



The City of Coral Gables

COA (SP) 2012-11  
SEPTEMBER 20, 2012

*Historical Resources Department*

**STAFF REPORT  
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
FOR ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS TO THE  
THE PROPERTY AT  
641 SAN LORENZO AVENUE  
A CONTRIBUTING PROPERTY WITHIN THE  
ITALIAN VILLAGE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

**Proposal:** Applicant is requesting design approval for the construction of an addition and alterations to the residence

**Architect:** Nelson de Leon, AIA, LEED AP

**Owner:** Armando Olivera

**Folio Numbers:** 03-4120-022-1480 & 03-4120-022-1490

**Legal Description:** Lots 22, 23, and 24, Block 13, Revised Plat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 1, according to the plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 28 at Page 31 of the Public Records of Dade County, Florida, now known as Miami-Dade County, Florida.

**Site Characteristics:** This property is located on three lots within the Italian Village Local Historic District on the northeast corner of Palmarito Street and San Lorenzo Avenue. The primary elevation faces south onto San Lorenzo Avenue. The site is approximately 170 feet wide by 165 feet deep.

**BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The Italian Village was designated as a local historic landmark district in 1992. The contributing structures within the district are reminiscent of Italian farm homes and feature a combination of one and two story sections with intersecting roof angles. The residence at 641 San Lorenzo was constructed in 1925 and designed by Robert Law Weed. Originally from Pennsylvania, Robert Law Weed came to Miami in 1919 and opened an architectural office in 1922. He designed residences and commercial buildings including department stores for Sears and Burdines as well as the Dadeland Mall. Weed is also known for his work on the University of Miami Master Plan in the late 1940's and early 1950's.

There have been few substantive changes to the structure since it was built. In 1939 there was a small one-story addition (137 square feet) built on the west side toward the rear of the property facing Palmarito Street.

### **PROPOSAL**

The applicant is requesting design approval for restoration and alterations to the existing structure and the construction of a one-story addition, a two-story addition, a new one story loggia, a new pool, a new brick courtyard with a fountain, a new in-ground fountain, a new covered terrace and site improvements.

### **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 existing residence is 3,496 square feet and sits on a large (27,358 square feet) site. The proposed additions total approximately 3,780 square feet. The addition will consist of a new kitchen, family room, covered terrace, covered loggia, laundry room, pantry, mud room, maid's room, gallery, guest room and new two-car garage on the first floor. The second floor will contain a new master bedroom, master bath, walk in closets, and a new bedroom. The connection from the proposed new portion to the existing portion is through a new hall on the first and second floors. New windows will be installed throughout.

The existing concrete driveway on the east portion of the property that runs from the front property line to an existing one car garage at the rear will be removed. On the primary (south) elevation facing San Lorenzo, the existing entry and four foot high wall will remain. Behind the wall a new fountain is proposed with a new brick paved courtyard. A low opening into the existing sun room will be blocked in. A new brick paved walkway will be installed that goes from the existing property line through a new gate/wall to on the right side and adjacent to proposed new one story loggia. This gated entry way leads to the new brick surrounded

swimming pool. The one story addition housing the new guest bedroom and two car garage will be visible to the rear of the residence on the left side

The proposed addition will be most visible from Palmarito Street on the west. On this elevation, the addition done in 1939 will be rebuilt to house a new wine room and china closet. The existing windows in the dining room will be replaced with French doors and two windows will be blocked up. The proposed two-story and one-story additions have been designed in such a way that they do not overwhelm the existing historic residence.

The north (rear) elevation is not visible from the street. The facing of the garage in this direction and the use of a variety of roof heights to break up the composition are typical conditions within the Italian Village.

The east elevation is also not visible from the street. The new pool is flanked by a new covered loggia on the south and a new covered terrace on the north. An original covered terrace that had been enclosed at some point will be re-opened to complete the composition.

The site improvements include a pool, a driveway and motor court off Palmarito Street, an in-ground fountain, brick pavers, and extensive landscaping (Cat palms, Bougainvilleas, Veitchia palms, Podocarpas, Washingtonia palms, Medjool or Date palm, McArthur and Alexander palms, and an herb garden).

### **VARIANCES**

No variances have been requested with this application.

### **BOARD OF ARCHITECTS**

The proposal was reviewed and approved by the Board of Architects on July 19, 2012.

### **STAFF CONCLUSION**

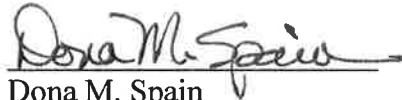
The application presented requests design approval for alterations and the construction of one and two-story additions to the residence located at 641 San Lorenzo Avenue.

Overall, the proposed addition does not detract from the historic integrity of the house. The proposed addition takes some of its design cues from the existing residence, but there is a clear distinction between the old and the new. As mentioned in the Letter of Intent, the differentiation is by the roof pitch, stucco finish, overhang and eave detail, sill treatments of the windows, number of clay vents grouped together, and the tie beam and window heights.

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

A motion to grant design approval for the alterations and addition to the structure at 641 San Lorenzo Avenue, a contributing structure within the Italian Village Local Historic District, and **APPROVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Dona M. Spain", written over a horizontal line.

Dona M. Spain  
Historic Preservation Officer