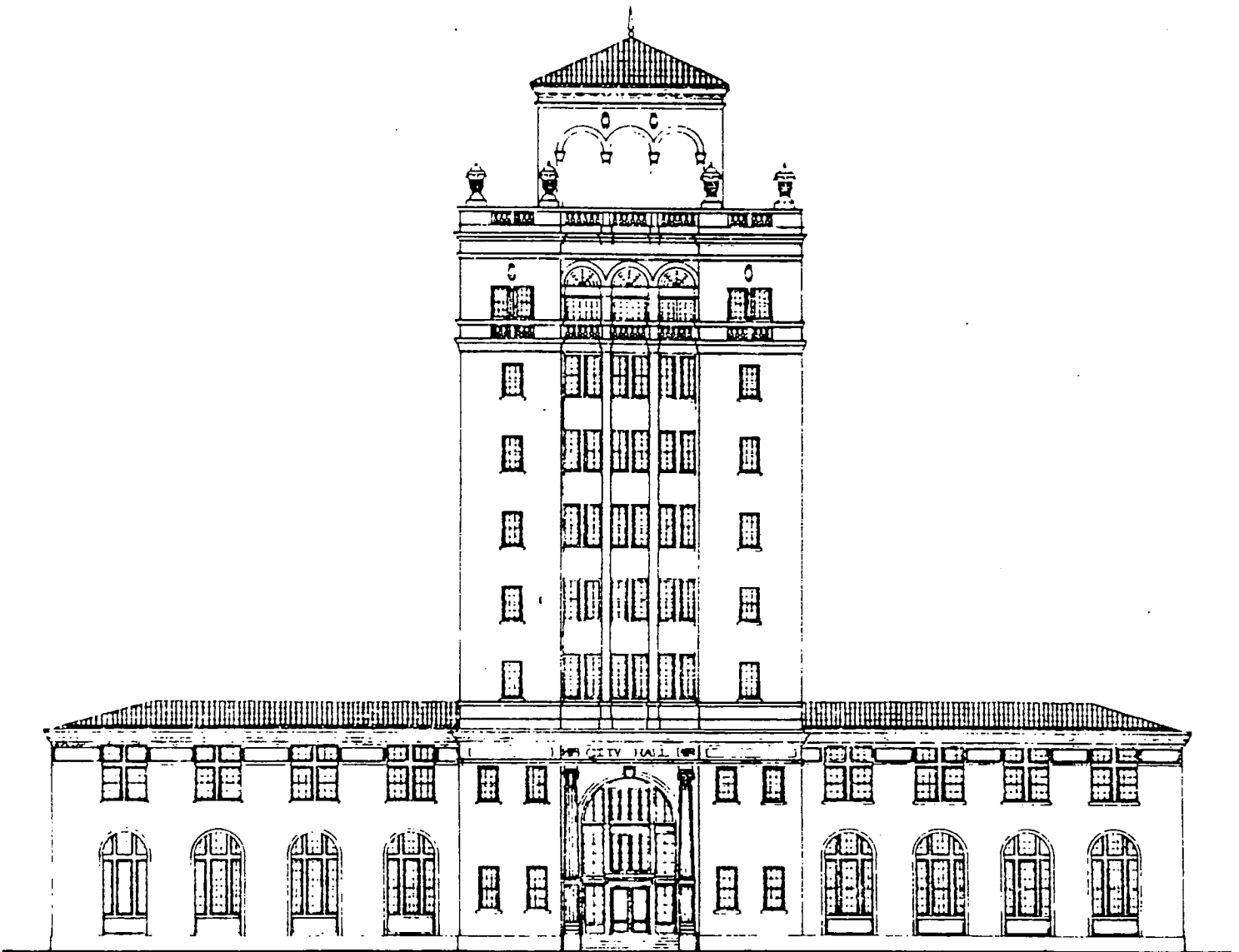


OLD CITY HALL
1130 WASHINGTON AVENUE

DESIGNATION REPORT



CITY OF MIAMI BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

REPORT OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH PLANNING DEPARTMENT
TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
ON THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF
OLD CITY HALL
1130 WASHINGTON AVENUE
AS AN HISTORIC SITE

(PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 26-5.B(3)
OF THE MIAMI BEACH ZONING ORDINANCE NO. 1891)

Prepared by

Richard S. Rickles
Richard S. Rickles
Principal Planner

4/1/83
DATE

Approved by

Sanford A. Youkilis
Sanford A. Youkilis
Director of Planning

4/1/83
DATE

Accepted by

Chairman
Historic Preservation Board

DATE

Designated by the City Commission
of the City of Miami Beach

Ordinance No. 83-2388

Date 10/15/83

| CONTENTS | | PAGE |
|----------|---------------------------------|------|
| I. | GENERAL INFORMATION | 1 |
| II. | SIGNIFICANCE | 4 |
| III. | HISTORICAL INFORMATION | 6 |
| IV. | ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION | 7 |
| V. | PLANNING CONTEXT | 9 |
| VI. | HP ZONING ELEMENTS | 10 |
| VII. | BIBLIOGRAPHY | 17 |

OLD CITY HALL

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Historic Name:

Miami Beach City Hall

Current Name:

Commonly referred to as "Old City Hall"

Location:

1130 Washington Avenue
Miami Beach, Florida 33139

Present Owner:

City of Miami Beach

Present Occupant:

Vacant

Present Use:

Police Training Exercises
Storage
Occasionally Used as Set for Movies

Present Zoning:

MU Municipal Use District

Tax Folio Number:

02-4203-09-0070

Boundry Description of HP Zoning District:

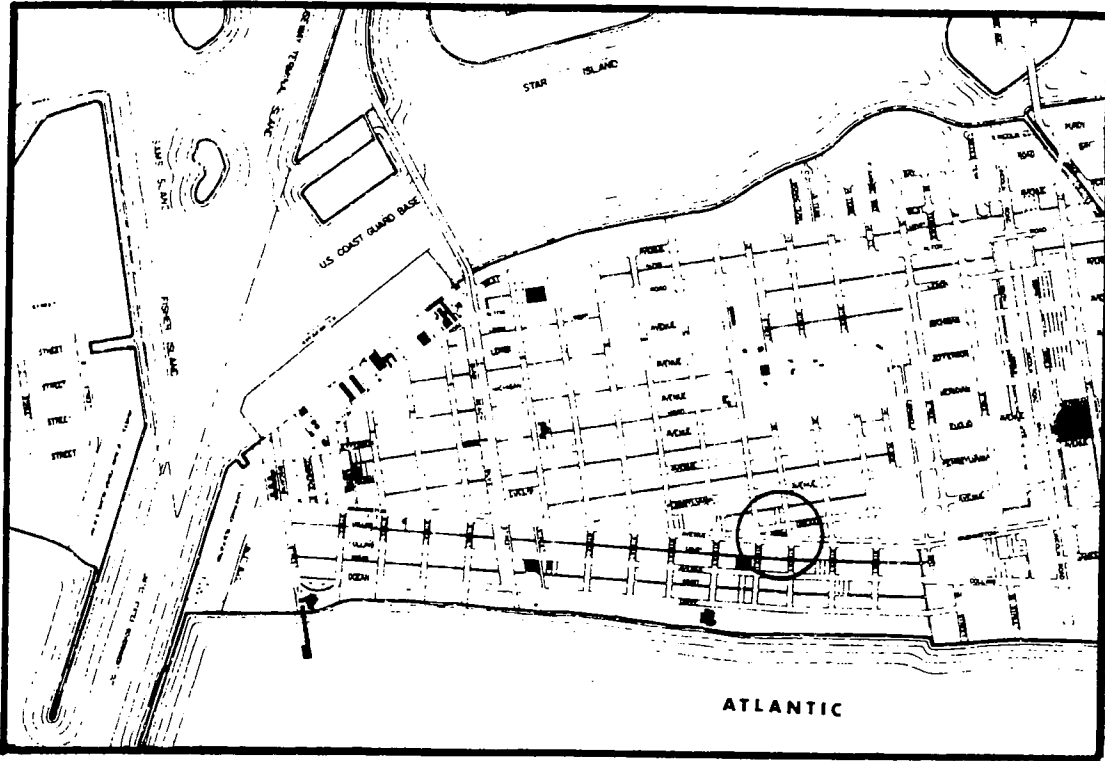
Block 23, Ocean Beach Addition No. 3, as recorded in Plat Book 2 at page 81, of the Public Records of Dade County, Florida

Dade County Historic Survey Rating:

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

OLD CITY HALL

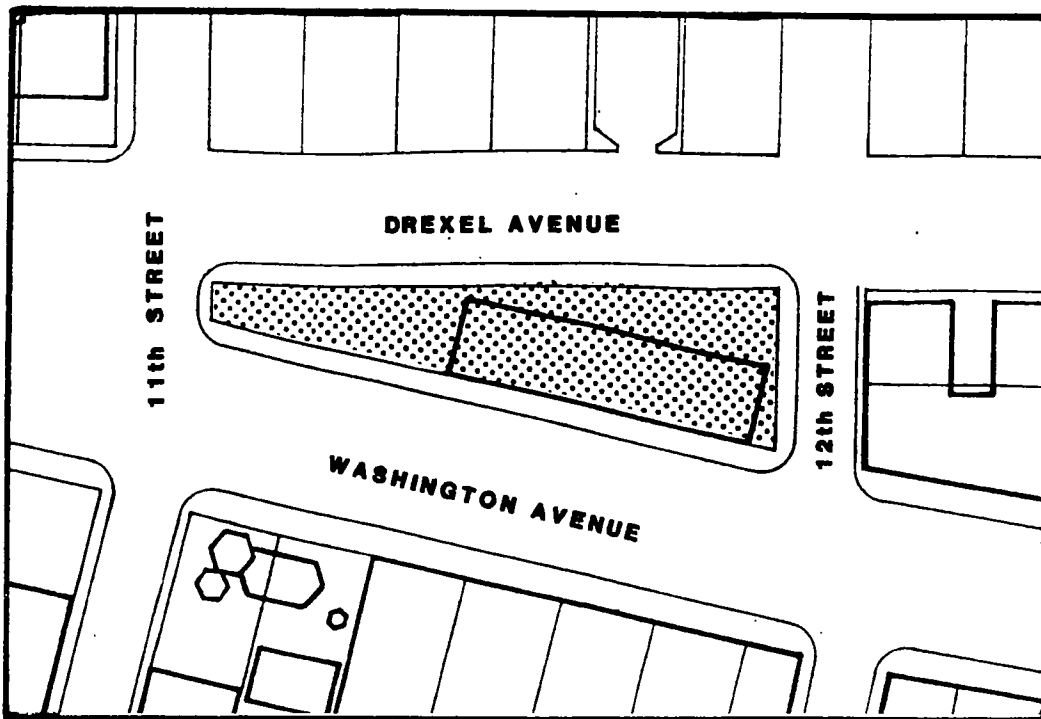
1130 WASHINGTON AVENUE



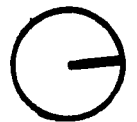
**LOCATION
PLAN**



NORTH



SITE PLAN



NORTH

II. SIGNIFICANCE

Statement of Significance

Old City Hall is significant for its association with the function of municipal government from 1928 to 1977. The structure is an outstanding example of Mediterranean Revival Architecture and is noted for its symmetry, stylistic features and details, and its prominence within the National Register Architectural District and the Washington Avenue neighborhood.

Old City Hall was occupied in 1928, replacing a former modest City Hall. The new structure demonstrated the legitimacy of the young City and a sense of optimism following the land bust of 1926. From its ninth floor observatory residents had a panoramic view of the City, ocean and bay.

The combination of the building's association with City government for fifty years, its distinct architectural style, and its prominent scale in comparison to surrounding structures has made Old City Hall one of Miami Beach's most recognizable and important landmarks.

Relationship to Criteria for Designation

a. Listing on the National Register of Historic Places

Old City Hall is located within the Miami Beach Architectural District which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

b. Owner Consent

In Resolution No. 83-17296 adopted on March 16, 1983, the City Commission of the City of Miami Beach gives its consent to the designation of Old City Hall.

c.1 Goals and Purposes of Historic Preservation District Regulations

A. Old City Hall is of architectural and historic significance as stated in the Dade County Historic Survey.

B. The designation of Old City Hall would foster civic pride and preserve physical evidence of the City's heritage.

D. The designation of Old City Hall would promote excellence in urban design by serving as an important example of the compatibility of restored, rehabilitated, or replaced structures within the Architectural District. In addition, as a major element in the proposed Police and Courts Facility, a rehabilitated Old City Hall would demonstrate the compatibility of historic structures and new construction.

c.2 National Register of Historic Places Evaluation Criteria

- A. Association with events that have made significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

As the seat of government for fifty years, Old City Hall is associated with both the events and persons which have shaped the history of Miami Beach during that period of time.

- C. Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Old City Hall is noteworthy for the excellence of its proportion and detailing as shown in the relationship of tower to flanking wings, the main entrance formed by a monumental arched bay flanked by large composite columns, decorative eighth floor balcony, and recessed ninth floor penthouse.

III. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Date Erected:

1927

Architect:

Martin Luther Hampton

Builder/Contractor:

H.A. Peters

Historical Context:

The structure at 1130 Washington Avenue was Miami Beach's second City Hall facility and was completed in 1927 at a cost of \$260,000. The building was occupied on January 1, 1928.

Old City Hall was utilized by the Fire Department on the first and second floors of the north wing, City Clerk on the first floor of the south wing, Engineering on the second floor of the south wing, City Manager and the Mayor on the seventh floor, the City Council Chambers on the eighth floor, and an observation deck on the ninth floor.

IV. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

Description of Building:

Old City Hall is composed of a central nine-story tower with two two-story wings. The building is 125' - 3" from grade to the top of penthouse cornice. The building originally may have had a pitched, Spanish-tile penthouse roof which added approximately 10 feet to the overall building height. Height of north and south wings is 43 feet to top of roof from finished floor. Building construction is reinforced concrete and structural steel with wood piling foundations. All windows are wood construction and most are double-hung. The wings are topped with a hip-roof surfaced with asbestos shingles. There are additions on the south wing roof and on the penthouse on the west elevation.

East Elevation

The first floor contains eight bays including a central two-story arched entrance portal with modern glass and aluminum doors and glazed infill, surrounded by decorative molding and flanked by fluted columns with corinthian capitals, four arched windows in each wing and two rectilinear windows. "City Hall" is incised about the entrance. The second floor contains ten bays and is surrounded by a decorative surface molding and cornice. The third through seventh floors contain five bays, the northern most bay on floors four through seven has been filled in. There is a cornice separating the seventh and eighth floors. The eighth floor contains seven bays, the central three are arched leading onto a balcony with a balustrade, the flanking bays each consist of two windows separated by a twisted column with a balustrade underneath and a decorative shield above. There is a cornice separating the eighth and ninth floors. The recessed ninth floor, or penthouse, is surrounded by a pierced concrete railing and contains three arched bays, which are two decorative shields and decorative cornice.

West Elevation

The design of the west elevation exactly repeats the east elevation except for the following alterations:

On the first floor, one bay has been filled in, none of the tower windows have been filled in, one decorative shield on the penthouse has been damaged and there are several incompatible additions on the ground floor.

North Elevation

The first floor contains three arched bays which have been filled in. The second floor contains three bays. The third through seventh floors each contained five bays, two of the central three have been filled in. The windows on floors three through seven are smaller in size than the other elevations. The eighth floor contains seven bays, two of the central three arched windows have been filled in, the flanking bays each consist of two windows separated by twisted columns with a decorative balustrade underneath and a decorative shield above. The central bay leads onto a balcony with balustrade. The ninth floor, or penthouse, is surrounded by a pierced concrete railing. All bays have been filled in and all

decorative moldings removed. There are decorative cornices atop the second floor, seventh floor, eighth floor and penthouse.

South Elevation

The south elevation essentially repeats the north elevation with the following exceptions: the first floor bays contain windows, all windows on floors three through eight are remaining, all penthouse bays have been filled in with one door remaining in the central bay and all decorative molding has remained.

Description of Significant Interior Areas:

Lobby - The first floor central lobby has terra cotta tile floors (with repairs), brass elevator doors, decorative brass lighting fixtures, pilasters (design of capitals includes shell and dolphin patterns), other decorative moldings, and a stairway with iron railing and wood bannister.

Description of Significant Site Feature:

On the southern portion of the site stands a memorial plaque to World War I soldiers embedded in a keystone surfaced monolith approximately fifteen feet in height. The southern portion of the site also contains a canon of more recent date and a flag pole. Site vegetation is composed of palms and shrubs.

V. PLANNING CONTEXT

Present Trends and Conditions:

Old City Hall is located within the proposed site of the new Miami Beach Police and Courts Facility. The project architects have recommended rehabilitation of the structure to be used for municipal office space and possible income producing office space.

Conservation Objectives:

Old City Hall is being nominated for designation to ensure the rehabilitation of the structure and new construction on the site is sympathetic and compatible with this City landmark. Designation would require the review of architectural plans by the Historic Preservation Board.

VI. HP ZONING ELEMENTS

Boundaries:

The boundaries of HP Zoning have been drawn to include all of Block 23, or the entire block presently occupied by Old City Hall. The official zoning map of the City shall indicate such boundaries and shall use the symbol HP-1.

Major Exterior Surfaces Subject to Review:

All exterior facades of Old City Hall shall be considered major exterior surfaces subject to review.

Major Interior Areas Subject to Review:

The central first floor lobby, including floor, walls, decorative moldings, light fixtures, elevator doors, and stairway shall be subject to review.

Major Landscape Features Subject to Review:

The major landscape features subject to review shall include all public monuments and memorials.

Evaluation Guidelines:

The following guidelines shall be used by the Historic Preservation Board to evaluate the appropriateness and compatibility of proposed development affecting the designated site:

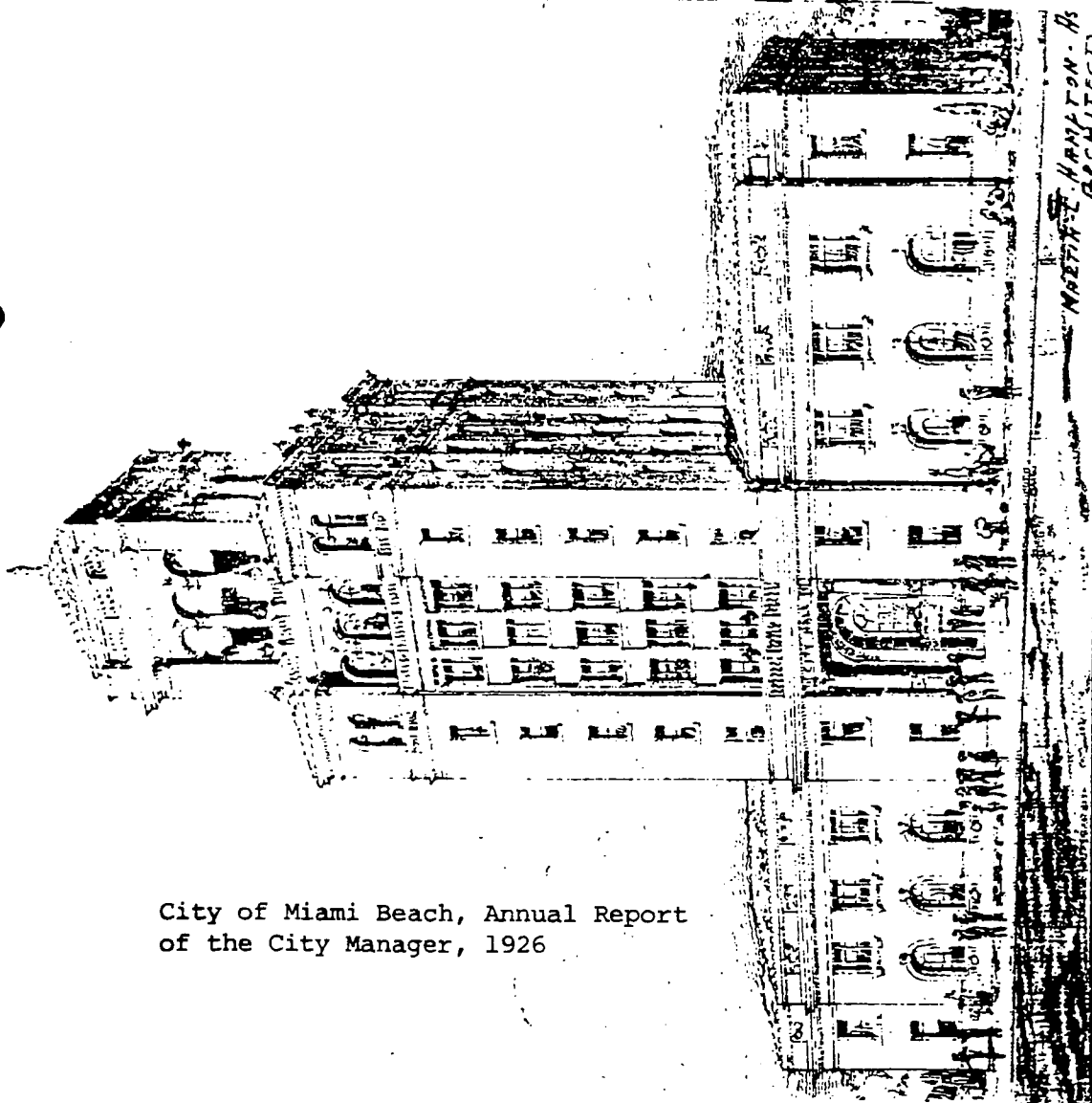
- U.S. Secretary of Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Rehabilitation Projects.

MUNICIPAL BUILDING OPERATIONS

IN ORDER TO SECURE THE MAXIMUM efficiency from the offices, not only more space but a concentration of the municipal departments, now scattered in various places, has become a necessity. Accordingly, bonds were voted for a new city hall July 31, 1925, in the amount of \$300,000 and, after careful consideration, a site on Washington and Drexel Avenues, between Eleventh and Twelfth Streets, was purchased for the sum of \$135,000.

Because this site borders on four streets the city hall here erected will stand out always in distinct relief, unobstructed by any other building or buildings. With this in mind, there was designed a structure, beautiful and architecturally graceful in appearance, yet an office building modern in every detail. The plans, as drawn by the architects, contemplate a modified adaptation of Spanish type, 167½ by 118 feet, two stories high, surmounted in the center by a nine-story tower, 50 feet square, rising 135 feet above the second story. Three major considerations were given attention in planning the interior, namely, to secure the greatest convenience at the least possible expense, and to provide for future growth.

On September 3, 1926, 22 bids were received for the construction of this building, ranging from \$279,000 to \$362,370, but for various reasons it was deemed advisable to reject these bids and, while no definite date has been set, an early authorization for re-advertisement will undoubtedly be made and work will proceed without further delay. The end of the next fiscal year will, in all probability, find the city government functioning in a new home.



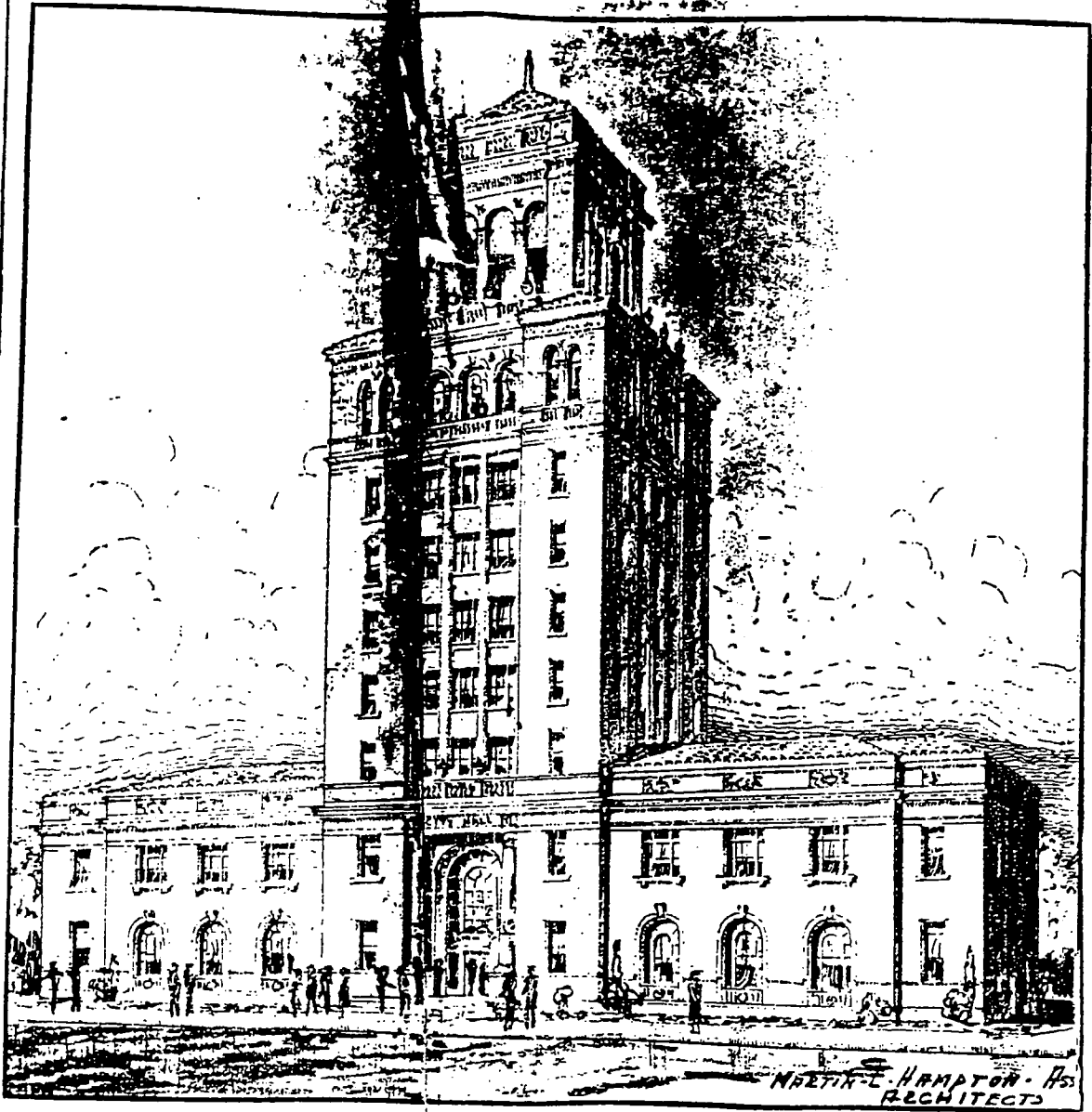
City of Miami Beach, Annual Report
of the City Manager, 1926

PROPOSED
MUNICIPAL OFFICE BUILDING

FUNDS AVAILABLE AND CONSTRUCTION AUTHORIZED

MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, FRIDAY, MARCH 11, 1927

Work Starts On New City Hall



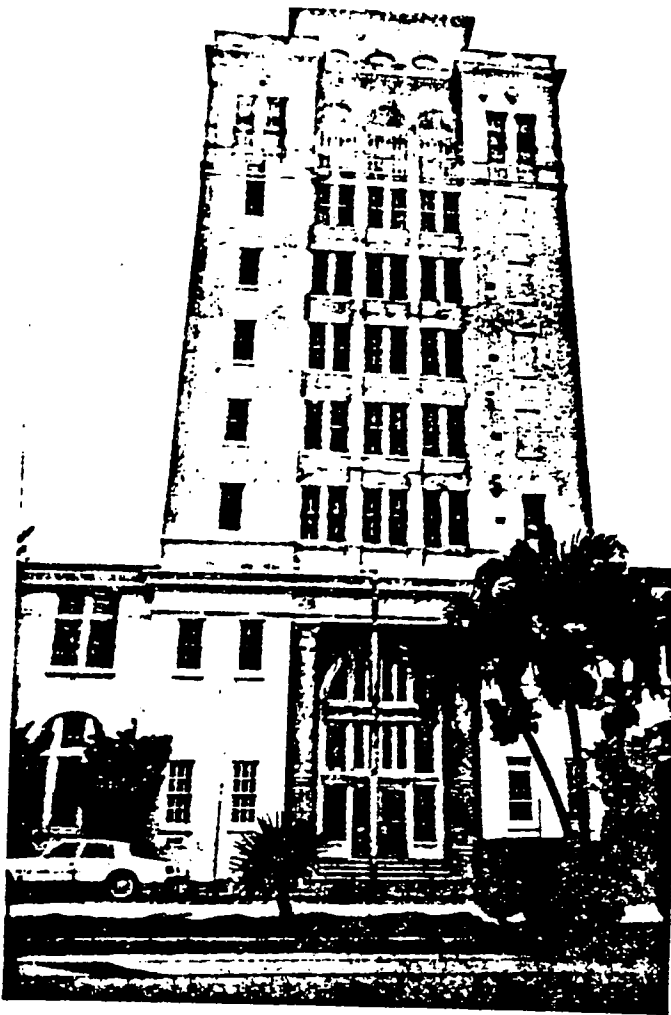
THE NEW CITY HALL—of Miami Beach (above) as it will appear when completed about October 1. Work started early this week on the foundation by the H. A. Peters Construction Company, successful bidders for the contract at a figure of \$212,000. It is estimated by City Manager C. A. Menshaw that the building when completed will cost approximately \$225,000. The contractor's figure does not include elevators and other features of the finished building.

The Miami Beach Beacon, March 11, 1927

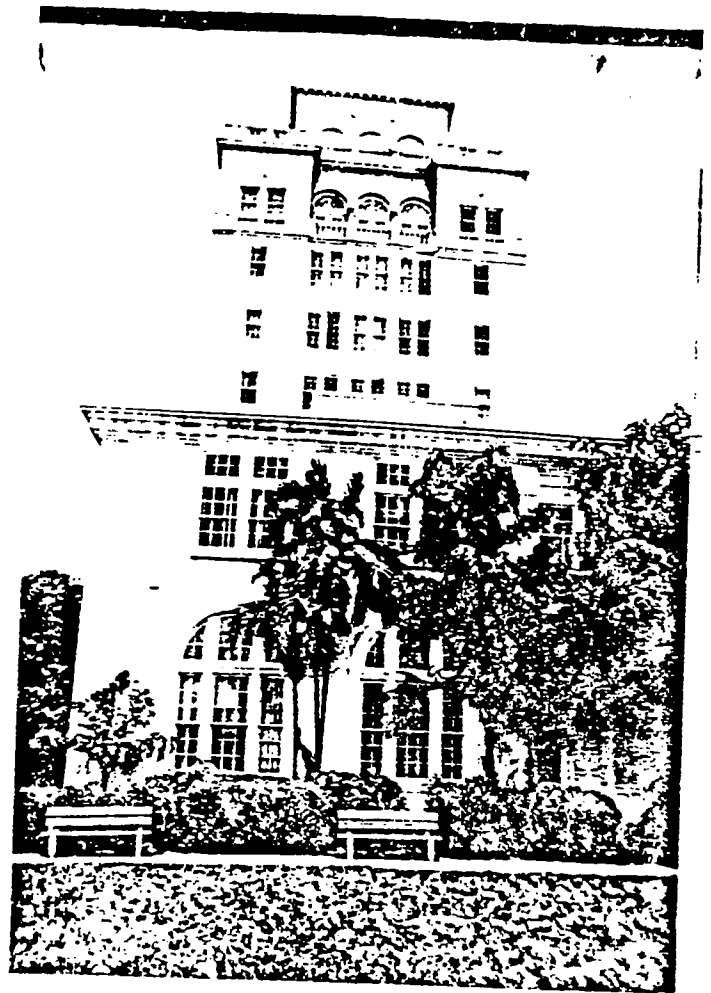


MIAMI BEACH, WITH EFFICIENT business houses and well-constructed amusement centers, is a modern city, equipped with every facility for comfortable living. The Miami Beach Gardens (first row, left) has a seating capacity of 4000 persons and offers high-class productions and concerts during the winter months. (Right) Community Theater, a cozy motion picture house. Second row (left) Miami Beach First National Bank. (Right) Allison Hospital. Third row, (Left) Offices of the Carl G. Fisher Properties. (Center) New Miami Beach City Hall. (Right) Miami Beach Bank and Trust Company.

Promotional brochure, "Miami Beach Is Calling You", 1940



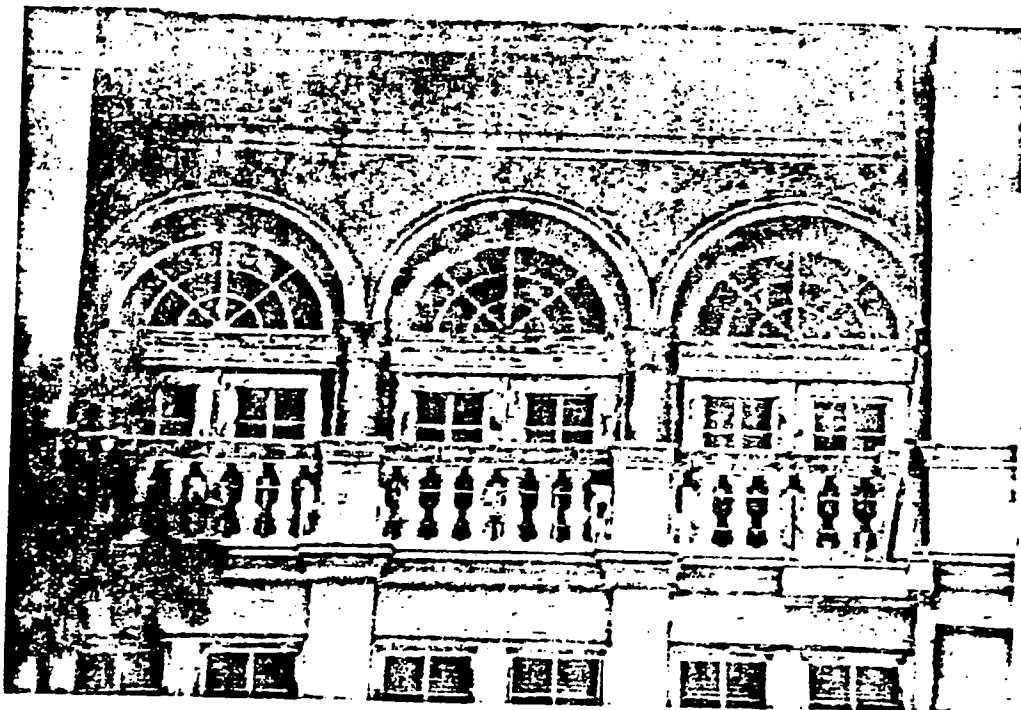
EAST ELEVATION



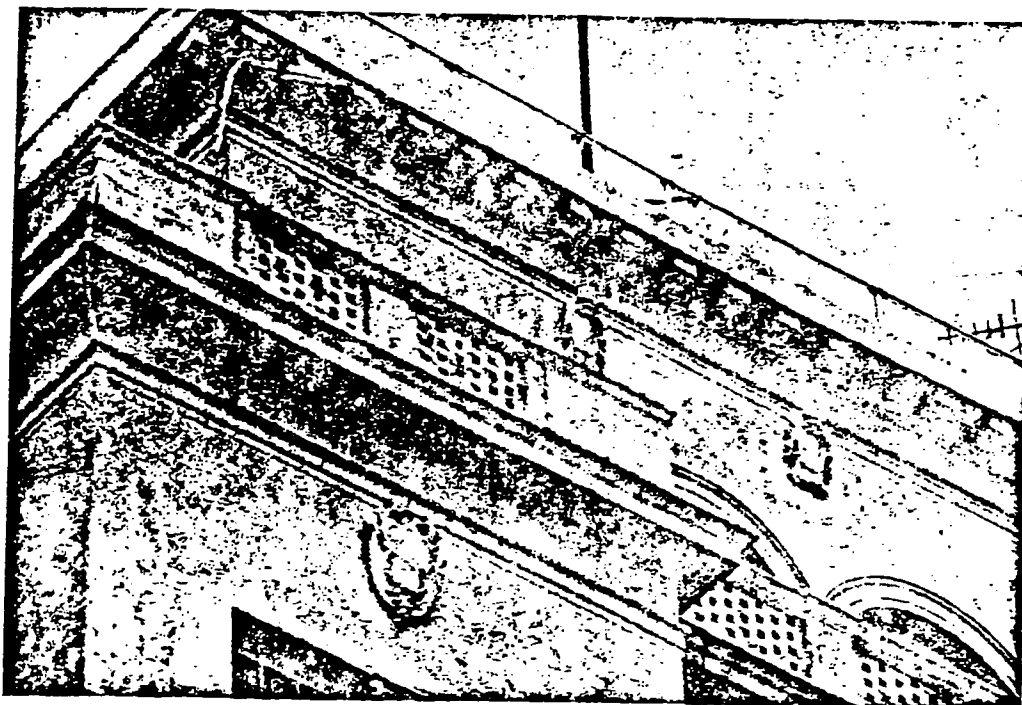
SOUTH ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION



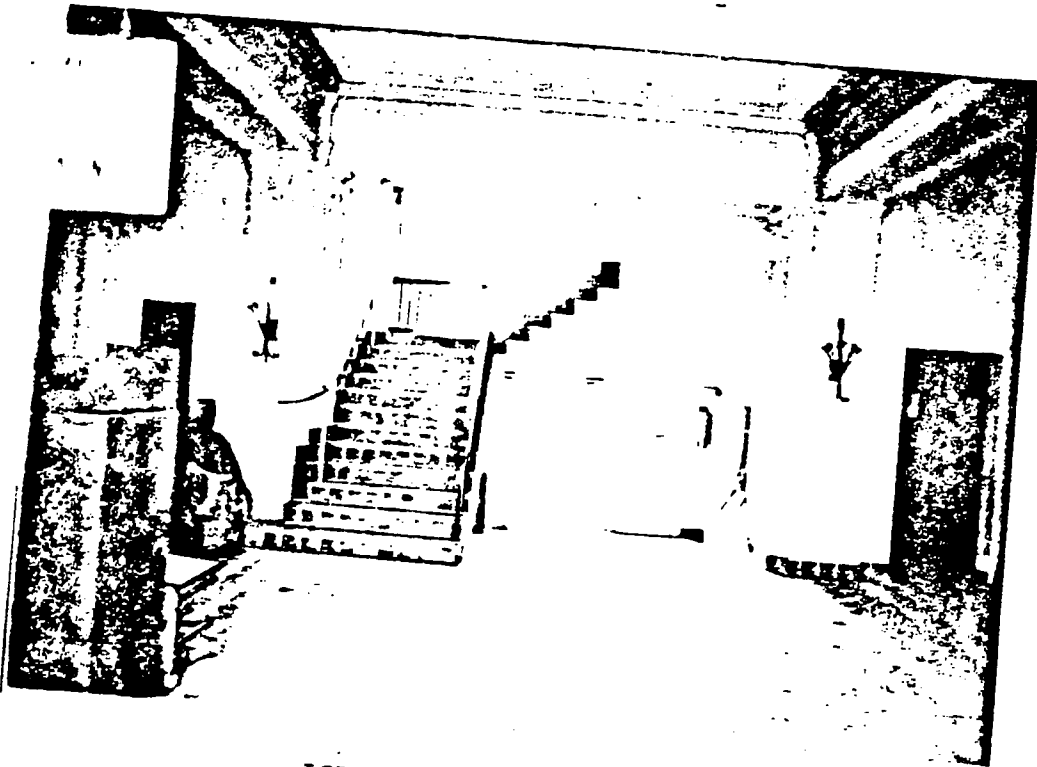
CLOSE-UP EIGHTH FLOOR BALCONY



CLOSE-UP NINTH FLOOR DECORATIVE RAILING AND SHIELDS



WORLD WAR I MEMORIAL



LOBBY INTERIOR

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Morton/Wolfberg/Alvarez/Taracido. "City of Miami Beach, Old City Hall, Adaptive Reuse Study, Interim Reports One and Two and Final Report"; City of Miami Beach, 1981.

Photographs on Pages 14, 15, and 16 by J. Pintado - Student Report: School of Architecture, University of Miami - 1979.