

MEMORANDUM

PROJECT: Society of the Four Arts

SUBJECT: Summary of Project Redesign (DRAFT)

DATE: 22 December 2024

TO: Roger Ramdeen, Shutts & Bowen

FROM: Nathaniel Rogers, AIA

CC: Harvey Oyer III, Shutts & Bowen
Nelo Freijomel, Keith Spina, Regan Rupp, Spina O'Rourke + Partners

BBB REF#: 2953

Introduction

This document provides an overview of the design revisions since the November 20th 2024 Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) Hearing for the Four Arts project, as a reference for revision of the application LOI.

Gross Areas

O'Keefe

The proposed expansion of the O'Keefe Building, as measured in enclosed gross floor area, has been reduced by 1,412 GSF. Of this amount, 1,026 GSF was in the one-story southeastern addition that has been removed from the proposal. The balance, 386 GSF, was cut from the western backstage expansion.

Rovensky

The proposed expansion of the Rovensky Building has been reduced by 459 GSF, a fairly minor change. This is largely explained by slightly reducing the proposed footprints on the second and third stories.

O’Keeffe – LPC Feedback and Status

Elevation	LPC Feedback	Design Response
Typ	1. Window/door trim should not be so contrasting; should be historically supported.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Window trim color lightened to off-white pending paint analysis, with verdigris accent color for doors and specialty windows.</i>
South	2. Too much of the building is obscured by new construction.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Southeast addition (1,026 GSF) now removed from proposal, Mizner’s SE windows in this location to be rebuilt according to original drawings.</i>
	The scale of the southwest additions too massive, eaves too aligned.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Revised to cascade the eave lines of the one-story roofs down progressively moving westward.</i>
	3. Too much blank stucco without articulation to reduce scale.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Second-story parapet replaced with tile roof; chimney, four windows, and an 11-bay open-air loggia integrated (see PF). Three windows now also provided on second floor southeast corner (matching original location in elevation).</i>
	4. Plane break not convincing.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. 1st Fl plane break offset doubled to 2 feet (from 1 foot).</i>
	5. Extent of westward expansion is too long.	<i>Comment incorporated. The extent of westward expansion reduced by 3 feet, maximum reduction possible per technical requirements.</i>
	6. Acoustical penthouse is too tall and bulky.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Height reduced by 2 feet, maximum reduction possible per technical requirements; E-W width is reduced by 7 feet.</i>
	7. Acoustical penthouse is too plainly detailed.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Crenelated corbeling and barrel tile cap detail added to provide traditional scale and color.</i>
West	8. Too much blank stucco without necessary articulation to reduce scale	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Second-story hipped pavilions, shuttered windows, and blind arches refer to Mizner and Volk’s historic elevation, stair dormer removed (and stair replanned).</i>
North	9. At the new arcades, too many undifferentiated bays makes it too repetitive. [B. Damgard via email asks if design team would consider reducing number of arches].	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Reduced from 9 to 8 arches each side, arches enlarged, stuccos capitals added to piers to more closely match Volk portico. Stucco cornices replaced with sloped rafter tails to reduce monumentality. The arch proportions still harmonize with the Volk portico. Worth Avenue comparison study provided to for existing scale relation.</i>
	10. Loss of original windows on north façade, east side is unfortunate.	<i>Comment incorporated. Second floor original windows can’t be retained, but four existing window openings on first floor to now be retained.</i>
	11. Too much blank stucco, seems out of scale. Round windows at second floor don’t seem historically supported.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. All new second floor windows changed to square openings. In addition, projecting towers “bookend” a fully symmetrical façade with parapet. Parapet façade reduced in length.</i>

O’Keeffe – Additional Preservation Foundation Feedback and Status

Elevation	Preservation Foundation Feedback <i>(beyond LPC feedback, provided in 12/10 in-person mtg, 12/13 memo, 12/16 and 12/20 Zoom mtgs)</i>	Design Response
South	<p>1a. The design should more clearly delineate where the original addition ended and the new additions begin.</p> <p>1b. A lighter, more transparent feeling (how Volk also designed it) is desired to reference the courtyard and auditorium function where the original building sits.</p> <p>1c. And/or: Could rooflines be adjusted to read original/existing wall and roof planes with the addition below on the front so that original massing can be distinguished?</p> <p>1d. (Post Loggia Study 1): Please center the loggia and extend it to 11 bays.</p> <p>1e. (Post Loggia Study 2): The roof in this zone should be raised between the new chimney and existing entry pavilion if the western roofs can’t be lowered.</p> <p>1f. Desired to either add glass windows to loggia (glassed-in) or leave open-air and provide ornamental doors beyond (i.e. Mizner’s Casa Bendita).</p>	<p>All these comments are now fully incorporated (except 1c). <i>The 11-bay open-air loggia is integrated into south façade design, centered over octagonal windows, using the reference of Mizner’s open-air loggias for the Embassy Club for the piers and brackets. The roof over this zone has its own massing, elevated with offset eaves and hipped roof to read separately from the western expansion. Ornamental (non-functioning doors) added to back wall of loggia.</i></p> <p>Regarding 1c: <i>BBB shared alternate study on 12/20 Zoom for lower second-story massing in area of auditorium and that it was not mechanically feasible nor desired for overall design quality reasons (emphasizes the western expansions, connects too directly with entry pavilion roof, and provides non-traditional wall exposure). PF agrees that the next best thing is the incorporated higher massing in this area.</i></p>
South	2. Groupings of windows to the west should be tied together with common sill or lintel detail to look more intentional.	<i>Comment fully incorporated, tied together with common sills and centered over octagonal windows below.</i>
	3. New additions should not touch Mizner’s tower if possible.	<i>Comment fully incorporated (minor interface removed.)</i>
West	4. PF appreciates the improvements of the redesigned west end; however, the blind arch spacing looks overly wide and should be more closely spaced for a more canonical reading.	<i>Comment fully incorporated.</i>
	5. Blind niches at the first story would make reference to the openings once here, even if in entirely new additions.	<i>Comment fully incorporated.</i>
North	6. The earlier experiment with a pilaster every third bay is not historically supported on ground floors (PF and design team agree that it is, however, common for upper	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Interim approach of a pilaster every third bay was removed in favor of reducing the arches from 9 to 8 and improving the detailing of the capitals and bases.</i>

	stories using colossal orders in Neoclassicism.)	
	7. Retain original windows if possible, and/or provide new windows in groupings that relate to original.	<i>Comment partially incorporated. Second floor original windows can't be retained, but four existing window openings on first floor to now be retained.</i>
	8. Arcade stairs should terminate at architectural features if possible.	<i>Comment incorporated. Eastern stairs moved one bay west, terminates on existing window opening (slightly off-center).</i>
	9. Arcade ceilings should be sloped; provide Mediterranean Revival pendants.	<i>Comment fully incorporated.</i>
	10. On the second-floor addition, above the previously open courtyard, consider similar treatment to what PF is suggesting for south – allow reading of original/existing wall/roof	<i>Comment not incorporated. See 1c. as well. There was a robust BBB/PF discussion on 12/20 Zoom about the second-floor plan (auditorium not on exterior wall), the role of these windows and roofline in this area, and the design team's conviction that the Volk portico demands a symmetrical approach. PF appeared to moderate this comment during the Zoom.</i>

Rovensky – LPC Feedback and Status

Elevation	LPC Feedback	Design Response
Typ	1. Window/door trim should not be so contrasting; should be historical.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Window trim color lightened to off-white pending paint analysis, with verdigris accent color for doors and specialty windows.</i>
East and North	2. Addition is not sufficiently subservient to the existing building in overall presence, scale and articulation. The overall effect is too monumental.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. All openings and details have been revised/reduced in scale to bring down overall reading. Hyphen has been made much quieter visually, the first floor cornice made simpler and lower. Arched windows removed from east elevation. The NE pavilion windows are now smaller, more similar to King Library windows. Second floor typical windows match existing building, increased in number (for spacing more consistent with existing building). Second floor north wall moved south by 3 feet to make first-floor roof more generous and traditional in slope/proportion. Northwest tower windows changed to grouped arched for finer scale and to be more consonant with Palm Beach references.</i>
	3. The entrance arch and arched windows are over-scaled. The water table is not successful. Look at King Library for possible scale reference.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. The water table is now removed, arched openings removed on east elevation and reduced on north. North arches match absolute height of those on the King Library. The entry arch is significantly smaller while retaining design clarity. A small door for children has been added next to the main entry/egress door.</i>
	4. Possibly too much glass at entry storefront. (12/10 Chair/Staff mtg)	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Ornamental grillework will cover the entire storefront, not just sidelights. The themes will be integrated into entry space.</i>
	5. The amount of stone contributes to the weightiness; should be lighter.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. The amount of stone drastically reduced in favor of stucco; the tall water table and quoining now removed.</i>
	6. The roof of the third-floor boardroom pavilion is too tall.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. The proposed board room pavilion roof ridge lowered by 3 feet and is now to be under height of existing roof. Pavilion eaves lowered by 18" to match existing building. (Ramp integrated into 2nd floor office layouts to make this possible)</i>
	7. Pavilion metal roof and storefront below it reads too dark.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Changed from dull bronze-color copper to verdigris pre-patinated copper.</i>
	8. Third floor pavilion reads as too bulky and too modern due to size; soften.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Pavilion massing broken into multiple elements, massing revised, all details revised. The entire board room massing shifted south by 5 feet and ridge is now centered on building east elevation. Eaves converted from integrated gutter and broad standing seam fascia to finer soffits (12" overhang) plus half-round copper gutter.</i>
	West	9. Amount of demolition overall (See PF: All 2nd and 3rd story windows from 1947 being demolished.)
Roof	10. Courtyard design for building is part of its DNA. Can atrium and/or skylights somehow be retained?	<i>Comment partially incorporated. The overall area is important to the client, and the courtyard was more appropriate when the building was small residential apartments on 2 and 3. Skylights proposed.</i>

Rovensky – Additional Preservation Foundation Feedback and Status

Elevation	Preservation Foundation Feedback <i>(beyond LPC feedback, provided in 12/10 in-person mtg, 12/13 memo, 12/16 and 12/20 Zoom mtgs)</i>	Design Response
East and North	1. Previous eave detail not appropriate for rooftop addition tectonic [BBB/PF consensus on approach at 12/20 Zoom meeting]	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Robust discussion over whether a conservatory-style reading was a better alternative. The design team believes strongly that the roof should have an overhang; BBB and PF agree overall roof treatment must be softer than an industrial-style standing seam roof. PF has moderated their comment for this area.</i>
	2. Remove small windows, first floor, restudy second floor windows.	<i>Comment fully integrated into latest version of design. Small windows removed.</i>
	3. Corner window not supported by stylistic direction of redesign.	<i>Comment fully incorporated. Corner window removed.</i>
West	4. Decision to retain all 2 nd and 3 rd floor windows is a positive development.	<i>Agreed.</i>
Roof	5. The central courtyard was an important feature of the building, and was maintained in the creation of the Children’s Library atrium. Any possibility of retaining the atrium would be beneficial to explore.	<i>Comment partially incorporated. Skylights proposed over 3rd floor elevator lobby. Design team notes that Rovensky is actually not all that large a building for an atrium – particularly as a commercial/institutional building. The courtyard made much more sense when the use was residential. As an example, in the existing condition, once an upper-level corridor is accounted for, floor depth for program space is less than 18 feet, which made lots of sense for apartments, but is quite shallow and limits planning flexibility for other uses. There is a great need for mechanical space in the middle of the building on each floor, which does not need natural light.</i>