

City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
www.coralgables.com

Historic Preservation Board Meeting Wednesday, September 21, 2022 4:00 pm

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Albert Menendez:

So then we'll start with the first case file. Case file LHD 2022-007. Consideration of the local historic designation of the property at 1221 Milan Avenue, legally described as Lot 9, Block 39, Coral Gables Granada section revised according to the plat thereof as recorded in plat book 8 at page 113 of the public records of Dade County, Florida.

Kara Kautz:

Thank you. Before we begin, I just wanted to clarify for the board that Warren is not going to be here in person. He is participating by Zoom, so we're going to sort of tag team the effort this afternoon. If you can please run the PowerPoint presentation for 1221 Milan, please.

Gus Ceballos:

Kara, if you do have a one of [inaudible 00:00:47] Warren is going to speak. We need to make sure that he's on video and he needs to be sworn in as well.

Kara Kautz:

Okay.

Elizabeth Guin:

The property at 1221 Milan Avenue is before you for consideration for designation as a local historic landmark. The single family home was designed in 1923 by architect Louis Brumm. The designation is the result of a historic significance determination requested by the owner after the property was cited for code violations and they were unable to obtain an after the fact [inaudible 00:01:23]. As per Article 8, section 8-103 of the Coral Gable zoning code, Criteria for Designation of Historic Landmarks, a local historic landmark must have significant character, interest or value of part of the historical, cultural, archeological, aesthetic, or architectural heritage of the city, state, or nation.

For designation of property, you must meet one of the criteria outlined in the code. 1221 Milan Avenue is eligible as a local historic landmark based on three criteria. Historical cultural significance, criteria 4. It exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economic or social trends of the community. Architectural significance, criteria one. It portrays the environment of an era in a history characterized by one or more distinctive architectural style. Criteria two, it embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or period or method of construction.

1221 Milan Avenue is a residential single family home in the Granada section. It is on a 50 foot by 100 foot interior lot on the north side of the street, between Columbus Boulevard and Madrid Street. Coral Gables was originally conceived as a suburb of Miami and attracted investors from across the nation during the South Florida real estate boom of the 1920s. Merrick drew from the Garden City and City Beautiful movements of the 19th and early 20th century to create his vision for a fully conceived Mediterranean inspired city, which is now considered one of the first modern planned communities in the United States. The city's developmental history is divided into three major historical periods. During the initial developmental period, architectural design specifically combined elements commonly used in Spanish, Moorish and Italian architecture.

The home at 1221 Milan Avenue was commissioned by Coral Gables founder George Merrick, and designed by Lewis Brumm, a member of his design team. It espoused Merrick's Mediterranean ideals and is the very early example of what is now known as the Coral Gables Cottage.

The October 1920 map, on the left side of the slide, shows the initial layout of Coral Gables when lots first went on sale in November of 1921. Initial sales were in the direct vicinity of Merrick's homestead in

section A, circled in red. Sales were very successful and the remainder of the land was divided into sections B through I as seen on the map on the right and offered for sale through 1922. As sales took off, Merrick looked to expand his land holdings. Records indicate that he expended a tremendous amount of time and energy in extending his holdings to the Tamiami Trail and the area highlighted in purple. Note that he initially only held lots on either side of Granada Boulevard denoted as Section F.

By fall 1923, Section F, which is highlighted here in purple, was significantly expanded. Merrick renamed it the Granada Section and redirected hundreds of workers to lay street sidewalks and water mains. Milan Avenue was the southern border of this section and is the red line on this plat map. In 1923, as Merrick increased his land holdings, he began to develop street scapes following Garden City precepts. Unlike earlier sections, the Granada Section was platted with large areas allocated for moderately priced and smaller sized homes. To showcase his vision, Merrick commissioned architects, H. George Fink, Martin Hampton, and Louis Brumm to design 58 Mediterranean inspired homes to demonstrate that, though smaller, the moderately priced homes in Coral Gables would have the same quality of construction and aesthetic as the larger homes. In the Granada section, Merrick stated that these 58 homes would "embody new and radical departures from the usual type of small home designing with compactness, beauty and comfort that will appeal to smaller families, each home will be differently, finely, detailed design."

The distribution of the 58 homes was: 12 on Ferdinand Street, 18 on Genoa Street, 8 on Milan Avenue, 6 on Capri Street, and 14 on Pizarra Avenue. These one story homes were the first of what would later be classified as the Coral Gables Cottage.

The eight homes on Milan Avenue commissioned by George Merrick are shown here by the red blocks. 1221 Milan Avenue was one of these homes and is denoted by the orange arrow. As intended, these homes provided a model for and sparked interest in developing Milan Avenue with moderately priced homes. The blue blocks here are the other homes on the street built in the 1920s. Milan Avenue retains its context to date. Developing these streets was a source of pride for Merrick. In 1925, he stated, "Frequently at night, Mrs. Merrick and I drive through Coral Gables. We go into the moderate priced sections and we find something which gives me even more pride in the accomplishment of an ideal. People who formerly used stock plans can now have a well appointed home. It is gratifying to see the difference in attractiveness of one of our very moderately priced houses as compared to a house of similar cost in the unrestricted section of Miami."

The home of 1221 Milan Avenue was one of the earliest of the Coral Gables cottages and played a significant role in the development of this typology in the city. Records indicate that as Merrick began developing the Granada section, his brother-in-law, Paul Kuhn, contributed financing and this included financing the home at 1221 Milan Avenue. Coone was married to Merrick's sister Helen and they had three young children. When Kuhn died suddenly in 1924, a member of Merrick's home department, Francis Cy Guest, stepped up to assist the widow and assumed the final financing of the house.

In 1925, with the incorporation of the city, Guest joined the Coral Gables Fire Department and in 1926 he became a member of the Coral Gables Police Force. Two years later, Sergeant Guest was tragically killed on Christmas Eve by a drunk driver. Guest was the first Coral Gables officer killed in the line of duty and his name is inscribed on the National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington DC. He is pictured here on the left.

In 1927, Dr. John Thom Holdsworth purchased 1221 Milan Avenue and lived in the home for 37 years. Dr. Holdsworth was a renowned economist and professor who was recruited heavily by the University of Miami to develop their School of Business Administration. He was Dean of the school from 1929 to 1941. In 1964, Dr. Holdsworth sold this home to the University of Miami for \$1. The property then passed through several owners until the current owners purchased it in 1998.

Merrick chose to develop Coral Gables as a Mediterranean inspired city because he felt this type of architecture harmonized best with South Florida's climate and lifestyle. The home at 1221 Milan Avenue honors Merrick's vision. Built over a crawl space to provide ventilation and separation from the high water table, the home has thick masonry walls to aid in keeping the home cool and varied casement windows and porch features arrange to provide much needed cross ventilation and light in this tropical environment. The home was designed by architect Lewis Brumm, who came to Coral Gables from California, where he had substantial experience designing Spanish inspired buildings. Brumm, in tandem with team member H. George Fink was largely responsible for developing the city's cottage genre. The home includes many additional prominent and character defining features of the Mediterranean revival style, which include but are not limited to: its textured stucco, combination of roof types and heights, projecting bays, arched openings, in particular the street facing segmental arch with the distinctive corner knobs, Spanish inspired chimney with diamond-shaped cutouts, detached garage whose parapets were designed to mirror the main house, wing walls, a barrel tile roof, decoratively arranged round vents in a diamond configuration, recessed casement windows with protruding sills and swooped masonry hoods.

In this slide, you can see the home over the last century. Visual assessment of the property as well as examination of permit documents and historic photographs indicate that there were a few changes to the character defining features of the home at 1221 Milan Avenue prior to the un-permitted alterations by the current owner who acquired the property in 1998. A discussion of these un-permitted alterations is provided in the designation report.

Alterations that occurred prior to 1998 include the enclosing of the two screen porches, denoted in blue on the survey. The current s-tile roof was installed in 1997. And in 1981 a roofed porch was added at the rear of the home along the east facade of the garage. The orange arrow on the survey indicates its location. And the photo in the center shows it soon after completion.

The current owner purchased the property in 1998 and this slide illustrates some of the alterations undertaken since then. The alterations were done without a permit and code enforcement case is ongoing. Additional details are provided in the designation report. Between 2009 and 2011, the open porch area on the front facade was enclosed for living space. This is denoted in purple on the 2001 property survey and illustrated by the photos in the center of the slide. Also, by 2011, a raised concrete pad was laid along the west side of the home as denoted in green on the survey. This patio blocked access to the garage. The garage door was removed and the garage became connected to the home as living space, as well as the rear 1981 porch that was also enclosed for living space. It is denoted in yellow on the survey. The photo above the survey shows the enclosed porch.

By 2021, this area was extended approximately another six feet north into the rear setback as illustrated on the 2021 property survey on the right. The photo above this survey shows that addition painted white abutting the rear of the original garage, which is painted yellow.

Here's a current photo of the home. The taller shed roofed bay was the original screened entry porch. Note, the street facing segmental arched opening with this distinctive corner knob feature. Also evident on this photo is the texture of the stucco. On the west side, note the arched opening of the entry porch and the prominent chimney. One of the hallmark features of the home are the swooped lentils, two of which you can see here above the windows flanking the chimney. Above these windows are examples of the grouped round vents decoratively arranged in a diamond configuration.

In the photo on the left, you can also see another grouping on the original garage. The photos in the center and the right side of the slide show the original east facade of the home. There's a pop out bay whose shed roof was originally tiled. The photo at the right is the original sleeping porch. Like the pop out bay, it historically had a barrel tile on its shed roof and is now un-clad. The photo on the lower left is the east facade of the recent infill on the front of the house. The orange arrow on the top slide indicates

its location. It is not clear, but opening on this side was recently enclosed or if this area of the addition was not finished as it is obscured by vegetation.

The photo on the left shows the rear facade of the home. It is looking at the northeast corner of the original sleeping porch. You can see the two windows infilling the large screened opening whose location and original size is easily discernible in the change of stucco texture. The photos on the right are of the enclosed 1981 porch on the top and at the bottom of the more recent extension to the rear of the home. The home was designed with two wing walls. Their locations and configurations are documented in this 1967 historic photo and circled in red. They are currently obscured from the street, but appear on the 2021 property survey.

In conclusion, the single family home at 1221 Milan Avenue was one of eight homes on Milan commissioned by city founder George Merrick in 1923. In accordance with Garden City precepts, Merrick envisioned Milan Avenue as a street of moderately priced attractive houses. He commissioned three members of his design team to demonstrate that these smaller homes were built with the same high quality construction and Mediterranean revival style features as other structures that shape the new city in the early 1920s. These houses are amongst the earliest of what are now known as the Coral Gables Cottages. The home of 1221 Milan Avenue was designed by architect Lewis Brumm, who in tandem with team member H. George Fink, was largely responsible for the developing of the city's cottage genre. This home was one of the earliest of the cottages and had played a significant role in the development of the Coral Gables cottage in the city. Hence, the property at 1221 Milan Avenue significantly contributes to the historic fabric of the city of Coral Gables. Staff recommends approval of the local historic designation of the property at 1221 Milan Avenue based on its historical, cultural, and architectural significance.

Kara Kautz:

So I believe the owner is here and wants to address you all or if you have any questions for staff. We do recommend approval, obviously. There were letters that were received in favor of the application. I'm not sure. I don't think you have copies of them on the dais, but I will tell you who they're from. Letter from Jane Romano, at 1261 Milan at Milan Avenue, recommending expressing her support of the designation. There's a letter from Ileana Sayre, also expressing her support in the designation. A letter from Bruce Fitzgerald, no address given recommending expressing support. Zuly Pardo, 49 Campina Court also expressing their support. And the final letter is from the Historic Preservation Association of Coral Gables, and they're also expressing their support of the designation. I can read any of those to you into the record if you like, but they will be made part of the record.

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Okay. This is the chair. Do the chair have a question for staff?

Okay. So is the request to designate the home in its current state or in its previous state?

Kara Kautz:

Correct, and we designate as it is now.

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

As it is now? And staff believes that even with the several additions, it is still significant?

Kara Kautz:

Yes.

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Thank you.

John Fullerton:

And the S tile. And the S tile.

Kara Kautz:

Yes.

John Fullerton:

It has S tile on it now?

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Into the mic.

Kara Kautz:

The S tile, I believe so.

Albert Menendez:

Would the owners like to speak?

Bruce Ehrenheft:

Also, through the chair, there was a handout at the beginning, which I didn't receive. Is it important for me to see that? In order to consider what... Thank you.

Peter Saliamonas:

Hi, good afternoon. My name is Peter Saliamonas. I'm here with my wife and a friend of ours who is an attorney. David Sacks. My mic? Sorry. Is that better?

Nancy Lyons:

Yeah.

Peter Saliamonas:

Okay. I really wish that everything said in the report accurately depicts my home because then I'd have a really cool home, something worthy of preserving. But at the end of the day, my home is very simple. It's very plain. Really, what makes it special is what happened inside, over the years with my family. But I'd like to talk a little bit about the report because I think it's not quite accurate.

Starting with the first sentence, believe it or not, where it talks about, that it's part of this genre of cottage homes that were commissioned by George Merrick in 1923. My home was built in 1922, so I don't know how it's part of those homes considering the dates. There are several articles that were attached to the report that, or they were either attached, or they were used as supporting documents for the report that were on Warren Adams gave to me that talks about in November of 1923 how they're commissioning these homes and my house was already built in 1922. So that's just one point I wanted to make. I don't think it's part of those homes. I did give a couple of documents there that

shows there are 11 homes on Milan in 1924, so it's possible that mine was one of the three that weren't part of those cottage homes as well.

Also, the report states, it talks a little bit about the qualities that these cottage homes are, and they say quote, "While they are not expensive, they represent the best of architecture." And it continues to say, "With fixtures built in." I don't have any built-in fixtures, "Garages linked artistically with the houses," which mine is not. "Screen loggias," I don't have. "And large and delightfully planted patios with winding walks of flagstone paving." My house doesn't contain that either. "And unique lanterns of early Spanish designs." Not prevalent in my home. "Gothic entrances, imported Spanish tile roofs" I do have that, but cypress beams, and archways also not in my home. So it just seems unlikely that my home was part of those 58 cottage homes. The report then talks about the historical significance of the people, of the architect and the people who lived in my home.

Lewis Brumm worked in tandem with George Fink, and Dr. Holdsworth was the first dean of the University of Miami School of Business Administration, which according to the report is a reason why our home is significant, and it says, "Significantly contribute to the historic fabric of the city of Coral Gables." I would argue that working with Lewis Brumm, working with someone who is significant doesn't make him significant. And I'm sure Lewis Brumm designed many beautiful homes, but mine just isn't one of them. I mean, it's a very, very simple design, something that looks like it was done fairly quickly. And the fact that Dr. Holdsworth was the first dean of the School of Business, I don't believe that that's enough in and of itself to make him an historic figure. Maybe if he created the School of Business or revolutionized the way business schools were done, perhaps that could be something, but just because he was the dean, I don't think that reaches the bar.

And if that is true, then I guess we'd have to consider every other dean that was the first dean of that particular school. So I don't know if that's the case or not, but I would imagine, for instance, the School of Computer Science's first dean maybe was in the 80s and maybe he lives in a house built in 2015. So if the code says you just need one requirement, and that's the requirement, then, well, whoever was the dean, right, therefore, his house would now be historic.

And just on page seven in the report, paragraph two, it says that he actually established the school of business, but he didn't. He was just the dean. And also, I found it interesting. I went to the Coral Gables Museum and looked at the exhibit on Coral Gables, and neither man was mentioned in the exhibit, and one would think that if the museum deemed them historically significant, that they would be there, and they're not there. Then the report mentions Francis Cyril Guest, who was the first police officer killed in the line of duty in Coral Gables. While he held the mortgage on the home, he never lived there. He lived at 527 Menorca, and I can't imagine that the fact that he held the mortgage on the home would make our house significant as well.

Then, regarding the characteristic design features of these cottage homes, and I hope I'm not repetitive, but mine doesn't have these features. On page six of the report, paragraph two, it says, "A small house in which every detail is a joy is made beautiful with a cloistered entrance," which is not on mine, "whose slightly pointed arched," don't have, "and carved columns," I don't have those, "lead to an open patio." Doesn't do that, "Is finally thought out and executed as a Renaissance palace," I wish, but that's not my home, again, "Has its chief decoration and entrance loggia." I don't have a loggia, "With a group of three round arches." I don't have those, "The middle slightly higher than the other two." Okay. "With twisted columns," I don't have that, "so delicate and right that no other decoration is necessary in such inconspicuous details as in the iron work of a window." My home doesn't have that. "The trim of a chimney, the curve of a garage roof," all these things my home doesn't have.

The report then lists things that my home supposedly has that would make it significant. But I think that none of those features such as having a crawl space or having textured stucco or being built of concrete block. I don't think there's anything revolutionary or unique in those designs that would lead it to be

historically significant, right? I mean, I think that should be the criteria in a design if it's going to be called significant. So on page 10, paragraph three, it states that quote, "The home possesses numerous character defining features of the Mediterranean revival style. These include but are not limited to extra stucco finish." My home does have that. Then it says, "Combination roof heights." Well, the original house basically has one roof height with just the planted, I guess there's not a picture of it up now, but just the area in the front where it has the Spanish tile.

It's not like one of these wonderful Coral Gables homes where you see different roof heights throughout. So I think that's an exaggeration. It says then, "A series of arched openings." I don't have a series of arched openings. The only arches I have are the window, well, it used to be a screen, the window in the front and on the side. "A distinctive knob arched opening facing the street." I don't think that, again, is anything so unique, revolutionary, and therefore, not historically significant. It says, "Spanish inspired chimney with diamond shaped cutouts." Well, the chimney is not original as seen if you look at the photo from 1967. There weren't any diamond shaped cutouts, and the barrel tile didn't exist on the chimney until at least after 1967. It says, "Detached garage whose parapets were designed to mirror the main home." I don't see anything so wonderful about the parapets.

They're just a parapet. It mirrors the parapet of the main home because it's just a very simple parapet, but it looks like the report is trying to make it look more than it really is. "Wing walls." Yep, there's a wing wall on the garage; it used to be a little wing wall. It's nice, I suppose. And then there's one on the side, but there's not much of a design to it. It just is pretty much square and conceals my AC. "Barrel tile roof." Yes. That was also, I think, taken away and then added. You can see in the 1967 photo, I don't even know if there actually was barrel tile roof originally. If you look at the original design, there was barrel tile roof, but we don't have a photo of one. The earliest photo I think we have is maybe 1967. I could be wrong, but it wasn't there, and then it was added later. And it also says, "Decoratively arranged groups of round vents in diamond configuration."

I say, oh, yes, there are. I don't know how significant they are except for they allow the rodents to crawl inside my roof. And then it says, "Projecting bays." Well, there's one part on the side of the house where the bathroom projects about one foot, and that is all there is, and it's hardly visible from the street, either. It says, "Recessed easement windows with protruding sills and swooped masonry hoods." I think that's just a very fancy way to describe. I have some window sills on the top and the bottom and they're not on all the windows, and there's many, of course, old Spanish homes that don't have that feature. There's also been many changes to my homes over the years. Not all that I did. If you look on page nine, figure 11, the decorative... So I gave, or you have the original design of my house.

It's not in the best shape. Okay. This is the building file and there's a long list of things that have been changed over the years in my house. But if you look, and if you can make it out the best you can. On the design, there was a decorative feature on the parapet, and that's not there. It wasn't there when I bought the house. I don't know if it was ever built or whether it was taken away at some point. The front window used to be a screen. There are windows now. The porch, if you can see. So the front porch was never, I don't think there. If you look at the sketch, the stairs are very narrow in the original sketch and then later on, and there's no indication that there was actually ever a porch. Later on you see as the stairs widen, there's probably the porch at that point, and then somebody put an awning up to cover the porch. So I'm not sure that the porch actually was originally there. Of course, combination roof heights. I think I might be repeating some things here. ... a series of arched openings. We discussed that already. So the Spanish-inspired chimney with diamond-shaped cutouts, there weren't diamond-shaped cutouts originally on the design. It looked more like a curve design, so that's also been altered from the original design. And then it says on page 10, paragraph four, "Visual assessment of the property, as well as examination of permit documents and historic photographs indicates that there are a few changes to the character-defining features, the home at 1221 Milan, prior to the unpermitted alterations by the

current owner." That's not true. There has been a lot that has been changed, like I said. And I'm sorry I read from the wrong spot on my notes, but I think I covered most of the issue.

Well, on the west facade, on the original design, there's many windows and they're not all there. And there's a door or two on the west facade that's also no longer there, and that's how I bought the house. The west facade used to have an arched window to the left of the door. That's no longer there. And the room at the back used to be screened in and now it's enclosed with windows. The entire back area was added in 1981, and that's what established the direct connection to the garage, not the patio. And the front of the garage, if you look, had some pattern on it, I don't know what it was, but that's also not there either. And at some point, the garage was made livable.

I'm sorry for my rambling and my imperfect presentation. I'm not used to public speaking. I'd just like to say that we moved to Coral Gables because of its character. That's what really turned us on, because of the trees and the homes, and we're really a big proponent of historic preservation. But I think declaring our home significant when it's not, you risk two things. One, you diminish the integrity of homes that are truly historic, and I think there's a danger to that and I think it would be wrong to do so to my house. And I'd be worried that eventually, the community might push back, and in that pushback, there could be truly historic homes that could get lost as a result. Do you have any questions for me? Thank you very much, and do you have any questions?

Dona Spain:

Don't go anywhere. I have questions.

Peter Saliamonas:

Okay.

Bruce Ehrenheft:

Excuse me, Mr. Chair, I need to interrupt. Council handed me a number of papers and said this represents changes in the house. It says, "Start building file" and the address. I cannot look at this or consider it unless it's on the record. It's been submitted, and everybody has a copy, so I'd like to hand it either... I don't know who I should give it to, Mr. Sabios.

Gus Ceballos:

Hello? Is the applicant proposing to make that part of the record?

Peter Saliamonas:

I don't know. Do we have... Yes? Okay. Yes. I guess so.

Gus Ceballos:

Given the fact that there's only one copy, if you'd like to pass it around to your fellow board members.

Peter Saliamonas:

Okay. We have [inaudible 00:35:51]... Just put it in the...

Margaret Rolando:

How does it relate to the presentation, or is that what you're going to talk about now?

Peter Saliamonas:

I'm sorry?

David Sacks:

My comment is brief, but [inaudible 00:36:03]. I just want to talk about it.

Albert Menendez:

Please state your name.

David Sacks:

Yep.

Bruce Ehrenheft:

I can't consider this [inaudible 00:36:13]

David Sacks:

Hello, everybody. Good evening. My name's David Sacks, law office at 2 South Biscayne Boulevard. I'm here on behalf of the Saliamonas with respect to your application here tonight. I simply wanted to say, and then I'll let you ask Peter questions or I'm happy to, whatever you know your preference is, but this document is, I guess, you take judicial notice of it. It's the city's own microfilm department. I'm sorry I didn't have copies. But again, the real point of it is to show the various changes that were illustrated by Mr. Saliamonas tonight. I don't know how you want to handle that. Again, if I had a photocopy here right now, we'd be doing this and there'd be no problem. It's up to the board's discretion as to whether or not you want to admit this into the record.

Albert Menendez:

Fair enough.

David Sacks:

Oh, Mr. Fullerton's got it. Cara, who requested this?

Kara Kautz:

This was the result of a historical significance determination.

Albert Menendez:

Okay. Are there any questions?

Margaret Rolando:

What I'm trying to understand is what is the point of the materials that you want to introduce? Is it in support of your clients' statements that there have been changes to the property? What is this exhibit demonstrate?

David Sacks:

Yes. In a sentence, this is to support what my client has said here tonight through documentary proof. And more specifically, it's to illustrate that while over the years, there have been changes to the

property as shown by the building permits within this package. And that was also testified earlier, so this is the backup to that. That's it. That's all.

Margaret Rolando:

And is this for all of the changes or only the changes that preceded his acquisition?

David Sacks:

They, I believe, preceded his acquisition. Certainly, many of them did, but it stands alone. We asked from the city a copy of all permits in connection with the property, just so we could demonstrate what our position is, that it's not as significant as we believe and our architect believes that this property is. And I'll stop talking.

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Through the chair, can we just ask staff to take a look at it? Because staff did mention during the presentation a number of these modifications, and it appears that these reflect the same modifications. But I can't, unless the applicant wants to stipulate that they're the same modifications that were presented by staff in the report.

David Sacks:

Not all of that is in the record, unfortunately. It goes back to 1920, and I would say the same of all cities. There's probably a paucity of key records that are missing, but this is, again, what came from the city through a public records request, your chapter 121.

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

One more question for staff. Is this the information that staff would have looked through to make their report?

Kara Kautz:

I can't. I haven't seen it. I don't know if it is.

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Would the...

Dona Spain:

This is a refile, I think.

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Would the Historic Preservation Department have checked the city's permit records?

Kara Kautz:

Yes, yes.

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Mr. Sacks, I think you might, if you hand the other one at the other end, we may be able to go more quickly reviewing it, unless you need one in front of you right now.

David Sacks:

You mean just hand it to [inaudible 00:40:17]?

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Hand it to Mr. Durana, at least, so that if we're going to take a look at it, we have a chance. But...

Albert Menendez:

In the meantime, is there anyone in the audience who would like to speak in favor of this case?

David Sacks:

Chair?

Albert Menendez:

Yes?

David Sacks:

I'm just going to conclude after any questions you may have. That's all I'm going to say.

Albert Menendez:

Okay. Anyone in the audience who would like to speak in opposition of this case? Okay. I'll close the public portion of the hearing.

Dona Spain:

I have a question for staff.

Kara Kautz:

Yes.

Dona Spain:

Do you know when the original permit number 402 was issued, what date?

Kara Kautz:

No.

Dona Spain:

That part of it that was lost?

Kara Kautz:

Yes. The permit book for the city, numbers one through, I think like 1326, don't exist anymore. The permit book starts after that point. Those first pages are gone. As this is number 402... And we do know it was built prior to the incorporation of the city, which was in 1925. At that time, they went back and assigned permit numbers to those structures that were already built. So the number, the 1922 on the tax card may be right. It may not be right.

Elizabeth Yuen, who did the research on this particular report is actually not here today. She's not on Zoom. But my best guess as to why that we know that this was the date that we say it's in the report is that the Grenada section did not open for sale for lots until 1923, the end of 1923. So my guess is that that's how she has some record that he commissioned those properties for the Grenada section after it was available for purchase.

Dona Spain:

Thank you. Also, when you're talking about the people that lived in the home and the architect, if you go to the Coral Gable zoning code, there's a section of it that talks about the criteria for designating property like this. There are criteria that talk about who was the architect, who lived there is associated in a significant way with a life and activities of a major historic person. That's not what staff is saying that they're suggesting, that they're recommending that we designate the home for. It's on its architectural significance and its cultural significance. It's not about those people at all.

Peter Saliamonas:

Okay, because they talk about them a lot in the report.

Dona Spain:

Yeah. It's interesting, and it's interesting that they lived there. But neither one of them necessarily is a major historical person in the city, which is why the Coral Gables Museum probably doesn't have them, and is why they didn't list that as a criteria for designation. I just wanted to clarify that.

Peter Saliamonas:

Okay. Thank you.

Dona Spain:

Okay. And when you're talking about a Coral Gables cottage, that was also talked about by Merrick, but there is a specific term in the zoning code that is a Coral Gables cottage. And that was done in the 1990s, because those properties, those small homes that have architectural details were being lost. People were buying them, knocking them down, replacing them with other homes. And so the Planning department along with the Historic Preservation department, it may have been one department then, I don't know, but they set up a cottage ordinance to save those homes. And so they listed, I think there's 19 criteria, and if your home qualified for 12 of those, it was considered a Coral Gables cottage. There was certain criteria. That's a zoning code term. And that list that Elizabeth had in her report, which she checked off, that's 12?

Kara Kautz:

Yeah. There are 19 criteria.

Dona Spain:

Right. That's what she was doing. She was going to that part of the zoning code and then checking off those things that your property has that qualifies it as a Coral Gables cottage. Not as a historic property, but as a Coral Gables cottage.

Peter Saliamonas:

I'm not sure if those are still on my home or they were ever part of it. I think some of those are perhaps inaccurate.

Dona Spain:

Well...

Peter Saliamonas:

If we can look at them, because I went to...

Dona Spain:

I can guarantee that they went out and looked at your house.

Peter Saliamonas:

I'm sorry?

Dona Spain:

I'm sure the staff went out and looked at your house in order to check off those criteria.

Peter Saliamonas:

Right. Okay.

Dona Spain:

I know that. I wasn't with them, but that's what they do.

Peter Saliamonas:

Right.

Dona Spain:

Anyhow, I just wanted to clarify that, that it wasn't. There are plenty of quotes from Merrick about the colleges and how great they are, but what staff is referring to in that checklist was an actual list of the zoning code that your property does qualify for.

Peter Saliamonas:

Okay.

Albert Menendez:

Any other questions?

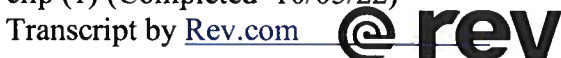
Cesar Garcia-Pons:

I do have a follow-up question for staff, similar to the one I asked previously about the modifications to the existing home. If the board votes today to make this historic, it would be historic in its current condition, which means the S tile, the additions, everything that was not originally part of the home is historic? I just need some clarity, please.

Kara Kautz:

clip (1) (Completed 10/05/22)

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Yes. I don't know if Warren is on and wants to address this?

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Mr. Adams?

Kara Kautz:

But we did...

Warren Adams:

Can you hear me?

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Yes. Do you need to be on screen?

Kara Kautz:

Warren, you need to be seen and you need to be sworn in.

Warren Adams:

Can you see me?

Kara Kautz:

No. Can CGTV put the Zoom screen on? There you go.

Margaret Rolando:

Oh, there he is.

Kara Kautz:

All right.

Gus Ceballos:

Do you swear that the testimony you will give today will be the truth and nothing but the truth?

Warren Adams:

I do.

Gus Ceballos:

Thank you.

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Mr. Adams, do you need me to repeat the question about if it gets designated today, does it get designated with all of the additions, or are we designating the original home? Just a little bit of clarity on what a designation will constitute.

Warren Adams:

It gets designated as is. And if any restoration, what was taken in the future, to take it back to its historic appearance, then obviously, that would be supported. But certainly, it's designated as-is. And obviously, if it was designated, any future alterations would have to be reviewed by the Preservation Office.

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Kara, those was a little muddled. Did you understand?

Warren Adams:

Would you like me to repeat?

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

If you could, Warren. It was a little blurry.

Warren Adams:

The building would be designated as is at the moment. However, any future alterations or any potential restoration in the future would be reviewed by the Preservation Office and for appropriateness, so if any changes were made after the designation, and this office would review those changes.

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Thank you, Mr. Adams.

Albert Menendez:

Thank you.

Margaret Rolando:

Albert?

Albert Menendez:

Yep.

Margaret Rolando:

I have a few questions for staff and for council. Oh, thank you. If we designate or vote to approve the designation, does that grandfather in, or validate the illegal additions?

Kara Kautz:

No.

Gus Ceballos:

I don't believe that there's any illegal additions that are before you today. But if there was an addition done that was not part of the historic fabric of the structure and the property is designated and there's a future modification, your board has the authority to request that that be changed or modified. Such as we've seen a multitude of times where a property gets designated and has S type tile, comes back for a reroofing, and the board requires a two piece barrel tile. [inaudible 00:49:10].

Margaret Rolando:

Okay.

Dona Spain:

But the illegal additions are handled [inaudible 00:49:14].

Kara Kautz:

Correct. Additionally, there is a code enforcement case open on the property that will require correction.

Margaret Rolando:

Okay. So what the decision we make today has nothing it will have no effect on whatever other actions the city may be taking.

Kara Kautz:

Whatever was done unpermitted will have to be either permitted or corrected.

Margaret Rolando:

Okay, and the applicant has suggested that the home would not qualify or might not qualify for designation, because there have been intervening modifications over the hundred year life of the home. My recollection is that through the years we've designated a lot of properties where there's been alterations to the property. From the Preservation Department's point of view does, what is the effect of modifications on the consideration of the historic significance of the property?

Kara Kautz:

As long as the property continues to maintain its historic integrity and meets the criteria, we find that it's significant. And in this case, we do feel that it still meets the criteria for designation and that it has retained enough of its integrity to identify it as a Coral Gables Cottage and a very early permit at that. Warren, I don't know if you want to add anything.

Margaret Rolando:

Thank you.

Warren Adams:

Yeah, as long as the property continues to convey significance. And in terms of architecture, and certainly we believe that there were sufficient details there to convey that significance as an early example of the Mediterranean revival style.

Albert Menendez:

Any other questions?

John Fullerton:

I have just a thought or comment. I'm looking at the Brumm and the Fink drawings of the house. That doesn't seem to have much relationship to what we see today. And in fact, the house today is a pretty poor example of what he left behind, let us think it was supposed to look like. And then I looked through all the photographs that we have in there are three or four different iterations of what the house looked

like. There's this thing on this crown on top of the chimney and there's no chimney and there's nothing on top, and then there's a diamond shape thing. It's all over the place. I just don't know what we're designating except of an image of what has been added to and subtracted from, for the last ... well at least since 1967, the last photograph I could see on here that had any architectural feeling to it at all. So I don't know, I'm inclined to wait until the house goes through its process of redesign after the workout of the illegal additions and then come back.

Kara Kautz:

So, this wasn't, it's following the correct process in terms of historical significance determination. If we find that it's significant, we are required to bring a designation or report to you within 60 days, so I don't believe it's a question of them wanting to come back after work has been completed.

John Fullerton:

Well, it's not really up to them. It's either historic or not.

Kara Kautz:

But that is up to this -

Dona Spain:

But did it come to you for a significance determination because they wanted to demolish the home?

Peter Saliamonas:

Yes.

Dona Spain:

Was it your intent to demolish the home?

Peter Saliamonas:

Yes.

Dona Spain:

And then build your dream house there?

Peter Saliamonas:

Yes.

Dona Spain:

Okay.

Peter Saliamonas:

And ...

Dona Spain:

Because if they go to ... I don't know how this will work, but if you go to the code enforcement and they have a hearing on the illegal stuff that ...

Peter Saliamonas:

Right.

Dona Spain:

... that happened and they say, "Well, we want to demolish the home." Then Code Enforcement will say, "Well, okay, well then that's not an issue." And so I think this board needs to make some type of determination as to whether or not it's significant or not. And designated or not designated, which would help him or hurt him, I don't know. But I don't think you should be going to the Code Enforcement Board without something from this board.

Albert Menendez:

Would somebody like to make a motion?

Gus Ceballos:

Well, I believe the applicant is before you today for a determination. So it wouldn't go to Code Board without this board's determination today, whether to designate or not designate.

Dona Spain:

He could.

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Yeah. So Mr. Chair, I know you're looking for a motion, but I just wanted to .. Mr. Fullerton was mentioning the discrepancies between the drawings and the building. I found in my research that many of the drawings, and maybe staff can follow up, is many of the drawings for these cottages were not built exactly as they were drawn. Many of the details weren't included and some different ones were included, or mirrored, or changed. I think there are definitely some details in these drawings that were not built, I would imagine. But I think it is typical to this type of [inaudible 00:55:12]

Kara Kautz:

Yes. It is. That happened quite frequently between the permit drawings and what was actually constructed for many properties. And we have early photographs that we know there have not been alterations that have been made. Then it's very easy to surmise that they were just done on the fly during construction and they were done in the field.

John Fullerton:

Thank you.

Albert Menendez:

Yes?

David Sacks:

Through the chair, members of the board. I just wanted to sum up a little bit before any motion was made. It's clear that my client isn't consenting to having this property designated. As we've talked about [inaudible 00:55:56] You're great at this. Me and you have been ... yeah, we're our bad list. As I was

saying, as we've discussed, keeping the home ... Mr. Saliamonas and his wife could file the demolition permit some time ago. They chose not to. That was a choice made based upon the fact that at heart, while he's not credentialed as a historic preservationist, he very much loves this home. As he said earlier, he wants to live in this home. He could have filed a demolition permit consistent, I think it's Chapter 554, that's now in place. And that would be potentially problematic for everybody. But that's not what he wants to do. That's not what you want to do.

So, I do want to go on the record, because I see where things are moving here, but I wanted to pick up on some of Peter's points, first with respect to the competent substantial evidence that set forth in the report and some of the additional materials. Some questions have been raised. Was the parapet there, was it not there? And we can go through all of those things as Peter did, and that's on the record. But it's clear that with respect to competent substantial evidence, you as applicant city as applicant has the burden of showing, and did so through their historic resources reports before us. Peter rebutted that, I think pretty completely. And definitely raised some issues that I think we're just recently asked by board member Fullerton and Mr. Pons.

Having said that, there was even further questions about the changes over the years. So, I think that before we get too far ahead of ourselves, we really need to take a step back. I don't know if there's an additional rush. I know it's happening in other cities about properties being designated, but let's not trip over ourselves, especially when we have someone that's willing to do something good, albeit not necessarily historic, which again is why it was saved well before he received his notice. Just so you're all aware of that, and not withstanding the condition of the home, which you know is occupied by rodents and things like that. I don't know if you said that earlier.

Forgive me for repeating it, but either way I wanted to say that. I also wanted to say it's important, I think. I'm a preservationist, I'm a lawyer, but a preservationist. I think it's important that we don't water down. As Peter said, some of these things. The criteria required ... the words significance and the words exemplifies, this isn't hyperbole. So, I think it's important that as a board we take into consideration really what's historic and what's not. And let's not trip over ourselves in order to get things designated for the sake of having them designated, when we know that the report was somewhat inaccurate. But again, it's the 1920s, but it was inaccurate. And so the competent substantial evidence was rebutted by my client. I don't know if it was rebutted to your extent, to your satisfaction, but nevertheless it was. I'll also go on to say that in addition to it just being a stretch, and unfortunately not everything in the city can be designated as we all know. There's a connection to George Merrick that runs far and wide. And I can go on and on and on about Venetian pools and all the coral rock, but let's not even go there. That was just part of my last comment about let's check ourselves, with respect to thinning out what the criteria really are.

I'd also like to say that because, the structure has, of what I'm talking about with regards to exemplifies, and maybe this is too watered down, I believe again that the application itself should be looked at again. We don't want to have to appeal this, we just want this really thought through by you as a board. We'll stay here all night. I'm sorry for the rest of you that are out here, but I think we really need to take a long look at this. I think it's important for the city that we don't designate properties that really shouldn't be designated without having all of us gone out there to visit.

The last thing I'll conclude is it's unfortunate that our architect couldn't be here today, because he too was the one that Mr. Saliamonas sought to get together to do something really good well, before there was any designation notice that was given. And this was the first one. This doesn't go back years like some of your other project. Why has it taken so long for this to be designated? This is not ... what notice was 30 something days? Within the last 30 days, or whatever it was. So let's take that step back. And again, we don't have our architect with us here today, but certainly he would testify the same thing. And

I think the three of us together would certainly open your eyes even further perhaps. And I'll leave it at there with you all. And I thank you.

Albert Menendez:

Thank you.

Albert Menendez:

I am entertaining motions. Does anybody have a motion?

Michael Maxwell:

I will move a motion. I will move a motion to get my wording right. To designate the property at 1221 Milan Avenue, legally described as Lot 9, Block 39 Coral Gables Granada Section Revised Is significant to the city of Coral Gable's history, based on the criteria established in the zoning code of the city of Coral Gables. It's historical, significant architectural and architectural significance.

Albert Menendez:

Do I have a second?

Margaret Rolando:

Second.

Albert Menendez:

Ms. Rolando seconds it.

Nancy Lyons:

Ms. Spain?

Dona Spain:

Yes.

Nancy Lyons:

Mr. Durana?

Xavier Durana:

Yes

Nancy Lyons:

Ms. Rolando?

Margaret Rolando:

Yes.

Nancy Lyons:

Mr. Garcia-Pons?

Cesar Garcia-Pons:

Yes.

Nancy Lyons:

Erenhaft?

Bruce Ehrenheft:

Yes.

Nancy Lyons:

Mr. Maxwell?

Michael Maxwell:

Yes.

Nancy Lyons:

Mr. Fullerton?

John Fullerton:

No.

Nancy Lyons:

Mr. Menedez?

Albert Menendez:

Yes.

Dona Spain:

Could I ask that the cottage ordinance be included in the record? Because I know you have the list of criteria, but you don't have the ordinance itself. Okay. So I think that's why the owner was a little bit confused.

Kara Kautz:

Okay.

Margaret Rolando:

May I also ask that if the Historic Preservation Department hasn't spoken with the applicant, that they share with him and his architects the benefits of being a Coral Gables Cottage and the advantages of being historically designated?

Kara Kautz:

Yes. I believe Warren has met with the owner a couple times, but yes, we will.