

**REPORT OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES
HISTORICAL RESOURCES & CULTURAL ARTS DEPARTMENT
TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
ON THE DESIGNATION OF
THE PROPERTY AT
2509 INDIAN MOUND TRAIL
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA
AS A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK**



Historic Photo, 1991



*Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts*

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LHD 2025-011
December 18, 2025

LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION

2509 INDIAN MOUND TRAIL, CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA

Application: Application by Owner

Folio Number: 03-4118-002-0210

Legal Description: Lot 3, Block 3, Coral Gables Section "D," according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 25, at Page 74, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida

Original Permit # & Date: #4842; 1935

Original Architect: William Merriam

Original Owner/Builder: Peninsular Construction & Development Company

Present Owner: Christine Mugrage and
Vivian Sanchez (Trustee, Vivian Ana Sanchez
Revocable Trust)

Building Type: One-story SFR

Style: Mediterranean Transitional

Site Characteristics: The property is located on an approximately 6,230 SF irregularly-shaped lot near the juncture of Indian Mound Trail and Andalusia Avenue

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Constructed in 1935, the single-family residence at 2509 Indian Mound Trail was amongst the first homes built during the New Deal Era. Between 1930 and 1935 there were fewer than 90 homes permitted in Coral Gables; over half of them occurred in 1935. As construction in Coral Gables tried to regain its footing in the 1930s after the 1926 Hurricane and Depression years, it shifted away from the elaborate Mediterranean Revival style of the 1920s towards simpler and more modern designs that reflected the new aesthetic and priorities of society. In doing so, Coral Gables entered a new architectural era. The home at 2509 Indian Mound Trail helped launch this new chapter in Coral Gables architectural history.

2509 Indian Mound Trail is one of the earliest representations of the Mediterranean Transitional style in the City. It was one of three homes designed in this style by architect William Merriam for the Peninsular Construction & Development Company in spring 1935. William Merriam came to Coral Gables to work for architect H. George Fink in 1924. Fink was a member of Merrick's original design team and is largely credited with developing Coral Gables' Mediterranean Revival style. Hence, in Fink's office, Merriam became very well-versed in the early Mediterranean-inspired architecture upon which Merrick's planned community was founded. In this Mediterranean Transitional style home, Merriam thoughtfully acknowledges the City's Mediterranean Revival foundation while embracing Modernistic aesthetics in a manner that harmonizes with Merrick's 1920s planned city. 2509 Indian Mound Trail retains its historic integrity, and it is a part of the collection of quality residences that contributes to the historic fabric of the City and its sense of place over time.

CORAL GABLES REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES: Preserving the City's Story

The built environment reflects the beliefs, values, creative expressions, and technical capacity at a place in time in history. Historic Preservation preserves those structures and spaces that tell the story of the community's historic past. The buildings that comprise the Coral Gables Register of Historic Places portray the City's story of progress, change and preservation. They are valuable, non-renewable resources that embody our collective heritage. The retention of these tangible touchstones provides a sense of community, a sense of evolution, a sense of identity, a sense of ownership, and a sense of place for the City of Coral Gables. In other words, these historic resources provide continuity and context; they are the foundation of the City's identity.

Coral Gables is a Certified Local Government (CLG) and as such must maintain a Register of Historic Places and abide by associated preservation standards. A local community works through a certification process --jointly administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs)-- to become recognized as a Certified Local Government (CLG). Once certified the community gains access to benefits of the program and agrees to follow required Federal and State requirements.

The City of Coral Gables was certified in 1986 and was amongst the first cities in Florida to become a CLG. Hence, it is the task of Historic Preservation, and an obligation of Certified Local Governments, to identify and protect those resources that contribute to the story of the City over time. Furthermore, the City must abide by the federal regulations as put forth in The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties: with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, & Reconstructing Buildings.

CRITERIA FOR SIGNIFICANCE

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

The single-family residence at 2509 Indian Mound Trail is eligible as a Local Historic Landmark based on its historical, cultural, and architectural significance. For designation, a property must meet **one (1)** of the criteria outlined in the Code. As discussed below, 2509 Indian Mound Trail meets the following **three (3) criteria**:

A. Historical, Cultural significance

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

B. Architectural significance

Criterion 1: Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural style

Criterion 2: Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Coral Gables' developmental history is divided broadly into three major historical periods:

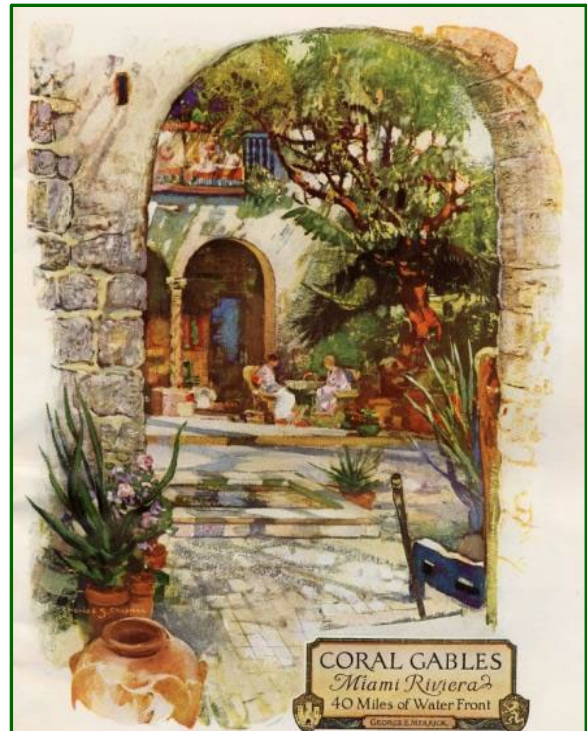
- **Pre-1926 Hurricane:** Initial Planning and Development/Florida Land Boom
- **1927-1944:** *1926 Hurricane Aftermath, Great Depression, New Deal & Wartime Activity*
- **1945-1963:** Post World War II and Modern periods

Designed in the Mediterranean Transitional style the single-family residence at 2509 Indian Mound Trail is in Coral Gables Section "D." It was constructed in 1935 during the City's second developmental phase when building was sparse, and the City was moving towards a new architectural era. This property exemplifies this period.

Founding of Coral Gables

Coral Gables was originally conceived as a suburb of Miami and attracted investors from across the nation during the South Florida real estate boom of the 1920s. Founder George E. Merrick drew from the Garden City and City Beautiful movements of the 19th and early 20th centuries to create his vision for a fully-conceived and cohesively-designed, Mediterranean-inspired city. It is now considered one of the first modern planned communities in the United States.

Advised by landscape architect Frank Button, artist Denman Fink, and architects H. George Fink, Walter De Garmo, Martin Hampton, H.H. Mundy, and Phineas Paist, Merrick converted 3,000 acres of citrus plantation and native hammock into ornate plazas, grand entrances, small parks, monumental buildings, and tree-shaded streets. Merrick and his team felt that Mediterranean architecture harmonized best with south Florida's climate and lifestyle. The architecture constructed during the community's initial period of development combined elements commonly used in Spanish, Moorish, and Italian architecture and has come to be known as the Mediterranean Revival style. During the 1920s structures and amenities were built almost exclusively in this style.



**Figure 1: Advertisement,
House Beautiful, 1925**

Nationally acclaimed landscape architect Frank Button produced the first comprehensive map of Coral Gables in 1921. It was based on an infrastructure of the inherited grid of fruit trees from the Merrick family's citrus plantation. Merrick envisioned a city with Old-World style and purposefully set aside vast amounts of valuable land to achieve this sense of place. Additionally, realizing that automobile ownership was becoming increasingly commonplace, Merrick wanted Coral Gables to embrace the motorist without sacrificing the beauty of the community or the comfort of the residents.

Button carefully laid over the grid a series of wide parkways with center planting medians that were major thoroughfares across the development as well as wide parkways with substantial swales for tree-planting providing internal access and scenic routes. The grid was opened at strategic locations for grand entrances, plazas, and fountains affording visual interest for both the pedestrian and the motorist. Broad boulevards curved around planned features that included vast park land, golf courses, monumental public and community buildings, as well as other amenities.

Coral Gables' initial development was predominantly around the Merrick family's Coral Gables Plantation in Section A. (Figure 2) Lots in Sections A, B, C, and D were offered for sale in 1921-2. Most early construction was concentrated north of, and in the direct vicinity of, the Granada Golf Course.

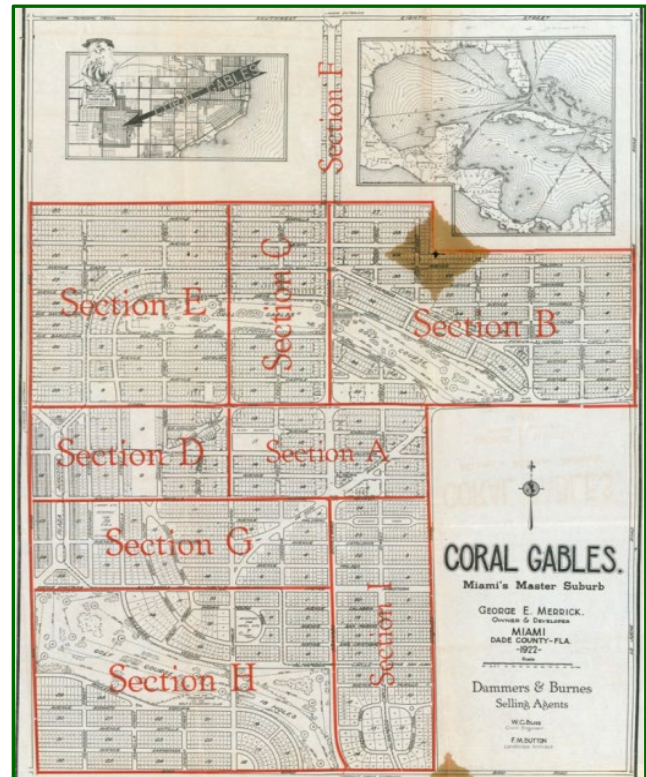


Figure 2: 1922 Map: "Miami's Master Suburb"

Indian Mound Trail, Section D

Indian Mound Trail, located in Section D, was laid out in 1922 as a small winding road connecting Coral Way and Anastasia Avenue. (Figures 2 & 4) On its southern end, two blocks were set aside for Saint Joseph Academy – now the grounds of Saint Theresa Catholic School and Church of the Little Flower.

Along the winding northern section between Coral Way and Madrid Street, lots for approximately a dozen homes were planned. During the 1920s only two Mediterranean Revival style homes were built – one at each end (Figure 4) -- and the remainder of the street remained a tree-lined scenic cut-through trail. (Figure 3)

Indian Mound Trail was primarily developed in the late 1930s when, as discussed below, building was scarce. Eight homes were built along this windy stretch between 1935 and 1939, and it remains a small dense collection of the pivotal and transitional homes built at this time. 2509 Indian Mound Trail, along with 2501 and 2505 were the first of this collection. They were built in 1935.



Figure 3: Indian Mound Trail, December 1923

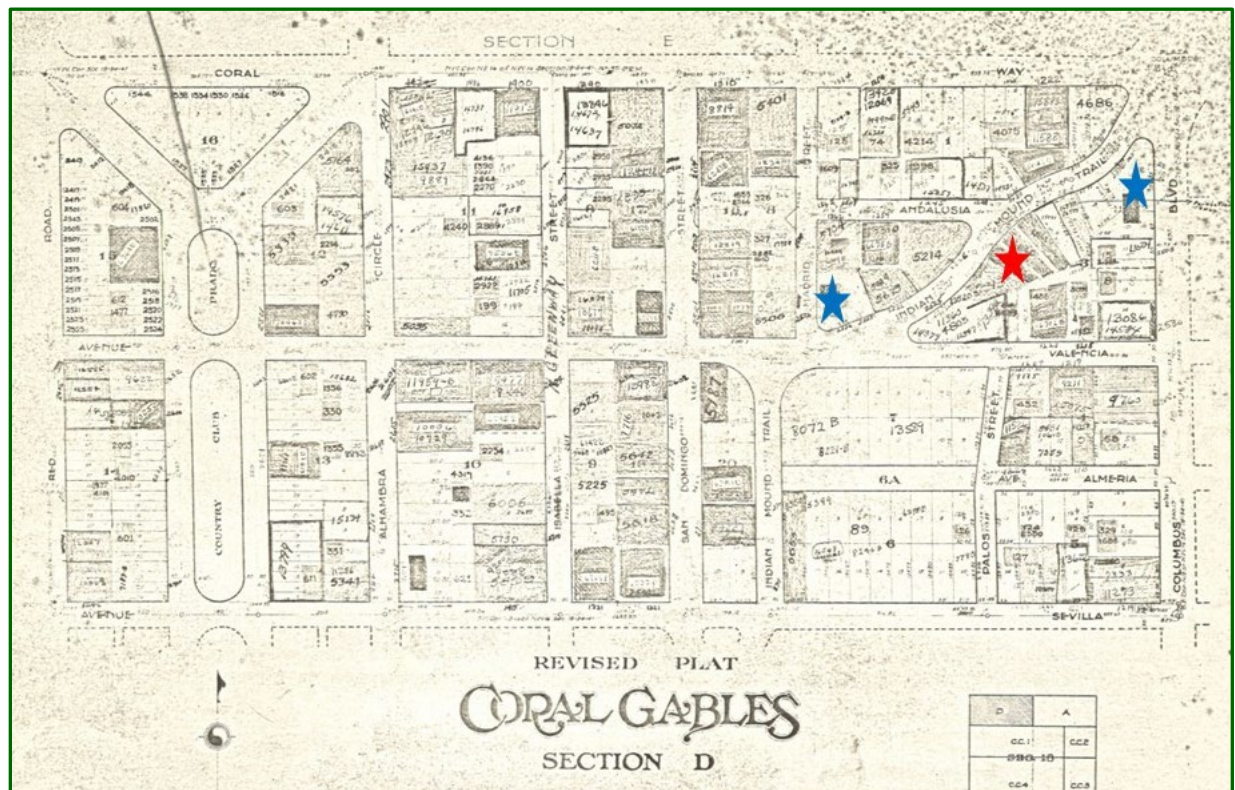


Figure 4: Section D Plat Map, 1927
Red Star: 2509 Indian Mound Trail
Blue Star: Location of 1920s homes

Peninsular Construction & Development Company

Lot sales sustained a rapid pace throughout Coral Gables during the 1920s and Merrick continued reinvest profits into acquiring more land. As a result, his workforce grew exponentially. Coral Gables, as well as other south Florida communities also expanding during this land boom period, began to experience a housing shortage. In addition, by mid-1924, for a variety of reasons, building supplies were not as readily accessible. Up to this point in Coral Gables, all work was performed by Merrick's companies. At this juncture Merrick was faced with a choice, slow the pace of development or find additional avenues to solve his shortages. Merrick chose to carefully explore the latter and began to negotiate contracts with outside investors who would commit to building large numbers of homes in keeping with the Coral Gables standards, who could supply their own workforce and materials, and who would agree to general oversight by Merrick's Coral Gables Construction Company.

In October 1925 Merrick announced the \$15 million contract with Peninsular Development & Construction Company of Coral Gables with a full-page ad. (Figure 5) Peninsular developed Llanerch, an exclusive suburb along Philadelphia's Main Line and several investors and managers of that project banded together to form a Coral Gables branch of the company. They initially agreed to build 100 homes on the southern end of the City and by November had six homes under construction on Camarin Street. To start building, Peninsular shipped building supplies from Philadelphia and began to erect its own sawmill near Cocoplum for future homes. They also aided in the dredging of the canal in that area.

A month later the president of Peninsular's Coral Gables' arm was removed for embezzlement. The company adjusted leadership and attempted to carry on. Unfortunately, they were hit with several lawsuits and while newspapers cite the company as continuing to build in Coral Gables, it is not clear how much of their contract they completed beyond the six homes on Camarin. As the economy plummeted at the end of the 1920s, Peninsular was not alone in asking for, and being granted, a release from their contract with Coral Gables.

In March 1935 it appears that, in conjunction with local real estate developer Thomas H. Horobin, Peninsular reformed under the name Peninsular Development Company. In early April Peninsular purchased the lots at 2503, 2505, and 2507 Indian Mound Trail. Within the year they were renumbered as 2501, 2505, and 2509 respectively. They were amongst the first of the ‘modern’ homes built in the City. (Figure 6)

[illegible]

**Figure 5: Peninsular Development & Construction
Company of Coral Gables
Launches 15 Million Dollar Home
Building Campaign
Miami News, October 28, 1925**

MODERN TRENDS HERE ARE SHOWN


Bungalows On Indian Mound Trail Have Unusual Features

Three modern bungalows following the latest trend in styling and appointments have been completed at 2503, 2505 and 2507 Indian Mound Trail for the Peninsula Development Company. Among the features is a curved, glassed-in solarium part of the large living rooms. These rooms have the popular cathedral type ceilings. Each has a patio with eastern exposure, giving access to all rooms, allowing the maximum of sunlight and ventilation.

Plans for the bungalows were by William H. Merriam, architect. Arthur H. Higgins was the general contractor. Gilbert H. Chaplin, Coral Gables realtor, is in charge of sales and operations.

The bungalow at 2507 Indian Mound Trail has been sold to Mrs. E. Y. Gleft, who purchased it for a permanent residence.

NEW HOME ERECTED FOR PENINSULA DEVELOPMENT COMPANY



New home at 2501 Indian Mound trail is one of three erected for the Peninsula Development Company from plans by William H. Merriam, architect. One of the homes has been sold. Gilbert H. Chaplin, Coral Gables realtor, is in charge of sales and operations.—Photograph by Herald

Figure 6: 2503, 2505, & 2507 (2509) Indian Mound Trail Completed
Miami Herald, March 29, 1936

Second Developmental Period: 1927-1944

During Coral Gables' Second Development Period the building of single-family homes was sparse. During these seventeen-years there were fewer than 1,000 new CBS single-family homes built in the City. (Figures 8) It was period of slow transitioning from Merrick's Mediterranean-inspired and cohesively-designed community to a city embracing national trends.

Construction in Coral Gables boomed until the combination of the 1926 Hurricane and the Great Depression. In the aftermath of the 1929 Wall Street Crash, the economy in Florida declined steeply. Between 1929 and 1933, 148 state and national banks in Florida collapsed. By 1933, one out of four Floridians was receiving public assistance.

The dire downturn in the economy, had a drastic impact on new construction in Coral Gables. For example, the dollar value of permits issued in 1926 was \$13,402,012. Permits steadily declined over the next few years and plummeted to \$71,605 in 1931. (Figure 7) As a result, and despite valiant efforts, Merrick's grand plans for completing his fully-conceived, Mediterranean-inspired city ended.

In the six years from 1930-1935 there were fewer than 90 new CBS single-family homes constructed. (Figures 8) 48 of them were built in 1935 as New Deal Era measures took effect. 2509 Indian Mound Trail was one of these homes.

As the decade wore on, relief expanded under the New Deal administration and people adjusted to a new way of life. As a result of the economic hardships, priorities and aesthetics had changed. This was reflected in all aspects of life including the types of homes built.

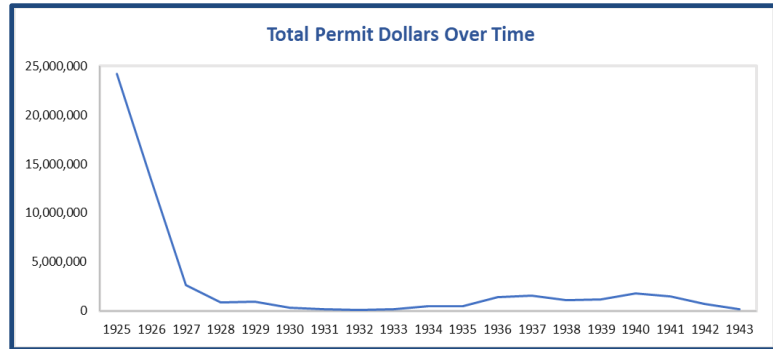
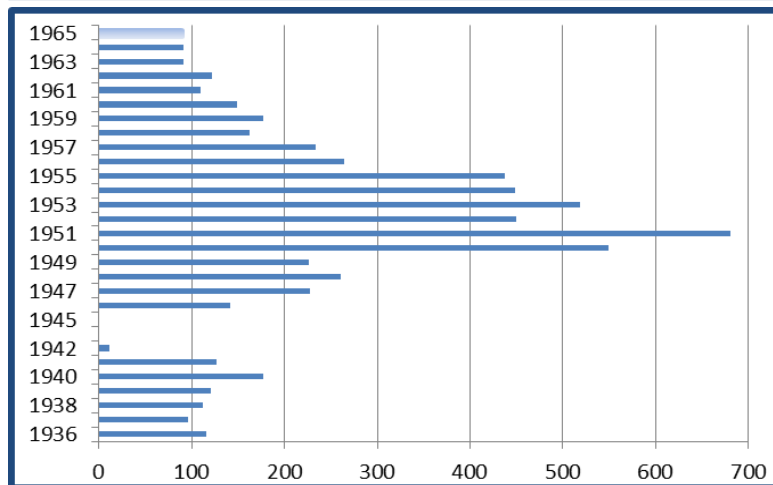
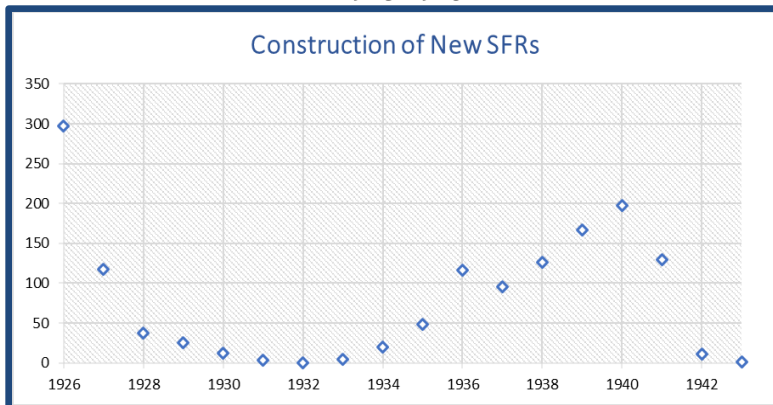


Figure 7: Coral Gables Total Building Permit Dollars, 1925-1943



**Figures 8: Number of New SFR Building Permits:
1926-1943 [top]
1936-1965 [bottom]**

Note: no data for 1945

1926 building curtailed by a major hurricane in September

Recovery was slow. By 1936 permit dollar values were in the vicinity of \$1,000,000 where they held steady for several years. (Figure 7) From 1936 through 1940 there were approximately 700 new CBS single-family homes built in the City. (Figures 8) However, this upward trajectory abruptly ground to a halt in the early 1940s as materials, expertise, and manpower were diverted to the war effort. When building resumed after the war Coral Gables entered a new and prosperous development period.

A Shift in Architectural Styles

As stated above, there were fewer than 1,000 new CBS single-family homes built during the seventeen years of the second developmental period. Of these, around 300 are Mediterranean Revival or Coral Gable Village homes. These were built early in the period when Merrick was trying valiantly to continue his vision and pre-hurricane contracts were being completed. By the close of the 1920s it was clear Merrick could not complete his dream. As discussed above, economics dictated a change was necessary. Most of the new homes built after 1930 departed from the ornamented and picturesque Mediterranean Revival style that had dominated the City's landscape since its inception.

Between 1930 and 1942 there were approximately 850 new CBS single-family homes built in Coral Gables. During this time single-family home design began, in a limited manner, to employ aspects of contemporary styles that favored more streamlined construction. In South Florida, Art Deco and the Art Moderne styles were largely in fashion during the mid-1920s, and in the 1930s respectively. In Coral Gables, whose early identity was so strongly tied to the Mediterranean theme, most architects sought to acknowledge Coral Gables's roots and Merrick's desire for a cohesively-designed community. Rather than fully embracing the Modernistic styles prevailing in other communities, Coral Gables moved to a style which blended elements of the Mediterranean Revival style with them to maintain an overall semblance of cohesion. 2509 Indian Mound Trail was permitted in June 1935 and was amongst the earliest homes in Coral Gables designed in this blended style.

In February 1937, the City of Coral Gables codified this approach by passing Zoning Ordinance 471. In Section 12(a) it states that "All buildings shall be of the Spanish, Venetian, Italian or other Mediterranean or similar type architecture." It allowed for exceptions such as frame homes in MacFarlane and 'modernistic type houses' in the Biltmore Section and the Biltmore Addition. However, throughout most of the City, new homes were to maintain the character of Merrick's Mediterranean-inspired vision. The direction many architects took was a unique hybrid that is now known as the Mediterranean Transitional style. (see Mediterranean Transitional section below)

While this architectural style, which combines Mediterranean Revival with Modernistic elements, was heavily employed in Coral Gables, it was not a stylistic phenomenon limited to Coral Gables. It was employed throughout South Florida. In the 1920s it was often called Modern Spanish. It was also known as Mediterranean Modern or, when specifically warranted, the Med-Deco Transitional. At a 1946 city commission meeting, architect H. George Fink--a member of Merrick's original design team--suggested that it be called the "Modified Mediterranean style."

The Mediterranean Transitional was a staple style during Coral Gables' second developmental period. However, after the war, as construction ramped up again and a new generation of homeowners entered the City, Zoning Ordinance 471 was hotly debated. In 1945 the City held a

public meeting to hear the citizens' wishes and it was upheld. However, this was not the final word on the subject. A year later, the City Commission called for a special meeting on May 21st to discuss "the matter of architectural styles" and invited all registered architects in the City to participate. There was a range of opinions and not a clear consensus. On one side Marion Manley - a member of the Board of Architects - stated that "architectural styles could not be frozen." Staunchly on the other side were two members of Merrick's design team, Walter De Garmo and Denman Fink. Fink expressed his belief that the City had "become world renown because of its original and distinctive architecture" and was "opposed to the City becoming a guinea pig for changing architectural styles." Seemingly in the middle was a third member of Merrick's team, H. George Fink, who advocated that the Mediterranean style continue to be modernized. In the end the Commission upheld the Zoning Ordinance but left the final design approval to the Board of Architects--who leaned towards introducing new styles.

Hence, Mediterranean Transitional Architecture was only produced for a brief period before the new stylistic trends took over. It is a pivotal link between the two historic building boom eras in the City and represents a final effort to harmonize with and honor Merrick's Mediterranean-inspired founding vision. The historical period of the Mediterranean Transitional style (primarily during the 1930s and early 1940s) further adds to its limited nature as these were Depression and wartime years which saw sparse new construction. There were only a few hundred homes purposely designed in this style, and they are an important piece of the City's architectural history. 2509 Indian Mound Trail is one of these homes.

Mediterranean Transitional Style (aka Mediterranean Modern Or Med-Deco Transitional)

The Mediterranean Transitional style employed Mediterranean Revival elements while using the forms and features of Modernistic or Ranch styles. In Coral Gables this style first appeared in the mid-1930s. These homes are typically one-story in height and rectangular in plan. While this style tends to retain recessed and projecting bays of the Mediterranean style, the overall form is simple, streamlined, and with a focus on geometric forms rather than undulating and intricate decorative features and smoother textured stucco. Character-defining features include barrel roof tiles on low-pitched gabled roofs, geometric or tropical ornamentation concentrated around windows, doors and eaves, and metal screen doors with tropical motifs.

General Characteristics

- Plan: regular and rectangular
- Height: typically, one-story built over a crawl space
- Primary Exterior Materials: stucco, smooth or lightly textured
- Roof Type: low and broad – gable or hip
- Roof Surfacing: barrel tile
- Limited recessing and projecting facades with a focus on geometric forms
- Attached garage often with cast masonry vents with tropical or geometric motifs
- Metal screen doors with tropical motifs
- Fenestration: usually deeply recessed; predominantly metal casement windows often with transoms on primary facades; corner windows or circular port hole windows may also be present
- Eyebrow canopies over windows or doors
- Detailing: usually minimal and reserved for window and door surrounds, gable vents, stucco beltcourse, cornice, built-in planters, or projecting sills

Modernistic Styles (1920-1940)

The Modernistic Styles were distinctly different from the eclectic and revivalist styles that preceded it. The Modernistic Styles emphasized sleek lines with Machine Age geometric decorative elements. The early form of the Modernistic Styles was Art Deco. A creative but short-lived movement, from 1925 to 1940 it permeated all modes of the arts from architecture to decorative arts to fashion. Art Deco was common in public and commercial buildings built in the 1920s and early 1930s but it was rarely used in domestic architecture.

Art Moderne, or Streamline Moderne, is a later type of the Modernistic Styles. As the Great Depression of the 1930s progressed, the Modernistic Styles changed. It became more austere, less ornamented, and more streamlined with a horizontal emphasis. Streamlining was a concept first conceived by industrial designers who favored the aerodynamic pure-line concept of motion and speed. Hence, the sharp angles, the stylized floral decorative motifs, and the vertical emphasis of the Art Deco were replaced with simple, aerodynamic curves, and long horizontal lines of the Art Moderne. This later type emphasized smooth surfaces, curving forms, geometric forms and long horizontal lines, and sometimes nautical elements. Cylindrical forms, long horizontal window grouping, as well as cement and glass elements were common. (McAlester)

The home at 2509 Indian Mound Trail was built in the Mediterranean Transitional style. It is one of the very early homes of this style in Coral Gables. Its form and layout lean heavily on the Modernistic styles while retaining features of Mediterranean Revival style.

2509 Indian Mound Trail



Figure 9: 2509 Indian Mound Trail, 1991
Courtesy Miami-Dade County Appraiser

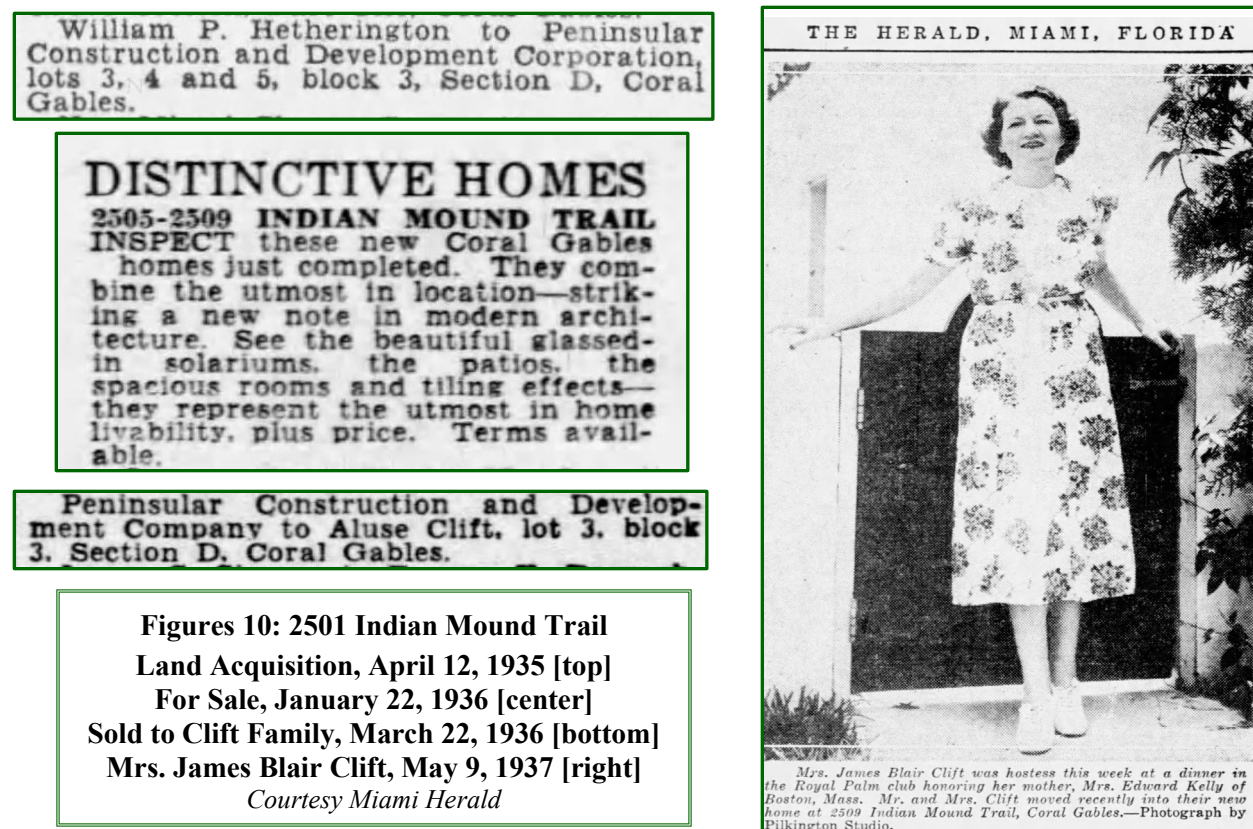
2509 Indian Mound Trail, along with 2501 and 2505 as mentioned above, was built by owner/builder Peninsular Construction Company in 1935. The plans were drawn by architect William Merriam in April and permitted in June. Designed in the Mediterranean Transitional style

they are very early examples of the style in the City. They were the also the first of the modernistic-inspired cluster of homes built along the street in the late 1930s.

The original permit (#4842) has not been located to date. However, Merriam's plans for 2501 Indian Mound Trail (Permit #4841) are available. Since the three homes were designed as a group, they share many features and the plans are a valuable resource as a reference for 2509. The plans for 2501 are provided as Attachment A at the end of the report.

January 1936 sales ads for the homes indicated they were 'just completed.' (Figures 10) Despite the economy, the homes took only a few months to sell. (Figures 6 & 10) James Blair Clift and his wife Bessie were the first owner/occupants of the home. They purchased the home in March 1936. (Figures 10)

The home passed through several owners over the next few decades with few alterations to the property. In 1973 the property was purchased by Merle and Ruth Flanders. It remained in the Flanders family for the next fifty-one years with it passing to their daughter Gale after the deaths in 1985 and 2011 respectively. Gale sold it to the current owners Christine Marie Mugrage and Vivian Sanchez in 2024. See below for a full listing of owners.



Owner & Occupants:

Note: Ownership records prior to 1980 have not been located. Ownership history for this time is based on numerous sources including R. L. Polk City Directories (available from 1926-65), building permits, realtor notes, other records on file with the City of Coral Gables and the Miami-Dade County Clerk.

1935-1936	Peninsular Construction Company
1936-1937	James Blair Clift & Bessie L. Clift
1940-1941	Shirley Black & Myrtice Black
1941-1946	Haskell A. Gift (1897-1945) & Margaret E. Gift
1946-1947	Margaet E. Gift Schaeffer [remarried widow] & Paul T. Schaeffer
1947-1958	Ann M. Naddy (owner; lived 2501 Indian Mound Trail) Margaret Scaefffer & Paul Schaeffer (tenants)
1958-1972	Frank J. Wedekemper & Laura M. Wedekemper
1972-1973	Cheung Cheun Weng & Ann L. Weng
1973-2024	Flanders Family
1973-1985	Merle D. Flanders (1916-1985) & Ruth J. [nee Hayes] Flanders
1985-1993	Ruth J. Flanders
1993-2011	Ruth J. Flanders (1918-2011) & Gale J. Flanders – by trust
2011-2024	Gale J. Flanders (1942-2025)
2024-Present	Christine Marie Mugrage and Vivian Sanchez, Trustee Vivian Ana Sanchez Revocable Trust

Architect: William Merriam (1897-1992)

William H. Merriam was the architect for 2509 Indian Mound Trail. Merriam attended the Ohio Mechanics Institute from 1915-17 earning a Certificate in Architecture. He served in the army in 1918 Army and upon discharge began studies at the Georgia School of Technology. While a student, he worked as a draftsman for the prominent architect W. H. Sears in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He graduated with a degree in Architecture in 1922 and accepted a draftsman position for Sears' mentor, the nationally-acclaimed architect, Reuben H. Hunt. Both architects have numerous buildings listed on the National Register for Historic Places.

In 1924, William Merriam accepted a draftsman position with architect H. George Fink and moved to Coral Gables. Fink was a member of Merrick's design team and at the time was working almost exclusively as the primary designer in the burgeoning development. While working for Fink, Merriam became a registered architect in 1931. He left Coral Gables briefly in the early 1930s when work was scarce to practice in New York. Merriam returned to Coral Gables in 1935 where he opened an office and practiced for the next several decades. The home at 2509 Indian Mound Trail was amongst his first commissions in his new practice.

In 1946 Merriam was admitted to the American Institute of Architects (AIA). He served on the Coral Gables Board of Architects for several years in the 1950s during Fink's chairmanship. Merriam was the Secretary-Treasurer for the Florida AIA Chapter from 1951-52 and its vice-president from 1952-53. (Figure 11) In 1954 he chaired the Florida Building Code Committee. He was granted AIA emeritus status when he retired in 1970 at the age of 73.

For over three decades Merriam worked consistently and prolifically in Coral Gables and the region in both the residential and commercial realm. In 1939 the Coral Gables Association of Architects gave Merriam an award of merit for the design of the home for F. A. Larson at 1043 Alhambra Circle. He also received notable acclaim for his work in designing the Coral Gables High School with August Geiger, Vann & Lyell in 1950 as well as for the 1956 design of the curved commercial building across from City Hall (401 Coral Way).

Merriam has numerous homes listed on the Coral Gables Register of Historic Places--many of which are contributing structures in the Alcazar Historic District and the Alhambra Circle Historic District. These include: 1008, 1043, 1317, 1414, 2039 and 2523 Alhambra Circle; 520 & 628 Alcazar Avenue; 1132 & 1260 S. Greenway Drive; 611 N. Greenway Drive; 2601 DeSoto Boulevard; 842 Palermo Avenue; 2505 Granada Boulevard; 3621 Monserrate Street, 229 Cadima Avenue, 737 Minorca Avenue, 517 Aragon Avenue, and 3613 Alhambra Court. Merriam is also responsible for the first addition to the Coral Gables Woman's Club in 1948. This building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990.



Figure 11: Architect William Merriam
Vice President, American Institute of Architects,
Florida South Chapter
Miami News, January 18, 1953

Retaining Context: Indian Mound Trail

With the implementation of the New Deal and other incentives, the building industry throughout the City resurged slightly in the late 1930s and early 1940s. During this period homes were, for the first time in Coral Gables, designed in contemporary styles. They launched a new chapter in Coral Gables' architectural history. As discussed above, Indian Mound Trail was largely developed in the late 1930s. Eight homes along this windy stretch (Figures 3 & 4) were built between 1935 and 1939 and it remains a small, dense collection of the pivotal and transitional homes built at this time.

The Post-War prosperity that followed the lean years of the Depression created an optimism which reigned through the 1950s and 1960s and resulted in an unprecedented building boom. During this time the building of single-family homes in the City of Coral Gables followed national trends both in numbers and in style and the City largely moved away from strictly Mediterranean precedents. As is evident in the aerial photos shown in Figures 12, the vicinity of 2509 Indian Mound Trail was built out during this boom. To date, Indian Mound Trail and the adjacent neighborhoods retain their single-family residence context. Hence, 2509 Indian Mound Trail retains its historic context and siting.



Figures 12: Aerial Photographs *Courtesy University of Florida Archives*
1938 [top]; 1957 [bottom]
Red Arrow: 2509 Indian Mound Trail

SIGNIFICANCE ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION



Figures 13

**2509 Indian
Mound Trail
Over Time:
Front Façade**

Top to Bottom

c. 1940s

July 1968

September 1991

2025

*1968 & 1991
Courtesy Miami-
Dade Property
Appraiser*

Executive Summary

Constructed in 1935, the single-family residence at 2509 Indian Mound Trail was amongst the first homes built during the New Deal Era. It is also one of the earliest representations of the Mediterranean Transitional style in Coral Gables. The thoughtful design of 2509 Indian Mound Trail acknowledges the City's Mediterranean Revival foundation while embracing Modernistic aesthetics. It aided in launching a new chapter in Coral Gables architectural history.

Between 1930 and 1935 there were fewer than 90 homes permitted in Coral Gables; over half of them occurred in 1935. As construction in Coral Gables tried to regain its footing in the 1930s, it shifted away from the elaborate Mediterranean Revival style of the 1920s towards simpler and more modern designs that reflected the new aesthetic and priorities of society. In doing so, Coral Gables began to follow national housing trends, and the City entered a new architectural era.

The home at 2509 Indian Mound Trail was one of three homes designed in this style by architect William Merriam for the Peninsular Construction Company in spring 1935. William Merriam came to Coral Gables to work for architect H. George Fink in 1924. Fink was a member of Merrick's original design team and is credited with largely developing Coral Gables' Mediterranean Revival style. Hence, in Fink's office, Merriam became very well-versed in the early Mediterranean-inspired architecture upon which Merrick's planned community was founded.

Situated along the winding Indian Mound Trail, the one-story residence is a two-bedroom house with an attached garage—versus the detached garage of the Mediterranean Revival style. This Mediterranean Transitional style home shows the strong influence of the Modernistic Style of Art Moderne. It retains a sense of recessed and projecting bays of the Mediterranean Revival style but in an overall simpler form with a focus on horizontality and geometric forms in the Modernistic fashion. While the roof is clad in barrel tile of the Mediterranean Revival style the roofs are low-pitched under singular ridges -- a distinct departure from the use of separate roofs of varying types and heights that are common in the Mediterranean Revival style. The smoother stucco of the Art Moderne style also accents the home's geometric emphasis and Modernistic sculptural qualities. The front façade is balanced at its ends by the geometric elements of the protruding square of the garage bay and the cylindrical solarium. The sculptural elements of the blocky and stepped chimney and the curved entry dominate its street presence. The fenestration of the home is deeply recessed giving the impression of being carved out but rather than modern clearview windows, the original windows were steel casements with raised muntins in keeping with Mediterranean Revival style. In the Modernistic fashion, embellishment is minimal. It includes coved eaves, geometric patterned masonry ground vents, exposed rafter tails, round windows in the garage doors (replaced), and the floral motif of the metal screened doors (not extant).

Assessment of the property, building documents, and historic photographs indicates that there were few changes to the home's historic character-defining features, and that it retains its historic integrity. As per, Article 8, Section 8-103 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code--*Criteria for designation of historic landmarks*: "Districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects of national, state and local importance are of historic significance if they possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, or association." Staff has determined that this property possesses sufficient integrity for designation. Thus, the property at 2509 Indian Mound Trail is deemed to significantly contribute to the historic fabric of Coral Gables and is part of the collection of quality residences that contributes to the City's sense of place over time.

Extant Exterior Description and Alteration Discussion



Figure 14: 2509 Indian Mound Trail, Streetview, 2025



Figures 15: Current Aerial Overview, 2025 [left]; Aerial Detail 2017 [center]

Courtesy Miami Dade Property Appraiser

Property Survey, 2025 [right] *Courtesy Delta Mapping & Land Planners*

The single-family residence sits on an approximately 6,230 SF northwest-facing narrow interior lot on curved, tree-lined Indian Mound Trail. As discussed above, this home was built in 1935 in the Mediterranean Transitional style and was one of the first built in the New Deal era in Coral Gables. It was built as a modest two-bedroom home (approximately 1,624 SF), and its simplicity was a response to the economic hardships of the Depression and the burgeoning modern aesthetic of subtle ornamentation and streamlined homes. As was typical, it is one-story with low roof pitch, prominent exterior chimney, an efficient floor plan, and includes the then-emerging trend of attached garages. It is built of masonry block over a crawl space and in the Modernistic fashion is

clad in a very lightly textured stucco. The plan is essentially C-shaped under low-pitched hipped roofs and a semi-circular solarium at the northwest corner. The current roof has an S-shaped barrel tile that was installed in 1993. The original roof was a two-piece barrel tile which was a character-defining feature of Merrick's Mediterranean Revival style homes. (Figures 13) In the Modernistic manner, the windows are deeply recessed without sills. The home retains a fair number of its original steel casement windows. (Figures 25) Alterations to the home are minimal and there are very few permits on file for this property.

The only additions to the home occurred in 1941. They were small with little historical impact on the original home. The first was an 8'-2" eastern extension of the rear wall to incorporate a bathroom. (Figures 16) The second was a 3'-6" extension of the side screen porch. This addition is clear by the change of floor tile and by the roof extension. (Figures 16 & 17)

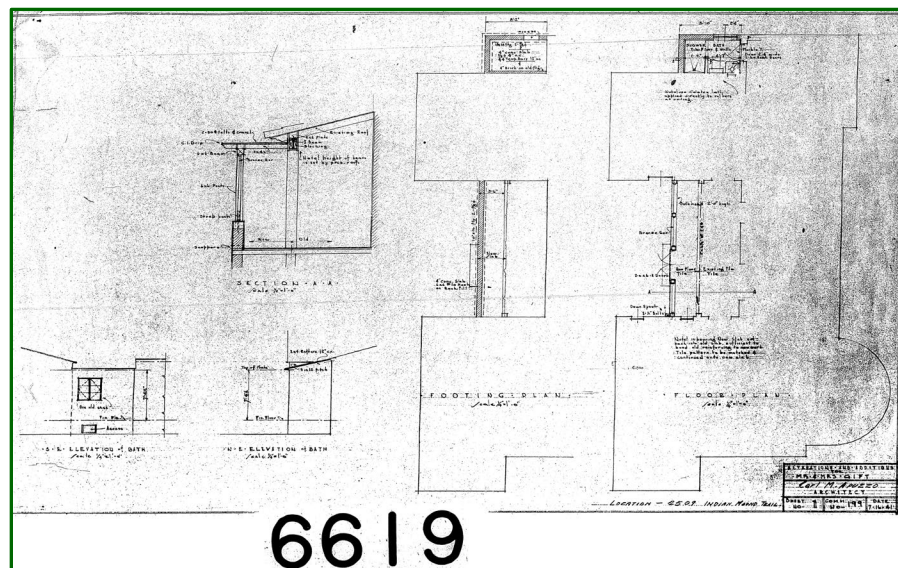


Figure 16: Permit #6619, 1941 Additions by architect Carl M. Apuzzo



Figure 17: 1941 Screen Porch Extension, 2025



Figures 18: Front Façade, 2025

In the Modernistic fashion the streetview of the home is distinctly horizontal with four major geometric and sculptural elements. The overall impression is streamlined and clean with few decorative touches. The low-pitched roofs visually impart a horizontality to the home. In the eave is a cove molding feature. (Figures 19) The softening of wall to roof connection is a detail often favored by Merriam to support the sculptural quality of the design. While the roof is clad in barrel tile of the Mediterranean Revival style along the front it is low-pitched under a single ridge -- a distinct departure from the use of separate roofs of varying types and heights common in the Mediterranean Revival style.



Figure 19: Coved Eave Feature, 2025

In the 1920s Mediterranean Revival style homes, a protruding front porch bay was a character-defining feature. In this home there is a similar protruding bay, but it contains an attached garage. In Merrick's 1920s the garages were detached and at the rear of the property. By the mid-1930s automobile ownership was more common than the early 1920s and siting it as a protruding bay gave automobile ownership a higher pride of place. Additionally moving the garage to be an integral part of the home aligned with the trend of designing efficient small houses. The garage bay reads as simple square feature. As a protruding bay it visually balances the large cylindrical solarium feature at the other end of the façade. As seen in Figure 20, the original carriage garage doors featured simple circular windows further emphasizing the bay's geometric nature. The garage doors were replaced in 1968. The photo in Figures 13 show them just prior to removal. The garage bay is under a shed roof that seamlessly joins with the hipped roof of the main home. Tire strips still lead to the vehicular opening.



Figure 20: Original Garage Doors, c.1940s



Figures 21: Curved Front Entry Feature, 2025

Adjacent to the garage is the receding front entry feature. Walls curve back to meet the door giving the sculptural impression that the walls were carved out to reveal the front door. (Figures 21) The curves of this feature reinforce the curve of the solarium bay. The cascading front steps follow the walls' curve and retain their original paver tiles. Historically, a metal screen door with a Modernistic floral motif completed the streetview of this feature.



Figures 22: Chimney Feature, 2025

As seen in Figures 21, the curve of the entry feature appears to flow organically into the large adjacent chimney. (Figures 21 & 22) Prominent chimneys were character-defining feature of the Mediterranean Revival style and were usually evocative of a Spanish belfry or Italian-inspired tower with a vertical emphasis. Merriam choose to keep the chimney as a prominent feature in this Mediterranean Transitional home but designed it as a Modernistic sculptural element. The semi-engaged chimney is large and blocky, again evoking geometry rather than embellishment. The rectangular block rises through the roof a few feet with a Modernistic Deco-inspired shouldered chimney top. While the east side of the chimney is on same plane of the front façade the west side projects from the plane. This side of the chimney stack steps down. Its projection gives the impression that the adjacent cylindrical form of the solarium was carved back from the plane of the chimney. The stepped element visually draws attention to the adjacent cylindrical solarium while simultaneously providing balance for it. The overall geometry, size, and solidity of the chimney visually grounds the home and aids the horizontal emphasis of the design.

When first placed on the market, ads like those in Figures 6 & 10 highlighted the curved solarium. It is a hallmark feature of the home. Two character-defining features of the Modernistic Art Moderne are cylindrical forms and long horizontal window bands. Merriam used these elements for the dominant solarium element. (Figures 22-24) Currently it is largely obscured by vegetation. The 1968 historic photo provided in Figure 24 shows the full impact of this Art Moderne element. The semicircular solarium feature protrudes from the western end of the front façade. Wrapping around the feature is a continuous band of windows providing another strong horizontal element to the façade. As seen in Figures 22, the window band is deeply inset. In the Modernistic fashion there is no sill and the large rectangular opening appears to be cut out from the half-cylinder mass. These windows were replaced at least twice. Based on



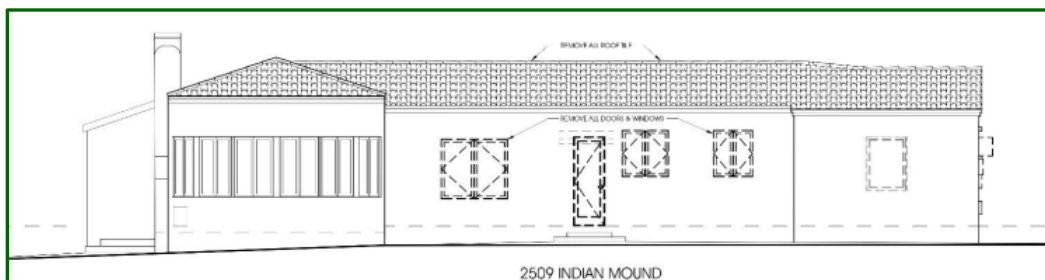
Figure 23: Interior of Solarium, 2025

historic photos they were replaced between 1968-1991. (Figures 13) The current windows were installed in 2016. Since the original plans for this house have not been located to date, the plans for the contemporaneous house by Merriam at 2501 are provided in Attachment A and may provide insight to the original design.



Figure 24: Historic Photo, July 1969
Courtesy Miami-Dade Property Appraiser

The side façade behind the solarium remains largely intact to Merriam's design. These windows, much like those on the other secondary façades, are recessed with no sills in the Modernistic fashion. However, their size, proportions and placement are in line with a Mediterranean Revival style home. Likewise, the use of casements rather than clearview windows also aligns with the Mediterranean Revival style. The Modernistic nod is the use of steel casements rather than wood. This façade retains its original steel casement windows. Due to vegetation and lot restrictions only portions of the façade could be photographed. A current elevation drawing is provided for reference. (Figures 25)



Figures 25: Side Façade, 2025
Looking Towards Solarium [left & center]; View from Solarium [right]
Elevation Drawing *Courtesy Locus Architecture*

The footprint of the home is an east-facing C-plan. Tucked into the crook of the “C” on the east façade is a covered patio porch. (Figures 15 & 26) Initial sales ads (Figure 6) state the porch was purposefully placed on the east side and configured to allow sunlight into all rooms. The ‘efficient’ placement and banding of openings align with Modernistic principles. As discussed above, this porch was widened slightly in 1941. (Figure 17) The original roof and addition configurations are shown in Apuzzo’s plans in Figure 16. Simple carved rafter tails are found in the porch eaves. The rafter tails are a Mediterranean Revival style element. The porch remains in its 1941 screened configuration. The remainder of the façade reflects its 1935 design and retains its original steel casement windows.



Figures 26: Side Façade Porch, 2025

As discussed above, there was a small bathroom added to the rear of the home in 1941. (Figure 17) It is at the center of the façade. (Figure 28) Since the 1941 addition, alterations to this façade have been minimal and reversible (thru-wall air-conditioning units, etc.) On this façade is one of the remaining cast masonry vents. (Figure 27) In keeping with the Modernistic aesthetic, decorative touches are minimal. Its geometric design is one of the few ornamental elements of the home.



Figure 27: Cast Masonry Vent (typ.), 2025



Figure 28: Rear Façade, 2025

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of historic designation within the City of Coral Gables is defined in Article 8, Section 8-101 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code as, *to promote the educational, cultural, and economic welfare of the public by preserving and protecting historic structures or sites, portions of structures, groups of structures, manmade or natural landscape elements, works of art, or integrated combinations thereof, which serve as visible reminders of the history and cultural heritage of the City, region, state or nation.*

It is the intent of the Coral Gables Zoning Code to recognize all buildings which possess “significant character, interest or value as part of the historical, cultural, archaeological, aesthetic, or architectural heritage of the City, state or nation” qualify for designation as a local historic landmark (Coral Gables Zoning Code, Article 8, Section 8-103). To that end, the Coral Gables Zoning Code states that for designation as a local historic landmark the property must meet **one (1)** (or more) of the criteria stipulated in Article 8, Section 8-103.

Designed in 1935 in the Mediterranean Transitional style the property at 2509 Indian Mound Trail (legally described as Lot 3, Block 3, Coral Gables Section “D,” according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 25, at Page 74, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida) is significant to the City of Coral Gables’ history based on the following **three (3) criteria** found in the Coral Gables Zoning Code, Article 8, Section 8-103:

A. Historical, Cultural significance

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

B. Architectural significance

Criterion 1: Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural style

Criterion 2: Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction

Staff finds the following:

The property at 2509 Indian Mound Trail is significant to the City of Coral Gables history based on:

HISTORICAL, CULTURAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Therefore, Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **APPROVE** the Local Historic Designation of the property at **2509 Indian Mound Trail** (legally described as Lot 3, Block 3, Coral Gables Section “D,” according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 25, at Page 74, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County) based on its historical, cultural, and architectural significance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna Pernas', is written over a horizontal line.

Anna Pernas
Historic Preservation Officer

Selected References

- 1940s Archival Photographs, City of Coral Gables, Historical Resources Department.
- Aerial Photography: Florida Collection. 2004-2011, University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries.
- Building Microfilm Records, Building and Zoning Department, Coral Gables, Florida.
- Building Permits Record Books, City of Coral Gables, Historical Resources Department.
- City of Coral Gables, Minutes of Special City Commission Meeting, May 14 and 21, 1946.
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- McAlester, Virginia, A Field Guide to American Houses, Alfred A. Knopf, 2015.
- Merrick, George, *Coral Gables Homes, Miami Florida*, c.1925.
Coral Gables Miami Riviera: Heart of the American Tropics, c.1925
- Miami-Dade County Property Appraisers Department Records.
- Miami-Dade County Clerk, County Records.
- Parks, Arva Moore, George Merrick, Son of the South Wind: Visionary Creator of Coral Gables, University Press of Florida, 2015.
- Parks, Arva Moore. *George Merrick's Coral Gables "Where Your 'Castles in Spain' Are Made Real!"* Ponce Circle Development LLC with Centennial Press, Miami, Florida, 2006.
- Polk, R. L. R. L. Polk and Company's Miami City Directory. Jacksonville, Florida: R. L. Polk and Co., various editions.
- Real Estate Records, Coral Gables Historical Resources Department.
- Roy, Joaquin. The Streets of Coral Gables: Their Names and Meanings. Ideas '92 Publications, 1989.
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1924 updated through 1950. On file, City of Coral Gables, Historical Resources Department.
- United States Census Records, various years.

REVIEW GUIDE

Definition:

The Review Guide comprises of some of the extant and character-defining features, which contribute to the overall significance of the structure and/or district. Hallmark and character-defining features are the *visual and physical features that give a building its identity and distinctive character*.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties embody two important goals: 1) the preservation of historic materials and, 2) the preservation of a building's distinguishing character.

Every historic building is unique, with its own identity and its own distinctive character. Character refers to all those visual aspects and physical features that comprise the appearance of every historic building. Character-defining features are the visual and physical features that give a building its identity and distinctive character. They may include the overall building shape, its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details, features, and aspects of its site and environment.

Use:

The Review Guide may be used to address the impact that additions, modifications, alterations and/or renovations may have on the historic structure and site.

The Review guide may also inform appropriate new construction in an historic district, neighborhood, or streetscape.

Property Address:	2509 Indian Mound Trail
Lot Description:	interior lot
Date of Construction:	1935
Use:	single-family residence
Style:	Mediterranean Transitional
Construction Material:	concrete block clad in stucco
Stories:	one-story
Roof Types:	hipped clad in barrel tile

NOTE: The Review Guide is to be referenced in conjunction with the information and photographic documentation contained elsewhere within this Report. Character-defining features may include, but are not limited to, the listing found on the following page.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

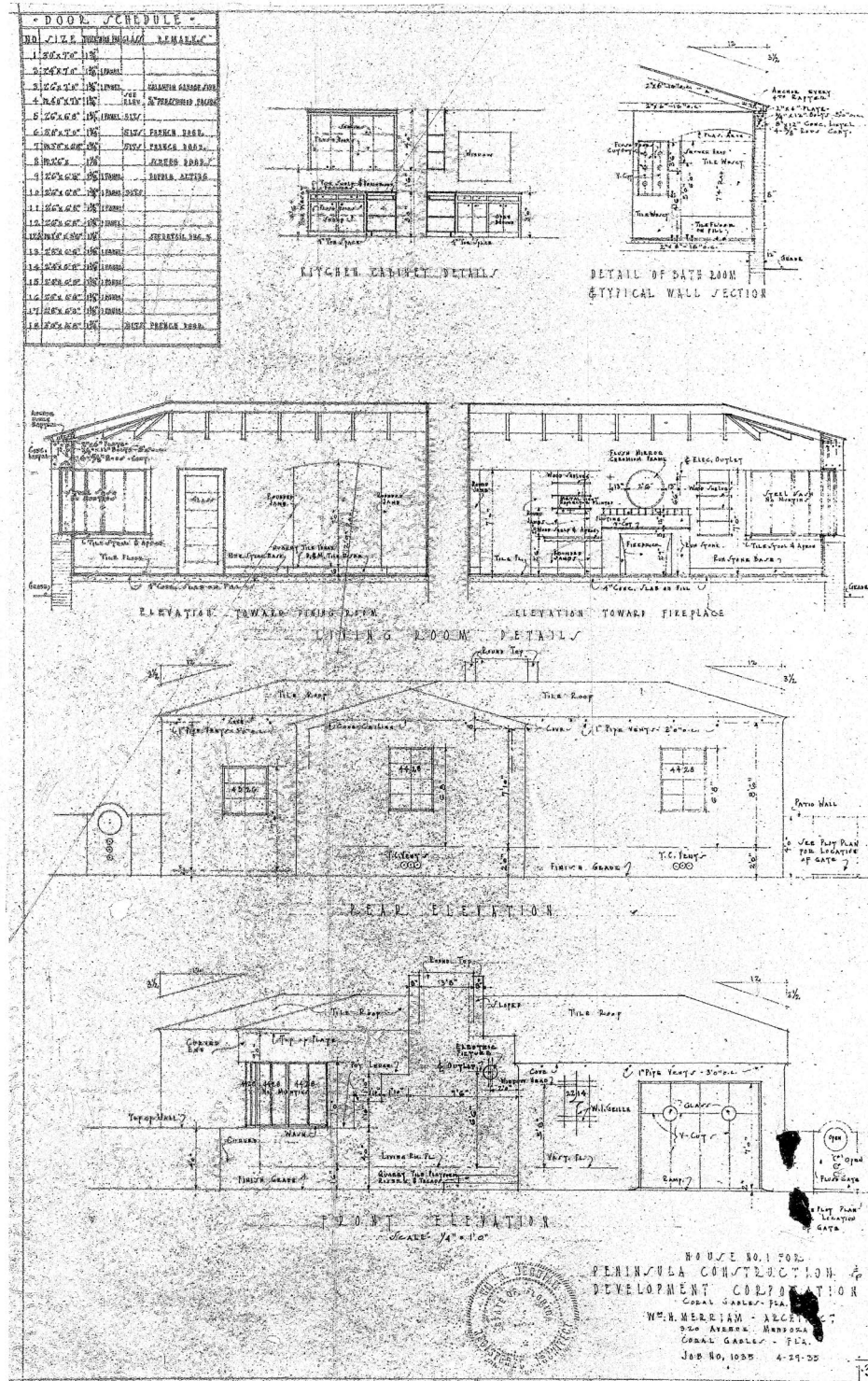
Style: Mediterranean Transitional

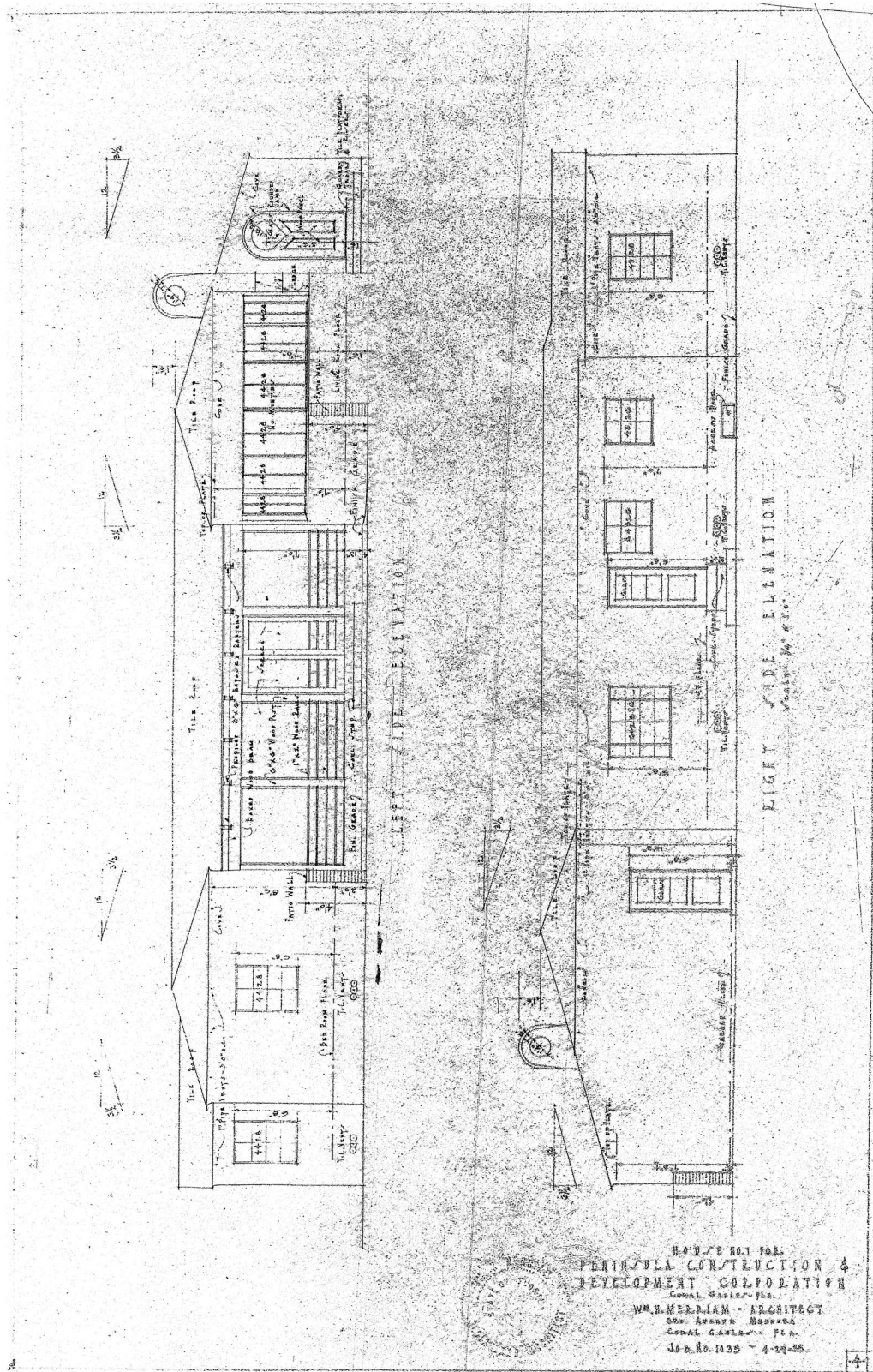


- ✓ one-story
- ✓ overall horizontal and geometric emphasis
- ✓ low and broad hipped roof roofs clad in barrel tile
- ✓ projecting coved eaves
- ✓ cylindrical solarium bay with a wrapped Modernistic horizontal window band
- ✓ square projecting attached garage bay
- ✓ sculptural elements of the blocky and stepped chimney with a Deco-inspired top
- ✓ curved and sculptural entry feature with cascading steps
- ✓ recessed fenestration without sills or lintels -- the Modernistic impression of the openings being carved out
- ✓ steel casement windows with raised muntins
- ✓ lightly-textured, almost smooth stucco
- ✓ sense of recessed and projecting bays
- ✓ exposed curved rafter tails
- ✓ minimal embellishment
- ✓ covered screened porch for indoor/outdoor living
- ✓ cast masonry vents
- ✓ round windows in the garage doors (replaced)
- ✓ floral motif of the metal screened doors (not extant)

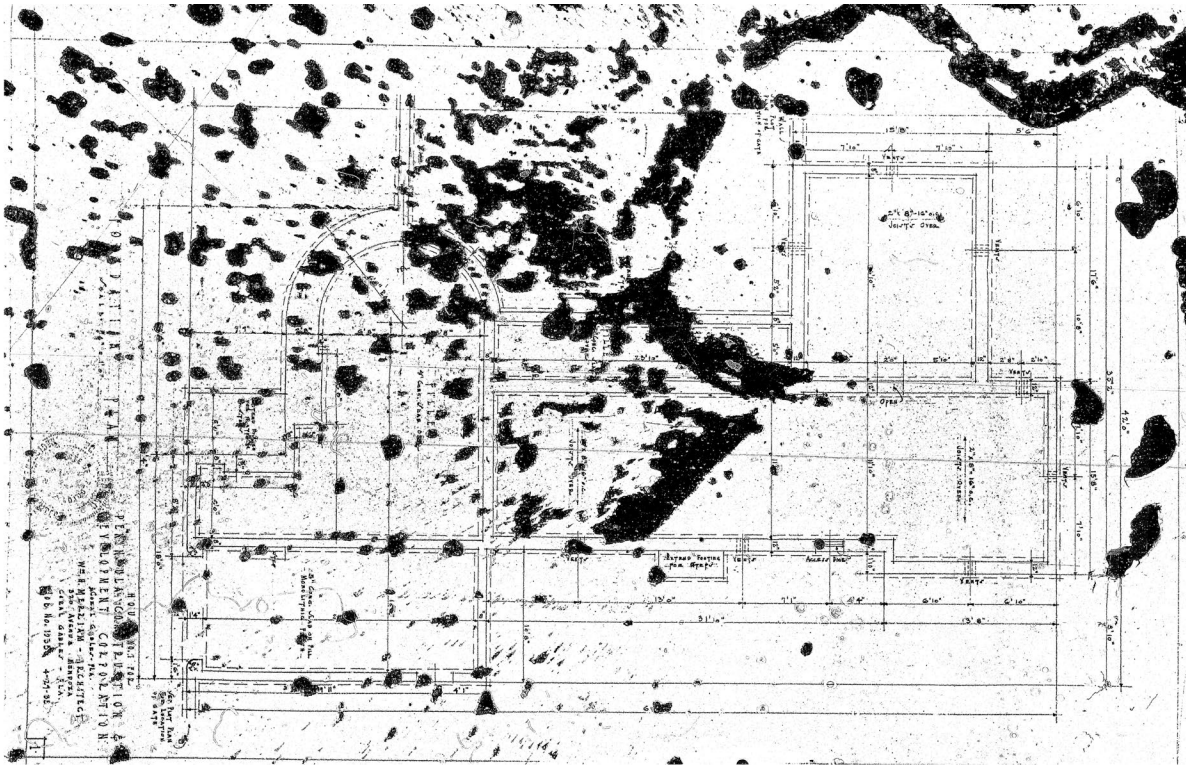
Appendix A:
Permit #4841, 1935 -- 2501 Indian Mound Trail
architect William Merriam for Peninsular Construction
Please note these are not plans for 2509 but provided for comparative reference

4841

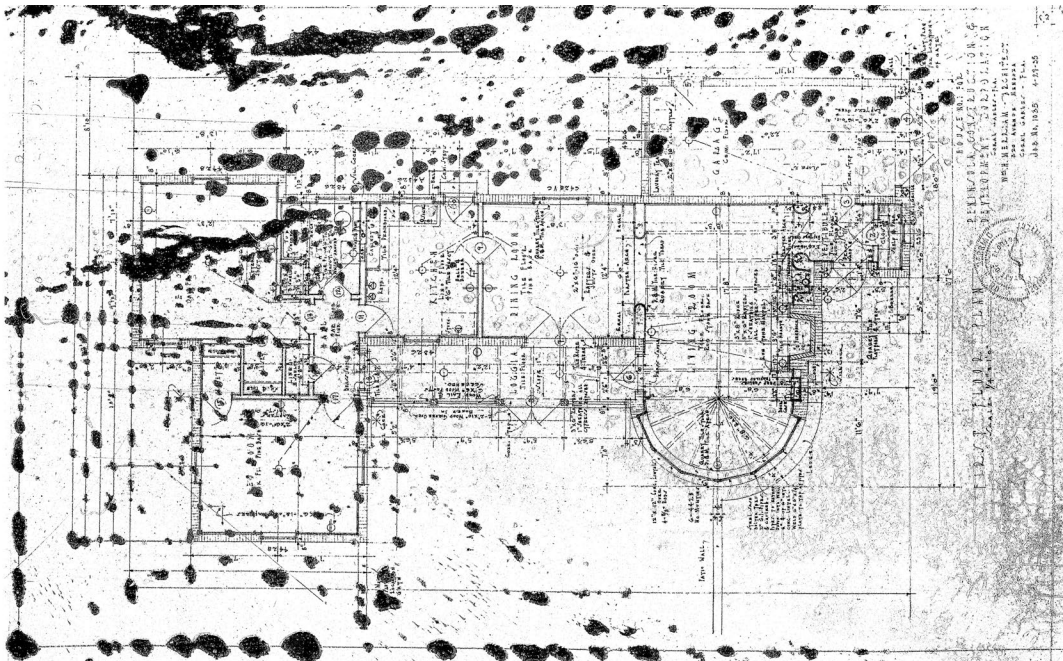




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