### **Continental Hotel**

4000 Collins Avenue Miami Beach, Florida

Historic Resources Report

## 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 34<sup>th</sup> 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. 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
1520 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."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "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

1	position of	HOTEL	Mailing Address	Permit No.	26925	Cost 🔅 🤾	350,000
A. A.	Lot 10, 11 & Block		SubdivisionM. B. IMP. CO.	Address	4000 Collins Av		e espesa esca
<b>√</b>	General Contractor Lincoln Construction	ES TES	Struction Co. (Al. W. Smith)	Bond No.	3764		
	Architect A. Herbert Mathes			Engineer	Alfred Oboler		n whose
1	V Zoning Regulations:	Use	RE Area 15	Lot Size	100 × 140		
	Building Size:	Front	901 Depth 1201	Height		Stories 5	
	Certificate of Occupancy No. 950	y No. 950	(Dec.14,1948)	UseHOTEL	02 rms, 102 beths,		Foom,
	Type of Construction	#1 CBB	Foundation Spread	Footing Roof	FIRT FIRT	. Date April	4 2 4
<u>}</u> -	Plumbing Contractor	# 26353	Markowitz Brothers	Sewer Connection	ction 2 ~ 6 11	DateMar. 1	10 m
<u></u>				Temporary Closet	loset 🐫		
*	Plumbing Contractor	,				Date	
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	Lawatories 112		Showers 7	Grease Traps	orano Orano Orano		
¥	Urinals 2		Sinks 3 - 6 slop	Drinking Fountains	mtains 1		
4	Gas Stoves 6		Gas Heaters	Rough Approved	ved	Date	
	Gas Radiators	*	Gas Turn On Approved T.	A. O'Neill,	Dec.14,1948		
) <b>.</b>	Septic Tank Contractor			W. T. LySize		Date	
-	Oil Burner Contractor			Tank Size	Tank Size	Date	
9 <b>.*</b>	Sprinkler System	\					
	Electrical Contractor	# 26857	Haskell Electric	RECEPTION # 15-34	#15-34 6-7	Copate Villa	28, 14
	Switch 200	0	Motors	Fans	Fans Temporary Fervice	多	8, 19
	OUTEIS Light 451 Receptacles 413	7 2 8	HEALERS Water Space 20	Centers of Distribution	stribution 10		
			Refrigerators	Service-Equipment	ulpment l		
			Irons	Sign Outlets	A STATE A STATE OF THE STATE OF		
	No. FIXTURES 562		trical Con	M		DateDec. 8	8, 1948
	FINAL APPROVED BY		Date of Service	Vecember	14,1948		
	FLECTRICAL PERMIT Alterations or Repairs—	-0ver	Fla. Power & Light Co: 1	Transformer v	rault - June 2,		

# ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS

Buildin	Building Permits:# 27648	# 27648 Two passenger elevators 2,000 lbs. cap.	- (#223069)Otis Elevator Co.
***	# 28256 Air # 28332 Fue # 29075 3 f:	Air Conditioning - Norton R. Ganger Company \$ 70,000 Sept. 15, 1948  Fuel Oil Tank - 1,000 gals Fla. Fuel Oil Co. \$ 200 Sept. 29, 1948  7 flat wallsigns - 170 sq. ft Claude Neon - \$ 900	# 5(,500 June 23, 1948 # 70,000 Sept. 15, 1948 # 200 Sept. 29, 1948 # 900 Dec 10 John
# #	34002 Enc.	Enclosing porch on south side- A. Herbert Mathes,	arch: Leifert Construction Cocont
## ##	4513 Met	tal sign on post - York Sign Company	# 1,000 Nov. 3, 1950
#52036 Fence:	10 ft. conc.	crete back fence at 10° wall height; 10 ft, of wall at 5º	# 2,000; Nov 12, 1953
#52088 Parking	street 13 Lot OK. 11/8 <b>grenmits:</b>	#52088 Parking Lot OK. 11/8/56 - Approx. 180 of 6" curb and new open terrance in front of hotel (See Permit #52036 for Plan x Plumbing Permits S. Leifert Const. 4,52036 for Plan	7/56 fron t of hotel (See Permit #52036 for Plan
#52545 Claude	Southern:	1 pole sign, 30 sq. ft; 1 wall sign, 50 sq. ft. 1/25/57	

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
terior - \$1850. - 7/20/64

- 300 ft cbs wall, 3 ft high - LK BRCWN 6/11/65

42288 Pitch & Morgen: 1 floor drain, relocated - 4/5/60 42439 Pitch & Morgen: 1 Water closet: 1 Bayatery - 6/16/60 OK 6/27/60 Rothman 445344 Serota Plumbing: 10 Lavatories 1 Bayatery - 6/16/60

Paint exterior - \$

Hy Weiss: Paint ex Owner, Continental

60726 Ward Roofing Co.: 166306 Joseph A. Collins:

Trest Industries: Solon B. Riggins:

- Dec.10, 1 Electrical Permits: #48944 B & W Elec. Co.: 7 receptacles OK HR 2/7/57

llight outlet; 18 fixtures - 2/3/60 OK 3/10/60 Meginniss lrange outlet; 1 motor, 0-1 hp - 8/22/61 OK Scarborough 9/22/61 Serv.Inc.: 1 meter change - 3/5/65 4 neon transformers, 1/25/57 52058 Astor Elec. Serv.Inc.: Claude Neon: #54754 Astor Elec: #57222 Astor Elec:

10 sign lamps - 6/23/65 6298 - Astor Electric Ser. - 2 Fixtures - 10/21/68. 51 Claude Southern Corp.: 36 C. J. Kay Electric Co.:

WILDING PERMITS - continued:

#75299 Claude Southern Corp.: 4' x 6' pole sign, HOTEL CONTINENTAL - \$350 - 6/23/65
#75286 Alert Sandblasting Co: Sandblast pool, \$295. - 11/18/65
#7517 - SIDNEY HYMAN: - 25' x 33' Typel Stg. Room on Roof Hgt. 8'6% - \$1500.00 - 4/12/66 OK Brown 6/24/66
#79166 Navildo Vichot; High pressure clean and paint exterior - \$630.00 - 10/23/67 @ABC 3/14/68

Block

# ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS

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

9/2/10 \$3,400.00 \$1,260.00 #84725 - BB Rosman - Exterior painting & cleaning #84952 - Capital Roofing - 18 sq. built up \$1,260 FILE NO. 1632 - JULY 6, 1984 - BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS - APPEAL FROM ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION----APPLICANT IS APPEALING THE ADMINISTRATIVE DETERMINATION THAT THE SUBJECT PROPERTY IS NOT A NON-CONFORMING (ADULT CONGREGATE LIVING FACILITY - A.C.L.F.).

1. CONDITION NO. PPROVED - NON-CONFORMING USE OF AN 80-BED ACLF FACILITY, THEREBY REVERSING THE ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION CHANGE THE TIME FRAME FROM SIX TO NINE MONTHS. 2. CONDITION 5, AMENDED TO RESTRICT THE ACLF FACILITY O A MAXIMUM 80 BEDS: THE REST OF THE CONDITION 5 IS UNCHANGED. 3. CONDITION 7 - AMENDED TO READ: SUBJECT TO THE ACTING PLANNING DIRECTOR'S RECOMMENDATION'S WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: 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 #04706-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 10/29/86 #26724 #91925

Chanin Air - 1-15 kw central heat, 1-7% ton air cond central, 1 duct work only owner addition to dining area per plans \$5,000. #MO8747 2/6/87

# Plumbing Permits:

#51912-Peoples Gas- set meter-12-26-74 #61985\_2/27/85\_Pro\_Plumb - fire pump, fire spkr heads 200

Electrical Permits:

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

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

#73193-Crown Neon-Continental Hotel- 6 sign tubes; 2 sign transformers-6-10-76 #73993-County Wide Electric- telephone booth-4-15-77

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



### **EXHIBIT 2**

### \$2,000,000 LEASE GIVEN AT BEACH

A 99 year lease with fent aggregating \$2,000,000 has been nade on the block on Collins ave., between 40th and 41st sts., uland Beach, and a 102-room hotel to be known as the Conmental will be erected on part of the property.

The lessor is Joseph Edell, The) essees are the Continental Hotel inc., and Coronet Hotel, inc. Beraard Cohen, Miami Beach build both corporations. Al Goldberg Morris Schaver, Jack Warsau and Philip Cohen are associated with the corporations.

According to plans already completed by A. Hebert Mathes, architect, the Continental Hotel and, will erect on the south por fion of the lot, the 102 room Hotel Continental. In the Gold Coast 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 con-

Structural steel and bar loists Will be used for the frame. Carvara glass and structural alumi-21 and investor, is president of num will be liberally employed throughout the building while the columns will be sculmined mosaic tile. Rust proof doublehung aluminum windows will also be another important feature.

> Each of the rooms will contain a builting individually controlled air conditioning unit, to insure berfect 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.

## Beach Hotel Continental

Work has begun on a umque heres to be known as the Con-(mental, Colline sye at 40th ave., Mlami Bench.

Lincoln Construction Co. has the connect, Al M. Suith, vier-president, and Stephen G. Lei-fert, streptary, amounts that the lord will be ready for or creamy by Nov. 1. Victor 80-has is to be maniging alreador.

Owner of the linted is a group headed by Bernard Come, Many Sendy investor. His associates inthat her Warsen, Pully Columand A. Goldberg, formerly of Le-

Coten is owner of the Marni Besty Catillar total and the Alman hotel or Discayor blvd. Oc Minute. Prior to the war he open-ated such Minute Beson divises as Lor Cardova, Betsy More and 140sery Armsi

#### EXTENDS FULL BLOCK

The Continental site extends for a full block on the west alle of Colling ave between 40th and dist ata, leneed for Bi years at an ing \$ gregate reach; of \$5,000,000, Lease; was taken in the name of Conticental Metel, Inc., from Joseph Relieville.

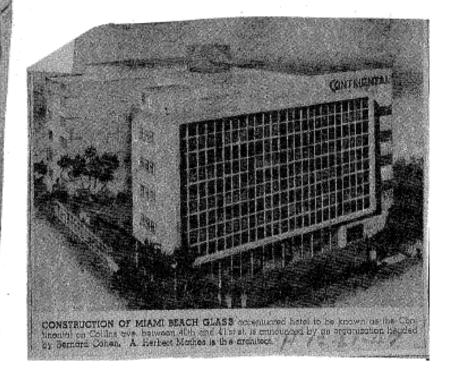
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The Compliants with have Included any controlled at 80000 three above rooms

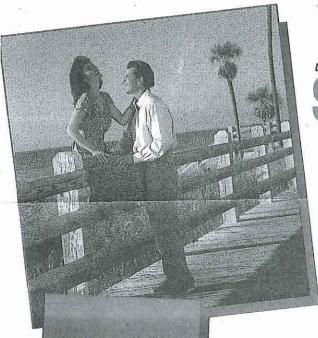
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The ar conducted orbit apar will feature a formed Poby 505 midned in Prench provincia, 2000.



# FURECLUSURE PRICES



Only 100 units available CONDOS

\$29,000

THIS SUNDAY ONLY

Doors open at 10:00 am

 $\star\star\star\star\star\star\star\star$ FIRST TIME OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

#### STEPS TO THE OCEAN

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- ★ Valet parking ★ Rental program available ★ Easy financing

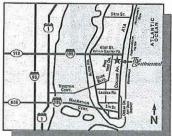
#### South of the Fontainebleau Hilton

South Florida's #1 Developer, **Crescent Heights**, offers the largest selection of condos on the ocean with all the amenities you can imagine. Now, **Crescent Heights** presents The Continental, located between South Beach and Millionaire's Row, just steps from the ocean. Foreclosure prices — never this low again!



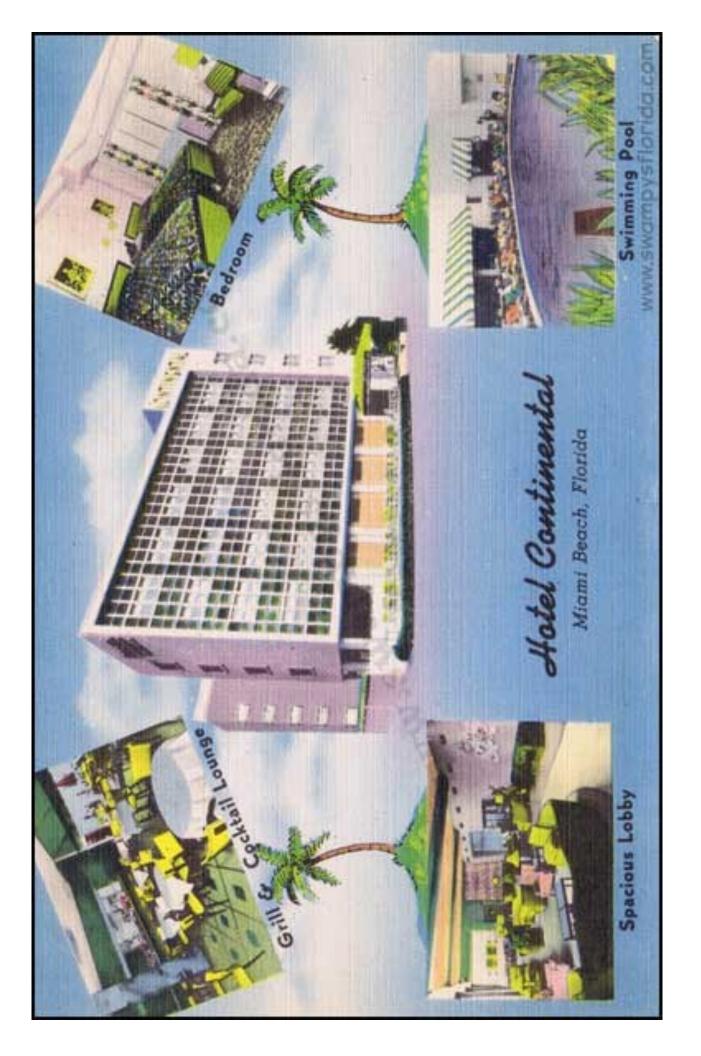
4000 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach, FL 33140 1-800-327-0555



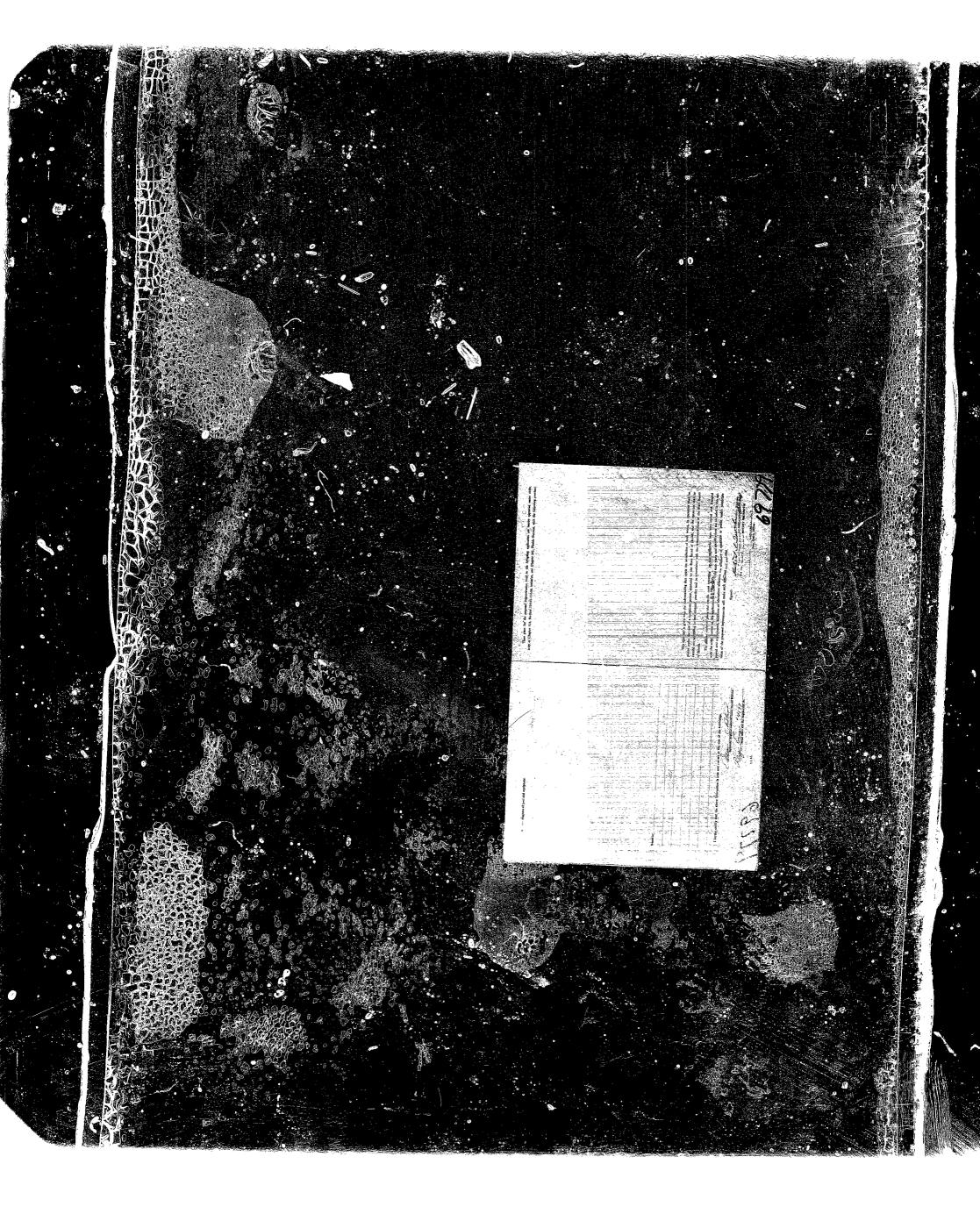


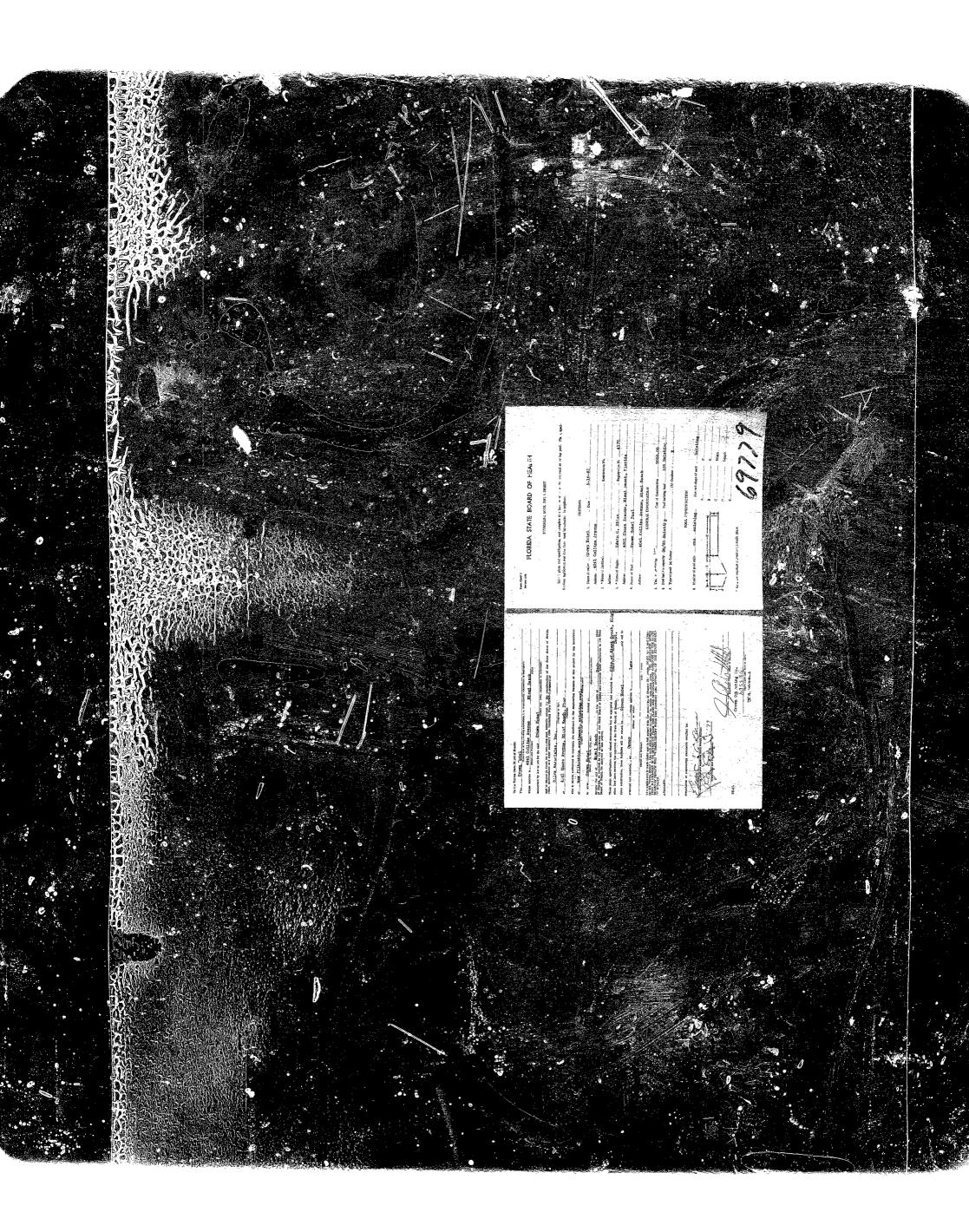


Oral representations cannot be relied upon for accuracy and/or details. For correct representation by the developer, refer to the documents which are to be furnished by the developer to a buyer or lessee as required by section 718.503, Florida Statutes.













			Via		PTXM0175
	INQUIRY _ *	TNS AVE	CON	,	MCD 0200.
AND LEGAL PREV CHG IMENTS INC Changed its GALBUT ETAL Name to. NGTON AVE Crescent Height XXXVII	G 6501 CLU 07/05/94 YEAR	(* 6) (* 8) (* )	BLDG YR 1 VALUE HIS 199 7286 9359 16635	TORY R 3 60 47	LUC 0600 ES YR 08/11/94 728000 935917 1663917
34 53 42 PB 5-8 CH IMPROVEMENT CO SUB	WVI) TOTEX	1 680 464	16631	24.7	1663917
HRU 15 ELK 34 Seed, 94 200.000 X 140 Des 23-29	SR EX CO NE		1663	717	1663917
TAX STATUS: TAXABLE PLATE 046 2 BAIH UNIT 98	STATE EXE SALE AMT 4566000 2910000	DATE. 08/90	TYPE IX	V SALE SALE	TINÜ 1 2
46347 BLDS 1	PFA-FOLIO S	JAM BENAM	PF9-R/(	Z MENU	prio-Finish
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E INQUIRY PF2-MORE LEGAL LEGAL INFORMATION HAS BEEN D

\* \* \* \* \* LAND IN

2 3226 001 1930 DIST 01 NEI 5/Z 0000 CU 0043 SU 0600 728000 AG VALUE 081194 TYPE MISC DATE

XXXXXX CALCULAT

03 LOTS 10 THRU 15 BLK 34 04 LOT SIZE 200.000 X 140

LUE C ACRES/ D FOOTAGE D FAC/ RATE



CONTINUE 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 Zoning 6501 **Building Area** 0 Lot Size Market Value \$0 Assessed \$0 Value **Picture** 0232260340001 20 FileName

Building Picture Location Picture

**Picture** 

Number

Unknown WALDO I ALVAREZ

0

Evaluator Picture Date

6/14/2012 10:46:10

PHOTO TAKEN JUNE 14, 2012

Picture Note

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

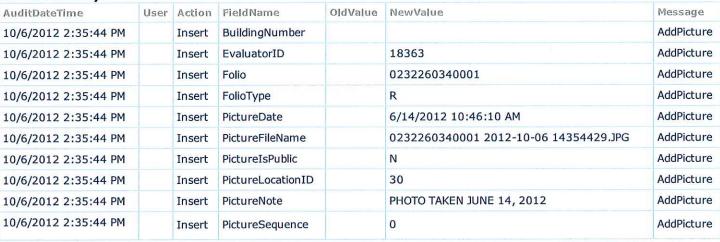
Camera Make PENTAX

Camera

Model

PENTAX Optio WG-1

Audit History:







UNIT # 111 (LIVING ROOM



UNIT # 111 (KITCHEN)



UNIT#111 BEDROOM CLOSET

