

Riviera Plaza
337 20th Street
Miami Beach, Florida



Prepared for
Rüger Holding
Spichernstrasse 6A
50672 Cologne
Germany

Historic Resources Report
submitted January 10, 2023 by
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Table of Contents

Section	Page
Preliminary Remarks	3
Historical Analysis	
Historical Outline	5
Sanborn Maps	6
Historic Photos	8
Historic Postcards	15
Newspaper Clippings	21
Building Data	
Building Card	23
Photo Survey	31

Preliminary Remarks

The present study comprises a survey of the building at 337 20th Street in Miami Beach, a contributing historic structure located in a district that has been both nationally and locally designated: the Miami Beach Architectural District (NR 1979) and the Museum Historic District (City of Miami Beach, 1990). It is also part of the Collins Park Arts District Overlay. This report has been prepared by Shulman + Associates for Rüger Holding in anticipation of restoration and modifications to the building, and conversion to hotel use.

This study presents the building historically, based on available documentation and site verification. It includes historical imagery and the Building Card information. A photo survey of current conditions is also included.

Historical Analysis and Imagery

Historical Outline

The project site comprises two 75'x125' parcels, Lots 6 and 8, Block E of the Miami Beach Improvement Co. PB 5-7 Subdivision.

Dating to 1924, a few years before the Great Miami Hurricane of 1926, the Riviera Plaza Hotel/Apartments was designed by architect Ralph. A. Preas (R.A. Preas) for owner C.A. Fowler. The builder is listed as O'Neill & Orr Co. The building is a Contributing Structure both in the Miami Beach Architectural District (National Register, 1979) and in the Museum Historic District (City of Miami Beach, 1990). Originally constructed out of reinforced concrete and cement blocks as a 42-room apartment/hotel (30 apartments and 12 hotel rooms), the building is primarily three storeys.

During World War II the building was one of many on Miami Beach used as a Training Center for the U.S. Army Air Corps. It was returned to owner on July 10, 1944 and was subsequently reconditioned by noted architect Roy France later that year.

Over the 1950's, 60's and 70's the building underwent minor renovations and repairs. In 1981 a portion of the decorative column and beam system above the roof parapet were removed, and in 1982 the superstructures on the roof were removed. By the late 1980s the building fell into disuse and was boarded up. In 1992, it underwent interior reconfiguration, creating 63 units, including 53 apartments and 10 hotel rooms. It is currently used as affordable housing.

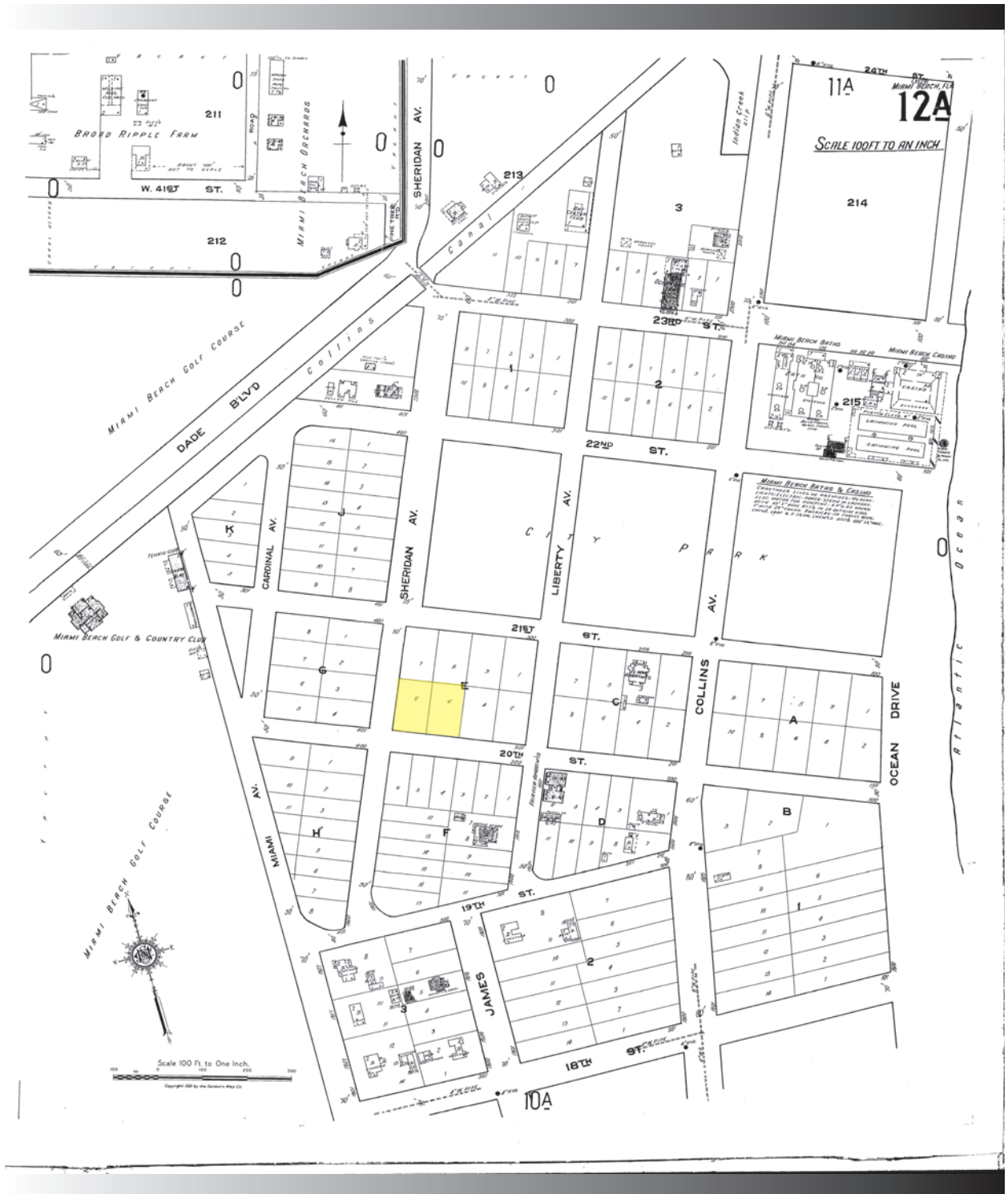
The Riviera Plaza was one of the first buildings in Collins Park, with proximity to the Roney Plaza Casino, Roman Baths and Miami Beach Golf Course a feature of early advertisements. Early photos show that the building predated the paving of 20th Street.

The building is classified as Mediterranean Revival, a style characterized by "the evocation of an Old World image, featuring decorative columns, arched windows, clay barrel tile roofs, rough stucco walls, wrought iron and spindle gates guarding picturesque courtyards" (Miami-Dade Preservation League).

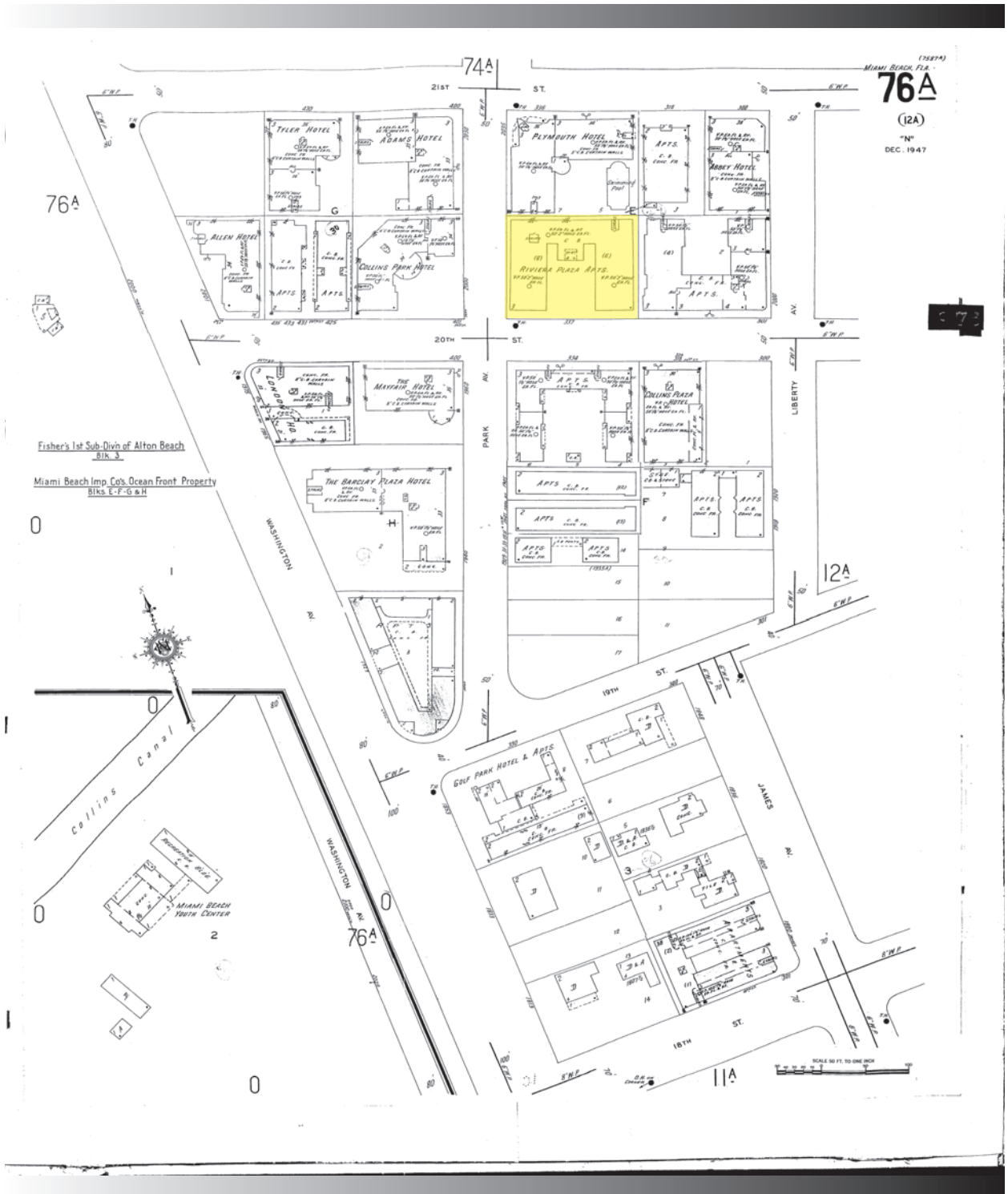
Original photographs of the building show balustrades, second floor balconies, carved masonry brackets, faux arcaded loggias, arched and moulded entries, twin arched windows and an arcaded entrance loggia, as well as Mediterranean-style awnings. The Riviera Plaza is an excellent early example of the style, with finely detailed, strongly representative Mediterranean Revival features and exhibiting an overall cohesion.

Architect:

R.A. Preas was a Miami-based architect who specialized in Spanish-style architecture, with six known buildings on Miami Beach. In addition to the Riviera Plaza, others include the Van Ness Hotel at 1390 Ocean Drive and Habana Hotel at 1300 Drexel Avenue, in the Art Deco style; and the Euclid Apartments at 802 Euclid Avenue, Kew Gardens Apartments at 1619 Jefferson Avenue, and a duplex at 935 Meridian Avenue in the Mediterranean Revival style.



Sanborn map, 1921



Sanborn map, 1947



Historical photographs dated 1/2/1925, Matlack Collection at HistoryMiami Museum



Historical photograph dated 5/14/1925, Matlack Collection at HistoryMiami Museum



Historical photograph dated 6/7/1929, Matlack Collection at HistoryMiami Museum



Historical photograph dated 1936, Miami News Collection at HistoryMiami Museum



Historical photograph, undated. Miami News Collection at HistoryMiami Museum



Historical photograph dated 1988, City of Miami Beach DRB 1377



Historical photographs, 1990s Courtesy Robert Saland (prior Owner)



Historical photographs, 1990s. Courtesy Robert Saland (prior Owner)



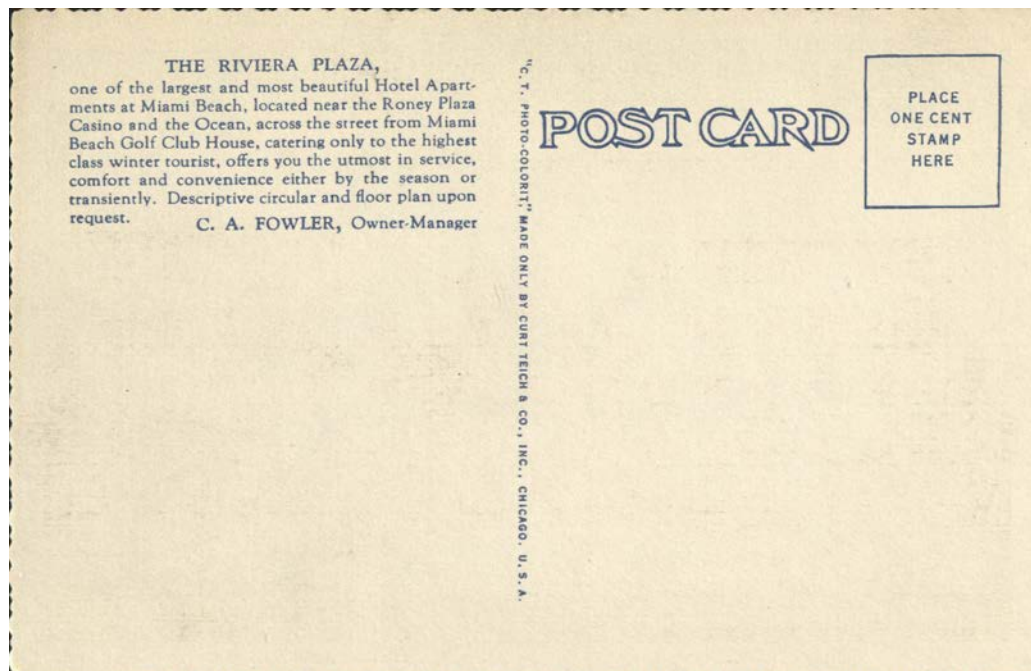
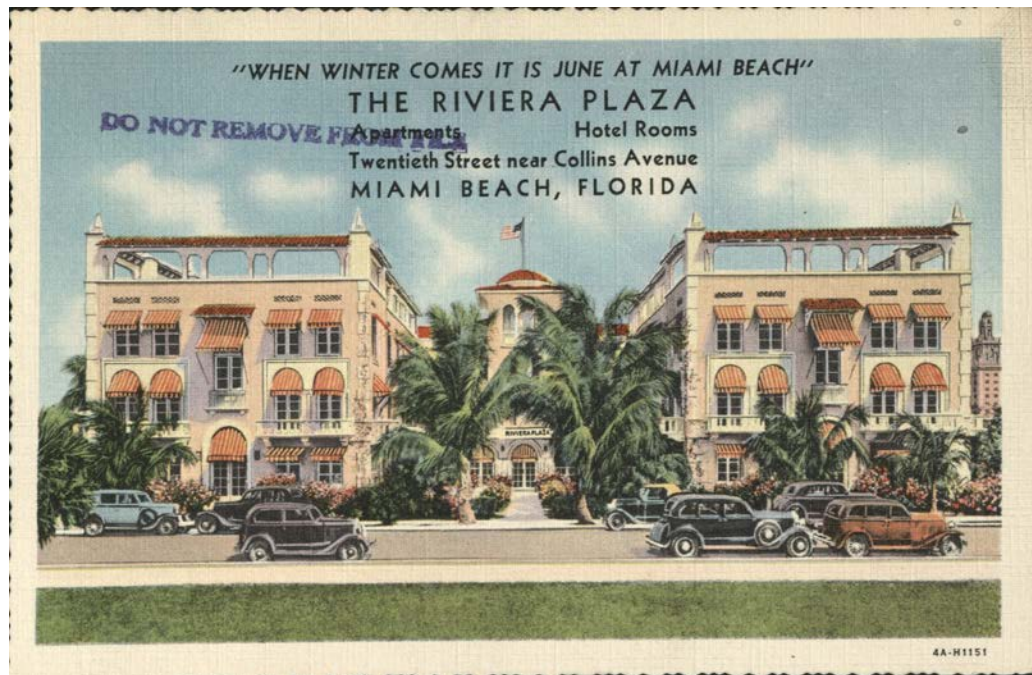
Historical photographs, undated. Courtesy Robert Saland (prior Owner)

Riviera Plaza
337 20th Street
Miami Beach, Florida



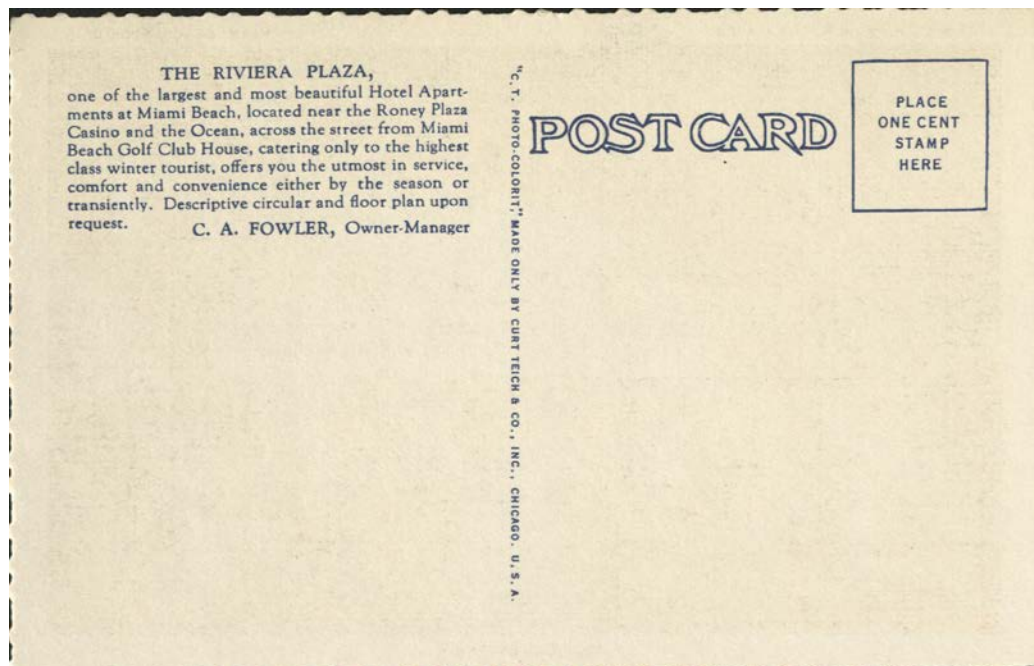
Historic postcard, Florida Postcard Collection at University of Miami Special Collections

Riviera Plaza
337 20th Street
Miami Beach, Florida



Historic postcard, Curt Teich Postcard Archives at the Newberry Library

Riviera Plaza
337 20th Street
Miami Beach, Florida



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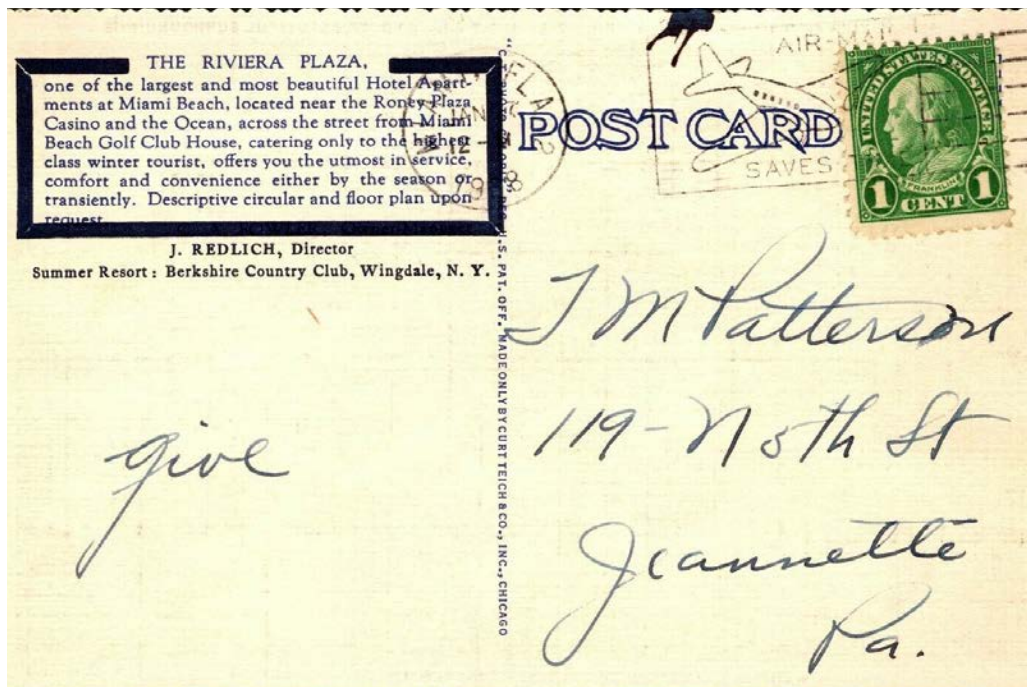


Historic postcard, Curt Teich Postcard Archives at the Newberry Library



The Riviera Plaza was built in 1924, when the Mediterranean Revival style was the prevalent architectural style in the area. With its barrel roofs, arched windows, and elaborate details, the hotel exudes a graceful ambience to this day. R.A. Preas designed the apartment-hotel, which is located at 337 Twentieth Street, across from the Collins Park Hotel. (Published by Colourpicture.)

Riviera Plaza
337 20th Street
Miami Beach, Florida



Historic postcard, Curt Teich Collection.

RIVIERA PLAZA WILL BE READY DECEMBER 1

Stucco work on the Riviera Plaza apartment building at Sheridan Road and Twentieth Street is nearly completed and the interior decorating has been started. The building will be ready for occupancy about December 1.

Ninety apartments, all with private bath, are in the building, which will cost \$250,000 when finished. A feature of the design is cypress ceilings in foyer and lobby.

C. A. Fowler is the owner, R. A. Preas the architect and the O'Neill-Orr Construction Company the contractor.

Newspaper clipping dated November 21, 1924, Miami Herald

his office was opened June 1.

The Riviera Plaza is a three-story structure, built about a beautiful tropical plaza. It has 39 large apartments and a number of attractive hotel rooms. The structure was built last summer.

Newspaper clipping dated November 25, 1925, Miami Herald

AT MIAMI BEACH, FLA.
RIVIERA PLAZA
HOTEL, APARTMENTS 5 Minutes' Walk from North Beach Casino



Largest and Most Exclusive on Miami Beach
Adjacent First Tee of Golf Course. Bathing from special entrance of Hotel.
Two and three room kitchen apartments and hotel rooms.
Catering only to a select clientele. Booklet B upon request.

Rate per day, week, month or season. Apartments fully furnished, including linens, china-ware and silverware. Write or wire direct to hotel.

Newspaper Clipping dated February 28, 1926, Miami Herald

LIVE AT THE BEACH!

Near Roney Plaza Bathing Pools. Cool breezes all the time. Large hotel apartments, \$5, \$4, \$3 per day for 2 or 4 persons. Daily maid service. Bath. Use the kitchens if you wish; but there are restaurants nearby. Rooms with bath, \$2, \$2.50, \$3.

RIVIERA PLAZA
Park Avenue at 20th Street.
Electric car service passes house. Liberal discount by the month.

Newspaper clipping dated August 26, 1926, Miami Herald

LOCATION
AWAY from the congested apartment house section, up near the Roney Plaza Casino and golf club house—two streets from the ocean.

RIVIERA PLAZA
Catering to the Winter Tourist
HOTEL ROOMS WITH BATH
By day, week, month or season.
HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS 4 PERSONS \$5 PER DAY
APTS. BY WEEK, MONTH OR SEASON
Rates include daily maid service and electric service for cooking, lighting, refrigeration.
TWENTIETH STREET
NEAR COLLINS AVE.
Telephone 5-3373.

Newspaper Clipping dated January 11, 1936, Miami Herald

Building Data

RIVERIA PLAZA APARTMENTS		USAFTTC		Date July 15-1924	
Owner	C. A. Fowler	Mailing Address		Permit No.	903
Lot	6 & 8 Block E	Subdivision	B. Impr. Co. O.F., Address	337 -	20th street
General Contractor	O'Neill & Orr Co.	Co.	17020		
Architect	R. A. Preas				
Front	137' Depth	110'	Height	33'	
Type of construction	reinforced concrete blk's.	\$	160,000.00	Cost	
Plumbing Contractor	O'Neill & Orr Co.				
Plumbing Fixtures	225	Rough approved by	H. Scheibll	Date	July 15-1924
Gas Stoves	#6932	GAS -- OK --	J.J. Farrey	Date	Oct. 14-1924
Gas Heaters		Final approved by	Make O'Neill & Orr	Date	Aug. 4-1924
Sewer connection	1	Septic tank			
Electrical Contractor	J.F. Ambrose				
No. outlets	418	Range	39 Motors	Fans	Temporary service
OUTLETS Light		HEATERS Water		Centers of Distribution	
Receptacles					
Electrical Contractor	Landis Fixture Co.				
No. fixtures set	319	Final approved by	Geo. L. Martin,	1 sign outlet - Jan. 19-1925	
Date of service	#12439- Griffin:	4 centers of distribution;	1 temp service-	fina. OK. 2/13th-2/1/1939	
Alterations or repairs	# 11050 - MOPPING ROOF - owner;	day labor	\$	100.00	Date Apr. 15-1938
BUILDING PERMIT	# 11709- PAINTING (H.H. Horton, contractor)	\$	1,500.00		Oct. 21-1938
ELECTRICAL	# 15333- Awning (no signs) Dixie Awning Co.	\$	100.--		Jan. 14-1941
"	# 18077- Unity Electric- 8 fixtures- Dec. 11, 1941				
"	# 18748 Biscoyne Electric- 1 light outlets - 7/28/42				
"	# 20083... USAFTTC, 2 Receptacles.... Feb. 11, 1941				
BUILDING PERMIT	# 19099... Reconditioning after ARMY occupation: Roy France,	\$7,500..			Over Oct. 10, 1944

METRO ORD. #75-34
REGISTRATION DATE: 10-10-38 *

USAFTTC returned to owner July 10, 1944

ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS			
61819 Pearce Roofing Co: Remodeling to roof - \$175 - May 9, 1950			
Building Permits: # 23896	Roof repairs - Ideal Roofing Co:	\$ 252.50	Jan. 7, 1947
# 33070	Gunite, wet sand-blasting, repairs to building: Watson Contracting Company	\$ 6,400.....	July 17, 1950
# 33479	Painting inside only - Jack Greco, contr.	\$ 2,900.....	Sept. 5, 1950
# 33541	Elevator shaft - 8' x 7' - 3 stories - Riley & Ross, engr: Irving Fischer, contractor	\$ 3,850.....	Sept. 13, 1950
# 33588	Installing awning type windows all over building - Miami Aluminum Products, contr.	\$ 5,000.....	Sept. 19, 1950
# 33693	Painting window frames - Martin Kirik & Clifford Crosby	\$ 500.....	Oct. 4, 1950
# 34340	Painting - Acarr Company, contr.	\$ 225.....	Nov. 28, 1950
# 36547	One pole sign - 24 sq.ft. & One flat wall sign - 22 sq.ft. - Total 46 sq.ft. - Acollite Neon, contr.	\$ 400.....	Aug. 10, 1951
# 38351	Installing 15 new bath rooms - all inside work - MacKay & Gibbs, arch: Herman Popkin, contr.	\$ 7,500.....	April 25, 1952
# 38542	Air conditioning - 58 window units - United Engineering Corp.	\$ 500.....	May 22, 1952
# 46123	H. Popkin Remodel 10 old kitchens. no new kitchens added: \$ 2,000 Oct. 20, 1954		
Plumbing Permits: # 54002	C. E. Morgan: 2-3/4 ton window air conditioners - \$400-7/26/57 OK 10/21/57		
# 59013	Syjack Construction: remove 2 window overhangs fr. of bldg. \$250, 5/18/59		
# 30360	Pates - 2 Clean-outs - Aug. 25, 1950		
# 30520	Chas. Pates: 20 sprinkler heads - Sept. 28, 1950		
# 33353	Serota Plumbing Co.: 6 water closets, 6 lavatories, 6 bath tubs - May 15, 1952		
# 33423	Nathan Serota: 6 water closets, 6 lavatories, 6 bath tubs - June 2, 1952		
a. Power & Light Co. #33851	Hurst Drilling & Equipment Co.: One 2 1/2" drain well for Vault Drainage (in front of 337 20th St.) - Sept. 3, 1952		
# 36639	Serota Plumbing: 12 sinks, replace only..... December 9, 1954 OK, Notman 12/9/1954		
# 43613	M. S. Plumbing Co.: 1 gas heater - 1/10/63		
# 43629	Peoples Gas Co.: 1 gas heater - 1/22/63		
Electrical Permits: # 20727	LaVigne Electric: 7 switch outlets, 7 light outlets, 1 receptacle, 7 fixtures, Nov. 29, 1944		
# 20789	Biscayne Electric: 1 Receptacle Dec. 16, 1944		
# 32920	Hosack Electric: 1 motor - Dec. 14, 1950 - P. Meginniss 12/15/50		
# 34681	Acollite Neon: 3 Neon transformers, Aug. 10, 1951		
# 36532	Lyon Electric: 86 appliance outlets, 4 centers of distribution, 1 services-equipment-8-5-52 OK-P. Meginniss May 13, 1952		
# 36616	Lyon Electric Co.: 18 switch outlets, 18 light outlets, 18 fixtures, 6 refrigerators, 6 iron outlets, 6 space heaters (bath), 6 centers of distribution - May 28, 1952 OK 8/12/52 M.		
# 36755	Lyon Electric: 18 Switch outlets, 18 Light outlets, 18 Fixtures, 6 Refrigerators, 6 Irons, 6 space heaters, 6 Centers of distributions, June 16, 1952 OK - P. Meginniss 8-5-52		
# 43282	Replace old surface boxes to recess..... October 27, 1954 (astor Electric) OK, Rosser 2/24/55		
# 50609	Lyon Elec: 2 Motors (LHP) - August 6, 1957 OK 8-8-57 Fidler		

Building Card. City of Miami Beach.

LOT: 648 BLOCK: E SUBDIVISION: MB Corp. D. O. F. ADDRESS: 337-20th

ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS

#22099 4/30/82 George A. Simone - repair and replace roof joists and redeck existing roof \$1,000.
#22113 5/4/82 Robert Doug Clifton - exterior painting beige-white trim 16B \$3,270.
#22187 5/13/82 Luster Stone demolition of existing slab, repour same cap w/epoxy chatt. sidewalk \$2,642.
#27519 10/10/85 owner replace 15 ft of ceiling paint hall lobby \$2,500.
#27549 10/17/85 owner compy with letter - fire damage repair, replace doors, misc repairs, 10 doors interior x rated fire \$2,000.
#28890 7/21/86 Tekva Inc - painting building \$5,500.
#28957 8/1/86 Tekva Inc - exploratory permit under supervision of P.Eng. \$300. 1. special inspect required. 2 explorer only. repairs will require an additional permit
#29541 12/9/86 Tekva Inc - covered exploration repairs per exploratory permit \$999.
#29633 1/5/87 owner/bldger fireall construct at top of 2nd fl stairway and door \$500.

PLUMBING PERMITS

#61645 7/17/84 Silver Plumb - gas piping repair

ELECTRICAL PERMITS

#80375 7/19/85 Ocean Elect - repair fire damage

COASTAL CONTROL ZONE

CUMULATIVE COST OF CONSTRUCTION OF PERMITS ISSUED

DATE ISSUED	PROCESS NO.	DESCRIPTION OF WORK	WORK COST	CUMULATIVE WORK COST	APPRAISED BLDG. VALUE BEFORE REMODEL %	COMMENTS	BUILDING PERMIT NO.
1-5-87		CONSTRUCT FIREWALL 2nd fl. stairway	\$ 500	\$ 500			29633

CITY OF MIAMI BEACH

CITY HALL 1700 CONVENTION CENTER DRIVE MIAMI BEACH FLORIDA 33139



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

CITY HALL
1700 CONVENTION CENTER DRIVE
TELEPHONE: 673-7550

17020

TO: PAUL GIOIA
BUILDING DIRECTOR

FROM: JUD KURLANCHEEK
PLANNING AND ZONING DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: DESIGN REVIEW FILE NO. 1377J
RIVIERA PLAZA APARTMENTS
337 TWENTIETH STREET

October 20, 1988

P.G. New

JAM

OCT 20 1988

Eng for Bldg Card

At its October 11, 1988 meeting, the Design Review Board granted final approval of the above noted project subject to the following conditions:

1. Replacement windows shall duplicate size and pattern of originals and be historically documented, if possible;
2. Details shall be provided for replacement doors which shall be consistent with originals;
3. A detailed drawing of the new iron fence proposed for the entry to the courtyard shall be provided to staff for approval;
4. Existing iron railings shall be retained and restored;
5. Treatment of the lobby shall be detailed on the plans; and,
6. The applicant shall provide documentation to staff that the owner of the property is in support of the project application.

In order to ensure that the appropriate staff is aware of these requirements, please record this action on the building card for the subject property. If the building permit is not issued within one (1) year of the meeting date (October 11, 1988) the Design Review Board approval will become void.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

JK/JD
METROPG

60000000
20-11-88

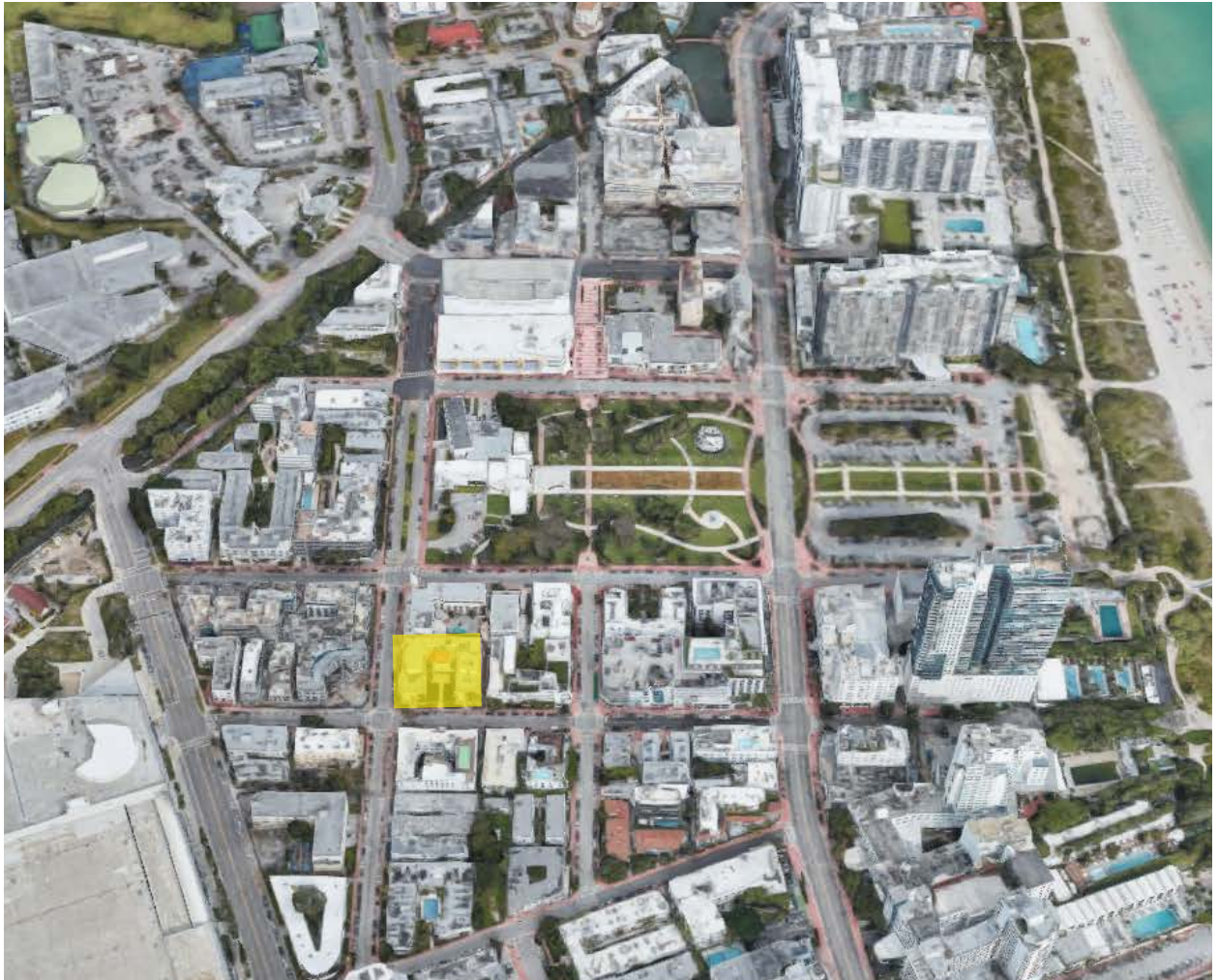
Building Card. City of Miami Beach.

COASTAL CONTROL ZONE
CUMULATIVE COST OF CONSTRUCTION OF PERMITS ISSUED

DATE ISSUED	PROCESS NO.	DESCRIPTION OF WORK	WORK COST	CUMULATIVE WORK COST	APPRAISED BLDG. VALUE BEFORE REMODEL %	COMMENTS	BUILDING PERMIT NO.
3-24-88		Board up building	\$1,000.00				32040
4-5-88		EXTERIOR PAINTING	\$1,000.00				32097

Building Card. City of Miami Beach.

Photo Survey



Aerial, 2022



1



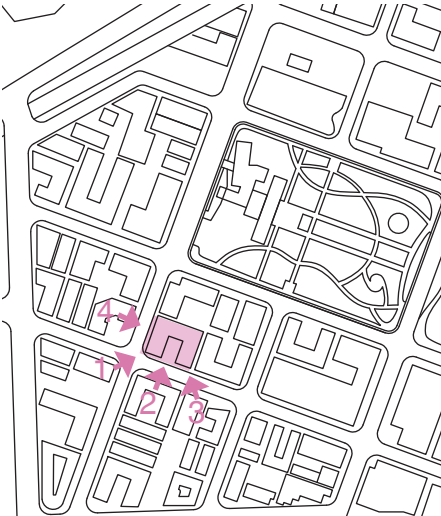
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PHOTOS TAKEN DECEMBER 16, 2022

Context



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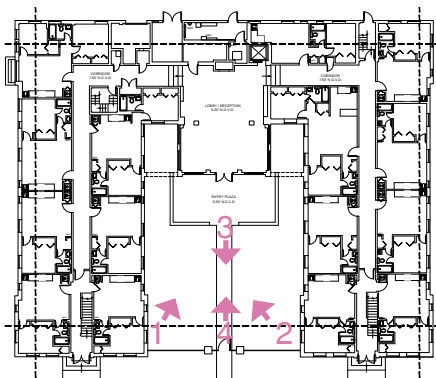
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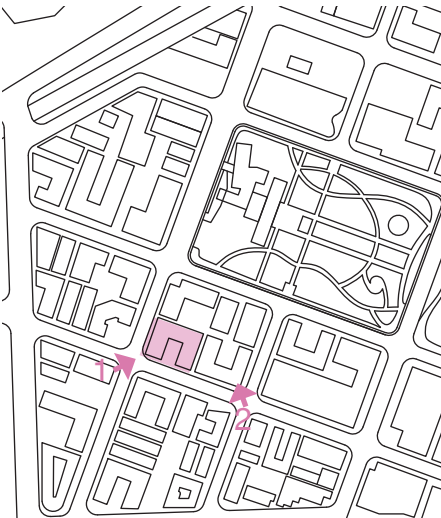


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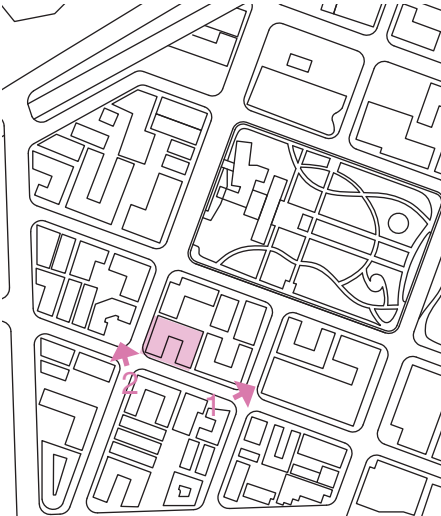
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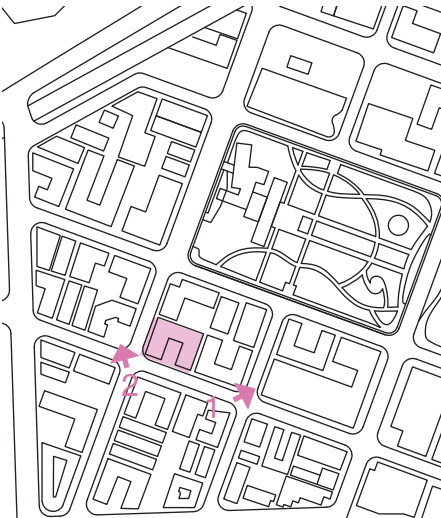
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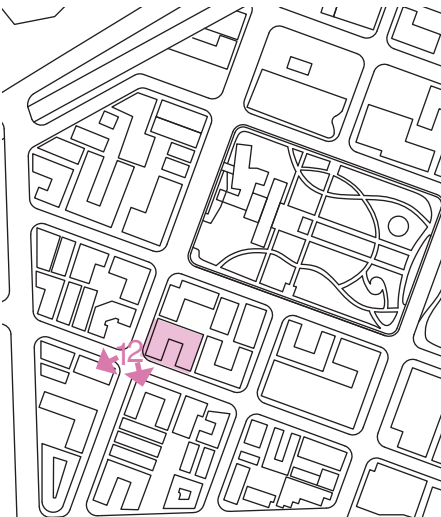
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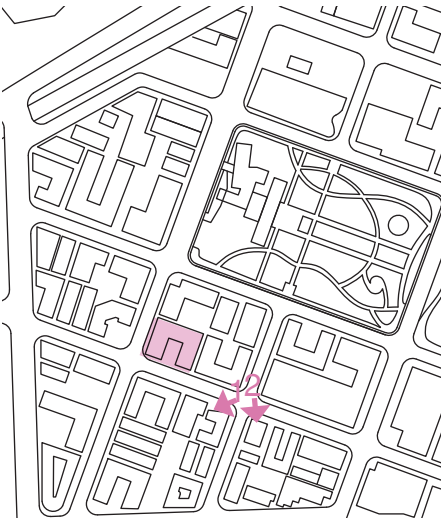
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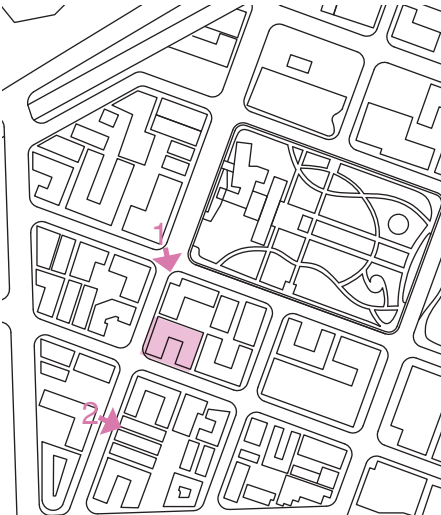
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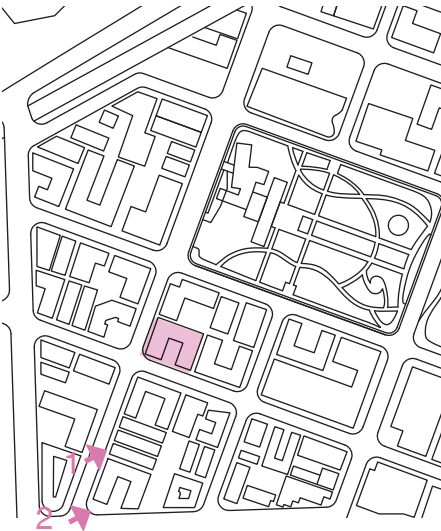


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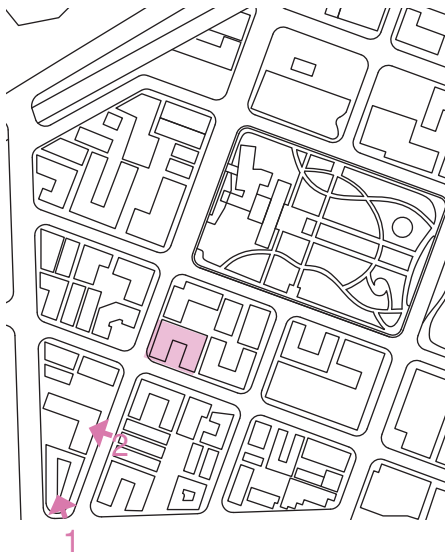
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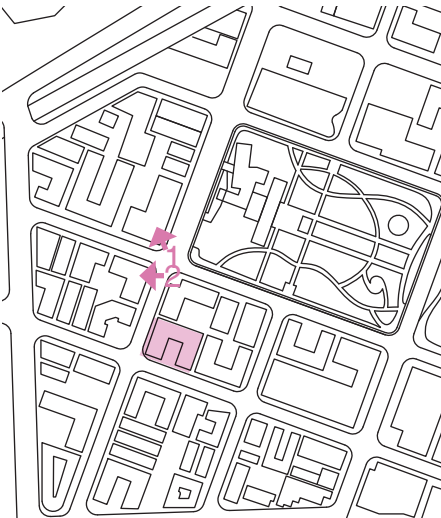
Context



1



2



PHOTOS TAKEN DECEMBER 16, 2022

Context



Front facade of 337 20th Street



20th Street looking Northeast



20th Street looking Northwest



20th Street Facade - Main entry



20th Street Facade- windows at ground level



Facade Details



Park Avenue Facade



Park Avenue Facade - windows at ground level



(Rear) looking East



(Rear) looking West



Looking North through West sideyard



Looking South through West sideyard



Ground floor interior



Ground floor interior



Ground floor looking through main entrance toward 20th Street



Ground floor - historic fireplace