

REPORT OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES PLANNING DEPARTMENT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION
TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
ON THE DESIGNATION OF

THE "FRENCH COUNTRY VILLAGE"

generally bounded by Caligula Avenue, San Vicente Street,
Maggiore Street, and Barbarossa Avenue

AS AN HISTORIC DISTRICT



517 Hardee Road

(PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 16B-17, 2(B)
OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES ORDINANCE 2508)

DATED: OCTOBER 1989

THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES

OFFICE OF
HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
CITY HALL



THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

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LHD-89-05

DESIGNATION REPORT

THE "FRENCH COUNTRY VILLAGE"

Generally bounded by Caligula Avenue, Barbarossa Avenue, Maggiore Street, and San Vicente Street, (containing 17 properties, five of which are non-contributing).

Historic Name: French Eighteenth Century Village

Common Name: The French Country Village

Legal Description: Lots 1 through 24, inclusive, Block 125, Riviera Section 10; and Lots 1 through 18, inclusive, Block 259 Riviera Section 11.

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

Legal Descriptions and Present Owners:

<u>541 Barbarossa Avenue:</u> non-contributing	Lot 16, Block 259, Riviera Section 11/Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Antonio Garrastanza. Date of construction: 1980
<u>508 Caligula Avenue:</u> Arch: Edgar Albright	Lots 9 and 10, Block 125, Riviera Section 10/Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Harry Wiseman
<u>516 Caligula Avenue:</u> Arch: Edgar Albright	Lots 6, 7 and 8, Block 125, Riviera Section 10/Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Eugenio Del Busto
<u>530 Caligula Avenue:</u> non-contributing	The east half of Lot 3 and Lots 4 and 5, Block 125, Riviera Section 10/Owner: Mr. and Mrs. George Sfakianakis. Date of construction: 1954
<u>500 Hardee Road:</u> Arch: Frank Forster	Lots 9 through 12, Block 259, Riviera Section 11/ Owner: Mr. and Mrs. David H. Pearson
<u>501 Hardee Road:</u> Arch: Edgar Albright	Lots 11 through 14 and the east 25 feet of Lot 15, Block 125, Riviera Section 10/Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Hernando A. Carrilo
<u>508 Hardee Road:</u> Arch: Frank Forster	Lots 7, 8, 13 and 14, Block 259, Riviera Section 11/ Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Ario Pardee
<u>516 Hardee Road:</u> Arch: Philip Goodwin	Lot 6, Block 259, Riviera Section 11/Owner: Mr. and Mrs. William B. Harper
<u>517 Hardee Road:</u> Arch: Edgar Albright	Lot 15 less the east 25 feet, and all Lots 16, 17 and 18, Block 125, Riviera Section 10/Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Nesbitt

<u>520 Hardee Road:</u> Arch: Philip Goodwin	Lot 5, Block 259, Riviera Section 11/Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Caldwell
<u>524 Hardee Road:</u> Arch: Philip Goodwin	Lots 4 and 17, Block 259, Riviera Section 11/Owner: Frank Lewis Schulwolf
<u>525 Hardee Road:</u> <u>non-contributing</u>	Lots 19 and 20, Block 125, Riviera Section 10/Owner: J. C. Elias and S. K. Skaf. Date of construction: 1955
<u>528 Hardee Road:</u> Arch: Frank Forster	Lots 3 and 18, Block 259, Riviera Section 11/Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Frank W. Glotfelty
<u>535 Hardee Road:</u> non-contributing	Lots 21 and 22, Block 125, Riviera Section 10/Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Angel M. Sixala Date of construction: 1955
<u>536 Hardee Road:</u> Arch: Frank Forster	Lots 1 and 2, Block 259, Riviera Section 11/Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Joseph K. Abrell
<u>541 Hardee Road:</u> Arch: Edgar Albright	Lots 23 and 24, Block 125, Riviera Section 10/Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Charles Cheezem
<u>6101 San Vicente St.</u> non-contributing	Lots 1 and 2 and the west half of Lot 3, Block 125, Riviera Section 10/Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Eugene A. Shaw Date of construction: 1953

Period of Significance/Dates of Construction: 1925-1926

Architects: Edgar Albright, Frank Forster, Philip Goodwin

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The "French Country Village" was one of many thematic housing developments planned for the City of Coral Gables in 1925 to add diversity to its predominantly Mediterranean character. The French Country Village exists as a unique assemblage of houses patterned after 18th century rural French architecture.

Sixteen free-standing houses (one of which is a duplex) constitute the "French Country Village." Eleven of the houses were built between 1925-1926 as part of the original village development. The remaining five houses are contemporary residences (built in the 1950s and 1980s) which are considered non-contributing, because they do not contribute to the historic character of the village as they were built after the period of significance.

Unlike the majority of the Coral Gables Villages, the houses in the French Country Village are not all contiguous to one another. While the houses are in close proximity, the houses on Caligula Avenue and the north side of Hardee Road are separated by more contemporary residential architecture.

JUSTIFICATION OF BOUNDARIES

Deed Book 1304 indicates that the Meyers Y. Cooper Company and the American Building Corporation originally planned an 18th century French Village to encompass Blocks 139 and 145, Riviera Section 9, and Blocks 124 and 125, Riviera Section 10. However, this plan was not realized because of the 1926 hurricane and subsequent financial difficulties. The properties were in fact constructed on some parcels not originally selected in that document. Twenty-eight French style houses were actually completed, located principally in the 500 and 1000 blocks of Hardee Road on Block 125, Riviera Section 10; Block 145, Riviera Section 9; Block 244, Riviera Section 12, and Block 259, Riviera Section 11.

Because of the distance separating these groups of houses and the differences in their design, they have come to be regarded as two separate villages. The houses on Block 125, Riviera Section 10 and Block 259 Riviera Section 11, have come to be known as the "French Country Village" because of their rustic appearance, while the houses on Block 145, Riviera Section 9 and Block 244, Riviera Section 12, which are generally more formal in style, have acquired the name "French City Village." The houses in both villages share common design characteristics, and in some instances were designed by the same architect.

The boundaries selected for the "French Country Village" are therefore based not only on the intended original location, but also for their common stylistic characteristics, dates of construction and proximity and relationship to each other.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Villages of Coral Gables built between 1925-26 by the American Building Corporation of Ohio, feature architectural styles of foreign countries, or certain American geographic regions. They added architectural diversity to Coral Gables, where the predominant style was Mediterranean Revival. Among the villages built in Coral Gables by the American Building Corporation were the Chinese Village; the Dutch South African Village; the Florida Pioneer Village; and the French Normandy Village (all listed in the Coral Gables Register of Historic Places).

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

The architectural style represented in the French Country Village is an interpretation of the diversity of European eighteenth-century provincial architecture, featuring half-timbering, towers, and steeply-pitched cross-gabled or hip-ped roofs covered with shingles.

ARCHITECTS

The houses within the French Country Village were the products of three architects, Edgar Albright, Frank Forster and Philip Goodwin. Little is known about

Edgar Albright (a local architect with offices in Miami Beach); however, Frank Forster and Philip Goodwin were highly prominent New York architects who specialized in French architectural designs. Forster designed many French provincial-inspired country estates in New York and Ohio which were frequently featured in Architectural Record during the 1920s-1930s. Likewise, Goodwin studied architecture in Paris and also co-authored a book about French provincial architecture which encouraged the adaptation of this style to American domestic architecture. Additionally, Goodwin was the architect of many of the houses in the adjacent French City Village, located in the 1000 block of Hardee Road.

EARLIEST RESIDENTS

The residents of these houses during the 1920s-1930s collectively represented the fields of finance, business, law, and construction. Interestingly, the house at 541 Hardee Road served as the University of Miami's Phi Alpha fraternity house during the early 1930s.

ALTERATIONS

The houses within the French Country Village have undergone little alteration over the past sixty years. Some of the alterations include, but are not limited to, replacement of original casement windows with aluminum awning windows, and enclosure of porches and garages. However, much of the original integrity of the village has been maintained.

ZONING REQUIREMENTS

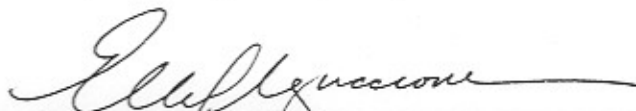
New construction on one of the two blocks in the French Country Village is already regulated by the Zoning Code of the City of Coral Gables, Section 17-3(j) which reads:

"On Lots 1 through 18, inclusive, Block 259, Riviera Section Part Eleven, all new buildings and any additions or alterations to the existing buildings shall be of the French style architecture to conform to the existing architecture in the block."

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The density of contributing properties within the two blocks which comprise the "French Country Village" differs considerably. However, in the village concept throughout the City, the companion blocks were intended as pendant pieces with the architectural style complementing and establishing a continuity of design. While Block 125 possesses a significant number of non-contributing structures, overall there is a sufficient proportion of contributing properties to justify the district boundary. More importantly the existing architecture on the block ties the village together in a spatial relationship that was to encompass a much greater area. Staff finds the district is highly significant because of its architecture, and association with events surrounding the early history of Coral Gables.

Respectfully submitted,



Ellen J. Dguccione
Historic Preservation Administrator

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500 Hardee Road

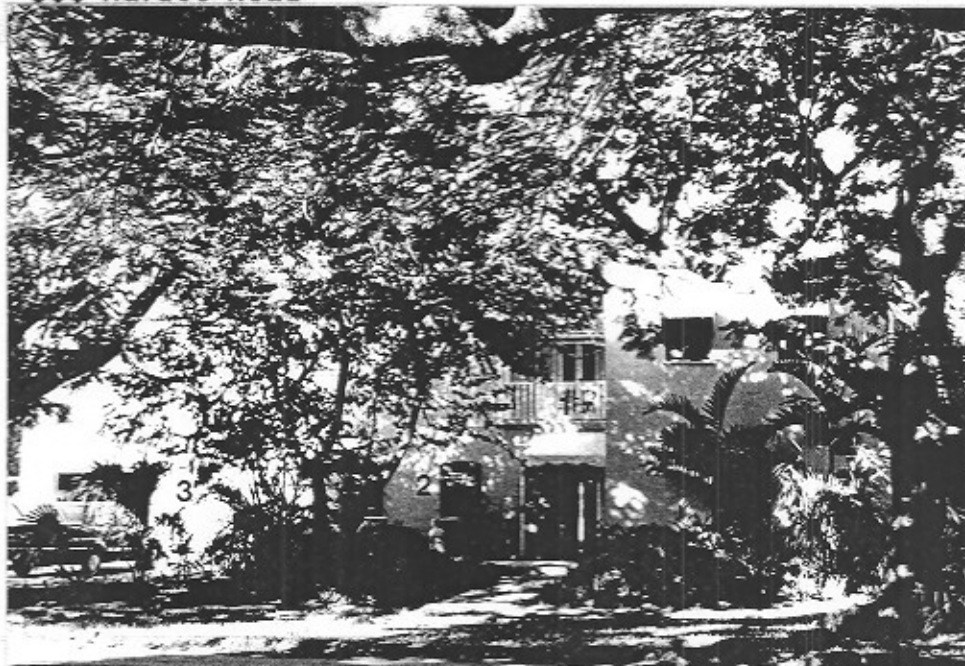


south elevation

House faces Maggiore Street

- 1) Moderately-pitched hipped roof
- 2) Entablature under roofline

500 Hardee Road



east elevation

Facing Maggiore Street

- 1) Balcony above central entrance
- 2) Multi-paned windows in segmental arches with lugsills
- 3) Two-car garage