

## The City of Coral Gables

COA (SP) 2015-007  
AUGUST 20, 2015

*Historical Resources Department*

**STAFF REPORT  
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
FOR THE PROPERTY AT  
936 CASTILE AVENUE  
A CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE WITHIN  
THE "CASTILE AVENUE / PLAZA HISTORIC DISTRICT"**

- Proposal: The applicant is requesting design approval for additions and alterations to the existing one-story residence and two-story auxiliary structure.
- Architect: RVL Architecture and Design
- Owner: Jorge A. and Kathrina F. Saladrigas
- Folio Number: 03-4107-021-0040
- Legal Description: Lot 8, Peacock Re-Subdivision, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 35, at Page 60 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.
- Site Characteristics: This property is located on the south side of Castile Avenue, between Granada Boulevard and Toledo Street. The main elevation of the residence faces north onto Castile Avenue and Young Park. The property is approximately 126' wide by 89' deep.

### **BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS**

In January of 2008, the "Castile Avenue / Plaza Historic District" was listed in the Coral Gables Register of Historic Places. It is comprised of properties located along Castile Avenue and Castile Plaza from Alhambra Circle to South Greenway Drive. The majority of the properties on the street were constructed in the early years of the City, and the massing, scale and architecture of the entire street maintain its cohesive charm and character. The residence at 936 Castile Avenue is considered a contributing resource within the historic district. It was constructed in 1931, and designed by Lester Avery. It is a good example of the residential architecture constructed throughout Coral Gables as the City started to shift away from pure Mediterranean Revival architecture. It has undergone some alterations but retains a high level of historic integrity.

### **PROPOSAL**

The applicant is requesting design approval for a small addition to the rear (south) of the residence, a second-story addition at the front (north) of the auxiliary structure, and interior and exterior alterations to both the existing one-story residence and two-story auxiliary structure.

**SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION**

The following Standards have application in this matter:

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 property currently consists of a one-story residence with a two-story auxiliary structure attached at the southeast corner, connecting physically to the house but not accessible from the interior of the house.

Alterations / Addition to Residence:

The addition proposed for the residence consists of a laundry and a small entry area at the rear (southeast corner) of the home. An existing non-original half bath and exterior steps (a permit could not be located for the half bath) will be removed to accommodate the addition. This addition allows entry into the residence from the driveway area.

The interior of the residence will be reconfigured on the west side to simplify the floor plan and to allow for the expansion of the master bedroom and the creation of a master bathroom. The existing bedrooms and bathrooms will be reconfigured and a powder room will be added. On the east side of the house, the existing kitchen is being renovated and expanded. The laundry room addition is to the south of the kitchen.

Alterations to the primary (north) elevation are minimal. All existing windows will be replaced with impact-resistant casement window units throughout. Non-original ironwork will be removed to reveal the existing, original wooden elements.

At the west elevation, a window is being added and another will be resized. An existing non-original covered terrace (a permit could not be located for the covered terrace) at the rear (southwest corner) of the home will also be removed. The sloped roof at the south of this elevation will be removed and the roof raised to join the parapet of the rest of the house. (Again, a permit could not be located for this sloped roof portion of the house.)

At the rear (south) elevation, the existing windows and doors will be reconfigured where the covered terrace was removed. French doors will be installed in the master bathroom and new windows will be installed to accommodate the new bathrooms. (Note that the two windows are drawn in elevation as identical in size, but they are different sizes in plan.) A new landing and steps with a barrel tile covered entry will be constructed where the covered terrace was removed to provide access to the yard from the master bedroom. French doors at the rear of the living room are proposed to be relocated to the west in order to line up on axis with the existing front

door. Non-original ironwork, similar to the front elevation, will be removed to reveal the existing, original wooden elements.

At the east elevation, the dining room extension (an addition permitted in 1940) will be altered. The shed roof will be removed and the roof will be raised to join the parapet of the rest of the house. A window in this addition will be removed and a decorative wing wall is being added at the northeast corner of the house. The kitchen window is being enlarged and shifted to the south to accommodate the layout of the new kitchen.

Alterations / Addition to Auxiliary Structure:

The existing auxiliary structure is currently two-stories in height and consists of two garage bays (each with a pair of wood garage doors) and a small toilet room on the first floor and a small guest bedroom with bathroom on the second floor. The second floor is accessible by an exterior staircase (approximately 2'-0" in width) located to the rear (south) of the structure.

The applicant is proposing an addition to the auxiliary structure that will extend the second floor living space to the north so that it is the full depth the garage bays below. The addition consists of an entry area, studio, full bathroom, closet, and bar area. A covered terrace extends the full width of the second floor addition at the north façade. A new staircase is proposed on the west side of the structure. The addition has a flat roof with a parapet and the covered terrace features a shed roof clad in true barrel tile.

At the primary (north) elevation, a shed roof above the garage doors will be removed to accommodate the second-story addition. The proposed elevation features a barrel-tiled shed roof, reminiscent of the original, on the second floor above the covered terrace. A two pairs of French doors lead onto the covered terrace from the studio and the railings appear to be wood pickets that emulate the woodwork found on the existing house.

The proposed west elevation will consist of the new two-story addition and staircase. A French door with a barrel tile covered entry provides access to the studio. Another French door below provides access into the garage. Wooden pickets, like those shown on the covered entry at the north façade are proposed for the second floor stair landing. The rear (south) and east elevations are very simple with a series of new casement windows with wood shutters that mimic those found on the existing house.

No sitework is proposed.

**VARIANCES**

No variances have been requested with this application.

**BOARD OF ARCHITECTS**

The proposal was reviewed and approved by the Board of Architects on June 25, 2015 with a recommendation to study adding windows to the proposed east elevation of the auxiliary structure.

**STAFF CONCLUSION**

The application presented requests design approval for additions and alterations to the existing one-story residence and two-story auxiliary structure at 936 Castile Avenue. The locations of the additions are to the rear of the property.

Much of the construction that has occurred on this property could not be documented, so the removal or alteration of those areas does not pose a concern to staff. With this proposal, the applicant is actually correcting many of the previous alterations for which permits could not be located. The existing second-story guest bedroom is extremely small and the stairway to access it is hazardous. Although the second-story addition does alter the appearance of the primary façade of the auxiliary structure, it is set back from the front façade of the residence and does not overwhelm or diminish the existing residence. Details found on the additions and alterations take their cue from the existing features of the residence and blend well with the historic property.

Staff would like clarification on the windows shown on the proposed elevations. It seems as if the awning windows drawn on the existing elevations were not changed to the casement units throughout the proposed elevations. Staff requests that the corrected elevations be approved administratively prior to permitting.

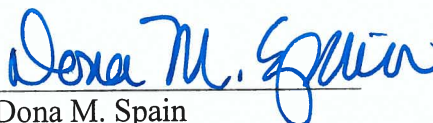
Additionally, some of the wood picket details that Staff noted during a walk-through of the property with the owner are missing from the house now. Were those removed for safe-keeping or have they disappeared? The design of replacement pieces should be approved by Staff prior to fabrication if they are not located.

The proposed addition does not detract from the overall historic integrity of the property.

**Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:**

A motion to **APPROVE** the design proposal for the s addition, and alterations to the existing one-story residence and two-story auxiliary structure, at 936 Castile Avenue, a contributing resource within the "Castile Avenue / Plaza Historic District," legally described as Lot 8, Peacock Re-Subdivision, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 35, at Page 60 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida, and **APPROVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness.

Respectfully submitted,



Dona M. Spain  
Historic Preservation Officer