



COA (SP) 2020-007  
August 19, 2020

Historical Resources &  
Cultural Arts

2327 SALZEDO STREET  
CORAL GABLES  
FLORIDA 33134

P 305.460.5093  
E hist@coralgables.com

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

**Proposal:** The application requests design approval for the relocation of the residence, an addition, and sitework.

**Architect:** Callum Gibb Architect, PA

**Owner:** GG Property Holdings LLC  
Greg Goldstein

**Legal Description:** Lots 14 and 15, Block 18, 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

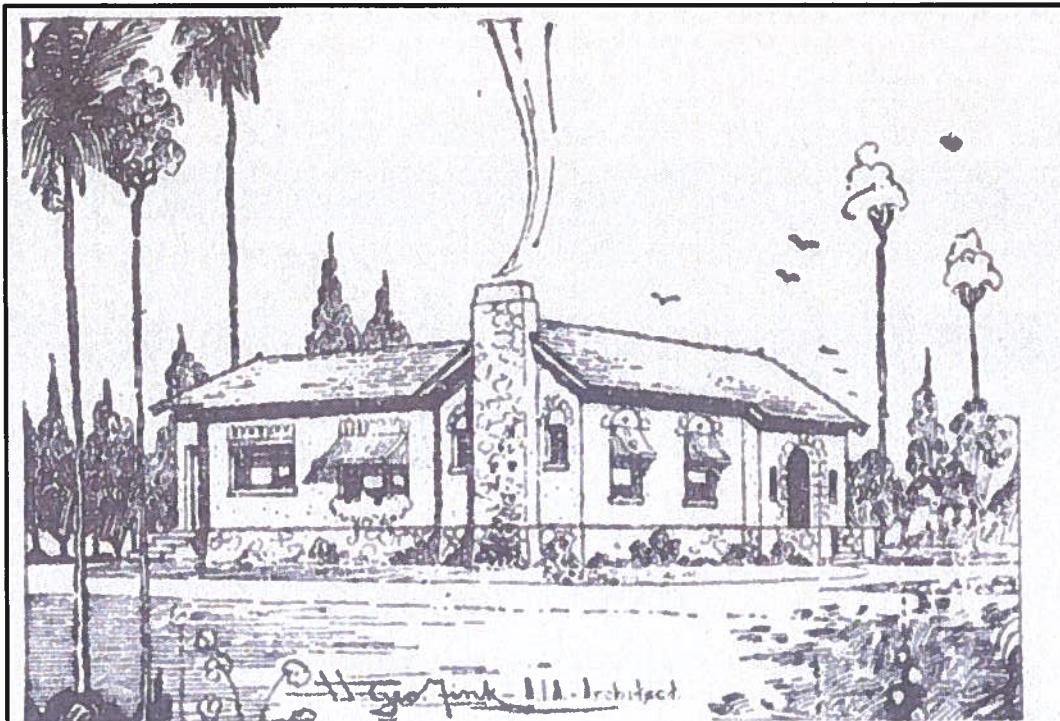
**Site Characteristics:** The property is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Minorca Avenue and Segovia Street. The lot size is 100' x 112.50.'

**BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS**

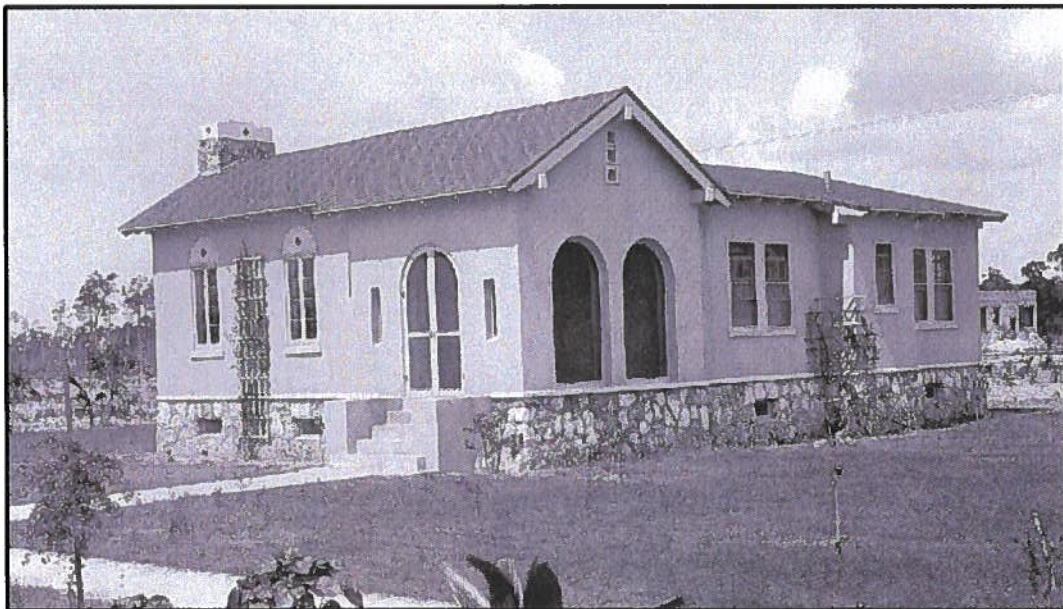
This home, amongst the earliest homes constructed in Coral Gables, was designed by H. George Fink and given permit #39 in the City. A Miami Herald article dated March 10, 1922 stated "Mrs. Sallie Allenfort of Patterson, NJ has started construction on a five-room coral rock and stucco bungalow on Segovia Street and Minorca Avenue. This house will be finished in two months and will be occupied by Mrs. Allenfort as soon as possible." It was one of eight homes whose renderings were included in a full-page advertisement entitled "The First Coral Gables Season Ends with Total Sales Over \$1,000,000" in April 1922. (see figure below)

An addition located to the north of the original structure in 1950 by architect Edward T. Rempe, Jr comprised of a carport (later enclosed), a bathroom, storage, and enlarged the screen porch (later enclosed). The original casements windows were replaced with awning windows at an unknown date. The date of the alteration of the front façade window is also unknown.

The property was designated as a Local Historic Landmark in 2005.



**RESIDENCE OF MRS. SALLIE ALLENFORT  
AT CORAL GABLES**



**H. George Fink rendering from Miami Herald, April 1922**

**"The First Coral Gables Season Ends with Total Sales Over \$1,000,000," [top]**

**Note: the coral rock features associated with the fenestration were not implemented  
c.1923 historic photo [bottom]**



c.1940 photo

### **PROPOSAL**

The applicant is requesting approval to relocate the existing residence east from its current location in the middle of Lots 14 and 15 to be contained wholly on Lot 14. Views of the home from both Minorca Avenue and Segovia Street will be maintained.

The applicant is requesting design approval to remove later additions (approximately 408 SF) to the rear of the home and construct a new addition (approximately 867 SF) comprising a bedroom suite and a one car garage to the rear of the property. Alterations to the original home are also planned.

### **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.*
3. *Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.*
4. *Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right may be retained and preserved.*
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**

#### **Relocation**

The existing residence at 603 Minorca Avenue sits almost exactly in the middle of Lots 14 and 15. The proposal requests that the existing residence be moved 20'-5" to the east so that it sits wholly on Lot 14 (corner lot).

The existing house is a one-story wood-frame structure that features a raised floor set on a coral rock stem wall. The relocation of the residence shall be conducted by an experienced specialist contractor to ensure a safe transition for the structure. The new concrete foundation and stem wall will be built to the same height as the existing and clad with coral rock set in the same manner as the existing.

#### **Addition and alterations**

The work proposed in the application consists of:

- Removal of later additions to rear of home (approximately 408 SF)
- Construction of a one-story addition (approximately 867 SF) to the rear of the home
- On the original home, fenestration will be returned to its original configuration. Namely, on the front façade, the large picture window will be removed, and the two single windows reinstituted. On the west façade, the French doors will be removed and replaced with a double window.

Sitework consists of a new brick paver front walkway and driveway.

#### **Front Elevation (Sheet A.3.1)**

On the front elevation, the large picture window (a later alteration) will be removed and replaced with two casement windows topped with a stucco arch in order to return the fenestration to the original configuration. No information was provided about the front door or if the front concrete steps and wing walls are to be reconstructed or moved.

#### **North Elevation (Sheet A.3.1)**

The existing elevation consists of a window at the rear of the original residence and the rear elevations of the later additions. The window will remain but is not visible on the proposed elevation which consists of the rear facade of the new garage. A thickened stucco base takes the place of the coral rock stem wall at the addition to differentiate it from the original. A pair of single-hung windows and a single French door provide light and access to the garage.

#### **East Elevation (Sheet A.3.2)**

At the east elevation, the additions to the north will be removed and replaced with a one-story addition consisting of a breakfast room, a master bedroom suite, and a one-car garage to the far north. The breakfast area and master bedroom each have a pair of French doors with stairs leading to the side yard. As with the north elevation, a stucco base takes the place of the coral rock base of the original residence. The roofline dips slightly at the breakfast room to provide a

visual break between the old and new. The drawing notes indicate that the addition will have projecting wood outlookers like those found on the original house. At the original front porch, fixed, clear-view windows are proposed to look more like the original screened openings.

West Elevation (Sheet A.3.3)

As at the east elevation, the additions to the north will be removed and replaced with the one-story addition. On the original residence, the French doors (a later alteration) will be replaced with single-hung windows. At the addition, two pairs of single-hung windows are being introduced at the breakfast room and at the rear hallway.

**VARIANCES**

No variances have been requested with this application.

**BOARD OF ARCHITECTS**

The proposal was reviewed and approved by the Board of Architects on February 27, 2020 with no comments.

**STAFF CONCLUSION**

Although seemingly unorthodox, Staff is of the opinion that the relocation of the home to a single lot is considered an appropriate option on this property as it will preserve the original cottage intention of this very early Coral Gables H. George Fink home.

In 2005 (a previous owner), a Special Certificate of Appropriateness was approved for a two-story approximately 2,800 SF addition to the east of residence, covered terrace to the west, and sitework. (See attached) This project, allowable by right under City codes, would have overwhelmed the existing one-story residence and obliterated its east elevation. It was never permitted.

In 2019 the current owner approached the Department about a substantial addition to the residence that, again, would have overwhelmed the residence and diminished its architectural integrity. The initial proposal called for the removal of approximately 80% of the structure. In working with the owner and the architect, attempting to balance the property rights afforded to the owner with historic preservation and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, Staff reached the conclusion that relocation of the historic residence was a viable option in order to preserve its architectural and historic integrity. Because this small wood-frame cottage was constructed in the middle of an 11,250 SF lot, it will always be susceptible to large, inappropriately scaled additions. Moving it to Lot 14 keeps the house intact, allows for a modest addition, and keeps the east elevation visible from the side street as it is now.

Section 3-1109 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code entitled "Moving of existing improvements" reads as follows:

The moving of significant improvement from their original location shall be discouraged; however, the Historic Preservation Board may grant a Special Certificate of Appropriateness if it finds that no reasonable alternative is available for preserving the improvement on its original site and that the proposed relocation site is compatible with the historic and architectural integrity of the improvement.

Typically moving of historic resources is avoided as once the resource is relocated it loses its site context and association. In this the resource remains on its original site and will retain that association and will ultimately result in the home retaining a higher degree of historic integrity. This is one of earliest homes in the City and is a unique case in which this measure would be deemed appropriate and feasible.

It has been determined that the existing structure is sound and can be safely moved. Staff's preference is that the coral rock stem wall remains intact throughout the move. Staff would like for the owner and the company chosen to execute the relocation to investigate this possibility. If it is not possible, the original coral rock is to be salvaged for reuse and reinstalled with the same pointing method.

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

1. Provide a complete structural report on the existing structure prior to obtaining a permit for the relocation of the structure.
2. The coral rock stem wall is to be moved with residence intact. If this is determined not to be possible, see condition #3 below.
3. The original coral rock base is to be salvaged and reused on the new base with the same pointing as on the original stem wall.
4. Windows to be clear glass and window muntins are to be high-profile.
5. Return the stucco detail to the arches over the reconfigured front windows.
6. New wood outlookers are to be differentiated from the existing. Details to be provided on permit drawings.
7. The windows are being proposed to return to the original configuration. In absence of original drawings, we look to 1920s photographs. The home at 637 Alcazar Avenue is essentially the "twin" of this house and its west elevation can be seen in a 1920s photo of the home (below).

Note that the west elevation of 603 Minorca Avenue can be seen in the background of the 1920s photo of the twin (below, far right). The proposed windows on the west elevation should reflect what is seen in the photo below.



8. Similarly, the original windows flanking the fireplace should be returned. Their location is visible in the stucco as a patch. They appear larger in the rendering than those seen in the photo of 637 Alcazar Avenue



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

A motion to **APPROVE WITH THE CONDITIONS NOTED ABOVE** the relocation of the existing residence from its current location in the middle of Lots 14 and 15 to Lot 14 and for the design approval for a one-story addition, alterations, and sitework on the property located at **603 Minorca Avenue**, a Local Historic Landmark,” legally described as Lots 14 and 15, Block 18, 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 and **APPROVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness with the conditions noted above.

Respectfully submitted,



---

Kara N. Kautz

Interim Historic Preservation Officer