NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name **Figueroa Apartments**
other names/site number **Pinto-Lugo & Rivera Building**

2. Location

street & number **601 Fernández Juncos Avenue** ___ not for publication
city or town **San Juan** vicinity _X_
state **Puerto Rico** code **PR** county **San Juan** code **127** zip code **00907**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this _X_ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property _X_ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide _X_ locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Lilliane D. López

Lilliane D. López **August 8, 2000**
Signature of certifying official Date

Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.
(___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register — Edson W. Beall 9.14.00
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined eligible for the National Register _____ _____
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined not eligible for the National Register _____ _____
____ removed from the National Register _____ _____

____ other (explain): _____

_____ for _____ _____
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
- X private
- ___ public-local
- ___ public-State
- ___ public-Federal

Category of Property
- X building(s)
- ___ district
- ___ site
- ___ structure
- ___ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register **0**
Name of related multiple property listing **N/A**

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
Cat: **Domestic** Sub: **Multiple**

Current Functions
Cat: **Commerce/Trade** Sub: **Office Building**

7. Description

Architectural Classification: **Art Deco**

Materials
Foundation **Concrete**
roof **Concrete**
walls **Concrete**
other _____

Narrative Description **(See continuation sheets)**

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

____ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

____ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

_X_ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

____ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

____ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

____ B removed from its original location.

____ C a birthplace or a grave.

____ D a cemetery.

____ E a reconstructed building, object,or structure.

____ F a commemorative property.

____ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance: **Community Planning and Development**
Architecture

Period of Significance **1935**

Significant Dates **1935**

Significant Person **N/A**

Cultural Affiliation **N/A**

Architect/Builder **Armando Morales Cano**

Narrative Statement of Significance **(See continuation sheets)**

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS)
___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
___ previously listed in the National Register
___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data
___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
_X_ Local government
___ University
___ Other
Name of repository: **Deeds Registry, San Juan I, Dept. of Justice**

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: **less than one acre (1032 sq.m.)**

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	**19**	**807665**	**2043355**	3	__	_____	_____
2	__	_____	_____	4	__	_____	_____

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description **(See continuation sheet)**
Boundary Justification **(See continuation sheet.)**

11. Form Prepared By

name/title **Héctor Santiago Cazull, Historic Preservation Consultant**
organization **ConservAcción** date **16 August 1999**
street & number **168 calle San Jorge, Apt. 3** telephone **787-722-6302**
city or town **San Juan** state **PR** zip code **00911**

Property Owner

name **René Pinto Lugo, Esq.**
street & number **601 Fernández Juncos Ave.** telephone **(787) 724-8103**
city or town **San Juan** state **PR** zip code **00907**

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Pinto-Lugo & Rivera Building, formerly known as the Figueroa Apartments is a two-story, concrete building with a flat roof, designed in a hybrid style with Art Deco and Spanish Revival influences. A modern, rooftop addition made of concrete, with a metal roof, was built in 1989. The building has a roughly rectangular floor plan, with projecting volumes on both the North and South facades, and lies near the base of an approximately triangular lot, measuring 1032.13 square meters. The lot borders along Intersection No. 5 and the vehicular ramp that connects Fernández Juncos and Ponce de León Avenues to the North; the Muñoz Rivera Expressway to the East; and a series of empty lots, recently expropriated by the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, to the South. In sum, the building is completely surrounded by highways and bridges with high traffic volume to the North, East and West, and by empty lots, awaiting new construction, to the South. To the North of Intersection No. 5, only a short distance away from the building, lies the San Antonio Bridge and the Condado Lagoon. To the West of Fernández Juncos Avenue lies the old Naval Air Base at Isla Grande, and the Isla Grande Airport. To the East of the Muñoz Rivera Expressway is the Miramar section of Santurce, a residential area characterized by single-family dwellings and multi-story buildings of the twentieth century, dedicated to residences and offices.

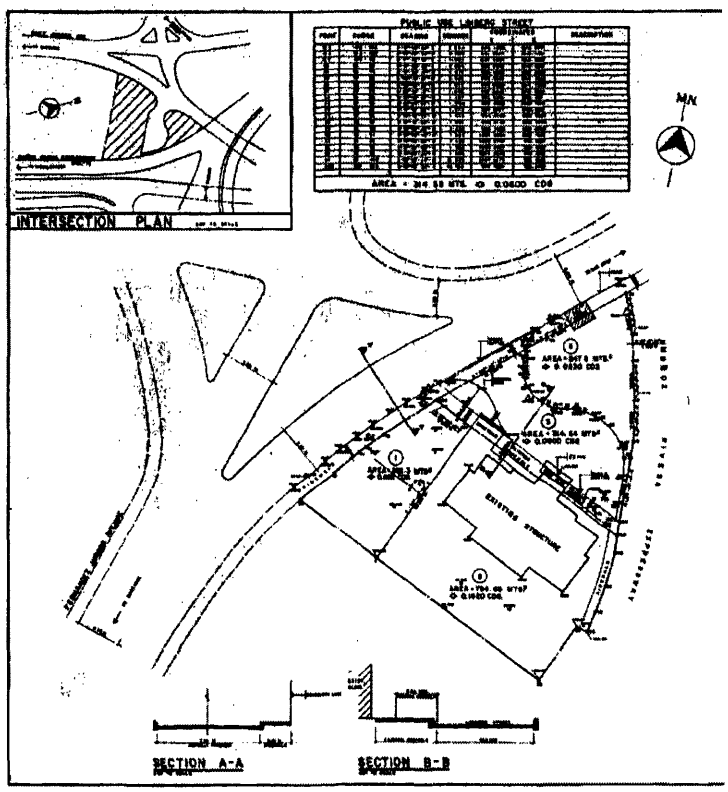


Figure 1: Surveyors plan of the lot, as of 1989.

The roughly-triangular lot has a very distinct character, compared to the urban chaos in the surrounding area. The building sits approximately near the center of the South side of the triangle, with its main façade facing north, toward the most acute angle of the lot. Just in front of the main façade lies a driveway paved with geometrical, concrete pavers in red and gray tones, which roughly coincides with the westernmost section of the no-longer-existing Lindberg Street. The paved area serves as a driveway for automobiles and as a reception area for the main entrance to the building. The acute angle at the North side of the lot, just North of the paved area, consists of an intensely green garden area, planted with grass, Royal Palms, bushes, ivies and other tropical plants and with a round fountain sitting approximately at its center. The green area borders with the paved area by means of a concrete curb following the shape of a sinuous curve, from East to West. The colored concrete pavers continue around the East side of the building, toward a narrow patio or garden area, with a decorative fountain sitting upon a raised, planting box made of concrete and bricks.

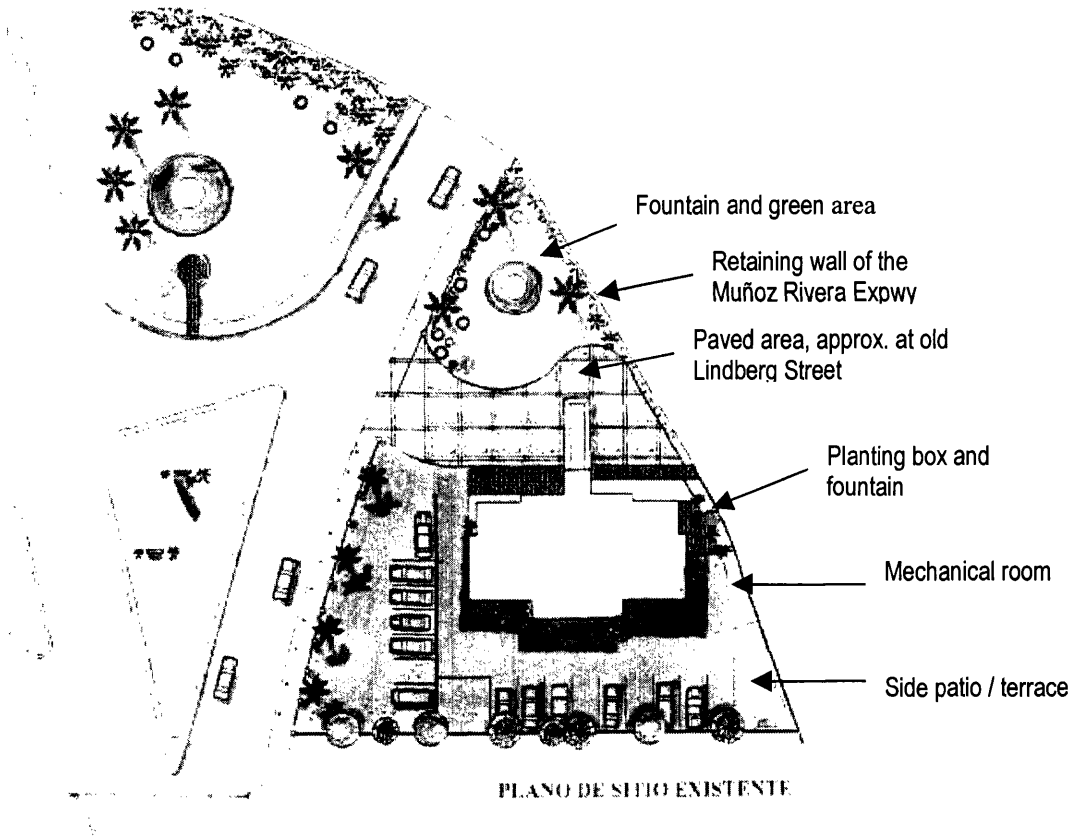


Figure 2: Site plan of the property, as of 1989.

The Eastern border of the lot is defined by a high, concrete retaining wall for the Muñoz Rivera Expressway, which passes just above the lot. On this side of the lot there is also a machine room, built up against the retaining wall, opposite the East façade of the building. At the Southeast angle of the lot, between the machine room and the South limits of the lot, there is a small, raised terrace, paved with bricks and cement. The terrace has small planting areas for decorative trees and a wall-fountain, lined with colorful tiles and bricks, up against the concrete wall which defines the South perimeter line of the lot. The South and East sides of the lot consist of an asphalt-paved parking area. A decorative fence, made of concrete posts, aluminum bars and cast-iron, decorative modules, encloses the East perimeter of the lot, along Fernández Juncos Avenue.

The building originally faced old Lindberg Street, which connected this area with the most central part of Miramar, where a part of Lindberg Street still remains, in front of the Lourdes Chapel and the Hotel Sutherland. In fact, the Figueroa Apartments building is the only building along Fernández Juncos Avenue in this section of Miramar, which faces north, instead of West, in direct response to the main thoroughfare of the area, Ponce de León Avenue. The building has always had a weak relationship with that part of Miramar, unfortunately, as it was originally on the wrong side of the tracks of the American Railroad Company, and subsequently completely cut off by the Muñoz Rivera Expressway, which was built upon the railroad's rights of way.

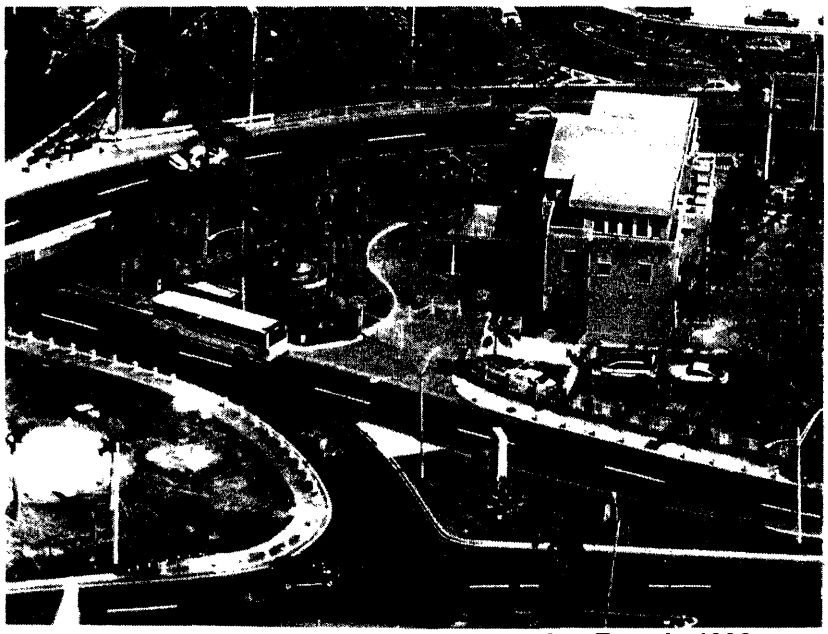


Figure 3: General view of the property, facing East, in 1998.

The Figueroa Apartments Building, currently known ad the Pinto-Lugo & Rivera Building, is a two story concrete structure, designed in a hybrid Art Deco and Spanish Revival style, with a modern, recessed rooftop addition. The exterior surfaces

are finished with a rough-textured concrete stucco, a technique common to the Spanish Revival style in Puerto Rico. The building's roughly rectangular floor plan measures 74 feet wide, from East to West, and 40 feet deep, and is articulated with projecting modules on both North and South facades, as can be seen in the site plan.

The main façade, toward the North, consists of a tripartite composition, with an ample, slightly-projecting central volume, and narrower flanking volumes toward the East and West.

The projecting, central volume is composed of a series of three vertical bays, defined by four fluted pilasters. Each pilaster is crowned by a small, rectangular appliqué with a rosette design, located above a long and narrow, vertical strip of blue wall tiles, creating a composition reminiscent of the Art Nouveau style. The central bay serves as the main entrance to the building at the ground level, whereas a recessed balcony occupies the space between the pilasters, at the upper level. A rectangular wall panel placed on the concrete plane above the second story balcony, crowns the central bay with the inscription Pinto-Lugo & Rivera. Two slightly-narrower vertical bays flank the entrance bay, each originally with receding balconies on each level, now enclosed with solar-bronze colored aluminum and glass-pane windows. The openings at the central bay have concrete lintels in an ascending composition of classical fillets and cavettos, whereas the flanking, narrower bays have plain, horizontal lintels. The narrower bays are crowned, at the concrete planes above the second floor, with rectangular panels of stained-glass mosaics. The mosaics are modern creations in an Art Deco style exploiting the tropical flower Bird of Paradise, and are the work of local artist Edward Ferraioli Weyland.

Figure 4: General view of the North facade.

The structural bays at the East and West ends of the main façade, are slightly lower in height than the central volume, and are each composed of solid concrete walls, perforated only by one window on each floor. The windows, originally French windows made of wooden jalousies, have been replaced with fixed, solar-bronze glass windows with aluminum frames.

Concrete awnings sheathed with mission-tiles and supported by concrete brackets, crown each one of the four windows at these bays.

A light-weight concrete marquis or portico, of recent construction, with mission-tiles lining the eaves, and supported by four cast-iron columns, projects North above the central entrance.

A recessed, roof-top addition rises above the entire two-story composition, in the form of a penthouse. This roof-top level, added between 1989 and 1990, is also tripartite in form, with a wider, rectilinear central body and narrower, curved wings, in a vague response to the tripartite composition of the historic building. The roof-top addition is crowned by rectilinear projecting eaves of lightweight concrete, which conceal a metal roof.

Figure 5: Detail of the central body of the main facade.

The side and rear facades of the building do not possess architectural elements of particular interest. The East façade, facing the retaining wall of the Muñoz Rivera Expressway, consists of a wider, projecting body toward the South, and a narrower, recessed body toward the North. The wider body houses four window bays, two on each floor, whereas the narrower body houses only two, one on each floor. All of the windows on this façade have concrete awnings and have

been sealed with concrete blocks and rough-textured stucco, in order to isolate the noise pollution from the expressway. The West façade, toward Fernández Juncos Avenue, is more or less a reflected version of this façade, but without the concrete awnings, and with only the windows at the lower floor sealed in concrete. The upper story windows are similar to those at the main façade.

The rear or South façade is composed of a projecting central volume and two narrower, flanking volumes, with a total of 16 window openings: four on each floor at the central volume and two on each floor at each of the flanking volumes. All of the windows at the lower floor have been sealed with concrete and stucco. Only the upper story windows have concrete awnings.

Interiors:

The building is accessed through a set of metal-framed, solar-bronze colored glass double-doors, which lead into a reception room or vestibule. The vestibule is paved with modern ceramic tiles. Another set of double doors leads into the ground floor office spaces. Directly ahead are the original stairs of the building, which consist of a straight flight of steps leading up from North to South. The stairs are currently paved with terra cotta and decorative ceramic tiles, and are enclosed on either side by concrete walls. On either side of the stairway, office spaces now occupy the living and dining areas of the two apartments that previously existed at this floor level. At the rear or South of the main office spaces on either side of the steps, a doorway leads onto narrow office spaces, which occupy the projecting, central volume at the rear of the building. On both the East and West sides of the building, just beyond the main office spaces, a small circulation hall or vestibule accedes three of the original bedrooms, now turned into office spaces, and a bathroom, at the center of the far wall. The room at the extreme Southeast corner has been turned into a kitchen instead of office space.

The upper story has a floor plan similar to that of the ground level. At the West side, where the executive offices are located, the circulation vestibule has been eliminated and incorporated into the old bedroom at the Northwest corner of the building, in order to create a small reception room. The only other significant change at this level is the decorative-iron spiral stairway, installed in the area where there used to be a balcony leading off of the stair hall. On the North wall, just behind the spiral stairway, an arch-shaped polychrome stained glass window has been installed, with geometric motifs exploiting the theme of the tropical flower Bird of Paradise. The stained-glass window is also by the renowned local artist, Eduardo Farraioli Weyland.

The spiral stair leads up to the roof-top addition. This upper level consists of a large central space used as a conference room. A narrow hall runs east to West between the conference room and the spiral stair, and leads two offices on either side. The offices on either side of the building are defined by rounded walls with a continuous row of glass windows on the North, and more traditional, square walls with simple window openings on all other sides.

In general terms, the interior walls are all of painted concrete. Some division walls have been added in glass-block and wood and glass combinations. The floors are generally covered with wall-to-wall carpeting, with terra cotta tiles near the entrance and reception areas.

The building generally conserves its original architectural elements at the exterior facades. Modifications to the facades,

such as the installation of glass mosaics, generally harmonize with the style and character of the building, but are distinguishable as modern additions. The alteration of the windows responded to the poor conditions of the original ones, to the new use of the building as office space, to the demand of modern infrastructure, and especially to the hostile environment immediately surrounding the building. These alterations are considerably minor and are reversible. The roof-top addition constitutes a major alteration, but its receded plan, low scale in comparison to the proportions of the other stories, curved walls, and construction in lightweight concrete and glass, with a metal roof, make it easily legible as a modern addition. In sum, the building maintains its principal exterior features in a good state of conservation, with modern modifications, which are distinguishable as such and generally reversible.

The interior finishes of the building have been adapted to its new uses, altering the sober character of the original spaces, but the building still maintains most of the original interior building fabric.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Since the second half of the nineteenth century, the Miramar section of Santurce began to consolidate its position as the preferred urban expansion area for the city of San Juan, especially for the middle and upper classes, which developed the area into one of exclusive, single-family dwellings with gardens and patios. Toward the third and fourth decades of the twentieth century, the growing business and professional classes of San Juan, no longer directly dependent on agricultural industries, increasingly invested in speculative real estate and urban development of the modern city. The new city of San Juan was now being built, and apartment buildings were going up at a fast pace, in order to house the growing middle class. The Santurce Ward, especially the areas of Ponce de León and Fernández Juncos avenues, the Parque Borínquen area in the Machuchal sector, now part of Condado, and the western sector of Miramar, near Miramar Avenue and Olimpo Street, became preferred areas for this type of multifamily development.

Figure 6: Miramar in 1929. Note the undeveloped nature of the lands toward the West, where Fernández Juncos Avenue had yet to be paved.

The growth of the real estate market coincided with a period of professional gestation in the field of architecture, and hence, in a boom in artistic creation in this field. Puerto Rican architects, formed mostly in the United States, put their creative minds to work, in the design of public buildings and private residential structures for the middle and upper classes, more often than not recurring to the Spanish Revival, as a style representative of the Island's national identity. The increasingly

influential modern movements in architecture began to pervade Puerto Rican architecture at the same time, either directly via Europe, or indirectly from the United States, helping to create an eclectic urban panorama, which expressed itself in the diversity of architectural styles occupying the same time and space, as well as the same buildings. As a result of this half-breeding of styles, the hybrid of Art Deco and Spanish Revival styles became commonplace among Puerto Rican buildings of the 1930's and 1940's, both in public and private buildings.

During this period, various renowned architects and master builders were busy designing and building homes and apartment buildings in the Miramar area, as can be evidenced in documents on-file at the Architectural and Construction Archives of the University of Puerto Rico. Some of these practitioners, among others, were:

Pedro de Castro
Rafael Carmoega
Martínez & Lázaro
Pedro Méndez
Armando Morales Cano
Rafael Hernández Romero
José Lazaro Costa

It wasn't until the 1930's that urban expansion in Santurce began to spread out into the western fringe of Miramar, between the mangroves of Isla Grande and the railroad tracks of the American Railroad Company. It was at this time that a large industrial plot of 38,974.07 square meters, belonging to Rafael Fabián y Fabián, then dedicated to metal foundries, was segregated for development purposes (see Figure 6). The lot, which was bounded by the railroad tracks to the North and East, and by the mangrove swamps to the West, was then occupied by a series of rustic industrial buildings dedicated to foundry activities. Up to 1934, the following buildings were located on this plot, among others (see Figure 7):

a. Mechanical workshop building
b. Garage and storage building
c. One-story wood and asbestos house
d. Concrete and iron building, for bronze foundry
e. Wooden lean-to shed for building b.
f. Lean-to shed for building a.
g. Wooden building for wood workshop
h. Wooden building for soldering work, destroyed by the dredging machine.
i. Wood and iron building for carbon storage.
j. Lean-to shed for building a.
k. Open shed made of iron stumps and wood and cardboard roof.
l. Building of iron columns and cardboard roof, for new iron foundry
m. Pails storage building
n. Lean-to shed of wood and cardboard, attached to building b.
o. Lean-to shed of iron and tin, for materials depository.

The large plot was subdivided in 1934, when Josefina Fabián Finlay, Rafael Fabián Finlay's daughter and heir, segregated

the property and sold a 750 square meter lot, facing Lindberg Street, to José Joaquín Figueroa, property-owner, merchant, and resident of San Juan, married at the time with Lesbia Ricardo.

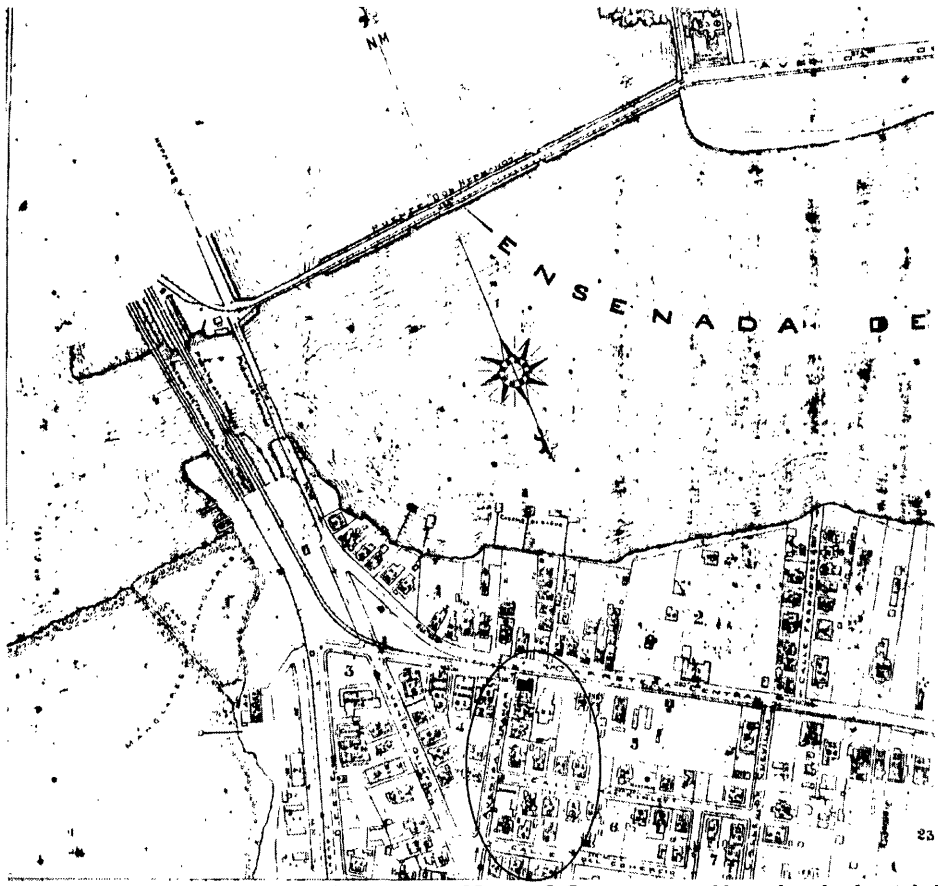


Figure 7: 1917 Fire Underwriters Map of Santurce. Not the industrial buildings on the property of Josefina Fabián Finlay, to the West of the railroad tracks.

The Pinto-Lugo & Rivera Building, historically known as the Figueroa Apartments, and currently located at 601 Fernández Juncos Avenue, in Miramar, was built between September, 1934 and July, 1935 by José Joaquín Figueroa. Figueroa, a respected Judge by profession, and an active investor in real estate, built homes and apartment buildings in various areas of Santurce, including Condado, Loíza Street and Miramar. Among other projects, Figueroa was responsible for the construction of an apartment building in the Art Deco style, at Ponce de León Avenue in the Puerta de Tierra Ward of San Juan (see Figure 8), for which he hired the services of famed Puerto Rican architect Pedro Méndez, whom also designed the National Register-listed Miami Building, in Condado. Figueroa also contracted the architectural services of Armando

Morales Cano, for the design of an important apartment building known as J.J. Figueroa Apartments or Borínquen Park Apartments, on Las Nereidas Avenue, now Ashford Avenue, in the Parque Borínquen development, Machuchal sector of Santurce, now part of Condado. Juan G. Figueroa was the master contractor for the building. This Spanish-Revival building, representative of the multi-family typology in these areas of Santurce, appeared in the 1938 Album de Oro de Puerto Rico, as a fine example of modern housing and the material progress that the City of San Juan was experimenting at that time (see Figure 9).

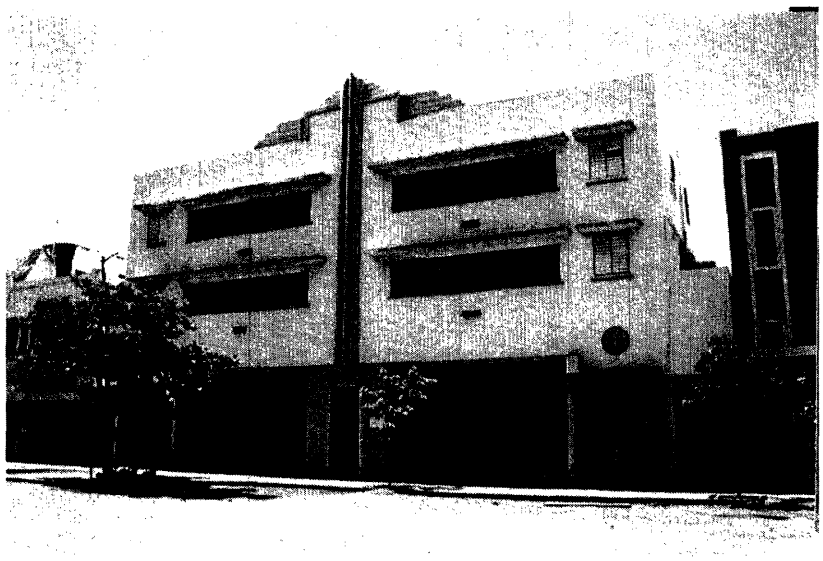
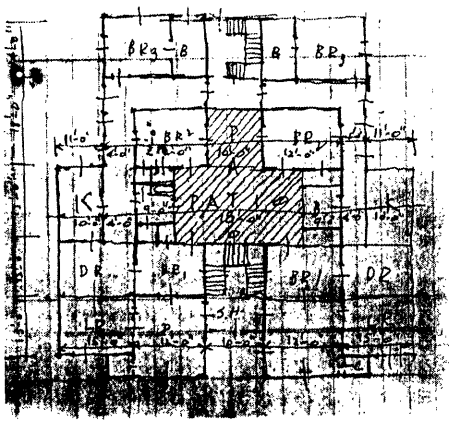


Figure 8: Building at Ponce de León Avenue, Puerta de Tierra. Designed by Pedro Méndez, for J.J. Figueroa, in 1940.

Figueroa was also the owner of other neighboring lots in the Machuchal sector (Parque Borínquen), and built upon them other apartment buildings, as well as single-family homes. One of these buildings sits immediately behind the Borínquen Park Apartments Building, on Maribel Street (see Figure 11). The similarities in design between this building and the previous one indicate a high probability that it was also designed by Armando Morales Cano. Although of a larger scale, these buildings partake of the same Hispanophile tendencies in architecture, and respond to the same market demands as the building in Miramar. In fact, the use of spaces and volumes in these buildings is significantly similar to the Figueroa Apartments Building. The architect for the Figueroa Apartments Building has not been identified with certainty, but it is highly probable that it was also designed by Armando Morales Cano, or perhaps by Pedro Méndez, given they are contemporaries, and also given the contractual relationship both architects had developed with Figueroa, not to mention the professional relationship that these architects probably had among themselves, as evidenced in the documents on-file at the AACUPR.

Figure 9: Borínquen Park Apartments, on Ashford Avenue, in Condado. Designed by Armando Morales Cano for J.J. Figueroa, in 1937.



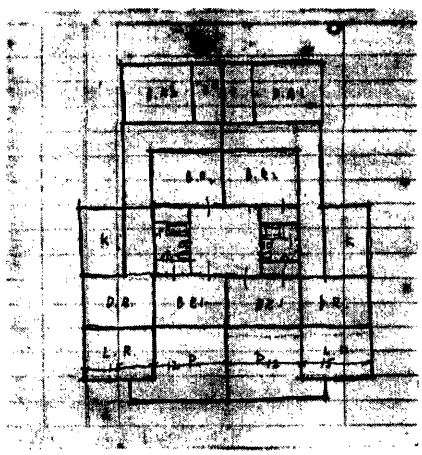


Figure 10: Sketches attributed to Pedro Méndez, for a building for J.J. Figueroa. These sketches are very similar to the drawings prepared by Armando Morales Cano for the Borínquen Park Apartments Building. It is worth noting that these, as well as a floor plan for the Borinquen Park Building, with notes and markings attributed to Pedro Méndez, were found in the Pedro Méndez collection, at the AACUPR.

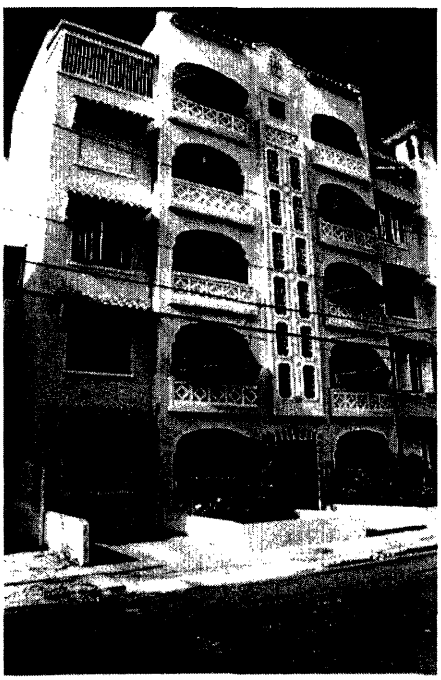


Figure 11: Building at Maribel Street, in Condado, built by J.J. Figueroa, circa 1940. Attributed to Armando Morales Cano.

The first concrete reference to the Figueroa Apartments Building in Miramar describes the building in the following light (see Figure 12):

> *"...two-story, reinforced concrete building, with a concrete roof, and known by the name "Figueroa Apartments" dedicated to housing use, with four apartments, and measuring 74 feet wide at the front, and 40 feet deep, and in addition, an auxiliary building measuring 76 feet wide at the front and 14 feet deep, dedicated to four garages and four rooms for the domestic service, with its corresponding sanitary installations..."*

Just as the Borinquen Park was a precursor in its type in the Condado area, the Figueroa Apartments was a pioneer in this newly developing area of Miramar, as it was the first apartment building to be constructed on the western fringe of land, previously dedicated to industrial uses. Contrary to other buildings that followed, this building was placed facing North, in response to the San Antonio Bridge, the Condado Lagoon, and old Lindberg Street, which directly connected this sector with the most exclusive and central part of Miramar, and with such prestigious institutions as the Union Club, the Hotel Sutherland and the Lourdes Chapel (see Figure 13). The building was built upon a 750 square meter lot. The lot bounded to the East with the tracks of the American Railroad Company, which passed below the ground-level of the lot; to the South, with the main plot of land, which had various industrial buildings, and other buildings under construction; to the

West, Fernández Juncos Avenue and the mangroves, already in the dredging process in order to claim lands from San Juan Bay.

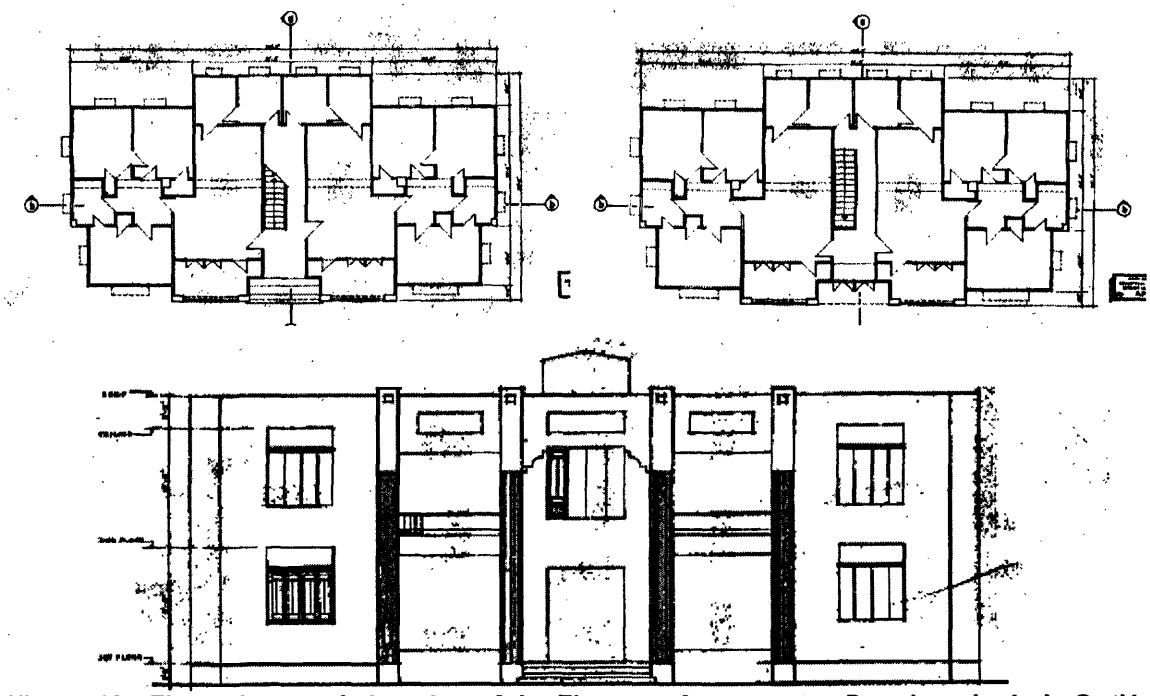


Figure 12: Floor plans and elevation of the Figueroa Apartments. Drawings by Luis Gutiérrez, AIA, 1988.

Other buildings of similar scale and character as the Figueroa Apartments followed immediately, some of them built by renowned architects such as Pedro de Castro and Pedro Méndez; but these all faced Fernández Juncos Avenue. By 1937, at least two additional apartment buildings had been constructed toward the South of the Figueroa, facing Fernández Juncos Avenue (see Figure 14). Almost immediately, the surrounding area became intensely urbanized, including the landfill area at the Miraflores mangroves, in order to build the Isla Grande Naval Air Base in 1939, and the construction of a new street parallel to the train tracks. This street was subsequently to become the new Muñoz Rivera Expressway.

Almost immediately after having built the structure, José J. Figueroa and his wife Lesbia Ricardo sold the lot and the building in July, 1935 for $20,000, to José Matos y Matos and his wife Mercedes López Díaz, residents of San Juan.

In 1941, José Matos y Matos and Mercedes López Díaz sold the property to José Silva Fontán and his wife, Ana Palou, for the sum of $30,000. A few years afterwards, in 1949, Silva and Palou sold the property again, to Enrique Rossy

Palmer and Angelita San Miguel, for the sum of $38,000. Rossy Palmer and San Miguel immediately sold the property to Francisco San Miguel Torres, property-owner and resident of Río Piedras, married to Haydeé Fuxench, for the same sum of $38,000.

Figure 13: The Lourdes Chapel and the Union Club, on Lindberg Street, in Miramar, circa 1915

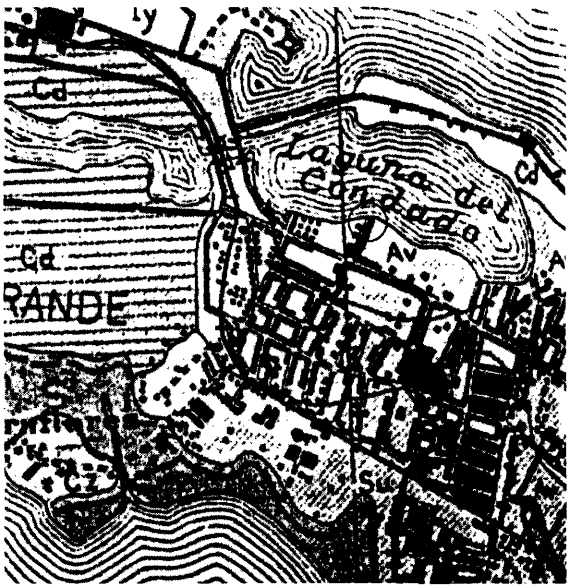


Figure 14: 1936 USGS map and aerial photo of 1937. Not the few buildings in the map, and the new constructions which appear on the photograph. The Figueroa Apartments already appears on both illustrations.

The Government of Puerto Rico then expropriated the neighboring lot to the West, where once stood the West Indies Oil Company gas station, in order to widen Fernández Juncos Avenue in response to the transformation of Intersection No. 5, as a result of the construction of the new Muñoz Expressway.

These major public works projects at Intersection No. 5 were carried out between 1955 and 1960, cutting off Lindberg Street, and in the process completely altering the relationship of the building with the central and most exclusive area of Miramar, as a result of the vehicular bridge or ramp which now connects the expressway with San Antonio Bridge. The urban context of the building was then completely altered (see Figure 15).

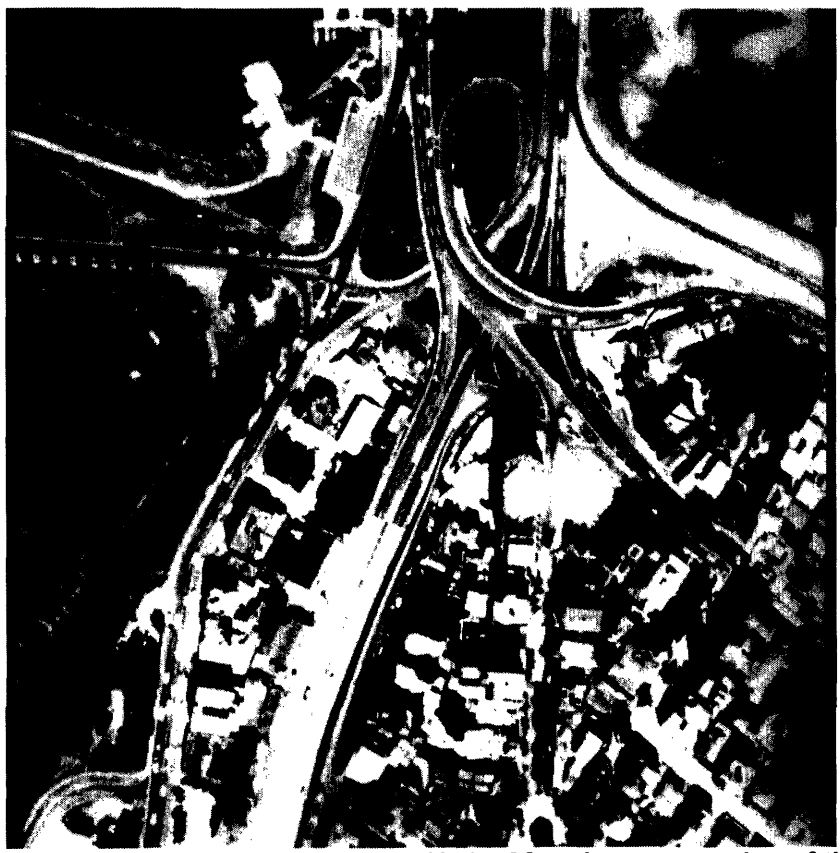


Figure 15: Aerial photograph in 1962. After the construction of the Muñoz Rivera Expressway, the entire western fringe of Miramar was cut off from the older and more exclusive area of Miramar.

Subsequently, in 1960, the Government of Puerto Rico sold remnants of the old West Indies Oil Company lot to Francisco San Miguel and Haydeé Fuxench. The remnants of the lot were then consolidated with the building's lot, leaving the Figueroa Apartments property much as it is found today.

During this whole process of multiple transactions, the building remained relatively untouched and in original conditions, with four living apartments and an accessory building with four garages and four rooms for the domestic service.

Finally, in February of 1988, the TransCaribbean Development Corporation, current owners of the property, bought the lot from Francisco San Miguel and Haydeé Fuxench, for the sum of $150,000.

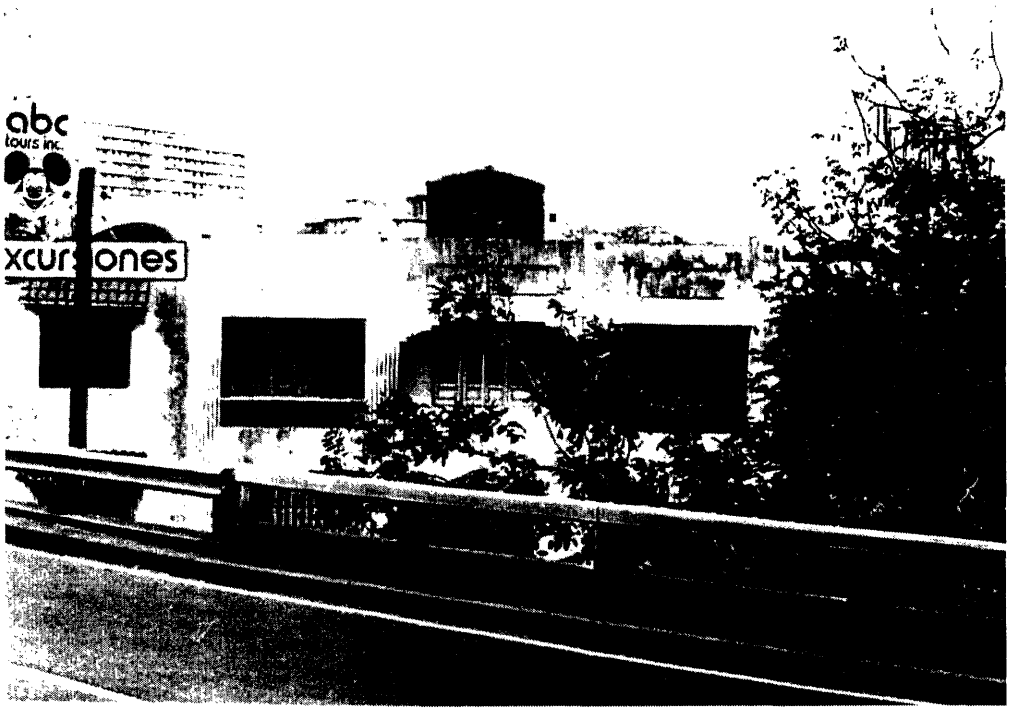


Figure 16: Photograph of the property in 1988.

That same year of 1988, the law firm of Cordero, Miranda & Pinto contracted the architectural services of Luis Gutiérrez, AIA, in order to rehabilitate the building for its new use as home of the law firm. The project consisted of:

1. Selective, minor demolition of few secondary, interior walls, in order to enlarge the office spaces;
2. Removal and sealing of some windows, in order to isolate the interior environment from the hostile surroundings;
3. Replacement of original windows with wood and glass, fixed windows;

4. Replacement of interior doors with new, imbuia doors;
5. Installation of a hung ceiling;
6. New electrical and plumbing infrastructure;

The selective demolition was minor, limited to the removal of the walls that separated the living rooms from the balconies; the walls that isolated the stair corridor from the apartments; and few small sections of walls in the bedroom areas. The project expanded the spaces for new office use, with only a small percentage of loss of original structure.

Although it was not contemplated in the 1988 project plans, a recessed rooftop addition was built. The addition was square in plan, and placed over the center of the rooftop. A reception marquis over the vestibule entrance, made of lightweight concrete and supported by four cast-iron columns, was also built at this time.

Another contemporary project included the demolition of the garage and service building, in order to enlarge the available parking area.

Less than a year afterward, the law firm of Cordero, Miranda & Pinto once again contracted the services of Luis Gutiérrez, in order to enlarge the rooftop addition. Two side wings (East and West) were then added to existing, square, central volume. The rooftop addition was built in concrete piers and cement blocks, with walls lined with glass windows, and with a lightweight metal roof (see Figure 17). With the construction of these projects, the Figueroa Apartments Building took on the form that it conserves today, and became known as the Pinto-Lugo & Rivera Building.

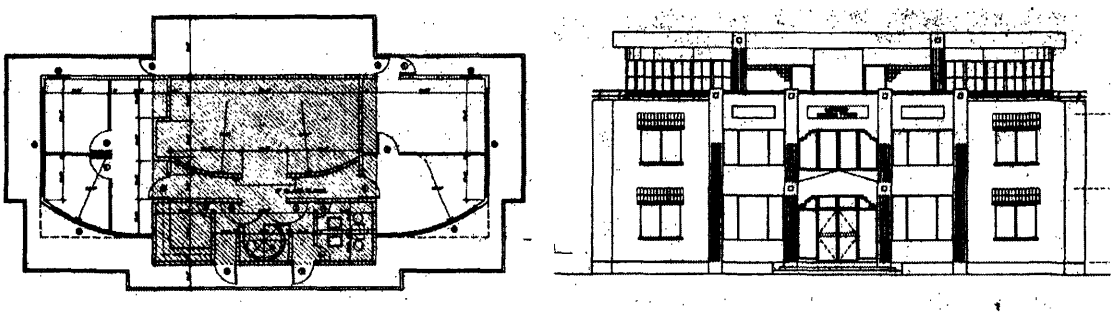


Figure 17: Plan and elevation of the rooftop addition, as per the project by Luis Gutiérrez, AIA.

Work carried out on the property since then has consisted of landscaping interventions, which have significantly bettered the surrounding environment, creating a green oasis amidst the dense traffic and urban chaos surrounding the building. Minor decorative improvements have also been implemented, characterized by the installation of stained-glass mosaics on the main elevation, and at select spots throughout the garden areas. The mosaics on the building, placed at the parapet, at the center of the second story, and at the East and West extremes of the main façade at the ground floor, are the handcraft of local artist Eduardo Ferraioli Weyland (see Figure 18). These mosaics are inspired in the Art Deco Style, with influences of the Arts and Crafts Movement. The mosaics are made of stained glass in blue, yellow and orange tones, and exploit the theme of the tropical flower Bird of Paradise.

The building receives the XXI century as such, after sixty-five years and a long struggle for survival, of the building per se, and of an entire urban quarter of Santurce.

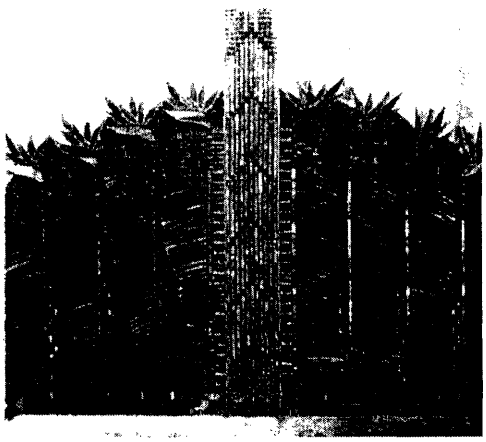


Figure 18: Glass mosaics incorporated to the building, by Eduardo Ferraioli Weyland.

SIGNIFICANCE

The Figueroa Apartments Building has been evaluated with respect to the Criteria of Eligibility and the Criteria for Evaluation of the National Register of Historic Places, and has been found eligible to the National Register under Criterion C. The property is significant in the area of Community Planning and Development, as it marked the beginning of urban expansion of the Miramar residential area, into the previously industrial and marginal plots of land West of the old American Railroad Company tracks. The building is also significant in the area of Architecture, as it embodies the characteristics typical of the hybrid, Art Deco-Spanish Revival style apartment buildings being constructed in the San Juan

area during the 1930's. The building has been significantly intervened as part of past rehabilitation projects for modern uses, but retains its most significant original characteristics at the exterior and therefore preserves an overall sense of its type and period in architecture, and the interior retains most of its historical building fabric.

The Figueroa Apartments Building, now known as the Pinto-Lugo & Rivera Building, located at 601 Fernández Juncos Avenue in the Miramar section of Santurce, was built between September, 1934 and July, 1935, and is associated with the urban development patterns that lead to the expansion of Santurce to the other side of the American Railroad Company tracks, toward the mangrove swamps of San Juan Bay. The property was built on one of the first lots to be segregated from a large, industrial plot of land belonging to Josefina Fabián Finlay, and dedicated to metal foundries. The plot was first subdivided in 1930, when Fabián Finlay sold a 529 square-meter lot to the West Indies Oil Company, for construction of a gasoline station. The lot was located at the corner Fernández Juncos Avenue and Lindberg Street, both new and unfinished thoroughfares. The former was to become a major urban axis, parallel to Ponce de León Avenue, the backbone of Santurce, whereas Lindberg Street connected Santurce with the Airport at Isla Grande.

Subsequently, in 1934, Fabián Finlay sold a 750 square-meter lot to José Joaquín Figueroa, a prestigious Judge by profession, businessman and resident of San Juan, married to Lesbia Ricardo. Figueroa immediately began work on the construction of the Figueroa Apartments Building, a two-story structures with four apartments for the middle and upper-middle classes. The building became the first residential structure to venture out onto this western fringe of Santurce. As a pioneer in this marginal and undeveloped area, the building occupied a privileged address on Lindberg Street, which connected directly across the railroad tracks with the most exclusive section of Miramar and prestigious social institutions such as the Union Club, and the Lourdes Chapel. The building also enjoyed spectacular views to the San Antonio Bridge and the Condado Lagoon. The building immediately began a development trend, which resulted in the construction of various apartment buildings along Fernández Juncos Avenue, in response to similar market demands. The Figueroa Apartments Building is the first and oldest building of its type in this section of Miramar, and the only one in continuous use.

Although the surrounding contexts have been altered significantly in the 1950's as a result of the conversion of the American Railroad Company tracks into the Muñoz Rivera Expressway, the building's location and distinct relationship with other buildings in the area, makes it the only physical link remaining between this western fringe of Santurce and the exclusive area of Miramar. As a result of ongoing demolition and development in the area, in the near future this building may very well be the only surviving building of its period in this district. As such, the building has been found to be eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, for its significance in the area of Community Planning and Development.

The Figueroa Apartments Building is also significant in the area of Architecture, as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of its type, period of construction and architectural style. The building conserves the distinctive architectural characteristics of a hybrid style, most common in Puerto Rico during the depression years of the 1930's, which combined modern forms, lines and vocabulary typical of the Art Deco style, with materials, craftsmanship, and traditional elements such as clay mission tiles and rustic stucco, borrowed from the Spanish Revival style.

Although the building has experienced a major addition at the rooftop and modifications to its interior finishes, as a result of its change in use, most of the original fabric is conserved, both on the exterior and interior, and the building retains its

overall sense of time and place. The rooftop addition, built between 1989 and 1990, is a recessed, lightweight, modern structure, and is therefore clearly distinguishable as a product of its time, thus allowing the correct interpretation of the original building. Other modifications were limited to changes to interior finishes such as flooring and doors, and to the exterior windows, all of which superficial in character and reversible. The Figueroa Apartments Building has, therefore, been found to possess architectural characteristics and integrity with respect to its type.

Although the architect of the building has not been identified with certainty, evidence of the contractual relationship between José J. Figueroa, the original owner, and architects Armando Morales Cano and Pedro Méndez, point to the high probability that the building was designed by one of these two masters in their field, at the time. The physical and architectural characteristics of the building, as well as its time of construction, early in Figueroa's entrepreneurial practice as a real estate developer, tend to suggest that Armando Morales Cano was the author of the building. Morales Cano designed other apartment buildings for Figueroa during the second half of the 1930´s, some of which, such as the Borinquen Park Apartments, share spatial characteristics and a management of volumes, similar to those of the Figueroa Apartments, and became landmarks of this historical period within the urban landscape of San Juan. The building is therefore also eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an example of a building attributed to Armando Morales Cano, a significant contributor to the development of multi-family apartment buildings in the San Juan of the 1930´s.

Given the intense level of demolition and development currently going on in this area of Santurce, the Figueroa Apartments Building may soon become the only surviving building pertaining to its period of construction, which marks the beginning of the development of the area. Its preservation and recognition by means of inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places would help to assure a necessary degree of historical and architectural continuity in the future development of this area, and would allow it to continue to serve as a transition between the older section of Miramar and this marginal area, currently undergoing significant change.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries are the legal boundaries of Plot 5112 of San Juan, Section 1, as inscribed and described in its 1st Inscription, in Volume 162, Folio 47, Section 1 of the San Juan Deeds Registry, Department of Justice of Puerto Rico.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The nominated property is defined by the parcel of land, currently associated with the lot. This lot includes small remnants of adjacent lots, which have been appended to the original lot over time, resulting in the existing situation of the lot.

All photographs were taken by Héctor Santiago Cazull on August 10, 1999. Original negatives on-file at the offices of Pinto-Lugo & Rivera, at the address of the nominated property, 601 Fernández Juncos Avenue, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Photo Number:

1. General view of the property, facing southeast.
2. Entrance drive to the property, facing east, along what used to be old Lindberg Street.
3. Principal (North) façade of the building, facing south.
4. Oblique view of the building, facing southeast.
5. East façade of the building, facing north.
6. West façade of the building, facing east.
7. South or rear façade, facing northeast
8. Central stairway, from ground floor, facing south.
9. Detail of fluted pilasters and modern mosaics on north or front façade, facing south.
10. Detail of mosaics on east side of north or front façade, facing south.