

Carter N. McDowell

Tel 305.350.2355

Fax 305.351.2239

cmcdowell@bilzin.com

August 18, 2024

Thomas Mooney
Planning Director
City of Miami Beach
1700 Convention Center Drive
Miami Beach, FL 33139

Re: Letter of Intent for Certificates of Appropriateness for the Demolition and Reconstruction of the Porte Cochere for the Contributing Historic Structure Located at 100 21st Street, Miami Beach, FL

Dear Mr. Mooney:

This firm represents BHI Miami Limited Corp, the applicant ("Applicant") for the proposed demolition and replacement of the porte cochere of the contributing structure formerly known as the Seagull Hotel located at 100 21st Street, Miami Beach within the Ocean Drive/Collins Historic District and the Miami Beach Architectural District (the "Property"). Please accept this correspondence as the Applicant's letter of intent for the attached plans and application seeking review and approval by the Historic Preservation Board ("HPB") of a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolition and reconstruct the porte cochere.

The owner's intent in the original approved plans was to repair and restore the existing porte cochere. Unfortunately, it seems that is no longer possible. In sum, the porte cochere has been inspected on several occasions by the project's engineer of record, Youssef Hachem of YHCE Engineering, who has been determined that the porte cochere is so deteriorated and in danger of collapsing and causing further damage to the facade that needs to be demolished and reconstructed. The August 15, 2024 signed and sealed letter included with the Application explains that the porte cochere shows evidence of excessive deflection which is expected to lead to more cracking and moisture intrusion into the steel and slab. This condition combined with the concrete strength of the porte cochere, described by YHCE as "undesirable", lead YHCE to its conclusion that demolition is necessary.

On June 15, 2021, the HPB approved the Applicant's Application HPB20-0442 for a complete transformation of the 145-room Seagull Hotel into the 100-room, ultra-luxury Bvlgari Hotel Miami Beach (the "Project"). The approved plans were prepared by design architect Citterio-Viel & Partners alongside the architect of record, Revuelta Architecture International. Construction of the project was significantly delayed by litigation with the Applicant's immediate neighbor which has only just recently been resolved and now a master building permit has been issued and work has commenced on the Project.

On June 26, 2024, the Cumming Group, the construction manager for the project, noticed a quickly deteriorating condition in the existing porte cochere. The attached Field Observation Report from the Cumming Group documenting the condition of the porte cochere which most recently has been dropping large chunks of concrete. The porte cochere has been shored and cordoned off. An example of the falling concrete and the condition of the porte cochere are shown in Figure A below.

The Applicant has laser imaging of the existing porte cochere structure which will assist in the reproduction and reconstruction of an exact replacement of the original porte cochere. However, because the approved plans for HPB20-0442 provided for the restoration of the porte cochere, rather than the demolition and reconstruction, we are now respectfully requesting a certificate of appropriateness to complete this work.



Figure A - Photos of Porte Cochere from July 7th and August 7th 2024

The proposed renovation will address the City's Sea Level Rise and Resiliency Review Criteria as follows:

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

Prior to the partial demolition of the existing structure, the Applicant will provide a recycling and salvage plan to the City.

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

N/A

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

N/A

- 4) Resilient landscaping (salt tolerant, highly water-absorbent, native, or Florida-friendly plants) shall be provided, in accordance with chapter 126 of the city Code.

N/A

- 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.

The proposed scope of work will meet all applicable zoning and building codes while protecting the integrity of the contributing historic building.

- 6) The ground floor, driveways, and garage ramping for new construction shall be adaptable to the raising of public rights-of-way 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 additional feet in height.

N/A

- 7) As applicable to all new construction, all critical mechanical and electrical systems shall be located above base flood elevation. All redevelopment projects shall, whenever practicable and economically reasonable, include the relocation of all critical mechanical and electrical systems to a location above base flood elevation.

N/A

- 8) Existing buildings shall, wherever reasonably feasible and economically appropriate, be elevated up to base flood elevation, plus City of Miami Beach Freeboard.

N/A

- 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 54 of the city Code.

N/A

- 10) As applicable to all new construction, stormwater retention systems shall be provided.

N/A

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

Porous pavement materials will be utilized where most effective.

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

The heat island effects on site will be reduced per code requirements and appropriate engineering design.

The Applicant continues to be excited for its ongoing renovation to the contributing Seagull Hotel structure, transforming it into the Bvlgari Hotel Miami Beach. Unfortunately, the existing porte cochere is not structurally sound and requires demolition and reconstruction. This reconstruction will be an exact recreation of the original design. Aside from this one change, the balance of the project remains consistent with this Board's approval of Application HPB20-0442. For the foregoing reasons, the Applicant respectfully submits the proposed project for review and approval by the Historic Preservation Board.

Sincerely,

Carter N. McDowell

Carter N. McDowell

CNM
Enclosures

CC: Nicholas Noto, Bilzin Sumberg