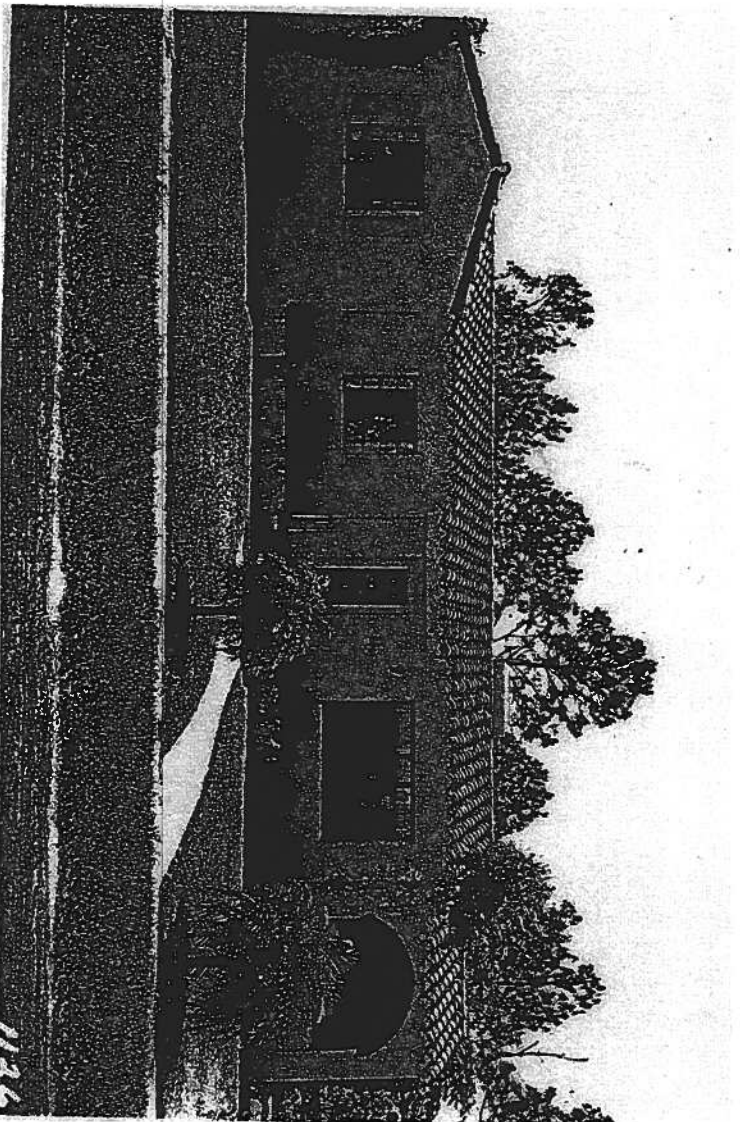


**REPORT OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES  
HISTORICAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT  
TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD  
ON THE DESIGNATION OF  
THE PROPERTY AT  
1700 CORTEZ STREET**



PHOTOGRAPH, 1940s



## The City of Coral Gables

LHD 2007-14  
MARCH 20, 2008

### Historical Resources Department

#### DESIGNATION REPORT PROPERTY AT 1700 CORTEZ STREET CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA

Folio Number: 03-4108-001-4740

Legal Description: Lots 9 and 10, Block 28 of Coral Gables Section B

Plat Book and Page: 5-1111

Original Permit No.: 6146

Date of Original Permit: 1940

Original Architect: H. George Fink

Original Owner: Ira G. Hanford

Present Owner: Perfecto and Lillian Arango

Present Use: Residential-Single Family

Building Type: One-Story Minimal Transitional/Minimal Trastional Style

Site Characteristics: The property is located on two lots at the corner of Cortez Street and Sorolla Avenue. The primary elevation faces east onto Cortez Street. Dimensions of the site are 100 feet wide by 150 feet deep.

#### SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Permitted in 1940, the structure at 1700 Cortez Street 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 Minimal Transitional/Traditional style of architecture, the building is a fine example of the type of residential buildings constructed in the City of Coral Gables just prior to World War II.

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 the City, similar structures have been significantly altered. It is necessary to preserve residences, such as the one at 1700 Cortez Street, which still reflect the social and economic impacts of the 1930s and 1940s on the architectural styles found throughout the City of Coral Gables.

**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. *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.*

Designed by the H. George Fink, the structure at 1700 Cortez Street is an excellent example of Spanish Mediterranean and Art Deco influences on the Minimal Transitional/Minimal Traditional style in the developing architecture of Coral Gables.

Standing one-story tall, this residential building exhibits features that are characteristic of the Minimal Transitional/Minimal Traditional style. Features, including barrel tiles, stucco, prominent exterior chimneys, integral garage, vents in the gable ends, very little overhang, exposed rafter ends, and brick details, add detail and charm to the structure.

The entrance into the home on the east side is through a wooden front door off brick paved steps. The entry is visually framed by the simple detailing of the wrought ironwork of the porch railing. To the north of the entrance is the loggia, or Florida room, screened with arched openings and similar wrought ironwork.

The original floor plan of the house is rectangular in shape with a 1951 addition to the west of the residence. The addition includes a second garage with a study and bathroom. The same garage door which is found on the existing garage was also used on the addition to retain a visual continuity along the northern façade of the structure. The location of the addition on the site and its form do not detract from the historical value of the residence. The plan also consists of the living room with a fireplace, kitchen, dining room, and two bedrooms which share a single bathroom.

Architectural details on the main structure, though simply articulated, reveal the Art Deco and Spanish Mediterranean style influences on the Minimal Transitional/Minimal Traditional Style. Details such as the curvilinear planter surrounding the front porch, the oversized arched openings of the Florida room, and the linear scalloped relief found under the gable eave as well as the front porch eave are reminiscent of the Art Deco style. The simple wrought iron scrollwork, also characteristic of the Art Deco era, is found in the arched openings of the Florida room and on the porch railings.

The arch details which also reflect the Spanish Mediterranean styles are seen through the use of the barrel tile roof, the carved wooden brackets, grouped tile roof vents, the concrete patterned screened vents located along the base of the structure, and the deep red tiles on the front porch steps, which add warmth and color to the front façade. The slump brick detailing, which frames the casement windows and is also found below the arched openings of the loggia, is typically associated with the Minimal Transitional/Minimal Traditional style.

### ADDITIONS / ALTERATIONS

There have been few substantive changes to the structure at 1700 Cortez Street over the past 67 years other than what would be considered routine maintenance (painting, re-roofing, roof repairs, etc.). At some point, air-conditioning wall units and metal awning windows were added.

In 1951, the addition of a second garage with a study and bathroom was made to the structure, abutting the western wall of the existing garage.

In 1990, a request for a building site separation was reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Board. The Board passed a motion stating that "Application No. 499-P requesting that Lots 9 and 10 shall be considered two building sites, one consisting of Lot 9 and one consisting of Lot 10 be denied." The matter was scheduled for consideration during the regular City Commission meeting of July 17, 1990. On July 13, 1990, a letter was received by the City Manager's office withdrawing the request for a building site separation.

### 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 Ira G. Hanford and John Hanford in 1940. Ira was a prominent horse jockey who won the 1936 Kentucky Derby, while John Hanford was a cement worker.

Subsequent owners include Dr. Floyd A. and Ethel H. Wright, who purchased the property in 1947. Dr. Floyd Wright was a professor at the University of Miami during that time. The Wrights sold the property to Perfecto and Lillian Arango in 1980.

Others who have resided at 1700 Cortez Street include Jason N. and Glen S. King in 1944, and John F. and Betty Greenacre from 1945 to 1946. Jason King and John Greenacre were both pilots. Mr. Greenacre was also a pilot for Pan American Airlines.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Constructed in 1940, the property at 1700 Cortez Street (legally described Lots 9 and 10, Block 28 of Coral Gables Section B) 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:


1700 Cortez Street, legally described Lots 9 and 10, Block 28 of Coral Gables Section B, and constructed in 1940, 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 1700 Cortez Street, legally described as Lots 9 and 10, Block 28 of Coral Gables Section B based on its architecture.

Respectfully submitted,

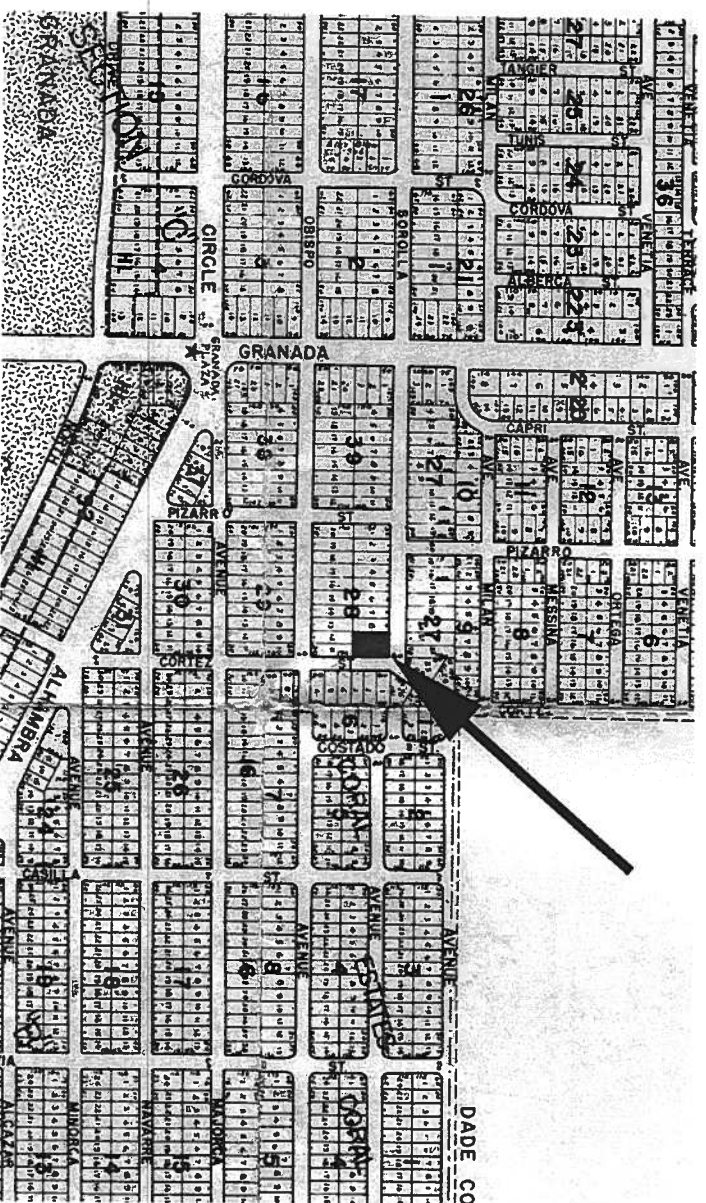


Kara N. Kautz  
Historic Preservation Officer

Bibliography

- Building Microfilm Records for 1700 Cortez Street, Building and Zoning Department, Microfilm Division, Coral Gables, Florida.
- R. L. Polk City Directories, Miami/Coral Gables 1924/1929 – 1949
- Real Estate Records for 1700 Cortez Street, 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

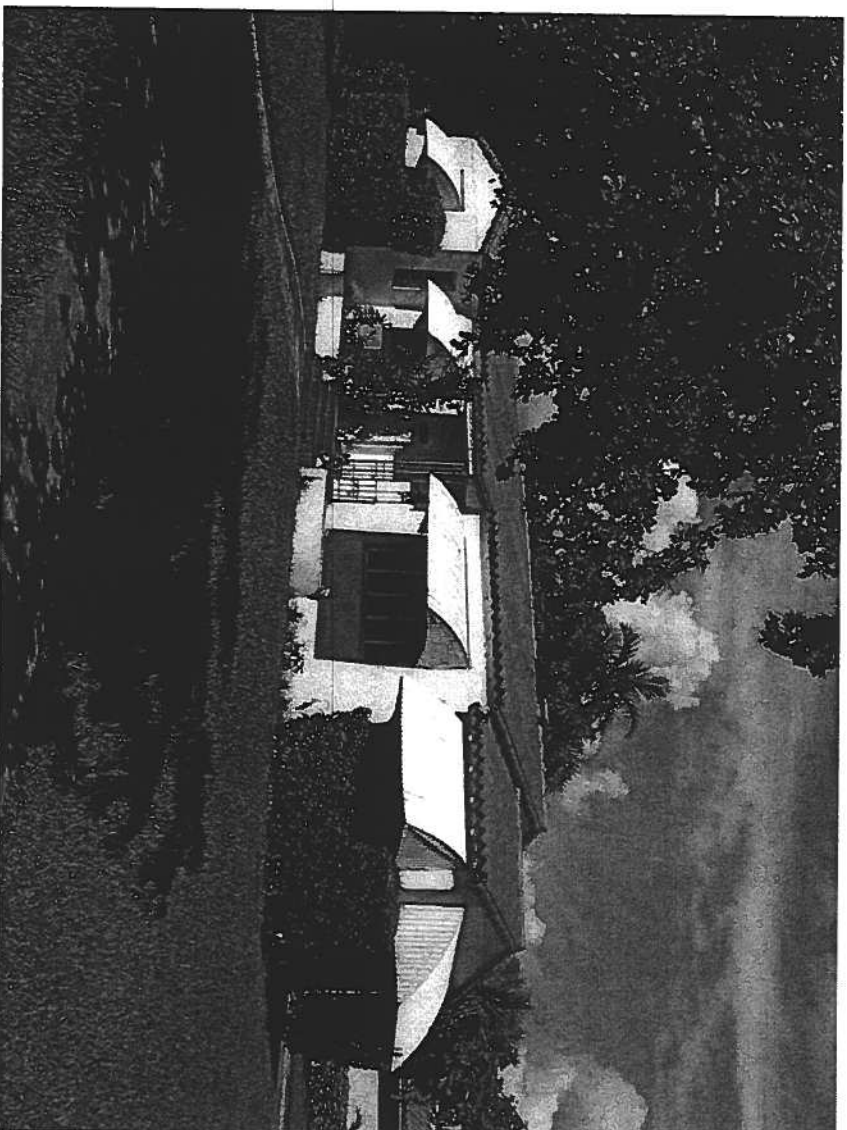
The Review Guide by describing EXISTING physical characteristics may be used to determine whether or not elements which create the character of the structure and/or district is present and/or whether or not later additions or alterations have so changed that character so as to cause the property (ies)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

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**Property Address:** 1700 Cortez Street

**Date of Construction:** 1940

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



Photograph Year 2007



