

**STAFF REPORT
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS REVISION
FOR THE PROPERTY AT
1104 MALAGA AVENUE
A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK**

Proposal: The application requests design approval for additions and alterations to the residence and sitework.

Architect: Locus Architecture (Nelson de Leon, AIA)

Owner: Nicholas V. Soane

Folio Number: 03-4118-003-1700

Legal Description: Lots 5-11 Inclusive, Block 12, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part One, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 106 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Site Characteristics: The property is located on a large corner lot at the southwest corner of the intersection of Malaga Avenue and Cordova Street. Comprised of seven lots, the property spans from Cordova Street on the north to Anastasia Avenue on the south. The primary elevation faces north onto Malaga Avenue.

BACKGROUND

In the early 1920s, city founder George Merrick envisioned Coral Gables as a planned Mediterranean-themed community whose architecture was adapted to the southern Florida climate. The single-family home at 1104 Malaga Avenue was designed in 1925 (Permit #710) by architect H. George Fink and is an excellent example of the Mediterranean Revival style. Described as a Mediterranean villa, this imposing home sits on large lot of almost an acre just north of the Biltmore Hotel. The home has only had six owners in its almost 100-year history and has had very few alterations and no substantive additions. Character-defining features of the home include: the loggia spanning the north and east sides with a series of arches supported by cast concrete twisted columns with iron railings, masonry grilles and cast concrete and tile ornamentation, barrel tile roof, textured stucco, decorative vents, and protruding sills. The property was designated as a Local Historic Landmark in October 1978.

PROPOSAL

The application requests design approval for additions and alterations to the residence and sitework. Please note that the installation of impact-resistant windows and doors is currently being permitted separately under a Standard Certificate of Appropriateness [COA (ST) 2023-083].



1104 Malaga Avenue, May 27, 1926



Aerial view from Biltmore Hotel showing rear of 1104 Malaga Avenue, Summer 1930



ca. 1940s photo of 1104 Malaga Avenue

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The following Standards have application in this matter:

2. *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*
5. *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.*
6. *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*
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

The property at 1104 Malaga Avenue consists of a two-story approximately 7,780 SF residence with an attached two-story garage structure at the southwest corner. The house sits wholly on the north four lots of the 43,150 SF site.

In 2023, the Historic Preservation Board approved a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for a Master Plan for future improvements to the residence and site. Knowing that the full scope of work would be implemented in phases, it was noted that the phases would be reviewed by Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Department Staff or the Historic Preservation Board via individual Certificates of Appropriateness. The Master Plan approval enabled the owner to submit a robust Ad Valorem Tax Abatement application and move forward with other work while preparing the drawings for this COA.

The work proposed in this application includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- An approximately 967 SF two-story addition to the rear (south) of the residence comprising a new family room on the first floor and a master bedroom, master bathroom, and elevator hall on the second floor
- An approximately 140 SF one-story covered screen porch adjacent to the new addition
- Exterior restoration including: restoring the arched openings of the loggia, removal of thru-wall A/C units, removal of an existing mechanical/oil heater room and enclosed nook at the southeast end of the loggia
- Recreation of removed exterior features including: applied tile decoration, wood and masonry grilles, wood window shutters, wing walls
- New barrel tile roof and skylight
- Interior remodeling and restoration of features and finishes and interior structural repairs
- New MEP and new emergency generator
- Removal of the existing exterior staircase leading to the second-floor of the garage and construction of a new exterior staircase to the south of the garage
- Reorganization of the entry steps/window/door at the existing laundry room at the southwest corner of the residence
- A 6'-0" perimeter wall and gates around the entire property
- A new paver walkway and driveway

Rather than fully describe the entire scope of work in the application, Staff has thoroughly reviewed the work in the application and is largely supportive of the proposal. The proposed location is appropriately sited and takes cues from the existing residence. Sills on the addition are differentiated from the existing and the stucco is noted on A-06.1 to have a different texture than the existing.

VARIANCES

No variances have been requested with this application.

BOARD OF ARCHITECTS

The proposal was reviewed and approved by the Board of Architects on February 22, 2024.

STAFF CONCLUSION

The application presented requests design approval for an addition, alterations, and sitework on the property at 1104 Malaga Avenue. This spectacular property has been neglected for decades and is in need of major restoration work. The current owner purchased the property in 2022 and is committed to bringing the property back to its former glory. For a property of this size, a minimal amount of square footage is being added and minor modifications made to the exterior. Staff is very appreciative of the restoration efforts being undertaken.

Staff has concerns about the 6'-0" continuous perimeter fence, as other properties in the vicinity do not have high walls/fences. Understanding that this is a very large lot, it might be more appropriate to implement a 4'-0" fence and gates on the lots abutting Malaga Avenue and a higher 6'-0" fence at the lots abutting Anastasia Avenue. A Zoning review indicated that the masonry portion (see A-01.4) at the entry gates will need to be redesigned so that the masonry wall is only 2'-6" within the triangle of visibility. If the whole fence were to be brought down to 4'-0", the comment might be resolved. Details of the fence height to be worked out with staff.


Staff requests that the following condition be incorporated into any motion for approval:

1. Window/door muntins are to be high-profile / dimensional.
2. Window/door glass to be clear/non-reflective/non-tint.
3. Roof tile is to be true two-piece barrel tile.
4. Work with Staff on all decorative details to be restored (e.g. the wooden spindles, iron work, light fixtures, etc.).
5. House is not to be restuccoed in its entirety. Provide note on drawings.
6. Existing window sills are to remain. Provide note on drawings.
7. Clarify stucco texture on elevations (as already noted on A-06.1).
8. Clarify what is happening with the existing pond feature in the SW corner of Lot 5 (previously noted to be restored)
9. Lower the fence height to 4'-0" on Lots 5, 6, 7, & 8 (facing Malaga Avenue and Cordova Street).

Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **APPROVE WITH THE CONDITIONS NOTED ABOVE** the design proposal for an addition, alterations, and sitework on the property located at located at **1104 Malaga Avenue**, a Local Historic Landmark," legally described as Lots 5-11 Inclusive, Block 12, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part One, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 106 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida and **APPROVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness with the conditions noted above.

Respectfully submitted,


Anna Pernas
Historic Preservation Officer