

MIAMI BEACH

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

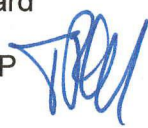
Staff Report & Recommendation

Historic Preservation Board

TO: Chairperson and Members
Historic Preservation Board

DATE: March 13, 2017

FROM: Thomas R. Mooney, AICP
Planning Director



SUBJECT: HPB16-0068, **1434 Washington Avenue.**

The applicant, Clay Hotel Partnership, LTD c/o Infinity Real Estate, is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the partial demolition, renovation and restoration of all structures on the site and variances to reduce the required rear setback, to relocate a projecting sign and to reduce the minimum size required for hotel units.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Continuance of the Certificate of Appropriateness and variances to a date certain of May 9, 2017.

EXISTING STRUCTURES (7)

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Local Historic District: | Espanola Way |
| Status: | Contributing |
| Original Construction Date: | 1925 |
| Original Architect: | Robert A. Taylor |

ZONING / SITE DATA

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Legal Description: | All of Block 3-B, First Addition to Whitman's Subdivision of Espanola Villas, Plat Book 9, Page 147 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County Florida. |
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|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Zoning: | CD-2, Commercial, medium intensity |
| Future Land Use Designation: | CD-2, Commercial, medium intensity |
| Lot Size: | 25,399 S.F. / 2.0 Max FAR |
| Existing FAR: | 50,139 S.F. / 1.97 |
| Proposed FAR: | 50,777 S.F. / 1.99 |
| Height: | 2 and 3-stories |
| Proposed Height: | no change |
| Existing Use/Condition: | Hotel and commercial |
| Proposed Use: | no change |

THE PROJECT

The applicant has submitted plans entitled "Espanola Hotel" as prepared by DNB Design Group, signed and dated December 21, 2016.

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the partial demolition, renovation and restoration of all structures on the site and variances to reduce the required rear setback, to relocate a projecting sign and to reduce the minimum size required for hotel units.

The applicant is requesting the following variance(s):

1. A variance from the minimum 200 s.f. required hotel unit size within the “Contributing building to allow 42 hotel units ranging from 167 s.f. to 198 s.f.

- Variance requested from:

Sec. 142-306. Development regulations.

The development regulations in the CD-2 commercial, medium intensity district are as follows:

Minimum Apartment Unit Size (Square Feet): Hotel Units: 15%: 300 - 335, 85%: 335+ For contributing hotel structures, located within an individual historic site, a local historic district or a national register district, which are being renovated in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards and Guidelines for the Rehabilitation of Historic Structures as amended, retaining the existing room configuration shall be permitted, provided all rooms are a minimum of 200 square feet. Additionally, existing room configurations for the above described hotel structures may be modified to address applicable life-safety and accessibility regulations, provided the 200 square foot minimum unit size is maintained, and provided the maximum occupancy per hotel room does not exceed 4 persons.

The applicant is proposing a renovation of the lobby, the addition of a trash room, 3 elevators and a new active roof deck. The building was originally constructed with hotel rooms that did not meet the minimum 200 s.f. as required by the current Code. The building features a total of 118 units with 42 units below the minimum area required. The proposed work would allow the hotel to function more efficiently while retaining the historic structure. The interior reconfiguration of the hotel units as originally constructed, create the practical difficulties that result in the need for the variance requested. Modifications to increase the size of the non-conforming units would negatively affect the main building systems and the configuration of the exterior windows. In this case, staff finds that this is the minimum variance necessary to preserve the historic character and design of the building. The non-conforming units should not have a negative impact in the historic district or on the adjacent properties as these units has been used for the hotel for many years.

2. A variance to reduce by 5'-1" the minimum required pedestal rear setback of 7'-10" for residential uses in order to construct planters at the roof level at a minimum of 2'-9" from the rear property line.

- Variance requested from:

Sec. 142-307. Setback requirements.

The setback requirements for the CD-2 commercial, medium intensity district are as follows:

Pedestal and tower (non-oceanfront), Rear: 5 feet, Residential uses shall follow the RM

setbacks. (See sections 142-156, 142-218 and 142-247.)

Sec. 142-156. Setback requirements.

The setback requirements for the RM-1 residential multifamily, low intensity district are as follows:

Pedestal, rear, Non-oceanfront lots—Minimum: 10% of lot depth

The new accessible roof deck includes planters that follow the existing non-conforming building lines on top of the four buildings adjacent to the rear. The planters will serve as safety guards for the guests and enhance the appearance of the space. Although the structure does not exceed the maximum height allowed, a setback variance is required due to the residential use of the space which requires a larger setback than the commercial uses. These buildings, as originally constructed, have non-conforming rear setbacks that range from 2'-9" to 3'-0" and the building fronting Drexel Avenue has a setback of zero from the rear property line. The two buildings on the corners of the site are three stories in height and a new trellis is also proposed to further contain the space and reduce any visibility from Washington Avenue.

Staff finds that the existing non-conforming structures create the practical difficulties that contribute to the need for this variance. The original hotel did not have many common spaces. The roof deck adds minimum necessary amenities that would allow a more successful hotel operation. Based on the existing conditions of the site and the retention of the non-conforming buildings, staff recommends that this variance request be approved.

3. A variance to relocate a projecting sign which is allowed on the first floor of the building, to the third floor of the building facing Espanola Way.

- Variance requested from:

Section 138-172. Schedule of sign regulations for principal and accessory use signs.

Zoning District, CD-2 – Projecting: 15 square feet.

A new sign with approximately 18.3 s.f. of area is proposed at the third floor of the building at the corner of Espanola Way and Drexel Avenue. However, only a building identification sign above the first floor is allowed by the Code. In this case, the applicant is requesting the relocation of a projecting sign from the first floor to the third floor, in order to minimize alteration or conflict with the existing architectural elements of the building at the first floor. Considering that the design of the proposed sign is compatible with the architecture of the building and the pedestrian character of the street, staff is supportive of this variance request. However, the sign would have to be reduced in size to comply with a maximum of 15 s.f. required for projecting signs.

Staff finds that the 'Contributing' building and its architectural elements create the practical difficulties that result in the need for the variance requested.

PRACTICAL DIFFICULTY AND HARDSHIP CRITERIA

The applicant has submitted plans and documents with the application that staff has concluded satisfy Article 1, Section 2 of the Related Special Acts.

Additionally, staff has concluded that the plans and documents with the application satisfy the following hardship criteria, as they relate to the requirements of Section 118-353(d), Miami Beach City Code:

- That special conditions and circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, structure, or building involved and which are not applicable to other lands, structures, or buildings in the same zoning district;
- That the special conditions and circumstances do not result from the action of the applicant;
- That granting the variance requested will not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this Ordinance to other lands, buildings, or structures in the same zoning district;
- That literal interpretation of the provisions of this Ordinance would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district under the terms of this Ordinance and would work unnecessary and undue hardship on the applicant;
- That the variance granted is the minimum variance that will make possible the reasonable use of the land, building or structure;
- That the granting of the variance will be in harmony with the general intent and purpose of this Ordinance and that such variance will not be injurious to the area involved or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare; and
- That the granting of this request is consistent with the comprehensive plan and does not reduce the levels of service as set forth in the plan.

COMPLIANCE WITH ZONING CODE

A preliminary review of the project indicates that the application, as proposed, appears to be inconsistent with the following sections of the City Code, in addition to the requested variances:

1. Section 138-172. The projecting sign exceeds the maximum area allowed of 15 SF.

The above noted comments shall not be considered final zoning review or approval. These and all zoning matters shall require final review and verification by the Zoning Administrator prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.

COMPLIANCE WITH CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS CRITERIA

A decision on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness shall be based upon the following:

- I. Evaluation of the compatibility of the physical alteration or improvement with surrounding properties and where applicable, compliance with the following criteria pursuant to Section 118-564(a)(1) of the Miami Beach Code (it is recommended that the listed criteria be found Satisfied, Not Satisfied or Not Applicable, as so noted):

- a. The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings as revised from time to time.
Not Satisfied
Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.
 - b. Other guidelines/policies/plans adopted or approved by Resolution or Ordinance by the City Commission.
Satisfied
- II. In determining whether a particular application is compatible with surrounding properties, the Board shall consider the following criteria pursuant to Section 118-564(a)(2) of the Miami Beach Code (it is recommended that the listed criteria be found Satisfied, Not Satisfied or Not Applicable, as so noted):
- a. Exterior architectural features.
Not Satisfied
Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.
 - b. General design, scale, massing and arrangement.
Not Satisfied
Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.
 - c. Texture and material and color.
Satisfied
 - d. The relationship of a, b, c, above, to other structures and features of the district.
Not Satisfied
Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.
 - e. The purpose for which the district was created.
Not Satisfied
Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.
 - f. The relationship of the size, design and siting of any new or reconstructed structure to the landscape of the district.
Not Satisfied
Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.
 - g. An historic resources report, containing all available data and historic documentation regarding the building, site or feature.
Satisfied

- h. The original architectural design or any subsequent modifications that have acquired significance.
Not Satisfied
Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.
- III. The examination of architectural drawings for consistency with the criteria pursuant to Section 118-564(a)(3) of the Miami Beach Code and stated below, with regard to the aesthetics, appearances, safety, and function of any new or existing structure, public interior space and physical attributes of the project in relation to the site, adjacent structures and properties, and surrounding community. The criteria referenced above are as follows (it is recommended that the listed criteria be found Satisfied, Not Satisfied or Not Applicable, as so noted):
 - a. The location of all existing and proposed buildings, drives, parking spaces, walkways, means of ingress and egress, drainage facilities, utility services, landscaping structures, signs, and lighting and screening devices.
Not Satisfied
Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.
 - b. The dimensions of all buildings, structures, setbacks, parking spaces, floor area ratio, height, lot coverage and any other information that may be reasonably necessary to determine compliance with the requirements of the underlying zoning district, and any applicable overlays, for a particular application or project.
Not Satisfied
See Compliance with the Zoning Code
 - c. The color, design, surface finishes and selection of landscape materials and architectural elements of the exterior of all buildings and structures and primary public interior areas for developments requiring a building permit in areas of the city identified in section 118-503.
Not Satisfied
Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.
 - d. The proposed structure, and/or additions to an existing structure is appropriate to and compatible with the environment and adjacent structures, and enhances the appearance of the surrounding properties, or the purposes for which the district was created.
Not Satisfied
Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.
 - e. The design and layout of the proposed site plan, as well as all new and existing buildings and public interior spaces shall be reviewed so as to provide an efficient arrangement of land uses. Particular attention shall be given to safety, crime prevention and fire protection, relationship to the surrounding neighborhood, impact on preserving historic character of the neighborhood and

district, contiguous and adjacent buildings and lands, pedestrian sight lines and view corridors.

Not Satisfied

Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.

- f. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic movement within and adjacent to the site shall be reviewed to ensure that clearly defined, segregated pedestrian access to the site and all buildings is provided for and that any driveways and parking spaces are usable, safely and conveniently arranged and have a minimal impact on pedestrian circulation throughout the site. Access to the site from adjacent roads shall be designed so as to interfere as little as possible with vehicular traffic flow on these roads and pedestrian movement onto and within the site, as well as permit both pedestrians and vehicles a safe ingress and egress to the site.

Satisfied

- g. Lighting shall be reviewed to ensure safe movement of persons and vehicles and reflection on public property for security purposes and to minimize glare and reflection on adjacent properties and consistent with a City master plan, where applicable.

Not Satisfied

Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.

- h. Landscape and paving materials shall be reviewed to ensure an adequate relationship with and enhancement of the overall site plan design.

Not Satisfied

Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.

- i. Buffering materials shall be reviewed to ensure that headlights of vehicles, noise, and light from Structures are adequately shielded from public view, adjacent properties and pedestrian areas.

Satisfied

- j. Any proposed new structure shall have an orientation and massing which is sensitive to and compatible with the building site and surrounding area and which creates or maintains important view corridor(s).

Not Satisfied

Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.

- k. All buildings shall have, to the greatest extent possible, space in that part of the ground floor fronting a sidewalk, street or streets which is to be occupied for residential or commercial uses; likewise, the upper floors of the pedestal portion of the proposed building fronting a sidewalk street, or streets shall have residential or commercial spaces, or shall have the appearance of being a residential or commercial space or shall have an architectural treatment which

shall buffer the appearance of a parking structure from the surrounding area and is integrated with the overall appearance of the project.

Satisfied

- l. All buildings shall have an appropriate and fully integrated rooftop architectural treatment which substantially screens all mechanical equipment, stairs and elevator towers.

Not Satisfied

Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.

- m. Any addition on a building site shall be designed, sited and massed in a manner which is sensitive to and compatible with the existing improvement(s).

Not Satisfied

Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.

- n. All portions of a project fronting a street or sidewalk shall incorporate an amount of transparency at the first level necessary to achieve pedestrian compatibility.

Satisfied

- o. The location, design, screening and buffering of all required service bays, delivery bays, trash and refuse receptacles, as well as trash rooms shall be arranged so as to have a minimal impact on adjacent properties.

Not Satisfied

Insufficient detailed plans have been provided for staff to fully evaluate the proposed project.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR DEMOLITION EVALUATION CRITERIA

Section 118-564 (f)(4) of the Land Development Regulations of the Miami Beach Code provides criteria by which the Historic Preservation Board evaluates requests for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition. The following is an analysis of the request based upon these criteria:

- a. The Building, Structure, Improvement, or Site is designated on either a national or state level as a part of an Historic Preservation District or as a Historic Architectural Landmark or Site, or is designated pursuant to Division 4, Article X, Chapter 118 of the Miami Beach Code as a Historic Building, Historic Structure or Historic Site, Historic Improvement, Historic Landscape Feature, historic interior or the Structure is of such historic/architectural interest or quality that it would reasonably meet national, state or local criteria for such designation.

Satisfied

The existing structures are designated as part of the Espanola Way Local Historic District; the buildings are designated as 'Contributing' structures in the historic district.

- b. The Building, Structure, Improvement, or Site is of such design, craftsmanship, or material that it could be reproduced only with great difficulty and/or expense.

Satisfied

The existing structures would be difficult and inordinately expensive to reproduce.

- c. The Building, Structure, Improvement, or Site is one of the last remaining examples of its kind in the neighborhood, the country, or the region, or is a distinctive example of an architectural or design style which contributes to the character of the district.

Satisfied

The existing structures are one of the last remaining examples of their kind and are distinctive examples of the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture which contributes to the character of the district.

- d. The building, structure, improvement, or site is a contributing building, structure, improvement, site or landscape feature rather than a noncontributing building, structure, improvement, site or landscape feature in a historic district as defined in section 114-1, or is an architecturally significant feature of a public area of the interior of a historic or contributing building.

Satisfied

The subject structures are designated as 'Contributing' buildings in the Miami Beach Historic Properties Database.

- e. Retention of the Building, Structure, Improvement, Landscape Feature or Site promotes the general welfare of the City by providing an opportunity for study of local history, architecture, and design or by developing an understanding of the importance and value of a particular culture and heritage.

Satisfied

The retention of these structures is critical to developing an understanding of an important Miami Beach architectural style.

- f. If the proposed demolition is for the purpose of constructing a parking garage, the Board shall consider it if the parking garage is designed in a manner that is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, U.S. Department of the Interior (1983), as amended, and/or the design review guidelines for that particular district.

Not Applicable

The demolition proposed in the subject application is not for the purpose of constructing a parking garage.

- g. In the event an applicant or property owner proposes the total demolition of a contributing structure, historic structure or architecturally significant feature, there shall be definite plans presented to the board for the reuse of the property if the proposed demolition is approved and carried out.

Not Applicable

The applicant is not proposing total demolition of the existing 'Contributing' buildings.

- h. The Dade County Unsafe Structures Board has ordered the demolition of a Structure without option.

Not Applicable

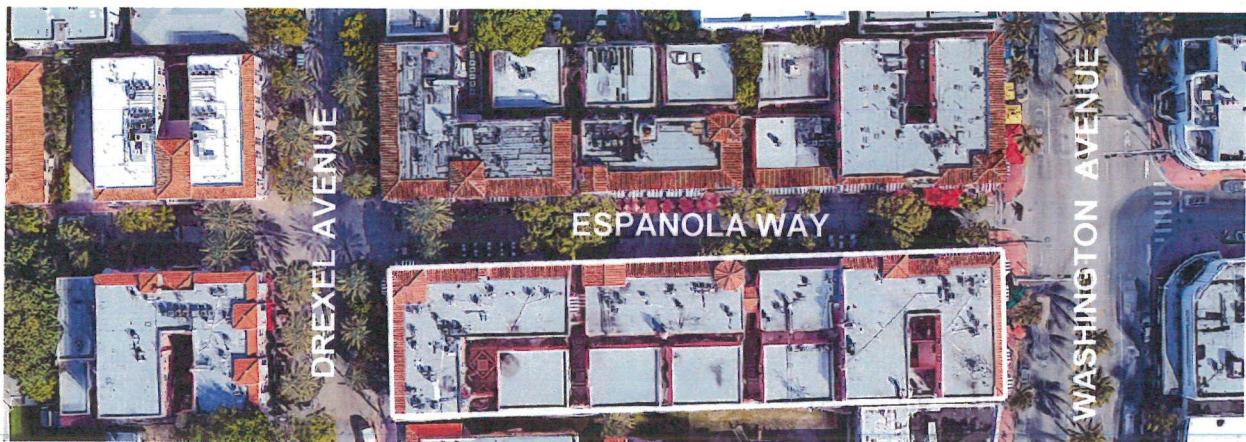
The Miami-Dade County Unsafe Structures Board has not ordered the demolition of any part of the subject buildings.

ANALYSIS

The Espanola Way Local Historic District, the City's first Local Historic District, was designated in 1986. The subject site is located within a portion of the historic district originally known as the 'Spanish Village' which encompasses Espanola Way from Washington Avenue to Drexel Avenue and also includes the two buildings on the west side of Drexel Avenue. The Spanish Village was developed by N.B.T. Roney, also the developer of the previously existing Roney Plaza Hotel, and contains a total of 16 buildings all constructed in 1925 and designed by Robert A. Taylor in the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture. The Spanish Village has been noted for its authentic reproduction of the Mediterranean style and, as stated in the designation report, "the concentration, alignment and design of these buildings and the narrowness of the street all combine to create a realistic impression of a Mediterranean Village."

The applicant owns all of the property on the south side of the Spanish Village, collectively known as the Clay Hotel, including the subject site (Between Washington Avenue and Drexel Avenue). A separate application has been submitted for the property located across Drexel Avenue (HPB16-0082).

The subject property, consists of 3 primary buildings, 1434 Washington Avenue, a 3-story building located at the corner of Washington Avenue and Espanola Way, 432 Espanola Way, a 2-story mid-block building fronting Espanola Way and 1437 Drexel Avenue, a 3-story building located at the corner of Drexel Avenue and Espanola Way. Additionally, four 2-story structures are located within the courtyard created by the main buildings.



2016 Aerial

The applicant is currently requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the partial demolition and renovation of all seven 'Contributing' structures on the site as part of a hotel redevelopment project.

Hotel lobby

The hotel lobby is located at the ground floor of the 1434 Washington Avenue building and has entrances on both Washington Avenue and Espanola Way. Although no original building permit plans have been located for this structure, staff has determined through examination of

historical photographs and on-site conditions that the double lobby was originally open-air and is most likely the original lobby configuration. The lobby features an original pecky cypress ceiling which is proposed to be restored and a pecky cypress clad reception desk. Within the original public lobby space, the applicant is proposing several alterations.

Lobby reconfiguration

The applicant is proposing to reconfigure the lobby space including the elimination of the Espanola Way portion as part of the hotel lobby. Additionally, the original masonry staircase is proposed to be demolished and the stairs reoriented to the Washington Avenue lobby. The Espanola Way portion of the lobby will be subsumed into the 'Oh Mexico' restaurant. Staff believes that this substantially intact, unique double lobby is an important design element of the 'Contributing' structure and its original design is highly representative of the Robert Taylor's original plan for the Spanish Village. It is important to note that the hotel across the street at 1448 Washington Avenue, originally known as the 'Village Hotel', was also designed with an open-air double lobby (see image below). Unfortunately, the Washington Avenue entrance for this hotel was eliminated at some time in the past. Consequently, staff recommends that the existing lobby configuration be retained including the existing masonry staircase. Staff would have no objection to the introduction of an additional staircase within the Washington Avenue lobby as currently proposed.

Original reception desk

On Sheet A-11 of the plans, the applicant has noted that the original pecky cypress reception desk is not in good condition and has been modified throughout the years. According to the noted provide on sheets A-13 and A-15, it appears that the applicant is proposing to remove the pecky cypress panels on the sides of the desk and mount them to the wall as a display. No further details have been provided, nor have any salvage plans been presented for what parts of the desk will be displayed. Regardless, staff is not supportive of the dismantling of the original desk, and would note that many original hotel lobby desks have been retained and restored and in some instances repurposed for a new use. Staff would have no objection to the careful relocation and restoration of the desk within the lobby.



Village Hotel, 1446 Washington Avenue, ca.1926

Introduction of new projecting light shaft

The applicant is proposing to demolish an existing octagonal shaped skylight and a portion of the original pecky cypress ceiling within the lobby in order to introduce a new approximately 8'-0" x 16'-0" rectangular shaped light shaft which projects approximately 8'-0" into the courtyard space above. While staff believes that the existing stained glass portion of the skylight may not be original element of the lobby, staff has determined that the pyramidal glass portion of the skylight at the roof level is most likely original. This element can be seen in aerial photography from dating back to 1941. No further details of the proposed projecting light shaft or resulting demolition have been provided including, existing, proposed or demolition reflected ceiling plans. Regardless of the above noted deficiencies or whether or not the existing skylight is original, staff believes that the proposed projecting light shaft design is entirely out of character with the modest Mediterranean Revival lobby. Staff would have no objection to the restoration of the existing skylight or the introduction of a new appropriately designed skylight within the existing octagonal shaped opening.

Lobby finishes and fixtures

A number of new finishes are proposed to be introduced within the original lobby spaces. Notably, the existing non-original diagonally set, clay tile flooring is proposed to be removed and replaced with a combination of travertine and black finished porcelain tile. A photograph of the lobby from 1979 has been included in the Historic Resources Report (page 27) and shows what may have been the original lobby tile. A building permit was issued in 1980 for the installation of the existing tile. Although the original tile floor may exist underneath, it is highly unlikely that it could be salvaged and/or restored. With regard to the proposed Porcelanosa 'Antique Black' tile proposed, staff is not supportive of the introduction of this material within the original lobby space, as this finish of this material is not consistent with surfaces finishes of the Mediterranean Revival period of architecture. In order to provide a more informed design decision, staff would suggest further investigation of the original flooring, for possible incorporation into a new flooring design.

Finally, staff would note that the lighting fixtures represented in the proposed lobby renderings are out of character with the period of architecture and would recommend that all lighting fixtures be consistent with the Mediterranean Revival style.

2-story courtyard buildings

Four 2-story structures are located within the courtyard space formed by the street facing buildings. The structures are paired together so that the entrance to each building is across from the other. Each of the four building entrances features a slightly different frontispiece design. The narrow passageways formed from the remaining courtyard space reinforce the Spanish Village concept. Notably, the special character of the 'Court Scene' of the Spanish Village was the subject of an early colored postcard as shown on the following page. Within the courtyard space, the applicant is proposing a number of alterations.

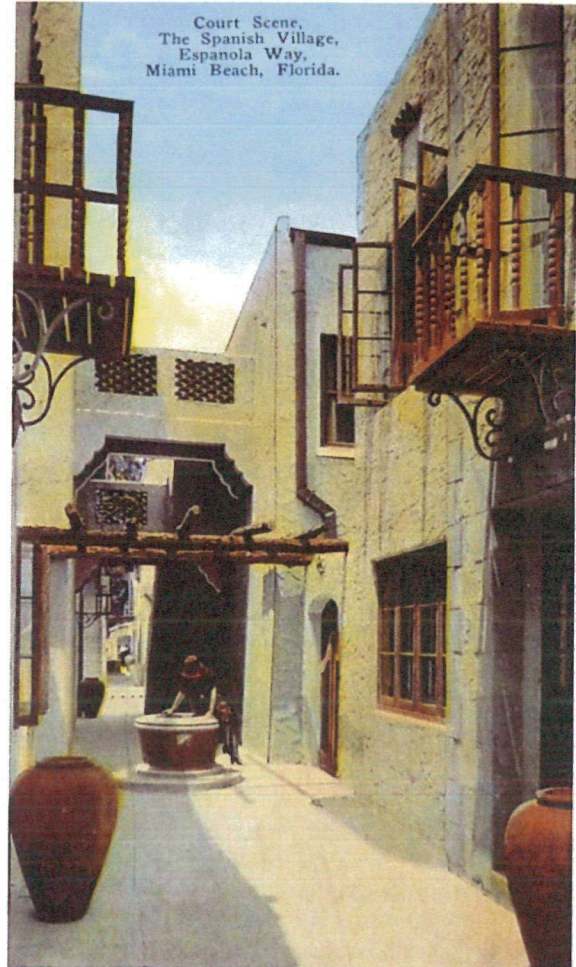
Introduction of new roof top amenities and pedestrian bridges

The applicant is currently proposing to activate each of the four courtyard building roofs with amenities for guests of the hotel including: two swim spas, a sun deck, an outdoor bar deck, and a yoga/relaxation deck. All of the decks are proposed to be connected with pedestrian bridges at the roof level. Further the applicant is proposing an enclosed bridge between the easternmost two courtyard buildings at the second level.

Staff has no objection to the activation of the roofs in order to add hotel amenities; however, staff is concerned with regard to the impact the pedestrian bridges will have on the defining architectural features of the courtyard buildings (see images on following page). Although complete a complete set of existing, demolition and proposed elevations for the courtyard buildings have not been provided at this time it is clear that portions of all of the projecting entrance features will be required to be demolished in order to introduce the proposed pedestrian bridges at the second and roof levels.

In order to retain and restore the existing projecting courtyard building entrances, staff recommends that the bridges be repositioned to the south of the projecting features.

Additionally, planters are proposed to be installed along the perimeter of the courtyard building roofs and pedestrian bridges. As shown in the renderings on Sheet A-19 the planters appear to add bulk and overwhelm the courtyard buildings. Further, staff believes that the planters are insufficiently sized to provide adequate rooting space for plant material to thrive overtime. Consequently, staff would recommend that roof top planters be eliminated and that a simple cable guard rail system be provided that is mounted to the inside face of the parapets.



New FPL vault and boiler room

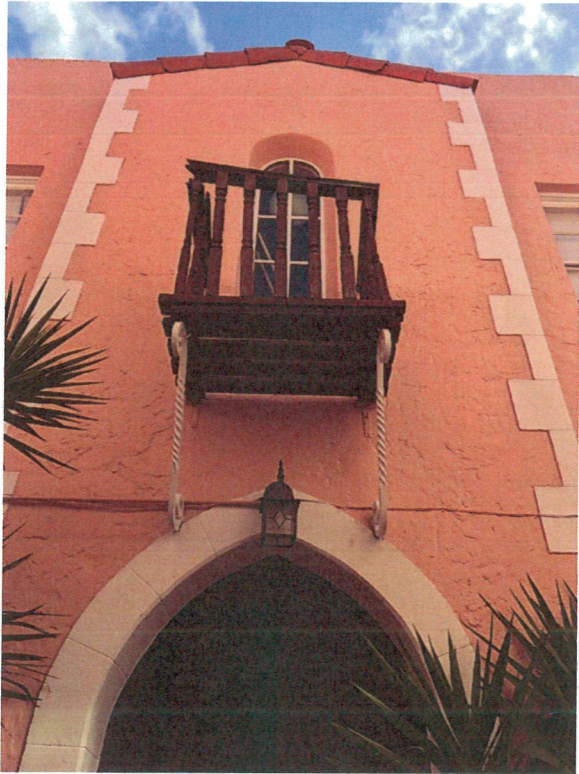
As currently proposed, these structures have been located within the original courtyard. Staff believes that the introduction of this large 2-story mechanical and utility room has an adverse impact on the character of this outdoor space. Notwithstanding the applicant's failure to provide detailed elevations of this structure, staff would recommend that the FPL and boiler room equipment be located within an existing building envelope.

Landscaping plans

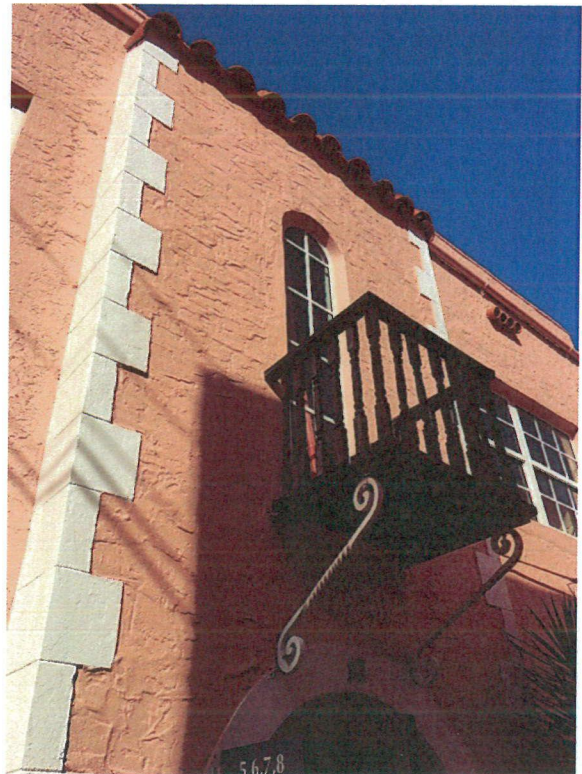
Adequate landscape plans have not been submitted in order for staff to fully evaluate the appropriateness of the proposed landscaping.

Restoration plans

While the applicant has not provided original microfilm plans, staff was able to locate building elevation plans for two of the structures as shown on pages 15 and 16 of this report. The discovery of these plans should assist the applicant in identifying opportunities for restoration. At a minimum, staff would recommend that the existing ground level storefronts be removed and replaced with new storefronts that are consistent with historical documentation.



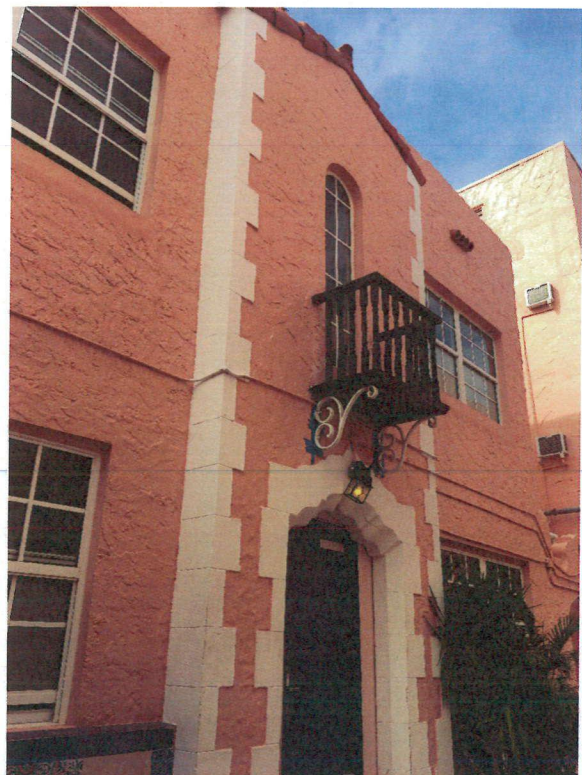
Courtyard Building 1



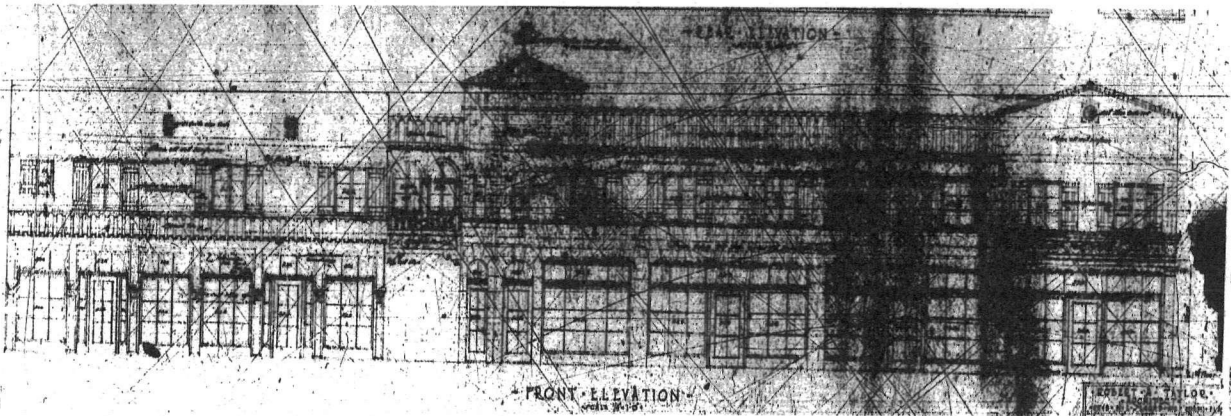
Courtyard Building 2



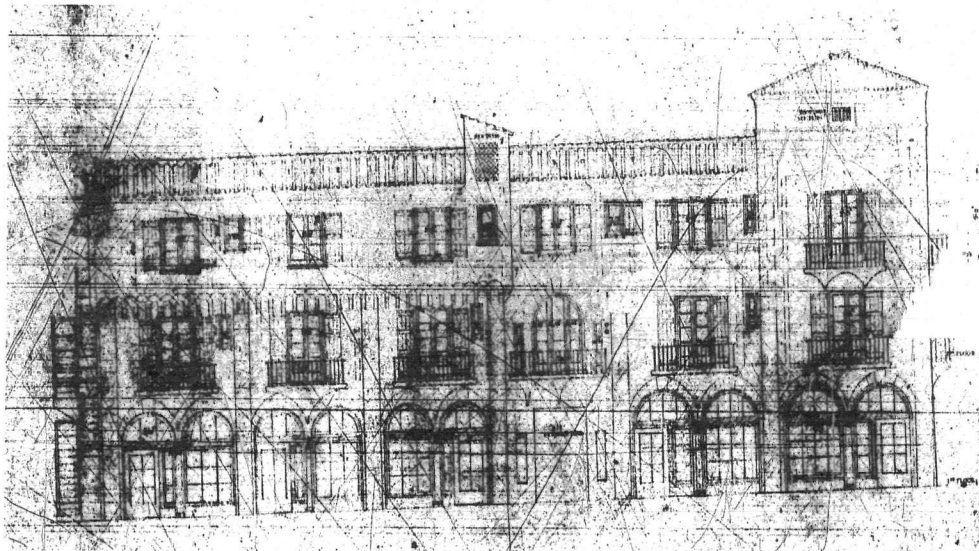
Courtyard Building 3



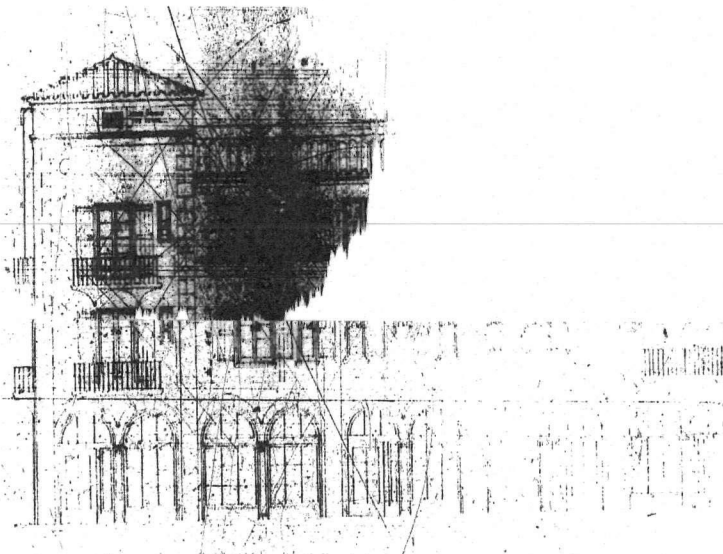
Courtyard Building 4



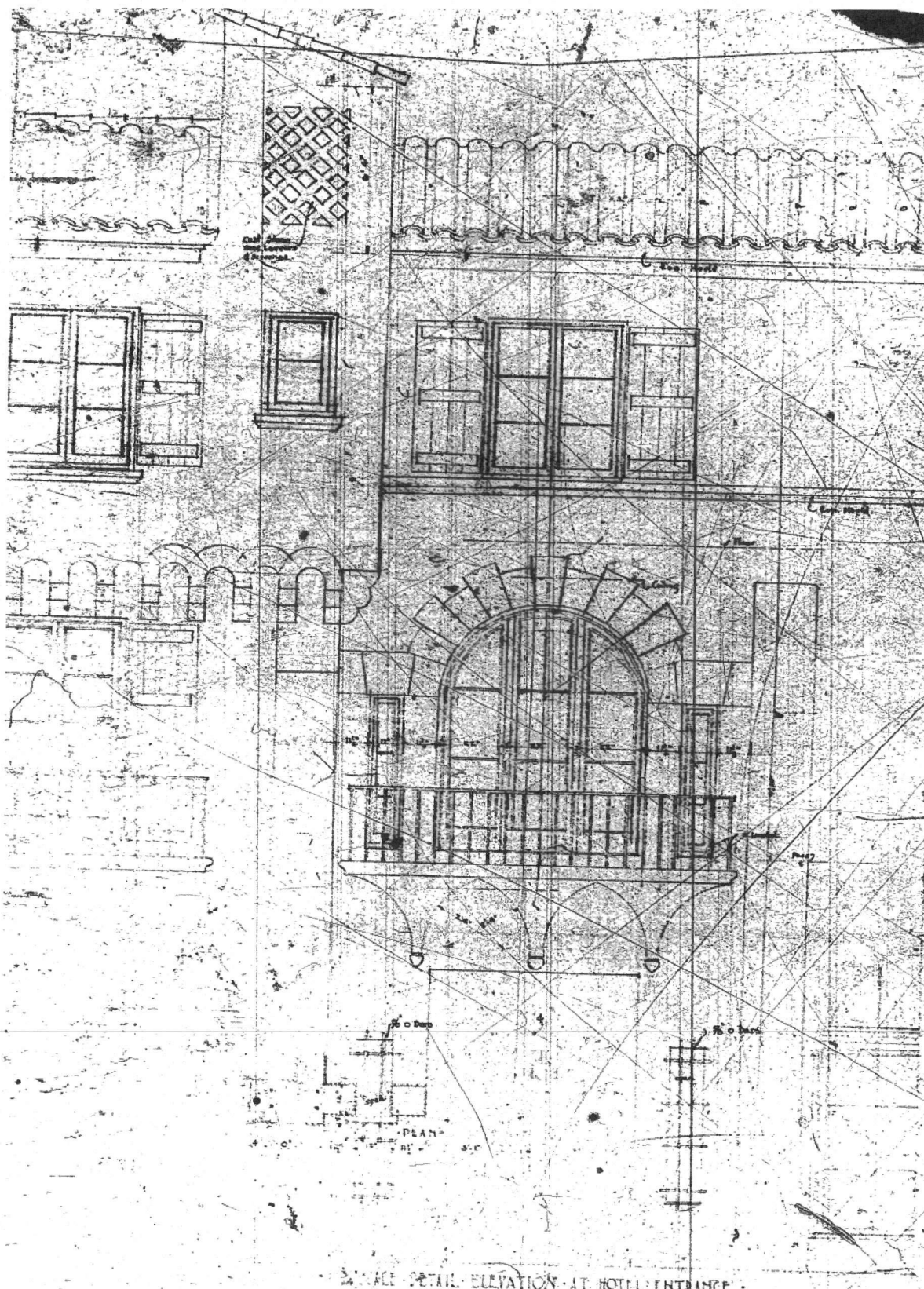
432 Espanola Way, Espanola Way elevation



1437 Drexel Avenue, Espanola Way elevation



1437 Drexel Avenue, Drexel Avenue elevation



1437 Drexel Avenue, Espanola Way detail elevation

Certificate of Appropriateness Violations

Staff has identified numerous elements attached to the structures which have not obtained a Certificate of Appropriateness. These elements include but are not limited to: signage, speakers, lighting, shade devices, artificial plants, etc. Staff recommends that all of these unpermitted elements be removed.

VARIANCE ANALYSIS

The subject site contains several buildings constructed in 1925 that have been unified as one property. The lot is located in the Espanola Way Local Historic District and also within the National Register Architectural District. The property includes hotel, and other commercial businesses. As part of the proposed improvements three variances are requested to reduce the requirements for unit size in historic hotel rooms, to reduce the required rear setback and to relocate a new sign to the third floor. These variance requests are associated with the retention of the historic buildings with non-conforming setbacks and room sizes. The variances are the minimum to preserve the historic character and design of the structure. In this case, staff finds that the existing building and the retention of its original architecture creates the practical difficulties that justify the variances requested.

RECOMMENDATION

In view of the foregoing analysis and the inconsistencies with the aforementioned Certificate of Appropriateness criteria and Practical Difficulty and Hardship criteria, as applicable, staff recommends the application be continued to a date certain of May 9, 2017.