



The City of Coral Gables

*Historical Resources Department***COA (SP) 2013-11  
SEPTEMBER 19, 2013****STAFF REPORT****SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
ALTERATIONS TO  
THE PROPERTY AT  
6801 GRANADA BOULEVARD  
A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK**

- Proposal:** The applicant is requesting design approval for alterations to the property including the demolition of auxiliary structures and site features and the removal and/or relocation of trees. This application is in association with a proposal to subdivide the property into two building sites which is subject to and under the purview of the Planning and Zoning Board and the City Commission.
- Architect:** R. J. Heisenbottle Architects
- Owner:** Califon Company, N.V.
- Folio Number:** 03-4129-031-0020
- Legal Description:** Tract 2 of Cartee Homestead according to the Plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 43, at Page 30, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.
- Site Characteristics:** The property is located on Granada Boulevard. The property backs onto the Coral Gables Waterway and the northwest side of the property is bounded by the Mahi Waterway. The primary elevation of the residence faces southeast onto the property. The site is approximately 2.94 acres with an irregular shape. The south side of the property on Granada Boulevard is demarcated with a coral rock wall.

### **BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Permitted on September 27, 1951, the residence located at 6801 Granada Boulevard was designed by international renowned architect Alfred Browning Parker. Commissioned by Mr. Daniel B. Caudle, the home is a fine example of Parker's modern style and tenets of architecture. The tree canopy of mature oaks and lush landscaping are important features of this property.

The residence was designated as a Local Historic Landmark on June 21, 2007. The following is a description in the staff report.

The original plan for the house consists of a largely rectilinear massing with an attached loggia and storage/cabana building that wraps around an irregularly shaped swimming pool. The original residence consists of a largely two-story house that had varying levels within it. One enters the home on the ground level and walks up a small flight of steps to the first floor which is comprised of a living room, dining room, kitchen and utility room. Walking up another flight of open steps from the living room, one lands at the music room – a transitional space between the first and second floors. Up another small flight of open stairs, one arrives at the second floor which is comprised of a study overlooking the living room, master bedroom, dressing room, closet and master bathroom. Completing the original residence is an attached open carport and two-bedroom "wing"/structure to the south of the house and a large screened patio that wraps the northwest and northeast elevations. The open carport is connected by a secondary flight of stairs to the master bedroom.

In September of 1952, one year after the initial permit was issued another permit was issued for a 792 square foot building separate from the house that was also designed by Alfred Browning Parker. This building originally housed a maid's room and garage and is described as a guest house on this proposal. Additions to the main structure include: a new wing added to the northwest of the original carport, additions to the south of the bedroom "wing", and the addition of a four car garage. Alterations include: renovation of the master bathroom and closet area, the removal of the secondary master bedroom stair, window alterations in the living room, expansion of the kitchen, the enclosure of the area outside the kitchen and the addition of a spiral staircase to what used to be an exterior balcony. It is unclear if the window system was replaced or refurbished. However, the current window system and wood "Persianas" accurately mimic Alfred Browning Parker's system. In addition, the Garage building was altered by removing the garage door and making the entire structure a living space. There were also some minor changes made to the cabana. A design by Spillis Candela and Partners in 1982 substantially altered the cabana by an addition. In 1983, a tennis court was added to the property south of the house.

The property was designated as a Local Historic Landmark on June 21, 2007. At the same time a Certificate of Appropriateness application was filed for design approval for the division of the property into two separate building sites. That application requested approval for the demolition of a portion of the main residence, tennis court, pool, and loggia. The lot separation was contingent on the removal of part of the existing main house and no detailed site plan was

provided. Staff recommended denial and noted that there were too many unknowns for staff to recommend approval. The Certificate of Appropriateness was denied by the Historic Preservation Board.

### **PROPOSAL**

This applicant is requesting design approval for alterations to the property including the demolition of the guest house, pool, pool deck, pool pavilion, cabana, planter, walkways, the relocation of the driveway, and the removal and/or relocation of trees.

This application is in association with a proposal to subdivide the property into two building sites which is subject to and under the purview of the Planning and Zoning Board and the City Commission. The criteria for the review of lot separations are contained in Article 3 Section 3-206 entitled "Building Site Determination" of the Coral Gables Zoning Code. This staff report does not address those issues. The "Proposed Lot A" is 80,664 square feet (approximate 1.85 acres) and the "Proposed Lot B" is 48,450 square feet (approximately 1.11 acres).

The property is currently for sale and vacant. As expressed by the applicant in the Letter of Intent accompanying the COA Application, the intent of the proposal is to make the property more consistent with others in the neighborhood, more salable and less costly to maintain.

### **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 proposal includes the following building demolitions:

- **Demolition of the guest house building**  
Although designed by Alfred Browning Parker and built in 1952, one year after the main residence was constructed, the guest house was not part of the original design by the architect and is a stand-alone building. Originally built as a garage and maid quarters, the building has been altered by the removal of the garage doors making the entire structure a living space. It now functions as a guest house. If this separate building is demolished the main house will retain its historic integrity. In addition, putting the new driveway in the the location of the existing guest house instead of routing it around the structure will save trees.
- **Demolition of the loggia (noted on the application as “existing pool pavilion”)**  
This was part of the original design by Alfred Browning Parker and has not been altered. The structure does block the view of the water which has apparently been a problem for potential buyers. If a future owner of the property wants to demolish this structure, it should be through a Special Certificate of Appropriateness application for consideration at that time.
- **Demolition of the pool cabana**  
The original pool cabana designed by Alfred Browning Parker was a much smaller structure. The original structure consisted of a storage room, a small bathroom and a room for the pump. A design by Spillis Candela and Partners in 1982 substantially altered the structure with an addition, the reconfiguring of the interiors, and changes to the exterior of the structure.
- **Demolition of the pool and deck**  
The pool and deck were designed by Alfred Browning Parker and relate to the shape of the pool cabana. It is an at grade improvement, and if it is demolished the main house will retain its historic integrity.

The proposal also includes the following site work:

- **Demolition and relocation of the existing driveway.**  
Staff visited the property with Troy Springmyer, the Acting Public Service Director. The relocation of the driveway to accommodate the lot separation will not require the removal of any specimen trees. This should be a condition of the lot separation.
- **Demolition of Existing walkways.**  
The 1967 site plan shows that walkways throughout the site have been altered. The demolition of the existing walkways will not affect the historic integrity of the site.

- Demolition of an existing planter.  
The 1967 site plan does not show this planter. Therefore, the planter was installed after 1967 and was not part of the original design of the property. The demolition of the planter will not affect the historic integrity of the site.
- Raising of an existing CBS wall to 4'0" high  
The 1967 site plan also does not show this wall. Therefore, this wall was installed after 1967 and was not part of the original design of the property. It may be altered or demolished without affecting the historic integrity of the site.
- Demolition of an existing concrete landscape trim located on "Proposed Lot B"  
This was not shown on the original, guest house addition, or 1967 site plans. The original and guest house site plans note this portion of the property as a "rocky area". The demolition of the existing concrete landscape trim will not affect the historic integrity of the site.
- Removal or relocation of existing trees  
It should not be necessary to remove or relocate existing specimen trees on the "Proposed Lot A" (the lot with the historic residence). The residence shown on "Proposed Lot B" is marked "Shown for general zoning information only" is not intended to represent an actual residence and is not appropriate for the new lot. Alfred Browning Parker took great care in siting his houses within the existing landscape. He did not wipe the landscape clear to build a new house. If the lot separation is approved, the same care should be taken for the design of the new house on Lot B. The removal or relocation of trees on Lot B will require a Special Certificate of Appropriateness. A tree survey with the types and sizes of existing trees should be required at that time.
- Removal of a portion of the coral rock perimeter wall on Granada Blvd. to accommodate a driveway for the proposed new residence on Lot B.  
This has been done on other properties within the city. It should be by a Special Certificate of Appropriateness in association with the design of the new residence.

Please note that the property as it exists now is 129,114 square feet. The square foot floor area of a residence on the property that is allowed by the Coral Gables Zoning Code is 39,734 square feet. Since the existing house is 13,161 square feet, a 26,573 square foot addition would be allowed by zoning.<sup>1</sup>

### VARIANCES

No variances have been requested with this application.

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<sup>1</sup>Calculations provided by applicant

### **BOARD OF ARCHITECTS**

This application was reviewed and approved with the following comments by the Board of Architects on July 11, 2013: "Pull the driveway from property line and consider an alternative material for the driveway." The plans were changed accordingly. The Board of Architects did not approve the site plan for the residence on the proposed new lot. The site plan for the new residence is marked "Shown for general zoning information only".

### **STAFF CONCLUSION**

The applicant is requesting design approval for alterations to the property including the demolition of auxiliary structures and site features and the removal and/or relocation of trees. This application is in association with a proposal to subdivide the property into two building sites which is subject to and under the purview of the Planning and Zoning Board and the City Commission.

The application clearly shows the disposition of the lot with the historic structure ("Proposed Lot A"). There is a detailed site plan. The existing tennis court and circular brick paver court will remain. The existing guest house will be demolished and a new driveway will be installed. The application is also requesting demolition of the loggia ("existing pool pavilion"), pool cabana and pool. Staff is recommending that the loggia (noted on the plans as "existing pool pavilion") be retained. However, if in the future a buyer wishes to demolish the loggia, the board could consider it through a separate Certificate of Appropriateness application at that time.

The proposal for "Proposed Lot B" is not defined. The house that is drawn is to illustrate zoning information only and should not be considered to be the design of the residence for this lot. If the lot separation is approved, the lot will retain its historic designation and the new residence will require review and approval by the Historic Preservation Board. The removal or relocation of trees on Lot B will require a Special Certificate of Appropriateness. A tree survey with the types and sizes of existing trees should be required at that time.

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

A motion to APPROVE the design for alterations to the property including the demolition of the guest house, pool and pool cabana and site features with the following conditions:

1. Retain the existing loggia (noted on the plans as "existing pool pavilion")
2. Any new construction on the parcel of land that will be created for a new residence ("Proposed Lot B") will require a Special Certificate of

Appropriateness and review by the Historic Preservation Board. Staff is not recommending approval of any construction on Lot B at this time.

3. No alteration or demolitions will occur unless the proposal to subdivide the property into two building sites is approved by the City Commission.
4. No tree removals/relocations will occur on the lot that has the historic residence ("Proposed Lot A") unless the proposal to subdivide the property into two building sites is approved by the City Commission.
5. The removal/relocation of trees on the lot that is created for a new residence ("Proposed Lot B") will be part of the application for that residence and will require a Certificate of Appropriateness. No tree removal or relocations will occur until the design of the new residence has been approved. Staff is not recommending approval of the removal/relocation of trees on Lot B at this time.
6. The demolition of the portion of the perimeter coral rock wall to accommodate the driveway for the new residence ("Proposed Lot B") will also be part of the application for that residence and will require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

**AND**

A motion to APPROVE a Certificate of Appropriateness for the alterations to the property with the above conditions.

Respectfully submitted,



Dona M. Spain  
Historic Preservation Officer