

TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Information for Town Council Meeting on: June 12, 2019

TO: Mayor and Town Council

VIA: Kirk W. Blouin, Town Manager

FROM: Joshua Martin, Director of Planning, Zoning & Building

RE: Update on Proposed Addition of Stairs to Memorial Fountain

DATE: June 4, 2019

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Town staff recommends that Town Council provide direction regarding the attached reconsideration from the Florida Division of Historical Resources regarding the proposed stairs to the Memorial Fountain per the attachments to this memo.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Built in 1929, using a design by Addison Mizner, Memorial Park was paid for by donations from the resort's winter residents and dedicated to the Town in 1930, during the midst of the Great Depression. A civic project of the highest order, Memorial Park was based on the Town's first Comprehensive Plan which was sponsored by the Garden Club of Palm Beach, and since its dedication has remained a centerpiece of the locally designated Town Square Historic District.

In the eighty years since the Memorial Park and Fountain were constructed, repairs have been made as needed. The Town continues to budget for routine upkeep of the fountain each year. In 1991, the Town of Palm Beach received a Small Matching Grant from the Department of State, Division of Historical Resources to patch the cast stone and repair the mechanical systems of the fountain. Later, via the FY 20104-2015 General Appropriation Act, the State of Florida (Department of State, Division of Historical Resources) awarded two Special Category Grants to the Town of Palm Beach, each in the amount of \$350,000. The Town remains extremely appreciative of these grants which have enhanced the public realm of the Town as a result.

The first of the Special Category Grants, SC517, involved the "Restoration of Addison Mizner's Memorial Fountain" which funded the fountain restoration only related to the Phase I improvements to the Town Square Historic District. The associated restrictive covenants were specific and limited to the vertical fountain itself and the related base beneath the fountain as described in the project description. The second of the Special Category Grants, MP512, involved the "Restoration of Addison Mizner's Memorial Park/Addison Mizner's Plaza" which specifically funded restoration, repair, and replication of deteriorated and damaged portions of the Mizner Memorial Fountain stone work that surround both the main fountain sculpture and linear fountain elements related to the Phase II improvements to the Town Square Historic

District. The associated restrictive covenants were specific and limited to the flatwork (not including the fountain area that was already subject to restrictive covenants via Special Category Grant SC517) and the Memorial Park as a whole. A copy of both grant agreements and associated restrictive covenants is enclosed as part of this transmittal for your review.

In late 2018, the Town of Palm Beach presented further improvements to the Town Square Historic District to the Town's Landmarks Preservation Commission that planned for the addition of stairs to the south façade of the Mizner Memorial Fountain as shown in the enclosed plan set. The original concept of the stairs dates back to 2013 but the design concept evolved into the most recent design in an effort to be more visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which the new construction is visually related. The evolution of the stair design is enclosed as part of this transmittal for your information. Moreover, in designing the addition of stairs to the south façade of the Mizner Memorial Fountain, the Town established the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties as the guiding principle for the effort at hand. Specifically, the Town consulted the Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings for new additions to historic buildings (structures). The approved, evolved design for the addition of stairs to the Mizner Memorial Fountain respects and fulfills the following Standard for Rehabilitation: "New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment."

As a result, the Town's Landmarks Preservation Commission and Town Council approved the proposed stair design in November 2018 and December 2018 respectively thus issuing the project a Certificate of Appropriateness, per the Town's Code of Ordinances. The addition of stairs is subject to the restrictive covenants of Special Category Grant MP512, whereby the Town agreed to the continued maintenance, repair, and administration of the property receiving grant assistance in a manner satisfactory to the Department for a period of ten (10) years from the date of recordation (August 27, 2015). The restrictive covenants include the following provision: "The Owner agree that no modification will be made to the Property, other than routine repairs and maintenance, without advance review and approval of the plans and specifications by the Department's Bureau of Historic Preservation".

In accordance with the aforementioned restrictive covenant and direction from Town Council, the Town Manager requested the review of the proposed stairs by the Florida Division of Historical Resources. Attached, please find the response from the Florida Division of Historical Resources as well as a follow up request for reconsideration from the Town.

Attachments

CC: Jay Boodheshwar, Deputy Town Manager
Paul Brazil, Director of Public Works