

LHD 2007-04
May 22, 2008

**DESIGNATION REPORT
PROPERTY AT
111 SALAMANCA AVENUE
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**

Folio Number: 03-4108-009-2790

Legal Description: Lots 10, 11 and East 30 feet Lot 12, Block 29, Coral Gables Douglas Section

Plat Book and Page: 25-69

Original Permit No.: 826

Date of Original Permit: 1924

Original Architect: H. George Fink

Original Owner: C. J. Schweiterman

Present Owner: C. Michael Saenz

Present Use: Apartment Building

Building Type: 2-story Mediterranean Revival with courtyard

Site Characteristics: The property is located on almost three lots at the corner of Salamanca Avenue and Galiano Street. The primary elevation faces south onto Salamanca Avenue. Dimensions of the site are 130 feet wide by 110 feet deep.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Permitted in 1924, the structure at 111 Salamanca Avenue was designed by H. George Fink, one of the most prominent architects in Coral Gables and cousin to City founder George Merrick. Designed in the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture, the building is an excellent example of the type of apartment buildings constructed in the City of Coral Gables during the height of its development.

The building has undergone minor alterations and has maintained its character and integrity, contributing to the historic fabric of the City. Due to progress and development in this area of the City, this structure is one of a few that remain intact.

CRITERIA FOR SIGNIFICANCE

b. *Architectural significance:*

1. *Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural styles*
2. *Embody those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction*
3. *Is an outstanding work of a prominent designer or builder*
4. *Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship of outstanding quality or which represent a significant innovation or adaptation to the South Florida environment.*

Designed by the H. George Fink, the structure at 111 Salamanca Avenue is an excellent example of the influence of the Mediterranean Revival style on the developing architecture of Coral Gables.

Standing at two stories tall, the apartment building exhibits features that are characteristic of the Mediterranean Revival style. Features including: barrel tiles, cast sills, rough textured stucco, two predominant chimneys, exposed rafter ends, twisted columns, arched openings and shaped wing walls, add detail and charm to the structure.

The two-story structure is designed with a U-shaped floor plan, symmetrical around a central receiving courtyard with a decorative stucco fountain, from which the main access into the units was provided. To the rear (north) of the courtyard is a loggia demarcated by a grouping of three decorative arches with twisted Corinthian columns. The courtyard is flanked with a pair of tiled staircases that provide access to a second floor open walkway. While the plan of the building is symmetrical in nature, the projecting bays of the front façade have slightly different first floor features. The bay to the west has a grouping of three casement windows inset between wooden columns and scored stucco. The east bay has a pair of decorative wood French doors that open onto a screened balcony. The original plans show this pair of doors opening onto a small balconette with wrought iron railings with a cement sill and brackets. However, the current balcony configuration can be seen in a circa 1940s photograph and a similar apartment building has this configuration as an original feature, leading one to believe that this may not have been constructed as shown in the original plans.

The east and west elevations are nearly identical to each other and feature fireplaces and projecting window bays on the second floor with half-timbering details, wooden supports and tile roof.

The majority of the wood windows remain as do a number of the original doors. Since its construction, the building has undergone minor alterations, which do not destroy the essential form and integrity of the property and its environment.

ADDITIONS / ALTERATIONS

There have been very few substantive changes to the structure at 111 Salamanca over the past 83 years other than what would be considered routine maintenance (painting, re-roofing, roof repairs, etc.). At some point, air-conditioning units and metal awnings were added. In addition, the original plans show wood railings and grilles, but the railings are now iron.

There were originally two one-story garages built on the property that were ordered by the City to be demolished because they were unsafe. These two auxiliary structures to the rear of the existing building were removed in 1968.

ARCHITECT

H. George Fink was cousin to City founder George Merrick, and was responsible for much of the early design and planning of Coral Gables. He moved to the area in 1915 from Pennsylvania, and in 1921 began his work with Merrick. A prolific architect, Fink designed numerous Mediterranean Revival residential and commercial structures in Coral Gables in the early 1920s and in 1924 was honored by King Alfonso XIII of Spain for his "interesting, outstanding, and extremely artistic interpretation and reproduction of the Spanish Arts in America." In 1928 Mr. Fink became Designing Architect for the J. D. Penny Co. of New York, remaining with them until 1932, when he accepted the position of Supervising Architect for the W. P. A. He was assigned to the State of Maine and remained with the W. P. A. until 1937.

He returned to Coral Gables in 1937 and resumed his private architectural practice. During World War II, Mr. Fink was Architectural Designer for Robert & Company, of Atlanta, assisting with the Richmond Naval Base, the Glynn County Base, Brunswick Ga., and the Chamblee Naval Base Chamblee, Ga. In 1934 He became Architect in Charge, Architectural Division, Bell Bomber Plant, Marietta Ga., where the famous B-29's were built and assembled. He returned to Coral Gables and continued to design in Coral Gables until the middle of the 1960's. He died in 1975.

OWNERSHIP HISTORY

The original plans show that the building was designed for C.J. Schweiterman in 1924. Subsequent owners include: Beulah F. (Thompson) Wilson and Finis E. Wilson (1940s) who retained the property until it was sold by her estate in June, 1986 to Robert N. Ginsburg who, in turn, sold it to current owner C. Michael Saenz in March, 1987.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Constructed in 1924, the property at 111 Salamanca Avenue (legally described as Lot 10, 11 and the East 30 feet of Lot 12, Block 29, Coral Gables Douglas Section) is significant to the City of Coral Gables' history based on the following criteria found in the Coral Gables Zoning Code, Article 3, Section 3-1103:

- b. Architectural significance:
1. Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural styles
2. Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction
3. Is an outstanding work of a prominent designer or builder
4. Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship of outstanding quality or which represent a significant innovation or adaptation to the South Florida environment

Staff finds the following:

111 Salamanca Avenue, legally described as Lot 10, 11 and the East 30 feet of Lot 12, Block 29, Coral Gables Douglas Section, and constructed in 1924 is significant to the City of Coral Gables history based on:

ARCHITECTURE

Therefore Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **APPROVE** the Local Historic Designation of the property at 111 Salamanca Avenue, legally described as Lot 10, 11 and the East 30 feet of Lot 12, Block 29, Coral Gables Douglas Section based on its architecture.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara N. Kautz
Historic Preservation Officer

May 22, 2008

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Bibliography

Building Microfilm Records for 111 Salamanca Avenue, Building and Zoning Department,
Microfilm Division, Coral Gables, Florida.

Coral Gables Use & Area Map, City of Coral Gables, June 1997, Plate No. #.

Real Estate Records for 111 Salamanca Avenue, Historical Resources Department, Coral Gables, Florida

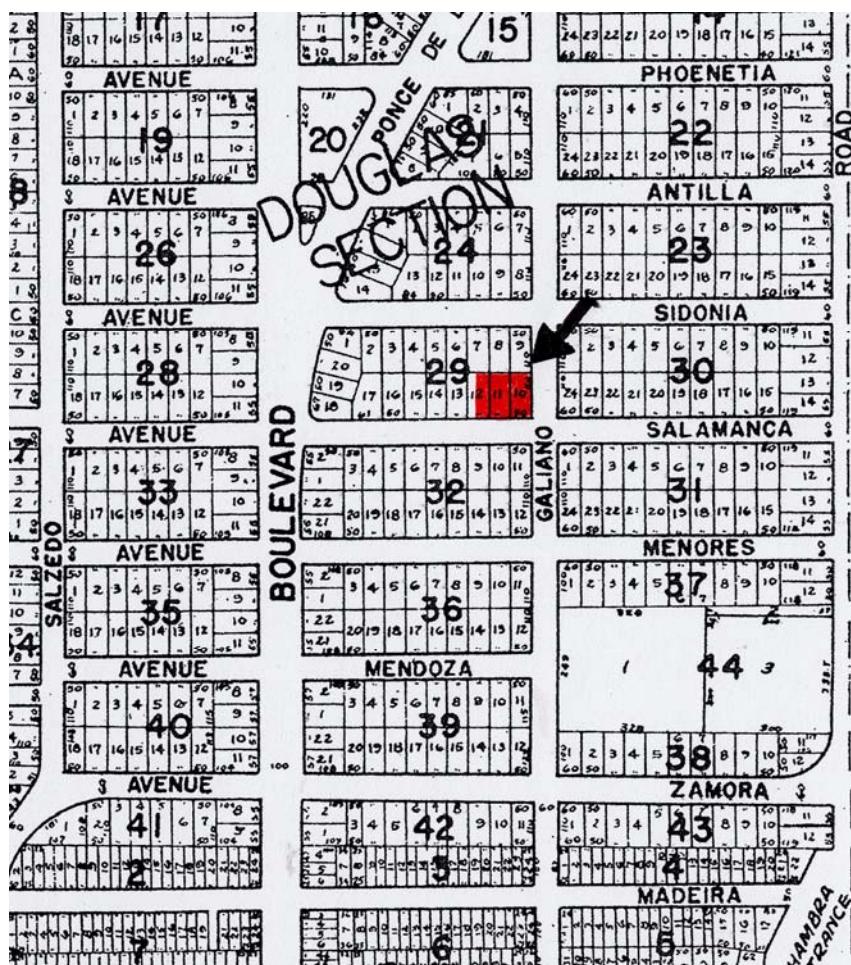
Building Permits Record Book, City of Coral Gables, Historical Resources Department, 1928-1944

1940's Archival Photographs, City of Coral Gables, Historical Resources Department.
Miami-Dade County Property Appraisers Property Information Search website

<http://gisims2.miamidade.gov/myhome/propmap.asp>

Miami-Dade County Clerk, County Record's Records Search website

<http://www.miami-dadeclerk.com/public-records/default.asp>



Location Map

REVIEW GUIDE

Definition: The Review Guide lists some of the more prominent features, which contribute to the overall character of a structure and/or district. It is not intended to be all-inclusive, as photographic documentation fully illustrates the present physical character of the property.

Use: The Review Guide may be used to address the impact of new construction, additions/modifications/alterations and/or renovations which may become the subject of some future Certificate of Appropriateness consideration

And

The Review Guide by describing EXISTING physical characteristics may be used to determine whether or not elements which create the character of the structure and/or district is present and/or whether or not later additions or alterations have so changed that character so as to cause the property (ies) to become ineligible for listing.

Property Address: 111 Salamanca Avenue

Date of Construction: 1924

Construction Material: Concrete block covered with stucco, and barrel roof tile



Photograph Year 2007