MIAMIBEACH

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Staff Report & Recommendation — Historic Preservation Board

TO: Chairperson and Members
Historic Preservation Board

DATE: March 17, 2026

FROM: Thomas R. Mooney, AICP
Planning Director

DS For TRM

SUBJECT: HPB25-0645, **235 Washington Avenue**

An application has been filed requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the total demolition of the existing 2-story structure, and its replacement with the construction of a new recreation field for the abutting, previously approved school, located at 251 Washington Avenue.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition and new construction, with conditions.

EXISTING STRUCTURES	
Local Historic District:	Ocean Beach
Classification:	Contributing
Architect:	B. Kingston Hall
Construction Date:	1938

ZONING / SITE DATA

Folio:	02-4203-003-1070
Legal Description:	Lot 7, Block 95, of the Ocean Beach Addition No. 3 Subdivision, according to the plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 2, Page 81 of the public records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.
Zoning:	RPS-3, Residential Performance Standard, Medium-High Density
Future Land Use:	RPS-3, Residential High Density Residential Performance Standard (R-PS-3)
Lot Size:	6,500 sq. ft.
Existing Use:	Hostel
Proposed Use:	Recreational open space and playground

THE PROJECT

The applicant has submitted plans entitled “235 Washington Avenue”, as prepared by Ryan Alderman Architect, dated January 11, 2026.

COMPLIANCE WITH ZONING CODE

A preliminary review of the project indicates that the application appears to be consistent with the applicable provisions of the Land Development Regulations of the City Code (LDRs).

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 recreational 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)(1) 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:

A. A recycling or salvage plan for partial or total demolition shall be provided.
Not Satisfied

B. Windows that are proposed to be replaced shall be hurricane proof impact windows.
Not Applicable

C. Where feasible and appropriate, passive cooling systems, such as operable windows, shall be provided.
Not Applicable

D. 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.
Satisfied

E. 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

F. 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

G. 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

H. Existing buildings shall be, where reasonably feasible and economically appropriate, elevated up to base flood elevation, plus City of Miami Beach Freeboard.
Not Applicable

I. 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

J. In all new projects, water retention systems shall be provided.
Not Applicable

K. Cool pavement materials or porous pavement materials shall be utilized.
Not Applicable

L. The project design shall minimize the potential for a project causing a heat island effect on site.
Satisfied

COMPLIANCE WITH CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS CRITERIA

A decision on an application for a certificate of appropriateness shall be based upon the following:

1. Evaluation of the compatibility of the physical alteration or improvement with surrounding properties and where applicable, compliance with the following criteria pursuant to section 2.13.7(d)(ii)(1) of the Land Development Regulations (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 may be amended from time to time.
    Not Satisfied – See Staff Analysis

    b. The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Reconstruction as may be amended from time to time.
    Not Applicable

    c. Other guidelines/policies/plans adopted or approved by resolution or ordinance by the city commission.
    Satisfied

    The Secretary of Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitation are intended as an aid to assist in applying the Secretary of Interior's Standards but are not binding on their own and are not meant to give case-specific advice or to address exceptions of unusual conditions.

2. The examination of architectural drawings for consistency with the criteria pursuant to section 2.13.7(d)(ii)(2) of the Land Development Regulations and stated below, with regard to the aesthetics, appearances, compatibility, 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.
Satisfied

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.
Satisfied

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.
Satisfied

d. The proposed structure, or additions to an existing structure are appropriate to and compatible with the environment and adjacent structures, and enhance the appearance of the surrounding properties, or the purposes for which the district was created.
Not Satisfied; See Staff Analysis.

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.
Satisfied

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.
Satisfied

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

Satisfied

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 Applicable

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.
Not Applicable

l. All buildings shall have an appropriate and fully integrated rooftop architectural treatment which substantially screens all mechanical equipment, stairs and elevator towers.
Not Applicable

m. 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

n. 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.
Satisfied

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR DEMOLITION EVALUATION CRITERIA

Section 2.13.7(d)(vi)(4) of the Land Development Regulations 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 of such design, craftsmanship, or material that it could be reproduced only with great difficulty or expense.
Partially Satisfied
The existing structure is designated as Contributing within the Ocean Beach Local Historic District, but it would not be difficult or costly to reproduce.

b. The building, structure, improvement, or site is one of the last remaining examples of its kind in the neighborhood, the county, 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 building is a distinctive example of the Art Deco style of architecture which contributes to the district.

c. 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 the buildings is critical to developing an understanding of an important Miami Beach architectural style.

d. 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.
Satisfied
The applicant is presenting plans for a recreational open space and playground as part of this application.

e. The 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 the structure.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The applicant is proposing the total demolition of the existing building and the construction of a recreational playground for the adjacent Basecamp305 school. The existing 2-story structure located at 235 Washington Avenue, which is classified as contributing in the historic properties database, was constructed in 1938 and designed by architect B. Kingston Hall in the Art Deco style of architecture. Notable design features include a central bay with an aluminum double-leaf storefront door flanked by large, fixed metal windows with simulated muntins. Each outer bay contains a single-leaf entrance door and one fixed-light metal window, also with simulated muntins. A shallow eyebrow canopy caps the central bay, while the outer bays are covered by individual canopies set at a lower elevation than the central canopy.

The second level maintains a similar symmetrical arrangement, consisting of a central metal window positioned above the primary entrance and two metal windows on each side, all with simulated muntins. The central second-level window is framed by a painted concrete disk, while the flanking windows are visually tied together by four vertically stacked, painted concrete panels. These panels extend to the outer edges of the facade and wrap around the corners. Access to a covered walkway is provided at the south end of the front facade.

Request for Total Demolition

The existing building appears relatively intact based upon microfilm plans and elevation drawings and has undergone little in the way of exterior modification since its initial construction. The only permitted and completed exterior work has been for windows, doors, and signage, as well as minor maintenance improvements. The interior has undergone numerous modifications, including a permit in 2020 to renovate all guest rooms and the lobby, as well as improvements to

accommodate a restaurant.

The applicant has submitted a report prepared by Youssef Hachem Consulting Engineering, entitled "Structural Condition Assessment 235 Washington Avenue," dated December 19, 2025, outlining the building's current structural condition. In summary, this report concludes the following:

> *"Structure does not comply with today's building code, and even when certain parts of it were built. The materials of the structural systems are compromised and cannot support the loads imposed on it; we recommend demolition of the structure."*

The structural engineer's report concludes that total demolition is required. Based on this finding, the retention of original materials, features, or finishes does not appear to be feasible. The Board should consider whether the structural assessment is sufficient to support the requested demolition of the existing structure.

235 Washington Avenue, 2025 photograph

The replication of demolished structures is generally discouraged, and reconstruction has been considered in the past under extenuating circumstances. Where replication is determined to be appropriate, reconstruction is expected to closely reflect the original dimensions, scale and massing of the demolished structure. In this particular instance replicating the subject building, in a usable manner, would be very challenging as the first floor could not be used for any type of habitable use. Raising a replicated structure to meet current base flood elevation and freeboard requirements would result in a highly awkward building that does not properly reflect the scale, massing and design of the original structure.

Although the existing structure is classified as 'contributing' it contains only modest design details, and the replication of the structure is not recommended. Given the advanced state of structural decline, substantiated in the engineering report, staff is supportive of the request for total demolition.

New Recreational Playground

The applicant is proposing to replace the existing structure with an open space area for use by students of the school, which is currently under construction at 251 Washington Avenue. The proposed improvements include recreational open space, seating areas, hardscape elements, perimeter fencing, and landscaping. The front (west) elevation along Washington Avenue and the rear (east) elevation facing the alley are proposed to be secured with fencing and landscape treatments.

The perimeter design includes a seven-foot aluminum picket fence with solid aluminum gates, consistent with the fence at the abutting school. Benches are proposed within the open space area, which is proposed to be surfaced with a pervious artificial turf system (TigerTurf Everglade Spring Pro), striped to accommodate two mini soccer fields.

Staff is supportive of the applicant's proposal for the re-use of the site, as it provides a desirable enhancement for the basecamp 305 school. To address the scale and fabric of the existing structure, in relation to the urban form of the immediate area, staff recommends that the applicant further study the portion of the perimeter fencing facing Washington Avenue and develop an architectural expression that is inspired by the design of the original structure on site. This can be developed as a revision to the front part of the perimeter fence, or by enhancing the open space amenities.

Staff can work with the project architect to develop this portion of the project, prior to issuance of a building permit for the perimeter fence. However, should the board prefer to review and approve the design of this portion of the project, it is recommended that the perimeter fence portion of the application be continued to the May Historic Preservation Board meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

In view of the foregoing analysis, staff recommends the application be **approved**, subject to the conditions enumerated in the attached draft Order, which address the inconsistencies with the aforementioned Certificate of Appropriateness criteria.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
City of Miami Beach, Florida

MEETING DATE: March 17, 2026

PROPERTY/FOLIO: 235 Washington Avenue / 02-4203-003-1070

FILE NO: HPB25-0645

APPLICANT: John Marshall

IN RE: An application has been filed requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the total demolition of the existing 2-story structure, and its replacement with the construction of a new recreation field for the abutting, previously approved school, located at 251 Washington Avenue.

LEGAL: Lot 7, Block 95, of the Ocean Beach Addition No. 3 Subdivision, according to the plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 2, Page 81 of the public records of Miami Dade County, Florida.

O R D E R

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. The subject site is located within the Ocean Beach Local Historic District.

B. Based on the plans and documents submitted with the application, testimony and information provided by the applicant, and the reasons set forth in the Planning Department Staff Report, the project as submitted:

1. Is not consistent with Sea Level Rise and Resiliency Review Criteria 'a' in Section 7.1.2.4(a)(1) of the Land Development Regulations.

2. Is consistent with Certificate of Appropriateness Criteria in section 2.13.7(d)(ii)(1) of the Land Development Regulations.

3. Is consistent with Certificate of Appropriateness Criteria in section 2.13.7(d)(ii)(2) of the Land Development Regulations.

4. Is not consistent with Certificate of Appropriateness Demolition Criteria in section 2.13.7(d)(vi)(4) of the Land Development Regulations.

C. The project would be consistent with the criteria and requirements of sections 2.13.7(d) and 7.1.2.4(a) of Land Development Regulations if the following conditions are met:

1. Prior to the issuance of abuilding permit for the perimeter fence, the applicant shall

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further study the portion of the perimeter fencing facing Washington Avenue and develop an architectural expression that is inspired by the design of the original structure on site, subject to the review and approval of staff, in a manner consistent with the Certificate of Appropriateness Criteria and the directions of the Board.

2. Revised site plan drawings for the proposed open space area shall be submitted to and approved by staff; at a minimum, such drawings shall incorporate the following:

    a. A historical plaque shall be displayed at the front of the property, in a manner to be reviewed and approved by staff consistent with the Certificate of Appropriateness Criteria and/or the directions from the Board.

    b. Final details of all exterior surface finishes and materials shall be submitted, in a manner to be reviewed and approved by staff consistent with the Certificate of Appropriateness Criteria and/or the directions from the Board.

    c. All roof-top fixtures, air-conditioning units and mechanical devices shall be clearly noted on a revised roof plan and elevation drawings and shall be screened from view, in a manner to be reviewed and approved by staff, consistent with the Certificate of Appropriateness Criteria and/or the directions from the Board.

3. A revised landscape plan, prepared by a Professional Landscape Architect, registered in the State of Florida, and corresponding site plan, shall be submitted to and approved by staff. The species type, quantity, dimensions, spacing, location and overall height of all plant material shall be clearly delineated and subject to the review and approval of staff. At a minimum, such plan shall incorporate the following:

    a. A fully automatic irrigation system with 100% coverage for any natural landscape areas, and an automatic rain sensor in order to render the system inoperative in the event of rain.

    b. The project design shall minimize the potential for a project causing a heat island effect on site.

    c. Cool pavement materials or porous pavement materials shall be utilized, if applicable.

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. General Terms and Conditions applying to 'I. *Certificate of Appropriateness'* noted above.

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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. 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.

E. All applicable FPL transformers or vault rooms and backflow prevention devices shall be located within the main building setbacks with the exception of the valve (PIV) which may be visible and accessible from the street.

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.

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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 **"235 Washington Avenue", as prepared by Ryan Alderman Architect, dated January 11, 2026**, 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 _____.

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA

BY:_____
Michael A. Belush, AICP
Planning & Design Officer
For the Chair

STATE OF FLORIDA)
)SS
COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE)

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this _____ day of _____ 20___ by Michael A. Belush, Planning & Design Officer, Planning Department, City of Miami Beach, Florida, a Florida Municipal Corporation, on behalf of the corporation. He is personally known to me.

_____
NOTARY PUBLIC
Miami-Dade County, Florida
My commission expires:_____

Approved As To Form:
City Attorney's Office: _____ ( )

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

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