

DESIGNATION: LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

517 ARAGON AVENUE

- Application:** September 13, 2022: received Historic Significance application
October 19, 2022: issued a determination letter stating it meets the minimum eligibility criteria for designation
December 9, 2023: HPO granted owner deferral request to Feb 2023
February 15, 2023: HPB grants owner one month deferral request



Local Historical Landmark

Article 8, Section 8-103 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code--*Criteria for designation of historic landmarks or historic districts*: a local historic landmark must have significant character, interest or value as part of the historical, cultural, archaeological, aesthetic, or architectural heritage of the City, state or nation.

For designation, a property must meet **one (1)** of the criteria outlined in the Code.

517 Aragon Avenue is eligible as a Local Historic Landmark based on **three (3) significance criteria:**

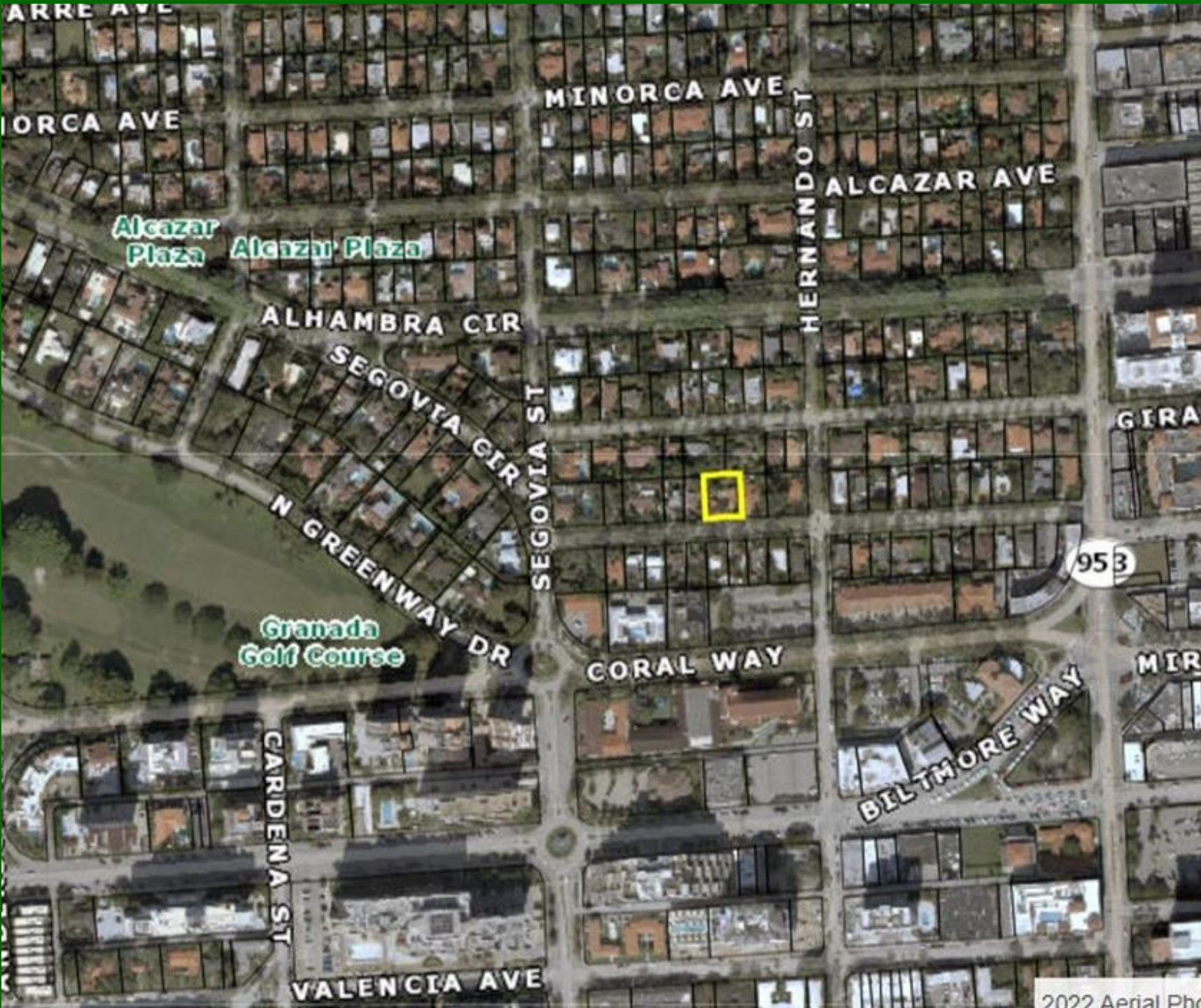
Historical, Cultural significance

4. Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economic or social trends of the community

Architectural significance

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





517 Aragon Avenue

Single-family residence

86' x 110' interior lot

Situated in Coral Gables
Section "B"

*Aerial Photograph Courtesy Miami-
Dade County Property Appraiser*



Coral Gables' Developmental History

Divided broadly into three major historical periods:

- Coral Gables' Initial Planning and Development/Florida Land Boom (Prior to the Hurricane of 1926)



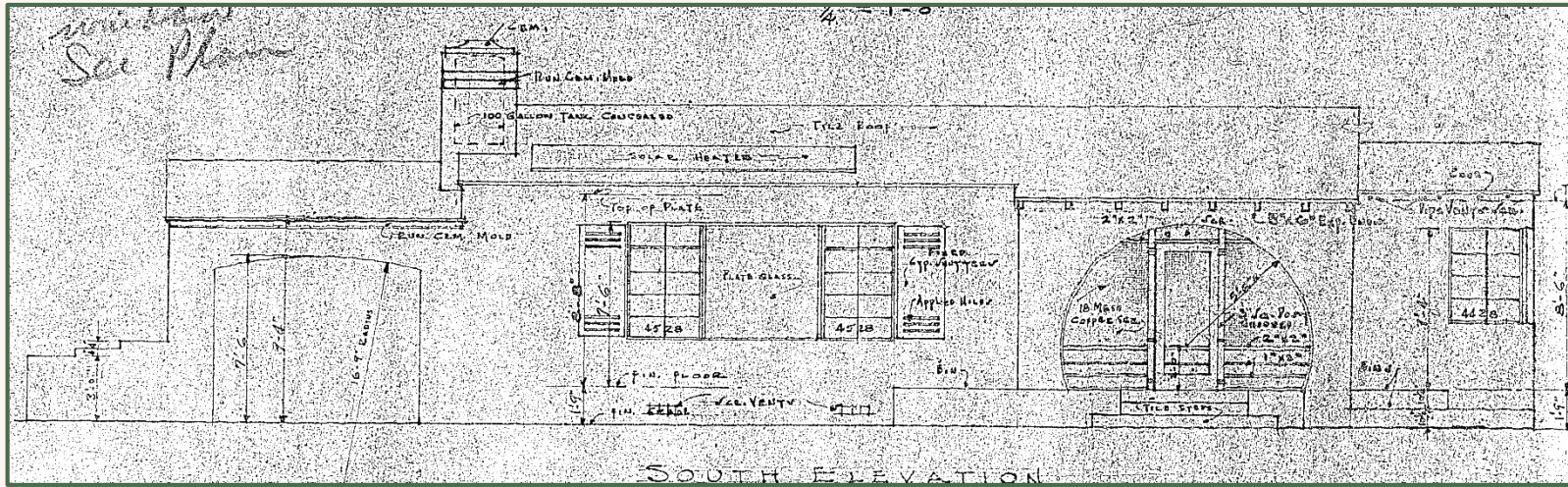
- **Aftermath of the 1926 Hurricane/ Great Depression and New Deal/ Wartime Activity (1927-1944)**



- Post World War II and Modern Periods (1945-1966)



517 Aragon Avenue



Architect:

William Merriam

Original Owner:

Laura B. Larson

Style:

Minimal Traditional (1935-1950)

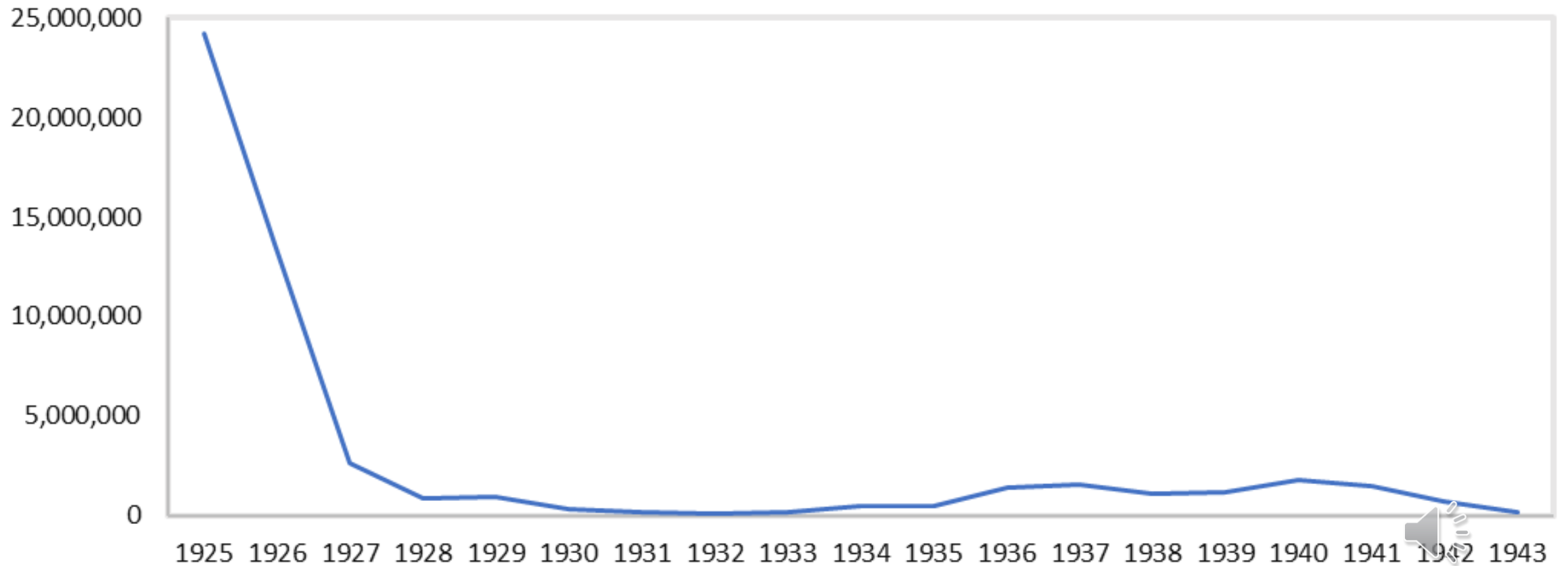
Permit:

#5357, February 1937

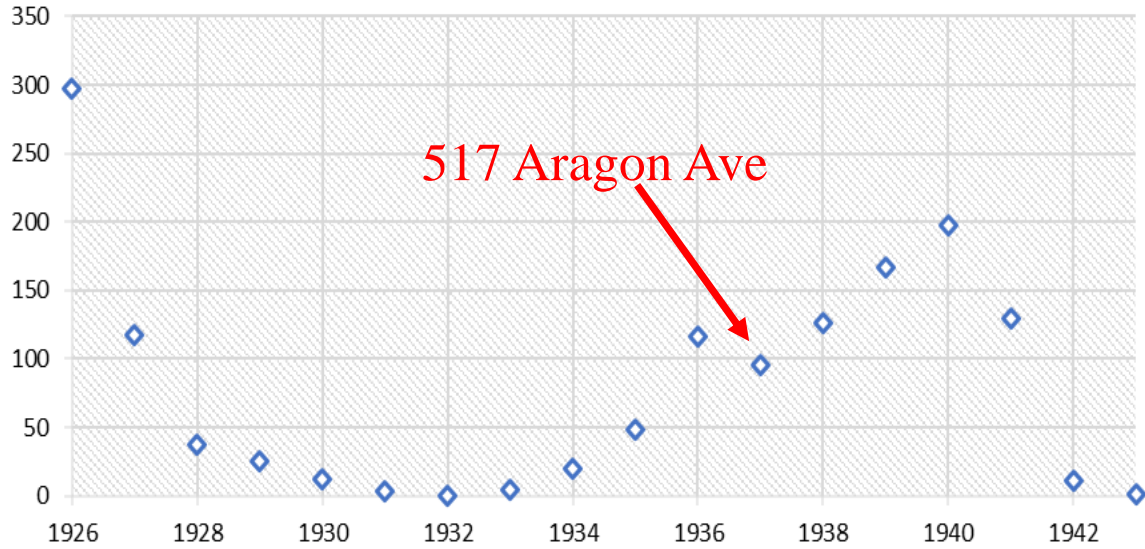


Coral Gables' Second Developmental Phase

Total Permit Dollars Over Time



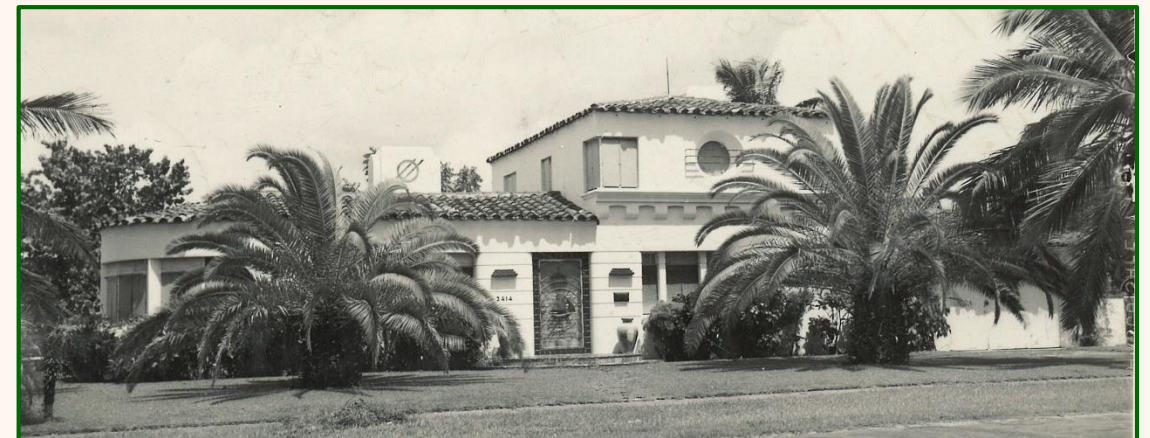
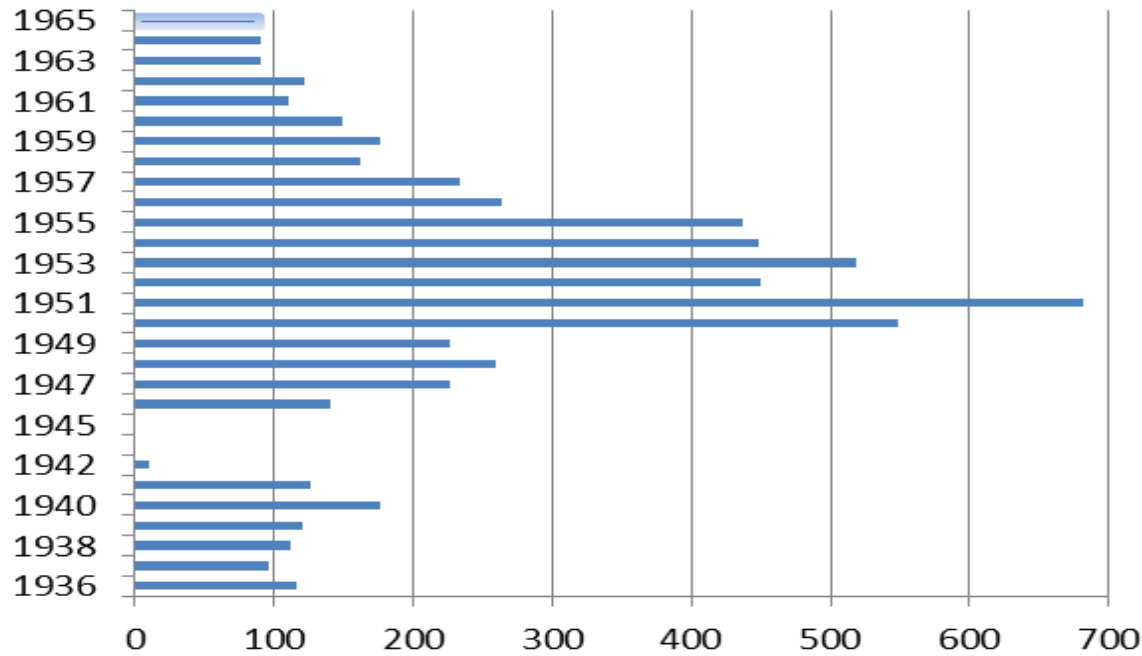
Construction of New SFRs



Building Permits: Single-Family Homes



1920s top; 1930s bottom



Note: no data for 1945; SFR permits for 1944 was zero



Minimal Traditional Style (1935-1950)

*The Minimal Traditional house was “the little house that could.” It was the small house that could be built with FHA-insured loans in the midst of the Great Depression between 1935 and 1940. **The Minimal Traditional was a well-studied and thoughtful response to the most challenging conditions ever to affect home construction in the United States.** In the early 1930s, the Great Depression virtually shut down the home-building industry. Banks were going under, mortgages were past due, and there were no funds for new construction.*

The urgent first step was the creation of a new method for insuring long-term, low-interest mortgages. This was accomplished in 1934 through the creation of the FHA, whose goal was to produce small homes the average working American could afford. The FHA not only provided insurance that covered the mortgage loan a bank made, it also prepared publications that showed how to most effectively design a small house. Architects, desperate for work after 1930, enthusiastically turned their attention to the design of the small house.

Virginia McAlester
[A Field Guide to American Houses](#)



Minimal Traditional Style: Initial Phase (1935-1942)

Its simplicity was a subtle response to the economic hardships of the Depression and the ornate styles of the 1920s

General Characteristics:

- combined a restrained combination of features from other styles while adhering to the burgeoning modern aesthetic of subtle ornamentation and stream-lined homes
- small, 2-3 bedrooms, and affordable for working and middle-class families
- well-built, often using modern materials (i.e., plywood, modern cement mixtures) and methods
- focused on practicality & efficiency
- most included the emerging trend of attached garages

Dominant Southeastern Florida Characteristics: Modernistic aesthetic with regional influences

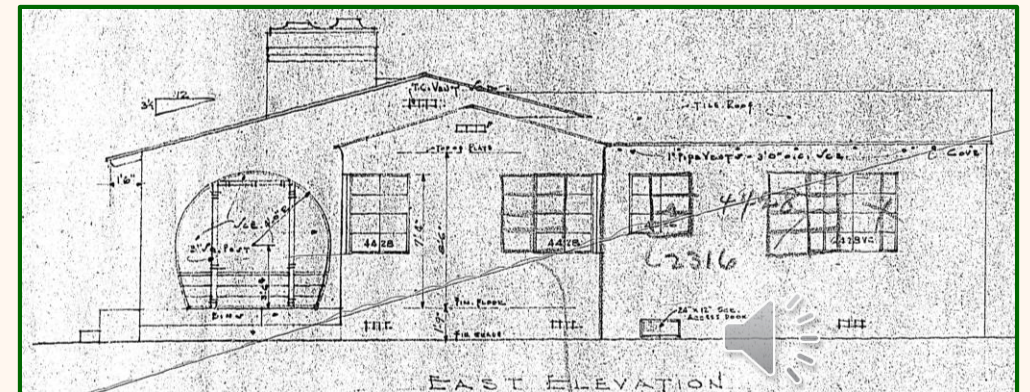
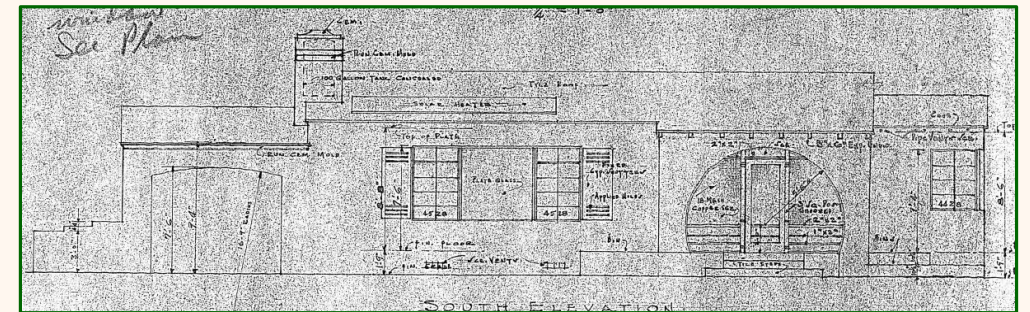
- Modernistic: stream-lined aesthetic with an overall horizontal emphasis, smooth stucco, recessed 'cutout' fenestration without sills or lintels, curving and geometric forms, simplified roof types
- Predominant regional influences Mediterranean Revival, Art Deco & Art Moderne styles
 - ✓ Mediterranean Revival: barrel tile roofs, arched main entrances, decorative vents
 - ✓ Art Deco & Art Moderne: corner windows, eyebrow hoods, and geometric & floral detailing



517 Aragon Avenue Character-Defining Features

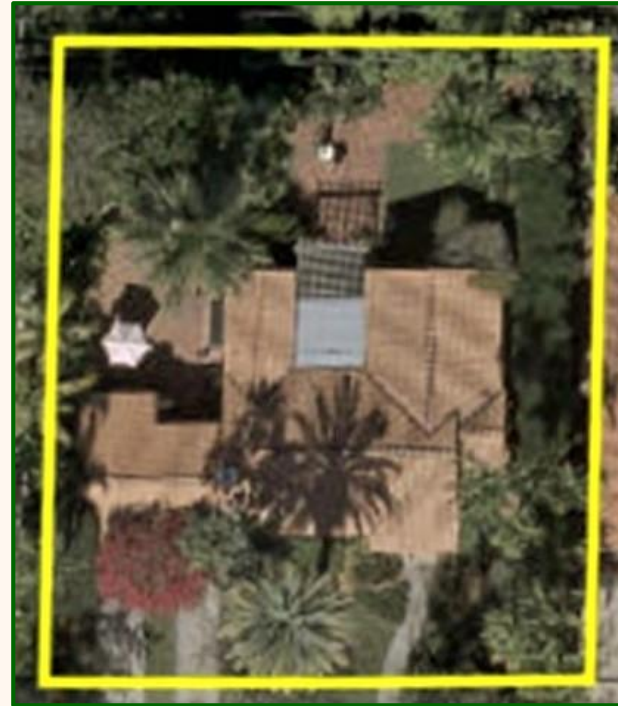
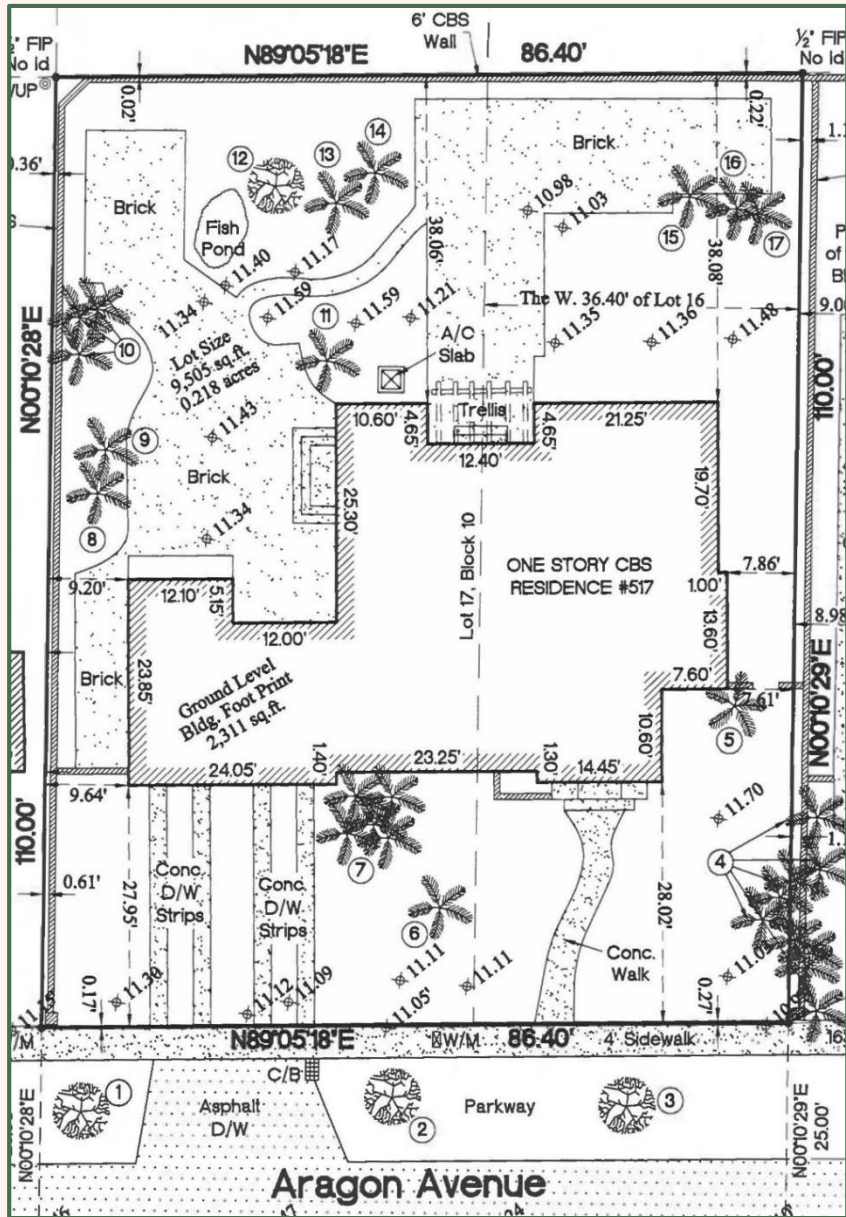


- ✓ one-story, overall simple massing with a horizontal emphasis, & focus on geometric forms
- ✓ low roof pitches clad in barrel tile roof
- ✓ corner window
- ✓ lightly-textured stucco and minimal decorative embellishment
- ✓ recessed fenestration without sills or lintels: the Modernistic impression of openings being carved out
- ✓ Moorish arched front porch
- ✓ large rectangular window with rounded sides
- ✓ shallow segmental arched square opening of the carport
- ✓ interior chimney with a geometric emphasis
- ✓ exposed rafter tails
- ✓ curved Modernistic built-in planter at the southeast corner
- ✓ rectangular grouped vents in the gable eaves

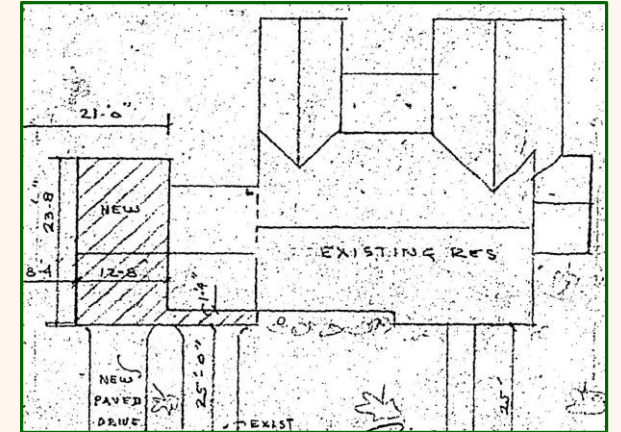


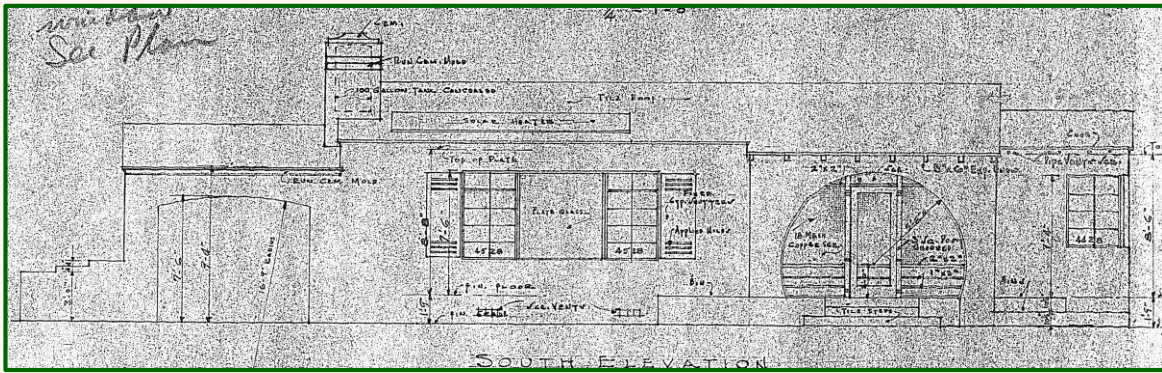
Front (South) & Side (East) Facades: Permit #5357, 1937

517 Aragon Ave: Survey

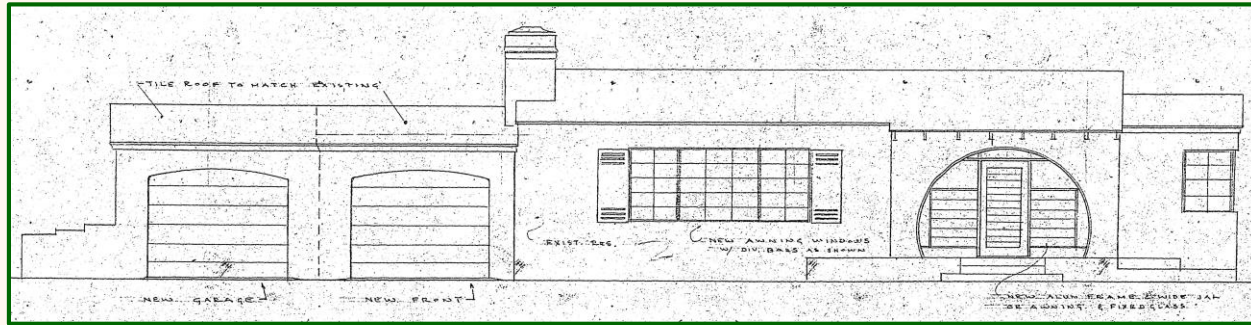


Garage Addition





Permit #5357, 1937



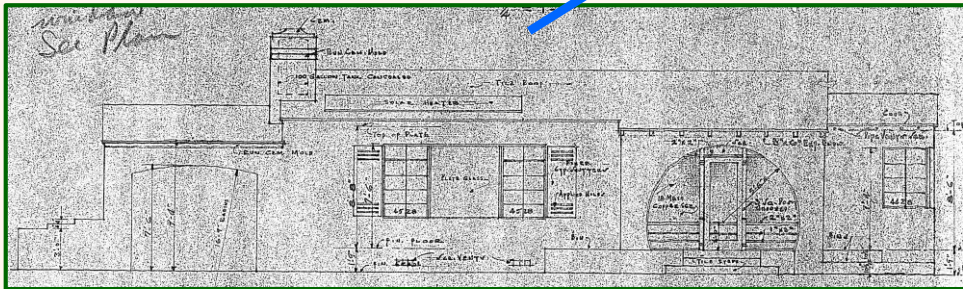
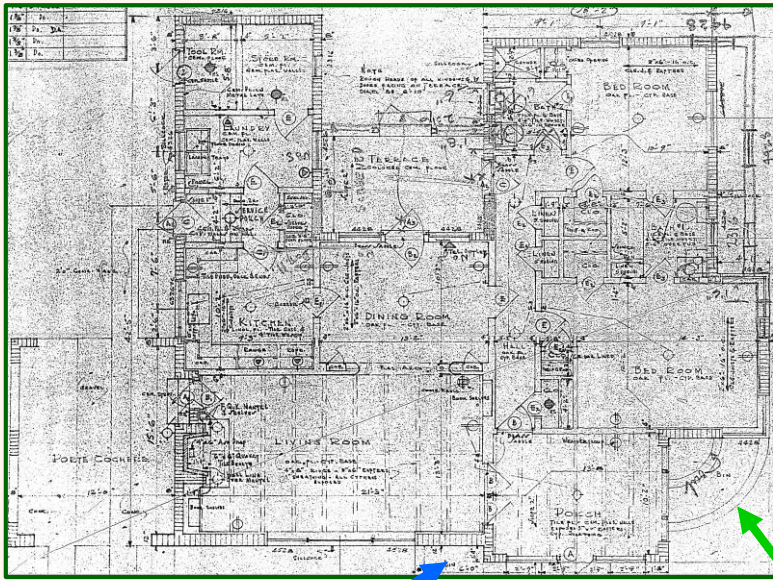
Permit #17220, 1961



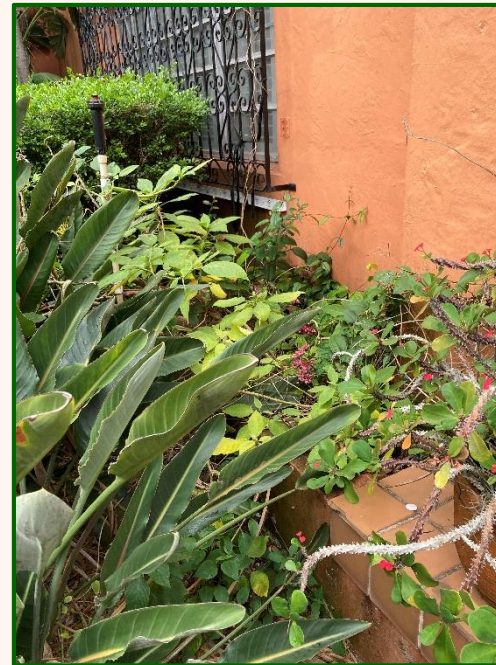
2022

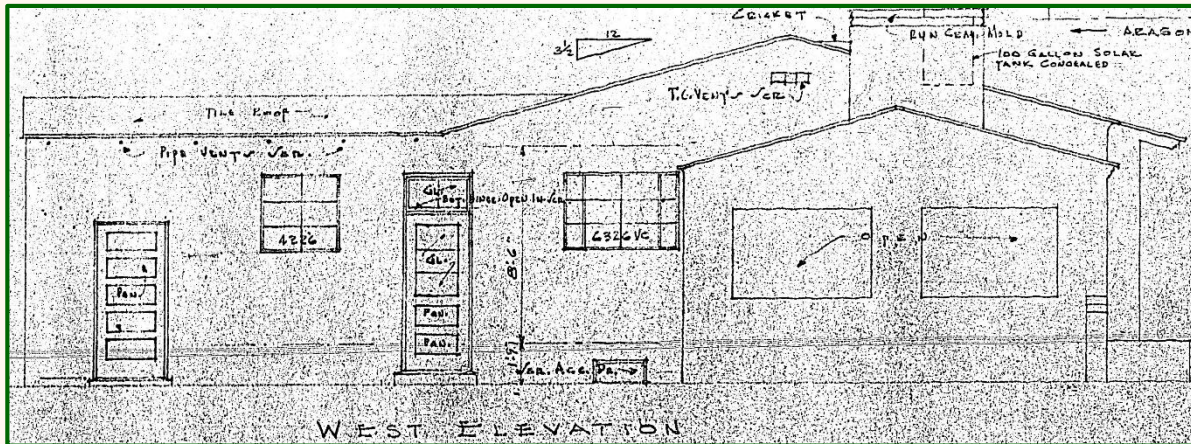


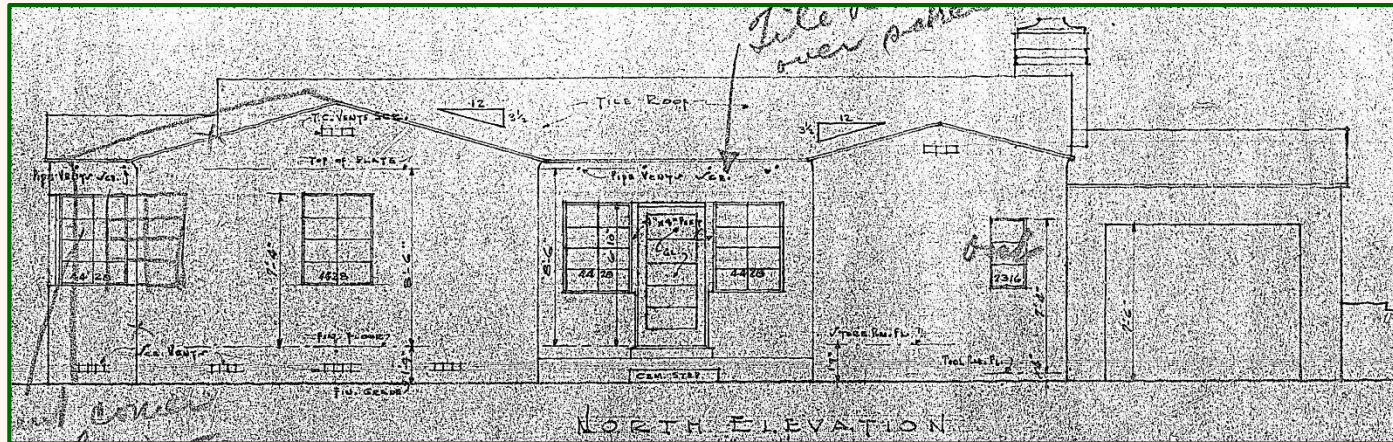
Permit
#5357,
1937

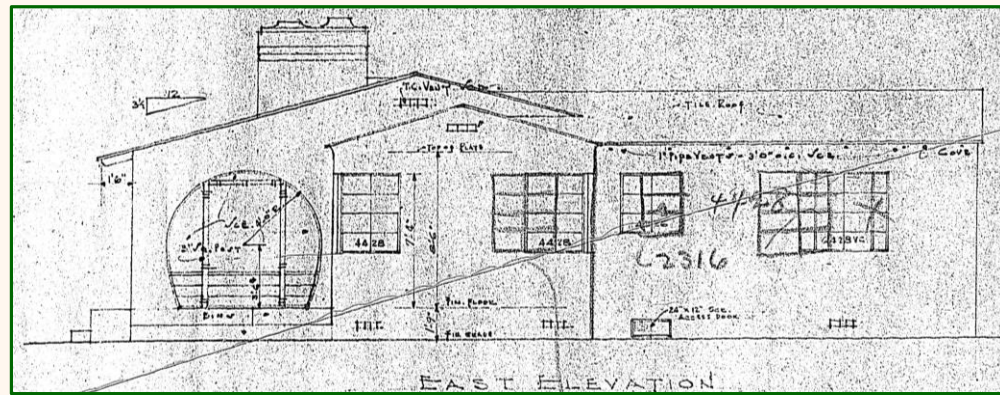
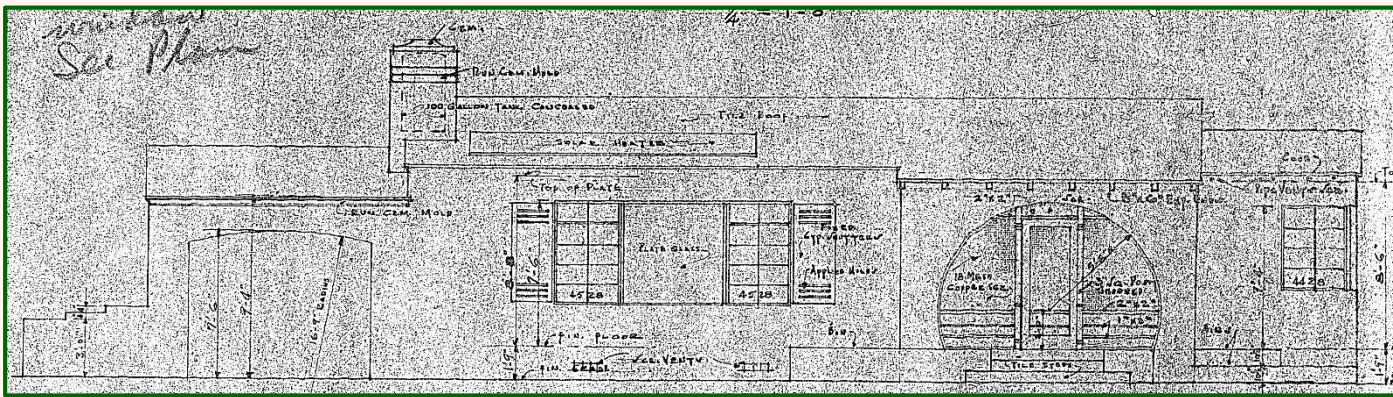


Historic
Photo
1940s









517 Aragon Avenue

Maintains a significant degree of historic integrity

Contributes to the historic fabric of the City of Coral Gables and is part of the collection of quality residences that serves as a visible reminder of the history and the cultural heritage of the City.

