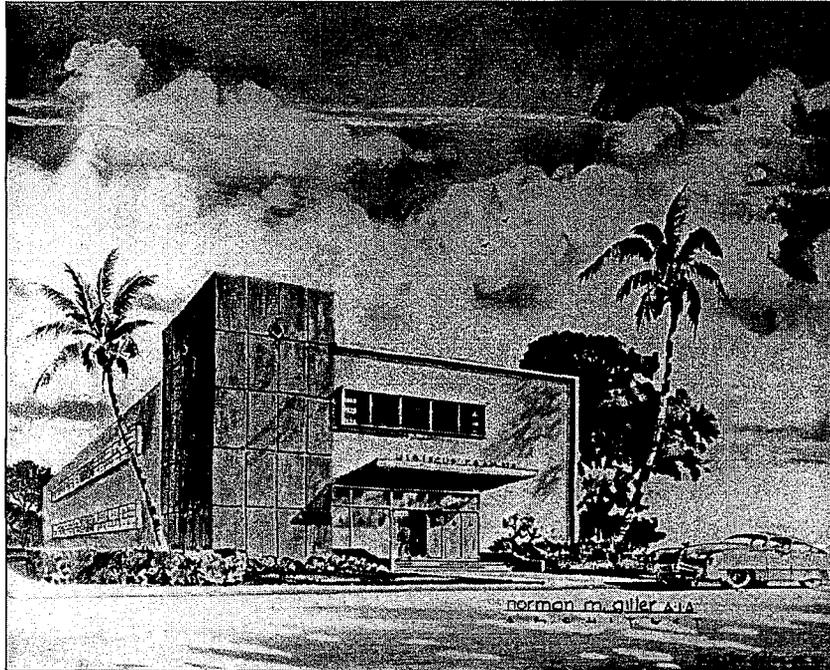


FLAMINGO PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT WESTWARD EXPANSION

DESIGNATION REPORT



Charles Giller's 1950 rendering of architect Norman M. Giller's Hibiscus Masonic Lodge at 955 Alton Road within the proposed western expansion area of the Flamingo Park Historic District. (Image courtesy of Giller & Giller, Inc., all rights reserved to the Giller family.)

PREPARED BY

CITY OF MIAMI BEACH PLANNING DEPARTMENT

January 16, 2008

CITY OF MIAMI BEACH
FLAMINGO PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT
WESTWARD EXPANSION DESIGNATION REPORT

PREPARED BY
CITY OF MIAMI BEACH PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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CITY OF MIAMI BEACH
FLAMINGO PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT
WESTWARD EXPANSION DESIGNATION REPORT

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I. REQUEST

On November 27, 2007, the Planning Board considered and voted on the possible westward expansion of the Flamingo Park Historic District to include the area between 8th Street and 14th Street, on the east side of Alton Road. With six members present, and one absent, the Planning Board was tied on whether to recommend designation of only the area between 12th Street and 14th Street (i.e., the bungalow colony area), or the entire area between 8th Street and 14th Street, as proposed by the Historic Preservation Board.

On September 11, 2007, the Historic Preservation Board considered and voted on the possible westward expansion of the Flamingo Park Historic District to include the area between 7th Street and 8th Street, on the east side of Alton Road. A motion to include the area between 7th Street and 8th Street within the proposed historic district westward expansion area failed by a vote of 4 to 3, with no absences. Hence, the Historic Preservation Board recommends the westward expansion of the Flamingo Park Historic District to east right of way line of Alton Road between 8th Street and 14th Street.

On August 14, 2007, the City of Miami Beach Historic Preservation Board discussed the possible westward expansion of the boundaries of the local Flamingo Park Historic district to include all properties on the east side of Alton Road between 7th Street and 14th Street. At this meeting, the Board voted to approve the expansion of the historic district boundaries between 8th Street and 14th Street (5 to 0; 2 absent) and to continue consideration of the expansion of the historic district between 7th Street and 8th Street to the September 11, 2007 meeting by a separate vote (5 to 0; 2 absent).

On July 13, 2006, the City of Miami Beach Historic Preservation Board discussed the possible westward expansion of the boundaries of the local Flamingo Park Historic District to include all properties on the east side of Alton Road between 7th Street and 14th Street. At this meeting, the Board directed staff to prepare a preliminary evaluation and recommendation report relative to this possible expansion area, and further directed staff to schedule a special meeting of the Board.

On July 27, 2006, the Historic Preservation Board reviewed the preliminary evaluation and recommendation report with recommendations prepared by the Planning Department relative to the proposed westward expansion of the Flamingo Park Historic District. The Board unanimously approved a motion (7 to 0) to direct staff to prepare a designation report and schedule a public hearing to consider the proposed historic designation.

On September 6, 2006, the City Commission discussed the proposed westward expansion of the Flamingo Park Historic District and took no action to modify the boundaries proposed in the preliminary evaluation and recommendation report.

On September 12, 2006, the Historic Preservation Board approved a motion (6 to 0; 1 absence) to proceed with the designation process and extend the interim procedures for the issuance of a demolition permit, as set forth in Section 118-591 (d), of the City Code of Miami Beach.

The Flamingo Park Historic District was originally designated by the City of Miami Beach on June 20, 1990, to extend local protection to part of the City that had been placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. The historic district's original boundaries extended roughly from 6th Street to South Lincoln Lane and from Washington Court to Lenox Court. On November 4, 1992, the City approved the expansion of the northern boundary of the historic district to North Lincoln Lane, in order to include the properties on both sides of Lincoln Road.

II. DESIGNATION PROCESS

The process of historic designation is delineated in Sections 118-591 through 118-593 in Subpart B of the Land Development Regulations of the City Code (Chapter 118, Article X, Division 4). An outline of this process is delineated below.

Step One: A request for designation is made either by the City Commission, the Historic Preservation Board, other agencies and organizations as listed in the Land Development Regulations of the City Code, or the property owners involved. Proposals for designation shall include a completed application form available from the Planning Department.

Step Two: The Planning Department prepares a preliminary evaluation report with recommendations for consideration by the Board.

Step Three: The Historic Preservation Board considers the preliminary evaluation to determine if proceeding with a designation report is warranted.

The designation report is an historical and architectural analysis of the proposed district or site. The report:

- 1) describes the historic, architectural and/or archeological significance of the property or subject area proposed for Historical Site or District designation;
- 2) recommends Evaluation Guidelines to be used by the Board to evaluate the appropriateness and compatibility of proposed Developments affecting the designated Site or District; and
- 3) will serve as an attachment to the Land Development Regulations of the City Code.

Step Four: The City Commission is notified of the Board's decision and the initial boundaries proposed for designation. Within 60 days of the vote of the Historic Preservation Board to direct the Planning Department to prepare a designation report, the City Commission may, by a five-sevenths vote, deny or modify the proposed request for designation.

Step Five: The designation report is presented to the Historic Preservation Board at a public hearing. If the Board determines that the proposed site or district satisfies the requirements for designation as set forth in the Land Development Regulations of the City Code, the Board transmits a recommendation in favor of designation to the Planning Board and City Commission.

Step Six: The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on the proposed designation, and shall consider the proposed historic designation as an amendment to the Land Development Regulations of the City Code and, subsequently, transmit its recommendation to the City Commission.

Step Seven: The City Commission may adopt an amendment to the Land Development Regulations of the City Code by a five-sevenths majority vote, which thereby designates the Historic Preservation Site or Historic District after one (1) public hearing for a parcel of land less than ten (10) contiguous acres or after two (2) public hearings for a parcel of land that is more than ten (10) contiguous acres.

III. RELATION TO ORDINANCE CRITERIA

1. In accordance with Section 118-592 in the Land Development Regulations of the City Code, eligibility for designation is determined on the basis of compliance with the listed criteria set forth below.
 - (a) The Historic Preservation Board shall have the authority to recommend that properties be designated as historic buildings, historic structures, historic improvements, historic landscape features, historic interiors (architecturally significant public portions only), historic sites or historic districts if they are significant in the historical, architectural, cultural, aesthetic or archeological heritage of the city, the county, state or nation. Such properties shall possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling or association and meet at least one (1) of the following criteria:
 - (1) Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the history of the city, the county, state or nation;
 - (2) Association with the lives of persons significant in the city's past history;
 - (3) Embody the distinctive characteristics of an historical period, architectural or design style or method of construction;
 - (4) Possesses high artistic values;
 - (5) Represent the work of a master, serve as an outstanding or representative work of a master designer, architect or builder who contributed to our historical, aesthetic or architectural heritage;
 - (6) Have yielded, or are likely to yield information important in pre-history or history;
 - (7) Be listed in the National Register of Historic Places;
 - (8) Consist of a geographically definable area that possesses a significant concentration of sites, buildings or structures united by historically significant past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development, whose components may lack individual distinction.
 - (b) A building, structure (including the public portions of the interior), improvement or landscape feature may be designated historic even if it has been altered if the alteration is reversible and the most significant architectural elements are intact and repairable.

2. The proposed Flamingo Park Historic District Westward Expansion is eligible for historic designation as it complies with the criteria as specified in Section 118-592 in the Land Development Regulations of the City Code outlined above.

(a) Staff finds the proposed historic district to be eligible for historic designation and in conformance with the designation criteria for the following reasons:

(1) **Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the history of the city, the county, state or nation;**

Many of the structures within the proposed westward expansion area were built during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Fourteen small houses located between 12th and 14th Streets are the remains of a colony of bungalow-like structures built by Lester F. Preu Realty Company between 1933 and 1936. Their modest scale and vernacular quality reflect the limited means American society faced during the Great Depression, a major event in the City's as well as the nation's history. The Preu Organization offered financing coordinated with the Federal Housing Administration, a program of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal.¹

(2) **Association with the lives of persons significant in the city's past history;**

Historic research has usually focused on the designing architects of designated buildings, but equally important to the history of Miami Beach are the development and realty companies that invested in the City, especially during the Depression era. One major development firm in South Florida at that time was the Lester F. Preu Organization, represented in the proposed westward expansion area by the 14 modest homes mentioned above.

A 1936 Miami Herald ad and article document that the Preu Organization "built 300 homes in Greater Miami during the last two years." These included, in addition to this Alton Road colony, other developments on Royal Palm and Post Avenues in Miami Beach and in East Shenandoah in Miami; Golden Beach Homes on North Bay Drive in Golden Beach; and a Fort Lauderdale development on Las Olas Boulevard.² In addition to homes, in Miami Beach in the 1930s Preu also built the Archway Ocean Villas, a rental property at 6861 Collins Avenue (demolished), and the Marber Apartments at 700 Michigan Avenue.

Lester F. Preu, Sr. (1898-1981), general contractor, had his company headquarters at 1443 Alton Road in 1936. In addition to heading the Preu Organization, he was also secretary of the Biscayne

¹ Advertisement, Miami Herald, 26 July 1936.

² "Preu Organization Builds Many Homes," Miami Herald, 26 July 1936.

Improvement Corporation, located on Biscayne Island on the Venetian Causeway.³ President of this company was William G. Welbon, who is listed as the original owner of several of these surviving homes, and five others in the 1400 block of Alton Road that have been demolished.

(3) **Embody the distinctive characteristics of an historical period, architectural or design style or method of construction;**

This assemblage of 22 contributing properties represents the architectural styles of the Depression and early post-World War II eras in Miami Beach. Fourteen small houses between 12th and 14th Streets were designed in the Mediterranean Revival-Art Déco Transitional style, a synthesis of Mediterranean Revival form and Art Deco decorative detail or vice versa. These structures, which form a colony of bungalow-like homes, are prime examples of the "Med-Deco" style popular in Miami Beach during the early 1930s. In addition to these early homes, there are several other pre-war buildings in the proposed westward expansion area that also are consistent with the variations of the Med-Deco style found elsewhere in the existing Flamingo Park Historic District. The remaining contributing properties were built during the early post-war years. The majority of these are noteworthy examples of the Post War Modern style apartment houses that were popularized in Miami Beach with the societal and economic changes following World War II. Not only did building materials and forms undergo changes at this time, but the City also wrestled with zoning variances and later zoning district changes as the era of private estates gave way to multi-family housing for the middle-class. All of these factors are embodied in the distinctive design characteristics of the contributing properties located within the proposed westward expansion area.

(4) **Possess high artistic values;**

By their nature as modest residential, commercial and institutional structures, these neighborhood buildings are not grandiose, but they admirably reflect the artistic values and design influences of their times and economic means and accomplish their aim of providing comfortable and affordable housing with skill and charm. Detailed workmanship is found in all of these structures.

(5) **Represent the work of a master, serve as an outstanding or representative work of a master designer, architect or builder who contributed to our historical, aesthetic or architectural heritage;**

The proposed westward expansion area contains fine examples of architecture built before and after World War II. Robert M. Little and

³ Polk's City Directory, 1939.

Anton Skislewicz are among the notable pre-war design masters whose work is represented within the proposed district expansion area. Norman Giller, A. Herbert Mathes, and Gerard Pitt are among the prominent post-war architects whose work also is represented here.

(6) **Have yielded, or are likely to yield information important in pre-history or history;**

The proposed westward expansion of the Flamingo Park Historic District is significant for its association with the architectural and cultural history of Miami Beach. It possesses architectural styles that collectively trace the historical progression of architectural design along Alton Road from 1933 to 1961. It includes original single family and multi-family residences as well as an institutional facility. Some of these single family homes have been successfully readapted to commercial and office uses. These buildings were designed in the Mediterranean-Art Deco Transitional and Post War Modern styles of architecture.

(7) **Be listed in the National Register of Historic Places;**

Although this area is not presently listed in the National Register of Historic Places, it appears to have clear potential to be determined to be eligible for national historic designation.

(8) **Consist of a geographically definable area that possesses a significant concentration of sites, buildings or structures united by historically significant past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development, whose components may lack individual distinction;**

This area is a geographically distinct concentration of mostly single family homes and apartment type buildings. These structures are located along the east side of a major north-south artery of Miami Beach: Alton Road. Directly adjacent to the existing Flamingo Park Historic District, the proposed westward expansion area generally includes all properties on the east side of Alton Road from 8th to 14th Streets. A collection of 14 modest homes is located between 12th and 14th Streets. This group represents a significant concentration of intimately scaled, Med-Deco architecture that was developed by the same builder, Lester Preu, and designed by the same architect, Robert M. Little, with similar characteristics, between 1933 and 1936. The area south of Flamingo Park, between 8th and 11th Streets, consists of mainly multi-family, residential buildings designed predominantly in the Post War Modern style. Although the proposed westward expansion of the Flamingo Park Historic District can be seen as having a different character north of Flamingo Park when compared to the properties located south of Flamingo Park, it is the

totality of the proposed expansion area that most accurately reflects the diversity of architectural styles that developed in Miami Beach from the Great Depression through the early post-war years. The 22 contributing properties provide an important concentration of historic architectural styles that are consistent in scale, style and character with the properties located in the adjacent existing Flamingo Park Historic District.

- (b) **A building, structure (including the public portions of the interior), improvement or landscape feature may be designated historic even if it has been altered if the alteration is reversible and the most significant architectural elements are intact and repairable.**

Although a few of the buildings within the proposed westward expansion of the Flamingo Park Historic District have been altered to various extents over the years, the majority of these structures retain a high degree of their original architectural design integrity and contribute to the special character of the proposed district expansion area. Most alterations are reversible, and exterior restoration could be successfully completed, if desired, by following original architectural plans and available historical photographs and/or documentation. Despite existing alterations to these structures, they continue to be highly representative of the rich architectural and cultural history of Miami Beach.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF BOUNDARIES

The currently designated Flamingo Park Historic District is generally bounded on the south by the center line of 6th Street, on the west by the center line of Lenox Court as extended (including all of Flamingo Park), on the north by the center line of Lincoln Lane North as extended, and on the east by the center lines of Collins Court and Collins Avenue.

The proposed westward expansion area of the Flamingo Park Historic District is generally bounded on the south by the center line of 8th Street, on the west by the eastern right-of-way line of Alton Road, on the north by the center line of 14th Street, and on the east by the center line of Lenox Court as extended, which abuts and is contiguous to the western boundary of the Flamingo Park Historic District (see **Map 1**).

The location of these boundaries has been determined through investigation and research of building records and historical documentation. They define a geographic area which possesses a significant concentration of historic buildings.

V. PRESENT OWNERS

The property located within the boundaries of the proposed Flamingo Park Historic District Westward Expansion is held by multiple owners.

VI. PRESENT USE

The current uses within the boundaries of the proposed westward expansion area are primarily multi-family residential and residential-office. Other current uses represented in the district include institutional facilities, single family homes, private parking lots, and a commercial shopping center.

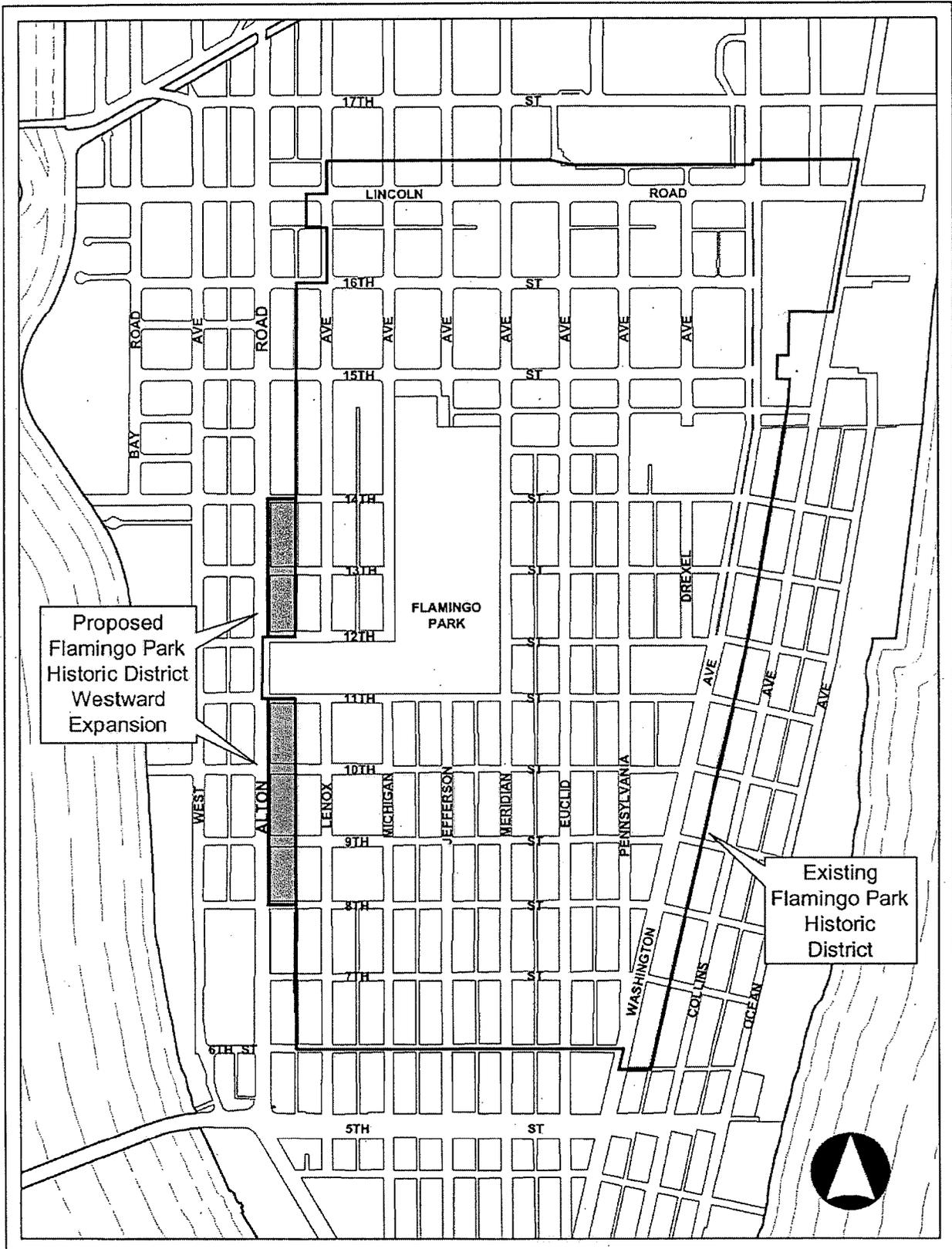
VII. PRESENT ZONING

The established zoning districts within the boundaries of the proposed Flamingo Park Historic District Westward Expansion are as follows:

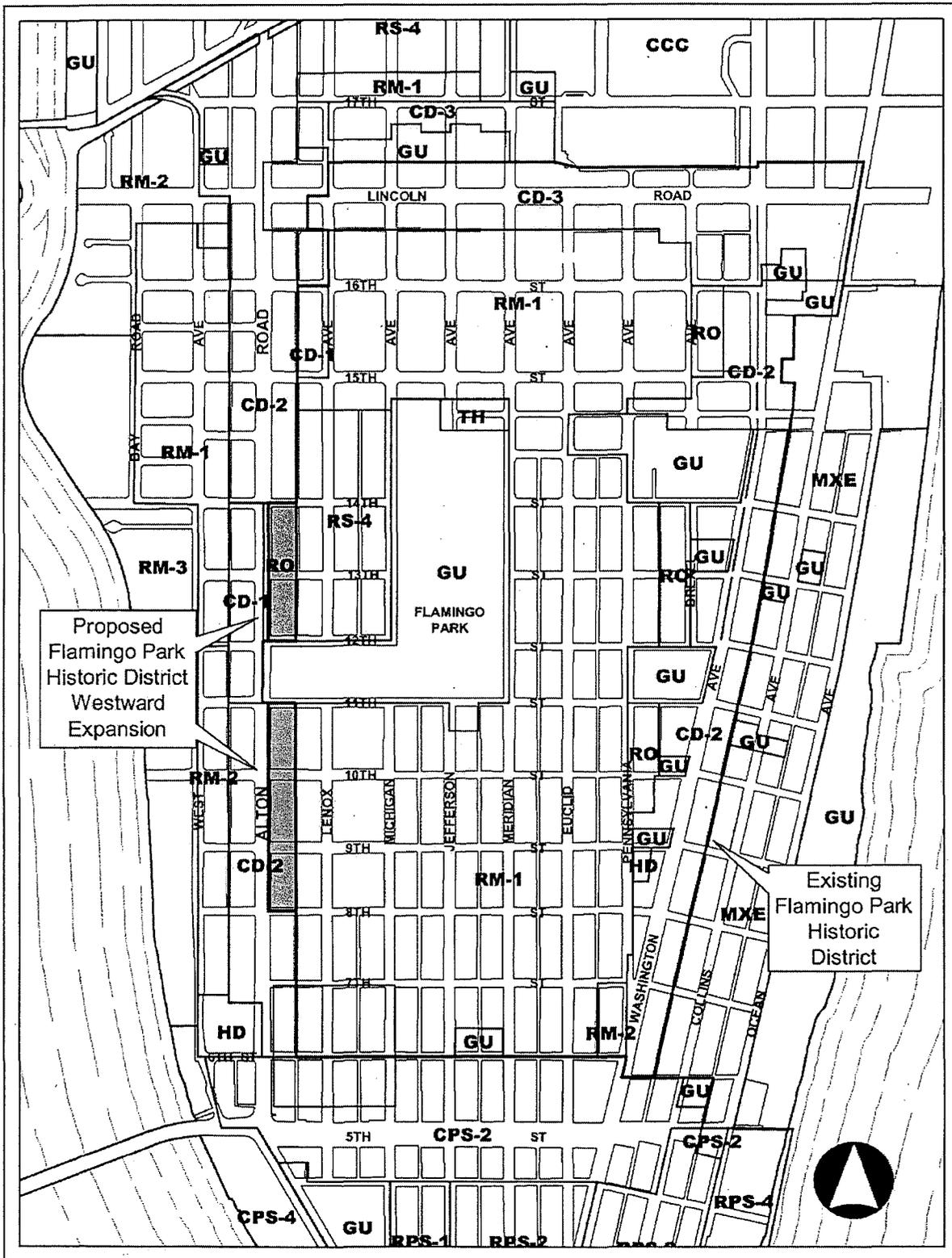
CD-2	Commercial, Medium Intensity
RO	Residential Office

These zoning districts coincide with the boundaries of the proposed westward expansion area. Please refer to the zoning map for more detailed information (**Map 2**).

MAP 1: PROPOSED FLAMINGO PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT WESTWARD EXPANSION



MAP 2: ZONING DISTRICTS WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE FLAMINGO PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT WESTWARD EXPANSION AND SURROUNDING AREAS



VIII. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The western boundary of the existing Flamingo Park Historic District runs along Lenox Court as extended from 6th to 16th Streets, except for the 1100 block where the boundary juts out to Alton Road to include all of Flamingo Park. The proposed westward expansion of the district affects the three blocks to the south of Flamingo Park and the two blocks to its north; and if adopted, it would bring the western boundary of the district generally out to the eastern right-of-way line of Alton Road continuously from 8th to 14th Streets. At present, there are 25 properties in the proposed westward expansion area, of which all but three are considered "Contributing" properties.

Figure 1 This 1936 Miami Herald ad promotes the Lester F. Preu Organization and its building achievements in the Greater Miami area. While the locations of the houses pictured here are not identified, they closely resemble the 14 Lester Preu homes on Alton Road.

As described in the designation report of the Flamingo Park Historic District, this land was first platted in 1914 by J.E. and J.N. Lummus as the Third Addition to their Ocean Beach Subdivision, before Miami Beach had yet been incorporated. Much of the actual landmass was created by dredging bay bottom onto the native mangrove swamp. In 1916 the Lummus brothers, in financial straits, sold their property west of Washington Avenue to the Miami Ocean View Company, which included Carl G. Fisher, James Allison, James Snowden, and others. The Lummus brothers were also partners in the company until Newton B.T. Roney bought out their interests in 1921. Also in 1921, the Miami Ocean View Company platted the Lenox Manor Subdivision, which comprised six square blocks, from Alton Road to Michigan Avenue between 8th and 11th Streets. Three blocks of the proposed westward expansion area lie in the Lenox Manor subdivision; all the rest is in Ocean Beach Addition 3.

The southern end of the Miami Beach peninsula was the first area to be settled, and the completion of the County (now MacArthur) Causeway in 1920 made 5th Street a major thoroughfare. Alton Road, said to have been named by Carl Fisher after Alton, Illinois, was a major north-south artery on the west side of the island by the 1920s. The heyday of the Florida Boom came to an end in 1926, when the September hurricane was followed by several years of stagnation. By the 1930s, as the Great Depression began, Miami Beach enjoyed a resurgence of resort development, with the construction of hundreds of modest hotels, apartments, and residences that now comprise the world-famous "Art Deco" District

(officially known as the Miami Beach Architectural District on the National Register of Historic Places).

The 22 Contributing properties in the proposed Flamingo Park Historic District Westward Expansion were all constructed between 1933 and 1961, representing the Depression and early post-World War II eras. More than half of these -- 14 small houses between 12th and 14th Streets -- are the remains of an intimately scaled colony of single family homes that originally extended almost to 15th Street. (One other remnant of

this colony still stands at 1439 Alton Road, just outside the area of the proposed expansion.) All these homes were built by the Lester F. Preu Realty Company between 1933 and 1936, and they were all designed by architect Robert M. Little early in his career. A 15th home in the proposed district expansion area, the house at 1355 Alton Road, was not part of the Lester Preu colony but was designed by Joseph J. DeBrita in 1940. Designed predominantly by one architect, Robert Little, this diverse but cohesive group of houses has successfully evolved to include other uses, such as a dentistry office, day care facility and real estate office, while remaining remarkably intact for more than 70 years.

The other pre-World War II buildings in the proposed westward expansion area are the expansive Phyllis (now Phillip) Gardens courtyard apartments at 835-855 Alton Road, designed by architect Anton Skislewicz in 1940; and the two-story Paul-Herbet apartment house at 825 Alton Road, designed by George Pfeiffer and Gerard Pitt in 1941. These pre-war buildings are generally consistent with variations of the Mediterranean Revival-Art Deco Transitional style of architecture.

The five other Contributing properties in the proposed westward expansion area were built during the early post World War II years, and all but one are apartment buildings. Three are by architect A. Herbert Mathes: the "Lois Ann" (1945) at 815 Alton Road; and the "Mark Leo" and the "Kimberley" (both 1947) at 801 and 807 Alton Road, respectively. The two-story, Post War Modern style Miami Ad School building at 955 Alton Road was originally the Hibiscus Masonic Lodge; it was designed by Norman M. Giller in 1950. Gerard Pitt designed the apartment house at 1135 8th Street in 1961, also in the Post War Modern style.



Figure 2 This postcard depicts the Masonic Temple, Hibiscus Lodge, at 955 Alton Road. Designed by Norman Giller in 1950, it is a Post War Modern landmark in the proposed western expansion area. Although brick is shown on the building's corner tower element in this postcard, it was originally finished in crab orchard stone.

Ratio of Contributing Properties

A review of the 25 properties located in the proposed western expansion area indicates that 22 of these properties (or **88 percent**) are Contributing and three properties (or **12 percent**) are Non-Contributing. The Non-Contributing properties are the following: a 1993 shopping complex (two structures) at 901 Alton Road, which replaced a 1953 motel; the Alton Palms apartments at 1025 Alton Road, designed by J. Renner in 1969; and the Apollo House apartments at 1130 11th Street, designed by R.S. Schneider in 1967.

Of the three Non-Contributing properties, 901 Alton Road is a recently constructed one-story shopping plaza built around a raised surface parking lot. It is comprised of two buildings: one L-shaped that wraps around a smaller, free-standing structure. This shopping plaza replaced the Sun Plaza Motor Court built at that location in 1953. Immediately north of the shopping plaza, there are currently two vacant lots at 927 and 939 Alton Road, where a 1930s garden apartment complex that was designed by B. Kingston Hall was recently demolished. However, the current day Miami Ad School building (originally the Masonic Temple) at 955 Alton Road (designed by Norman Giller in 1950) anchors the north end of the 900 Alton Road block as a very significant Contributing property.

It should be noted that one of the buildings that has been determined to be a Contributing property in the proposed district expansion area, the Dorick Apartments at 1011-1015 Alton Road (designed by Gilbert Fein in 1949), is prone to serious site flooding due to low elevation. It is unknown how and if this condition can be corrected in the future and whether the building can be retained and preserved.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned Non-Contributing properties and vacant lots, the proposed westward expansion area possesses a significant concentration of Contributing properties defined and united aesthetically by their respective historic development eras. This is particularly evident between 7th Street and 9th Street and between 12th Street and 14th Street. Further, 955 Alton Road represents a significant Post War Modern landmark at the southeast corner of 9th Street and Alton Road.

Architect Biographies

Several of Miami Beach's distinguished local architects are represented in the proposed westward expansion of the Flamingo Park Historic District, including the following:

Joseph J. DeBrita practiced in Miami Beach from the 1930s to the 1950s. He designed dozens of residential, hotel and apartment buildings, mostly in the Art Deco style. These include the Villa Luisa and Ocean Blue hotels on Ocean Drive, the Dorset and Coral Reef hotels on Collins Avenue, and the Eastview Apartments (Marriott) on Washington Avenue. Together with A. Kononoff, he designed the Mount Vernon and Monticello (Harding) hotels at 63rd Street in 1946.

Gilbert M. Fein (1920-2003) was from New York City and studied architecture at New York University. He served in the Army Corps of Engineers during World War II and settled in Miami Beach after the war. He designed hundreds of residential and commercial buildings

in South Florida in the new Post War Modern style, becoming "one of the masters of Modernism."⁴ Most of Fein's comfortably livable buildings are unassuming and not prominent landmarks, but some of the better-known are:

Starlite Hotel	750 Ocean Drive
News Cafe	800 Ocean Drive
Helen Mar Annex	2445 Lake Pancoast Drive
Lake View Apartments	4780 Pinetree Drive
Park Isle Club	780 73 rd Street

On October 19, 2005, the Gilbert Fein Neighborhood Conservation District was designated by the City of Miami Beach on 16th Terrace west of West Avenue, commemorating several of Fein's apartment buildings there.

Norman Giller is still an active architect on the Beach together with his son Ira. Norman Giller is well known as one of Florida's most prolific and influential architects of the Post War Modern style. Born in Jacksonville in 1918, he graduated from the University of Florida in 1945 and worked with Henry Hohaus and Albert Anis in his early career.⁵ He pioneered the use of air conditioning, flat-slab construction techniques, and early motel design. His buildings include the Diplomat Hotel in Hollywood (demolished), the Ocean Palm and Thunderbird Motels in Sunny Isles, and the Carillon Hotel and the North Shore Community Center (also known as the North Shore Bandshell) in Miami Beach.

Robert M. Little came to Miami from Philadelphia in 1925. He worked for Robert A. Taylor (designer of Roney's Spanish Village on Espanola Way) before starting his own practice in 1933. He rose to prominence as a residential architect in Miami Beach prior to World War II, with many of his buildings in North Beach. After the war, he worked more in Miami and is best known for his work on the Merrick Building at the University of Miami.

A. Herbert Mathes was active in Miami Beach from the 1940s to the 1960s where he designed hotel, residential, and civic architecture. His works include the Revere (demolished), Continental, Geneva, Parisian, and Allison Hotels; the Golden Gate apartments; and the Miami Beach Public Library at 2110 Collins Avenue (demolished).

Gerard Pitt (1885-1971) was born in New Rochelle, New York, and graduated from Columbia University in 1907. In his early career, he worked in New York City and Detroit. He moved to Miami in 1930 and was in partnership with George L. Pfeiffer, 1940-1941. Pitt served as supervising architect for the southeast district of the Florida Hotel Commission from 1935 to 1957.⁶ In Miami Beach, he designed dozens of mostly small-scale apartment buildings in the Art Deco and Post War Modern styles from 1940 to the late 1960s, when he was in his 80s. These include:

⁴ "Gilbert M. Fein," Miami Herald, Obituaries, 11 March 2003, p.4-B.

⁵ Eric P. Nash and Randall C. Robinson, Jr., Mimo: Miami Modern Revealed (San Francisco, California: Chronicle Books, 2004), pp. 90-94.

⁶ Membership Application, American Institute of Architects, Florida South Chapter, Coral Gables, Florida.

Lincoln Arms	1800 James Avenue
Miljean	1831 James Avenue
Tropical Gardens	1600 Collins Avenue
Clifton Hotel	1343 Collins Avenue

Anton Skislewicz (1895-1980), a native of Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia, and World War I aviator, immigrated to New York after that war and graduated from Columbia University in 1929. Drawn by the Depression-era building boom in Miami Beach, he opened a practice here in 1934 and contributed a European sensibility to local architecture. His early work in naval architecture and aviation is clearly evident in his Streamlined buildings. Skislewicz also designed a limited-edition limousine for Lincoln Motors in 1938. During World War II, he closed his practice and returned to shipbuilding in Tampa, Florida.⁷ Some of his buildings include:

Breakwater Hotel	940 Ocean Drive
Lord Balfour Hotel	350 Ocean Drive
Plymouth Hotel	2035 Park Avenue

⁷ Clotilde Luce, "Anton Skislewicz," Home Miami, May 2006, pp. 108-111.

IX. ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Exemplary buildings of distinct Miami Beach architectural movements have been identified in the proposed Flamingo Park Historic District Westward Expansion. The architectural styles represented in this area include Mediterranean Revival-Art Deco Transitional (Med-Deco), and Post War Modern or Miami Modern (MiMo).

Mediterranean Revival-Art Deco Transitional (circa late 1920s to mid-1930s)

"Med-Deco" in Miami Beach was a synthesis of Mediterranean Revival form and Art Deco decorative detail or vice versa. This unique hybrid style became a fascinating bridge between the "familiar" and the "new" as the allure of Art Deco found its way into the City's architectural vocabulary. Clean stepped roof lines and crisp geometric detailing replaced scrolled parapets, bracketed cornices, and Classical features on structures of clear Mediterranean Revival form. Likewise, sloped barrel tile roofs rested gracefully on edifices with spectacular Art Deco entrances and facade treatments.

Some of the most celebrated architects in Miami Beach designed structures in this brief-lived but very significant style, including V.H. Nellenbogen, Henry Hohausser, Russell Pancoast, and T. Hunter Henderson. The predominant exterior material of Med-Deco Transitional was smooth stucco with raised or incised details. Featured stucco areas were often patterned or scored. Keystone, either natural or filled and colored, was frequently used to define special elements. Windows ranged from wooden and steel casement to wooden double-hung, and even large single windows in gracefully curved masonry openings.

Post War Modern or Miami Modern (MiMo) (circa 1945 to 1965)

The Post War Modern style in Miami Beach clearly established a path of its own in terms of modern functional simplicity. Essentially the strong design personality of Art Deco, as it evolved over two decades on the Beach, significantly gave way to the dictates of function in the Post War Modern seaside resort architecture. In recent years, this style has come to be popularly known as Miami Modern, or MiMo.

Floor plans were commonly reorganized from interior double loaded corridors to "open air" verandas or "cat walks" on one side or more. Single block massing remained a dominant characteristic but new functional exterior elements profoundly impacted on design. Overhanging roof plates, projecting floor slabs and ornamental railings became typical of the new "style" along with paired or clustered pipe columns to support them. Symmetrical staircases became significant exterior design features. Occasionally, double block massing was created with a common landscaped courtyard in between.

Additional design elements and materials were added to the architectural vocabulary, including rounded eaves, rock face feature areas, cast concrete decorative panels, slump block and applied masonry elements denoting marine and nautical themes, such as seahorses and anchors.

X. **PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Criteria for Designation:** The Planning Department finds the proposed Flamingo Park Historic District Westward Expansion to be in compliance with the Criteria for Designation listed in Section 118-592 in the Land Development Regulations of the City Code.
2. **Expanded District Boundaries:** On July 27, 2006, the Historic Preservation Board reviewed the preliminary evaluation and recommendation report and adopted the boundaries as recommended by the Planning Department for the proposed westward expansion of the Flamingo Park Historic District. On September 11, 2007 the Historic Preservation Board further considered the proposed westward expansion area boundaries and decided to reduce the expansion area to include the blocks between 8th Street and 14th Street on the east side of Alton Road (see **Map 1**). (Refer to **Section IV, Description of Boundaries**, for more information.)
3. **Areas Subject to Review:** The Planning Department recommends that the areas subject to review shall include all exterior building elevations and public interior spaces, site and landscape features, public open spaces and public rights-of-way, and all vacant or parking lots included within the boundaries of the proposed Flamingo Park Historic District Westward Expansion. Regular maintenance of public utilities, drainage, and mechanical systems, sidewalks, and roadways shall not require a Certificate of Appropriateness.
4. **Review Guidelines:** The Planning Department recommends that a decision on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness shall be based upon compatibility of the physical alteration or improvement with surrounding properties and where deemed applicable in substantial compliance with the following:
 - a. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, as revised from time to time;
 - b. Other guidelines/policies/plans adopted or approved by resolution or ordinance by the City Commission;
 - c. All additional criteria as listed under Sections 118-564(b) and 118-564(c) in the Land Development Regulations of the City Code;
 - d. City of Miami Beach Design Guidelines as adopted by the Joint Design Review/Historic Preservation Board on October 12, 1993, amended June 7, 1994, as may be revised from time to time.

X. FIGURE INDEX

- Figure 0:** (Cover) Architectural Rendering by Charles Giller, "Hibiscus Masonic Lodge," 955 Alton Road, Miami Beach, Florida; Norman M. Giller, FAIA, Architect, Archives of Giller & Giller, Inc., 1950.
- Figure 1:** Advertisement, Miami Herald, 26 July 1936.
- Figure 2:** Postcard, "Masonic Temple-Hibiscus Lodge," courtesy of Ricky Flanagan, Orlando, Florida.

APPENDIX I

**FLAMINGO PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT WESTWARD EXPANSION
PROPERTIES LIST**

<u>PROPERTY ADDRESS</u>		<u>BUILDING NAME/USE</u>	<u>STYLE</u>	<u>ARCHITECT</u>	<u>BUILT</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
800 BLOCK						
1135	8 th Street	Apartments	Post War Modern	Gerard Pitt	1691	Contributing
801	Alton Road	Mark Leo apts.	Post War Modern	A. Herbert Mathes	1947	Contributing
807	Alton Road	Kimberley apts.	Post War Modern	A. Herbert Mathes	1947	Contributing
815	Alton Road	Lois Ann apts.	Post War Modern	A. Herbert Mathes	1945	Contributing
825	Alton Road	Paul-Herbet apts.	Med-Deco	Pfeiffer & Pitt	1941	Contributing
835-855	Alton Road	Phillip Gardens	Med-Deco	Anton Skislewicz	1940	Contributing
900 BLOCK						
901	Alton Road	shopping plaza	Altered 1953 motor court		(1993)alt.	Non-Contributing
927-939	Alton Road	vacant lot	(site of DRB approved future project)			
955	Alton Road	Masonic Temple	Post War Modern	Norman M. Giller	1950	Contributing
1000 BLOCK						
1011-1015	Alton Road	Dorick Apts.	Post War Modern	Gilbert Fein	1949	N/A *
1025	Alton Road	Alton Palms apts.	(seven story apt. building)	J. Renner	1969	Non-Contributing
1130	11 th Street	Apollo House apts.	(six story apt. building)	R.S. Schneider	1967	Non-Contributing

* Note: On September 11, 2007 the Historic Preservation Board approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for total demolition of this structure as a consequence of the severe flooding problems that have historically plagued this property.

<u>PROPERTY ADDRESS</u>	<u>BUILDING NAME/USE</u>	<u>STYLE</u>	<u>ARCHITECT</u>	<u>BUILT</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	
1100 BLOCK	Flamingo Park					
1200 BLOCK						
1211	Alton Road	residence (office)	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1936	Contributing
1215	Alton Road	residence	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1934	Contributing
1225	Alton Road	residence	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1934	Contributing
1235	Alton Road	residence (front addition)	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1934	Contributing
1239	Alton Road	residence (plant nursery)	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1934	Contributing
1247	Alton Road	residence (realty office)	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1934	Contributing
1257	Alton Road	residence	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1935	Contributing
1300 BLOCK						
1301	Alton Road	residence	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1936	Contributing
1315	Alton Road	residence (dentist)	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1934	Contributing
1321	Alton Road	residence (office)	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1934	Contributing
1329	Alton Road	residence	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1933	Contributing
1335	Alton Road	residence (dentist)	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1934	Contributing
1343	Alton Road	residence (preschool)	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1934	Contributing
1345	Alton Road	residence (medical office)	Med-Deco	Robert M. Little	1934	Contributing
1355	Alton Road	residence (realty office)	Med-Deco	J.J. DeBrita	1940	Contributing

**LIST OF PROPERTIES LOCATED WITHIN THE 700 BLOCK ON THE EAST SIDE OF ALTON ROAD
CURRENTLY NOT WITHIN THE PROPOSED FLAMINGO PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT WESTWARD EXPANSION AREA**

<u>PROPERTY ADDRESS</u>	<u>BUILDING NAME/USE</u>	<u>STYLE</u>	<u>ARCHITECT</u>	<u>BUILT</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	
700 BLOCK						
709	Alton Road	private parking lot				
721	Alton Road	private parking lot				
725-735	Alton Road	"Twin Harbor" apts.	Med-Deco	V.H. Nellenbogen	1936	Contributing
745	Alton Road	residence	Mediterranean Revival	A.J. Blackstone	1933	Contributing
755	Alton Road	apartments	Post War Modern	Gerard Pitt	1947	Contributing
759	Alton Road	apartments	Post War Modern	Henry Hohausser	1948	Contributing

APPENDIX II

FLAMINGO PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT WESTWARD EXPANSION
CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHS



801 & 807 Alton Rd.- A. Herbert Mathes - 1947



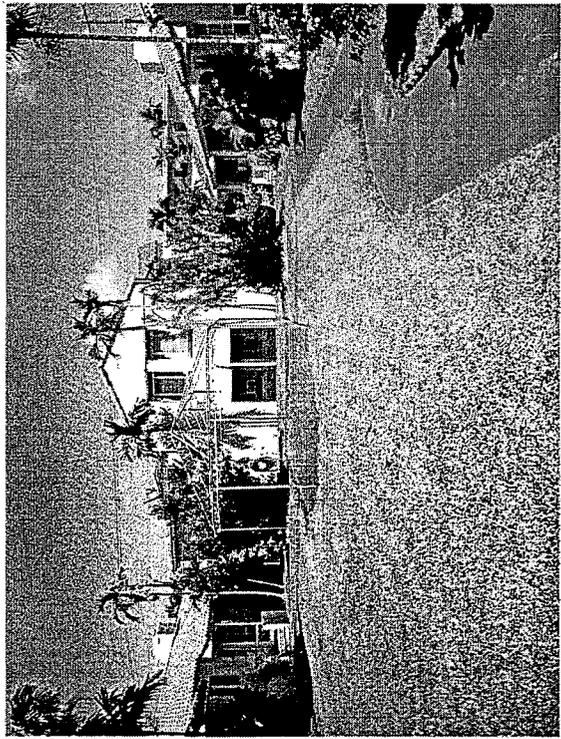
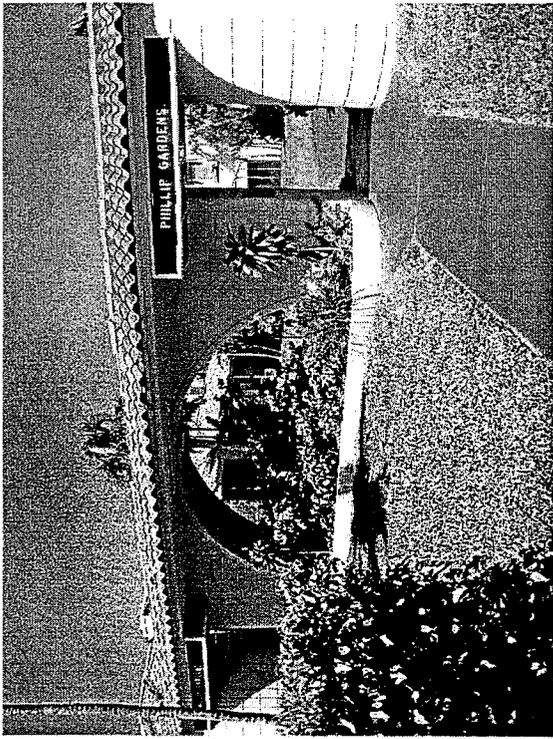
1135 8th St.- Gerard Pitt - 1961



815 Alton Rd.- A. Herbert Mathes - 1945



825 Alton Rd.- Pfeiffer & Pitt - 1941



835-855 Alton Rd. - Anton Skislewicz - 1940



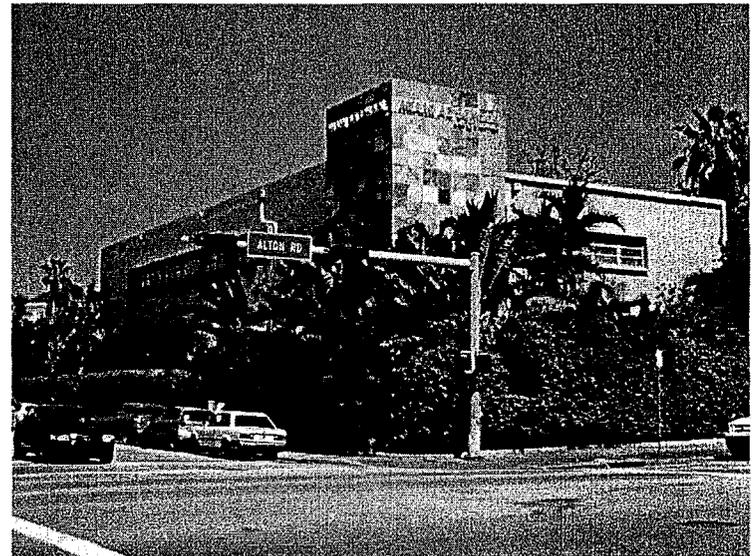
901 Alton Rd. – Shopping Plaza – c.1992

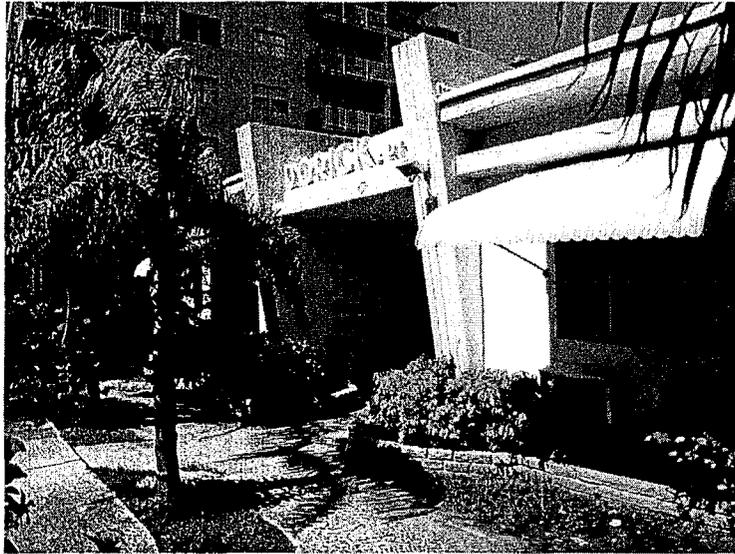


927-939 Alton Rd.- Vacant Lot



955 Alton Rd. – Norman Giller - 1950





1011-1015 Alton Rd. – Gilbert Fein - 1949



1025 Alton Rd. – J. Renner - 1969



1130 11th St. – R.S. Schneider - 1967



1211 Alton Rd. – R.M. Little - 1936



1215 Alton Rd. – R.M. Little - 1934



1225 Alton Rd. – R.M. Little - 1934



1235 Alton Rd. – R.M. Little - 1934



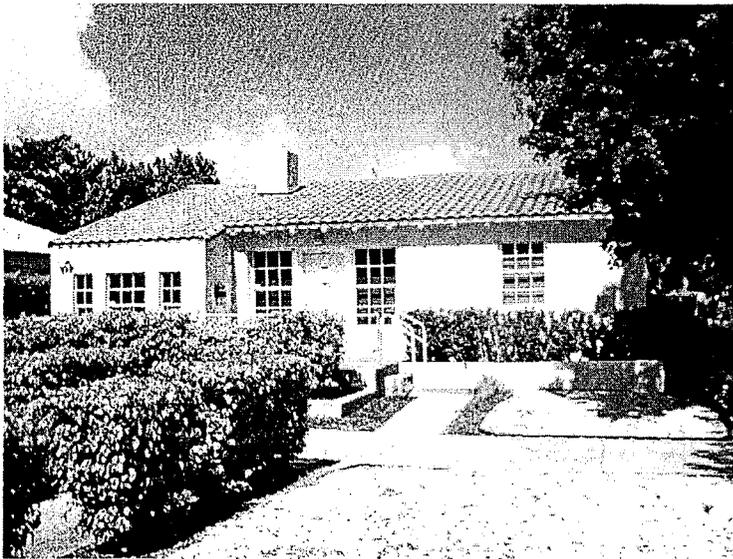
1239 Alton Rd. – R.M. Little - 1934



1247 Alton Rd. – R.M. Little - 1934



1257 Alton Rd. – R.M. Little - 1935



1301 Alton Rd. – R.M. Little - 1936



1315 Alton Rd. – R.M. Little - 1934



1321 Alton Rd. - R.M. Little - 1934



1329 Alton Rd. - R.M. Little - 1933



1335 Alton Rd. - R.M. Little - 1934



1343 Alton Rd. - R.M. Little - 1934

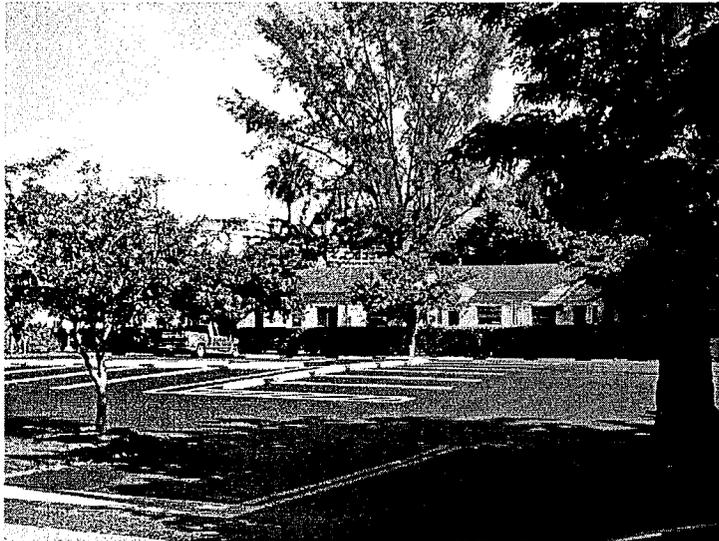


1345 Alton Rd. - R.M. Little - 1934

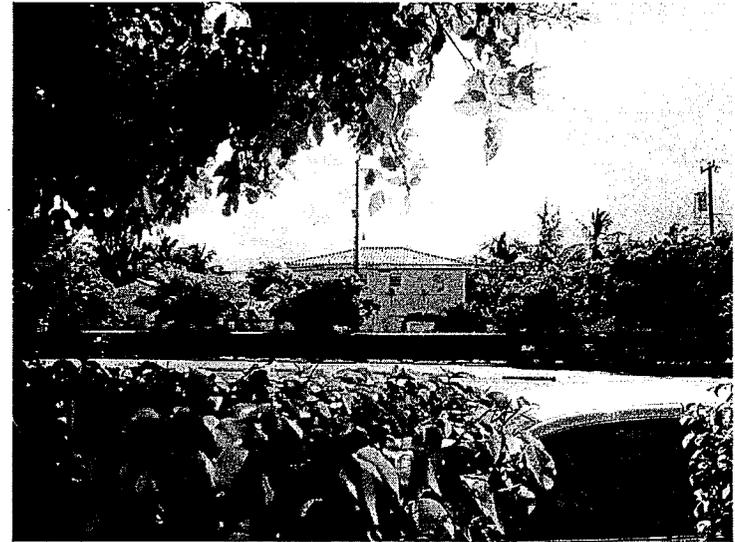


1355 Alton Rd.- J.J. Debrita - 1940

PHOTOGRAPHS OF PROPERTIES LOCATED WITHIN THE 700 BLOCK ON THE EAST SIDE OF ALTON ROAD
CURRENTLY NOT WITHIN THE PROPOSED FLAMINGO PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT WESTWARD EXPANSION AREA



709-721 Alton Road – parking lot



725-735 Alton Rd.-V.H. Nellenboen - 1936



755 Alton Rd.-Gerard Pitt - 1947



745 Alton Rd.-A.J. Blackstone - 1933