



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

www.brzoninglaw.com

305.377.6231 office
305.377.6222 fax
mlarkin@brzoninglaw.com

VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMITTAL

August 3, 2024

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

Re: **DRB24-1037** – Final Design Details for New Two-
Story Home at 4410 Alton Road, Miami Beach

Dear Mr. Madan,

This law firm represents Mauricio Rivera Kirschner (the "Applicant"), the owner of the property located at 4410 Alton Road (the "Property") in the City of Miami Beach (the "City"). On December 11, 2023, the Design Review Board ("DRB") approved the construction of a new two-story home with an understory on the vacant lot. The DRB bifurcated the landscape design and approved it on March 5, 2024, DRB File No. DRB23-0941. Based on the innovative design, the DRB's approval included the following condition:

The final design details of the exterior materials and finishes, including any impacts from the structural components, as well as rooftop drainage, shall be submitted for the review and approval of the Design Review Board.

Please allow this letter to serve as the Applicant's letter of intent for design review approval of the final design details and structural components of the new single-family home.

Property Description. The Property is a regular shaped lot fronting Alton Road, north of W 44 Street. The Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser's Office identifies the Property with Folio No. 02-3222-011-1150. The Property is approximately 12,000 square feet in size. The Property is located within the RS-4, Single Family Residential Zoning District. Pursuant to Building Permit No. BR1700896, the prior home on the Property was demolished in 2018. The surrounding area consists of single-family homes.

Proposed Development. The Applicant proposes to construct a uniquely designed two-story Modern Tropical residence with an understory (the "Project"). The estimated cost of construction is \$600,000.00. The applicant's goal is to improve the sustainability and resiliency of the Property, and to provide a beautiful new home that will contribute to the architectural integrity of the City and the positioning of Miami Beach as a new focus of global cultural innovation. The proposed design plays in the natural environment, with natural elements and movement; merging architecture, landscaping and interior design in a proposal of great urban vocation that draws inspiration from the tropicity of the city and enhances the values of the unique vegetation of Florida. The home is centrally located on the lot, in a design that seeks to strengthen the horizontality and present an image to the city rather than a building; a built landscape. All functional aspects of the house, such as parking or mechanical equipment, are skillfully integrated into the natural inspiration of the design and protected from street view.

The landscape plan provides opportunity for planting on each level of the design. The ground level planting is extremely lush and of a high variety. The landscape plans provide that there are approximately four (4) different tree and palms types and over twenty (20) shrubs and shrub-like type plantings. There are additional plantings proposed within the understory and along the organic steps leading to the front entrance. The planters along the elevation are purposefully designed to add greenery and soften the massing. The planting on the rooftop is minimal and necessary to tie in the rest of the landscape design.

The details of the Project are tailored to the character and personality of the Applicant, as well as his vision and contribution to art and innovation of technology and materials. A highly specialized and experienced, international group of architects, engineers, and designers have contributed to the detailed plans package and ensure that the new home meets or exceeds construction standards for Miami Beach.

Design Review. The design of the main home was approved on December 11, 2023 and the landscape design was approved on March 5, 2024. The final design details of the

exterior materials and finishes satisfy the design review criteria, provided in Section 2.5.3.1 of the Resiliency Code, as follows:

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

The Property is a dry lot fronting Alton Road. The site has been vacant for approximately six (6) years. The Property is sodded with minimal landscaping. The proposed design, as described above, will be a beautiful new single-family home that complies with the requirements of the Resiliency Code.

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 Property is currently an idle, vacant lot. There are not appropriate means of ingress and egress, drainage facilities, utility services. There is minimal existing landscaping, lighting, or screening.

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 architectural plans submitted with the application materials include a zoning data table, site plan, elevations, and multiple diagrams for open space, lot coverage, and the waiver and variance requests to confirm compliance with the requirements for the underlying zoning district.

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 Project is a beautiful new single-family home, with high quality materials and engineering. The architectural and landscape plans included in the submitted application materials provide a clear depiction of the color, design, selection of landscape materials and architectural elements of exterior building surfaces.

- 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 Project is in conformity with the intent of the Resiliency Code and standards of the applicable RS-4 land development regulations.

- 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 proposed new home, in full compliance with the Resiliency Code, is sensitivity to and compatible with the existing surrounding properties, proposed homes in the future, and raising of the streets. The home is an innovative modern style of design with high quality finishes. The resilient design will enhance the quality of the neighborhood.

- 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 layout of the proposed site plan provides an efficient arrangement. The main home, in compliance with all required setbacks, is centrally located on the lot. The pool is located within the rear yard with a perimeter of lush landscaping. The Applicant has also paid particular attention to safety as well as flood and fire protection with the proposed understory.

- 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 Project includes a designated wraparound driveway. This design feature ensures that there is no backing out onto the high traffic of Alton Road. Parking and vehicle storage is efficiently reduced with the provision on the understory. Pedestrians can safely enter the main home from the center steps to the main entrance.

- 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 Applicant will provide sufficient lighting to ensure safe movement of persons and vehicles within the site and for security purposes. The Applicant agrees to minimize glare and reflection, if any, on adjacent properties consistent with the City's Code of Ordinances.

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

The proposed landscape plan was specifically reviewed and approved by the Design Review Board on March 5, 2024. The materials are Florida resilient, can be well-maintained, and enhance the proposed architecture.

- 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 proposed design strategically places the front gate closer to the understory. This design element ensures that vehicles parking within the understory are shielded from public view, but the beauty of the main home and front entrance remaining visible.

- 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 proposed single-family home, with an understory, is well within-in the maximum permitted height, unit size, and lot coverage of the RS-4 district regulations. The proposed home is also centrally located within the lot in compliance with all required minimum setbacks. Complying with the applicable land development regulations ensures that this dry-lot is sensitive to the surrounding homes and the high traffic of Alton Road.

- 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 Project is a single-family home.

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

The proposed home includes an active rooftop that is well integrated with the proposed design. The elevator and stair enclosures are a cylinder shape to be compatible with the movement of the undulating roofline. Based on the feedback of the Design Review Board, the design team further studied the rooftop projections. The sleek, round form of the cylinders are an uncommon detail on single-family homes that furthers improves the overall design.

- 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).**

The Property is currently a vacant lot. The Project includes one, two-story home with an understory. No additions are proposed.

- 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 portion of the home fronting Alton Road includes an architecturally appropriate amount of transparency and privacy. The design includes landscaping, a driveway, and steps to the front door.

- 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 proposed home includes an artfully designed understory, with ample storage and an enclosed garage to screen any trash and refuse receptables.

- 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.**

Not applicable to the proposed single-family home.

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

The proposed new home and site fully comply with the land development regulations and policies provided in Chapter 7, Article I of the Resiliency Code.

Sea Level Rise and Resiliency Criteria. The new home 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 home 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 raising the first floor of the home to the base flood elevation of 8' NGVD and 5' of freeboard.

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 with understory ensures that the home 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 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 home 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 floor 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. Finalizing review of this Project will permit the development of an innovative, resilient single-family home that will add value to the surrounding neighborhood. The Tropical Modern design features a variety of beautiful and unique architectural moments and lush landscaping. Included with the application materials are the final design details of the exterior materials and finishes, as well as a drainage plan of the rooftop. We look forward to your favorable review of the application and further developed landscape plans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael W. Larkin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael W. Larkin

Attachments

cc: Emily K. Balter, Esq.