
EL JARDIN

3747 MAIN HIGHWAY

Designation Report



City of Miami

REPORT OF THE CITY OF MIAMI PLANNING DEPARTMENT
TO THE HERITAGE CONSERVATION BOARD
ON THE POTENTIAL DESIGNATION OF
EL JARDIN
3747 MAIN HIGHWAY
AS A HERITAGE CONSERVATION ZONING DISTRICT

Prepared by Sarah E. Eaton 12/14/82
Historic Preservation Consultant Date

Accepted by Charles Edwin Chase 12/14/82
Chairman, Heritage Conservation Board Date

Designated by the Miami City Commission
Ordinance No. 9624
Date 05/31/83

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Historic Name:

El Jardin

Current Name:

Carrollton School of the Sacred Heart

Location:

3747 Main Highway
Miami, Florida 33133

Present Owner:

The Convent of the Sacred Heart of Miami
3747 Main Highway
Miami, Florida 33133

Present Occupant:

Carrollton School of the Sacred Heart
3747 Main Highway
Miami, Florida 33133

Present Use:

Educational

Present Zoning District:

R-1B

Tax Folio Number:

01-4128-04-0050

Boundary Description of HC Zoning District:

All of lots D and E lying southeast of County Road of the plat of EWANTON HEIGHTS, as recorded in Plat Book B at Page 53, of the Public Records of Dade County, Florida.

HC Zoning Classification:

Historic Site

Dade County Historic Survey Rating:

Architectural Significance - 1
Historical Significance - 1
Contextural Significance - 1

EL JARDIN

3747 MAIN HIGHWAY



location



site plan

II. SIGNIFICANCE

Statement of Significance:

El Jardin is significant as an outstanding example of Mediterranean Revival style architecture and is noted for its superb design, detail, materials, and craftsmanship. Designed by a prominent architectural firm, El Jardin was also the winter home of a noted industrialist.

El Jardin is the earliest known full-fledged Mediterranean Revival style structure remaining in Miami. In his design of El Jardin, Richard Kiehnel, of the architectural firm of Kiehnel and Elliott, introduced an architectural mode to South Florida which would prove to be the most influential in the area's history.

The outstanding detail and craftsmanship of the structure are particularly evident in the applied decoration on the frieze and around the central doorway, as well as on the finely articulated bayfront façade. Also of note are the special cosmetic effects which gave the brand new surface a weathered, aged look.

El Jardin is also significant for its associations with John Bindley, president of Pittsburgh Steel Company.

Relationship to Criteria for Designation:

El Jardin is eligible for designation under the following criteria for designation:

1. Is associated in a significant way with the life of a person important in the past.

El Jardin was built by John Bindley, president of Pittsburgh Steel, as his winter home.

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

El Jardin is an outstanding example of Mediterranean Revival style architecture and is the earliest known example of that style in Miami.

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

El Jardin was designed by Richard Kiehnel of the firm of Kiehnel & Elliott. Kiehnel introduced the Mediterranean Revival style to Miami and went on to produce many of the City's outstanding structures.

7. Contains elements of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship of outstanding quality or which represent a significant innovation or adaptation to the South Florida environment.

El Jardin is particularly noteworthy for the excellence of its craftsmanship and detailing, embodied in such features as its applied ornamentation on the frieze, elaborate central doorway, finely articulated bayfront façade, and its artificially aged appearance.

III. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Date of Erection:

1917

Architect:

The architect for El Jardin was Richard Kiehnel of the firm of Kiehnel & Elliott. This firm was formed in Pittsburgh in 1906 and was extremely active and influential in Miami after 1920. Other buildings by Kiehnel & Elliott include Miami Senior High School, Seybold, Building, Coconut Grove Playhouse, and Coral Gables Elementary School.

Builder/Contractor:

John B. Orr

Historical Context:

El Jardin is one of many elaborate estates built along Biscayne Bay as winter homes for northern industrialists. Other owners of El Jardin, in addition to John Bindley, have included Albert J. Richey, a Pittsburgh and Miami real estate magnate, and Henry L. Doherty, founder of Cities Services.

El Jardin has been owned by the Convent of the Sacred Heart since 1961.

IV. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

Description of Building:

El Jardin is a two story rectangular structure with an open courtyard. This concrete building is faced with a textured stucco finish and is topped with a low-pitched hipped roof covered with barrel tiles.

The northwest façade features a symmetrical composition with a central doorway. This main entrance contains a double Spanish door of thick wood panels encrusted with large bronze studs. An elaborate frontispiece with Spanish Churriguesque detailing embellishes the entrance.

The southeast façade facing the bay features a much more fanciful composition. Here, three elliptical arches on the first story with an open loggia on the second story are flanked by two corner pavilions which project slightly from the rear wall.

The most outstanding feature of El Jardin is its applied decoration, particularly on the deep-set frieze. This intricate decoration also appears as window and door trim, along balconies, and around arches.

Special cosmetic treatments were applied to the structure during construction to create a weathered and aged effect. Paint coats were overlapped letting colors underneath show through. Cast stone was given artificial veining and porous surfaces. Solutions were also applied to promote mildew growth.

The southeast façade of the building opens to an exterior courtyard with a reflecting pool and fountain enclosed by a wall of oolitic limestone. Below the main terrace is a large swimming pool, also enclosed by an oolitic limestone wall. Overlooking the pool and recessed within the terrace is a bathhouse which is connected to the main house by a passageway into the basement.

Description of Site:

El Jardin is located on a ten-acre lot overlooking Biscayne Bay and is enclosed on the Main Avenue side by an oolitic limestone wall and gatehouse. Other historic structures on the property, in addition to the gatehouse, are a former six-car garage and apartment northwest of the house and the bathhouse and pool on the southeast side.

A large new classroom building northwest of the house does not contribute to the historic integrity of the property and blocks the view of the house from Main Highway.



El Jardin
3747 Main Highway
Southeast (bayfront) façade
1982

V. PLANNING CONTEXT

Present Trends and Conditions:

El Jardin is well maintained and is actively utilized as the Carrollton School. In order to meet the needs of the school, a large, modern classroom building was constructed on the property between the main house and Main Highway.

Conservation Objectives:

The exterior surfaces of the historic structures should continue to be preserved in their original state, and any new buildings planned for the school should be designed and sited in a manner more sympathetic to the historic character of the property.

These conservation objectives can best be achieved by maintaining the present zoning of the property. An HC-1 zoning overlay district will maintain the current zoning, requiring only the review of physical changes to the property.

VI. HC ZONING ELEMENTS

Boundaries:

The Boundaries of the HC zoning district have been drawn to include the entire tract of land owned by the Convent of the Sacred Heart of Miami.

Major Exterior Surfaces Subject to Review:

All four facades of El Jardin and all surfaces of all other historic improvements or structure on the site shall be considered major exterior surfaces subject to review. This shall include the gatehouse, gate and walls, former garage, swimming pool, and bathhouse. The Barry Building shall not be considered a major exterior surface.

Major Landscape Features Subject to Review:

The major landscape features subject to review shall include all features which are subject to requirements for tree removal permits, as set forth in Chapter 17 of the City Code.