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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES OF THE
NORTH BEACH COMMUNITY (1919-1963)
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
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E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

SUMMARY

The Multiple Property submission, Historic and Architectural Resources of the North Beach Community, addresses properties nominated for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, B, and/or C. The properties have significance for their association with events and persons locally significant in the areas of architecture, community planning and development, entertainment/recreation, commerce, religion, social history, and education. Properties eligible for listing under this cover were constructed between 1919 and 1963, and fall under three contexts: I. Early Development of the North Beach Area (1919 – 1929); II. Depression Era and World War II Development (1930 – 1945); and III. Post World War II Development Boom and the Rise of Mid-Century Architectural Styles (1945-1963). This later context includes buildings less than 50 years of age which may be nominated under Criteria Consideration G if they are exceptionally important or if they are an integral part of the development of the character of a historic district.

SETTING

Miami Beach (population 87,933 in 2000) is a city in southeast Florida situated on a number of natural and artificial islands, bounded by the Atlantic Ocean on the east and Biscayne Bay (the Intracoastal Waterway) on the west, which is connected to the city of Miami by four causeways. It is located in Miami-Dade County, between the city of Surfside on the north and by Key Biscayne on the south. Its main north-south thoroughfare is Highway A1A (Collins Avenue), which runs between the Atlantic Ocean beach area and its many hotels and condominiums and the residential subdivisions that overlook Biscayne Bay. A number of these subdivision are found on “dredge and fill” islands that extend out into the bay and are connected to the main barrier island by causeways that pass over “creeks,” or man-made channels that provide navigation for pleasure craft owned by area residents. Until 1912 the Miami Beach area was a swampy, bug-infested stretch of land located between the recently founded city of Miami and the Atlantic Ocean. John S. Collins and Carl G. Fisher pioneered real estate development and built a bridge across the bay. Miami Beach, incorporated in 1915, is now a trendy, luxury urban resort, noted for its Art Deco architecture, and as a major tourist and convention destination. Miami Beach is a year-round, sub-tropical urban resort, world famous for its beaches, palatial estates, cultural and recreational facilities, and vibrant nightlife. The North Beach community of Miami Beach comprises approximately one third of the city’s land area and population. It spans from the Atlantic Ocean to Biscayne Bay, and extends from 63rd Street on the South to the Miami Beach city limits at 87th Terrace on the north and includes the Normandy Isle and Normandy Shores islands which are connected to the Miami Beach peninsula via 71st Street.

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I. Early Development of the North Beach Area (1919-1929)

Native Americans, while not a factor in the modern development of North Beach and its surrounding communities, were the area's first inhabitants. Uncovered in 1923 during land clearing activity for the Altos Del Mar no. 4 subdivision (near Bay Drive between 91st and 93rd Streets in present day Surfside, just north of Miami Beach), Tequesta Indian remains were initially promoted by local developers as the site of an ancient pirate treasure.¹ A 372 foot-long Tequesta Indian habitation mound, as well as a burial mound, was subsequently unearthed by archeological digs at the site. The digs, initiated in 1934 by Vernon Lamme and completed in 1935 by Karl Squires and Dr. Julian H. Steward, revealed the remains of at least 50 people, as well as potsherds, arrowheads, bone tools, and artifacts of shell and stone.² The remains dated from as early as approximately 1,000 B.C. to as recently as the 16th century A.D.³

The U.S. government initiated the modern history of North Beach with the construction of the Biscayne House of Refuge, a lifesaving station constructed on the beach slightly south of today's 71st Street in 1876. It was the southernmost of eleven stations constructed under an executive order of Ulysses S. Grant issued in 1875 by the United States Lifesaving Service (precursor of the Coast Guard) to assist shipwrecked sailors.⁴ The vernacular wood structure was built of pine with a cedar shingle roof and featured a wrapping verandah according to the standardized plans developed for Florida's Houses of Refuge by Boston architect Francis Ward Chandler, later head of the School of Architecture at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Anticipating expanded operations, the lifesaving station's original 10 acre oceanfront site was expanded westward in 1891 to include a 22 acre government-owned site spanning from the Atlantic Ocean to Biscayne Bay. This site would later accommodate one of the areas founding town sites, as well the North Shore Park, one of the area's most important recreational areas.⁵

In 1882, the land surrounding the House of Refuge, including 60 miles of oceanfront land from Key Biscayne to the present-day town of Jupiter, Florida, was purchased by New Jersey entrepreneurs Elnathan Field, Ezra Osborn and Henry Lum with the intention of establishing a coconut plantation. Over 300,000 coconuts, imported by boat from the Caribbean, were floated ashore and planted by a mobile work crew partly based at the Biscayne House of Refuge and directed by its keeper, Hamilton Pierce. Remarkably, as late as the first

¹ Howard Kleinberg, Miami Beach: A History (Miami, FL: Centennial Press, c1994) pp. 2-3.

² Gordon R. Willey, "Sites in Broward and Dade Counties," Yale Publications in Anthropology: Florida and the Caribbean (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1949) pp. 79-84. Quoted in William H. Cary, Shannon M. Anderton, Carolyn Klepser, "Historical Overview of North Beach", p. 8.

³ Miami Beach: A History, pp. 2-3.

⁴ "Historical Overview of North Beach," p. 1.

⁵ Carolyn Klesper, p. 2.

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decade of the 20th century, most of coastal South Florida remained under this single ownership as a coconut plantation.⁶

The commercial failure of the coconut plantation in the 1890s brought horticulturist John Collins, an investor in the scheme, to Florida. In 1907, Collins bought out a portion of the land between present-day 14th to 67th streets, and established a farm and avocado orchard on part of the site. Only five years later, in 1912, Collins and his family formed the Miami Beach Improvement Company and platted the Ocean Front Subdivision with the intention of developing a seaside resort in emulation of Atlantic City, New Jersey. The efforts of Collins, along with other developers like Carl G. Fisher and brothers, John N. and James E. Lummus, led to the incorporation of the Town of Miami Beach on March 26, 1915, and its re-incorporation as a city on May 1, 1917. The northern boundary of the municipality lay approximately at 45th Street (near the present I-195 causeway), and thus below North Beach. However, as both a model of development and later as a framework for civic governance, the founding of Miami Beach had a critical impact on the next phase of North Beach development. World War I (1914-1918) stopped development on the beach and, as late as 1924, the North Beach area was still largely a wilderness outside the city limits of Miami Beach. Only the Jungle Inn, reputedly a speakeasy and gambling joint, was built there, avoiding Prohibition by taking full advantage of the area's isolation.⁷ North Beach did not become a part of Miami Beach until July 1, 1924. On that day, nearly ten years after the incorporation the City, its northern border was moved from near 46th Street to its current location at 87th Terrace.

The basic pattern of land development along Miami Beach was established at the southern end of the peninsula as early as 1912, where the platting of new subdivisions was accompanied by the raising and clearing of land. Native mucky swamps and dense brush were tamed in order to entice tourists and sell home sites. Inland water edges were neatly contoured with concrete seawalls, giving definitive shape to the area. Suction dredges, installed on barges in Biscayne Bay, vacuumed up bay bottom and re-deposited it within the new perimeter. Miami Beach was transformed into a neatly fringed table of bleached bay-bottom sand that quickly produced a physical eden of green lawns, neat rows of feathery trees and flowering plants. The landscape was not so much designed as "engineered." It was transformed to reflect what a generation of Americans thought the tropics should look like, rather than a naturally evolved landscape. The pattern quickly spread up the coast, transforming coastal South Florida from would-be coconut plantation into promising resort suburbs. The chief planning tool of this urbanization was the gridiron plan rather than meandering and curvilinear streets. North Beach, lying directly north of the pioneering subdivisions of South Miami Beach largely followed this original pattern.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Located in a rustic two story cabin constructed of hewn logs and fronted by a porch, the Jungle Inn's theme was enhanced by interior walls adorned with animal skins and alligator hides, and by tropical plants that hung from the ceiling; "Historical Overview of North Beach," p. 4.

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Period of Initial Subdivision Development

With the end of World War I, the subdivision and planning of North Beach began in earnest. The stage was set after an agreement was reached between property owners in the area and Dade County commissioners in December, 1918, that phased out the existing oceanfront right of way of Ocean Boulevard. This scenic right of way was originally granted to the three Tatum Brothers in 1917 in order to provide access to their property.⁸ Although the boulevard was noted as “one of the most popular of the numerous pleasure drives around the city,”⁹ the agreement recognized the roadway’s commercial value, and strategically opened the most valuable oceanfront property for private development. Collins Avenue (formerly Atlantic Avenue, renamed in honor of John Collins in 1917), which was 200’ behind Ocean Boulevard, was henceforth established as the vital north-south artery of Miami’s beaches. A patchwork quilt of subdivisions soon sprouted along Collins Avenue, which became one of the nation’s most storied and recognizable roadways.

North Beach’s first subdivision, Atlantic Heights, was filed in February, 1919, by Frank Osborne, son of coconut plantation founder Ezra Osborne, and his wife Viola. It centered on Atlantic Drive (present day 69th street) and spanned from the Atlantic Ocean to Indian Creek, a lagoon that bisected the swampy land mass of North Beach that includes the Normandy Shores and Isle of Normandy islands. The same year, the Altos Del Mar #1 and #2 subdivisions were filed by the three Tatum brothers—Bethel Blanton, Johnson Reed, and Smiley M. The brothers were natives of Georgia, sons of Aaron S. Tatum, a minister, and Elizabeth Johnson Tatum. Bethel Tatum had moved to Florida in 1881 at age 17, had worked in the newspaper business, and for a time was owner and publisher of the Miami Metropolis. In 1907 he went into real estate and was later joined by his two brothers. Johnson Tatum, born in 1866, went to business college in Louisville, Kentucky, and moved first to Tampa and then to Miami in 1911, working in banking and insurance. The third brother, Smiley, majored in chemistry at the University of Georgia and worked for many years as a chemist in Bartow, Florida, until acid fumes injured his eyes. He moved to Miami in 1902.¹⁰

These subdivisions established a swath of home sites along the Atlantic Ocean between present-day 75th Street and 87th Terrace. Altos Del Mar #3, a multi-family district, was laid out just to the west in 1923. The Tatums completed their North Beach development with Altos Del Mar #4, 5 and 6 (which lie in present-day Surfside). Number 6 was promoted by the Tatums as “the hub around which the entire social and business life of upper

⁸ “Ocean Boulevard May Soon Be Thing Of The Past: Tatums Asking County To Keep Old Agreement, Board Under Contract To Accept Highway Back From Shoreline,” News-Metropolis, December 11, 1923, Section II, p. 1.

⁹ Miami the Beautiful (Miami, Florida: Foster & Reynolds) Circa 1920. Courtesy of the Historical Museum of South Florida.

¹⁰ Carolyn Klesper, “90 Years of North Beach, A Synopsis of the Northern Portion of the City of Miami Beach,” prepared for the City of Miami Beach Planning Department, June 6, 2001, p. 3.

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Miami Beach will center, and radiate from. It will be a district devoted to high class shops and stores surrounded by beautiful residences, luxurious hotels and exclusive apartment houses.”¹¹

In 1921, under executive order of President Warren G. Harding,¹² a portion of the government tract associated with the Biscayne House of Refuge (between present-day 73rd Street and 75th Street) also became available. This land was restored to the public domain just after Harding’s January 1921 visit to Miami Beach (a visit made famous by photos of Harding playing golf with Carl Fisher’s pet elephant Rosie, who served as the president’s caddy). By 1922, the tract’s roughly 40 acres had been surveyed and platted into 133 lots with broad streets, an oceanfront park on its east end, and a bayfront park on its west end. Its planning called for a hotel district along a fragment of the now defunct Ocean Boulevard, a commercial district along Collins Avenue and a residential district on the balance of the land. This stratified planning assembled the essential features and amenities of a resort community into a compact 10 blocks. The plat was renamed the Harding Townsite in 1923, after the President’s death in August of that year. Its lots were sold in February 1924 at an auction attended on the first day by more than 2,000 people.¹³

In 1925, Henri and Rose Levy, with partners Reuben and Ethel Gryzmish, completed the oceanfront development of North Beach with the Normandy Beach South Subdivision, which lay between the Atlantic Heights and Harding Townsite subdivisions.¹⁴ Levy, a native of Hochfelden (Alsace) who immigrated to America in 1900 and settled in Cincinnati, had moved to Miami Beach in 1922.¹⁵ Levy bought the land he would develop from Carl Fisher in 1923, but could not associate with Fisher because of his Jewish origins.¹⁶ Reuben Gryzmish and his brother Mortimer, tobacconists from Boston whose fortune was founded on the J. A. Cigar Co., would develop an important partnership with Levy. The Levys and Gryzmishes planned Normandy Beach South to center on 71st Street, which was henceforth established as a future east-west corridor to the mainland and consequently the axis of a key urban center of commercial development. Theatrically, the developers marked the eastern end of 71st Street, at Collins Avenue, with a whimsical gate rendered in stone and stucco and spanning the road.¹⁷ The gate initiated a series of artful projects that Levy and Gryzmish would sponsor on his expanding North Beach properties.

¹¹ “To Complete An Ideal: The Newest Allotment Of Altos Del Mar.” Miami Herald, Sunday January 27, 1924, p. 7.

¹² The plat was legally held up for years by Mr. L. G. Norton, who previously made a claim to the tract as a homesteader and contested the subsequent land patents issued by the Federal Government. The contestation failed in 1930, when the Supreme Court failed to hear the case.

¹³ “32 Lots in Harding Townsite Are Sold At Public Auction,” The Miami Herald, February 13, 1924.

¹⁴ Normandy Beach South was the successor to the Normandy Beach Subdivision (spanning from present-day 87th terrace to 90th street in Surfside) that Levy had platted the previous year.

¹⁵ “North Beach Resort District Designation Report” (Miami Beach: City of Miami Beach Planning Department, Design Preservation & Neighborhood Planning Division) 2003. p. 23.

¹⁶ Interview with June Newbauer by Philippe Bardo, September 3, 2000. Courtesy of the City of Miami Beach.

¹⁷ Carolyn Klesper, “90 Years of North Beach,” p. 5.

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By 1925, Miami Beach's "North Shore" (North Beach's oceanfront) presented a nearly continuous grid of streets from 63rd Street to 87th Terrace. An exception was the remaining swath of territory belonging to the lifesaving station, which was deeded to the City of Miami Beach in 1941.¹⁸ The eclectic numbering systems and often flowery street names (Bougainvillea, Clematis, Dahlia) assigned within each subdivision were soon regularized when the district was annexed by the City of Miami Beach. Abbott, Bryon, Carlyle, Dickens and Hawthorne Avenues were named for poets and authors in 1925, following the recommendation of the city engineer, E.D.R. Neff.

Development soon moved to the western frontier of North Beach. Just west of the Harding Townsite, an amorphous mangrove area was bulkheaded to create Park View Isle in 1925. One year later, Henri Levy's Normandy Beach Properties Corporation began development of the Normandy Isles, the area's most ambitious development. Originally named Meade-Warner Island, the tract comprised 450 acres on two natural mangrove islands in Biscayne Bay, directly west of Levy's Normandy Beach South subdivision. Isle of Normandy, the southernmost of the two islands, required two years to clear land, construct seawalls and dredge. Levy's third project and greatest challenge was Normandy Isle, on a natural (though swampy) land mass in Biscayne Bay, directly west of Normandy Beach South. The two were connected by 71st Street, and at one point the entrance was graced with a grand archway announcing the name of the development.¹⁹

On the bay side of Miami Beach, a real estate syndicate composed of several members, among them the Gryzmich brothers and Henry (sic) Levy, bought a mangrove patch named Mead Island from A.P. Warner and the Mead brothers for \$250,000, renamed it South Island and began its development. Just above South Island was another mangrove patch called North Island. (Existence of the two mangrove islands can be traced back as far as Bernard Romans' mid-18th century survey of the area.) The syndicate originally planned to name the development's streets after persons. But the Dade County Commission, which had control of street names, rejected the idea, and the developers decided to name the streets after French towns and provinces. Included in the new naming was a change of the island's name from South Island to Normandy Isle. In 1925 the first housing, comprised of four apartment houses, was begun along with the fountain at the east end of the island. Intersected by 71st Street and Normandy Drive, which form a central business district, the quaint kidney-shaped area rife with greenery saw its first apartments and its eye-catching fountain rise in 1925. The fountain still stands today but the housing did not survive the devastating hurricane of 1926. Nonetheless by the middle 1940s and 1950s, modern multifamily buildings popped back up again, many lining the northernmost waterfront streets evocatively dubbed Calais and Marseille Drives. North Island was to remain in its native state until 1939

¹⁸ The House of Refuge site was, "by authority of Congress, exchanged for a site on Causeway Island, in Biscayne Bay, for the use of the Coast Guard." "Harding Townsite / South Altos Del Mar Historic District Designation Report" (Miami Beach: City of Miami Beach, Planning, Design and Historic Preservation Division) 1966, P. 16.

¹⁹ Carolyn Klesper, "90 Years of North Beach," p. 5.

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when the City of Miami Beach bought it, pumped up the land and created Normandy Shores Municipal Golf Course.²⁰

Much of the land was initially under water. For over two years, huge dredges operating 24 hours a day pumped up the bay bottom to create Normandy Isle from the south parcel. Barracks were built for the imported workers, many from the Bahamas. Plants, mostly palms, were imported from the Caribbean and stocked in a nursery for use in landscaping. Henri and Rose Levy designed the fountain, streets, lighting, sidewalks, arched entrance gate at the east, pavilion at the west entrance, and an extensive plant nursery (site of the present park and pool) on Normandy Isle. They were clearly inspired by the City Beautiful Movement of the time, as well as Henri's memories of France. A comparison of several French town plans shows that Miami Beach's Normandy Isle most closely resembles the seaside town of Granville, one of Henri Levy's favorite places.²¹

In 1925, as Levy was working on Normandy Isle and, farther south, the Roney Plaza Hotel was under construction, two resort facilities appeared on the oceanfront just south of Atlantic Heights. The first was the Gulf Stream Apartments, a seven-story building and nine cottages at 6039 Collins Avenue. Nearby, the palatial 142-room Deauville Casino and Hotel was built by Joseph Eisener, a former salesman for Carl Fisher. Its name may have been influenced by Levy's French-inspired projects nearby. It was heavily damaged by the hurricane within months of its construction, but survived for thirty years. Eisener built what was proclaimed as the largest swimming pool in Florida as part of the Deauville Casino, which opened at 67th Street and the ocean in early 1926. The ocean-fed pool was 165 feet long and 100 feet wide and located on the second floor behind the hotel rooms. It was surrounded by a gigantic pool deck and cabanas, a space that could fit over 2,000 spectators for shows choreographed in and around the pool. Planned as an entertainment capital, the Deauville provided dining rooms, ballroom dancing, entertainers, exhibitions by champion swimmers and divers and state-of-the-art bathing facilities. The Deauville had a checkered life, and eventually was sold to health faddist Bernarr MacFadden and demolished in 1956 for a new Deauville Hotel.²²

Smaller apartment-hotels also sprung up in the area. However, the largest slice of new development in all areas of North Beach comprised modest single family houses. On May 1926, the Miami Daily News Metropolis announced 50 houses under construction on Normandy Isle by the Garrison Construction Co., all of Spanish, Italian Renaissance, Persian and Floridian designs. Most were vacation or retirement homes styled according to the popular and romantic Mediterranean Revival. They were conceived as artistic homes, "ranging from

²⁰ Kleinberg, p. 94.

²¹ Interview with June Newbauer, daughter of Henri Levy, by Philippe Bardo.

²² Kleinberg, p. 104, p. 223.

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picturesque patio dwellings to palatial mansions.”²³ The larger homes, designed by Miami’s best architects, rose on the oceanfront Altos Del Mar subdivision.

The island’s Oceanside (1926) and Trouville (1926) subdivisions, both completed prior to the real estate bust of the same year, were designed by D.E. Rossetter, an engineer formerly associated with Carl G. Fisher Properties. Normandy Beach Properties called Rossetter “a master city builder.” Indeed, the Normandy Isles were to be provisioned with all the elements Fisher had virtually trademarked on his lands directly to the south. Its picturesque, gracefully curving and tree-lined parkways, ample waterfront lots and a golf course²⁴ contrasted with the engineer’s grid that characterizes most of North Shore. The island featured esplanades and a civic monument (Normandy Isle Fountain) in a central place that functioned as a town center. Bay Drive, which encircled Normandy Island, was a 70-foot “white way” boulevard.²⁵ In a strategy reminiscent of Fisher and perhaps inspired by Schultze & Weaver’s contemporary but un-built Villa Biscayne cooperative apartment building project on North Bay Road, a large site at the southeast corner of the island, on the axis of Brest Esplanade, was set aside for the development of a grand hotel.²⁶

Levy then worked on realizing his dream of connecting his Miami Beach properties to the mainland with a causeway across Biscayne Bay linking North Beach to mainland Miami’s growing northern subdivisions, as well as Hialeah Park racetrack, which lay directly to the west. The two existing connections were the Venetian Causeway, which was too low for boats to pass under, and the County Causeway at 5th Street, which was so narrow it had one-way traffic, that was reversed every hour. The Miami Beach City Council endorsed the causeway project in December 1925, making it possible to proceed with preliminary work.²⁷ Initial plans were prepared by an engineer named Lassiter to sell the idea of the 79th Street Causeway to the U.S. government through the Corps of Engineers.²⁸

After numerous trips to Washington, much re-designing, and an arduous and expensive construction, thanks to the efforts of Henri Levy the causeway was finally completed in 1929. It is called the 79th Street Causeway for its western connection in Miami; at its eastern end it connects to 71st Street on Normandy Isle and Miami Beach. The causeway was dependent for a part of its length on the divided parkway system called the North and South Everglades Concourses (later renamed 71st Street and Normandy Drive) that bisected the Isle of Normandy. The two roads met at 71st Street at Vendome Plaza, whose triangular layout formed the

²³ “The Isle of Normandy: One of Beauty Spots of Miami Beach Is Latest In Development of Filled Land,” The Lure of Miami Beach, c. 1929. HMSF.

²⁴ “The Future ‘Show Place of all Miami Beach’: Isle of Normandy,” Miami Herald, October 6, 1925.

²⁵ A street with lights was referred to as a white way during the early 20th century,

²⁶ The North Shore Hotel, a Colonial Revival structure with a grand portico, colonial windows with decorative shutters and hipped roofs (demolished and replaced by the King Cole Apartments in 1961) was built there in 1937.

²⁷ “City Council” City of Miami Beach Annual Report, 1926. Courtesy of the City of Miami Beach.

²⁸ Interview with June Newbauer by Philippe Bardo, September 3, 2000.

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commercial and civic center of the area. At the center of Vendome Plaza was the Vendome fountain, a centerpiece of the island's civic arts program.

The development of North Island (later called Normandy Shores) was deferred due to the great hurricane of 1926, and Florida's subsequent real estate bust. The last development of the era was Biscayne Point, platted in 1926 by Cecil Fowler. Fowler, was the owner of the National Bank in Lafayette, Indiana, and a friend of developer Carl Fisher, with whom he co-developed Miami Beach's famed Flamingo Hotel.²⁹ The subdivision's unique peninsular design projected 4,900 feet into Biscayne Bay. Platted for single family homes and bisected by a canal, Biscayne Point achieved the uncommon success of offering water frontage with almost every lot.

To the west, the completion of the Everglades Avenue Causeway was dependent on the creation of further new islands by the Venetian Isles Company³⁰ The causeway's track, which crossed Broadcast Key, the location of the transmitter of WIOD in the center of Biscayne Bay, laid the groundwork for the future Harbor Island, North Bay Island and Treasure Island, later incorporated as North Bay Village in 1945. When completed in 1929, the Everglades Avenue Causeway was not only a much needed new automotive link across Biscayne Bay, with the County Causeway farther south, it was also the final link of a recreational parkway that formed a "loop drive" around the bay. The loop, first envisioned by Coral Gables developer and planning activist George Merrick, was designed to enthrall residents and holiday riders with over-water views of Miami and Miami Beach.

In less than a decade (1919-1929), the physical topography of North Beach had been transformed from wilderness to real estate. Its new lines were established, although the area hardly benefited from the manic development that characterized other Florida boom towns. Originally outside the Miami Beach city boundaries and remote from its concentration of amenities, the district was still characterized by its isolation. However, in 1924 the northern boundary of Miami Beach, previously set at the midline of Section 22, near present-day 46th Street, was extended to the north line of Section 2, Township 53, Range 42E, and henceforth known as 87th Terrace. The change put most of North Beach squarely under the control of Miami Beach (and Carl Fisher, whose estate-zoned ocean front subdivisions, platted in 1924 and later known as "Millionaires Row," were just to the south, between approximately 46th and 67th streets). The incorporation of North Beach into Miami Beach may even have been planned by Fisher to improve the development prospects for his own areas. In any case, the annexation of North Beach was opposed by local investors, notably those who had bought lots in the Harding Townsite, over the issue of raising of taxes.³¹

²⁹ Jerry M. Fisher, *The Pacesetter: The Untold Story of Carl G. Fisher* (Ft. Bragg, CA: Lost Coast Press) 1998.

³⁰ "\$675,000 Available for Causeway: Commissioners Approve Bonds for Bay Road," *Miami Daily News*, December 20, 1925. Little River Section, p. 1.

³¹ "The News at Miami Beach," *Miami Herald*, July 2, 1924.

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II. Depression Era and World War II Development (1930-1945)

In spite of the crash of Florida's real estate boom in 1926, and the stock market debacle of 1929, Miami Beach experienced astonishing growth in the mid-1930s. With the completion of the Everglades Causeway (now called the 79th Street Causeway) in 1929, the stage was set for the future development of North Beach. The still empty western half of the Isle of Normandy, as well as the adjacent northern island, renamed Normandy Shores in 1948, were platted between 1936 and 1939. The development of Normandy Shores was initiated with the development of the Normandy Shores Municipal Golf Course on land first offered to the city in 1928. Like LaGorce Country Club farther south, it was one of the first golf courses in the nation built entirely on reclaimed bay bottom. Its Georgian Revival clubhouse building, designed by August Geiger and styled, was completed in 1941.

Other subdivisions were concurrently completed. Park View Island, initially raised in 1925, was redeveloped with new concrete seawalls by Thomas H. Horobin, who also linked its development to the ocean with a new paved parkway to the ocean at 73rd street. The Haynesworth Beach Subdivision and Lyle G. Hall Subdivision were platted in 1937. The growth of North Beach was still tempered by the area's relative isolation and newness. However, during the 1930s, North Beach emerged from an outpost to a full-fledged seasonal resort city. The construction of new hotels and apartment buildings was the chief engine of Miami Beach's development during this period. Accordingly, most new subdivisions were planned for apartment and hotel development. As development progressed in this area in the 1930s and early 1940s, more hotels appeared, built by the same architects and in the same Art Deco style as seen in South Beach. Most impressive was the seven-story Tower Hotel, now demolished, designed by Martin L. Hampton in 1935. It stood directly north of the Gulf Stream Apartments and was built in only 70 days.³² A few of the smaller hotels still survive from this time, including:

- Forde Ocean Apartments, 6605 Collins Avenue; architect L. Murray Dixon, 1935
- Normandy Plaza, 6979 Collins Avenue; architect L. Murray Dixon, 1936
- Rowe Hotel, 6606 Collins Avenue; architect David T. Ellis, 1939
- Olsen Hotel, 7300 Ocean Terrace; architect V.H. Nellenbogen, 1940

Within the Harding Townsite's two-block ocean frontage at Ocean Terrace, new hotels mirrored the building types prevalent in South Miami Beach. Other hotels sprang up on Collins Avenue and even on Harding Avenue. Nearly all were built on the district's minimal 50-foot lots, with masonry walls and interior corridors following the building and construction typology established in the 1920s. Built in a popular language of modernism, these buildings assimilated vernacular features and celebrated environmental fitness, tropical

³² Architectural Forum, Sept. 1936, p. 217.

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luxury, a recreational lifestyle and popular culture. Far from modernism's ideological roots, prewar Miami was already a hothouse in which new and hybridized varieties of modernism were tested and flourished.

Oceanfront bungalow colonies, which appeared in the 1930s, offered families a small village of freestanding villas on the beachfront, a more informal and domestic alternative to traditional hotels. Some offered free-standing maisonette apartments, and were stepped in a manner that afforded each unit a southeastern exposure or a view of the ocean.³³ American Architect and Architecture highlighted Miami Beach's new maisonette-type apartment buildings, which emulated the use of similar apartment types in the Parisian interiors of Le Corbusier and Robert Mallet-Steven.³⁴

The coherent development of low-scale, multi-family residential communities just beyond the more popular and publicized oceanfront is a surprising legacy of Miami Beach's ad hoc urbanization. This pattern was set in prewar South Miami Beach, where between 1925 and 1941 a densely built neighborhood of apartment buildings and apartment-hotels rapidly and unpredictably filled platted subdivisions originally destined for single-family homes.³⁵ Large numbers of Moderne, garden-style apartment buildings were built west of the beach, in the North Shore and Normandy Isle areas. Generally built on a single 50-foot lot, most were two stories with front patios and side gardens. On larger lots, the linear configuration of garden apartments was articulated to form L, C or J-shapes, or simply mirrored to create generous, private courts.

These buildings, exemplifying the plasticity and transparency of Moderne architectural styling, featured cubic massing and large glass casement windows which cross-ventilated each unit and were sheltered by projecting concrete 'eyebrows'. Exterior catwalks and outdoor stairways predicted the more functional building types of the post-war period. Often, two buildings were mirrored, or turned at angles in order to create common garden spaces, and better take advantage of the southern exposure. On the interior, a combination of bedrooms and studio apartments featured dinettes, dressing rooms, streamlined kitchens. The patios were furnished with plentiful sun chairs and tables. By the beginning of World War II, a significant number of small apartment buildings lined Marseilles Drive, Normandy Drive, Biarritz and Bay Drives in Normandy Isle, and crowded around Abbott, Byron, Carlyle and Dickens Avenues, behind the beachfront.

The interwar period also witnessed the modernization of vernacular home styles in South Florida. A distinct and common vocabulary of housing emerged from meshing the bungalow style of the region's first

³³ "Two Apartments, Miami Beach, Florida," American Architect and Architecture, p. 65.

³⁴ Jean-Francois Lejeune, "Lawrence Murray Dixon and His Colleagues: Competing for the Modern 1933-1942;" Jean Francois Lejeune; Allan T. Shulman, The Making of Miami Beach: 1933-1942. The Architecture of Lawrence Murray Dixon. (New York: Rizzoli) 2000, p. 171.

³⁵ "Building and Rebuilding" Jean Francois LeJeune and Allan T. Shulman, The Making of Miami Beach 1933-1942, The Architecture of Laurence Murray Dixon (New York: Rizzoli) 2000.

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development with the Mediterranean Revival masonry vernacular and even modern themes and features. The result was stylistically eclectic. The Golden Rule Homes, two of which were completed in June, 1935 according to designs by Robert Little, are an example. The bungalow-like Mediterranean villas were built of concrete block sporting “Spanish design and have every modern convenience and appointment.” Designed for maximum ventilation, they advertised not only major amenities like ‘cathedral ceilings’, built-in garages, old Spanish tiled roofs and steel casement windows, but also small features like window shelves, flower boxes, large tiled terraces, screened porches, outside hot and cold showers and built-in radio aerials.³⁶

North Beach’s retail districts also took shape during the 1930s. Along the retail corridor of Collins Avenue in the Harding Townsite, shops, restaurants and movie theaters established a new urban center. Commercial development extended southward all the way to 67th Street. The area along 71st Street also experienced significant construction, especially on Normandy Isle, where new buildings were completing the space around Vendome Fountain.

Residential and retail developments were accompanied by the expansion of the district’s civic infrastructure. The establishment of North Shore Park on the grounds of the old House of Refuge, with a new Lifesaving and Comfort Station on the beach, proceeded in 1941. A United States Post Office and Southern Bell telephone exchange were located in the area. The development of Fire Station #4 and the Biscayne Elementary School were aided by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). In addition to public schools, the seasonal character of the district encouraged the development of private day schools.

III. World War II Development and the Rise of Mid-Century Architectural Styles (1946-1958)

As Miami Beach was transformed into a training camp for the U.S. Army-Air Forces during World War II, with 85% of its hotel space leased by the military to serve as barracks, North Beach also did its part. The Gulf Stream Apartments and Tower Hotel were among the leased properties, as were the Normandy Plaza, Rowe, and Windsor Hotels and 15 surviving apartment buildings. It does not appear, however, that the Army leased any properties on Normandy Isle. The most significant phase of North Beach’s development came after World War II. Growth in the previous two decades lagged behind the astonishing development of South Miami Beach, which by 1945 had been transformed into a bustling resort city.

In North Beach, a similarly structured armature of lots and blocks was nearing completion. The last major subdivisions in North Beach, and indeed on Miami Beach itself, were developed between 1944 and 1947. The Beach-Bay Subdivision (Harry Sirkin, 1944), Biscayne Beach (Milton and Esther Steinhardt, 1945), and the 17-acre Tatum Waterway Subdivision (Jacob and Claire Freidus’ Branch Corporation, 1946) largely completed the

³⁶ “Golden Rule Realty Houses Completed,” The Miami Herald, Sunday June 16, 1935.

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planning of the Tatum Waterway area.³⁷ Tatum Waterway Drive was laid out fronting the waterway, and Freidus' Drake Construction Company planned to develop as much as 2,000 feet of water frontage³⁸ Biscayne Beach 2nd Addition, which created the district's second peninsular projection into Biscayne Bay, was platted by the Steinhardts in 1947. Finally, The Normandy Golf Course Subdivision, surrounding the newly completed Normandy Shores Golf Course, was platted in 1945, largely completing the Normandy Islands as conceived by Levy.

North Beach's distinct layering of elements—oceanfront hotels, retail corridors, apartment districts and neighborhoods of single family houses—were already in place, if thinly populated, by 1945. With the end of World War II, hundreds of new buildings were built in North Beach, completing the urban fabric and infusing the entire area with a new architecture. Stylistically, this new architecture tailored and humanized the language of mid-century American modernism according to a carefully defined vision of place—commercial to be sure, but also distinctly Floridian in its emphasis on private and public leisure in tropical surrounds. Civic and religious buildings, schools, commercial shopping centers, houses and apartment buildings, hotels and attractions each illustrated this assimilation.

The formal expression of North Beach's modern architecture varied from the austere to the baroque, from the purely functional to expressive of joy. In many cases, it featured visually dramatic highlights designed to be experienced from the automobile. These highlights - like glass box lobbies, delta-winged signage pylons, concrete shells fashioned as domes or hyperbolic paraboloids, egg-crate facades and cantilevered canopies - were lovingly iconized through an array of visual hyperbole. They proclaimed the tropics to be a modern place, and a fun one too. Their repetition created a common language so coherent that it defines this district.

It is also in the post-war period that North Beach evolved a distinctly Jewish patronage and social character. Beginning as early as the 1920s and accelerating in the 1930s, Miami Beach was already evolving toward a conspicuously Jewish resort. In addition, restrictions that had largely prevented Jewish tourists from frequenting areas north of Lincoln Road at the southern end of Miami Beach were challenged and eventually abandoned after World War II. The increasingly Jewish presence in land improvement, as well as in building development and construction can be traced in the names and origins of the developers themselves. The presence of Jewish tourists is marked in the numerous synagogues that occupy this part of the city. The Yiddish culture of its largely elderly, Eastern European population was poetically captured in the writing of Yiddish writer and Nobel laureate Isaac Bashevis Singer in Those Were the Days: My Love Affair with Miami Beach. Among the first hotels erected after the war, was a group that reflected the patriotic fervor and architectural conservatism of the early post-war years. In Miami Beach, traditional American themes had already been

³⁷ The Miami Herald called the Freidus extensive property owners in New York, Philadelphia and Miami Beach. "Beach Tract Goes On Sale," The Miami Herald, December 1, 1946, p. c-1.

³⁸ "Beach Gets \$5,000,000 Development," The Miami Herald, May 2, 1948.

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popularized in the run-up to World War II. The Georgian, White House, Jefferson and Betsy Ross hotels in South Beach, and the Coral Reef and President Madison hotels farther north along Collins Avenue all expressed Colonial Revival and American Federal themes. Levy's new hotel group in North Beach was styled with entrances porticos with classical columns, Federalist door frames and other elements of a Neoclassical Revival or Federalist architecture intended to visually affirm American values.

Hotel developments in the North Beach historic district, however, were soon in the vanguard of transformations in American resort architecture. While modest new hotels were still constructed following the pattern of low, narrow buildings set by prewar hotels, the rising tide of post-war tourism in Miami Beach quickly motivated fundamental changes in larger multi-story hotels. High-rise hotels soon transformed a large stretch of Collins Avenue, even though public parking was often unavailable and required remote valet parking for hotel guests. The emergence of motels, and their transformation along the beaches into small, family-oriented resorts also had an increasing effect on North Beach. While North Beach's urban structure was more accommodating of parking lots, the visual cues on the new buildings were like those of the multi-story hotels along Collins Avenue which were widely emulated in the district.

The largest part and most cohesive part of North Beach emerged in the district's residential districts, most of which were built in the post-war period. Notwithstanding the criticism of South Beach's rapid densification by planners like St. Louis-based Harland Bartholomew, who the city hired in the late 1930s to examine its land use regulations, North Beach's similarly spectacular post-war urbanization went unabated for nearly 20 years. Bartholomew's 1940 report to the city described uncontrolled speculative building, along with the practice of crowding the land with apartment buildings, as more indicative of an industrial district than a well balanced residential neighborhood.³⁹ Yet this same dynamic continued to transform North Beach into a garden city of densely built small apartment buildings, an important facet of post-war Florida living balanced between urbanity and the domesticity of suburbia.⁴⁰

While post-war North Beach is conspicuously shaped by small apartment buildings, a different form of urban development would redefine key parcels of its urban grid. High-rise apartment buildings made apparent the latest trend in domestic accommodations. Farther south along Millionaire's Row, high rises replaced luxury hotels as the most visible feature of Miami Beach's skyline. Built on large parcels along the waterfront, the buildings incorporate large loading, drive-up zones, parking and varied pool decks. Built on properties designed for large resort hotels, they reinforced existing neighborhoods with architecturally significant new

³⁹ The planner prepared zoning amendments that would have prevented the recurrence of a similar urban congestion. However, Bartholomew's amendments were never adopted. Bartholomew wrote, "Multiple dwellings and hotels, therefore, might be considered Miami Beach's industry." Harland Bartholomew & Associates, A preliminary report upon population, land uses and zoning, Miami Beach, Florida (St. Louis: Harland Bartholomew & Associates, 1940), p 9.

⁴⁰ Harland Bartholomew's subsequent report of 1958 is striking for its depiction of Miami Beach neighborhoods.

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focal points; but, in principle, towers portended the largest challenge to North Beach's tightly knit urban neighborhoods.

Miami Modern

What the Art Deco style was to South Beach, the Post-war Modern and "MiMo" styles were to North Beach. First was Roy France's Martinique Hotel at 64th Street (now demolished), with 137 rooms the largest of the six hotels built in Miami Beach in 1946 and the first hotel in the City to be completely air-conditioned. The following year, Henry Hohausser's Sherry Frontenac Hotel appeared at 65th Street, "the first post-war multi-million dollar glamour hostelry," with 250 rooms. In 1950 Roy France's Casablanca Hotel was built at 63rd Street, a landmark of exotic fantasy adapted to the automotive age, with huge neon signage and a carport supported by four turbaned figures. The year 1951 saw the construction of two hotels by Albert Anis: the Monte Carlo, just south of the Sherry Frontenac, and the Biltmore Terrace, at the Miami Beach city limits, on the Ocean at 87th Terrace. These all preceded Morris Lapidus' Fontainebleau, a marvelous but certainly not the earliest example of MiMo architecture. Other landmarks of the 1950s style in North Beach are the Carillon Hotel (Norman Giller, 1957) and the new Deauville (Melvin Grossman, 1958), constructed on the site of the old Deauville Casino. The new Deauville became a landmark for more than just its architecture; it was also the site of the Beatles' performance for the Ed Sullivan TV show in 1964. All this was less than 90 years since the founding of the Biscayne House of Refuge.

The MiMo style spectrum represents a range of perhaps five distinct variations, although many buildings share traits borrowed from one another. All are represented in the architectural resources of the North Beach area. Examples taken from the "Miami Modern Architectural Guide Map of North Miami Beach.

- 1. Resort MiMo:** This is the best-known MiMo style. It is characterized by clean-lined hotel towers contrasted by dramatic porte-cocheres. Expansive, lavish interior public spaces have a movie-set quality. Grand staircases and lavish materials such as marble, mosaic tile, terrazzo, and gold anodized aluminum are common features.
- 2. Wrightian MiMo:** Frank Lloyd Wright, through his creation of a modern American style, had an enormous influence on the architecture of the 1950s. Architects everywhere began to employ such Wrightian motifs as gabled facades, stone pylons, and built-in planters. The gabled facade is also known as the "Chalet Style."
- 3. Iconic Modernism:** Iconic Modernism can be found throughout the United States; however, North Beach's large concentration of Mid-century Modern architecture provides a wide array of the iconic motifs of the 1950s, such as parabolic arches, boomerangs, butterfly roofs, delta shapes, and pylons.

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4. Vernacular MiMo Miami area architects blended modernistic forms into the Miami Beach vernacular of modest block and stucco apartment hotels. The anti-decorative canon of the International style was adapted through the use of abstract stucco relief patterns, decorative railings, and period motifs and materials such as grille block, pipe columns, thin horizontal masonry cantilevers, and projecting vertical fins.

5. Subtropical Modernism: This MiMo style seeks to marry the austere European International style with the hot, humid climate of South Florida. Like the Bauhaus, there is no attempt at decoration. Instead, the architects employed myriad sun protection devices such as wide eaves, wooden louvers, concrete brise-soleils, and intricate metal sun grilles.

IV. Expanded Period of Development (1959-1963)

Although the National Register generally applies a 50-year cutoff as a criteria for historical significance, the built evidence of North Beach's construction indicates that most buildings built in at least a five year period after 1959 (the assumed 50 year cutoff) are indistinguishable from earlier buildings and inextricably linked to the architectural themes of the post-war generation of architecture in Miami Beach. The period between 1959 and 1963 did witness the development of new building types (high-rise towers) and steady pressure to provide parking within building sites. Yet most building production of this period derived from post-war architectural themes, or expanded these themes with new but subtle variations (buildings joined by a common gable is an example). In 1964, a citywide zoning code change would increase the parking requirement for all residential buildings, effectively concluding the continuity of North Beach's tradition of garden apartment buildings and creating incentives to develop newer, larger and taller building models with ground floor parking lots. When the parking requirements took effect, they made the older types associated with the nomination's period of significance impossible or un-economical to build and initiated a transformation of the urban scale of new buildings in the area. Thus, the historic context of the Post-war Boom in North Beach is defined from 1945 to 1963. The parallel economic decline of the area limited new construction, leaving the structure and scale of North Beach largely intact.

Architect Biographies

A number of architects made a distinct contribution to the architectural character of the North Beach area of the city of Miami Beach. A list of some of the more important individuals are listed below.

Joseph J. DeBrita practiced in Miami Beach from the 1930s to the 1950s. He designed dozens of residential, hotel, and apartment buildings, in the Art Deco, Classical Revival, and Post-war Modern styles. These include the Villa Luisa and Ocean Blue hotels on Ocean Drive, the Dorset and Coral Reef hotels on Collins Avenue, and the Eastview Apartments (Marriott) on Washington Avenue. Together with architect A. Kononoff, he

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designed the classical revival Mount Vernon and Monticello (Harding) hotels at 63rd Street in 1946. Other notable buildings by DeBrita include the Tropicaire Hotel at 880 71st Street, and apartment buildings located at 7725 Byron Avenue and 1208 71 Street.

L. Murray Dixon (1901-1949) A native of Live Oak, Florida, Dixon was educated at the Georgia Institute of Technology (1918-1919)⁴¹ and later moved to Miami Beach. Beginning in 1933, Dixon designed over 100 surviving buildings in the Miami Beach Architectural District (N.R. 1979). In his short lifetime he became one of Miami Beach's most prolific and talented designers of hotels, residences and commercial buildings. Some of the many hotels Dixon designed are: The Tides, Victor, Tiffany, Marlin, Ritz Plaza and Raleigh, along with numerous apartment buildings. In North Beach, he designed the Normandy Plaza Hotel at 6979 Collins Avenue and a number of apartment buildings, including 920 Bay Drive, 7345 Byron Avenue, 7625 Abbott Avenue and 320-328 80 Street.

Gilbert M. Fein (1920-2003) was from New York City and studied architecture at New York University. He served in the Army Corps of Engineers during World War II and settled in Miami Beach after the war. He designed hundreds of residential and commercial buildings in South Florida in the new Post-war Modern style. One of his trademarks was a type of mirrored garden apartment building, featuring two 2-story buildings joined at the front by a marquee or gable roof, and framing a landscaped courtyard. Most of Fein's comfortably livable buildings are unassuming and function extremely well in Miami Beach's low scale multi-family neighborhoods. In the North Shore and Normandy Isle neighborhoods there are over 76 buildings designed by Gilbert Fein during the period from 1949-1961, but some of the better-known are Ocean Front Apartments, 7400 Ocean Terrace, Ocean Way Hotel, 7430 Ocean Terrace, Beach Place Motel, 8601 Harding Avenue; and Deco Palm Apartments, 6930 Rue Versailles.

Norman Giller (1918-) is still an active architect and is well known as one of Florida's most prolific and influential architects of the Post-war Modern style. Born in Jacksonville, Florida, he graduated from the University of Florida in 1945 and worked with Henry Hohaus and Albert Anis in his early career.⁴² He pioneered the use of air conditioning, flat-slab construction techniques, and early motel design. His buildings include the Diplomat Hotel in Hollywood (demolished), the Ocean Palm and Thunderbird Motels in Sunny Isles, and the Carillon Hotel and the North Shore Bandshell in North Beach.

Leonard H. Glasser (1922-1982) and his brother Robert L. Glasser both attended Miami Beach High School before serving in World War II, Leonard in the Army and Robert in the Navy. Both resumed their study of architecture at the University of Florida after the war. Leonard completed the state boards in 1949, and Robert

⁴¹ Keith Root, Miami Beach Art Deco Guide, Miami Design Preservation League, 1987, p.32.

⁴² Eric P. Nash and Randall C. Robinson, Jr., MiMo: Miami Modern Revealed (San Francisco, California: Chronicle Books, 2004), pp. 90-94.

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in 1954, becoming a junior partner. “The Glassers designed several groups of homes in Fort Lauderdale, Vero Beach, and Marathon. They are also responsible for the new oceanfront auditorium at 10th Street, Miami Beach, as well as more than 40 buildings constructed in North Beach during the period from 1950-1955. They also designed the Fun Fair drive-in on the 79th Street Causeway, and Miami’s 990 Insurance Building.”⁴³ The Glassers relocated their office to Puerto Rico in 1961 to work on projects there and in Central America.⁴⁴ Forming Glasser-SACMAG Associates in 1969, they contributed to the design of the Bacardi Building in Miami, and also the Coral Gables Post Office. Leonard Glasser died in 1982 at age 60.⁴⁵ Robert Glasser was living in Winter Park, Florida, in 1996.

Henry Hohauser (1889-1963) Born in New York City and educated at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, Hohaus came to Miami in 1932. He was a practicing architect in Miami Beach for over 20 years and was one of the most prolific. His firm designed over 300 buildings in the Miami area, and he is “generally credited with being the originator of modernism in Miami Beach.”⁴⁶ Just a few of Hohaus’s well-known buildings in South Beach are the Park Central Hotel, Colony Hotel, Edison Hotel, and the Cardozo Hotel. His work in North Beach spans the period from 1937-1954, including examples of Moderne and Post-war Modern apartments. Notable examples include the White Apartments at 405 76th Street and Good House at 530 75th Street.

Robert M. Little came to Miami from Philadelphia in 1925. He worked for Robert A. Taylor (designer of Roney’s Spanish Village on Espanola Way) before starting his own practice in 1933. He rose to prominence as a residential architect in Miami Beach prior to World War II, with many of his buildings in North Beach. After the war, he worked more frequently in Miami and is best known for his work on the Merrick Building at the University of Miami.

Victor H. Nellenbogen (1888-1959), a native of Hungary schooled in New York, came to Miami Beach in 1928 and became a prominent designer of residential and hotel architecture in both the Mediterranean Revival and Art Deco styles. His hotels include the Bowman (Shep Davis Plaza), Savoy Plaza, the Nash, the Alamac, the Franklin, and the Lord Tarleton (Crown/Ramada). He also remodeled the Sterling Building at 927 Lincoln Road in the Art Deco style in 1941. Noteworthy buildings in North Beach by Nellenbogen include the Moderne Olsen Hotel at 7300 Ocean Terrace and a series of wood frame vernacular houses built in 1935-36.

Harry O. Nelson (1902-) was born in Denmark in 1902 and came to the U.S. as an infant.⁴⁷ In Miami in the 1920s he worked as a draftsman for August Geiger.⁴⁸ He was especially gifted in the Art Deco style, and left a

⁴³ “Glasser Brothers Add Project Department,” Miami Daily News, June 27, 1954.

⁴⁴ “2 Firms Join Forces,” Miami Herald, June 22, 1969.

⁴⁵ Obituary, Miami Herald, March 27, 1982.

⁴⁶ Howard Kleinberg, Miami Beach: A History (Miami, Florida: Centennial Press, 1994), p. 129.

⁴⁷ 1930 U.S. Census.

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legacy of very fine buildings in Miami Beach, dating from 1930 to 1950, including his own home at 6868 Harding Avenue. Some of his best works in South Beach are the Park Avenue Hotel, Beacon Hotel, Florence Villas, Lakeside Apartments and residences located at 829, 830, 836 Espanola Way. Noteworthy buildings in North Beach include the Ocean Terrace Hotel (Days Inn) at 7460 Ocean Terrace, the Baltic Hotel at 7643 Harding Avenue, and an apartment building at 6946 Rue Vendome.

Gerard Pitt (1885-1971) was born in New Rochelle, New York, and graduated from Columbia University in 1907. In his early career, he worked in New York City and Detroit. He moved to Miami in 1930 and was in partnership with George L. Pfeiffer, 1940-1941. Pitt served as supervising architect for the southeast district of the Florida Hotel Commission from 1935 to 1957.⁴⁹ In Miami Beach, he designed dozens of mostly small-scale apartment buildings in the Art Deco and Post-war Modern styles from 1939 to the mid 1960s, when he was in his 80s. He was one of the most prolific architects in the North Beach area with at least 59 buildings in the North Shore and Normandy Isles neighborhoods.

Nathan A. Seiderman (1908-2002) had an office on Normandy Isle and worked mostly in North Beach, designing at least 32 apartment buildings there from 1951 to 1959. He also designed the Fairfax Apartments at 1776 Collins Avenue in 1951. He later moved to Los Angeles, California, and died in 2002.⁵⁰

Anton Skislewicz (1895-1980), a native of Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia, and World War I aviator, immigrated to New York after that war and graduated from Columbia University in 1929. Drawn by the Depression-era building boom in Miami Beach, he opened a practice here in 1934 and contributed a European sensibility to local architecture. His early work in naval architecture and aviation is clearly evident in his Streamlined buildings. Skislewicz also designed a limited-edition limousine for Lincoln Motors in 1938. During World War II, he closed his practice and returned to shipbuilding in Tampa, Florida.⁵¹ Some of his buildings include the Breakwater Hotel, Lord Balfour Hotel, and Plymouth Hotel. His most notable North Beach building was the Ocean Surf Hotel at 7435 Ocean Terrace.

Donald G. Smith (1906-) was born in Indiana and educated at Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, and started a private practice in Miami Beach in 1938.⁵² The Royal Palm Hotel in Miami Beach was one of his earliest and best works. He also designed the Lynmar Hotel and the Metropole Hotel in South Beach and dozens of small residences and apartment houses throughout the city. In the post-war years he formed a well-

⁴⁸ Polk's Miami Beach City Directory (Richmond, VA: R.L. Polk Publishing Company, 1926.).

⁴⁹ Membership Application, American Institute of Architects, Florida South Chapter, Coral Gables, Florida.

⁵⁰ Ancestry.com, Social Security Death Index, <http://ssdi.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/ssdi.cgi>.

⁵¹ Clotilde Luce, "Anton Skislewicz," Home Miami, May 2006, pp. 108-111.

⁵² A.I.A. membership application, Coral Gables branch.

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known partnership with Irvin Korach. Notable examples in North Beach are the Drake Villas along Tatum Waterway Drive and Ocean Horizon at 7420 Ocean Terrace.

Frank Wyatt Woods (1894-1962) was a graduate of Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design, and came to Miami in 1924. "He designed the Hamster House and Seacrest Manor on Miami Beach and other resort hotels and homes."⁵³ In the 1930s many of his buildings were vernacular, including 1120, 1330, and 1430 Lenox Avenue, and a residence at 4211 Indian Creek Drive. He also designed the Art Deco-style Dorchester Hotel at 1850 Collins Avenue. After World War II he designed at least 21 buildings in North Shore and Normandy Isle, including 1220-1248 Marseilles Drive, 7750-7770 Tatum Waterway, the Harding Apartments at 7418 Harding Avenue, and Rosemary Manor at 8118 Harding Avenue. He was an honorary member of the A.I.A.

Manfred Mancuso-Ungaro (1888-1978) was born in Italy and emigrated to the U.S. in 1901, graduated from Columbia University in 1911 and studied architecture at Syracuse and Cornell Universities. He was a licensed civil engineer, working for the New York Port Authority and Newark, New Jersey, School Board before coming to Miami in 1936. Here he chiefly designed homes in Miami Shores and Coral Gables.⁵⁴ He was also active in Miami Beach through the 1940s and '50s, designing several Post-war Modern apartment houses in Normandy Isle and North Beach as well as 801 Michigan Avenue, 901 8th Street, 1735 James Avenue, and a private residence at 3555 Flamingo Drive. He died in Hollywood, Florida, at age 90.

⁵³ Obituary, Miami Herald, March 16, 1962.

⁵⁴ Obituary, Miami Herald, Feb. 23, 1978.

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F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Property Type: F.1

1. Name of Property Type: Multi-Dwelling Residential Buildings

2. Description: Multi-dwelling residential buildings comprise the majority of historic buildings found in the North Beach survey area. Examples from each of the community's periods of historic development, as defined in Section E, can be found throughout the community. A single narrow one- or two-story building on a single lot forms the fundamental building block of the North Beach's architecture. The earliest apartment buildings in the district were tenement-type buildings, occupying nearly the full lot. These eventually gave way to courtyard buildings and garden-type apartment buildings, whose larger open spaces were better adapted to the 50-foot lot structure of the area's "engineer's grid" style of platting. The development of apartment buildings and condominiums on larger lots yielded better gardens, but generally still followed the modular design established by a single building on a single lot. Even on narrow lots, garden apartment buildings offered a strong sense of community and security, while providing ample space for trees, ornamental plantings, and even private gardens. Since a large number of buildings were constructed in the post-war era, garden apartment buildings are dominant in defining the character of the architecture of North Beach.

Mediterranean Revival Apartment Buildings

Mediterranean Revival style architecture is closely associated with the Florida Land Boom of the 1920s, and the style remained a powerful influence, especially in residential design, through the 1960s. The style has its roots in the Spanish Colonial revival that first became popular in the western United States, particularly California, in the early part of the 20th century in the wake of Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue's evocation of the style at the Panamanian-California Exposition celebrating the opening of the Panama Canal (March 9, 1915-January 1, 1917) in San Diego's Balboa Park. The Balboa Park buildings contained reminiscences of missions and churches in Southern California and of palaces and homes in Mexico, Spain and Italy. It was a synthetic style, based on a freehand mixing of architectural themes. In Florida, the Mediterranean Revival connected with the state's history as a former Spanish Colony, and with the Spanish colonial architecture of the nearby Caribbean islands. A feeling of antiquity, coupled with emotional and romantic imagery, are hallmarks of the style.

Few Mediterranean Revival style apartment buildings were constructed during the mid to late-1920s due to the collapse of the real estate boom and the devastating hurricane that struck Miami Beach in 1926. Those that are still extant are generally three-stories in height, have stucco covered exterior walls adorned with door surrounds, arches, decorative metal grillwork and parapets. The use of the Mediterranean Revival style did not entirely disappear with the collapse of the Florida Land Boom in 1926. In the early 1930s, the style exhibited fewer

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decorative details, creating numerous buildings that are difficult to distinguish from masonry vernacular. By the mid-1930s, a transitional synthesis of Mediterranean Revival and Moderne styling was common, which is locally referred to as Mediterranean Deco.

Moderne Apartment Buildings

After the collapse of the real estate boom in Miami Beach in 1925-1926, Mediterranean Revival style architecture fell out of favor and was replaced by a taste for Art Deco and Moderne style buildings which represented a more modern, up-to-date attitude in American architecture. Art Deco and Art Moderne are variants of a type of architecture that was popular in the United States from the 1920s to the 1940s. One difference between the two styles is that Art Moderne uses horizontal orientation and Art Deco uses vertical orientation. Art Deco—as the name implies—puts greater emphasis on decorative elements and makes use of oriental and ancient Egyptian themes in a modernized format. The two things they do share are stripped down forms and geometric-based ornament. Moderne has its own streamlined look, and characteristics include rounded edges, corner windows, glass wall blocks, mirrored panels, ribbon or band windows with metal frames, string courses along coping of wall, a flat roof, curved canopies, smooth wall finish, and railings, balusters, and door and window trim with either aluminum or stainless steel.

In North Beach, Moderne apartment buildings are restrained in character. On their facades, Moderne motifs were employed to complement the decorative characteristics already established by the Mediterranean Revival buildings of the previous decade. Moderne apartment buildings in North Beach often feature interplay between flat and curved surfaces rendered in smooth stucco. They often employ shallow setbacks with variations in low-relief decoration. Broad areas of painted stucco, the generous use of terrazzo, stainless and tubular steel metalwork, and the use of etched glass, helped transform these otherwise simple buildings into something more glamorous. Further decoration was provided by projecting concrete slab eyebrows over windows and doors, and a strong interplay of vertical and horizontal accents. The horizontal accent was especially evident in streamlined structures, which featured rounded corners with bands of ribbon windows and racing stripes.

Moderne apartment buildings in North Beach were organized according to a new functional approach to housing design that placed increased emphasis on amenity and comfort. Moderne apartment buildings were the first in North Beach to offer modern garden type accommodations with units that promoted cross ventilation and a visual connection of all units to a courtyard. Access was often provided by an exterior stairway. Lobbies and corridors were eliminated, removing most of the circulation from the interior of the building. Building widths were reduced, allowing side yard garden courts to develop ample dimensions along one side.

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Post World War II Apartment Buildings

In North Beach, Post-World War II architecture was strongly influenced by the dominant force of the International Style, as well as by a regional approach to both functionality and styling. Post-war apartment buildings were generally built between 1945 and 1963. Most follow the model of garden apartment building established by Moderne apartment buildings during the 1930s. Post-war garden apartment buildings were mainly one- and two-story, and featured narrow building masses that provided space for enhanced landscaping, walkways and simple patio courts. Two-story buildings borrowed the device of exterior galleries, or catwalks, characteristic of the contemporary and highly popular motel type. However, in a departure from the motel model, these galleries looked not onto parking but onto shallow side-yard gardens that functioned as private internal passageways. Each unit's front door, often equipped with a stoop, planter or semi-private garden space, opened to the garden. Within the network of open spaces, the outdoor stair became one of the most important design features, its dynamic expression made more apparent by the austerity of the buildings' treatment.

It was quite common to pair garden apartment type buildings together, mirroring each other across a courtyard in order to create a more unified environment. The mirrored structures were sometimes joined on the front with either a low-pitch gable, or a marquee-like portico. In either case, the effect was to resourcefully frame the central patio. Another strategy was to wrap the building around the outer sides of the lot, employing a variety of ground plans, e.g., L, U, C or J-shaped buildings framing the central garden or court.

On larger parcels, often facing waterways such as canals or the open bay, the layout of residential wings produced larger patios with manicured gardens, fountains and even swimming pools. Equipped with croquet and shuffleboard courts, or cabanas and areas for barbeque, these larger patio complexes provided extra opportunities for outdoor living in a resort-like setting.

Post-World War II apartment buildings generally emphasized horizontality, often exhibiting a flat roof with broad overhanging eaves, echoed by the horizontal projections of the catwalks or balconies and anchored to the ground with long low planter boxes. Individual windows were often grouped together with projecting concrete bands and contrasting texture and color to create bold patterns. The overhanging roof eaves were typically curved on the underside, locally known as "soft" eaves.

Among the characteristics of the post-war garden apartment buildings in North Beach was their simple, restrained decorative program comprising projecting roof planes and balconies, projecting concrete window surrounds, glass jalousie windows, and structural pylons. Space-age design elements were sometimes employed in angled roofs and parapets that resembled delta wings and clustered pipe columns. Solid stucco wall areas were treated with "super-graphics" in the form of incised lines, checkerboards, and medallions. Often two or more contrasting materials, such as stone, slumped brick (brick with an expanded or "slumped" base), or mosaic

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tile, were used to create bold designs. These functional and decorative elements were softened by the inventive application of decorative concrete and metalwork, especially to form screen walls and railings on stairways, balconies and catwalks. Wrought iron railing designs commonly used in this style typically included ribbon, diamond, geometric, floral and garland patterns. Other typical railing materials included metal mesh panels and cast concrete “brise-soleil”.

Bungalow Courts and Studio Apartments

Bungalow courts represent an adaptation of popular American housing types of the early 20th century America (bungalows, garden city houses) to the urban resort culture of Miami Beach. Bungalow courts were built in large numbers during the 1920s, 30s and 40s. Most were built along the beachfront, although some were also built in the residential neighborhoods of North Shore and Normandy Isles toward the west. Most featured a collection of individual villas or small buildings housing full apartments that were organized to define a small colony. These fully-equipped residential units, typically one- or two-stories high, provided families with home-like accommodations, while the surrounding gardens, lawns, paved courts and other open spaces provided a balance between suburban and urban community living. Usually modest in nature, bungalow courts rejected the flamboyant aspects of Mediterranean Revival, Moderne & Post-war Modern styling. Rather, they typically reflect the more vernacular approach of Masonry Vernacular or mix aspects of current and past styles.

Studio Apartments, like bungalow courts, provided home-like accommodations, although in more luxurious and more spatially sophisticated garden apartment type building. Studio apartment buildings were built in the period from the 1930s to the 1950s. These apartments were often sited on desirable waterfront lots and were desirable for their lush gardens, swimming pools and access to waterways with docking facilities for pleasure craft. Most studio apartments were maisonettes (two-story apartments), featuring a double-height living room and a two-story glass wall, and were likely inspired by the Parisian interiors of Le Corbusier.⁵⁵ As the Miami Herald noted, “each apartment is – for practical purposes – a separate unit, almost a private home.”⁵⁶ Each maisonette was generally organized around a landscaped patio with private entrances, and their volumes were generally staggered to enhance their individuality, cross ventilation and views. Studio apartment buildings feature low-rise, prismatic masses. Studio apartments completed in the 1930s were usually Moderne in style, featuring masonry walls with a generally nautical appearance. Post-war examples are abstractly rendered in solids and voids,⁵⁷ with their walls alternately composed of massive brick, stucco, jalousie windows and perforated masonry or metallic screens.

⁵⁵ Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris (1887-1965), Swiss-born architect who chose to be known as Le Corbusier, one of the founders of modern architecture..

⁵⁶ “National Attention...,” The Miami Herald, 13 February 13 1949.

⁵⁷ Visually and physically advancing and receding forms.

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High Rise Apartment Buildings

Starting in the late 1950s, substantial waterfront stretches of Miami Beach were refigured with palisades of high-rise apartments, making apparent the latest trend in domestic accommodations and replacing the luxury hotel as the most visible feature of the city's skyline. Miami Beach experienced one of the nation's most important booms of high rise apartment building construction during the 1960s.

The trend toward the construction of high rise buildings resulted partly from new zoning regulations that allowed new buildings to be hypothetically unlimited in height or size, coupled with requirements to provide on-site parking in multi-story garages attached or incorporated into the primary building. Construction technology and local government subsidy also played a role in spurring high-rise development. Improved ready-mix concrete⁵⁸ and better cranes made taller buildings cost-effective. Flat slab construction reduced floor-to-floor heights and 'scatter columns' allowed the structure to be designed after the floor plans had been rationalized according to marketing considerations.

Waterfront high-rise apartment buildings were marketed as "luxury" residences, competing on the basis of image and amenities offered to the tenants. Most of North Beach's high-rise apartment buildings followed the styling of Post-war Modern, augmented with rich construction materials and elaborate landscaping. Their visually striking and lavishly landscaped automobile drop-offs, whose welcoming ribbons of concrete ascended to vaulted canopies, provided a glittering entrance to richly decorated lobbies and other public spaces. A use of elegant metalwork, patterned walls of polished stone, brise-soleils, and precast concrete panels emphasized richness and complexity. The grounds were decked out with sculptural light fixtures, statues, tropical foliage and elaborate waterworks that included fountains, grottoes, and waterfalls. The towers were placed on pedestals that contained health spas, restaurants, meeting and game rooms and indoor parking. Large pools and cabana clubs met the water edge. Above the lavish pedestals, living units were generally spacious, with each having either ocean, bay, or street views as well as universal individual balconies.

3. Significance: The historic multi-dwelling residential buildings of North Beach may be significant under criteria A, B, and/or C. The areas of significance may include community planning and development, architecture, or any other area that may be sufficiently explained in the nomination proposal. Architectural significance should reflect local stylistic trends in architecture consistent with those found in Florida during the twentieth century, or be tied to special circumstances of design or use of materials found solely in South Florida resort communities. Properties may gain significance through association with persons of historical importance,

⁵⁸ Edward L. Friedman quoted in Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins, David Fishman, New York 1960 : Architecture and urbanism between the Second World War and the Bicentennial (New York, NY : Monacelli Press, 1995) p. 83

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either as the only resource remaining to be associated with the person or through a significant activity (e.g., the writing of literature), other than residential use, exercised by the person on the property.

4. Registration Requirements: For buildings to be eligible for listing under this multiple property cover they must be located in the North Beach community and have been constructed between 1926 and 1963. They should reflect specific characteristics of a style or type or be associated with important historical events. Districts nominated under this property type should possess a noticeable concentration of relatively well-preserved historic resources. Buildings nominated under criterion C must sufficiently retain their architectural integrity. A building that has been altered by the construction of intrusive additions, or by the application of materials inconsistent with the historical period of the resource, or which have seen the removal of defining architectural features will not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Physical integrity requirements for buildings that are significant in areas other than architecture may be applied less stringently; however, buildings that have been radically altered to the point that they bear little resemblance to their appearance during the period of significance will not be eligible for nomination to the Register. Such changes as the replacement of windows with non-historic types or the covering of defining details are not, in themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

Property Type: F.2

1. Name of Property Type: Tourist Lodgings

2. Description: Dozens of tourist lodgings are located in the North Beach area, making it one of Miami Beach's primary resort centers. Most are situated near the beaches of the Atlantic Ocean. Grouped together in tight proximity, they generate an urbanity peculiar to the North Beach area, as well as to the City of Miami Beach. A smaller number of hotels were built facing Indian Creek and on Normandy Isle, indicative of the need for tourist accommodations in all areas of Miami Beach. Many buildings were leaders in the development of a regional architectural style, and several of these occupy a key role in the evolution of resort architecture in America, exhibiting important advances in hotel programming, planning, styling and construction.

Small Moderne Hotels

The most prevalent styles of hotels in North Beach are Moderne and Post-war Modern. By the 1930s, with North Beach now within the limits of the city, numerous small hotels were built by private entrepreneurs and small companies. These largely Moderne structures maintained the construction principles established by the Mediterranean Revival, but simplified and abstracted its decorative program. As in Miami Beach's southern

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resort district, the proliferation of smaller hotels was encouraged and facilitated by North Beach's small lot sizes, as well as by the attractiveness of the community among the working-class population.

Post-World War II Hotels

The construction of modest-sized hotels continued in the post-war period. The oceanfront orientation of Ocean Terrace was largely dominated with modest Post-war Modern two-story hotels. These illustrate a contextual approach, maintaining the established pattern of freestanding masonry structures on single lots. However, the post-war hotels were far more modest, collectively deploying a new range of elements and materials. The wood-framed roofs ordinarily projected over the masonry facades, which were patterned with less classical geometries and mixed materials like plate glass, fieldstone, slump brick and tile.

Post-World War II Resort Hotels

Bigger and more efficient Post-war Modern hotels blossomed on Collins Avenue, reflecting North Beach's accelerating urbanization. These resort hotels were characterized by a larger number of rooms and catered to package tours, conventions, and summer tourism, now possible with the installation of air-conditioning. Many were large, all inclusive resort destinations that offered a full vacation experience to their guests. They were built on larger oceanfront lots and were much larger in height and interior space allowing the creation of large numbers of guest rooms, as well public spaces such as restaurants, shops, spas, and meeting rooms. By the late 1950s, these employed flat slab and glass curtain wall systems, reflecting the influence of International Style architecture. The hotels sought to increase their attractiveness by constructing boldly decorative facades focusing on often elaborate and fanciful porte-cocheres, entry portals and dramatic lobby spaces. Such dynamic and integrated site planning that began at the porte-cochere continued all the way to the swimming pool, sundeck, and cabana colony on the beach.

The inclusion of cafes, spas, pools, retail concourses, movie theaters and ballrooms were intended to attract and facilitate convention activities, more than one of which could be accommodated at the same time. The modern planning of these hotels was usually matched with modern architectural styling. While the earliest of the resort hotels generally followed smooth lines and rectangular massing of Miami Beach's smaller prewar hotels, new fluid and sculptural touches began to appear during the middle and late 1950s, especially in areas like the porte-cochere which often offered fantastic designs. Smooth white stucco walls were increasingly offset with curved panels and textured materials like fieldstone and ceramic tile. Offset by massive full-height pylons and sky signs, and employing popular iconic modern forms, they competed for the attention of tourists on the new high rise skyline of Miami Beach. The most important post-war hotels in North Beach compared in sheer size and splendor with architect Morris Lapidus' famed Fontainebleau, Eden Roc and Americana Hotels, which had redefined the luxury resort hotel genre in the mid-1950s.

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Motor Hotels and Motels

Modern motels developed from the grouped tourist cabins and motor court hotels that began to appear along America's roadways during the 1920s. Motor courts offered roadside lodging with ample parking close to the rooms. After World War II, motels, took on a more unified appearance but often lacked distinction to identify one from the other. Such lodgings usually consisted of one or two one-story buildings containing a series of guest rooms and an office. Often the only distinguishing feature was the signage, with a distinctive shape and image outlined in neon. The only amenities were usually a private bathroom with towels and bath soap, Initially, even television sets were coin operated. With the development of national interstate highway system and the rapidly expanding tourist trade, made possible by automobile travel on the new coast-to-coast highways, motels and motor hotels found it necessary to compete fiercely for customers. Finding it necessary to attract attention from behind the windshield, motels enhanced the mobility of their guests and the romance of car travel by providing them easy access to their cars and by offering increasing attractiveness by inclusion of on-site restaurants, bars, swimming pools, playgrounds for children, and easy access to beaches and nearby tourist attractions.

In North Beach, motels are generally Post-war Modern in styling. Rooms were organized in multi-story horizontal designs with bold porte-cocheres, gates and pylons organized around parking areas. Access to guest rooms was available by both by interior corridors and by exterior balconies with wrought-iron railings. Exterior elevators lifted guests to the proper floor, and rooms features picture windows to give guest views of the swimming pool area, cabana, or beach. North Beach's more compact lot structure, as well as the higher cost of its land, was an obstacle to low-density motel development. The type was found in larger numbers in Sunny Isles, to the north, or on Biscayne Boulevard, to the west. Yet the growing importance of the car did fuel the construction in North Beach of new modest-size motels and the conversion of existing hotels to motel use. In terms of their planning, many of these tourist destinations are notable for their accommodation to local land availability, rather than purely as notable examples of motels.

One effect of the motel building type can be found in North Beach's garden apartment buildings, which partly emulated motel planning without actually accommodating automobiles in large parking areas. The post-war motel's characteristic exterior stairways and catwalk access system, which gave every unit direct access to a public balcony, facilitated access to landscape and climate. Like motels, they also employed visually striking facade elements that offset the otherwise monotonous repetition of dwelling unit bays on the long facades.

3. Significance: The historic tourist lodgings of North Beach may be significant under criteria A, B, and/or C. The areas of significance may include community planning and development, architecture, entertainment/recreation or any other area that may be sufficiently explained in the nomination proposal. Architectural significance should reflect local stylistic trends in architecture consistent with those found in

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Florida during the twentieth century, or be tied to special circumstances of design or use of materials found solely in South Florida resort communities. Properties may gain significance through association with persons of historical importance, either as the only resource remaining to be significantly associated with the person or through a significant activity (e.g., the writing of literature), other than residential use, exercised by the person on the property.

4. Registration Requirements: To be eligible for listing in the National Register under this property type, the building must have been constructed for use as a hotel, resort hotel, motor hotel or motel during one of the historic periods covered in Section E. Such buildings or resources may be included as contributing elements of an historic district if they retain a sufficient degree of physical integrity to reflect their historic period of development. Buildings nominated for their architectural significance should retain their historic appearance to a high degree. Buildings that have lost their historic character through the irreversible alteration or removal of original fabric or decorative details can not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Such changes as the replacement of windows with non-historic types or the covering of defining details are not, in themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

Property Type: F.3

1. Name of Property Type: Commercial Buildings

2. Description: Commercial buildings were largely built along two clearly-articulated commercial corridors of the North Beach area. Collins Avenue is the main north-south artery of North Beach as well as of the entire City of Miami Beach. Although its continuity is broken by North Shore Park (site of the former Biscayne House of Refuge), it maintains a primarily commercial character mixed with hotels and apartment buildings. 71st Street, which leads to the Isle of Normandy and across the 79th Street causeway to northern Miami, is North Beach's primary east-west artery. It comprises two main commercial concentrations: one running from Collins Avenue to Indian Creek, and the second around Vendome Plaza and bifurcating westward along 71st Street and Normandy Drive. Another (yet less developed) small commercial center is at the west end of the Isle of Normandy.

Examples of commercial buildings from each of North Beach's periods of historic development, as defined in Section E, can be found throughout the community. During the 1920s, a small number of commercial buildings, styled Mediterranean Revival, began to rise on Collins Avenue and 71st Street, primarily around the Vendome Fountain. Commercial buildings in the North Beach area mainly span the period from 1935 to the post-war boom, a sign of the vibrancy of modern commercial architecture in Miami.

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Moderne Commercial Buildings

Moderne commercial and mixed-use structures were built mainly during the 1930s and early 1940s, many employing plate glass and vitrolite glass facades with stepped cornices and fluted walls. Following the Second World War, several transitional Moderne buildings were built employing plastic or cubic massing, but mixing a more austere construction. Moderne style buildings represented a more modern, up-to-date attitude in American architecture. Art Deco and Art Moderne are variants of a type of architecture that was popular in the United States from the 1920s to the 1940s. One difference between the two styles is that Art Moderne uses horizontal orientation and Art Deco uses vertical orientation. Art Deco—as the name implies—puts greater emphasis on decorative elements and makes use of oriental and ancient Egyptian themes in a modernized format. The two things they do share are stripped down forms and geometric-based ornament. Moderne has its own streamlined look, and characteristics include rounded edges, corner windows, glass wall blocks, mirrored panels, ribbon or band windows with metal frames, string courses along coping of wall, a flat roof, curved canopies, smooth wall finish, and railings, balusters, and door and window trim all done with either aluminum or stainless steel.

Post World War II Commercial Buildings

The Post-War Modern style was frequently applied to low-scale commercial buildings in Miami Beach after World War II. While the commercial buildings incorporated many of the typical design elements of the architectural movement, they were also custom tailored to address their retail function. These buildings can be defined by their modern functional simplicity; often featuring large plate glass storefronts, deeply recessed angled entrances, glass doors, uniform or varied knee walls, fin walls and landscape planter boxes. A continuous eyebrow typically separated the storefronts from the facade wall above. This upper facade wall was usually framed with bold stucco bands and finished with interior panels of smooth, fluted or scored stucco in checkerboard or vertical striped patterns. The expansive upper facade walls were ideal for large neon signage to attract the potential customer. Corner commercial buildings in the prewar and post-war period often incorporated sweeping curved walls at the street intersection to emphasize their highly visible location. Glass walls of office and commercial buildings were often screened from the street or the environment with precast concrete or aluminum brise-soleil. Some commercial buildings emulated the urbanism of residential structures, employing garden courts or patios. Others flaunted iconically modern architectural features like parabolic arches.

3. Significance: The historic commercial buildings of North Beach are usually significant under criteria A and/or C in the areas of commerce, community planning and development, architecture, or any other area that may be sufficiently explained in the nomination proposal. The architecturally significant buildings reflect trends in architecture consistent with those found in Florida during the period of significance and retain a high degree of architectural integrity.

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4. Registration Requirements: For buildings to be eligible for listing under this property type, they must have been constructed for use as a commercial building or served an important commercial function during one of the historic periods covered in Section E. Districts nominated under this building type should possess a concentration of relatively well-preserved historic resources. Eligibility for individual nomination is restricted to buildings that reflect a definite architectural type and to those that have had a central role in the commercial life of the community or were important in the physical development of the community. Buildings nominated for their architectural significance should retain their historical appearance to a high degree. Buildings that have lost their historic character through the irreversible alteration or removal of original fabric or decorative details can not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Such changes as the replacement of windows with non-historic types or the covering of defining details are not, in themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

Property Type: F.4

1. Name of Property Type: Single-Family Residences

2. Description: Although single family homes were once built across the entire North Beach area, many were replaced by apartment buildings during the intense redevelopment of the post-war period. Nevertheless, neighborhoods of single family dwellings were built in North Beach some are still extant today. Most of the houses that were erected were small bungalows, cottages, and other modest-sized single family homes. North Beach's single family homes reflect typical stylistic trends in Miami Beach residential areas from the 1920s to the Post-war era. The houses adapted modern design to a relatively stable tradition of floor plans established in the Mediterranean Revival houses of the Florida Land Boom. North Beach's homes were marked more by the local building culture than by national stylistic patterns. Generally vernacular or eclectic in style, they exhibit a greater concern with living in a warm and humid climate—featuring patios and porches that were a visible expression of outdoor living—than adhering to any particular stylistic principles.

Bungalow Style Houses

The American bungalow had its origins in California in the early 1900s and quickly spread across the nation, its popularity reaching its zenith during the 1920s when it became the style of choice for large new middle-class subdivisions. The bungalow became a popular form of house construction throughout Florida and in Miami Beach as early as the city's foundation in 1915. Bungalows were one or two-stories tall, with broad gabled roofs and screened front porches. The porch often had decorative column treatments. A popular form of bungalow was the airplane bungalow, which included a single bedroom room on the second floor. Bungalow walls were sheathed with a variety of materials, including wood clapboard, wood shingles, stuccoed masonry,

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brick and oolitic rock. Windows were double-hung with wood sashes, and generally a three-over-one sash configuration.

Wood Frame Vernacular Houses

Wood frame vernacular houses were constructed throughout America beginning with earliest years of settlement. After the Civil War, balloon framing became widespread, and the exterior walls were usually sheathed in either weatherboard or drop siding. Houses are usually one to two stories in height and ground plans are generally simple, usually being rectangular or having an L-shape. Gable and hip roofs are common, and early examples featured exterior or interior brick chimneys serving fireplaces used to heat the interior of the residence. Front porches are nearly universal, with houses often featuring a secondary rear or side porch on the kitchen ell. Wood Frame Vernacular residences from North Beach's pioneering era of development are rare.

Mediterranean Revival Style Houses

Mediterranean Revival style architecture is closely associated with the Florida Land Boom of the 1920s, although the style remained a powerful influence, especially in residential design, through the 1960s. The style has its roots in the Spanish Colonial revival popular throughout the United States in the early part of the 20th century, especially in the wake of Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue's triumphant evocation of the style at the Panamanian-California Exposition in San Diego (1915). It was a synthetic style, based on a freehand mixing of Mediterranean architectural themes. In Florida, the Mediterranean Revival connected with the state's history as a Spanish Colony, and with the Spanish colonial architecture of the nearby Caribbean islands. Feelings of antiquity, coupled with emotional and romantic imagery, are hallmarks of the style.

In North Beach, Mediterranean Revival style homes correspond to a shift in construction technology from the area's pioneering wood tradition toward masonry architecture. Nevertheless, the concept of the bungalow remains strongly evident in many of the small Mediterranean Revival houses, which are modest in size and austere in detailing. They typically feature narrow building masses aggregated to form irregular floor plans often centered on patios or walled gardens. Their roofs are gabled or hip and finished with red clay tile, or flat with Mission-style barrel tile decorations along the parapet. Mediterranean Revival homes generally feature stuccoed exterior walls with a rough textured finish, often pierced by arched window openings. Entrance porches and chimneys were clearly expressed. Windows were generally casement or double hung. Applied decorative features like glazed terra-cotta, ironwork, exposed use of wood, and clay pots and urns are common.

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Moderne Houses

Moderne houses were built throughout the United States in the 1920s and 30s. Most featured a cubic appearance with large window areas to connect with the outdoors, and flat roofs were often used as livable decks. In Florida, Moderne Houses were influenced by the popular Florida Tropical Home, a modern-themed house constructed by the state at the 1933 Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago. The house projected a functional modernism that featured tall airy spaces, well lit and cross ventilated.

In North Beach, Moderne houses are generally one or two-story, featuring a cubic massing accentuated by smooth stucco walls and flat roofs hidden behind generous parapets. Moderne houses are decorated with incised stucco reveals, applied medallions, cast concrete or stone decorative bas-relief with fountain or floral motifs. Functional elements like tubular metal railings, scuppers, protective eyebrows and air vents create additional decorative accents. Continuous concrete planters bring landscape to the façade, and exterior stairs leading to the roof or a second floor terrace are common.

Minimal Traditional Houses

Minimal Traditional was a synthetic style which pared down traditional and eclectic styles, transforming them into modern expressions. In Miami Beach, minimal traditional houses feature a blend of architectural themes from Mediterranean Revival style housing, like gabled ends and the use of tiled roofs. Yet, they are more austere, featuring smooth stucco walls with little detail. Tile roofs are often white, lending a more monochromatic appearance to the house.

Ranch/Contemporary Houses

In the wake of World War II, a variety of new housing styles were popularized, including ranch style and contemporary style houses based on the dominant International Style. Post World War II largely abandoned historical precedent, favoring practical and even vernacular forms and expressions. The discourse on post-war housing was heavily influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright's prewar Usonian houses, and regional movement searching for a well-rooted functional architecture to serve modern needs.

In North Beach, Post World War II houses were generally one-story, horizontal ranch-style houses or contemporary styled houses. Ranch houses feature broad eaves projecting over low-slung volume of the house. Contemporary houses feature flat roofs and no decorative detailing. Both styles derive some decoration from the use of brick, crab orchard stone and wood. In many houses, ranch and contemporary are joined, often with a ranch frontage facing the street, and contemporary styled sections defining the garage and Florida Room, or screened porch. Most Post World War II houses feature jalousie windows.

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3. Significance: The historic houses of North Beach may be significant under criteria A, B, and/or C. The areas of significance may include community planning and development, architecture, or any other area that may be sufficiently explained in the nomination proposal. Architectural significance should reflect local stylistic trends in architecture consistent with those found in Florida during the twentieth century, or be tied to special circumstances of design or use of materials found solely in South Florida resort communities. Properties may gain significance through association with persons of historical importance, either as the only resource remaining to be associated with the person or through a significant activity (e.g., the writing of literature), other than residential use, exercised by the person on the property.

4. Registration Requirements: For buildings to be eligible for listing under this multiple property cover they must be located in the North Beach community and have been constructed between 1926 and 1963. They should reflect specific characteristics of a style or type or be associated with important historical events. Districts nominated under this property type should possess a noticeable concentration of relatively well-preserved historic resources. Buildings nominated under criterion C must sufficiently retain their architectural integrity. A building that has been altered by the construction of intrusive additions, or by the application of materials inconsistent with the historical period of the resource, or which have seen the removal of defining architectural features will not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Physical integrity requirements for buildings that are significant in areas other than architecture may be applied less stringently; however, buildings that have been radically altered to the point that they bear little resemblance to their appearance during the period of significance will not be eligible for nomination to the Register. Such changes as the replacement of windows with non-historic types or the covering of defining details are not, in themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

Property Type: F.5

1. Name of Property Type: Civic and Religious Buildings and Monuments

2. Description: North Beach, like the rest of Miami Beach, was largely platted with little accommodation for civic architecture. Normandy Isle, where the Vendome Fountain dominates a public square, is a notable exception. Nevertheless, as the district grew into a full-service community, a substantial infrastructure of civic, institutional and religious architecture was introduced, including public and private schools, post offices, telephone exchanges and fire stations. North Beach's civic architecture notably tracks the creation of a distinct local resort culture, and the demographic evolution of the district. Several churches are found in North Beach. However, as the district evolved increasingly into a Jewish community, its most important landmarks were the many synagogues that were constructed within the fabric of the community.

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The civic architecture of North Beach spans the period of initial development, the Depression and wartime era and the post-war period. The creation of civic architecture in each era reflected its concerns and stylistic predilection. During the 1920s, elements of civic architecture were literally built into the infrastructure by the area's developers. Even the planning of streets for picturesque effect, creating monumental views and spaces can also be considered an aspect of the district's founding civic architecture. This infrastructure includes bridges and the Vendome fountain with Spanish or Italianate details inspired by the Mediterranean Revival.

During the 1930s, national investment in public infrastructure, especially the WPA, spurred the development of schools, fire stations and other public amenities. Some of these buildings betray a Depression Modern aesthetic, with austere, classical facades modernized with modern proportions and detailing. Others were vernacularized to fit into the residential character of the neighborhoods. After World War II, resort oriented civic spaces like the North Shore Bandshell were developed. Many celebrated the dynamic geometries of Post-war Modern architecture with bold pylons supporting strongly cantilevered canopies. A number of churches and synagogues were created during this period, illustrating the desire of many religious institutions to express their modernity. Their buildings feature belfries reinterpreted as pylons or airy perforated boxes, windows shaded by fins and entrances framed with open-air loggias.

3. Significance: The historic civic and religious architecture of North Beach may be significant under criteria A, B, and/or C. The areas of significance may include community planning and development, architecture, or any other area that may be sufficiently explained in the nomination proposal. Architectural significance should reflect local stylistic trends in architecture consistent with those found in Florida during the twentieth century, or be tied to special circumstances of design or use of materials found solely in South Florida resort communities. Properties may gain significance through association with persons of historical importance, either as the only resource remaining to be associated with the person or through a significant activity (e.g., the writing of literature), other than civic or religious use, exercised by the person on the property.

4. Registration Requirements: For civic and religious buildings to be eligible for listing under this multiple property cover they must be located in the North Beach community and have been constructed between 1926 and 1963. They should reflect specific characteristics of a style or type or be associated with important historical events. Districts nominated under this property type should possess a noticeable concentration of relatively well-preserved historic resources. Buildings nominated under criterion C must sufficiently retain their architectural integrity. A building that has been altered by the construction of intrusive additions, or by the application of materials inconsistent with the historical period of the resource, or which have seen the removal of defining architectural features will not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

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Physical integrity requirements for buildings that are significant in areas other than architecture may be applied less stringently; however, buildings that have been radically altered to the point that they bear little resemblance to their appearance during the period of significance will not be eligible for nomination to the Register. Such changes as the replacement of windows with non-historic types or the covering of defining details are not, in themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The geographical area of North Beach encompasses the northern portion of the City of Miami Beach, Miami-Dade County, Florida. The northern boundary is 87th Terrace, which also forms the northern city-limit line between Miami Beach and the City of Surfside. The southern boundary of North Beach is 63rd Street. The area is bounded on the east by the Atlantic Ocean and on the west by Biscayne Bay.

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IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The North Beach area of the city of Miami Beach was selected for Multiple Property documentation because it is a separate geographical area, physically separated by water from the remainder of the city, except for an 800-foot-wide ribbon of land along the Atlantic Ocean near 63rd Street. Because of its isolation, the North Beach area developed in a different time frame from the South Beach area and remains today as a distinct community. Much of the South Beach area was surveyed for historic resources during the 1970s through the 1990s, resulting in the National Register listing of the Miami Beach Architectural District in 1979 and numerous local historic districts. During the early 1990s, two small local historic districts were designated in North Beach, but the majority of the area was overlooked due to its predominance of post-war architecture. Since the year 2000, local and national interest in the “recent past” has grown dramatically, and the North Beach area has received much attention for its vast concentration of “MiMo” (Miami Modern) architecture.

The Historic Preservation Division of the City of Miami Beach Planning Department conducted the survey and evaluation. The team consisted of William H. Cary, Division Director; Joyce Meyers, Principal Planner; Shannon Anderton, Senior Planner; Carolyn Klepser, Historic Research Consultant; and several architectural student interns. An initial evaluation of the North Beach area was conducted in 1999, using visual surveys to identify potential historic districts and individual landmarks. Priority areas were established for further analysis, including the North Shore neighborhood, the eastern portion of the Normandy Isles, and the resort hotels located primarily along the Atlantic Ocean between 63rd and 71st Streets. These areas were deemed to have the greatest concentration of architecturally significant buildings and to have a consistency of scale and character. Other sites and districts considered potentially eligible for listing, but given lower priority due to time limitations, included isolated buildings and multiple dwelling neighborhoods—such as the western portion of Normandy Isle and the area south of 71st Street near Indian Creek Drive—and single dwelling neighborhoods.

Data collection for the priority survey areas included the original building permit cards and microfilm drawings, recent building permits, and tax assessor files for over 800 properties. All of this information was recorded in a database. During the summer of 2003, the city of Miami Beach completed the documentation of the buildings in the North Shore and Normandy Isle neighborhoods, including building descriptions, mapping and photography. During this time period, city staff also conducted an extensive analysis of the stylistic features that define the characteristics of the local post-war modern architecture, particularly focusing on small hotels and apartment buildings. This included making extensive photographs and drawings of features such as building footprints, rooflines, open-air corridors, railings, windows and doors, surface materials, courtyards and landscape features. This study informed subsequent evaluations of the historic integrity of buildings in the proposed district.

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In August 2005, the city received a Historic Preservation Grant from the State of Florida to complete the National Register Multiple Property documentation and nominations for two historic districts in North Beach. This funding enabled the City to engage the services of an architect, Allan T. Shulman, who is a noted authority on Miami's architectural history, having published numerous articles and books on the subject. His expertise was supplemented by historical photographs, newspaper and magazine articles, plat maps, Sanborn maps, post cards, brochures and advertisements compiled by the historic research consultant, Carolyn Klepser, using materials in the City Clerk's office, the Historical Museum of Southern Florida, the Miami-Dade Public Library, the Florida Division of Archives, private collections and oral interviews. The project team, including city staff and consultants, defined the historic contexts based upon the time periods when major waves of development took place. Significant property types were defined based on historical function and architectural style. Each of the significant architectural styles generally coincides with one of the time periods identified in the historic contexts. Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping of the survey data helped to evaluate the potential district boundaries and inform concepts about construction dates, building height, architectural style, architects, builders and concentrations of contributing buildings. Allan T. Shulman wrote the text for the historic contexts, associated building types, narrative descriptions and statements of significance.

From October 2005 through March 2006, the Historic Preservation Division staff conducted a review of each property in the survey database to update the evaluations on architectural style and contributing versus noncontributing status. This involved field observations to compare the survey data to current conditions. Some buildings were changed from contributing to noncontributing status based upon alterations that compromised their historic architectural integrity. The updated survey forms were forwarded to the State of Florida Master Site File.

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