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

OMB No. 1024-0018

RECEIVED
DEC 20 1993
NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

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historic name: **Smaine-Ortiz House**

other names/site number: **Porfirio Ortiz House**

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2. Location

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street & number: **341 Antonio Mellado Street** city or town: **Isabel Segunda**
vicinity ___
state: **Puerto Rico** code: **PR** county:**Vieques** code: **147**
zip code: **00765**

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.)

Arleen Pabón PhD **December 13, 1993**
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:

X	entered in the National Register ___ See continuation sheet.	Mark Mi·Nor	2/2/94
____	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__ **(House)**	__1__	buildings **(Garage)**
__0__	__0__	sites
__0__	__0__	structures
__0__	__1__	objects **(Cast-iron water tank)**
__1__	__2__	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register __0__

Name of related multiple property listing: **N/A**

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions
Cat: **Domestic** Sub: **Single Dwelling**

Current Functions
Cat: **Domestic** Sub: **Single Dwelling**

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification: **other: raised vernacular gallery house**

Materials
foundation: **Brick**
roof: **Metal**
walls: **Wood, Metal**
other: **Stucco, Cast Iron**

Narrative Description

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8. Statement of Significance

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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: **Architecture**

Period of Significance: **1898**

Significant Dates: **1898**

Significant Person: **N/A**

Cultural Affiliation: **N/A**

Architect/Builder: **José MacPhaline**

Narrative Statement of Significance

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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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
_X_ State Historic Preservation Office
_X_ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other
Name of repository: **Puerto Rico Deeds Register, Fajardo**

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: **less than one acre**

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	**18**	**241675**	**2008280**	3	__	_____	_____
2	__	_____	_____	4	__	_____	_____

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

Boundary Justification

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11. Form Prepared By

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name/title: **Mr. Héctor Santiago Cazull/ Architectural Conservator; and, Mr. Robert Rabin/ Historian, Centro Cultural Yaureibo. (Revised and edited by the P.R.S.H.P.O.**

organization: **Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña** date: **September 30, 1992**

street & number: **54 Ulises Martínez St.** telephone: **(809) 850-1885**

city or town: **Humacao** state: **PR** zip code: **00791**

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Property Owner

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name: **Mr. Porfirio Ortiz**

street & number: **341 Antonio Mellado St.** telephone:

city or town: **Isabel Segunda, Vieques** state: **PR** zip code: **00765**

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Smaine-Ortiz House is a raised one-story structure, mixed-construction vernacular balcony-house, located at 341 Antonio Mellado Street (San Francisco), in the town of Isabel Segunda, on the Island of Vieques, Puerto Rico. The house rests on a lot located on the northwest corner of Antonio Mellado and Prudencio Quiñones Streets; which slopes steeply downward from the rear to the front (west to east), forcing the front of the house to be raised above a partial podium-like basement, whereas the rear of the house sits directly upon the ground. The basement level is constructed of masonry, whereas the main, residential level is of wood-frame, with a side-gabled, corrugated sheet-metal roof. The house has an "L-shaped" plan, arranged around a small courtyard, with its core volume facing Antonio Mellado Street, and the intersecting-gabled service wing running parallel to Prudencio Quiñones Street.

A series of three low, elliptical-arch openings, each with inward-opening, wood-panelled doors, articulates the pseudo-rusticated basement wall. The arrangement is flanked by simple, decorative pilaster-like elements at the corners. A masonry stairway with a solid, masonry rail rises from the sidewalk on the northern end of the façade to the balcony on the residential level. The balcony is a long, narrow, L-shaped gallery, created by the set-back of the main structure from the basement wall, running the length of both exterior façades. It has a polychrome hydraulic-cement floor and is enclosed by a concrete rail with decorative, cast-iron balusters. It is covered by an independent wood-and-sheet-metal shed-roof, supported by a series of plain concrete posts.

The exterior of the wood-frame residential part of the house is sheathed with rusticated-effect pressed, sheet-metal, and is articulated by a series of four wooden-jalousie, double-doors. All original door openings have been shut off and fitted with white aluminum "Miami-type" windows, except for the third one, which is used as the main entrance to the house. All door openings are framed with wooden, fluted-pilaster jambs, and crowned by wooden cornices and tripartite pediments. The cornices have interesting ornamental motifs: a stars at each end, a bull's-eye motif at the center, connected by curvilinear

cutouts. The pediments are decorated with wooden triangular moldings. The main structure is topped by a corrugated, sheet-metal roof, with side, hipped gables.

The south façade along Prudencio Quiñones Street is irregular in shape, due to the rising level of the street, beginning as a two-story structure and ending as a single-story one. The basement level is very similar in treatment to the main façade. The western side of this façade, which runs flush to the sidewalk in line with the basement, is sheathed with plain-tin panels. This section corresponds to the service wing, holding the kitchen, a bathroom, and the dining room. This wing is crowned by a side-gabled roof which intersects the roof of the core volume of the house at its eastern end. After Hurricane Hugo destroyed the original garage in 1989, a simple garage was added to the house, abutting against the western end of this façade.

The basement can be entered by either of the three doors on the main façade. Just inside the pseudo-rusticated masonry wall, a narrow, transversal corridor is formed by a second stuccoed masonry wall, arranged parallel to the outer wall, and in line with the wall of the wood-frame structure above. Large storage spaces, topped with flat lintels aligned with the arched doorways, have been crested within.

As stated above, the third door on the main façade of the residential level corresponds to the main entrance of the house, leading into a small, nearly square living area. Its original wooden floors are now covered with linoleum, and its ceiling, originally consisting of narrowly-striated wooden panels (tabloncillo), was replaced with pressed-wood, hung ceiling, after Hurricane Hugo. The four walls of the living room are of particular interest, as they conserve most of its original character: original chair-rails; decorative, square-shaped, with small, wooden pyramidal designs projecting outward of the center; diamond-patterned tabloncillo below the rails and vertically striated above; and original, wood-panel double-doors on either side, leading into the two main bedrooms. There is a wide, elliptical archway which leads from the living room into the next room. This next room displays fluted wooden pilasters with detailed imposts, from which springs the arch, which is articulated by wooden surrounds and by an intricate soffit with

transversal, wooden reeding. The antechamber is similar to the living room in detailing and displays double-doors, similar to those previously described, which open onto the secondary bedrooms, one to each side.

All bedrooms display finishes similar to those of the two major living areas. The bedrooms on the northern side of the house are square in plan and have new pressed-wood ceilings, similar to those of the living room. The southern wall of the bedrooms on the southern side is angled inward, creating an acute angle at the southeastern corner of each of the rooms. This detail adds greater interest to the rooms, in addition to the fact that all conserve their original ceilings, doors and trim, including details, millwork cornices and corner moldings. All bedroom windows have been replaced by the aluminum "Miami" type. The six areas described up to this point comprise the core volume of the house.

Beyond this area, a doorless opening leads onto the gallery of the service wing, which has a polished concrete floor and leads into the dining room to the left, through two door openings, and to the bathroom to the right, through two doors aligned with those of the dining room. The easternmost of the two doors to the bathroom has been closed off with concrete block during a recent renovation in order to make room for a large, modern shower-stall. The dining room conserves early twentieth-century polychromed hydraulic-cement tiles and original ceilings, as well as an original, small pantry unit at its northeastern corner. Continuing toward the rear through the gallery, a set of period double-doors leads out onto the interior courtyard. These doors are original to the house but were relocated from the other door openings. From the courtyard, another set of double doors leads into the kitchen. The kitchen conserves the original, double-shutter windows along the southern wall, and aluminum "Miami type" windows along the western and northern walls. At the northeastern corner of the kitchen is an original, built-in, millwork china cabinet with wood and glass doors. At the far end of the southern wall, is an antique, vaulted brick-masonry kitchen-stove.

Because of the topography of the lot, the courtyard is an irregular, multi-level terraced space, defined by the walls of

the house and enclosed by a low, masonry wall along the northern property line. The western side of the courtyard is defined by the corrugated sheet-metal eastern wall of the make-shift garage, constructed after Hurricane Hugo destroyed the original cochere. There is also a large, cylindrical, cast-iron, water tank in the courtyard. The make-shift garage and the water tank are considered not contributing to the significance of the property.

The house is in overall good condition, save for the deterioration of small portions of the wooden details in the balcony, and the near-collapse of a small portion of the roof-overhang over the kitchen. The only modifications which the house has suffered over time are the removal and/or replacement of the doors and windows noted above, the replacement of the original ceiling damaged by Hurricane Hugo, and the installation of hydraulic-cement floor tiles in the dining room and balcony. The decorative, pressed-tin covering the façade is probably a later addition.

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Smaine-Ortiz house, built in 1898, is an excellent example of a raised, one-story and basement type of vernacular dwelling, significant for its good state of conservation and its architectural character. Construction of the house was begun by Mr. Agustín Smaine, an early immigrant to Vieques, and was finished by Don Carlos Ortiz, a prominent sugar plantation owner of the late-nineteenth century. The house is eligible under Criterion C, for its architectural significance as the best preserved example of its type found on Vieques Island.

Mr. Agustín Smaine, an immigrant presumably from one of the British West Indies Islands, built his house on a municipally-owned urban lot at the corner of San Francisco and Santa Barbara Streets. Upon nearly finishing the house in 1898, Mr. Smaine reportedly left Vieques and sold the property to Don Carlos Ortiz Román, a prominent sugar plantation owner, who finished the house. The house is similar in size to those built by the successful sugar plantation owners of the nineteenth-century, most of whom lived in town, on or around the Plaza. The house is still owned by the Ortiz Family, and is currently owned by Don Porfirio Ortiz, son of Don Carlos.

The various influences which helped shape the local architecture of Vieques have left their mark on this house. Firstly, the house is partially elevated upon a high podium, which serves as a visual base for the entire structure, including the balcony or front gallery. This basement, used for storage, displays a simple yet effective architectural treatment, consisting of a heavily pseudo-rusticated basement perforated by three arched doorways. This treatment masks the usually open space upon which houses were built.

In addition to its value as a representative of the type of house built by well-to-do immigrants in Vieques, the Smaine-Ortiz House is significant as an example of the emergent architecture of Vieques. It is particularly significant for the variety of decorative detailing; it is admired locally as one of the charming houses in Isabel Segunda. The main façades present an interesting mix of details and textures, created by the combination of various forms and materials with different textures: coarse-rusticated pressed tin panels; heavy, ashlar-like rustication of the basement wall; decorative, wooden cut-outs above the doorways; intricate, cast-iron balusters along the entire length of the balcony; floral-pattern, polychrome hydraulic-cement tiles on the floors of the spiral, entrance stair and balcony.

Although it has not been possible to identify with certainty the builder of the house, the decorative details lead us to believe that late-nineteenth-century carpenter, José MacPhaline, was the responsible for the construction of the house. MacPhaline has been documented as one of the most active carpenters in Vieques at the time.

The adaptation of the house to its irregular corner-lot was skillfully achieved, as the angle of the street intersection imposed a very difficult problem. Instead of ending at the corner and disguising the odd angle, or chamfering the corner, as is most commonly done under these circumstances, the wrap-around balcony with is projecting shed-roof emphasizes this feature, and adds a greater sense of acuteness to the angle and movement to the building. Furthermore, the angled side-walls reflect the dynamism of some of the interior spaces. The slope of the lot

also contributes to the complex form of the house, as it was probably a principal reason for the raised, basement construction. In addition, the irregular topography of the lot forced the creation of a series of terraced levels and steps in the courtyard, which add to the particularity of the house.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Berthelot, Jack and Martín Gaumé. Kaz Antiyé Jan Moun Ka Rété (Caribbean Popular Dwelling) Guadaloupe: Editions Perspective Créoles, 1982.

Buisenet, David. Historic Architecture of the Caribbean. London: Heinemann, 1980.

Gosner, Pamela W. Caribbean Georgian: The Great and Small Houses of the West Indies, First Edition. Washington D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1982.

Ortiz, Nana (daughter of Don Carlos Ortiz). Interviews carried out by Carmen Figueroa on March 1, 1992, and by Héctor Santiago on September 4, 1992.

Ortiz, Porfirio (son of Don Carlos Ortiz and owner of the property). Interview carried out by Héctor Santiago on September 18, 1992.

Rabín, Robert and Héctor Santiago. "Sugar Haciendas in Development of Vieques, 1824-1900", a historical context prepared with a "Survey and Planning" grant for the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, 1992, as part of the "Inventario de Recursos Históricos y Arquitectónicos de Vieques, Puerto Rico, 1843-1991".

Rabin, Robert and Héctor Santiago. "The Foundation and Settlement of Vieques, 1811-1860", a historical context prepared with a "Survey and Planning" grant for the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, 1992, as part of the "Inventario de Recursos Históricos y Arquitectónicos de Vieques, Puerto Rico, 1843-1941".

Rabin, Robert and Héctor Santiago. "The Immigrations to Vieques,

1823-1898", a historical context prepared with a "Survey and Planning" grant for the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, 1992, as part of the "Inventario de Recursos Históricos y Arquitectónicos de Vieques, Puerto Rico, 1843-1941".

Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office. Inventories of Historic Properties for various municipalities of Puerto Rico.

Registro de la Propiedad de Vieques, Fajardo, Puerto Rico.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary includes all of the property corresponding to lot number eleven (11) of urban block number thirty-two (32) of the town of Isabel Segunda, Municipality of Vieques, Puerto Rico.

Boundary Justification:

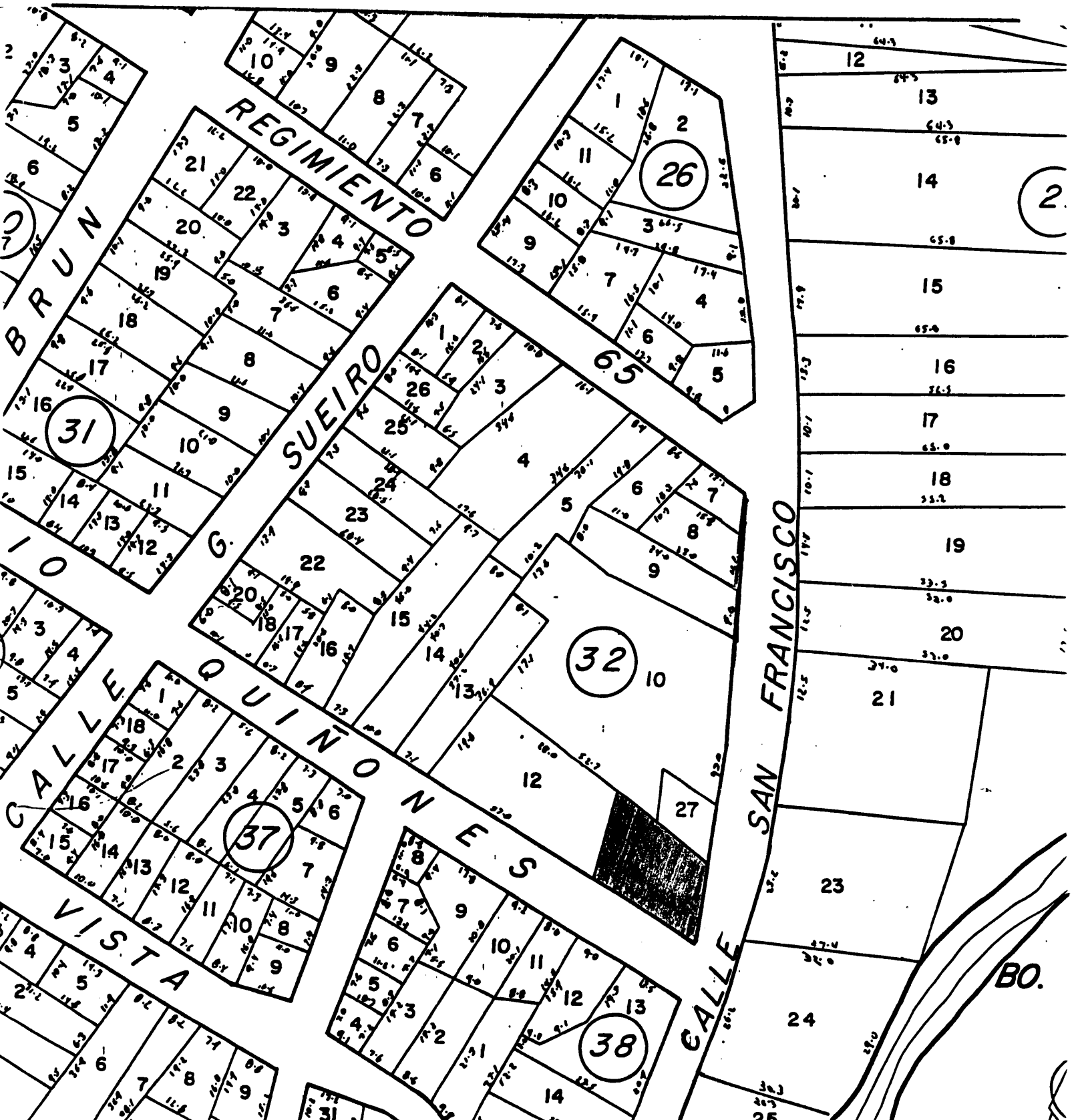
The boundaries comprehend the urban lot historically and currently associated with the property.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SITE PLAN
Casa Smaine-Ortiz
Isabel Segunda
Vieques, P.R.
Scale: 1:1000