

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

GROUNDS FOR APPROVAL

- **Economic Hardship**

- Does the cost of providing vertical accessibility meet or exceed 20% of the cost of the alteration to the primary function area?
- If the 20% threshold is met, the waiver SHALL be granted.
- Does not apply to new construction.
 - Fit-outs/Build-outs are considered new construction

- **Historic Nature**

- Has the applicant provided documentation of the historic significance of the building?
- Would the historic significance of the structure be negatively impacted by the alterations applicant would have to make to provide accessibility?
- Can be combined with Technical Infeasibility or Economic Hardship

- **Technical Infeasibility**

- Is the structure built in a way that would otherwise place unnecessary, unreasonable, or extreme hardship on the applicant, if they were required to provide accessibility?
 - Has the applicant provided comments from a licensed design professional?
 - Would have to rebuild, demolish, encroach on property lines, etc.

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Elizabeth Bishop House - WAV # 637

Issue: Vertical accessibility to the first and second floors.

Project Type: Historical preservation (alteration)

Project Progress: Under Construction

Analysis:

The applicant is requesting a waiver from providing vertical accessibility to the first and second floors of a historic two-story house built in 1933 with 1,366 square feet. The Applicant is proposing to provide a public garden with educational exhibits focusing on the life and work of poet Elizabeth Bishop. This outdoor component will be open to the public 5 days a week and will have accessible pathways and an accessible ground-floor restroom. The interior of the house will include offices for everyday administrative use and occasional exhibits for the public.

The architect for the project stated that providing for vertical accessibility to the first floor and second floor would be technically infeasible due to the existing structural condition which would require removing or altering multiple load-bearing structural members that are essential parts of the building structural frame and that such alteration would threaten or destroy the historic integrity of the building. The project cost is \$426,619 for the alteration. The alteration will consist of the restoration of the cistern porch, and the historic windows and shutters; and providing for a new accessible restroom and accessible pathways connecting the restroom to the public right-of-way. According to the Florida Department of State, the above-referenced property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing resource to the Key West National Register Historic District, and compliance with the requirements for vertical accessibility would threaten or destroy the historic integrity of the building. The applicant has provided documentation confirming the historic significance of the property.

Uploaded Documents:

1. Owner Authorization
2. Construction Cost
3. Licensed Design Professional Comments
4. Historic Significance Documentation
5. Plans/Pictures

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends granting the request for waiver for vertical accessibility on the grounds of the historical nature of the property and technical infeasibility.

Items to be waived:

Vertical accessibility to the structure, as required by section 553.509, Florida Statutes.

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553.509 Vertical accessibility. This part and the Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design do not relieve the owner of any building, structure, or facility governed by this part from the duty to provide vertical accessibility to all levels above and below the occupiable grade level, regardless of whether the standards require an elevator to be installed in such building, structure, or facility, except for:

- (a) Elevator pits, elevator penthouses, mechanical rooms, piping or equipment catwalks and automobile lubrication and maintenance pits and platforms;
 - (b) Unoccupiable spaces, such as rooms, enclosed spaces and storage spaces that are not designed for human occupancy, for public accommodations or for work areas; and
 - (c) Occupiable spaces and rooms that are not open to the public and that house no more than five persons, including, but not limited to equipment control rooms and projection booths.
 - (d) Theaters, concert halls, and stadiums, or other large assembly areas that have stadium-style seating or tiered seating if ss. 221 and 802 of the standards are met.
 - (e) All play and recreation areas if the requirements of chapter 10 of the standards are met.
 - (f) All employee areas as exempted in s. 203.9 of the standards.
 - (g) Facilities, sites, and spaces exempted by s. 203 of the standards.
- (2) However, buildings, structures, and facilities must, as a minimum, comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design.

206.2.4 Spaces and Elements. At least one accessible route shall connect accessible building or facility entrances with all accessible spaces and elements within the building or facility which are otherwise connected by a circulation path unless exempted by 206.2.3 Exceptions 1 through 7.

402.2 Components Accessible routes shall consist of one or more of the following components: Walking surfaces with a running slope not steeper than 1:20, doorways, ramps, curb ramps excluding the flared sides, elevators, and platform lifts. All components of an accessible route shall comply with the applicable requirements of Chapter 4 and 208.3.1.

Waiver Criteria: There is no specific guidance for a waiver of this requirement in the code. The Commission's current rule, authorized in Section 553.512, Florida Statutes, provides criteria for granting waivers and allows consideration of unnecessary or extreme hardship to the applicant if the specific requirements were imposed.

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MOTIONS

- I move to recommend that the Florida Building Commission approve this request for waiver on the grounds of _____.
 - Economic Hardship
 - Historic Nature
 - Technical Infeasibility

- I move to recommend that the Florida Building Commission deny this application.
 - No rationale necessary.

- I move to recommend that the Florida Building Commission defer this request for waiver to the next meetings of the Council and the Commission for the purpose of allowing the applicant to _____:
 - Submit requested information
 - Contact building official or building department
 - Etc.