

MIAMI BEACH

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Staff Report & Recommendation

Historic Preservation Board

TO: Chairperson and Members
Historic Preservation Board

DATE: February 13, 2024

FROM: Thomas R. Mooney, AICP
Planning Director

OK for TM

SUBJECT: HPB23-0601, **251 Washington Avenue.**

An application has been filed requesting a variance to reduce the setback requirements in order to introduce a 7'-0" tall fence within the required front yard.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approval of the variance with conditions.

BACKGROUND

On July 12, 2022, the Historic Preservation Board reviewed and approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of new educational facility on a vacant site and variances from the minimum required interior side yard setbacks for a school.

On March 14, 2023, the Historic Preservation Board reviewed and approved variances from the required rear and side yard setbacks.

EXISTING SITE

Local Historic District: Ocean Beach

ZONING / SITE DATA

Legal Description:	Folio: 02-4203-003-1090 Lots 14 & 15, Block 8, of the Ocean Beach Fla Subdivision, according to the plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 2, Page 38 of the public records of Miami Dade County, Florida.
Zoning:	RPS-3 (Residential Performance Standard, medium-high density)
Future Land Use Designation:	RPS-3 (Residential Performance Standard, medium-high density)
Existing Use/Condition:	Vacant lot
Proposed Use:	Private school

THE PROJECT

The applicant has submitted plans entitled "Basecamp305", as prepared by Arquitectonica, dated December 10, 2023.

COMPLIANCE WITH ZONING CODE

A preliminary review of the project indicates that the application appears to be consistent with the Land Development Regulations with the exception of the variance requested herein. This 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.

CONSISTENCY WITH 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A preliminary review of the project indicates that the proposed use is **consistent** with the Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan.

COMPLIANCE WITH SEA LEVEL RISE AND RESILIENCY REVIEW CRITERIA

Section 7.1.2.4(a)(i) of the Land Development Regulations establishes review criteria for sea level rise and resiliency that must be considered as part of the review process for board orders. The following is an analysis of the request based upon these criteria:

- (1) A recycling or salvage plan for partial or total demolition shall be provided.
Not Applicable
- (2) Windows that are proposed to be replaced shall be hurricane proof impact windows.
Not Applicable
- (3) Where feasible and appropriate, passive cooling systems, such as operable windows, shall be provided.
Not Applicable
- (4) Resilient landscaping (salt tolerant, highly water-absorbent, native or Florida friendly plants) shall be provided, in accordance with Chapter 4 of the Land Development Regulations.
Not Applicable
- (5) The project applicant shall consider the adopted sea level rise projections in the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Action Plan, as may be revised from time-to-time by the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact. The applicant shall also specifically study the land elevation of the subject property and the elevation of surrounding properties.
Not Applicable
- (6) The ground floor, driveways, and garage ramping for new construction shall be adaptable to the raising of public rights-of-ways and adjacent land and shall provide sufficient height and space to ensure that the entry ways and exits can be modified to accommodate a higher street height of up to three (3) additional feet in height.
Not Applicable
- (7) In all new projects, all critical mechanical and electrical systems shall be located above base flood elevation. Due to flooding concerns, all redevelopment projects shall, whenever practicable, and economically reasonable, move all critical mechanical and electrical systems to a location above base flood elevation.
Not Applicable

- (8) Existing buildings shall be, where reasonably feasible and economically appropriate, elevated up to base flood elevation, plus City of Miami Beach Freeboard.
Not Applicable
- (9) When habitable space is located below the base flood elevation plus City of Miami Beach Freeboard, wet or dry flood proofing systems will be provided in accordance with Chapter of 54 in General Ordinances.
Not Applicable
- (10) In all new projects, water retention systems shall be provided.
Not Applicable
- (11) Cool pavement materials or porous pavement materials shall be utilized.
Not Applicable
- (12) The project design shall minimize the potential for a project causing a heat island effect on site.
Not Applicable

VARIANCE CRITERIA

The applicant has submitted plans and documents with the application that satisfy Article 1, Section 2 of the Related Special Acts, allowing the granting of a variance if the Board finds that practical difficulties exist with respect to implementing the proposed project at the subject property.

The applicant has submitted plans and documents with the application that also indicate the following, as they relate to the requirements of Section 2.8.3(a) of the Land Development Regulations:

- i. 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;
- ii. The special conditions and circumstances do not result from the action of the applicant;
- iii. Granting the variance requested will not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by these land development regulations to other lands, buildings, or structures in the same zoning district;
- iv. Literal interpretation of the provisions of these land development regulations would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district under the terms of these land development regulations and would work unnecessary and undue hardship on the applicant;
- v. The variance granted is the minimum variance that will make possible the reasonable use of the land, building or structure;

- vi. The granting of the variance will be in harmony with the general intent and purpose of these land development regulations and that such variance will not be injurious to the area involved or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare;
- vii. 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; and
- viii. The granting of the variance will result in a structure and site that complies with the sea level rise and resiliency review criteria in chapter 7, article I, as applicable.

VARIANCE ANALYSIS

The applicant is requesting the following variance:

1. A variance to reduce by 4'-0" the minimum required front yard setback of 4'-0" for a 7'-0" tall fence in order to provide a 7'-0" tall fence with no setback (0'-0") along the front property line. Variance requested from:

Section 7.5.3.2 Allowable encroachments within required yards for districts other than single-family districts.

The following regulations shall apply to allowable encroachments in all districts except single-family residential districts, unless otherwise specified in this Code.

(h) Fences, walls, and gates. Regulations and requirements pertaining to materials and heights for fences, walls and gates, excluding for vacant parcels and construction sites, are as follows:

(1) All districts except I-1 and WD-2:

(A) Front yard and side yard facing a street. Within the required front yard or required side yard facing a street, fences, walls and gates shall not exceed 5 feet, as measured from grade. The height may be increased up to a maximum total height of 7 feet if the fence, wall or gate is set back from the front and/or side street property line. Height may be increased by 1 foot for every 2 feet of setback.

As noted in the background section of this report, on July 12, 2022, the Board reviewed and approval a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of new educational facility on a vacant site. The applicant is requesting a variance to permit the introduction of a 7'-0" fence at the front property line to provide a greater level of security for students of the school. In general, the Land Development Regulations permit a 5'-0" tall fence at the front property line, a 6'-0" tall fence setback 2'-0" from the front property line and a 7'-0" tall fence setback 4'-0" from the front property line. Staff would note that the development regulations within the R-PS3 zoning district require a building to be located exactly 5'-0" from the front property line. Therefore, a 7'-0" tall fence setback the required 4'-0" would significantly reduce the usable outdoor space for students.

It is also important to note that schools are generally located within the GU zoning district which provides greater flexibility with regard to the height and setback of a fence given the special security requirements for educational institutions. The unique location of the subject school within the R-PS3 along with the mandatory 5'-0" front setback creates practical difficulties warranting the granting of the variance.

Finally, staff would note that a portion of the applicant's request is related to fencing within the

required rear yard. This portion of the variance request is not applicable as fencing is permitted at a height of 7'-0" at the rear property line along the alley.

RECOMMENDATION

In view of the foregoing analysis, staff recommends that the request for a variance be **approved**, subject to the conditions enumerated in the attached draft Order.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
City of Miami Beach, Florida

MEETING DATE: February 13, 2024

PROPERTY/FOLIO: 251 Washington Avenue / 02-4203-003-1090

FILE NO: HPB23-0601

APPLICANT: 251 Washington LLC

IN RE: An application has been filed requesting a variance to reduce the setback requirements in order to introduce a 7'-0" tall fence within the required front yard.

LEGAL: Lots 14 & 15, Block 8, of the Ocean Beach Fla Subdivision, according to the plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 2, Page 38 of the public records of Miami Dade County, Florida.

ORDER

The City of Miami Beach Historic Preservation Board makes the following FINDINGS OF FACT, based upon the evidence, information, testimony and materials presented at the public hearing and which are part of the record for this matter:

I. Certificate of Appropriateness

A. A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness has not been filed as part of this application.

In accordance with section 2.2.4.8(c) of the Land Development Regulations the applicant, the City Manager, Miami Design Preservation League, Dade Heritage Trust, or an affected person may appeal the Board's decision on a Certificate of Appropriateness to a special magistrate appointed by the City Commission.

II. Variance(s)

A. The applicant filed an application with the Planning Department for the following variance:

1. A variance to reduce by 4'-0" the minimum required front yard setback of 4'-0" for a 7'-0" tall fence in order to provide a 7'-0" tall fence with no setback (0'-0") along the front property line.

B. The applicant has submitted plans and documents with the application that satisfy Article 1, Section 2 of the Related Special Acts, allowing the granting of a variance if the Board finds that practical difficulties exist with respect to implementing the proposed project at the subject property.

The applicant has submitted plans and documents with the application that indicate the following, as they relate to the requirements of section 2.8.3(a) of the Land Development Regulations:

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 these land development regulations to other lands, buildings, or structures in the same zoning district.

That literal interpretation of the provisions of these land development regulations would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district under the terms of these land development regulations 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 these land development regulations and that such variance will not be injurious to the area involved or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare.

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.

The granting of the variance will result in a structure and site that complies with the sea level rise and resiliency review criteria in chapter 7, article I, as applicable.

- C. The Board finds that the application satisfies Article 1, Section 2 of the Related Special Acts and the requirements of section 2.8.3(a) of the Land Development Regulations, and hereby **approves** the requested variances; and imposes the following condition based on its authority in section 2.8.4 of the Land Development Regulations:

1. Substantial modifications to the plans submitted and approved as part of the application, as determined by the Planning Director or designee, may require the applicant to return to the Board for approval of the modified plans, even if the modifications do not affect variances approved by the Board.

The decision of the Board regarding variances shall be final and there shall be no further review thereof except by resort to a court of competent jurisdiction by petition for writ of certiorari.

- III. General Terms and Conditions applying to both 'I. Certificate of Appropriateness' and 'II. Variances' noted above.**

- A. The applicant agrees and shall be required to provide access to areas subject to this approval (not including private residences or hotel rooms) for inspection by the City (i.e.: Planning, Code Compliance, Building Department, Fire Safety), to ensure compliance with the plans approved by the Board and conditions of this order.
- B. The issuance of a building permit is contingent upon meeting Public School Concurrency requirements, if applicable. Applicant shall obtain a valid School Concurrency Determination Certificate (Certificate) issued by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools. The Certificate shall state the number of seats reserved at each school level. In the event sufficient seats are not available, a proportionate share mitigation plan shall be incorporated into a tri-party development agreement and duly executed. No building permit may be issued unless and until the applicant obtains a written finding from Miami-Dade County Public Schools that the applicant has satisfied school concurrency.
- C. The relocation of any tree shall be subject to the approval of the Environment & Sustainability Director and/or Urban Forester, as applicable.
- D. The applicant shall comply with the electric vehicle parking requirements, pursuant to section 5.2.12 of the land development regulations, as applicable.
- E. Where one or more parcels are unified for a single development, the property owner shall execute and record a unity of title or a covenant in lieu of unity of title, as may be applicable, in a form acceptable to the City Attorney.
- F. A copy of all pages of the recorded Final Order shall be scanned into the plans submitted for building permit and shall be located immediately after the front cover page of the permit plans.
- G. The Final Order shall be recorded in the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.
- H. Satisfaction of all conditions is required for the Planning Department to give its approval on a Certificate of Occupancy; a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy or Partial Certificate of Occupancy may also be conditionally granted Planning Departmental approval.
- I. The Final Order is not severable, and if any provision or condition hereof is held void or unconstitutional in a final decision by a court of competent jurisdiction, the order shall be returned to the Board for reconsideration as to whether the order meets the criteria for approval absent the stricken provision or condition, and/or it is appropriate to modify the remaining conditions or impose new conditions.
- J. The conditions of approval herein are binding on the applicant, the property's owners, operators, and all successors in interest and assigns.
- K. Nothing in this order authorizes a violation of the City Code or other applicable law, nor allows a relaxation of any requirement or standard set forth in the City Code.

- L. Upon the issuance of a final Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Completion, as applicable, the project approved herein shall be maintained in accordance with the plans approved by the board and shall be subject to all conditions of approval herein, unless otherwise modified by the Board. Failure to maintain shall result in the issuance of a Code Compliance citation, and continued failure to comply may result in revocation of the Certificate of Occupancy, Completion and Business Tax Receipt.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, based upon the foregoing findings of fact, the evidence, information, testimony and materials presented at the public hearing, which are part of the record for this matter, and the staff report and analysis, which are adopted herein, including the staff recommendations, which were amended and adopted by the Board, that the application is GRANTED for the above-referenced project subject to those certain conditions specified in Paragraph I, II, III of the Findings of Fact, to which the applicant has agreed.

PROVIDED, the applicant shall build substantially in accordance with the plans entitled **“Basecamp305”, as prepared by Arquitectonica, dated December 10, 2023**, as approved by the Historic Preservation Board, as determined by staff.

When requesting a building permit, the plans submitted to the Building Department for permit shall be consistent with the plans approved by the Board, modified in accordance with the conditions set forth in this Order. No building permit may be issued unless and until all conditions of approval that must be satisfied prior to permit issuance, as set forth in this Order, have been met.

The issuance of the approval does not relieve the applicant from obtaining all other required Municipal, County and/or State reviews and permits, including final zoning approval. If adequate handicapped access is not provided on the Board-approved plans, this approval does not mean that such handicapped access is not required. When requesting a building permit, the plans submitted to the Building Department for permit shall be consistent with the plans approved by the Board, modified in accordance with the conditions set forth in this Order.

If the Full Building Permit for the project is not issued within eighteen (18) months of the meeting date at which the original approval was granted, the application will expire and become null and void, unless the applicant makes an application to the Board for an extension of time, in accordance with the requirements and procedures of section 2.13.7 of the Land Development Regulations; the granting of any such extension of time shall be at the discretion of the Board. If the Full Building Permit for the project should expire for any reason (including but not limited to construction not commencing and continuing, with required inspections, in accordance with the applicable Building Code), the application will expire and become null and void.

In accordance with chapter 2 of the Land Development Regulations, the violation of any conditions and safeguards that are a part of this Order shall be deemed a violation of the land development regulations. Failure to comply with this Order shall subject the application to chapter 2 of the Land Development Regulations, for revocation or modification of the application.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 20__.

Filed with the Clerk of the Historic Preservation Board on _____ ()