



## The City of Coral Gables

*Historical Resources Department*

**COA (SP) 2009-09  
MAY 7, 2009**

### **STAFF REPORT**

**SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
FOR AN ADDITION/ALTERATION TO  
THE PROPERTY AT  
1021 ALHAMBRA CIRCLE  
A CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE WITHIN THE  
"ALHAMBRA CIRCLE HISTORIC DISTRICT"**

**Proposal:** The applicant is requesting design approval for the construction of an addition and alterations to the existing structures. At-grade improvements have also been proposed for installation.

**Architect:** Jose L. Gonzalez Perotti

**Owner:** Quentin G. and Dana Nason

**Legal Description:** Lot 15, 16, and the E half of Lot 17, Block 3, Coral Gables Section "C"

**Site Characteristics:** This property is located on two and a half interior lots. The main elevation of the building faces south onto Alhambra Circle.

**Originally Constructed:** c. 1929

**Original Architect:** Stewart and Paist (Harold Stewart)

### **BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS**

In January of 2008, the "Alhambra Circle Historic District" was listed in the Coral Gables Register of Historic Places. It is comprised of residences located along Alhambra Circle. The district boundaries are LeJeune Road on the east and Sevilla Avenue on the south.

The residence located at 1021 Alhambra Circle, constructed circa 1929, is a contributing structure within the "Alhambra Circle Historic District." The main structure is designed in the Mediterranean Revival Architectural style and features details such as an oriel window (above front entry door), stylized arches, predominant chimney, and a barrel tile roof.

### PROPOSAL

The applicant is requesting design approval for the construction of additions and alterations to the existing structures. At-grade improvements have also been proposed for installation.

### SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The following Standards have application in this matter:

9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
  
10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

### STAFF OBSERVATIONS

#### Main structure:

On the east side of the building are the existing porches for the home. The porches that face the front elevation have been enclosed on both the ground and upper floors. The one-story porch, which faces the rear elevation and accesses the side yard, has low walls and a roof top terrace deck. The proposal involves the demolition of the one-story porch and the alteration of the window and door openings in the two-story section.

Replacing the one-story structure will be a new dining room. The finished floor will be raised on the interior, and will have a seven (7) inch step down from the existing family room; but will be level with the sitting room area. Like the section it replaces, the roof top will be usable as a terrace. Screen blocks were originally used in the historic home to add a decorative detail to the second floor "screened" porch. A similar detail will be integrated into the design of the second floor terrace's masonry wall, which will act as a railing. Barrel roof tiles instead of screen blocks will be used as the accent panel.

A covered loggia is also proposed for construction. The dimensions are approximately eleven (11) feet, nine and a quarter (9 ¼) inches wide, by thirty-three (33) feet, six and a half (6 ½) inches long. The north and south walls recess approximately eight (8) inches from the front and rear elevations, extending to match the height of the railings at the roof top terrace. Masonry openings in the loggia, mimicking the original design at the porte-cochere, will face the front and rear yards. A low stucco banding has also been proposed at the base of the wall to help to distinguish this section as new construction. The loggia is covered with a shed roof, with tiling meant to match the existing structure. The roof is supported by wood beams and columns and decoratively cut brackets.

All windows and exterior doors, except the front door, will be replaced. Shutters will be affixed to the majority of the openings. Additionally, new wrought iron gates have been designed for installation in the porte-cochere. The openings to the sitting areas on the ground floor and upper floor will be changed from two openings to a single opening.

Auxiliary structure:

To the northwest corner of the property (rear) is a two story "guest house" and garage building. The ground floor is comprised of a double car garage, a bathroom, living area, bedroom, and storage. On the second floor are: a bedroom suite, living room, dining room, kitchen and two balconies. Many of these spaces will be reconfigured and all the windows and doors will be replaced except for the garage door. Simple security bars will be installed on the second floor windows facing east.

The one-story section to the east of the building, which contains a bedroom and storage room, will be demolished. A new guest room and covered loggia will be constructed as an addition to the remaining structure. The dimensions of the new construction are approximately twenty-one (21) feet wide, by sixteen (16) feet, ten (10) inches deep. It will step back from the front elevation approximately one (1) foot, seven (7) inches. The addition will have masonry walls with openings that mimic the detail of the porte-cochere. Barrel roof tiles will be installed on the gable roof to match the existing tiles on the two story section.

The reconfiguration of the spaces on the ground floor will create a larger bathroom and converts the living area into a bar area. The window, door, and partitions will be altered to accommodate these changes. The rear door will be enclosed and the window in the enlarged bathroom will be converted into a door. The vacated space from the altered hallway will become the new air condition closet. On the second floor, the rear balcony will be removed and a window installed in place of the door. The reconfiguration will convert the kitchen into another bedroom, create a shared bathroom and reduce the size of the existing bedroom. A bar area is proposed to replace the dining room.

At-grade improvements (summary):

Details of materials for the at-grade improvements were not submitted. Additional review and application is necessary for the pool, pavers, and landscaping.

To the east of the auxiliary building terrace addition, a pool deck and pool is proposed to be installed. The pool will be setback approximately seventeen (17) feet from the east property line and ten (10) feet from the rear property line. The parking ribbon strips and front walkway will be resurfaced. The driveway to the garage beyond the main building will be made linear and remain concrete. A new walkway is proposed for the auxiliary structure and will connect back to the main house.

A six foot high wall currently exists to the rear of the property that connects to a chain link fence on the west side, and a three (3) foot high CMU wall on the east that wraps around the front property line and connects back to the house. A new metal gate is proposed for the wall in the three (3) foot high section. The gate will mimic the design of the vehicular gate.

**VARIANCES**

No variances have been requested as part of this application.

**BOARD OF ARCHITECTS**

This project was reviewed without comment on January 22, 2009 and April 9, 2009.

**STAFF CONCLUSION**

The application presented requests design approval for the construction of additions and alterations to the property. The additions are planned for areas of the buildings that were previously altered. The demolitions of the sections do not harm or jeopardize the historic nature of the historic building. Minor modifications should be made to the design to further distinguish the new construction from the historic fabric. At the terrace openings (both at the main building and the auxiliary structure), the detailing at the corners should be restudied to not mimic exactly the original character defining feature.

Additionally, Staff recommends that the two openings on the ground floor at the south east corner on the front façade be returned back to two arched openings as indicated in the original drawings. Staff has no objection to the alteration at the second floor in this area. Similarly, the openings into the new dining room could be restored to their original arched configuration to line up with the restored front arches. Staff has concerns about the new "security bars" at the second floor of the garage and if they impede the windows they cover.

Further review and application for the at-grade improvements (pool, pool deck, walkways, landscaping, etc.) is required. This review does not include approvals or recommendations for those items.

The Historical Resources Department staff recommends the following: A motion to APPROVE, with the integration of the comments, the design for the addition and alterations to the property at 1021 Alhambra Circle, a contributing structure within the "Alhambra Circle Historic District" and the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness with conditions.

Respectfully submitted,



Kara N. Kautz

Historic Preservation Officer