

HISTORIC PRESERVATION SOLUTIONS, LLC
4748 CHARING CROSS ROAD
SARASOTA, FL 34241

May 30, 2015

City of Fort Lauderdale
Historic Preservation Board
700 NW 19th Ave.
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

RE: HPB Case No. H15010 - 3017 Alhambra Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33304
Letter of Clarification

Dear HPB Members:

I am writing as the principal member of Historic Preservation Solutions, LLC to clarify assertions made in the document prepared by Amy Van de Riet, Associate for Anthony Abbate Architect, P.A. and entitled *An Evaluation of Qualification for Historic Designation in the City of Fort Lauderdale, 3017 Alhambra Street, Fort Lauderdale, Florida*.

First, I would like to clarify that I prepared the historic designation application for 3017 Alhambra Street. This information was not provided in the designation application as the City form provides no location to identify the preparer of the application. I meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Architectural History in accordance with federal regulations 36 CFR Part 61. Specifically, I possess a Bachelor of Science degree in Historic Preservation and have 37 years of historic preservation experience in Virginia, Connecticut and Florida. Copies of my resume and statement of my qualifications are attached (Attachments 1 and 2). Since this application was prepared by a professional meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards, this issue presented by Ms. Van de Riet is moot.

Following, each of the five points asserted in the Van de Riet report to be inaccuracies will be addressed:

1. The Van de Riet report indicates that the designation application creates a relationship between the subject property and Hugh Taylor Birch as well as the Bonnet House. The only reference to Mr. Birch and the Bonnet House is found in the setting section wherein the early ownership of the land and the platting of the Lauder-del-Mar subdivision is described. As

presented in the application narrative, Mr. Birch owned a substantial amount of land on the barrier island. The narrative then goes on to describe the first two subdivisions of the property. As is stated in the narrative, in 1919, Mr. Birch deeded 35 acres of land to his daughter and son in law as a wedding present. It is on this land that the Bonnet House was built. This is the only reference to the Bonnet House. In no way does the narrative suggest that there is a relationship between the Bonnet House and 3017 Alhambra Street. Further, the designation application does not suggest any similarity in the architectural style of these two buildings as is suggested in the Van de Riet report. The designation application narrative then goes on to explain that the second subdivision of Birch's property occurred when he sold land to Broward Estates Corporation, who platted it as Lauder-Del-Mar. It is within this subdivision that Alhambra Street is located. An image of the original plat map was included in the designation application.

2. The authority for the statement that the three properties, located at 3017, 3021 and 3029 Alhambra street were built in the mid-1930s was made by me using my assessment as a professional architectural historian and is based on research using City Directories from this period, building permit records and an examination of the architectural drawings for these properties. Further, these three properties, along with the Casa Blanca Restaurant, located at the corner of Alhambra and A1A are consistent with the size, scale and use of the majority of the historically significant properties within this neighborhood and identified on the *2008 Architectural Resource Survey: Central Beach Neighborhood*.
3. The citation for the Willis' being owner occupants comes from the 1938/1939 and 1941/1942 City Directories which stated that the Willis' were homeowners at this address.
4. The definition for the Art Moderne style was developed by me in my authority as a professional architectural historian and is based on accepted definitions. This definition is as follows: *The architectural style reflected stylized and simplified forms and emphasized horizontal, vertical and curving planes, typically masonry with a smooth stucco finish, long horizontal lines, with details such as corner windows, glass block, flat projecting eyebrow slabs over windows and doors and nautical elements such as portholes*. This definition is consistent with the definition found in the City of Fort Lauderdale Historic Preservation Design Guidelines which states:

ART MODERNE

- Flat roof with a small ledge or coping at roof line
- Asymmetrical facade
- Smooth stucco wall surface with horizontal grooves or lines
- Horizontal balustrade elements
- Windows wrap corners

Page 6 of the Architectural Styles section of the City of Fort Lauderdale Historic Preservation Design Guidelines is attached (Attachment 3). Please note that the photograph in the top right corner of this attachment is described as as Art Moderne building and embodies many of the same architectural characteristics as 3017 Alhambra Street.

An additional definition can be found in *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester. This book is recommended in National Register Bulletin 16a as a reference for identifying and describing architectural styles and descriptions. A facsimile of the pages associated with the art moderne style is attached (Attachment 4).

It is true that the *2008 Architectural Resource Survey: Central Beach Neighborhood* indicates that the style of 3017 Alhambra Street is Deco and I concur with the Van de Riet report that the building does not meet the definition of the Deco or Art Deco style. This assessment as representing the Deco style was done in error. However, the designation application does not suggest that 3017 Alhambra Street was built in the Deco style. It asserts that the building is an excellent example of the Art Moderne style.

5. The description of the building, developed under my authority as a professional architectural historian is completely consistent with the definition of the Art Moderne style as stated in the designation application, in the definition found in the City of Fort Lauderdale Historic Preservation Design Guidelines and found in *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester.

The evaluation section of the Van de Riet report seems to support the assessment of 3017 Alhambra Street by stating the following on pages 8 and 10:

The City of Fort Lauderdale Historic Preservation Design Guidelines lists the following characteristics as

defining the Art Moderne style:

- Flat roof with a small ledge or coping at roof line
- Asymmetrical façade
- Smooth stucco wall surface with horizontal grooves or lines
- Windows wrap corners

Based on these criteria, the property at 3017 Alhambra Street embodies the characteristics of fl at roof with small coping at roof line, asymmetrical façade and windows wrap corners.

Then the report goes on to determine that 3017 Alhambra Street does not exemplify the Art Moderne style without giving any rationale. The evaluation goes on to describe alterations, most of which are more maintenance than alterations such as roof replacements and concrete repairs. The installation of paved parking is a reality in order for a building to function as apartments in modern times and doesn't affect the architecture.

There are two alterations identified. The first is the windows which have been replaced twice. In 2006, the windows would have been required to meet the South Florida building code hurricane standards and replicating the original windows in form and materials would not be feasible under this code. However, the windows do reflect the horizontal emphasis of the building with applied horizontal muntin bars. Further, since the window openings have not been altered with the

exception of one window that was converted to a door on a secondary elevation, the window replacement has minimal impact on the architectural integrity of the building.

The second alteration is the replacement of the balustrade on the secondary exterior staircase to the second floor in 2003. At that time the original balustrade with an open horizontal emphasis would not have met the building code in place at that time. Further, this balustrade is on a secondary elevation and does not face the public view-shed but faces the neighboring property. Therefore, it has a minimal impact on the integrity of the Art Moderne architectural style.

The Van de Riet report has not established that 3017 Alhambra Street fails to meet criteria e. which states:

Its value as a building recognized for the quality of its architecture, and sufficient elements showing its architectural significance.

In fact, the Van de Riet has strengthened the argument for designation, when it states on page 10 that *“Based on these criteria, the property at 3017 Alhambra Street embodies the characteristics of flat roof with small coping at roof line, asymmetrical façade and windows wrap corners.”* Based on the designation application and this follow up letter addressing the issues raised in the Van de Riet report, the historic designation application for 3017 Alhambra Street should be approved as a landmark based on the fact that it clearly does exemplify the characteristics as a singular example of the art moderne style.

As I will be unable to attend the Historic Preservation Board meeting on June 1, 2015, I am submitting this letter, as well as cited attachments, as written competent testimony as a professional architectural historian who meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards for Architectural History in accordance with federal regulations 36 CFR Part 61.

Sincerely,

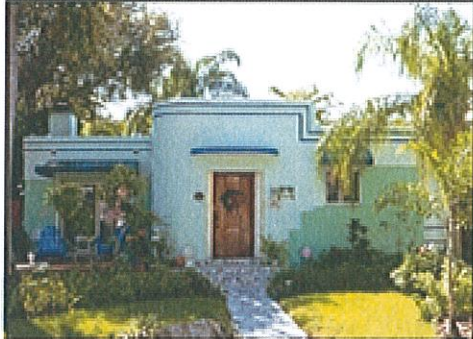


David Baber
Principal Member

Enc.

CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE HISTORIC PRESERVATION DESIGN GUIDELINES,
ARCHITECTURAL STYLES CHAPTER, Page 6 - Modern

MODERN



This residence has curved forms typical of the Art Deco period with decorative grooves and cantilevered sun screens over window and door openings typical of the Art Moderne period.



This Art Moderne building has a 2-story main block with a 1-story wing visually joined by with a decorative band. Windows wrap around corners and are covered by cantilevered sun screens.



This Art Moderne residence has a central projecting parapet topped by a coping, corner wrapping windows with cantilevered sun screens, and a smooth stucco surface with horizontal grooves.

ART DECO

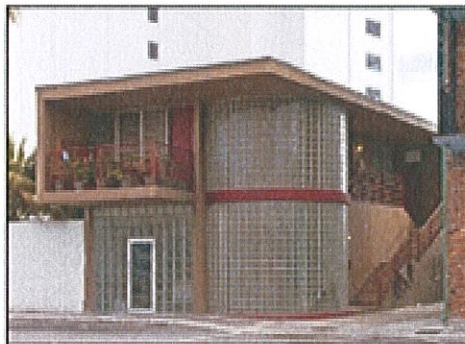
- Flat roof with vertical projections above roof line
- Smooth stucco wall surface with geometric designs

ART MODERNE

- Flat roof with a small ledge or coping at roof line
- Asymmetrical facade
- Smooth stucco wall surface with horizontal grooves or lines
- Horizontal balustrade elements
- Windows wrap corners



Fort Lauderdale's hotels and motels were constructed in a variety of styles including this Art Moderne example. Note the projecting roofline and wrapping corner windows.



This Mid-Century Modern building has a semi-enclosed, round, glass block corner and a projecting balcony under a unifying flat roof slab.

**DAVID BABER, Principal Member
Historic Preservation Solutions, LLC
Architectural Historian/Historic Preservation Consultant**

Statement of Qualifications

Mr. David Baber has over 37 years of experience in activities associated with the protection and preservation of historic resources in Virginia, Connecticut and Florida. His involvement includes development and management of local historic preservation programs, conducting or supervising the preparation of historic sites surveys, preparing historic designation applications for the National Register of Historic Places and local historic designation programs and providing oversight and supervision of projects to restore or rehabilitate historic buildings. Mr. Baber meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Architectural History in accordance with federal regulations 36 CFR Part 61.

Historic Sites Surveys

Mr. Baber began his career by completing historic sites surveys beginning with completing the survey of five towns in Connecticut's capital region including Glastonbury, Hebron, Andover, Marlboro and Bolton. This was followed by conducting a survey of historic properties in Amherst County Virginia. Since then I have, had involvement with surveys by providing oversight, management or review of projects. Over time I have provided assistance to several municipalities by reviewing the information in surveys being conducted for them. This includes all five phases of the survey updates completed in the City of Sarasota, and more recently, the downtown survey for the City of Pompano Beach and the phase I survey update for Broward County.

Historic Resource Designation

Mr. Baber has established and managed local historic preservation programs in Windsor, Connecticut; Sarasota, Florida and Broward County, Florida. Through these programs, he has become thoroughly familiar with the criteria applied to buildings to determine whether or not they possess adequate significance and integrity to be eligible for designation. Mr. Baber has also prepared many designation applications, both for the National Register of Historic Places and local designation. Recently, he has prepared a successful National Register nomination of the West Side Grade School in Fort Lauderdale, Florida and local designation application for the Broward County Main Library, also in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Historical Context and Assessment Reports

Mr. Baber has been involved with all aspects of preparing histories, historical contexts and assessments of sites, areas and districts. The reports have been used for a variety of purposes. A recently completed report, co-authored by Mr. Baber is the Historical Context for Florida Power and Light's McGregor Smith Cottage located at their Turkey Point power Station.

**DAVID BABER, Principal Member
Historic Preservation Solutions, LLC
Architectural Historian/Historic Preservation Consultant**

Heritage Walking/Driving Tours

Mr. Baber has had involvement with several self-guided tours that have been published over time. While directing the Sarasota County History Center, I managed and supervised the development of a walking tour of the City of Sarasota's Civic Center and Theatre Arts District. Recently, I created two printed tours in Broward County, the *Historic Sites Walking Tour of Fort Lauderdale Beach* and *A Guide to National Register Places in Broward County*.

Historical Exhibits

Mr. Baber has been involved with the development of approximately 15 permanent and temporary historical exhibits during his career. These exhibits provide the same type digital born presentations found in St. Petersburg African American Heritage Trail markers. Mr. Baber has been either directly involved or has supervised all aspects of the process of the development of at least 14 exhibits including identifying the subject and themes, conducting necessary research, identifying visual materials, graphic design, layout and production. This includes the development of the permanent history exhibit installed at the Chidsey Building.

DAVID W. BABER

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941-685-0782

PROFESSIONAL GOAL

A career focused on protecting society's irreplaceable historic and cultural resources.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Extensive historic preservation knowledge
 - Advocating for historic preservation issues
 - Personnel Management
 - Managing multi-disciplinary programs
 - Completing multiple simultaneous tasks
 - Regulatory compliance management
 - Oversight of restoration projects
 - Managing grant-in-aid programs
 - Successful history of securing grant funds
 - Budget development and oversight
-

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

1/2008 – 12/2014 Broward County Historical Commission
Fort Lauderdale, FL

1/2008-1/2011 County Historic Preservation Officer, Historical Commission

Provided leadership to history and historic preservation programs and organizations throughout Broward County. Provided guidance to and implemented the policies of the Historical Commission and was responsible for managing the County's multifaceted history/historic preservation programs. Examples of administrative duties included managing all staff, creating, developing and managing all budgets, communicating the agency mission, resolving conflicts and improving and expanding programs and projects to realize the goals of the organization.

Key Historic Preservation Accomplishments

- Completed the rehabilitation of the historic West Side Grade
- Provided technical assistance to property owners and municipalities in terms of applying criteria for designations and improvements to historic resources
- Participated in the Section 106 review process for State and Federal projects occurring in the County
- Increased efficiency and consistency of the County's historic preservation programs
- Improved consistency of the County's development review program for impacts to historic resources
- Provided assistance in writing and reviewing National Register and local designation applications
- Developed a County-wide coalition of history and historic preservation organizations
- Developed educational programs on preservation issues for the public and municipalities
- Implemented locally funded challenge grant-in-aid program, modeled loosely on the State of Florida preservation grants program, to preserve, rehabilitate and restore important local resources

1/2011-12/2014 Historic Preservation Coordinator, Libraries Division

Due to severe budget cuts associated with the recent recession, Historical Commission funding was eliminated and the services and programs were reorganized under the County library system. The Historic Preservation Officer position was with the Historic Preservation Coordinator with no administrative responsibilities. Examples of activities in this new position include preparing National Register and local designation applications, providing technical assistance to other communities and property owners, supervising the creation of local history exhibits, and assisting with library activities such as the digitization of special collections.

Key Historic Preservation Accomplishments

- Compared existing preservation program with CLG requirements/wrote replacement ordinance
- Secured a State preservation grant and provided support for a County-wide historic sites survey
- Prepared and defended the National Register nomination for the Historic West Side Grade School
- Prepared the local designation application for the Marcel Breuer designed Broward Main Library
- Led a team of stakeholders to develop an historic resource disaster long term recovery strategy

1/1995-1/2008 Sarasota County Government
Sarasota, FL

Historical Resources General Manager

Responsibilities included directing the primary history and historic preservation government agency in Sarasota County. This multi-disciplinary program included initiatives to promote the protection and preservation of historic and prehistoric resources, managing an historical archive/museum collection, and operating a local history program. Administrative and management aspects of the program, included budget development and implementation, staff management, development of programs targeted at protecting cultural resources in the County and promoting an understanding of local history.

Key Historic Preservation Accomplishments

- Provided leadership and oversight to ensure compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards in the rehabilitation of County owned historic resources including the County Courthouse, the Venice Train Depot, Nokomis Beach Plaza, Phillippi Estate Park, the Hermitage, and the Dr. Wilson House.
- Supervised the conservation/restoration of significant cultural objects
- Oversaw the creation of long term maintenance and management plans for all County owned historic buildings to assure their long term sustainability
- Developed countywide local register of historic places, and successfully sought CLG status
- Successfully applied for and managed 10 State Small Matching and Special Categories historic preservation grants with a total value of nearly \$1,500,000 for a variety of preservation activities
- Created a process based on Section 106 for consistently reviewing all development activity in the County with the successful result of avoiding, minimizing or mitigating impacts to cultural resources
- After the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons, successfully relocated the irreplaceable historical collections from a 65 year old building on the bay-front to a hardened inland location
- Developed covenants and easements to protect historic and archaeological resources
- Participated as a member of the Statewide Technical Advisory Committee in the multi-phased project to develop a disaster planning and mitigation strategy for historic resources in Florida

1985-1995 Town of Windsor
Windsor, CT

Community Development Coordinator

Responsible for managing all aspects of the historic preservation and comprehensive community development programs in Windsor, Connecticut's oldest town. Developed and managed operating and project budgets based on state and federal community development and historic preservation funding sources. Managed program to provide grants and low income loans to improve low income housing and commercial buildings. Directed all historic preservation activities such as surveys and National Register nominations and provided staff support to the Historic Preservation Board.

Key Historic Preservation Accomplishments

- Oversaw the restoration of historic buildings in town such as the aforementioned railway facility, a one room school to be used as a museum and a federal period house to be used as a home for unwed teenage mothers and their children
- Prepared HABS documentation on the historic railroad passenger and freight depots as a condition of federal funding to prepare the buildings for rehabilitation as a multi-modal transportation center
- Provided all documentation and reporting to assure that all federally funded projects complied with NHPA Section 106 and NEPA requirements
- Successfully sought and administered grant funding totaling nearly \$5 million from state and federal sources for all community development and historic preservation related activities
- Acted as staff liaison to the Historic Preservation Board
- Reviewed all applications for improvements to historic buildings
- Developed a local heritage tourism program in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce.

**1983-1985 Bridgeport Neighborhood Housing and Commercial Services, Inc.
Bridgeport, CT**

Upper East Side Director

Administered all phases of a comprehensive preservation based revitalization program in a severely depressed, historic, inner city neighborhood in Connecticut's largest city. Formulated administrative and project budgets, identified and developed housing and infrastructure projects, solicited funding to carry those projects, and organized neighborhood self help groups.

**1979-1983 Willimantic Community Redevelopment Agency
Willimantic, CT**

Rehabilitation Director

Developed and administered a historic preservation oriented residential and commercial rehabilitation program involving grants and low interest loans as a part of the community development activities for the City of Willimantic. Prepared construction plans and specifications for projects, performed credit underwriting, arranged financial packages, recruited contractors and supervised construction. Program was the recipient of a national HUD award for the success of the preservation and revitalization of the commercial downtown district. Supervised the preparation of historic sites surveys and National Register nominations in the City.

**1978-1979 Central Virginia Planning District Commission
Lynchburg, VA**

Historic Planner

Conducted historic sites inventory in Amherst County. Made A-95 review comments on projects with historic preservation related considerations.

**1978 Capitol Region Council of Governments
Hartford, CT**

Architectural Historian

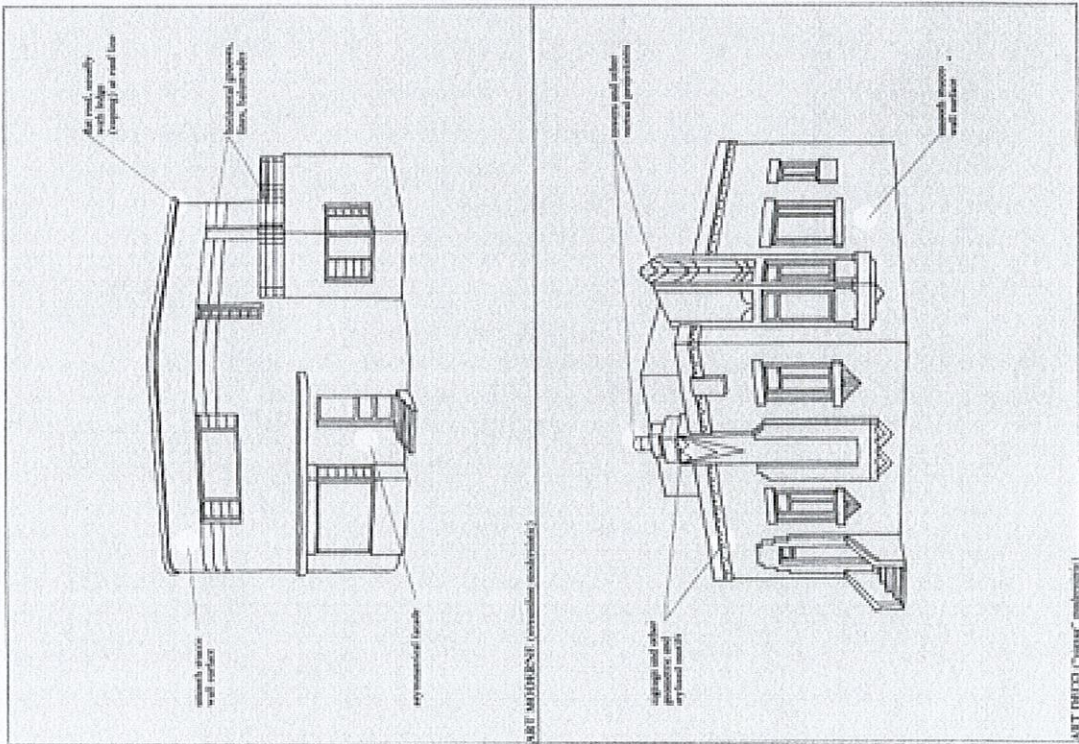
Assembled historic resources survey on a contractual basis, in conjunction with the Connecticut Historical Commission, in five Hartford area towns.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Historic Preservation, 1978, Roger Williams College, Bristol, RI
Associates of Engineering Technology, Architecture/Construction, 1974, Roger Williams College, Bristol, RI

AFFILIATIONS

- National Trust for Historic Preservation, Forum member
- Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, member and former trustee
- 2007 Florida Trust for Historic Preservation annual conference local chair
- Department of State, Central Florida Regional Preservation Office, former Citizen Advisory Board member
- Member of the Sarasota Architectural Foundation, Technical Advisory Committee
- Friends of the Sarasota County History Center, board member
- Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation, board member
- Crowley Museum and Nature Center, former board member and vice chair



COLLECTOR HOUSES
Modernistic
1925-1940

IDENTIFYING FEATURES

ART MODERNISM—Smooth wall surface, usually of stucco; flat roof, usually with small ledge (coping) at roof line; horizontal grooves or lines in walls and horizontal balustrade elements give a horizontal emphasis; facade usually asymmetrical.

ART DECO—Smooth wall surface, usually of stucco; gabled, eaveless, and other eplazed and geometric motifs occur as decorative elements on facade; towers and other vertical accents above the roof line give a vertical emphasis.

VARIANTS AND DETAILS

ART MODERNISM—One or more corners of the building may be curved; windows frequently are continuous around corners; glass blocks are often used in windows, or in entire sections of walls; small round windows are common.

OCCURRENCE

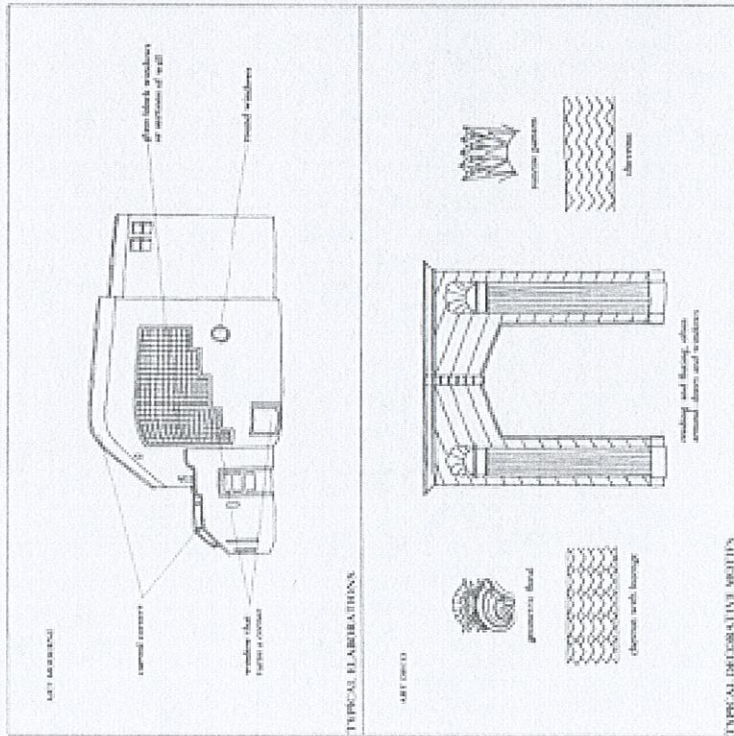
The Modernistic styles were built from about 1910 to 1940. The earlier form was the Art Deco, which was common in public and commercial buildings in the 1920s and early 1930s. It was, however, extremely rare in domestic architecture; we know of only a few surviving houses, although it was frequently used for apartment buildings. Also about 1930, Art Moderne became the prevalent Modernistic form. Although never common, many houses were built in the style; scattered examples can be found throughout the country.

COMMENTS

The Modernistic styles received their first major impetus in 1911 when the Chicago Tribune held a world-wide competition for a headquarters building in Chicago. Although the first prize went to a Gothic design, the second prize went to an Art Deco design by a young Finnish architect, Eliel Saarinen. His design was widely publicized and much of the architectural profession felt that he deserved the first prize; the style quickly became the latest architectural fashion. Shortly after 1910 another, more diffuse influence affected the Modernistic style—the beginning of streamlined industrial design for ships, airplanes, and automobiles. The smooth surfaces, curved corners, and horizontal emphasis of the Art Moderne style all give the feeling that streamline could move smoothly

Exterior Finish: Modernism

over their others, thus they were streamlined. In most building types, both the horizontal, accentuated Art Moderne, and the vertical, engaged Art Deco influences occur in combination. In houses, however, the streamline influence is predominant. Many examples resemble the contemporaneous International style, in which decorative detailing was reduced to the barest minimum.



MODERNISTIC

1. San Francisco, California, in 1929. A very rare example of an Art Deco house, near the prominent decorative details and vertical road grooves.
2. Toledo, Ohio, 1929. The popular Art Moderne design is almost universal.
3. San Antonio, Texas, 1929. Note the entry area with its rounded, arched, curved glass-block window, and curved porch roof with coping above the entry.
4. Irving Park, Minnesota, 1937. Leo Hilmer, Pan and Co., architect. The brick wall (shading is applied at the artist). Near the entrance horizontal ridges and curved ornamental screen.
5. The Moore, Iowa, 1937. Betty House, Korsch and Korsch, architect. This Leitch-style example has ornate curved screens and a dramatic entry of horizontal grooves. Note also the curved upper and lower windows in the screen on the left.

