

Dear Key West HARC Members,

My name is Amanda Lee. Although I grew up in New York, I have been a seasonal visitor to Key West for most of my life. My parents were early time share owners at the Banyan, spending two winter months there each year. I remember them taking me to James Merrill's annual Valentine's Day party at his extraordinary home on Elizabeth Street and to dinner at Fiorini's, where anything ordered from the wine list came directly from the liquor store by bicycle for a \$5 upcharge.

My husband, Greg, and I honeymooned in Key West in 1997 and have visited at least once or twice a year since. Purchasing our home at 1013 Southard Street in 2018 was the fulfillment of a long-held dream and we plan to make Key West our permanent home. In seeking a home here, we very deliberately chose to live in the historic district. We very much wanted to live in an area that valued the peaceful preservation of Key West's residential neighborhoods and respected the historic nature of the area and its homes.

Our property was once considered one parcel with 10 Lowes Lane. Evidently 1013 Southard Street was subdivided just before we purchased our home; Our entire rear boundary line to the north is shared with 10 Lowes Lane. When we were notified that the owner was seeking planning committee permission (since withdrawn) to affect the proposed building alterations, we twice asked, through the owner's lawyer, if the owner would want to meet and discuss his plans neighbor-to-neighbor. We never got a response and have since wondered if perhaps the owner is not planning to live in the house but instead to use it as a vacation rental or to resell it once expanded. An owner who actually lives in Key West's remarkable historic district would undoubtedly appreciate the area's historic fabric.

The proposed structure increases the height, volume and footprint of the existing structure in a way that is at odds with the historic fabric of the neighborhood. We don't know the HARC Commission's processes (how determinations of what may or may not be "non contributing" are made) but it's hard for us as residents to understand how adding a new adjoining structure to a historic building on such a small lot — essentially doubling the habitable space — could be consistent with Historic Preservation Standards. The idea that one can mass up a very small home by adding a completely new structure, with non-historic features, and meet HARC guidelines so long as the non-historic features don't squarely face the street seems to challenge the very idea of historic preservation. The portion of the proposed structure that faces south is a completely new building and facade. We have never seen three-paneled sliding glass doors anywhere in the historic district. The proposed structure adds five new aluminum doors on the South facade: three sliding glass doors plus two additional glass doors. We hope that the HARC Commission will give careful consideration to the proposed alterations before approving non-historic additions and features.

Thank you for your consideration,
Amanda & Greg Lee

