



**Public Housing and Community Development**

701 NW 1st Court, 16th Floor  
Miami, FL 33136-3914  
T 786-469-4100 • F 786-469-4199

**miamidade.gov**

August 23, 2016

Dr. Timothy A. Parsons, Ph.D.  
Director, Division of Historical Resources and  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
Division of Historical Resources  
R.A. Gray Building  
500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Re: DHR Project File No.: 2016-3065, Received by DHR: July 21, 2016  
Project: GOB/Surtax/CFFP/Existing Public Housing Funding, FY 2016 – Liberty Square  
Public Housing Project, 1415 NW 63 Street, Miami, Florida 33147 and 1200 62 Lane,  
Miami, FL 33147 County: Miami-Dade

Dear Dr. Parsons:

We are in receipt of your letter dated July 29, 2016 concerning the redevelopment of Liberty Square (Attachment A).

As you have requested in item #1 of your letter, Miami-Dade Public Housing and Community Development (PHCD) and Related Urban, the selected developer, will continue consultations with SHPO and others to mitigate adverse effects on historic properties. To that end, please accept this letter and corresponding attachments as the requested case study, with additional documentation to be provided pursuant to item #2 of your letter, regarding information being provided to the public and an opportunity to express their views.

There has been substantial interest in the redevelopment of Liberty Square from governmental agencies, residents, stakeholders and various groups. Attachments B through G indicate documents received or issued on historic related issues for Liberty Square.

At their July 6, 2016 meeting, the Board of County Commissioners approved the award of Liberty Square and Lincoln Gardens to Related Urban as developer. The redevelopment of Liberty Square is the largest and most ambitious project in our redevelopment plan with \$307 million in total development costs. This type of redevelopment effort cannot be accomplished through limited capital funding received by PHCD from HUD of approximately \$11 million per year. It requires much more creative financing tools provided via a mixed-finance approach for redevelopment, which includes public/private partnerships with qualified developers and leveraging of funding. This approach has transformed many public housing developments throughout the country. For Liberty Square, all existing 709 public housing units will be demolished in phases and replaced with 1,572 new units; 757 public housing units, 815 non-public housing units, community, education and healthcare facilities, as well as retail and a major grocery store. Every public housing resident household at Liberty Square as of the date of the Mayor's announced selection of the project proposal, April 1, 2016, is guaranteed a right to return. The Contract between the County and Related Urban includes a Community Benefits



Package with substantial commitments for Job Training and Placement, and Minority Business Hiring. Attachment H provides some preliminary renderings of the proposed project. A video can be seen at the following link: <http://www.miamidade.gov/housing/images/videos/related-urban-liberty-square-video.mp4>. The video includes resident comments of their hopes and dreams for a new Liberty Square.

The attached Summary and Excerpt from the Physical Needs Assessment (PNA) (Attachment I), was completed on April 23, 2012 by Miguel A. Rodriguez, FAIA, for the Liberty Square Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant. It indicates repair work costing in excess of \$92 million, which has increased in the last four years to well over \$100 million. Attached are also additional pictures (Attachment J) which depict some examples of the poor and obsolete conditions at the site, which desperately need to be addressed. Beyond the many deficiencies summarized in the PNA for a 79-year old project, it makes little sense to expend over \$100 million on a project which, once completed, would still be obsolete from a project design, infrastructure, health safety and security standpoint. For example, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), which is an important component of the redevelopment approach, cannot be fully implemented in a rehabilitation. Additionally, the current project layout will not allow a mix of units and uses that has been a very successful model across the country. This has been a point of emphasis by HUD. In a letter to PHCD dated November 21, 2014 concerning required improvement of PHCD's Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS), HUD's recommendations included: *"assess the feasibility and desirability of under-occupied developments, e.g. physical condition and configuration, rehabilitation costs and lifespan, neighborhood factors such as crime and proximity to employment, transportation, and services, etc., and consider repositioning options if appropriate"*. Even though Liberty Square is a large site (57 acres) it is substantially under-occupied, its physical condition and configuration are obsolete, its substantial rehab cost would not be warranted as compared to lifespan and neighborhood factors such as crime prevention, employment, services, etc., can only be addressed with a new vision, which includes a substantive Community Benefits Package for redevelopment of this community.

Every project reaches a point of obsolescence; Liberty Square is clearly at that juncture. While respecting the past, it is time to move forward with a new, state-of-the-art redevelopment that will bring much needed positive change to this community.

We have requested, and received from Dade Heritage Trust, a Preliminary Designation Report dated June 2016 (Attachment K) which provides substantial detail on Liberty Square and the Community Center: (i.e. *"The community center was and has been the heart of the Liberty Square community, by design. It has hosted social, cultural and religious events, been the founding point for at least one church, and provided childcare services as well as a library for the edification of Liberty Square residents. It typifies the role of a community center in Miami or any community"*). It is our understanding that Dade Heritage Trust is the applicant (on behalf of Liberty Square Project Friends and Family Reunion, Inc.), which will request historical designation of the Liberty Square Community Center, its monument, and its name, to the Miami Historic Preservation Board. Based on our own research of the earliest available plans (1976) from the Building Department, the existing community center work includes additions and expansions. The plans reviewed at the Building Department indicated a portion of the



Community Center (highlighted in red on Attachment L) as existing in 1976. Accordingly, we believe this to be the original Community Center location. Additionally, the proposal from Related Urban, and the subsequent negotiated Contract, includes restoring *"one of the existing buildings within the Liberty Square site to create the Liberty Square Museum in partnership with the Black Archives, to preserve the history of Liberty Square and document its future."*

There is widespread agreement among the various groups that they are in favor of paying tribute to Liberty Square's past in a meaningful way while not delaying the project (see attachments C and D, highlighted areas). There are differing opinions as to whether that would best be accomplished with the preservation of the original Community Center. Based on recommendations made in your letter and other correspondence from Ms. Cody, the Preliminary Designation Report from Dade Heritage Trust, the request from Liberty Square Project Friends and Family Reunion, Inc., and our review of these and other documents, in addition to the request by all to expedite the redevelopment; PHCD and Related Urban agree that the preservation of the original Liberty Square Community Center may provide a meaningful alternative as part of the mitigation plan. PHCD and Related Urban will make this recommendation to the Liberty Square Resident Council, Liberty Square residents and other stakeholders, and will also make this information available to the public, pursuant to item #2 of your letter. PHCD and Related Urban will also consider other mitigation measures, such as documentation of the historic structures and the community history, as well as development of additional material. We are providing a copy of this correspondence to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), pursuant to item #3 of your letter.

Please advise if this meets with your approval so that we can proceed with next steps, including executing a Memorandum of Understanding as indicated in item #4 of your letter. We are anxious to work with you to get this matter resolved in an expeditious manner to address Liberty Square's history and future. The residents of Liberty Square, and the community, are awaiting this project with great anticipation.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and assistance.

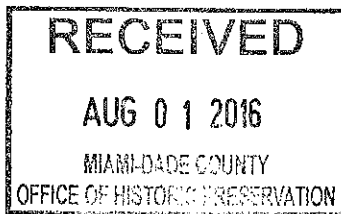
Sincerely,



Michael Liu  
Director

C: Reid Nelson, Director, ACHP  
Jason Aldridge, Supervisor of Federal and State Compliance and Review, and Deputy SHPO  
Alberto Milo Jr., Related Urban  
Jorge R. Cibrán, PHCD



**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT of STATE**

**RICK SCOTT**  
Governor

**KEN DETZNER**  
Secretary of State

Sarah Cody  
Historic Preservation Planner  
Miami-Dade County  
Regulatory and Economic Resources Department  
Office of Historic Preservation  
111 NW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Mailbox 114  
Miami, Florida 33128

July 29, 2016

RE: DHR Project File No.: 2016-3065, Received by DHR: July 21, 2016  
Project: *GOB/Surtax/CFFP/Existing Public Housing Funding, FY 2016 – Liberty Square Public Housing Project, 1415 NW 63 Street, Miami, Florida 33147 and 1200 62 Lane, Miami, FL 33147*  
County: Miami-Dade

Ms. Cody:

The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer reviewed the referenced project for possible effects on historic properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the *National Register of Historic Places*. The review was conducted in accordance with Section 106 of the *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966*, as amended, and its implementing regulations in *36 CFR Part 800: Protection of Historic Properties*.

The proposed undertaking includes the complete demolition and redevelopment of existing public housing units at Liberty Square. The Liberty Square Public Housing complex (8DA7017 – 8DA7145, 8DA7474) is considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, we concur with the county's determination that the proposed undertaking will have an adverse effect to the Liberty Square Public Housing complex. Since the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has determined that the undertaking will constitute an adverse effect, procedures relating to 36 CFR 800.6 *Resolution of Adverse Effects* must be followed.

1) According to 36 CFR 800.6(a), the Agency (Miami-Dade County) shall continue consultation with the SHPO and other consulting parties to develop and evaluate alternatives or modifications to the undertakings that could avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse effects on historic properties. The Agency shall submit a case study\* outlining these efforts for review by the SHPO.

\* A case study is a document that outlines the agency's efforts to develop and evaluate alternatives or modifications to a project that could avoid or minimize adverse effects to cultural resources. The case study provides a record of an agency's due diligence to carefully consider the impacts of its actions upon cultural resources. The document may also reveal previously unidentified but feasible alternatives that will avoid impacts altogether.



Ms. Cody  
DHR Project File No.: 2016-3065  
July 29, 2016  
Page 2

(2) In accordance with 36 CFR 800.6(a)(4), the Agency shall make information regarding this finding available to the public, providing the public with an opportunity to express their views on resolving adverse effects of the undertakings. Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.11(e), copies or summaries of any views provided by consulting parties and the public shall be made available to the SHPO as part of the case study outlined in (1).

(3) The Agency shall notify the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), 401 F Street NW, Suite 308, Washington, DC 20001-2637, of the adverse effect finding per 36 CFR 800.6 (a)(1). The notification to the ACHP should be similar to the project information submitted to this office and should include the following documentation as outlined in 36 CFR 800.11(e). The ACHP will advise of its decision to participate in consultation within fifteen (15) days of receipt of this notification or other request. If the ACHP chooses not to participate in consultation, the Agency shall resolve the adverse effect without ACHP participation and pursuant to 36 CFR 800.6(b)(1).

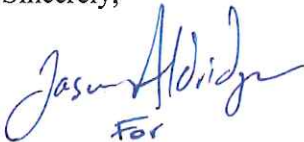
(4) If the Agency, the SHPO and, if applicable, the ACHP agree on how the adverse effects will be resolved, they shall execute a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) pursuant to 36 CFR 800.6(c).

(5) If the Agency and the SHPO fail to agree on the terms of the MOA, the Agency shall request the ACHP to join the consultation. If the ACHP decides to join the consultation, the Agency shall proceed in accordance with 36 CFR 800.6(b)(2). If the ACHP decides not to join the consultation, the ACHP will notify the Agency and proceed to comment in accordance with 36 CFR 800.7.

We look forward to working with Miami-Dade County as we proceed to the resolution of adverse effects. If the adverse effect cannot be avoided, the possible preservation of the original community center could be an excellent part of a mitigation plan. It will also be important to consider other mitigation measures, such as documentation of the historic structures and the community's history as well as development of educational material.

If you have any questions, please contact me by email at [Jason.Aldridge@dos.myflorida.com](mailto:Jason.Aldridge@dos.myflorida.com), or by telephone at 850.245.6333 or 800.847.7278.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jason Aldridge". Below the signature, the word "For" is written in a smaller, cursive script.

Timothy A. Parsons, Ph.D.  
Director, Division of Historical Resources  
and State Historic Preservation Officer





June 21, 2016

Mr. William E. Hopper, Jr., Chairperson  
City of Miami Historic Preservation Board  
444 SW 2nd Ave., 3rd Floor  
Miami, FL 33130

Re: Historical Designation of the Liberty Square Community Center

Dear Mr. Hopper:

The Resident Council of Liberty Square is elected to represent the residents of Liberty Square, which is comprised of 709 public housing units. We have been working closely with Miami-Dade Public Housing and Community Development (PHCD) and the recommended developer, Related Urban, on the planned redevelopment of Liberty Square. The recommendation for contract award by Mayor Gimenez will be heard by the Board of County Commissioners on July 6<sup>th</sup>. We know that this project will have a tremendously positive impact on the entire neighborhood, and our residents.

We have become aware of a request to the City of Miami Historic Preservation Board for the historical designation of the Liberty Square Community Center, its monument, and its name. We also understand that Dade Heritage Trust is the applicant on behalf of Liberty Square Project Friends & Family Reunion, Inc., which is making the request. We are unfamiliar with this entity.

It is important to note that the Liberty Square Resident Council is very much in favor of paying tribute to Liberty Square's past in a meaningful way. However, we do not believe that the historic designation of the Community Center may be the best way to achieve this. More importantly, if the current application process goes forward, the almost 700 families who currently reside at Liberty Square, and other interested community members, will not have the opportunity to provide their opinion on this matter, which is an important part of the redevelopment engagement process.

This is a very large project which will take approximately five years to redevelop. There is enough time to include our residents and the community in the discussion before a decision is made on how to best preserve and respect the history of Liberty Square.

We request that your Board delay any decision on this matter until further discussions and input can be obtained from our residents and the community. We will keep you advised of our progress and invite you, or your representative, to become a part of the redevelopment process for Liberty Square.

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Liberty Square Resident Council Inc: President- Ms. Sara Smith, Vice-President - Crystal Corner, Recording Secretary - Joyce Fleming, Corresponding Secretary - Meldred Collier, Treasurer - Ms. Dorothy Edmonds and Liaison Mr. Eric Thompson.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely;

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sara Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sara" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Smith".

Sara Smith  
President, Liberty Square Resident Council

cc. Christine Rupp, Dade Heritage Trust





LIBERTY SQUARE PROJECT  
 FRIENDS & FAMILY REUNION INC.  
 1165 N.W. 109TH STREET  
 MIAMI, FL 33168-6035  
 (305) 696-1819

June 29, 2016

Mayor Carlos A Gimenez  
 Stephen P Clark Center  
 111 NW 1 Street  
 Miami, FL 33128

Re: Historical Designation of Liberty Square Community Center

Dear Mayor Gimenez:

We are writing this letter to expose the red flags that have come forward since we filed our application for the Historical Designation of Liberty Square Community Center.

The entire Liberty Square Project is already listed in the National Registry of Historical Places. Our group is only concerned with making the Community Center historic. We have had no hidden agenda and have been open and honest in our dealings with any person and/or organization that we have had contact with.

On Thursday, June 23rd, a meeting was scheduled between our group and the TENANTS of Liberty Square for 5 pm. At the meeting we were informed that only our group and the tenant council would be meeting. Some of the tenants came at 6 pm for the meeting only to be told that the meeting began at 5 pm and were sent to another room.

We were also advised that a letter was received by the council informing the tenants that our application for historic designation would stop and/or halt construction for the development. Sarah Smith read her response to said letter which stated they were not interested in the historical designation of Liberty Square Community Center which was written the day before our meeting. We requested a copy of the letter that they received. As of this date we have not received a copy of that letter. They said they were nervous about what could happen and spoke of their plans to have a museum with Liberty Square's history included. Our response, of course, was that we in no way wanted to interfere or halt construction of their housing, which is so badly needed.

President: Phillip B. Walker Sr.  
 Secretary: Beverly Williams  
 Chaplin: Wilhelmina Davis

Vice President: Alstene L. McKinney  
 Treasurer: Gail V. Symonette  
 Parliamentarian: Freddie L. Hall

Page 2

June 29, 2016

We also suggested that they could put their museum inside the Community Center or just have both—your museum and have the Center remain historical.

It is also to be noted that outsiders have been brought in to guide and oversee the tenants. Michelle Spence-Jones, who resides in Atlanta, set up this meeting and helped to preside over it.

We are hopeful that this situation can be straightened out without seeking further recourse

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Phillip B. Walker". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

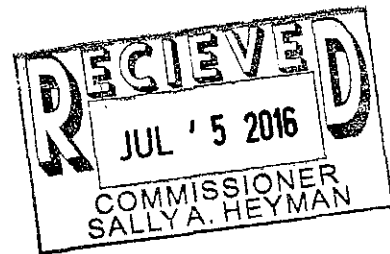
PHILLIP B. WALKER, President



LIBERTY SQUARE PROJECT  
FRIENDS & FAMILY REUNION INC.  
1165 N.W. 109TH STREET  
MIAMI, FL 33168-6035  
(305) 696-1819

June 29, 2016

Commissioner Sally A. Heyman  
Stephen P Clark Center  
111 NW 1 Street  
Miami, FL 33128



Re: Historical Designation of Liberty Square Community Center

Dear Commissioner Heyman:

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**Page 2**

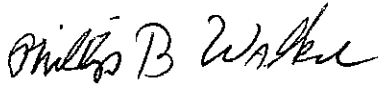
**June 29, 2016**

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**Respectfully,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phillip B. Walker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Phillip" and last name "Walker" clearly distinguishable.

**PHILLIP B. WALKER, President**



July 21, 2016

Dr. Timothy Parsons  
Compliance and Review Section  
Florida Department of State  
Division of Historical Resources  
R.A. Gray Building, 500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

RE: GOB/Surtax/CFFP/Existing Public Housing Funding, FY 2016

ADDRESS: Liberty Square Public Housing Project  
1415 NW 63 Street, Miami, FL 33147 (Built 1940)  
1200 NW 62 Lane, Miami, FL 33147 (Built 1942)

Dear Dr. Parsons:

The properties listed above have been reviewed by this agency for possible impacts to historic, architectural, or archaeological resources. Consideration was taken of the subject properties as well as adjacent and surrounding structures over 50 years of age for potential historic districting.

The proposed activities for the property involves: complete demolition and redevelopment of existing public housing units at Liberty Square.

The funding recipient is:  
RUDG, LLC  
Kareem T. Brantley  
444 Brickell Avenue, Suite 301  
Miami, FL 33131

Attached are photographs as well as USGS maps, property information from the County Property Appraiser of the subject properties, and information on the proposed redevelopment.

In accordance with Section 106 Regulations (Rev. 6/1999) a review has been conducted of County Historic Site Files and maps. We have determined that historic resources would be affected by the project and that the subject properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, as well as for local historic designation by the City of Miami, which has their own historic preservation jurisdiction independent of our office.

Therefore, with the above noted, this agency has determined that the funding activities will have an adverse effect on properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It should be further noted that Dade Heritage Trust is currently working with community members to present an application for local designation to the City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board. This application proposes designation of Liberty Square's original community center only, to represent the significance of the broader community. This application has not yet been presented for consideration by the City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board; at this time, no portion of Liberty Square has been locally designated.

A letter of concurrence is kindly requested from your office at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Sarah K. Cody  
Historic Preservation Planner  
Miami-Dade County





**Regulatory and Economic Resources Department  
Office of Historic Preservation**

111 NW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Mailbox 114 • 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Miami, Florida 33128  
T 305-375-4958

August 16, 2016

Mr. Reid Nelson, Director, Office of Federal Agency Programs  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
401 F Street NW  
Suite 308  
Washington, DC 20001

RE: GOB/Surtax/CFFP/Existing Public Housing Funding, FY 2016

ADDRESS: Liberty Square Public Housing Project  
1415 NW 63 Street, Miami, FL 33147 (Built 1940)  
1200 NW 62 Lane, Miami, FL 33147 (Built 1942)

Dear Mr. Nelson:

The properties listed above have been reviewed by this agency and by the Florida Division of Historical Resources for possible impacts to historic, architectural, or archaeological resources. Consideration was taken of the subject properties as well as adjacent and surrounding structures over 50 years of age for potential historic districting.

The proposed activities for the property involves: complete demolition and redevelopment of existing public housing units at Liberty Square.

The funding recipient is:

RUDG, LLC  
Kareem T. Brantley  
444 Brickell Avenue, Suite 301  
Miami, FL 33131

Attached are photographs as well as USGS maps, property information from the County Property Appraiser of the subject properties, and information on the proposed redevelopment. Also included are previous correspondence between our office and the Florida Division of Historical Resources, regarding the determination of an adverse effect to the resources.

In accordance with Section 106 Regulations (Rev. 6/1999) a review has been conducted of County Historic Site Files and maps. We have determined that historic resources would be affected by the project and that the subject properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, as well as for local historic designation by the City of Miami.

Therefore, with the above noted, this agency has determined that the funding activities will have an adverse effect on properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Liberty Square was the first public housing project developed in the southern US specifically for African Americans. Originally constructed in 1936, the project was a joint venture between local Miami businessmen and the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, an early New Deal program established by Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1935.

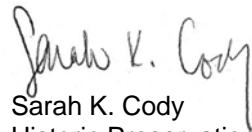


As recorded in a previous historic resource survey, and documented in the Florida Master Site File, the Liberty Square Public Housing Project is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It is significant under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Politics and Government, Social History, and African American Heritage. It is also significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.

It should be noted that Dade Heritage Trust, a local preservation advocacy non-profit, is currently working with community members to present an application for local designation to the City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board. This application proposes designation of Liberty Square's original community center only, to represent the significance of the broader community. This application has not yet been presented for consideration by the City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board; at this time, no portion of Liberty Square has been locally designated.

As noted in the attached letter from the Florida Division of Historical Resources, Miami-Dade County has been instructed to notify your agency of the adverse effect.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Sarah K. Cody". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sarah" being more prominent.

Sarah K. Cody  
Historic Preservation Planner  
Miami-Dade County





 RELATED  
U R B A N

 modis  
architects

Architects Unlimited 

***“LIBERTY SQUARE RISING”***  
BAFO SUBMITTAL . FEB 5TH, 2016

ATTACHMENT H





RELATED  
URBAN

modis  
architects

Architects Unlimited AU

## LIBERTY SQUARE OVERALL 3D SITE PLAN

*LIBERTY SQUARE RISING*  
Miami, FL









RELATED  
URBAN

modis  
architects

Architects Unlimited AU

**PHASE 3B - PUBLIC & AFFORDABLE HOUSING,  
GARDEN STYLE BUILDINGS**  
CONCEPTUAL RENDERINGS

*LIBERTY SQUARE RISING*  
Miami, FL









RELATED  
URBAN

modis  
architects

Architects Unlimited AU

## PHASE 4A - HOME OWNERSHIP TOWNHOUSE

CONCEPTUAL RENDERINGS

*LIBERTY SQUARE RISING*  
Miami, FL





















RELATED  
URBAN

modis  
architects

Architects Unlimited AU

UNIT INTERIOR IMAGES  
**LIVING/DINING ROOM**

*LIBERTY SQUARE RISING*  
Miami, FL













April 23, 2012

Mr. Gregg Fortner  
Director  
Miami Dade County  
Public Housing and Community Development  
701 NW 1<sup>ST</sup> Court, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Miami, Florida 33136

Re: Severe Physical Distress of Public and/or Assistant Housing – Liberty Square / FLA 5-5

Dear Mr. Fortner:

This will confirm that my evaluation of this project indicates that the development is in severe physical distress and in need of replacement rather than rehabilitation. Attached please find back-up documentation as follows:

- Choice Neighborhoods – Certification of Severe Physical Distress
- Summary
- Structural Deficiencies
- Design Deficiencies
- Excerpt from the Physical Needs Assessment (PNA).
- Photos

Please advise if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,  
RODRIGUEZ ARCHITECTS, INC.



Miguel A. (Mike) Rodriguez, FAIA  
Principal  
FL AR#10099

Enclosures: As noted.

**RODRIGUEZ ARCHITECTS, INC.**  
2121 PONCE DE LEON BLVD., STE. 1010  
CORAL GABLES, FL 33134  
TEL.: (3 0 5) 4 4 8 - 3 3 7 3  
FAX: (3 0 5) 4 4 8 - 3 3 7 4  
A A C - 0 0 1 9 3 3

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OF ARCHITECTS

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## **LIBERTY SQUARE FLA. 5-2/3/5**

### **Summary**

The Liberty Square development consists of 709 family units, located within the City of Miami, between NW 62 ST and NW 67 ST, and NW 12 AVE and NW 15 AVE. This development was constructed in 1937 and is one of the oldest public housing projects built nationally.

Due to the old age of the project (75 years old), this development has deteriorated and it is in dire need of replacement. It also has inherent structural and design deficiencies that are typical of developments built in the 1930's.

### **Structural Deficiencies**

This development demonstrates significant deficiencies in the structural elements and building systems, as follows:

1. Extensive wood truss repairs may be required to reinforce structural components.
2. There are structural walls where there are horizontal spalling concrete and cracks and separations along the second floor tie beams. These conditions are of concern as they may be indicative of the structural separation of concrete beams from the exterior load bearing walls.
3. Existing open porches need substantial repairs of wood beams, rafters, and steel columns need to be replaced and be brought up to present codes.
4. Existing electrical systems have been updated from time to time, but are still substantially outdated and in need of replacement. There are an insufficient number of outlets to handle new kitchen appliances such as microwave, dishwashers and dryers.
5. Existing plumbing systems have been updated but are still substantially outdated and in need of replacement.
6. Existing heating and cooling systems are also substantially outdated and in need of replacement. There are no A/C central heating & cooling systems in units. – To provide this improvement the estimated total cost will include, the removal of the existing heaters, patching & painting, modifications to each unit to install soffits for the A/C ductwork, enlarging existing closets, increasing the electrical panel to accommodate the new system, new condensing units with security and concrete pads.
7. Mechanical systems need to be replaced and the units retrofitted with exhaust fans, kitchen range hoods, dishwashers, and dryer vents.
8. Site work needs recreational areas, more landscaping and re-sodding, replacement and installation of new sidewalks.
9. Open porches at the front of the units need extensive repairs to the structural elements, including roof sheathing, rafters, undersized wood beams with new, hurricane straps, provide proper concrete footings, and replacement of damaged and corroded steel columns.
10. Roof gable ends are obsolete and not the optimum design against hurricanes. Electrical main lines penetrate roof areas and are a source of water infiltration.



11. Existing sewer system is over 20 years old and outdated.
12. Storm drain laterals need to be cleaned and made operational.
13. Other on-site utilities, such as water meters and individual shut off valves need to be replaced.

## **Design Deficiencies**

This development has fundamental design deficiencies of a type and quality that require substantial rehabilitation to correct. The following is a list of deficiencies:

- a. Building layout and site layout are substantially inappropriate. The buildings are layout in “military barrack” style with high density. There is no sensitivity as to how many structures were built next to each other, and no effort made in creating a “comfortable and dynamic environment” for the residents.
- b. Room sizes are inadequate. There is very limited space for kitchen cabinets, there is only space for the washer but not the dryer, there is very limited closet space and storage inside the units, there is a minimal living space and no family rooms.
- c. The existing layout is not conducive to a “neighborhood atmosphere”, making it difficult for residents to “own” their apartment space and use the common areas for recreation.
- d. The entranceways to the units through the front porches are not accessible to persons with disabilities.
- e. Energy efficient stoves and refrigerators, microwave, dishwasher, new energy star light fixtures, and appliances, security alarms, cable ready units, green features such as insulation, VOC paint, sealants etc., pool for residents, exercise equipment, lighted ceiling fans, mini-blinds for windows are needed for this development.
- f. Installation of impact resistant windows. The present windows do not offer protection against flying debris and other wind damage from hurricanes.
- g. Installation of impact resistant doors – All doors in the apartments need to be replaced with impact resistant doors. The present doors do not offer protection against flying debris and other wind damage from hurricanes.
- h. Row apartments open to interior of the project and do not offer “Eyes on the street design”.
- i. There is insufficient parking for the residents.
- j. There is insufficient landscaping at the site.
- k. Development is in need of additional recreation and open space areas.
- l. Ideally, design should incorporate modern, market rate, garden style apartments with corresponding amenities at “all” units (i.e. units that do not look like public housing even if they are), which this development does not.

# LIBERTY SQUARE - Excerpt from the Physical Needs Assessment (PNA)

Total estimated rehabilitation cost

PUBLIC HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

X

Original

Revision Number

Development Number	Development Name		DOFA Date or Construction Date:	
FLA 5-2/3/5	LIBERTY SQUARE		1937	
Development Type	Occupancy Type	Structure Type	Number of Bldgs.	
X Rental	Family 709	Detached / Semi - X	0	45
Turnkey III - Vacant	Elderly 0	Row	32	142
Turnkey III - Occupied	Mixed 0	Walk-up	329	46
Mutual Help		Elevator	160	
Section 23, Bond Financed				

## General Description of Needed Physical Improvements

ELD FAM	0		STORIES		1	
	709		PARKING AREA		151200	
	WORK ITEM DESCRIPTION		UNIT TYPE	QTY.	UNIT PRICE	
	EXTERIOR ENVELOPE OF STRUCTURE AND STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS					
1	OVERHANG REPAIRS	SF	3500	\$35.00		\$ 122,500.00
2	EXTERIOR PAINTING	SF	709000	\$1.50		\$ 1,063,500.00
3	A/C UNIT INSTALLATION	EA	709	\$25,000.00		\$ 17,725,000.00
4	SPALLING CONCRETE REPAIRS	SF	200000	\$25.00		\$ 5,000,000.00
5	HURRICANE SHUTTERS INSTALLATION	LS	5672	\$700.00		\$ 3,970,400.00
6	WINDOWS REPLACEMENT	LS	5672	\$700.00		\$ 3,970,400.00
7	SHINGLE ROOF REPLACEMENT	SF	15000	\$8.00		\$ 120,000.00
8	EXTERIOR DOORS REPLACEMENT	LS	1418	\$1,000.00		\$ 1,418,000.00
9	FLAT BITUMINOUS ROOF REPLACEMENT	SF	12000	\$25.00		\$ 300,000.00
10	VACANCY REPAIRS (10% PER YR)	LS	70.9	17,000		\$ 1,205,300.00
10						
					SUBTOTAL	\$ 34,895,100.00
	INTERIOR IMPROVEMENTS					
1	INTERIOR PAINTING	SF	709000	\$1.50		\$ 1,063,500.00
2	INTERIOR REPAIRS TO DRYWALL SURFACES	SF	709000	\$5.00		\$ 3,545,000.00
3	INTERIOR DOORS REPLACEMENT	LS	5672	\$100.00		\$ 567,200.00
4	FLOOR REPLACEMENT	SF	709000	\$3.25		\$ 2,304,250.00
5	REPLACEMENT OF REFRIGERATORS	LS	709	\$700.00		\$ 496,300.00
6	REPLACEMENT OF STOVES	LS	709	\$700.00		\$ 496,300.00
7	KITCHEN CABINETS REPLACEMENT - Fam	LS	709	\$6,000.00		\$ 4,254,000.00
8	WATER HEATER REPLACEMENT	LS	709	\$345.00		\$ 244,605.00
9	KITCHEN CABINETS REPLACEMENT - Eld	LS	0	\$4,000.00		\$ -
10	MEDICINE CABINETS REPLACEMENT	LS	1418	\$150.00		\$ 212,700.00
11	SPACE HEATERS REPLACEMENT	LS	1418	\$1,000.00		\$ 1,418,000.00
12	LOCKS REPLACEMENT	LS	7090	\$50.00		\$ 354,500.00
13	CEILING REPAIRS	SF	709000	\$5.00		\$ 3,545,000.00
14	REPLACEMENT OF RANGE HOODS	LS	709	\$250.00		\$ 177,250.00
15	MAILBOXES	LS	709	\$25.00		\$ 17,725.00
					SUBTOTAL	\$ 18,696,330.00
	HVAC & PLUMBING IMPROVEMENTS					
1	BATHROOM REPAIRS	LS	1418	\$4,500.00		\$ 6,381,000.00
2	TOILET REPLACEMENT	LS	1418	\$350.00		\$ 496,300.00
3	LAVATORY REPLACEMENT	LS	1418	\$225.00		\$ 319,050.00
4	TUB / SHOWER REPLACEMENT	LS	1418	\$1,000.00		\$ 1,418,000.00
5	PLUMBING REPAIRS	LS	1418	\$1,300.00		\$ 1,843,400.00



6	TOILET INTERIOR MECHANISM	LS	1418	\$25.00		\$ 35,450.00
					SUBTOTAL	\$ 10,493,200.00
	<b>ELECTRICAL IMPROVEMENTS</b>					
1	LIGHT FIXTURES REPLACEMENT	LS	8508	\$150.00		\$ 1,276,200.00
2	ELECTRICAL REPAIRS	LS	14180	\$100.00		\$ 1,418,000.00
3	ELEC. OUTLETS REPLACEMENT FOR ELDERLY	LS	0	\$30.00		\$ -
4	ELEC. OUTLETS REPLACEMENT FOR FAMILY	LS	1000	\$50.00		\$ 50,000.00
5	SMOKE DETECTORS	LS	2836	\$125.00		\$ 354,500.00
					SUBTOTAL	\$ 3,098,700.00
	<b>SITE WORK IMPROVEMENTS</b>					
1	PARKING LOT CONSTRUCTION	SF	15000	\$10.00		\$ 150,000.00
2	SODDING	SF	20000	\$1.00		\$ 20,000.00
3	SITE LIGHTING REPAIRS / REPLACEMENT	LS	0	\$1,300.00		\$ -
4	CHAIN LINK FENCING REPAIRS	LF	0	\$8.00		\$ -
5	PICKET FENCE REPAIRS	LF	15000	\$65.00		\$ 975,000.00
6	CONC. SIDEWALK REPAIRS	SF	200000	\$5.00		\$ 1,000,000.00
7	CLOSED CIRCUIT TV ( Camera surveillance)	EA	0	1000		\$ -
					SUBTOTAL	\$ 2,145,000.00
	<b>BUILDING SYSTEMS</b>					
1	UNDERGROUND DRAINAGE / WATER LINES & SEWER REPAIRS / REPLACEMENT	LS	0	\$1,600.00		\$ -
2	ELEVATOR REPAIRS / REPLACEMENT	PER CAB	NA	NA		\$ -
3	GENERATOR REPAIRS / REPLACEMENT	LS	NA	NA		\$ -
4	FIRE ALARM SYSTEM	LS	NA	NA		\$ -
5	FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEM	LS	NA	NA		\$ -
6	EMERGENCY CALL SYSTEM	LS	NA	NA		\$ -
					SUBTOTAL	\$ -
Total Preliminary Hard Costs for Needed Physical Improvements					TOTAL	\$ 69,328,330.00
Architectural fees						\$ 6,932,833.00
Construction Administration fees for PHCD staff						\$ 6,932,833.00
Management Improvements						\$ 6,932,833.00
Relocation funds for residents during construction						\$ 2,000,000.00
					GRANDTOTAL	\$ 92,126,829.00
Per Unit Hard Cost						\$ 129,939.11
Date Assessment prepared						4/12/2012
Source of Information:						On site inspections and construction records

## **LIBERTY SQUARE**

### **STRUCTURAL DEFICIENCIES**



The existing open porches need to be repaired and restored. The metal connectors at wood beams need to be replaced with more modern present code connectors. The existing open porches do not meet hurricane uplift requirements and are not design to current codes.



Many of the steel columns in the open porches need replacing because they have been damaged due to their long exposure to the elements and old age.



Existing roofs and appurtenances do not meet current code requirements.



Site work needs recreational areas, more landscaping and re-sodding, replacement and installation of new sidewalks.



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**Attachment 11:**  
**Need – Design Deficiencies Documentation**

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**Applicant:**  
**Miami-Dade Public Housing**  
**and Community Development**

**File Name:**  
**Att11DesignDefLS.pdf**

## LIBERTY SQUARE

### DESIGN DEFICIENCIES



Buildings at Liberty Square were constructed prior to today's building standards and are "barrack style" apartments. The building layout and site configurations are inappropriate. There is a large density of structures and units, with no sensitivity for residential interaction. There is no "comfortable or dynamic environment" for residents.



Site conditions make it difficult and inaccessible to physically challenged residents to move around the site.



The kitchen areas are inadequately small and restrictive. There is no space for microwave, appliances, dishwashers or a full size refrigerator.



The kitchen areas are not well ventilated and lack range hood with exhaust fans. Interior of units are not handicap accessible.



## **LIBERTY SQUARE**

### **DESIGN DEFICIENCIES**



Front and rear doors are in need of replacement with up to date hurricane impact exterior doors and 32" minimum clearances or required by code.



Vinyl asbestos flooring needs replacing with more durable ceramic tile flooring. The existing flooring creates tripping hazards for residents and do not last.



Existing interior lightning is inadequate, and fixtures are not energy star light type.



Fencing along the perimeter of the project is damaged and in need of replacement.

**LIBERTY SQUARE**  
**DESIGN DEFICIENCIES**



Laundry facilities inside the units do not meet present code. There is very limited room for washers and no provisions for dryers. The existing rooms are not adequate to meet modern day needs.



Existing bollards to prevent vehicular access to the rear of the units are obsolete and unsightly. These need to be replaced with residential fences. The sidewalks are in need of repairs.





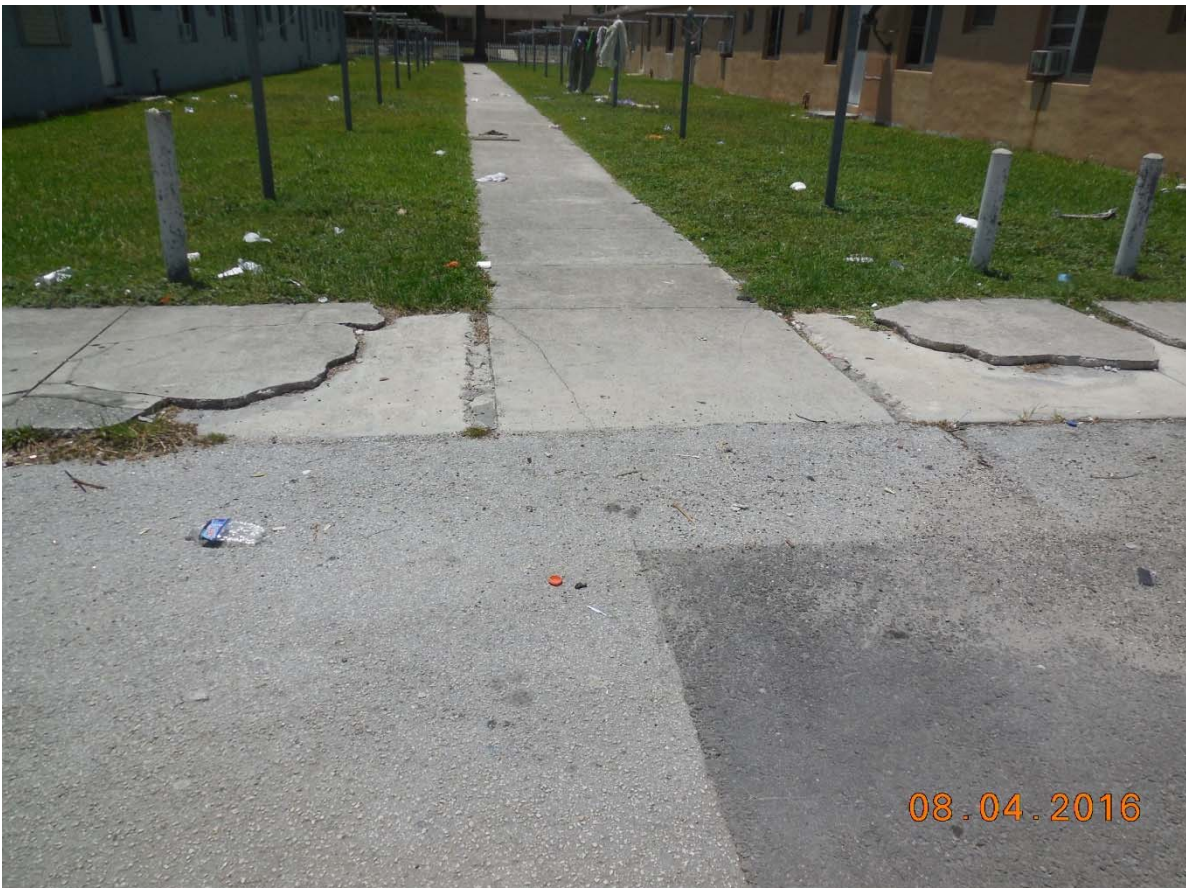












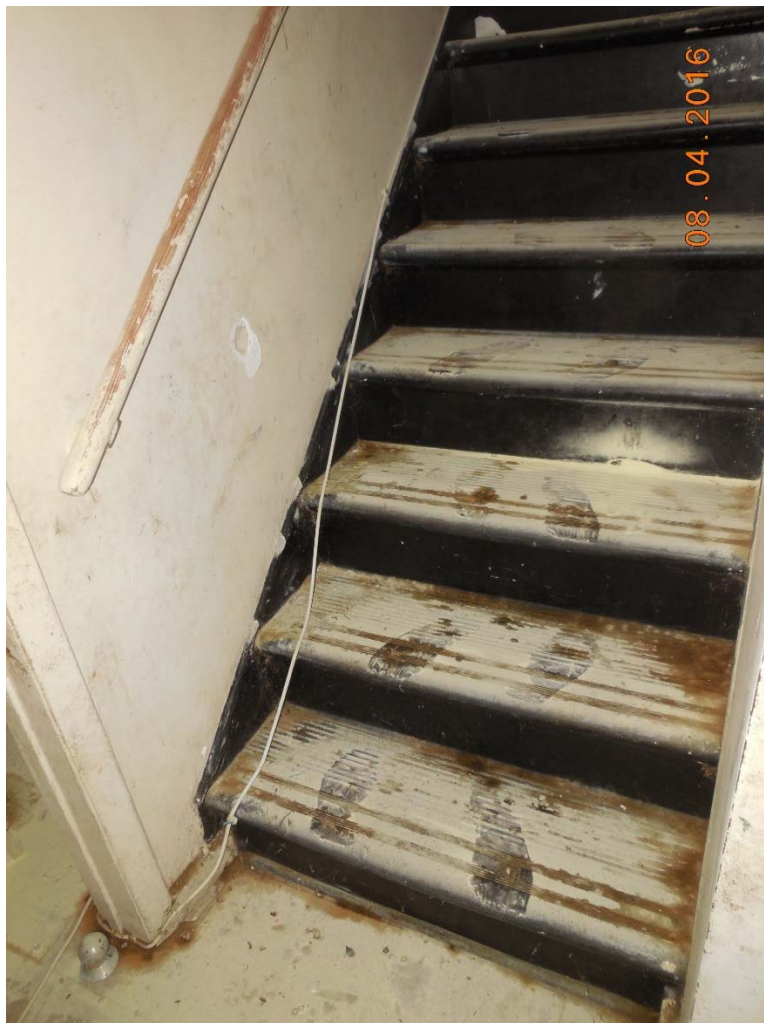


































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Liberty Square Community Center  
6304 NW 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue

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Preliminary Designation Report



June 2016



This report was prepared by Max Adriel Imberman, Historic Designation Specialist, Dade Heritage Trust.

## CONTENTS

1. General Information
2. Preliminary Statement of Significance
  - a. Dates of Significance
  - b. Statement of Significance
  - c. Criteria for Historical Designation
3. Connection to Criteria for Historic Designation
4. Representative Photographs
5. Bibliography



## **1. General Information**

**Historic Name:**

Liberty Square Community Center

**Location:**

6304 NW 14th Avenue

**Tax Folio Number:**

01-3114-009-0010

**Legal Description:**

14 53 41 17.6 AC PB 34-99

LOW COST HOUSING PROJ NO H 4602

BLKS 1 THRU 6 INC LESS W10FT OF

OF BLKS 2-4 & 6

LOT SIZE 766656 SQUARE FEET

**Date of Construction:**

1936

**Architect:**

Unknown

**Contractor/Builder:**

Unknown

**Primary Land Use:**

General

**Present Use:**

General

**Zoning:**

T4-R

## 2. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### a. Specific Dates:

1936 (year built)

### b. Statement of Significance:

The Liberty Square Community Center is the social, cultural, and administrative hub of the Liberty Square Housing Project, the third-oldest public housing project in the country. It was constructed in 1936 as a fundamental part of a joint venture between President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Public Works Administration and local business interests led by Miami attorney John Gramling. Liberty Square was designed and built to provide safe, healthy homes for Miami's African-American workforce. It joined utopian ideals with the segregationist practices of 1930s America. The community center, commonly referred to as "The Center," fulfilled many purposes for Liberty Square since its founding, including housing the offices of the housing project, as well as hosting the project's library, as well as a large auditorium. It has been the home to countless social, cultural, and religious events. The community center is representative of the ideals behind the project's founding, as well as the growth of its community over the last eight decades.

The construction of Liberty Square was inspired by the concern of Miami's affluent white community that the city's African-American population in the area then-called Colored Town (now Overtown) was living in unsafe and unhealthy conditions. This fear was in part caused by genuine concern, but also by fear that African-American servants would bring disease into white-owned houses. The weekly Miami newspaper *Friday Night* released a January 12, 1934 article, which stated that "the people who hire negroes in their homes should come forth with their protest. A protest against allowing the maid that cares for their children, the cook that prepares their food, and the wash woman that does their clothes, from bringing into their homes the disease germs that flourish in the present negro district."<sup>1</sup> Liberty Square was intended, above all else, to be a clean, healthy environment, and the community center was at its heart both geographically and in terms of the services it provided to achieve that goal.

Liberty Square's design and construction were guided by a utopian ideal, that it would be a community that would lead to the betterment of its residents. This belief was certainly held by the black advisory group which worked with the all-white Miami Advisory Committee on Housing. This group, which included local figures such as the Reverend John Culmer, Dr. W. B. Sawyer, and attorney R. E.S. Toomey, wanted to name the housing project "Utopia." This idea was rejected by the committee for being too general, but it indicates the expectations held for the project. The committee eventually decided on the name "Liberty Square" to complement the naming of the already-existing Liberty City.<sup>2</sup> Even though the housing project did not receive the

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<sup>1</sup> George, Paul S., and Thomas K. Petersen. "Liberty Square, 1933-1987 The Origins and Evolution of a Public Housing Project." *Tequesta* LXIX (2009). p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38-39.



name “Utopia,” its founders held very high expectations for the influence it would have on its resident, and the community center was designed in such a way that would help achieve the goals of the project’s founding.

As with many New Deal construction projects, the Liberty Square housing project was intended to be extremely modern, to be designed with the best interests of the community in mind. A 1936 promotional pamphlet describes Liberty Square as a “modern low rent housing project in a residential area occupied by Negro families.”<sup>3</sup> Liberty Square was situated in an area anticipated to grow in population. The pamphlet describes the Liberty City area as “sparsely settled, but rapidly developing. Four churches are nearby, and a public school is under construction one half-mile from the center of the project. Cooperative effort should result in a completely new and model community.”<sup>4</sup> While Liberty Square was not placed in the center of 1930s Miami, it was expected to be an integral part of a growing community. Its housing units were designed to be modern, with plumbing for hot and cold water, electric lights, built-in refrigerators, and kerosene stoves. Each dwelling had a private bath, and the promotional pamphlet states that “every bed-room is assured an abundance of light and air.”<sup>5</sup> Only one-fourth of the Liberty Square land was covered with buildings. The rest was dedicated to green space for personal and community gardens, as well as lawns and play yards. The buildings were also designed to withstand the wind forces of the hurricanes that so often struck Miami.

The community center was a fundamental part of the plan for Liberty Square. The 1936 promotional pamphlet states that the building “contains a large auditorium, three stores, a day nursery, and the Management Office. Special provision has been made for the care of babies and children of pre-school age by the inclusion of the nursery as well as indoor recreational activities for older children. By the utilization of available leadership and the development of existing facilities, every opportunity will be offered for the care and well-being of the children of employed parents living in the project.”<sup>6</sup> Liberty Square management was very selective in who it allowed to live there. Tenants were expected to be self-sustaining with limited income. If a resident crossed a certain salary threshold, they would be forced to move out. The community center was designed to fill the needs of a working-class family, holding the administrative offices for the project, as well as stores to buy food and quality of life items. The community center had a massive emphasis on childcare because the designers of the Liberty Square project did not want the working-class residents to be worried about their children. If their children had a safe place to stay during the day, the parents could focus on work during the day to support the family. The community center was integral from day one in supporting the utopian designs of Liberty Square.

In the almost-eighty years that the Liberty Square Community Center has stood, it has been used to hold social, cultural, and religious events. The testimonies of Liberty Square residents demonstrate the wide variety of uses the building has had, and the numerous ways it deeply impacted the lives of Liberty Square residents, young and old. The community center was commonly used as a place to meet for civic clubs, social clubs, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and the

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<sup>3</sup> Liberty Square: A Modern Low Rent Housing Project in a Residential Area Occupied by Negro Families. p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

local PTA. The community center accommodated meetings for political and economic organizations such as the Liberty Square Consumers' Cooperative Association, which aimed to collaboratively help members of the African-American community make money and buy goods. It hosted athletic and crafting groups. It was used for holiday celebrations, such as the annual roller-skating event on Christmas Day, in which the community center closed off 63<sup>rd</sup> Street to allow children to skate, with a Christmas tree adorning the roof of the building. The community center was also used to host talent shows for the project's children. These events were led by master of ceremonies Blanche Calloway, singer and activist, and sister of legendary jazz artist Cab Calloway, who gave children the opportunity to demonstrate their skills. Finally, the library housed in the building gave Liberty Square residents an opportunity for learning, and an environment for tutoring and general enrichment. The success of the community center is partly due to its facilities, but also because of the involvement of community members who actively worked to provide resources for Liberty Square residents young and old.

The Liberty Square Community Center was the origin point of at least one Miami congregation, being the first meeting place of The Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, which is now located on Northwest 54<sup>th</sup> Street. Their first service took place on June 5, 1949, in the community center's auditorium, and a month later it was formally organized as a Diocesan Mission. The church met at the community center for two years before moving into its own building.

While the building has been altered to fit the needs of the many decades since its construction, its overall purpose within the community remains the same. It still hosts Liberty Square's administrative offices, its library, and events are still held within its auditorium. An addition was built to house more childcare programs. Ramps for handicap accessibility have been added. Cosmetically, the building has gone through relatively major changes, but its original use remains intact.

### **3. Relationship to Criteria for Designation:**

1. The site of a historic event with significant impact upon the community, city, state, or nation.

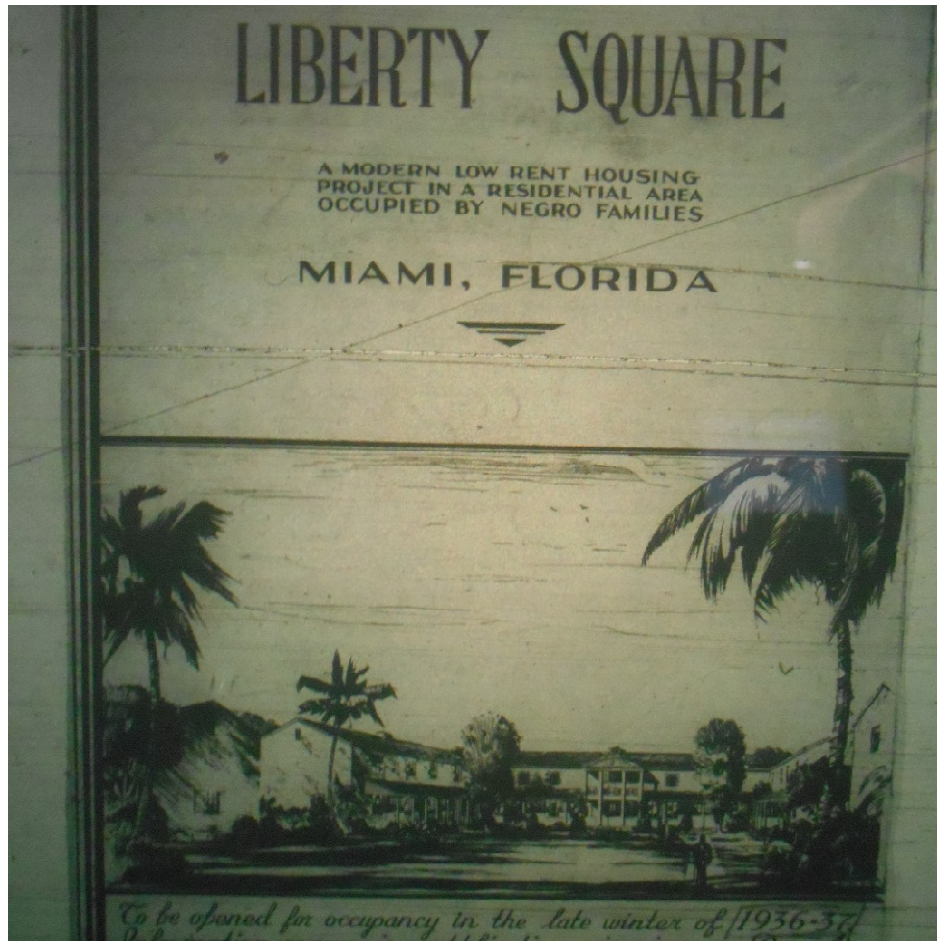
The Liberty Square Community Center is at the heart of America's third-oldest public housing project, and is the result of a partnership between Franklin Delano Roosevelt's national New Deal initiatives and local Miami interests. The collaboration of federal and municipal interests was key to the success of PWA programs nationally. The design and construction of Liberty Square was a groundbreaking project, and the community center filled an indispensable role in terms of administration, social life, culture, and religion.

2. Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economical, or social trends of the community.

The Liberty Square Community Center represents a combination of factors pervasive in the 1930s: a New Deal utopian ideal based on the health and wellness of the project's

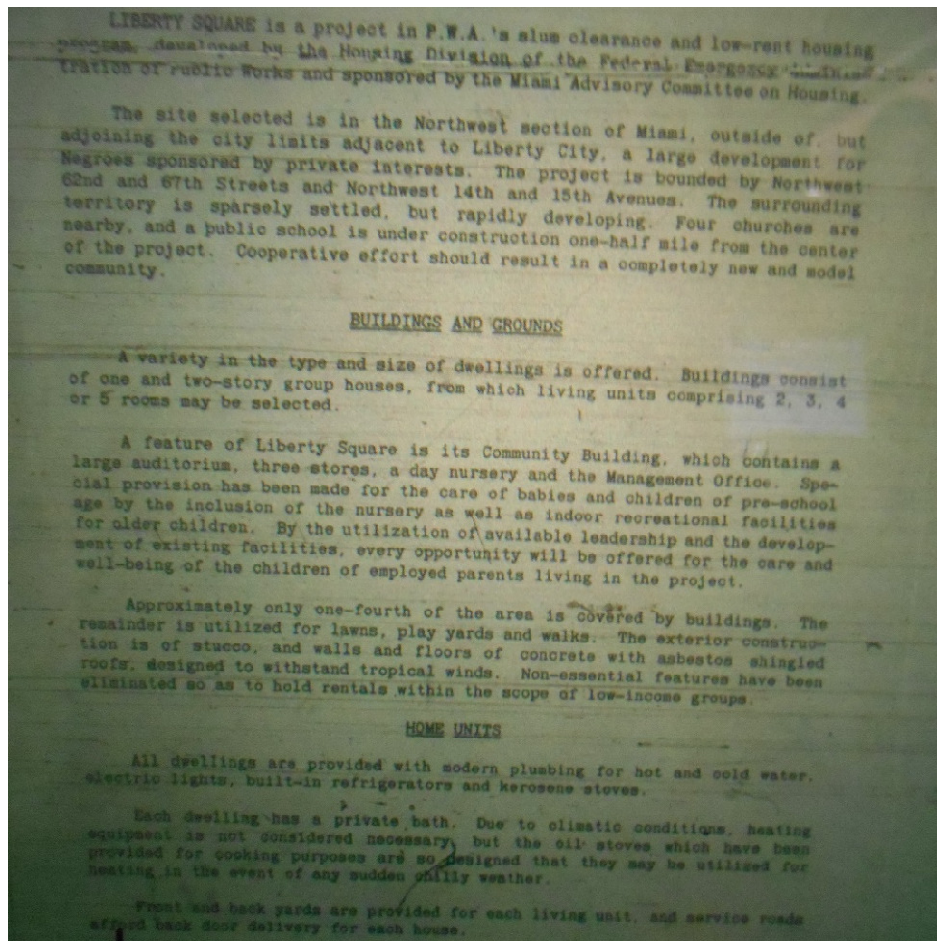


residents, as well as outright racial segregation. The community center was and has been the heart of the Liberty Square community, by design. It has hosted social, cultural and religious events, been the founding point for at least one church, and provided childcare services as well as a library for the edification of Liberty Square residents. It typifies the role of a community center in Miami or any community.

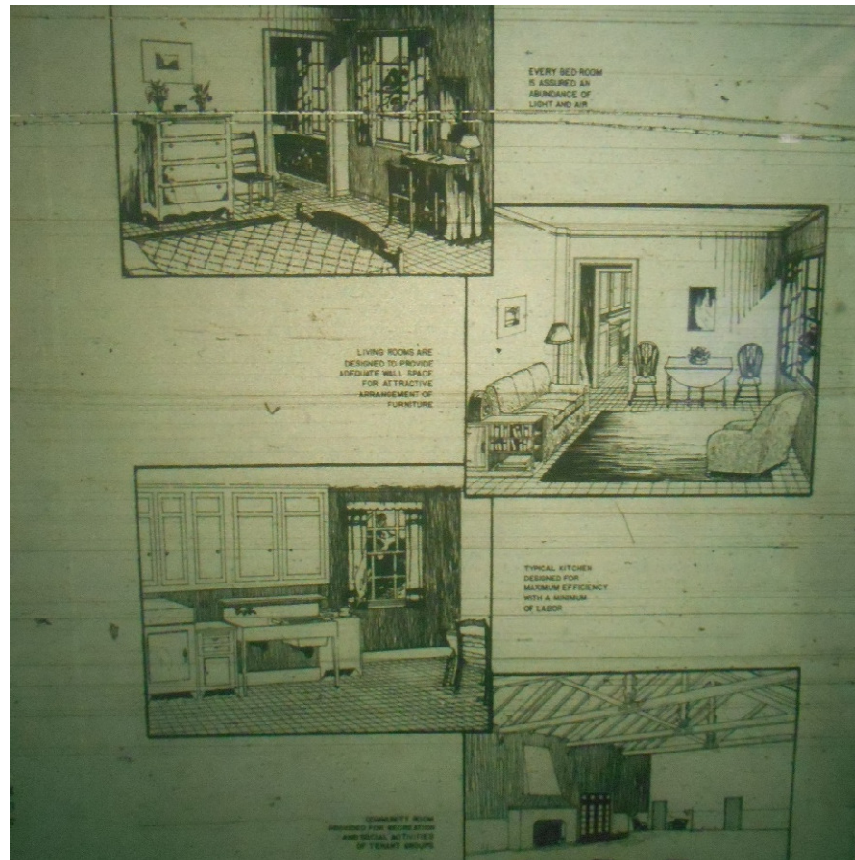


*Courtesy of the Miami-Dade Public Library Florida Room. 1936 Promotional Pamphlet for the Liberty Square Housing Project.*



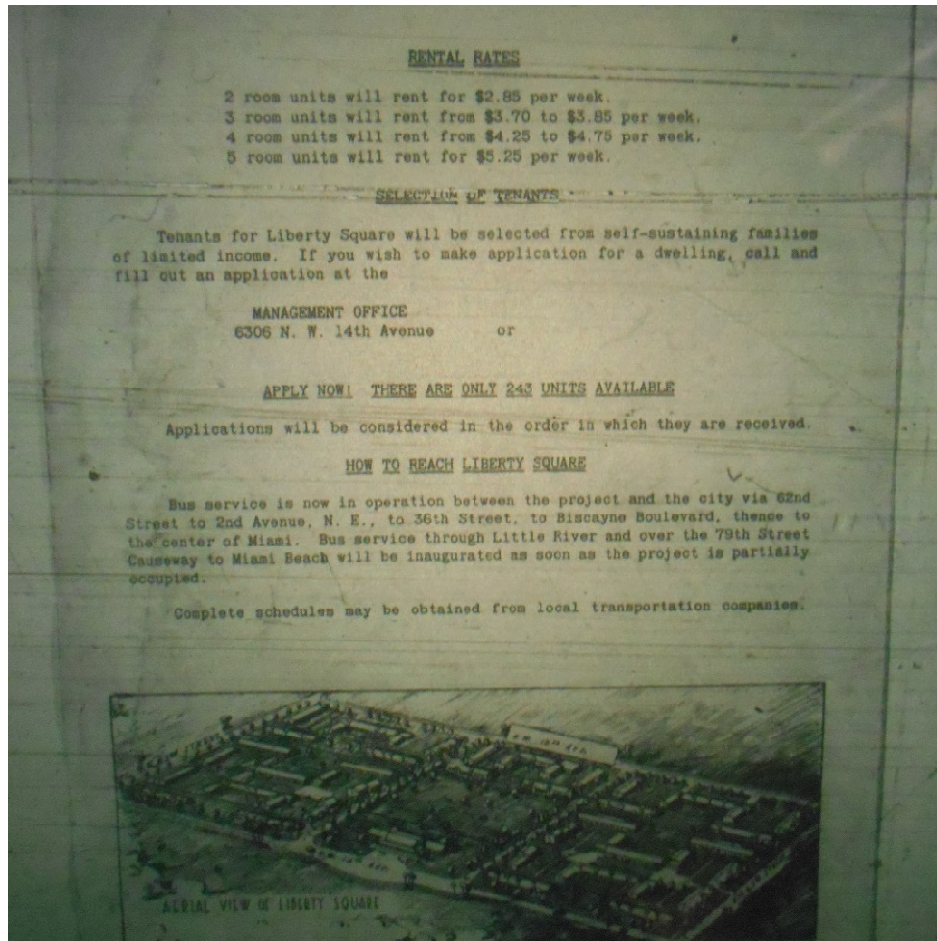


*Courtesy of the Miami-Dade Public Library Florida Room. 1936 Promotional Pamphlet for the Liberty Square Housing Project.*



*Courtesy of the Miami-Dade Public Library Florida Room. 1936 Promotional Pamphlet for the Liberty Square Housing Project.*





*Courtesy of the Miami-Dade Public Library Florida Room. 1936 Promotional Pamphlet for the Liberty Square Housing Project.*

#### 4. Representative Photographs



*6304 NW 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Eastern Elevation (2016)*





*Eastern Elevation (2016)*



*Eastern Elevation (2016)*





*Eastern Elevation (2016)*



*Northern Elevation (2016)*



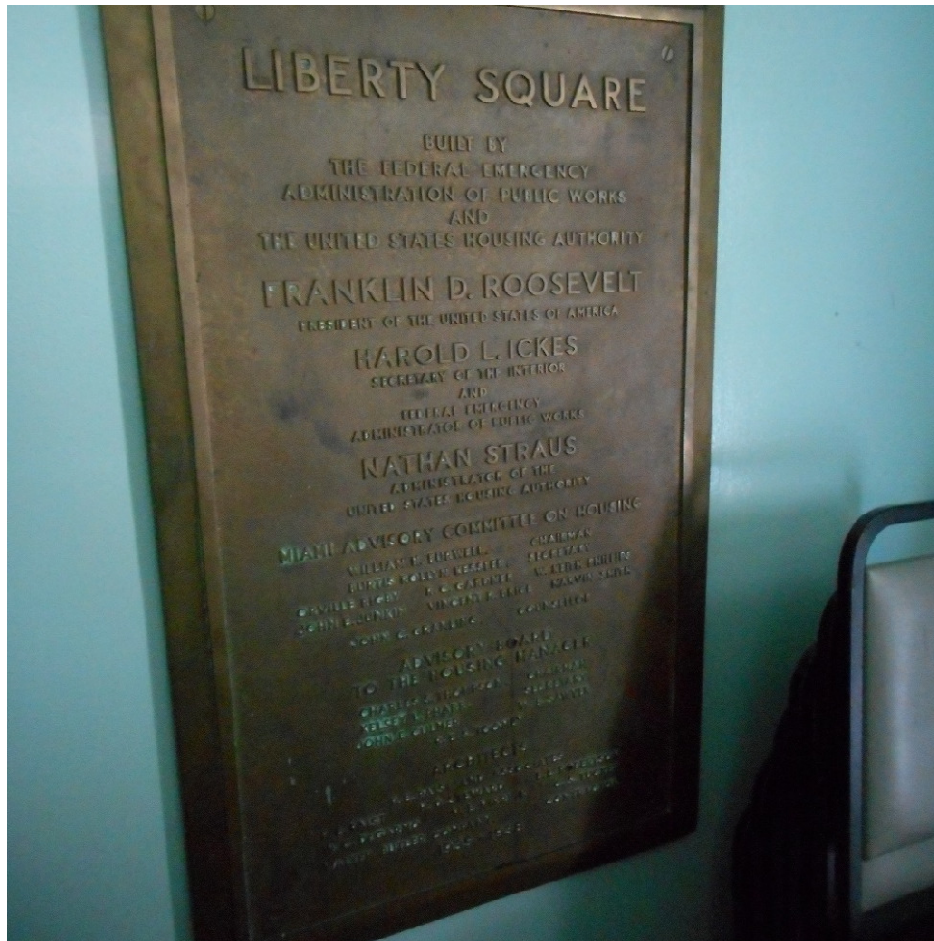


*Western Elevation (2016)*



*Western Elevation (2016)*





*Commemorative plaque from the 1936 founding of Liberty Square, housed inside the community center currently, but originally displayed on a monument across the street.*

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