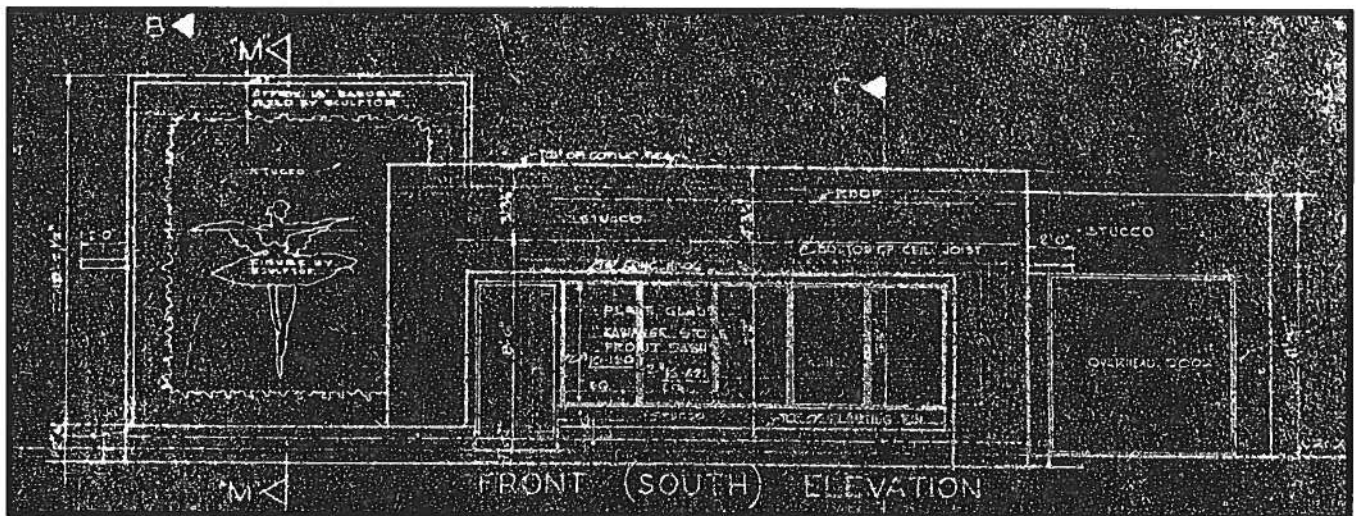


**REPORT OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES
HISTORICAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
ON THE DESIGNATION OF
THE PROPERTY AT
247 MALAGA AVENUE**



c. 1948 PERMIT DRAWING



The City of Coral Gables

LHD 2004-18
COA (SP) 2004-26
OCTOBER 21, 2004

Historical Resources Department

2327 SALZEDO STREET
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA 33134

DESIGNATION REPORT PROPERTY, 247 MALAGA AVENUE

<u>Date of Construction:</u>	C. 1948
<u>Original Architect:</u>	Robert M. Little
<u>Legal Description:</u>	Lots 26 and 27, Block 29, Coral Gables Crafts Section
<u>Plat Book and Page:</u>	10-94
<u>Original Owner:</u>	Iva and Phillis Kapp
<u>Present Owner:</u>	247 Malaga Inc., Juan Carlos Menendez
<u>Original Permit No.:</u>	8059, February 19, 1948
<u>Original Use:</u>	Conservatory
<u>Site Characteristics:</u>	The property is located on two interior lots with the primary elevation facing south onto Malaga Avenue.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Originally built as a dance conservatory, the building at 247 Malaga Avenue is a prime example of post-World War II masonry vernacular commercial architecture. Constructed circa 1946, this simple structure was designed by Robert M. Little for Iva and Phillis Kapp.

BACKGROUND

On October 27, 2003, a request for the evaluation of historic significance was received by the Historical Resources Department for the purpose of demolition. A letter was issued on October 29, 2003 informing the applicant that the property did meet the minimum eligibility criteria for designation as a local historic landmark. Subsequently, the owners have requested for the consideration of the local historic designation of the property and submitted an application for an Accelerated Certificate of Appropriateness.

CRITERIA FOR SIGNIFICANCE

b. Architectural significance:

- 1. Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural styles*
- 2. Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction*
- 3. Is an outstanding work of a prominent designer or builder*
- 4. Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship of outstanding quality or which represent a significant innovation or adaptation to the South Florida environment.*

1945 officially brought with it the end of World War II. Through the sacrifices of the nation came the need to develop a better future through progress. In all areas of the American culture, including architecture, this ideal soon became reality through design, music, and literature. Designed in 1948 to create a new architectural style reflective of the concept of introducing a new feeling and language for this section of Coral Gables the building at 247 Malaga Avenue utilizes both traditional and contemporary materials.

Constructed on two lots, this asymmetrical rectangular building exhibits many features that are characteristic of a regional Masonry Vernacular architectural style, which is an adaptation of the Art Moderne/Art Deco/International Style typologies. Combining materials like modular glass units with the more traditional materials of pre-cast cornices, and adobe brick reinforces the idea of creating a new feeling and language for the remainder of the twentieth century. Other features include concrete “eyebrows”, built-in planters, concrete/cast screened vents, and flat roofs with parapets. The exterior surfacing of the building, which is smooth in texture and white in color, is also a typical characteristic of an Art Moderne building. Wood awning windows, which have since been changed to metal, were designed on either side of the large ballroom, allowing for cross ventilation and the flow of air through the space.

A frame of decorative “baroque mould” on the front façade (that was designed by an artist other than the architect) is the only elaborate detail that is currently on the building that is original. The figure of the dancer that was also formed by the unnamed sculptor has since been removed.

Designed as a one-story building, the floor plan of the building is an “L” with the dance studio looking outward onto a paved patio. The two-story section and covered patio to the north was added in 1980. Although the building has undergone change, the alterations have been sympathetic and have not harmed the overall integrity of the building.

Born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, Robert Murray Little was educated at the T-Square Club Atelier in Philadelphia. He worked in the Pennsylvania area until about 1925 when he relocated to Florida to work with Robert A. Taylor. Little opened his own office on Miami Beach in 1933 and is now recognized as one of a group of influential architects who developed and guided the movement locally known as MiMo (Miami Modern). Designing buildings throughout South Florida, his buildings can be seen on the University of Miami campus (Lowe Art Gallery-1952; and Pick Music Library-1959) and throughout the Metropolitan Miami area.

ART DECO/ART MODERNE/INTERNATIONAL STYLES

Introduced in Paris in the mid 1920's the Art Deco style, which was initially found in decorative arts, combined geometric patterns and shapes with interpretations of mechanical and natural forms. It is often characterized through a vertical emphasis by highly stylized applied ornamentation, relief carvings or casts, and designs. Roofs are typically flat and the wall surfaces are very angular finished in smooth stucco, occasionally accented with natural stone. Glass block and windows that wrapped around corners was also a common feature.

Although the terms Art Deco and Art Moderne are frequently used interchangeably, the term Art Moderne is applied more often to those buildings that convey movement. Designers were fascinated by speed and movement, and highly influenced by the development in automobiles, trains, airplanes and ships. Rarely symmetrical in design, the streamline style also distinguished itself from typical Art Deco buildings through horizontal banding, cantilevered slabs, sometimes referred to as eyebrows, and softened corners.

The Art Moderne style is a derivative of the Bauhaus movement of Germany. Classical architecture was stripped of ornamentation to explore the purest form of the design. This idea then evolved into the Moderne or International Style as it was called in the United States.

ADDITIONS / ALTERATIONS

The building located on Lots 26 and 27, Block 29 of the Coral Gables Crafts Section has undergone several minor modifications. Since the name of the occupant/tenant has changed, the signage identifying the building has also changed. Originally called Phillis Kapp Studio, the name was eventually changed to "Phillis Kapp Studio of the Arts"; "Energy Fitness Studio Party Clubhouse"; "Studio of the Dance Party Clubhouse"; "The Curio Shop Antiques Gallery"; "Fits Stops of America"; and "The Praga Yoga Center" to name a few. The sign type was originally neon and eventually became painted on the building. The figure of the dancer, which was also designed by the artist who created the baroque frame as indicated on the original plans, was removed.

In 1972 the original wood awning windows were replaced with metal awning units. Other alterations that have occurred to the building include: The replacement of the front door and the garage door, the alteration of the storefront, interior remodeling, and the construction of a wall. In 1979, a one-story addition was added to the west side of the structure. A second story was added in circa 1980 to the rear (north). The addition is sympathetic and does not detract from the overall appearance or overpower the older sections of the building.

OWNERSHIP HISTORY

Iva Kapp (1892-1986) was married to William Phillip Kapp until his death on June 15, 1944. Four years later she and Phillis Kapp (1916-1989) commissioned Architect Robert Little to design the building at 247 Malaga Avenue. On the original building permit, the description identified the building as a "conservatory". Phillis Kapp taught dance in this building until the 1980's. During this time she established a relationship with George Lehor and his wife Geraldine. The Lehors assumed ownership of the building under the name Lecot, Inc and now as 247 Malaga Inc.

ACCELERATED
CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS PROPOSAL

Proposal: The application requests design approval for the construction of an addition and alteration to the structure. A variance has been requested to allow for the use of "parking lifts"

Owner: 247 Malaga Inc

Architect: Alleguez Architecture-Ana Alleguez, RA/Thorne Grafton Architect

Legal Description: Lots 26 and 27, Block 29, Coral Gables Crafts Section

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The following Standards have application in this matter:

9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

STAFF OBSERVATIONS

The applicant is requesting design approval for the construction of an addition and the alteration to the existing building. Alterations to the building include the demolition of the later additions and the removal of the courtyard. The new construction will accommodate offices on the second, third, and fourth (penthouse) floors, with parking on the ground level. Elevators, stairs, lobbies and bathrooms are incorporated into the design.

While the existing structure is set back approximately five (5) feet from the property line, the design for the addition is set back approximately ten (10) feet, allowing for the original building to have visual prominence. Features such as a curving glass "bridge", set back from the masonry circulation volumes on the east and west, a white metal trellis, stucco panels with reveal lines, fixed square windows, and concrete eyebrows create a composition that is reminiscent of the original structure, but identifiable as new construction.

The new entrance into the building is located at the base of the west "tower". A smaller secondary stair is designed at the base of the east "tower". The entrance into the garage is through the already altered storefront façade of the original structure. Made of lexan and aluminum, the electronic sectional gates have panel sizes that mimic the current storefront grid.

Signage has also been addressed in this application. The new sign for the building will be placed within the "frame" on the stucco wall of the original building. Identifying the building address, the letters are composed of raised metal letters and will be highlighted by cove lighting.

VARIANCE

The following variances are requested from the Coral Gables "Zoning Code":

Zoning Code Article 13. Off Street Parking and Loading.

The Zoning Code of the City of Coral Gables currently does not address the use of "parking lifts." In order to maximize the parking configuration and respond to the requirements as dictated by the dimensions of the property and the size of the building, the applicant has proposed the implementation of a two level parking lift system with a valet parking management plan. As indicated by the letter of intent, visitor parking within the garage structure is not anticipated other than to the access of the required two handicapped parking stalls. It is therefore understood that visitor parking was not address by this design other than for the required disabled parking spaces.

The response to the parking requirement is unique and innovative. Located four blocks south of the Central Business District (CBD), this building is required to provide off-street parking for its tenants. Because of the configuration of the lot, and the location of the historic structure on the property, the variance is regarded as reasonable.

BOARD OF ARCHITECTS

The Board of Architects reviewed this proposal on August 5, 2004 and had no comments.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Constructed in circa 1948, the property at 247 Malaga Avenue (legally described as Lots 26 and 27, Block 29, Coral Gables Crafts Section) is significant to the City of Coral Gables' history based on the following criteria found in the Coral Gables Zoning Code, Article 31, Section 31-2.4:

b. Architectural significance:

1. Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural styles
2. Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction
3. Is an outstanding work of a prominent designer or builder
4. Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship of outstanding quality or which represent a significant innovation or adaptation to the South Florida environment.

The applicant is requesting design approval for the construction of an addition and the alteration of the existing property. A variance to allow the use of "parking lifts" for the parking of multiple cars has been requested.

The overall design of the addition does not detract from the historic nature of the structure and is in keeping with the style and massing of the existing building.

Variances from the Coral Gables Zoning Code have been requested. Granting the variances will not be detrimental to the historic nature of the residence. The Historical Resources staff finds that the following criteria, necessary for authorization of a variance, apply:

Criteria	Yes/No
(a) That special conditions and circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, structure or building involved and which are not applicable to other lands, structures or buildings in the same zoning district.	Yes
(b) That the special conditions and circumstances do not result from the actions of the applicant.	Yes
(c) That granting the variance requested will not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this Ordinance to other lands, buildings or structures in the same zoning district.	Yes
(d) That literal interpretation of the provisions of the Zoning Code would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district under the terms of the Zoning Code and would work unnecessary and undue hardship on the applicant.	Yes
(e) That the variance granted is the minimum variance that will make possible the reasonable use of the land, building or structure.	Yes
(f) That granting the variance will not change the use to one that is different from other land in the same district.	Yes
(g) That the granting of the variance will be in harmony with the general intent and purpose of the Zoning Code, and that such variance will not be injurious to the area involved or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare.	Yes

The Historical Resources staff finds that the necessary criteria required for authorization of a variance does apply.

Staff finds the following:

The property at 247 Malaga Avenue (legally described as Lots 26 and 27, Block 29, Coral Gables Crafts Section), which was designed in 1948 is significant to the City of Coral Gables history based on:

Architecture – A Masonry Vernacular building with Art Moderne influences, designed by architect Robert M. Little

The applicant has also requested design approval for an addition, changes and alterations to the existing residence. Staff finds that the design is not detrimental to the historic nature of the structure.

The following variance is requested from the Coral Gables "Zoning Code":

Grant a variance from the off-street parking and loading requirements as outlined in Article 13 of the Coral Gables "Zoning Code" to allow the use of "parking lifts" for the parking of multiple cars.

Staff therefore recommends the following:

A motion to APPROVE the Local Historic Designation of the property at 247 Malaga Avenue (legally described as Lots 26 and 27, Block 29, Coral Gables Crafts Section) based on its architecture

AND

A motion to APPROVE the design for the addition and alteration to the property at 247 Malaga Avenue (legally described as Lots 26 and 27, Block 29, Coral Gables Crafts Section) and the issuance of an Accelerated Special Certificate of Appropriateness

AND

A motion to grant a variance from the off-street parking and loading requirements as outlined in Article 13 of the Coral Gables "Zoning Code" to allow the use of "parking lifts" for the parking of multiple cars

Respectfully submitted,



Dona M. Lubin

Historical Resources Department

Report written by Simone Chin

Bibliography

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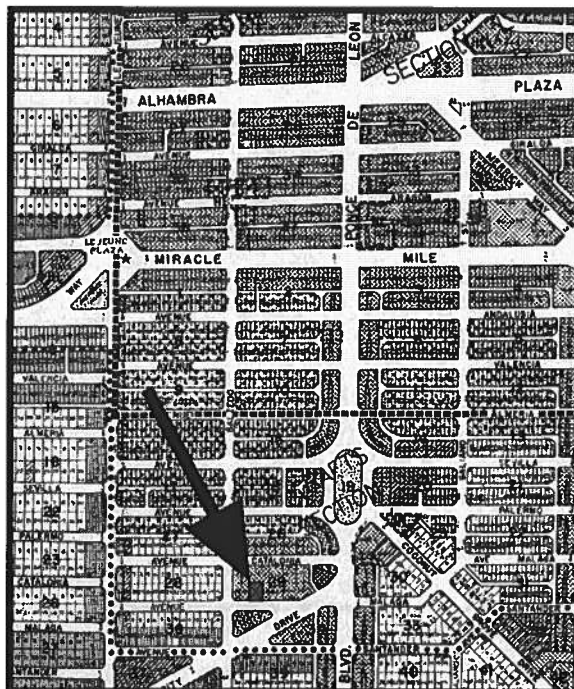
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Location Map

REVIEW GUIDE

Definition: The Review Guide lists some of the more prominent features, which contribute to the overall character of a structure and/or district. It is not intended to be all-inclusive, as photographic documentation fully illustrates the present physical character of the property.

Use: The Review Guide may be used to address the impact of new construction, additions/modifications/alterations and/or renovations which may become the subject of some future Certificate of Appropriateness consideration....and

The Review Guide by describing EXISTING physical characteristics may be used to determine whether or not elements which create the character of the structure and/or district is present and/or whether or not later additions or alterations have so changed that character so as to cause the property (ies) to become ineligible for listing.

Property Address: 247 Malaga Avenue

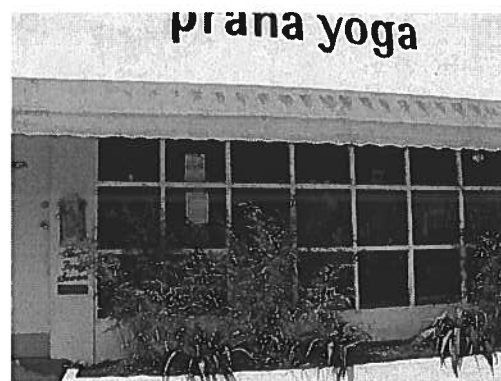
Date of Construction: c. 1948

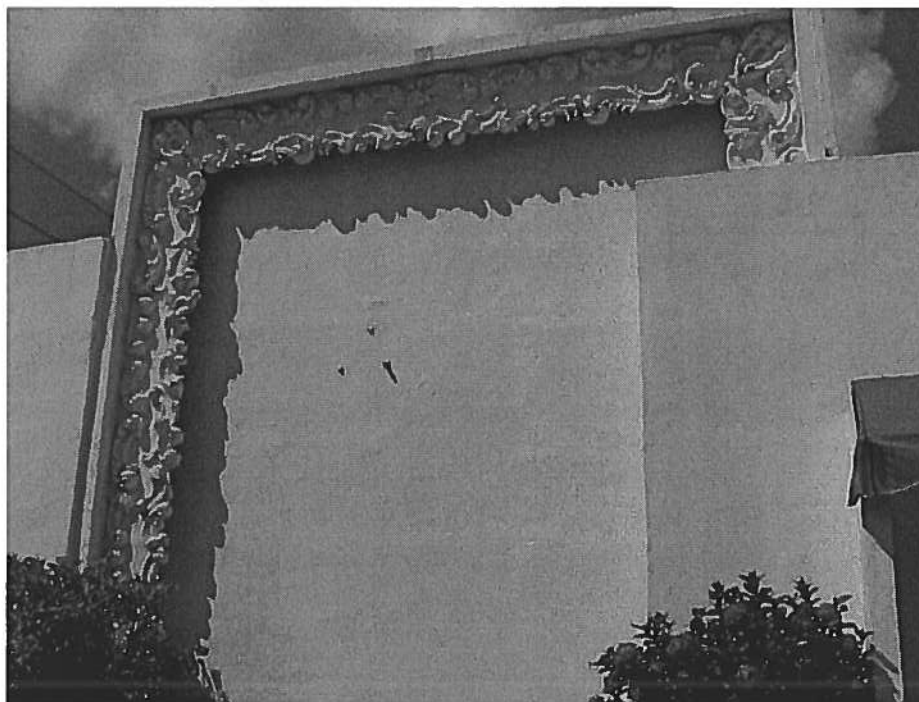
Construction Material: concrete block covered with stucco



Photograph Year 2004







October 21, 2004

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