

CITY OF MIAMI
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Staff Report & Recommendation

To: Chairperson and Members
Historic Environmental Preservation Board

From: Megan Schmitt
Preservation Officer

Applicant: James Barrett, Owner

Subject: **Item No. 8 – 643 NE 69 Street**

The owner, James Barrett, of subject property, a two-story contributing residence located in the Bayside Historic District is requesting site improvements for the front yard.

BACKGROUND: This is a new application. The applicant recently applied and was approved for a standard Certificate of Appropriateness that was issued at staff level to include the repair of original windows, replacement of select windows that are not original, new awnings, and exterior painting.

THE PROPERTY: The subject property is a two-story contributing residence built in 1925.

HISTORIC PICTURE:



ANALYSIS:

The applicant is requesting approval of proposed site improvements that include adjusting the slope of the front yard to draw rainwater away from the house and the foundation, new walkways, new pavers, and the addition of new landscaping in the front yard.

Currently rainwater collects in the area underneath the porte cochère, creating a pool of water that negatively effects the foundation of the home. This also makes it difficult to access the porte cochère during rainfall. The applicant is proposing the implementation of a gradual incline towards the house, creating an overall 1'-0" increase from the current elevation to the top of the new elevation located closest to the house. Additionally, the applicant has proposed the creation of two new walkways and the placement of new concrete pavers on all driveway and walkway surfaces. Staff is supportive of this request.

New landscaping is also proposed for the front yard. Plans show a variety of species, including several types of low plants and palms. Majority of the yard shows coverage with Purple Salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*) which is a common biennial wildflower. Staff would suggest a reduction of the amount of coverage for the Purple Salsify. Other plants that are proposed include the *Tranescantia Pallida* and *Zamia Furfuracea* – both of which are considered invasive species and staff does not support placement within the landscaping plan. The *Wodyetia Bifurcata* (Foxtail Palm) is a high maintenance palm that regularly dispenses seeds that can quickly pile-up and take root. Staff would suggest that the applicant choose a different palm species that requires less maintenance. Overall staff suggests presenting a revised landscape plan, to be approved by staff, that utilizes plants that do not have a high growth rate, stay low to the ground, and are not an invasive species.

Along the western property line of the residence, the applicant is requesting to place a clusia hedge that runs from the rear of the porte cochère to the property line. Within the Bayside Historic District, the placement of hedges along the side of a property that extend beyond the front façade is not allowed. The applicant has requested an exception in his case due to his close proximity to the main entrance to the neighborhood and to the commercial activity along Biscayne Boulevard. The applicant has also stated that he would like to place a clusia hedge along the western property line of his neighbors residence (the lot to the west) which is the first house within the Bayside Historic District on the Northside of 69th Street.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The Preservation Office recommends that the application for a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for site improvements be **Approved with Conditions**.

1. Applicant to present a revised landscape plan, to be approved by staff, that utilizes plants that do not have a high growth rate, stay low to the ground, and are not an invasive species.
2. This Certificate of Appropriateness is subject to approval by zoning, building, and all other required city departments.