

From: Parsons, Timothy A. [<mailto:Timothy.Parsons@dos.myflorida.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, November 07, 2017 6:40 PM

To: Spring, Michael (Office of the Mayor) <Michael.Spring@miamidade.gov>; Tomlinson, Angela E. <Angela.Tomlinson@DOS.MyFlorida.com>

Cc: Fitz-Patrick, Christie (Burrus) <Christie.Fitz-Patrick@dos.myflorida.com>; Rodriguez, Yasha <Yasha.Rodriguez@dos.myflorida.com>; Denis, Marie (CUA) <Marie.Denis@miamidade.gov>; Kirtley, Eddie (CAO) <Eddie.Kirtley@miamidade.gov>; Cody, Sarah (RER) <Sarah.CodyAdelman@miamidade.gov>; Storhoff, Timothy P. <Timothy.Storhoff@dos.myflorida.com>

Subject: Re: important info needed DHR

Michael,

Thank you for your patience in awaiting this reply. As you know, I've been out of the office and I wanted to confer with DHR staff before responding.

After technical review of Special Category Grant Application 19.h.sc.100.166 (Coconut Grove Playhouse) from Miami-Dade County, the Division of Historical Resources reached a determination of ineligibility for the grant application, due to inconsistency of the proposed project with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Historic Preservation (the "Secretary's Standards"). This determination was discussed with me in detail before it was finalized, and I agreed with our staff's assessment.

In further explanation of this determination of ineligibility, please note that the Special Category Grant program is governed by Chapter 1A-39, Florida Administrative Code, and the Special Category Grants Guidelines that are incorporated therein. Pursuant to Rule 1A-39.001(7)(c), F.A.C., all grant work funded by the Division must conform to the standards contained in the Secretary's Standards, and additionally, the Special Category Grant Guidelines, in Section IV.4, provide that expenditures for work not consistent with the Secretary's Standards are non-allowable for expenditure of grant funds and as contributions to required match.

This project, as presented in the application and associated attachments (including architectural drawings), does not conform to the Secretary's Standards, in that if carried out as proposed it would not comply with the following Standards for Rehabilitation:

Standard No. 1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.

Standard No. 2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Standard No. 4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

Standard No. 5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

Standard No. 6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Standard No. 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Standard No. 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

As proposed, this project will result in the loss of integrity of the building. The entire interior of the building would be replaced as part of the proposed structural work. Plans submitted with the application show the complete loss of the interior organization of the front building. In addition, the historic theater space where the activities that make this property significant would be demolished to construct a new building. This would render the property ineligible for the National Register under its significance as a theater.

These findings during technical review of Application 19.h.sc.100.166, supported a determination of ineligibility due to inconsistency with the Secretary's Standards, and as a result, the application was placed in "Ineligible" status in the DOS Grants Online System (www.dosgrants.com) on September 5, 2017, as shown in the application's online Activity Log. On September 5, automatically generated messages were sent to individuals shown in the grants system as Organization Managers and Submitters. The Organization Managers and Submitters for Miami-Dade County are:

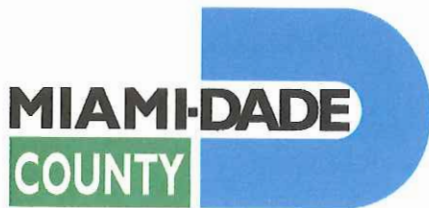
Daniels, LaTousha	latousha.daniels@miamidade.gov	Submitter
Spring, Michael	ms4@miamidade.gov	Organization Manager
Leslie, Marialaura	Marialaura.Leslie@miamidade.gov	Organization Manager
Leslie, Marialaura	ML8@miamidade.gov	Organization Manager

I hope that this clarifies the situation and answers your questions. As you know I am a supporter of the County's efforts to revitalize the Coconut Grove Playhouse and return it to its former vibrancy. A determination of ineligibility for this grant certainly isn't a judgement on the value of the proposed work. However, what is proposed isn't allowable under this grant program. Please let me know if you have any additional questions, or if there is anything else that I can clarify.

Best,
Tim

Timothy Parsons, Ph.D., RPA

Director, Division of Historical Resources | State Historic Preservation Officer | Florida
Department of State | 500 South Bronough Street | Tallahassee, Florida
32399 | 850.245.6306 | www.flheritage.com



Cultural Affairs
111 NW 1st Street • Suite 625
Miami, FL 33128-1994
T 305-375-4634 F 305-375-3068
miamidadearts.org

miamidade.gov

November 28, 2017

Dr. Timothy A. Parsons, Ph.D., RPA
Division Director, and State Historic Preservation Officer
Florida Department of State
Division of Historical Resources
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Re: Special Category Grant Application – Coconut Grove Playhouse

Dear Dr. Parsons:

Tim,

First and foremost, we would like to thank you for your candor and detailed explanation of the determination of ineligibility regarding the Special Category Grant. Though our professional analysis differs, we appreciate the opportunity to keep an open dialogue with you and your staff regarding the future of the Coconut Grove Playhouse. With that in mind, we offer our thoughts on your staff's assessment.

We would like to reiterate that the application addressed work to restore, rehabilitate, and reinvigorate the historic front building, designed by Richard Kiehnel in 1927. With the exception of egress stairways and an elevator to address life-safety issues, the proposed project recaptures the historic spatial configuration of the interior of the structure. It also restores the façade, with its original architectural details, and reopens the historic storefronts, bringing vibrancy and life back to the Playhouse at the iconic streetfront façade. As detailed in the local historic designation report, this front building, specifically the south and east façades, are the most architecturally significant features of the site.

The assessment provided appears to be based on an assumption that the rear building, which houses the auditorium, retains its historic integrity. While it was part of the original build-out of the Coconut Grove Playhouse, subsequent additions and alterations by Alfred Browning Parker, and later by Ferguson Glasglow Schuster, Inc., among others, have altered the historic space in such a way that its integrity has, unfortunately, been lost.

While Alfred Browning Parker is, inarguably, a master architect, in terms of his additions to the Playhouse, his most significant design elements were housed in the lobby preceding the auditorium. Those design elements no longer remain in place today, as they were removed during later renovations. Within the auditorium itself, his alterations can be understood as a project of expedience; he addressed the programmatic needs of the theater space, without consideration of how his alterations interacted with the significant architectural features of the original Kiehnel design. For example, his reconfiguration of space left columns, arches, and fountains partially buried in concrete.

The result of this work was a degradation of the historic auditorium space, and an ultimate loss of integrity.

The grant application proposed a master plan that was considered at a public hearing by the City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board. The associated staff report recommended approval with a series of conditions. The positive recommendation from staff indicates that they evaluated the proposed work against the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, as required, and determined it to be in compliance. The approval by the Board affirms that.

With regard to the individual Standards, we have assessed the work proposed for the historic front building, which is the only original space that retains its historic character and integrity:

Standard 1: The building is being returned to its historic use, defining a formal entry experience for visitors to the auditorium, and engaging with pedestrians through the reopening of the historic storefronts.

Standard 2: The historic character is being retained and restored to its original design, as documented in historic period photographs. Distinctive architectural features, such as the storefronts, and parapet details, that were removed over time, are being restored.

Standard 4: While it can be argued that the design elements introduced by Alfred Browning Parker in the lobby area during the 1950s acquired historic significance in their own right, those were later removed. Parker's work within the auditorium space itself is not architecturally significant; in reality, it degrades the integrity of the interior space.

Standard 5: The distinctive materials, features, and finishes that characterize the historic structure are to be preserved in the proposed project. As documented, the front building is the most architecturally significant portion of the overall site. This building, and its individual architectural features, are being restored. Significant architectural elements that characterized the auditorium, prior to the introduction of insensitive alterations, are being proposed for reuse, to the greatest extent possible. This includes, notably, the double proscenium arch. Other elements that are not feasible for reuse, such as the auditorium columns, are being proposed for display and interpretation.

Standard 6: Deteriorated historic features are proposed for repair and restoration. Missing features, such as the storefronts and original parapet, are proposed for replacement based on historic period documentation.

Standard 8: Any ground disturbing work will be monitored by an archaeologist and an archaeological report detailing the monitoring shall be submitted to the Historic Preservation Office.

Standard 9: The new construction is proposed in place of the existing auditorium building, which has lost its historic integrity over time. The new construction is compatible in size, scale, proportion, massing and spatial relationship. The new theater will be located along the same axis as the original

auditorium. It will be distinguishable from the historic building through its material and setback. It is important to note that it is compatible in terms of spatial and visual relationships as well. When seen from the primary public viewshed of Main Highway and Charles Avenue, the historic building remains the visually dominant element, with the new addition only visible when visitors travel through the historic building, or approach from the rear of the property.

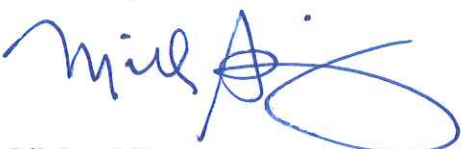
Standard 10: The front building is the only extant building that retains its historic integrity and character. The proposed new addition, if removed in the future, would not alter the essential form or integrity of the historic building.

It was stated that as proposed, this project will result in the loss of integrity of the building. In reality, the historic integrity of the auditorium building was degraded over time through a series of insensitive alterations. The front building is the most architecturally significant, and retains the greatest degree of integrity. The project, as proposed, seeks to not only restore the front building, but to breathe new life into one of the County's great cultural sites.

Based on its historic context, the Coconut Grove Playhouse is currently eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. However, in reality, the loss of integrity to the auditorium space has already made the property ineligible for listing under its significance as a theater. It maintains its eligibility based on its architectural significance and as a work of Richard Kiehnel; our project aims to celebrate that history and restore the former vibrancy of the Playhouse as an iconic part of the Coconut Grove community.

Again, we thank you for your consideration and your support of our revitalization efforts. We look forward to our continued relationship, and to the on-going dialogue as we continue our work to rehabilitate the Playhouse.

Sincerely,



Michael Spring
Senior Advisor, Office of the Mayor
Director, Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs