

**REPORT OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES
HISTORICAL RESOURCES & CULTURAL ARTS DEPARTMENT
TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
ON THE DESIGNATION OF
THE PROPERTY AT
415 ARAGON AVENUE
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**



Historic Photo, c.1940



LHD 2023-11
February 21, 2024

**LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION:
415 ARAGON AVENUE, CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**

Application: Initiated by City Staff in response to Code Violations

Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts

2327 SALZEDO STREET
CORAL GABLES
FLORIDA 33134

☎ 305-460-5093
✉ hist@coralgables.com

<u>Folio Number:</u>	03-4108-001-1130
<u>Legal Description:</u>	Lot 16 & the West ½ of Lot 15, Block 7, Section Coral Gables Section "B," according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 111 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida
<u>Permit No. & Date:</u>	286; December 1924
<u>Architect:</u>	Frank Wyatt Woods
<u>First Owner:</u>	John Stabile
<u>Present Owner:</u>	415 Aragon Avenue LLC 401 E Las Olas Blvd, Fort Lauderdale
<u>Building Use, Type, Style:</u>	One-story SFR, Mediterranean Revival
<u>Site Characteristics:</u>	The property is located on an 8,250 SF interior lot on the north side of Aragon Avenue between Le Jeune Road and Hernando Street.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

415 Aragon Avenue is amongst the earliest homes in the City and stands as a testament to founder George Merrick's vision for the Coral Gables. Merrick strove to create a cohesively-designed, Mediterranean-inspired city. He and his team felt that Mediterranean architecture harmonized best with south Florida's climate and lifestyle. During the 1920s, Merrick's development team paid careful attention to ensure that the buildings and streetscape elements conformed to Mediterranean ideals. Designed in the Mediterranean Revival style, the property at 415 Aragon Avenue is an example of the homes built during the founding years of the City and it significantly contributes to the historic built environment of the City of Coral Gables

The single-family residence and its detached garage were designed in 1924 by architect Frank Wyatt Woods for John Stabile. Stabile was a well-respected contractor in the Miami area and was involved in the construction of Coral Gables from its inception. His buildings were known to be very well-built with a flair of masonry ornamentation. When Woods came to visit Coral Gables in 1924, Stabile commissioned Woods to design three homes for him. Records imply that Stabile hoped to entice Woods, who was well-versed in Mediterranean architecture, to remain in the area. Woods did stay and officially opened a practice in Coral Gables with an office in the Stabile Building. Woods' already renowned career continued to flourish. In later years his work was credited with aiding in shaping a new direction of mid-century modern design in the Miami area. 415 Aragon Avenue was one of Woods' three initial commissions for Stabile that launched his work in Florida.

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 415 Aragon Avenue 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, 415 Aragon Avenue meets the following **three (3) criteria**:

Historical, Cultural significance

4. *Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economic, or social trends of the community*

Architectural significance

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

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

The single-family home at 415 Aragon Avenue was designed in late 1923 during the initial development of Coral Gables. It was amongst the earliest homes built and it exemplifies the Mediterranean ideals espoused by Coral Gables' founder George Merrick.

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. Merrick drew from the Garden City and City Beautiful movements of the 19th and early 20th centuries to create his vision for a fully-conceived and cohesively-designed Mediterranean-inspired city. The goal was to create architectural splendor in a suburb with tropical luxuriance. 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 transformed 3,000 acres of citrus plantation and native hammock. Merrick's team felt that Mediterranean-inspired architecture harmonized best with south Florida's climate and lifestyle and was a featured selling point in early promotional materials. The architecture constructed during the community's first period of 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 in this style. The single-family residence at 415 Aragon Avenue is an example of the Mediterranean Revival style and is indicative of the type of architecture that was the founding premise of Coral Gables.

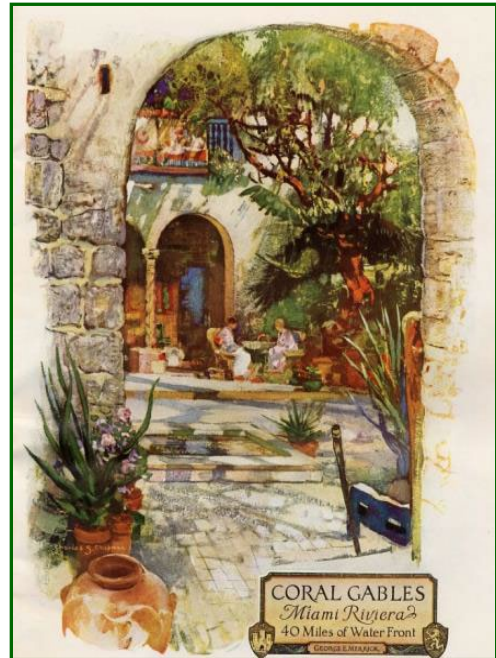
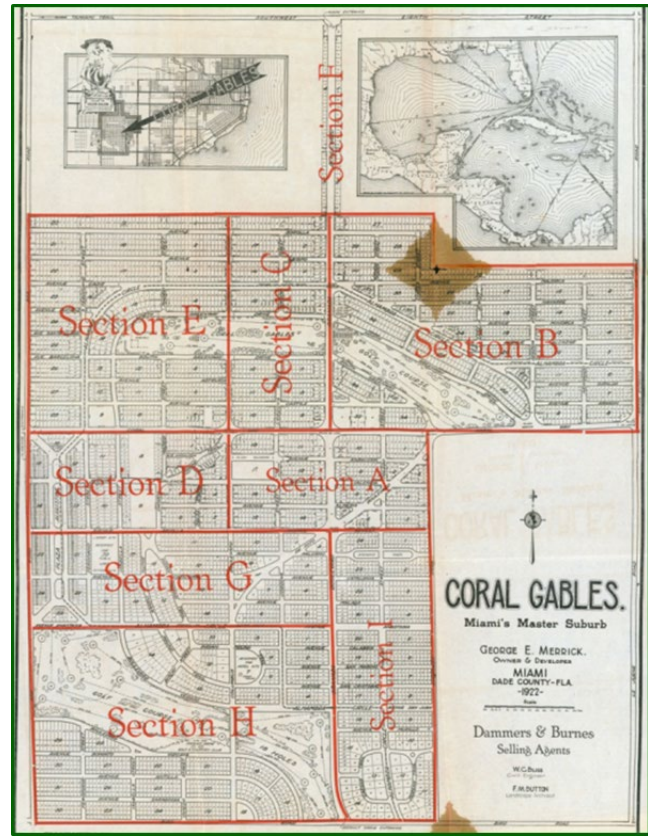


Figure 1: Advertisement in *House Beautiful*, 1925

Nationally-acclaimed landscape architect Frank Button drew the first comprehensive map of Coral Gables in 1921. It was based on the grid infrastructure of fruit trees from the Merrick family's citrus plantation, as well as the native pineland. Laid carefully over the grid of orthogonal streets (north-south) and avenues (east-west) are a series of diagonal and curved roadways. Merrick's design team carefully planned to maximize the potential intrinsic to its tropical environment. They laid out broad sweeping boulevards with grand vistas and tree-lined streets, plazas with fountains that invited visitors to linger, and Mediterranean-inspired homes that conveyed a quality of centuries-old permanence with generous street setbacks for front yards to celebrate the 'tropical vegetation in a delightful profusion.' It also employed restrictive zoning to control development and aesthetics. The city plan embraced the City Beautiful ideals of copious amounts of public green space, tree-lined streets, and monumental public buildings. It also wholeheartedly

incorporated the Garden City precepts of comprehensive planning with defined areas for different uses, a wealth of public facilities, and housing for varied income levels without sacrificing quality. Homes built for modest incomes were constructed alongside grand palazzos and a section of the City was devoted to multi-family housing.

Merrick realized that automobile ownership was becoming increasingly commonplace for the affluent and middle classes and wanted to embrace the motorist without sacrificing the beauty of the community or the comfort of the residents. Thus, he implemented an intentional hierarchy of roadways. In Button's 1922 map, one can clearly see the series of wide parkways with center planting medians that were major thoroughfares across the development as well as parkways with substantial swales for tree-planting that supplied internal access and scenic routes. (Figure 2) Merrick's 'Great Development Program,' also included majestic place-making features. The grid opened at strategic locations to include grand entrances, plazas, and fountains giving focus to major arteries and vistas, and providing visual interest for both the pedestrian and the motorist. Broad boulevards curved around planned features that included golf courses, monumental public and community buildings, and other amenities.



**Figure 2: Coral Gables Map:
"Miami's Master Suburb," 1922**

With Merrick's acceptance of Button's plan in July 1921 the building of Coral Gables' infrastructure began in earnest. Miles of roads were laid with sidewalks, green space, and trees, along with the establishment of acres of parks. The levelling of the Granada Golf course commenced, and waterways were channeled through the oolitic limestone beds. The boundaries ran from just north of Sorolla Avenue south to Bird Road, west to Red Road, and east to Anderson Road, with a small section abutting Le Jeune Road north of Coral Way. The northern section of Granada Boulevard was only a strip of land from the street north of Sorolla Avenue (then called Coral Valley Road) to the Tamiami Trail where the first entrance was to be constructed. A row of narrow lots flanked both sides of the street. The map also indicated the location of the first seventy-five acres which was to be put up for sale. It was labelled as Section "A" and was the area just south of Merrick's homes on Coral Way. It contained both large and small lots which encouraged buyers from different income brackets.

On November 23, 1921, three days before the subdivision lots were offered for public sale at a heavily advertised auction, Button's plan was made public in a two-page spread in the Miami Times. Records indicate that upwards of five thousand people attended the auction. Six days later the auction closed with three hundred lots sold for more than a half-million dollars. Buoyed by the sales in December 1921 Merrick pledged \$10,000 from the sales to fund a library and, a few days later, pledged another \$100,000 and land to create a University of Miami in Coral Gables.

On December 27, 1921, Section “B” went on sale. This section included lots on the impressive Greenway Drives that circled the proposed golf course as well as Alhambra Circle which was a wide boulevard with a ‘parked’ center median. Section B also included smaller lots that could be bought separately or bundled together. 415 Aragon Avenue is in this early section of the city. Building permit records indicate that Aragon Avenue became a well-developed single-family home street in the mid-1920s (Figure 3) with the home at 415 being amongst the first on the street.



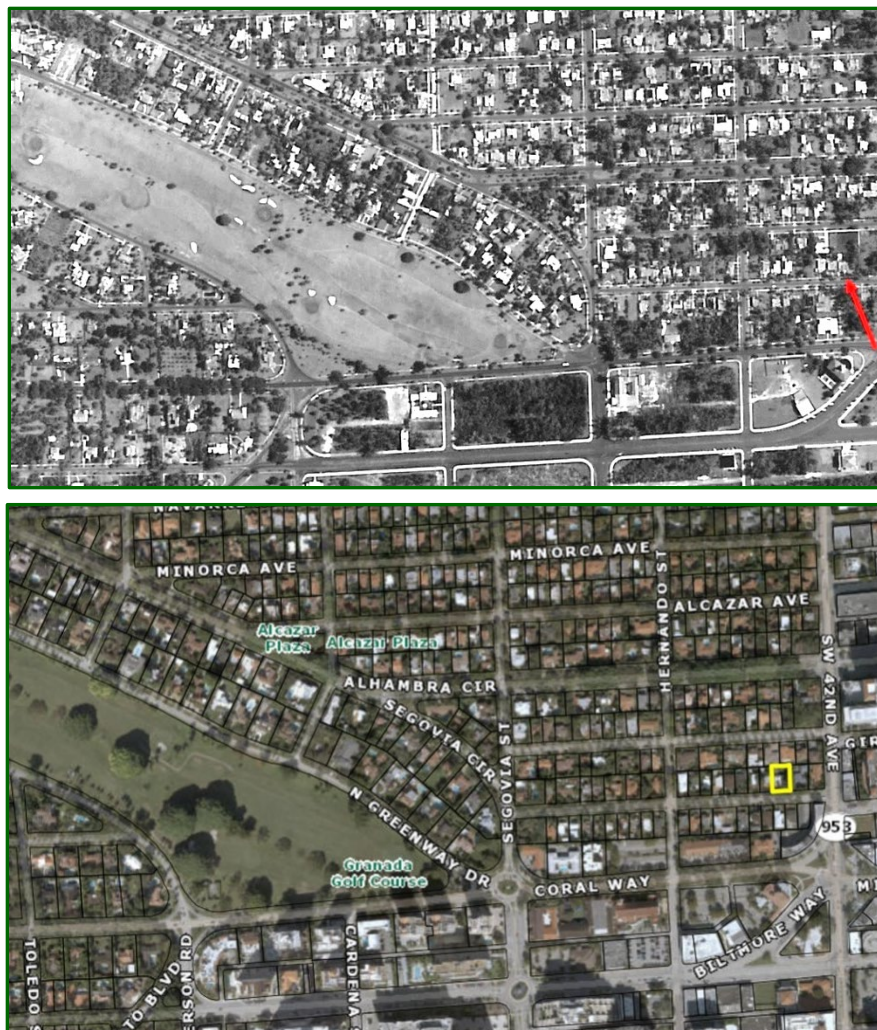
Figure 3 Section B Map
Blue Boxes: Pre-1935 single-family homes
Red arrow: 415 Aragon Avenue

The home at 415 Aragon Avenue was commissioned by John M. Stabile (1890-1958) in 1924. Stabile was a well-respected contractor who worked with Merrick since Coral Gables’ inception. In 1922 newspapers report Stabile building a coral rock house on Navarre Street, laying the sidewalks on Obispo Street and Alhambra Plaza (later renamed Country Club Prado), and building a concrete plant. Stabile was lauded for his excellent and tropical-withstanding construction and quickly became a go-to contractor in Coral Gables. By 1923 he was often cited as the contractor for homes commissioned by Merrick and designed by H. George Fink, Walter De Garmo, or Kiehnel & Elliott. Also in 1923, he built one of the earliest commercial buildings in Coral Gables at 290 Aragon Avenue. The first floor of the John Stabile Building housed his ornamental masonry business. (Figures 4) When procuring barrel tile from Cuba and Spain could not keep pace with the building in Coral Gables, Stabile began making barrel tile. And when shipping delays inhibited shipments of septic tanks, he made those too and are seen in Figures 4. In 1924 he was awarded the prestigious contract to build the Coral Gables Congregational Church. In December 1924 Frank Wyatt Woods, a well-established architect from New York, arrived in Miami for vacation. He was experienced in Mediterranean-inspired architecture (see Architect section below) and visited Coral Gables. He ‘became fascinated’ with Merrick’s vision. Stabile offered him office space in his building and commissioned him to design three homes for him. One of these homes was 415 Aragon Avenue. To Coral Gables’ benefit, Woods decided to stay (Figure 7 & 24), and these were the first of numerous Coral Gables commissions. In later years Woods’ work was credited with aiding in shaping a new direction of mid-century modern design in the Miami area.



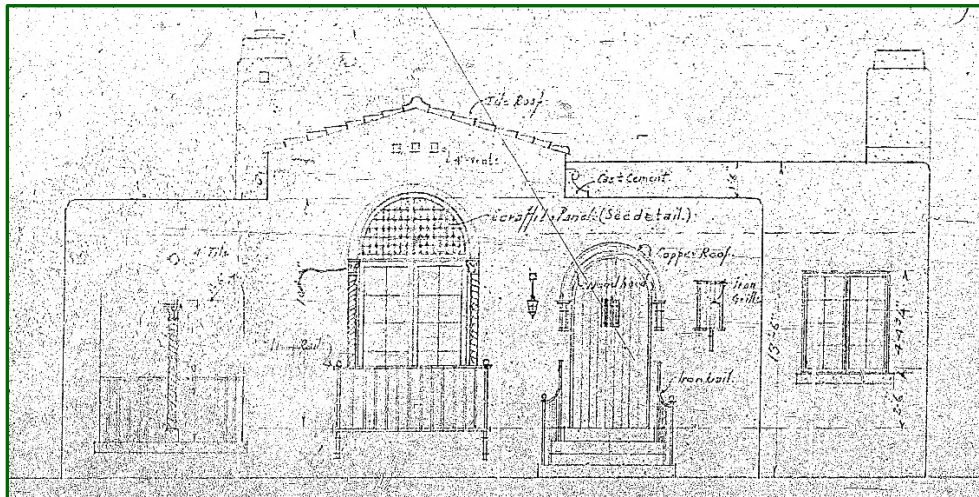
Figures 4: John M. Stabile Contractor Ad, Miami News, June 4, 1924 [left]
John Stabile Building, 290 Aragon Avenue, June 17, 1924 [right]

In general, construction in the City of Coral Gables boomed until the combination of the devastating Hurricane of 1926 and the Great Depression curtailed new development and ended Merrick's grand plans. During the Depression Era of the 1930s few single-family homes were built. With the implementation of the New Deal and other incentives, the building industry experienced a small resurgence in the late 1930s and early 1940s, only to abruptly grind to a halt during the War years. The Post-War prosperity that followed these lean years created an optimism which reigned through the 1950s and 1960s and resulted in an unprecedented building boom. During this time the building of single-family homes in the City of Coral Gables followed national trends both in numbers and in style. As illustrated in Figures 5, Aragon Avenue and Section B saw marked construction of additional single-family homes and building records indicate the area was built out by the late 1950s. Section B, developed as a single-family neighborhood, remains so to date. Thus, the home at 415 Aragon Avenue retains its historic context.



Figures 5: 415 Aragon Avenue, Siting and Context
Aerial Photographs: 1948 [top]– red arrow; Current Context, 2021 – yellow box [bottom]
Courtesy of Aerial Photography: University of Florida

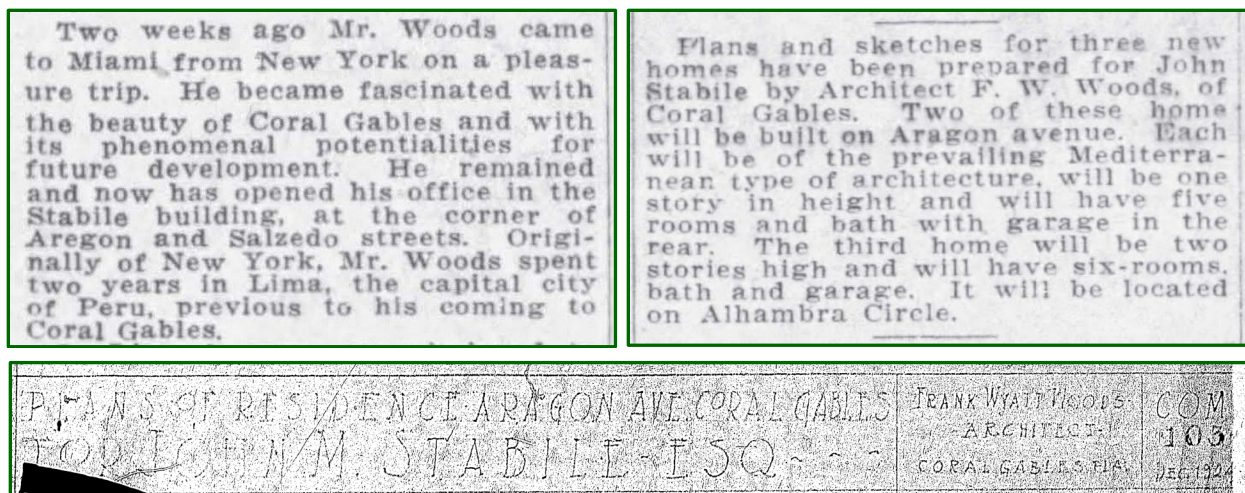
SIGNIFICANCE ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION



Figures 6: Front (South) Façade Over Time
Permit #286, December 1924 [top]; c.1940s [center]
June 2009 *Courtesy Google Streetview* [bottom left]
December 2023 [bottom right]

Executive Summary

Located in Section B, the buildings at 415 Aragon Avenue were amongst the earliest constructed in Coral Gables. The single-family residence and detached garage were designed in 1924 by architect Frank Wyatt Woods for John Stabile. As discussed above John Stabile was a noted contractor in the Miami area and was involved with the building of Coral Gables from its inception. His buildings were noted to be very well-built with a flair of masonry ornamentation. When architect Frank Wyatt Woods came to visit Coral Gables in December 1924, Stabile's business was quite successful, and he was expanding his services. Stabile commissioned Woods to design three homes for him and offered him an office in the Stabile Building. (Figures 7) Records imply that he hoped to entice Woods, who was well-versed in Mediterranean architecture, to stay in the area. Woods did stay and officially opened a practice in Coral Gables within the month and soon after took on a partner. (See Architect section below). Woods' already renowned career continued to flourish, and he remained in south Florida. In later years Woods' work was credited with helping shape a new direction of mid-century modern design in the Miami area. 415 Aragon Avenue was one of Woods' three initial commissions for Stabile that launched the South Florida portion of his career.



Figures 7: Frank Wyatt Woods: 415 Aragon Commission
Miami Herald, December 14, 1924 [top]
Title Block Permit #286

Founder George Merrick and his team felt that Mediterranean-inspired architecture harmonized best with south Florida's climate and lifestyle. During the 1920s, Merrick's team paid careful attention to ensure that the buildings and streetscape elements conformed to Mediterranean ideals. The home at 415 Aragon Avenue honors their vision for adapting residential design to the rigors of South Florida's climate while keeping the integrity of the Mediterranean Revival style. It features thick cement masonry block walls which keep the home cool, light-colored textured stuccoed exterior walls which reflect the sun's heat, varied windows that supplied much needed ventilation and light in this tropical environment, and several covered porches for coveted indoor-outdoor living. (Figures 6 & 10) Additionally, its construction over a crawl space supplied added ventilation and separation from the high-water table.

Designed in the Mediterranean Revival style, the property stands as a testament to Merrick's vision for a cohesively-designed Mediterranean-inspired city. As described below, the home and its

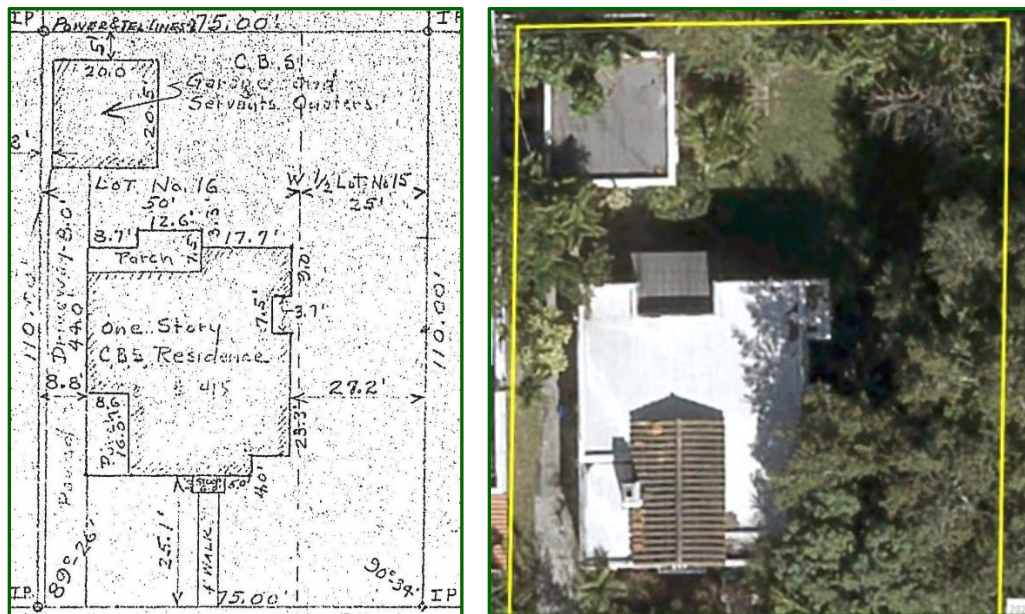
auxiliary garage building exhibit numerous character-defining features of the Mediterranean Revival style with projecting and recessed planes, rectilinear massing, along with roof types that include low-pitched gable roof clad in barrel tile and flat roofs with simple parapets. The home takes cues from Italian architecture, which is a style Woods pursued in Coral Gables in subsequent years. In particular, a substantial carved masonry barrel vault front entry hood capped in copper and supported by carved masonry brackets, the delicately-twisted columns, and the slender chimneys. This hood feature was removed at an undetermined date. Across the front façade and wrapping around the southwest corner are a series of semi-circular arches most of which spring from slender twisted columns. Within the arched front entry, the original curved wood plank door with its carved spindles remains. (Figure 15) In the central arched opening is a Juliet balcony feature with masonry bas relief ‘tympanum.’ (Figures 8 & 14) It is most likely the work of John Stabile and is one of the hallmark features of the home. Other style characteristics of the home are the masonry scrollwork transitioning to the parapets (Figures 12), decoratively-grouped round vents, the metal railings at the front door, porch, and front window, as well as recessed casement windows with projecting sills.



Figure 8: Bas Relief Panel, 2023

Staff visually assessed the property and examined permit documents, building records, and historic photographs and have determined that the property at 415 Aragon Avenue possesses sufficient integrity for designation. The home clearly remains a Mediterranean Revival style home built during the City’s initial development period in the 1920s. As per, Article 8, Section 8-103 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code--*Criteria for designation of historic landmarks or historic districts*: “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.” It should be noted that, as discussed and illustrated below, substantial unpermitted work occurred on this property in recent months which included the removal of historic features and the initiation of a rear addition. At present, all work has ceased and mitigation of this unpermitted work is ongoing. Notwithstanding, it is deemed that this property 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.

Extant Exterior Description & Alteration Discussion

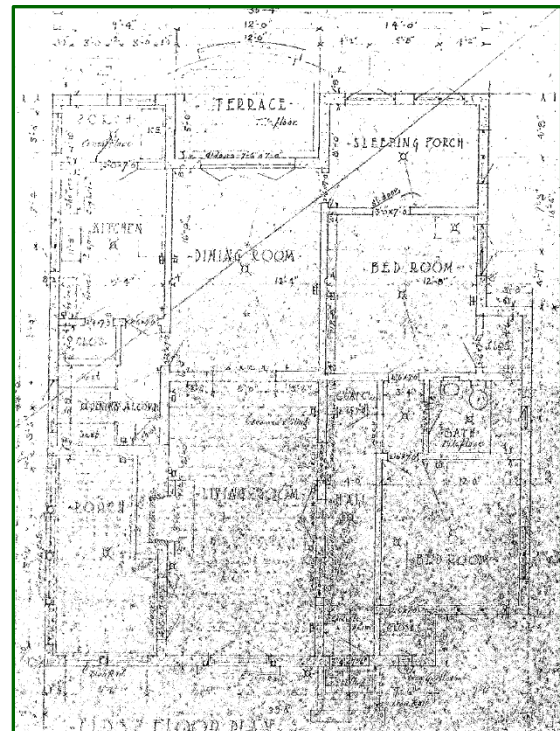


Figures 9: 415 Aragon Avenue

Site Plan, 1955 [left] *Courtesy of Thomas J. Kerry, Eng.*
Current Aerial Photo, 2023 [right] *Courtesy of Miami-Dade Property Appraiser*

415 Aragon Avenue is an approximately 75'x 110' (8,250 SF) interior lot on the north side of the street containing a single-family residence and an accessory garage building. The structures are located on Lot 16. The west half of Lot 15 provides a side yard to the east of the home. A concrete driveway runs between the west side of the home along the property line to the garage accessory building at the northwest corner of the lot. (Figures 9)

The single-family residence was designed as a two-bedroom home. The bedrooms and a rear sleeping porch were along the east side. At the center core was a dining and living room. A narrow hall led from the front door and double French doors opened into the living room directly across from a fireplace. The living room led onto a covered porch at the southwest corner of the home. The dining room opened onto an open-air tiled terrace at the rear of the home. Adjacent to the terrace at the northwest corner was a screened back porch off the kitchen. (Figure 10 & 23) A copy of the original permit (#286) is provided as Attachment A at the end of this report. In 1940 a small (approx. 4'x 9') bathroom addition was added at the northeast corner of the home off the east wall of the sleeping porch. (Figures 9) (Permit #6378; See Attachment B)



**Figure 10: Original Floorplan
Permit #286, 1924**



Figure 11: Front (South) & Side (West) Facades, 2011 *Courtesy Google Streetview*

The one-story home is built of concrete block units and clad with textured stucco. Rectangular in plan and massing it is comprised of a series of flat-roofed portions and a central gable-roof section clad in barrel tile. The front-facing gable rises slightly above the flat roof parapets. (Figures 9 & 11) The fenestration of the home varies in size and configuration. Windows are recessed with protruding sills. Ten original wooden casements were replaced with aluminum awning windows in 1970 with the permit specifying that the original openings and sills were to be retained. Decoratively-grouped round vents are found above the windows on various facades. Two chimneys rise a half-story above the roof line. One rises through the western portion of the gable roof and the second along the east façade of the home with a decorative curved bracket on top of the parapet rising along its side. (Figures 11 & 12)



Figures 12: Transition Features to Parapets, 2023



Figure 13: Front (South) Façade, 2023

A projecting bay spans most of the front with the façade stepping back at the eastern end to flat-roofed main living area. The parapets of the flat-roof main area are slightly higher than the front bay. Bridging and tying these flat roofed sections is a front-facing barrel tile gable roof extending back at the center of the home. (Figures 9 & 11) Scrolled masonry features provide a delicate transition from the gable roof to the parapets of the front bay. (Figures 12)

Across the front projecting bay and wrapping around the southwest corner are a series of semi-circular arches. Within the arched front entry, the original curved wood plank door with its carved spindles remains. (Figures 15) The metal railing that curves with the entry steps is also original. To the east of the entry is a small window ensemble that retains its original window and its curved metal grillwork. (Figures 13 & 15) To the west of the entry is a large arched feature centered under the gable roof. The Juliet balcony ensemble retains its original balcony and railing as well as the twisted columns below the masonry bas relief 'tympanum' in the archway. (Figures 8 & 14) Centered above the arch are three decoratively-arranged round vents. At the southwest corner of the home is an arcaded covered porch.



Figure 14: Juliet Balcony Ensemble, 2023



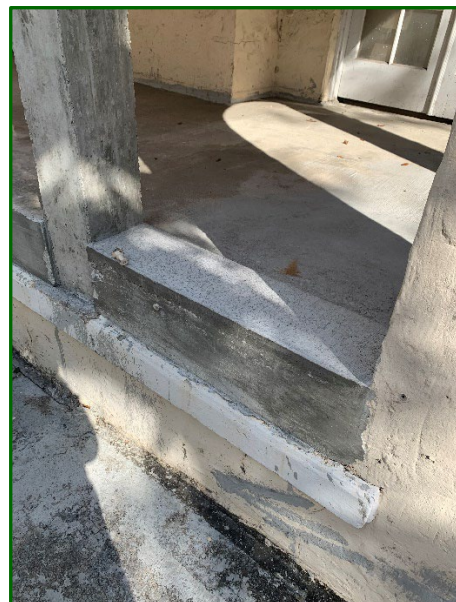
Figures 15: Original Features, 2023
Arched front door with spindles [left]; Entry railings [center]
Small casement window with curved grillwork [right]



Figures 16: Side Elevations, December 2023: West [left]; East [right]

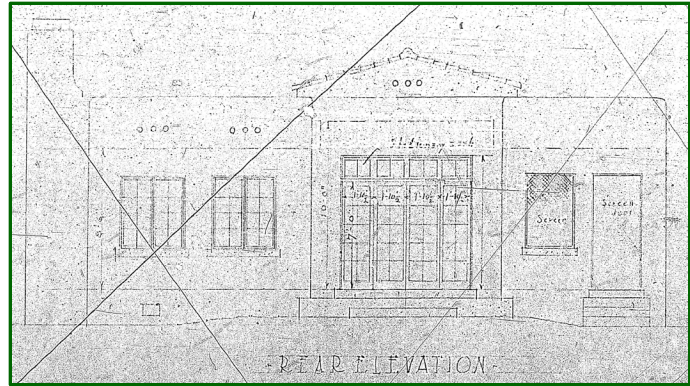
In 2023 a permit for roofing and a permit for interior renovations were approved. In addition, there was substantial work done to the home without a permit. At present a stop work order from Code Enforcement is in effect. The following briefly describes and illustrates some of the unpermitted work undertaken on the exterior of the home in 2023.

In July 2023 City Staff noticed the removal of the twisted columns and railings on the corner porch. Code Enforcement issued a violation and stipulated that the removed columns be secured and prepared to be reinstated. Subsequently, work continued without a permit and as seen in Figures 17, the last of railings were removed and the arched openings were reduced with a poured concrete slab.



Figures 17: Unpermitted Work on Front Covered Porch, 2023
Column & Railing Removal, July 2023 [top]
Subsequent Railing Removal & Opening Reduction, October 2023 [bottom]

In Fall 2023 activity at the rear of the home was noticed and by October 2023 it was clear that an unpermitted addition was being constructed. A Stop Work order was issued. Figures 19 illustrate that prior to the unpermitted addition the rear of the home remained as originally designed with the central terrace. The only change was the small 1940 bathroom at the northeast corner.



As illustrated in Figures 20 & 21, the partially constructed unpermitted addition infills the recess between the chimney and the 1940 bathroom bay on the east façade. On the rear it appears it likewise is infilling the recessed terrace. The roof of the back half of the home appears to have been removed, changed in type, and sloped towards the remaining historic home. The addition removed historic fabric and encapsulated various sections of the original exterior walls.



Figures 19: Rear (North) Façade
Permit #286, 1924 [top]
Aerial Photo, January 2023 [bottom]
Courtesy of Miami-Dade Property Appraiser

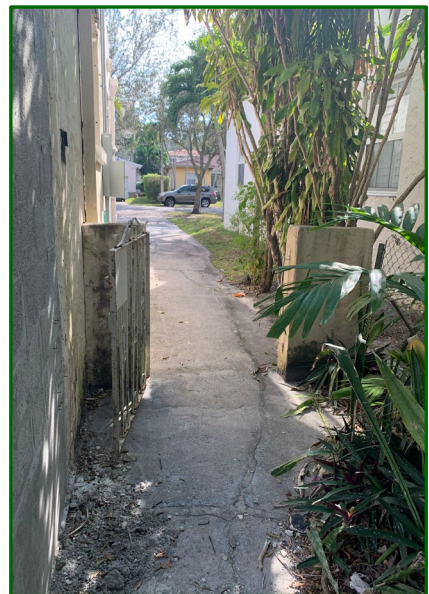


Figures 20: Unpermitted Addition, December 2023
Side (East) Façade [left]; Rear (North) Façade [right]



**Figures 21: Unpermitted Addition: Side (East) Façade, Streetview, December 2023 [top]
Rear (North) Façade: October 2023 [center left], December 2023 [center right]
Encapsulated Historic Exterior Walls, December 2023:
Northeast Corner [bottom left], West terrace wall [bottom right]**

At the northwest corner of the property is a one-story 20' x 20' accessory building. (Figures 9) It originally served as the garage and servants' quarters for the residence. In later years the servants' quarters was used as a rental property. The Streetfile contains receipt for a 1969 rental permit for it. The building has a flat roof with simple parapets. The textured stucco matches the main residence. The vehicular opening was enclosed at an unknown date and two windows installed. The infill was recessed so the original garage door opening size and location is maintained. There are doors leading to the living space on the south and east facades. (Figures 22)



Figures 22: Accessory Building, 2023
South Façade [top]; Garage Door Opening Recess [bottom left];
East Façade [bottom center]; Driveway looking South [bottom right]

Chronological List of Owners

1924-1925	John Stabile (see Historic Context section)
1926-1947	Edward C. Hodge (1893-1976) & Ester C. Hodge
1948-1955	Mary Seymour Nelson & Richard M. Nelson
1955-1970	Frederick J. Desrosiers & Lucy Williams Desrosiers
1970-1978	Dimitri Hados & Sylvia Hados
1978-1984	Jose L. Pelleya & Ana Maria Pelleya
1984-1985	Intercontinental Bank
1985-1986	Maria Antonieta Tio
1986-1988	Scott R. Neitzel & Julie L. Neitzel
1988-1989	Manuel Iriondo & Janet Anne Iriondo
1989-1991	Len A. Pagano, Jr. & Mary Lou S. Pagano
1991-1999	Mitchel A. Bierman & Ana Peralta Bierman
1999-2021	Michael A. Shapiro
2022	Estate of Michael A. Shapiro
2022-Present	415 Aragon Avenue LLC

UNUSUALLY well built bungalow, large beam ceiling; living room, fireplace; large dining room, kitchen, breakfast room, 3 bedrooms and bath; 2 screened in porches, garage with servants' quarters, laundry tubs; solar and electric hot water system; 150 ft. frontage. Many tropical fruit trees, pergola, lily pool; freshly decorated inside and out. New awnings. Open for inspection, 10 a. m. to 5 p. m., Sunday, by owner. 415 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables.

OPEN 1 TO 5
415 ARAGON

OUT of town owner ill must sell Spanish style spacious older home on 75' lot. 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, guest house, 2 living porches, service porch, pantry, full size dining room, breakfast nook, fireplace. Completely Furn. by Royal Palm. Includes deep freeze. A real buy. \$4,000 cash balance \$100 month.

HILSON REALTY, REALTORS
CORAL GABLES AND SOUTHWEST
2352 Ponce de Leon Blvd. HI 6-1655

Figures 23: *Miami Herald* For Sale Ads with Property Descriptions
October 27, 1935 [top]; March 5, 1955 [bottom]

Architect: Frank Wyatt Woods

Frank Wyatt Woods (1894-1962) was born in Providence, Rhode Island. He was a graduate of Brown University, and the Rhode Island School of Design. Trade publications indicate that by 1912 he had become an established architect in Rhode Island. Several of his buildings from his early career in Providence contribute to the Wayland Historic District which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These include the Buena Vista Apartments (1912-13) built in the Spanish Revival Style and the Lafayette Apartments (1913) built in the Mediterranean style. In 1916, a national trade publication *The Denison* cites in its advertising that nationally-acclaimed architect Frank Wyatt Woods used their interlocking tiles for the Washington and Whitmore Apartments in Providence.” Later that year, the same advertisement is also found in the Average Man’s Home which published the results of a national competition for modest homes.

Woods came to the Miami area in December 1924 for vacation. He visited and became enamored with Coral Gables and immediately opened an office there. His practice flourished and he continued to reside and work in the Miami area for the remainder of his career. The National Register of Historic Places Designation Report for the Normandy Isles Historic District groups Frank Wyatt Woods with several architects who dominated the new construction in the post-war period in the district and states “together, these architects defined a new direction of mid-century modern design in Miami Beach.” Woods also designed Miami Beach’s Dorchester Hotel built in 1939 in the Art Deco style.



**Figure 24: *Miami Herald*,
January 5, 1925**

Upon his arrival in Coral Gables in the 1920s Woods commissions were hailed in the newspapers. The *Miami News* dated July 17, 1925, reported: “*Hollow building blocks made of coral stone will be used in the construction of the new residence for Robert M. Davidson, city manager of Coral Gables on Castile Avenue. The architect, Frank Wyatt Woods says that the new material shows great promise....it is made by a special process invented by the head of the Nicholes Construction Company...the dominant note of its architecture is Italian in adaptation.*”

Contemporaneous to this commission, Woods joined A. L. Klingbel in designing a group of Italian-styled homes. Historian Arva Moore Parks states in her book George Merrick, Son of the South Wind that “they set the style that led to the Italian Village.” Woods continued to design Italian-inspired homes in Coral Gables. On May 23, 1926, the *Miami News* reported “Frank Wyatt Woods, a nationally-known architect, has designed five of the homes which are being completed. They form an Italian group on Ferdinand Drive [Alhambra Circle] in the Country Club section.” These include the following Alhambra Circle properties: 4206 (1926), 4504 (1926), 4706 (1926), 4722 (1926), 5309 (1926) and 5500 (1925). He added 4607 Alhambra Circle to the group in 1932.

During this time, Woods and his business partner, John Tracey, designed Mediterranean Revival homes throughout Coral Gables. Permits record over 33 homes between 1925 and 1927. Several are designated as local historic landmarks. They are 39 and 43 Sidonia Avenue (twin apartments, 1926), 318 Viscaya Avenue (1927, rebuilt). In addition, the following are contributing resources in historic districts: 901 Castile Avenue (1925), 900 Coral Way (1925), as well as the following homes on Alhambra Circle 410 (1926), 414, 533 (1937), 1126, 1225, 1316, 2024. Other homes include: 1713 Cortez Street, 1149 Milan Avenue (1925), 708 Pizarro Street, 733 Pizarro Street, 315-17 and 323-25 Velarde Avenue (apartments, demolished), and 322 Viscaya Avenue (1927).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of historic designation within the City of Coral Gables is defined in Article 3, 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, the property at 415 Aragon Avenue (legally described as Lot 16 & the West ½ of Lot 15, Block 7, Section Coral Gables Section “B,” according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 111 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:

Historical, Cultural significance

3. *Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economic or social trends of the community*

Architectural significance

1. *Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural style;*
2. *Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction;*

Staff finds the following:

The property located at **415 Aragon Avenue** is significant to the City of Coral Gables history based on:

HISTORICAL, CULTURAL & ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Therefore Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **APPROVE** the Local Historic Designation of the property at **415 Aragon Avenue** (legally described as Lot 16 & the West ½ of Lot 15, Block 7, Section Coral Gables Section “B”) based on its historical, cultural and architectural significance.

Respectfully submitted,



Anna Pernas, Historic Preservation Officer

Selected References

- Archival Photographs, City of Coral Gables, Historical Resources Department.
- Aerial Photography: Florida Collection. University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries.
- American Institute of Architects Directory, Biography, 1956, p. 619.
- Building Records, Building and Zoning Department, Microfilm Division, Coral Gables, Florida.
- Building Permits Record Books, City of Coral Gables, Historical Resources Department.
- McAlester, Virginia, A Field Guide to American Houses, Alfred A. Knopf, 2015.
- Merrick, George, *Coral Gables Homes, Miami Florida*, c.1925.
Coral Gables Miami Riviera: Heart of the American Tropics, c.1925
Coral Gables Miami's Master Suburb, 1923.
- Miami-Dade County Property Appraisers Department Records
- Miami-Dade County Clerk, County Property Records
- National Register for Historic Places.
"Normandy Isles Historic District, Miami Beach" Nomination.
"Wayland Historic District, Providence, Rhode Island" Nomination.
- Newspapers.com
Miami Herald
"Architect From Peru Now At Coral Gables" December 14, 1924, p.67.
"Contract Awarded for \$150,000 Church" May 10, 1924, p.14.
"Coral Gables Builds 21 New Residences" August 20, 1923, p.5.
"Navarre Home" April 20, 1922, p.5.
- Miami News
"Building is to House a Concrete Factory" December 17, 1923, p.15.
"Laying Sidewalks" November 20, 1922, p.12.
"More Business Brings Changes" February 11, 1924, p.4.
"New Material Used in House," July 17, 1925.
- Parks, Arva Moore, George Merrick, Son of the South Wind: Visionary Creator of Coral Gables, University Press of Florida, 2015.
- Polk, R. L. R. L. Polk and Company's Miami City Directory. Jacksonville, Florida.
- Real Estate Records for 415 Aragon Avenue, Coral Gables Historical Resources Department.
- United States Census Records.

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.

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:	415 Aragon Avenue
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 SFR; one-story auxiliary structure
Roof Types and Materials:	gable, shed, flat; barrel tile
Other:	possible 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.

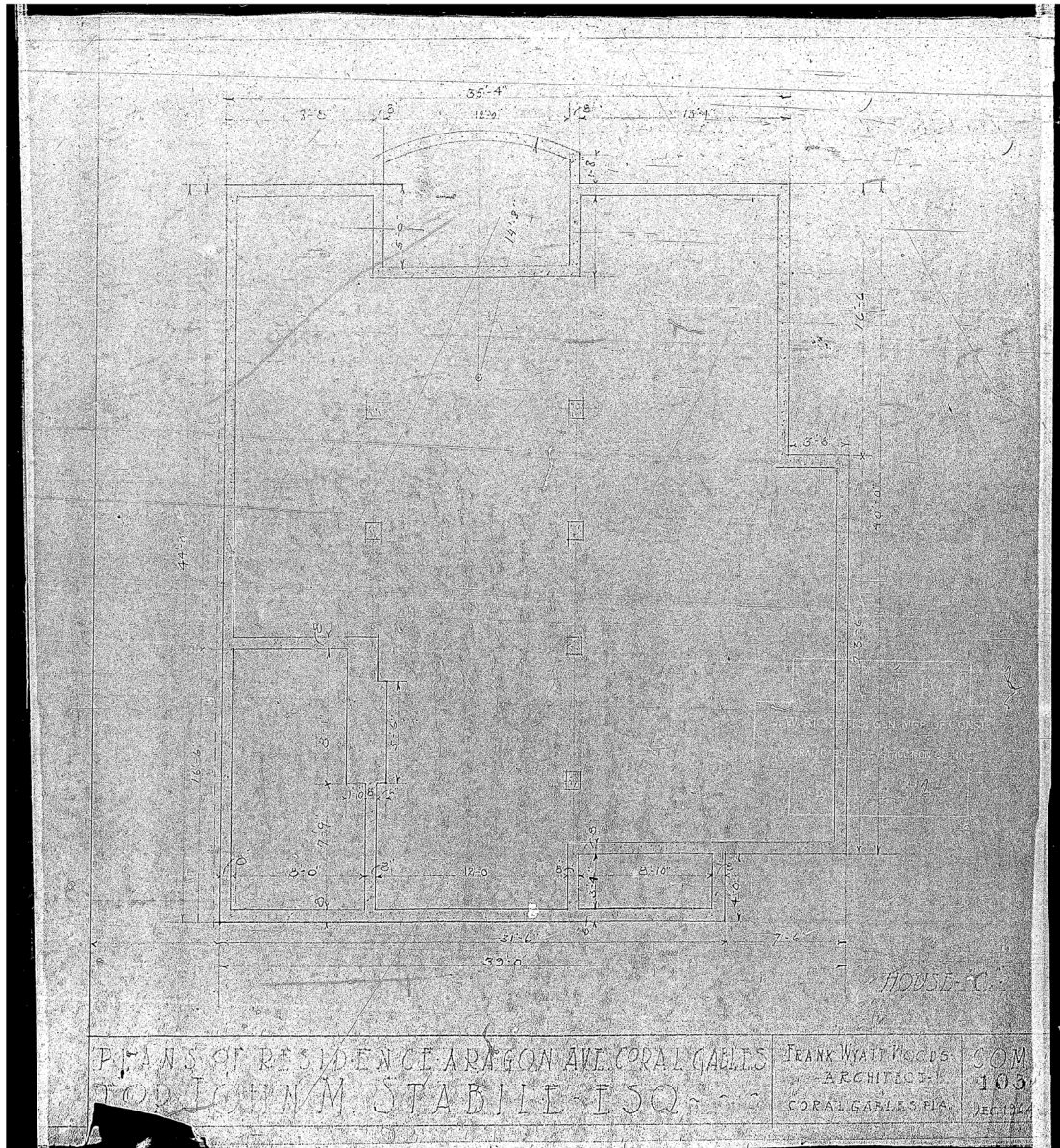
CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

Property: 415 Aragon Avenue
Style: Mediterranean Revival

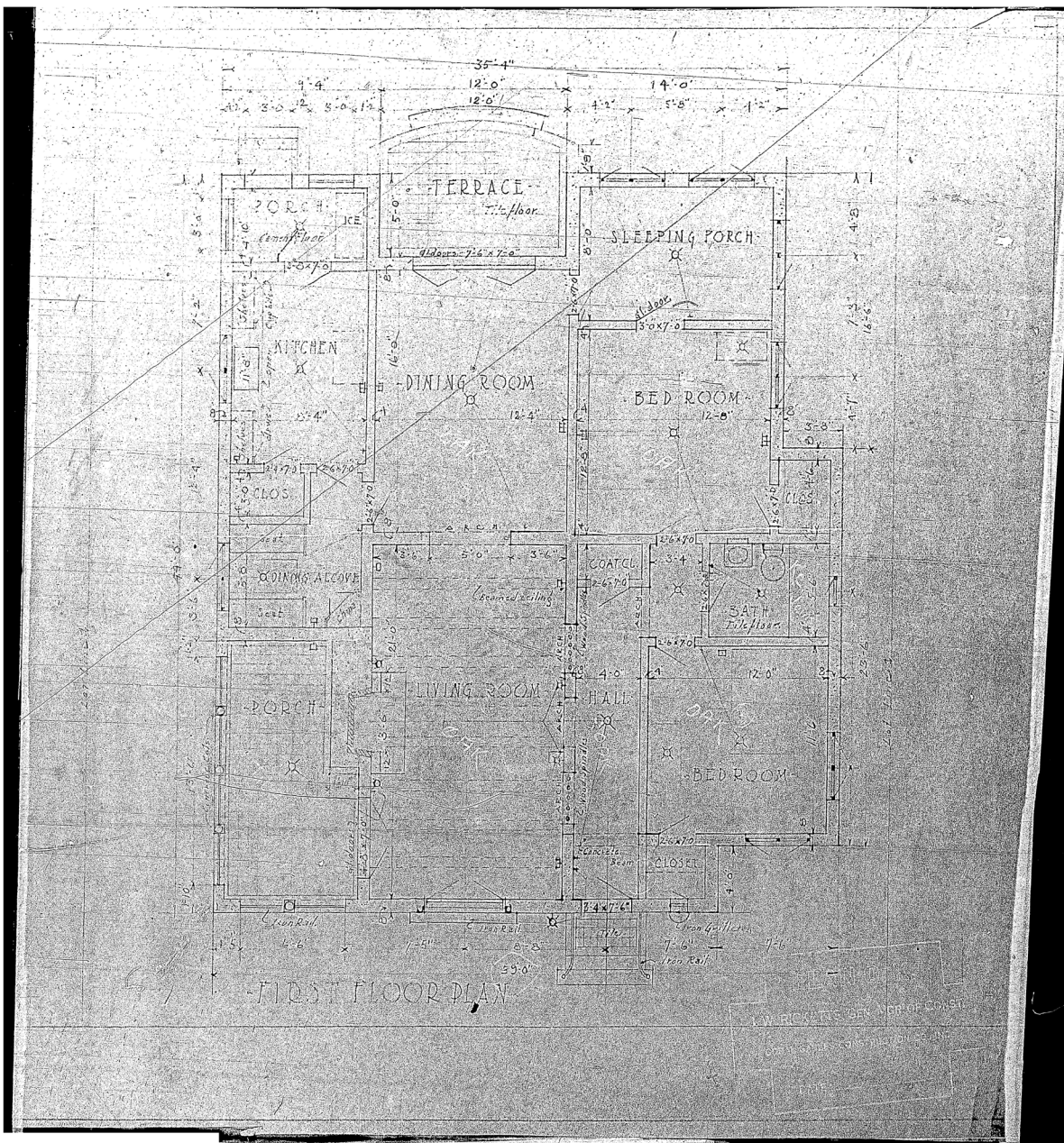


- ✓ thick cement masonry block walls
- ✓ light-colored, textured stuccoed exterior walls
- ✓ projecting and recessed planes
- ✓ rectilinear massing and floor plan
- ✓ low-pitched gable roof clad in barrel tile
- ✓ flat roofs with simple parapets
- ✓ delicately-twisted columns
- ✓ series of semi-circular arches
- ✓ arched front entry
- ✓ original curved wood plank front door with its carved spindles
- ✓ a Juliet balcony feature
- ✓ masonry bas relief 'tympanum'
- ✓ two prominent chimneys
- ✓ masonry scrollwork transition features to parapets
- ✓ decoratively-grouped round vents
- ✓ metal railings at the front door, porch, and front balcony window
- ✓ recessed casement windows of various sizes and configurations with projecting sills
- ✓ detached garage building with matching design elements

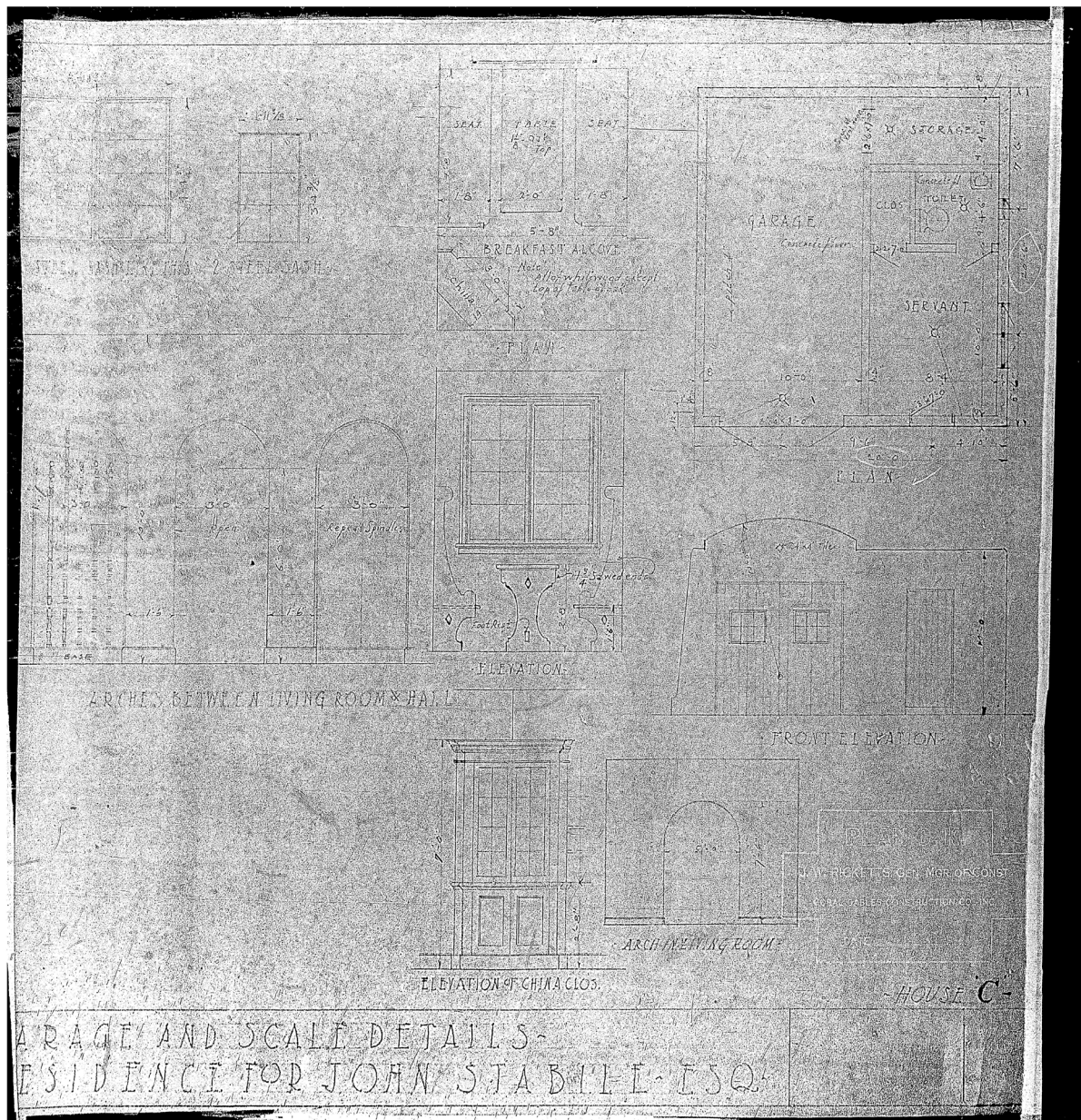
ATTACHMENT A:
Permit #286, 1924, Architect: Frank Wyatt Woods



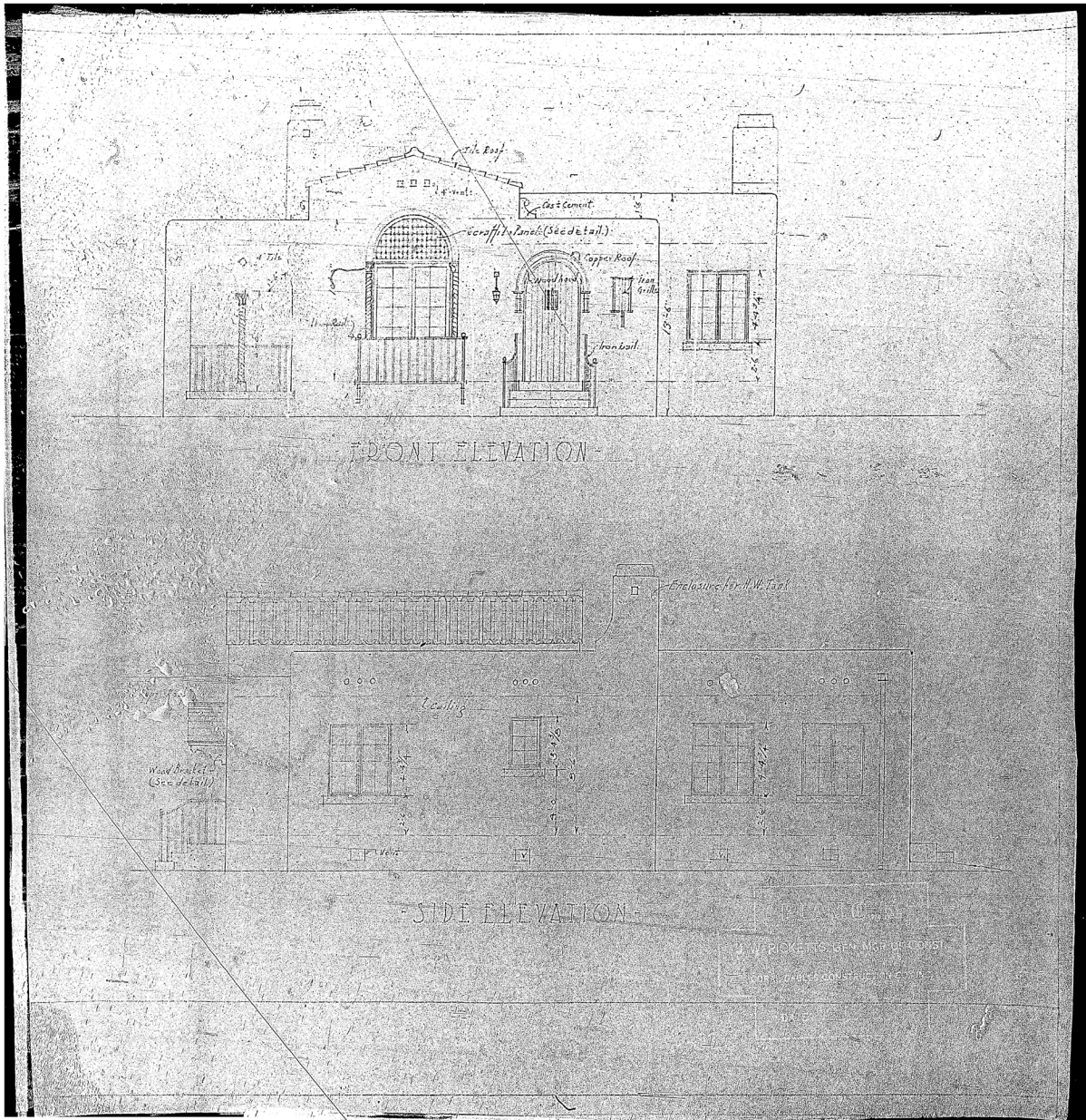
286



286

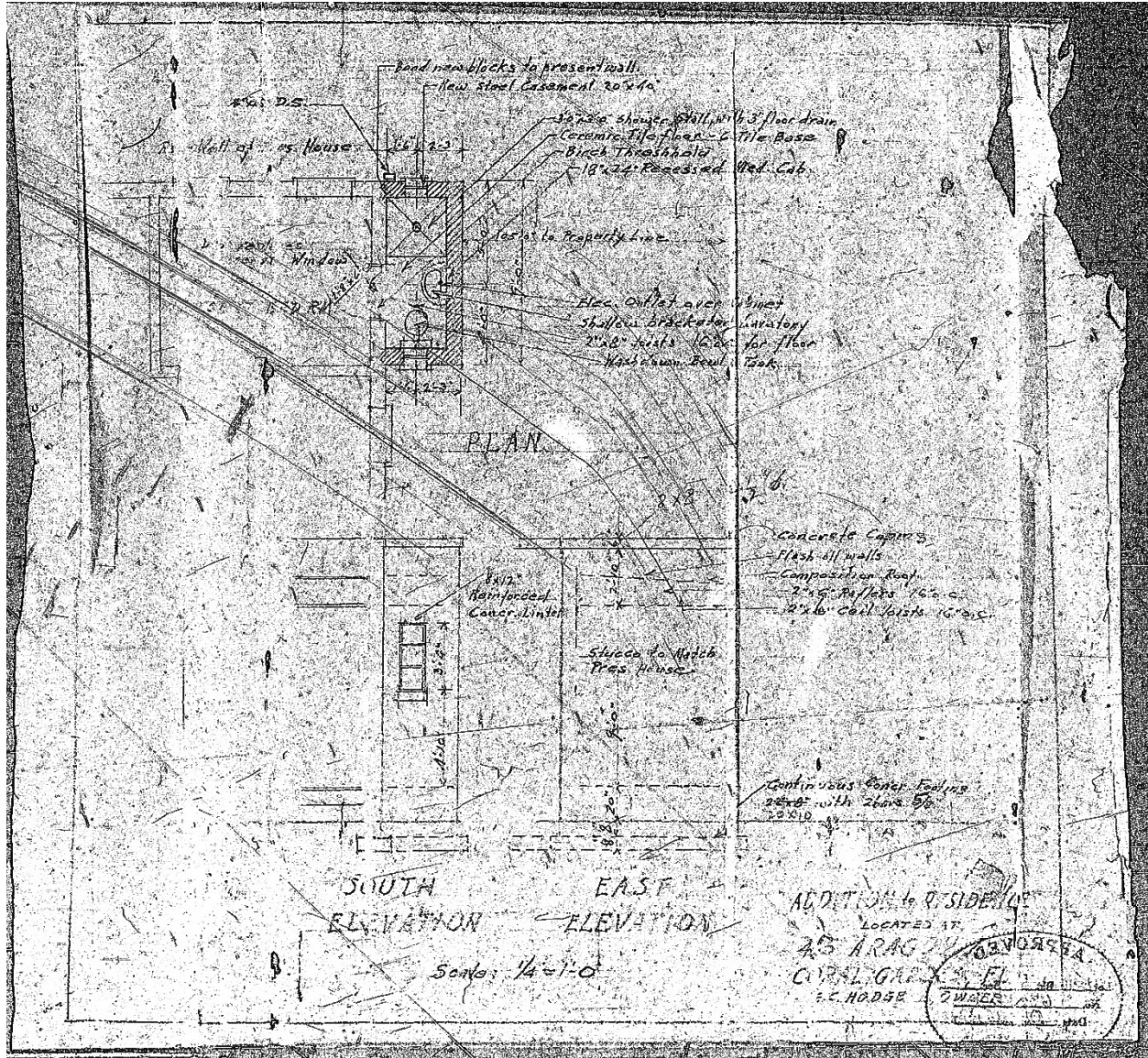


286



286

ATTACHMENT B: Permit #6378, 1940 - Addition



6378