



1001 SW 67 AVE, STE 102
Miami, FL 33144-4756
(305) 894-6605 OFFICE
(786) 347-7692 FAX

email: info@arm-architect.com
website: www.arm-architect.com
Florida License Number AA26001833

May 8, 2015

Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation

Accessibility Council
Mary-Kathryn Smith
1940 North Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1027

RE: Accessibility Waiver - 336 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach, FL

Dear Mrs. Smith:

I was hired by my client to document the restoration and alteration of this more than eighty year old structure. It is a building which is a good example of the Art Deco Mediterranean Revival which was prevalent in Miami Beach in the 1930's and 40's.

The building is classified by the City of Miami Beach as "contributing" in the Miami Beach Historic Properties Database and it is located within the Ocean Beach Local Historic District.

The building's main architectural feature is its lobby. The lobby is just 6 inches above grade or sidewalk elevation. Beyond the lobby is the first floor which is currently accessible by stairs going up 4 feet. Also accessible by stair from the lobby is the second floor roughly fourteen feet above the lobby elevation. The building more or less occupies its entire lot. The rear of the building is used for service and emergency exiting.

For vertical accessibility as is required by the Florida Building Code, the lobby is the logical place to locate an elevator, LULA, or lift. The unfortunate truth is that any of these devices would "threaten or destroy" the historic character of the most significant aspect of the building.

For accessible rooms as required by the Florida Building Code, the design incorporates a fully accessible room on the first floor with both mobility and communication features. The design also incorporates three additional rooms with full communication features and one additional room with improved mobility features. There is simply not enough space to provide two rooms with mobility features as the code requires.

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For accessibility to the lobby, which is currently 6 inches above the sidewalk elevation, the design incorporates an accessible ramp at the side yard of the building along the side of the lobby. Also, the design incorporates a redesigned reception counter with provisions for accessibility.

We, the owner and the design team, have taken as many steps as possible to provide in this project as many of the accessibility features required by code as possible. We thank you for your consideration in waiving some of the requirements which are either not feasible or would destroy the character of this historic building.

Sincerely,

Amilcar R. Melendez, RA
President – ARM Architect PA
Florida Registration - AR 93063