



COA (SP) 2024-004
DECEMBER 19, 2024

**STAFF REPORT
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
FOR THE PROPERTY AT
3800 GRANADA BOULEVARD
A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK**

*Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts*

2327 Salzedo Street
Coral Gables
Florida, 33134

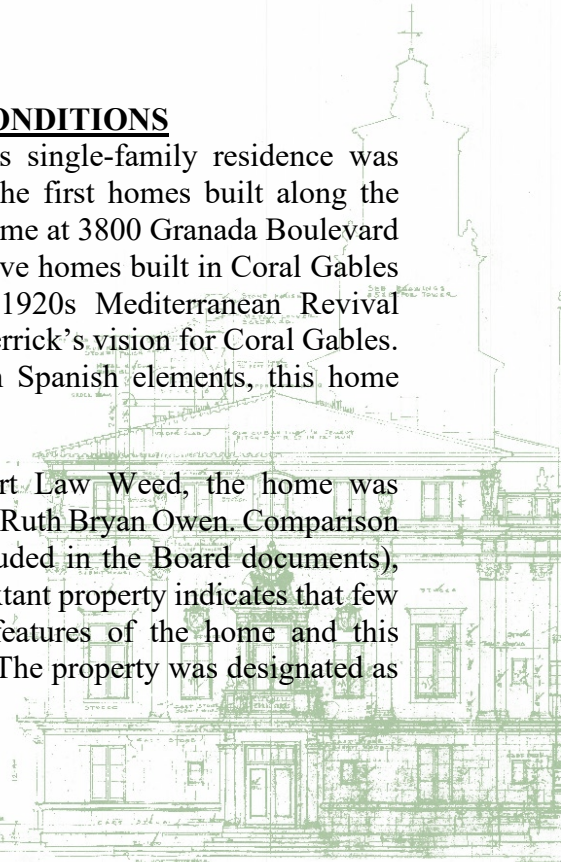
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- Proposal:** The application requests design approval for additions and alterations to the residence and sitework.
- Architect:** Oscar A. Carrera Architect
- Owner:** Walter and Yasmin Gonzalez
- Legal Description:** Lots 112, 113, 114, and the South 20 feet of Lot 115, Block 50, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part Four, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 10, at Page 57, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.
- Site Characteristics:** The irregularly-sized property is located on several interior lots on the west side of Granada Boulevard at the head of Algaringo Avenue. The rear property line is along the Biltmore Golf Course. The property is approximately 31,790 SF.

BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS

Situated on the prominent Granada Boulevard this single-family residence was amongst the earliest built in the City and one of the first homes built along the Biltmore Golf Course. Constructed in 1925-6, the home at 3800 Granada Boulevard (originally 3806) was by far one of the most expensive homes built in Coral Gables at this time. It is an excellent example of the 1920s Mediterranean Revival architecture which characterizes founder, George Merrick's vision for Coral Gables. While many early buildings in this style relied on Spanish elements, this home heavily favored Italian precedents.

Designed by nationally-recognized architect Robert Law Weed, the home was commissioned by Major Reginald Owen and his wife Ruth Bryan Owen. Comparison of the original permit plans (see Permit #1341 included in the Board documents), historic photos and other building records with the extant property indicates that few changes have occurred to the character-defining features of the home and this residence retains a high degree of historic integrity. The property was designated as a Local Historic Landmark on July 20, 2022.



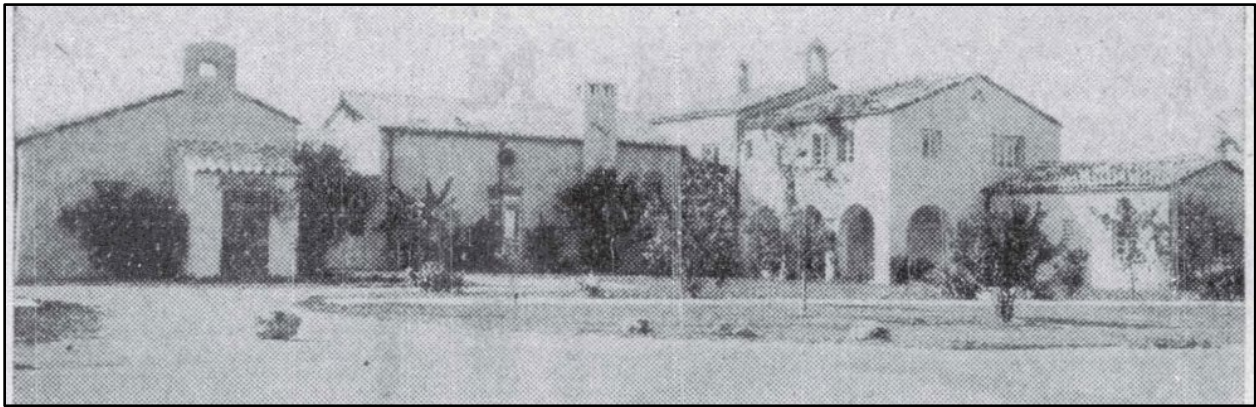


Figure 1: The Miami Herald, April 1930



Figure 1: ca. 1940s photo



Figure 3: Front facades facing east, 2019

Courtesy: Realtor.com

PROPOSAL

The applicant is requesting design approval for multiple additions and alterations to the existing home and extensive sitework on the property. The additions consist of a two-story addition at the northwest corner of the home, a one-story addition to the southeast corner of the home, and a one-story covered terrace at the rear (west) of the home. Sitework includes regrading of the entire site, walls, fences, hardscape, landscape, swimming pool, and fountains.

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.*
3. *Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.*
4. *Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*
5. *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.*
6. *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*
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 U-shaped residence with north and south wings that face Granada Boulevard creating a deep center courtyard. The north wing is primarily two-story while the south wing is one-story in height. The proposed addition at the northwest corner of the residence is two-stories in height and sits wholly behind a two-story portion of the home. To accommodate this addition, an existing first-floor Florida room (originally a pergola that was converted to living space) and an original second-floor wood projecting balcony will be removed. The addition comprises a family room and powder room on the first floor and master bedroom and closet on the second floor.

A one-story addition is proposed at the southeast corner of the residence at the east end of the south wing at the front elevation of the home. To accommodate the “storage” room, a non-original shed-roofed carport will be removed. The garage openings originally faced north (see Figure 1) and the openings were changed to face Granada fairly early (see Permit #1341). To the rear of the residence, a proposed 872 SF one-story covered terrace extends from the new two-story addition across the rear of the west façade. It’s length mirrors that of the double-height “Great Room” inside.

All window and doors on the residence will be replaced with impact-resistant units to match the original configurations. Some restoration work is proposed (i.e. reopening a porch at the southwest corner of the residence). Much of the interior layout of the home will be reconfigured.

The sitework proposed for the property is extensive. It includes:

1. Removal of all hardscape elements (driveways and walkways). (Sheet D-001)
2. Removal of the front fence, columns, and gates. (Sheet D-001)
3. New 4'-0" masonry front property wall with 7'-0" high oolite-clad columns at the vehicular openings and picket gates. (Sheets A-010, L-7.01, L-100)
4. New coral stone hardscape (walkways, driveways, auto court, pool coping, and patios). (Sheet A-010)
5. New landscaping.
6. Regrading of the entire site which results in a 3'-9" oolite-clad retaining wall topped with a 3'-0" aluminum picket fence facing the Biltmore Golf Course. (Sheets L-7.03, LR-1.04)
7. A series of low retaining walls, planters, and fountain feature at the front of the property. The center "courtyard is being raised by approximately 1'-6" which fills in the base of the original arches of the entryway to the north. (Views C & D/L-1.00, Sheets L-7.01, A-202, A-204)
8. New swimming pool. (Sheet A-010)

Note that the descriptions below do not follow the order of the plan sheets, but instead "walk around" the building starting at the front (east) elevation.

Front (East) Elevation – Sheet A-202:

At the front (east) elevation facing Granada Boulevard, the one-story addition to the north of the existing garage is visible and obscures a portion of the original home behind. It is under a side-facing gable roof with no overhang. Three large windows with stuccoed "columns" between face Granada Boulevard. The oolite cladding below the windows is an extension of the retaining wall of the built-up center courtyard. (See view H/L-1.01) The windows, doors, and garage doors will be replaced with new impact-resistant units. The original front door is noted as "to be restored." An original multi-paned arched window is proposed to be removed. Staff will note it is to remain. A pair of shutters as seen in the original drawings will return to a second-floor window. A portion of the gabled roof of the two-story addition at the northwest corner is visible to the rear.

Partial North Elevation – Sheet A-201:

This elevation is provided to show the north elevation of the south wing. The gable end of the one-story addition is punctured by an arched window assembly with transoms. Above are decorative grouped vents that match those found on the existing residence. A base of oolite cladding is shown. It is unclear as to how or if it wraps the corners of the façade. A semi-circular connector piece with an oversized round window is under a "metal roof." At the existing residence, a series of windows (originally an open-air hallway) will be elongated to accommodate French doors with sidelites.

North Elevation – Sheet A-200:

The proposed north elevation consists of the existing, historic residence to the east and new construction to the west. The series of doors in the one-story eastern end of this façade was originally a screened service passage with a cypress beam, brackets, and cypress posts. It was enclosed at some point, retaining the cypress beam and the five openings, but inserting new

columns. The existing elevation drawings does not show the existing beam. See Figure 4. The proposal shows brackets, but no details are provided. Note the proportions of this section of the elevation is inconsistent with the extant home.



Figure 4: North facade, 2019

Courtesy: Realtor.com

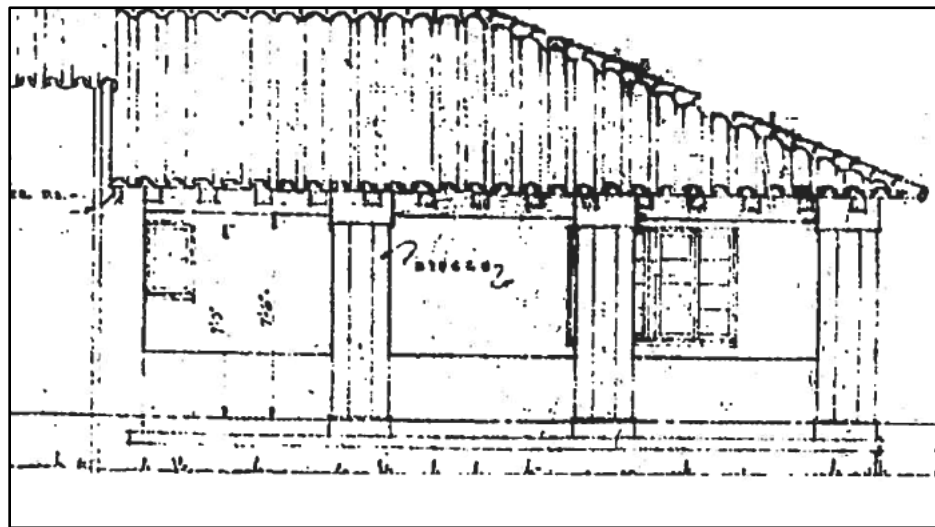
To the west an existing wood balcony will be retained. Below, an existing window opening will be extended to allow for a new French door. The existing side-facing gable roof end demarcates the proposed new construction. At the first floor two double windows are proposed to be eliminated and two new windows installed. A window on the east façade of this gable roofed projection (not visible) is being relocated as well. Above this bay, the existing roof ridge is being stepped up to the west of a chimney by approximately 2'-8" to accommodate the new two-story addition to the west. (See Section 01/Sheet A-301) The addition features a lower shed roof over three large arched windows. Centered above are three casement windows. Further to the west, the side of a projecting balcony is visible.

Rear (West) Elevation – Sheet A-205:

The rear (west) elevation faces the Biltmore Golf Course. At the north end, the two-story addition, replaces an existing Florida Room (originally a pergola) and original wood projecting balcony. The addition, under a gable roof, is punctuated by a second-floor projecting balcony supported by a concrete corbel and under a fabric awning. Casement windows flank the French doors leading to the balcony. On the first floor, the large arched windows found on the north elevation are repeated. A quatrefoil window is to the north. A base of stone cladding is shown on this elevation, although as noted previously, it is unclear as to how or if it wraps the corners of the façade. Spanning the rear façade is the flat roofed covered terrace consisting of wood beams, carved wood brackets, wood columns on a stone-clad base (not depicted as stone) and metal roof. (Also see Section 01/Sheet A-204) Further details will need to be provided at permitting.

At the southwest corner of the home, an original porch that was enclosed is being reopened. The original masonry columns, knee wall, and sill are extant. See Figures 5, below. The proposal does not show the knee walls or sill. Staff recommends that the knee walls flanking the center opening

be retained. The window and door within the porch are being reconfigured, although no existing elevation of the space within has been provided for comparison.



Figures 5: Porch at Southwest corner: Top -Photo, 2019, Bottom – Permit #1341

South Elevation – Sheet A-203:

On the south elevations the only alteration is the replacement of windows and the reopening of the southwest corner porch. The side of the two-story addition and the covered porch are visible to the west and the stepped up roof of the north wing is visible beyond. A series of three casement windows are placed across the second floor of the addition while French doors below provide access to the covered terrace. A lintel above the French doors mimics one found on the north façade of the south wing (see Sheet A-201).

Grading / Sitework:

As noted above, the proposal includes extensive sitework. Of most concern to staff is the regrading of the entire site by adding fill to raise the grade by as much as 4'-6." This number is based on the marks at the southwest corner of the site on L-2.01 although the Section/Elevation "G" on Sheet LR-1.04 shows a wall that is 3'-9" high. The resulting retaining wall is to be clad in oolite and

topped with a 3'-0" aluminum picket fence facing the Biltmore Golf Course. Additional regrading takes place to the east of the home within the U created by the two wings of the residence. This center courtyard will be raised by approximately 18" which fills in the base of the original arches of the entryway to the north with planters. (Figures 6)



Figures 6: Entry Loggia infill – C & D/Sheet L-1.00

VARIANCES

No variances have been requested with this application.

BOARD OF ARCHITECTS

The proposal was reviewed by the Board of Architects multiple times and ultimately approved on January 18, 2024 with no conditions. The rear wall and fence returned to the BOA and was approved October 17, 2024.

STAFF CONCLUSION

The applicant is requesting design approval for multiple additions and alterations to the existing home and extensive sitework on the property. on the property at 3800 Granada Boulevard. The additions take their cues from the existing residence, but further distinction needs to be made between the existing and proposed – see condition #12 below.

While Staff is generally supportive of the application, there are a few components of the proposal that need to be addressed. The stepped up roof condition at the north bay to accommodate the two-story addition needs to be restudied to keep the roof ridge at its current height. The addition maintains the roof ridge height of the existing residence, so it seems plausible that another solution is available that allows the existing roof structure not to be removed and raised. The roof of the “Storage” room addition at the front façade is to be lowered to be below the eave of the existing garage structure.

The proposed grading of the site creates a physical and visual barrier between the property and the golf course to the rear and infills the arches at the entryway. Staff recommends a gradual decrease in the grading toward the rear of the property to mitigate the height of the wall and fencing required. This should be further studied with staff and if necessary, may need further review by the Historic Preservation Board. Staff will require further clarification of the infill proposed at the arched entryway. Modifications to prominent original openings should be avoided. If possible, adjust the location of the retaining wall to the exterior of the columns or study a gradual transition of the proposed grade to the entry.

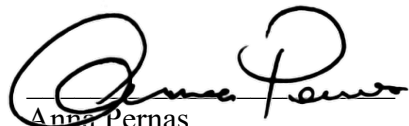
In addition to the comments above, Staff requests that the following conditions be incorporated into the approval of the proposed application:

1. Window glass is to be clear / no tint / no reflectivity.
2. Window muntins to be high-profile.
3. All French doors to have bottom rails.
4. New roof tile is to be two-piece barrel tile.
5. The existing house is not to be restuccoed. Patch as needed.
6. The arched leaded glass window on the front (east) façade is to remain. Provide hurricane protection as needed.
7. The Gothic-arched window on the rear (west) façade is to remain in place until it is certain that the muntin pattern can be replicated.
8. The existing front door is to remain.
9. Provide partial east elevation of portion of home obscured by “Storage” room.
10. Provide elevations of fences/gates that flank the residence (enclosing the rear yard).
11. No synthetic turf is to be used between the oolite elements or elsewhere.
12. Details (e.g. the decorative grouped vents, lintels, stucco texture) are to be differentiated from the original.
13. The “metal” roofs at the semi-circular connector to the “Storage” room and the rear covered terrace are to be copper.
14. The cypress beam at the north elevation is to remain and details are to be provided about the proposed brackets, columns, and how the doors are to be installed.
15. Any exposed coral rock on the east elevation is to be retained.
16. Work with Staff to finalize details of the porch at the southwest corner.
17. Oolite bases and cladding on the various facades to be coordinated.
18. The pool is to be submitted under a separate Standard Certificate of Appropriateness for Staff review.

Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS** the design proposal for the addition and alterations to the residence at 3800 Granada Boulevard, a Local Historic Landmark, legally described as Lots 112, 113, 114, and the south 20 feet of Lot 115, Block 50, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part 4, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 10, at Page 57 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida, and **APPROVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness.

Respectfully submitted,



Anna Pernas

Historic Preservation Officer