



**STAFF REPORT
SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
FOR THE PROPERTY AT
768 ALHAMBRA CIRCLE
A CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE WITHIN
“THE ALHAMBRA CIRCLE HISTORIC DISTRICT”**

*Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts*

2327 Salzedo Street
Coral Gables
Florida, 33134

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Proposal: The application requests design approval for an addition and alterations to the residence and sitework.

Architect: A. R. Poza Architect, Inc. (Albert Poza)

Owner: Greg Barry and Michelle Serruya

Folio Number: 03-4108-001-3900

Legal Description: Lot 1 and the West ½ of Lot 2, Block 23, Coral Gables Section “B,” according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 111, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Site Characteristics: The property is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Alhambra Circle and Venetia Avenue and Cortez Street. The property is approximately 75’ x 150’.

BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS

The “Alhambra Circle Historic District,” designated in 2008, comprises one- and two-story residential properties built between the 1920s and the 1950s and landscape features that abut Alhambra Circle. Also included within the district are the Alhambra Water Tower, Granada Plaza, and Alcazar Plaza.

The district is defined by the wide median that runs through it. This landscape feature exists nowhere else in the City and helps to create the unique feel of this major boulevard. Alhambra Circle is the City’s longest roadway running from Douglas Road to Campo Sano near the University of Miami campus to the south. This roadway, 120 feet wide with a lushly planted generous swale, was purposefully planned and integral to George Merrick’s plan for the City of Coral Gables. The experience of this important thoroughfare is as dependent on the street’s wide median as it is on the architecture of the homes that surround it.

The single-family home at 768 Alhambra Circle was designed 1928 (Permit #4041) by architect Frank Wyatt Woods. A two-story addition was made to the east side of the home in 1941 and, much later, a subsequent one-story addition took place behind it. While the home has undergone alterations over the years, it retains its historic integrity and contributes the architectural fabric of the City.

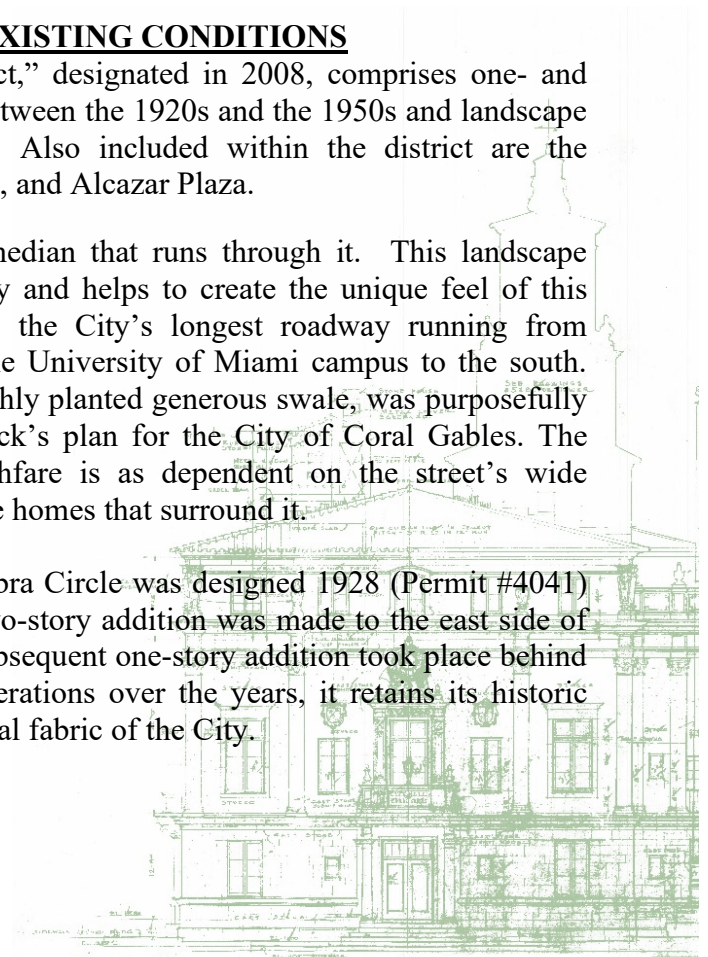




Figure 1: ca. 1940s photo



Figure 2: Current Photo, June 2025

PROPOSAL

The application requests design approval for a second story addition to the rear of the residence and alterations to the residence. Limited sitework is also proposed.

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.*
5. *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.*
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 applicant is requesting design approval for an addition to the rear (south) of the existing residence, alterations to the residence, and limited sitework. The work proposed in the application consists of:

- A second story addition to the rear / southeast corner of the home. The addition extends the existing one-story family room (a later addition to the home) by 5'-4" feet to the south. The second-floor addition replaces an existing second-floor open terrace above the family room and consists of a Master Bedroom and closet. To the west of the addition, a new covered terrace is proposed to fill the "U" shape void at the rear of the home. The first floor consists of a covered terrace and outdoor kitchen. The second floor consists of an open terrace accessible from the new Master Bedroom.
- At the rear (south) elevation, a window on the first floor is being replaced with a French Door to access the covered terrace and a casement window is being reintroduced to the second floor.
- At the front (north) elevation, new impact-resistant French doors with a transom to match the original configuration (see Figure 1) will replace existing French doors.
- Interior alterations / remodeling to the existing residence.
- Sitework is limited to the removal of pavers in the rear yard to comply with Zoning Open Space requirements.

South (Rear) Elevation- Sheet A.7

At the south elevation, the gable-end addition is visible at the west end of the façade with the covered terrace at the center. The addition tops and existing and extended one story family room (a later addition). The existing low wall of the second-floor open terrace remains, and the wall cap incorporated as a moulding around the addition. A back of French doors at the first floor leads to the expanded family room. A pair of double casements is centered above at the second floor. To the west, the covered terrace spans between the addition the carport. Topped with a picket railing that surrounds the second-floor open terrace, the corner piers have a cap that follows the moulding on the addition.

A French door will replace a window opening at the first floor and a window on the second floor is being returned to the façade (see Figure 3). At the elevator tower, an existing window providing access to the shaft will be relocated to the north side of the tower to accommodate the new pitched roof the addition.

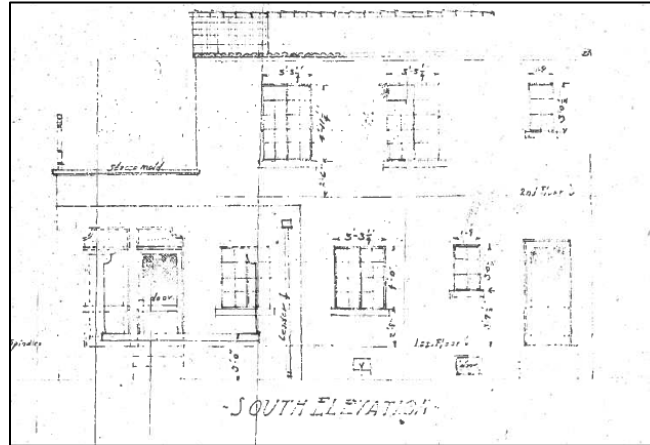


Figure 3: South Elevation, Permit 4041

West (Facing Cortez Street) Elevation- Sheet A.8

At the west side elevation, the second story addition is visible beyond the existing one-story carport. The addition is set back from the street and should only be minimally visible from Cortez Street. A pair of French doors provides access to the second-floor terrace.



Figure 4: Current Photo, ca, 2022 (courtesy Realtor.com)

North (facing Alhambra Circle) Elevation- Sheet A.9

At the front elevation, the only alteration to the original residence is the reintroduction of a transom to the French doors of the living room, which will be replaced with new doors with

muntins that match the original configuration (see Figure 5). The access window from the rear of the elevator shaft is being relocated to the north side of the shaft just below the roof ridge line of the residence. The addition is not visible from Alhambra Circle.

East Elevation - Sheet A.10

The south elevation consists of the existing residence to the north with the family room extension and second floor addition the south. The roof ridge of the addition is lower than the existing residence, so it is not visible from the right-of-way. Two tiled inserts on the existing family room will be removed. Fenestration at the new addition is limited to two casement windows above the moulding.



Figure 5: ca. 1940s photo, detail of French doors with transom

VARIANCES

No variances have been requested in conjunction with this application.

BOARD OF ARCHITECTS

This proposal was deferred by the Board of Architects on February 13, 2025 with the following comments: 1) RAISE WINDOWS AT MASTER BEDROOM. 2) STUDY LOWERING RAILING HEIGHT AT BALCONY. OK TO MEET WITH CITY ARCHITECT. The City Architect subsequently approved the corrections on March 10, 2025.

STAFF CONCLUSION

The application presented requests design approval for an addition and alterations to the residence and sitework. The addition occurs at a portion of the home that has already been altered with an addition and is largely not visible from the front or side streets.

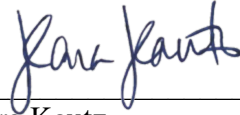
Staff requests the following conditions to be incorporated into any motion for approval:

1. Window/door muntins are to be high-profile / dimensional.
2. Window/door glass to be clear / no tint / no reflectivity / no low-e.
3. The roof is to be true two-piece barrel tile.
4. French doors are to have a higher bottom rail / kickplate.
5. If the remainder of the windows and doors are contemplated to be replaced, they are to match the original type and configuration (casements).

Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **APPROVE WITH THE CONDITIONS NOTED ABOVE** the design proposal for an addition and alterations to the residence and sitework on the property located at **768 Alhambra Circle**, a Contributing Resource within the “Alhambra Circle Historic District,” legally described as Lot 1 and the West ½ of Lot 2, Block 23, Coral Gables Section “B,” according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 111, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida and **APPROVE** the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness with the conditions noted above.

Respectfully submitted,



Kara Kautz

Acting Historic Preservation Officer