

MIAMI BEACH

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Staff Report & Recommendation

Historic Preservation Board

TO: Chairperson and Members
Historic Preservation Board

DATE: January 12, 2016

FROM: Thomas R. Mooney, AICP
Planning Director

SUBJECT: HPB File No. 7590, **1700 Alton Road - Possible Designation of an Historic Site.**

A presentation by the City of Miami Beach Planning Department to the Historic Preservation Board of a Preliminary Evaluation and Recommendation Report relative to the possible historic designation of 1700 Alton Road, as an individual local historic site, requested by the applicant, AC 1700 Alton Owner LLC.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Direct the applicant to prepare a Designation Report for the possible designation of 1700 Alton Road as a local historic site.

ZONING / SITE DATA

Legal Description: Lots 1 & 2, Block 17 of Commercial Subdivision 1st Addition, According to the Plat Thereof, as Recorded in Plat Book 6, Page 30, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Zoning: CD-2 (Commercial, Medium Intensity)
Future Land Use Designation: CD-2 (Commercial, Medium Intensity)
Existing Use/Condition: Apartment/Hotel

EXISTING STRUCTURE

Original Construction Date: 1922
Original Architect: Martin L. Hampton

The existing 5-story structure was constructed in 1922, is an excellent example of the City's 1920s Boom period architecture. As an early example of Mediterranean Revival hotel architecture, the subject structure retains much of its architectural integrity, despite several alterations that have been made over time.

EVALUATION

Historic Significance

The structure located at 1700 Alton Road is of historical significance in that its location and building form represents a period of time, series of events, and design style which shaped much of the City's built environment.

The subject building was constructed in 1922 and designed by prominent local architect, Martin Luther Hampton in the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture. At the time of its construction, this 5-story building, which is approximately 56' in height, was the second tallest building in Miami Beach.

The original building permit card lists two names for the building; the Mayflower Hotel and the Variety Hotel. It appears however, from examination of the Polk's Business Directory for 1924 and 1925, that the original name for the property was the Marlborough Hotel. The location for this hotel at the corner of 17th Street and Alton Road was likely chosen in part, by its close proximity to the Collins Bridge, the original vehicular connection between the Beach and the mainland. By the 1930s this section of Alton Road was developing into one of the major commercial thoroughfares in the City.

While alterations have been made to the building over time, the majority of the alterations are reversible. Alterations include the redesign of the entire ground level fronting on Alton Road and 17th Street, removal of the original wood frame windows, modifications to the corner tower feature, introduction of through-the-wall air-conditioner units and the removal of all significant finishes within the public interior spaces. Although original plans have not yet been located, a sufficient amount of historical documentation, including early photographs has been submitted, which should serve as an adequate guide for restoration.

Architectural Significance

The structure located at 1700 Alton Road designed by architect Martin Luther Hampton, is an excellent example of the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture, which is well represented within several of the City's local historic districts as well as the Miami Beach National Register Architectural District.

The barrel tile parapet, exposed rafters, chamfered corner tower feature and original arch reveals are distinctive characteristics of this style.

Mediterranean Revival (late 1910s to 1930s)

Mediterranean Revival architecture was the "style of choice" for the first major land development period in Ocean Beach. Its combination of Italian, Moorish, North African and Southern Spanish themes evoked Mediterranean resort architecture and was found to be an appropriate and commercially appealing image for the new Floridian seaside resort.

During the mid-1910s through the 1930s, the style was applied to hotels, apartment buildings, commercial structures, and even modest residences. Its architectural vocabulary was characterized by stucco walls, low pitched terra cotta and historic Cuban tile roofs, arches, scrolled or tile capped parapet walls and articulated door surrounds, sometimes utilizing Spanish Baroque decorative motifs and Classical elements. Feature detailing was occasionally executed in keystone. Application of the architectural vocabulary in Miami Beach ranged from

sparing to modestly exuberant, and building massing varied from simple rectangular forms to stepped massing with recessed wall planes and tower-like corner features. Wooden casement or double-hung windows of several configurations provided additional detail to the facades.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board direct the applicant to prepare a Designation Report for the possible designation of 1700 Alton Road, as a local historic site. This designation will further benefit the purpose of historic preservation in Miami Beach.