



TOWN OF PALM BEACH
Planning, Zoning & Building Department
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PLANNING, ZONING, & BUILDING DEPARTMENT
PZ&B Staff Memorandum: Landmarks Preservation Commission

TO: LPC Chairperson and Members

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

SUBJECT: COA-23-010 N COUNTY RD
(WELLS RD to MIRAFLORES DR)

MEETING: FEBRUARY 17, 2023

COA-23-010 N COUNTY RD (WELLS RD TO MIRAFLORES DR). The applicant, The Town of Palm Beach, has filed an application requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness review and approval for roadway, drainage, curb, and median improvements.

Applicant: The Town of Palm Beach
Design Professional: Chen Moore & Associates | Brent Whitfield, PE

HISTORY:

Shortly after the 1926 hurricane, residents along North Ocean Boulevard began requesting the abandonment of the ocean front street. The Boulevard had been destroyed in the storm and was reconstructed in a temporary fashion, only to have it wash away again in the hurricane of 1928. Following the 1928 hurricane, residents were successful in formally petitioning the Town to abandon the roadway. The property owners agreed to pay for all expenses to widen N County Road, from 30 feet to 70 feet, and to beautify the roadway.

The reconstruction of North County Road began during the summer of 1930 and was completed in November of that year. The work included the construction of "two 20-foot roadways with a park through the middle and a walk for pedestrians and wheel chairs on the west side". The roadway was constructed by Greynolds and Monroe, and the beautification work was done by the Palm Beach Company. The trees planted along North County Road in 1930 were largely Ficus species.



County Road, 1930 Courtesy of J. Kenneth Brower

The North County Road Tree Canopy was designated as a Historic Landscape by the Town of Palm Beach on January 15, 2014, as the widening and beautification of North County Road from Wells Road to Miraflores Drive reflected the early planning of the Town and constituted a unique area of landscaping and planning.

Per the submitted Letter of Intent, several concerns are currently effecting the area, including poor drainage, limited sight distance for traffic exiting Canterbury Lane, and sod in the median that is routinely subject to damage and rutting from traffic. Additionally, the ongoing utility undergrounding project is scheduled to construct facilities to accommodate the electrical power infrastructure in this segment of North County Road in the summer of 2023. The Public Works Department identified this time as an opportunity to address the existing issues with the roadway and drainage. In consideration that the tree canopy in this location is historically designated, this application for a Certificate of Appropriateness is to ensure that the proposed infrastructure improvements are visually compatible with the existing environment.

THE PROJECT:

The applicant has submitted plans, “North County Road Drainage Improvements”, as prepared by **Chen Moore & Associates**, dated January 12, 2023.

The following is the scope of work for the Project:

- roadway, drainage, curb, and median improvements

STAFF ANALYSIS

The current application is a Town initiated project and the application, as proposed, is zoning compliant and does not require zoning relief. Approval of the project will require one (1) motion to be made by the Commission: (1) for the overall design of the project in accordance with the criteria provides in Sec. 54-122.

The subject application includes modifications to drainage and traffic safety, while also proposing aesthetic improvements that enhance the resilience and sustainability of the corridor infrastructure. The submittal package includes documentation on the corridor’s “Critical Root Zones” for the historic tree canopy, mapped by a Certified Arborist. The construction drawings are to identify areas where the contractor will need to avoid in order to protect the existing root systems to the greatest extent possible. In addition to the technical plans, an exhibit including rendered illustrations has been provided demonstrating the visual impacts to the corridor.

WRB:JGM:JRH