



June 8, 2015

Members of the Florida Building Commission & Accessibility Advisory Council
c/o Chip Sellers
Office of Codes & Standard, Florida Department of Community Affairs
1940 North Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Re: Statement on Bass Museum of Art Accessibility

Dear Mr. Sellers and Members of the Commission and Council:

I am the architect for a planned expansion and renovation of the Bass Museum of Art, located at 2100 Collins Avenue in Miami Beach, Florida. The museum is about to undergo renovations and, as such, this letter requests your review of the building's accessibility deficiency in light of its historic significance.

The building was built in 1930, and its historic status is documented in the attached letter from Debbie Tackett. In the most recent expansion, completed in 2001, the entrance was moved from the historic front to the west side of the new building. This made sense at the time because a library built within the park in 1962 had unfortunately blocked the open vista from the museum across the park to the Atlantic Ocean. Furthermore, this new entrance was accessible.

In 2004, a new library was built adjacent to the park and the 1962 library was demolished. When Collins Park was restored in 2008, opening the vista to the Ocean once again, the Museum decided to re-open the original main entrance facing the park.

This historic entrance has a porch with seven steps so it is not accessible. To add a ramp or lift at this location would damage the architectural character of this building which is one of the first and finest examples of Art Deco architecture in Miami Beach.

We are proposing to create an accessible entrance on the north side between the historic building and the 2000 addition. This entrance would have a new ramp and be equipped with a video intercom system and electric lock release, monitored by the receptionist at the front desk. The route to this ramp is 200 feet from the main entrance and 70 feet from 22nd Street.

There will be a new entrance on Park Avenue for the Education Department which will utilize the ramp built in 2001. This will also be the staff entrance.

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We believe our solution is in accordance with the Preservation Brief 32, "Making Historic Properties Accessible", wherein it is written:

"Whenever possible, access to historic buildings should be through a primary public entrance. In historic buildings, if this cannot be achieved without permanent damage to character-defining features, at least one entrance used by the public should be made accessible. If the accessible entrance is not the primary public entrance, directional signs should direct visitors to the accessible entrance. A rear or service entrance should be avoided as the only mean of entering a building."

For your review, we are submitting the following materials:

1. Letter from Debbie Tackett, Preservation & Design Manager, Planning Department of the City of Miami Beach, regarding the historic status of the building.
2. Historic Resources Report for the Bass Museum of Art, dated February 6, 2015.
3. Site Plan diagram indicating the main entry and accessible entries.
4. Photographs of the building's exterior and interior.
5. Existing 1st Floor Plan.
6. Proposed 1st Floor Plan.
7. Sketches showing how making the main entry accessible would impact the historic character.

The only accessibility deficiency of the building will be the lack of a ramp or lift at the main entry. We believe we have provided reasonable alternative entries that preserve the historic and architectural character. In all other ways, inside and outside, the building will comply with the ADA.

We appreciate your consultation and look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Gauld".

David Gauld, AIA