



TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Planning, Zoning & Building Department

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

9:00 a.m., WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1994

AT THE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 360 SOUTH COUNTY ROAD, PALM BEACH
TO INCLUDE SITE VISIT AT CASA APAVA, 1300 SOUTH OCEAN BOULEVARD

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman
Lillian Jane Volk at 9:02 a.m.

II. Roll Call:

PRESENT: Lillian Jane Volk, Chairman
Elise P. Mackintosh, Vice Chairman
Sally Gingras, Secretary
William S. Gubelmann, Member (arrived 9:03 a.m.)
Anne G. Metzger, Member (arrived 9:05 a.m.)
Jacqueline Albarran de Mendoza, Member (at 9:03 a.m.)
Arthur Silverman, Member
Elizabeth Shields, Alternate Member
Anne Sory Keresey, Alternate Member
Robert L. Moore, Director of Planning, Zoning &
Building
Timothy M. Frank, Planner/Projects Coordinator

ABSENT: Jane R. Grace, Alternate Member

RECORDING SECRETARY: Cynthia M. Delp

Let the record show that Mrs. Grace had a conflict with this meeting date, and her absence was excused by Mrs. Volk.

III. Informal Review & Site Visit - 1300 South Ocean Boulevard, Casa Apava:

Mr. Robert Deziel, Esquire, of Moyle, Flanigan, Katz, Fitzgerald & Sheehan, P.A., addressed the Commission representing the applicant, outlining the goals set for this meeting. First, the site visit would serve to familiarize the Commissioners with the existing landmark structure and landscape. Secondly, a presentation, approximately forty-five minutes in length, would demonstrate the contemplated changes to the site, in preparation for the regular LPC meeting to be held Wednesday, May 18, 1994. Mr. Deziel thanked the Commission for holding this special additional meeting. All parties involved in this project are working toward a renovated Casa Apava, whose changes will mutually satisfy the owner as well as the Commission.

Mr. Deziel introduced Mr. Harry Rosenblum, the owner's representative on this project. Mr. Rosenblum stated that Casa

Apava's new owner, Mr. Ronald Perelman, currently owns a landmarked residence and office in the state of New York, and as such, is familiar with landmark properties and restoration of same. In the last few months, the owner has assembled a team of professionals to work on this project...Mr. Mark Ferguson of New York, Mr. Jeff Smith of Palm Beach, and an arborist to deal with the landscape.

Mr. Jeffery W. Smith stated that May 16-22 will be National Preservation Week, and the Florida Trust will hold its annual conference in the Town of Palm Beach, at which time the Trust will bestow its award for historic preservation to the Town of Palm Beach. It will be the first time that the award has been presented to a municipality. Mr. Smith thanked the Commission members for their assistance in the renovation of both 456 and 460 Worth Avenue, both of which are award recipients. He was confident that Casa Apava, fully renovated, would be the next recipient of this award. Casa Apava has yet to be restored to modern standards, and as such, is lacking many amenities. The contemplated restoration is designed to return Casa Apava to its former grandeur. Mr. Smith's firm has been retained to work in conjunction with Mr. Mark Ferguson of New York City. Mr. Smith introduced Mr. Ferguson as being "disciplined and sensitive to preservation issues", as well as being a talented and creative architect.

Mr. Mark Ferguson, likewise, praised the efforts of Mr. Smith with regard to restoration of landmarked buildings. Ferguson Murray's design goal is always to design buildings fitting and suitable to their context. He stated that he was pleased to be asked to work on this exceptional site, and to work with an owner who appreciates the value of landmarked properties and preservation.

In preparation for the site visit, Mr. Moore reminded the Commission that they are governed by the Sunshine Law both to, from, and during the site visit.

The meeting adjourned to Casa Apava at 9:13 a.m., and re-grouped at the site at 9:25 a.m.

SITE VISIT

The Commission began its tour of the site in the rear (east) parking area. Mr. Ferguson pointed out that approximately 200 feet of property was sold off to the south, where a new house is currently being constructed. He explained that the original site plan called for a driveway through the jungle-like landscape, which concealed even the ocean from view. Visitors would then enter the home through the grotto-like main entrance, and then move up the stairs to the reception room to a beautiful ocean view. This dramatic type of entrance has now been spoiled by the removal of so much vegetation and the installation of the large parking area.

The Commission entered the house through the main entryway which occurs under the bridge. From there, they went up the stairs into the reception room and then out to the east terrace and the beautiful expanse of east lawn, looking back at the east facade of the house and the existing landscape. Mr. Ferguson mentioned, as a point of interest, that "Apava" is a Sanskrit word meaning "one who frolics in the sea". From there, the Commission moved to the loggia on the

west elevation, looking west though the beautiful lake vista. It was noted that Mr. Perelman does not own the parcel of land lying within the lake vista to the west of South Ocean Boulevard, but this parcel is protected as an easement occurs there, and changes within that easement would first require review. Looking back at the west facade, Mr. Ferguson remarked at how the structure builds up, rising out of the jungle to the tower and belvedere above, a wonderful integration of architecture and nature. Moving back inside, the group entered the living room, loggia and library...rooms which resulted from the 1929 alteration to the original 1919 construction, and then moved out to the north terrace. On the north side of the property, a swimming pool and lush vegetation once existed. Now, however, a new house is under construction there due to the sale of this parcel of land. The most dramatic room of the house is the library, which is like a cool oasis in comparison to the heat found in the rest of the house. The Commission ventured upstairs through the various bedrooms, and then many climbed the spiral stair to the tower for a splendid and cool view. Leaving the house through the staff wing, all returned to their cars at 9:58 a.m., and arrived back at the Town Council Chambers to re-convene the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Presentation in Town Council Chambers

Mr. Ferguson provided some historical information relative to Casa Apava. The property was bought by the Bingham family from Flagler in the 1890's. This parcel was given to Frances Bingham, a daughter, as a wedding present when she married Mr. Bolton.

Mr. Ferguson presented historical photos of the site as well as an old site plan. It was once contemplated that accessory structures be located to the south of the main residence, which is in keeping with the changes proposed today.

Mr. Smith added that the lakefront land to the west of South Ocean Boulevard once held the staff quarters, boat house, garages, maintenance buildings and such. Now, however, this land has been divided into four lots, and the amenities once there for Casa Apava no longer exist. (Mr. Perelman's property no longer extends directly to the lake, but he does retain the vista to the lake. He currently owns the parcel to the north of the vista, across South Ocean Boulevard.) As the site has already lost staff quarters, garage, pool, a sense of arrival, palm garden and privacy, the applicant's desire is to return the eliminated amenities to the site, and return the site, as a whole, to its original grandeur.

The proposal would develop both the north and south ends of the property. On the north end, a patio will be enclosed with a cloister; a pool will occur south of the property line accompanied by a pool pavilion, and a 6' wall will offer privacy to pool users; and a projection room and powder room will form a library addition. This area is protected from the ocean, and is a natural site for a pool. On the south end of the property, the existing parking paving will be removed and the garden-like atmosphere will be restored. The staff wing of the house will be converted to guest accommodations with three bedrooms on the second floor, and a sitting area on the first floor. The kitchen will be retained, as is, and the bridge room will be used for family dining. The paving under the bridge will be converted to a garden. A new four-bedroom guest wing for children is

planned. The new guest wing will be linked to the converted guest wing via an open air loggia with an open air pergola on one side. A pool will occur in the middle of this space. A new parking area and three car garage with a staff apartment on the second floor will be constructed. The new driveway will lead from South Ocean Boulevard through the jungle and up to the center of the house to the loggia, the new entrance into the house, where guests will ultimately be led up into the reception hall to the wonderful view of the ocean.

Some accessory structures are planned as well. A gazebo will be tucked into the edge of the planting on the ocean side. A tennis pavilion will be added to the existing tennis court. A path will lead from the pool pavilion through the garden to the tennis court. The vehicle turn around will be done in gravel with a shell base.

Let the record show that Mrs. Albarran de Mendoza left the meeting at 10:30 a.m. and Mrs. Metzger left at 10:47 a.m.

Mr. Ferguson proceeded to review the proposed changes to the floor plans and elevations of the house. With all of the additions, approximately 10,000 square feet will be added to the site, including outdoor covered areas. Mr. Smith felt the additional square footage was not too great when considering the scale of the house.

Mrs. Volk thanked Mr. Ferguson for a well detailed presentation. Mrs. Mackintosh suggested that an elevator be incorporated into the plans. Mr. Gubelmann commented that the guest wing is quite substantial, and wondered whether the owner would be able to sell it off as a separate building. Mr. Frank responded that this is part of the landmarked site, and any subdivision would need to be approved by the Commission first. The need for two pools was likewise questioned by Mr. Gubelmann. Mr. Ferguson explained that the north pool is designed especially for winter use, and is protected from ocean breezes, and the south pool is primarily to be used by guests, who will not have to go through the house for access to a pool.

Mrs. Volk stated, pursuant to the comments of the commissioners, that it would seem that the LPC approves of the plans conceptually. She requested, however, that when the plans are brought in for review on May 18th, the additions should be more obvious on the drawings through coloration or some other method.

IV. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m. without benefit of a motion.

Respectfully submitted,



Sally Gingras, Secretary

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