

SOW DESIGN STUDIO
632 SW 4th Avenue,
Fort Lauderdale, 33315



March 08th, 2026

To: City of Miami Beach - Design Review Board
From: SOW Design Studio
Date: March 08th, 2026
Subject: Re: Padel X - Responses to DRB Comments

To whom it may concern,

Following please find responses to those comments generated by the City of Miami Beach, Design Review Board, as they pertain to the Padel X project at 640 17th St, Miami Beach, FL 33139.

Comments: 2. ARCHITECTURAL REPRESENTATION

a. Add "FINAL SUBMITTAL" and DRB File No. to front cover title for heightened clarity.

[Response: Please refer to the revised digital submittal. The front cover, Sheet D-000, has been updated to include "FINAL SUBMITTAL" and the corresponding DRB File No. for clarity.](#)

b. Final submittal drawings need to be DATED, SIGNED AND SEALED.

[Response: Please refer to the revised digital submittal. The final submittal drawings have been updated to be dated, signed, and sealed in accordance with the DRB requirements.](#)

c. Demolition plan: number each parking space individually and provide a total count of the parking spaces that are going to be removed/closed for the project.

[Response: Please refer to Sheet D-0017, Demolition Plan, where each affected parking space has been individually numbered. The proposed scope removes a total of 167 existing rooftop parking spaces.](#)

[Parking count is as follows:](#)

- Total Existing Rooftop Parking Spaces: 359
- Total Parking Spaces Removed/Closed: 167



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- Remaining Rooftop Parking Spaces: 192

d. Portions of the proposed padel courts located on the north side are going to be cantilevered over the central driveways with parking. Staff is concerned that there will be not enough clearance to allow vehicle movement, the section provided on D-0024 is not accurate. It seems that the new skin is projecting lower than the 10'-6" dimension. Please verify these measurements on site, revise the section and provide an image of this area in question.

Response: In response to the DRB's comments, the proposal has been redesigned to address the concerns regarding the north-side cantilevered courts and potential vehicle-clearance conflicts below.

The revised design reconfigures the 40,000 SF facility so that it is set back from the perimeter of the existing parapet, eliminating the need for cantilevered catwalks for interior circulation. The padel courts have been rotated and are now arranged parallel to the existing parapet walls. This new layout avoids encroachment over the central drive aisles and parking areas, thereby resolving the clearance concerns noted by staff.

In addition, the setback helps reduce the visual impact of the new rooftop structure while still maintaining safe and accessible means of egress for the public.

e. Materials: missing, please provide more detailed information on the materials to be used for the screen/skin, window/opening frames, glass color, and other façade elements. Specify the finished material and colors where applicable. Additionally, provide a numbered material legend with images representing each material, add numbers to the perspective/rendering views to correspond with the materials listed in the legend.

Response: Please refer to Presentation Pages D-0031 to D-0036 where detailed information on the proposed façade materials has been provided as requested.

f. Lighting: provide lighting details, is the skin transparent and light will glow at night? Any color light to be used? Provide this after the material details and provide a night rendering from the north façade.

Response: Please refer to the rendering on Sheet D-0037. The proposed screen/skin is a semi-transparent fabric designed to provide a more uniform lighting condition within the courts while minimizing glare that could negatively affect player visibility and performance. The fabric color is white.

At night, the design intent is for the skin to emit a soft, even glow that reinforces the lightweight character of the enclosure. The primary lighting approach is white illumination. However, programmable RGB lighting can also be incorporated for special occasions or events, allowing the façade to reflect the vibrant visual character of Miami Beach, inspired by the city's Art Deco tradition and its signature pink, teal, yellow, aqua, and magenta tones.



Examples of the intended lighting effect are included in the presentation, along with the proposed night rendering of the north façade.

g. Signage: on separate pages, demonstrate compliance that the signages shown on the elevations are allowed by code (Chapter 6), provide dimensions, area calculations, details (material, color, lighting etc.)

Response: Please refer to Sheet D-0026 for the proposed signage details and code-compliance information. The submittal includes signage dimensions, area calculations, and relevant details.

3. DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

a. The proposed padel enclosure appears disproportionately tall compared to the existing building. According to the International Padel Federation (FIP), the absolute minimum clear height from the playing surface to any overhead obstruction (including lights or beams) is 19.7 feet. The proposed structure is 36 feet in height. Therefore, staff recommends lowering the structure by approximately 10 feet.

Response: Refer to the Section on D-0028. In response to staff's concern regarding the perceived height of the proposed facility enclosure, the design team revised the proposal to incorporate a step-back strategy that reduces the apparent scale of the structure and softens its visual impact. As part of this revision, the perimeter skin has been lowered by one module, which helps reduce the perceived height of the overall volume.

It is also important to note that the **Original Bid Proposal approved by the City** contemplated an **overall height of 78 feet**, consisting of the existing 42 foot parking structure and a new 36 foot enclosure above. This remains within the 100 foot maximum building height permitted by the applicable zoning regulations for the property, as measured from street level.

The current proposal reduces the enclosure height to **34 feet**, which is the height recommended by our court specialist for an optimum playing experience, and to **30 feet** at the perimeter skin, making the proposed facility lower than what was originally contemplated.

To the extent the Board's concern is based on the minimum clearance required for play, we respectfully note that the International Padel Federation establishes a **minimum free height of 6 meters, or approximately 19.7 feet**, and further states that for **new facilities, a free height of 8 meters, or approximately 26.2 feet, throughout the court is recommended, free of obstructions**. For that reason, the proposed height is not simply a matter of preference, but a necessary component of providing a facility that aligns with contemporary padel standards, supports a high quality playing environment, and allows the project to function as a destination-level recreational amenity.



The intent is to create a facility that delivers an elevated user experience for residents and visitors alike, consistent with the character and aspirations of Miami Beach.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that the proposed height be maintained, as it is both code-compliant and operationally justified, while the incorporated setbacks and massing strategies help mitigate the visual impact of the enclosure on the existing building and surrounding context.

b. Although the proposed structure incorporates a texture, it still reads overall as a plain, solid wall. The lack of openings causes the new façade to appear flat and heavy. In addition, areas such as the proposed exterior lounge and reception space seem to be located directly behind the screen. Staff recommends incorporating some openings to soften the façade and exploring variations in height along the exterior skin/screening to reduce the overall massing of the building.

Response: The design team acknowledges staff's comment regarding the perceived flatness and heaviness of the proposed enclosure. However, the enclosure is not intended to read as a solid wall, but rather as a lightweight screening element that balances the functional needs of the padel facility with a softer architectural expression.

The proposed façade is a fabric screen system, not a solid opaque enclosure. Its translucency, texture, and detailing are intended to give the structure a lighter and more permeable appearance. Although this quality may not be fully captured in some renderings, the material itself reads as visually lighter in person, as shown in the live imagery included in the presentation.

The screening also serves an important performance function for the padel courts and adjacent program areas. Introducing larger or more frequent openings could create glare, shadows, and visual distractions that would negatively affect gameplay and the overall user experience. For that reason, the enclosure is designed as a more continuous skin in order to maintain controlled lighting and visual conditions.

At the same time, the façade is not entirely static or closed. As indicated in the manufacturer's catalog on Sheet D-0036, the lower 15-foot portion of the tent structure is operable and can open, allowing portions of the enclosure to read as fully transparent when in use. This creates variation and a changing pattern of openness across the façade, helping reduce the perception of a continuous solid surface.

Additionally, the overall visual impact of the enclosure is lessened by its translucent material, its setback from the existing parapet, and its location on the rooftop, where it is perceived as a recessed screened element rather than a primary building wall. Taken together, these design features help the structure read more like a lightweight pavilion than a heavy enclosed volume.

For these reasons, the design team believes the proposed façade approach appropriately addresses both the architectural and functional goals of the project.



Please provide a narrative response to the comments listed below. Provide page location if applicable.

1. APPLICATION COMPLETENESS

a. Application: provide DRB file number.

Response: DRB File Number added to the application form.

b. Application: provide a brief description of the request, do not refer to LOI.

Response: A brief description of the request was added to the application form.

c. Include the project cost of estimate in the Letter of Intent.

Response: Project cost estimate of \$5,200,000 added to Letter of Intent.

d. LOI: Indicate how many parking spaces are being removed to allow this project (see also related plan comment below).

Response: Letter of Intent was updated to identify that 167 of the 359 existing parking spaces on the rooftop will be demolished for the project, leaving a total of 192 spaces on the rooftop following construction.

e. LOI and Application: Please confirm if 640 17 Street and the folio 02-3227-000-0090 are the ones related for this parking garage.

Response: Confirmed. The City refers to this as the "G5 – 17 Street Parking Garage" and identifies the address as 640 17 Street. However, the garage does not have an individual folio number from the Property Appraiser. The garage is included as a portion of Property Appraiser Folio Number 02-3227-000-0090 which includes this garage, 1901 Convention Center Drive (City Hall), 1661 Pennsylvania Avenue, 400 17 Street, and 501 17 Street.

f. The plan set shall be organized per checklist sequence items 11a to 11q.

Response: Plans have been organized according to checklist.

g. Provide a recently signed survey as a separate electronic file and within the plan set, Checklist Item 10 and 11b.



Response: As built survey received from the City included as Sheet D-003. The property is owned by the City and we have therefore been unable to obtain a recent survey. The City is aware of this and we have been discussing a resolution and path forward.

h. Zoning Data D-0013: the chart is illegible. Revise.

Response: The zoning data chart on Sheet D-0013 (now D-003) has been reformatted and enlarged to improve legibility in the 11x17 submittal format.

i. Context Location Plan D-002: Showing name of streets. (checklist item 11d)

Response: The Context Location Plan on Sheet D-004 and Aerial Site Context D-005 has been updated to identify and label the adjacent streets.

j. Plans should be formatted to 11x17 size. Please print one set and revise the text, dimensions, and scales (or graphic scales) for better legibility.

Response: The plan sheets have been reformatted to the required 11x17 size, and the text, dimensions, and scales, including graphic scales where applicable, have been revised to improve overall legibility in the printed set.

4. ZONING COMMENTS

a. Exterior screen: The exterior skin seems to be located outside the existing exterior wall, provide a detail of the parapet wall at the roof level with the location and projection of the skin, provide projection dimensions, provide property line location, if the skin is projecting beyond the property line may require a variance on the side facing Pennsylvania Avenue and approval from Public Works.

Response: The revised design reconfigures the 40,000 SF facility so that it is set back from the perimeter of the existing parapet, eliminating the need for cantilevered catwalks for interior circulation. The padel courts have been rotated and are now arranged parallel to the existing parapet walls. This new layout avoids encroachment over the central drive aisles and parking areas, thereby resolving the clearance concerns noted by staff.

The skin is not projecting beyond the property line. Sheets D-0014 through D-0025 provide significant detail on the location and dimensions.

3. DRB – Planning Admin Review



1. Page 1 of Application: Submit update to include File Number (DRB26-1170)

Response: Page 1 of application updated accordingly

2. Submit checklist. Must include name, signatures, and date.

Response: Checklist with name, signature, and date included in this resubmittal.

3. Missing City of Miami Beach – Assistant City Manager required signed pages.

Response: Application forms have been provided to the City Manager's office for execution and are currently in review. City Manager signatures will be provided shortly.

4. Page 8 of Application: Submit signed and notarized Applicant Affidavit

Response: Signed and Notarized Applicant Affidavit included in this resubmittal.

5. Email owners mail labels in Excel

Response: Owners List for mailing labels in Excel has been emailed to Ms. Gabriela Freitas.

6. Page 1 of Application: Property Information – Please attach Legal Description as “Exhibit A”

Response: Legal Description to be provided by Property Owner (City).

7. Page 7 of Application: Incomplete Disclosure – Trustee: Disclosure must name and include percentage of ownership of the entity or person who owns the trust and all beneficiaries.

Response: Disclosure of Interest updated to be complete.

8. Page 6 of Application: Incomplete Disclosure – Disclosure must include all owners with corresponding percentage (%) of ownership who holds 5% or more.

Response: Disclosure of Interest updated to be complete.

9. Page 4 of Application: Owner Affidavit or Alternate Owner Affidavit must be signed and notarized

Response: Alternate Owner Affidavit included in this resubmittal. Owner Affidavit is in process under review in the City Managers Office.

10. Page 5 of Application: All members representing or speaking on behalf of the owner/application must be granted Power of Attorney from owner – Submit signed and notarized affidavit per speaker.



Response: Power of Attorney authorization is under review for execution by City Managers Office.