



HISTORIC RESOURCES PRESERVATION BOARD REPORT

HRPB Project Number 24-00100032: Consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for construction of a new single-family residential structure at 927 South Palmway. The subject property is a non-contributing resource to the South Palm Park Historic District and is located in the Single Family Residential (SFR) Zoning District. The future land use designation is Single Family Residential (SFR).

Meeting Date: March 13, 2024

Property Owners/Applicants: Russell Ayers and Gina Devine

Address: 927 South Palmway

PCN: 38-43-44-27-01-031-0150

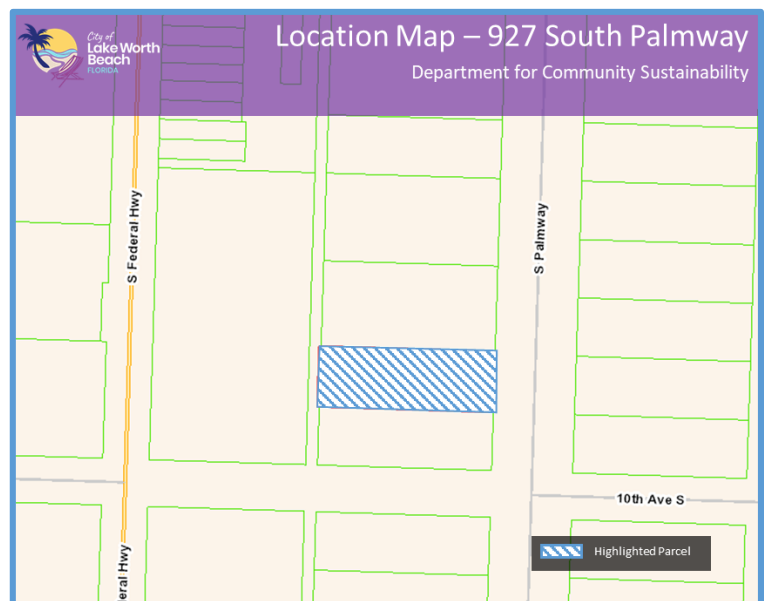
Size: ±0.17 acres / 7,500 sf

General Location: East side of South Palmway between 9th Avenue South and 10th Avenue South

Existing Land Use: Single Family Residential

Future Land Use Designation: Single Family Residential (SFR)

Zoning District: Single Family Residential (SFR)



RECOMMENDATION

The documentation and materials provided with the application request were reviewed for compliance with the applicable guidelines and standards found in the City of Lake Worth Beach Land Development Regulations (LDRs), the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, and for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed new single-family structure is consistent with the City's Land Development Regulations. As proposed, the structure's design is partially consistent with the Historic Preservation Ordinance and the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines' requirements for new construction. Staff contends that the proposed design successfully utilizes character-defining features of the Mediterranean Revival architectural style and does provide continued visibility of the historic structure, but the proposed height and scale of the new structure are out of character with the surrounding neighborhood. **Therefore, staff recommends that the Board carefully review the proposed design, taking into consideration both the scale of the surrounding neighborhood as well as the relationship of the new construction to the existing historic structure.**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The property owners, Russell Ayers and Gina Devine, are requesting approval for the construction of a new single-family residence at 927 South Palmway. The existing ±786 square foot house on the property will be converted into an accessory mother-in-law suite. A survey of the property is included in **Attachment A**. The parcel is located in the Single Family Residential (SFR) zoning district and has a Future Land Use (FLU) designation of Single Family Residential (SFR).

PUBLIC COMMENT

Staff has not received any letters of support or opposition for this application.

BACKGROUND

The one-story single-family residence located at 927 South Palmway was constructed c. 1925 in the Mission Revival architectural style. Although no architectural drawings of the building are available in the City's property files, property cards from the 1940s and 1950s describe the structure as being of wood frame construction with stucco cladding on a pier foundation, having a flat roof, and wood windows and doors.

City permit records indicate a variety of alterations to the structure over time, including the addition of a utility room in 1948, a jalousie porch to the north side of the house in 1950 and 1955, an open front porch in 1955 (which was converted to a screened porch in 1988), reroofing in 1963 and 1983, and installation of a utility shed in 1993.

While the 1998 historic resources survey and subsequent historic district designation for South Palm Park listed 927 South Palmway as a non-contributing resource due to alterations to the front of the structure, the updated 2020 historic resources survey recommends that the designation be changed to contributing.

Staff met with the previous property owner in November 2023 to discuss architectural plans for the proposed new construction, as well as historic district requirements regarding design, scale, and massing of new construction and Base Flood Elevation requirements. Staff also met and discussed historic preservation and Base Flood Elevation requirements with the new property owner in January 2024. Staff received a complete COA application for new construction on February 20, 2024, and the project was scheduled for the March HRPB meeting.

ANALYSIS

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The subject site has a Future Land Use (FLU) designation of Single Family Residential (SFR). Per policy 1.1.1.2, the Single-Family Residential category is *"intended primarily to permit development of single-family structures at a maximum of 7 dwelling units per acre. Single-family structures are designed for occupancy by one family or household. Single-family homes do not include accessory apartments or other facilities that permit occupancy by more than one family or household. Residential units may be site-built (conventional) dwellings, mobile homes or modular units."*

Analysis: The proposed structure is a single-family residence and is consistent with the intent of the Single-Family Residential designation. The proposed single-family structure is also consistent with Goal 3.1 which seeks to achieve a supply of housing that offers a variety of residential unit types and prices for current and anticipated homeowners and renters in all household income levels by the creation and/or preservation of a full range of quality housing units.

Consistency with the Land Development Regulations – Zoning

Single-Family Residential (SFR): Per LDR Section 23.3-7(a), the "SF-R single-family residential district" is intended primarily to permit development of one (1) single-family structure per lot. Provision is made for a limited number of nonresidential uses for the convenience of residents. These nonresidential uses are compatible by reason of their nature and limited frequency of occurrence with an overall single-family residential character. The "SF-R single-family residential district" implements the "single-family residential" land use category of the Lake Worth Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed new construction project appears to be consistent with all site data requirements in the City's Land Development Regulations; however, there are some inconsistencies between the survey and site plan that will need to be revised at permitting. Formal and complete review for compliance with the City's Land Development Regulations, including landscaping, will be conducted at building permit review. The proposed site plan and architectural drawings are included in this report in **Attachment A**.

Development Standard		Single Family Residential (SFR)	Provided
Lot Size (min)		5,000 sf	7,500 sf
Lot Width (min)		50'	50'
Setbacks	Front	20'	36.95'
	Rear	15'	52.18'
	Side	5'	7.33'
Accessory Structure Setbacks	Front	n/a	n/a
	Rear	5'	9.4' ¹
	Side	5'	5.3' ¹
Impermeable Surface Coverage (max)		50%	46% (3,468 sf)
Structure Coverage (max)		30%	27.7% (2,080 sf)
Front Yard		75% permeable & landscaped	84%
Building Height (max)		30' principal structure (2 stories) 24' accessory structure (2 stories)	About 23.4' principal ² n/a (accessory structure)
Accessory Structure Size Limitation		40% of primary structure	32.4%
Maximum Wall Height at Side Setback (primary structure)		18' @ 5' setback up to 23' @ 10' setback	20'4" at 7'4" setback (primary) n/a (accessory structure)
Floor Area Ratio (FAR) (max)		0.45	0.396 (2,973 sf)
Parking		2 spaces	2 spaces
Base Flood Elevation		Current Flood Zone = 6' NAVD Pending Flood Zone = 9' NAVD	Finished floor elevation 18" above crown of road

¹ Inaccuracies were noted between survey and site plan for the setbacks of the existing structure. Staff has added a condition of approval to revise the site plan at permit to ensure accuracy and consistency regarding setbacks, impermeable surfaces, etc.

² Per LDR Section 23.1-12, Building height: The vertical distance measured from the minimum required floor or base flood elevation or twelve (12) inches above the crown of the road, whichever is greater, to ... (c) the average height between eaves and ridge for gable, hip, and gambrel roofs, (d) the average height between high and low points for a shed roof...

Consistency with the Land Development Regulations – Historic Preservation

The proposed single-family residence is designed as a contemporary interpretation of Mediterranean Revival architecture. The Mediterranean Revival architectural style gained popularity in the United States in the 1920s, emulating design elements from Spanish, French, Italian, and North African influences. Mediterranean Revival architecture (and the closely related Spanish Colonial Revival and Mission Revival styles) were particularly popular in

parts of the United States that had ties to Spanish Colonial heritage. In South Florida, the Mediterranean Revival style is also closely tied to the Florida Land Boom and the development of Palm Beach, West Palm Beach, and Miami. This architectural style uses heavy, asymmetrical massing; stucco exterior wall finishes; and casement or double-hung windows. There are often multiple levels of gabled or cross-gabled roofs covered with clay barrel tile roofing. A wide variety of materials and designs were used for ornamentation, including terra cotta, cast stone, wrought iron, and glazed ceramic tiles. The Mediterranean Revival architectural style is covered as a primary style in the Lake Worth Beach Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, and that chapter is included in this report as **Attachment C**.

All new construction within a designated historic district shall be visually compatible. New buildings should take their design cues from the surrounding existing structures, using traditional or contemporary design standards and elements that relate to existing structures that surround them and within the historic district as a whole. Building design styles, whether contemporary or traditional, should be visually compatible with the existing structures in the district. The visual compatibility criteria for new construction within the city's historic districts is located in [Section 23.5-4\(k\)\(3\)\(A\)](#) in the LDRs. Staff has reviewed the criteria and provided an analysis in the section below. The applicant has also submitted a Justification Statement, provided in this report as **Attachment D**.

Section 23.5-4(k)3.A – Additional Guidelines for New Construction: *In approving or denying applications for certificates of appropriateness for new construction, the City shall also, at a minimum, consider the following additional guidelines which help to define visual compatibility in the applicable property's historic district:*

- (1) *The height of proposed buildings shall be visually compatible and in harmony with the height of existing buildings located within the historic district.*

Analysis: The height of the proposed building is taller than the height of most of the neighboring structures. Generally, this area of South Palmway is characterized by low, one-story houses. As the proposed new construction at 927 South Palmway is 2 stories tall, its height is not in harmony with the majority of the existing buildings in the surrounding neighborhood.

- (2) *The relationship of the width of the building to the height of the front elevation shall be visually compatible and in harmony with the width and height of the front elevation of existing buildings located within the district.*

Analysis: While the width of the front elevation is in scale with the surrounding properties, the two-story height of the proposed new construction creates a different relationship between the building's width and height than many of its surrounding neighbors. Whereas most of the existing buildings nearby are wider than they are tall, emphasizing horizontality, the proposed new construction is taller than it is wide, and has a greater emphasis on verticality than most of the nearby structures, which tend to be low, wide, one-story structures.

Part of the applicant's justification for the narrow, vertically-oriented design is the consideration of the existing c. 1925 structure. Staff noted during meetings with the previous and current property owners that staff would likely not be able to support a new construction design that completely blocks visibility of the historic structure from the public right-of-way, especially because of the recommendation for the existing structure to become contributing in the new historic resources survey. To retain some visibility of the historic structure while meeting the applicant's desire for space in the new house, the applicants chose to use a narrow two-story design and shifted the placement of the structure towards the north to provide continued visibility of the historic structure.

- (3) *For landmarks and contributing buildings and structures, the openings of any building within a historic district should be visually compatible and in harmony with the openings in buildings of a similar architectural style located within the historic district. The relationship of the width of the windows and doors to the height of the windows and doors in a building shall be visually compatible with buildings within the district.*

Analysis: The proposed design is new construction and therefore will not be a landmarked or contributing building. The proposed multi-light single hung windows, and multi-light French doors are compatible with the contemporary style of the structure and properties in the Northeast Lucerne Local Historic District that utilize masonry construction. However, the side elevations feature asymmetric window placement and that is atypical for buildings within the historic districts.

- (4) *The relationship of solids to voids in the front facade of a building or structure shall be visually compatible and in harmony with the front facades of historic buildings or structures located within the historic district. A long, unbroken facade in a setting of existing narrow structures can be divided into smaller bays which will complement the visual setting and the streetscape.*

Analysis: The front (east) elevation avoids expanses of black façade, and the relationship of solids to voids is generally in harmony with neighboring buildings.

- (5) *The relationship of a building to open space between it and adjoining buildings shall be visually compatible and in harmony with the relationship between buildings elsewhere within the district.*

Analysis: The proposed building adheres to setback requirements within the current zoning code and is spaced appropriately in relation to neighboring buildings.

- (6) *The relationship of entrance and porch projections to sidewalks of a building shall be visually compatible and in harmony with the prevalent architectural styles of entrances and porch projections on buildings and structures within the district.*

Analysis: The proposed design places the entrance on the front elevation, with a second-story balcony projecting out over the entryway. The surrounding homes have a variety of entrance and porch configurations; most utilize a front-facing entry door and many have narrow open-air entry porches.

- (7) *The relationship of the materials, texture and color of the façade of a building shall be visually compatible and in harmony with the predominant materials used in the buildings and structures of a similar style located within the historic district.*

Analysis: The proposed building will have a textured stucco exterior finish. This is a common façade material for Mediterranean Revival architecture, and is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

- (8) *The roof shape of a building or structure shall be visually compatible and in harmony with the roof shape of buildings or structures of a similar architectural style located within the historic district.*

Analysis: The structure proposes to use a hipped roof, which is a compatible roof shape for multiple architectural styles within the surrounding historic district as well as for the Mediterranean Revival style.

- (9) *Appurtenances of a building, such as walls, wrought iron, fences, evergreen, landscape masses and building facades, shall, if necessary, form cohesive walls of enclosures along a street to ensure visual compatibility of the building to the buildings and places to which it is visually related.*

Analysis: The site features are appropriate for the structure and its context in the neighborhood.

- (10) *The size and mass of a building in relation to open spaces, the windows, door openings, porches and balconies shall be visually compatible and in harmony with the buildings and places to which it is visually related.*

Analysis: The size and mass of the proposed building are more substantial than the majority of the neighboring properties. The building utilizes glazing and a large front porch to add visual interest to the façade, and the proportions of the window and door openings are visually compatible with the surrounding neighborhood

(11) A building shall be visually compatible and in harmony with the buildings and places to which it is visually related in its directional character: vertical, horizontal or non-directional.

Analysis: The applicant has provided a streetscape showing the building in relation to those to either side of it. The building's height and massing are more substantial than the majority of the immediately neighboring properties.

(12) The architectural style of a building shall be visually compatible with other buildings to which it is related in the historic district, but does not necessarily have to be in the same style of buildings in the district. New construction or additions to a building are encouraged to be appropriate to the style of the period in which it is created and not attempt to create a false sense of history.

Analysis: The proposed new structure is designed as a contemporary iteration of the Mediterranean Revival style. The Mediterranean Revival style is generally compatible with the surrounding district. While the proposed design does not use as much architectural ornamentation as many historic Mediterranean Revival structures did, the overall design successfully incorporates the character-defining features of the style.

(13) In considering applications for certificates of appropriateness to install mechanical systems which affect the exterior of a building or structure visible from a public right-of-way, the following criteria shall be considered:

(a) Retain and repair, where possible, historic mechanical systems in their original location, where possible.

Analysis: This requirement is not applicable to the new construction project.

(b) New mechanical systems shall be placed on secondary facades only and shall not be placed on, nor be visible from, primary facades.

Analysis: In the submitted site plan, all mechanical equipment is placed outside the required side setbacks and is placed next to a secondary (north) façade.

(c) New mechanical systems shall not damage, destroy or compromise the physical integrity of the structure and shall be installed so as to cause the least damage, invasion or visual obstruction to the structure's building materials, or to its significant historic, cultural or architectural features.

Analysis: This requirement is not applicable to the new construction project.

(14) The site should take into account the compatibility of parking facilities, utility and service areas, walkways and appurtenances. These should be designated with the overall environment in mind and should be in keeping visually with related buildings and structures.

Analysis: The site plan proposes to adapt and expand the existing side-loaded gravel driveway, creating an L-shaped driveway accommodating 2 parking spaces. While this driveway configuration is atypical within the historic districts, it does accommodate the required 2 off-street parking spaces while meeting the requirements for front yard landscaping. The proposed site design is generally compatible with the surrounding neighborhood; in addition to a landscape plan, a tree survey and disposition plan shall be required at building permit.

Consistency with the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines

Per the Lake Worth Beach Historic Guidelines, *“New construction can be designed utilizing the architectural language of one of the 10 defined primary styles, or an alternative yet compatible style. It is very important that new construction not hybridize the styles, borrowing pieces from one and another. This approach creates confusion and dilutes the intrinsic value of the historic structures and styles. The best approach is to choose one style of architecture, and to design a structure that utilizes the common characteristics, proportions, and materials of that style.”* The Mediterranean Revival architectural style is covered as a primary style in the Lake Worth Beach Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, and that chapter is included in this report as **Attachment C**.

Analysis: New construction in the City’s historic districts is not limited to any particular architectural style, but staff always recommends that projects are designed solely within one architectural style. Staff contends that the design of the structure displays architectural features and materials that are consistent with Mediterranean Revival architecture; the hipped roof with barrel tile roofing, four-over-four single-hung windows, arched windows on the front façade, and textured stucco exterior wall finish are character-defining features of the Mediterranean Revival style present in the design.

The front façade features a two-story entry porch with simple columns. While balconies were a common architectural feature of Mediterranean Revival architecture, a full two-story entry porch would be atypical for this style historically. Tall, one-and-a-half or two-story entrance porches became more common in American architecture in the late 20th century. The structure is designed with a textured stucco exterior wall finish. The structure’s massing is rectangular and symmetrical; historic Mediterranean Revival houses were typically asymmetrical in massing and configuration. Mediterranean Revival architecture is also known for its elaborate ornamentation. While the proposed design does incorporate some decorative features, such as the arched windows on the front elevation and the balcony railing, staff contends that the design could be made more compatible through additional architectural ornament, such as decorative stucco detailing around the front doors.

The structure proposes hipped roofs over the main massing of the structure as well as the entry porch, with concrete barrel tile roofing on both. Per the Design Guidelines, historic roofing materials for the Mediterranean Revival style were typically terra cotta barrel tiles; the proposed roofing will imitate the historically appropriate roofing type.

The fenestration incorporates single hung windows with four divided lights in each sash, as well as ten-light French doors. The design proposes an atypical eight-light transom window on the north elevation; although this window design is unusual for the Mediterranean Revival style, the window will not be visible from the public right-of-way. The window placement and fenestration pattern generally avoids long expanses of blank façade on the front and rear elevations, although the side (north and south) elevations do have a few blank areas.

Finally, staff contends that the scale, height, and massing of the proposed new construction are out of character for the surrounding neighborhood. As described in the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, *“Few things can disrupt a historic street and district more than new construction that is out of scale, too tall, and simply overwhelms its lot. ... Even if the zoning code allows a two-story structure; on a street made of one-story historic structures, a two-story structure may not be appropriate.”* The 2-story height of the proposed building is taller than the height of most of the neighboring structures. Generally, this area of South Palmway is characterized by low, one-story houses. Furthermore, while the width of the front elevation is in scale with the surrounding properties, the two-story height of the proposed new construction creates a different relationship between the building’s width and height than many of its surrounding neighbors. Whereas most of the existing buildings nearby are wider than they are tall, emphasizing horizontality, the proposed new construction is both tall and wide, and has a greater emphasis on verticality. However, as discussed in the previous section, the applicant’s justification for the narrow, vertically-oriented design is to retain some visibility of the historic structure while meeting the applicant’s desire for space in the new house. Staff also has concerns that the building height could increase significantly when Base Flood Elevation requirements are addressed. Staff has added a

condition of approval to bring the design back to the HRPB if building height, wall height, and/or design are significantly altered from the current architectural plans due to Base Flood Elevation requirements.

CONCLUSION AND CONDITIONS

The proposed new construction application is consistent with the City's Land Development Regulations. As proposed, the structure's design is partially consistent with the Historic Preservation Ordinance and the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines' requirements for new construction. Staff contends that the proposed design successfully utilizes character-defining features of the Mediterranean Revival architectural style and does provide continued visibility of the historic structure, but the proposed height and scale of the new structure are out of character with the surrounding neighborhood. Therefore, staff recommends that the Board carefully review the proposed design, taking into consideration both the scale of the surrounding neighborhood as well as the relationship of the new construction to the existing historic structure. If the HRPB moves to approve the new construction request, staff has drafted conditions of approval below.

Conditions of Approval:

- 1) If the building height, wall height, and/or design are significantly altered due to Base Flood Elevation requirements, the project shall return to the HRPB for a revised COA review.
- 2) The existing ±786 square foot house shall be converted into an accessory structure.
 - a. The accessory structure shall not be utilized as an accessory dwelling unit (ADU).
 - b. The accessory structure (converted garage) shall not have kitchen facilities as defined in the City's Land Development Regulation (LDR) Section 23.1-12: "Facility within a dwelling unit inclusive of all the following: cooling and food preparation appliances, cold storage, plumbing, and ventilation. A microwave, sink, and refrigerator shall not constitute a kitchen." Future alterations that would lead to the conversion of the structure to an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) shall be prohibited. The accessory structure shall function as an extension of and subordinate to the new single-family residence at 927 South Palmway.
 - c. The accessory structure shall not be granted an additional utility meter from the Public Utilities Department and shall not be issued a rental license from the Lake Worth Beach Business License Division.
- 3) Windows and doors shall be compatible with the Mediterranean Revival architectural style. The exact design of the windows and doors shall be reviewed by staff at permitting.
- 4) The front door and bathroom windows may utilize clear glass, frosted glass, or glass with a Low-E coating (60% minimum VLT). Tinted, highly reflective, grey, colored, etched, or leaded glass shall not be used.
- 5) The windows and doors (excluding the bathroom windows and front door) shall utilize glazing that is clear, non-reflective, and without tint. Low-E (low emissivity) is allowed but the glass shall have a minimum 60% visible light transmittance (VLT) measured from the center of glazing. Glass tints or any other glass treatments shall not be combined with the Low-E coating to further diminish the VLT of the glass.
- 6) The windows shall be recessed a minimum of two inches (2") in the wall, and shall not be installed flush with the exterior wall.
- 7) All divided light patterns shall be created utilizing exterior raised applied muntins. Exterior flat muntins or "grids between the glass" shall not be used.
- 8) The roofing shall use concrete barrel tile roofing in a terra cotta color to imitate clay tile roofing.
- 9) The structure shall utilize a textured stucco finish.
- 10) The site plan shall be revised at permit to accurately depict setbacks of the existing structure, as well as all existing impermeable surfaces.
- 11) Formal and complete review for compliance with the City's Land Development Regulations will be conducted at building permit review.
- 12) All improved surfaces shall be setback a minimum of 1'-0" from property lines to allow for adequate water runoff within the property boundary.

- 13) All mechanical equipment shall be located behind the front façade of the structure and outside of required setbacks.
- 14) A gravel stabilization plan shall be submitted at building permit, noting how the gravel driveway will be maintained so that gravel stays out of the right-of-way, alley, and storm water systems.
- 15) In addition to a Landscape Plan, a tree survey and disposition plan shall also be required at building permit. Trees that are removed must be replaced on site and/or mitigated, and a tree removal permit shall be required. Landscaping shall be reviewed for compliance with the City's landscape requirements at building permit.

BOARD POTENTIAL MOTION:

I MOVE TO **APPROVE** HRPB Project Number 24-00100032 with staff recommended conditions for the construction of a new single-family structure at **927 South Palmway**, based upon the competent substantial evidence in the staff report and pursuant to the City of Lake Worth Beach Land Development Regulations and Historic Preservation requirements.

I MOVE TO **DISAPPROVE** HRPB Project Number 24-00100032 for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for the construction of a new single-family structure at **927 South Palmway**, because the Applicant has not established by competent substantial evidence that the application complies with the City of Lake Worth Beach Land Development Regulation and Historic Preservation requirements.

Consequent Action: *The Historic Resources Preservation Board's decision will be final decision for the new construction. The Applicant may appeal the Board's decision to the City Commission.*

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Plan Set and Survey
- B. Photos
- C. Historic Preservation Design Guidelines – Mediterranean Revival and New Construction
- D. Applicant's Justification Statement