

**REPORT ON HISTORIC RELEVANCE  
OF STRUCTURE AT 3747 CHASE AVE. MIAMI, BEACH, FL.  
BY NAJEEB CAMPBELL, PROFESSOR OF ARCHITECTURE AND  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEMBER, CITY OF MIAMI**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN;

Upon initial analysis of this structure in determining its historic architectural significance, I began by establishing the style in which it was created. It seems the architect was performing a design in the Mediterranean revival style but without any significant ornament or exterior structural details common to more established Mediterranean houses of significance. Details such as; 1) Entrance towers (many of which here in Dade County are cylindrical), 2) Arched and colonnaded porches and or breezeways (many of which here in Dade County are in the "Solomonic" style) 4) Elaborate chimneys.

There is also a lack of wall surface ornament such as 1) Pilastered columns 2) Dentils 3) Cornices 4) Elaborate window frames, sills or headers.

The very simplified Mediterranean style in which the house was built is reminiscent of the simplistic but smaller homes built in actual Mediterranean areas such as the south of France and Italy in order to satisfy housing needs en masse when the region's towns were built in a traditional fashion.

The architect's interpretation of this style here in the US and to Miami Beach in particular seemed to be a combination of keeping the design very simple but applying a grander size for the requirements of 1930's middle/upper-middle class American life. The architect seems to have pursued a goal of designing a home in the Mediterranean style common to Miami Beach in the period but eschewed any significant detailing perhaps because of budget or client tastes.

As one traverses the exterior of the structure to observe each façade, we see clean simple white stucco surfaces absent of any ornament. There is the presence of a few semi-circular arches on the back patio which lead to the pool area but they are of a very simple, small and domesticized proportion, very unlike the more grand rear porches of more significant Mediterranean residential architecture where the arches sit atop columns of taller "Golden section" proportions.

One of the most visible parts of the structure, the Porte Cochere, which is attached to the main façade, significantly diminishes the notion of historic significance and architectural style continuity by its very design. Traditionally, the Porte Cochere was a very important part of façade design in Mediterranean revival architecture for the automobile era. They were designed to hold only one car width and the openings were very sensitively tied in to the overall design of the structure with elaborate shoulder details and turrets and sometimes even atop half columns on the side away from the structure. This was done to diminish the visual effect of a parked automobile on the main façade of the home while giving it a covered/protected space. The Porte cochere at 3747 Chase can be simply called a garage! Even though it does have a semi-circular arch on the side away from the house, the opening is for two vehicle widths with a plain flat beam across the entry. Again we see, as in the case of the entire house, either the architect or subsequent owners sacrificed the traditions of architectural significance for more modern convenience, which in this case was a two-car garage.

The Mediterranean revival style seems to be the vernacular of the area and many homes of similar square footage and beyond populate the neighbourhood. Many of them however are of a more sophisticated design and property layout; some of the best of them are located along Pine Tree Drive. Another important point to make about Pine Tree Drive is that there is where you can witness the juxtaposition of some of these more sophisticated older Mediterranean revival style homes alongside beautifully done contemporary/modern houses very similar to what the architect; Mr. Massarsky, is proposing for 3747 Chase.

The interior spaces of 3747 Chase have no particularly significant floor plan elements and the material finishes are of average quality such as; fiber board counter tops and cabinets, regular ceramic tiles and plaster walls.

The second story does have rooms with hardwood flooring and there is a central living room on the ground floor with a double height ceiling finished with timber rafters, these elements may be considered to have some value but in no way can they elevate this structure to the level of architectural significance.

In conclusion, the house and property at 3747 Chase Avenue, Miami Beach, in my opinion is not architecturally significant. Although it was built prior to 1942 and embodies the popular Mediterranean revival style of the era it is a very average representation thereof and has no significant exterior architectural

characteristics, features or details in its construction or design expression in any way on par with the standard of other architecturally significant Mediterranean revival structures here in Miami-Dade county or around the country for reasons explained in the previous paragraphs. Many finer examples are present in the immediate neighbourhood and Mr. Massarsky's design is very tasteful, non provocative and will fit quite well amongst its neighbours as can be seen as mentioned before on close by streets such as Pine Tree Drive.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Najeeb Campbell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Najeeb Campbell

[najeebcampbell@gmail.com](mailto:najeebcampbell@gmail.com)

(305) 987-4001