



*Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts*

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**COA (SP) 2016-029
December 15, 2016**

**STAFF REPORT
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
FOR THE PROPERTY AT
2907 COLUMBUS BOULEVARD
A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK**

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

Architect: Bravo Architecture (Pedro Bravo)

Owner: Ana Navarro and Violeta Navarro

Folio Number: 03-4118-003-1930

Legal Description: Lots 13 and 14, Block 15, Coral Gables Country Club Section 1, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 108 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Site Characteristics: This property is located on two interior lots between Palermo Avenue and Catalonia Avenue. The main elevation faces west onto Columbus Boulevard. Dimensions of the site are approximately 100 feet wide by 132 feet deep.

BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS

City of Coral Gables permit number 187 was issued for the property at 2907 Columbus Boulevard. Although the date of construction is unknown, Fishbaugh photographic evidence indicates that the residence was completed at least by August, 1924. Columbus Boulevard, a major traffic artery in the city was designed to showcase beautiful homes, typically occupying two lots, with some of the largest early residences in Coral Gables. While the architect for this home has yet to be identified, it clearly reflects the quintessential elements of Mediterranean design, and commands a striking presence on the boulevard. The residence expresses a masterful combination of one and two story section that, in some cases, terminate in towers. The complexity of the design is further demonstrated by a combination of roof types and slopes, tile coping which defines the parapet edges and the use of coral rock accents.

The property was designated as a Local Historic Landmark in 1999.

PROPOSAL

The application requests design approval for a series of one-story additions to the east (rear) of the existing residence, interior alterations, and sitework. The additions consist of an octagonal breakfast nook at the northeast corner of the residence, a butler's pantry, an expanded family room that will connect the existing residence to an existing two-story garage building, and a sitting area for the master suite. A covered terrace is proposed to the east of the master bedroom suite. Portions of the interior of the existing residence (kitchen area and master bathroom) will be reconfigured. The existing pool will be remodeled and the pool deck will be replaced.

Although not indicated on the plans or within the letter of intent, all of the existing windows and doors of the residence and garage structure (with the exception of the garage doors) are proposed to be replaced with impact-resistant units. Please note that due to discrepancies within the proposed drawings and a need for more photographic documentation of the existing windows, Staff has requested that this item be addressed in a separate Standard Certificate of Appropriateness. Staff will work with the architect to ensure that the windows are properly coordinated.

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.*
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 applicant is requesting design approval for one-story additions to the east (rear) of the existing historic residence, interior alterations to the residence, and alterations to the pool and pool deck.

Additions:

The additions, located to the east (rear) of the existing residence, take design cues from the existing historic home. The additions are one-story in height and are not visible from Columbus Boulevard. The new impact-resistant windows will be of the same style as those found on the existing structure although the sizes will differ. The additions are proposed to be flat-roofed with a parapet as the majority of the existing residence is flat-roofed. In some cases barrel tile coping is indicated for the parapets.

The additions, with the exception of the proposed breakfast area, either take the place of later additions or are connected to later addition. (Figure 1)

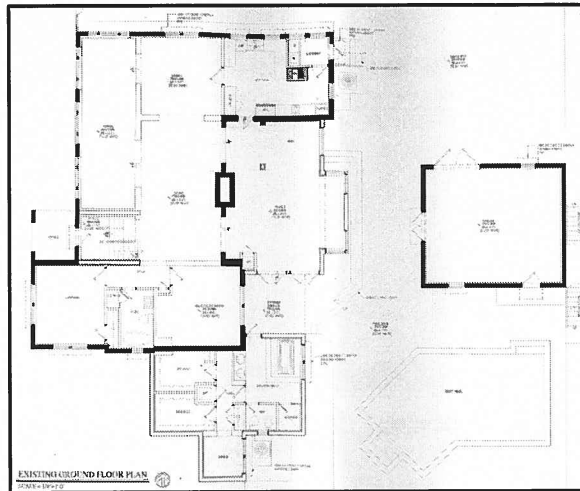


Figure 1: Outline of Original Structures at 2907 Columbus Boulevard

Starting from north to south in plan, the additions consist of an octagonal breakfast nook at the northeast corner of the existing residence. The breakfast nook addition is recessed off the northeast corner by approximately 1'-0" to provide distinction between the old and new and to allow the outline of the existing residence to remain. Immediately to the south, a proposed butler's pantry provides a rear entry to the residence from the existing driveway. To the south of the kitchen, the existing shed-roofed family room will be replaced with an expanded flat-roofed family room that connects the existing residence to the existing garage structure to the east. An existing small covered terrace to the south of the family room will be enclosed to create a sitting area for the master bedroom. To the east of the existing master bedroom suite and south of the expanded family room, a 12'-0" deep covered terrace is proposed to span the rear of the residence.

The west (front) elevation (see Sheet A-15) the existing residence remains unaltered with the exception of the installation of new impact-resistant windows and doors. The new additions are not visible on this elevation.

On the south elevation (see Sheet A-16), the southern end of the flat-roofed covered terrace is directly to the east of the existing residence. It features a low wall to conceal a built-in barbecue area. The corners of the parapet are raised slightly. The lower parapet topped with barrel tile coping is at the same height as is found on the existing residence. Three round scuppers are centered on the façade. The expanded family room is visible beyond. Its parapet is devoid of coping. To the east is the south elevation of the existing garage structure, now connected to the residence but otherwise unaltered.

The east (rear) elevation is the most impacted by the proposed additions. (See Sheet A-17) At the north end of the existing residence, the window, door and stoop and much of the rear wall are to be removed to receive the new octagonal breakfast nook. The breakfast nook is recessed off the northeast corner and its parapet is lower than that of the existing residence (visible beyond with tile coping). Each side of the octagon features a window with transom above, decorative awning, and a single round scupper. To the south of the breakfast nook is the butler's pantry addition with a single French door and decorative awning. The parapet of both the butler's pantry and the expanded family room addition are same height as the existing residence. South

of the family room the sitting room addition is visible with a pair of casement windows. The windows in this addition are slightly higher than those found in the master bathroom (an earlier addition) to the south and are without a transom. The proposed covered terrace obscures the southern portion of this façade. A portion of the covered terrace protrudes approximately 1'-4" from the façade and is emphasized by a higher parapet devoid of coping and a decorative awning. Decorative round scuppers are found below the parapets. The windows of the master bathroom are visible through the terrace and they appear to retain the barrel tile hoods above.

On the north elevation of the existing residence, the two windows closest to the northeast corner are proposed to be raised to match the adjacent two windows in order to accommodate the new kitchen cabinets inside. (See Sheet A-18) The breakfast nook addition is visible to the east of the existing residence. Beyond the expanded family room is just barely seen above and to the east. No changes are proposed to the garage structure.

Sitework:

The sitework consists of the removal of brick pavers and driveway throughout the rear yard area, relocation of mechanical equipment, the remodeling/reshaping of the existing swimming pool, installation of a new pool deck, chain link fence installation at the southeast corner of the property, and landscaping.

VARIANCES

No variances have been requested with this application.

BOARD OF ARCHITECTS

The proposal received preliminary approval by the Board of Architects on October 15, 2015 without comments.

STAFF CONCLUSION

The application requests design approval for additions and alterations to the residence at 2907 Columbus Boulevard and sitework. The majority of the rear of the residence, with the exception of the northeast corner (the width of the existing kitchen), consists of previous additions to the residence. The new additions, with the exception of the breakfast nook, are not impacting historic architectural fabric. The additions are not visible from the front façade of the historic residence and take their design cues from the existing architecture. Overall, the design of the additions does not detract from the historic nature of the structure.

Staff has the following comments:

- A separate Standard Certificate of Appropriateness will be required for the installation of impact-resistant windows and doors.
- A separate Standard Certificate of Appropriateness will be required for the pool and deck.
- Staff suggests adding a low wall at the west side of the covered terrace where it abuts the mechanical units. A wall similar to the one proposed on the southern end of the terrace would visually and acoustically block the units.

- To differentiate the historic structure from the new construction, the tile coping should be eliminated from the parapet of the proposed covered terrace.
- On the east (rear) elevation, the spacing of the windows within the covered terrace is awkward. Staff is unsure how to remedy this situation, but wanted to point it out for discussion.
- Also on the east (rear) elevation, the awning over the French door into the butler's pantry seems to be drawn low, leaving a blank expanse above. The rendering (Sheet A-22) is more balanced and preferred.
- The elevations and renderings indicate that the decorative tiles applied to the cast concrete sills are to remain. Those tiles are not original to the residence and should be considered for removal in their entirety.
- The elevations and renderings also indicate that the barrel tile hoods above the windows and doors are to remain. Only in a very few instances are those features original (Figure 2). The hood feature was replicated at some unknown date and applied on almost single window or door opening on the residence. Staff would like for the owner to consider removing the later applications and restoring the original look of the historic structure.

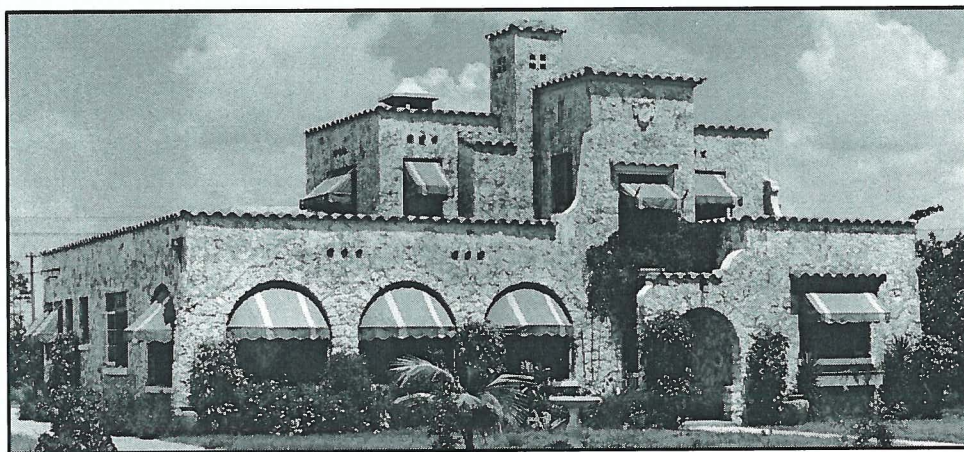
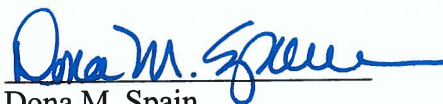


Figure 2: Fishbaugh Photograph of 2907 Columbus Boulevard, August 6, 1924

Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **APPROVE with Staff's comments noted above** the design proposal for the alterations and additions to the building at 2907 Columbus Boulevard, a Local Historic Landmark, legally described as Lots 13 and 14, Block 15, Coral Gables Country Club Section 1, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 108 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida, and **APPROVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness.

Respectfully submitted,



Dona M. Spain
Historic Preservation Officer