

October 04, 2011

South Miami Avenue

Miami, Florida

Designation Report

"A State Historic Roadway"



Figure 1: Looking Southeast on South Miami

City of Miami Planning Department
Preservation Section

Contents

- I. Preface
- II. General Information
- III. Significance
- IV. Description
- V. Designation
- VI. Summary

I. Preface

This designation report is submitted by the City of Miami on behalf of the residents along South Miami Avenue. South Miami Avenue was one of the first corridors cleared for new development along the southern coastline of Miami after Brickell Avenue. The State of Florida designated this corridor as Historic in 1977 as part of a route from Cocoplum Circle in Coral Gables down 42th Ave to Ingraham Hwy to 37th Ave through Coconut Grove on Main Highway, McFarlane Road and South Bayshore Drive leading into Miami Ave to the intersection of 15th Rd. The section of road listed in this report is Miami Ave between 26th Rd and 15th Rd.

II. General Information

Name of Resource or Historic Name:

South Miami Avenue

Present Owner:

City of Miami

Address

Miami Avenue

Boundary Description:

Miami Avenue from SW 26th Road flyover to SW 15th Road

Present Use:

Local street

Adjacent Zoning Classification:

T3-R Single Family Residential and T1 Natural Zone

South Miami Avenue - Proposed City of Miami Historic Roadway Designation



Site Location

Source: City of Miami GIS; 2011

III. Significance

This section of Miami Ave is the only section of Miami Avenue that has a median and is an original suburban two lane residential street that was built in the City Beautiful movement across the US in the early 20th century. This section of Miami Ave also was the first to break away from the city's strict east-west north-south street grid and this style of street characterizes the "roads" neighborhood in the adjoining right of ways on an angle with Biscayne Bay instead of Miami Ave and Flagler Street. The street currently is 23 feet wide on each side of the median, consisting of an 8 foot park lane, 5 foot bike lane, and 10 foot vehicular traffic lane. There are also 5 foot sidewalks, 20 foot swales, and a center 20 foot median. These dimensions allow the pedestrian and greenery to dominate the right of way, as less than half the entire right of way is paved, while still accommodating for the flow of vehicles and cyclists.

The corridor is further characterized by stately Canary Island Date Palm trees planted along the median giving this street a well manicured orderly planting style. The swales were planted with Royal Poinciana trees that give tremendous color in the spring and whose draping canopy gives and completely different texture than the native vegetation in private yards. The corridor median and swales are planted with grass to finish a simple clean look that focuses attention on the trees and canopy of the area while allowing views into some of Miami's most well maintained single family homes.

This street is unique for its relatively little pavement compared to the size right of way, it's formal rows of well maintained trees, it's unique geographic direction being angled on axis with Biscayne Bay instead of the North-South-East-West grid, and its connection between Coconut Grove and Downtown Miami.

IV. Designation

Application of Criteria for Designation:

3. *Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economical or social trends of the community;*
4. *Portray the environment in an era of history characterized by one or more distinctive architectural styles;*
5. *Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction;*

This section of Miami Avenue was built in a time of great expansion for the City of Miami. Miami was creating its first suburbs and the City Beautiful planning movement that created

places like Coral Gables and Miami Shores was a national trend in development. This movement also created some of the great city parks in America, the Daniel Burnham plan for Chicago, and new towns all over America. Miami Avenue is a lasting legacy of this time period of urban development in Miami. The City of Miami has very few large tree lined streets with medians in single family residential areas. The City Beautiful movement was an architecturally inspired movement ways of sculpting the landscape to maximize the views of prominent areas, prioritize the natural landscape over the roadway, and create scenic corridors within cities.



Figure 2: Looking Northeast



Figure 2: Looking from South from 15th Rd



Figure 3: Looking from North along South Miami Avenue



Figure 4: Looking from South along South Miami Avenue



Figure 5: Photo Entering Brickell (fountain on 15th Rd)

CHAPTER 77-491

House Bill No. 1116

AN ACT relating to historic preservation designating portions of South Bayshore Drive and South Miami Avenue, in the City of Miami, as a historic highway; providing definitions; prohibiting use of state funds for certain physical changes on or near the road; requiring approval of the Division of Archives, History and Records Management for other specified changes; limiting the erection of signs; authorizing the Division to erect markers and to obtain historic easement in property along the road; providing severability; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, in June, 1896, the County Commission authorized the paving of this road which became the first road leading out of the City of Miami, and followed an earlier trail used by the settlers of Coconut Grove, and

WHEREAS, this road parallels one of Dade County's earliest known landmarks, a rocky cliff of Jolitic limestone, known as the Silver Bluffs, being shown on a map drawn in 1771 by Bernard Romans, who surveyed the area when it was part of British East Florida, and

WHEREAS, the Silver Bluffs, including Dade County's point of highest elevation, are a unique geological formation, created by wave action tens of thousands of years ago when the sea level stood several feet higher than at present, and

Figure 6-9: State Legislation Designating South Miami Avenue

ray are claimed to be
ourse except to the

f Florida:

of this act are found

ed out of funds in the
ties scheduled for
fiscal year 1977-1978,
injuries and damages:

to draw his warrant in
o upon funds in the
in the State Treasury
e same out of such

becoming a law.

1977.

ion designating
nd South Miami
istoric highway;
of state funds
near the road;
rchives, History
ecified changes;
uthorizing the
obtain historic
oad; providing
te.

mission authorized the
leading out of the
sed by the settlers of

ounty's earliest known
known as the Silver
by Bernard Romans, who
ast Florida, and

ade County's point of
stion, created by waves
en the sea level stood

WHEREAS, the Silver Bluffs are studied by geologists and students
of geology from all parts of the world, and

WHEREAS, this road has areas of exceptional flora, including
Simpson Park, and

WHEREAS, this road is lined by many early homes, including the
Trapp Residence which dates from 1889, and Vizcaya, the palatial home
of James Deering, now a Dade County Museum, and

WHEREAS, this road provides the only visible and tangible reminder
of the geological origins, the pioneer heritage and the unique
tropical flora of the Dade County area and represents a necessary
link with the past which once severed can never be restored, and

WHEREAS, it is the finding of the legislature that South Bayshore
Drive and South Miami Avenue, as described herein, should be
preserved in order that present and future residents of and visitors
to Florida may study and enjoy the scientific and historic
significance and beauty of this pioneer roadway, NOW, THEREFORE,

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. As used in this act:

(1) "Road" means that portion of South Bayshore Drive which
extends northerly from Aviation Avenue to Ralissee Street and the
adjoining portion of South Miami Avenue which extends northerly from
Ralissee Street to Simpson Park at Southeast 15th Road, in the City
of Miami, Florida.

(2) "Division" means the Division of Archives, History and
Records Management of the Department of State.

(3) "Historic easement" means any easement, restriction, covenant
or condition running with the land, designated to preserve, maintain
or enhance all or part of the existing state of places of historic,
architectural, archeological, geological or cultural significance.

Section 2. Those portions of South Bayshore Drive and South Miami
Avenue, described herein, are hereby designated as a state historic
highway. No state funds shall be expended by any public body or
agency for any of the following purposes:

(1) To cut or remove any tree having a diameter at its thickest
part in excess of six inches within thirty-five feet of either side
of the paved surface of the road, or to engage in an activity which
requires the removal without replacement of such a tree;

(2) To alter the physical dimensions or location of the road;

(3) To excavate or demolish the prominent outcroppings of the
Silver Bluffs;

(4) To erect, demolish or significantly alter the appearance of
any structure, including but not limited to, walls, fences,
sidewalks, and curbing, within one hundred feet of either side of the
paved surface of the road, with the following exceptions:

(a) Bicycle paths and recreational facilities the construction of
which does not require the removal of any structure deemed worthy of

Figure 7: State Legislation

preservation by the Division. The Division shall be consulted and official approval obtained before any work is begun. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance and repair of the road or structures, provided the physical dimensions and location of the road and the appearance of any structure are preserved, nor to prevent any work that is necessary for the public health or safety as determined by the agency having jurisdiction over the portion of the road involved. However, the preservation of the road shall take priority over considerations of traffic management, and the public safety shall not be construed to require alterations in the road when alternative means of promoting safety, including more restrictive traffic regulations, are available.

Section 3. No signs may be erected within three hundred feet of either side of the paved surface of the road, except the following:

- (1) Official road signs, including traffic control devices, erected by the Department of Transportation or by the City or County having jurisdiction over the portion of the road involved;
- (2) Signs not visible from the road;
- (3) Markers indicating points of historical interest erected or approved by the Division;
- (4) Signs that do not exceed six square feet in area advertising the sale or lease of the property on which they are located; or
- (5) Signs advertising only the name or nature of the business being conducted upon or the products, facilities, goods or services being sold, supplied, or distributed upon or from the premises where the signs are located, if such signs do not exceed a total of thirty square feet in area for any one business. The provisions of this section shall not supersede a more restrictive law, ordinance or regulation already in effect or taking effect after this act.

Section 4. The Division is authorized to obtain by purchase, gift, or devise historic easements in property situated along the road whenever and to such extent that the Division may determine appropriate for the preservation of the road or of any structure of historic significance along the road. To be considered worthy of protection by the Division, property or the protected part thereof need not be of great historic, architectural, archeological, geological or cultural significance when considered by itself, provided that it makes a significant contribution to the area considered as a whole. Any restriction placed on the use of property situated along the road pursuant to this section shall be reported by the Division to the tax assessor of Dade County and shall be taken into consideration when the property is assessed for tax purposes.

Section 5. The Division shall provide for the erection of suitable markers on and along the road.

Section 6. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the act which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this act are declared severable.

Section 7. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

CHAPTER 7

Approved

Filed

AN ACI
th
af
di
em
to
be

WHEREAS
Agricultur
result of

WHEREAS
retirement

WHEREAS,
benefits,

WHEREAS,
Retirement
disability
retirement

Be It Enact

Section
and declare

Section
receive in
retirement

Section
General Rev
to be pai
retirement

Section
favor of S.
Revenue Fur
directed to
otherwise aj

Section

Became a

Filed in.

Figure 8: State Legislation

shall be consulted and begun. Nothing in this ordinary maintenance and the physical dimensions of any structure are necessary for the public having jurisdiction over the preservation of the traffic management, to require alterations noting safety, including

in three hundred feet of except the following:

traffic control devices, by the City or County had involved;

ical interest erected or

feet in area advertising are located; or

nature of the business es, goods or services from the premises where need a total of thirty The provisions of this ve law, ordinance or after this act.

to obtain by purchase, situated along the Division may determine of any structure of e considered worthy of tected part thereof. tural, archeological, onsidered by itself, tribution to the area on the use of property shall be reported by and shall be taken for tax purposes.

for the erection of

ct or the application valid, the invalidity ions of the act which n or application, and red severable.

coming a law.

Approved by the Governor June 20, 1977.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 20, 1977.

CHAPTER 77-492

House Bill No. 1946

AN ACT for the relief of S. M. Rooks, a former employee of the Department of Agriculture; providing an appropriation to compensate him for a permanent disability as a result of an accident during his employment with the department; recognizing his right to receive in line of duty disability retirement benefits; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, S. M. Rooks, a former employee of the Department of Agriculture, has been judged totally and permanently disabled as a result of an accident during his employment with the department, and

WHEREAS, S. M. Rooks, has, since June 30, 1974, received regular retirement benefits from the state, and

WHEREAS, S. M. Rooks was improperly denied disability retirement benefits, and

WHEREAS, S. M. Rooks has no recourse against the Florida Retirement System except through the Legislature for recovery of disability payments, and for recognition of his permanent disability retirement benefit eligibility, NOW, THEREFORE,

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. The facts stated in the preamble to this act are found and declared to be true.

Section 2. S. M. Rooks is permanently disabled and is eligible to receive in line of duty disability retirement benefits from his retirement on June 30, 1974.

Section 3. The sum of \$5,850 is appropriated out of funds of the General Revenue Fund in the State Treasury not otherwise appropriated to be paid to S. M. Rooks for payment of in line of duty disability retirement benefits to which he is entitled.

Section 4. The Comptroller is directed to draw his warrant in favor of S. M. Rooks in the sum of \$5,850 upon funds of the General Revenue Fund in the State Treasury and the State Treasurer is directed to pay the same out of such funds in the State Treasury not otherwise appropriated.

Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 1977.

Became a law without the Governor's approval.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 23, 1977.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

Figure 9: State Legislation

V. Summary

Miami Avenue is a great residential street with many unique attributes for the City of Miami and indicative of the City Beautiful movement. Miami Avenue also has the geographical location next to Brickell Avenue and previously connected to the "roads" before I-95 was built. This street exemplifies the natural environment over the built environment. Several Environmental Preservation Districts, including the historic Simpson Park, are located adjacent to this section of road. The State of Florida designated this road as historic and the City of Miami would like to add a local historic designation.

--- End of Report ---

