



COA (SP) 2025-026  
December 18, 2025

**STAFF REPORT  
ACCELERATED SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
FOR THE PROPERTY AT  
826 ORTEGA AVENUE  
A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK**

*Historical Resources &  
Cultural Arts*

2327 Salzedo Street  
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Florida, 33134

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**Proposal:** The application requests design approval for additions and alterations to the residence and sitework. Variances have also been requested from Article 2, Section 2-101 D (4 & 5) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code for the front and side setback, Article 13, Section 13-303 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code for enlarging a non-conforming structure, and Article 2, Section 2-101 D (6) a. of the Coral Gables Zoning Code for the minimum separation between the primary residence and the pool and gazebo.

**Architect:** Roberto S. Vich, RA

**Owner:** Virginia del Carmen Vich

**Legal Description:** Lot 5 & the West 25 Feet of Lot 6, Block 7, Coral Gables Granada Section Revised, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 113, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

**Site Characteristics:** The property is a 75' x 100' interior lot on the south side of Ortega Avenue between Cortez and Pizzaro Streets.

**BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS**

See Designation Report LHD 2025-008 discussed previously.

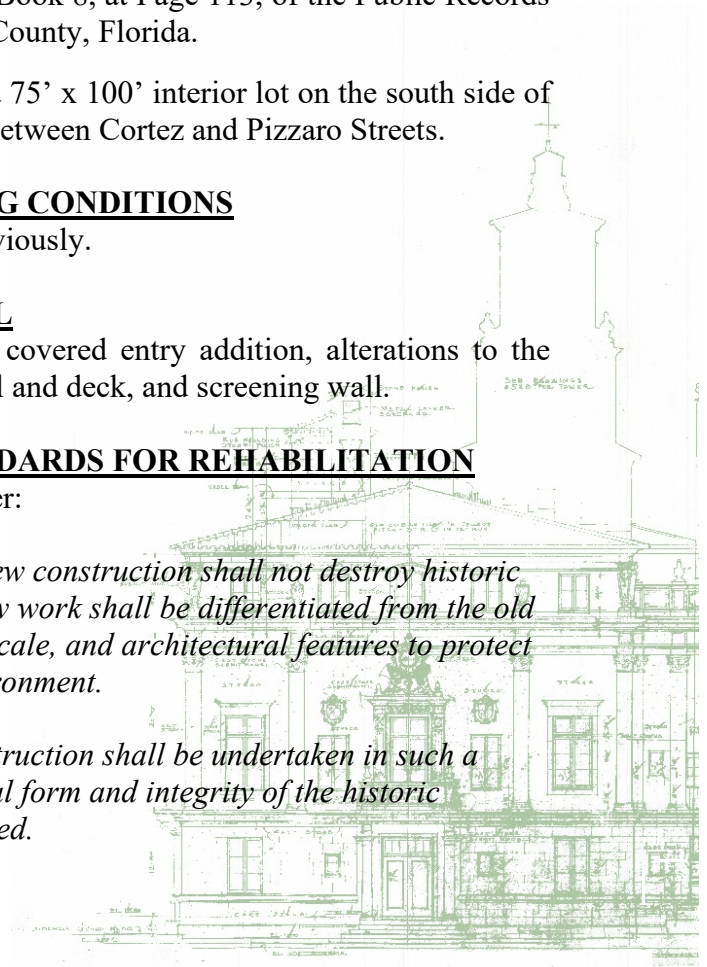
**PROPOSAL**

The application requests design approval for a new covered entry addition, alterations to the residence, and sitework that includes a swimming pool and deck, and screening wall.

**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.*



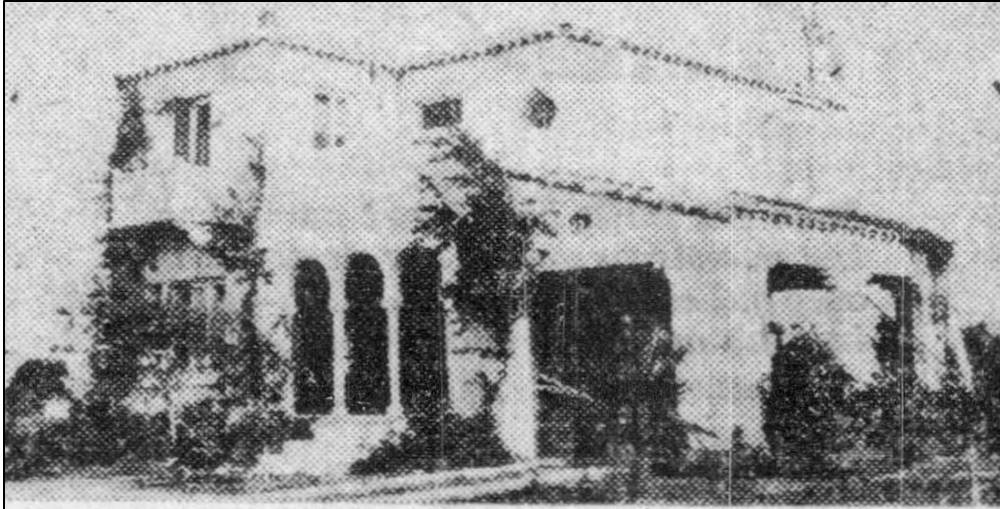


Figure 1: 1930 photo (top); ca. 1940s photo (middle); Current photo, 2025 (bottom)

### **STAFF OBSERVATIONS**

The scope of work contained in this application includes:

- Reconfiguration of the front entry to the residence. This includes:
  - o The removal of the existing non-original covered entry and stairs and the removal of an existing non-original brick planter to the east of the entry.
  - o Removal of the existing entry door.
  - o Construction of a new covered entry porch. The proposed covered entry will center the new double doors with the second-floor windows above. The porch is under a shed roof clad in tile with exposed rafter ends that is supported by two 8" square columns noted to be "Hardie Board on 4: x 4" wood post." Three steps cascade down from the landing. The double entry doors are French doors with a lower solid panel. A 1'-0" raised stucco band with corbeled corners surrounds the doors. A pair of light fixtures flank the new doorway.
- A new 4'-0" masonry wall is proposed to the east of the residence to act as the required pool screening. The wall is finished in stucco (texture not noted) and topped with 1'-0" decorative metalwork with a circle pattern. The pattern is repeated in the 5'-0" high pedestrian gates shown on the west and east sides of the residence. The wall and gates are noted to be under a separate permit.
- Sitework includes a swimming pool to the east of the residence and a gazebo, also the east of the residence, that is noted as a future improvement and under separate permits.

**Please note that, although depicted on the site plan, no elevations have been provided for the gazebo.**

### **VARIANCES**

Variances have also been requested from Article 2, Section 2-101 D (4 & 5) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code for the rear and side setback, Article 13, Section 13-303 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code for enlarging a non-conforming structure, and Article 2, Section 2-101 D (6) a. of the Coral Gables Zoning Code for the minimum distance between the residence and pool.

The following variances are requested in conjunction with this proposal:

Grant a variance to allow the new enlarged front covered entry to extend into the required 25'-0" front setback vs. The required minimum front setback in Single-Family Residential Districts shall be twenty-five feet (25'-0"), pursuant to Article 2, Section 2-101 D (4)a of the Coral Gables Zoning Code.

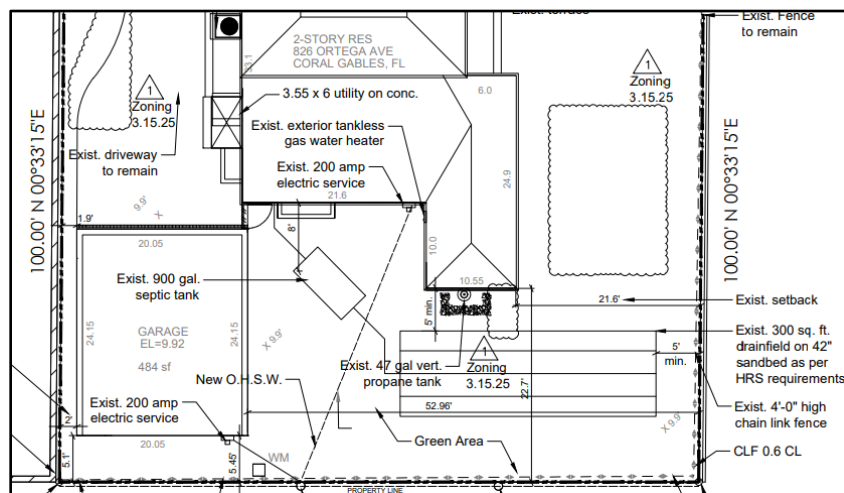
Grant a variance of Article 13, Section 13-303 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code, to allow a new enlarged front covered entry on an existing non-conforming structure.

The existing home is setback approximately 15'-0" from the front property line where a 25'-0" front setback is required. The house is legally non-conforming as to the front setback as it encroaches by 10'-0" as constructed in the 1920s. The existing covered entry encroaches into the front setback already by approximately 4'-0" so there is precedent for this proposal. Because of the siting of the historic home on the lot, Staff supports these variances.



Grant a variance to allow the edge of the pool deck, pool water edge and gazebo to have a side setback of three feet six inches (3'-6") vs. the required minimum side setback in Single-Family Residential Districts shall be approximately nine feet five inches (9'-5") pursuant to Article 2, Section 2-101 D (4 & 5) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code.

The proposed swimming pool, deck, gazebo are located in the side yard to the east of the residence. Because the 1920s house was sited so far forward on the lot as noted above, the septic tank and drain field are located to the rear of the home (see below). The side yard is the only location for any site improvements. The Code requires a 15'-0" overall side setback on this property. Because the existing original carport is 5.65' from the west property line, the required east setback is 9.35' which would render the side yard unusable for a pool or gazebo. Please note that the water's edge of the pool is noted to be at 7'-6" from the property line with the pool deck edge at 3'-6".



**Figure 2: Site Plan, BLDR-24-10-6285**

Grant a variance to allow the closest edge of the gazebo and pool water edge a minimum separation from the residence of three feet (3'-0") vs. the required minimum separation in Single-Family Residential Districts of five feet (5'-0") pursuant to Article 2, Section 2-101 D (6) a. of the Coral Gables Zoning Code.

As noted above, the only location for a pool and/or gazebo is in the side yard. Because the side yard is narrow, the proposed pool and gazebo are closer to the house than is allowed by Code.

The Historical Resources staff finds that the following criteria, necessary for authorization of the variances, apply:

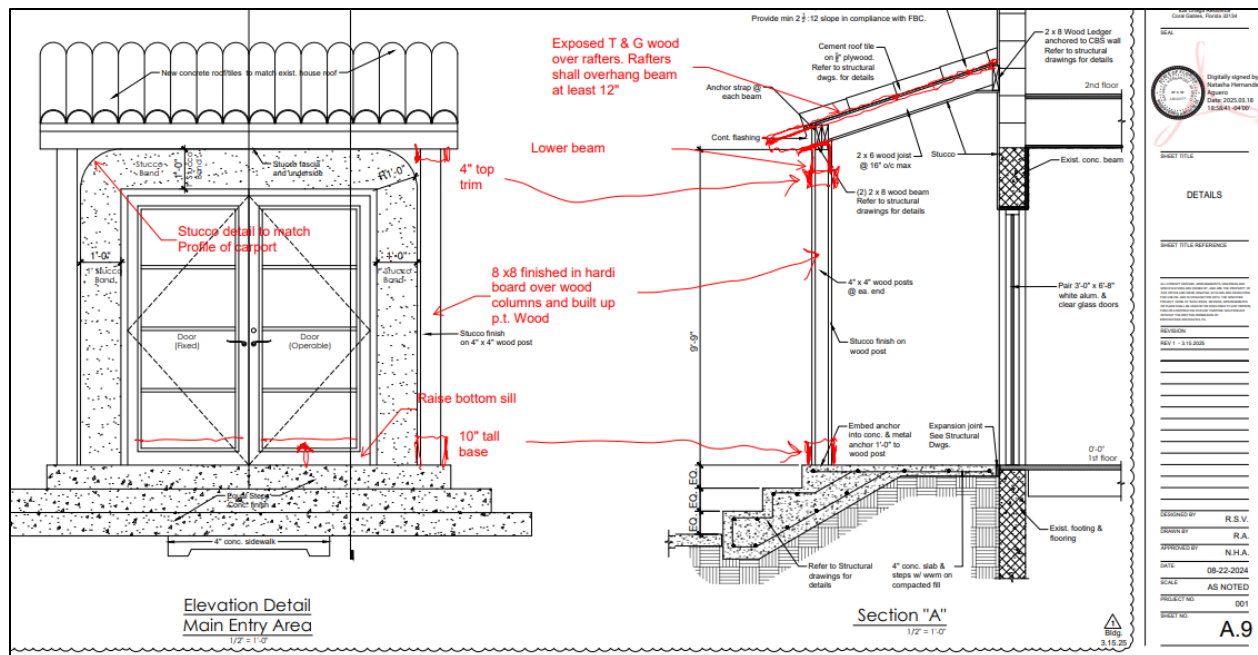
Criteria	Yes/No
1) That special conditions and circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, structure or building involved and which are not applicable to other lands, structures or buildings in the same zoning district.	Yes
2) That the special conditions and circumstances do not result from the actions of the applicant.	Yes
3) That granting the variance requested will not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this Ordinance to other lands, buildings or structures in the same zoning district.	Yes

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4) That literal interpretation of the provisions of the Zoning Code would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district under the terms of the Zoning Code and would work unnecessary and undue hardship on the applicant.	Yes
5) That the variance granted is the minimum variance that will make possible the reasonable use of the land, building or structure.	Yes
6) That granting the variance will not change the use to one that is different from other land in the same district.	Yes
7) That the granting of the variance will be in harmony with the general intent and purpose of the Zoning Code, and that such variance will not be injurious to the area involved or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare.	Yes
8) That the granting of the variance is appropriate for the continued preservation of an historic landmark or historic landmark district.	Yes

### **BOARD OF ARCHITECTS**

The proposal was reviewed and approved as noted by the Board Architects on May 15, 2025. The written and drawn notes are below. Please note that the front wall was not included in the Board of Architects submittal or review.



### **STAFF CONCLUSION**

The application requests design approval for a covered entry addition and alterations to the residence and sitework. The front entry, as seen in Figures 1, was altered at some point by the 1940s from its original triple arch configuration. The current entry configuration is not appropriate for the home. The current proposal, while not restoring the original or 1940s entry, is more appropriate to the Mediterranean Revival style of the home than what currently exists.

Within this proposal, a swimming pool, pool deck, masonry wall with gates, and gazebo are indicated on the site plan as "future" and "under separate permit." There were no elevations provided for the proposed gazebo and Staff is not comfortable recommending variances on an item that has not yet been evaluated or reviewed by Historic Staff or the Board of Architects. The

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proposed gazebo and its associated variances will be brought back to the Historic Preservation Board as a future Special Certificate of Appropriateness when the gazebo has been further developed. Therefore, all references to the gazebo have been removed from the recommendations below.

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

1. Window and door glass is to be clear, no tint, no reflectivity, no low-e.
2. Muntins are to be high-profile.
3. The French doors and fixed sidelites are to receive higher kickplates.
4. The French doors are to receive a vertical muntin and possibly another horizontal to more closely reflect the original drawings.
5. House is not to be restuccoed in its entirety. For any stucco patching, a sample is to be approved by Historic Staff prior to complete application.
6. Roof tile is to be true, two-piece barrel tile.
7. Remove the raised stucco band around the new entry doors.
8. Clarify material of swimming pool deck.
9. A separate Standard Certificate of Appropriateness will be required for the pool and pool deck if the shape or location changes.
10. The front wall and gates are to be reviewed by the Board of Architects. Work with Staff on the design of the gates and the decorative metalwork (circle pattern not appropriate).
11. The proposed gazebo and variances are to be reviewed under a separate Special Certificate of Appropriateness at a future date.

**Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:**

A motion to **APPROVE** the design proposal for additions and alterations to the residence and sitework on the property located at **826 Ortega Avenue**, a Local Historic Landmark, legally described as Lot 5 & the West 25 Feet of Lot 6, Block 7, Coral Gables Granada Section Revised, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 113, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida, and **APPROVE WITH THE CONDITIONS NOTED ABOVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness.

AND

A motion to **APPROVE** a variance to allow the edge of the pool deck and pool water edge to have a side setback of three feet six inches (3'-6") vs. the required minimum side setback in Single-Family Residential Districts shall be approximately nine feet five inches (9'-5") pursuant to Article 2, Section 2-101 D (4 & 5) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code.

AND

A motion to **APPROVE** a variance to allow the new enlarged front covered entry to extend into the required 25'-0" front setback vs. The required minimum front setback in Single-Family Residential Districts shall be twenty-five feet (25'-0"), pursuant to Article 2, Section 2-101 D (4)a of the Coral Gables Zoning Code.

AND

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A motion to **APPROVE** a variance of Article 13, Section 13-303 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code, to allow a new enlarged front covered entry on an existing non-conforming structure.

AND

A motion to **APPROVE** a variance to allow the closest edge of the pool water edge a minimum separation from the residence of three feet (3'-0") vs. the required minimum separation in Single-Family Residential Districts of five feet (5'-0") pursuant to Article 2, Section 2-101 D (6) a. of the Coral Gables Zoning Code.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna Pernas', written over a horizontal line.

Anna Pernas

Historic Preservation Officer