



**CITY OF PALM SPRINGS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SERVICES**

**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** February 10, 2015  
**To:** Historic Site Preservation Board  
**From:** Flinn Fagg, AICP Director of Planning Services  
**Subject:** **Case HSPB 91 – Pompeii de las Palmas  
Application for Class 1 Historic Designation**

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Attached please find an application for Class 1 historic designation and related historic resources report submitted by the Pompeii de las Palmas homeowners association in concert with the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation.

This material is submitted today for your review in anticipation of a noticed public hearing on the matter at the March 10, 2015 HSPB meeting. In the coming weeks, staff will arrange site visits for those board members wishing to familiarize themselves with the site prior to next month's public hearing.

Since today's meeting is not a noticed public hearing on this case, the Board may not discuss particulars related to the case. Staff is requesting the board receive the report and continue the item to a noticed public hearing at its March meeting.

Attachment: Class 1 historic designation and historic resources report on Pompeii de las Palmas.

# Pompeii de Las Palmas

221 West Stevens Road  
Palm Springs, CA 92262

**Nomination Application  
for City of Palm Springs  
Historic District**



Prepared by

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for the

Palm Springs Preservation Foundation

January 2015

*Acknowledgements*

*This nomination is part of a joint initiative by the*

**PALM SPRINGS PRESERVATION FOUNDATION**

*and the*

**POMPEII DE LAS PALMAS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION**

**Dedicated to my friend**

**Patrick McGrew**

**Cover Graphic: An Ionic column design motif used in a vintage advertisement for Villa Roma, a much larger “Roman Revival” modernist complex in south Palm Springs. Due to its small size, Pompeii de Las Palmas most likely produced limited (or no) advertising material of this type.**

# HISTORIC DISTRICT NOMINATION

## TABLE of CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: PAGE 3  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: PAGE 4  
HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION APPLICATION FORM: PAGE 5  
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: PAGE 9  
EVALUATIONS for HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION: PAGE 15  
INTEGRITY ANALYSIS: 17

### APPENDICES

I	Assessor's Map
II	Current Addresses and Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs)
III	Informal Field Survey of Representative "Small" Seasonal Rental Properties and Hotels/Apartments
IV	Photographic Documentation of Buildings and Site
V	Excerpts from 1964 Issue of <i>Palm Springs Personages</i>
VI	Note from Mr. Ari Bass Regarding the PDLP Complex

## **Introduction**

The Palm Springs Preservation Foundation (PSPF) is 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.”

Starting in 2008, PSPF has actively lobbied local governments throughout the Coachella Valley to support the creation of historic districts in accordance with their local ordinances. However, due to the foundation’s limited resources, PSPF can only support efforts to create historic districts if there is strong homeowner interest and enthusiasm for such an undertaking.

On March 24, 2014 PSPF was notified by a representative of the Pompeii de Las Palmas Homeowners Association that during their annual meeting (on March 1, 2014) the Pompeii de Las Palmas Homeowners Association had voted unanimously to pursue the historic district designation of their condominium complex. On May 22, 2014 PSPF was provided with various documents of owner support indicating that more than two-thirds of the Pompeii de Las Palmas owners supported pursuing historic district status. Copies of these documents (and the photographic survey of the PDLP complex) have been provided to the city’s Director of Planning Services on a separate compact disk.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Pompeii de Las Palmas (PDLP), built in 1964, is a nine-unit property in the historic Old Las Palmas neighborhood. Originally constructed as apartments, the complex converted to condominiums in 1969. The complex is significant for two reasons: it is an intact example of a specific “building type” and it exhibits numerous stylistic markers that place it in Palm Springs’ modern period.

Regarding its significance as a specific building type, the PDLP complex is an excellent example of the “small” seasonal rental property or hotel/apartment. The construction of that particular building type was popular in Palm Springs from about 1920 until 1965. (“Small” is defined in this nomination as 25 units or less). In recent decades, many fine examples of this building type have been demolished. The PDLP is a highly-intact example of this historically important building type.

Also, the PDLP complex is a fine example of the significant modernist architecture for which Palm Springs is internationally known and should be viewed as a component of the historic trends that define the city’s 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”).

**DESIGNATION CRITERIA:** The PDLP complex has not previously been evaluated for historic district eligibility.

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, there are two patterns of events: the rise in popularity of a particular building type and the rise of Palm Springs’ prominence in midcentury architectural excellence. The PDLP complex is an outstanding example of both a historic building type and the construction of buildings within the context of midcentury desert modernism. *The PDLP complex is associated with both these patterns 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 complex qualifies for listing as a Historic District under Criterion 1.*

8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 3 & 4 - **Design/Construction:** The PDLP complex is eligible both as a fine example of a historically important building type and is eligible under the theme of Modern architecture because it possesses numerous distinctive characteristics of the modernist style, including flat roofs, expansive amounts of glass, etc. *For its distinctive characteristics and for its high artistic values, the PDLP complex qualifies as a Historic District under Criteria 3 & 4.*

**SUMMARY:** This evaluation finds the PDLP complex eligible for listing as a Palm Springs Historic District under 8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 1, 3 & 4 of the local ordinance’s seven criteria (criteria 6 is deemed as inapplicable as the various buildings in the PDLP complex possess “individual distinction”). Additionally, the buildings in the district retain a 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

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## HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION

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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](mailto: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:

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**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.

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**1. Property Information**

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Historic name: Pompeii de Las Palmas (PDLP)  
Other names: Not applicable  
Address: 221 West Stevens Road, Palm Springs, CA 92262 (historic address 206 Camino Norte)  
Assessor Parcel Number: See Appendix I for the Assessor’s Map and Appendix II for a listing of APNs  
Owner’s Name (HOA President): Mr. Steve Fusco  
Owner’s Address: 225 West Stevens Road  
City: Palm Springs State: CA Zip: 92262  
(Note: The PDLP Homeowners Association is self-managed)  
Telephone: (970) 779-0945  
Fax number: Not applicable  
E-mail address: smfusco@gmail.com

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## 2. Classifications

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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	
3		Buildings (comprising 9 units)
1		Sites
3		Structures (includes cabana and carports)
		Objects
<hr/>		<hr/>
7		<b>Total</b>

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"

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## 3. Use or Function

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Historic Use or Function: Multi-family residential housing

Current Use or Function: Multi-family residential housing

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## 4. Description

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Architect: Unknown

Construction Date and Source: 1964 (from multiple sources, including building permits)

Architectural Classification: International Style - Desert Regional Variation – "Roman Revival"

Construction Materials:

Foundation:	Concrete slab	Roof:	Composition
Walls:	Concrete block, stucco, wood	Other:	Plaster columns

Building Description: *Attach a description of the Building / Site / District, including all character defining features on one or more additional sheets. (See pages 11-12 and Appendix IV).*

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

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**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

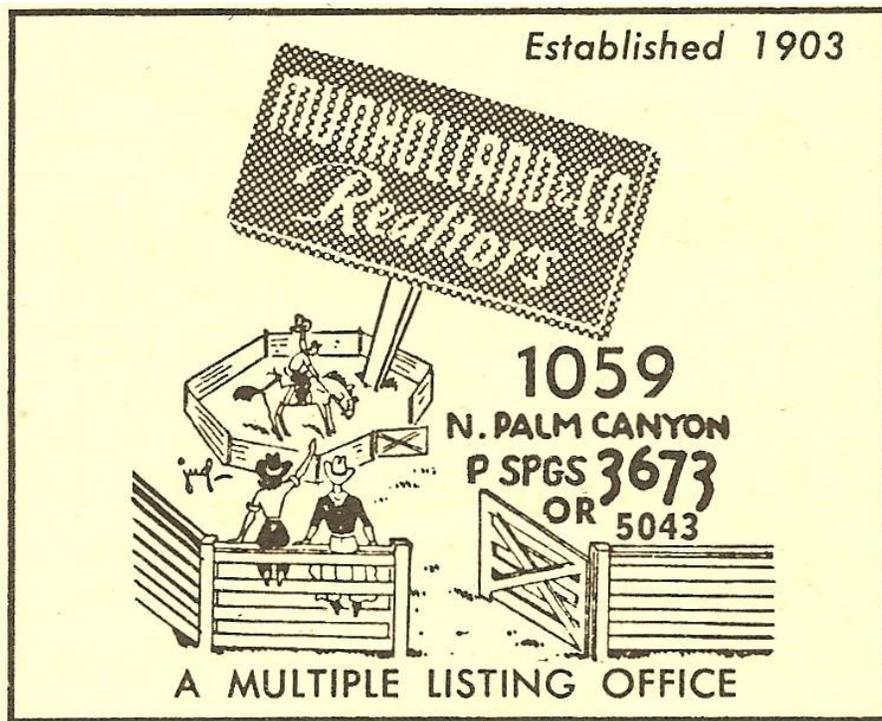
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## 6. Statement of Significance

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### History

The early history of the Pompeii de Las Palmas (PDLP) condominiums was both eventful and complex. The site of the complex (actually two separate parcels that would later be consolidated) was acquired by Julia T. Munholland (nee: Julia T. Kuhn) in 1959 and upon her death it became part of her estate. The executor of her estate was John G. Munholland (her husband); the attorney for the estate was James Munholland (assumed to be a relative). The estate's Los Angeles Superior Court probate petition (heard on November 12, 1963) referenced the parcels as a bequest of the deceased to John G. Munholland. (Note: At the time of these transactions, John G. Munholland was the principal of Munholland & Co., a real estate company located at 1059 North Palm Canyon. Interestingly, the 1965 telephone directory identifies John G. Munholland's home address as 322 Camino Norte (just a few houses west of the PDLP complex)).



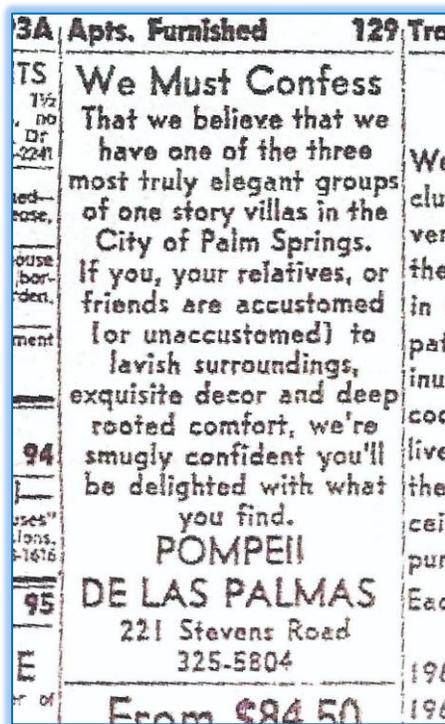
Advertisement for Munholland & Co. Realtors in the 1956 Palm Springs area telephone directory

Additional information concerning John G. Munholland is contained in Appendix V which excerpts portions of the 1964 issue of *Palm Springs Personages*.

On February 24, 1964 John G. Munholland sold the parcels to Des-Pro, Inc., a California corporation. On May 12, 1964 Palm Springs city building permit #B6849 was issued to Des-Pro, Inc. for the construction of "9 apartment units, Frame & Stucco, Compo[sition] roof." The complex, named "Pompeii de Las Palmas," comprises a total

of 10,600 square feet of living space and 990 square feet of carport space. The permit was issued as an owner-builder permit with the total value of the construction estimated at \$185,000. The original permit lists "Rosalind Lewis, 190 E. Palm Canyon, Palm Springs Calif." as the contractor. (Note: Des-Pro, Inc. is shown as "Des Pro, Inc" in the white pages of the 1965 Palm Springs telephone directory oddly with no phone number but a home address of 200 Camino Norte, a unit within the PDLP complex. Additional information about Des-Pro, Inc. proved difficult to find and was deemed of marginal value to this nomination).

On April 30, 1965 the developer Des-Pro, Inc. was first notified by the lender that it was in default on the construction loan and the property would be sold on the courthouse steps on September 22, 1965 if the developer did not cure the default. The amount due the lender at the time of the scheduled trustee's sale was \$186,009.07. The developer did not cure the default and there were no buyers at the trustee's sale. As a result, the property reverted to the lender, "Investors Savings and Loan Association," on September 22, 1965. The title documents confirm Investors Savings and Loan still held the property when the Condominium Plan was filed on August 8, 1969 and they continued to own the property exclusively until the first four units (1, 2, 5, & 6) were sold on November 13, 1969.



This advertisement for PDLP units for rent appeared in the January 24, 1969 issue of the *Desert Sun* newspaper

The sale of the first units on November 13, 1969 was followed by the sale of the remaining five, with the last two units closing escrow on July 17, 1970 (at which point the original lender no longer had an ownership interest in the project).

C. Permit History. Palm Springs building permit #B6849 (previously mentioned) cites the total value of the work as \$185,000.00 and levies a 15' 0" height limit.

D. Local Construction History and Context. This nomination focuses on the area west of North Palm Canyon Drive and east of North Monte Vista Drive and bounded by West Alejo Road to the south and West Vista Chino to the north. Among other things, this neighborhood acts as a transition buffer from North Palm Canyon Drive to the larger homes and estates nestled further west against the mountains.

While the construction of this building type (i.e., the "small" seasonal rental property or hotel/apartment) was popular in Palm Springs from about 1920 to about 1965, this building type did not become established in the PDLP neighborhood until after the end of WWII. This was caused largely because vacant land in the Tennis Club neighborhood (south of the Desert Inn), and the area immediately adjacent to the El Mirador Hotel, had become less available. Hence, the neighborhood in which PDLP was constructed became a viable building location that could address the continuing need for vacation rentals. At least 20 of these smaller rental properties or hotel/apartments were built in this area and many are still intact and in operation in some form or another. Appendix III lists some of these properties by address and provides an interesting historical context.

The 1964 construction of the PDLP complex was one of the last of this once popular building type. With the opening of tribal land to long-term leases (a result of the passage of the Equalization Act of September 21, 1959) the scale of local building was quickly transformed. "Built as Condominiums" residential complexes grew in number starting in the early 1960's and included complexes in the south of Palm Springs, specifically Tribal Land Section #26 (the Canyon Country Club area), Section #30 (Seven Lakes Country Club area) and Section #24 (the Mesquite Country Club area). These larger development tracts attracted first-rate architects and developers and proved far more profitable and economically viable than the smaller hotel. More importantly, with larger floor plans and air-conditioning they offered the possibility of year-long occupancy.

The construction of the Pompeii de Las Palmas complex was on the cusp of this economic and "lifestyle" shift. Though initially intended as seasonal rentals for visitors to Palm Springs the PDLP complex was soon converted to condominiums. This conversion is consistent with the 1960s trend that was occurring throughout the Palm Springs area, the state of California and the nation.

E. National Context. The concept of a condominium (where the ownership of a building or property is a shared entity) is a relatively modern phenomenon, although communal living is not. The first "condominium" was built in the United States in 1960 in Salt Lake City, Utah. The concept quickly grew in popularity.

F. Miscellany. The city of Palm Springs job record card for PDLP (which records the inspections approved during construction) originally specified "206 Camino Norte" as the job address. The typed address has been crossed off and "221 W Stevens" is handwritten next to it.

## The Architecture

The Pompeii de Las Palmas complex is designed in a “Roman Revival” style. That said, the Roman Revival styling is only an overlay superimposed over a skillfully articulated modernist building. Roman Revival architecture of the mid-1960s, though short-lived, was considered the pinnacle of “chic.” The architectural style was seen as very forward-thinking and extended beyond the world of architecture into fashion and interior design as well.

In 1963, the year before construction of the PDLP complex, the Roman Revival style was introduced to south Palm Springs with the construction of the 69-unit Villa Roma condominiums (located at Sierra Madre Drive and Avenida Granada). Villa Roma was “designed and planned” by James Schuler Associates of Garden Grove, California though, again, there is no indication this firm was involved with the PDLP complex. In chronicling the history of the Villa Roma complex, PSPF’s journal *The Architecture of Desert Leisure* makes the following observation:

The quirky design of Villa Roma...was no accident. The 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome were broadcast to the world on television and Italian films like Fellini’s *La Dolce Vita* (1960) were being watched by the American middle-class. Suddenly Americans were enamored with all things Italian...[housing] developers quickly tapped into that fascination.

Also in Palm Springs, in the adjacent Little Tuscany neighborhood, a home designed by architect James Naughton was underway. Naughton was a well-known designer of modernist homes using the Roman Revival motif (though designed in the same architectural style, there is no evidence that Naughton designed the PDLP complex). Nearby, in Los Angeles, the mid-1960s saw the construction of Mt. Olympus, a hillside subdivision in the Hollywood Hills area of the city. The 406 single-family residences of Mt. Olympus are designed in the Roman Revival style and feature Roman fountains, statuary, columns and Italian Cypress hedges. Similarly, Hollywood motion picture studios tried to capitalize on America’s new fascination with Italy by casting Italian actors like Sophia Loren, Rossano Brazzi, Gina Lollobrigida, and Virna Lisi to star in American films. In 1964, the year that the PDLP complex broke ground, the films *Marriage Italian Style* and *The Fall of the Roman Empire* both received Oscar nominations. Just a few years earlier, Hollywood studios had success with films like *Rome Adventure*, *Come September*, and *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* which were shot primarily on location in Italy.

The low slung stucco structures that make up the PDLP complex are modulated with horizontal “eyebrows” or overhangs. Eyebrows are logically placed over doorways and windows. These horizontal elements are pleasingly in contrast to the vertical lines of the exposed structural columns which are wrapped in an Ionic cladding. The Stevens Road facade (the main entry) is a deft exercise in minimalism. A concrete and pebble path leads the pedestrian to a pair of entry doors that act as the welcoming element on the street facade of the complex (see Appendix IV, figures 1 and 3). The entry doors are located in an open portico which is located asymmetrically within a wall of five street-facing carports. The roof over the entry is raised in emphasis of its purpose as a “welcoming” element and virtually floats over the lower carport roofs. The carport street roofline notches back at the Ionic columns to emphasize the vertical structural element

(see Appendix IV, figure 3). The floor of the entry path from the street is gray concrete seeded in black river rock, the carports are paved in gray concrete. The PDLP units are made up of seven 2-bedroom units and two 1-bedroom units. There are a total of five different floor plans. Eight-foot tall sliding glass doors allow in an abundance of natural light.

Throughout the entirety of the PDLP complex the exterior facades are surprisingly intact with little or no compromise. The buildings and site of the PDLP complex retain a high degree of integrity (see detailed Integrity Analysis).

(Note: The exterior facades of the PDLP complex display a level of design expertise that “possesses high artistic value” which could arguably qualify under criteria 8.05.020 (a) paragraph 5 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code. However, that assertion is not made in this nomination for two reasons: (1) because an architect for the complex cannot be identified it cannot be placed contextually within any architect or designer’s professional oeuvre, and (2) the more enduring relevance of the PDLP complex is in its importance as a historic, but vanishing, building type.)

### Site Description

Location. The Pompeii de Las Palmas complex is bounded by West Stevens Road to the north, Camino Norte to the south, a residential parcel to the west and a parcel containing an abandoned city water reservoir to the east. A listing of current mailing addresses and individual assessor parcel numbers is provided at Appendix II.



Aerial view of Pompeii de Las Palmas complex (oriented north)

Reaching all the way back to 19th century British planner Ebenezer Howard's *Garden City*, architects (and skilled designers) have attempted to combine the best of city and rural life to create a utopian environment. The designer of the PDLP complex succeeds by creating an environment free from cars (a popular symbol of urban distress) by siting all vehicular roads and carports on the perimeter of the complex. As such, the PDLP units front onto a green Roman courtyard and pool free of the street and the automobile.

## **Landscape Architecture**

The Roman Revival style continues throughout the PDLP complex in the design of the landscaping and a true oasis has been created within the courtyard. The lush and elegant courtyard gardens are of a formal design and include an oval pool, slender Italian cypress trees and covered loggia set in a lawn. Roman Revival statuary can be found throughout the complex. A covered outdoor space adjacent to the pool is an integrated element in the overall design of the PDLP complex. A meandering concrete sidewalk connects each unit and serves as the pedestrian street within the PDLP complex.

See Appendix IV for Photographic Documentation of Buildings and Site.

## **HISTORIC CONTEXT**

To qualify as a Palm Springs Historic District, the contributing structures must be significant; that is, they must represent a significant part of the history, architecture, or archeology of an area and they must have the characteristics that make them a good representative of properties associated with that aspect of the past. The significance of an historic district can be properly understood when it is evaluated within its historic context. Historic contexts are those patterns or trends in history by which a specific district is understood and its meaning (and ultimately its significance) within history is made clear. In order to decide whether a district's contributing properties are significant within their historic context, it must be determined which facet of history the district represents; the significance of that facet of history; whether the subject district has relevance in illustrating the historic context; how the district illustrates that history; and an analysis of the physical features the contributing properties in the district possess to determine if they convey the aspect or history with which they are associated. If the subject district represents an important aspect of the area's history (under any of the seven criteria recognized by the Municipal Code) *and* possesses the requisite quality of integrity, then it qualifies as a historic district.

## **BACKGROUND / HISTORIC CONTEXT**

The relatively short history of Palm Springs can be organized into three more or less 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 can be considered to have begun with the construction of the area's first "modern" structure, Rudolph Schindler's Paul and Betty Popenoe Cabin in 1922. 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 from a sleepy village into an increasingly cosmopolitan environment that saw the construction of schools, hospitals, an airport and other important public works projects. 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 lands surrounding the town's original core.

Palm Springs' Hollywood associations certainly imparted an air of sophistication to the city. By 1964, the city had built 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 and Donald Wexler.

## **EVALUATION:**

### **Criterion 1:** Significant Event (*Completed because Criterion 1 is marked above*)

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 recognizes properties associated with events or patterns of events or historic trends, such as the gradual rise of the city's prominence in architectural excellence in midcentury modern architecture that is an important pattern of events within this associated context. In this regard, there are two patterns of events: the rise in popularity of a particular building type and the rise of Palm Springs' prominence in midcentury architectural excellence. The PDLP complex is an outstanding example of a historic building type (specifically, the "small" seasonal rental property or hotel/apartment) which slowly gained prominence from about 1920 to 1965. Additionally, the PDLP complex is an outstanding example of multi-family residential design and construction of buildings within the context of midcentury desert Modernism. *The PDLP complex is associated with this pattern of events for its ability to exemplify both the rise of a specific building type and the modern period of the national, state and local history. Therefore, the contributing properties within the district qualify for listing as a Historic District under Criterion 1.**

## **ARCHITECTURE** (Criteria 3 – 6)

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

The buildings of the PDLP historic district represent a specific building-type and exhibit stylistic markers which place them directly in the historic context of Palm Springs' Modern Period. Though one of the city's lesser-known condominium complexes, the

PDLP complex is a prime and largely intact example of a particular building-type and the significant modernist architecture for which Palm Springs is widely known. As such the contributing properties in the district may be viewed as an important component of the historic trends that have come to define Palm Springs' image as a vacation resort destination and the center of important midcentury architecture, i.e., an historic trend that exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history. The contributing properties within the district qualify for listing as a Historic District 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 contributing properties in the district are eligible under this criterion as they represent a fine example of a particular building-type (specifically, the "small" seasonal rental property or hotel/apartment) that slowly established itself in the resort community of Palm Springs from about 1920-1965. The PDLP complex's buildings also qualify under the theme of Modern architecture because they possess distinctive characteristics that make up the many qualities of the style, such as overall horizontality, expression of structure, flat roofs, expansive amounts of glass, use of inexpensive, machine produced materials, masonry, etc. The contributing properties in the district are eligible because, in total, they represent an important example of building practices in Palm Springs from 1920-1965 and at "midcentury." The contributing properties in the district qualify as a Historic District on the local registry under Criterion 4.

**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. However, because the buildings in the proposed historic district do possess individual distinction and could qualify individually as Class 1 Historic Sites under the previous criteria, Criterion 6 does not apply. Hence, the PDLP 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 PDLP complex does not qualify for listing on the local registry under Criterion 7.

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

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### 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 property was constructed or the place where an historic event occurred. The relationship between the property and its location is often important to understanding why the property was created or why something happened. The actual location of a historic property, complemented by its setting, is particularly important in recapturing the sense of historic events and persons. Except in rare cases, the relationship between a property and its historic associations is destroyed if the property is moved. ***The PDLP complex remains in its original location and therefore fully meets this criterion.***

### 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. ***The essential characteristics of form, plan, space, structure, and style have survived intact in the PDLP complex. Similarly, the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; and the type, amount, and style of detailing, have all survived intact.***

## 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 PDLP complex continues to reflect the architect or designer's original design relationship of site and structure. All original elements of the PDLP complex are intact and in place as originally designed.***

## 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. ***The PDLP complex exhibits a high level of design in part due to the choice of materials and adornments. A sophisticated effect is accomplished within the cohesive and striking combination of materials. Although a few vinyl replacement windows have been installed in the PDLP complex, the review process that will accompany historic designation should curtail future unsympathetic changes and create a framework to reverse those that currently exist.***

## 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 PDLP complex represents a high level of design expression. The PDLP complex also reaches a high level of construction standards that can be expected to be associated with an "upscale" seasonal resort facility. Therefore, 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 constructed, the PDLP complex catered to the aspiring upper middle class. As such the "feeling" of the buildings necessarily had to exude urbanity albeit it in a more informal resort location. The mid-1960s were a sophisticated, forward-looking and optimistic time, a feeling still expressed in the design of the complex. Accordingly, the PDLP complex retains the 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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. ***Despite being converted from rental units into a full-year residential development, the PDLP complex is an important example of a small, midcentury seasonal vacation rental 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 PDLP complex appears to be in excellent condition partially due to the use of construction materials suitable for the harsh desert environment. This integrity analysis confirms that the buildings and site of the PDLP complex still possess all seven aspects of integrity. While the buildings have undergone very minor alterations since construction, all of the character-defining features survive as originally designed. The buildings and site retain a high degree of integrity sufficient to qualify them for designation as an historic district.

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## 8. Bibliography

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Attached is a list of books, articles, and other sources cited or used in preparing this application and other documentation that may be relevant.

### Books

Ainsworth, Ed. *Golden Checkerboard*. Palm Desert, CA: Desert-Southwest, Inc., 1965

Architectural Resources Group. *City of Palm Springs Historic Resources Survey*. San Francisco, 2004

Bogert, Frank. *First Hundred Years*. Palm Springs, CA. Palm Springs Heritage Associates, 1987

Cinotto, Simone. *Making Italian America, Consumer Culture and the Production of Ethnic Identities*. Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2014

Cygelman, Adele. *Palm Springs Modern*. New York: Rizzoli, 1999

Hess, Alan and Andrew Danish. *Palm Springs Weekend: The Architecture and Design of a Midcentury Oasis*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2001

Johns, Howard. *Palm Springs Confidential*. Fort Lee, NJ: Barricade Books, 2004

Moruzzi, Peter. *Palm Springs Holiday*. Layton, UT: Gibbs Smith, 2009

Mungo, Ray. *Palm Springs Babylon*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993

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.

Rosenow, Erik. *The Architecture of Desert Leisure*. Palm Springs: Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, 2013

Serraino, Pierluigi and Julius Shulman. *Modernism Rediscovered*. Cologne: Taschen, 2000

### Magazines & Newspapers

- *Desert Sun* newspaper
- Mary M. Alward, *Italian Influence on American Glamour* (website article at [www.LifeinItaly.com](http://www.LifeinItaly.com))

### Other Sources Consulted

- Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (website [www.aguacaliente.org](http://www.aguacaliente.org))
- City of Palm Springs (Planning and Building Departments)
- Palm Springs Historical Society
- Palm Springs Public Library
- Riverside County Assessor's Office

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## 9. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: Approximately .9 acres (or 40,510 sq. ft.)  
Property Boundary Description: See Appendices I and II.

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## 10. Prepared By

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Name/title: James R. Harlan  
Organization: Submitted on behalf of the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation in partnership with the Pompeii de Las Palmas Homeowners Association  
Street address: 1775 East Palm Canyon Drive, Suite 110-195  
City: Palm Springs State: CA Zip: 92264  
Telephone: (760) 837-7117  
e-mail address: info@pspreservationfoundation.org

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## 11. Required Documentation

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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: Assessor's Map (top of page is east)

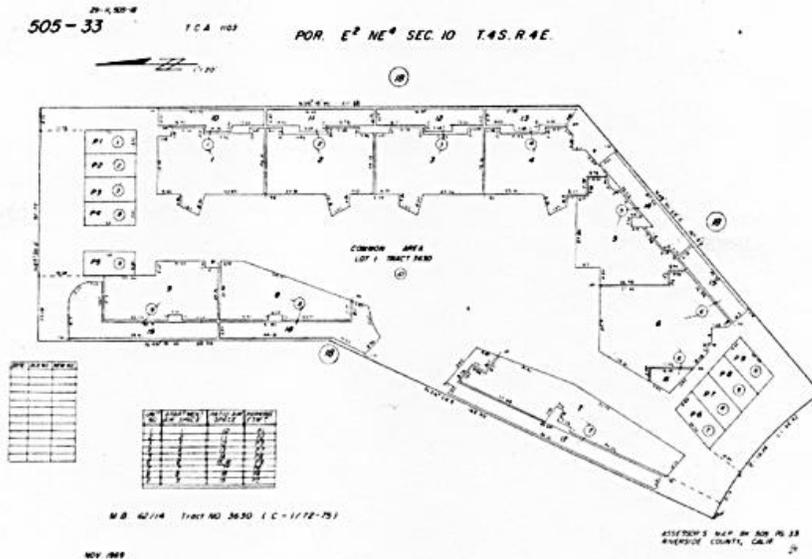
Property Information Center

8/5/14, 7:09 AM

Parcel Number: 505330002-2  
Map Book: 505  
Page/Block: 330  
Parcel: 2  
Check Digit: 2

## HOW TO READ THE ASSESSOR'S MAP PAGE

The numerical parcel number on a map page consists of three main segments. The first three digits is the map book number. The second set of three numbers is the page/block number, and the third segment identifies the parcel number.



[http://pic.asrcikrec.com/Kview\\_ParcelMaps.aspx?ParcelNumber=505330002-2](http://pic.asrcikrec.com/Kview_ParcelMaps.aspx?ParcelNumber=505330002-2)

Page 1 of 2

**Appendix II: Current Addresses and Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs)**

<u>Address</u>	<u>APN</u>
221 West Stevens Road	505-330-001
223 West Stevens Road	505-330-002
225 West Stevens Road	505-330-003
227 West Stevens Road	505-330-004
229 West Stevens Road	505-330-005
331 West Stevens Road	505-330-006
200 Camino Norte	505-330-007
204 Camino Norte	505-330-008
206 Camino Norte	505-330-009
Common Area	505-330-010

(All addresses within Palm Springs, CA 92262)

Note: Since an “omnibus” legal description of the PDLP complex cannot be located (or may not exist) it is recommended that the above compilation of APNs be cited to describe the geographic boundaries of the proposed historic district.

## Appendix III: Informal Field Survey of Representative “Small” Seasonal Rental Properties and Hotels/Apartments

(Historic Names Used if Known)

### Extant Properties in Vicinity of Pompeii de Las Palmas

Coral Sands	210 W Stevens Road	built 1953
La Siesta Villas <sup>1</sup>	247 W Stevens Road	built 1965
Via Del Sol Apartment Hotel <sup>2</sup>	222 W Via Sol	built 1957
La Posada Hotel*	120 Vereda Sur	built 1955
Villa de Las Palmas	197 W Via Lola	built 1962
Villa Hermosa**	155 W Hermosa	built 1947
Merito Manor***	183 W Merito Place	built 1961
Carmelita Hotel & Apartments <sup>3</sup>	515 N Palm Canyon Drive	built 1950
Del Hai Mo Lodge	641 N Palm Canyon Drive	built 1952

<sup>1</sup> Built on site of demolished La Siesta Bungalows

<sup>2</sup> Today “Via Del Sol Resort”

<sup>3</sup> Today “The Corridor”/Just Fabulous Bookstore

(\*Designed by Herbert Burns, \*\*Designed by Albert Frey, \*\*\*Designed by Barry Berkus)

### Demolished Properties in Vicinity of Pompeii de Las Palmas

Sunny Sands Hotel	1565 N Palm Canyon Drive	built 1947
El Portal Hotel	1561 N Palm Canyon Drive	circa 1935
El Pueblito	1443 N Palm Canyon Drive	
Casa del Camino	1447 N Palm Canyon Drive	
Casas del Sol Apartments	1153 N Palm Canyon Drive	
Canyon View Apartments	1087 N Palm Canyon Drive	
Bisonte Lodge****	260 West Vista Chino	circa 1950

(\*\*\*\*Designed by E. Stewart Williams)

**Appendix IV: Photographic Documentation of Buildings and Site**

Note: Detailed photographic documentation of the three buildings (which includes the nine units and carports) of the Pompeii de Las Palmas condominium complex and common areas is provided as a separate enclosure on a compact disk. These photographs are provided separately to illustrate various elevations and architectural features of the units and common areas.



Figure 1. North facade along West Stevens Road



Figure 2. West Stevens Road entry and carports



Figure 3. Eave detail along West Stevens Road



Figure 4. Entry condition detail along West Stevens Road



Figure 5. Pedestrian entry along Camino Norte



Figure 6. Courtyard

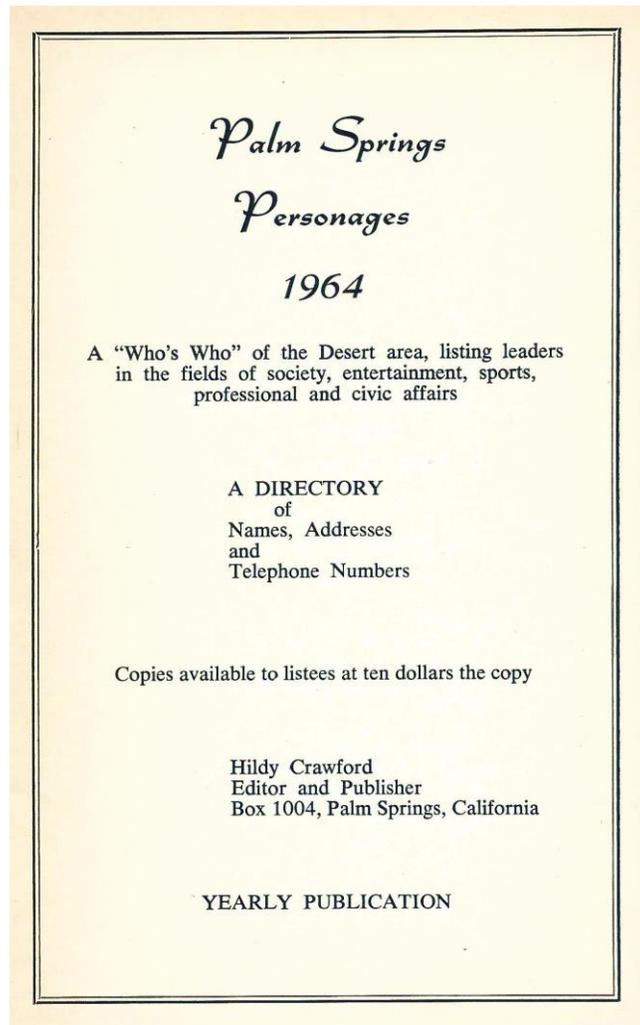


Figure 7. Pool cabana



Figure 8. Internal pedestrian walkway

Appendix V: Excerpts from 1964 issue of *Palm Springs Personages*



MUNHOLLAND, Mr. John G.  
*Realtor*  
322 Camino Norte  
Palm Springs  
325-6455

Villa Riviera  
800 E. Ocean Blvd., Apt. 304  
Long Beach  
California  
HE 5-4762

Affiliations: Shadow Mountain Club, Ranch Club, Pacific Coast  
Club (L.B.), L.A. Athletic Club, Al Malaikah, El Bekal Shrine,  
B.P.O. Elks, Masonic Orders, California Bar, Desert Riders,  
California Real Estate Assn., Honorary President California  
Real Estate Assn., Past President Palm Springs Realty Board.

## Appendix VI: Note from Mr. Ari Bass Regarding the PDLP Complex

“[The PDLP]...complex holds a ton of lifelong memories for my mom, brother and me – which I’d like to articulate for you. My grandparents bought the [PDLP] unit around 1967. My mom used to take us frequently, and my grandparents took us as well. We used to keep sleds at the place so in the winter [so] we could go up to the Tram and play in the snow. We obviously witnessed the sad decline of the [Palm Springs] area and [PDLP] property as development expanded to Rancho Mirage, Palm Desert and La Quinta. We did talk about selling the place and trading [it] for a different PS location; however, we never gave up on the old school allure and sexiness of the Las Palmas area. I recently visited for the first time in about 5 years; I brought my mom, wife, and 3 girls. Truthfully, I got very emotional when I saw how great the complex looked. So many great memories rushed back into my mind – without the pool fence and with the new landscaping it looks terrific. The first time I was able to dive to the bottom of a pool was there; one of the first times I rode a bike without training wheels was on Camino Norte. We spent countless Thanksgivings, Passovers and Easters at Pompeii de Las Palmas; the complex provides a great place for an Easter Egg hunt. One of the truly special experiences of my recent, yet very brief, visit was walking as a family to breakfast and dinner on Palm Canyon. The last time I did that was well over THIRTY years ago – I am 44 now. We are thrilled the HOA is reviving the complex, just as the neighborhood is also being revived.

Sincerely,

Ari Bass  
Orange County

(Note: Ari’s mother, Dori, still owns a PDLP unit. She inherited it from her father who purchased the unit when it was first offered for sale).