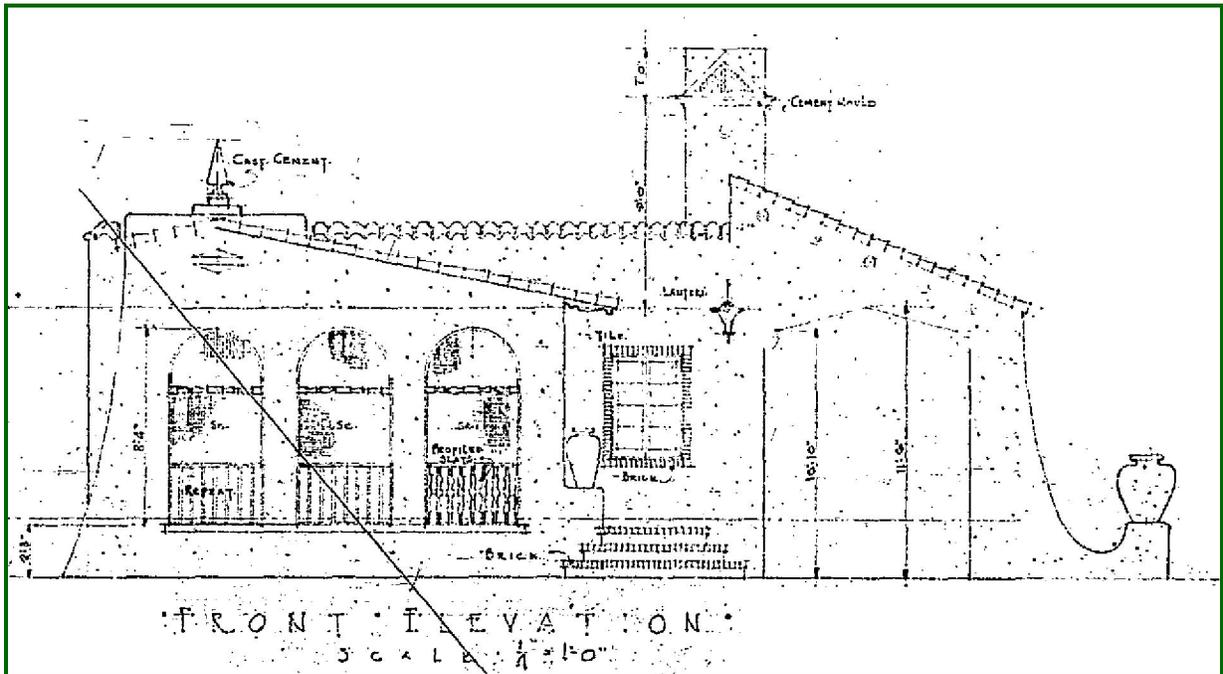


REPORT OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES
HISTORICAL RESOURCES & CULTURAL ARTS DEPARTMENT
TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
ON THE DESIGNATION OF
THE PROPERTY AT
1506 LISBON STREET
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA



Permit #258, 1924



LHD 2025-009
October 16, 2025

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION:
1506 LISBON STREET, CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**

Application: Application result Historic Significance Determination

Folio Numbers: 03-4107-018-7620

Legal Description: Lot 10, Block 68, Coral Gables Granada Section Revised, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 113 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Original Permit No.: 258

Date of Construction: 1924-25

Original Architect: H. George Fink

Original Builder/Owner: J. Edwin Kerr; Joseph Ricketts

Present Owner: Leonardo De Paula Pessoa & Holly Ann De Jong

Building Type / Style: One-story SFR / Mediterranean Revival

Site Characteristics: The property is located on an interior 50' x 105' lot on the west side of the street between Messina and Milan Avenues.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Constructed in 1924-5, the single-family residence at 1506 Lisbon Street is one of the earliest homes constructed in the Coral Gables. Founder George Merrick envisioned Coral Gables as a Mediterranean-inspired planned city. Sales of first lots were sold in November 1921 were quite successful, a trend that continued for the next few years. Merrick's vision included the Garden City precept of offering housing for different income levels. In 1923 Merrick purposefully platted the Granada Section with streets for all incomes. Modest homes were built with the same high-quality construction and features as other structures that shaped the new city in the early 1920s. Many of these modest houses are now classified as Coral Gables Cottages.

Initially Merrick's team handled all construction and design. By 1924 Merrick began exploring partnerships. In September he contracted with J. Edwin Kerr to build 100 homes. Kerr was heavily involved in the development of Druid Hills, an exclusive planned community bordering Atlanta. Only the second outside contractor Merrick allowed to build in the City, Kerr concentrated on providing homes for working families and engaged architect H. George Fink, a member to Merrick's team, to design them. It included the one-story, moderately-affordable home at 1506 Lisbon Street. The home was under construction by November 1924. Kerr passed shortly thereafter, and it was completed in spring 1925 by Joseph Ricketts. Fink was largely responsible for the typology that later became known as the Coral Gables Cottage. 1506 Lisbon Street is representative of Fink's Mediterranean Revival style work in this genre. The property retains its historic integrity, and it exemplifies the building archetype upon which Coral Gables was founded. Hence, it significantly contributes to the historic fabric of the Coral Gables and is part of the collection of quality residences that contributes to the City's sense of place over time.

CORAL GABLES REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES: Preserving the City's Story

The built environment reflects the beliefs, values, creative expressions, and technical capacity at a place in time in history. Historic Preservation preserves those structures and spaces that tell the story of the community's historic past. The buildings that comprise the Coral Gables Register of Historic Places portray the City's story of progress, change and preservation. They are valuable, non-renewable resources that embody our collective heritage. The retention of these tangible touchstones provides a sense of community, a sense of evolution, a sense of identity, a sense of ownership, and a sense of place for the City of Coral Gables. In other words, these historic resources provide continuity and context; they are the foundation of the City's identity.

Coral Gables is a Certified Local Government (CLG) and as such must maintain a Register of Historic Places and abide by associated preservation standards. A local community works through a certification process -- jointly administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) -- to become recognized as a Certified Local Government (CLG). Once certified the community gains access to benefits of the program and agrees to follow required Federal and State requirements.

The City of Coral Gables was certified in 1986 and was amongst the first cities in Florida to become a CLG. Hence, it is the task of Historic Preservation, and an obligation of Certified Local Governments, to identify and protect those resources that contribute to the story of the City over time. Furthermore, the City must abide by the federal regulations as put forth in The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties: with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, & Reconstructing Buildings.

CRITERIA FOR SIGNIFICANCE

Article 8, Section 8-103 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code--*Criteria for designation of historic landmarks or historic districts*--states that to qualify for designation as a local historic landmark individual properties must have significant character, interest, or value as part of the historical, cultural, archaeological, aesthetic, or architectural heritage of the City, state, or nation.

The single-family residence at 1506 Lisbon Street is eligible as a local historic landmark based on its historical, cultural, and architectural significance. For designation, a property must meet **one (1)** of the criteria outlined in the Code. As discussed below, 1506 Lisbon Street meets the following **three (3) criteria**:

A. Historical, Cultural significance

Criterion 4: Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economic, or social trends of the community

B. Architectural significance

Criterion 1: Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural style

Criterion 2: Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Coral Gables' developmental history is divided broadly into three major historical periods:

- **Pre-1926 Hurricane:** Initial Planning and Development/Florida Land Boom
- **1927-1944:** 1926 Hurricane/Great Depression Aftermath and New Deal/Wartime Activity
- **1945-1963:** Post World War II and Modern periods

Constructed in 1924-5, the single-family residence at 1506 Lisbon Street occurred during the City's first phase of development and is indicative of the type of architecture that was the founding premise of Coral Gables.

Founding of Coral Gables



Figure 1: Streets in Coral Gables Under Construction, July 22, 1922

Coral Gables was originally conceived as a suburb of Miami and attracted investors from across the nation during the South Florida real estate boom of the 1920s. Founder George E. Merrick drew from the Garden City and City Beautiful movements of the 19th and early 20th century to create his vision for a fully conceived and cohesively designed, Mediterranean-inspired city. It is now considered one of the first modern planned communities in the United States.

Advised by landscape architect Frank Button, artist Denman Fink, and architects H. George Fink, Walter De Garmo, H. H. Mundy, and Phineas Paist, Merrick converted 3,000 acres of citrus plantation and native hammock. (Figure 1) The use of Mediterranean designs was one of the featured selling points in early promotional materials. Merrick and his team felt that this type of architecture harmonized best with south Florida's climate and lifestyle. The architecture constructed during Coral Gables' initial development combined elements commonly used in Spanish, Moorish, and Italian architecture, and has come to be known as the Mediterranean Revival style. During the 1920s structures and amenities were built almost exclusively per this style.

The home at 1506 Lisbon Street exemplifies the Mediterranean ideals and climate adaptations espoused by City founder George Merrick. As discussed below, it was designed by architect H. George Fink who was amongst a small cadre of select architects Merrick commissioned to develop his vision in the 1920s.

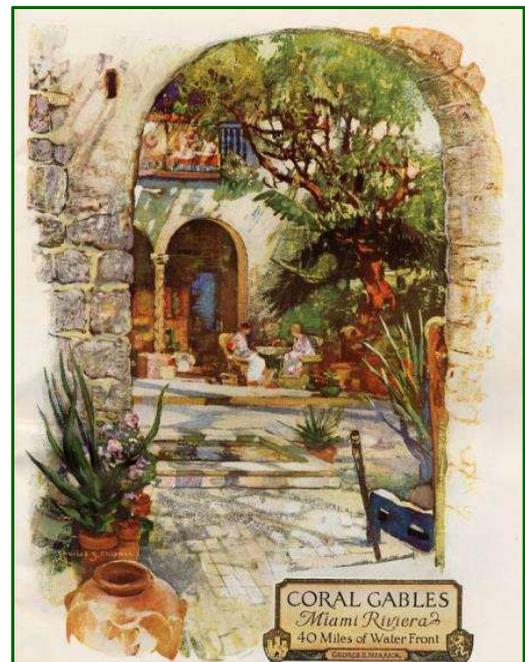
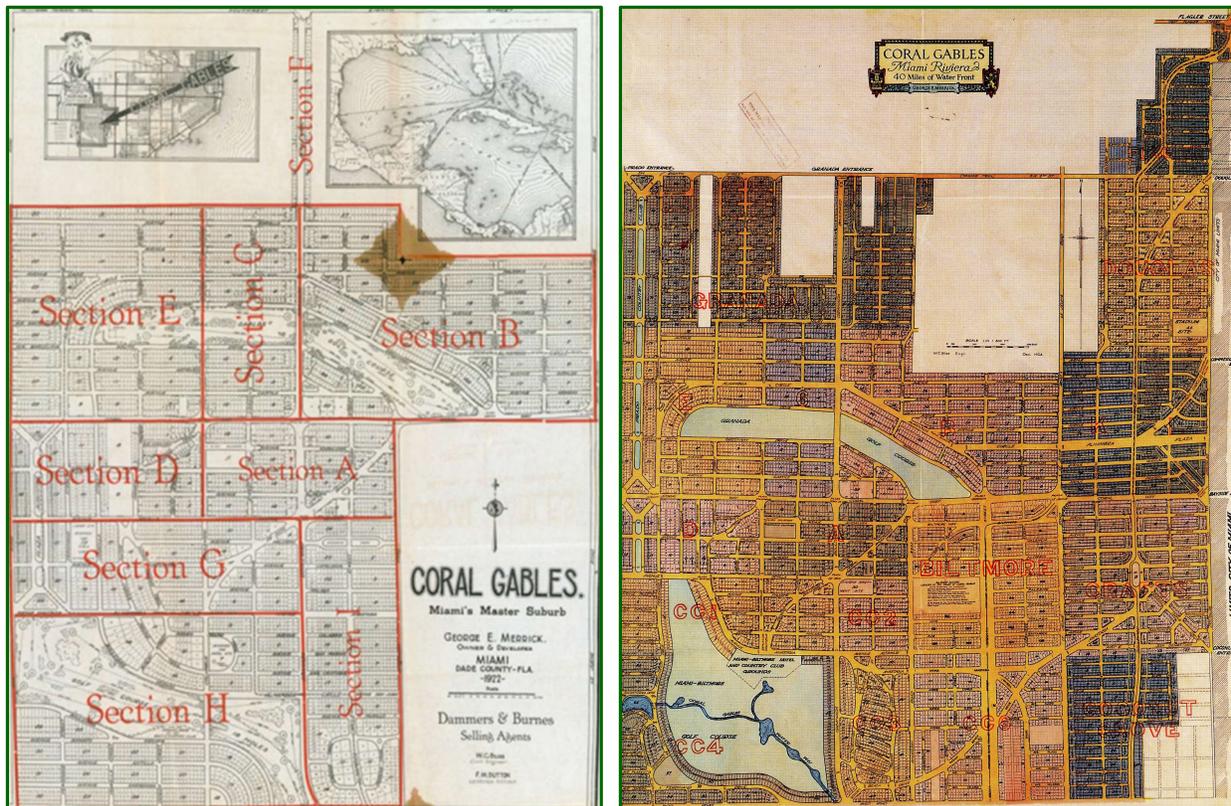


Figure 2: Advertisement in *House Beautiful*, 1925

Merrick’s design team carefully planned the city to maximize the potential intrinsic to its tropical environment. They laid out broad sweeping boulevards with grand vistas and tree-lined residential streets. They designed plazas with fountains that invited visitors to linger and Mediterranean-inspired homes that conveyed a quality of centuries-old permanence. Generous street setbacks created front yards that could celebrate the ‘tropical vegetation in a delightful profusion.’ The team employed restrictive zoning to control development and aesthetics. The plan embraced the City Beautiful ideals of copious amounts of public green space and monumental public buildings. It also wholeheartedly incorporated the Garden City precepts of comprehensive planning with defined areas for different uses (i.e., residential, commercial, trades), supplying a wealth of public facilities. Merrick was particularly dedicated to the Garden City precept of building a socially mixed community where people of various socioeconomic levels could live side-by-side without sacrificing quality. Homes built for modest incomes were built alongside grand palazzos and a section of the City was devoted to multi-family housing.



Figures 3: Coral Gables Maps
“Miami’s Master Suburb,” 1922 [left]
“Miami Riviera,” 1924 [right]

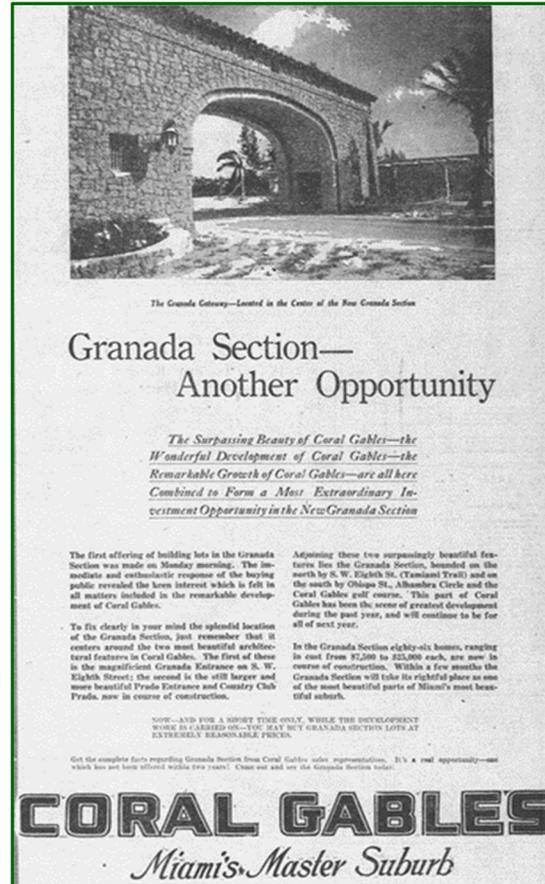
The first lots went on sale in November 1921. They were in Section A, the area immediately south of Merrick’s family home. Section B opened on December 27, 1921 and included the impressive Greenway Drives surrounding the proposed golf course and Alhambra Circle, a wide boulevard with a ‘parked’ center median. In January 1922 Section C was released for sale. Sales were brisk and, as shown on the 1922 map of Coral Gables (Figures 3), the remainder of the suburb was quickly divided into sections.

The Granada Section & Garden City Precepts

Throughout the early 1920s Merrick continued to re-invest his earnings into public amenities and into the expansion of land holdings. Acquiring land north of Tamiami Trail was a priority and a hard-fought endeavor for Merrick. As illustrated on Button's 1922 map in Figures 3, while Granada Boulevard connected to the Tamiami Trail, Merrick only owned the small strips of land to either side (Section F). By 1923, with the acquisition of various tracts of land--some lot by lot--he replatted and renamed this area the Granada Section. (Figures 3, 4, & 5) In October 1923 the launching of the Granada Section became Merrick's highest priority. He redirected hundreds of workers to lay streets, sidewalks, and water mains.

The Granada Section spanned from Red Road (SW 57th Avenue) on the west, to Cortez Street on the east, and from Tamiami Trail (SW 8th Street) on the north, to Milan and Mendoza Avenues on the south. Merrick continued to purchase additional tracts over the next several years. Merrick was unable to buy the property to the east of Cortez Street and this area remains as unincorporated Miami-Dade County to this day.

When first launching Coral Gables during 1921-22, Merrick's team designed and built homes throughout the community to demonstrate their Mediterranean-inspired vision. In 1923, as Merrick substantially increased his land holdings, he began to develop streetscapes following Garden City precepts. Unlike earlier sections, the Granada Section was platted with large areas allocated for moderately-priced and smaller-sized homes. To showcase his vision for these homes, Merrick commissioned architects H. George Fink, Martin Hampton, and Lewis Brumm to design fifty-eight homes that (Figures 6):



The Granada Gateway—Located in the Center of the New Granada Section

Granada Section— Another Opportunity

The Surpassing Beauty of Coral Gables—the Wonderful Development of Coral Gables—the Remarkable Growth of Coral Gables—are all here Combined to Form a Most Extraordinary Investment Opportunity in the New Granada Section

The first offering of building lots in the Granada Section was made on Monday morning. The immediate and enthusiastic response of the buying public revealed the keen interest which is felt in all matters included in the remarkable development of Coral Gables.

To fix clearly in your mind the splendid location of the Granada Section, just remember that it centers around the two most beautiful architectural features in Coral Gables. The first of these is the magnificent Granada Entrance on S. W. Eighth Street; the second is the still larger and more beautiful Trade Entrance and Country Club Plaza, now in course of construction.

Adjoining these two surpassingly beautiful features lies the Granada Section, bounded on the north by S. W. Eighth St. (Tamiami Trail) and on the south by Ohio St., Alhambra Circle and the Coral Gables golf course. This part of Coral Gables has been the scene of greatest development during the past year, and will continue to be for all of next year.

In the Granada Section eighty-six homes, ranging in cost from \$2,500 to \$25,000 each, are now in course of construction. Within a few months the Granada Section will take its rightful place as one of the most beautiful parts of Miami's most beautiful suburb.

NOTE—AND FOR A SHORT TIME ONLY, WHILE THE DEVELOPMENT WORK IS CARRIED ON—YOU MAY BUY GRANADA SECTION LOTS AT EXTREMELY REASONABLE PRICES.

Get the complete facts regarding Granada Section from Coral Gables sales representatives. It's a real opportunity—which has not been offered within two years! Come out and see the Granada Section today!

CORAL GABLES

Miami's Master Suburb

Figure 4: *Miami News*, November 22, 1923

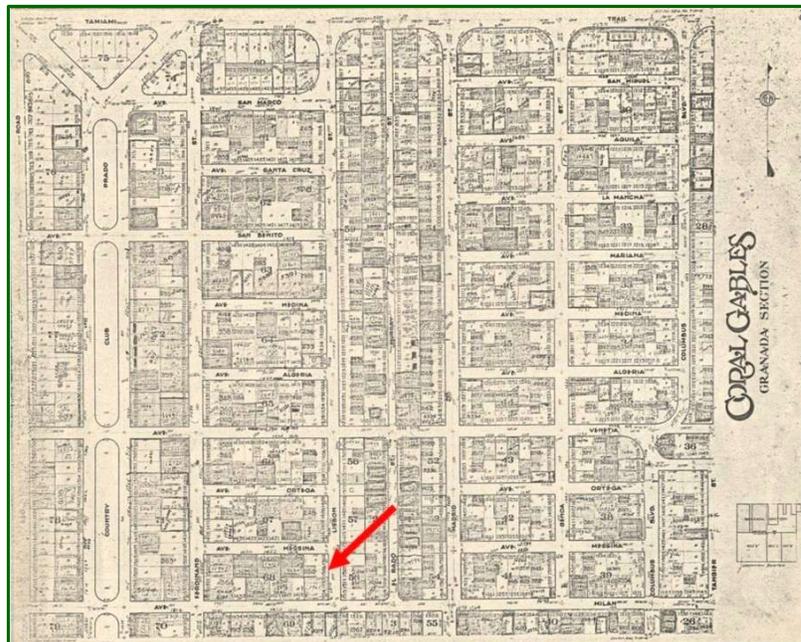


Figure 5: Granada Section: Plat Map Central Section
Red Arrow: 1506 Lisbon Street

“embody new and radical departures from the usual type of small house designing, with compactness, beauty and comfort that will appeal to smaller families...each home will be a different finely-detailed design.”

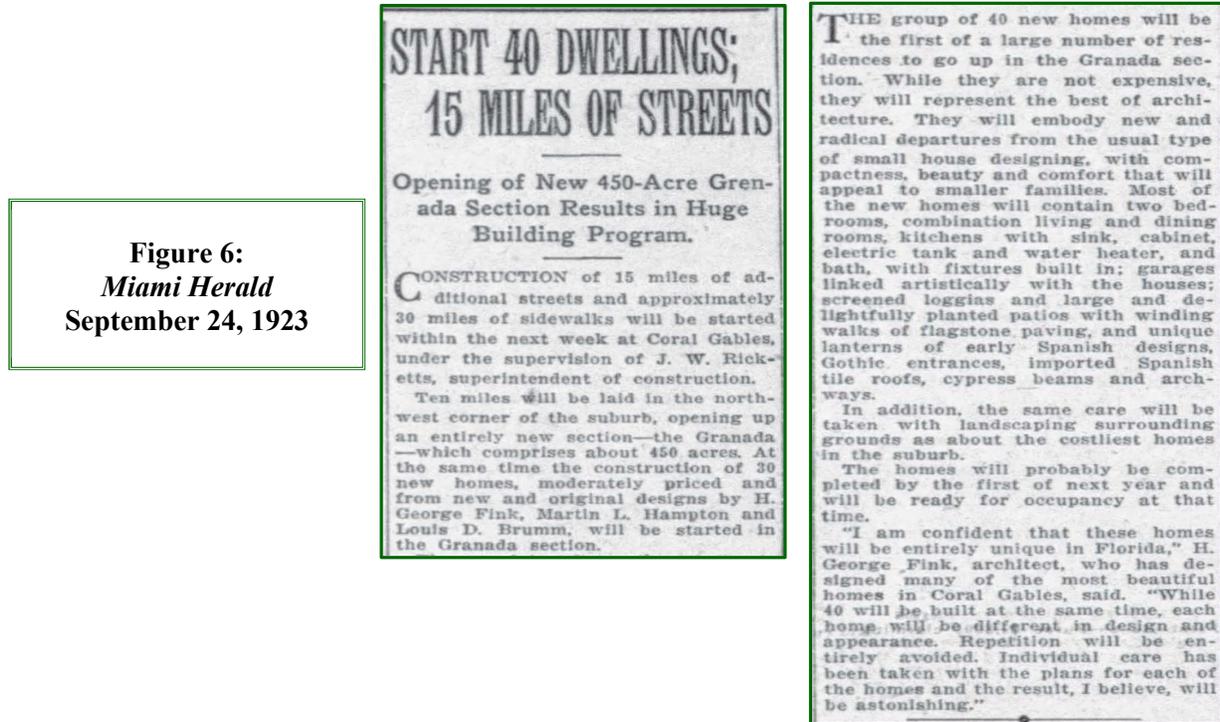


Figure 6:
Miami Herald
September 24, 1923

In Merrick’s 1925 publication *Coral Gables Miami Riviera: Heart of the American Tropics*, he waxed poetic about the moderately-priced Mediterranean Revival style homes, in this manner:

A small house, in which every detail is a joy, is made beautiful with a cloistered entrance who’s slightly pointed arched and carved columns lead to an open patio, as finely thought out and executed as a Renaissance palace, and as beautiful in its setting. Another small house, whose wall spaces are unusually simple, has as its chief decoration an entrance loggia with a group of three round arches, the middle slightly higher than the other two, separated by twisted columns so delicate and right that no other decoration is necessary. Even grouped ventilator holes are made to play delightful part in the design of a whole house front, and such inconspicuous details as in the iron work of a window, the trim of a chimney, the curve of a garage roof, the right placing of a huge Spanish water jar to break the surface pattern of an open veranda, are harmonious, styled, architecturally right.

As intended, the fifty-eight homes provided a model for, and sparked interest in, developing areas of the Granada Section with moderately-priced homes.

Frequently at night Mrs. Merrick and I drive through Coral Gables. We go into moderate-priced sections, and we find something which gives me even more pride in the accomplishment of an ideal—people who formerly used stock plans can now have a well-appointed home... it is gratifying to see the difference in the attractiveness of one of our very moderately priced houses as compared to a of similar cost in the unrestricted section of Miami.

--George Merrick, June 28, 1925, *Florida Times Union*

Coral Gables Cottage

In accordance with Garden City and City Beautiful tenets, founder George Merrick planned Coral Gables to provide housing and amenities for all income levels. The initial homes built were larger to attract investors. In 1923, with the platting of the Granada Section, Merrick shifted to demonstrate his vision for modest homes and, as discussed above, commissioned homes towards that end. The initial homes were well-received and by the mid-1920s modest residences, detailed to harmonize with the larger Mediterranean Revival style houses, were built throughout the City. They are an important piece of Coral Gables' early history. 1506 Lisbon Street is one of these homes.

In 1993, the City of Coral Gables took official action to aid in the recognition and preservation of these significant resources and passed a "Cottage Ordinance." Its stated purpose is to:

maintain and preserve the architectural quality and character of Coral Gables' traditional, small scale, residential neighborhoods by encouraging the preservation of the existing Coral Gables Cottage style houses.

An amendment to the Zoning Code enacted special incentives to cottage owners whose properties met specific requirements to be classified as a "Coral Gables Cottage." The current Coral Gables Cottage Regulations are found in Article 8, Section 8-200 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code. It defines the Coral Gables Cottage as a detached, single-family dwelling which is distinguished by its movement in plan, projection and recessions, asymmetrical arrangement of entrances, frequently employed surface ornament for embellishment, and at least twelve of nineteen specific Mediterranean Revival Style features which are original to the cottage. A cottage property must be one-story in height, zoned SFR, constructed prior to 1940, have a lot frontage no greater than sixty-five feet, and be designated as a local historic landmark. The nineteen features are:

1. Coral rock or stucco finish
2. Combination roof type (e.g., gable, shed, hip or flat roof)
3. Front porch
4. Projecting bay on front elevation
5. Masonry arches or arches springing from columns on front elevation
6. Decorative doorway surrounds
7. Decorative and/or predominant chimney
8. Detached garage to the rear of the property
9. Similar decorative features, parapet and/or roof slope on main house and detached garage
10. Porte-cochere or carport
11. Decorative wing walls
12. Barrel tile roof (two-piece, cap-n-pan)
13. Varied height between projecting and recessed portions of the front elevation
14. Vents grouped as decorative accents
15. Cast ornament and/or tile applied to front elevation
16. Built-in niches and/or planters
17. First floor above crawl space
18. Casement or sash windows
19. Loggias/arcade

1506 Lisbon Street was designed in the cottage typology and may qualify for classification as a Coral Gables Cottage and the associated Zoning incentives, at the owner's request.

John Edwin Kerr (1889-1924)

In October 1923 the launching of the Granada Section became Merrick's highest priority. He desired a strong presence near the Tamiami Trail and redirected hundreds of workers to lay streets, sidewalks, and watermains. By November the fifty-eight moderately-priced homes he commissioned, amongst others, were under construction in the Granada Section.

Lot sales continued at a rapid pace throughout Coral Gables in early 1924 and Merrick continued reinvest profits into acquiring more land. As a result, his workforce grew exponentially. Coral Gables, as well as other south Florida communities also expanding during this land boom period, began to experience a housing shortage. Also, by mid-1924, for a variety of reasons, building supplies were not as readily accessible. Up to this point, in Coral Gables all work was performed by Merrick's companies. At this juncture Merrick was faced with a choice, slow the pace of development or find additional avenues to solve his shortages. Merrick chose to carefully explore the latter.

During the 1923-24 winter season John E. Kerr, a prominent businessman who headed the major Atlanta realty firm Simmons-Kerr, visited Coral Gables. Kerr was impressed by Merrick's vision and progress, and they exchanged ideas regarding parameters for outside contractors. Kerr was deeply involved in the development of Druid Hills, an exclusive planned suburb of Atlanta. It was designed by the premier landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted in 1893. It was one of his last commissions and was initially only partially completed. In 1908 Asa Candler, the president of Coca Cola, purchased the suburb and the rights to Olmsted's plans. Kerr was tapped by Candler to aid in its completion. Druid Hills was one of the planned communities Merrick visited and studied when he was preparing the plans for Coral Gables. Druid Hills is now listed on the National Register for Historic Places. Kerr was also the head of Kerr Lumber and was in the process of acquiring additional lumber companies. Hence, he could bring to Coral Gables development experience, construction management, building materials, and manpower.

Evidently these discussions were productive. Kerr left stating that he had a few business matters to work through in Atlanta but, if all went well, he was open to devoting resources to Coral Gables. Kerr returned several months later and purchased twenty-five lots and secured the option on twenty-five more. On October 18, 1924, he entered into a formal agreement with Merrick to build 100 homes in Coral Gables. The work was to occur in batches of 50. Newspapers state that he was only the second outside contractor allowed to work in Coral Gables. (Figure 7)

Most of the fifty properties were in the Granada Section. Building records indicate that ten of them were along Lisbon Street. This street was paved with sidewalks but was otherwise undeveloped at the time. It was also a street that Merrick intended for primarily moderately-affordable homes.

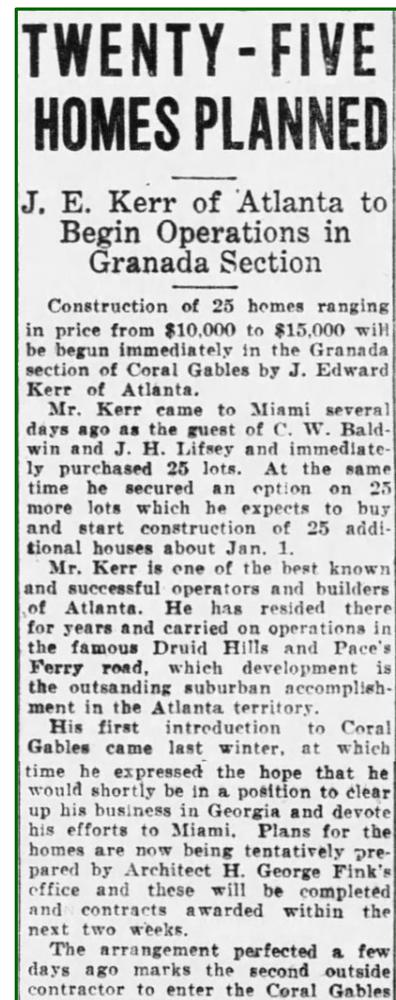
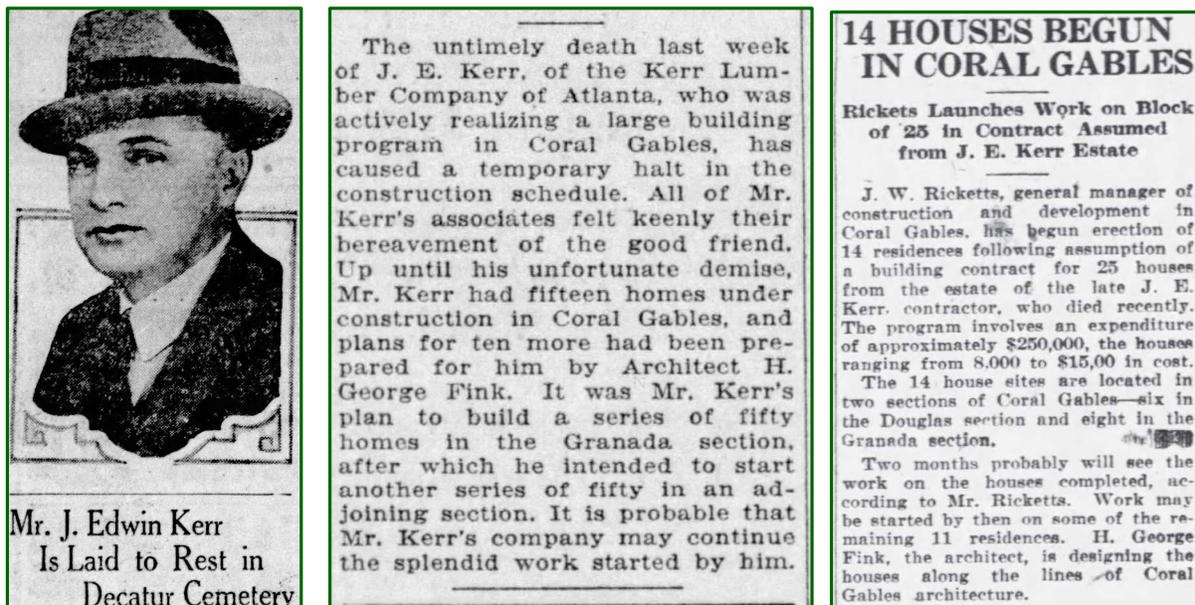


Figure 7: Miami Herald, September 29, 1924

Kerr hired architect H. George Fink to design the homes. Fink, a member of Merricks original design team, was also one the architects commissioned by Merrick in late 1923 to design the initial modest homes in the Granada Section. (Figure 6) An October 27th newspaper reported that Kerr had broken ground on five homes and had purchased twenty-five more lots. By November 17th he had eleven homes under construction. Records suggest that 1506 Lisbon Street was one of these properties.

Mr. Kerr died on November 24, 1924 from complications of appendicitis. Construction of the fifteen homes he had underway was halted. In February 1925 it was announced that Joseph W. Ricketts, and his wife Anna, would personally compensate the estate and take over a block of twenty-five properties. These included the homes under construction, those already designed by H. George Fink, and several other lots of their choosing. 1506 Lisbon Street was amongst this contract. Ricketts was Merrick's Supervisor of Construction but accounts at the time made it clear this was a personal endeavor and not under Merrick's aegis. (Figures 8) By the fall 1925 the twenty-five homes were complete.



Figures 8: *Atlanta Journal*, November 25, 1924 [left];
Miami Tribune, November 30, 1924 [center]; *Miami News*, February 4, 1925 [right]

It is interesting to note that in early 1925, following in Kerr's footsteps, Lindsey H. Hopkins, an Atlanta financier, partnered with H. W. Nicholes, the president of Builders' Finance & Mortgage Company, and approached George Merrick with a similar but larger building program. They, like Kerr, were also heavily involved in the development of Druid Hills. In April they announced their contract with Merrick to ultimately build 500 single-family homes. The first phase included fifty homes that would be evaluated by Merrick's Coral Gables Corporation for quality and style before the purchase of additional lots. H. George Fink, again, was also the primary architect of this project. Hopkins became enamored with South Florida and became a real boon for the City. He heavily invested in Coral Gables and other projects in the area. In 1925 Hopkins financed the final construction permits for the San Sebastian Apartment Hotel and in 1928 he purchased it from the Coral Gables Corporation, living in the penthouse until his passing in 1937.

Architect: H. George Fink

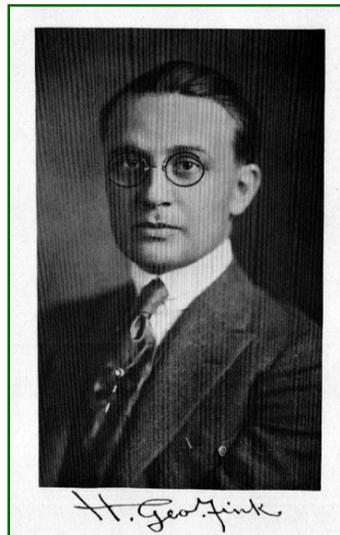


Figure 9: H. George Fink, Portrait, 1920s

H. George Fink (1892-1975) was the architect for 1506 Lisbon Street. Fink, a cousin of City founder George Merrick, was responsible for much of the early design and planning of Coral Gables. Over 100 of his buildings are designated as Local Historic Landmarks within the City of Coral Gables (individually or in a historic district).

Architect H. George Fink, a key member of Merrick's original design team, was instrumental in creating the fabric of 1920s Mediterranean Revival architecture which characterizes Coral Gables. He designed numerous Mediterranean Revival residential and commercial structures in the City in the early 1920s. His residential designs ranged from cottages to elaborate residences for the City's leaders including George Merrick and Edward E. "Doc" Dammers. Fink's architectural practice was so busy during the early 1920s, that by the end of 1923 he outgrew his office and built an office at 2506 Ponce de Leon Boulevard that served as a showcase for the Mediterranean Revival style. He was regularly featured in newspaper articles discussing the progress of development in Coral Gables, and in

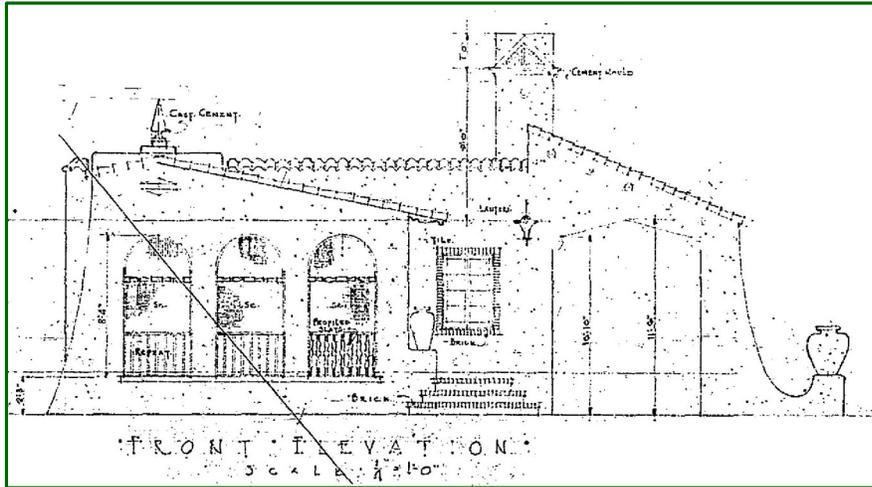
advertisements for the community during the 1920s. In 1924, Fink travelled to Spain to study the architecture and was honored by King Alfonso XIII of Spain for his "interesting, outstanding, and extremely artistic interpretation and reproduction of the Spanish Arts in America." During his visit to Spain, Fink was also made a "Don," the Spanish equivalent of English knighthood.

H. George Fink's architectural career spanned over four decades in Coral Gables. Fink's family moved to the Miami area from Springdale, Pennsylvania in 1904 and graduated from Miami High School in 1907. He studied architecture at the Drexel Institute in Philadelphia and supplemented it with special classes at the University of Pennsylvania. From 1915 to 1921 Fink designed numerous buildings for Miami Beach Developer Carl Fisher and Associates. In 1921 he began working with George Merrick. That same year, Fink became a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) -- the youngest member of the organization at the time of his appointment.

The devastating hurricane in 1926 abruptly halted much of the construction in Coral Gables. In 1928, Fink left the City accepting a position as the Designing Architect for the J. C. Penney Company of New York. He remained with them until 1932 when he became a Supervising Architect for the Works Progress Administration (WPA). He was assigned to the State of Maine and remained with the WPA until 1937.

Fink returned to Coral Gables in 1937 and resumed his private architectural practice. During World War II, he was Architectural Designer for Robert & Company, of Atlanta, assisting with the Richmond Naval Air Station, the Glynn County Base in Brunswick, Georgia, and the Chamblee Naval Base in Chamblee, Georgia. In 1943, Fink became Architect in Charge, Architectural Division, Bell Bomber Plant, Marietta, Georgia, where the famous B-29s were built and assembled. Fink returned to Coral Gables in 1945 and continued to design there until the middle of the 1960s. He served on the Coral Gables Board of Architects from 1945 through 1956, acting as its chairman for seven years within this period. Fink also served as the Secretary of the Florida South Chapter of the AIA from 1952-1955.

1506 Lisbon Street



**Figure 10:
1506 Lisbon Street
Permit #258, 1924
Architect:
H. George Fink**

1506 Lisbon Street, as discussed above, was one of the homes started by J. Edwin Kerr in November 1924. Construction was halted when Kerr passed in late November and the home was completed by Joseph Ricketts in the spring of 1925. This one-story, moderately-affordable home was designed by architect H. George Fink in the Mediterranean Revival style in keeping with Merrick’s vision for Coral Gables. Fink, a member of Merrick’s original design team, was also one the architects commissioned by Merrick in late 1923 to design the initial modest homes in the Granada Section. Fink was largely responsible for the typology that later became known as the Coral Gables Cottage.

Two pages of Fink’s original permit for 1506 Lisbon Street have been found to date. (see Attachment A) There is some confusion in the historic building records regarding the permit number. Plat maps and an early tax card record the permit number as 260. However, the plans were assigned number 258. Not all the pages of Permit #258 belong to 1506 Lisbon Street but rather seem to include drawings for two additional homes designed by Fink for Kerr. It should be noted that permit numbers were not assigned to plans in Coral Gables until summer 1925 following the incorporation of the City in April. It seems likely that some of plans for the homes already in progress when Ricketts took on the contract were not fully sorted when filed with the City.

The earliest photo located to date is from the 1940s. (Figures 16) However, Fink also designed the home at 813 Lisbon Street for Kerr. With only a few details changed it is a mirror image of 1506 Lisbon Street. The photo in Figure 11 dated March 1926 of 813 provides a record of what 1506 looked like shortly after construction.



**Figure 11: 813 Lisbon Street,
March 1926
*Mirror image of 1506 Lisbon Street***

Upon completion the property was purchased in 1925 by Dorothy Wilkins Smith. She sold it in 1928, but she continued to reside in the home until her mother's death in 1937. The property was put up for sale and finally sold in 1939. LeRoy Weston and his wife Elizabeth Erwin Weston purchased it, and 1506 Lisbon Street remained in the Weston family for the next forty-seven years. In 1968 LeRoy and Elizabeth celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in the home.



Figure 12: Sale Listing, *Miami Herald*,
September 6, 1938



Figure 13:
LeRoy Erwin Weston,
Sr.,
undated
Courtesy Ancestry.com

Both the Westons and the Erwins were considered pioneer families. LeRoy was a fourth-generation Floridian. The Westons arrived in 1825. The Erwins were beloved Miami pioneers. Elizabeth's parents, Dell Zell Erwin and Eva Jones Erwin, settled in the Coconut Grove area in 1909. She grew up with her ten siblings on a farm along what is now known as Erwin Road. LeRoy Weston (Figure 13) served as the Coral Gables Chief of Police from 1927 to 1932. In the 1930s he became the special investigator for the Florida Racing Commission. He left this post when Florida Attorney General Cary D. Landis named him as chief criminal investigator. In 1976 the Westons passed the property to their children, Leroy, Jr and Emma Krogh. After their father passed in 1986, they sold the home.

1506 Lisbon Street then passed through several hands with Keith and Connie Morrow calling it home for twelve years from 1988-2000. See the full owner listing below. The present owners, Leonardo Bezerra DePaula Possoa and Holly Ann DeJong, purchased it in 2023.

Owners:

- 1925-28 Dorothy Wilkins Smith
- 1928-39 Louis A. Pinan
Dorothy Wilkins Smith & her mother, Emily F. Wilkins,
remained on the premises until Emily's death in 1937
- 1939-1986 Weston Family
 - 1939-1976 LeRoy Erwin Weston (1893-1986) &
Elizabeth White Erwin Weston (1900-1981)
 - 1976-1986 LeRoy Weston, Jr. (son) & Janet Weston &
Emma Weston Krogh (daughter)
- 1986-1988 Anne M. MacDonald Levine
- 1988-2000 Keith William Morrow & Connie Morrow
- 2000-2023 John Stock & Brigitte Deschamps
- 2023-Present Leonardo Bezerra DePaula Possoa & Holly Ann DeJong

Context

The Granada Section is a single-family area. It was not amongst the initial areas platted by Merrick but rather platted two years later in 1923. By this time Coral Gables was developing quickly. Early construction had leaned towards larger homes that would attract investors. With the Granada Section, Merrick was keen to showcase his dedication to the Garden City precept of building a socially mixed community where people of various socioeconomic levels could live side-by-side without sacrificing quality. He platted Country Club Prado at its western edge as higher-end area

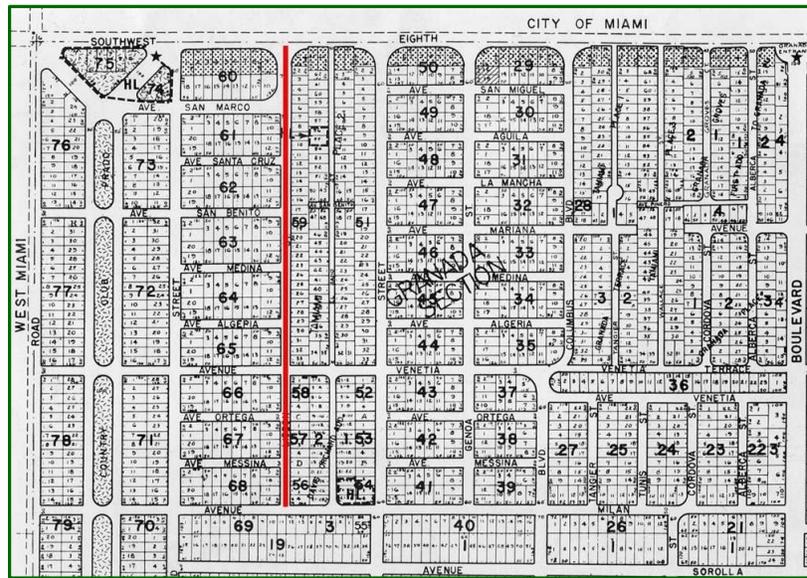
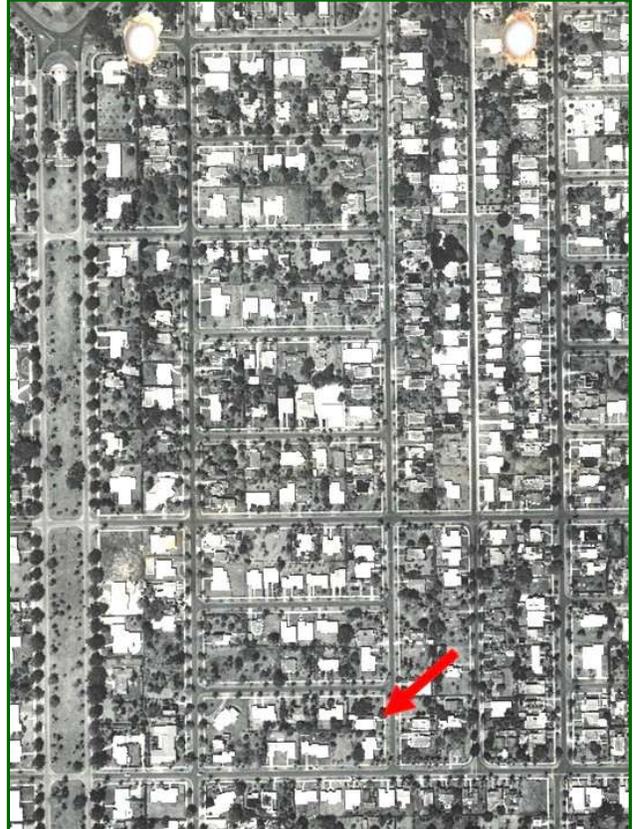


Figure 14: Granada Plat Map, East Portion, 1925
Red Line: Lisbon Street

and commissioned several homes to encourage its development. Near the Prado and at the heart of the section he laid out streets with smaller lots to accommodate moderately-affordable homes for working class families. (Figures 5 & 14) He commissioned fifty-eight homes along some of these streets to illustrate his vision and encourage those with modest incomes to build in the Granada Section. Lisbon was one of the streets and the home at 1506 was amongst the first built. Prior to the September 1926 hurricane, there were nearly three dozen homes constructed along Lisbon Street (blocks 800-1500).

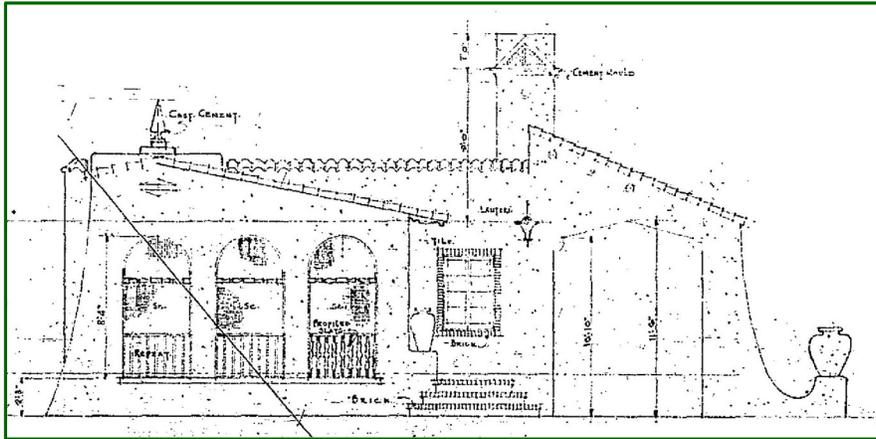
After the hurricane, there were few homes built on Lisbon Street during Coral Gables second developmental period (1926-1944). The dire downturn in the economy, coming so closely on the heels of the hurricane, had a drastic impact on new construction. The Post-War prosperity that followed these lean years resulted in the unprecedented building boom of 1950s and 1960s. During this era, single-family homes in Coral Gables followed national trends both in numbers and in style. The new homes were a distinct departure from the ornated and picturesque Mediterranean Revival style that had dominated the City's landscape since its inception. By the late 1950s Lisbon Street was built out with new residences and remains to present day as street of modest single-family homes. (Figures 15)

Hence, the home at 1506 Lisbon Street retains its historic context. It was one the first homes built on Lisbon Street and it exemplified Coral Gables founder George Merrick's vision for the street to be accommodate moderately-priced, attractive homes in the Mediterranean Revival style. In accordance with Garden City precepts to which Merrick ascribed, these modest homes were smaller in size but built with the same high-quality construction and features as other structures that shaped the new city in the early 1920s. The Granada Section and more specifically, Lisbon Street remains a single-family neighborhood. 1506 Lisbon Avenue distinctly stands, amongst many later homes, as a testament to Merrick's vision a century later.



Figures 15: Aerial Photographs with 1506 Lisbon Steet Noted
1938 [top]; 1948 [left]; 1957 [right]

SIGNIFICANCE ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION



**Figures 16: 1506 Lisbon Street, Front (East) Façade
Permit #258, 1924 [top]; Historic photos, c.1940 [center];
Current, 2023 [bottom] *Courtesy Realtor.com***

Executive Summary

The single-family residence at 1506 Lisbon Street is one of the earliest homes constructed in the Coral Gables and it represents an archetype upon which the City was founded. Commissioned by J. Edwin Kerr, he broke ground in 1924. Kerr was heavily involved in the development of Druid Hills, an exclusive planned community bordering Atlanta, and he was only the second outside contractor that founder George Merrick allowed to build in the Coral Gable. Kerr's homes were the first along Lisbon Street. When Kerr passed suddenly, the home at 1506 Lisbon Street was completed by Joseph Ricketts in spring 1925. This one-story, modest home was designed by architect H. George Fink in the Mediterranean Revival style. Fink, a member of Merrick's original design team, was also one the architects commissioned by Merrick in late 1923 to design the initial modest homes in the Granada Section. He was largely responsible for the typology that later became known as the Coral Gables Cottage. A century later, 1506 Lisbon Street remains a testament to Merrick's vision for Coral Gables.

Merrick felt that Mediterranean-inspired architecture harmonized best with south Florida's climate and lifestyle. 1506 Lisbon Street is a fine example of adapting residential design to the rigors of South Florida's climate while maintaining the integrity of the Mediterranean Revival style. Its thick masonry walls were intended to keep the home cool and its light-colored stuccoed exterior to reflect the sun's heat. The window placement afforded much needed ventilation in this tropical environment. It is constructed over a crawl space for added ventilation and separation from the high water table. Also, in keeping with south Florida's lifestyle and needs, it was originally designed with screened front and back porches as well as a screened sleeping porch.

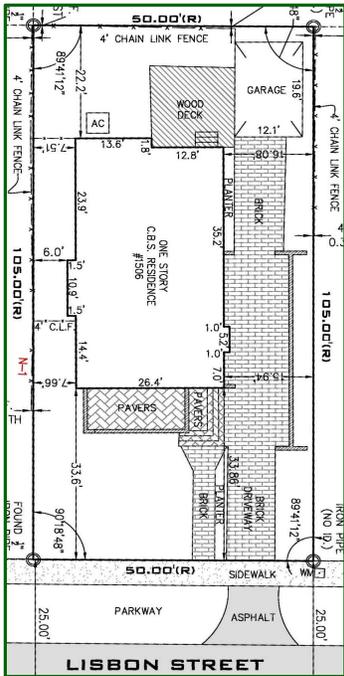
The home also possesses numerous character-defining features of the Mediterranean Revival style. These include but are not limited to: textured stucco finish; combination of roof types and heights; projecting and recessed bays; a projecting front porch with rounded arch openings; porte cochere with stylized Moorish arched openings; barrel tiled roofs; carved rafter tails; parapets edged with a rounded molding; a distinctive geometric chimney cap (Figure 17); a masonry parapet spire; a variety of wing walls; decoratively arranged round vents; cascading, tiled front entry steps; recessed windows (originally casements) with protruding sills; and a detached garage whose style and features match the home.



Figure 17: Chimney Cap, 2025

Assessment of the property, building documents, and historic photos indicates that over the past century there were few changes to the historic character-defining features of the structures at 1506 Lisbon Street. It clearly reads as a 1920s moderately-affordable home and detached garage in the Mediterranean Revival style. As per, Article 8, Section 8-103 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code--Criteria for designation of historic landmarks: "Districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects of national, state and local importance are of historic significance if they possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, or association." Staff has determined that this property possesses sufficient integrity for designation. Thus, the property at 1506 Lisbon Street significantly contributes to the historic fabric of the Coral Gables and is part of the collection of quality residences built during the land boom era that contributes to the City's sense of place over time.

Extant Exterior Description and Alteration Discussion



**Figures 18:
1506 Lisbon Street**
**Front (East) Façade,
2023**
*Courtesy Realtor.com
[top]*
**Property Survey,
2025**
*Courtesy Landmark
Surveying & Assoc.
[left]*
Aerial, 2025
*Courtesy Miami-Dade
County Property
Appraiser
[right]*

The single-family residence sits on an interior 50' x 105' lot on the west side of the street. The property comprises a single-family home with a detached garage that is located at the northwest corner. A brick paver driveway runs along the north side of the home to the garage. The home is approached by a brick paver walkway from the sidewalk to the front entry steps. (Figures 18)

The one-story house is built of masonry block units above a crawl space, and it retains its original footprint. There have been no additions or substantial alterations. The home is clad with textured stucco. The living space (approx. 1,651 SF) of the home is under a flat roof with parapets that are finished with a rounded molding edge. The pitched roofs of the porch and porte cochere bays are clad in barrel S-tile that was installed in 2019. The windows throughout the home are recessed with protruding sills and are predominantly awning in type. The original windows of the home were casements, changed to jalousies in the 1950s, and to the current awnings in 1979. Most of the original window openings remain extant. Round vents are decoratively arranged on all facades of the home.



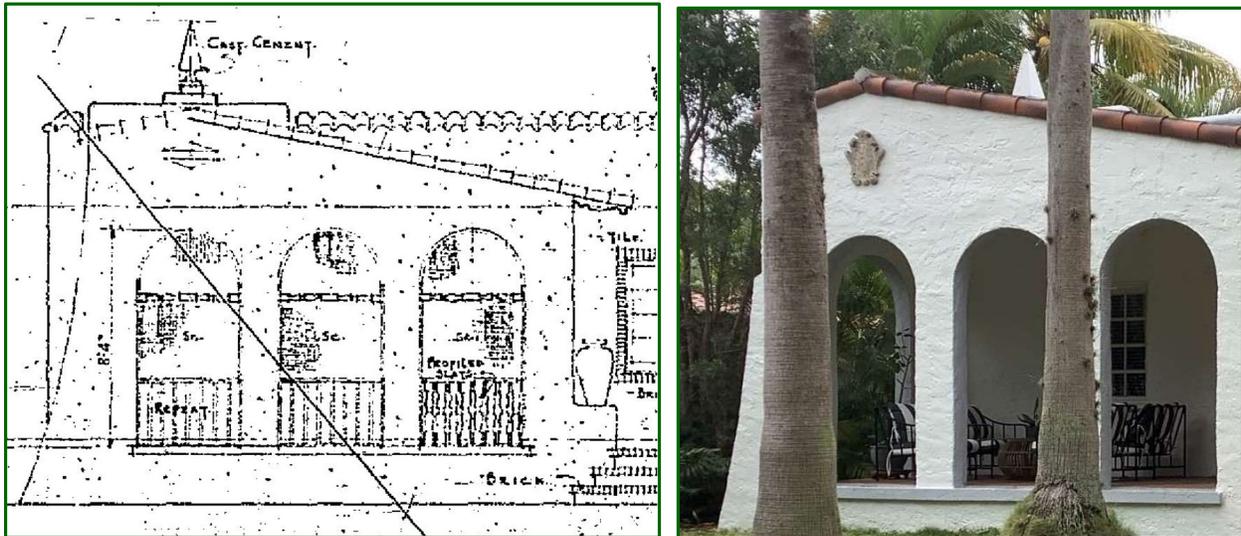
Figures 19: Front (East) Façade, 2025 [top]; Front Porch Entry, 2024 [bottom]

The confluence of a variety of geometric elements creates the striking street presence of this cottage home. The front façade is comprised of two distinct bays --the front porch and the porte cochere. The front porch bay projects forward from the living space and porte cochere. It has a side-facing saltbox gable roof with carved rafter tails at its lower northern end over the front entry. (Figures 20) Under the roof apex a cast masonry heraldic plaque (not original) adorns the façade. Centered behind the apex a masonry spire rises from the parapet. (Figures 21) A full-height buttress-inspired wing wall at the southeast corner of the porch leans into the asymmetry of porch created by the roof. At the northeast corner a small footed wing wall visually anchors the bay. (Figures 19 & 20)

The porch presents as a series of arches. Three narrow round arches fill the front façade. They are tied together by a common projecting sill. At the south another round arch opens the side to breezes and views. The northern end serves as the entry. These archways were originally screened and contained spindle railings (Figures 21) most likely very similar to those seen in Figure 11. A central full-height round arch is flanked by smaller ‘niche-like’ arches. Entry to the home is near the northern end of the porch through a board and batten front door. The porch retains its cascading front steps. (Figures 20 & 22)



**Figures 20: Front Porch, 2023
Entry [top]; Looking North, 2023 [bottom]**
Courtesy Realtor.com



Figures 21: Masonry Parapet Spire Rising: Permit #258, 1924 [left]; Current, 2024 [right]

The porte cochere bay extends north from the flat-roofed living space. It is under a barrel tiled shed roof whose pitch is slightly steeper than the saltbox gable of the projecting front porch. A series of round vents run along the roof's edge, emphasizing the diagonal of the pitched roof. At the northeast and northwest corners of the porte cochere, wing walls gently curve down to a foot that visually anchor the pitched roofs. (Figures 22 & 23) The stylized arches of the porte cochere are angular and contrast with the round arches of the porch. Rising above the roof, at the juncture of the porte cochere and the adjacent living space, is square chimney with a distinctive geometric chimney cap. It is comprised of a series of cross gables that sit on a molding base. (Figures 17 & 22)

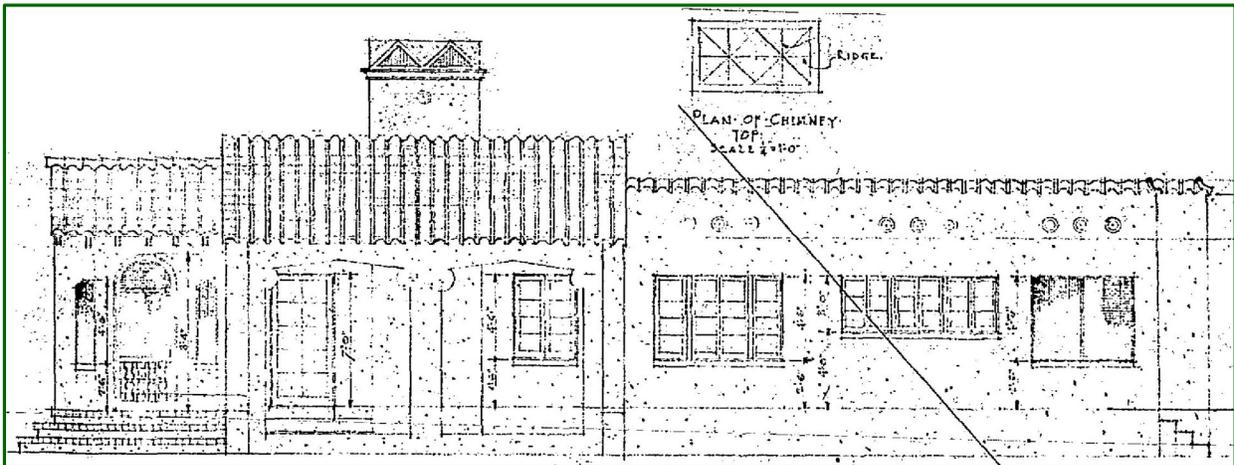


Figure 22: Porte Cochere, 2024



Figures 23: Porte Cochere: Interior Looking West to Rear, 2023; North Side Arches, 2025

As seen in Fink’s floor plan in Figure 26, at the southwest corner of the home was originally a screened sleeping porch. This was enclosed for living space at an unknown date. The size of the original openings was maintained. (Figure 25) At the northwest corner of the home was screened back porch. (Figure 26) In 1993 the porch was enclosed as part of a kitchen extension. The screened opening along the north façade was blocked up and the adjacent kitchen window was reduced in width. (Figures 24 & 29) These alterations do not have a substantial impact on the historic integrity of the home. All other aspects of the side and rear facades remain extant.



**Figures 24: North Side Elevation, Permit #258 Elevation Drawing, 1924 [top]
Reduced (Width) Kitchen Window, 2023 [left]; Enclosed Back Porch Area, 2023 [right]**

Photos courtesy Realtor.com



Figure 25:
Enclosed Screened Sleeping Room, 2023
Photos courtesy Realtor.com

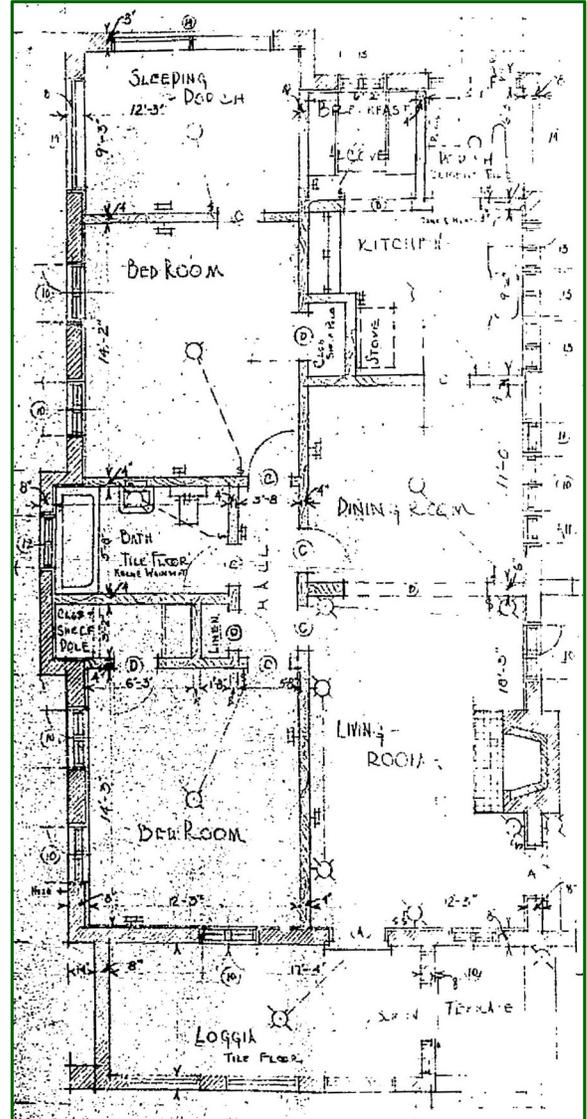


Figure 26:
Original Floor Plan
Permit #258, 1924

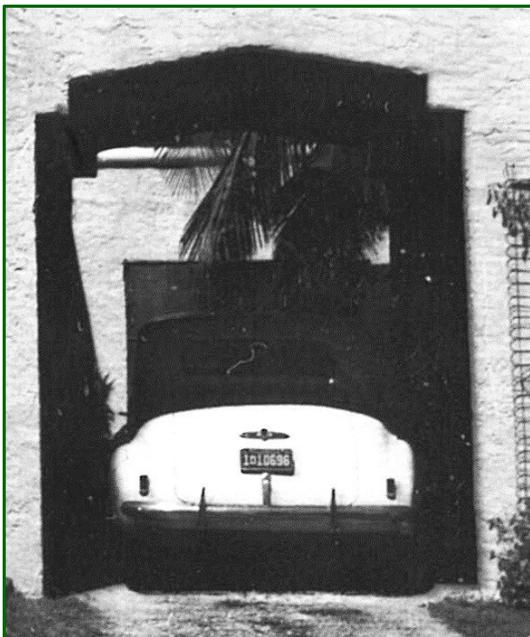


Figure 27:
South Side Façade, Looking West, 2025

At the northwest corner of the property is a detached single-car garage. (Figures 18, 28 & 29) The simple flat-roofed structure is contemporaneous with the home and is partially visible through the porte cochere in the c.1940 historic photo in Figures 29. Like the house, the garage is clad in stucco. The texture of the stucco matches the home. Also like the home, the garage parapets are finished with round molding. A detached garage with details matching the home are character-defining features of Merrick's 1920s properties in Coral Gables.



Figure 28: Rear of Property, 2023
Rear Façade & Yard with Garage in Background
Courtesy Realtor.com



Figures 29: 1924 Detached Garage, Front (East) Façade
Historic Photo, c.1940 [left]; Current, 2023 *Courtesy Realtor.com* [right]
Note: rounded parapet molding and stucco texture matches 1924 house

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of historic designation within the City of Coral Gables is defined in Article 8, Section 8-101 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code as, *to promote the educational, cultural, and economic welfare of the public by preserving and protecting historic structures or sites, portions of structures, groups of structures, manmade or natural landscape elements, works of art, or integrated combinations thereof, which serve as visible reminders of the history and cultural heritage of the City, region, state or nation.*

It is the intent of the Coral Gables Zoning Code to recognize all buildings which possess “significant character, interest or value as part of the historical, cultural, archaeological, aesthetic, or architectural heritage of the City, state or nation” qualify for designation as a local historic landmark (Coral Gables Zoning Code, Article 8, Section 8-103). To that end, the eligibility for designation as a local historic landmark is defined by the Coral Gables Zoning Code as meeting **one (1)** (or more) of the criteria stipulated in Article 8, Section 8-103.

Constructed in 1924-5 in the Mediterranean Revival Style the property at 1506 Lisbon Street (legally described as Lot 10, Block 68, Coral Gables Granada Section Revised, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 113 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida) is significant to the City of Coral Gables’ history based on the following **three (3) criteria** found in the Coral Gables Zoning Code, Article 8, Section 8-103:

A. Historical, Cultural significance

Criterion 4: Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economic, or social trends of the community

B. Architectural significance

Criterion 1: Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural style

Criterion 2: Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction

Staff finds the following:

The property located at 1506 Lisbon Street is significant to the City of Coral Gables history based on:

HISTORICAL, CULTURAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Therefore, Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **APPROVE** the Local Historic Designation of the property at **1506 Lisbon Street** (legally described as Lot 10, Block 68, Coral Gables Granada Section Revised) based on its historical, cultural, and architectural significance.

Respectfully submitted,



Anna Pernas
Historic Preservation Officer

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 - Miami News
 - “14 Houses Begun in Coral Gables: Ricketts Launches Work on Block of 23 in Contract Assumed from J. E. Kerr Estate” February 4, 1925, p.21.
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 - “Better Hurry! Only 30 Days More—Coral Gables Home Building Offer” November 4, 1922, p.24.
 - “Construction Notes: Completion 8 of 25 houses by Ricketts” April 22, 1925, p.19.
 - “Construction Notes: 11 homes under construction by J. Edward Kerr” November 17, 1924, p.12.
 - “Construction Notes: John E. Kerr started Construction on 5 houses” October 27, 1924, p.3.
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“Opening Auction Sales at Coral Gables—Miami’s Master Suburb” November 25, 1921, p.18-19.

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REVIEW GUIDE

Definition:

The Review Guide comprises of some of the extant and character-defining features, which contribute to the overall significance of the structure and/or district. Hallmark and character-defining features are the *visual and physical features that give a building its identity and distinctive character*.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties embody two important goals: 1) the preservation of historic materials and, 2) the preservation of a building's distinguishing character.

Every historic building is unique, with its own identity and its own distinctive character. Character refers to all those visual aspects and physical features that comprise the appearance of every historic building. Character-defining features are the visual and physical features that give a building its identity and distinctive character. They may include the overall building shape, its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details, features, and aspects of its site and environment.

Use:

The Review Guide may be used to address the impact that additions, modifications, alterations and/or renovations may have on the historic structure and site.

The Review guide may also inform appropriate new construction in an historic district, neighborhood, or streetscape.

Property Address:	1506 Lisbon Street
Lot Description:	interior lot
Date of Construction:	1924-5
Use:	single-family residence
Style:	Mediterranean Revival
Construction Material:	concrete block covered with textured stucco
Stories:	one-story
Roof Types:	flat, shed
Other:	potential Coral Gables Cottage

NOTE: The Review Guide is to be referenced in conjunction with the information and photographic documentation contained elsewhere within this Report. Character-defining features may include, but are not limited to, the listing found on the following page.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

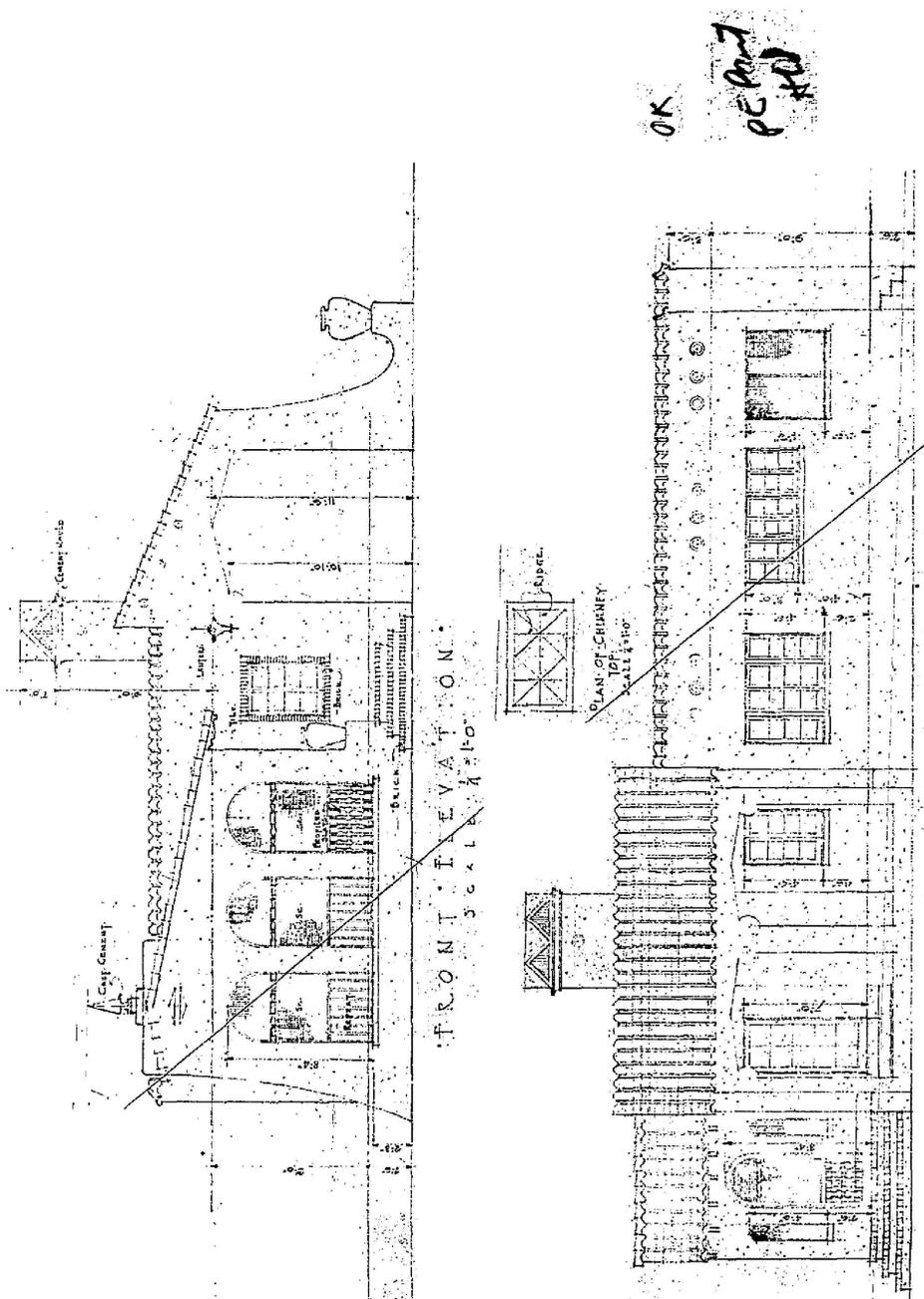
Style: Mediterranean Revival



- ✓ thick masonry walls
- ✓ textured stuccoed exterior walls
- ✓ construction over a crawl space
- ✓ combination of roof types and heights
- ✓ window placement affording ventilation
- ✓ projecting and recessed bays
- ✓ projecting front porch with rounded arch openings
- ✓ porte cochere with stylized Moorish arched openings
- ✓ barrel tiled roofs
- ✓ carved rafter tails
- ✓ flat roof with parapets edged with rounded moldings
- ✓ distinctive geometric chimney cap
- ✓ masonry parapet spire
- ✓ a variety of wing walls
- ✓ decoratively arranged round vents
- ✓ cascading front entry steps
- ✓ recessed windows (originally casements) with protruding sills
- ✓ a detached garage whose character matches the home

Appendix A: Permit #258, 1924

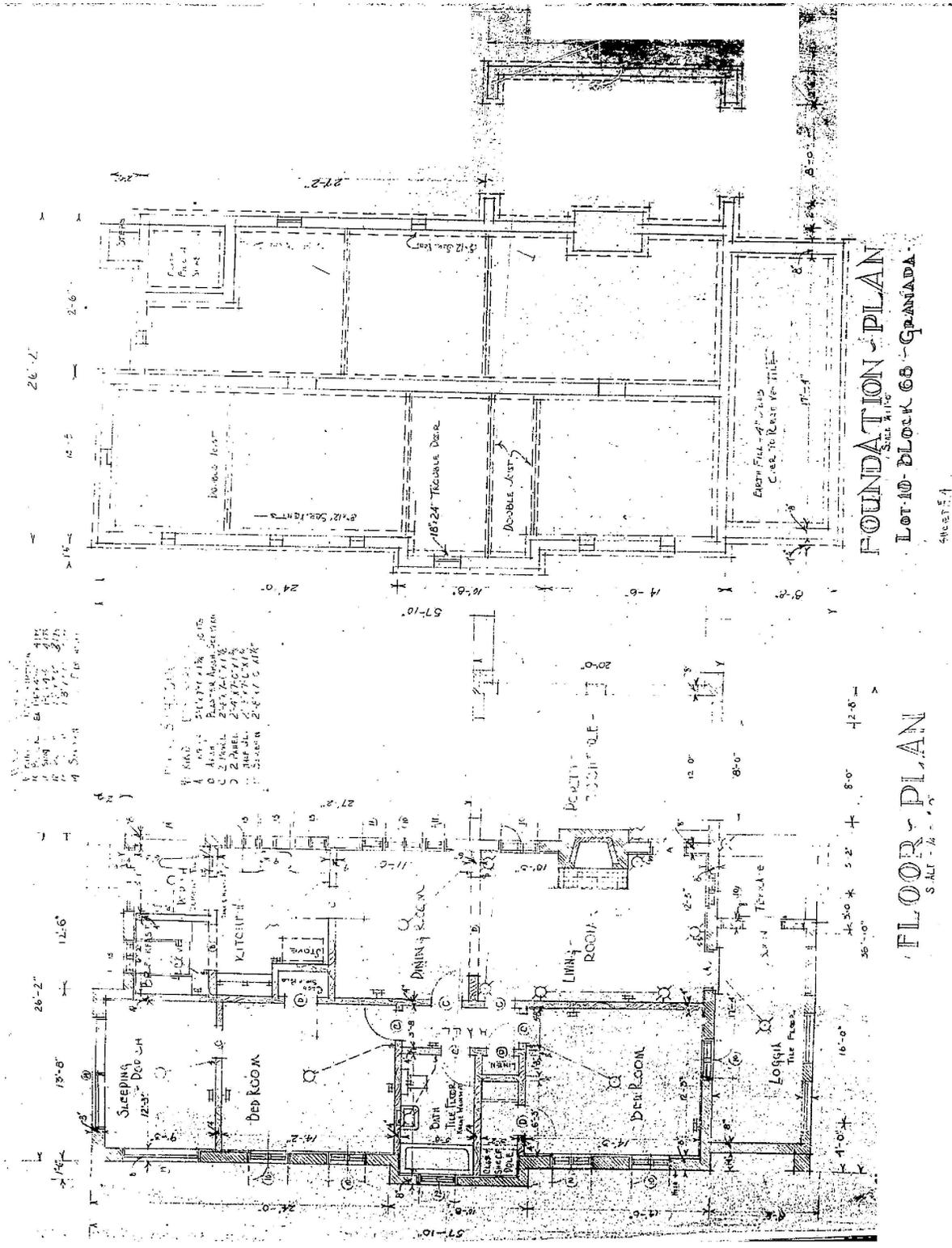
Architect: H. George Fink



FRONT ELEVATION
RIGHT ELEVATION
RESIDENCE W. GEORGE KERR

SHEET NO. 2

258



FOUNDATION PLAN
 SHEET 2/4
 LOT 10 BLOCK 65 GRANADA

FLOOR PLAN
 SHEET 1/4

258