

SMITH
ARCHITECTURAL
GROUP, INC.

LETTER OF INTENT
RELATED TO THE ADDITION OF THREE VEHICULAR GATES AT
124 VIA BETHESDA COA-24-007/ZON-24-028

January 16, 2024

We are pleased to submit the accompanying drawings in support of our request to add three (3) total vehicular gates at 124 Via Bethesda, a Landmarked residence. The addition of three (3) vehicular gates includes two (2) sliding gates at the North motor court along Via Bethesda and one (1) swinging pair of gates and piers at the East drive along Flagler Drive. The gate designs are inspired by existing gates and railings on the property. Please note the following:

A) ARCOM 18-205

Not applicable.

B) LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION 54-122/18-306/54-125

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C) SPECIAL EXCEPTION 134-229

Not applicable.

D) SITE PLAN REVIEW 134-329

Not applicable.

E) VARIANCES 134-201

The applicant has filed an application requesting Town Council to review and approve two (2) vehicular sliding gates at the North motor court along Via Bethesda that are set back from the street pavement less than the required 18 feet (134-1668). The East North gate is set back 9'-5" and the West North gate is set back 10'-3 1/2" from the pavement. The gates are set by the location of the existing piers. The justification for the variances is set forth below:

1) The special conditions related to the setback for the proposed gates is that the placement of the columns is part of the configuration of the landmarked property and it would be impossible to set a gate back 18 feet as it would be in the middle of the motor court. The requested gate is simply connecting the columns for security purposes.

2) The applicant was not the cause of the special conditions of the property or residence, as the characteristics of the residence and land has been in existence since the house was designed and built in 1928 and because of the landmarked status of the property, there is merit for relief for the setback variances.

3) The granting of the variances for the setback of the proposed gates will not confer on the applicant a special privilege. This property is landmarked and has special circumstances that do not exist with many other properties in the neighborhood. Additionally there are many other gates in the neighborhood.

4) The hardship for the proposed variances that runs with the land is that the property is a Town of Palm Beach Historic Landmark and the gate columns are existing at the entrance to the motor court. It would be a hardship to meet the 18 foot setback from the edge of pavement because of the configuration of the existing motor court and location of the existing gate columns.

5) The variance requested for the gate setback is the minimum necessary to make reasonable use of the land as the columns are existing and the configuration of the motor court prevents a gate setback 18 feet.

6) Considering the historic value and uniqueness of the property, and the safety and security of the owner, the variances being requested are minor and reasonable and will not be injurious to the area. Via Bethesda is not a heavily travelled road and the public welfare will not be affected by this variance request.

F) WORTH AVENUE DESIGN GUIDELINES 134-233

Not applicable.

G) LANDMARKS TAX ABATEMENT 54-198

Not applicable.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'J' followed by 'S' and 'M' with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jeffery Smith, AIA
Smith Architectural Group, Inc.