CONTINENTAL HOTEL 4000 COLLINS AVENUE, MIAMI BEACH

Location: Lots 10-15, Block 34, Miami Beach Improvement Co. Oceanfront Subdivision

The hotel is situated on the northwest corner of Collins Avenue and 34th Street, with a surface parking lot adjoining it to the north.

Resource material:

- 1. Building Permit Card
- 2. Archival postcards
- 3. Article, "\$2 Million Lease Given at Beach," *Miami News*, Dec. 21, 1947.
- 4. Article, "Beach Hotel Continental Work Begins," Miami Herald, April 4, 1948.
- 5. Newspaper ad for condo sales by Crescent Heights, circa 1990s.
- 6. Tax jacket, incl. 1994 and 2012 photographs by Property Appraiser

Plans not found on microfilm: #26925 Original plans, A.H. Mathes, April 4, 1948

#34002 Enclosing porch on south side, A. H. Mathes, 1950

#52036 New open terrace in front, ? architect, 1956.

Architect: A. Herbert Mathes (1912-1977) graduated from New York University in 1937 and came to Miami Beach in 1944. Previously he had designed stores for the National Shoe Company, shoe exhibits at the 1939 New York World's Fair, packing plants in Kansas, film labs for 20th Century Fox, and Forest Park Gardens in Rye, New York. During World War II he designed ships for the U.S. Navy.¹ In Miami Beach he designed a number of commercial, residential and municipal buildings, including:

Golden Gate Apartments
Parisian Hotel
Geneva Hotel
Continental Hotel
Allison Hotel
2395 Flamingo Drive
1510 Collins Avenue
4000 Collins Avenue
6261 Collins Avenue

Miami Beach Public Library 2100 Collins Avenue (demolished)

Mathes is probably best known for designing the North Addition to the Fontainebleau Hotel in 1959, which included the "cheesehole" façade and the "Spite Wall."

[&]quot;Portraits and Projects of Architects," Florida Sun, May 21, 1951.

The Continental Hotel, constructed in 1948, is a fine example of the Postwar Modern architectural style in Miami Beach, although its front facade has been altered from its original design. It is a boxy, flat-roofed, five-story structure that originally cost \$350,000 and included 102 hotel rooms with baths, a dining room, and swimming pool. (1)

Even before the building permit was issued on April 1, 1948, information about the planned hotel appeared in an article in the *Miami News* in December 1947.(3) The original owner, Continental Hotel Inc, was a group headed by Bernard Cohen, "Miami Beach builder and investor," who also owned the Cadillac Hotel in Miami Beach and the Alcazar in Miami.(4) The group took out a 99-year lease on the hotel's site in 1947.

In the absence of any original plans, the 1947 news article provides some information about the hotel's design:

The Continental will not only be unique in its facade but will be entirely different in many aspects of design and construction. Structural steel and bar joists will be used for the frame. Carrara glass and structural aluminum will be liberally employed throughout the building, while the columns will be sculptured mosaic tile. Rust-proof double-hung aluminum windows will also be another important feature. Each of the rooms will contain a built-in, individually controlled air conditioning unit. ... The public space, which will also be air conditioned, will feature a formal lobby furnished in the French provincial motif, and a card room.

This newspaper article is accompanied by a rendering of the planned "glass-accentuated hotel," showing the upper four stories of the front facade as a continuous grid of windows. Although the rendering is only a drawing, an early color photograph of the completed hotel (2) confirms that the original front facade did indeed consist entirely of glass set into aluminum frames. At present, this front facade consists of 24 individual boxed windows, in rows of six per floor. This alteration probably occurred in the early 1990s; Design Review Board file #4341 (August 20, 1993) included "window replacement" at the Continental, and both a 1990s condo ad (5), as well as a 1994 photograph (6), show the boxed windows by that time.

As construction of the Continental got underway, the *Miami* Herald published a similar article in April 1948 (4), describing it as "a unique hotel" and "an unusual structure":

One of the features is a swimming pool of unique shape and design. Facade of the hotel will be different from usual structures of this type, carrara glass and structural aluminum being used. Columns will be sculptured mosaic tile. The air conditioned public space will feature a formal lobby furnished in French provincial motif.

One of the archival postcards (2) from circa 1948 contains multiple images of the Continental, both exterior and interior, made from black-and-white photographs that have been hand-tinted. In the absence of original plans, these give the only clues about the original interior that have been found so far. The front facade is shown with its grid of windows, and inset on the sides are views of the "swimming pool,"which appears to be kidney-shaped; the "grill and cocktail lounge," which was probably located on the north side of the pool; a guest "bedroom;" and the "spacious lobby." While not much can be clearly discerned in this small photo, the lobby appears to have a bas-relief decorating its west wall, and a welter of chairs and sofas that do not seem particularly French provincial.

As a Contributing building in the Collins Waterfront Historic District of Miami Beach, the Continental retains many distinctive features of the Postwar Modern style, despite the alterations to the front facade. These include overall asymmetry, the grand-scale "boxing" of the upper front facade, the signage slab at the north end, and the channel-letter signs on the east and north parapets. On the ground floor in front, plate-glass windows are interspersed with round half-columns, which continue around the south elevation. A metal railing around the front terrace appears to be original.

---Carolyn Klepser, researcher Feb. 4, 2017

Owner CONTINENTAL	THE SE	Mailing Address	Permit No. 26925	Cost \$ 350,000
Lot 10, 11 & Block			Address 4000 Collins Av	Avenue
General Contractor Lincoln Construction		truction Co. (Al. W. Smith)	Bond No. 3764	
Architect A. Herbert Mathes	i Katioa		Engineer Alfred Oboler	e de la constante de la consta
V Zoning Regulations:	Use	RE Area 15	Lot Size 100-X 140	
Building Size:	Front	90° Depth 120°	Height 671 S	Stories 5
Certificate of Occupancy No. 950	cy No. 950	(Dec.14,1948)	UseHOTEL-102 ins, 102 baths,	is, Dining Room, &
Type of Construction	F CE	Foundation Spread	Footing Roof Flat	Date April 1, 1948
Plumbing Contractor	# 26353	Markowltz Brothers	Sewer Connection 2 = 6 **	DateMar. 16, 1948
			Temporary Closet	
Plumbing Contractor	,			Date
Water Closets 111		Bath Tubs 102	Floor Drains 8 Rain	1000
Lavatories 112		Showers 7	Grease Traps 1	
Urinals 2		Sinks 3 - 6 slop	Drinking Fountains	
Gas Stoves 6		Gas Heaters	Rough Approved	Date
Gas Radiators	**************************************	Gas Turn On Approved Tr. A	A. O'Neill, Dec.14,1948	
Septic Tank Contractor	r		Transfer Size	Date
Oil Burner Contractor			Tank Size	Date
Sprinkler System	\.			
Electrical Contractor	15892 #	Haskell Electric	RECEMPLE NO. # 15-34 6-	A Charles Vally 28, 13
Switch 200	0	Motors 1	Fans Temporary Service	#2755 Dec. 8, 19
Receptacles 418	s 118	ricalers water Space 20	Centers of Distribution 10	TTOWN
		Refrigerators	Service-Equipment 1	
	c	Irons	Sign Outlets	
No. FIXTURES 562		Electrical Contractor # 27855	B. Haskell	Datenec. 8, 1948
FINAL APPROVED BY	*	nsee Date of Service	December 14,1948	
FIECTRICAL PERMIT Alterations or Repairs-	6ver 6ver	Fla. Power & Light Co: Tr	Transformer vault - June 2,	1948 EXHIBIT 1

ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS

	Buildir	ng Pern	mits:# 27648 Two passenger elevators 2	,000 lbs. cap.	-(690222#)	Otis Ele	vator Co	٨
	###	28256 28332 29075	# 28256 Air Conditioning - Norton R. Ganger Company	Company Fuel Oil Co.	77,500 70,000 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8	. Sept. 15, Sept. 29,	1948 1948 1948	
	*	34002	Enclosing porch on south side- A. Herbert Mathes,	rbert Mathes, s	rch: Leifert	Construct	Lyto	t co
	井井	# 34513	Metal sign on post - York Sign Company	eny	75 Dec. 3, 1950	Not.	149 1995 1995) 1 1 3 3 5
#52036 F	ence:	12	<pre>+ rainting.</pre>	ft. of wall at s	# 2,000:	Nov 12,	1953 area back	\$ _
#52088 F	Strict III	street Toto ng Pen	#52088 Parking Lot OK 11/8/56 - Approx. 180. of 6" curb and new open terrance in fron t of hotel (See Permit #52036 for Plan xalumbing Fermits: S. Leifert Const. 4600 11/1/1/12	•: \$20000 11/	7/56 fron t of hotel	(See Permit	; #52036 f	or PLa
帯なるなならい	Laude	Southe	#52545 Claude Southern: 1 pole sign, 30 sq. ft; 1 wall sign, 50 sq. ft. 1/25/57	sq. ft. 1/25/57		•	•	

42288 Fitch & Morgen: 1 floor drain, relocated - 4/5/60 42439 Fitch & Morgen: 1 Water closet: 1 Bayatory - 6/16/60 OK 6/27/60 Rothman #45344 Serota Flumbing: 10 Lavatories 1 Bayatory - 6/16/60 Hy Weiss: Paint exterior Owner, Continental Hotel PERMITS:

Apply fiberglass set in gilsonite & marble chips over concrete deck - \$550, - 11/12/58

Exterior Painting = \$1347 - 11/30/59
Repairs to roof = \$200. - 12/4/59
Repair 134.7 ton cooling tower - \$3,000. - 11/7/61 OK Plaag 2/9/62
rterior - \$1850. - 7/20/64

Ward Roofing Co.: Joseph A. Collins:

Ciffer Industries: Solon B. Riggins: - 300 ft obs wall, 3 ft high - LK BRCWN 6/11/65

- Dec. 10, 16, Electrical Permits:#48944 B & W Elec. Co.: 7 receptacles OK HR 2/7/57 ande Neon: 4 neon transformers, 1/25/57 #49338 Claude Neon:

Astor Elec: 1 light outlet; 18 fixtures - 2/3/60 OK 3/10/60 Meginniss Astor Elec: 1 range outlet; 1 motor, 0-1 hp - 8/22/61 OK Scarborough 9/22/61 Astor Elec. Serv.Inc.: 1 meter change - 3/5/65 #54754 Astor Elec: #57222 Astor Elec.

10 sign lamps -6/23/65 11 appliance outlets -6/24/666298 - Astor Electric Ser. - 2 Fixtures - 10/21/68. 51 Claude Southern Corp.: 96 C. J. Kay Electric Co.:

#74299 Claude Southern Corp.: WILDING PERMITS - continued:

#75286 Alert Sandblasting Co: Sandblast pool, \$295. - 11/18/65 #76117 - SIDNEY HYMAN: - 25' x 33' Typel Stg. Room on Roof Hgt. 8'6% -4° x 6° pole sign, HOTEL CONTINENTAL

IAN: - 25' x 33' Typel Stg. Room on Roof 'Hgt. 8'63 - \$1500.00 - 4/12/66 OK Brown 6/24/66 High pressure clean and paint exterior - \$630.00 - 10/23/67 @4903/14/68

ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS

#82711 Capital Roofing Co. Re-roof job 25 squares \$2,000.00 7/23/69 **Building Permits:**

9/2/10 \$1,260.00 9/ #84725 - BB Rosman - Exterior painting & cleaning #84952 - Capital Roofing - 18 sq. built up \$1,260

IS NOT A NON-CONFORMING DECISION--FILE NO. 1632 - JULY 6, 1984 - BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS - APPEAL FROM ADMINISTRATIVE APPLICANT IS APPEALING THE ADMINISTRATIVE DETERMINATION THAT THE SUBJECT PROPERTY (ADULT CONGREGATE LIVING FACILITY - A.C.L.F.).

CONDITION NO. APPROVED - NON-CONFORMING USE OF AN 80-BED ACLF FACILITY, THEREBY REVERSING THE ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION SUBJECT TO THE ACTING PLANNING DIRECTOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: 1. CONDITION NO CHANGE THE TIME FRAME FROM SIX TO NINE MONTHS. 2. CONDITION 5, AMENDED TO RESTRICT THE ACLF FACILITY - AMENDED TO READ: O A MAXIMUM 80 BEDS: THE REST OF THE CONDITION 5 IS UNCHANGED. 3. CONDITION 7 CCOKING FACILITIES SHALL BE PROHIBITED IN ANY ACLF UNIT

SUBJECT TO ALL THE CONDITIONS AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

Electrical Permits:

ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS

Building Permits: #2164-Raisco Corp. - 2 Cooling Towers 90 Ton-\$6000-7-21-72 to 4706-Dingle and Cooper-Re-roofing 10 sqs-\$500-12-5-73

#09240-Crown Neon-Continental Hotel-Two double face pdesigns-\$500-6-11-76

#26614 3/6/85 owner paint exterior \$110.

3/29/85 Candy Painting pressure clean and paint exterior white only #26724

owner addition to dining area per plans \$5,000. #91925 10/29/86

Chanin Air - 1-15 kw central heat, 1-7% ton air cond central, 1 duct work only 2/6/87 #M08747

Plumbing Permits:

#51912-Peoples Gas- set meter-12-26-74 #61985 2/27/85 Pro Plumb - fire pump, fire spkr heads 200

Electrical Permits:

#72165-B & G Electric- 1 insta. system fire alarm; 15 bells, 10 pulls-4-25-75

#53536-Stanley Bottacovalo-70 lavatory-3-12-76

#73193-Crown Neon-Continental Hotel- 6 sign tubes; 2 sign transformers-5-10-76

#73993-County Wide Electric- telephone booth-4-15-77

G.H.C. Elec - 1-5 ton air cond, 1-15 kw strip hearer #81753 2/10/87



EXHIBIT 2

S2,000,000 LEASE CIVEN AT BEACH

A Diver lease with fent aggrégating \$2,000,000 has been nade on the block on Collins ave, between 40th and 41st sta. Them Beach, and a 102 room hotel to be known as the Consideral will be erected on part of the property.

The lessor is Joseph Edell. The essees are the Continental Hotel are, and Coroner Hotel, inc. Bereard Cohen Miami Beach build it and investor, is president of Dolli corporations. Al Goldberg Morris Schaver, Jack Warsaw and Philip Cohen are associated with the corporations.

According to plans already completed by A. Hebert Mathes speciated, the Continental Hotel Fig., Will erect on the south portion of the lot, the 102 room Hotel Continental. In the Gold Cost area already known for beautiful and imposing structures, the Continental will not only be unique in its facade but will be entirely different in many aspects of design and constitution.

Structural steel and bar joists will be used for the frame. Cartara glass and structural aluminum will be liberally employed throughout the building while the columns will be sculptured mosaic the Rust proof doubles hing aluminum windows will also be another important feature.

Each of the rooms will contain a built it, individually controlled air conditioning unit, to insure perfect air temperature at all times. In cool weather the same unit can be employed for heating. The public space, which will also be air conditioned, will feature a formal lobby, furnished in the French provincial motif, and a card room.

EXHIBIT

Beach Hotel Continental

Work has begun on a umque hotel to be known as the Con-(inental, Collins ave at 40th ave., Mlami Beach,

Lincola Construction Co. has the connect, Al M. Suriti, vice-president, and Strohen C. Lin-feet, servetary, aminume that the long will be rearly for on curancy by Nov. 1. Victor Bi-has is to be transging of victor.

Owner of the linted is a group headed by Bernard Copen, Minori Searty investor. His associates inthats Jack Warson, Plotty Columand A. Goldberg, formerly of Liedruft.

Coten le ooner es die Mami Bestin Caffillar notel and the Alemar thotal per Discoyne blvd. The Miami. Price to the was he sparated anth Minmi Begon directs as the Cardona, Betsy More and Lateerry Arms

EXTENDS FULL BLOCK

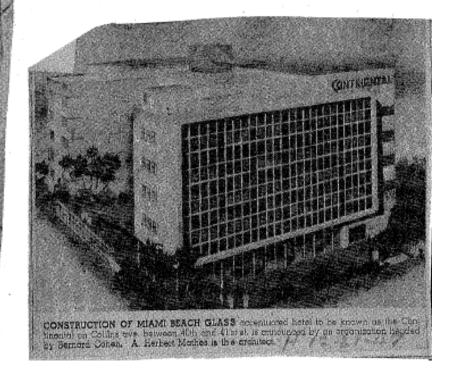
The Continental sice extends for a full block on the west able to Colling ave, between 40th and filst ats, lensed for Bi years at his ing gregate reach; of \$5,000,000. Egain! was taken in the name of Conticental Metel, Inc., from Joseph

Biospinis from the distinguisher of A Herbort Mathew tall for an unusual structure. The Consignants with have 102 individually committed \$2.0000 Unied stress rooms.

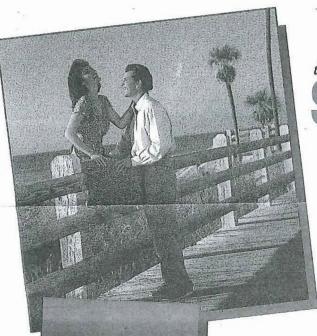
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The ag conductored profit again will feature a formed Priby, 505 alabasi in Prench provincial could



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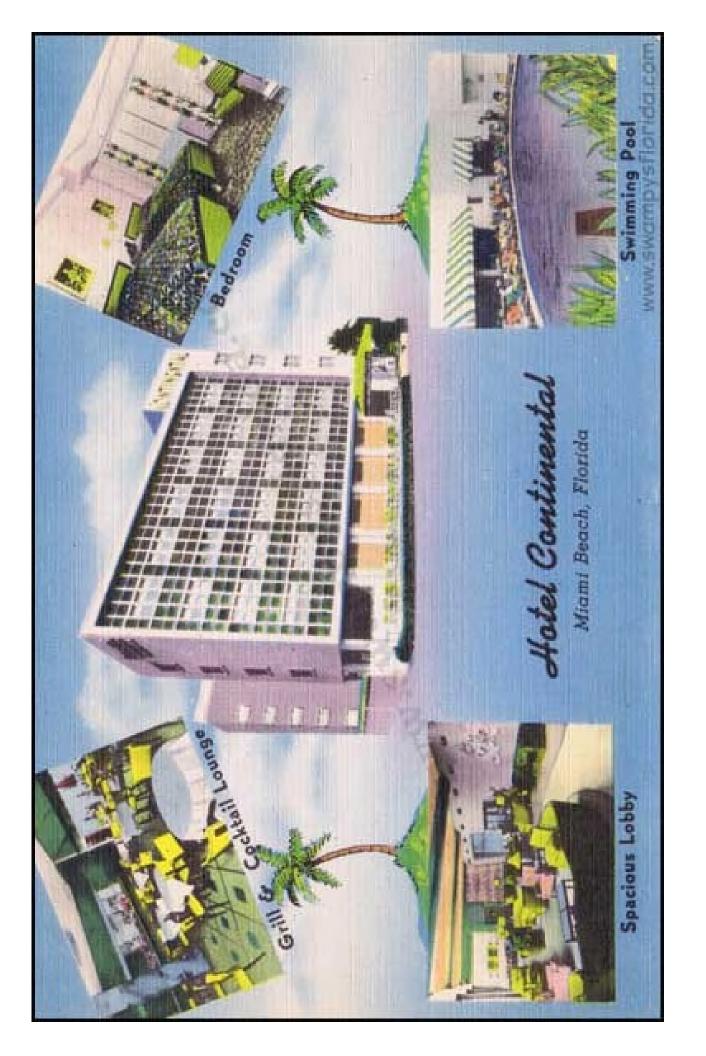
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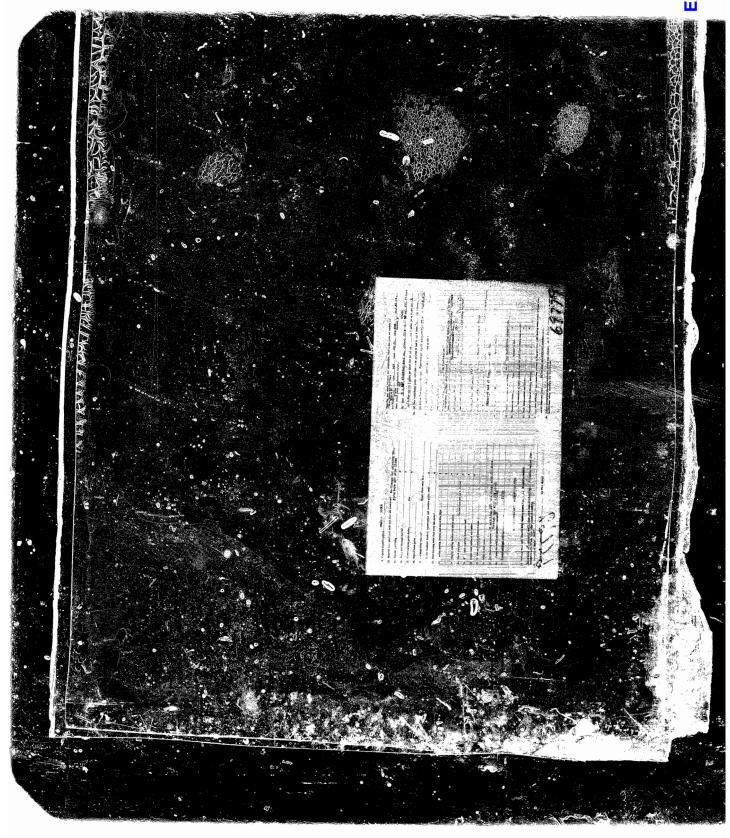
4000 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach, FL 33140 1-800-327-0555

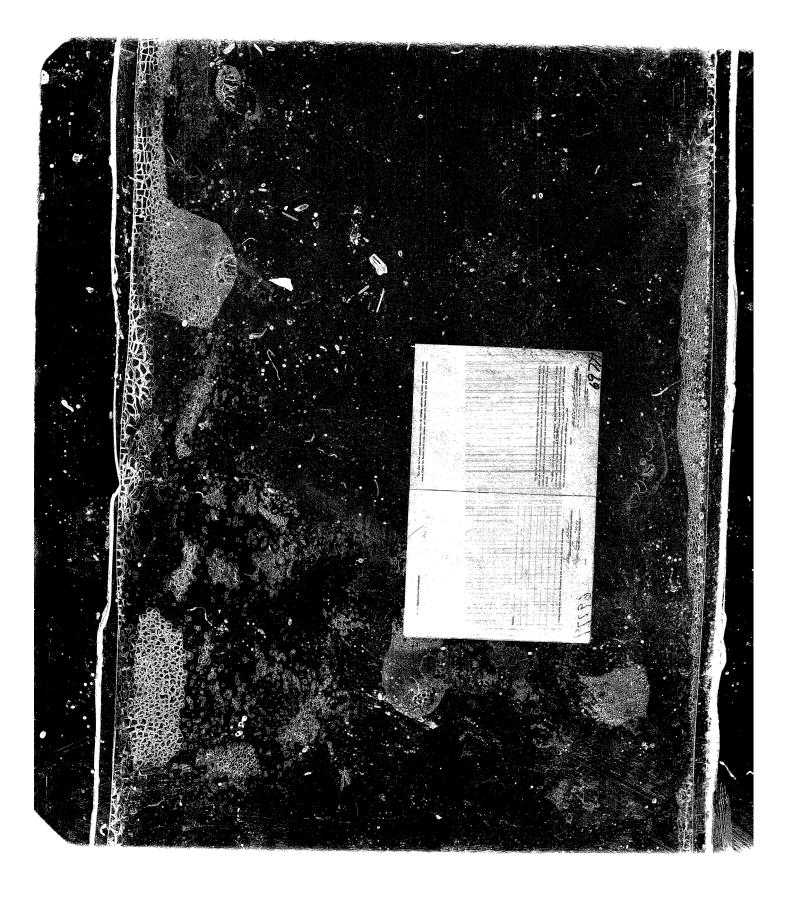


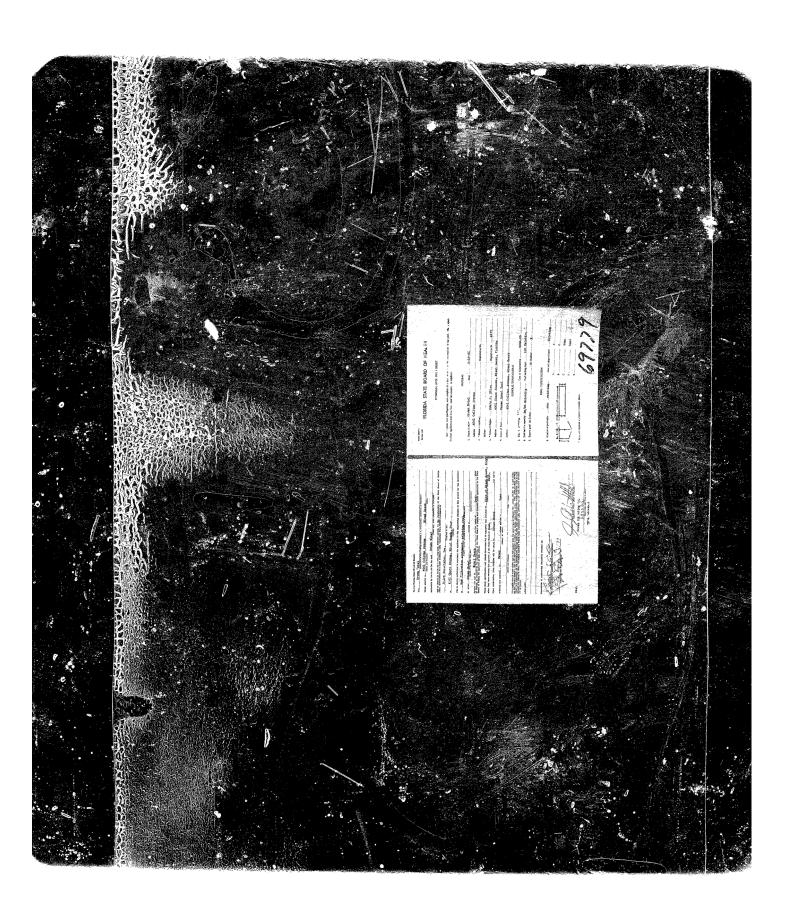


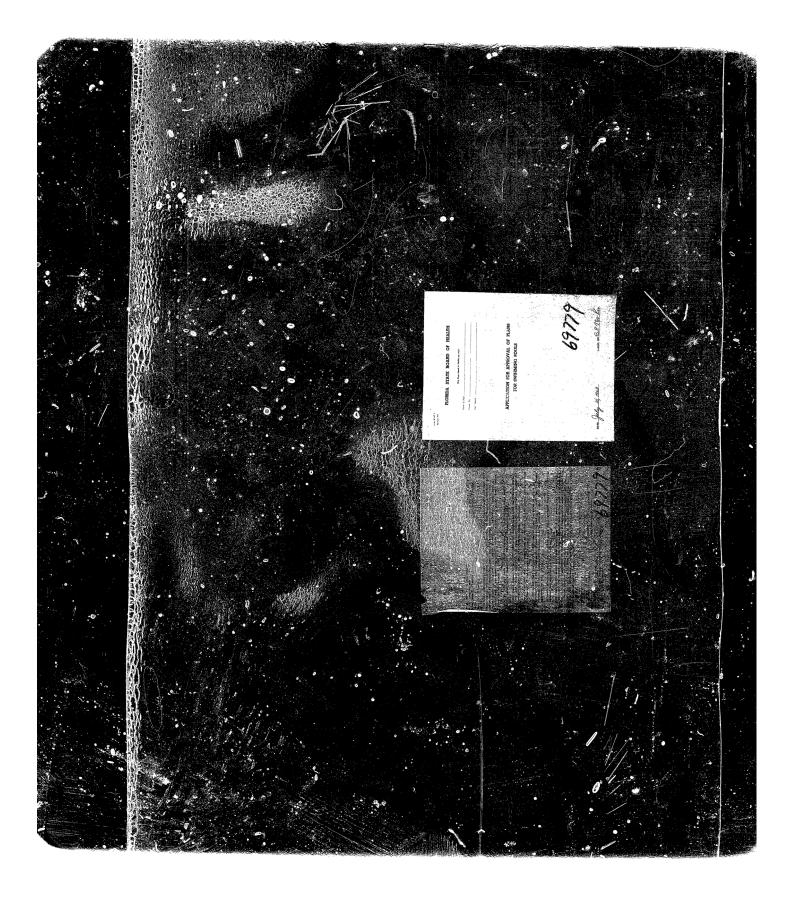
Oral representations cannot be relied upon for accuracy and/or details. For correct representation by the developer, refer to the documents which are to be furnished by the developer to a buyer or lessee as required by section 718.503, Florida Statutes

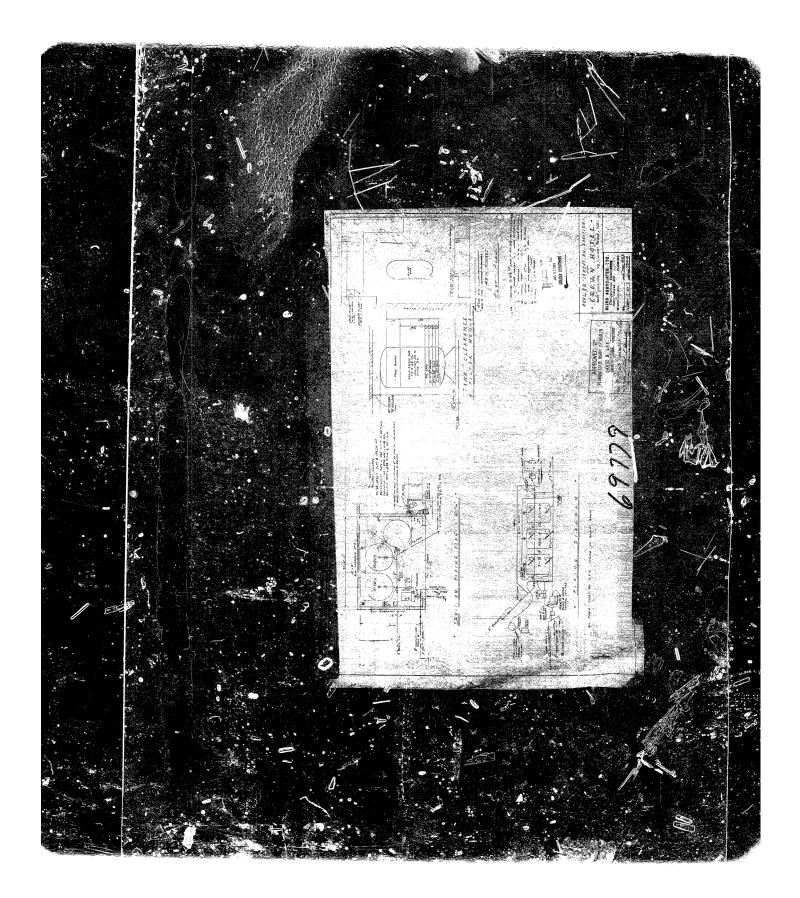












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PF8 LA FRONT LANDLINES HAVE BEEN DISPLAYED ***

Current CAMA Data:

Folio 02-3226-034-0001 Folio Status **ACTIVE** Owner Name REFERENCE ONLY Property **4000 COLLINS AVE** Address District 1 Neighborhood 0.00 DOR Code 0000 6501 Zoning Building Area 0 Lot Size Market Value \$0 Assessed \$0 Value **Picture** 0232260340001 20 FileName **Picture** 0 Number Building

Picture Evaluator Picture Date

Picture

Location

WALDO I ALVAREZ 6/14/2012 10:46:10

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PHOTO TAKEN JUNE 14, 2012

Picture Note

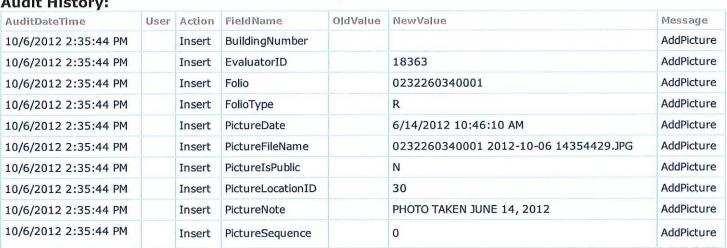
Camera Date 06/14/2012 10:46:1

Camera Make PENTAX

Camera Model

PENTAX Optio WG-1

Audit History:







UNIT # 111 (LIVING ROOM)



UNIT # 111 (KITCHEN)



UNIT#111 BEDROOM CLOSET

