

1849 J LLC
1849 James Avenue, Miami Beach, Florida
Vertical Accessibility – ADA Waiver Application

Grounds for a Waiver

Technical Infeasibility. As originally designed and built, the separate, pod arrangement of units with first level units raised above the courtyard means there is no vertical accessibility to any of the units. To address this would require integration of eight (8) ramps to the first level units and eight (8) elevators to the second level units. Accomplishing all of this within this narrow 1950 building and its small internal courtyard entails a set of considerable challenges. The substantial structural adjustments required to retroactively accommodate multiple elevators are technically infeasible because of the age, architecture, and spatial dimensions of the Property. Like many garden-style apartments of its time, this structure was conceived and constructed without consideration of ramps or elevator space. Due to the building's age, substantial structural elements need to be added to facilitate elevators, which further increases the potential footprint of elevator installation.

The building's spatial limitations, characterized by its constrained width and unique layout, represent significant barriers. Further, due to all the nooks and crannies created by the architecture, the majority of the ground floor, both inside and outside, is required for life-safety egress. The implementation of elevators, ramps, or other lift mechanisms would undeniably consume a substantial portion of the building's internal spatial capacity, rendering it technically infeasible to facilitate vertical access without compromising life-safety pathways, functional layout and practical viability. The proposal provides the required number of accessible ground floor units, and no different use exists on the second floor than on the first floor. The installation of ramps and elevators is severely impractical and would cause a consequential reduction of the overall usable courtyard space and hotel space, and impede on life-safety egress pathways resulting in substantial safety issues.

Notably, the Applicant's architectural plans demonstrate extensive accessibility compliance in all other respects. The Applicant has ensured that the renovation of the building includes accessible pathways and the installation of ramps where required, including one providing access to the ground-floor lobby and one providing access to two ground-floor units. The Applicant's

renovation plans for the building include the remodeling of two hotel rooms on the ground-floor, to provide full ADA accessible bathrooms. In conclusion, given the building's age, architectural framework and unique spatial limitations, the installation of multiple elevator systems and numerous ramps is technically infeasible.

Historic Nature of the Building. In addition to the technical infeasibility described above, integration of multiple ramps and elevators would severely threaten the historic integrity of this contributing structure by necessitating fundamental changes to the building's structural framework and the character of the courtyard, resulting in irreversible impacts to its defining historic features and public spaces.

Any modification to the building's structure to accommodate multiple elevators would irreparably harm the building's unique and identifying historic characteristics. The unit layouts and exterior elevations would be compromised in many locations. Further, implementing numerous ramps for all first level units detracts from the original layout and appeal of the courtyard. As the owner of the building, the Applicant is responsible for maintaining these historic elements throughout the process of the proposed renovation, for the betterment of the property, the neighborhood, and the City of Miami Beach.

Please also see the following documents related to the historic nature of the property:

- The City's Historic Database listing the property as a contributing structure within the local Museum Historic District and the National Miami Beach Architectural District – see excerpt on next page;
- The City's Building Card

MIAMI BEACH HISTORIC PROPERTIES DATABASE

