

22 August 2025

Mr. Greg Oropeza
HARC Vice Chairman
1300 White Street
Key West, Florida 33042



RE: 704 Russell Lane, Key West

Dear Greg,

This letter is written in support of the 704 Russell Lane Application, at the HARC meeting scheduled for August 26, 2025, in the commission chambers. I have copied all commissioners and asked Daniela Salume to distribute this letter to the board for the meeting.

The project has been revised to accommodate items raised at the last meeting. One of those items included adding the guest house to the main building, resulting in a building. We modified the roof to add dormers, changed siding to lap siding, used a concrete slab on grade instead of a raised floor, and moved the pool to the rear yard. These changes have provided a one and one half story house at 24'-6" above ground.

The following chart identifies the adjacent properties with heights taken from the Monroe County Property Appraiser's website.

ADDRESS	FLOOR HT. M.C. SIZE	COMMENT
701 Fleming	2 ½	
703 Fleming	2 ½	Adjacent to 704 Russell – Front.
711 Fleming	1 / 1	Two buildings adjacent on Fleming side.
715 Fleming	1	
717 Fleming Rear	1 ½	Adjacent to 704 Russell on rear side.
719 Fleming	2 ½	Behind 704 Russell on Fleming.
723 Fleming	1 ½ / 1	Two buildings.
417 Elizabeth	2 / 1	Two buildings.
417 Elizabeth Rear	1	
704 Russell Lane	1 ½	New Residence as Revised

The chart above identifies neighboring properties with their height in the number of floors. Three of these are 2 ½ stories, one is two stories, three, including 704 Russell Lane are 1 ½ stories and six are one story in height. Of these 13 sites, 704 Russell Lane is in the middle.

Daniela notes several guidelines with comments about “....contributing structures that define the rhythm and scale of the streetscape, the added height may disrupt the established hierarchy...”

Guideline 1: Acceptable proposals will be compatible with the size, scale, color, texture, material and character of the district, sub-area or block and designed so that when completed the urban context in which it stands will not be jarred by the look of the new building. New buildings shall not overshadow the historic properties around it.

A review of the streetscape elevations provided in our proposal shows that this is a minor project compared to historic context and surrounding buildings, with the “size, scale, color, texture, material and character of the district...” in particular, this project does not “overshadow historic properties around it.”

Guideline 13: New buildings should generally be consistent with the existing height of buildings of same land use in the district, sub-area and/or immediate block. Buildings at the corners of major named and numbered streets, may exceed the height of adjacent buildings, particularly if there is a prevailing pattern of such height differentiation in the immediate area and adjacent corners.

A review of our street scape elevations shows that we comply with this guideline and we are consistent with the existing height of neighboring historic buildings.

Daniela Salume notes that the door on the front side porch do not comply with Guideline 11 of “Entrances, Porches, and Doors.” We will change these doors into compliance with the guidelines and submit to Daniela to review.

We have made these changes to come into compliance with the HARC regulations. It is our intent to have this project approved by the HARC board, but we will address making additional changes if required by the board.

Sincerely,



Bert Bender

CC: Bryan Green
Alan Nations
Alan Perez
Aileen Osborn
Joseph Moody
Haven Burkee – Chair
Daniela Salume
Rick Bascom