



TOWN OF PALM BEACH
Planning, Zoning & Building Department
360 South County Road
Palm Beach, FL 33480
(561) 838-5431 • www.townofpalmbeach.com

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: HSB-22-011 (ZON-22-122) 141 AUSTRALIAN AVE (COMBO)

MEETING: APRIL 19, 2023

HSB-22-011 (ZON-22-122) 141 AUSTRALIAN AVE (COMBO). The applicant, Gregory James Pamel, has filed an application requesting Landmarks Preservation Commission review and approval for proposed exterior alterations to a Historically Significant two-story primary structure, and for the demolition and reconstruction of an existing two-story nonconforming accessory structure in the rear yard, including variances for setback, height, number of stories, and Cubic Content Ratio (CCR). This is a combination project that shall also be reviewed by Town Council as it pertains to zoning relief/approval.

Applicant: Gregory James Pamel
Professional: SKA Architect + Planner
Representative: David Klein, Esq.

HISTORY:

The subject property was designated 'historically significant' in June of 2022. The property is located within the Royal Park Conservation District. The structure is designed in the Craftsman style and was constructed circa 1910-1915 in the Royal Park subdivision, one of Palm Beach's earliest neighborhoods.

The current proposal was initially scheduled to be reviewed by the LPC at the November 16, 2022, meeting but was deferred by the applicant to the April 19, 2023, meeting.

THE PROJECT:

The applicant has submitted plans, entitled "Pamel Residence 141 Australian Ave", as prepared by **SKA Architect + Planner** dated March 14, 2023.

The following is the scope of work for the Project:

- Removal of vinyl siding and installation of wood shingle siding on the primary residence
- Demolition of an existing two-story rear guest house
- Construction of a 1,478 square foot two-story guest house
- Landscape and hardscape improvements

The following Special Exceptions, Site Plan review and/or Variances required to complete the project, and shall be reviewed by Town Council:

- **VARIANCE 1:** Section 134-893(b)(7): Variance request for construction of an accessory structure with a side (east) yard setback of 3.5 feet in lieu of the 15-foot required in R-B Zoning District.
- **VARIANCE 2:** Section 134-893(b)(9): Variance request for construction of an accessory structure with a rear (north) yard setback of 5 feet in lieu of the 15-foot required in R-B Zoning District.
- **VARIANCE 3:** Section 134-893(b)(13): Variance request for a cubic content ratio (CCR) of 4.73 in lieu of the 4.30 maximum allowed in R-B Zoning District.
- **VARIANCE 4:** Section 134-891(b): Variance request to rebuild a two-story accessory structure with an overall building height of 23.5' feet in lieu of the 14-foot maximum allowed in R-B Zoning District.
- **VARIANCE 5:** Section 134-891(b)(1): Variance request for an accessory building height of two stories in lieu of the one story maximum allowed on a lot with less than 20,000 square feet.

Site Data			
Zoning District	R-B	Lot Size (SF)	7,011 SF
Future Land Use	SINGLE-FAMILY	Total Building Size (SF)	3,688.4 SF
C-O-R	10.42'	Flood Zone	X
Exist Fin. Floor Elevation	12.17' (main) 10.96' (accessory)	Prop. Fin. Floor Elevation	12.17' (main) 1' (accessory)
Year of Construction:	1910-1925	Architect/Builder:	No record
Project			
	Required/Allowed	Existing	Proposed
Lot Coverage	30% (2,100 SF)	28.64% (2,008 SF)	28.64% (2,008 SF)
Cubic Content Ratio (CCR)	4.3	4.53	4.73 <i>Variance requested</i>
Building Height	14'	21.5' (accessory)	23.5' (accessory) <i>Variance requested</i>
Landscape Open Space	45% (3,155 SF)	43.2% (2,962 SF)	47.8% (3,353 SF)
Front Yard Open Space	40% (500 SF)	57.95% (725 SF)	65.9% (824 SF)
Perimeter Open Space	50% (1,079.5 SF)	66.69% (2,057 SF)	65.6% (2,233 SF)
Native Plant Species %	35%	N/A%	35% met
Surrounding Properties / Zoning			
North	2004 Two-story residence / R-B		
South	2014 Two-story residence / R-B		

East	2006 Two-story residence / R-B
West	2006 Two-story residence / R-B

STAFF ANALYSIS

As a HSB project the proposed changes must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Sec. 18-306, Sec. 54-122 and 54-123 of the Landmark Preservation Ordinance. A preliminary review of the project indicates that the application, as proposed, appears to be inconsistent with the following sections of the Town zoning code: 5 requested variances.

Firstly, it is admirable that the applicant has opted to designate the property as a Historically Significant Building and has chosen to preserve and renovate the 1920s residence. The structure is surrounded by new(er) two-story residences and its preservation contributes to the rich architectural history of Palm Beach, as well as the streetscape of Australian Avenue.

The scope of work includes the renovation of the two-story primary residence. While altered over the years, the structure is an excellent example of the Craftsman style of architecture. Craftsman style residences generally have steep pitched gable roofs with wide, unenclosed eaves, exposed rafter tails, and full or partial width open porches with knee walls. Additional features of the style often include paired and single casement and double-hung windows and wood lap or shingle siding. The removal of the vinyl siding and installation of the wood shingle siding on the primary house is appropriate and greatly enhances the character of the building.

As it pertains to the rear accessory structure - restoration of the existing building would be the best preservation practice rather than complete demolition and new construction. Reconstruction of a building can be an acceptable preservation treatment if the design is based on the original design and incorporates the character defining features of the historic structure. To note, the proposed new construction alters the idea of the existing structure. As an example, the sleeping porch is a character defining feature of the building. The proposed overhang of the second floor on the south façade alludes to the original overhanging sleeping porch, however incorporating a row of windows along the second floor of the south façade or another similar design element would help to illustrate the building's history of having a sleeping porch at this location.

- **VARIANCE 1:** Section 134-893(b)(7): Variance request for construction of an accessory structure with a side (east) yard setback of 3.5 feet in lieu of the 15-foot required in R-B Zoning District.

The existing accessory structure is sited with a 3'-2" east side yard setback. The application seeks to construct the new accessory structure with a 3'-5" side yard setback, whereas 15' is currently required.

- **VARIANCE 2:** Section 134-893(b)(9): Variance request for construction of an accessory structure with a rear (north) yard setback of 5 feet in lieu of the 15-foot required in R-B Zoning District.

The existing accessory structure is sited with a 3'-2" rear north yard setback. The application seeks to construct the new accessory structure with a 5' rear yard setback, whereas 15' is currently required.

- VARIANCE 3: Section 134-893(b)(13): Variance request for a cubic content ratio (CCR) of 4.73 in lieu of the 4.30 maximum allowed in R-B Zoning District.

The existing primary and accessory structure have a combined CCR of 4.53 CF, which currently exceeds the allowable 4.30 CCF. With the construction of the new accessory structure, the applications are requesting to increase the CCR to 4.73 CF.

- VARIANCE 4: Section 134-891(b): Variance request to rebuild a two-story accessory structure with an overall building height of 23.5' feet in lieu of the 14-foot maximum allowed in R-B Zoning District.

The area of the subject parcel limits the height of accessory structures to 14'. The applicants are requesting to demolish an existing two-story accessory structure with a height of 21.5' and to construct a new two-story accessory structure with an increased height of 23.5'.

- VARIANCE 5: Section 134-891(b)(1) Variance request for an accessory building height of two stories in lieu of the one story maximum allowed on a lot with less than 20,000 square feet.

Per the RB zoning code, two-story accessory structures are only allowed on parcels with an area of 20,000 SF or greater. As the parcel is only 7,011 SF, only a single-story accessory structure is permitted.

Approval of the project will require two separate motions to be made by the Commission: (1) for the overall design of the project in accordance with the aforementioned criteria, subject to any imposed conditions, and (2) that the implementation of the proposed variances will/will not cause negative architectural impact to the subject property.

WRB:JGM:JRH