



**TOWN OF PALM BEACH**  
Planning, Zoning & Building Department  
360 South County Road  
Palm Beach, FL 33480  
[www.townofpalmbeach.com](http://www.townofpalmbeach.com)

**PLANNING, ZONING, & BUILDING DEPARTMENT**

**PZ&B Staff Combination Memorandum: Landmarks Preservation Commission and Town Council**

**FROM:** Wayne Bergman, MCP, LEED-AP *WB*  
Director PZ&B

**SUBJECT:** ZON-23-109 (COA-23-040) 134 EL VEDADO ROAD (COMBO)

**MEETING:** MARCH 13, 2024 TC

**ZON-23-109 (COA-23-040) 134 EL VEDADO RD (COMBO)—VARIANCE.** The applicants, Elizabeth, and Jeffrey Leeds filed an application requesting Town Council review and approval for a variance to provide vehicle queuing space deficient in depth between the driveway gate and edge of roadway. The Landmarks Preservation Commission shall perform a design review of the application.

The applicant, Elizabeth and Jeffrey Leeds, have filed an application requesting Landmarks Preservation Commission review and approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for additions and alterations to an existing two-story Landmarked residence and accessory structures, including window, door and roof replacement, modifications to opening sizes, demolition of rear porch, construction of an enclosed rear addition, addition of covered rear terrace, covered walkway and second floor addition to tennis house, and landscape and hardscape modifications. Additionally, requesting construction of front wall with new vehicular driveway gates, including a variance from the backup/cueing distance requirement. The Town Council shall review the application as it pertains to the zoning relief/approval.

**Applicant:** Elizabeth & Jeffrey Leeds  
**Professional:** Asbacher Architecture

**HISTORY:** The property at 134 El Vedado Road was designated a landmark in 1991 under Resolution No. 22-91. Built in 1935 in the French Eclectic Style by John L. Volk the residence faces north. The main section of the house is half timbered, which is rare for a home in Palm Beach. Many original elements remain, and its integrity is intact, including its steeply pitched roof with wooden brackets and flat clay tiles. Additions such as the pool house were later constructed but are in keeping with the characteristics of the complex.

At the November 17, 2023, Landmarks Preservation Commission meeting the applicant was approved for all modifications to the structure but asked to restudy the gates. The revised plans reflect a reduction in driveway width from 14' to 12', increased gate setback from 8' to 12', a more visually open vehicular gate design, a revised pedestrian gate design and confirmation that the plantings will fully screen the site wall.

At the December 20, 2023 LPC meeting, the item was presented and approved (7-0). A motion was made and carried (7-0) that the implementation of the variances would not negatively impact the architecture. The variance portion of the application was deferred at the January and February Town Council meeting, at the request of the applicant.

**THE PROJECT:**

The applicant has submitted plans, entitled "Leeds Residence", as prepared by Asbacher Architecture, Inc. dated and stamped by the Town February 26, 2024.

The following is the scope of work for the Project:

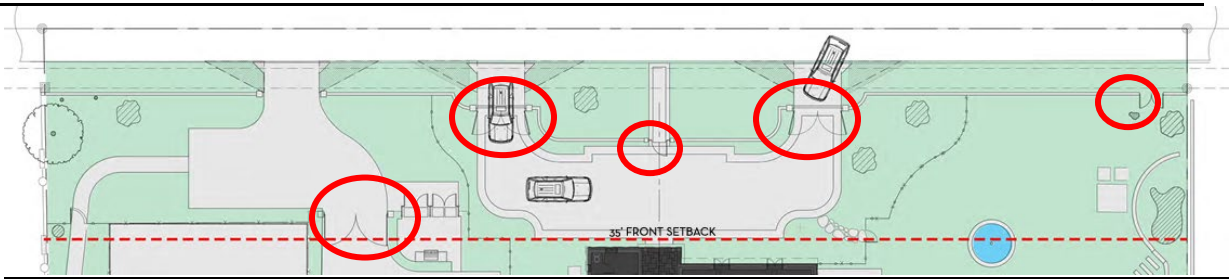
- Addition of new front wall with two sets of gates. Variance required for gates.
- Revised landscape and hardscape by Nievera Williams.
- **VARIANCE #1 Section 134-1668:** Variance to reduce the required vehicular backup driveway space to install a driveway gate with an approximately 12'-0" setback from the edge of pavement in lieu of the 18'-0" minimum required.

Site Data			
Zoning District	R-A	Future Land Use	SINGLE FAMILY
Lot Area	57,789 SF	Year of Construction	1935
Designation	7/22/91	Architect/Builder:	John Volk
Lot Coverage	Required: 25% Existing: (8,317 SF) 14.4% Proposed: (8,824 SF) 15.27%	Surrounding Properties / Zoning	
North	135 El Vedado Road / Single Family Residence / R-A		
South	105 Jungle Road / Single Family Residence/ R-A		
East	100 El Vedado Road / Single Family Residence / R-A		
West	150 El Vedado Road / Single Family Residence / R-A		

**STAFF ANALYSIS**

The application is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations to a landmarked property. This property was landmarked in 1991 due to its unique architecture and association with John Volk. A preliminary review of the project indicates that the application, as proposed, appears to be inconsistent with the abovementioned sections of the Town zoning code as it pertains to the backup distance in junction with the new gates.

The applicant is proposing a new 6'-0" high site wall along the front property line facing El Vedado Way, setback 12'-0" from the edge of the curb. Where two vehicular curb cuts are currently existing, the applicant is proposing three. A new dual access vehicular entrance sequence shall be differentiated from a secondary means of vehicular access and shall be delineated with two swing gates. The revised gate design and location is an improvement on the original proposal and much more compatible with the site details and streetscape.



The new gates are proposed 2/3 solid wood, with a diagonal wood pattern on the top 1/3. The site wall, front landscaping and solid panel gates and pedestrian gate will partially obscure the landmarked property from view.



There is an existing gate setback considerably from the roadway currently. And this portion of the proposal will alter the view that is currently offered.



El Vedado Way is a narrow (20'-0" wide from curb edges) roadway. There are some properties with dense landscaping along the front property line and property walls. In fact, directly across the street is a property at 135 El Vedado Rd that also has vehicular gates, albeit in a transparent metalwork design that affords views into the site. Otherwise, vehicle gates seem more common on the western block portion of El Vedado Road, across South County Road, rather than along this eastern 100 block towards the ocean. There is also a variance associated with the proposal, to reduce the required vehicular backup driveway space to install a driveway gate with an 12'-0" setback from the edge of pavement in lieu of the 18'-0" minimum required which does not appear to be consistent with the streetscape.

The proposed landscape plan is also a departure from what exists on site. The landscape architect

described to LPC the request for a more open, less formal garden for the new owners. Significant landscape materials has been retained and is being added at the edges of the parcel. Additional plantings have been included in the resubmittal along El Vedado Road to soften the site wall from view.

**CONCLUSION:**

Approval of the project will require one separate motion to be made by the Town Council:

- (1) for final determination of approval or denial of the variances by the Town Council, and that the variance **shall or shall not** be granted that all of the criteria applicable to this application as set forth in [Sec. 134-201\(a\)](#), items 1 through 7 have been met.

WRB: JGM: FHM