



COA (SP) 2024-041
January 16, 2025

*Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts*

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**STAFF REPORT
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
FOR THE PROPERTY AT
816 CASTILLE AVENUE
A CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE WITHIN
THE “CASTILLE AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT”**

- Proposal:** The applicant is requesting design approval for additions, and alterations to the resident to include enclosing the front porch.
- Architect:** Castellanos Design Services
- Owner:** Carlos and Stephanie Mercado
- Folio Number:** 03-4108-001-5340
- Legal Description:** Lots 7 and West 15FT of Lot 8, Block 34, Coral Gables Section “B”, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 111 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.
- Site Characteristics:** The property is located on the south side of Castille Avenue between South Greenway Drive and Toledo Street. The property dimensions are approximately 65’ x 125’.

BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS

In January of 2008, the “Castile Avenue / Plaza Historic District” was listed in the Coral Gables Register of Historic Places. It is comprised of properties located along Castile Avenue and Castile Plaza from Alhambra Circle to South Greenway Drive. The majority of the properties on the street were constructed in the early years of the City, and the massing, scale and architecture of the entire street maintain its cohesive charm and character.

The property at 816 Castille Avenue is considered a Contributing Resources within the historic district. It was designed by Kromer and Patterson and constructed in 1926 in a Mediterranean Revival Style. The building has undergone some renovations including a two-story addition at the rear and new windows, but the overall integrity of the home has been maintained and it contributes to the collection of quality residences found within the City.



Figure 1: ca. 1940s photo of 816 Castille Avenue



Figure 2: ca. August 2024 photo of 816 Castille Avenue, Google Maps

PROPOSAL

The application requests design approval for alterations to the residence to include enclosing the front porch.

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

In August 2023, COA(ST)2023-028 was issued as part of a building permit application for interior and exterior renovations to include the replacement of windows and doors, and to remove a damaged pergola. A revision was submitted in August 2024, that increased the scope of the work to include additional structural repairs, roof replacement, enclosing the front porch and modifications to the windows and doors.

The original screened-in, front porch remains an open air space. The property owner is requesting to install impact widows details in a similar configuration to the pattern of the original screens.

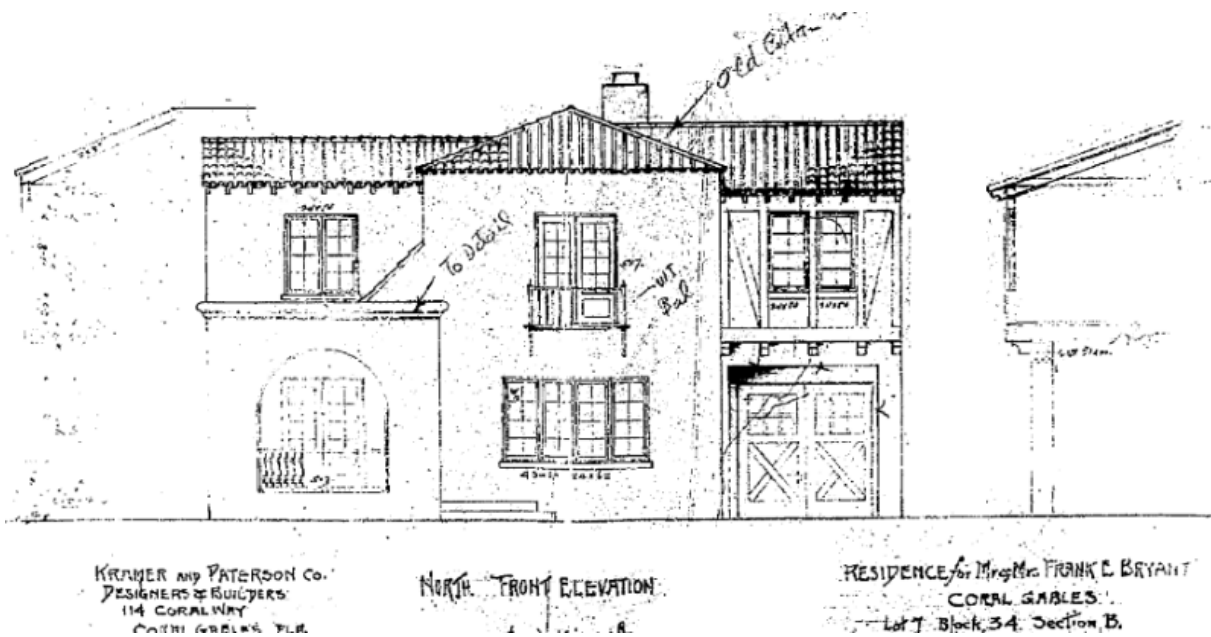


Figure 3: Permit #2296, Front Elevation

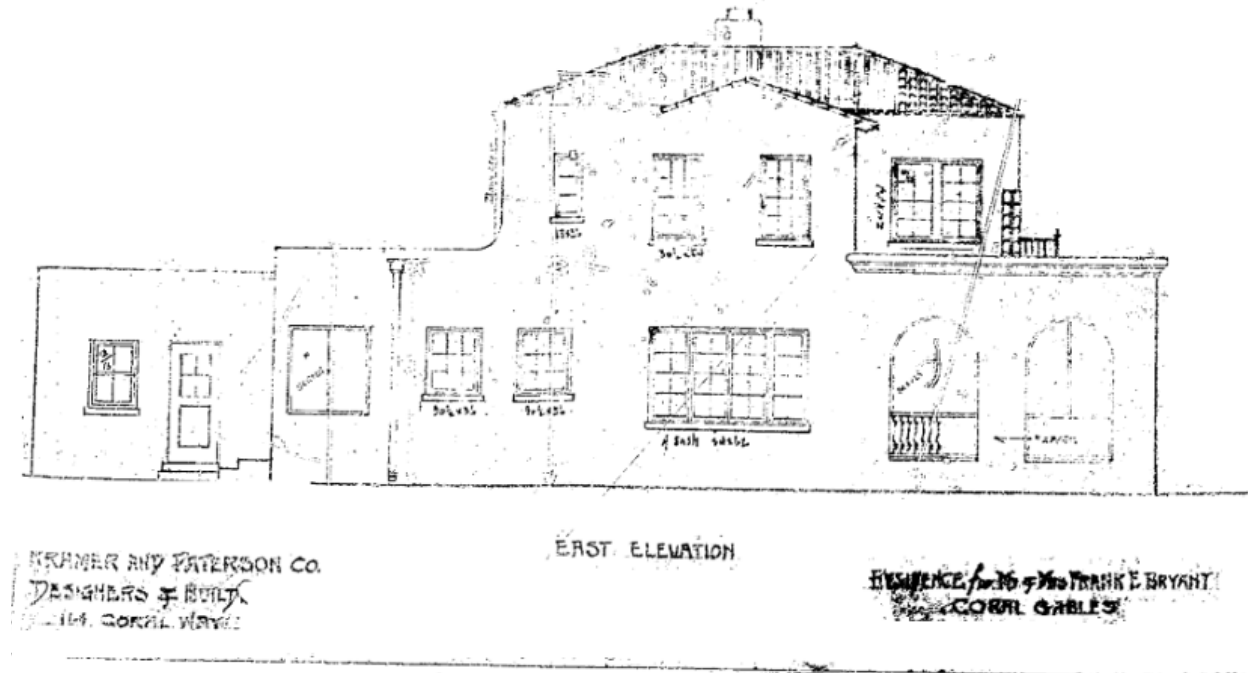


Figure 4: Permit #2296, Side (EAST) Elevation

VARIANCES

No variances have been requested with this application.

BOARD OF ARCHITECTS

The proposal was reviewed and approved by the Board of Architects on November 21, 2024 with the following comments:

1. Add transoms at the rear ground floor family room.
2. Second floor master bedroom windows to match the ground floor modulation as in the original home.
3. Side arches of the porch to have (1) vertical muntin and (1) horizontal. Front arch of porch, ok as presented.

STAFF CONCLUSION

The proposed alterations at the rear do not detract from the historic character of the building and will not be visible from the public right of way. Staff agree with BOA's recommendations regarding the window and door proposal for the infill at the rear. These alterations can be reviewed administratively as part of a Standard COA.

The work proposed to the front porch detracts from the integrity of the historic building and is inconsistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. While there are many examples of glass-enclosed porches on historic houses in the City, it appears these alterations were undertaken prior to designation. The residence was constructed in the Mediterranean Revival Style, the open porch is a significant feature on the front of this house, Staff does not support the request.

If approval is considered, Staff requests that the following conditions be incorporated into any motion for approval:

1. Window/door muntins are to be high-profile / dimensional.
2. Window/door glass to be clear / no reflectivity / no tint / no low-E.

Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **DENY** the design proposal for front porch enclosure on the property located at 816 Castille Avenue, legally described as LOT 7 & W 15FT of LOT 8, Block 34, Coral Gables Country Club Section B, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 111, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida and **DENY** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anna Pernas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A" and "P".

Anna Pernas
Historic Preservation Officer