



**STAFF REPORT
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
FOR THE PROPERTY AT
3920 DURANGO STREET
A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK**

*Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts*

2327 Salzedo Street
Coral Gables
Florida, 33134

P: 305-460-5093
E: hist@coralgables.com

Proposal: The application requests design approval for additions and alterations to the residence and detached garage, and sitework.

Architect: Hamed Rodriguez Architects

Owner: Luciana Maria Patsigia

Folio Number: 03-4118- 005-1780

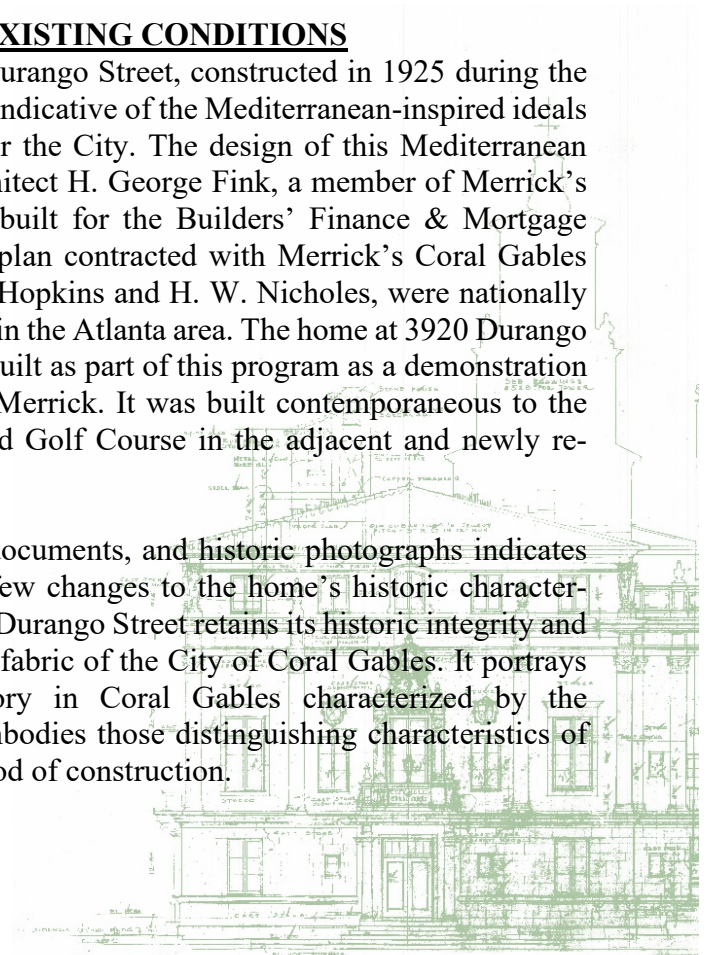
Legal Description: Lot 6, Block 46, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part Three, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 10, at Page 52 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Site Characteristics: The property is located on an interior, approximately 50' x 100' lot on the west side of Durango Street just north of the intersection of University Drive and Bird Road.

BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS

The single- family residence at 3920 Durango Street, constructed in 1925 during the initial development of Coral Gables, is indicative of the Mediterranean-inspired ideals founder George Merrick envisioned for the City. The design of this Mediterranean Revival style home is attributed to architect H. George Fink, a member of Merrick's original design team. The home was built for the Builders' Finance & Mortgage Company as part of a larger building plan contracted with Merrick's Coral Gables Corporation. The partners, Lindsey H. Hopkins and H. W. Nicholes, were nationally acclaimed for their building campaigns in the Atlanta area. The home at 3920 Durango Street was one of the first fifty homes built as part of this program as a demonstration for the contract and was approved by Merrick. It was built contemporaneous to the development of the Biltmore Hotel and Golf Course in the adjacent and newly replatted Country Club Sections.

Assessment of the property, building documents, and historic photographs indicates that over the past century there were few changes to the home's historic character-defining features. The property at 3920 Durango Street retains its historic integrity and significantly contributes to the historic fabric of the City of Coral Gables. It portrays the environment in an era of history in Coral Gables characterized by the Mediterranean Revival style, and it embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, period, and method of construction.





Figures 12: 3920 Durango Street Over Time

Front (East) Façade:

c. 1940 [top]

1968 & 1977 [center]

Courtesy Miami-Dade Property Appraiser

2024 [bottom]

PROPOSAL

The application requests design approval for a two-story addition to the rear of the residence and attached garage and alterations to the residence. The two-story addition from the residence will extend over the existing one-story detached garage. Sitework is also proposed.

Note: In July 2023 there was a fire on the second story of the home. It was declared not fit for habitation and has been vacant since. The current owner purchased the property in September 2023 with the intention of restoring and adding to the house. The Architect and Property Owner have been working with staff on the renovation plans. At the Owner's request, the property was designated a historic landmark on August 21, 2024.

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 additions and alterations to the existing residence. The Architect's intent was to minimize alterations to the residence, by extending the addition over the one-story original garage and reconfiguring the ground floor to accommodate an outdoor covered terrace. The work proposed in the application consists of:

- Extending the existing second floor toward the rear of the property and over the one-story auxiliary building, connecting the two structures. The addition has a flat roof and will be setback from the edge of the parapet. The two-story addition consists of a primary bedroom suite, and two bedrooms with a shared bathroom. The building footprint at the first floor of the main residence will be minimally altered.
- The existing one-story auxiliary building will be partially demolished to create a covered outdoor terrace, laundry room and bathroom. A spiral staircase will be installed to provide access to the two-story addition. The two-story addition is setback from the edge of the building to create the perception that a one-story structure remains in-tact from the street perspective.
- Installation of new impact-resistant windows and doors.
- Interior alterations / remodeling to the existing residence.

- Infill of the existing crawl space and installation of a new concrete slab at the ground level.
- New driveway and approach from Durango Street.
- Construction of a new pool and pool deck

Front Elevation (facing Durango Street)- Sheet A-2.0

At the North East Elevation (front), the only alterations to the existing home appears to be the replacement of the windows and doors with impact-resistant units. The existing windows on the home are single-hung. The original windows throughout the home were casements in a divided-lite configuration with high-profile muntins and protruding sills. The Architect has proposed new casement windows to match the historic photos, since plans have not been located.

The front entry is near the northeast corner of the home adjacent to the porte cochere. The front door appears to be original to the home. It is a vertical plank door with a diamond cutout window and is proposed to remain. A new screen door will be installed, to match the 1940's and 1970's photo. A new true, two-piece, barrel tile roof will be installed. The lattice installed at the rear of the port-cochere will be removed, all original details that remain will be restored. The original chimney finial cap, previously removed in 1996 due to wind damage, will also be restored.

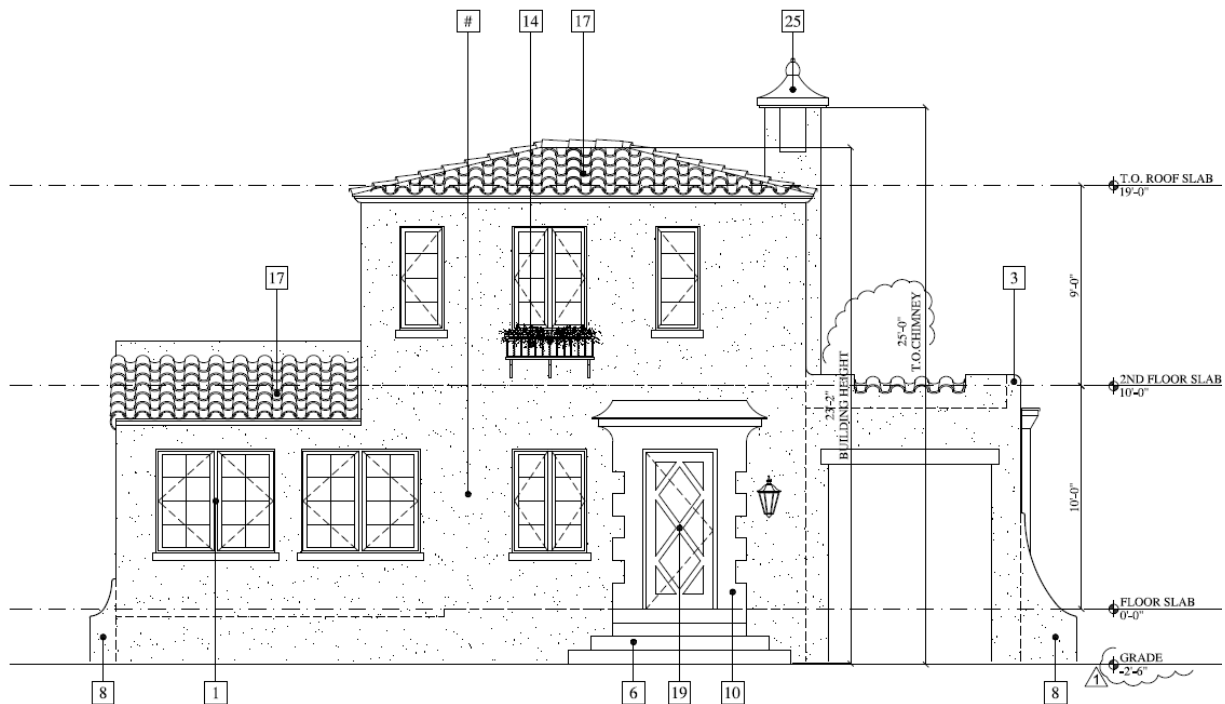
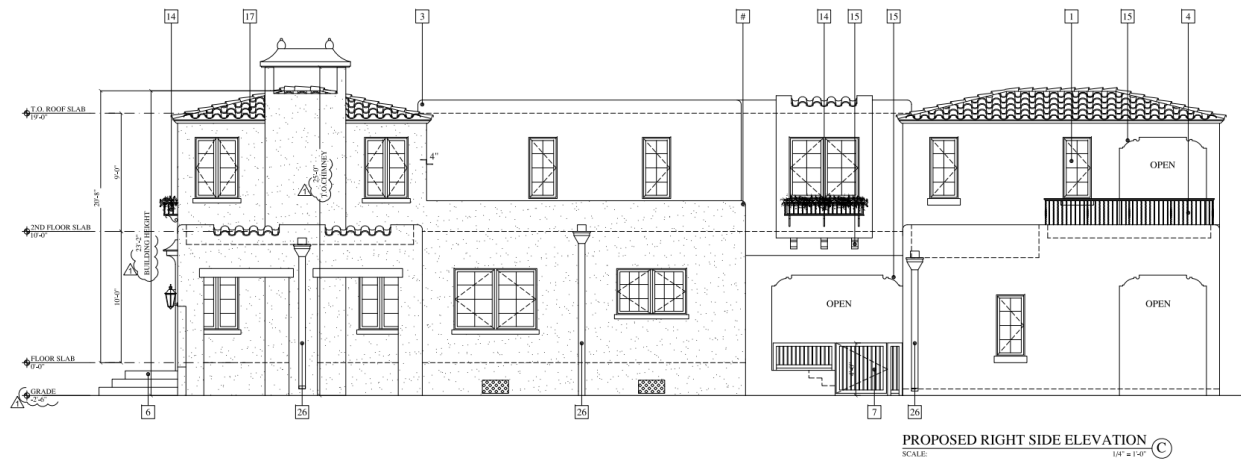


Figure 3: Proposed Front Elevation

Rear Elevation (facing Granada Street)- Sheet A 2.0

At the rear of the residence, a small utility room will be removed and existing openings will be enlarged for new French doors. The second floor addition extends toward the rear yard to create a bridge connector over the one-story auxiliary building. The two-story addition is an extension of the existing second floor will house the primary bedroom suite, additional bedroom and a bathroom. The stucco texture will be differentiated from the original.



Right Side Elevation (facing Algaringo Street)- Sheet A 2.1

All the windows and doors of the residence will be replaced with new casement windows to match the historic photos on file. The original plans of the house have not been located to date. Two door openings at the ground floor are being modified into windows, it is recommended that scoring on the stucco remain to identify the size of the original openings and that window sills should not be added to these openings. The new second floor addition extends toward the rear of the property and over the detached auxiliary building. The addition over the main residence has a flat roof and single casement windows. The “bridge” creates a hyphen between the addition over the main residence and auxiliary building. Decorative arched openings connect the new pool patio to the side yard.

Left Side Elevation (facing University Drive) - Sheet A2.1

There are no changes to the left side ground floor, besides window replacement. All new windows will be casement to match the historic photos on file. The original plans of the house have not been located to date. At the existing second floor, a window will be infilled and a new window will be added at the top of the stairs. The second floor addition extends toward the rear yard and over the existing auxiliary building. A series of balconies with French doors in the primary bedroom will overlook at the new pool patio. The auxiliary building will be partially demolished to accommodate a new covered terrace with decorative arched openings.

Sitework and Detached Auxiliary Building:

A one-story garage auxiliary building sits at the northwest corner of the property. At an unknown date the garage door opening was enclosed, and it is now listed as a guest house. Some of the alterations to the front (west) façade of the structure are obvious from the stucco pattern. The design proposal includes partial demolition of the structure for a new covered terrace, bathroom and laundry room and construction of a second-floor addition and roof terrace. The covered terrace will face toward the new pool patio through a series of decorative arched openings. It is the intent of the architect to maintain the look of the one-story structure from the street perspective and accommodate the changes to the garage behind the house. Due to the existing footprint of the existing residence and minimal rear yard, locating the addition in this area creates the least amount of impact to the main residence while still accommodating the needs of the owner without seeking any variances from the Zoning Code.

The new two-story addition has a hipped, barrel tile roof that matches the existing roof slope. The primary bedroom will have a series of iron balconies with French doors, overlooking the new pool patio. A spiral staircase at the rear will lead from the pool patio up to a small roof terrace that connects to the primary bedroom. The railing of the roof terrace is setback from the front of the building to minimize any visibility from the street. All the proposed opening sizes, and types are appropriate to the style of the existing building.

The sitework includes removing the existing U-shaped driveway and wood deck and the installation of a new driveway, walkways, pool and pool patio.

VARIANCES

No variances have been requested in conjunction with this application.

BOARD OF ARCHITECTS

08/15/2024 BOA: Motion to defer with the following comments: 1) align columns in rear with 2nd floor. 2) City Architect to review.

08/29/2024 BOA: Motion to approve based on satisfying all BOA comments.

STAFF CONCLUSION

The application presented requests design approval for additions and alterations to the residence and original detached garage and sitework. The proposed alterations to the residence are in keeping with the Secretary of Interior Standards in that the essential form and integrity of the historic structure are being respected and the new addition is located at the rear or on an inconspicuous side of the historic building. The size, scale and massing are critical elements for ensuring that a new addition is subordinate to the historic building, thus preserving the historic character of a historic property.

The scope of work includes restoration of many of the original features of the home including the chimney cap, screened door, casement windows and barrel tile roof. The additions and modifications to the one-story auxiliary structure are more unconventional, but it is the Architect's intent to preserve the residence and retain the one-story portion from the perspective of the street. By incorporating the existing building footprint, they have created a proposal that respects the

historic structure, meets the Zoning requirements and provides for the needs of the property owner. Many of the alterations to the rear of the residence and the detached structure will be minimally visible to the street. A vacant lot is located to the right side of the building, making this elevation more visible than typically usual for an interior lot. Future development of this site will minimize the visibility of this elevation.

In July 2023 there was a fire on the second story of the home. It was declared not fit for habitation and has been vacant since. The owner and architect have been working with staff on a rehabilitation plan for the property that would preserve the character defining features of the property, restore missing/damaged features and accommodate for the new owner's needs. The modifications to the auxiliary building allows for minimal changes to the main residence and still maintains the perception of a detached garage from the street perspective. As per the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, the proposed addition is located at the secondary elevation and is compatible with the design of the property. Staff requests the following conditions to 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 tint / no reflectivity / no low-e.
3. The stucco should be differentiated from the existing residence.
4. Window sills should be removed from the new addition and should only remain on the original portion of the house.
5. Chimney cap detail to be included in the permit plans.
6. The roof structure of the existing residence is not to be removed.
7. A separate Standard Certificate of Appropriateness is required for the swimming pool. Provide material of pool deck to Staff for review.

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 **3920 Durango Street**, a Local Historic Landmark, legally described as Lot 6, Block 46, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part Three, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 10, at Page 52 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,

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

Historic Preservation Officer