

**REPORT OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES  
HISTORICAL RESOURCES & CULTURAL ARTS DEPARTMENT  
TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD  
ON THE DESIGNATION OF  
THE PROPERTY AT  
229 RIDGEWOOD ROAD  
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA  
AS A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK**



c.1940 Photograph



LHD 2016-008  
June 16, 2016

**LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION  
FOR THE PROPERTY AT  
229 RIDGEWOOD ROAD  
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**

*Historical Resources &  
Cultural Arts*

2327 SALZEDO STREET  
CORAL GABLES  
FLORIDA 33134

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✉ hist@coralgables.com

**Folio Number:** 03-4129-024-0170

**Legal Description:** Lots 9 and 10, Block 2, Coconut Grove Manor, according to the Plat thereof as recorded in Plat Book 17 at Page 19, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida

**Original Permit No.:** 5338

**Date of Original Permit:** 1938

**Original Architect:** Robert Fitch Smith

**Original Builder:** J. G. Buddington

**Original Owner:** Mr. & Mrs. W. R. Wedderspoon

**Present Owner:** Frederick J. Kent

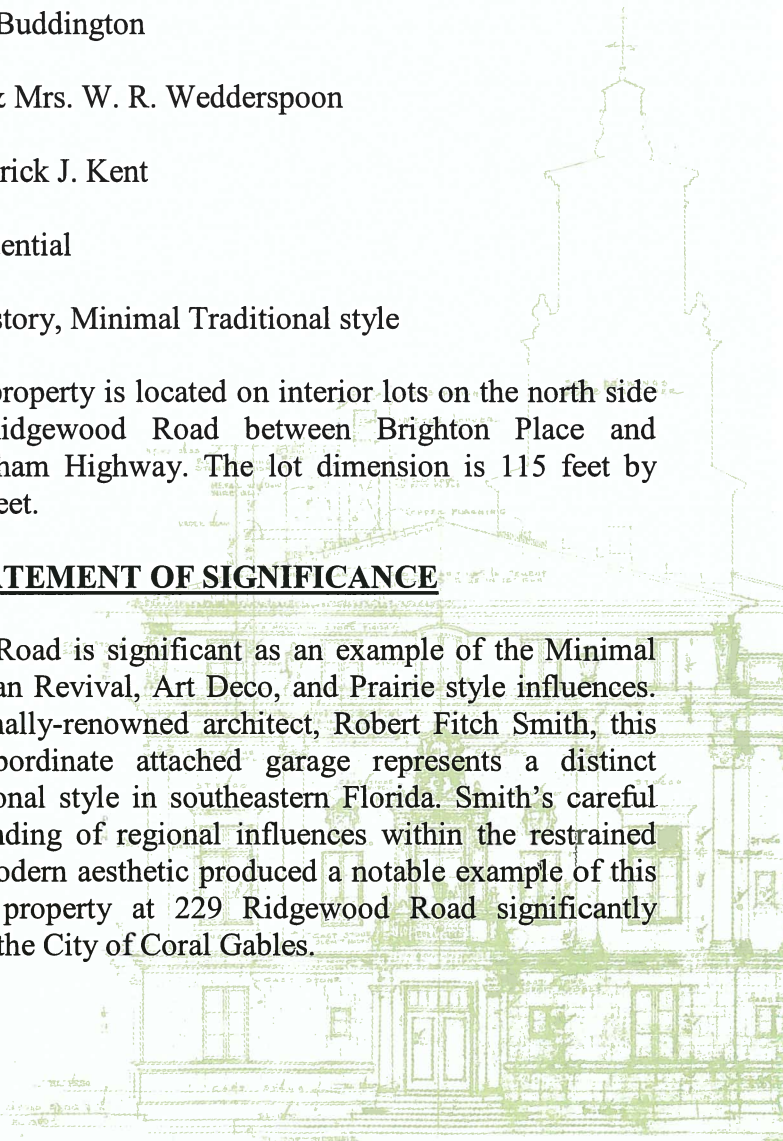
**Present Use:** Residential

**Building Type:** One-story, Minimal Traditional style

**Site Characteristics:** The property is located on interior lots on the north side of Ridgewood Road between Brighton Place and Ingraham Highway. The lot dimension is 115 feet by 140 feet.

**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The residence at 229 Ridgewood Road is significant as an example of the Minimal Traditional style with Mediterranean Revival, Art Deco, and Prairie style influences. Constructed in 1938 by the nationally-renowned architect, Robert Fitch Smith, this single-family home with its subordinate attached garage represents a distinct interpretation the Minimal Traditional style in southeastern Florida. Smith's careful attention to the detailing and blending of regional influences within the restrained context of the contemporaneous modern aesthetic produced a notable example of this New Deal era style. Thus, the property at 229 Ridgewood Road significantly contributes to the historic fabric of the City of Coral Gables.



## CRITERIA FOR SIGNIFICANCE

### Architectural Significance

Article 3, Section 3-1103 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code--*Criteria for designation of historic landmarks or historic districts*--states that to qualify for designation as a local historic landmark individual properties must have significant character, interest or value as part of the historical, cultural, archaeological, aesthetic, or architectural heritage of the City, state or nation.

The single-family residence at 229 Ridgewood Road is eligible as a local historic landmark based on its **architectural significance (criteria b)**. For designation, a property must meet **one (1)** of the criteria outlined in the Code. As discussed below, 229 Ridgewood Road meets **two (2)** criteria of architectural significance. Specifically, it

1. *Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural style;*
2. *Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction.*

## HISTORIC CONTEXT

Coral Gables' developmental history is divided broadly into three major historical periods:

- Coral Gables' Initial Planning and Development/Florida Land Boom (Prior to the Hurricane of 1926),
- Aftermath of the 1926 Hurricane/Great Depression and New Deal/Wartime Activity (1927-1944),
- and Post World War II and Modern periods (1945-1963).

Built in 1938 the construction of the single-family home at 229 Ridgewood Road occurred during the New Deal Era. It is built in the Minimal Traditional style and is indicative of the housing trend across the nation as well as the interpretation of the style in the southeastern Florida region.

In the aftermath of the 1929 Wall Street Crash, the economy in Florida declined steeply. Between 1929 and 1933, one hundred forty-eight (148) state and national banks in Florida collapsed. By 1933, approximately one out of four Floridians was receiving some type of public relief and assistance. (Abell Garcia, p.6) As the decade wore on relief measures expanded under the direction of the New Deal administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. As people adjusted to a new way of life their priorities and aesthetic changed. This was reflected in all aspects of life including the types of homes that were built.

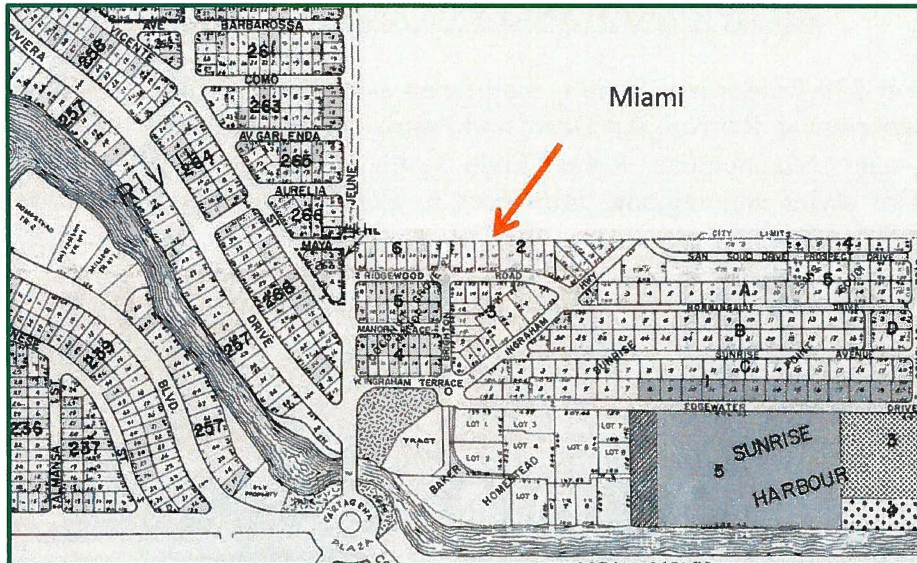
In Coral Gables the dire downturn in the economy, coming so closely on the heels of the devastating Hurricane of 1926, had a drastic impact on new construction. Not only did the number of new houses greatly decrease but the types and style of the homes also changed (see Attachment A: Coral Gables City Permits Issued 1925-43). For example, the dollar value of permits issued in 1926 was \$13,402,012. Permits steadily declined over the next few years and

plummeted to \$71,605 in 1931. Recovery was slow. Permit dollar values rose approximately \$1,000,000 in 1936 where it held steady for several years. Historic structure surveys of sections of Coral Gables (i.e., North Gables Section, Flagler Section), conducted by Janus Research indicates that the predominant architectural style in Coral Gables continued to be Mediterranean Revival through the 1920s but when the construction of new began to rise in the late 1930s the Minimal Traditional and masonry vernacular styles were more common.

The Minimal Traditional style was a popular house style that emerged during the New Deal era. The homes were small (2-3 bedrooms) and affordable for working and middle-class families. It remained a prevalent style until the early 1950s, when it was supplanted by the Ranch style. In the 1930s, Minimal Traditional single-family homes appeared throughout the country as architectural journals and magazines promoted it. Its simplicity was a subtle response to the economic hardships of the Depression and the ornate styles of the 1920s. Minimal Traditional homes combined a restrained combination of features from earlier house styles while adhering to the burgeoning modern aesthetic of subtle ornamentation and streamlined homes. The homes were well-built, often using modern materials (i.e., plywood, modern cement mixtures) and methods (i.e., solar). This style also focused on practicality and included the emerging trend of attached garages. These were usually a subordinate element unlike later styles where the garage became more prominent. Nationally, common influences on the Minimal Traditional style homes tended to be Colonial Revival, Arts and Crafts, and Tudor styles. The Minimal Traditional style was flexible and embraced elements of previous styles. This led to area-specific and sometimes architect-specific variations.

In Coral Gables, by the mid-1930s there was a distinct departure from the ornamented and picturesque Mediterranean Revival style that had dominated the City's landscape since its inception. Minimal Traditional houses in Coral Gables often reflected this precursor style as well as the dominant regional style of Art Deco. Specifically, Minimal Traditional style homes in Coral Gables tended to reflect Mediterranean Revival style influences with features such as barrel tile roofs or arched main entrances. Art Deco influences included corner windows, eyebrow hoods, and geometric detailing. Typically, Minimal Traditional homes were one-story with low or moderate roof pitches, prominent exterior chimneys, integral garages, and vents in the gable ends. Also typical in south Florida homes was the use of solar water heaters. This was not a national trend since these systems could not survive hard freezes. This industry peaked in Florida and California in the late 1930s, and petered out in the 1950s as electricity became cheap in Florida. Hence, the industry paralleled the popularity of the Minimal Traditional style and was often a featured element in these homes.

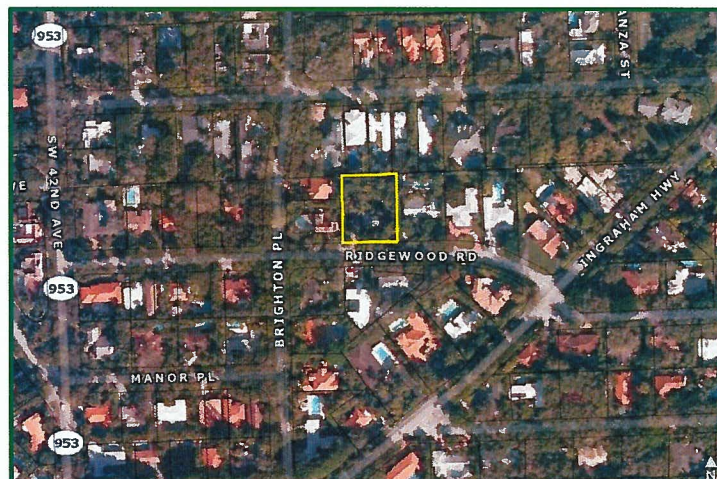
Located in the Coconut Grove Manor Section, the residence at 229 Ridgewood Road sits on interior lots 9 and 10 in Block 2 (see Figure 1). This section was largely undeveloped throughout the Land Boom era and well into the 1940s. The area was predominantly built out in the 1950s with single-family homes. This neighborhood still retains this context. (see Figures 2 and 3) The home at 229 Ridgewood Road is one of the few extant examples the Minimal Traditional style in this area.



**Figure 1: Plat Map: Coconut Grove Manor  
229 Ridgewood Road: Block 2, Lots 9 and 10**



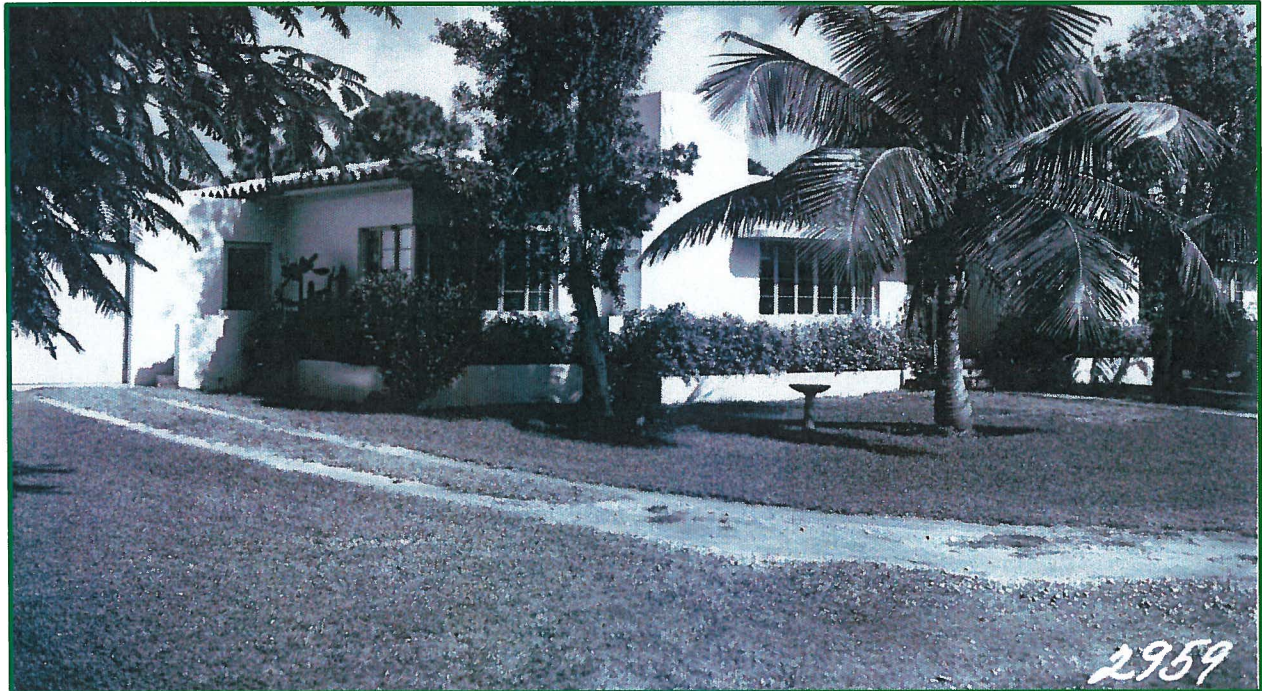
**Figure 2: Aerial Photographs -- 1948 (left); 1957 (right)**  
*Courtesy of Aerial Photography: Florida Collection, University of Florida, George A. Smathers Libraries*



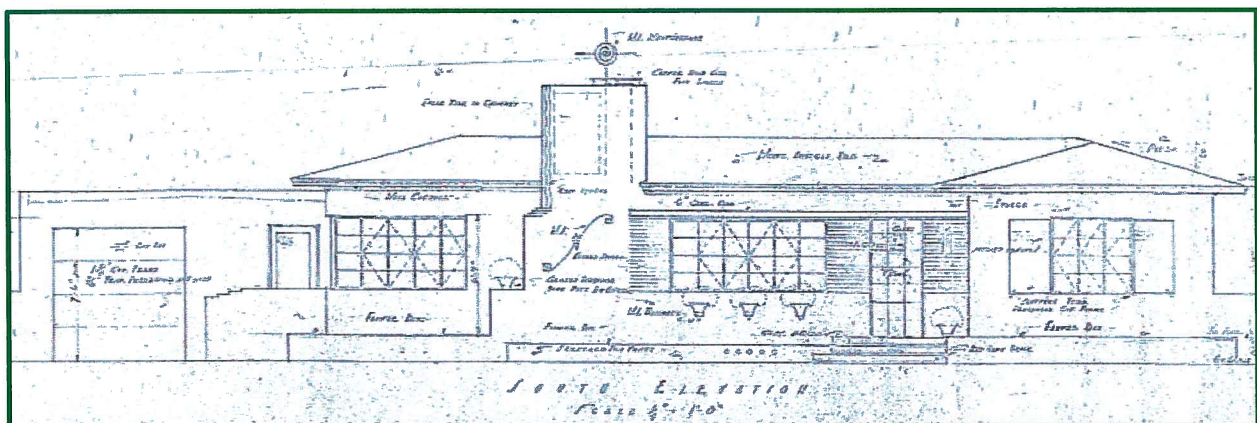
**Figure 3: Aerial Photo -- Current Context for 229 Ridgewood Road**  
*Courtesy of Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser*

## SIGNIFICANCE ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION

The residence at 229 Ridgewood Road is significant as an example of the Minimal Traditional style with Mediterranean Revival, Art Deco, and Prairie style influences. Constructed in 1938 by the nationally-renowned architect, Robert Fitch Smith, this single-family home represents the distinct blend of styles and regional influences in Coral Gables. (see Attachment B: Permit #5338 drawings)



**Figure 4: Front (South) Elevation, Historic Photo, c.1940**



**Figure 5: Front (South) Elevation, Permit #5338 Drawings, 1938,  
Robert Fitch Smith, Architect**

The residence at 229 Ridgewood Road is a one-story, two bedroom single-family home with a garage. The garage, while attached, is set back from the primary front facade and is devoid of ornamentation or stylistic features. As was typical of Minimal Traditional homes, it reads as a subordinate portion of the home.

The house is a significant example of a Minimal Traditional home. It exhibits the blending of the regional influences of the Mediterranean Revival and Art Deco styles within the overall massing and articulation of Prairie style architecture. The architect, Robert Fitch Smith, was reportedly greatly influenced by the renowned architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, and his distinctive Prairie Style architecture. The home at 229 Ridgewood Road reflects this influence with its low-pitched roofs, dominant horizontality--which was meant to aid the home in integrating it with the flat landscape--and its broad chimney that is the focal point of the home. It also harmoniously incorporates features from both the Art Deco style, most notably the large eyebrow hood and chimney detailing, and the Mediterranean Revival style with its barrel tile roof. Smith's attention to the detailing of these influences within the restrained context of the contemporaneous modern aesthetic resulted in a distinctive interpretation of the Minimal Tradition style.

Minimal Traditional style features of the residence at 229 Ridgewood Road include:

- one-story rectangular plan
- attached, subordinate garage
- smooth stucco exterior finish
- low-pitched hipped, white barrel tile roof
- groups of recessed large-paned casement and fixed windows
- prominent corner window
- deep flat eaves
- dominant broad chimney with Art Deco detailing
- built-in planters
- simple wood cornice coupled with a wood finish board
- large central eyebrow hood
- asymmetrical use of louvered shutters
- scored stucco to emphasize the homes entrance and its overall horizontality
- stepped privacy wall
- solar heating tank in the chimney

In the subsequent decades few changes have occurred to the character-defining features of the home at 229 Ridgewood Road. It retains a high degree of historical integrity and is a significant example of southeastern Florida's expression of the Minimal Traditional style. Hence, it is considered to be an integral component of the historic collection of City's built environment.

### **Extant Exterior Description**

The single-family residence at 229 Ridgewood Road sits on two interior lots on the north side of the street. The lot contains extensive mature vegetation (see Figure 6). Hence, photo documentation of home was limited.



**Figure 6: 229 Ridgewood Road, Front (South) Façade  
Context with mature vegetation, May 2016**

The massing of this one-story residence is rectilinear, low and horizontal. The flat and low-pitched white tile hipped roofs blend with the smooth white stucco facades giving the impression of a low-slung home. On the front façade, the banding of casement windows and the horizontal yellow lines presented by the built-in planters, the deep eaves elements, and the vertical edge of the central eyebrow hood against the stark white exterior walls further emphasizes its horizontal nature. The dominant feature of the home is a centrally-located squat, broad-facing, and low chimney with Art Deco detailing. It visually anchors the home. The stepping down and interlinking planes of the chimney, the built-in planters, the privacy wall, and the scoring of the stucco add visual interest and subtly draws attention to the rectilinear and horizontality of the home. The careful attention to the intersection and articulation of planar surfaces is a key component to the visual impact of this home.



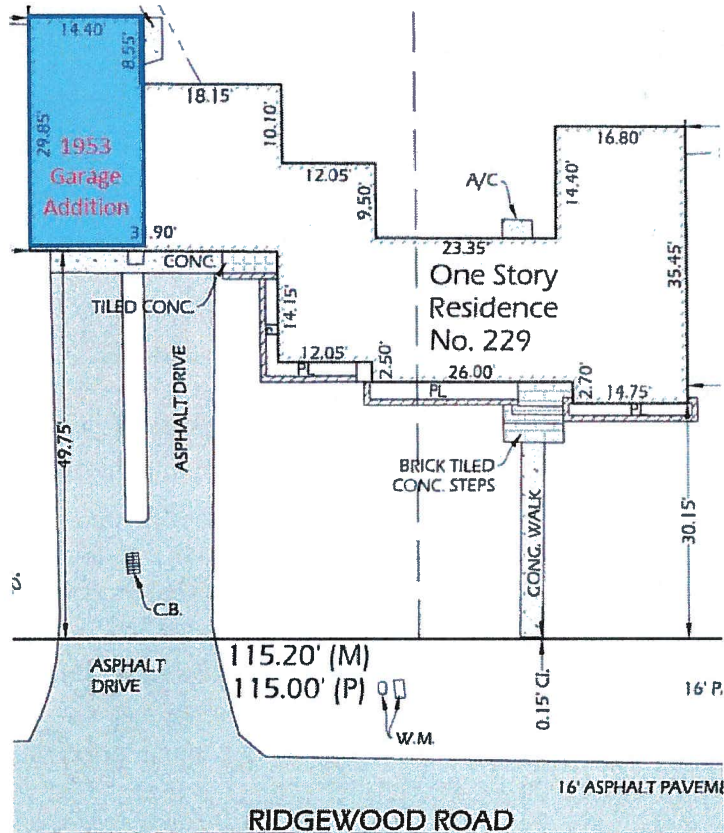


**Figure 7: 229 Ridgewood Road, Front (South) Facade, looking northeast, May 2016**



**Figure 8: 229 Ridgewood Road, Front (South) Facade, Front Entry, May 2016**  
**Note: horizontal scoring under eyebrow hood**

The home at 229 Ridgewood Road is U-shaped in plan with the open end facing north onto the backyard. The western leg of the U is comprised of two attached garages. It was built of masonry construction that has smooth white stucco finish. Living spaces are housed under a series of low, hipped two-piece barrel tile roofs that are painted white. The wood board eaves are deep and finished above with a simple wood cornice and below with a wood finish board. The wood elements are painted yellow. The garage roofs are flat with 1'-6" masonry parapets. The recessed windows are original and are casement and fixed in type with slimline metal frames and horizontal glazing bars; they are predominantly 4-lites.



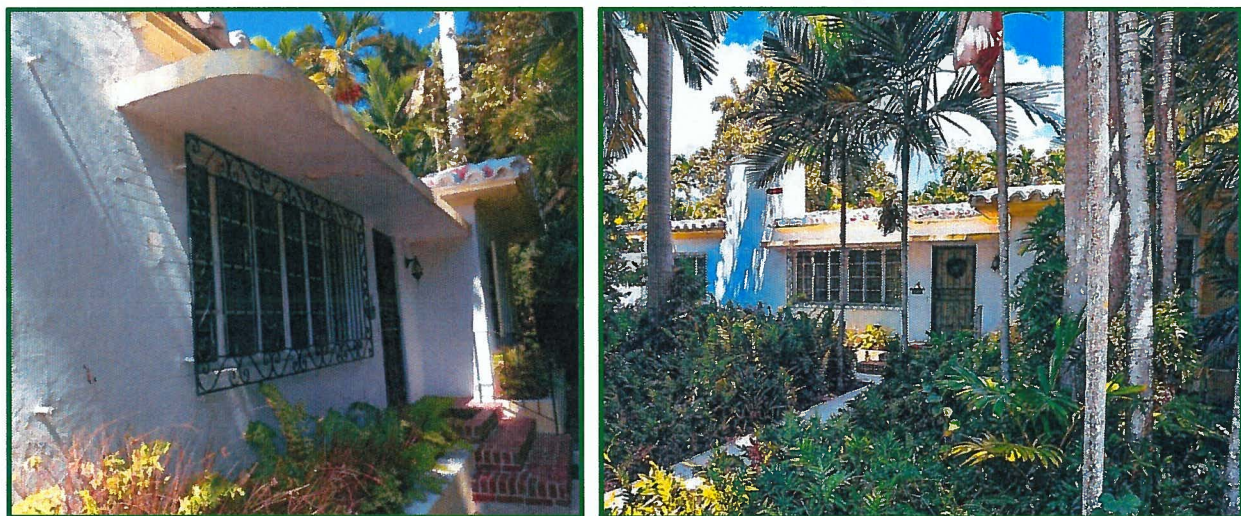
**Figure 9: Annotated Survey for 229 Ridgewood Road**  
**Note location of 1953 garage addition**  
Survey courtesy of Mojarena & Associates, Inc., March 2016

The front (south) façade reads as a series of planes stepping back to the north from east to west (see Figure 9). The eastern portion of this façade has a centered tripartite casement window flanked by louvered shutters. A 1'-6" high built-in planter runs the full length of this bay and extends beyond the end of the façade approximately 18"; the extension beyond the corner of the home is a detail that adds to the horizontal emphasis and low-slung feeling of the home. (see Figure 10) Moving west along the front façade, this eastern bay steps back 2'-7" to the north to the main entry portion of the home.



**Figure 10: 229 Ridgewood Road, Front (South) Façade, May 2016  
eastern bay (left), detail of extended planter (right)**

The main entry landing is accessed by three cascading red brick steps. To the west of the front door is a bank of six 4-lite windows. A decorative metal security grate covers the bank of windows; the grate was not original to the home. A large Art Deco eyebrow hood, 15'-2" long and 1'-8" deep, with a curved southwestern corner runs from the wall of the eastern bay to beginning of the chimney. The stucco under the hood, aligning with the lower edge of the window up to the hood, is scored with horizontal lines the height of a brick; further demarking the entrance area. (see Figures 8 & 11) Another built-in planter runs between the entry steps to the western edge of the chimney. This planter is several inches lower than the planters flanking it. The eyebrow hood, large bank of windows, scored stucco, and cascading steps also emphasizes the horizontality of the home.



**Figure 11: 229 Ridgewood Road, Front (South) Façade, May 2016  
eyebrow hood and scored stucco (left)  
Note: horizontality of the façade and the dominant chimney (right)**

To the west of the entry bay is centrally-located squat, broad-facing, low chimney with Art Deco detailing. It is a dominant feature of the home. To the east, the front plane of the chimney is flush with entry façade its edge is implied by the end of the cornice, hood and horizontal scoring. To the west of chimney the front (south) façade steps back approximately 2', thus exposing the west façade of the chimney. The broad front (south) face of the chimney is approximately 4' wide at its top. On the upper portion of the chimney, two clean geometric wavy lines provide a sculpted setback along the western vertical edge. At approximately 12" below the cornice-line these curvy planes flow into a stepped element--reminiscent of Art Deco zig-zag--as the chimney broadens out to the west. At its base, the chimney it widens again to its west to form a cubic planter. The top of this planter shelf aligns with the bottom of the window bank to its west. The restrained spirit of the thirties Art Deco geometric detailing and the dominant broad horizontal form the Prairie Style chimney are fused in this main character-defining feature of the home.



**Figure 12: 229 Ridgewood Road, Front (South) Façade, Chimney (left), Note: intersection of rectilinear planes and elements emphasizing the homes horizontality (right), May 2016**

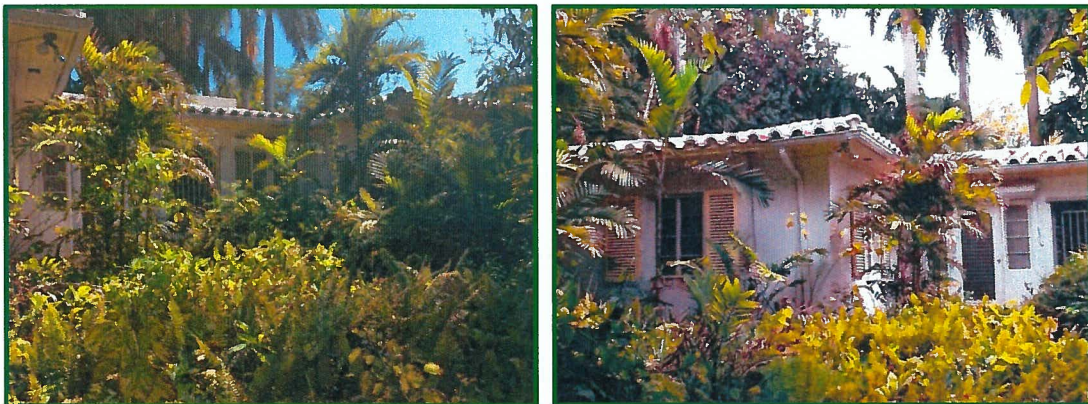
To the west of the chimney is a corner window. It is comprised of five 4-lite windows on the south façade and three 4-lite windows on the west façade. A metal grate matching the entry area window covers the north façade windows. A built-in planter, 1'-6" high, runs from the chimney and wraps around the west façade terminating at a privacy wall. Thus at the southwest corner of the chimney, the two built-in planters of different heights intersect with the cubic chimney base to form a mixture of rectilinear shapes and surfaces. (see Figures 7 & 12)

From the corner window, the south façade steps back 14' to two attached garages. At the northeast corner, a door is shielded by an approximately 4' high privacy wall. The top of the wall, like the chimney, steps down to the west. (see Figure 13)



**Figure 13: 229 Ridgewood Road, Front (South) Façade, May 2016**  
Note stepped privacy wall (left), subordinate garages (right)

The side (west) façade of the home is the side elevation of the second garage and contains a double 3-lite casement window. The rear (south) façades are currently obscured by vegetation. The western leg of this U-shaped façade is stepped inward to the east from the second garage to the first garage to the kitchen and finally to the middle leg of the U. The eastern leg of the U is comprised of a single bay. (see Figures 9 & 14) A back door with a glass louver central panel is flanked single 4-lite casement windows. A series of double and triple 4-lite casement windows are located on the rear U façades. Windows on the eastern leg have louvered shutters. Crawl space access is provided on the south face of the kitchen bay. No additional detailing is present on rear (south) façade. The side (east) façade has a single central casement window flanked by double casement windows. Roll-down hurricane shutters and awning frames are present. Groups of round screened crawl space vents are centered below each window. (see Figure 15)



**Figure 14: 229 Rear (North) Façade: central portion (left), east wing (right), May 2016**



**Figure 15: 229 Ridgewood Road, Side (East) Façade, May 2016**

### **Additions / Alterations**

Comparison of permit drawings and the c.1940 historic photograph (see Figures 4 & 5) with the extant home demonstrates the high degree of integrity this home as retained over the years (see Figures 6-13). All features are extant and unaltered.

There was only one addition to the property since its original construction. In 1953, the original architect Robert Fitch Smith seamlessly added a one-story garage (428 SF) with flat roof and parapet to the west of the original garage by (see Figures 9 & 13 and Attachment C: Permit 11713 drawing). The builder on the permit is listed as the owner (F. A. Kent).

Other permits on file for this home are few. The garage was re-roofed in 1954, 1977, and 2001. In 1991, portions of the barrel tile roof was replaced and repaired. In 2004 the chimney flashing was replaced and barrel tile was replaced in the vicinity. The exterior was pressure-cleaned and repainted white with yellow accents in 1997 and again 2016. Hurricane shutters were installed in 2001. A new solar heater (82 gallon tank) was installed in 1954.

### **Ownership History**

Note: Records regarding ownership prior to 1950 have not been located. The ownership history for this time period is based on numerous sources including R. L. Polk City Directories (available from 1926-65), building permits, realtor notes, other records on file within the Coral Gables Historical Resources Department and the Miami-Dade County Clerk.

The residence at 229 Ridgewood Road has been home to three families, the Wedderspoons, the Morrisons, and the Kents. The Kents have owned the property for the last 69 years; since 1947.

The original permit plans, dated January 1938, indicate that the residence was built for Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Wedderspoon (also listed as Witherspoon). It is not clear if the home was to be built for Pastor William R. Wedderspoon and his wife Annie or for their son William R. Wedderspoon, Jr. At the time of construction they are all listed in the City Directory as living up the street at 216 Ridgewood Road. Pastor Wedderspoon was a nationally known lecturer. In the late 1930s he was the pastor at William Bryan Memorial Methodist Church (3713 Main Highway, Miami). He and his wife both died within months of each other in 1939.

Regardless of whether the property was originally built for William R. Wedderspoon, Jr. or passed to him after the death of his parents, it is clear that by 1944 the residence is owned by William R. Wedderspoon and occupied by his wife Dorothy Havens Wedderspoon while he was serving in the United State Army Air Corps during World War II. Dorothy worked at the University of Miami as secretary to the president. She retired in 1952. William's profession was listed as a painter.

Prior to 1944, the home was not occupied by the Wedderspoons but by tenants James Arthur Morrison, Jr. and his wife Floy. James and his father were the head of the well-known Southern restaurant chain called Morrison's Cafeterias. Started by his father in Mobile, Alabama in 1920, Morrison's Cafeterias introduced the novel concept of the cafeteria style dining to the region. Initially, the cafeteria offered 73 different items with the typical meal costing \$.31. In 1928 they began expanding into other southern states. Morrison's Cafeterias were hugely popular during the Great Depression and by 1938 they were reportedly serving 700,000 customers a year. The

company continued to grow and diversify expanding into film, university, and hospital cafeteria industries. Decades later Morrison's Cafeterias acquired Ruby Tuesdays. (Morrison Restaurants Inc. History)

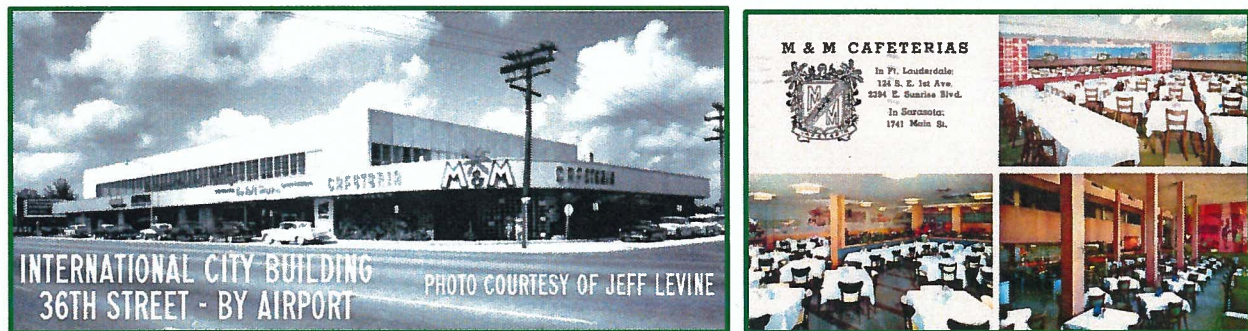


**Figure 16: Morrison's Cafeteria, Tampa, Florida 1937**

Photos courtesy University of South Florida

In 1940, James Morrison, Sr. became ill, and the father-son team decided to reduce their involvement in the ever-growing company and moved to Miami to open a new endeavor--M & M Cafeterias, Inc. The residence at 229 Ridgewood Road is where James Morrison, Jr. lived when arrived in the Miami area to launch this endeavor. His work address was listed as 127 NE 2nd Avenue which would become the headquarters for M&M Cafeterias. The new business grew quickly and in 1950s the Morrisons sold their rights to Morrison's Cafeterias and joined forces with Bickford Lunchrooms a New York-based company. They launched the Southeast Coast Division of Bickford's Inc. with the following M & M Cafeteria locations:

- 163rd Street Shopping Center, North Miami
- 127 N.E. 2nd Avenue, Miami
- 4451 N.W. 36th Street, Miami Springs
- 124 S.E. 1st Avenue Fort Lauderdale
- 2394 East Sunrise Boulevard, Fort Lauderdale
- 1741 Main Street, Sarasota

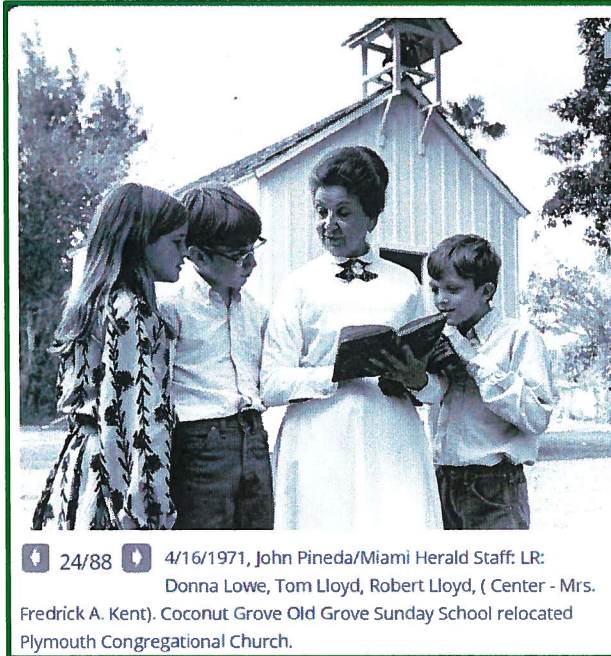


**Figure 17: M & M Cafeteria, 4451 N.W. 36th Street, Miami Springs, 1956**

In 1944 James Arthur Morrison, Jr. served as a Lieutenant in Navy during WWII. His wife, Floy Johnston Morrison, vacated 229 Ridgewood Road at that time and the property owner Dorothy Wedderspoon moved in. When William R. Wedderspoon returned from the serving in the war the City directories indicate that he did not reside at 229 Ridgewood Road but rather a few

blocks over at 4100 Brighton Place. In 1947 the Wedderspoons sold the property to Frederick A. and Gertrude Kent.

The Kents established Coconut Grove Realty Corporation in 1925 and Frederick served as president and Gertrude as secretary/treasurer until the 1960s. According to City Directories



24/88 4/16/1971, John Pineda/Miami Herald Staff: LR: Donna Lowe, Tom Lloyd, Robert Lloyd, ( Center - Mrs. Fredrick A. Kent). Coconut Grove Old Grove Sunday School relocated Plymouth Congregational Church.

Frederick started a new business, Kent Real Estate, which he managed until his death in 1974. According to the current owner Frederick J. Kent, the son of Frederick and Gertrude, his parents had been managing the property at 229 Ridgewood Road for the Wedderspoons and when they decided to sell the home the Kents seized the opportunity to purchase it. The Kent family has remained in the home for the past sixty-nine (69) years.



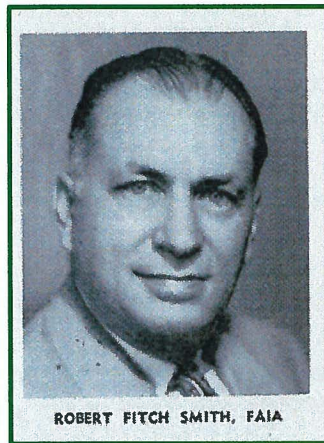
**Figure 18: Gertrude Kent, 1971**  
 Photo courtesy of Coconut Grove Flashback

### Ownership and Occupant Table for 229 Ridgewood Road

Year	Occupants/Owners Source: Polk Directories -- (O) citation in directory means owner	Owners Source: Building Permits
1938		Mr. & Mrs. W. R. Wedderspoon
1939	No listing	
1940-43	James A. Morrison, Jr. – manager M & M Cafeteria (127 NE 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ave) Floy Morrison	
1942		Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Wedderspoon
1944	Dorothy H. Wedderspoon, Secretary to University of Miami President William R. Wedderspoon, Jr. (O) USAAC Rosalie Coe	
1945-6	No listing [Note: William R. Wedderspoon listed at 4100 Brighton]	
1947		2/47 Mr. Wedderspoon septic line & tank
1947-73	Frederick Alex Kent, 1947-62: President Coconut Grove Realty Corp 1963-74: Kent Real Estate Gertrude M. Kent, Secretary/Treasurer Coconut Grove Realty Corp Frederick Kent, student	
1974-93	Gertrude M. Kent	
1994- Present	Frederick J. Kent	



**Architect: Robert Fitch Smith**



Robert Fitch Smith was a nationally-recognized architect who designed over 600 residences and 200 civic, commercial, and industrial buildings in South Florida and the Caribbean. His designs were varied in style ranging from Art Deco with Asian influences at Java Head at 200 Edgewater Drive in Coral Gables (1936) to MiMo at the Biscayne Plaza Shopping Center, 7900 Biscayne Boulevard in Miami (1953). His work is noted for the careful attention to detail. He was reportedly heavily influenced by the work of acclaimed architect Frank Lloyd Wright. (Country Club of Coral Gables Historic District Designation Report)

**Figure 18: Robert Fitch Smith, AIA**

Photo courtesy of The Florida Architect, April 1960

Robert Fitch Smith (1894 – 1964) was born in Fremont, Ohio and educated at the University of Michigan, the Carnegie Institute of Technology, the Western State College-Michigan, Columbia University and the University of Miami. He was an instructor of architectural design at the University of Miami from 1928 to 1931. He returned decades later to become the first chairman of the Department of Architecture. His civic engagement roster includes: charter member of the Miami City Planning Board; Director of Coordinating & Planning Committee of Dade County; Chairman of Regional Planning Board of Dade County; Chair of the Miami Fine Arts Commission; Board member of the Inter-American Cultural Trade Center (Interama); member of the American Institute of Architects; member of the Beaux-Arts Institute of New York, He was the Vice-Chairman of the Urban Planning Committee of the America Institute of Architects for the Southern area, and a member of the Architectural League of New York. (History of Dade County, Florida) He died in Miami on June 16, 1964 at the age of 69. The Robert Fitch Smith papers are held by the Univesity of Maimi Archives and include some of his architectural drawings.

Notable projects in the Coral Gables area include: the Doc Thomas House at 5530 Sunset Drive (1932), which is listed on the National Registrar for Historic Places; the Audio-Visual Education Building at University of Miami; the Montgomery Library and Museum at Fairchild Tropical Gardens (1934); and University Baptist Church at 3299 Riviera Drive (1940). Other residences designed by Smith in Coral Gables includes 427 Giralda Avenue (1934), 512 Giralda Avenue (1934), 1218 Coral Way (1936 -- contributing structure in the Coral Way Historic District), and 2020 N Greenway Drive.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of historic designation within the City of Coral Gables is defined in Article 3, Section 3-1101 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code as,

“to promote the educational, cultural, and economic welfare of the public by preserving and protecting historic structures or sites, portions of structures, groups of structures, manmade or natural landscape elements, works of art, or integrated combinations thereof, which serve as visible reminders of the history and cultural heritage of the City, region, state or nation.”

It is the intent of the Coral Gables Zoning Code to recognize all buildings which possess “significant character, interest or value as part of the historical, cultural, archaeological, aesthetic, or architectural heritage of the City, state or nation” qualify for designation as a local historic landmark (Coral Gables Zoning Code, Article 3, Section 3-1103). To that end, the eligibility for designation as a local historic landmark is defined by the Coral Gables Zoning Code as meeting **one (1)** (or more) of the criteria stipulated in Article 3, Section 3-1103.

Constructed in 1938, the property at 229 Ridgewood Road (legally described as Lots 9 and 10, Block 2, Coconut Grove Manor) is significant to the City of Coral Gables’ history based on the following **two (2)** 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;

#### **Staff finds the following:**

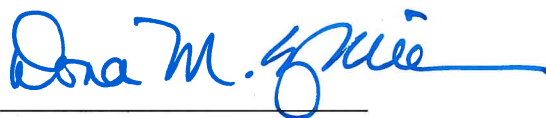
The property located at **229 Ridgewood Road** is significant to the City of Coral Gables history based on:

#### **ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

#### **Therefore Staff recommends the following:**

A motion to **APPROVE** the Local Historic Designation of the property at **229 Ridgewood** (legally described as Lots 9 and 10, Block 2, Coconut Grove Manor) based on its architectural significance.

Respectfully submitted,



Dona M. Spain  
Historic Preservation Officer

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## REVIEW GUIDE

**Definition:**

The Review Guide comprises of some of the extant and character-defining features, which contribute to the overall significance of the structure and/or district.

Character-defining features are the visual and physical features that give a building its identity and distinctive character. They may include the overall building shape, its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details, features, and aspects of its site and environment.

**Use:**

The Review Guide may be used to address the impact that additions, modifications, alterations and/or renovations may have on the historic structure and site.

The Review guide may also inform appropriate new construction in an historic district, neighborhood, or streetscape.

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Property Address:	229 Ridgewood Road
Lot Description:	interior lots
Date of Construction:	1938
Use:	single-family residence
Style:	Minimal Traditional with Prairie, Art Deco, and Mediterranean Revival style influences
Construction Material:	concrete block covered with stucco
Stories:	one-story
Roof Types and Materials:	low, hipped barrel tile roofs
Photographs Year:	2016

## CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

One-story rectilinear plan house with a horizontal emphasis and a variety of interlocking planar surfaces



Deep flat eave  
with simple  
cornice above  
and finish board  
below

Corner window

White smooth stuccoed,  
masonry exterior walls

Built-in planters of  
varying heights



Dominant broad stepped-down chimney with Art Deco detailing

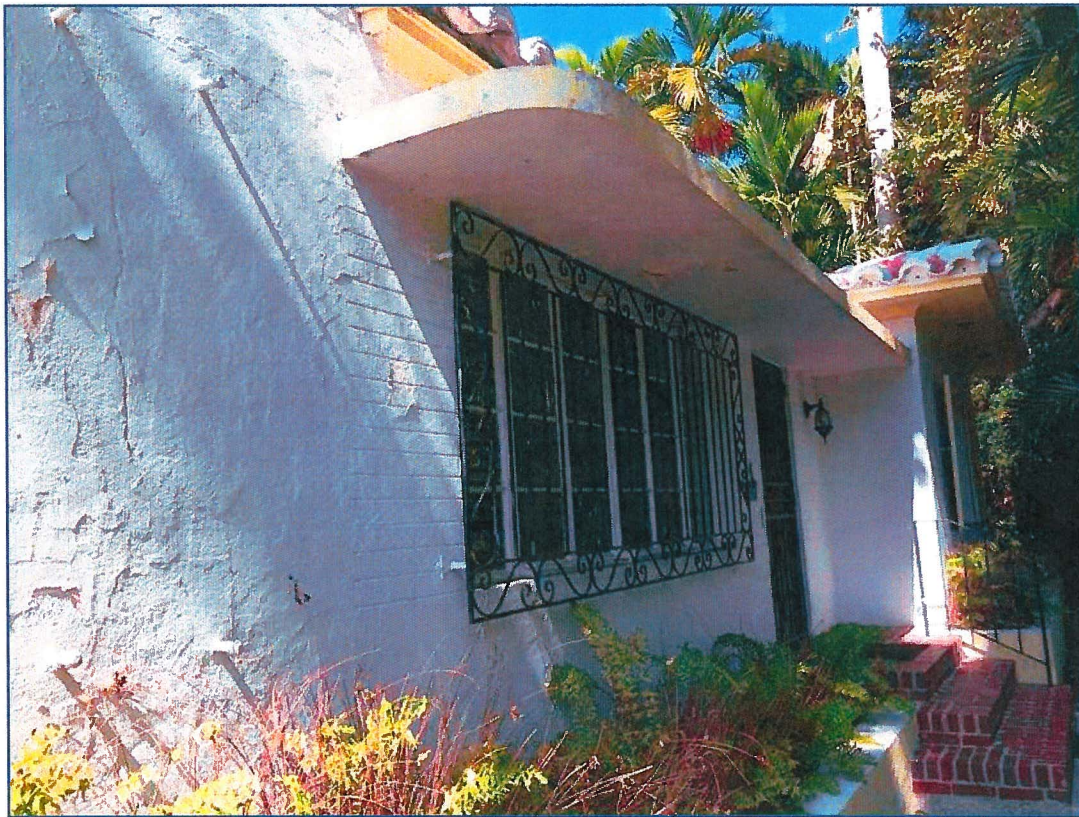
Low-pitched hipped roofs with white two-piece barrel tile

Bands of recessed 3- and 4-lite casement and fixed windows



Horizontal scoring of stucco  
under hood

Eyebrow Art Deco hood



Subordinate attached  
garage

Stepped down Art Deco detailing  
of privacy wall reflecting the  
chimney detailing





Louvered shutters only on eastern bay

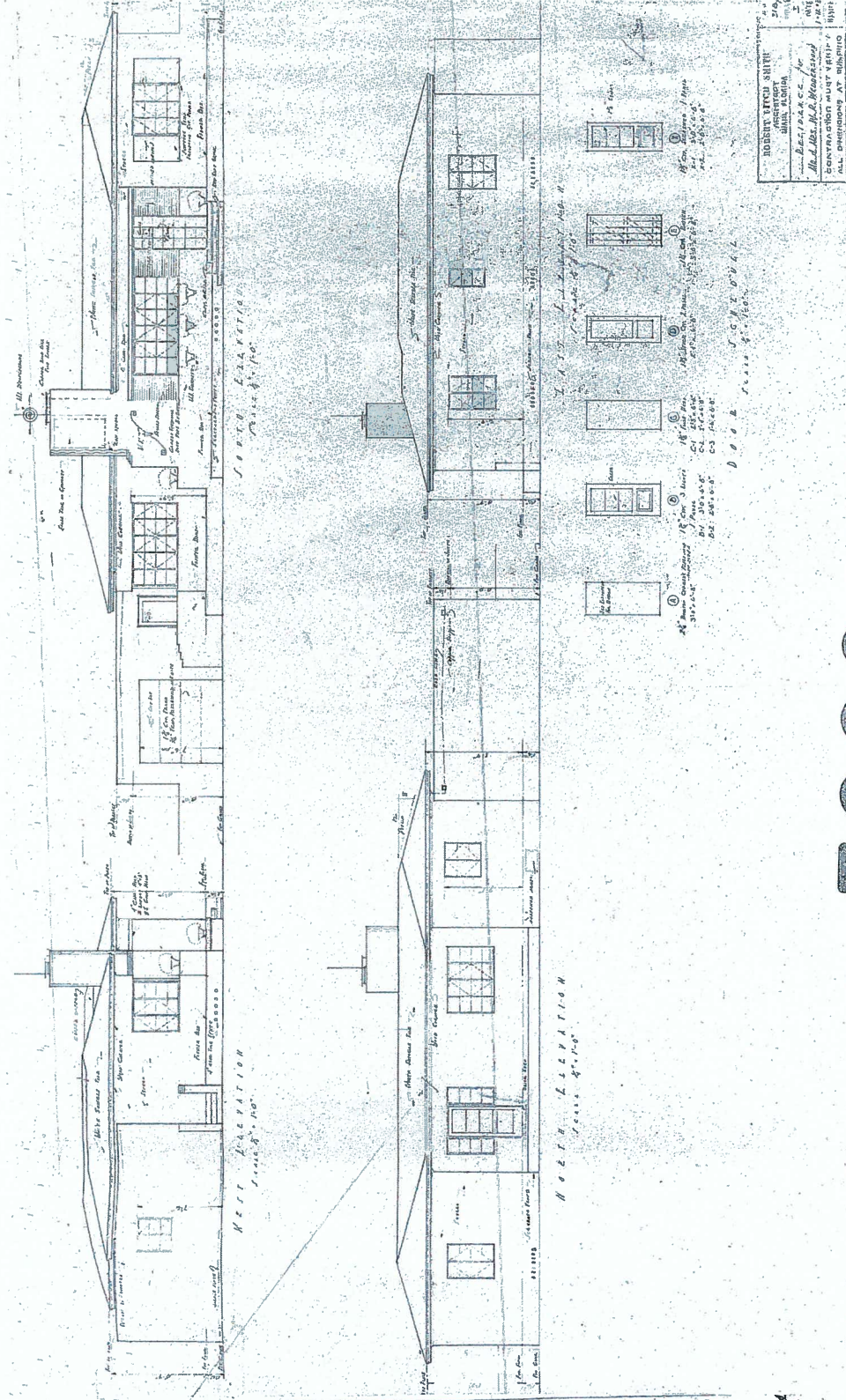


## ATTACHMENT A: Coral Gables City Permits Issued 1925-43

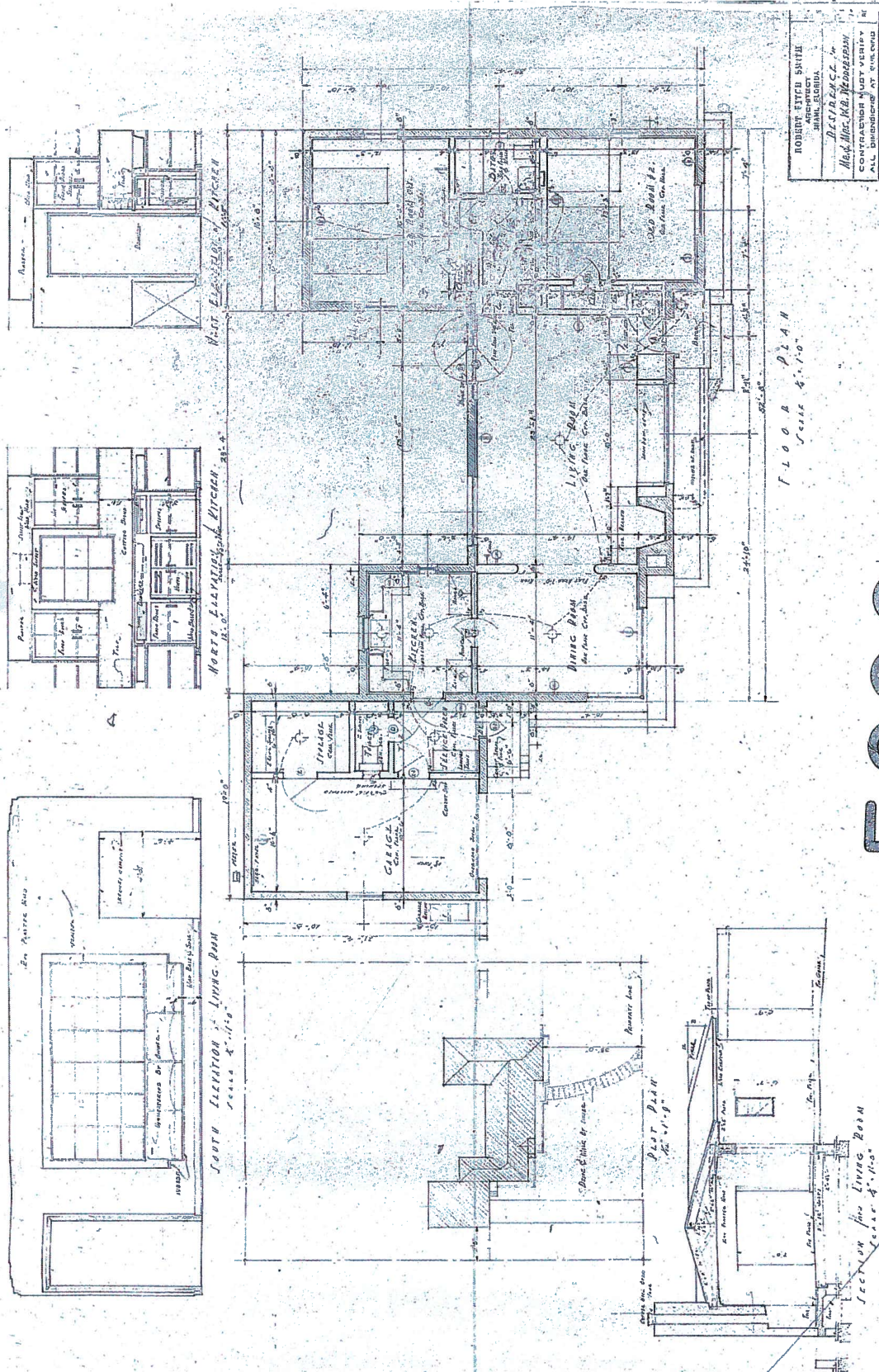
(Information Obtained from Early Permit Books)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Dollar Value of Permits Issued</u>	<u># of Permits Issued</u>
1925	\$25,890,515	
1926	\$13,402,012	
1927	\$2,602,900	
1928	\$868,340	
1929	\$973,925	134 (29 C.B.S. Single family Residences)
1930	\$286,895	
1931	\$132,719	
1932	\$71,605	
1933	\$164,393	
1934	\$477,554	
1935	\$496,677	
1936	\$1,365,930	315 (116 C.B.S. Single family Residences)
1937	\$1,222,595	227 (96 C.B.S. Single family Residences)
1938	\$1,087,450	244 (112 C.B.S. Single family Residences)
1939	\$1,195,998	368 (120 C.B.S. Single family Residences)
1940	\$1,750,645	668 (177 C.B.S. Single family Residences)
1941	\$1,481,771	565 (127 C.B.S. Single Family Residences)
1942	\$ 705,988	206 (11 C.B.S. Single Family Residences)
1943	\$132,944	255 (0 C.B.S. Single Family Residences)

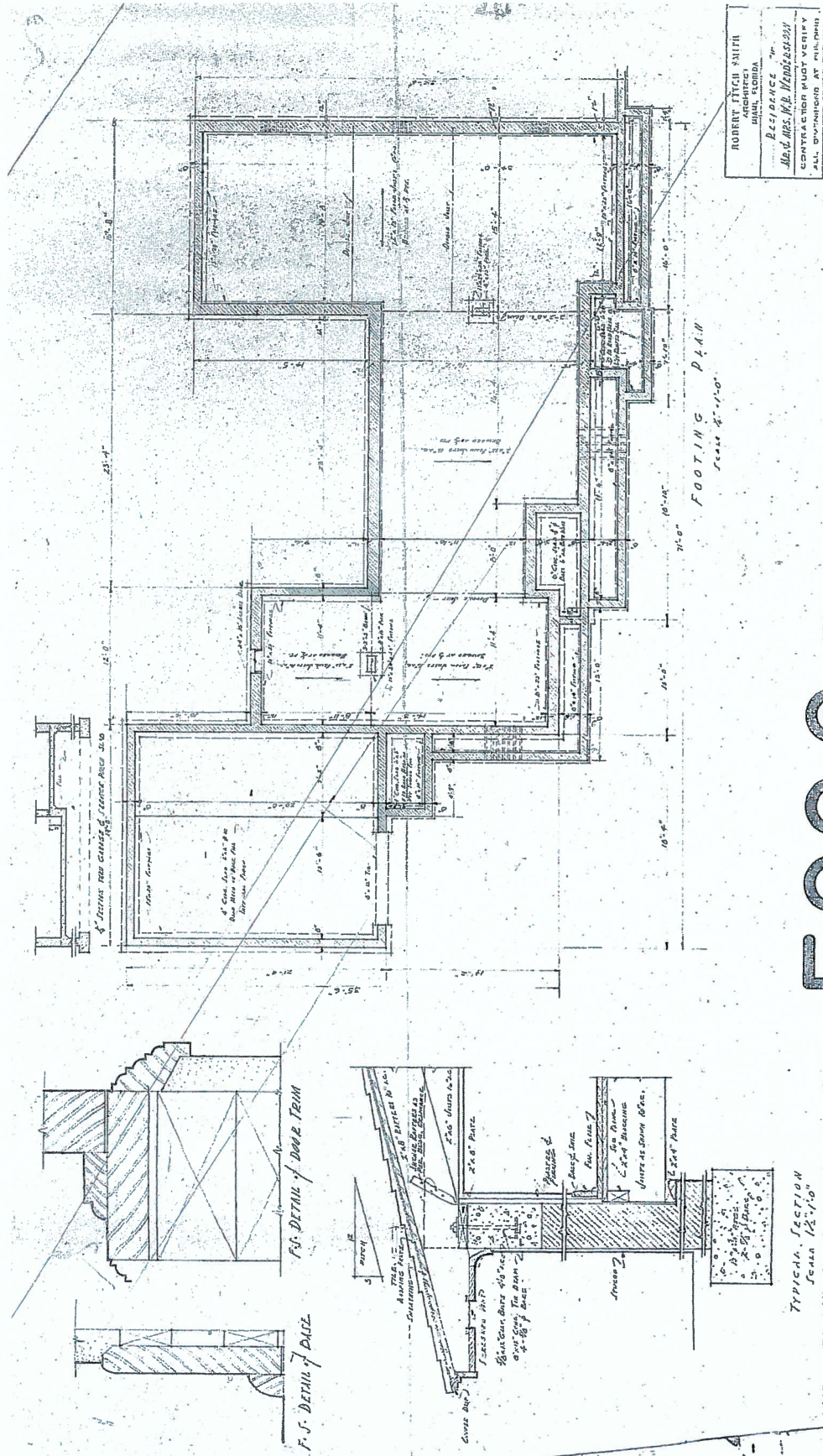
# ATTACHMENT B: Permit #5338, 1938 Original Drawings, Robert Fitch Smith, Architect



5338

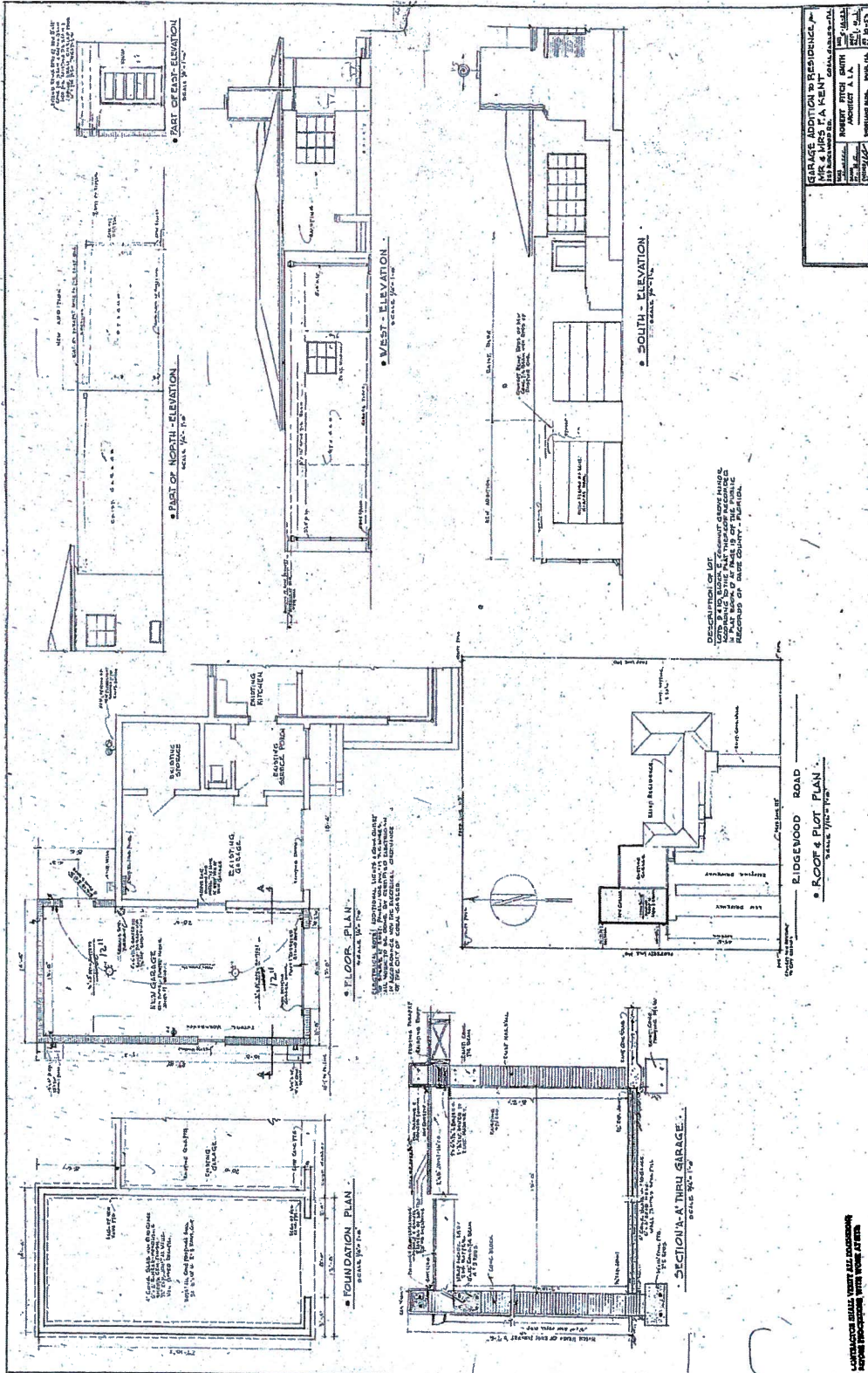


5338



5338

# ATTACHMENT C: Permit #11713, 1953 Garage Addition, Robert Fitch Smith, Architect



11713

CONTRACTOR SHALL VERIFY ALL DIMENSIONS BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH WORK AT SITE