



Historic Site Preservation Board Staff Report

DATE: June 9, 2014

PUBLIC HEARING

SUBJECT: AN APPLICATION BY KEVIN MILLER & JIN SUK PARK (OWNERS) IN COLLABORATION WITH THE PALM SPRINGS PRESERVATION FOUNDATION, REQUESTING CLASS 1 HISTORIC DESIGNATION FOR "THE VILLAGE MANOR" (CURRENTLY "THE ORBIT IN") LOCATED AT 562 WEST ARENAS ROAD (APN #513-120-026-4), ZONE R-2 (HSPB #95)

FROM: Department of Planning Services

SUMMARY

The Village Manor Apartments were designed by Herbert Burns and constructed in 1956 in what has become known as the "Desert Modern" architectural style. Burns was an architectural designer with many commissions in Palm Springs in the late forties and fifties. He and his wife were also very active in the civic and social affairs of the community. Current owners have requested Class 1 historic designation. Such status 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:

1. Open the public hearing and receive public testimony.
2. Close the public hearing and adopt resolution HSPB #95; "A RESOLUTION OF THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE CLASS 1 HISTORIC STATUS FOR 562 WEST ARENAS ROAD "THE VILLAGE MANOR."

Related Relevant City Actions by HSPB, Planning, Fire, Building, etc...

June, 2015

Site inspection by members of the HSPB and City Staff.

<i>Neighborhood Meeting</i>	
None	

<i>Ownership Status</i>	
2007	Purchase by current owner.

BACKGROUND AND SETTING

Historic Preservation activities in Palm Springs are regulated under Municipal Code Section 8.05 ("*Historic Preservation*"). The purpose of the Historic Preservation Ordinance is:

"... for the purpose of preserving areas and specific buildings of the city which reflect elements of its cultural, social, economic, political, architectural and archaeological history. This chapter is intended to stabilize and improve buildings, structures or areas which are considered to be of historical, architectural, archaeological or ecological value, to foster civic beauty, to strengthen the local economy and to promote the use of specific buildings for the education and welfare of the citizens."

Definition of an Historic Site.

Section 8.05.020 of the Municipal Code provides the definition of a historic site as follows. Staff has evaluated the site against this definition and provided discussion below on each item as it relates to this specific site. From the analysis below, staff believes the Village Manor Apartments meet the definition of a historic site based upon Criterion 3 and Criterion 5.

(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:

The Village Manor Apartments (VMA) is significant because of its design, setting, and aesthetic effect, as characterized further in this staff report.

Criterion 1: That is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community; or

Contrary to the historic resources report, staff does not believe the site is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the national state or local community.

Criterion 2: That is associated with lives of persons who made meaningful contribution to national, state or local history; or

Although Herbert Burns was a “civic-minded” and socially active resident of Palm Springs from 1946 until his death around 1988 as discussed in more detail below, staff does not believe these activities constitute “a meaningful contribution”.

Criterion 3: That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history; or

The VMA possesses many of the distinctive characteristics, detailing, and styling of the post-war period of development of resort-based architecture in Palm Springs, when local developers, hoteliers, homeowners and merchants embraced the simple bold, clean lines of the Modern period of architecture, adapted to the intense desert climate. The VMA emphasized leisure and outdoor enjoyment, capitalizing on the views and vistas of the nearby mountains, and simple, but stylish architectural detailing that have become “trademarks” of the Palm Springs Mid-century Modern period.

Criterion 4: That embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction;

The architecture and design of the Village Manor Apartments is representative of the “Mid-century Modern” or “Desert Modern” style. However its method of construction – which appears to be of conventional frame and stucco construction - is not unusual or distinctive.

Criterion 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;

The VMA is easily identified example of the work of Herbert Burns, an architectural designer whose work possesses high artistic value. The Village Manor incorporates many of Burns’ “trademark” design elements such as the “double cantilevered eave”, thin ledgestone planters and piers, wide eaves and overhangs; all elements that produce a strong horizontal presence found in many of his local commissions. His effective use of “bris-soliel” to control the intense desert sun as well as the broad cantilevered eaves reflect a respect and understanding of the harsh desert climate in which his designs were placed.

Criterion 7: That represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;

Staff does not believe the subject property meets this condition.

Criterion 8: That has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to national, state or local history or prehistory.

Staff is unaware of any archaeological or pre-historical relevancy to this site.

Designation of Historic Sites.

Only the City Council is authorized to designate historic sites. When the Historic Site Preservation Board determines that Class 1 historic designation of a certain site or district would further the purpose of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Board may initiate studies, surveys and investigations it deems necessary to adequately gather information in consideration of such a recommendation to the City Council.

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 marker explaining the historic nature of the site will be installed at the site in a location viewable from the public way.
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

A fairly concise description of the site is provided in the Historic Resources Report dated February 2015 which was provided to HSPB members at their May 2015 meeting.

The subject property is currently configured as an eight-unit apartment / hotel building located on an approximately 14,250 square foot lot in the Tennis Club Neighborhood at the northeast corner of Arenas Road and San Jacinto Road. The building, which was originally constructed using conventional wood framing clad in sand finish stucco, had five guest apartments and an owners unit in a "U"-shaped configuration around an outdoor swimming pool and courtyard.¹ The building is a single story, flat-roofed structure with a thin roof fascia. It is clad in sand finished stucco with generous eaves and overhangs, planters and accent piers of Arizona sandstone, and bris-soliel sunscreens.

In 2000, an addition that provided a poolside bar, shade structure and storage was built. This addition, designed by Lance O'Donnell of O2 Architects, is located generally in the southwest portion of the site. It is constructed of ground-face concrete block in a stack bond pattern with a low flat roof profile and exposed steel structural framing. Mechanical units were added to the roof of the existing structure that are concealed

¹ The Village Manor Apartments was constructed as a five-unit apartment building. At some later date, it appears units were further subdivided and presently the City recognizes eight rental units and one manager's unit.

from view by horizontally-ribbed galvanized steel panels.



AERIAL VIEW OF 562 WEST ARENAS ROAD "VILLAGE MANOR APARTMENTS"



STREET ELEVATION OF VILLAGE MANOR (A.I.A. "ORBIT IN"). THE 2000 ADDITION IS AT THE LEFT

The building has a strong horizontal feel that is further emphasized with Burns' "signature" "thin, second cantilevered eave" placed just below the eave and overhang of

the roof, seen below in the front façade. (The photo above also shows the horizontal sandstone planter and accent panel which is balanced and offset by the vertical wood boards forming the bris-soliel.)

The historic resources report notes that most of the building permit records for the VMA no longer exist in the City Building Department records.

The building was designed by Herbert Burns. Although little biographical information is available about Burns, he is credited for having designed numerous hotels, residences and other commercial buildings in Palm Springs in the late 40's and 50's. The historic resources report notes that Burns was not a licensed architect, but the stylish and comfortable hotels and other buildings in Palm Springs whose designs are credited to Burns attest to his design competency.

Herbert Burns (1897 – 1988) arrived in Palm Springs with his wife Gayle in 1946, having completed a term of service in the Army Air Corps. He was a building designer in Los Angeles at the time. The Burns were active in civic and social life in Palm Springs, Herbert served on the Chamber of Commerce Board, the Palm Springs Hotel and Apartment Association and made an unsuccessful run for mayor in 1950.

DEFINING HISTORIC CHARACTERISTICS

The physical character-defining historic features of the Village Manor Apartments include the following:

1. Strong horizontality in its design, emphasized by the low, flat horizontal roof line and thin roof fascia.
2. The thin ledgestone/standstone planters and vertical "piers".
3. The "second fascia and eave" cantilevered and placed below the cantilevered eave of the roof, further accentuating the horizontal lines of the building.
4. The "bris-soliel" sun screens.

Non-contributing elements at the site:

1. The poolside bar/shade structure and associated elements constructed in 2000.
2. The roof-mounted corrugated metal screen walls concealing mechanical equipment installed as part of the 2000 addition.

REQUIRED FINDINGS

In considering a recommendation for Class 1 historic designation, pursuant to Municipal Code Section 8.05.160, the Board and the City Council shall find that the purposes of the Historic Preservation chapter are furthered by designation of such property as a historic site or district. The purpose of the Historic Preservation chapter of the Municipal Code is outlined in PSMC 8.05.010:

This chapter is adopted pursuant to the authority of (California) Government Code Section 37361 for the purpose of preserving areas and

specific buildings of the city which reflect elements of its cultural, social, economic, political, architectural and archaeological history. This chapter is intended to stabilize and improve buildings, structures or areas which are considered to be of historical, architectural, archaeological or ecological value, to foster civic beauty, to strengthen the local economy and to promote the use of specific buildings for the education and welfare of the citizens. (Ord. 140 §

Class 1 designation of the Village Manor Apartments would further the purpose of the historic preservation ordinance because it reflects elements of the City's architectural, social, and cultural history as follows:

Criterion 3: It reflects the Modern period in architecture and design that was popular in the post-war period in Palm Springs and the elsewhere in the nation.

Criterion 5: It presents the work of Herbert Burns, a local architectural designer whose work possesses high artistic value.

CONCLUSION

The Village Manor Apartments meets the definition of a historic site as outlined in the Municipal Code in several ways. The designation of the Village Manor Apartments as a Class 1 historic site will further the purpose of the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

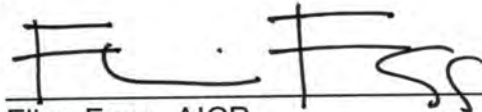
In accordance with Section 15331 (Historical Resources Restoration/Rehabilitation) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed designation is categorically exempt from environmental review as the proposed designation meets the conditions outlined for preservation of a historic resource (Class 31 Categorical Exemption).

NOTIFICATION

Pursuant to section 8.05.140 of the Municipal Code of Palm Springs, All property owners within five hundred (500) 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.



Ken Lyon, RA,
Associate Planner



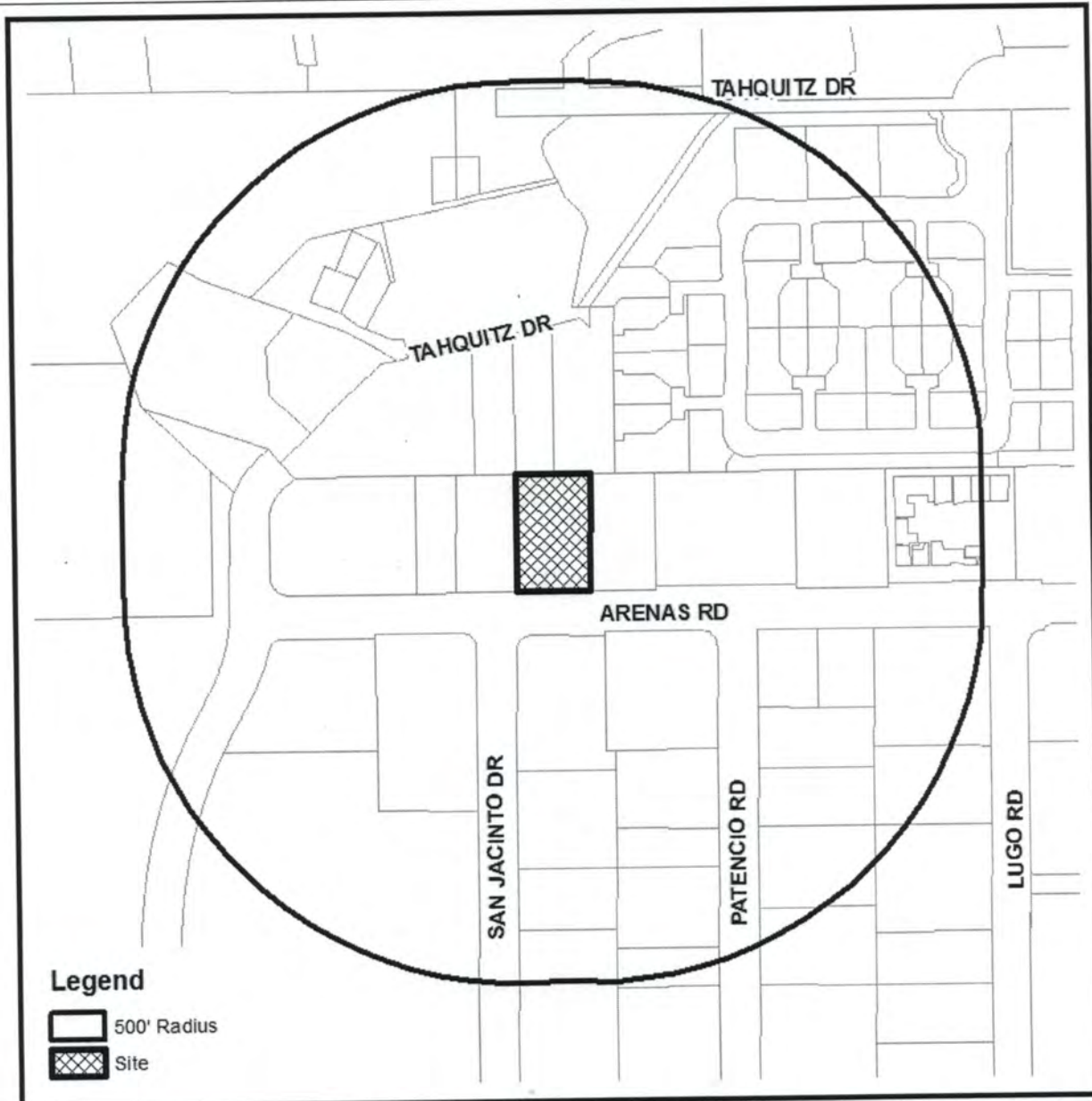
Flinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services

Attachments:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Draft Resolution
3. Historic Resources Survey, Application, letter of support from the owner, and related documents.



Department of Planning Services Vicinity Map



Legend

- 500' Radius
- Site

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

RESOLUTION NO. HSPB 95

A RESOLUTION OF THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL DESIGNATE THE PARCEL AT 562 WEST ARENAS ROAD, (APN #513-120-026-4), "THE VILLAGE MANOR APARTMENTS" A CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE #HSPB 95, (ZONE R-2)

THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD FINDS AND DETERMINES AS FOLLOWS:

A. Kevin Miller & Jin Suk Park, ("Applicant and owner") in collaboration with the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation (PSPF) have filed an application with the City pursuant to Article III of Section 8.05 ("*Procedure for Designation of Historic Sites or Historic Districts*") of the Palm Springs Municipal Code requesting Class 1 historic site designation for the parcel located at 562 West Arenas Road (APN #513-120-026-4).

B. On Jun 2, 2015, members of the Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) and city staff conducted site inspections to familiarize themselves with the subject site.

C. On June 9, 2015, a noticed public hearing to consider Case HSPB 95 was held by the HSPB in accordance with applicable law.

D. The proposed historic site designation is considered a "project" pursuant to the terms of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), and has been determined to be Categorically Exempt as a Class 31 exemption ("*historic resources restoration / rehabilitation*") pursuant to Section 15331 of the CEQA Guidelines.

E. The HSPB carefully reviewed and considered all of the evidence presented in connection with the hearing on the project, including, but not limited to, the staff report, and all written and oral testimony presented.

F. The subject parcel is eligible for consideration as a historic site because it conforms to the following criteria established in Palm Springs Municipal Code (PSMC) Section 8.05.020 ("*Definitions*") for the definition of a historic site:

(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:

The Village Manor Apartments (VMA) is significant because of its design, setting, and aesthetic effect and meets the definition of a historic site based on the following criterion:

Criterion 3: That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history; or

The VMA possesses many of the distinctive characteristics, detailing, and styling of the post-war period of development of resort-based architecture in Palm Springs, when local developers, hoteliers, homeowners and merchants embraced the simple bold, clean lines of the Modern period of architecture, adapted to the intense desert climate. The VMA emphasized leisure and outdoor enjoyment, capitalizing on the views and vistas of the nearby mountains, and simple, but stylish architectural detailing that have become “trademarks” of the Palm Springs Mid-century Modern period.

Criterion 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;

The VMA is easily identified example of the work of Herbert Burns, an architectural designer whose work possesses high artistic value. The Village Manor incorporates many of Burns’ “trademark” design elements such as the “double cantilevered eave”, thin ledgestone planters and piers, wide eaves and overhangs; all elements that produce a strong horizontal presence found in many of his local commissions. His effective use of “bris-soliel” to control the intense desert sun as well as the broad cantilevered eaves reflect a respect and understanding of the harsh desert climate in which his designs were placed.

G. FINDINGS. Pursuant to PSMC 8.05.160 (“*Findings and Decisions – Resolution*”), the HSPB and City Council must make findings in support of the historic site designation as follows:

“If the city council shall find that the purposes of this chapter are furthered by designation of property as an historic site or district, such findings shall be stated in a resolution designating such property within such historic site or district.”

The purpose of the Historic Preservation Chapter of the Palm Springs Municipal Code is outlined in PSMC Section 8.05.010 as follows:

“This chapter is adopted pursuant to the authority of Government Code Section 37361 for the purpose of preserving areas and specific buildings of the city which reflect elements of its cultural, social, economic, political, architectural and archaeological history. This chapter is intended to stabilize and improve buildings, structures or areas which are considered to be of historical, architectural, archaeological or ecological value, to foster civic beauty, to strengthen the local economy and to promote the use of specific buildings for the education and welfare of the citizens.”

Class 1 historic site designation of the Village Manor would further the purpose of the historic preservation ordinance because it reflects elements of the City’s architectural, social, and cultural history as follows:

Criterion 3: It reflects the Modern period in architecture and design that was popular in the post-war period in Palm Springs and the elsewhere in the nation.

Criterion 5: It presents the work of Herbert Burns, a local architectural designer whose work possesses high artistic value.

H. DEFINING HISTORIC CHARACTERISTICS:

The physical character-defining historic features of the Village Manor Apartments include the following:

1. Strong horizontality in its design, emphasized by the low, flat horizontal roof line and thin fascia.
2. The thin ledgestone/standstone planters and vertical “piers”.
3. The “second fascia and eave” cantilevered and placed below the cantilevered eave of the roof, further accentuating the horizontal lines of the building.
4. The “bris-soliel” sun screens.

Non-contributing elements at the site:

1. The poolside bar/shade structure and associated elements constructed in 2000.
2. The roof-mounted corrugated metal screen walls concealing mechanical equipment installed as part of the 2000 addition.

THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD RESOLVES:

Based upon the foregoing, the HSPB hereby recommends that the City Council designate the parcel at 562 West Arenas Road “The Village Manor Apartments” (APN #513-120-026-4), Class 1 Historic Site #HSPB 95.

ADOPTED this ninth day of June, 2015.

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

ATTEST:

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

Flinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SERVICES

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 12, 2015
To: The Historic Site Preservation Board
From: Ken Lyon, RA, Associate Planner 
Subject: Case HSPB #95 – Class 1 application for the Village Manor (Orbit In)

Please find attached the historic resource report for the subject application. Staff will be making arrangements for HSPB members to visit the site in the coming weeks. It is recommended that the Board continue this item to a date certain of June 9, 2015 for consideration of the application at a noticed public hearing.

Orbit In Hotel

Village Manor, 1955

Herbert W. Burns, designer/builder

562 West Arenas Road
Palm Springs, CA 92262

**Nomination Application
for City of Palm Springs Class 1 Historic Site**

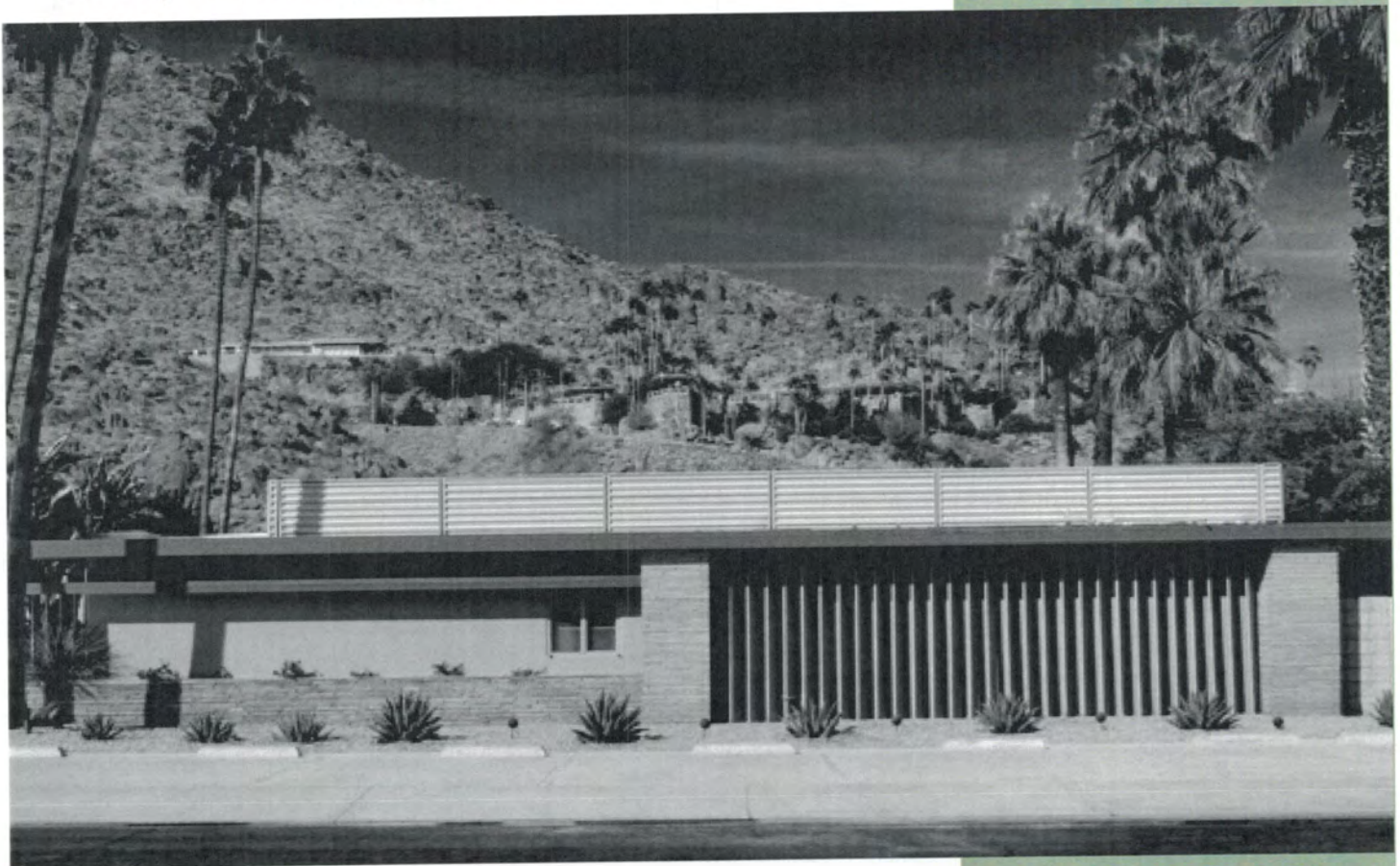


Photo by Dan Chavkin

Prepared by Jade Thomas Nelson
with assistance from Ron and Barbara Marshall
on behalf of Kevin Miller and Jin Park, Orbit In Hotel

February 2015

RECEIVED
APR 01 2015
PLANNING SERVICES
DEPARTMENT

HSPB 95



Village Manor Room Key Fob

Acknowledgements

*To thank the following for their valuable assistance
and supporting documentation:*

**Palm Springs Preservation Foundation
Palm Springs Historical Society
Ron and Barbara Marshall
Lance O'Donnell, AIA
City of Palm Springs
Patrick McGrew
Christy Eugenis
Jeri Vogelsang
Dan Chavkin
Kevin Miller
Gary Johns**



Village Manor prior to restoration
(Photo courtesy Christy Eugenis)

Orbit In Hotel (Village Manor)

CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE NOMINATION

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INTRODUCTION

About the authors:

Jade Thomas Nelson is a Palm Springs native. From 2003-2013 he served in a managerial capacity at the Orbit In Hotel and was instrumental in its public relations. He is former vice-chair of the Palm Springs Historic Site Preservation Board during which time he oversaw the update and expansion of the guide to Class One Historic Sites sponsored by the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation. Nelson is an active volunteer for Palm Springs Modernism Week and an avid supporter of architectural and historical preservation.

Ron and Barbara Marshall are board members of The Palm Springs Preservation Foundation (PSPF), a non-profit organization whose mission is "to educate and promote public awareness of the importance of preserving the historical resources and architecture of the city of Palm Springs and the Coachella Valley area." Their ongoing volunteer efforts have provided a turning point for the success of preservation in the city.



Village Manor exterior after restoration
(Courtesy Orbit In Hotel)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SIGNIFICANCE: The Orbit In Hotel was designed by “architectural designer” Herbert W. Burns in 1955. As an important and largely intact example of a commercial desert modernist hotel structure, the building exhibits numerous stylistic markers that place it in the historic context of Palm Springs’ mid-century modern period.

DESIGNATION CRITERIA: The Orbit In Hotel has not previously been evaluated for Class 1 Historic Site eligibility. However, the Orbit In Hotel (catalogued as “Orbit In’s Oasis”) appears in the Master List of the 2004 Palm Springs Citywide Historic Resources Survey. Furthermore, a “sister” property, “The Town & Desert Apartments,” also by Herbert W. Burns was designated a Class 1 Historic Site in 2014, the first Burns building in Palm Springs to be recognized as such.

A brief summary of the evaluation contained in this nomination is as follows:

8.05.020 (a) paragraph 1 - **Events:** This criterion recognizes properties associated with events or patterns of events or historic trends. In this nomination, the applicable “pattern of events” is the gradual rise of Palm Springs’ prominence in midcentury architectural excellence and its role in the birth of American roadside motor-court lodging. The Orbit In Hotel complex is an outstanding surviving example of multi-unit design and the construction of buildings within the context of midcentury desert modernism. The nominated commercial complex is associated with this pattern of events for its ability to exemplify the modern period of the national, state and local history. *The Orbit In Hotel is associated with this pattern of events, and is associated as well with Criterion 3 for its ability to exemplify a particular period of the national, state or local history. Therefore, the Orbit In Hotel qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criterion 1.*

8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 3, 4 & 5 - **Design/Construction:** The Orbit In Hotel is eligible under the theme of Modern architecture because it possesses numerous distinctive characteristics that make up the modernist style, including linear design, stacked stone, expansive amounts of glass, use of natural materials, etc. Additionally, the work of architectural designer Herbert Burns must be catalogued as the work of a “Master” builder because of his record of architectural excellence. Therefore, for its distinctive characteristics, as the work of a Master, and for its high artistic values, the Orbit In Hotel qualifies as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criteria 3, 4 & 5.

SUMMARY: This evaluation finds the Orbit In Hotel eligible for listing as a Palm Springs Historic Site under 8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 1, 3, 4 & 5 of the local ordinance’s seven criteria. Additionally, the Orbit In Hotel retains a very high degree of architectural integrity.

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

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@palmsspringsca.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 designations, 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: Village Manor
Other names: Orbit In Hotel
Address: 562 West Arenas Road, Palm Springs, CA 92262
Assessor Parcel Number: 513120026-4
Owner's Name(s): Kevin Miller and Jin Suk Park (as Orbit In LLC)
Owner's Address: 562 West Arenas Road
City: Palm Springs State: CA
Zip: 92262
Telephone: (310) 415-0511
Fax number: N/A
E-mail address: kevin@venblue.com

2. Classifications

Ownership of Property. Fill as many boxes as apply.

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

Category of Property. Fill only one box.

- Building (Note: can include site)
- District
- Site (Exclusive of Structures)
- Structure
- Object

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

Contributing	Non-contributing	
1		Buildings
		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
<hr/>		
1		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: Apartments/Hotel

Current Use or Function: Hotel

4. Description

Architect: Herbert W. Burns (architectural designer)

Construction Date and Source: 1955 (building permit)

Architectural Classification: International Style - Desert Regional Variation

Construction Materials:

Foundation: Concrete slab on grade

Roof: Composition

Walls: Frame wood construction covered with stucco and flagstone pavers.
Freestanding concrete block.

Building Description: *Attach a description of the Building/Site/District, including all character defining features, on one or more additional sheets. (See pages 17-20)*

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

Events

- (1) Fill this box if the property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

Persons

- (2) Fill this box if the property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

Architecture

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

Archeology

- (7) Fill this box if the property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Other Criteria Considerations (Check all the boxes that apply.)

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

6. Statement of Significance

Summary

Village Manor, originally described as "Palm Springs' finest studio apartments," was designed by Palm Springs architectural designer Herbert W. Burns in 1955. The public opening (mid 1956) of the complex was well-received thanks in large part to the success and reputation of Burns' comparable lodging nearby, including The Town and Desert Apartments which garnered national attention when published in the May 1948 issue of *Architectural Record* in an article entitled "California Hide-Away, Motel Style." Burns' architectural designs also appeared in *Motels*, a 1955 Time-Life hardcover book by George Baker and Bruno Funaro, in an entry entitled "Rental Units Share Owner's Garden."

The Architectural Designer

Although not licensed as an "architect," architectural designer/builder Herbert W. Burns (1897-1988) is an important figure in the history of Palm Springs' "built environment." Because he designed at least a dozen commercial and over two dozen residential or private buildings (including the homes of actress Joan Davis and the town pharmacist Merrill Crockett) in the Coachella Valley, many residents and visitors have directly experienced Palm Springs' modernist architecture through his striking buildings. In a 1968 oral history taken by researcher Rush Hughes, Mrs. Gayle Burns stated that she and Herbert "first came to Palm Springs in 1946." She also states that before arriving in Palm Springs, Herbert W. Burns was "a major in the [Army] Air Corps" and "a building designer in Los Angeles."

This is a snippet of a 1940 U.S. Census form, likely from Ancestry.com. It shows two rows of data for individuals. The first row lists "Herbert W. Burns" and the second row lists "Gayle R. Burns". The columns contain personal information such as name, date of birth, sex, and marital status. The names are handwritten in ink.

Excerpt from 1940 U.S. Census taken May 3rd, 1940 in Los Angeles, CA
(Ancestry.com)



(Newspapers.com)

Though general biographical information about Herbert W. Burns is scarce (see "Research Note" at the end of this section), not only was he an accomplished architectural designer/builder who garnered many commissions, he and his wife Gayle were also popular innkeepers who were very civic-minded. Additionally, they were prominent in the city's social scene and, as such, their names appear frequently in local magazines (*The Villager*, *Palm Springs Life*), phone directories (*Personages*) and *The Desert Sun* newspaper. Therefore, from the many tidbits of news we know that Herbert W. Burns was; on the Board of Directors of the Palm Springs Chamber of Commerce (July-August 1948 issue of *Palm Springs Villager*); ran unsuccessfully for Palm Springs City Council in the 1950 election just 24 votes short of beating incumbent Thomas Kielely (May-June 1950 issue of *Palm Springs Villager*); and was elected President of the Palm Springs Hotel and Apartment Association (June 1951 issue of *Palm Springs Villager*).



THEY MAKE IT PLEASANT — Earl O'Day Press Service

On the stairs at Villa Hermosa following the election meeting of officers (top to bottom): Maynard Mead, Wayside Inn; Herbert Burns (president), Town and Desert; Edward Davidson, Rossmore Hotel; Arthur Meyer, Villa Hermosa; Adele Colgan, Chuckwalla Manor; Si Slocum, Lone Palm; Kay Cordrey, The Colony; Jack Schulman, Acacia Lodge; Edna Keefe, Casa Palmeras; Bill Foldesy, Palm Springs Hotel; John Miller, Monte Vista Apartments. Hidden by Miss Keefe is Keith Herbert of Cases del Sol. In front are Legal Counsellor Saul Ruskin (left) and Ed Zirinsky of Sunny Sands.

(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)



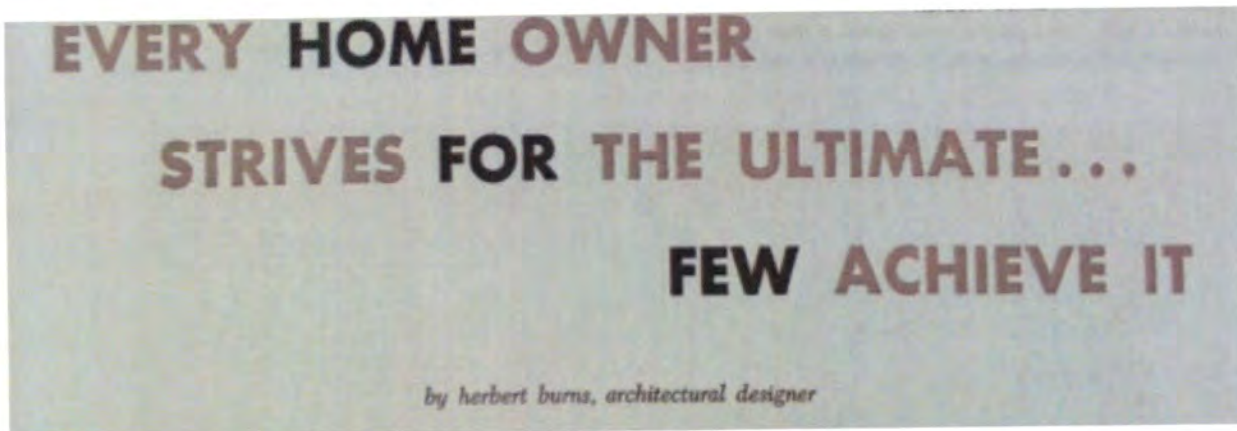
**Architectural Designer Herbert W. Burns at his drafting table
June-July 1960 issue of *Palm Springs Life* magazine**

(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)

Greg Hough, president of *Palm Springs Historical Society*, worked after school and during summers for Burns and his wife to help maintain their properties. He recalls Burns as a humble and modest man but also as a convivial “jack-of-all trades” who enjoyed flying and using his two-way radio when he wasn’t doing some home-improvement project or community activity in his spare time. This aligns with the candid portrayal of Burns (often seen wearing a Hawaiian shirt) in many society columns and articles in *Palm Springs Villager* over the years.

Despite the lack of general biographical information about Burns, researchers are fortunate that he authored a six-page article entitled, “Every Home Owner Strives for the Ultimate...Few Achieve It,” in the June-July 1960 issue of *Palm Springs Villager*. In the well-illustrated article, Burns expounded on “finding the ideal home,” to wit:

“If you are completely satisfied with your home, you are in the upper five percent of the average homeowner group. Basically dissatisfaction is the result of insufficient thought and research on the part of the owner and his planner and their failure to anticipate the future activities of the owner’s family.”



Title from Page 7 of June-July 1960 Palm Springs Villager
(Courtesy private collection)

Most notably, the article does not dwell on philosophical matters and Burns' "principles" are steeped in practical considerations that give us insight into the mind of an architectural designer acutely aware of the more concrete needs of the average homeowner. Burns seemed so confident of the practicality of his "solutions" that he even provides a notional floor plan intended to maximize livability, efficient traffic flow and the interaction of "conversational groups." In the article, Burns touches on color, furniture placement, air-conditioning, Hi-Fi placement, kitchen design, ceiling heights (and hallway widths), landscaping, etc., yet finally, and rather sentimentally, concludes with:

"Do not build a house to impress your friends and neighbors nor to show off your success. Such a house is a vulgar display of money. Build a house that is a home -- be it ever so humble. A house is made of stone and earth but a home is built of love, understanding, loyalty and tolerance. A home is a haven, a place to share joys and sorrows, to feel safe and secure. It is the only place you can be completely relaxed and where you can run the full gamut of your emotions..."

Live in your home. Enjoy it."



Certainly one of the more important, but mostly forgotten, residential commissions that Herbert W. Burns received was a "spec" house (i.e., "a residence built without a particular buyer in mind or under contract, but designed to appeal to the maximum market possible") built by Palm Springs developer Fay Brainard at 1120 East Alejo Road in 1948 (per Building permit #3392 of February 27, 1948). The Brainard-Robbin

residence is located on a street-to-street lot immediately west of the Frank Sinatra residence built less than a year prior. The house gained some local renown when it was next purchased and expanded by Ed & Bertha Robbin (whose primary residence was a huge ranch of "many thousands of acres" in Reno, Nevada). The Brainard-Robbin Residence was prominently featured in the September 1956 issue of *Palm Springs Villager* magazine in an article entitled "The House of Many Views," by Edith Carlson and featured a photograph of the interior design done by Arthur Elrod. The Burns' design was described as "frame-stucco construction with a trim of Salton Sea rock." (see article below)



The House of Many Views, Palm Springs Villager - September 1956
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)

Placing Burns within the context of his fellow architects and architectural designers, authors Michael Stern and Alan Hess, in *Julius Shulman: Palm Springs*, opined:

"The work of Herbert Burns showed a less austere... approach to Modernism than Frey or Lautner, and...his design's clean lines, strong composition, warm materials, open plans, and response to the climate reflect a clear and moderate Modernism. Burns was a developer who built houses, inns and offices; he owned and ran the small vacation inns he built. Though not trained in design, he had both a strong respect for and a good grasp of Modern architecture.

Vacationers spending a month, or a season, in the desert would rent small efficiency apartments such as Burns' Town and Desert.... Each visitor had their own comfortable private realm, but it was always connected through large window walls

to the semi-public pool area and its social activity, and to the mountain views beyond. Screens of pipe columns or louvers were used to distinguish entries and terraces, or simply as design accents. The openness of the plan allows people to fully enjoy the sunshine and fresh air—the main reasons that Canadians, Midwesterners, or Easterners visited Palm Springs.”

Other noteworthy projects, similar to the Orbit In Hotel (Village Manor), designed by architectural designer Herbert W. Burns include:

- **The Four Hundred**

(400 W. Arenas Rd., a ten-unit complex, and site of Burns' own home - a 1954 design)

- **The Town & Desert**

(370 W. Arenas Rd., a ten-unit "apartment hotel," now the Orbit In's "Hideaway" - a 1947 design)

- **Desert Hills**

(601 W. Arenas Rd., a fourteen-unit complex - a 1955 design)

- **Desert Ho** (historic name)

(120 Vereda Sur, a multi-unit complex now a private facility – a late 1940's design)

- **Desert Riviera**

(610 E. Palm Canyon Dr., an eleven-unit complex – a 1951 design)

[Research Note: Only a single, uncorroborated source identifies a “Herbert W. Burns” who died in Palm Springs on January 27, 1988. From the standpoint of apparent age, this seems consistent with photographs taken of Burns. Oddly, however, there is no obituary of Burns that could be located in *The Desert Sun* or *The Los Angeles Times* newspaper during the month after his (probable) passing on January 27, 1988, or in any newspaper (thus far) for that matter. There is an obituary for Herbert's wife, Gayle, in the *The Desert Sun* newspaper's May 14, 1976 issue. The obituary states that Gayle died on May 7, 1976, leaving Herbert as her widower. Gayle's address in the obituary is 400 West Arenas (where she and Herbert lived as innkeepers for many years after selling the Town & Desert Apartments in 1954, the same year they sold the land for Village Manor). Further, the obituary states that Gayle was interred in Nebraska (where she was born and had a number of surviving relatives). It is possible that because Gayle pre-deceased Herbert, since they were childless and because Burns' career had long since lapsed, Herbert's death may not have been recorded in the local media. To that end, he may also have been interred in his birth state (Pennsylvania). In a 2014 interview, Ms. Joanne Petty (now 81 years old), former owner of the Desert Hills Apartment Hotel at 601 West Arenas, and close (though relatively younger) friend of the Burnses, remembers that “the year 1988 for Herbert's death seems about right.” Ms. Petty commented on the lack of information about Gayle's passing, i.e., “nobody knew she had passed or was even sick.” Ms. Petty also confirmed that the Burnses were indeed childless. It appears that Herbert, though renowned for his sociability and his hospitality as an innkeeper, may have been a very private person in his retirement.]

Local Historical Context

The city of Palm Springs saw a number of buildings erected just after World War II. These were designed by a variety of talented and important architects including Richard Neutra's Kaufmann House (1947), E. Stewart Williams' Frank Sinatra Residence (1947), William Cody's Del Marcos Hotel (1947) and Paul R. Williams' and A. Quincy Jones' Town & Country Center (1948) to name just a few. The buildings of Herbert W. Burns, beginning with The Town & Desert Apartments in 1947 and including many others of his over the following decade, must likewise be recognized as significant examples of the city's modernist architecture designed during this period.

In a 1968 oral history, taken by researcher Rush Hughes, Mrs. Gayle Burns lamented the rarity and high expense of building materials in post-war Palm Springs during the construction of Burns' projects around the city in the late 1940's/early 1950's. One of the hardest to obtain and most expensive of these building materials were nails. During the interview Gayle Burns stated that she managed to procure "25 kegs of nails" from her "brothers in the Midwest." She also remarks that securing this excessive quantity of nails (far more than was needed for the construction of one building) allowed her and Herbert to barter for other essential building materials.



(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)

Whether or not Herbert W. Burns ever gained the esteem or admiration of local licensed architects seems unclear and is certainly a matter for speculation. However, he apparently was afforded some democratic validation in 1958 when his home at "The Four Hundred" (located at 400 West Arenas Road) was featured in what is likely one of the earliest "modernist" home tours in Palm Springs. Sponsored by the Palm Springs Branch of the American Association of University Women, proceeds from the house tour raised college scholarship money for local high school students.

The house tour featured Herbert and Gayle Burns' home; and the family homes of esteemed local architects "Mr. and Mrs. William Cody, A.I.A., 1950 Desert Palm Drive; Mr. Albert Frey, A.I.A., 1150 Paseo El Mirador;...and Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Williams, A.I.A., 1250 Paseo El Mirador." In an article about the home tour, entitled "The Architect...and His Own Home Design," in the March 1958 issue of *Palm Springs Villager*, the author seemed most intrigued by the Burns' home with such features as a "cleverly concealed...Hi-Fi," "infra-red lights in the kitchen to keep food warm; hidden electric blanket controls; built-in clocks in every room...and dimmers to lower living room lights for after-dinner conversation."



Story on Home Tour, Palm Springs Villager, March 1958
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)

Site Description

Location

The Orbit In Hotel is located in the “Historic” Tennis Club neighborhood. The complex is bounded by West Arenas Road to the south and various residential and commercial parcels to the east, west and north (Colony 29). The complex is sited around a large 20' x 40' pool and takes full advantage of mountain views to the west as well as a birds-eye view of Palisades Drive, the Burgess/Meyerman House and Frey House Two. Plantings of aloes, birds of paradise, bougainvillea and trailing lantana as well as expanses of large gravel can be found on the grounds. There is on-site parking for each guest suite. A full legal description of the property is provided at Appendix II and the Assessor's Parcel map is at Appendix III.



Aerial view of the Orbit In Hotel complex (oriented north) showing the site and street in front.

(Google Earth)

Building Type

Like some complexes of the period and other commercial buildings by Burns, the Orbit In Hotel is oriented toward the sites' best views in somewhat of an L-shaped plan with a slight extension at the top of the "L" so as to create a buffer from the street. The complex contains 9 studio-style guest units each with private rear patio and most featuring the

original pink-tiled bathroom. Five units have detached original kitchen with built-in “Dwyer” enameled steel cabinetry. One unit has been converted into an office/reception area that can easily subvert back to a guest suite. A courtyard pool and concrete patio deck create a common meeting area in front of the units, each of which has a picture window with exterior plantings to afford natural light and views yet maintain privacy.



Restored room showing original casement windows, exterior plantings, and view.
(Photo by Dan Chavkin)

Oft mistaken for a “motel,” early advertisements characterized the “Studio Apartments” of Village Manor as “Quiet Relaxing Desert Living for the Discriminating,” and the May 1948 issue of *Architectural Record* magazine described a very similar Burns complex, the nearby Town & Desert Apartments, in a rather fitting manner of these complexes:

“If the “motel” is the modern version of a hotel, this one is a similar model of an apartment hotel for a vacation spot. Its rooms are really small apartments, designed for Californians who can afford to get-away-from-it-all in elegant seclusion in Palm Springs. While the convenience and informality notes are clear, this is far removed from the roadside sleeping concept of the more typical motor courts. Its design contemplates a commune-with-nature type of holiday where a swim and a sun bath are the doctor’s prescription.”

VILLAGE MANOR (Darby Lucas)
Palm Springs' Finest Studio
Apartments, Heated Pool,
562 W Arenas Rd. FA 5-5619

In summary, the mid 1950’s characterization of Village Manor as “Palm Springs’ finest studio apartments” not only brought an air of distinction but, more importantly, carried a much better connotation than “motel.” Today, a configuration such as the original Village Manor might be described as “serviced apartments” or merely by virtue of its compact size, and perhaps more accurately; a “boutique hotel,” which is precisely what the Orbit In Hotel bills itself as.

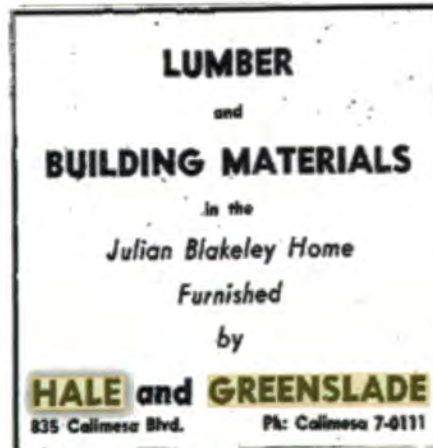
The Architecture

The Orbit In Hotel complex is a single-story structure that, as the Village Manor, was originally configured with five rental units (each with separate kitchen) and a large owner's unit (with guest room and kitchen) plus a small office. This configuration was modified over the years but the building envelope has remained largely unchanged. The units surround a courtyard with large pool and outdoor covered bar addition, all oriented to provide stunning views of the pool and Mount San Jacinto foothills.

The West Arenas Road south-facing façade is distinguished by overall horizontality, a deep eave with a double "eyebrow" soffit, and a variety of materials including cement block, glass block, flagstone, stucco and wood. The façade's overall horizontality is subtly reinforced by a low planter wall composed of stacked flagstone mortared and laid horizontally end-to-end in ledge-style (a Burns signature element as well as a popular material and construction technique found throughout Palm Springs' built environment during the late 1940s and 1950s). Also found on the south elevation is a vertical *brise-soleil* (i.e., "sun break") composed of angled and painted wood planks. The *brise-soleil* not only provides sun protection but also visual interest by punctuating the strong horizontal planes of the design. Further punctuating the horizontal planes created by the roof and flagstone elements are 2-inch steel pipe supports which also serve to express the structure of the building.

Throughout the complex, elements of the south-facing façade are echoed with the use of original steel casement windows and large rectangular piers of mortared flat-stacked Arizona flagstone. Aside from the practical use as roof supports, the *s t a c k e d* flagstone piers are syncopated with some piers terminating at the roofline and one piercing the roof. The apparent massiveness of these piers helps to visually anchor the structure and the piercing pier serves to break the horizontality of the design. Interestingly, the piers are quite functional (and largely hollow), providing much needed indoor space.

In an effort to provide more security to the Orbit In Hotel complex, minor additions were designed by o2 Architecture (Lance O'Donnell, A.I.A.) in 2000. These city-approved additions include *c o n c r e t e* block walls and rear gated private patios around much of the site's perimeter as well as a steel entry gate with keypad access.



Ad for Hale and Greenslade, contractors
(Newspapers.com)

Chain of Ownership

Equity Title Company reports that "H. W. Burns and Gayle S. Burns, husband and wife," purchased the land on which the Village Manor would be built from Sadie M. Luyster, a widow, in August 1949. Per title records, the Burnses sold the property to a "co-partnership composed of Elwein G. Hale and Gordon A. Greenslade" on June 10, 1955. A sales price is not listed however, since a building permit dated just five days later on June 15, 1955, lists Hale and Greenslade as "contractors" - and the building is an obvious Burns design - it can be safely deduced that the Burnses sold the land along with the building plans and designs for "Village Manor." On December 2, 1955, a Notice of Completion was issued for Hale and Greenslade who subsequently sold Village Manor to Rita Irene Rasmussen, a married woman, on August 24, 1956. Thereafter, records show 8 modifications to, and changes of, property ownership until the sale in April 1999 to Christy Eugenis and Stan Amy (Wahoo-Cal Hotels, LLC), who restored the building and re-named it the Orbit In Hotel. It was sold to current owners Kevin Miller and Jin Park in September 2007.

Permit History

City records indicate an extant microfiche file for 562 West Arenas Road. The original building permit, dated 6/15/55 shows "Hale & Greenslade" as the Contractor/Owner of "Village Manor." Subsequent electronic files/site plans are unavailable as city staff opined that those files were likely lost when the Building/Planning Department's computer systems were "corrupted." There is also a building permit dated 2/14/2000 to "Remodel 7 unit hotel building - New configuration will be 7 units and 1 caretakers unit, exercise room, new bike storage building, walls, gates, trash enclosure, pool bar/counter area, new canopy" and "new underground service - 11/1/2000." An addendum to this permit showing interior modifications is dated 11/7/2000. A Certificate of Occupancy for the Orbit In Hotel is dated August, 2003.

BACKGROUND / HISTORIC CONTEXT

The relatively short history of Palm Springs can be organized into three virtually distinct periods that include Prehistory, the Settlement Period, and the Modern Period. It is within the context of the last period that this building will be evaluated.

Modern Period (1925-1960s): This period is considered to have begun with construction of the area's first "modern" structure, Rudolph M. Schindler's Paul & Betty Popenoe Cabin in 1922 ('an important contemporary design to Schindler's own house at Kings Road, Los Angeles'). With this building, the area's predominant architectural style, which was based on well established Mexican and Spanish Colonial motifs, began to change. Incorporation of the town of Palm Springs followed in 1938. During the post-WWII era, Palm Springs' economy prospered through tourism. Hollywood celebrities discovered the desert oasis and patronized its hotels, inns, nightclubs and restaurants; celebrity-seeking tourists soon followed, transforming Palm Springs and its environs from a sleepy village into an increasingly cosmopolitan environment that saw the construction of schools, hospitals, an airport and other important public works projects, many by leading architects of the day. The commercial core along Palm Canyon Drive (originally Main Street) flourished. In the 1950s, the downtown core was expanded by the construction of the cross-axis of Tahquitz-McCallum Way that extended from the center of the original settlement to the airport, spurring new development along the way. Early private residential development also expanded into new sub-divisions composed of midcentury-modern second homes in the flat land areas surrounding the town's original core.

Palm Springs' Hollywood associations certainly added an air of sophistication to the city. By the 1960's, the city had established a reputation for cutting edge architecture as a result of local architectural practitioners like John Porter Clark, Albert Frey, E. Stewart Williams, William F. Cody, Donald Wexler, Hugh Kaptur, Howard Lapham and Herbert W. Burns.

EVALUATION:

Criterion 1: Significant Events

To qualify for listing under this criterion, a property must be associated with one or more events important in the defined historic context. Criterion 1 often recognizes properties associated with events or patterns of events or historic trends, such as the gradual rise of the city's prominence in excellence in midcentury modern architecture that is an important pattern of events within this associated context. The Orbit In Hotel complex is an outstanding example of commercial design and construction of buildings within the context of midcentury desert Modernism. The Orbit In Hotel complex is associated with this pattern of events for its ability to exemplify the modern period of the national, state and local history. However, since it is not associated with an actual historic event, but rather a broad pattern of historic events, The Orbit In Hotel complex may not qualify for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 1.

Criterion 2: Significant Persons.

Criterion 2 recognizes properties associated with the lives of persons who made meaningful contribution to national, state or local history. While Herbert and Gayle Burns might be considered individuals of local importance, the documentation for that additional qualification was not deemed necessary for this nomination. Hence, the Orbit In Hotel doesn't qualify for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 2.

ARCHITECTURE (Criteria 3 – 6)

Criterion 3: *(That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history)*

The Orbit In Hotel complex (1955) was designed by Palm Springs architectural designer Herbert W. Burns. The stylistic markers of the residence place it directly in the historic context of Palm Springs' Modern Period. The commercial complex represents a prime and largely intact example of the significant modernist architecture for which Palm Springs is widely known. As such the complex may be viewed as an important component of the historic trends that have come to define Palm Springs' image as a center of important midcentury architecture, i.e., an historic trend that exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history. The Orbit In Hotel complex qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 3.

Criterion 4: *(That embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or) Type, Period, and Method of Construction:* "Type, period, or method of construction" refers to the way certain properties are related to one another by cultural tradition or function, by dates of construction or style, or by choice or availability of materials and technology. To be eligible under this Criterion, a property must clearly illustrate, through "distinctive characteristics" a pattern of features common to a particular class of resources. "Distinctive characteristics" are the physical features or traits that commonly recur in individual types, periods, or methods of construction. To be eligible, a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction. Characteristics can be expressed in terms such as form, proportion, structure, plan, style, or materials.

The Orbit In Hotel complex is eligible under the theme of Modern architecture because it possesses distinctive characteristics that make up the many qualities of the style, such as overall horizontality, expression of structure, expansive amounts of glass, use of inexpensive, machine produced materials, masonry, etc. As such, the complex is eligible under this criterion because it represents an important example of building practices in Palm Springs at midcentury. The Orbit In Hotel complex qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 4.

Criterion 5: (That (a): represents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or (b): that possesses high artistic value).

5a: Work of a Master: A master is a figure of generally recognized greatness in a field, a known craftsman of consummate skill. The property must express a particular phase in the development of the master's career, an aspect of his work, or a particular idea or theme in his craft. A property is not eligible as the work of a master, however, simply because it was designed by a prominent architect. For example, not every building designed by Frank Lloyd Wright is eligible under this portion of Criterion 5, although it might meet other Criteria.

Herbert W. Burns is a well-respected and locally prominent practitioner of modernist architecture and design whose reputation has continued to gain stature in recent years as Palm Springs' architectural richness has gained international prominence.

5b: Properties possessing high artistic values: High artistic values may be expressed in many ways, including areas as diverse as community design or planning, engineering, and sculpture. As an example of the maturing modernist movement, the Orbit In Hotel complex certainly articulates the best of resort "lifestyle" modernism to a level of excellence and confidence that, in total, they could easily be considered an aesthetic ideal. As the work of a Master, and for its high artistic values, the Orbit In Hotel complex qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 5.

Criterion 6: (That represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction). This Criterion was created to address the resources contained within a potential historic district. As such, Criterion 6 does not apply. Hence, the complex does not qualify under Criterion 6.

ARCHEOLOGY

Criterion 7: (That has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to the national, state or local history or prehistory). The complex does not qualify for listing on the local registry under Criterion 7.

7. Integrity Analysis (using U.S. Secretary of Interior Standards)

INTEGRITY

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be listed in the local registry, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the criteria, but it also must have integrity. The evaluation of integrity is sometimes a subjective judgment, but it must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. Historic properties either

retain integrity (that is, convey their significance) or they do not. The definition of integrity includes seven aspects or qualities. To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects. The retention of specific aspects of integrity is paramount for a property to convey its significance. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a particular property requires knowing why, where, and when the property is significant. The following sections define the seven aspects and explain how they combine to produce integrity.

LOCATION

Location is the place where an historic building was constructed or the place where an historic event occurred. The relationship between the building and its location is often important to understanding why the building was created or why something happened. The actual location of a historic building, complemented by its setting, is particularly important in recapturing the sense of historic events and persons. Except in rare cases, the relationship between a building and its historic associations is destroyed if the property is moved. ***The Village Manor (Orbit In Hotel) remains in its original location and therefore qualifies under this aspect.***

DESIGN

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. It results from conscious decisions made during the original conception and planning of a property and applies to activities as diverse as community planning, engineering, architecture, and landscape architecture. Design includes such elements as organization of space, proportion, scale, technology, ornamentation, and materials. A property's design reflects historic functions and technologies as well as aesthetics. It includes such considerations as the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; textures and colors of surface materials; type, amount, and style of ornamental detailing. ***Although the Orbit In Hotel complex has seen some exterior alteration, the essential characteristics of form, plan, space, structure, and style have survived intact. Similarly, the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; and the type, amount, and style of detailing, has largely survived. Aside from the large window in the owner's suite being replaced with a sliding glass door, at a later date this large unit was divided into four distinct rooms with the closing off of three interior connecting doorways. One closet was converted to a half bathroom while a former kitchen was removed and a bathroom added. The conversion is not only well-executed but thoughtful and consistent with the overall design of the complex (see "The Architecture" portion of this nomination).***

SETTING

Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. Whereas location refers to the specific place where a property was built or an event occurred, setting refers to the *character* of the place in which the property played its historical role. It involves *how*, not just *where*, the property is situated and its relationship to surrounding features and open space. Setting often reflects the basic physical conditions under which a property was built and the functions it was intended to serve. In addition, the way in which a property is positioned in its environment can reflect the designer's concept of nature and aesthetic preferences. ***The setting of the Orbit In Hotel continues to reflect the architectural designer's original design relationship of site and structure for Village Manor.***

MATERIALS

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. The choice and combination of materials reveals the preferences of those who created the property and indicate the availability of particular types of materials and technologies. ***While some of the Village Manor exterior surface materials have been repainted multiple times over the years, this change does not constitute a significant loss of the physical elements that expressed the design during the building's period of significance; the particular pattern and configuration that today forms the building site survives intact. Current colors reflect the original as-built colors likely specified by Burns as determined by paint layer analysis and Burns' earth-hued color palette.***

WORKMANSHIP

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. It is the evidence of artisans' labor and skill in constructing or altering a building, structure, object, or site. Workmanship can apply to the property as a whole or to its individual components. It can be expressed in vernacular methods of construction and plain finishes or in highly sophisticated configurations and ornamental detailing. It can be based on common traditions or innovative period techniques. Workmanship is important because it can furnish evidence of the technology of a craft, illustrate the aesthetic principles of a historic or prehistoric period, and reveal individual, local, regional, or national applications of both technological practices and aesthetic principles. Examples of workmanship in historic buildings include tooling, carving, painting, graining, turning, and joinery. ***The workmanship of the Orbit in Hotel is comprised of integral ornamental detailing reflected in stone, concrete block, glass and steel. The property continues to express a high degree of contemporary period workmanship.***

FEELING

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. For example, a rural historic district retaining original design, materials, workmanship, and setting will relate the feeling of agricultural life in the 19th century. ***When designed, the Village Manor was sited to take advantage of panoramic views of the mountain and constructed around a central courtyard pool creating an intimate and resort-like feel. The tactful addition of a covered reception / poolside bar / dining area cleverly helps to shield the pool and adjacent hot tub from street view thereby creating further protection and privacy for guests. Accordingly, the Orbit In Hotel retains this original integrity of feeling.***

ASSOCIATION

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. A property retains association if it *is* the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. Like feeling, association requires the presence of physical features that convey a property's historic character. For example, a Revolutionary War battlefield whose natural and man-made elements have remained intact since the 18th century will retain its quality of association with the battle. Because feeling and association depend on individual perceptions, their retention alone is never sufficient to support eligibility of a property for the National Register. ***As previously stated in this nomination, the Orbit In Hotel is an important example of a particular building type in Palm Springs. Accordingly, it continues its association with a pattern of events that have made a meaningful contribution to the community.***

INTEGRITY SUMMARY

The Orbit in Hotel appears to be in excellent condition due to both the use of construction materials suitable for the harsh desert environment *and* to diligent upkeep and consistent maintenance. This integrity analysis confirms that the buildings and site of the Orbit In Hotel complex still possess all seven aspects of integrity. While the building has had concrete block walls and gates added to create security for the guests, overall, virtually all of the character-defining features survive. The buildings and site both retain a high degree of integrity sufficient to qualify it for designation as a Class 1 historic site.

8. Bibliography

A list of books, articles, and other sources cited or used in preparing this application and other documentation that may be relevant:

Books

- Architectural Record Book. *Motels, Hotels, Restaurants and Bars*. F. W. Dodge Corporation, New York, 1953
- Architectural Record Book. *Motels, Hotels, Restaurants and Bars* (Second Edition). F. W. Dodge Corporation, New York, 1960
- Baker, Geoffrey and Bruno Funaro. *Motels*. Reinhold Publishing Corporation, New York, 1955
- Hess, Alan and Andrew Danish. *Palm Springs Weekend*. Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 2001
- Moruzzi, Peter. *Palm Springs Holiday*. Gibbs Smith, Layton, Utah, 2009
- Stern, Michael and Alan Hess. *Julius Shulman: Palm Springs*. New York: Rizzoli, 2008

Documentary Sources

- Architectural Resources Group. *City of Palm Springs Historic Resources Survey*. San Francisco, 2004
- "California Hide-Away, Motel Style." *Architectural Record*, Vol. 103, No. 5, May 1948: 96-101
- Hough, Greg. Live interview, 2006.
- National Park Service. *National Register Bulletin 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.
- Oral History #201-054 taken by Mr. Rush Hughes, "Interview of Mrs. Gayle Burns," conducted on October 31, 1968 (originally recorded on 3" magnetic tape, now digitized)
- Pacific Coast Architecture Database (PCAD).
<https://digital.lib.washington.edu/architect/>
- Palm Springs Life*. Annual Pictorial 1959, March 1960, June-July 1960, February 22, 1961 (magazine)

Palm Springs Villager. Midsummer 1947, September 1947, October 1947, November 1947, December 1947, January 1948, February 1948, March 1948, April 1948, May-June 1948, Midsummer 1948, July-August 1948, December 1948, February 1949, April 1949, July-August 1949, March 1950, May-June 1950, December 1950, April 1951, June 1951, December 1951, June 1953, September 1953, April 1954, June 1954, October 1955, September 1956, March 1958 and May 1958 (magazine)

The Palm Springs and Desert Resort Area Story. Palm Springs Chamber of Commerce, 1955 (pamphlet)

Petty, Joanne. Telephone interview. March 21, 2014.

Other Sources Consulted

- City of Palm Springs (Planning and Building Departments)
- Los Angeles Public Library (Central Library)
- Riverside County Assessor's Office
- Palm Springs Historical Society
- Palm Springs Public Library
- Equity Title Company
- Newspapers.com
- *The Desert Sun*
- Ancestry.com

9. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Estimated .57 acres (25,000 square feet)

Property Boundary Description: Lot 13 MB 009/432 MAP OF PALM SPRINGS (See Appendix II)

10. Prepared By

Name/title: Jade T. Nelson with assistance from Ron & Barbara Marshall

Organization: Submitted on behalf of the Orbit In Hotel

Street address: 562 West Arenas Road

City: Palm Springs

State: CA

Zip: 92262

Telephone: (760) 567-4696

E-mail address: jadenelson@me.com

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.

Appendix I: Letter of Owner Support

February 9, 2015

City of Palm Springs
Planning Department
Historic Site Preservation Board
Palm Springs, CA 92262


To Whom It May Concern,

Pursuant to Palm Springs Municipal Code Chapter 8.05, we fully support the Class 1 Historic Site nomination of the Orbit In Hotel (Village Manor) at 562 West Arenas Road. The complex, designed by Herbert W. Burns in 1955, is a fine example of the midcentury modern architecture for which Palm Springs is world-renowned.

We have entrusted Jade Nelson to represent us in this matter who can be contacted at (760) 567-4696 or via email: jadenelson@me.com

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact us directly at (310) 415-0511 or via email: kevandjin@orbitin.com.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Kevin Miller and Jin Park in cursive script.

Kevin Miller and Jin Park, owners
Orbit In Hotel, LLC
562 W. Arenas Road
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Appendix II: 2000 Grant Deed

RECORDING REQUESTED BY:
The Escrow Connection

AND WHEN RECORDED MAIL TO:

Kevin Miller/Jin Suk Park
4120 Madison Ave.
Culver City, Ca. 90232

Order No. 884545-12
Escrow No. 36056-KK
Parcel No. 513-120-026

DOC # 2007-0623209
10/05/2007 08:02A Fee:10.00
Page 1 of 2 Doc T Tax Paid
Recorded in Official Records
County of Riverside
Larry U. Ward
Assessor, County Clerk & Recorder



S	R	U	PAGE	SIZE	DA	MISC	LONG	RFD	COPY
/			2						
M	A	L	485	426	PCOR	NCOR	SMF	NCHG	EXAM 033
									T 033

GRANT DEED

THE UNDERSIGNED GRANTOR(S) DECLARE(S) THAT DOCUMENTARY TRANSFER TAX IS: \$2244.00

computed on full value of property conveyed, or
 computed on full value less liens or encumbrances remaining at the time of sale.
 unincorporated area: City of Palm Springs, and

FOR A VALUABLE CONSIDERATION, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged,
Wahoo-Cal Hotels LLC., a California Limited Liability Company By: New Village Group LTD., Manager, a California Corporation

Hereby grants to KEVIN D. MILLER AND JIN SUK PARK, HUSBAND AND WIFE AS JOINT TENANTS

the following described real property in the County of Riverside, State of California:

LOT 35 AND 36 OF TAHQUITZ PARK AS SHOWN BY MAP ON FILE IN BOOK 11 PAGE 7 OF MAPS, RECORDS OF RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA.

EXCEPTING FROM SAID LOT 36 THE EASTERLY 5 FEET.
Date August 31, 2007

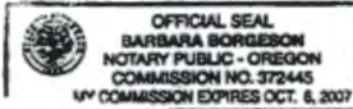
Wahoo-Cal Hotels LLC., a California Limited Liability Company By: New Village Group LTD., Manager
Christy Eugenis
 By: Christy Eugenis, Vice President

STATE OF ^{OREGON} CALIFORNIA)
) S.S.
 COUNTY OF ^{Multnomah})

On September 5, 2007, before me, Barbara Borgeson personally appeared Christy Eugenis personally known to me (or proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence) to be the person whose name is subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that he/she executed the same in his/her authorized capacity, and that by his/her signature on the instrument the person, or the entity upon behalf of which the person acted, executed the instrument.

WITNESS my hand and official seal.

Signature *Barbara Borgeson*



Mail Tax Statement to: SAME AS ABOVE or Address Noted Below

Appendix III: Assessor's Map

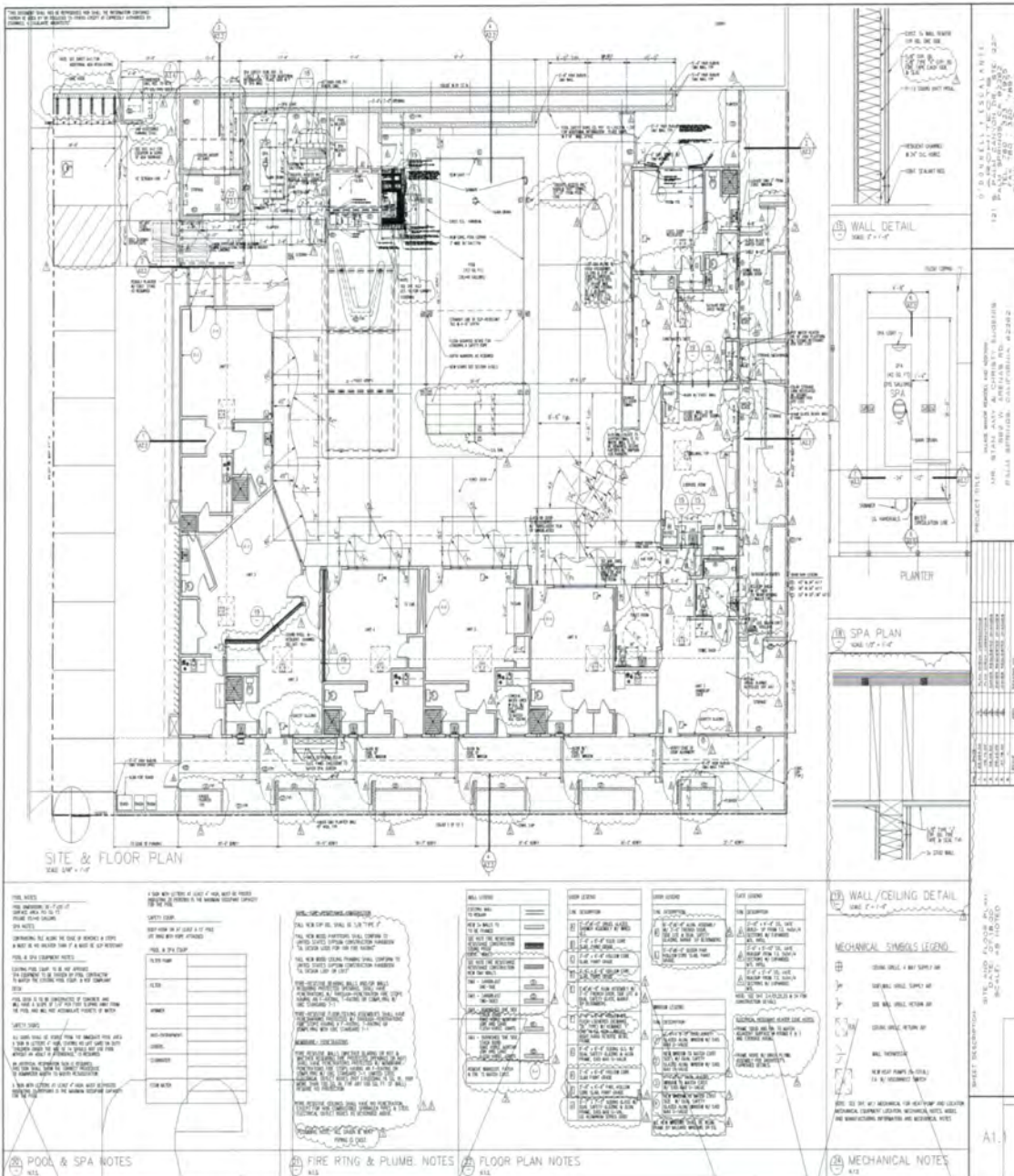


Data Deemed Reliable, But Not Guaranteed.
 Copyright © 2004-2015 Leader Processing Services, Inc. All Rights Reserved. All other trademarks and copyrights are the property of their respective holders.
 1/10/2015 Customer Service Req. Blanca Ruiz

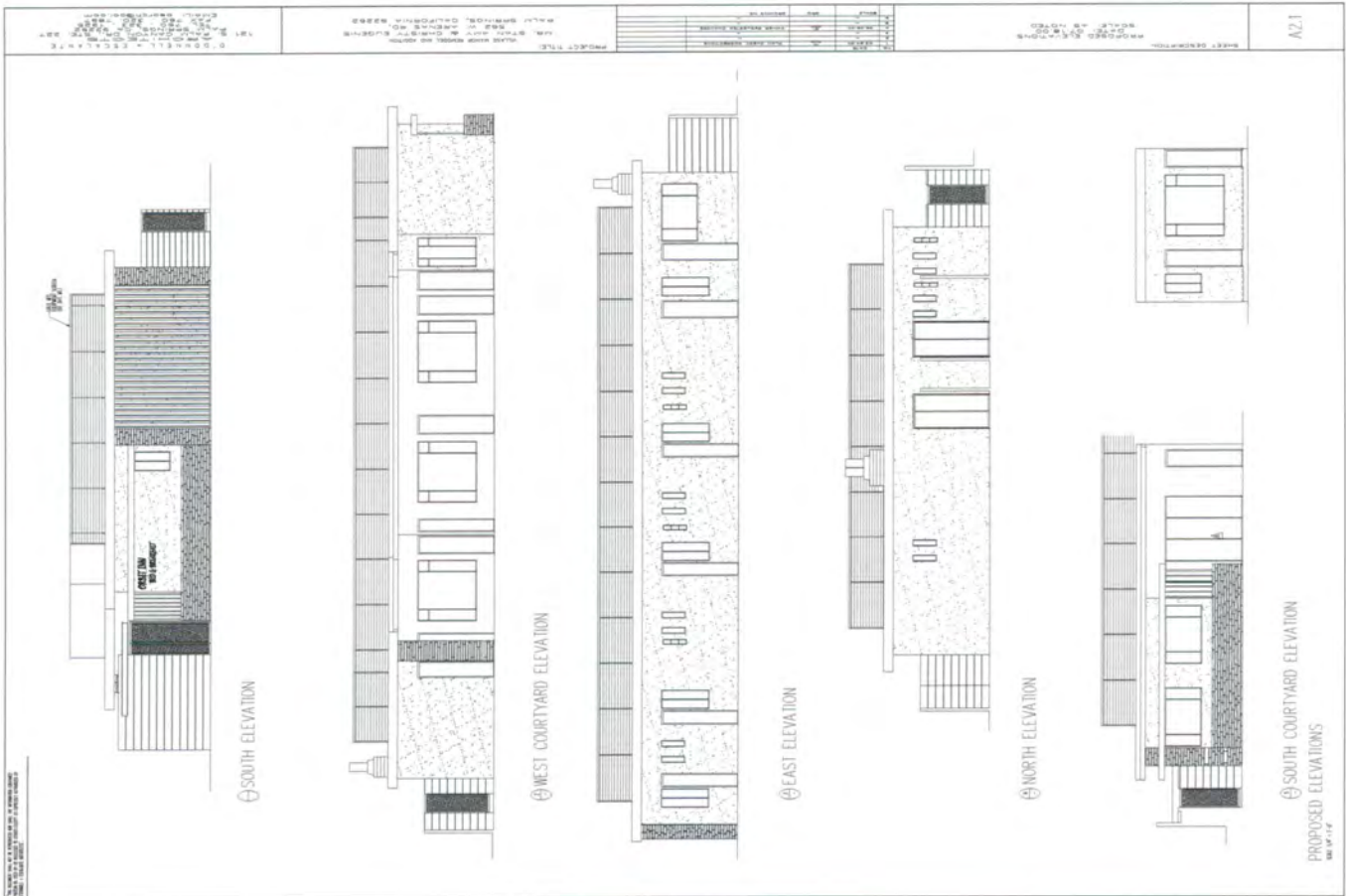


Appendix IV: Documentation of Building and Site

Site Plan generated in 2000 by O'Donnell + Escalante Architects for Renovation of the Village Manor
(Courtesy o2 Architecture – Lance O'Donnell, AIA)



Elevations generated during the renovation of the Village Manor in 2000
 (Courtesy o2 Architecture – Lance O'Donnell, A.I.A.)



Appendix V: Photographs & Ephemera

Then...



Photo by Christy Eugenis
South-facing courtyard façade pre-restoration

...and Now



Photo by Dan Chavkin
South-facing courtyard façade of the Orbit In Hotel as it appears today

Village Manor to Orbit In Hotel restoration/improvement “process” photos

(after paint work restoration to match original colors - showing construction of pool bar and covered dining area)

Photos by Christy Eugenis



Top Left: Looking East
Center Right: Looking South
Bottom Right: Looking North

The Orbit In Today



Photo by Dan Chavkin
**Patio of the ChaCha Room
showing exposed concrete block wall
and steel privacy gate**



Photo by Dan Chavkin
**Pool bar and covered dining area
by Lance O'Donnell, AIA, 2000**

Original Architectural Detailing
(as it appears today)

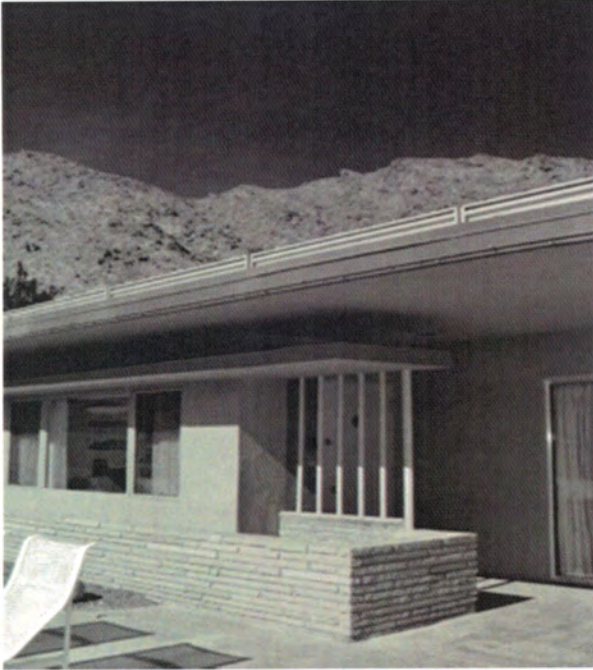


Photo by Dan Chavkin

**Detail of mortared stacked flagstone planter (bottom)
steel pipe and wood dowel supports (center)
and horizontal eyebrow soffit (top)**



Photo by Clara Nelson
**Detail of original mortared
and stacked flagstone pier**

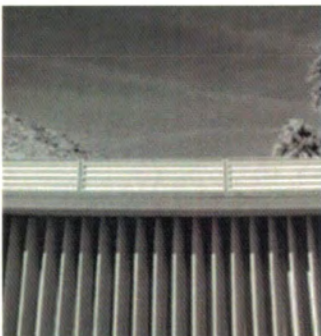


Photo by Dan Chavkin
**Detail of exterior vertical brise-soleil
On street-facing façade**

Ephemera



Advertisement
1956 City of Palm Springs Phone Directory
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)



RECEIVED

APR 07 2015

PLANNING SERVICES
DEPARTMENT

Office Use Only

Date: 4.01.2015

Case No.

HSPB No. 95

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 designations, 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: Village Manor
Other names: Orbit In Hotel
Address: 562 West Arenas Road, Palm Springs, CA 92262
Assessor Parcel Number: 513120026-4
Owner's Name(s): Kevin Miller and Jin Suk Park (as Orbit In LLC)
Owner's Address: 562 West Arenas Road
City: Palm Springs State: CA
Zip: 92262
Telephone: (310) 415-0511
Fax number: N/A
E-mail address: kevin@venblue.com