



**Regulatory and Economic Resources Department**

**Office of Historic Preservation**

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August 7, 2018

Mr. Ruben A. Acosta  
Survey and Registration Supervisor  
Division of Historical Resources  
R.A. Gray Building  
Bureau of Historic Preservation  
500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Re: DA01070 Coconut Grove Playhouse, National Register of Historic Places Draft Nomination

Dear Mr. Acosta:

Thank you for providing Miami-Dade County with the opportunity to review and comment on the revised National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Coconut Grove Playhouse. The County appreciates the State's efforts to officially recognize the significance of the Playhouse through this nomination. We recognize that this is a complex property, particularly how the evolution of the resource relates to the analysis of integrity. The inclusion of spatial diagrams that visually depict this evolution are helpful, and critical to understanding the transformation of space that occurred over time.

However, even with the reorganization of the narrative, it maintains deficiencies that must be resolved prior to proceeding with the nomination. Specifically, the descriptive narrative does not support the conclusions made about the remaining integrity of the resource.

The narrative correctly identifies that while the exterior retains integrity to the original Richard Kiehnel design, the interior does not. With regard to the interior integrity of Alfred Browning Parker's design, the narrative does not provide an analysis that places this project within the broader context of Alfred Browning Parker's larger body of work. As a result, Parker's Playhouse design has not been substantiated as being architecturally significant. Even if the assumption is made that Parker's work here is, in fact, significant enough to warrant eligibility, the integrity of his design is not readily apparent.

The narrative states that "key aesthetic features of Parker's design, such as the interior fountain, dome, and modernist finishes, are now gone...The building has a low level of integrity of materials or workmanship from the Parker period, as the materials and finishes that characterized his work are now obscured or missing..." Despite this accurate description, the nomination concludes that the Playhouse retains a moderate level of architectural integrity, due in large part to the retention of Parker's spatial organization. However, given that the defining elements of Parker's interior design have been eliminated by subsequent architectural interventions, the Playhouse exhibits a low level of integrity to Parker's overall design, and ultimately may not be sufficient for listing.

The Coconut Grove Playhouse is an important historic and cultural institution, and we thank the State for taking the initiative to nominate it for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, and for taking into consideration our professional evaluation and comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah K. Cody".

Sarah K. Cody  
Historic Preservation Chief  
Miami-Dade County

Cc: Warren Adams, Historic Preservation Officer, City of Miami