



ARCHITECTURE INTERIOR DESIGN PLANNING

MEMORANDUM

To: Florida Building Commission
Cc: Adam Hyatt – 235 Washington Holdings, LLC
From: Carlos Aguayo 
Date: July 2, 2020
Re: SoBe Hostel at 235 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, Florida 33139
Accessibility Waiver Request

The purpose of this document is to provide an explanation from the design professional as to the specific reasons for the Request for Waiver ("Waiver") of accessibility requirements from the Florida Building Commission ("FBC") for the SoBe Hostel, located at 235 Washington Avenue in the City of Miami Beach, Florida. The SoBe Hostel is a 2-story Art Deco contributing structure built in 1938 located in the Ocean Beach District of South Beach. The Waiver is being requested for limited access to the public men and women restrooms located at the upper lobby reception. The access to these existing restrooms which already are built in compliance with ADA but are located 30" above the lower lobby entrance to the Hostel. The historical uniqueness of the Hostel is the street level lounge bar lobby which has access via four (4) steps to the upper lobby reception and guestrooms. The rear of the buildings ground floor is used for egress with stairs leading to the public right-of-way on Collins Court alleyway. Refer to the site and floor plans made part of this memo.

The applicant is in the process of renovating the existing interior finishes of the guestrooms, men and women gang bathrooms serving the guests and the public spaces. The City of Miami Beach Building Department has indicated that a waiver from Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) vertical accessibility standards, and specifically from Florida Accessibility Code Section 201.1, must be issued by the FBC for this limited access to the public men and women restrooms.

Based on the building conditions described with proposed renovation the applicant is requesting a waiver for compliance with the FAC vertical accessibility requirements that are not mandated by ADA as they present a historical, economical and feasibility hardship. The applicant has considered two (2) alternative scenarios to achieve compliance, which concluded in determining the hardship.

In the first scenario, the use of a chair lift riding over the existing steps up to the lobby reception which would negatively impact the egress width of the stair and deter the appearance of street level lounge bar seating area.

In the second scenario, a ramp would be constructed to replace the four (4) steps. This would require a switch-back type 30'-0" long ramp (1" per 12" or 8.3% slope) which would again affect the uniqueness of the bar lounge and elevated reception lobby area affecting seating.

We respectfully request your consideration for this limited access to the existing public restrooms to the upper lobby to remain as is.