



**STAFF REPORT
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
FOR THE PROPERTY AT
415 ARAGON AVENUE
A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK**

*Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts*

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Florida, 33134

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Proposal: The application requests design approval to correct work without a permit with additions and alterations to the residence and detached garage, and sitework.

Architect: A. R. Poza Architect, Inc. (Albert Poza)

Owner: 415 Aragon Avenue LLC (Gladys Taggart)

Folio Number: 03-4108-001-1130

Legal Description: Lot 16 & the West 1/2 of Lot 15, Block 7, Section Coral Gables Section "B," according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 11, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

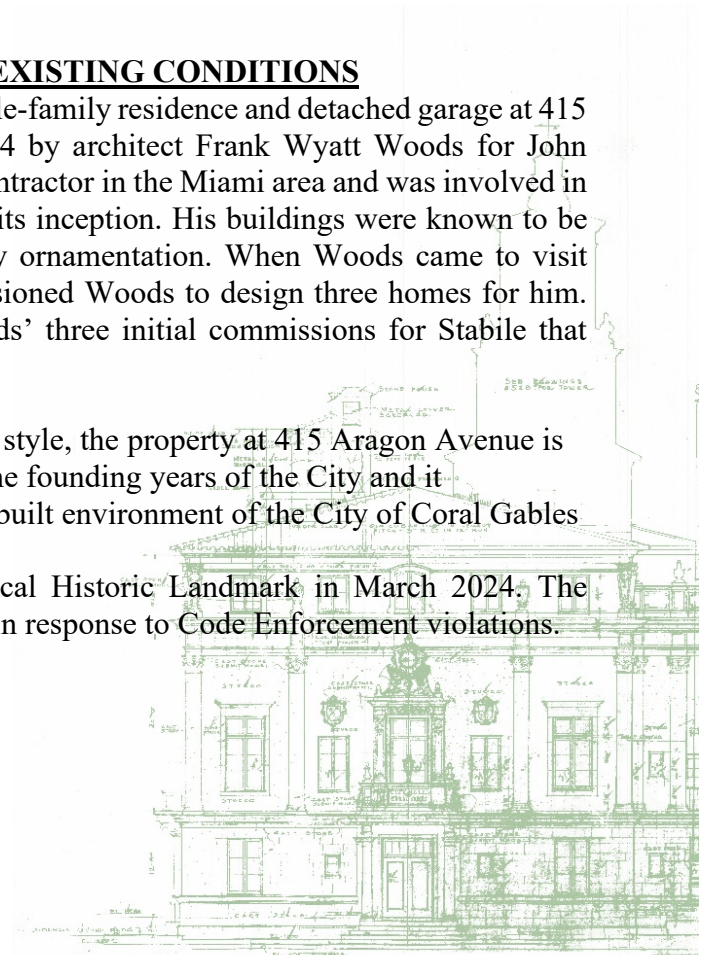
Site Characteristics: The property is located on an 8,250 SF interior lot on the north side of Aragon Avenue between Le Jeune Road and Hernando Street.

BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS

Permitted in 1924 (Permit #286), single-family residence and detached garage at 415 Aragon Avenue 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. 415 Aragon Avenue was one of Woods' three initial commissions for Stabile that launched his work in Florida.

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 property was designated as a Local Historic Landmark in March 2024. The designation was initiated by City Staff in response to Code Enforcement violations.



TIMELINE

For a full description and timeline of events of the unpermitted work on the property, please see the narrative and photographs contained in the Local Historic Designation Staff Report pages 14-17, “Extant Exterior Description and Alterations Discussion” section (attached).

PROPOSAL

The application requests design approval to correct work without a permit with one-story additions and alterations to the residence and detached garage, and sitework.



Figure 1: ca. 1940s photo



Figure 2: Photo, June 2009 (courtesy Google)



Figure 3: Current Photo, December 2023



Figure 4: Current Photo, December 2023

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.*

5. *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.*

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 several additions and alterations to the existing residence that is currently in a state of semi-construction due to unpermitted work and subsequent red tagging (stop work order) of the property. Some of the work to the rear of the home seeks to incorporate structural elements from the unpermitted work. The work proposed in the application consists of:

- A one-story approximately 427 SF addition to the east of the property consisting of a master bedroom suite, hallway and attached carport.
- Enlarging the raised concrete terrace to the rear and covering with a barrel-tiled shed roof.
- Installation of new impact-resistant windows and doors.
- Reinstating the hood feature (see Figure 1) over the front door.
- Interior alterations and remodeling / buildout (the interior is currently gutted).
- Utilizing the existing detached garage (converted without a permit) to living space and connecting it to the main house via a covered walkway at the northwest corner of the rear covered terrace.
- New concrete driveway on the east side of the property leading to the new carport.
- Repair of the original driveway at the west side of the property.

South (facing Aragon Avenue) Elevation- Sheet A.5

The south (front) elevation consists of the existing historic residence to the west and the proposed addition to the east. A portion of the existing detached garage is visible from the right-of-way. At the southwest corner of the existing residence, the application seeks to retain the existing, unpermitted concrete slab poured atop the covered porch and enclose the porch as living space with fenestration. A new column surround “to match original” is proposed to be returned where the original was removed. The height of the column will not match the original due to the substantial change in floor height (see Figures 5). Staff does not support the retention of the concrete slab or the enclosing of the porch as living space. An original iron railing was removed as part of the unpermitted work, it should be returned as part of the restoration of this space. No details were provided about the material or design of the column.

The other original ironwork on this façade is called out to be repaired. New impact-resistant windows and doors are proposed with a pair of fixed French doors at the balconette and a pair of casements to the east. The muntin patterns match those found on the original permit drawings. No notation was made for the low relief arched panel atop the French doors. It is to remain and not be disturbed during the installation of the French doors (see Figures 5).



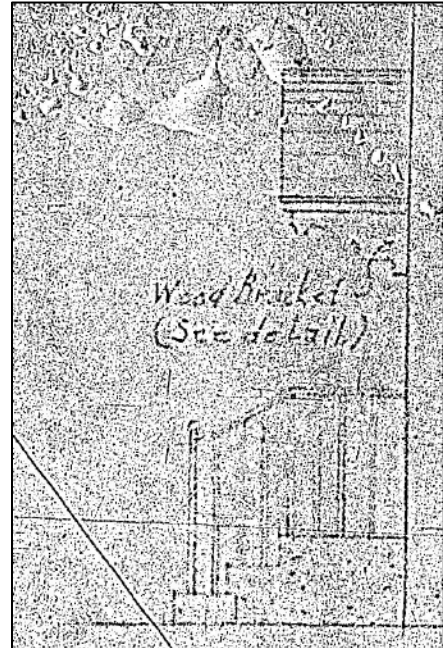
Figures 5: South Elevation Details - Current Photos, December 2023

The application proposes replication of the hood feature seen in the 1940s photo and in the original drawings (see Figure 1 and original drawings attached to the Local Historic Designation Report). No construction details/sections were provided for this element. Note that the original drawings call the element out as a “wood hood” with “copper roof,” although in the 1940s photo it appears to be stucco or plaster.

To the east of the existing residence, the addition fills the existing side yard and consists of a front-facing carport under a gable-end roof with the master bedroom volume behind. A flat-roofed connector joins the existing house and the carport. All of the parapets on the proposed additions are capped with a 4” smooth stucco band. The roofs of the carport and connector are both lower than the existing residence with the volume behind rising above the existing home. The carport entrance is a three-point arch under a barrel-tile gable roof. A tiled niche is centered on the rear wall. At the eastern corner of the master bedroom volume a wing wall protrudes to anchor a aluminum picket gate.

East - Sheet A.6

At the south end of the existing residence, the proposed copper-clad door hood is visible at the front door. It is noted to project 3’-0” from the south façade. Note that, as drawn, it does not match the original design intent (see Figures 6). The carport with two arched openings obscures a portion of the existing residence. To the north is the flat-roofed master bedroom addition. The addition façade is largely blank except for a pair of casement windows (no protruding sill, typical on the additions). Beyond, the detached garage is visible with the roofed connection to the back terrace of the residence. At the garage – to be converted to living space – a window is proposed to be relocated and a door opening removed.



Figures 6: Hood Detail – 1940s photo [left] and Permit #286 [right]

North (Rear) Elevation - Sheet A.5

The rear elevation has been completely demolished by the unpermitted work save for a sliver of the south wall of the small bumpout added to the northeast corner of the home in the 1940s (see Figure 7). For all intents and purposes, this elevation is entirely new. The master bedroom features a small bathroom bumpout under a tiled gable roof at the easternmost end of this façade. An arch-topped window is centered under the gable. This window type is repeated again on this elevation. Two large pairs of casement windows provide light into the master bedroom. To the west a shed-roofed covered terrace spans almost the entire length of the remainder of the façade. A series of wood wrapped steel columns support the shed roof. Single and double French doors with sidelites provide access to the terrace.



Figure 7: North (Rear) Elevation - Current Photo, December 2023

West Elevation - Sheet A.6

At the west elevation the only alteration proposed to the existing residence is the enclosure of the original front porch. See previous discussion the South Elevation earlier. At the north end of this façade, the architect is proposing to raise the parapet height where new wall was added. A scupper is proposed at this parapet, although its location doesn't match the roof plan and the height of the indicated parapet seems wrong. The side of the shed roof of the rear terrace appears to be clad in wood although it is not described. The west side of the detached garage is unchanged.

VARIANCES

No variances have been requested in conjunction with this application.

BOARD OF ARCHITECTS

A version of this proposal was reviewed and approved with conditions by the Board of Architects on March 20, 2025 with the following comments: 1) ADJUST THE ARCHES ON THE CARPORT TO BE 3 POINT ELLIPSES. 2) CONSIDER MAKING THE WALLS OF THE CARPORT 12" THICK IF ZONING REQUIREMENTS ALLOW.

STAFF CONCLUSION

The applicant is requesting design approval for several additions and alterations to the existing residence that is currently in a state of semi-construction due to unpermitted work and subsequent red tagging (stop work order) of the property. The application presupposes the incorporation of existing unpermitted construction so that some of the work can be salvaged. No care was taken in being sympathetic to the historic nature of the property. Had Historic Staff had input to a design proposal prior to the unpermitted construction, the outcome would be very different than what is currently being proposed.

The additions are limited to one-story, but should be better incorporated into the residence. Staff recommends that the connector to the carport be pushed back beyond the original northeast corner of the residence in order to respect the highly decorative original corner detail that exists (see Figures 8). There appears to be plenty of room to shift the entire carport/master bedroom addition to the rear to accommodate this request. Some floor plan changes may be required, but this is an important and unique feature of this home.



Figures 8: Corner Detail – Current Photo, December 2023 [left] and 1940s photo [right]

Similarly, the carport seems repetitive of the gable roof portion on the existing home. The arched opening competes with distinctive series of arches on the original home arches and perhaps should not be replicated at the carport. However, the original proposal included a flat roofed carport but was not accepted by the BOA (see Figure 9). Staff suggests that the carport be open on three sides and not engaged with the master bedroom suite.

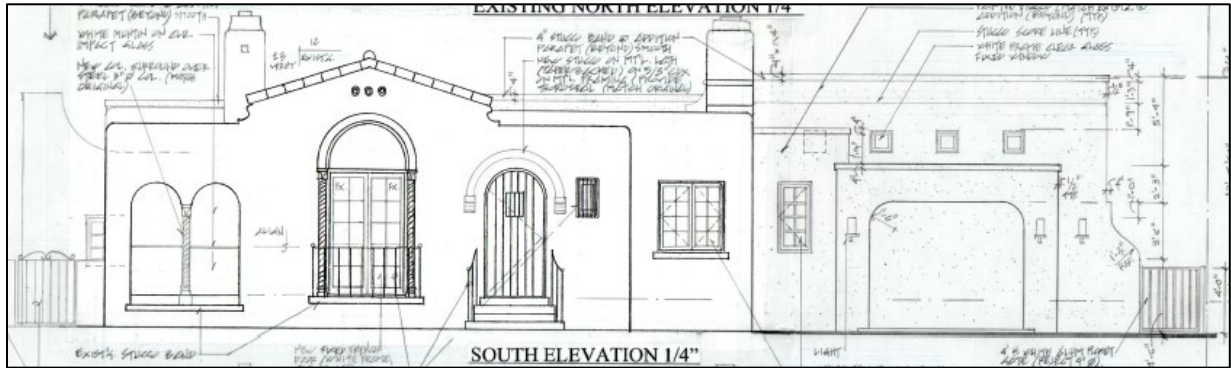


Figure 9: First BOA submittal with flat roofed carport

The parapet height of the master bedroom addition should be lowered to be more in keeping with the parapet height on the north façade of the home. No floor or ceiling heights were denoted on the elevations, but the parapet heights vary around the additions and should be more consistent and lowered to be more in scale with the existing residence. The various heights may be due to incorporating the beams and walls of the unpermitted construction. The stucco bands, although they do provide a distinction between the old and new, tend to draw attention to the inconsistent parapet heights.

Staff very strongly recommends that the front covered terrace remain unenclosed. The porch is an original character defining feature of this home. The front façade has remained largely intact and should remain so. The columns to reintroduced will be shorter than the originals and the slab is completely inappropriate as an intervention. The concrete infill atop the porch floor is to be removed and the iron railings reinstated.

Staff requests the following conditions to be incorporated into any motion for approval:

1. Work with Staff on the relocation of the carport connector and the restudy of the carport details.
2. The front porch is to remain open/unenclosed. The concrete added atop the porch floor is to be removed (original sills to remain) and an iron railing to replicate the original is to be returned to the openings.
3. Window/door muntins are to be high-profile / dimensional.
4. Window/door glass to be clear/no tint/no reflectivity/no low-e.
5. Extant window sills are to remain.
6. French doors to have higher bottom rails/kickplates.
7. Roof tile is to be true, two-piece barrel tile.
8. The low relief arched panel atop the French doors at the south façade is to remain and not be disturbed during the installation of new doors. The columns flanking the opening are to remain as well.
9. The house is not to be restuccoed in its entirety. Patching may occur with sample of stucco to be approved by Historic Preservation Staff prior to application.

10. Staff to review cast concrete turned columns prior to purchase and installation. Shop drawings may be required.
11. Existing original front door is to remain.
12. Provide details of all repair/restoration work to be done on the original features of the residence.
13. Provide construction details and sections of the front door hood. Work with Staff to ensure it is a replication. If this cannot be achieved, the element should be eliminated rather than adding a conjectural feature.
14. Reduce the parapet height of the master bedroom addition to be the same as the rear façade and eliminate the corner pieces at the south façade.
15. Stucco texture of the new addition should be differentiated from the existing residence. A score line is to be added to demarcate the location of new construction.
16. Recess of original garage door opening to remain.
17. No elevation / F.F.E. information provided on plans. If the floor elevation of the detached garage is too low, the Building Official may not allow it to be used as living space without modification. Staff does not support the raising of the roof/parapet to achieve a raised floor.

Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **APPROVE WITH THE CONDITIONS NOTED ABOVE** the design proposal for an addition and alterations to the residence and sitework on the property located at **415 Aragon Avenue**, a Local Historic Landmark, legally described as Lot 16 & the West 1/2 of Lot 15, Block 7, Section Coral Gables Section "B," according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 11, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida and **APPROVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness with the conditions noted above.

Respectfully submitted,



Kara Kautz

Acting Historic Preservation Officer