

*HISTORIC
PRESERVATION
BOARD*

JUNE 16, 2016

**CORAL
GABLES**®
THE CITY BEAUTIFUL



CASE FILE

LHD 2016-08

Consideration of the local historic designation of the property at **229 Ridgewood Road**, legally described as Lots 9 & 10, Block 2, Coconut Grove Manor, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 17, at Page 19 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

229 Ridgewood Road

Palmarium
in Lush South Coral Gables



229 Ridgewood Rd
Coral Gables, FL 33133
2 bedroom/2 baths | \$1,150,000



Build Your Dream Home

Secluded Amidst Majestic Palms.

Listed for the Value of the Land \$1,150,000

This 16,100 sq./ft. retreat (115x140) just south of Coconut Grove is minutes from downtown Miami, the Brickell Financial center or the Airport. For a taste of international cuisine relish a multitude of Grove or Gables restaurants. After dinner relax in the country-like living and enjoy the breeze as it ruffles the palm branches.

Professional photos coming soon.

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CORAL GABLES, FL 33146



March 2016: received
Significance Determination
Request in accordance with
Section 3-1107(g) of Coral
Gables Zoning Code

Application was from a
potential buyer who was
*“interested in purchasing the
land in order to build a new
home”*

May 2016:
issued a determination that the
property **does meet** the
eligibility criteria for
designation as local historic
landmark.

229 Ridgewood Road

Built in 1938

One-story home
with subordinate attached
garage



c.1940

2016



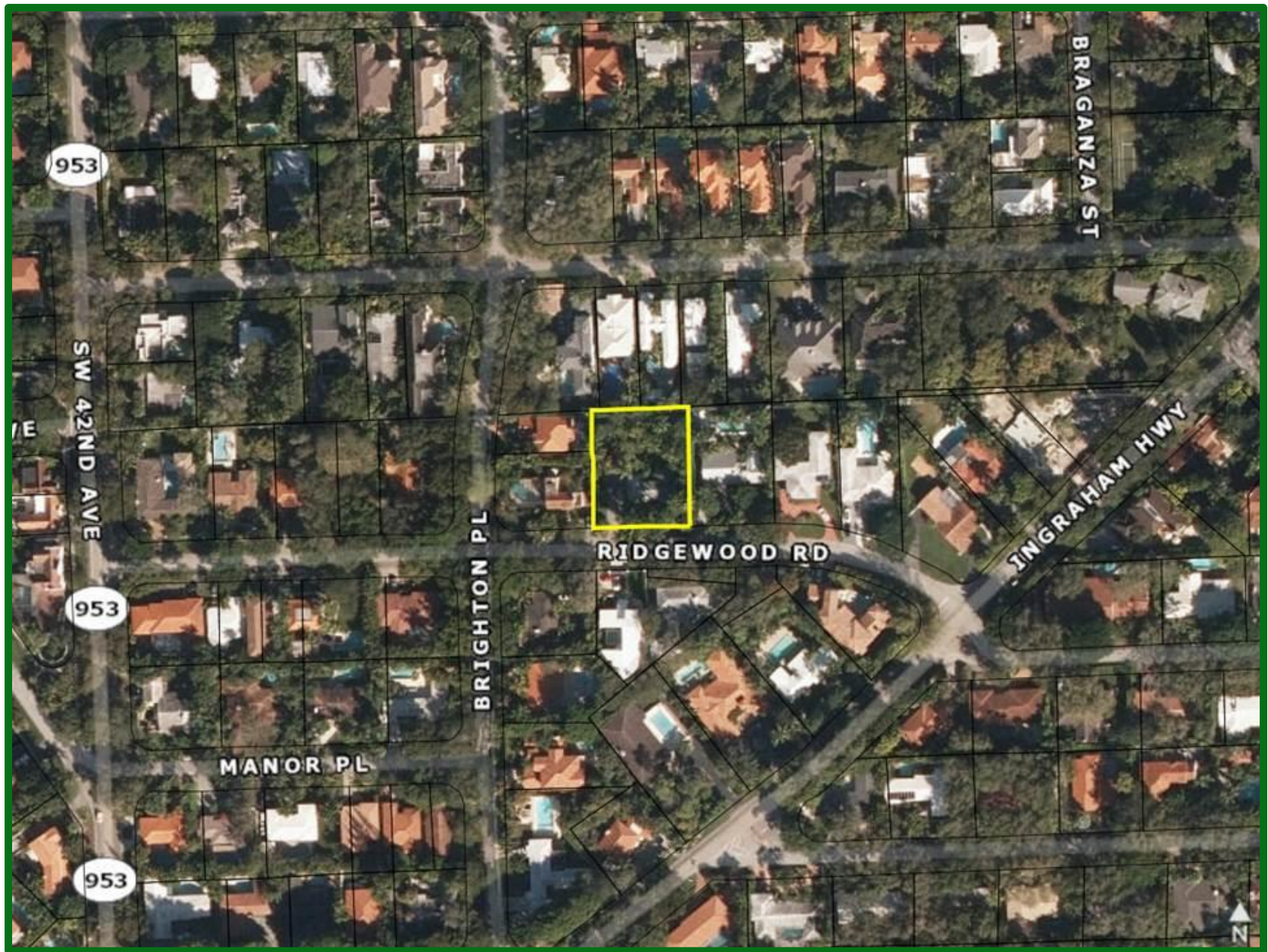
Local Historical Landmark

Article 3, Section 3-1103 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code--*Criteria for designation of historic landmarks or historic districts*: a local historic landmark must have significant character, interest or value as part of the historical, cultural, archaeological, aesthetic, or architectural heritage of the City, state or nation.

For designation, a property must meet **one (1)** of the criteria outlined in the Code.

229 Ridgewood Road is eligible based on two (2) Architectural significance criteria; specifically

- 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*



Location of 229 Ridgewood Road

Aerial Photograph Courtesy Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser

OWNERS AND OCCUPANTS: HOME TO THREE FAMILIES

Wedderspoon Family: owner, 1938-1947

original permit issued in 1938 to:

Mr. & Mrs. W. R. Wedderspoon

- Pastor William R. & Annie
- William R. Wedderspoon, Jr.
& wife, Dorothy

Morrison Family: occupant, 1940-1944

- James Arthur Morrison, Jr.
& wife, Floy

Kent Family: owner, 1947-Present

- Frederick A. & Gertrude Kent
- Frederick J. Kent



William Bryan Memorial
Methodist Church

OWNERS AND OCCUPANTS

Morrison Family : occupant, 1940-1944

James Arthur Morrison, Jr. & wife, Floy
Manager, M & M Cafeteria



Founded 1940



Founded 1920



INTERNATIONAL CITY BUILDING
36TH STREET - BY AIRPORT

PHOTO COURTESY OF JEFF LEVINE

OWNERS AND OCCUPANTS

Kent Family: owner, 1947-Present – 69 Years

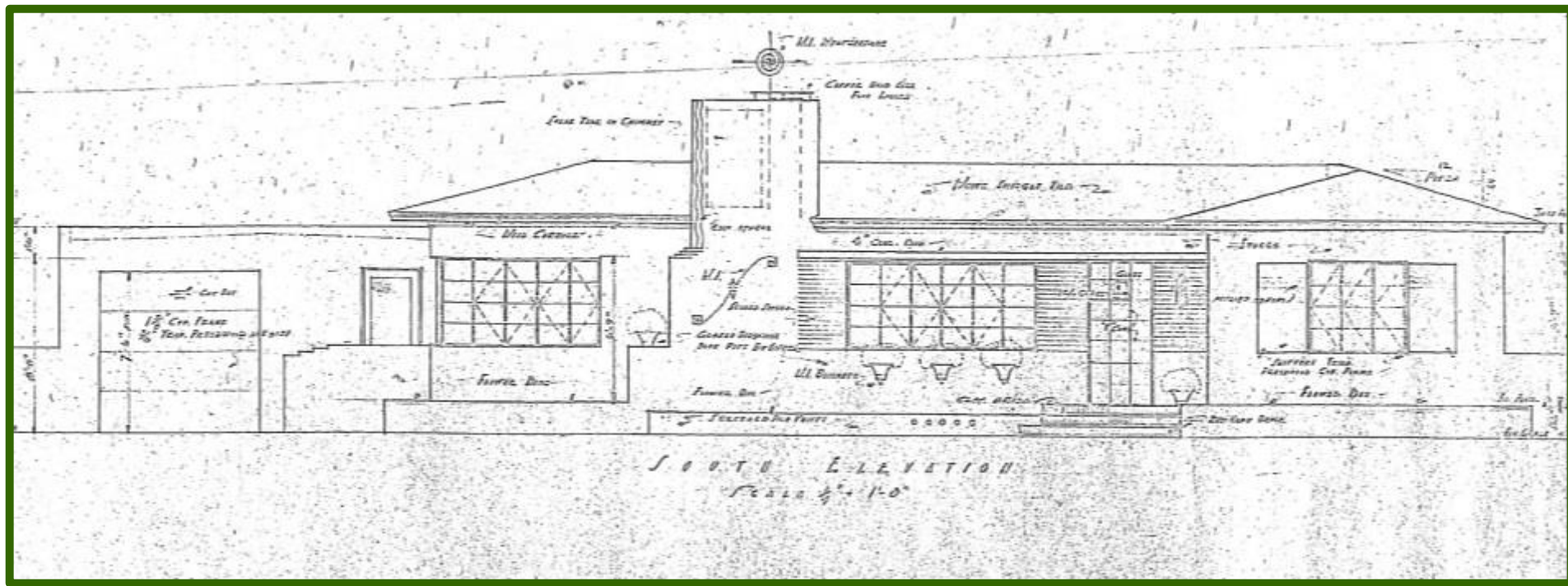
- Frederick A. & Gertrude Kent
- Frederick J. Kent



Established 1925



Minimal Traditional Style



Permit 5338 drawings

Constructed in 1938 by Robert Fitch Smith, Architect

ROBERT FITCH SMITH

(1894–1964), Architect

Nationally-recognized architect who designed over 600 residences and 200 civic, commercial, and industrial buildings in South Florida and the Caribbean. He was an instructor of architectural design at the University of Miami from 1928 to 1931.



His designs were varied in style ranging from

- **Java Head at 200 Edgewater Drive** (1936), Art Deco with Asian influences -- *CG Historic Landmark*
- **7900 Biscayne Boulevard, Biscayne Plaza Shopping Center**, Miami (1953), *MiMo – City of Miami Historic Landmark*
- **5530 Sunset Drive, Doc Thomas House** (1932) --*listed on the National Registrar for Historic Places*
- **Montgomery Library and Museum, Fairchild Tropical Gardens** (1934)
- **3299 Riviera Drive, University Baptist Church** (1940)

Other residences in Coral Gables include: **427 Giralda Avenue** (1934), **512 Giralda Avenue** (1934), **1218 Coral Way** (1936) -- *contributing structure in the Coral Way Historic District*, and **2020 N Greenway Drive** (1934, demo 1965)

MINIMAL TRADITIONAL STYLE



Minimal Traditional was the style of choice across the U.S. during the 1930s and 1940s, it was a blend of previous and modern styles and favored durable, simple functionality.

- popular house style that emerged during the New Deal era
- homes were small (2-3 bedrooms) and affordable for working and middle-class families
- widely promoted architectural journals and magazines
- remained a prevalent style until the early 1950s, when it was supplanted by the Ranch style



MINIMAL TRADITIONAL STYLE



- Its simplicity was a subtle response to the economic hardships of the Depression and the ornate styles of the 1920s.
- Combined a restrained combination of features from earlier house styles while adhering to the burgeoning modern aesthetic of subtle ornamentation and streamlined homes.
- Homes were well-built, often using modern materials (i.e., plywood, modern cement mixtures) and methods (i.e., solar).
- Focused on practicality. Often included the emerging trend of attached garages as a subordinate element. In later styles the garage became more prominent.

Panarama



DATA: Living Area, 826 Sq. Ft.; Breezeway and Garage Area, 336 Sq. Ft.; Cubage, House—14,300 Cu. Ft.; Cubage, Breezeway and Garage—2,585 Cu. Ft.; Ceiling Height, 8 Ft.; Basement Height, 7 Ft.



A Convenient and Decorative Corner Cabinet

Build in a Space Saving Linen Cabinet



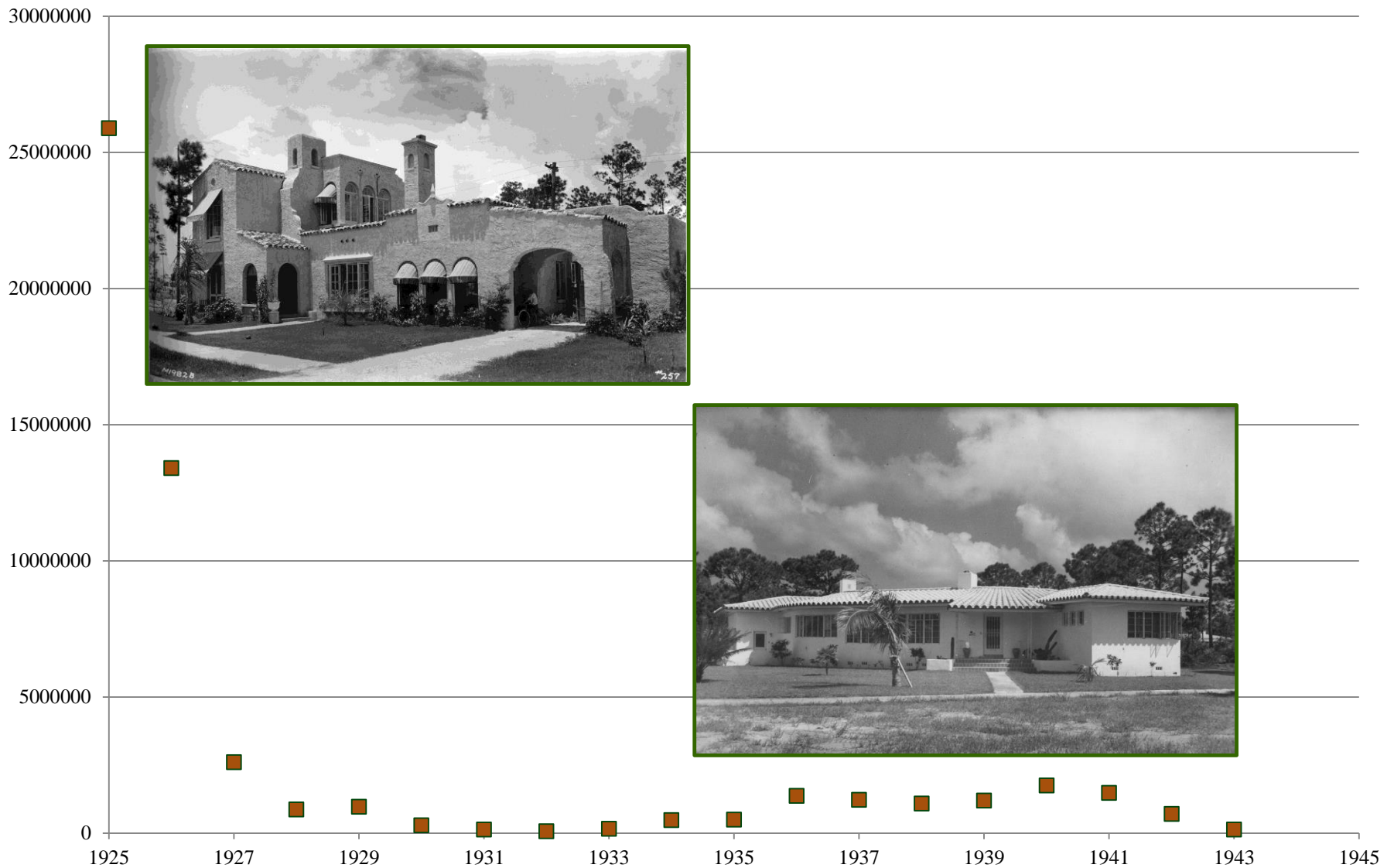
The ingenious arrangement of the projecting front wing, which is entirely of glazed sash, virtually brings the outdoors in. The attached garage with the breezeway provides the appearance of great width yet the architecture is basically Colonial. The plans provide for a large terrace at the right of the living room which will be much appreciated for summer living. A basement is provided.



Nationally, common influences tended to be Colonial Revival, Arts and Crafts, and Tudor styles.

Coral Gables Building Permits 1925-1943

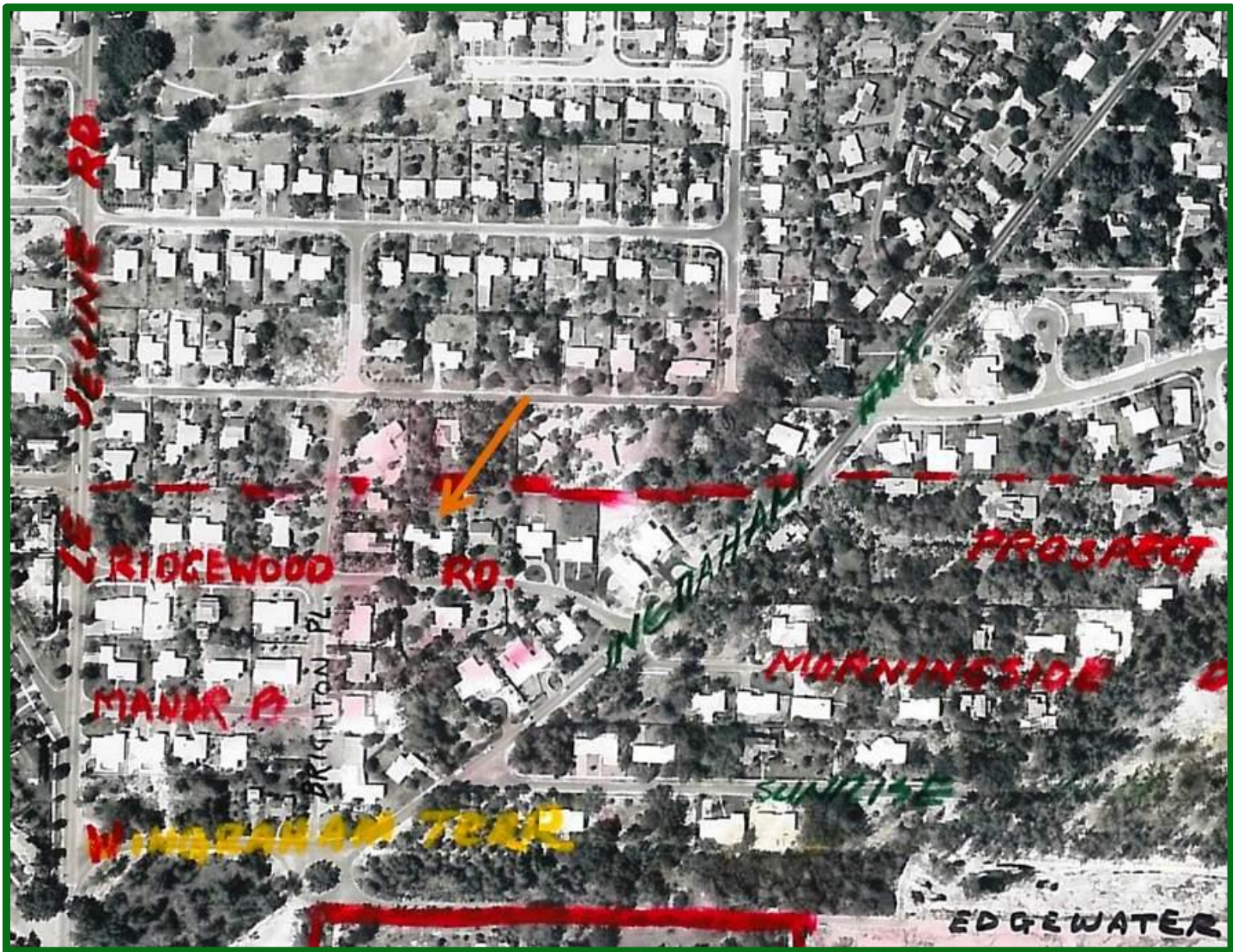
Table: Permit Dollar Value vs. Year





Aerial Photographs, 1948, Coral Gables Coconut Grove Manor Section

*Courtesy Aerial Photography: Florida Collection, University of Florida,
George A. Smathers Libraries*



Aerial Photographs, 1957, Coral Gables Coconut Grove Manor Section

*Courtesy Aerial Photography: Florida Collection, University of Florida,
George A. Smathers Libraries*

MINIMAL TRADITIONAL STYLE IN SOUTHEASTERN FLORIDA

- The Minimal Traditional style was flexible and embraced elements of previous styles. This led to area-specific and sometimes architect-specific variations.
- Minimal Traditional houses had a modern, stream-lined aesthetic with influences from the previous styles. In Southeastern Florida these influences were predominantly regional and from Mediterranean Revival and Art Deco styles
 - Mediterranean Revival
 - barrel tile roofs or arched main entrances
 - Art Deco
 - corner windows, eyebrow hoods, and geometric detailing
- Also typical was the modern conveniences of solar water heaters

Minimal Traditional Style with Prairie, Mediterranean Revival and Art Deco influences



229 Ridgewood Road: Historic Photograph, c.1940

229 Ridgewood Road:

One story, 2 bedroom SFR with attached subordinate garage



Overall massing:

Prairie style influence

- low-pitched hipped roofs
- dominant horizontality
- broad chimney visually anchoring the home

Note: mature vegetation surrounding the home
limited photo-documentation

Front (South) Façade facing Ridgewood Road, 2016

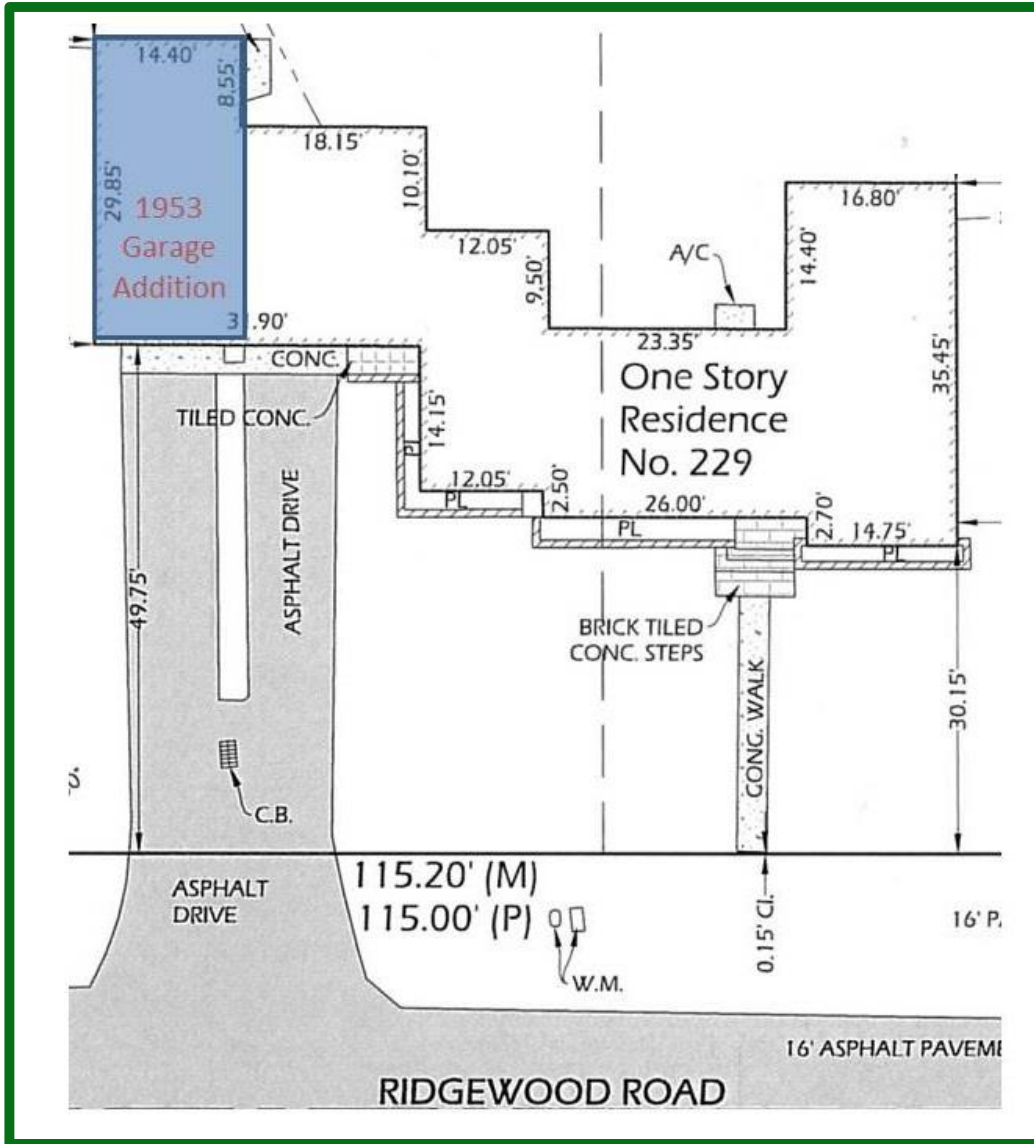
1953 Garage Addition

(depicted in blue)

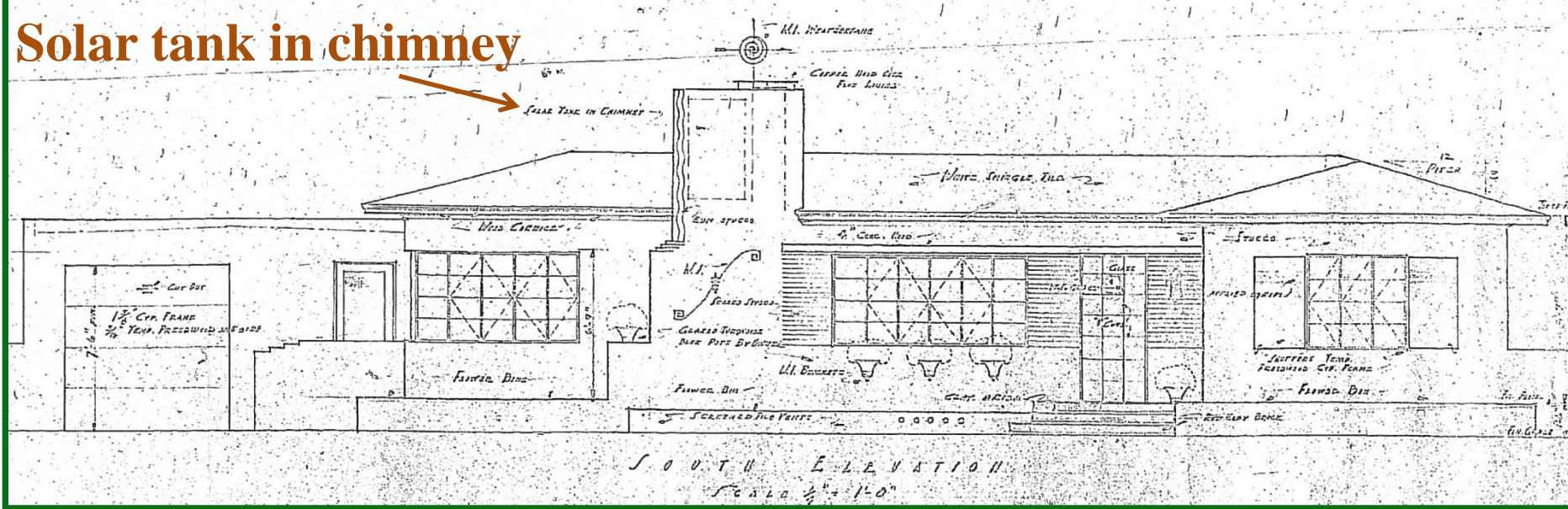
Permit 11713

Architect:

Robert Fitch Smith



Solar tank in chimney



Note: Bands of windows
Stucco scoring

Front (South) Façade
eastern portion
2016



Mediterranean Revival Influence:
barrel tile roof



229



229





229



Dominant chimney that anchors the home

Subtle detailing – modern aesthetic

Art Deco detailing:

Wavy lines – geometric

– softening vertical line

Stepping geometric step detailing

– horizontal emphasis

Overall stepping down of the chimney

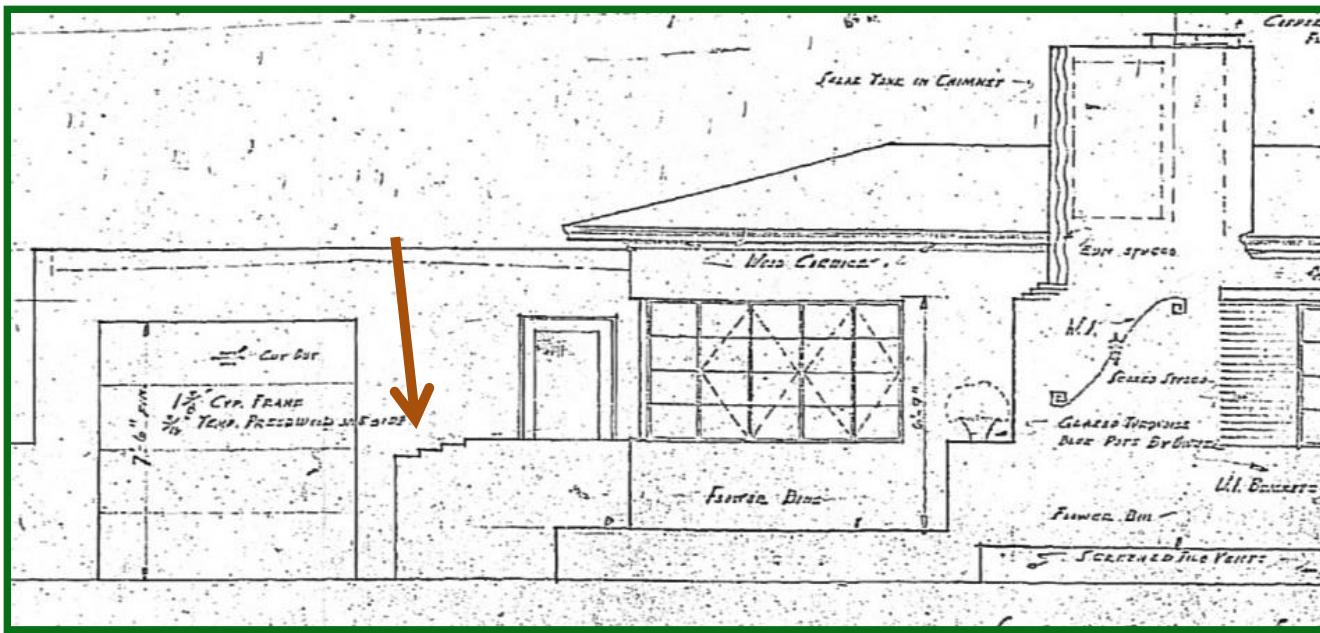
– horizontal lines

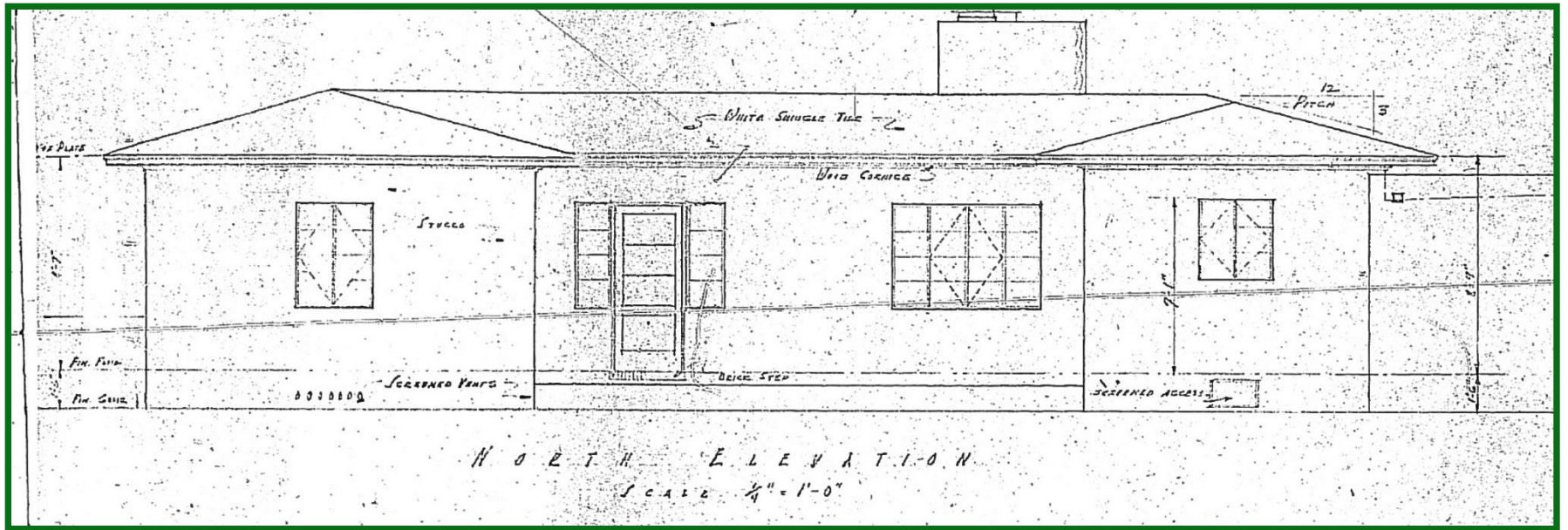
– planar & cubic geometry



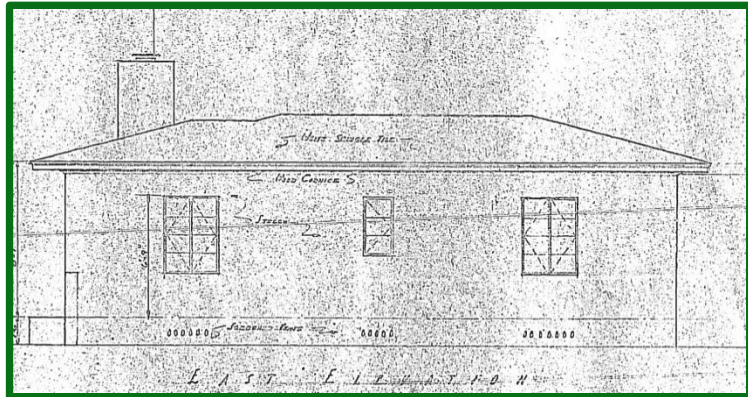


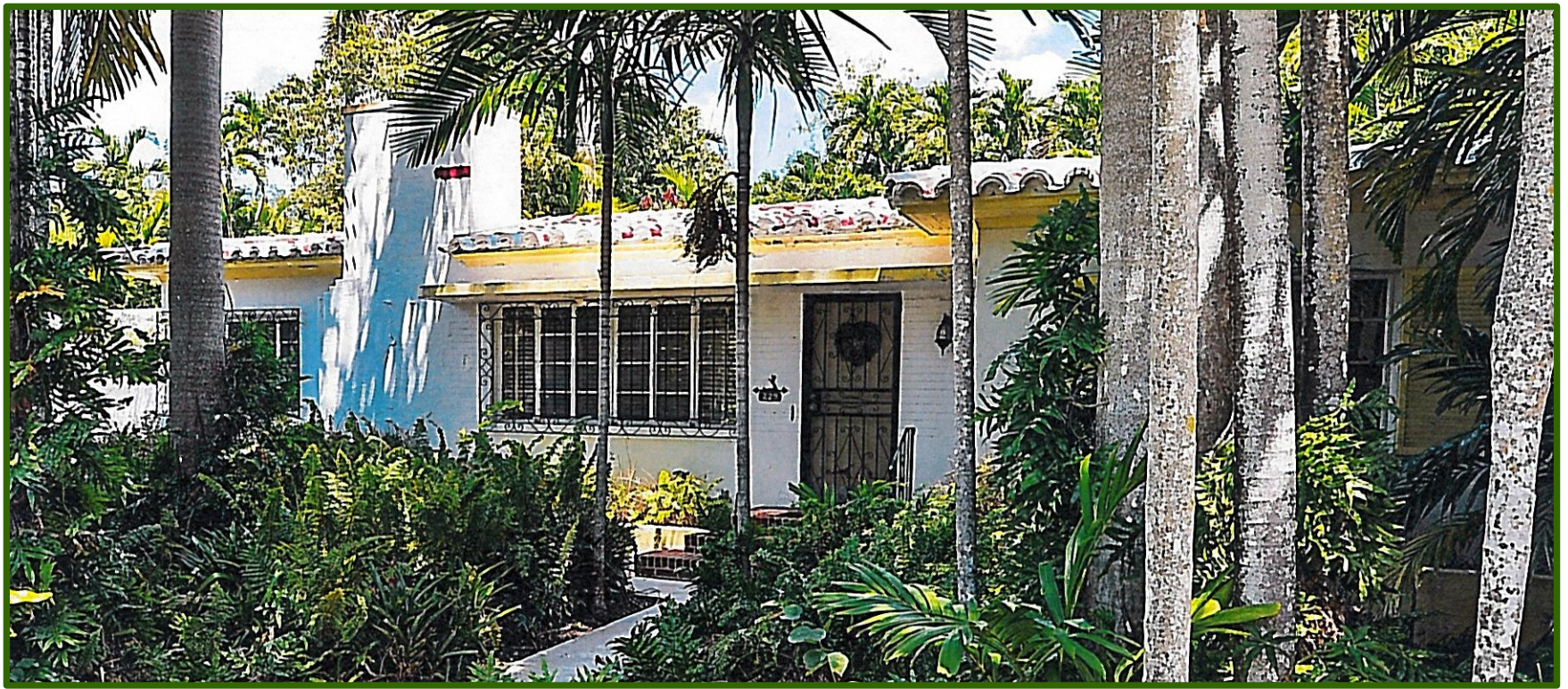






East Facade





The single-family home at 229 Ridgewood Road is a significant example of the Minimal Traditional style. Within the overall massing and articulation of Prairie style architecture it harmoniously incorporates features from both the Art Deco style, most notably the large eyebrow hood and chimney detailing, and the Mediterranean Revival style with its barrel tile roof. Smith's attention to the detailing of these influences within the restrained context of the contemporaneous modern aesthetic resulted in a distinctive interpretation of the Minimal Traditional style.

Minimal Traditional Style Character-defining Features at 229 Ridgewood Road include:

- ✓ one-story and rectangular in plan
- ✓ attached and subordinate garage
- ✓ smooth stucco exterior finish
- ✓ restrained ornamentation
- ✓ dominant broad chimney with Art Deco detailing
- ✓ low-pitched hipped, white barrel tile roof
- ✓ groups of recessed large-paned casement and fixed windows
- ✓ scored stucco to emphasize the homes entrance and its overall horizontality
- ✓ deep flat eaves with a simple wood cornice above coupled with a wood finish board below
- ✓ large central eyebrow hood
- ✓ built-in planters
- ✓ prominent corner window
- ✓ asymmetrical use of louvered shutters
- ✓ stepped privacy wall
- ✓ solar heating tank in the chimney

Summary Statement of Significance

The residence at 229 Ridgewood Road is significant as an example of the Minimal Traditional style with Mediterranean Revival, Art Deco, and Prairie style influences. Constructed in 1938 by the nationally-renowned architect, Robert Fitch Smith, this single-family home with its subordinate attached garage represents a distinct interpretation the Minimal Traditional style in southeastern Florida. Smith's careful attention to the detailing and blending of regional influences within the restrained context of the contemporaneous modern aesthetic produced a notable example of this New Deal era style.

The property retains a high degree architectural integrity and significantly contributes to the historic fabric of the City.

Staff recommends APPROVAL of the Local Historic Designation of the property at 229 Ridgewood Road.

