



COA (SP) 2024-005  
March 20, 2024

Historical Resources &  
Cultural Arts

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**STAFF REPORT  
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
FOR THE PROPERTY AT  
1031 ALHAMBRA CIRCLE  
A CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE WITHIN  
THE “ALHAMBRA CIRCLE HISTORIC DISTRICT”**

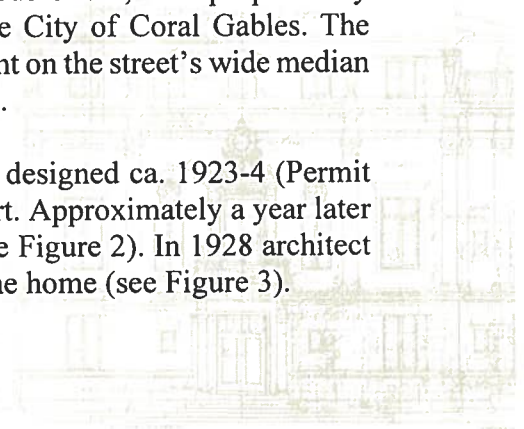
- Proposal:** The application requests design approval for additions and alterations to the residence and sitework.
- Architect:** Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc.
- Owner:** Michael and Maria Tyler
- Legal Description:** Lots 19 & 20 and the East 19 Feet of Lot 21, Coral Gables Section “C,” according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, Page 26 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.
- Site Characteristics:** The property is located on multiple interior lots on the north side of Alhambra Circle between Granada Boulevard and Cordova Street. The primary elevation faces south onto Alhambra Circle. Dimensions of the site are approximately 119 feet wide by 150 feet deep.

**BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The “Alhambra Circle Historic District,” designated in 2008, comprises one- and two-story residential properties built between the 1920s and the 1950s and landscape features that abut Alhambra Circle. Also included within the district are the Alhambra Water Tower, Granada Plaza, and Alcazar Plaza.

The district is defined by the wide median that runs through it. This landscape feature exists nowhere else in the City and helps to create the unique feel of this major boulevard. Alhambra Circle is the City’s longest roadway running from Douglas Road to Campo Sano near the University of Miami campus to the south. This roadway, 120 feet wide with a lushly planted generous swale, was purposefully planned and integral to George Merrick’s plan for the City of Coral Gables. The experience of this important thoroughfare is as dependent on the street’s wide median as it is on the architecture of the homes that surround it.

The single-family home at 1031 Alhambra Circle was designed ca. 1923-4 (Permit #204) by the architectural firm of Hampton and Reimert. Approximately a year later the carport was added to the west side of the home (see Figure 2). In 1928 architect Phineas Paist designed an addition to the east side of the home (see Figure 3).





**Figure 1: May 27, 1924 photo**



**Figure 2: September 8, 1925 photo**



**Figure 3: ca. 1940s photo**



**Figure 4: June 2022 photo**

### **PROPOSAL**

The application requests design approval for a one-story garage and gazebo addition to the side (west) of the residence, a new covered terrace to the rear, and sitework.

### **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.*
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 scope of work contained in this application consists of a one-story addition to the west of the existing residence and a new covered terrace to the rear. The addition to the west consists of a one-story garage structure under a flat roof with a parapet. To accommodate this addition, a low coral wall at the west side of the carport will be removed, as will a small pond with footbridge to the west of the carport. The garage structure houses a one-car garage with a laundry area at the north end. A one-story covered "gazebo" is attached to the north end of the garage structure. This covered area is under a rear-facing gable end roof. At the northwest corner of the house, an existing awning with concrete columns will be removed to accommodate a permanent covered terrace structure. A small shed roof will be removed as well. The garage addition will be visible from



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Alhambra Circle. It is setback approximately 2'-0" from the front (south-facing) façade of the carport and approximately 41'-6" from the front property line.

The garage addition takes its cues from the existing residence by maintaining the parapet height of the adjacent carport, using coral rock as accents, trying to match the look of the original garage door, and maintaining the proportions of the windows of the historic residence. The gazebo area to the rear of the garage will not be visible from Alhambra Circle. It utilizes coral rock on the columns and on the north wall of the garage (behind the built-in barbecue). At the new covered terrace, coral rock is used as a base for the columns, matching the base on the new garage. The parapet walls of the flat roof are topped with a barrel tile coping to match the existing residence.

Site work proposed with this application is minimal and includes the addition of pavers to the existing driveway to meet the new garage and the removal of some concrete in the rear yard. A new paver walkway will be installed to connect the carport, the gazebo, auxiliary structure, and pool deck.

### **VARIANCES**

No variances have been requested in conjunction with this application.

### **BOARD OF ARCHITECTS**

The proposal was reviewed and approved by the Board of Architects with the following conditions on November 16, 2023:

- 1) Revise drawings as indicated and send to City Architect for administrative approval
  - A) On page A4.01 remove keystone at proposed rear elevation.
  - B) On page A4.02 rework new garage door by eliminating arch scaling parapet to original detached garage door proportion. Garage door to match original design of detached garage.
  - C) On page A4.03 modify windows on new garage to match scale and design of original historic structure. Possibly by eliminating arch tops too.

The City Architect subsequently approved with conditions on January 8, 2024 with the following comment: Approval based on satisfying BOA comments from the 11/16/23 meeting.

### **STAFF CONCLUSION**

The application requests design approval for additions and alterations to the residence and sitework. The addition is compatible with the architecture of the historic residence and is set back far behind the main body of the home. The garage is distinguishable from the existing home in its use of smooth stucco on the walls and the absence of barrel tile coping. The gazebo portion of the addition will not be visible from the street and is sympathetic to the residence.

The earliest homes in Coral Gables were those constructed of coral rock (oolitic limestone). As the city grew rapidly, architects were then mandated by George Merrick to incorporate coral rock as accent features in single-family residences. This home (Permit #204) is one of those early homes and the coral rock details are one of the character-defining features of the residence. The use of coral rock as a base for the garage or covered terrace is not appropriate and would detract from the original detail. Staff suggests a stucco base for both areas. The use of coral rock at the gazebo area may be appropriate, but its detailing is not clear (rough or honed, pattern, etc.).

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.

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3. Roof tile is to be true two-piece barrel tile.
4. All French doors to have a higher kickplate.
5. Consider French doors in lieu of sliding glass doors at existing breakfast room.
6. Provide a section looking at the west elevation of the house/new covered terrace.
7. Rafter tails at the gazebo area roof are to be differentiated from any found on the residence.
8. Remove the barrel tile coping from the new covered terrace.
9. Replace the coral rock base at the garage and covered terrace with a raised stucco base.
10. Material to be specified for the new pool deck.

**Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:**

A motion to **APPROVE WITH THE CONDITION NOTED ABOVE** the design proposal for an addition to the residence and sitework on the property located at **1031 Alhambra Circle**, a Local Historic Landmark, legally described as the North 4.46 Feet of Lot 18 and Lots 19 & 20, Coral Gables Section "E," according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, Page 86 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida, and **APPROVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition noted above.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna C. Pernas', written over a horizontal line.

Anna C. Pernas  
Historic Preservation Officer