

City of Key West Planning Board  
Attn: Melissa Paul-Leto, Planner Analyst

My name is Joseph M. Shea and as the owner of the family residence at 526 Simonton Street, my wife and I would like to object to Kate Miana, Miana Group Investments Ltd.'s request for a variance on the residence at 618 Free School Lane (AK # 1009261).

This house was originally part of Nancy's Secret Garden and when Pritam Singh got the property in foreclosure from Nancy Forrester, there were certain assurances and restrictions placed on the property. All the other residences built on the property that was part of Nancy's Secret Garden are Victorian in style. They are built of wood, raised off the ground and in keeping with HARC guidelines.

At the time of the transfer this small wooden cottage was designated as a transient rental unit and was built off the ground -- not on a cement slab! The proposed structure will be; 1) on a cement slab, 2) the siding will be removed and replaced with stucco, 3) it will be a modern design with nothing Victorian about its character, and 4) it requires a set back variance from 11 feet to 5 feet which will adversely affect its adjoining neighbors on Southard Street.

Asking for a variance during the hottest part of the summer when the majority of residents are out of town is the oldest trick in the Key West playbook. Since this cottage is currently designated a transient rental unit and the entity asking for the variance is Miano Group Investments Ltd., we sincerely doubt this will ever be a strictly private residence.

My wife and I bought our home in 1978 (we previously owned a small house on Grinnell Street). I vote in Key West and am concerned about our community. Within the past 40 years there has been a steady erosion of zoning requirements. We are a small island with ecological constraints which Nancy Forrester has championed all these years. Extreme caution must be used in granting the many requests which pour in on an endless basis. Once a variance is granted, historically it has been shown that the variance later becomes almost automatic. (i.e. height/density variances).

We urge you to deny Kate Miano, Miano Group Investments Ltd.'s request for a variance and that HARC demands building plans in keeping with the Victorian character of all of her neighbor's residences and guest houses within the Historic District of Key West.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this highly sensitive issue.

Sincerely,  
Joseph M. Shea

TO: Melissa Paul-Leto, Planner Analyst  
[mleto@cityofkeywest-fl.gov](mailto:mleto@cityofkeywest-fl.gov)

FROM: Ben C. Willis, Willis Timber LTD  
Homeowner @ 623 Southard Street

DATE: July 15, 2013

RE: Variance Hearing – Kate Miano, Miami Group Investments

I own property at above address, directly behind 618 Free School Lane (RE #0009000-000000; AK#1009261) and are opposed to the variance requested. As the home sits at this time, we have full view of the roof line despite the lush foliage (if that gives you any indication as to the closeness of the home at this time). It has been a long time goal of HARC to maintain the integrity and character of the Historic District homes. This variance would back up to our fence line right at our property line. The intrusion would be offensive and would definitely intrude on our privacy. This request is not in keeping with the existing setback guidelines.

We ask that you deny this request. Thank you for this consideration.

**From:** Peggy Newberry [<mailto:mangotreeinn@aol.com>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, July 15, 2015 2:41 PM

**To:** Melissa Paul-Leto

**Subject:** 618 Free School Lane variance request

To City of Key West Planning Board

As per the notice we received regarding the above, we find no objections to the variance requested by Kate Miano.

Please make a note of our non objection to the variance.

Sincerely,

Peggy Newberry  
Johnny Newberry

Adjacent property owners

Mango Tree Inn  
603 Southard St.  
Key West FL 33040  
305-293-1177  
mangotree-inn.com  
[mangotreeinn@aol.com](mailto:mangotreeinn@aol.com)

From: Jonathan Ingham [<mailto:inghamjonathan@gmail.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, July 15, 2015 3:33 PM

To: Melissa Paul-Leto

Cc: [keys8e@aol.com](mailto:keys8e@aol.com)

Subject: Variance at 618 Freeschool lane

To the Key West Planning Board; I reside at 617 Freeschool lane and as such am the most impacted by anything that affects #618. Kate Miano has always been a considerate neighbor and has scrupulously kept me up to date on her plans for a residence at that address. I believe that the plans that I have seen are in keeping with what we residents and taxpayers would be happy with in our city. We are lucky to have a fellow citizen contribute so much to the quality of life in Key West and can see no reason why what seems to be a minor variance should not be granted.  
Jonathan Ingham, 617 Freeschool lane.

Melissa Paul - Leto, Planning Analyst

Re: 618 Free School Lane - Kate Miano

We have lived in Key West nearly twenty five years, and own an Antique Store (601 Fleming St.) around the corner from the property asking for the variance. We have known Kate Miano for many years, and have observed her attention to the details of her properties, and her support of the local community. She was good to meet with us to discuss her plans for her property at 618 Free School Lane, and has shown a willingness to meet with neighbors to discuss her plans for the property.

While we would have loved to see Nancy Forester's dream of open space and a lush garden in the center of the block continue, neither the city, nor neighboring property owners stepped up to the plate to see that venture succeed. Kate Miano has stated that she is at a stage of her life where she would like to be able to live in that garden, with her home opening into that space. Her home plan faces away from the noise and bustle of the swimming pools of Southard Street guest houses & transient units (the side of the requested variance.)

She has stated she wishes to have this property as her private home, has designed it as such, and has offered to move the transient license upon approval to build the house. She has historically shown the highest standards of care in the design and upkeep of other properties she has owned in Key West, and has stated an interest in preserving and if appropriate, relocating on the lot, mature plantings displaced by the project. The project is now on the third set of plans, in an attempt to address concerns of the building department that now has apparently indicated that they had been looking at erroneous data about the property in their records.

We believe that the project needs the variance (to minimum distance to the property line,) and that it should not cause undue hardship to the pool area of the neighboring transient property. I urge the city to grant her request for a variance in this instance.

Sincerely,

Mark Jacob &  
Paul Cox  
Duck & Dolphin Antiques LLC  
601 Fleming Street Key West FL 33040

(305) 295-0499

**From:** [ed.clark@sunnykw.com](mailto:ed.clark@sunnykw.com) [<mailto:ed.clark@sunnykw.com>]

**Sent:** Thursday, July 16, 2015 10:25 AM

**To:** Melissa Paul-Leto

**Subject:** Kate Miano freeschool lane

To whom it may concern,

I am the owner of 521 Simonton Street, corner of Simonton and Freeschool Lane. Kate Miano had sent me her plans on constructing her residence at the end of the lane. I have no problem with the construction at all. It would increase the tax base of the city. It is a single story home. Concerning the fencing and the foliage on the property, its set backs could be cut by 2/3 and still the home would be invisible.

It is my feeling that anyone that has a transient license should be able to keep it. If a property is zoned for transient use; an owner should be able to walk to licensing and pick one up. Then make the unit comply with the city and state regulations of that license. Transient licenses should not be sold or transferred but a right of the property owner in the transient zoned property.

**Edward G. Clark, Broker**

Paradise Real Estate in Key West

521 Simonton Street

Key West FL 33040

cell 305-304-6972

fax 305-294-8863

[ed.clark@sunnykw.com](mailto:ed.clark@sunnykw.com)

**From:** Erik deBoer [<mailto:edeboer@bellsouth.net>]

**Sent:** Thursday, July 16, 2015 2:16 PM

**To:** Melissa Paul-Leto

**Subject:** Kate Miano residence, Free School Lane

City of Key West

Planning Dept.

Dear Sirs:

My name is Erik deBoer, and I am a partner in the Marquesa Hotel at 600 Fleming St. I have reviewed the plans for the Miano Residence on Free School Lane and find the design to be quite good and sensitive to the site, as well as the neighborhood. My partners and I have no objection to the setback variance that is under consideration.

Thank you,

Erik deBoer