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# BEVERLY TERRACE HISTORIC DISTRICT

## 3224 AND 3300 BISCAYNE BOULEVARD

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### Designation Report



City of Miami

REPORT OF THE CITY OF MIAMI  
PRESERVATION OFFICER  
TO THE HISTORIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION BOARD  
ON THE POTENTIAL DESIGNATION OF THE  
BEVERLY TERRACE HISTORIC DISTRICT  
AS A HISTORIC DISTRICT

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Passed and  
Adopted on March 18, 2003

Resolution No. 2003-16

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Historic Names:

Beverly Terrace Manor - 3224 Biscayne Boulevard  
Beverly Terrace Apartments - 3300 Biscayne Boulevard

Current Name:

Beverly Terrace Historic District

Location:

3224 and 3300 Biscayne Boulevard  
Miami, Florida

Present Owner:

Multiple Owners - A complete list of owners is available in the Department of Planning and Zoning

Present Use:

Multi-Family Residential

Zoning District:

C-1, with an SD-20 Overlay

Tax Folio Numbers:

01-3230-039-0001 - 3224 Biscayne Boulevard (plus individual folio numbers for each unit)  
01-3230-038-0001 - 3330 Biscayne Boulevard (plus individual folio numbers for each unit)

Boundary Description:

The boundary of the Beverly Terrace Historic District is shown as a heavy line on the attached map entitled "Beverly Terrace Historic District." The boundary is further described as Lot 5 and the westerly 104 feet of Lot 6 of Block 1; and Lot 5 and the westerly 101 feet of Lot 6 of Block 4, both of the plat of BEVERLY TERRACE

SUBDIVISION, as recorded in Plat Book 11, at Page 47, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

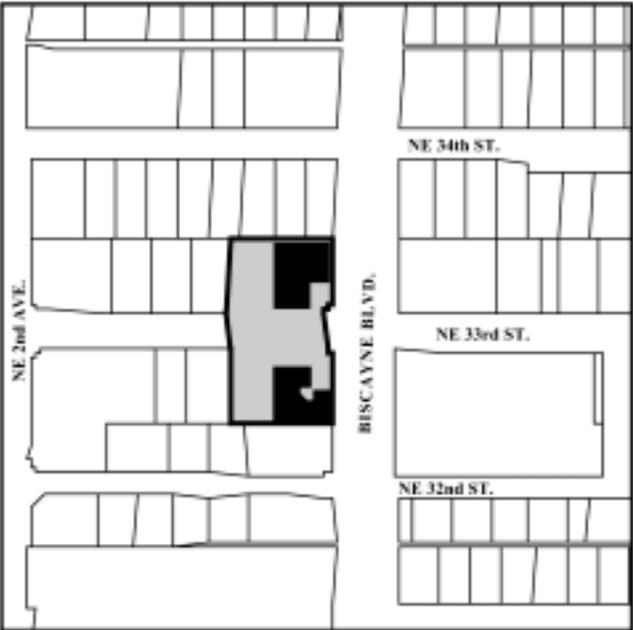
Classification:

Historic District

# BEVERLY TERRACE HISTORIC DISTRICT 3224 AND 3300 BISCAYNE BOULEVARD



  
location



  
site plan

## II. SIGNIFICANCE

### Specific Dates:

1925

### Architects:

Martin Luther Hampton and E. A. Ehmann

### Builder/Contractor:

Unknown

### Statement of Significance:

The Beverly Terrace Historic District (named for the subdivision plat) is significant in the historical, cultural and architectural heritage of the City of Miami. It is a unique architectural statement created by master architect Martin Luther Hampton with his partner E. A. Ehmann. Because so many of the original buildings that lined Biscayne Boulevard and defined its character have been lost, the former Beverly Terrace Manor (3224 Biscayne Boulevard) and Beverly Terrace Apartments (3300 Biscayne Boulevard) are particularly important and impressive reminders of the boulevard at its zenith. The buildings are of special architectural importance not only because of their finely detailed Mediterranean Revival designs, but also in their relationship to one another, forming bookends that bring special prominence to the intersection of NE 33<sup>rd</sup> Street and Biscayne Boulevard. Further, the Beverly Terrace Apartments was the first building in Miami to be sold as a "co-operative," then an innovative approach to joint ownership.

In 1924, the Davenport & Rich Development Company acquired the property from NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to Biscayne Bay with a 285-foot frontage on NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue from T. F. O'Brien, an early Miami pioneer. The company sold lots measuring 60 x 115 feet for \$7,500, and only a year later the land was valued at \$50,000.

During this meteoric financial growth, the company embarked on its campaign to improve the four corners of what was then NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and NE 33<sup>rd</sup> Street. The plan was to build on each corner of the intersection. At that time, NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue (later Biscayne Boulevard) was 55 feet wide, while NE 33<sup>rd</sup> Street was 60 feet wide.

The value of the land and all four buildings (when completed) was estimated at \$1.5 million. The Beverly Terrace Apartments was the first in the group to be completed, and opened in August 1925. The Beverly Terrace Manor would open in September 1925.

The Davenport & Rich Investment Company commissioned the architects to design buildings for each of the corners of the intersection. In a surviving illustration, the architects depicted all four corners of the intersection, and detailed a fountain monument in the center. The effect of the grouping was to create a formal plaza that was reminiscent of ancient Spanish and Italian cities, further emphasizing the linkage to the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture. The Beverly Terrace Hotel, which occupied the southeast corner of the intersection, became a group home owned by the United Methodist Church in the 1970s, and was demolished in the 1980s. The only building in the group that was not constructed is the Beverly Terrace Arms, planned for the northeast corner of the intersection.

In all of the buildings, the street frontage was identical, and the canted main entrance established an axial relationship, tying the group together spatially. In each, the canted center entrance also served to anchor the extending wings that created the L-shaped plan. The height and proportions of the buildings, along with their architectural design featuring prominent end towers, while not duplicating one another, established a thematic homogeneity. The siting of the buildings at each corner served to enclose the space at the intersection, creating the impression of a European plaza.

The buildings also represent an innovative concept applied to real estate ownership. In the *Miami Daily News* account of the completion of the apartments, the writer quotes Mr. J. N. Ryan, manager of the Cooperative Homes Department of the Davenport & Rich Investment Company, who states:

The completion of the Beverly Terrace Apartments is of *epochal* (emphasis added) importance in Miami realty circles as it marks the success of the first 100% cooperative ownership plan for apartments in Florida.

While Europeans were quite familiar with the concept and such major U.S. urban centers as New York, San Francisco and Chicago had already begun selling "co-ops," the idea was a new one to Miami. In a cooperative apartment, the owner is a shareholder in the property and has an undivided interest in the land coupled with the right of occupancy of an apartment. When sales of the apartments in the Beverly Terrace Apartments proved immediately successful, the Beverly Terrace Manor was begun several months earlier than planned, in order to satisfy the buyer demand.

While the Davenport & Rich Company was in the midst of constructing the Beverly Terrace Subdivision, another monumental project began that would have a direct impact on their interests. In 1925, the Shoreland Company, developers of Miami Shores, began the construction of Biscayne Boulevard.

Biscayne Boulevard was to provide the first major thoroughfare that would link the communities north of the City of Miami, and in particular, the City of Miami Shores, to Downtown Miami. The boulevard began at SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and ended at NE 55<sup>th</sup> Street, where it connected to Federal Highway. The building of the roadway was a monumental task, as its course ran through both improved and unimproved sections of the city, and required millions of dollars for the acquisition of land and property, and for its construction.

In addition to its value as a major north-south artery, Biscayne Boulevard was designed as a shopping district that would apply the strictest of design standards and attention to comfort and beauty. Advertisements for the boulevard touted it as the "Fifth Avenue of the South," and such retailers as Burdines and Sears Department stores took advantage of the promotion and built major outlets here.

The Biscayne Boulevard Company adopted the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture as the theme for the buildings. It was the preeminent style choice for many of the new subdivisions and cities born in the mid-1920s. Some of the buildings on the boulevard that pre-dated the roadway construction were allowed to remain, as they were consistent with the character the developers wished to convey. Others were demolished to make way for the new development. During the course of Biscayne Boulevard's construction, 85 buildings were demolished, at least 12 houses were relocated, and several houses lost their front porches. Because they reflected the character and quality that the Biscayne Company chose for the boulevard's development, the Beverly Terrace Apartments, Manor and Hotel remained. In fact, they were included in the promotional literature published by the Biscayne Company.

One of the major consequences of Biscayne Boulevard's construction to the Beverly Terrace buildings was the change in character of the street itself. In the original design scheme, the plaza created at the intersection was the result of the relatively narrow width of the streets. When Biscayne Boulevard was cut through, it was 100 feet in width, almost doubling the street width; the intimate space needed to perceive the plaza was lost.

Further, the westernmost wing of the Beverly Terrace Hotel (formerly on the southeast corner, now demolished) was destroyed. The Davenport & Rich Company sued, but after a \$56,606 court settlement in January 1927, the demolition of the wing was accomplished. The boulevard was opened to automobile traffic in March 1927.

In 1929, the same year as the devastating collapse of the stock market, the first in a series of Art Deco-designed buildings were constructed. The Sears Building at the foot of Biscayne Boulevard and NE 13<sup>th</sup> Street occupied a most prominent location on the thoroughfare, and the departure from the historical fashion to the contemporary reflected the forward thinking of the developers.

In contemporary newspaper accounts on the opening of the Beverly Terrace Apartments, the style of architecture is described as "Spanish." The term "Mediterranean Revival" is today the widely accepted description for the eclectic combination of elements that have come to characterize the style. The hallmarks of the Mediterranean Revival style include masonry construction with broad areas of uninterrupted surfaces covered with stucco that is frequently textured; cast stone or concrete ornament typically reserved for the embellishment of windows and doorways; a combination of roof slopes including flat, gabled and sometimes hipped; the use of arcades, loggias, and colonnades to provide sheltering, yet open areas; the juxtaposition of one and two stories; the use of towers, particularly at the corners; clay barrel tile roofing; awnings, decorative ceramic tiles, and wrought iron accents.

Both the Beverly Terrace Apartments and the Beverly Terrace Manor possess almost every feature just described. Because of the complexity of the plan, the articulation of those elements is especially noteworthy.

Architect Martin Luther Hampton along with his partner E. A. Ehmann designed all four buildings at the corner of NE 33<sup>rd</sup> Street and Biscayne Boulevard in 1925, of which only the Beverly Terrace Apartments and the Beverly Terrace Manor survive. Hampton was one of the six architects (the others being H. George Fink, Walter De Garmo, Richard Kiehnel, Harold Hastings Mundy and L. D. Brumm), who comprised George Merrick's original design team in the creation of Coral Gables, Florida. Hampton was a master of design who made a significant impact in the articulation of the Mediterranean Revival style, which proliferated in the Miami area during the Boom. In fact, in 1919, famed architect Addison Mizner (1872–1933) hired Hampton to design interiors and supervise details for the many projects he was designing in Palm Beach.

In 1916, after Merrick wed Eunice Peacock, Hampton designed their first home at 937 Coral Way, known as "Poinciana Place." Before the first lots in Coral Gables were sold in 1921, George Merrick sent his design team, consisting of his artistic designer, Denman Fink, and architects H. George Fink, Leonard Schultz, Martin L. Hampton and others to Europe to study the prototypical architecture that was chosen as the inspiration for the buildings in Coral Gables. Hampton and Ehmann designed the Coral Gables Inn in 1922, a Mediterranean Revival masterpiece that was compared to the *Generalife* Palace (the summer palace of the Moors) in Seville, Spain.

The Coral Gables Inn (demolished) contained about 50 bedrooms, and was arranged in a "U" plan shape. In many respects, the Coral Gables Inn represents a "dress rehearsal" for the Beverly Terrace Apartments, as they were both similar in design and function. In 1923, along with then partner Reimert, Hampton designed the Country Club of Coral Gables at the intersection of North Greenway Drive and Granada Boulevard. Although severely damaged by a fire in 1983, the building is an acknowledged masterpiece of the Mediterranean Revival design.

In February 1924, at Merrick's request, Hampton designed the Biltmore Hotel and Country Club. His design included a replica of Seville's *Giralda* tower flanked by wings containing hotel rooms. The New York firm of Shultze and Weaver, who retained much of the original Hampton concept, executed the final design for the Biltmore.

Hampton was equally skillful in the design of single-family residences, apartments, hotels, clubhouses and commercial buildings. One of his most significant commercial designs is the Congress Building at 111 NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. In 1923, Hampton designed a five-story office building for the Realty Services Corporation. When the firm rapidly outgrew their quarters, Hampton designed an additional 16 stories creating a high-rise of exceptional architectural merit. The Congress Building is listed in the *National Register of Historic Places*.

Hampton later worked throughout the Miami area, including Miami Beach and Miami Springs. He designed the Old Miami Beach City Hall and numerous residences in Glenn Curtiss' development of Country Club Estates, now known as Miami Springs.

#### Relationship to Criteria for Designation:

As stated above, the Beverly Terrace Historic District, comprised of the apartments at 3224 and 3300 Biscayne Boulevard, has significance in the historical and architectural heritage of the City of Miami; possess integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association; and is eligible for designation under the following criteria:

3. Exemplify the historical, cultural, political, economical, or social trends of the community.

The Beverly Terrace Historic District exemplifies the historical, cultural, economical and social development trends of the City of Miami. The buildings comprising the district reflect the unique evolution of Biscayne Boulevard. The complex of buildings planned for all four corners of the intersection of NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and NE 33<sup>rd</sup> Street conveys the skills of the architects as both planners and designers. Later, when the Biscayne Boulevard Company changed the character of the street into a boulevard, the Beverly Terrace Apartments and Manor were of such quality and design that they were not only allowed to stay, but used in the Company's promotional literature as well.

5. Embody those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, period, or method of construction.

The Beverly Terrace Historic District is comprised of two outstanding examples of Mediterranean Revival design applied to multi-family residential buildings. Mediterranean Revival design is an eclectic derivation of architectural prototypes in countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. In this case, the

designers favor a more restrained treatment that is reminiscent of ancient classical influences in Italy.

6. Is an outstanding work of a prominent designer or builder.

Architect Martin Luther Hampton teamed with partner E. A. Ehmann in the design for a complex of four buildings that would relate to each other spatially and architecturally. Hampton is remembered as a pioneering architect in early Miami and designed exceptional residential, commercial and institutional buildings. The Beverly Terrace Apartments and Manor are outstanding examples of his work.

### III. DESCRIPTION

#### Present and Original Appearance:

#### Setting:

The Beverly Terrace Historic District comprises the northwest and southwest corners of the intersection of NE 33<sup>rd</sup> Street and Biscayne Boulevard (formerly NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue). The two buildings comprising the district occupy a frontage of 114.5 feet on Biscayne Boulevard and 106 feet on NE 33<sup>rd</sup> Street. Although this part of Biscayne Boulevard was once restricted to hotel and apartment buildings, the buildings are now surrounded by a mix of commercial buildings that are of more recent vintage. Surface parking is located behind each of the buildings.

#### Siting:

The relationship of the buildings to each other creates an impressive visual impact. They were designed as pendant pieces, with a similar plan shape, height and general plan so that they could easily be perceived as a pair. The canted corner entrances that provide the anchor for the extending wings are each oriented in such a way as to create a diagonal across the boulevard, further creating a spatial relationship that was operative when four buildings comprised the group.

#### Beverly Terrace Manor, 3224 Biscayne Boulevard:

The canted entrance bay of the Beverly Terrace Manor faces northeast, with the wings of the building extending in an easterly direction. The building is three stories in height and was constructed with concrete columns filled with hollow tile. The extending wings create an open courtyard in the front of the building.

Shallow, hipped roof towers terminate the ends of the inside corners of the building. The addition of the towers creates varying roof heights that give the building additional interest. The roof extends over the wall mass to create eaves that are embellished with brackets. The overhangs and towers are roofed with a barrel tile.

The principal focusing element of the building is the ornate center bay that extends the full three-story height and then terminates in a parapet that features a curvilinear swan's neck pediment. The parapet is pierced by a quatrefoil that contains a grid of wrought iron.

The entrance on the first floor that led to the common lobby has been altered, (the original doorway width and door configuration has been narrowed by infilling), although it still retains sufficient integrity to convey the sense of the original. Engaged columns carry a classical entablature that is surmounted by a

balustrade of turned balusters made of cast concrete. The entry is approached by a series of three risers that lead to a landing featuring multi-colored broken tile, a popular material and treatment for porches and entries in the 1920s.

There are some original wooden casement windows still in place; however the majority of them have been replaced, mostly with an aluminum awning type. Additional ornamental features that articulate the building include quoining at the corners of the bays that project and recede, cast lintels below the windows, clay tile ventilation panels and stringcourses to distinguish the different stories.

The side entrance located at the easternmost bay that fronts on Biscayne Boulevard consists of a projecting portal of concrete block scored to resemble stone, with radiating voussoirs and a prominent keystone embellished with a portrait face in relief.

#### Beverly Terrace Apartments, 3300 Biscayne Boulevard:

The exterior description of the Beverly Terrace Apartments is almost identical to that of the Beverly Terrace Manor. The intention was to create subtle versions of each design, so that while they remained distinct, there would be a similarity that would undeniably create an inviolable relationship between the two.

The canted entrance bay faces southeast with the wings of the building extending in an easterly direction. The building is three stories in height and was constructed with concrete columns filled with hollow tile. The extending wings create an open courtyard in the front of the building.

Shallow, hipped roof towers terminate the ends of the inside corners of the building. The addition of the towers creates varying roof heights that give the building additional interest. The roof extends over the wall mass to create eaves that are embellished with brackets. The overhangs and towers are roofed with barrel tile.

As in the Beverly Terrace Manor, elaborate side entrances lead into the building. Again, windows were a casement type but most have been replaced by aluminum substitutions. A scalloped molding embellishes the parapet of the main faces of the building, and continues below the windows of the third story adjacent to the center bay.

#### Center Bay Feature Common to Both the Beverly Terrace Apartments and Manor:

The center bay of both the Beverly Terrace Apartments and Manor is the focusing element in each composition. In the Beverly Terrace Manor, the ground floor door consists of a round arched portal that carries an entablature. The bay terminates in a parapet with a curvilinear parapet emphasized by a cast molding that follows

the curves of the wall. A quatrefoil that contains a metal grid screen pierces the center of the parapet.

In the Beverly Terrace Apartments, the division of stories, and their articulation through the grouping of windows, is identical. The parapet treatment is the most differentiated element of the composition. Here the parapet consists of a freestanding wall that is pierced by three equally sized and equidistant arches. Engaged spiral columns that carry an ogee arch define the center of the parapet. Tile coping terminates the flanking walls.

Contributing Structures and/or Landscape Features:

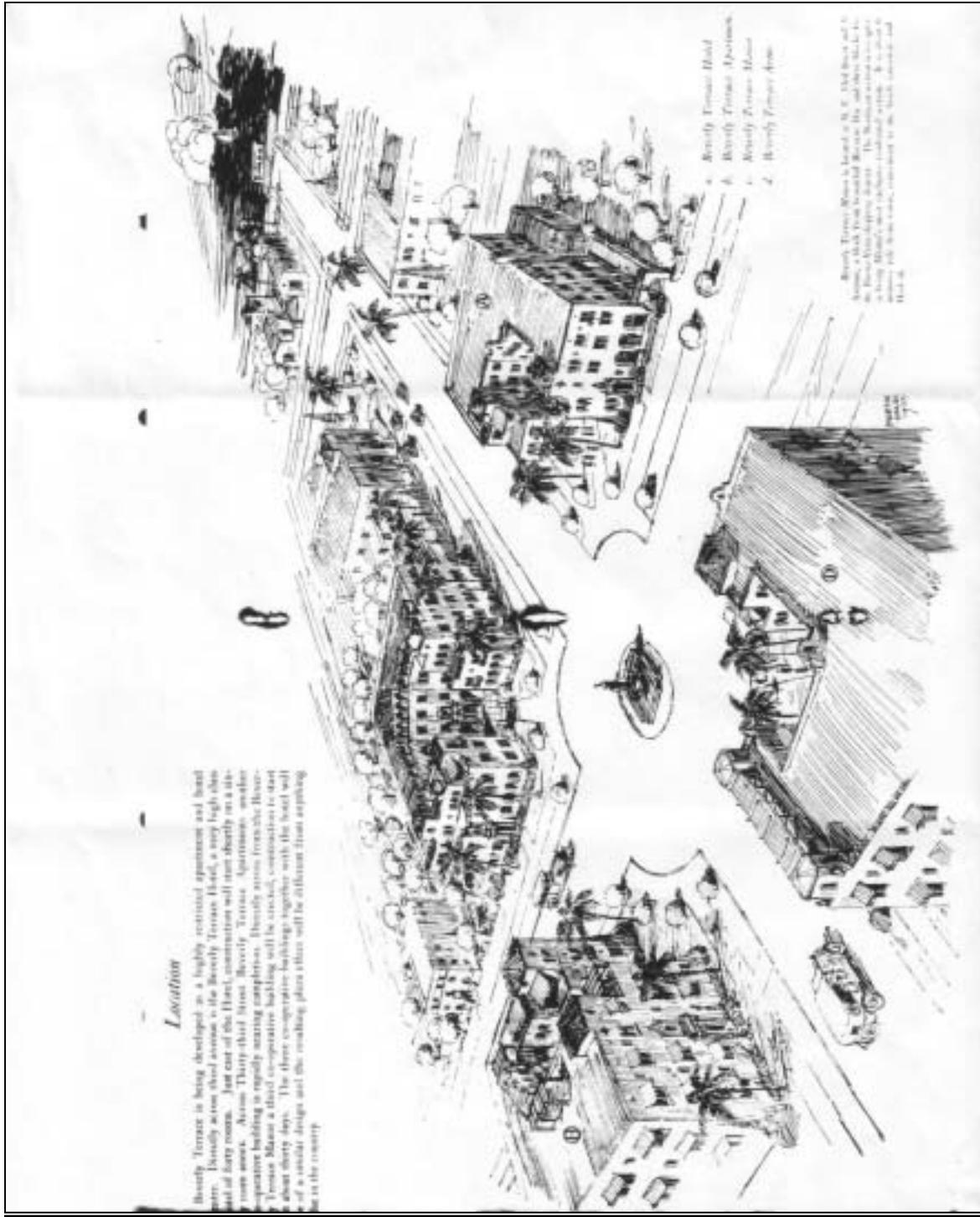
The Beverly Terrace Manor and Beverly Terrace Apartments are contributing structures within this historic district. Both buildings feature low plantings along the main elevation. Mature trees line Biscayne Boulevard and the side streets and are considered to be contributing landscape features.



Beverly Terrace Manor  
3224 Biscayne Boulevard  
North and east façades  
2002



Beverly Terrace Apartments  
3300 Biscayne Boulevard  
South and east façades  
2002



Beverly Terrace Historic District  
 "Plans for Beverly Terrace Corner Include \$1.5 million in Improvements"  
*Miami Daily News and Metropolis*  
 August 2, 1925  
 IV. PLANNING CONTEXT

### Present Trends and Conditions:

Although Biscayne Boulevard has itself fallen into disrepair, with an uneven quality to the new construction, there is significant future development potential. The Performing Arts Center now under construction at NE 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Biscayne Boulevard, and the addition of residential units in the Downtown and Edgewater area are helping to revive the boulevard. Because the Beverly Terrace Manor and Beverly Terrace Apartments are exceptional in their design and there are few other opportunities for historic housing, they should bring a premium market value.

### Preservation Incentives:

Over the years, both of the buildings included in this historic district have deteriorated, and appear to be in need of substantial rehabilitation. The assessment of the buildings is probably on the low side. The buildings are among the most distinctive of those from the early days of Biscayne Boulevard, and carry with them a certain cachet. Should the owners wish to invest in their upgrade, the increased property tax resulting from a higher assessed value could be deferred for a period of 10 years under the Miami-Dade County ad valorem tax incentive ordinance.

V. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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