

February 19, 2016

Mr. Ramon Trias
Planning & Zoning Director
City of Coral Gables
405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, Florida 33134

Re: Planning & Zoning Submittal for Riviera Country Club – 1155 Blue Road

Dear Mr. Trias:

On behalf of the Riviera Country Club (“Applicant”), JMorton Planning & Landscape Architecture, is requesting site plan and conditional use approval to demolish and reconstruct the existing country club located on the 113 acre property located at 1155 Blue Road (“Property”). The Riviera Golf & Country Club (“Club”) was originally constructed on the Property circa 1946. The membership of the Club desires to construct a new club and fitness center that will better serve the needs of the members. It is the intent of the Applicant to commence construction of the new Club prior to the demolition of the existing Club in order to limit the amount of time that the Club is not in operation.

The Property currently has a zoning designation of Special Use and the underlying Future Land Use designation of the Property is Parks & Recreation. Private clubs and golf courses are identified as conditional uses in the Special Use zoning district. Currently situated on the affected area of the Property is a 52,717 square foot country club, fitness center, golf course, golf cart barn, and 186 parking spaces (including the parking area on the south side of Blue Road). This affected area of the property is 8.45 acres.

The proposed Club & Fitness Center have a building area of 44,923 square feet (air conditioned area excluding lobby). The proposed architectural style for the Riviera Country Club will be an elegant hybrid of classical forms and details from the Island Classical and Bermuda Colonial architectural styles. This hybridization is an appropriate nod to the continued evolution of architectural and demographic changes within the overall South Florida region. As part of the redevelopment project the existing cart barn will be demolished and incorporated into the design of the new Club. Additional site improvements to be made include the addition of parking spaces which will bring the total provided parking to 325 parking spaces. This additional parking will accommodate a general lack of parking that has historically been a problem for the Club. Currently, vehicles park along Blue Road during peak operating hours of the Club. However the proposed modifications to the Club will eliminate that situation while creating a new streetscape along the right-of-way.

Conditional use approval is required as the existing building will be completely demolished and rebuilt in a different location. As required by Section 3-408 of the City Code, the following responses have been provided to the review standards for conditional uses.

- A. The proposed conditional use is consistent with and furthers the goals, policies and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and furthers the purposes of these regulations and other City ordinances and actions designed to implement the Plan.

Response: The Property has a Parks and Recreation Future Land Use designation which allows for public/private land areas and buildings for recreation, both active and passive, including golf, tennis,

and similar sporting and leisure activities. Thus, the existing golf course and country club is consistent with that Future Land Use designation. The use is also consistent with the current zoning designation of Special Use as the City Code defines this district as a zoning classification which accommodates uses which have the potential of adversely impacting adjacent uses but which enhance the quality of life of the citizens of the City. The Riviera Country Club has been a part of the City of Coral Gables' unique culture and fabric since the 1940's when the Club was originally developed.

- B. The available use to which the property may be put is appropriate to the property that is subject to the proposed conditional use and compatible with existing and planned uses in the area.

Response: *The Property has been utilized as a golf and country club for many years. This application for conditional use approval is needed as the Applicant desires to demolish and reconstruct that existing use. Compatibility will be accomplished through additional landscaping along the perimeter of the new parking area as well as the reconfiguration of the parking area to better accommodate the parking demands for the Club. This reconfiguration ensure that the use is more compatible with the surrounding neighborhood by eliminating the chaotic parking situation that currently occurs along Blue Road during peak operating hours of the Club.*

- C. The proposed conditional use does not conflict with the needs and character of the neighborhood and the City.

Response: *The Club has been in existence on the Property for approximately 70 years. It has become an integral part of the neighborhood and the homes adjacent to the golf course are very desirable and highly sought after. The proposed site plan will improve the existing parking configuration by removing the parking that occurs along Blue Road. Additionally, the proposed architecture of the new building will be an elegant hybrid of classical forms and details from the Island Classical and Bermuda Colonial architectural styles.*

- D. The proposed conditional use will not adversely affect the use of other property in the area.

Response: *The proposed Club will not adversely affect the use of other property in the area. The surrounding area is comprises mostly of large single family homes. These homes have enjoyed being located adjacent to a golf course as demonstrated by the high property values in the area. Additionally, the proposed reconfiguration will make the Club a better neighbor to these residential properties by accommodating all parking within the Property, having enhanced and upgraded architecture, as well as the provision of more landscaping within the Property.*

- E. The proposed use is compatible with the nature, condition and development of adjacent uses, buildings and structures and will not adversely affect the adjacent uses, building or structures.

Response: *The proposed Club is compatible with the nature, condition and development of the adjacent residential uses, buildings and structures. Country Clubs are found within residential areas across the county, state, and country. These residential uses typically have a higher property value when located within close proximity of such golf and country clubs.*

- F. The parcel proposed for development is adequate in size and shape to accommodate all development features.

Response: *As demonstrated by the attached site plan, the Property is of adequate size and shape to accommodate the proposed Club. The redevelopment will make better use and function of the Property rather than the current site configuration. The Property will now be able to accommodate all of the required parking on-site rather than within the right-of-way of Blue Road.*

- G. The nature of the proposed development is not detrimental to the health, safety and general welfare of the community.

Response: The proposed redevelopment of the Club will not be detrimental to the health, safety, or general welfare of the community. The Club has been in operation in this location for approximately 70 years while the neighborhood developed around it. The Special Use zoning district is reserved for those uses such as the Riviera Country Club that enhance the quality of life of the surrounding community.

- H. The design of the proposed driveways, circulation patterns and parking is well defined to promote vehicular and pedestrian circulation.

Response: The proposed site plan has been designed so that its traffic flow functions well within the context of the general site parking and circulation. The proposed site plan identifies 3 access points from Blue Road to the Club. One drop-off circle is proposed at the main entry of the Club under the new porte cochere and a drop off loop is proposed in front of the new fitness center. Three parking areas are proposed, one for the fitness center, one for the main clubhouse, and one for the tennis center on the south side of Blue Road. A dedicated valet parking area has been identified on the site plan which includes 32 tandem parking spaces (approximately 10% of the total parking provided). The proposed loading bay has been incorporated into the proposed building footprint below the grade of the main entry.

- I. The proposed conditional use satisfies the concurrency standards of Article 3, Division 13 and will not adversely burden public facilities, including the traffic carrying capacities of streets, in an unreasonable or disproportionate manner.

Response: The proposed improvements to the Club will not impact traffic carrying capacities as there will be no increase to the membership of the Club and no increase in building area of the Club. A traffic statement from Simmons & White has been attached for further information.

Based on the above justification and attached information, the Applicant respectfully requests approval of this site plan with conditional use. The Applicant is confident that the proposed application to redevelop the Riviera Country Club will enhance the surrounding area as well as improve

Sincerely,

JMorton Planning & Landscape Architecture, Inc.



Jennifer Morton, RLA, LEED AP
LA 000166