



200 S. Biscayne Boulevard
Suite 300, Miami, FL 33131

www.brzoninglaw.com

305.377.6231 office

305.377.6222 fax

MLarkin@brzoninglaw.com

LA GORCEVIA ELECTRONIC SUBMITTAL

July 13, 2025

Rogelio Madan, Development & Resiliency Officer
Planning Department
City of Miami Beach
1700 Convention Center Drive, 2nd Floor
Miami Beach, Florida 33139

RE: **DRB25-1104:** Letter of Intent – Application for Design Review Board Approval for the Property Located at 5685 Alton Road, Miami Beach, Florida

Dear Mr. Madan:

This law firm represents La Gorce Country Club, Inc., (the "Applicant") relating to the property located at 5685 Alton Road (the "Property") in the City of Miami Beach (the "City"). The Applicant's goal is to enhance the experience for both members and neighbors by constructing a new, resilient clubhouse that addresses the challenges of sea-level rise. Please accept this letter as the Applicant's letter of intent in support of a pre-application request to the Design Review Board ("DRB") for the design review of a proposed new clubhouse, which will replace an existing clubhouse originally built in 2004.

Description of the Property. The Property is located East of Alton Road near the intersection of W 57 Street and Alton Road. The Property comprises a portion of the existing La Gorce Country Club, including the site of the current clubhouse. The Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser's Office identifies the Property with Folio No. 02-3214-000-0010. See Exhibit A, Property Appraiser Summary Report. The Property is located within the Golf Course ("GC") Zoning District, and is not located in a local or national historic district. The Property is currently

improved with a private golf course, an approximately 45,000 square foot clubhouse, pool, cart storage facility, six (6) tennis courts, and on-site parking.

Project. The Applicant seeks approval to demolish the existing clubhouse and construct a new, state-of-the-art facility totaling approximately 73,606 square feet. The proposed redevelopment includes the relocation of two (2) tennis courts in compliance with the minimum required setbacks fronting Alton Road, elevation and maintenance of the remaining courts, the addition of four (4) padel courts, a standalone golf performance center, a standalone pro shop, and the construction of three (3) new comfort stations strategically placed throughout the golf course (the "Proposed Project"). The proposed golf performance center is predominantly set back one hundred and seventy feet (170') from the single-family homes to the west, with only a minor portion extending within this distance. Importantly, any new structure proposed including but not limited to, restroom facilities or comfort stations shall be setback seventy-five feet (75') from the rear yards of residential homes abutting the golf course property and shall not exceed 2,000 square feet. The proposed facility measures 1,475 square feet in floor area and sixteen feet (16') in height, well within the maximum allowed 2,000 square feet and twenty feet (20') in height.

The proposed padel courts have been thoughtfully located adjacent to the existing tennis courts and carefully oriented to minimize both noise and visibility from the surrounding area. Importantly, the courts are set back twenty feet (20') and six inches (6") from the nearest single-family residences along the western boundary of the golf course. To further reduce potential impacts, each court will be enclosed with solid plexiglass panels, which help contain sound and prevent noise from carrying to neighboring properties. The Applicant is considering constructing a solid block wall within the setback area, which will be fully screened and covered with landscaping to help mitigate any additional noise impacts. In addition, the twenty foot (20') setback area will be densely landscaped with a combination of hedges and mature evergreen trees, creating a natural buffer that enhances privacy and provides an additional layer of sound attenuation. Together, these measures are designed to ensure the courts remain compatible with the surrounding residential character and do not adversely affect nearby homes.

The intent is to modernize and elevate the club's facilities while remaining compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood. The new clubhouse will be constructed within a similar footprint as the existing structure but elevated in accordance

with current City resiliency standards to address flood mitigation. A golf cart storage and maintenance area is located below the first level reducing the visual and operational impact at grade.

The Proposed Project is designed in full compliance with the City of Miami Beach Resiliency Code (the "Resiliency Code"), including all applicable requirements for setbacks, height, unit size, lot coverage, and understory design. This ensures minimal impact to adjacent properties and reinforces the Project's compatibility with the surrounding community. From an access standpoint, the Project will utilize existing the entry points and improve circulation. A new driveway for members only that aligns with West 57th Street and a reconfigured service driveway are proposed to enhance traffic flow and reduce congestion at ingress and egress points.

The proposed clubhouse will maintain a front setback of two hundred and thirty-four feet (234') from Alton Road and one hundred and seventy feet (170') from adjacent single-family residences. The total proposed building area of approximately 73,606 square feet is well within the maximum 100,000 square feet permitted. Upon arrival, members will be welcomed through a new guardhouse leading to a motor court and landscaped parking garden, located in a similar area as the current surface parking. The ground floor of the new clubhouse will include a club lounge with direct views of the golf course, wellness and locker facilities, a golf performance center, and a pro shop. The second level will offer a pool overlooking the course and a fitness and movement studio. The Project also proposes the demolition and relocation of two (2) existing comfort stations, which will be raised and set back further from residential homes abutting the golf course. A third comfort station is proposed near West 51st Street and is designed in compliance with all required setbacks.

To successfully redevelop the Property using a footprint similar to the existing layout and to accommodate a functional clubhouse, the Applicant respectfully requests a variance to reduce the front yard setback along Alton Road for an ancillary structure. This approach achieves a thoughtful balance between preserving the current site configuration and ensuring adequate security and vehicular queuing, thereby supporting a viable and context-sensitive use of the Property.

Variance Request. In order to establish the Proposed Project, the Applicant respectfully requests the following variance from Section 7.2.22.3.a. of the Resiliency Code.

- 1) Variance from Section 7.2.22.3.a. of the Resiliency Code to reduce the setback fronting Alton Road for an Ancillary Structure to seventy-five (75') where one hundred and twenty-five feet (125') are required.

Analysis. The Proposed Project complies with the codified hardship criteria under Section 2.8.3 of the Resiliency Code as follows:

1. 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;

The Property is uniquely designated as the only parcel in the City identified as "Golf Course" and is one (1) of only two (2) private golf courses within City limits. This distinct land use designation creates special conditions that are not applicable to other properties. Additionally, the Applicant is committed to preserving the existing curb cuts along Alton Road, which are essential to the Property's access and circulation. This commitment must also take into account the anticipated elevation of Alton Road to address sea level rise, presenting additional design and engineering challenges that are specific to this site. The combination of the Property's unique land use designation, the need to preserve existing access points, and the impact of planned public infrastructure improvements constitutes a special condition that supports the requested relief under the applicable variance criteria.

2. The special conditions and circumstances do not result from the action of the applicant;

The special conditions affecting the Property stem from its unique location and land use designation as the only property in the City designated "Golf Course". These conditions were not created by the Applicant. Additionally, the required circulation and vehicular queuing on-site are dictated by the Property's configuration, the preservation of existing curb cuts along Alton Road, and the

need to maintain safe access in anticipation of future public infrastructure improvements related to sea level rise. These are conditions imposed by the surrounding environment and regulatory context, not as a result of any action taken by the Applicant.

3. 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;

The requested variance arises from unique site-specific conditions, including the Property's designation as the only golf course in the City. The variance is sought solely to accommodate circulation and queuing requirements while preserving existing access points along Alton Road — elements essential to the safe and functional operation of the site and not intended to provide any additional development rights or density. Similar relief would be available to any property similar zoning districts facing comparable site constraints and regulatory obligations. Accordingly, granting the variance does not confer any special privilege, but instead enables the reasonable use of the Property in a manner consistent with the intent and purpose of the land development regulations.

4. 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;

A literal interpretation of the setback requirement for Ancillary Structures would prevent the Applicant from constructing a functional clubhouse, as otherwise permitted under the Golf Course zoning regulations. The area in question is setback seventy-five feet (75') from Alton Road surrounded by a landscape island, making the requested reduction both reasonable and appropriate. Such a denial would impose an unnecessary and undue hardship on the Applicant by depriving them of the ability to reasonably utilize the Property securely in a manner consistent with both the character of the neighborhood and the intent of the zoning district.

5. The variance granted is the minimum variance that will make possible the reasonable use of the land, building or structure;

The requested variance is limited in scope and intended solely to enhance the security of the clubhouse in a location that is minimally visible from the public realm. The Applicant is requesting only the minimum relief necessary to accommodate proper circulation and queuing, while maintaining a layout that closely aligns with the existing conditions. This request reflects a balanced approach that preserves the character of the site while supporting reasonable development rights through a thoughtful, context-sensitive design.

6. 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;

The granting of the variance in accordance with the proposed plan will be consistent with the intent and purpose of the land development regulations and will not be injurious to the public welfare.

7. 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

The granting of the variance is consistent with the comprehensive plan and does not impact levels of service.

8. 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.

The Proposed Project complies with the applicable sea level rise criteria.

Practical Difficulty. The Proposed Project has been thoughtfully designed to balance the preservation of the existing site layout with the functional needs of a modern clubhouse. The Property presents practical challenges that require careful planning to ensure reasonable and secure use of the site. Specifically, the large code-required

setbacks, the need for adequate queuing, and the desire to maintain orderly traffic flow along Alton Road create a unique set of constraints. To address these challenges, the Applicant proposes to retain the existing curb cuts and reduce the number of access points currently existing, minimizing disruption to the established circulation pattern. The proposed guardhouse, set back approximately seventy-five (75') feet from Alton Road, is designed to provide essential security and accommodate required vehicle queuing without impeding traffic flow along Alton Road. It will be enhanced with high-quality landscaping to integrate seamlessly with the overall project design.

Placing the guardhouse approximately seventy-five feet (75') feet from Alton Road is essential to achieving adequate site security and operational efficiency. A key component of heightened security is maintaining control at the point of entry—this is significantly compromised when a guardhouse is located too far from the entrance. The proposed location ensures clear sightlines to the primary access point and surrounding areas, allowing security personnel to effectively monitor and manage all activity at the entrance.

Positioning the guardhouse closer to the entry also allows for smoother traffic flow and more efficient queuing. The proposed design includes two (2) entranceways—one (1) operated by staff and the other controlled by key card access for club members. This dual-entry system provides seamless access while minimizing potential delays or congestion, further reinforcing the need for proximity to the entrance.

Relocating the guardhouse farther into the site would limit visibility, diminish response time, and undermine the very function of the structure. Given the constraints of the site and the operational goals of the club, the proposed location balances security needs, queuing requirements, and traffic flow, constituting a practical and necessary solution under the circumstances.

This approach reflects a practical and sensitive solution to the site's constraints, ensuring compliance with queuing requirements and security needs while maintaining a layout consistent with existing conditions and minimizing impacts to the surrounding area.

Design Review Criteria. The application is consistent with the City's design review criteria codified in Section 2.5.3.1 of the Resiliency Code. Below is each relevant criterion and the application's consistency with all of the standards.

- a. The existing and proposed conditions of the lot, including but not necessarily limited to topography, vegetation, trees, drainage, and waterways.**

The plan is in compliance.

- b. 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.**

The plan is in compliance.

- c. 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.**

The plan is in compliance.

- d. The color, design, selection of landscape materials and architectural elements of exterior building surfaces and primary public interior areas for developments requiring a building permit in areas of the city identified in section 2.5.3.2.**

The plan is in compliance.

- e. The proposed site plan, and the location, appearance and design of new and existing buildings and structures are in conformity with the standards of this article and other applicable ordinances, architectural and design guidelines as adopted and amended periodically by the design review board and historic preservation board and all pertinent master plans.**

The plan is in compliance.

- f. The proposed structure, or additions or modifications to an existing structure, indicates a sensitivity to and is compatible with the environment and adjacent structures, and enhances the appearance of the surrounding properties.**

The plan is in compliance. The proposed buildings have been designed to integrate into the surrounding area and the site design represents a major improvement over the status quo.

- g. The design and layout of the proposed site plan, as well as all new and existing buildings 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 contiguous and adjacent buildings and lands, pedestrian sight lines and view corridors.**

The plan is in compliance. The proposed building is an efficient use of the land and preserve pedestrian site lines.

- h. 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 all parking spaces are usable and are safety and conveniently arranged; pedestrian furniture and bike racks shall be considered. Access to the site from adjacent roads shall be designed so as to interfere as little as possible with traffic flow on these roads and to permit vehicles a rapid and safe ingress and egress to the site.**

The plan is in compliance. Pedestrian access from Alton Road is a focus of the design and the plan includes bike racks. Vehicular access is limited to Alton Road.

- i. 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. Lighting shall be reviewed to assure that it enhances the appearance of structures at night.**

The plan is in compliance. The project lighting has been designed to limit glare on adjacent properties.

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

The landscaping has been designed to blend well with the surrounding area.

- k. 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.**

The plan is in compliance.

- l. The proposed structure has 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).**

The plan is in compliance. The building has been designed to integrate into the adjacent area.

- m. The building has, where feasible, space in that part of the ground floor fronting a 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 street, or streets shall have residential or commercial spaces, shall have the appearance of being a residential or commercial space or shall have an architectural treatment which shall buffer the appearance of the parking structure from the surrounding area and is integrated with the overall appearance of the project.**

The proposed building directly fronts the Alton Road.

- n. The building shall have an appropriate and fully integrated rooftop architectural treatment which substantially screens all mechanical equipment, stairs and elevator towers.**

All rooftop equipment will be screened.

- o. An 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).**

This criterion is inapplicable to this application.

- p. All portions of a project fronting a street or sidewalk shall incorporate an architecturally appropriate amount of transparency at the first level in order to achieve pedestrian compatibility and adequate visual interest.**

The proposed building has significant transparency at the ground level.

- q. 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**

The back of house elements of the development have been located in a manner to limit the impact on adjacent properties.

- r. In addition to the foregoing criteria, section 104-6 (t) the General Ordinances shall apply to the design review board's review of any proposal to place, construct, modify or maintain a wireless communications facility or other over the air radio transmission or radio reception facility in the public rights-of-way.**

This criterion is inapplicable to this application.

- s. The structure and site comply with the sea level rise and resiliency review criteria in chapter 7, article I, as applicable.**

See below analysis.

Sea Level Rise and Resiliency Criteria. The new Project advances the sea level rise and resiliency criteria in Section 7.1.2.4 of the Code, as follows:

- 1. A recycling or salvage plan for partial or total demolition shall be provided.**

A recycling and salvage plan for demolition of the existing clubhouse will be provided at permitting.

2. Windows that are proposed to be replaced shall be hurricane proof impact windows.

Hurricane proof impact windows will be provided.

3. Where feasible and appropriate, passive cooling systems, such as operable windows, shall be provided.

The Applicant will provide, where feasible, passive cooling systems.

4. Whether resilient landscaping (salt tolerant, highly water-absorbent, native or Florida friendly plants) will be provided.

All landscaping will be Florida friendly and resilient.

5. Whether 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, including a study of land elevation and elevation of surrounding properties were considered.

The Applicant is proactively addressing sea level rise projections by providing a higher elevation that will ensure the clubhouse above will be resilient for the foreseeable future. The habitable first floor will be raised five feet (5') above maximum freeboard (DFE + 4') thirteen feet (13') NGVD.

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.

The elevated first floor ensures that the clubhouse is adaptable to the raising of public rights-of-ways and adjacent land in the future.

7. Where feasible and appropriate. All critical mechanical and electrical systems are located above base flood elevation.

All critical mechanical and electrical systems will be located above base flood elevation.

8. Existing buildings shall be, where reasonably feasible and appropriate, elevated to the base flood elevation.

The proposed clubhouse is entirely new construction located well-above base flood elevation.

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 of the City Code.

No habitable space is located below base flood elevation.

10. Where feasible and appropriate, water retention systems shall be provided.

Where feasible, water retention systems will be provided.

11. Cool pavement materials or porous pavement materials shall be utilized.

Cool pavement materials or porous pavement materials will be utilized where possible.

12. The design of each project shall minimize the potential for heat island effects on-site.

The proposed design provides large open spaces and non-air-conditioned shaded living spaces to strategically minimize the potential for heat island effects on site.

Conclusion. The Proposed Project features a modern design that is thoughtfully planned to ensure long-term resilience for decades into the future. Accordingly, we respect request your favorable review and recommendation with respect to this application. The Project complies with setbacks, height, unit size, and lot coverage. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (305) 377-6231.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a single continuous stroke that forms a stylized, wavy shape.

Michael Larkin

CC: Michael Yanopoulos



Exhibit A

PROPERTY APPRAISER OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Summary Report

Generated On: 07/13/2025

PROPERTY INFORMATION	
Folio	02-3214-000-0010
Property Address	5685 ALTON RD MIAMI BEACH, FL 33140-2018
Owner	LA GORCE COUNTRY CLUB INC
Mailing Address	5685 ALTON RD MIAMI BEACH, FL 33140-2018
Primary Zone	8300 GOLF COURSE & COUNTRY CLU
Primary Land Use	3853 GOLF COURSE OR DRIVING RANGE : GOLF COURSE
Beds / Baths /Half	0 / 0 / 0
Floors	2
Living Units	0
Actual Area	
Living Area	
Adjusted Area	65,084 Sq.Ft
Lot Size	5,959,008 Sq.Ft
Year Built	Multiple (See Building Info.)



ASSESSMENT INFORMATION			
Year	2025	2024	2023
Land Value	\$1,403,568	\$1,403,568	\$1,403,568
Building Value	\$9,613,751	\$9,729,733	\$9,230,355
Extra Feature Value	\$799,809	\$808,819	\$817,830
Market Value	\$11,817,128	\$11,942,120	\$11,451,753
Assessed Value	\$11,817,128	\$11,942,120	\$11,451,753

BENEFITS INFORMATION				
Benefit	Type	2025	2024	2023
Note: Not all benefits are applicable to all Taxable Values (i.e. County, School Board, City, Regional).				

SHORT LEGAL DESCRIPTION
53 42 136.8 AC M/L
PARC 1 LESS PART DEAC IN PB 14-43
& PARC 2 PER DB 2509-109 IN SECS
10-11-14-15 53 42
LOT SIZE IRREGULAR

TAXABLE VALUE INFORMATION			
Year	2025	2024	2023
COUNTY			
Exemption Value	\$0	\$0	\$0
Taxable Value	\$11,817,128	\$11,942,120	\$11,451,753
SCHOOL BOARD			
Exemption Value	\$0	\$0	\$0
Taxable Value	\$11,817,128	\$11,942,120	\$11,451,753
CITY			
Exemption Value	\$0	\$0	\$0
Taxable Value	\$11,817,128	\$11,942,120	\$11,451,753
REGIONAL			
Exemption Value	\$0	\$0	\$0
Taxable Value	\$11,817,128	\$11,942,120	\$11,451,753

SALES INFORMATION			
Previous Sale	Price	OR Book-Page	Qualification Description

The Property Appraiser is continually editing and updating the tax roll. This website may not reflect the most current information on record. The Property Appraiser and Miami-Dade County assumes no liability, see full disclaimer and User Agreement at <http://www.miamidadacounty.gov/info/disclaimer.asp>