



Historic Site Preservation Board Staff Report

Date: November 13, 2012

Case No: HSPB – 85

Application Type: Class 1 Designation Application

Location: 992 E. La Jolla Road / Twin Palms Estate Model A2 Residence

Owner / Applicant: Lawrence E. Wood

Zone: R-1-C / Residential, Single Family

APN: 511-053-012

From: Craig A. Ewing, AICP, Director of Planning Services

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

An application by Lawrence E. Wood, owner, to designate the single family dwelling at 992 E. La Jolla Road as a Class 1 historic site. Such designation would:

1. Place the subject property under the guidance of Municipal Code Section 8.05
2. Require present and subsequent owners to maintain the buildings consistent with that ordinance,
3. Grant possible property tax reduction opportunities to the owners under the State of California Mills Act.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) open a public hearing, received any testimony and adopt the attached draft statement of historic significance and resolution recommending to the City Council a Class 1 historic designation for the property.

PRIOR ACTIONS

None.

BACKGROUND AND SETTING

Definition of an Historic Site.

Section 8.05.020 of the Municipal Code provides the definition of a historic site as follows;

(a) *Historic Site.*

An historic site is any real property such as: a building; a structure, including but not limited to archways, tiled areas and similar architectural elements; an archaeological excavation or object that is unique or significant because of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship or aesthetic effect and:

- 1. That is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community; or*
- 2. That is associated with lives of persons who made meaningful contribution to national, state or local history; or*
- 3. That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history; or*
- 4. That embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or*
- 5. That presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or that possesses high artistic value; or*
- 6. That represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or*
- 7. That has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to national, state or local history or prehistory.*

A Class 1 Historic Site may also qualify for historic designation at the federal, state and/or county level.

Designation of Historic Sites.

The City Council is authorized to designate Historic Sites.

The Historic Site Preservation Board makes recommendations to the City Council that certain sites be designated as Historic Sites in accordance with Section 8.05.135 of the Municipal Code. The Board may initiate studies, surveys and investigations it deems necessary to adequately gather information in consideration of a recommendation.

Conditions that apply to Class 1 Historic Sites.

According to Section 8.05 of the Municipal Code, the following shall apply to a Class 1 Historic Site:

1. It shall meet the definition of a historic site as outlined in Municipal Code Section 8.05.020.
2. An archival file shall be maintained on the property by the City.

3. It may be qualified as 'historic' at the federal, state, and/or county level.
4. The structure/site may not be modified nor objects removed without the approval of the City Council.
5. The use may be limited by the City Council to the extent that it may impair the integrity of the site.
6. A plaque explaining the historic nature of the site will be installed at the site.
7. Compliance with all rules and regulations for Historic Sites and Historic Districts under Article IV of Chapter 8.05 of the Municipal Code shall be required.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Located on the northwest corner of E La Jolla Road and Navajo Drive, the wood-frame, three bedroom, two bath single family residence built in 1957 consists of 1,600 square feet on a 10,000 square foot lot in the southerly part of the City.¹

The building's tar and gravel gable roof defines the enclosed area beneath, while the front façade extends beyond the roof and suggests the appearance of a larger home. Further enhancing the size of the building is the horizontal roof that covers a patio and carport to the side of the dwelling. Wooden vertical slates also unite the outdoor patio space with the home. Exterior materials include native stone, board and batten, and stucco.

An especially well-restored home within the Twin Palms neighborhood, the property is one of 90 homes built by the Alexander Construction company in 1957-58. Its ambitious detailing belies the simple 40 x 40 foot floor plan that was used throughout the tract. The post-and-beam construction permitted both the extensive use of glass and non-bearing interior walls. Other details common to the tract, many of which allowed for a wide variety of customization are described below.

The subject property represents the Alexander Construction Company's first residential tract in Palm Springs, pre-saging subsequent Alexander developments which for many have come to define Palm Springs' mid-century modern single family residential development. The property was restored in the last year, and building permit history indicates that no significant additions or changes occurred since original construction.

The dwelling's design was the product of the architecture firm of Palmer & Krisel, AIA who collaborated on numerous single family housing tracts in southern California in the 1950's and early 1960's. They began work with the Alexander Construction Company, first in the burgeoning San Fernando Valley before turning their attention to the resort and second-home markets in the Coachella Valley. Their first product in the desert was the Ocotillo Lodge on W. Palm Canyon Drive in 1957, followed by the Twin Palms tract and others.

¹ This description is derived from the application submitted by the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, September 1, 2012. Additional information is provided in the application, attached to this report.

DEFINING HISTORIC CHARACTERISTICS

Common character-defining features of the dwelling and others in the tract include: Post-and-beam construction; expansive floor to ceiling windows with clerestories; the absence of moldings or trim around windows and doors; a breezeway that connects the carport to main house; open floor plans; three-quarter high wall partitions; fiberglass or iron screens and walls with decorative cutouts; idiosyncratic rooflines including flat, gabled, slanted, or butterfly-shaped; exposed beams with tongue-and-groove wood ceilings; exteriors finished with board and batten wood siding, patterned brick or decorative concrete block or native stone.

Within the tract, two slightly different configurations, designs "A" and "B," were offered. The subject property, Model "2A" features a front door facing the street with the carport aligned with the face of the house. The structural system of the home was simple post and beam construction which resulted in non-load bearing walls. Great design flexibility was achieved through this system that provided the opportunity for walls of glass. Also aiding design flexibility was the placement of HVAC ducting underneath the concrete pad. This arrangement eliminated unsightly soffits and allowed for dramatic ceiling heights throughout the houses.

To mitigate the appearance of similar or identical elevations, the architects designed alternate rooflines. The subject property shows a gable roof, but flat and butterfly (short and long) were also used. Despite the identical floor plans, actual units included plans that were flipped and/or rotated 90-degrees to ensure that no two identical configurations were located closely to one another. A wide spectrum of exterior facade materials were used, including concrete block, stone, stucco, conwood panels and wood board and batten siding. The result was a custom look for each of these homes. The project garnered national attention for both the architects and the Alexanders."²

In the recent restoration, architect William Krisel designed the restored landscape for the property. The building's paint color scheme is historically correct and taken from the architect's archives.

REQUIRED FINDINGS

As noted above in Background and Setting, Section 8.05.020 of the Municipal Code provides the definition of a historic site: "*An historic site is any real property such as: a building; a structure, including but not limited to archways, tiled areas and similar architectural elements; an archaeological excavation or object that is unique or significant because of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship or aesthetic effect*". Seven other qualities are listed therein with the applicant's and staff's analysis provided below:

1. *The resource is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community.*

² Excerpted from *The Alexanders, a Desert Legacy*. Harlan, James; Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, Palm Springs: 2011

The applicant does not request designation based on this finding.

- 2. The property is associated with lives of persons who made meaningful contribution to national, state or local history.*

The applicant does not request designation based on this finding.

- 3. The property reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history.*

Midcentury modern residential architecture developed deep roots in Palm Springs beginning in the 1950's and the Twin Palms Estates Model A-2 Residence is an excellent example of how the style served to create an open plan residential environment for both weekend visitors and fulltime residents. The building has been restored to its nearly original condition with no significant modifications or additions imposed on the structure since its construction. The property well-exemplifies Palm Springs' and Southern California's embrace of the midcentury modern tract house style in the mid- part of the 20th century Staff supports this finding.

- 4. The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction.*

The residence embodies the distinctive characteristics of its type, period and method of construction and is an excellent example of how midcentury modern architecture was expressed in multi-unit speculative housing subdivisions. The basic plan and one of the multiple variations presented at the site serve as examples of simplified and standardized building features that fostered resort-style living featuring post-and-beam construction with large expanses of glass. Exterior spaces were fully developed to allow year-round use of the outdoor amenities including patios spas and pools. The subject property could easily serve as a model for the genre expressed in plan, form, proportion, structure, style, materials and architectural details Staff supports the finding.

- 5. The property presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or that possesses high artistic value.*

The property presents the work of a master architect and possesses high artistic value. This building is an excellent example of architects Palmer & Krisel's command of the midcentury idiom. Their use of the style in this project illustrates the adaptability of the style to a multi-family setting. The way in which the defining characteristics of this property are related by style, choice and availability of materials and technology utilized in its construction makes show the sure hand of a master in creating a structure that fully articulates the aesthetic ideal of a Midcentury modern vacation home more fully than many other properties of its type. Staff supports the finding.

- 6. The property represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.*

The application does not seek approval under this finding.

7. *The property has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to national, state or local history or prehistory.*

The application does not seek approval under this finding.

CONCLUSION

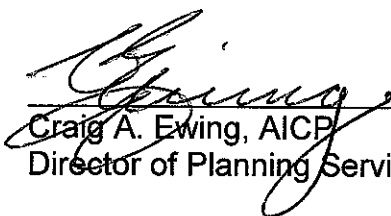
Both the original physical development of the site and its current condition provide a strong basis for historic designation. The recent remodel of the building and its landscaping have been accomplished in a respectful and sensitive manner. The building exterior and grounds present one of the most ambitious restorations in the Twin Palms neighborhood and offers a prime example of mid-century modern residential architecture, as designed by Palmer & Krisel and developed by the Alexander Construction Company.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

In accordance with Section 15331 (Historical Resources Restoration/Rehabilitation) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed designation is categorically exempt from environmental review as the proposed designation meets the conditions outlined for preservation of a historic resource.

NOTIFICATION

Pursuant to section 8.05.140 of the Municipal Code of Palm Springs, All property owners within three hundred (300) feet of the subject property have been notified and notice was made in a newspaper of general circulation. As of the writing of this report, staff has not received any inquiries on this matter.



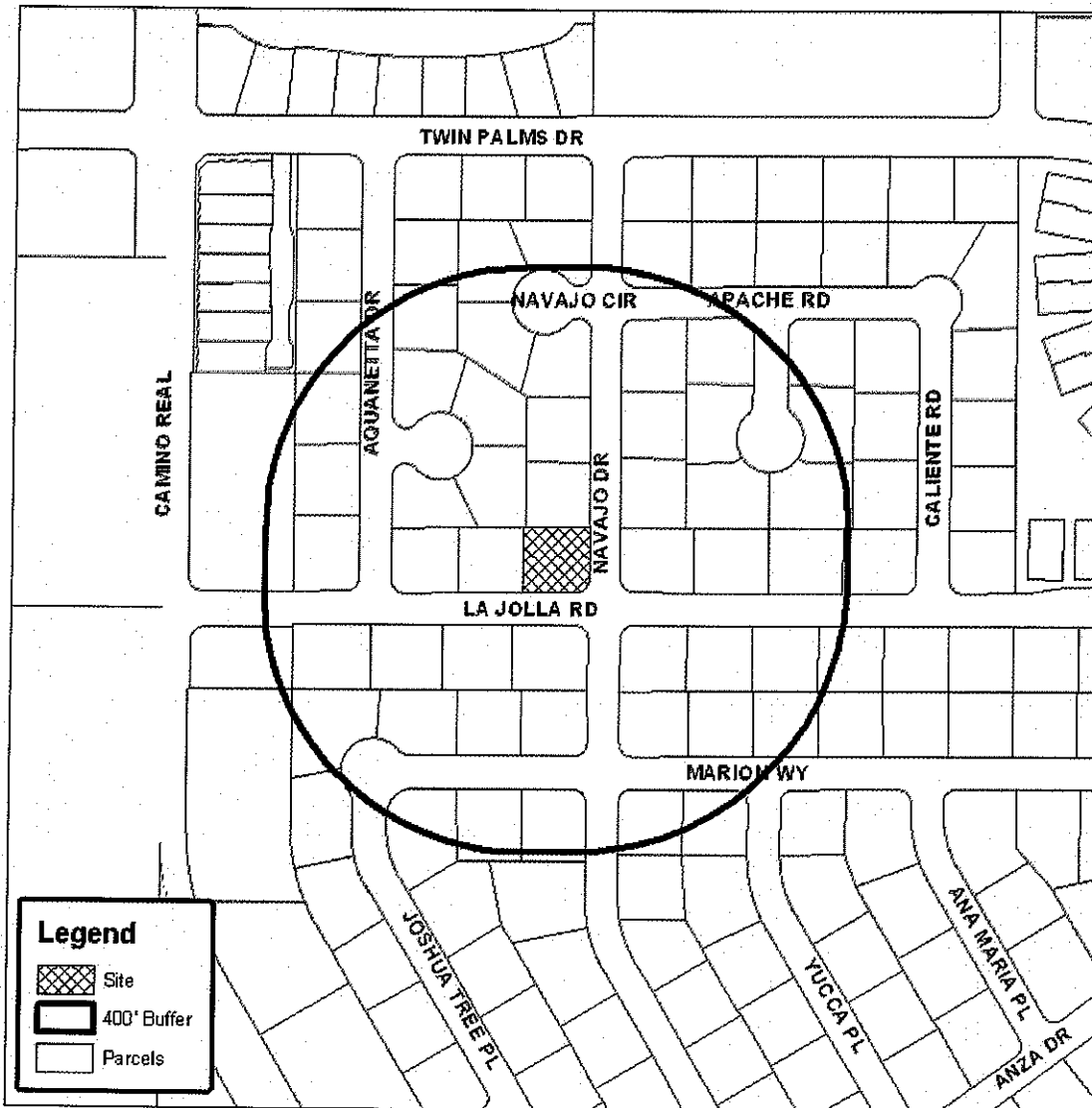
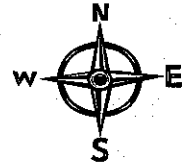
Craig A. Ewing, AICP
Director of Planning Services

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity Map
2. Draft Resolution and Statement of Historical Significance
3. Application and Submitted Documents



Department of Planning Services Vicinity Map



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

CASE NO: HSPB 85

APPLICANT: City of Palm Springs

DESCRIPTION: To consider designating a residential property developed with a single family home and accessory structures as a Class 1 Historic Site. The subject site is located at 992 East La Jolla Road. (APN 511-053-012).

HSPB RESOLUTION NO. 85

OF THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD OF
THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA,
RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL
DESIGNATE THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 333-343
SOUTH PALM CANYON DRIVE ("J.W. ROBINSONS
BUILDING") AS A HISTORIC SITE, CLASS 1 – HSPB 84

WHEREAS, in 1957-58, the Alexander Construction Company's first single family residential development was constructed, including the dwelling at the northwest corner of E. La Jolla Road and Navajo, and with a site address of 992 E. La Jolla Road; and

WHEREAS, the dwelling has been remodeled and restored, including landscaping designed by William Krisel, one of the original architects on the dwelling; and

WHEREAS, the defining characteristics of this building include:

- Post-and-beam construction;
- Expansive floor to ceiling windows with clerestories;
- The absence of moldings or trim around windows and doors;
- A breezeway that connects the carport to main house;
- Screens and walls with decorative cutouts;
- Idiosyncratic gable roofline; and
- Exterior finishes of board and batten wood siding and native stone

WHEREAS, Chapter 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code allows for the designation of historic sites; and

WHEREAS, the property owner, Lawrence E. Wood, has submitted an application for Historic Site Designation for the subject property; and

WHEREAS, notice of a public hearing of the Historic Site Preservation Board of the City of Palm Springs to consider designation of the property, known as the Casa Palmeras residences, as a historic site was issued in accordance with applicable law; and

WHEREAS, on November 13, 2012, the Historic Site Preservation Board conducted a public hearing in accordance with applicable law to consider designation of the Casa Palmeras residences as a historic site; and

WHEREAS, the Historic Site Preservation Board has carefully reviewed and considered all of the evidence in connection with the designation, including but not limited to the staff report, application and historical research, all written and oral testimony presented.

THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD HEREBY FINDS AS FOLLOWS:

1. *The property reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history.*

Midcentury modern residential architecture developed deep roots in Palm Springs beginning in the 1950's and the Twin Palms Estates Model A-2 Residence is an excellent example of how the style served to create an open plan residential environment for both weekend visitors and fulltime residents. The building has been restored to its nearly original condition with no significant modifications or additions imposed on the structure since its construction. The property well-exemplifies Palm Springs' and Southern California's embrace of the midcentury modern tract house style in the mid- part of the 20th century.

2. *The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction.*

The residence embodies the distinctive characteristics of its type, period and method of construction and is an excellent example of how midcentury modern architecture was expressed in multi-unit speculative housing subdivisions. The basic plan and one of the multiple variations presented at the site serve as examples of simplified and standardized building features that fostered resort-style living featuring post-and-beam construction with large expanses of glass. Exterior spaces were fully developed to allow year-round use of the outdoor amenities including patios spas and pools. The subject property could easily serve as a model for the genre expressed in plan, form, proportion, structure, style, materials and architectural details.

3. *The property presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or that possesses high artistic value.*

The property presents the work of a master architect and possesses high artistic value. This building is an excellent example of architects Palmer & Krisel's command of the midcentury idiom. Their use of the style in this project illustrates the adaptability of the style to a multi-family setting. The way in which the defining characteristics of this property are related by style, choice and availability of materials and technology utilized in its construction makes show the sure hand of a master in creating a structure that fully articulates the aesthetic ideal of a Midcentury modern vacation home more fully than many other properties of its type.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, based upon the foregoing, the Historic Site Preservation Board recommends that the City Council adopt the attached Statement of Historic Significance and designate the entire property located at 992 E. La Jolla Road as a Historic Site, Class 1 subject to the following conditions;

1. The property owner shall permit the City to place a historic marker of the City's choosing at the site. The marker shall be placed in a location visible from the public right-of-way. The owner shall maintain the marker in the location installed and pay for the replacement cost if the plaque is lost, stolen, or otherwise removed from the property.

2. All future modifications of the existing structures, as well as any new buildings shall require HSPB review pursuant Municipal Code Ordinance 8.05.180.
3. No review for maintenance of the parking lot or landscaping shall be required, except that, subject to staff approval, any new landscape materials shall be native or desert-appropriate, including removal of turf, where practical.
4. All requirements of the Palm Springs Zoning Code shall be met.
5. That the City Clerk submit the Council Resolution to the County recorder for recordation within 90 days of the effective date of this resolution.
6. Any alterations or modifications to the exterior approved prior to the designation of this site by the City Council shall be considered legal, non-conforming only as to Section 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code.

ADOPTED this ___th day of November, 2012.

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTENTIONS:

ATTEST:

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS,
CALIFORNIA

Craig A. Ewing, AICP
Director of Planning Services
Historic Site Preservation Board Secretary

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

992 E. LA JOLLA ROAD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Statement of Significance: The subject property meets architectural criteria 3, 4 and 5 to qualify as a Class 1 site because it exemplifies the Midcentury Modern architectural style and period of local history; embodies the distinctive characteristics of that type, period, and method of construction; represents the work of Master architects Palmer & Krisel, AIA, and possesses high artistic values.

Palm Springs is known internationally for its significant concentration of Midcentury modern residential and commercial construction. In fact, it is safe to say that no American city is more closely identified with this particular period of American architecture; the city truly exemplifies this period of national State and local history. As such, the building qualifies for listing as a Class 1 site under Criterion 3.

Additionally, the building embodies the distinctive characteristics of the type, period, and methods of mass residential development construction. The building's distinctive characteristics, physical features and traits include resort-style living featuring post-and-beam construction that featured large expanses of glass; exterior spaces were fully developed to stimulate the year-round use of outdoor amenities such as patios spas and swimming pools. Eligibility under these criteria requires that a property contain enough of these characteristics to be considered a true representative of its particular type, period, and method of construction. The subject property could easily serve as a model for the type with all of the characteristics, as expressed in terms such as form, proportion, structure, plan, style, materials and architectural details. The building serves in general as a reference to ideas of design and construction, basic plan and form, as well as in the specific, for the precise ways it combines the particular materials found in this property and in variations throughout the neighboring development.

The way in which the defining characteristics of this property are related by style, choice and availability of the materials and technology utilized in its construction is emphasized because it is a perfectly restored example of its type and period of construction. The subject property becomes an important example within the context of the building practices of the 1950s. The house and the development represent an important phase of the development of Palm Springs and influenced the development of later subdivisions. For these reasons the building qualifies for listing as a Class 1 site under Criterion 4.

To understand how Palmer & Krisel merit the honor of being called "master architects" it is necessary to understand their background and careers. The following biographies of both Palmer and Krisel were drawn from the Los Angeles Times obituary for Dan Saxon

Palmer dated January 29, 2007 by Claire Noland and the William Krisel archive at the Getty Museum.

Dan Saxon Palmer (1920 – 2007) was born in Budapest, Hungary. Two years later he moved with his parents to New York, where his father operated a Hungarian import business and his mother was a dress designer. After earning a bachelor's degree in architecture from New York University in 1942, Palmer served in the Army Corps of Engineers during World War II as a mapmaker, draftsman and photographer in England and France. After the war, he apprenticed in the offices of architects Morris Lapidus in New York and Victor Gruen in Los Angeles.

William Krisel (1924– present) was born and raised in Shanghai, China to American parents until the family relocated to Beverly Hills in 1937. Krisel developed an early interest in architecture which he attributes to his father's correspondence with Rancho Santa Fe architect Lillian Rice, who designed a home for the family in California. He enrolled at the University of Southern California (USC) as an architecture student in 1941, but his studies were interrupted by the onset of World War II. He served for three years as a Chinese interpreter before returning to USC. As a student, Krisel apprenticed at the offices of Paul Laszlo and Victor Gruen. He graduated in 1949 and obtained his license in 1950, the same year he formalized his partnership with architect Dan Saxon Palmer whom he had met when they both worked in Gruen's office. Krisel would go on to earn his license as a landscape architect in 1954.

"The firm, Palmer & Krisel, AIA, Architects (including for a brief period a third partner, John Lindsay) focused its early attention on custom homes in Bel Air and Brentwood, where they experimented with the modular post-and-beam system that they would later employ in their tract houses. In 1952, Palmer and Krisel completed their first tract development, consisting of ten houses in the San Fernando Valley. The attention the firm gained from builders for this modest project led to a new collaboration with the family-owned Alexander Construction Company, which commenced with the Corbin Palms development in 1953.

"Over the next decade, Palmer and Krisel expanded their practice to meet the needs of the booming housing industry by offering a complete array of services to clients and builders. Their work came to be characterized by unique siting, minimal ornamentation, butterfly roofs, and large glass windows, all of which reflected ongoing popular interest in casual indoor-outdoor living. The standardized designs of these single-family tract homes made them both easy to construct and accessible to first-time homebuyers. The residential projects reveal Krisel's interest in experimenting with construction methods, building materials, and layout patterns, as well as his consideration of lifestyle changes after World War II. Krisel's work with Palmer represented the mass replication of the ideals and aesthetic of the program, moving beyond prototype to meet the large-scale needs of the postwar housing boom. Over the next decade, the pair would design approximately 20,000 units of housing in Southern California.

"Looking to broaden their market, the Alexanders turned to the Coachella Valley as a site of recreational development. In order to bring visitors to Palm Springs and the

surrounding area, they commissioned a destination resort in 1954, which Palmer and Krisel designed on a ten-acre site. The Ocotillo Lodge was completed in 1957 and featured a striking modern design juxtaposed against the warm desert landscape. Additional Alexander tracts in the vicinity of the resort made the ownership of second residences outside of Los Angeles, including condominiums and single family houses, popular among members of the middle class. These projects include Twin Palm Estates, Racquet Club Road Estates, and the Sandpiper Condominiums. The homes were notable for their textured landscaping, concrete block walls, extensive glass walls featuring desert views, and swimming pools, emphasizing an elegant, but relaxed lifestyle."³

Palmer and Krisel ended their partnership in 1964, but it is the firm's work through that year that is relevant to this nomination. The firm's principals Dan Palmer and William Krisel qualify as master architects because they are figures of generally recognized greatness in their profession as exemplified by the subject property. It expresses the distinctly Mid-century modernist phase in the development of their careers, a theme for which they continue to be known. As an example and prototype, the subject property possesses high artistic values as expressed in both architectural and community design and planning. It is eligible for its high artistic values because it fully articulates the aesthetic ideal of a Midcentury modern vacation home more fully than many other properties of its type. For these reasons the building qualifies for listing as a Class 1 site under Criterion 5.

³ The biographical information about William Krisel is paraphrased from information found in the Krisel Archive as the Getty Museum.

Nomination Application for
Palm Springs Class 1 Historic Site
TWIN PALMS ESTATES MODEL A2 RESIDENCE
992 East LaJolla Road
Palm Springs, California 92264

Twin Palms Estates Model A2 Residence



Prepared By Patrick McGrew
McGREW / ARCHITECTURE
9/1/2012



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

Department of Planning Services

3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, CA 92262

Telephone: 760-323-8245 ~ Fax: 760-322-8360

Public Works & Engineering ~ 760-323-8253

Fire Department ~ 760-323-8187

Building & Safety ~ 760-323-8242

Building Inspections ~ 760-323-8243

Code Enforcement ~ 760-778-8434

HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION

The City of Palm Springs allows for the local designation of historic buildings, sites or districts within the City (Section 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code.) This application packet is to be completed in order to request a historic designation. For additional information, please contact the Department of Planning Services at 760-323-8245 or planning@palmspringsca.gov.

APPLICATION

The completed application and required materials may be submitted to the Department of Planning Services. The submittal will be given a cursory check and will be accepted for filing only if the basic requirements have been met.

A case planner will be assigned to the project and will be responsible for a detailed review of the application and all exhibits to ensure that all required information is adequate and accurate. Incomplete applications due to missing or inadequate information will not be accepted for filing.

Applicants may be asked to attend scheduled meetings pertaining to their project. These will include the Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) and the City Council.

HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD (HSPB)

Once the application has been determined to be complete, the HSPB will review the application to determine whether the site meets the minimum qualifications for designation pursuant to Chapter 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code. If such determination is made, a public hearing will be scheduled for a future meeting.

A public hearing will be held by the HSPB to receive testimony from all interested persons concerning the Historic Site Designation. The public hearing may be continued from time to time, and upon complete consideration, the HSPB will make a recommendation to the City Council. Notice will be provided as indicated below.

CITY COUNCIL

After receiving the recommendation of the Historic Site Preservation Board, a public hearing will be held by the City Council to receive testimony from all interested persons concerning the requested Historic Site Designation. The public hearing may be continued from time to time, and upon complete consideration, the City Council will then conditionally approve, deny, or approve the application as submitted. The City Council's decision on the application is final.

NOTIFICATION

Prior to consideration of the application by the HSPB and the City Council, a notice of public hearing for a Historic Site Designation request will be mailed to all property owners within 400 feet of the subject property a minimum of ten (10) days prior to the hearing dates.



Office Use Only

Date:
Case No.
HSPB No.
Planner:

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
Department of Planning Services

HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION APPLICATION

TO THE APPLICANT:

Your cooperation in completing this application and supplying the information requested will expedite City review of your application. Application submitted will not be considered until all submittal requirements are met. Staff may require additional information depending upon the specific project. Please submit this completed application and any subsequent material to the Department of Planning Services.

This form is to be used to nominate individual properties for Class 1 or 2 historic designation, or to nominate the formation of historic districts. Applicants are encouraged to review two bulletins from the US Department of Interior for additional information:

"How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form" (National Register Bulletin 16A / <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/>); and
"How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation" (National Register Bulletin 15; <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/>).

Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions in the Bulletins.

1. Property Information

Historic name: Twin Palms Estates Model A2 Residence

Other names: N/A

Address: 992 East La Jolla Road

Assessor parcel number: 511053012-0

Owner's name: [REDACTED]

Owner's Address: [REDACTED]

City: [REDACTED]

State: [REDACTED]

Zip: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Cell: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

E-mail address: [REDACTED]

See Planning Dept. for info.

2. Classifications

Ownership of Property:. Check as many boxes as apply.

- Private
- Public - Local
- Public - State
- Public - Federal

Category of Property

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property. Total must include at least One (1) in Contributing Column.

Contributing	Non-contributing	
1		Buildings
1		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
2		Total

If the building or site is part of a larger group of properties, enter the name of the multiple-property group; otherwise enter "N/A".

N/A

3. Use or Function

Historic Use or Function: Single Family Residence

Current Use or Function: Single Family Residence

4. Description

Architect: Palmer & Krisel

Construction Date and Source: 1957, per Riverside County Assessor's Records

Architectural Classification: Desert Modern / Midcentury Modern

Construction Materials:

Foundation: Concrete

Roof: Tar and Gravel

Walls: Wood Frame w/ Natural Stone, Stucco
And Board & Batten Siding

Other: _____

Building Description: See continuation sheets

5. Criteria (Check all boxes that apply for the criteria qualifying the property for listing.)

Events

- (1) Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

Persons

- (2) Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

Architecture

- (3) That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national State or local history, or
- (4) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or
- (5) Represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or
- (6) Represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

Archaeology

- (7) Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Check all the boxes that apply.)

- owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- removed from its original location.
- a birthplace or a
- grave. a cemetery.
- a reconstructed building, object, or
- structure. a commemorative property.
- less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

6. Statement of Significance

Attach an explanation of any of the numbered criteria selected in Section 5 (above).

Architecturally significant under Criteria 3, 4 and 5; see continuation sheets.

7. Integrity Analysis

Attach an analysis of the Building & Site's integrity based on the criteria in this section.

Integrity: This Twin Palms Estates home has been carefully restored with assistance from the original architect William Krisel. The original kitchen and bathroom cabinetry is of walnut and was recreated from the architect's original plans. Krisel has personally designed the restored landscape for this project. The paint color scheme is historically correct and taken from the architect's archives. This 3-bedroom, 2-bath home has terrazzo tile floors throughout and uses both new and vintage light fixtures. The HVAC system and pool equipment are new. This respectfully renovated home successfully utilized *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards* to guide the project as it combined the architecture of the original design with today's lifestyle and contribute to the architectural heritage of Palm Springs.

In addition to being determined eligible under at least one of the applicable designation criteria the building must also retain its architectural integrity. Integrity is based on significance to explain why, where and when a property is important. Only after significance is fully established can a determination be made with regard to the issue of integrity. In this case, the building's significance lies in its midcentury architecture. To retain historic integrity, a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects of integrity which include **Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling and Association**. As a thoughtful and well-informed rehabilitation project it retains integrity of all seven aspects.

8. Bibliography

See Continuation sheets

9. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 10,000 sq. ft. lot size equals 0.23 acre

Property Boundary Description. The boundary includes all of Riverside County Assessor's Lot No. 511053012-0

10. Prepared By

Name/title: Patrick McGrew

Organization: McGrew / Architecture

Street address: 674 South Grenfall Road

City: Palm Springs

State: California

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11. Required Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed application form. **Do not mount any exhibits on a board.**

1. **Attachment Sheets.** Include all supplemental information based on application form (above).
2. **Maps:** For Historic Districts, include a sketch map identifying the proposed districts boundaries.
3. **Photographs:** Eight (8) sets of color photographs showing each elevation of the property and its surroundings.
4. **Non-owner's Notarized Signature:** If the applicant is not the owner, a notarized affidavit shall be provided (see following page).
5. **Site Plan:** One 1/8" to 1/4" scale drawing of the site, and eight reduction copies (8 1/2 x 11 inches) The site plan shall show all of the following: Property boundaries, north arrow and scale, all existing buildings, structures, mechanical equipment, landscape materials, fences, walls, sidewalks, driveways, parking areas showing location of parking spaces, and signs. **Indicate the square footage and use of each building and the date(s) of construction.**
6. **Public Hearing Labels:** Three (3) sets of typed self-adhesive labels of all property owners, lessees, and sub-lessees of record. **The labels shall include the Assessor's parcel number, owner's name and mailing address of each property with 400 feet from the exterior limits of the subject property.** Additionally, all Assessor Parcel Maps clearly indicating the 400-foot radius and a certified letter from a title company licensed to conduct business in Riverside County, California shall be submitted.

Note: If any property on this list is owned by the United States Government in trust for the Agua Caliente Indian Tribe or individual allottee, copies of notices with postage paid envelopes will be submitted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to notify the individual Indian land owners of the public hearings.

NON-OWNER AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE) ss

I (We), _____ being duly sworn, depose and say that I (we) am (are) the person(s) herein named and that the foregoing statements and answers herein contained and the information herein submitted are in all respect true and correct to the best of my (our) knowledge and belief.

Name: (Please print) _____

Mailing address: _____ City, _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Signatures: _____ Signatures: _____

Who proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the person(s) whose name(s) is/are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that he/she/they executed the same in his/hr/their authorized capacity(ies), and that by his/her/their signature(s) on the instrument the person(s), or the entity upon behalf of which the person(s) acted, executed the instrument.

I certify under PENALTY OF PERJURY under the laws of the State of _____ that the foregoing paragraph is true and correct.

WITNESS my hand and official seal this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Notary Public in the State of _____

with principal office in the County of _____

Place Notary Seal Above

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE NOMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet

Building Description: Like the other homes in the Palmer & Krisel-designed development, the home at 992 East La Jolla Road is essentially square in plan, 40 feet on a side resulting in 1600 sq. ft. of enclosed interior space. The residence contains three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a 30-foot living room with a native stone fireplace. A pool and two patio areas provide outdoor living spaces. A simple gabled roof connects to vertical wall planes that extend the front façade east and west and give the impression of a much larger home. A patio located to the east of the entrance is screened by wooden slats and topped by a horizontal plane that provides a roof for the carport. The entrance is flanked by native stone walls built by second-generation Italian master mason John F Gallerano.

Common character-defining features of these homes include: Post-and-beam construction; expansive floor to ceiling windows with clerestories; the absence of moldings or trim around windows and doors; a breezeway that connects the carport to main house; open floor plans; three-quarter high wall partitions; fiberglass or iron screens and walls with decorative cutouts; idiosyncratic rooflines including flat, gabled, slanted, or butterfly-shaped; exposed beams with tongue-and-groove wood ceilings; exteriors finished with board and batten wood siding, patterned brick or decorative concrete block or native stone.

Context: “The neighborhood now known as ‘Twin Palms’ (also called, variously, Smoke Tree Valley Estates, El Camino Estates and Royal Desert Estates) was the first residential subdivision built by the Alexander Construction Company in Palm Springs. Constructed between 1957 and 1958, the 90-home tract was completed in three phases. Situated in the then less fashionable south end of the city, the homes were elegant and efficient. Two slightly different configurations, designs “A” and “B,” were offered. The subject property, Model “2A” features a front door facing the street with the carport aligned with the face of the house... Sited on 10,000 square foot lots and assembled on 40' by 40' concrete pads, the homes were relatively spacious for second homes... Services were located in the center of the home creating a linear core, punctuated by an atrium off the master bath. The extremely well-built homes were priced at around \$30,000. Each home came with two palm trees in the front yard — thus the name. The structural system of the home was simple post and beam construction which resulted in non-load bearing walls. Great design flexibility was achieved through this system that provided the opportunity for walls of glass. Also aiding design flexibility was the placement of HVAC ducting underneath the concrete pad. This arrangement eliminated unsightly soffits and allowed for dramatic ceiling heights throughout the houses.

“To mitigate the appearance of similar or identical elevations, the architects designed alternate rooflines including flat, butterfly (short and long) and gabled. Despite the use of identical floor plans - variations included plans that were flipped and/or rotated 90-degrees to ensure that no two identical configurations were located closely to one another. While a wide spectrum of exterior facade materials were used - concrete block, stone, stucco, conwood panels and wood board and batten siding - the result was a custom look for each of these homes. The project garnered national attention for both the architects and the Alexanders.”¹

This is the second home to be nominated as a Class 1 site from the Twin Palms sub-division. The Menrad Residence located at 1070 Apache (HSPB # 74) was designated a Class 1 site in 2009.

¹ Harlan, James, *The Alexanders, a Desert Legacy*. Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, Palm Springs: 2011
Continuation Sheet – Text 1

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE NOMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet

Statement of Significance: The subject property meets architectural criteria 3, 4 and 5 to qualify as a Class 1 site because it exemplifies the Midcentury Modern architectural style and period of local history; embodies the distinctive characteristics of that type, period, and method of construction; represents the work of Master architects Palmer & Krisel, AIA, and possesses high artistic values.

Palm Springs is known internationally for its significant concentration of Midcentury modern residential and commercial construction. In fact, it is safe to say that no American city is more closely identified with this particular period of American architecture; the city truly exemplifies this period of national State and local history. *As such, the building qualifies for listing as a Class 1 site under Criterion 3.*

Additionally, the building embodies the distinctive characteristics of the type, period, and methods of mass residential development construction. The building's distinctive characteristics, physical features and traits include resort-style living featuring post-and-beam construction that featured large expanses of glass; exterior spaces were fully developed to stimulate the year-round use of outdoor amenities such as patios spas and swimming pools. Eligibility under these criteria requires that a property contain enough of these characteristics to be considered a true representative of its particular type, period, and method of construction. The subject property could easily serve as a model for the type with all of the characteristics, as expressed in terms such as form, proportion, structure, plan, style, materials and architectural details. The building serves in general as a reference to ideas of design and construction, basic plan and form, as well as in the specific, for the precise ways it combines the particular materials found in this property and in variations throughout the neighboring development.

The way in which the defining characteristics of this property are related by style, choice and availability of the materials and technology utilized in its construction is emphasized because it is a perfectly restored example of its type and period of construction. The subject property becomes an important example within the context of the building practices of the 1950s. The house and the development represent an important phase of the development of Palm Springs and influenced the development of later subdivisions. *For these reasons the building qualifies for listing as a Class 1 site under Criterion 4.*

To understand how Palmer & Krisel merit the honor of being called "master architects" it is necessary to understand their background and careers. The following biographies of both Palmer and Krisel were drawn from the *Los Angeles Times* obituary for Dan Saxon Palmer dated January 29, 2007 by Claire Noland and the William Krisel archive at the Getty Museum.

Dan Saxon Palmer (1920 – 2007) was born in Budapest, Hungary. Two years later he moved with his parents to New York, where his father operated a Hungarian import business and his mother was a dress designer. After earning a bachelor's degree in architecture from New York University in 1942, Palmer served in the Army Corps of Engineers during World War II as a mapmaker, draftsman and photographer in England and France. After the war, he apprenticed in the offices of architects Morris Lapidus in New York and Victor Gruen in Los Angeles.

William Krisel (1924– present) was born and raised in Shanghai, China to American parents until the family relocated to Beverly Hills in 1937. Krisel developed an early interest in architecture which he attributes to his father's correspondence with Rancho Santa Fe architect Lillian Rice, who designed a home for the family in California. He enrolled at the University of Southern California (USC) as an architecture student in 1941, but his studies were interrupted by the onset of World War II. He served for three years as a Chinese interpreter before returning to USC. As a student, Krisel apprenticed at the offices of Paul Laszlo and Victor Gruen. He graduated in 1949 and obtained his license in 1950, the same year he formalized his partnership with architect Dan Saxon

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE NOMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet

Palmer whom he had met when they both worked in Gruen's office. Krisel would go on to earn his license as a landscape architect in 1954.

"The firm, Palmer & Krisel, AIA, Architects (including for a brief period a third partner, John Lindsay) focused its early attention on custom homes in Bel Air and Brentwood, where they experimented with the modular post-and-beam system that they would later employ in their tract houses. In 1952, Palmer and Krisel completed their first tract development, consisting of ten houses in the San Fernando Valley. The attention the firm gained from builders for this modest project led to a new collaboration with the family-owned Alexander Construction Company, which commenced with the Corbin Palms development in 1953.

"Over the next decade, Palmer and Krisel expanded their practice to meet the needs of the booming housing industry by offering a complete array of services to clients and builders. Their work came to be characterized by unique siting, minimal ornamentation, butterfly roofs, and large glass windows, all of which reflected ongoing popular interest in casual indoor-outdoor living. The standardized designs of these single-family tract homes made them both easy to construct and accessible to first-time homebuyers. The residential projects reveal Krisel's interest in experimenting with construction methods, building materials, and layout patterns, as well as his consideration of lifestyle changes after World War II. Krisel's work with Palmer represented the mass replication of the ideals and aesthetic of the program, moving beyond prototype to meet the large-scale needs of the postwar housing boom. Over the next decade, the pair would design approximately 20,000 units of housing in Southern California.

"Looking to broaden their market, the Alexanders turned to the Coachella Valley as a site of recreational development. In order to bring visitors to Palm Springs and the surrounding area, they commissioned a destination resort in 1954, which Palmer and Krisel designed on a ten-acre site. The Ocotillo Lodge was completed in 1957 and featured a striking modern design juxtaposed against the warm desert landscape. Additional Alexander tracts in the vicinity of the resort made the ownership of second residences outside of Los Angeles, including condominiums and single family houses, popular among members of the middle class. These projects include Twin Palm Estates, Racquet Club Road Estates, and the Sandpiper Condominiums. The homes were notable for their textured landscaping, concrete block walls, extensive glass walls featuring desert views, and swimming pools, emphasizing an elegant, but relaxed lifestyle."²

Palmer and Krisel ended their partnership in 1964, but it is the firm's work through that year that is relevant to this nomination. The firm's principals Dan Palmer and William Krisel qualify as master architects because they are figures of generally recognized greatness in their profession as exemplified by the subject property. It expresses the distinctly Mid-century modernist phase in the development of their careers, a theme for which they continue to be known. As an example and prototype, the subject property possesses high artistic values as expressed in both architectural and community design and planning. It is eligible for its high artistic values because it fully articulates the aesthetic ideal of a Midcentury modern vacation home more fully than many other properties of its type. *For these reasons the building qualifies for listing as a Class 1 site under Criterion 5.*

² The biographical information about William Krisel is paraphrased from information found in the Krisel Archive at the Getty Museum.

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE NOMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet

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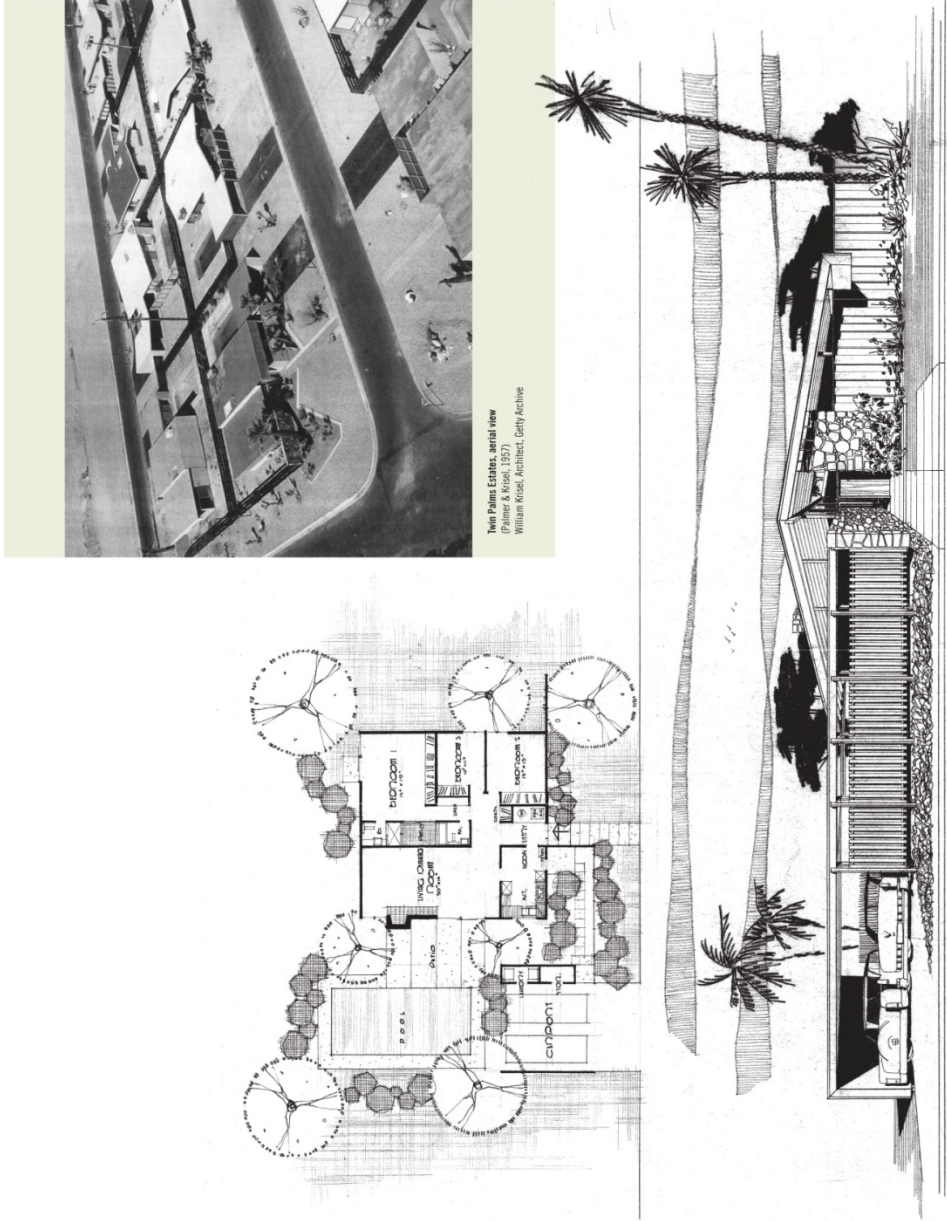
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PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE NOMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet



Twin Palms Estates, aerial view
(Palmer & Kroski, 1957)
William Kroski, Architect, Getty Archive

Twin Palms Estates, model #2
(Palmer & Kroski, 1957)
William Kroski, Architect, Getty Archive

1 Plan, Model and Rendering of the subject property. Source: *The Alexanders: A Desert Legacy*

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE NOMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet



2 3/4 View showing south and east facades.

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE NOMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet



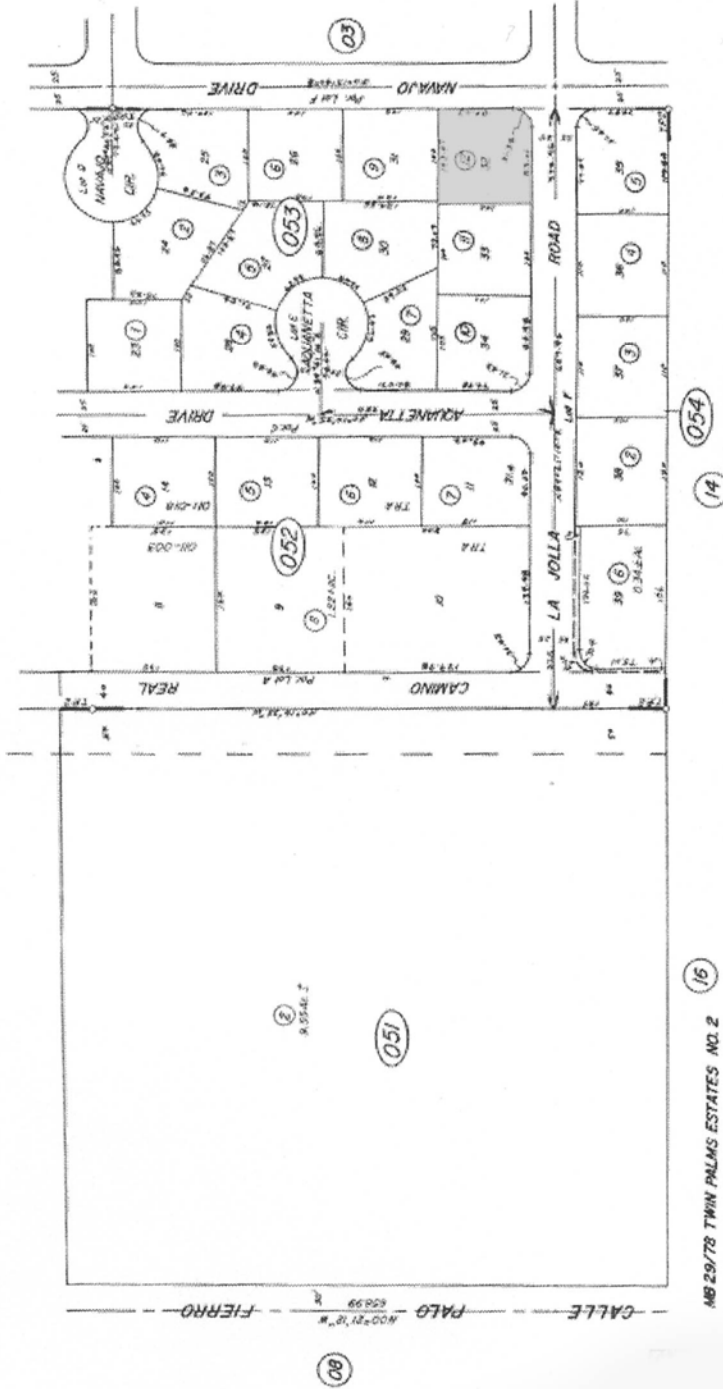
3 Rear Elevation

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE NOMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet

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ASSESSOR'S MAP BK. 51, PG. 65
RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIF. 1969

APRIL 1969

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE NOMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet



Palm Springs Life, February 2008: "Who would have thought with today's skyrocketing prices for Alexander houses that there was ever a time when developers would need to rely on a free 'Jolly' ride to see the future icons of the desert? The construction of George and Robert Alexander's homes doubled the size of Palm Springs and allowed the city to take a new direction as a focus of modernist architecture."