



COA (SP) 2015-007 Revised
February 17, 2021

Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts

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

Proposal: The application requesting design approval for additions and alterations to the existing one-story residence and two-story auxiliary structure and sitework was approved on August 20, 2015.

This application requests design approval for a revision to the approved Special Certificate of Appropriateness for as-built deviations from the previously approved plans.

Architect: RVL Architecture and Design

Owner: Jorge A. and Kathrina F. Saladrigas

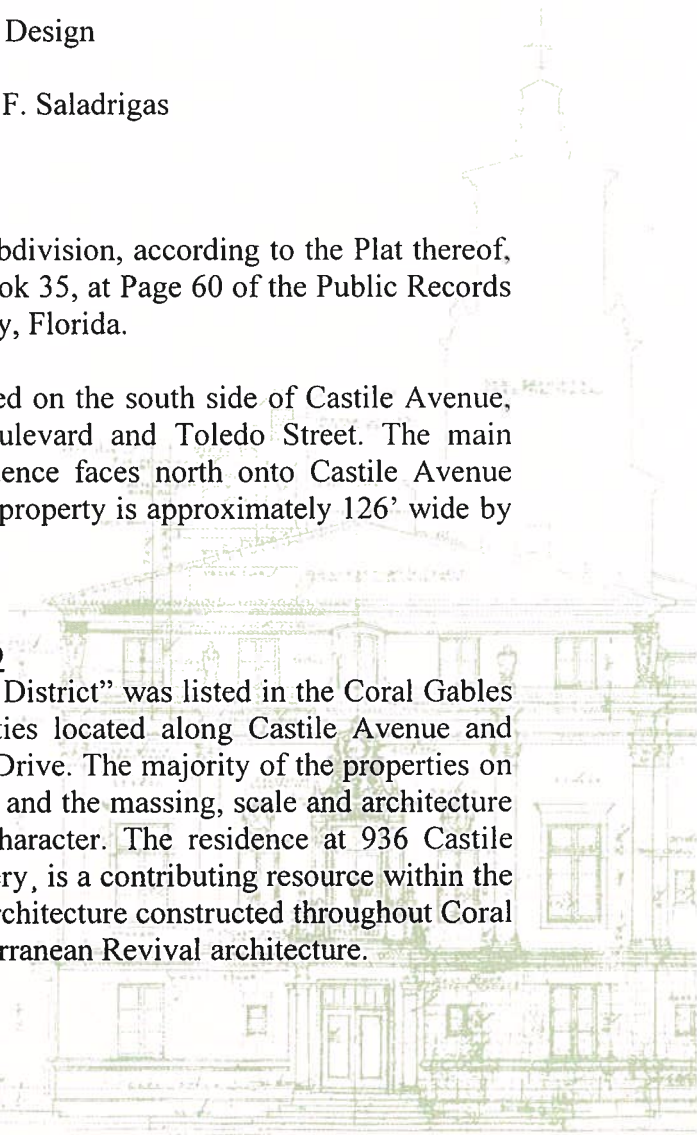
Folio Number: 03-4107-021-0040

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

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, constructed in 1931 and designed by Lester Avery, is a contributing resource within the historic district. 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.



PROPOSAL

In August 2015 Special Certificate of Appropriateness COA (SP) 2015-007 for additions and alterations to the existing one-story residence and two-story auxiliary structure and sitework at 936 Castile Avenue was approved by the Historic Preservation Board with only one condition regarding tile coping at the parapet.

This revision requests approval of as-built deviations from the approved COA. During construction, the original window sills of the residence were removed, as was an original plinth and decorative urn.

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

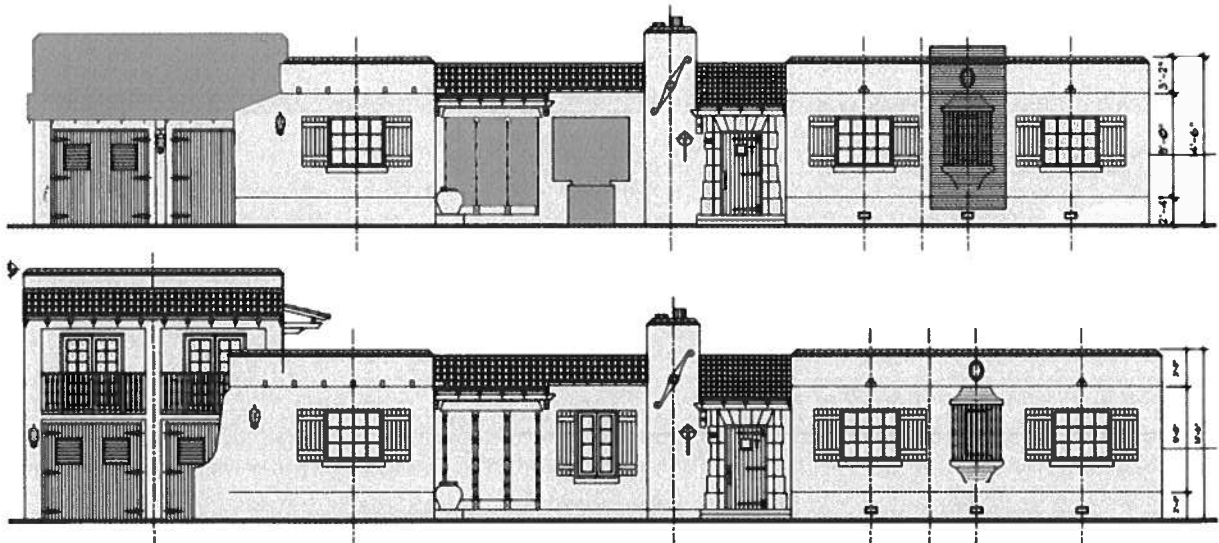
The following Standards have application in this matter:

2. *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alterations or features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*
5. *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a 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.*

STAFF OBSERVATIONS

The application before the Board requests approval for as-built deviations from the previously approved COA, specifically the removal of all of the original projecting window sills on the residence and the removal of an original plinth and decorative urn at the front (north) elevation.

When the Board reviewed the Special Certificate of Appropriateness in 2015, the sills and urn were depicted in both the existing and proposed elevations. No indication was given that either feature was to be removed.



Existing (top) and Proposed (bottom) Elevations , COA (SP) 2015-007

During construction the window sills, urn, and plinth were removed. The current proposal requests that the removed features not be restored to the residence.

Please be advised that the homeowner had filed Part One of the Ad Valorem Tax Abatement Application for the work described in COA (SP) 2015-007 prior to the onset of construction.

VARIANCES

No variances have been requested with this application.

BOARD OF ARCHITECTS

The proposal has not been reviewed by the Board of Architects.

STAFF CONCLUSION

The application presented requests approval for as-built deviations from the previously approved COA, specifically the removal of all of the original projecting window sills on the residence and the removal of an original plinth and decorative urn at the front (north) elevation. Both of those items are character-defining features of the property and are visible in a 1940s photograph of the residence.



Photo ca. 1940s

Both items were indicated on the approved drawings as existing to remain. Had either feature been shown to be removed, Staff would have required that they remain. The requested deviations are not appropriate and violate the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The letter of intent refers to an email approving the windows. The email had nothing to do with the window sills, but the fact that the windows were tinted, not clear view as requested.

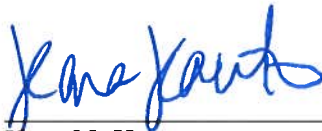
The homeowner is requesting Ad Valorem Tax Exemption for the work described in COA (SP) 2015-007. The exemption is a financial incentive that is intended to encourage the rehabilitation and restoration of historic properties. As part of the application process, the Historic Preservation Officer must certify that the work is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. As noted above, this application violates Standards #2, #5, and #9.

If the Board approves the deviations as proposed, it is Staff's belief that the property should no longer be eligible for a tax exemption.

Therefore, Historical Resources Department Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **DENY** the design approval for a revision to the approved Special Certificate of Appropriateness COA (SP) 2015-007 for as-built deviations from the previously approved plans for the property located 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.

Respectfully submitted,



Kara N. Kautz

Interim Historic Preservation Officer