NPS Form 10-900
(3-82)

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Exp. 10-31-84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received AUG 8 1984
date entered SEP 18 1984

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Church San Fernando of Carolina (Historic Churches of Puerto Rico 72)

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number Muñoz Rivera St., Town Plaza ___ not for publication

city, town Carolina ___ vicinity of

state Puerto Rico code 72 county San Juan code 0200

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	X occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	X private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	X religious
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	X yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	N/A	___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Catholic Church, Archdiocese of San Juan

street & number Box 1967

city, town San Juan ___ vicinity of state Puerto Rico 00903

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Supreme Court of Puerto Rico, Church Litigation Case #2, 1904

street & number Box 2392

city, town San Juan state Puerto Rico 00903

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of the Historic Churches of Puerto Rico has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes X no

date 1984 ___ federal X state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town San Juan state Puerto Rico

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	X original site
X good	___ ruins	X altered	___ moved date
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The parish church San Fernando of Carolina sits directly in front of the town plaza, with its entrance facing west. The church occupies the central space of a town block with structures on both sides restricting its space and reducing its view. It is separated from the street by an iron grillwork fence, enclosing a tiled area which surrounds the church on three of its sides. This church, as well as the one in Vega Baja, was designed by engineer Antonio María Guitián. Both churches are similar in their facades and in the arrangement of interior spaces, the one in Carolina being the smallest of the two.

The cruciform plan is composed of one nave, covered with a barrel vault, a transept which extends from the side facades, and a semicircular apse. At the entrance, a small vestibule, covered with embossed tin ceiling pieces, and two small rooms are located under the choir loft. To the right of this area, the baptistery is located; to the left, stairs lead up to the choir loft. The short nave consists of only one bay, creating the sensation of a central plan arrangement of spaces. This impression is reinforced by the great spatial importance given to the crossing. This area is covered with a large lanterned dome, mounted on a drum, perforated with windows. Behind this central space, the semicircular apse, of secondary importance, is covered with a half dome.

The church was built, up to the base of the dome, between 1860-1862 according to plans of Antonio María Guitián. The nave, at this time, remained uncovered. In 1865, engineer Lorenzo de Vizcarrondo y Mongrand drew plans to finish the dome. In 1869, Vizcarrondo drew other plans to finish the church, including a wooden vault over the nave, and the choir loft. The work was finally finished in 1870. In 1894 the roof was restored with wood on the inside and galvanized iron on the outside. In 1950 this was substituted by the present concrete vault. The rest of the structure is built of brick and mortar. The floors are covered with grey and white marble tiles. The altarpiece is made of veined grey and white marble of modern design that is not effectively integrated with the sober interior space.

The facade, very similar to that of the Vega Baja Church,has delicate proportions and is composed of three horizontal bands or levels. Doric pilasters frame the arched entrance. A Doric frieze separates the first and second levels of the facade. Double pilasters flank the choir window in the second level. Above it there is a circular opening which used to have a clock. The belfry crowning the facade, has an arched opening on each of its four sides and pilasters on its corners. The side facades are simple: one door and window on each side open into the main nave. The transept walls, extending outward from the side facades are crowned with a triangular pediment, and have a pointed arched window in their upper parts. A door was opened on the transept wall on the right side of the building. Doors which used to open from the extended transept walls towards the front of the building were substituted by windows.

In recent remodeling work of the church (1976-1979) all the wooden louvered windows were exchanged for modern stained glass windows, closing off the means of natural ventilation. The building has been air-conditioned. Notwithstanding these minor alterations, the church retains most of its significant architectural features.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	X community planning	___ landscape architecture	X religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	X architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater
X 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation
___ 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates 1860–1870 **Builder/Architect** Eng. Antonio María Guitián and Eng. Lorenzo de Vizcarrondo y Mongrand

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The church San Fernando of Carolina was built between the years of 1860 and 1870, following the plans of Antonio María Guitián and Lorenzo de Vizcarrondo y Mongrand. The building retains most of its original construction and design components. It is very similar to the church in Vega Baja, also designed by Guitián. These churches are distinguished from others on the Island by their plan, proportions and structural roof system. The use of a cruciform plan and the great importance given to the central space under the dome were probably inspired by traditional centrally-planned churches. The property has suffered minor alterations, namely,the substitution of two doors for windows, the opening of a new door, the changing of wooden louvered windows for stained glass ones, and the new concrete vault. Basically, however, it retains intact all the important elements of its architecture and spatial organization. The traditional relationship of the church and town plaza is maintained to this day, in accordance with Spanish Crown ordinances, adding to the significance of the structure in terms of its interaction with the Carolina milieu.

A very important wooden sculpture, "El Cristo de los Ponce", is located in this church, adding to its importance. The image of Christ was acquired by the Carolina Parish in 1871. It was a gift from the King of Spain, Fernando el Católico, to Juan Ponce de Leon's family when he (ponce de Leon) was governor of the Island. This fact dates this sculpture to the 16th century, making it circa 460 years old.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Marvel, Thomas S. and Maria Luisa Moreno, Architecture of Parish Churches in Puerto Rico, Editorial Universitaria, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, unpublished.

Ojeda, Iraides, Inventario de Monumentos Historicos, Centro Cultural "San Miguel de las Carolinas", Carolina, Puerto Rico.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property aprox. 995 sq.mts.

Quadrangle name Carolina, PR Quadrangle scale 1:20,000

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A	20	187560	2034990	B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

The church is located to the east of the Town Plaza and Muñoz Rivera St. It is bounded on the north and south by private structures and on the east by a secondary street.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries N/A

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marisa Gómez, Arch. and Ester Cardona, Arch. (Reviewed by Dr. Arleen Pabón de Rocafort, SHPOfficer)

organization Investigaciones Bonaire, Inc. date March 1984

street & number Tetuan 103 telephone (809) 724-4997

city or town Old San Juan state Puerto Rico 00901

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ✓ state ___ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Arleen Pabón de Rocafort

title State Historic Preservation Officer date July 20, 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

See Continuation sheet for listing date

Keeper of the National Register

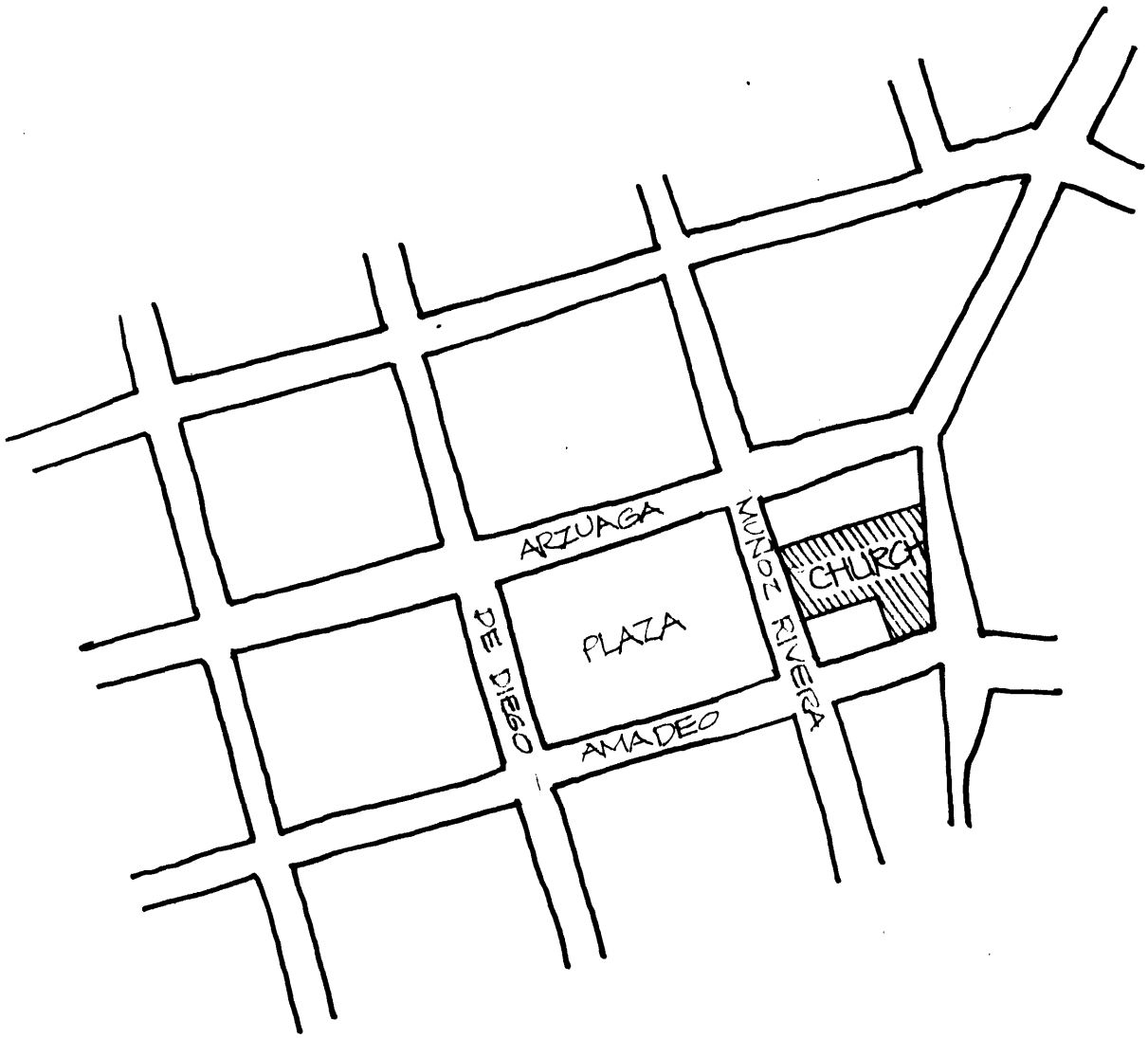
Attest: date

Chief of Registration

Church San Fernando of Carolina
Major Bibliographical References:

Historic Plans of 1865, Architect Lorenzo de Vizcarrondo y Mongrand, General Archives of Puerto Rico, Fondo: Obras Públicas, Serie: Edificios Religiosos, Caja: 79, Legajo:16.

Historic Plans, General Archives of Puerto Rico, Fondo: Obras Públicas, Serie: Edificios Religiosos, Arch:7, Gav:1, N°:693.



town: CAROLINA scale: 1:2000 north

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