



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

*Historical Resources &  
Cultural Arts*

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**Proposal:** The application requests design approval for the demolition of a wood-frame auxiliary structure, an addition and alterations to the residence, and sitework. A variance has also been requested from Article 8, Section 8-203 C (1) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code for the elimination of off-street covered parking.

**Architect:** Patrick Valent

**Owner:** Manuel A. Melendez

**Folio Number:** 03-4107-018-0600

**Legal Description:** Lot 5, Block 4, Coral Gables Granada Section Revised, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 113, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

**Site Characteristics:** The property is located on the south side of Medina Avenue between Pizarro Street and Cortez Street. The lot dimensions are 50' x 100'.

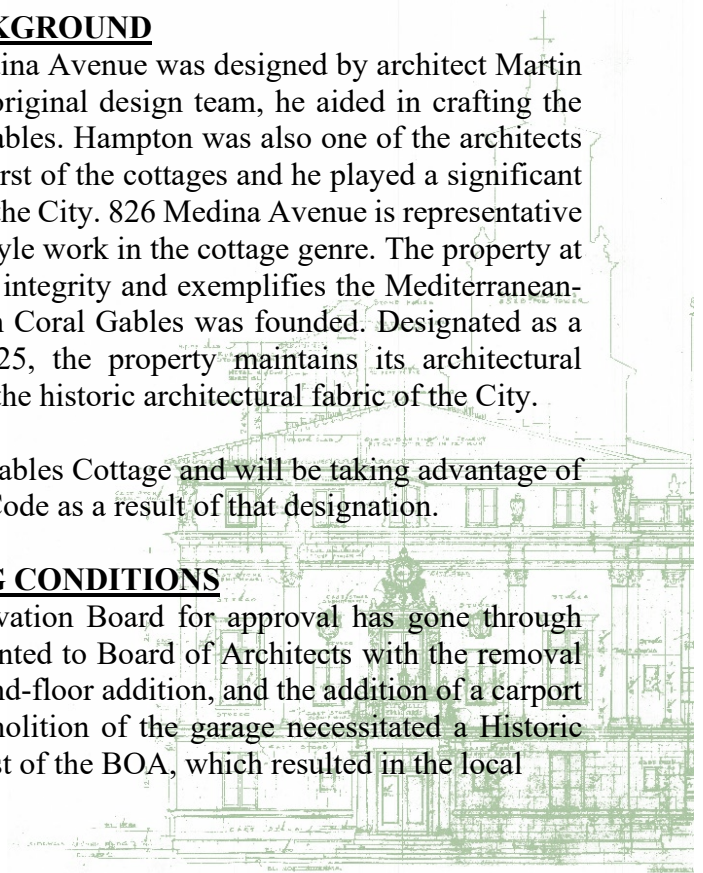
**BACKGROUND**

The single-family residence at 826 Medina Avenue was designed by architect Martin L. Hampton. A member of Merrick's original design team, he aided in crafting the Mediterranean aesthetic of the Coral Gables. Hampton was also one of the architects hand-picked by Merrick to design the first of the cottages and he played a significant role in the development of this genre in the City. 826 Medina Avenue is representative of Hampton's Mediterranean Revival style work in the cottage genre. The property at 826 Medina Avenue retains its historic integrity and exemplifies the Mediterranean-inspired building archetype upon which Coral Gables was founded. Designated as a Local Historic Landmark in May 2025, the property maintains its architectural integrity and continues to contribute to the historic architectural fabric of the City.

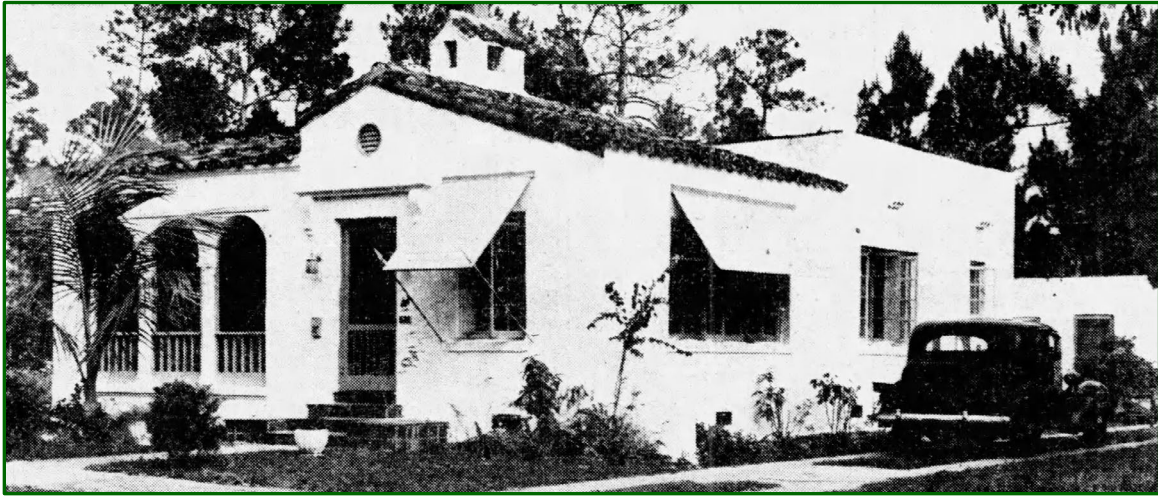
The property also qualifies as a Coral Gables Cottage and will be taking advantage of incentives in the Coral Gables Zoning Code as a result of that designation.

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The project before the Historic Preservation Board for approval has gone through several iterations. Initially, it was presented to Board of Architects with the removal of the detached garage structure, a second-floor addition, and the addition of a carport to the west side of the home. The demolition of the garage necessitated a Historic Significance determination at the request of the BOA, which resulted in the local



historic designation of the property. Working with the architect and homeowner, Staff became aware of the existing constraints on the site, namely that the front setback is only 14'-9", leaving the rear yard as the only location for the septic tank and drainfield. Staff required that the detached garage be retained and suggested utilizing it as living space in lieu of a second-story addition to this early home. Staff also suggested Cottage designation with a variance to waive the off-street parking requirement in order to leave the historic home at one-story. It was then discovered that the existing garage is wood-frame construction and dilapidated. The current request is to reconstruct the garage, with the same footprint and setbacks, and utilize it as living space.



**Figure 1: May 9, 1943 Photo**



**Figure 2: ca. 1940s Photo**



**Figure 3: Current Photo, 2025**

### **PROPOSAL**

The application requests design approval for the demolition of a detached wood-frame auxiliary garage structure, an addition and alterations to the residence, and minor sitework. A variance has also been requested from Article 8, Section 8-203 C (1) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code for the elimination of off-street covered parking.

### **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 application requests design approval for the demolition of an existing one-story auxiliary garage structure, the construction of an addition to the rear of the residence that will connect to a recreated garage structure that will be used as living space, exterior alterations, and minor sitework. The work proposed in the application consists of:

- The demolition of the existing original one-story detached garage structure and a 1987 CBS storage room addition. The garage structure is wood-frame construction and is in poor condition and the west wall is noticeably bowing outward. The original structure is approximately 460 SF and is noted on the property's tax card as ½ garage bay and ½ servant's quarters. The garage originally had an arched parapet over the garage door (see Figure 2) that was later removed. Otherwise, it is devoid of ornamentation.
- The construction of an addition to the southwest corner of the house that consists of a reconstructed auxiliary structure to be used as living space and a gallery connector between the existing residence and new "garage." To accommodate the addition, a window at the rear of the home (kitchen) and a set of stairs leading out of the laundry area will be removed. The new "garage" comprises a master bedroom suite and a storage bay. The front-facing storage bay recreates carriage doors on the east façade so that the appearance of a garage remains from the street ROW.

The parapet of the "garage" will be higher than the existing to accommodate the raise in floor height for the living space. A horizontal stucco reveal denotes the height of the original garage structure. At front (north) façade of the "garage" addition, carriage doors open onto a storage bay at ground level, giving the appearance of a garage from the street. The existing driveway pavers are to remain. Note that the site plan does not match the existing survey and will need to be corrected prior to permitting. The proposed elevation illustrates a round vent and thickened lintel above the garage door "to match existing." The vent is a feature that exists on the home and should not be recreated on the new addition. Likewise, the lintel refers to an existing change in stucco on the structure (see photo on Sheet A-2.0) that actually denotes a change in the size of the door opening. Staff suggest increasing the height of the door to the original opening size and eliminating the added features.

The detailing of the addition is simple with the windows and stucco noted to match existing. At the west side of the gallery connector, a French door topped with a canvas awning opens onto a dual-sided stair leading to the driveway. Note that at the west façade of the existing residence, an existing window shifts in the existing and proposed floor plans. No elevations were provided for the rear of the home, and this is assumed to be a drafting error.

- The site work is limited to new septic tank and drainfield and replacing any paving removed to match existing conditions.

### VARIANCES

A variance has also been requested from Article 8, Section 8-203 C (1) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code for the minimum rear setback for the elimination of off-street covered parking. The following variance is requested in conjunction with this proposal:

*Grant a variance to allow the residence to not provide a carport or porte-cochere vs. Enclosed garages may be converted to living space or storage space so long as a carport or porte-cochere is provided for the storage of an automobile pursuant to Article 8, Section 8-203 C (1) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code.*

The Coral Gables Zoning Code requires that all properties maintain a covered off-street parking space (carport or garage). Coral Gables Cottage regulations (found in Article 8 of the Zoning Code) allow for the use of an enclosed garage as living space if an alternate covered parking space is provided. Given the constraints of the site and the desire to retain a one-story Coral Gables Cottage, Staff supports the granting of the variance.

The Historical Resources staff finds that the following criteria, necessary for authorization of the variance, apply:

Criteria	Yes/No
1) That special conditions and circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, structure or building involved and which are not applicable to other lands, structures or buildings in the same zoning district.	Yes
2) That the special conditions and circumstances do not result from the actions of the applicant.	Yes
3) That granting the variance requested will not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this Ordinance to other lands, buildings or structures in the same zoning district.	Yes
4) That literal interpretation of the provisions of the Zoning Code would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district under the terms of the Zoning Code and would work unnecessary and undue hardship on the applicant.	Yes
5) That the variance granted is the minimum variance that will make possible the reasonable use of the land, building or structure.	Yes
6) That granting the variance will not change the use to one that is different from other land in the same district.	Yes
7) That the granting of the variance will be in harmony with the general intent and purpose of the Zoning Code, and that such variance will not be injurious to the area involved or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare.	Yes
8) That the granting of the variance is appropriate for the continued preservation of an historic landmark or historic landmark district.	Yes

### **BOARD OF ARCHITECTS**

The proposal was reviewed and approved with the following notes by the Board of Architects on January 15, 2026:

Add a reveal to mark the location of the original parapet Raise lintel over garage to be 12" Also make lintel flush Add wing wall to elevations with dimensions and clear detail Also detail the circular crest over garage Move crest up as per elevation mark ups

### **STAFF CONCLUSION**

The application requests design approval for the deteriorated wood-frame detached one-story garages. They are important elements that define Coral Gables Mediterranean Revival architecture and are especially important to the smaller, Cottage-type residences. The proposal seeks to rebuild the garage structure, utilizing it as living space and attaching it to the residence, while maintaining the look of a garage from the public view. It was important to Staff to maintain this early Martin

Hampton-designed home as a one-story Cottage and not require the introduction of a new carport as it never had one. The addition to the home is not readily visible from Medina Street and appropriately placed. The addition of conjectural features to the north façade of the garage is not supported by Staff and the windows at the addition are to reflect what was originally on the home, not match what is there now. Staff can work with the applicant to achieve the property windows and muntin patterns.

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. Work with Staff on the window type and muntin pattern for the addition.
4. French doors are to receive higher kickplate.
5. Carriage doors are to be wood. Staff to approve the final design.
6. Correct the site plan to match the existing survey prior to permitting.
7. Stucco is to be lightly textured to differentiate it from the rough texture of the existing home. A stucco sample is to be provide to Staff for review and approval prior to application.
8. A detail is to be provided for the stucco reveal. Provide enough width for it to be easily discernable.
9. Eliminate the windowsills at the addition.
10. New canvas awnings will require a separate permit and a separate Standard Certificate of Appropriateness.

**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 **826 Medina Avenue**, a Local Historic Landmark, legally described as Lot 5, Block 4, Coral Gables Granada Section Revised, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 113, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida and **APPROVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness with the conditions noted above.

AND

A motion to **APPROVE** a variance to allow the residence to not provide a carport or porte-cochere vs. Enclosed garages may be converted to living space or storage space so long as a carport or porte-cochere is provided for the storage of an automobile pursuant to Article 8, Section 8-203 C (1) of the Coral Gables Zoning Code.

Respectfully submitted,



Anna Permas

Historic Preservation Officer