



HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD STAFF REPORT

DATE: August 26, 2021

PUBLIC HEARING

SUBJECT: AN APPLICATION BY THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION OF "THE ROBERT ALEXANDER RESIDENCE" (AKA "THE HOUSE OF TOMORROW" LOCATED AT 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, (APN #505-082-026), CASE HSPB #136. (KL).

FROM: Department of Planning Services

SUMMARY

At its May 4, 2021 meeting, the HSPB considered Case 3.0917 proposing alterations to 1350 Ladera Circle; a Class 3 site. At that meeting, the Board voted to deny the application, to impose a 120-day stay of demolition and directed staff to initiate an application for possible historic resource designation of the site.

The Board will consider the application in this public hearing.

If designated as a historic resource, the property would be subject to the regulations outlined in Section 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Open the public hearing and receive public testimony.
2. Close the public hearing and adopt Resolution HSPB #136, "A RESOLUTION OF THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL DESIGNATE "THE ROBERT ALEXANDER RESIDENCE" (AKA "THE HOUSE OF TOMORROW") LOCATED AT 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, AS CLASS 1 (LANDMARK) HISTORIC RESOURCE HSPB #136, SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS (APN 505-082-026)."

BACKGROUND AND SETTING:

A historic resources report prepared by Robert Chattel & Associates dated July 12, 2021 ("the report") is the basis of this staff report.

<i>Related Relevant City Actions by HSPB, Planning, Fire, Building, etc...</i>	
May 4, 2021	HSPB reviewed Case 3.0917 (alterations to a Class 3 site) and voted unanimously to deny the application, place a 120-day stay of demolition on the property and to initiate an application for possible historic resource designation pursuant to PSMC 8.05.130
August, 2021	Site inspection by members of the HSPB and City Staff.

<i>Ownership Status</i>	
December, 2020	Purchase by the current owner.

BELOW AN AERIAL VIEW OF THE RESIDENCE.



FRONT ELEVATION OF THE ALEXANDER RESIDENCE



The dwelling at 1350 Ladera Circle was designed by architect William Krisel for real estate developer Robert Alexander and his family. It is a unique example of residential architecture from the mid-twentieth century. The building's period of significance is 1960 to 1965.

ANALYSIS:

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

"...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 historic resources for the education and welfare of the citizens."

Standard Conditions that apply to Historic Resources

The following shall apply to a Class 1 or 2 Historic Site or Resource:

1. It shall meet the definition of a Class 1 or 2 historic resource as outlined in Municipal Code Section 8.05.020 including the findings outlined in Section 8.05.070 (C).
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. A marker explaining the historic nature of the site may be installed at the site in a location viewable from the public way.
5. Compliance with all rules and regulations for Historic Resources and Historic Districts under Chapter 8.05 of the Municipal Code.
6. If designated, the findings in support of designation shall be stated in a resolution of the City Council that shall be recorded with the County Recorders' office within 90 days of the effective date of the Council's resolution.

Evaluation of the Application. Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 8.05.070 (C,1,a), the HSPB shall evaluate the application and make findings in conformance with the following criteria:

Criteria for the Designation of Class 1 Historic Resources. A site, structure, building or object may be designated as a Class 1 historic resource, provided both of the following findings ("a" and "b") are met:

- a. *The site, structure, building or object exhibits exceptional historic significance and meets one or more of the criteria listed below:*

The Alexander residence exhibits exceptional historic significance because of its association with architect William Krisel, its association with Robert Alexander, a person of local significance, as a unique example of architecture from the mid twentieth century period, and because it reflects unique construction characteristics.

(Criterion 1) The resource is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community;

On page 45 the report notes that although singer and actor Elvis Presley and his wife Priscilla rented the home for a brief period in 1967 and had their honeymoon at the home, that event itself does not constitute a meaningful contribution under this criterion. The report does not identify any other noteworthy events associated with the site; thus it does not qualify under Criterion 1.

(Criterion 2) The resource is associated with the lives of persons who made a meaningful contribution to national, state or local history;

The report notes on page 45 that the home is historically significant for its association with the lives of Robert and Helene Alexander. Robert Alexander and his father George ran the Alexander Development Company which is credited for transforming Palm Springs from an enclave of wealthy industrialists and notables from the movie industry to a vacation and retirement community accessible to the middle class. Both Robert and Helene were active in community affairs and philanthropy. For these reasons, the site qualifies as a historic resource under Criterion 2.

(Criterion 3) The resource reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, state or local history;

On page 46, the report explains that the Alexander Residence reflects the post-World War II period in terms of innovative design principles. The report notes that the home cleverly blends design characteristics of three different styles: (1) elements of Organic architecture with the fieldstone walls and integration of the structure with the topography of the site, (2) the mid-century period with its open floor plan, expansive use of floor-to-ceiling glass and integrated carport, and (3) the Google style, with its space-age aesthetic characterized by the wing-shape of the roofline and the “spaceship-like” quality of the master bedroom hovering over the front lawn and the “saucer-like” form of the suspended fireplace in the living room. For these reasons, staff concurs that the site qualifies as a historic resource under Criterion 3.

BELOW LEFT & CENTER: THE FRONT ROOFLINE REFLECTS THE FORM OF A JET AIRPLANE, THE ROUNDED MASTER BEDROOM APPEARS TO BE “LIFTING OFF” THE SITE LIKE A SPACE SHIP, AND AT THE RIGHT, THE SAUCER-SHAPED FIREPLACE IN THE LIVING ROOM .



(Criterion 4) The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction;

The form of the Alexander residence with its long, column-free rooflines and expansive cantilevered roofs providing shade and shelter from the desert sun at the front and rear terrace reflect the extensive amount of steel used in the construction of the house. Although a common characteristic of mid-twentieth century design is to expose the structure as part of the aesthetic, the Alexander residence conceals the steel elements, belying the source of the structural stability of the long, open roof spans. The method of construction contributes to the dramatic visual effect of the structure. As such, staff concurs that the home qualifies as a historic site under criterion 4.

(Criterion 5) The resource presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age, or that possesses high artistic value;

The design of the Alexander Residence is credited to the architectural firm of Palmer & Krisel. [Dan Saxon Palmer (1920 – 2007) and William Krisel (1924 – 2017)]. The business partnership between Palmer & Krisel lasted from 1949 through 1966. Although the report briefly mentions Palmer, it credits the primary design of the Alexander residence to Krisel.

Beginning on page 39, the report documents Krisel’s architectural career, noting that the Alexander residence was perhaps Krisel’s “most adventurous and high-spirited” custom home design. Early in their partnership, Palmer & Krisel decided to focus on the mass-produced tract housing industry, putting into practice modern construction methods and materials to demonstrate how Modernist design could cut costs and deliver value while also producing attractive and livable dwellings.

Along with his contemporaries such as Donald Wexler and William Cody, Palmer & Krisel’s work helped define what has become known as “Desert Modern architecture” and Krisel in particular continues to be recognized for his contribution in the post-war transformation and expansion of Palm Springs. Lastly, the exuberant “space-age”

aesthetic of the Alexander residence, together with the one-of a kind floor plan using a series of circular pavilions at each corner of the diamond-shaped roof form create a unique structure that possesses high artistic value. Therefore, staff concurs that the Alexander residence qualifies as a historic site under Criterion 5.

(Criterion 6) The resource represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, as used in evaluating applications for designation of historic districts, for parcels on which more than one entity exists; or

The report does not assert that the Alexander residence qualifies under Criterion 6.

(Criterion 7) The resource has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to national, state or local history or prehistory.

No information has been provided in the historic resources report on any pre-historic significance of the site.

Analysis of Integrity. (PSMC 8.05.070 (C,1,b). The site, structure, building or object retains one or more of the following aspects of integrity, as established in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards: integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, setting, feeling, or association.

Beginning on page 48 of the report is an evaluation of the site relative to the seven aspects or qualities of historic integrity, as recognized by the National Register of Historic Places. The seven aspects or qualities include location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The report concludes that despite certain unpermitted additions and demolition of the pool and associated terrazzo terrace, the site retains a high degree of integrity and is further analyzed below:

1. Location:

The Alexander residence remains in the same location that it was constructed, thus it retains integrity of location.

2. Design:

As noted in the report, although the subject property reflects much of the original unique design characteristics, recent work has destroyed or altered some character-defining features. These include the terrazzo pool deck and exterior steps that extended outward from steps inside the home between the dining room and the living room, the swimming pool tile, edge coping and plaster. Most of the original landscape material has also been removed. Replacing the terrazzo pool terrace and steps with an appropriate exterior-grade terrazzo would restore the design integrity of this part of the site.

BELOW THE TERRAZZO POOL TERRACE AND STEPS THAT CREATED A STRONG VISUAL CONNECTION BETWEEN INDOORS AND OUTDOORS WERE RECENTLY DEMOLISHED



A room addition off the northwest corner of the home visually impairs the symmetry of the west elevation facing the rear yard.

BELOW: NOTE THE SYMMETRY OF THE ORIGINAL WEST FAÇADE AND TERRAZZO TERRACE



THE SYMMETRY AND COHESIVENESS OF THE REAR ELEVATION HAS BEEN VISUALLY IMPAIRED BY A NON-PERMITTED ROOM ADDITION AT THE NORTHWEST (LEFT) SIDE



Removal of this unpermitted addition would strengthen the design integrity of the rear

facade. Similarly, the stucco wall and garage doors that converted the original carport to a garage diminishes the defining characteristic of the carport. Open carports allowed ventilation and were common features in post-World War II mid-century modern residential design.

Despite the adverse impact of these changes, (many of which are reversible) the home possesses good design integrity.

3. Setting:

The report analyzes the quality of Setting on page 49. Encroaching development, loss of views and privacy, and removal of the landscape have diminished the integrity of the setting of the Alexander residence. However, the overall context of the setting; that of a custom single-family dwelling on a hillside lot with direct “face-on” views at the end of a short cul de sac within a tract of other modern era homes remains.

4. Materials:

As noted on page 49 of the report, the rear yard is an important space for entertainment and recreation that emphasized the indoor-outdoor relationship characteristic of so many homes in Palm Springs. The complete demolition of the pool, tile, coping terrazzo terrace, steps and landscape diminishes the integrity of materials. Despite these losses, the rest of the home retains a good degree of material integrity with the fieldstone rock walls, stucco, glass, interior terrazzo and the washed aggregate circular stepping stones at the front entry.

5. Workmanship:

The property reflects a high level of quality in workmanship as evidenced in the hand-laid fieldstone-clad walls, careful method of integrating the frameless clerestory windows and precise detailing of the aluminum strips in the terrazzo; for example, in the family room where the aluminum strips converge in a spoke-like pattern at the fireplace. The attention to detail, many irregular angles, canted walls and circular form of the various parts of the home combine to reflect a substantial quality level of workmanship typical for a custom designed home for a high-profile client. Thus, the home retains integrity of workmanship.

6. Feeling:

The design of the Alexander residence creates a unique, exuberant architectural expression that feels very much from the period of the late 1950's and early 1960's when America's fascination with space travel, jet-powered airplanes, flying saucers and modern styling were at their zenith. Furthermore, the feeling of casual contemporary living is still evident at the Alexander residence.

7. Association:

The dwelling at 1350 Ladera Circle retains its association with owner / developer Robert Alexander, architect William Krisel and the post-war period of innovative forward-minded modern design. Its space-age aesthetic is associated with the mid-twentieth century period. For these reasons, staff concurs that the site retains integrity of Association.

In conclusion, the Alexander residence retains a high degree of historic integrity.

DEFINING HISTORIC CHARACTERISTICS

In considering a recommendation for historic resource designation it is important to distinguish those physical elements that are original or from the period of significance that contribute to the resource's historic significance from alterations, additions or features that were added at a later time that may be sympathetic to the original character, but which may create a false sense of historicity. Distinguishing original character-defining features from non-original elements aids the HSPB when it is tasked with evaluating future alterations to the historic resource.

On page 18 the report identifies the physical character-defining historic features of this site as follows:

Overall Visual Aspects

- One-and-a-half story massing with spaceship quality in composition.
- Location on sloped lot at terminus of cul-de-sac.
- Multiple levels that change in elevation using stairs and conform to the slope of site.
- Relationship between indoors and outdoors, expressed via floor-to-ceiling windows and continuation of terrazzo steps from living room and dining room to rear yard.
- Generally symmetrical composition on both the front and rear elevations.
- Exterior use of fieldstone, stucco, glass, and aluminum.
- Diamond-shaped plan with integral circular pavilions at each corner.
- Vast shed roof configuration, including striking point centered over front facade, rounded corners, expansive eaves, and triangular cutouts.
- Upper-level master bedroom projection over inset fieldstone-clad wall.
- Offset entrance courtyard hidden from street view by fieldstone-clad wall and iron gate.

- Flush-mounted and metal-framed floor-to-ceiling windows, bands of windows, and clerestory windows and glass sliding doors.¹
- Pentagonal gunite swimming pool at rear yard.
- Original open carport (enclosed at some point with a stucco-clad wood frame wall and metal overhead garage doors)

Visual Character at Close Range

- Spoke-like shape of beams that join or converge just above the fieldstone-clad wall underneath upper-level master bedroom projection.
- Decorative iron gate enclosing entrance courtyard.
- Circular, seeded aggregate steppingstones and rectangular landing set over a water feature clad in fieldstone.
- Pentagon-shaped terrazzo-clad projecting stoop with apex facing southeast.
- Dramatic, full height, highly decorative multi-paneled wood double-door entry.
- Oversized bronze doorknobs featuring densely textured patterns.
- Oversized sconce light fixture placed asymmetrically to the west of the entry door.
- Clerestory glass that is frameless at the head, visually linking interior and exterior ceiling plane.

THE FRAMELESS DETAIL AT THE TOP OF THE CLERESTORY WINDOWS ALLOWS THE CEILING PLANE TO SEAMLESSLY EXTEND FROM INSIDE TO OUTSIDE



Non-contributing elements:

- The stucco-clad wall and garage doors enclosing the carport.
- The room addition off the northwest corner of the home adjacent to the fieldstone

¹ Staff would assert that the configuration, location, and size of doors and windows and the frameless detailing of the windows at the ceiling are character-defining. However if the owner wishes to replace the glass with more energy-efficient, code-compliant (tempered) glazing in the future, this should be allowed so long as it does not change the configuration, location, size and general detailing of the fenestration.

- wall.
- The landscape.
 - Non-original windows on the north and west elevation.
 - The door from the master bedroom suite onto the carport / garage roof and the iron security gate at the roof level over the open stairway.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The proposed historic resource designation is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical changes to the environment, directly or indirectly.

NOTIFICATION

Pursuant to section 8.05.140 of the Municipal Code of Palm Springs, all residents within five hundred (500) feet of the subject property have been notified and notice was published in a newspaper of general circulation.

CONCLUSION:

The Robert Alexander residence meets the definition of a historic resource based on Criteria 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the Palm Springs Historic Preservation Ordinance and possesses sufficient historic integrity to qualify as a Class 1 (landmark) site.



Ken Lyon, RA, Associate Planner
Historic Preservation Officer



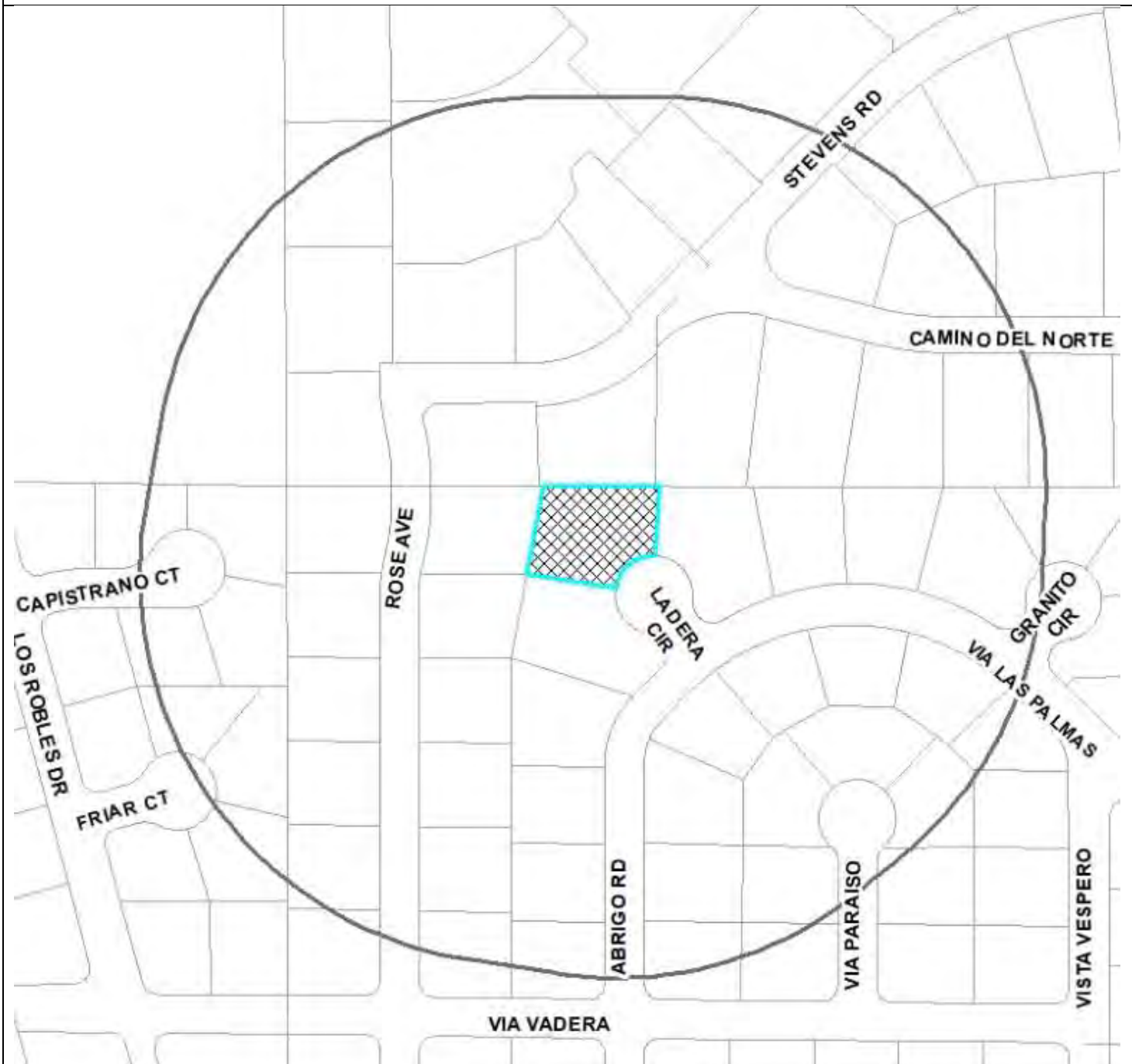
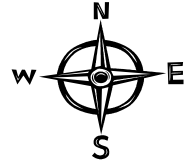
Flinn Fagg, AIOF
Development Services Director

Attachments:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Draft Resolution
3. Application, related background materials, photos (under separate cover).



Department of Planning Services Vicinity Map



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

1350 Ladera Circle

HISTORIC RESOURCES REPORT

Alexander Residence (“House of Tomorrow”)
1350 Ladera Circle
Palm Springs, California



Prepared for:
City of Palm Springs
3200 Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92263

Prepared by:



Chattel, Inc. | Historic Preservation Consultants
13417 Ventura Boulevard
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July 12, 2021

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I. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Historic Resources Report (report) is to determine if the property located at 1350 Ladera Circle, Palm Springs, California (Assessor Parcel Number: 505-082-026, subject property) in the Vista Las Palmas neighborhood is eligible as a Class 1 or Class 2 historic resource under the City of Palm Springs (City) Historic Preservation Ordinance.

At its May 4, 2021 meeting, the City Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) considered a request for approval for alterations and partial demolition at the subject property and directed City staff to initiate an application and historic resources report to inform the HSPB on the potential historic significance of the subject property. This document serves as the historic resources report and uses site-specific and contextual research in primary and secondary sources, application of criteria of significance within the appropriate historic contexts, and direct observations of the subject property made by professionals meeting the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards*.

The subject property, known as the Alexander Residence or the "House of Tomorrow"¹, is a one-and-a-half-story single-family residence constructed in 1960 for real estate developer Robert "Bob" Alexander, his wife homemaker and philanthropist Helene, and daughter Jill. It was designed in the Mid-Century Modern architectural style by master architect William Krisel, AIA of Palmer & Krisel. The subject property is currently identified as a City Class 3 building, or potentially eligible resource, and was previously identified by Historic Resources Group (HRG) as appearing eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) as an individual property through survey evaluation; appearing eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) as an individual property through survey evaluation; and being locally significant both individually and as a contributor to a district that is locally listed, designated, determined eligible or appears eligible through survey evaluation as part of the Citywide Survey published in 2018. HRG assigned California Register status codes 3S, 3CS and 5B, consistent with the preceding narrative description.

For the reasons stated in this report, the subject property is eligible for local designation as a Class 1 historic resource under City Criterion ii for association with the lives of Bob and Helene Alexander; Criterion iii for reflecting innovative design principles that characterize the Post-World War II period of single-family residential development in Palm Springs through its unique interpretation of the Mid-Century Modern style with Organic and Googie elements; Criterion iv for embodying distinctive characteristics of a method of construction through its extensive use of steel to achieve the long spans of its distinctive roof and open plan; and Criterion v as a work of master architect William Krisel, AIA of Palmer & Krisel which possesses high artistic value. Despite limited alterations, the subject property continues to retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The period of significance is from 1960, when the residence was built, to 1965, with the deaths of Bob and Helene Alexander.

¹ The origins of the name "House of Tomorrow" are unclear. The earliest mention of the name found in available newspaper articles of the *Palm Springs Desert Sun* is from 2000, in which the subject property is anecdotally noted as having been referred to by Bob Alexander as the "House of Tomorrow" upon completion. Other news articles have claimed the name originates from the 1962 issue of *Look Magazine*, though the name does not appear in the article about the subject property titled "The Way-Out Way of Life." Original drawings refer to the subject property as the "Robert Alexander Residence." Nevertheless, the "House of Tomorrow" name has subsequently been used in City documents and architectural publications featuring the subject property.

Refer to Attachment A for DPR 523A forms prepared by ARG and HRG, Attachment B for maps and aerials, Attachment C for historic images, Attachment D for contemporary photos, Attachment E for selected historic building permits, and Attachment F for 1962 *Look Magazine* spread featuring the subject property.

II. QUALIFICATIONS

Chattel, Inc. (Chattel) is a full-service historic preservation-consulting firm with practice throughout the western United States. The firm represents governmental agencies and private ventures, successfully balancing project goals with a myriad of historic preservation regulations without sacrificing principles on either side. Comprised of professionals meeting the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards* in history, architecture, architectural history, and historic architecture, the firm offers professional services including historical resources evaluation and project effects analysis, in addition to consultation on federal, state, and local historic preservation statutes and regulations.

Chattel staff engage in a collaborative process and work together as a team on individual projects. This report was prepared by President Robert Jay Chattel, architectural historian and preservation architect, and Associate II Alvin-Christian Nuval, planner. Additional support was provided by Principal Associate Leslie Heumann, architectural historian, and Intern Narek Mkrtoumian.

III. METHODOLOGY

Primary and secondary source materials were consulted for the development of this assessment and applicable historic contexts. For a complete list of sources, see bibliography. Sources generally included:

- Building permits and records from the City of Palm Springs
- Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings prepared by HRG in 2018
- Newspaper articles (primarily from the *Palm Springs Desert Sun* and *Los Angeles Times*, available online through Newspapers.com)
- Chain of title prepared by WFG National Title Company in 2021
- William Krisel papers, 1935-2014 held by the Getty Research Institute Library and Special Collections
- Publications, including *The Alexanders: A Desert Legacy* by James R. Harlan and *William Krisel's Palm Springs: The Language of Modernism* edited by Chris Menrad and Heidi Creighton
- Historic and current aerials from NETR Historic Aerials and Google Earth
- Other previous surveys, evaluations, and reports of the subject property

Note that while original drawings of the subject property are included as part of the William Krisel papers, 1935-2014 held by the Getty Research Institute, the Getty Research Institute Library and Special Collections continues to be closed to the public due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The owner of the subject property worked with a librarian at the Getty Research Institute to receive reference photographs of the drawings which were subsequently reviewed by Chattel. The photographs of the drawings were intended to be used for research purposes only and are not included in this report.

A site visit was conducted by President Robert Jay Chattel, architectural historian and preservation architect, and Associate II Alvin-Christian Nuval, planner, on June 2, 2021, during which the exterior and interior of the subject property were extensively photographed and integrity was assessed.

IV. REGULATORY SETTING

City of Palm Springs

In considering eligibility as a historic resource, the City has a system in which properties may be classified as having Class 1, 2, 3, or 4 status. As defined in Palm Springs Municipal Code (PSMC) Section 8.05.020:

“Landmark/Class 1 historic resource” means any site, structure, building or object not located on Tribal Trust or Allocated Trust Land designated by resolution of the City Council as having historic, architectural, archaeological, cultural, or aesthetic significance that contributes to an understanding and awareness of the community’s history.

“Historic Merit/Class 2 historic resource” means a site, structure, building or object not located on Tribal Trust or Allocated Trust Land that does not qualify for Class 1 historic resource designation under this chapter, but is otherwise deserving of official recognition as having historic, architectural, archaeological, cultural, or aesthetic significance and is designated as a Class 2 historic resource by resolution of the City Council. A Class 2 historic resource may lack some aspects of historic integrity, or may include a site where the structure, building or object of historic significance has been lost, damaged or removed. Class 2 sites on which the historic resource still exists are eligible for the execution of a Mills Act historic property preservation agreement, as determined by City Council.

“Potentially Eligible/Class 3 building” means any building which is not a Class 1 or Class 2 historic resource, but is identified in a City historic resources survey as eligible for designation as a historic resource. A building may be a Class 3 building regardless of the construction date or the improvements thereon. Class 3 sites are not eligible for the execution of a Mills Act historic property preservation agreement.

“Class 4 building” means any building which is not a Class 1 or Class 2 historic resource or a Class 3 building, and on which the building or improvements thereon were constructed before January 1, 1978, or whose age cannot be determined. The City Council shall review this date and update it as it deems appropriate through amendment to this chapter.

Under PSMC Section 8.05.070(C)(1), City Council may designate a property as a Class 1 historic resource if it meets the following criteria of subsections (a) and (b):

- a. *The site, structure, building or object exhibits exceptional historic significance and meets one or more of the criteria listed below:*
 - (i) *The resource is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community; or*
 - (ii) *The resource is associated with the lives of persons who made a meaningful contribution to national, state or local history; or*
 - (iii) *The resource reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, state or local history; or*
 - (iv) *The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or*

- (v) *The resource presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age, or that possesses high artistic value; or*
 - (vi) *The resource represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, as used in evaluating applications for designation of historic districts, for parcels on which more than one entity exists; or*
 - (vii) *The resource has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to national, state or local history or prehistory.*
- b. *The site, structure, building or object shall be evaluated for integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association according to the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service's National Register Bulletin titled: "How to apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation" as revised from time to time.*

The City Council may designate a property as a Class 2 historic resource if it meets the criteria of subsection (a) above, but does not meet the findings for integrity in subsection (b).

Relationship to Subject Property

The subject property is currently identified as a City Class 3 building. Based on the findings of this report, the subject property is eligible for designation as a Class 1 historic resource under City Criterion ii for association with the lives of Bob and Helene Alexander; Criterion iii for reflecting innovative design principles that characterize the Post-World War II period of single-family residential development in Palm Springs through its unique interpretation of the Mid-Century Modern style with Organic and Googie elements; Criterion iv for embodying distinctive characteristics of a method of construction through its extensive use of steel to achieve the long spans of its distinctive roof and open plan; and Criterion v as a work of master architect William Krisel, AIA of Palmer & Krisel which possesses high artistic value. Additionally, despite limited alterations, the subject property continues to retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Previous Surveys, Evaluations, and Reports

The following section summarizes previous surveys, evaluations, and reports completed for the City regarding the subject property. See Attachment A for Department of Parks and Recreation 523A forms (DPR forms) prepared by ARG and HRG.

DPR 523A Form, 2003

In August 2003, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) prepared a DPR form identifying the subject property as the “House of Tomorrow.” ARG gave the subject property status code 3S for appearing eligible for listing on the National Register as an individual property through survey evaluation, with applicable criteria A and C and period of significance listed as 1960s-1970s. ARG found that the subject property retained a high degree of integrity, though at the time it had not yet reached 50 years of age. Regarding significance, ARG provided the following description:

The house appears to meet the level of significance necessary for individual National Register of Historic Places or California Register of Historical Resources eligibility at the national level. Though innovative in design, the residence is typical of the pattern of residential development that occurred in the City of Palm Springs in the 1960s and 1970s; it is an outstanding example of innovative residential buildings. Further, it is associated with Robert Alexander, builder of local prominence, and entertainer Elvis Presley. Further, the building is the work of master architect, William Krisel. It is an excellent example of its type, period, or method of construction.

Because of the building’s visual quality, history, intact setting, and high integrity, the building represents the overall residential development of this neighborhood in the 1960s and 1970s and contributes to the historic identity of Palm Springs as an enclave for progressive architecture. The structure represents the overall development of residential architecture during the post-war era and contributes to the mid-century modernist character so strongly identified with Palm Springs.

DPR 523A Form, 2016

In 2016, Historic Resources Group (HRG) prepared a DPR form which gave the subject property status code 3S for appearing eligible for listing in the National Register as an individual property through survey evaluation; 3CS for appearing eligible for listing in the California Register as an individual property through survey evaluation; and 5B for being locally significant both individually and as a contributor to a district that is locally listed, designated, determined eligible or appears eligible through survey evaluation. HRG identified the period of significance as 1960 with applicable criterion C/3/4,5, all for architecture. Regarding significance, HRG wrote:

The property is significant as an excellent example of Mid-century Modern architecture designed by the prominent architectural firm of Palmer & Krisel. It exhibits quality of design with distinctive features including its complex plan of clustered polygonal forms, wide front gable roof with wide overhanging eaves, and extensive use of glass, plaster, stone, and wood.

HRG also identified the following character-defining features:

- *One-story configuration with complex geometric forms*
- *Low-pitched gable roof with wide overhanging eaves*
- *Unadorned wall surfaces with little decorative detailing*
- *Plaster, wood, and stone used as exterior wall panels and accent materials*
- *Flush-mounted metal frame windows and sliding doors, and clerestory windows*

Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings, 2018

In December 2018, HRG completed the final draft of a Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings that has since been published on the City website. Appendix C includes a Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) listing eligible resources. The subject property is listed with both status code 5B as an excellent example of Mid-century Modern architecture designed by Palmer & Krisel and 5D3 as a contributor to the Vista Las Palmas district. The potential Vista Las Palmas Historic District was described in Appendix D to include 161 total properties with 79 contributors and eligible as a local historic district under Criterion 3 for association with residential development in the Post World War II era of the City, and Criterion 4/5 for its Mid-century Modern architecture designed by architects Palmer & Krisel and Charles E. DuBois.

Historic Site Preservation Board Staff Report, 2021

In May 2021, the City of Palm Springs prepared a staff report for the HSPB in response to a request by the property owner for approval of alterations at the subject property, a Class 3 building. City staff analyzed the subject property under local designation criteria and concluded:

The property at 1350 Ladera Circle appears eligible for re-designation from a Class 3 site to a Class 1 (Landmark) historic resource, meeting Criteria 2, 3, 4 and 5 and appears to retain significant historic integrity to warrant re-designation to a Class 1 historic site.

City staff found that the association with Elvis Presley's honeymoon did not constitute a meaningful contribution to the community and therefore the subject property was not eligible under Criterion 1. Under Criteria 2, 3, 4, and 5, City staff found the subject property eligible for association with Bob Alexander, exemplifying the post-World War II period in Palm Springs, having distinctive characteristics in terms of construction method and circular form, and having high artistic value as a reflection of architect William Krisel's creativity, respectively.

Though the subject property met all seven qualities of integrity reviewed, City staff noted that some material integrity was impacted by unauthorized demolition of the terrazzo pool deck, terrazzo steps, and original pool tile and edge coping.

V. DESCRIPTION

Physical Description

The following physical description is based on review of historic documentation partly included as attachments to this report and inspection from the June 2, 2021 site visit with the property owner. See Attachment B for maps and aerials, Attachment C for historic images, and Attachment D for contemporary photographs of the subject property.

Setting

The subject property is located at 1350 Ladera Circle (APN 505-082-026) in the Vista Las Palmas neighborhood of Palm Springs and contains a one-and-a-half story single-family residence constructed in 1960. It sits on a slope at the northwest end of a short, circular cul-de-sac that extends from Abrigo Road and S. Via Las Palmas and is generally surrounded by other single-family residences, with a residential tennis court to the east. Due to the nature of the sloping terrain, the subject property is designed with multiple levels that change in elevation using stairs and conforms to the shape of the site. Mount San Jacinto and its associated mountain range is visible to the west of the subject property.

The lot to the west of the subject property is under development with a new single-family residence. The lot to the east of the subject property was largely undeveloped until the 1980s, when a tennis court was constructed. Both lots were associated with the subject property at different periods as described in the chain of title, though neither is currently owned by the property owner. The lot line of the subject property was adjusted to include a portion of the lot to the west in 2019. The recent development on both adjoining lots occurred after the period of significance of the subject property and does not detract from integrity of setting. More information regarding the lots is described alongside property ownership later in this section.

General

With the center of its primary elevation (front façade) located at the southeast corner of an irregularly shaped plan, the eccentric, steel-framed single-family residence designed in a Mid-Century Modern style with Organic and Googie elements is the northern terminus and focal point of Ladera Circle (see Figure 1 on following page for identification of elevations referenced in this description). The footprint of the house is generally diamond-shaped, with circular pods, or pavilions, at each of the four corners. Its exterior walls are mostly stucco, accented by dramatic stone veneer, or fieldstone. Fenestration is metal-framed, and includes fixed and sliding windows, mostly clustered in bands, clerestories, and floor-to-ceiling window walls. All exterior glazing appears to be original, single-pane glass. The vast shed roof comes to a striking point over the center of the façade, has dramatic curves at the northeast and southwest corners, and incorporates strategically placed triangular cut-outs in its generously overhanging eaves. The house steps up in a series of tiers from the street with the carport behind a screen wall to the east at the lowest level, an entrance courtyard to the west at the mid-point level, and the master bedroom at the upper level.

There is a careful and precise geometry in the design of the subject property and the arrangement of its features and spaces. Symmetry is incorporated throughout, from the orientation of the circular pavilions at each corner of a diamond-shaped plan to the pairs of angled flagstone-clad walls that frame the front façade and the rear yard-facing west elevation. At the

interior, each room, including the bedrooms, takes on angular shapes that deviate from typical rectangular forms. Pentagons are incorporated into the design at the terrazzo-clad projecting stoop at the entrance courtyard and the gunite swimming pool in the rear yard. The orientation and relationship between these elements are interwoven into the design of the subject property as a whole.



Figure 1: Google aerial identifying elevations referenced in subject property description

Exterior

The distinctive roof as viewed from the front façade is reflective of the wide, back-swept wings of a 1960s fighter jet and the hovering master bedroom projection on the façade lend a spaceship quality to the composition. From Ladera Circle, the front facade appears generally symmetrical, dominated by the central cantilevered upper floor master bedroom over a sloped area landscaped with minimal palms, cacti, and other plants. The master bedroom projection contains raked windows and clerestories that curve from the south elevation to the east elevation. A fieldstone-clad wall is inset under the master bedroom projection and stretches as a screen wall to the east and west. At the east, the wall terminates before an asphalt driveway that leads to an inset pair of garage doors with stucco-clad surround installed some time in the past that enclosed what originally was an open carport. At the west, the wall terminates proximate to the adjacent property line and includes a decorative iron gate enclosing an entrance courtyard. The gate appears to be original and can be seen in historic photographs in Attachment C, Images 6, 16, and 19.

A series of circular, seeded aggregate steppingstones and a rectangular landing meanders up to the entrance which is several feet above the street level, all over a water feature clad in fieldstone that is not currently in operation. The steppingstones that are located inside the entrance courtyard lead to a pentagon-shaped, terrazzo-clad projecting stoop with its apex facing southeast and requiring the user to navigate to either side to ascend the three steps to the entry landing. The landing sets the stage for a dramatic, highly decorative multi-paneled double-door

entry at the south elevation. The door enframingent is full height to the stucco eave of the roof and a triangular cut-out aligns with the entry. Within the door enframingent, a fixed transom with a rabbeted joint above the paired doors occupies slightly less than one-half the height of the enframingent. Like the wood transom, each door leaf is intricately paneled in small, deeply recessed squares accented by fluted metal studs. Oversized bronze doorknobs featuring densely textured patterns are attached to each door next to the center seam. The overall effect is that the transom and doors are seamlessly covered in the decorative surface treatment which gives the appearance they would open from top to bottom, belying their true function. The entry is flanked by fieldstone-clad walls. An oversized sconce is placed asymmetrically to the west of the door enframingent.

To the west of the entry are flush-mounted and metal-framed floor-to-ceiling windows that provide light to the living room. The living room is set below the exterior landing. There is no visible frame where the glass meets the ceiling/eave at the top of the clerestory windows, which is a typical detail. At the north and west elevations, glass sliding doors provide access at grade to the rear and side yards, respectively. The rear yard contains the concrete shell of an expansive swimming pool that was recently demolished along with a concrete and terrazzo pool deck, and the limited width side yard contains mechanical equipment. The north elevation has an inset covered patio with access to the laundry room and two bedrooms.

The west elevation is flanked on either side by fieldstone-clad walls like at the lower level of the façade. A stucco-clad room addition extends beyond the edge of the fieldstone wall that does not appear to be part of the original construction based on its different eave condition, details and roof elevation. There are several sliding doors at the west elevation that provide access to the living and dining room, the family room, and the room addition.

When viewed from the west, the vast shed roof takes on a diamond shape and rises towards the front façade where it ends in a point. At the northeast and southwest corners of the roof plane, instead of coming to a point, the fascia is rounded. A fieldstone chimney extends above the roof plane above a fireplace in the family room. At the west elevation, there is a triangular cutout in the roof similar to triangular cutouts on the façade. The leading edge of the roof consists of a sheet metal clad fascia that is canted. The roof edge flashing has been partially removed in preparation for installation of new roof cladding. A portion of the roof above what used to be an open carport can be accessed via what appears to be an added door at the upper-floor master bathroom on the east elevation.

Finishes of the pentagon-shaped gunite swimming pool at the rear yard have been fully demolished. The expansive pool deck, coping and plaster have been removed. Pool mechanical equipment that was located in a vault has also been removed. There is a vertical grade change between the floor level of the living room and the dining room of about 20 inches, which can be seen in three terrazzo steps on the interior of the home. A fragment of these steps exists on the outside of the glass exterior wall suggesting the terrazzo steps extended beneath the glass wall as part of the pool terrace, and visually integrated the interior floor plane with that of the pool terrace.

Landscape generally consists of sparse desert plants including mature palms, succulents, and other drought-tolerant vegetation. Tall palms appear to frame both ends of the fieldstone-clad wall at the front façade, through the palms at the southwest are behind the wall and the palms at the northeast are in front of the wall. Much of the previous vegetation has been removed as part of current work and there are large patches of exposed soil at the front and rear yards. A border

hedge to provide privacy from adjacent properties has been recently planted along the property lines at the west, rear and north, side yards.

Interior

The residence is arranged on multiple levels in generally a diamond-shaped plan with four circular pavilions, one at each corner. Starting at the lowest level at the living room, one pavilion contains the living room and steps up to the dining room; a second pavilion at the dining room level contains the family room and a bedroom; and also at the dining room level, a third pavilion contains an additional two bedrooms. The highest-level fourth pavilion contains the master bedroom seen on the front facade. Other rooms, including the entry, kitchen, foyer, hall, and bathrooms, occupy the spaces between the circular pavilions. Rooms are irregularly shaped and change in elevation using stairs to conform with the slope of the site.

The living room is nearly circular with a curved fieldstone-clad wall topped by a continuous clerestory window along the south with full glazed openings to the east and west. Steps lead up to the dining room and visually extend outside through the glass wall. A low dividing wall provides some separation between the spaces. A conical sheet metal fireplace hood is suspended from the ceiling above a fire pit at the center of the circular pavilion. The fire pit is saucer-shaped and stands on a single, low center post at the edge of the steps at the end of the low dividing wall. Additional steps below the fire pit are rounded, appearing to conform with the circular shape of the fire pit and sheet metal hood. A similar but larger hood is located in the kitchen. No cabinetry or appliances remain in the kitchen. The north wall of the family room is clad in fieldstone and contains a fireplace.

A set of stairs leads up to the upper level master bedroom, with the south wall of the stairs clad in fieldstone. The entrance to the master bedroom is separated from the rest of the space by a privacy wall with openings that allow access at either end. The master bedroom is largely symmetrical, though there is some fieldstone along the north wall at the west side of the room that is not present at the east. It is characterized by clerestory windows and larger, expansive windows. These window walls are set at a slight angle and raked inward at the top. A door from the master bedroom leads to the master bathroom where all the fixtures have been removed. The water closet area has an exterior door that provides access to the roof on the east elevation above the carport. Another exterior doorway provides access to an exterior stair that leads to the carport below.

Alterations

Though the subject property has experienced some alterations, it still appears to be largely intact and recognizable. As the historic documentation from the Getty Research Institute needs to be further studied, the following alterations are what are known or suspected.

On the exterior, a room addition at the rear was added at the corner of the north and west elevations that is not reflected in available building permits or historic documentation and is estimated to have been built during the 1970s or 1980s. The room addition visibly extends above and beyond the fieldstone-clad walls that frame the west elevation.

The window frames, which are painted, were likely originally unpainted mill-finish or clear anodized aluminum. Film or tint has been added to many window units particularly on south facing elevations. There appear to be added clerestory and other windows at the juncture of the north and east elevations that are framed and detailed differently than original windows. Whereas original clerestory windows are frameless at the head, visually linking the interior and exterior ceiling plane, added clerestory windows are fully framed (see Attachment D, Image 18). A pair of aluminum garage doors, set in a stucco-clad wood frame wall, appear to have been added some time in the past to enclose the carport. A door was added at the upper level master bathroom on the east elevation to provide access to the roof of the enclosed carport and an iron security grill was added over the adjacent semi-enclosed stairs that lead from the master bathroom suite to the interior of the garage. It should be noted that neither the room addition or garage enclosure appear to have been permitted.

The roof cladding has been partially removed as part of the current work. It is also possible that at an unknown date, a fourth triangular opening in the roof along the north elevation may have been infilled. Historic documentation of early drawings designed by William Krisel both include and exclude a fourth triangular cutout at the covered patio and it is unclear what was ultimately constructed.

The expansive terrazzo and concrete pool deck, concrete coping, and pool plaster and tile have recently been removed by the current owner. Much of the previous landscape has also been removed by the current owner (see Attachment C, Images 20-23 for photographs of landscape prior to purchase). A portion of the landscape underneath the master bedroom projection at the northeast area of the façade which previously was a grass lawn (see Attachment C, Image 4) has been stripped to the soil. The steppingstone path both at the façade and the entrance courtyard had historically been surrounded by lush vegetation (see Attachment C, Images 5, 6, and 21) that has since been removed. Similarly, at the rear yard, most of the grass, trees, and other plants were removed. New cacti, succulents, and other drought-tolerant plants have been planted at the front and rear yards. The current property owner reports that a heavily overgrown hedge existed along the north property line, which was recently removed. A new hedge has been recently planted.

On the interior, all kitchen appliances, bathroom fixtures, and portions of some walls, have been removed. A tall pony wall that visually divided the living room from the dining room has also been removed. In addition, many of the ceilings were textured (see Attachment C, Images 24, 26, and 27) and it is likely this surface was refinished to a smooth surface as part of the current work. Based on review of historic documentation, the configuration of the rooms appears to be largely intact.

The following table provides a summary of available building permits. See Attachment E for images of original 1960 building permits.

Date	Address	Owner	Contractor	Description
5/20/1960	1350 Ladera Circle	Robert Alexander	Alexander Const. Co.	8 room steel frame, masonry, and stucco dwelling with carport; compo roof
8/23/1960	1350 Ladera Circle	Alexander	Paddock	Construct 15x30 gunite swimming pool
5/7/1980	1350 Ladera Circle	Ernest Primm	F. Wiskowski	Grading of 200 cu. Yds. For future tennis court
5/27/1980	1350 Ladera Circle	E. Primm	F. Wiskowski & D. Hodges Masonry [sic]	Construct 120' of block wall in side yard by 5' high
6/30/1980	1350 Ladera Circle	E. Prim	F. Wiskowski	Construct tennis court and retaining walls of 130' x 30'
10/16/1980	1350 Ladera Circle	E. Primm	Valley Plumbing	Gas line from meter to gas [intelligible] valve
10/23/1980	1350 Ladera Circle	E. Primm	Hendrickson Const.	Connect to sewer in Ladera Cir (now located on Rose)
6/25/1981	1350 Ladera Circle	EJ. Primm Invest. Co.	Dew Roofing Co.	Re-Roof per proposal
5/25/2005	1350 Ladera Circle	Leonard Lewis	R & K Air Conditioning	Replace / change-out (2) ton A/C unit in rear yard – same size – same location

Character-Defining Features

Character-defining features are the physical features of a building that convey its significance. A three-step approach, as described in *Preservation Brief #17: Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character*² is utilized to identify materials, features, and spaces that contribute to the historic significance of the subject property. The purpose of this approach is to identify features or elements that give a building its historic visual character and that should be preserved to the maximum extent possible. This approach involves first describing a building from afar in order to present the characteristics that comprise its overall setting and architectural context; then describing the exterior up-close to define materials, surface finishes, and manner in which it was constructed; and, finally, describing the spaces, rooms, and details that comprise its interior visual character.

The subject property has the following character-defining features:

Overall Visual Aspects

- One-and-a-half story massing with spaceship quality in composition.
- Location on sloped lot at terminus of cul-de-sac.
- Multiple levels that change in elevation using stairs and conforms with the slope of site.
- Relationship between indoors and outdoors, expressed via floor-to-ceiling windows and continuation of terrazzo steps from living room and dining room to rear yard.
- Generally symmetrical composition on both the front façade and rear elevation.
- Exterior use of fieldstone, stucco, glass, and aluminum.
- Diamond-shaped plan with integral circular pavilions at each corner.
- Vast shed roof configuration, including striking point centered over front facade, rounded corners, expansive eaves, and triangular cutouts.
- Flush-mounted and metal-framed floor-to-ceiling windows, bands of windows, and clerestory windows and glass sliding doors.
- Upper level master bedroom projection over inset fieldstone-clad wall.
- Offset entrance courtyard hidden from street view by fieldstone-clad wall and iron gate.
- Original open carport (enclosed at some point with a stucco-clad wood frame wall and metal overhead garage doors)
- Pentagon-shaped gunite swimming pool at rear yard.

Visual Character at Close Range

- Spoke-like shape of beams that join together at inset fieldstone-clad wall underneath upper level master bedroom projection.
- Decorative iron gate enclosing entrance courtyard.
- Circular, seeded aggregate steppingstones and rectangular landing set over a water feature clad in fieldstone.
- Pentagon-shaped terrazzo-clad projecting stoop with apex facing southeast.
- Dramatic, full height, highly decorative multi-paneled wood double-door entry.
- Oversized bronze doorknobs featuring densely textured patterns.

² National Park Service, Department of the Interior. *Preservation Brief #17: Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character*. Washington D.C.

- Oversized sconce light fixture placed asymmetrically to the west of the entry door.
- Clerestory glass that is frameless at the head, visually linking interior and exterior ceiling plane.

Interior

- Fieldstone-clad walls at foyer, living room, family room, and master bedroom.
- Suspended conical sheet metal hoods in living room and kitchen.
- Saucer-shaped fire pit on single, low center post at edge of steps in living room.
- Pony wall separating sunken living room from raised dining room accessed by steps.
- Steps separating living room from dining room that visually extend from interior to exterior on both sides of floor-to-ceiling glass.

Subject Property History

On May 20, 1960, the City issued a permit to Robert “Bob” Alexander (Bob) for construction of the subject property, described as an eight-room steel-frame, masonry and stucco dwelling with carport and composition roof with a total work value of \$60,000. Later that year, on August 23, 1960, the City issued another permit for a 15-foot by 30-foot gunite swimming pool with a total work value of \$3,000. Construction progressed and Bob had moved in with his wife, Helene, and daughter, Jill.

As described in *The Alexanders: A Desert Legacy* by James R. Harlan:

Local lore recounts that Bob Alexander built the house for his family but was concerned that the unconventional design of the home might not appeal to his wife. Lore notwithstanding, the House of Tomorrow’s schematic plans show a luxurious master bath labeled “Bob” and “Helene” and a secondary bedroom labeled “Jill’s.” Local lore further recounts that after seeing the nearly completed house, Helene Alexander enthusiastically embraced it.³

Both the Alexander family and the subject property gained national attention when they were featured in a six-page spread in the September 25, 1962 issue of *Look Magazine* (see Attachment F). Titled “The Way-Out Way of Life,” the article discussed both the character of the subject property and the lifestyle of its residents who “wanted their home to add a glossy new style to indoor-outdoor living.”⁴ Helene shared insight into the Alexander’s eclectic design philosophy for their home, quoted saying, “A lot of people were building Roman things...so we went Egyptian.”⁵ The article continued:

The Alexanders’ architect, improving on the Egyptians, used glass and peanut-brittle stonework to inscribe four perfect circles on three levels. He installed electronic controls to manipulate the indoor climate, the outdoor lights and automatic rain. The decorator did the walls in textured plastic, took a Nile formality right out into the artificial landscape. The table-tennis set stands by the heated pool upon stately Egyptian pedestals.⁶

The subject property was celebrated for its innovation and its excess, labeled as “a \$300,000 pleasure dome that proves California has only begun to show how luxurious things can be on this planet.”⁷ The *Look Magazine* spread not only showcased the trend in Mid-Century Modern design that became characteristic of Palm Springs, but also shared the more carefree attitude associated with the city by readers across the United States. The Alexanders’ residency in the subject property ended shortly and under tragic circumstances when Bob and Helene died in a plane crash on November 14, 1965, along with Bob’s parents, George and Mildred Alexander.⁸

Only two years later, the subject property would come into prominence again after being leased by singer Elvis Presley for one year beginning in September 1966.⁹ Following Elvis and Priscilla

³ Harlan, James R., *The Alexanders: A Desert Legacy*, Palm Springs Preservation Foundation: 2011, 49.

⁴ Harris, T. George, “The Way-Out Way of Life,” *Look Magazine* (pp. 38-43), September 25, 1962, 38.

⁵ *Ibid*, 38.

⁶ *Ibid*, 38.

⁷ *Ibid*, 38.

⁸ Berman, Art, “Millionaire, Wife Among 8 Killed in Private Jet Crash,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 16, 1965, 1, 26.

⁹ Fessier, Bruce, “Elvis’ desert legacy lives in Stagecoach,” *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, May 2, 2017: A10.

Presley's Las Vegas wedding on May 1, 1967, the couple celebrated a portion of their honeymoon at the subject property.

Not much is known about the subject property during the 1970s and 1980s. Historic building permits show that it was owned by Ernest Primm in 1980 and the room addition may have been built at this time. Building records show that in 1986 the City issued a public nuisance violation to owner Dorothy Watson due to the accumulation of polluted water in the stagnant swimming pool. In 1987, the subject property was listed in an advertisement as having been repossessed and for sale for \$675,000, including an additional adjacent lot with a tennis court.¹⁰

In 1993, the subject property was refurbished "to just the way that Elvis had rented it" and was being rented out for parties at \$3,500 a day.¹¹ The following year, advertisements began to appear in the *Palm Springs Desert Sun* for tours at the Elvis Presley Honeymoon Hideaway.¹² The owner, Leonard Lewis of Boston, emphasized the subject property's relationship to Elvis further by hosting gatherings at the residence including an event celebrating the 30th anniversary of Elvis and Priscilla's wedding in 1997. The City tried to get a court order to stop the event, claiming that the use of celebrity homes in residential neighborhoods for commercial gain violated zoning ordinances, though Judge Charles Stafford who presided over the case denied the City's request citing that the City did not make a clear argument for how the event would be in violation of current statutes.¹³ Judge Stafford questioned whether the weekend events would change the character of a residential zone when many other houses also host barbecues and receptions, especially when proceeds were intended to go to charity.

The City again filed a lawsuit in October of that year "considered [to be] a test case for rent-a-parties at celebrity homes in Palm Springs" to be heard by the Riverside County Superior Court.¹⁴ In May 1998, the City Planning Commission voted 6-1 to recommend banning corporate parties at celebrity homes through a zoning ordinance amendment, though supporting "allowing charitable and political events but no more than three a year per home and no more than one guest per 100 square feet of lot space to keep the parties from getting too large."¹⁵ By at least 2006, events including house tours were regularly occurring at the subject property.

In 2014, the subject property was put up for sale for an initial asking price of \$9.5 million. By October 2018, the price had dropped to an asking price of \$3.26 million.¹⁶ The subject property was sold and deeded to the current owner on December 15, 2020 and the operations of the Elvis Presley Honeymoon Hideaway ceased.

¹⁰ "Advertisement: Charley's Best Buys," *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, April 24, 1987: 36.

¹¹ Hussar, John, "A Tender Touch of Elvis," *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, May 27, 1993: 85.

¹² "Advertisement: Visit the Honeymoon Hideaway," *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, April 1, 1994: 85.

¹³ Haberman, Douglas, "After judge's ruling, the Elvis shindig is on," *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, May 1, 1997: 1.

¹⁴ Marcum, Diana, "Elvis' 'Honeymoon Hideaway' at Center of Zoning Fight," *Los Angeles Times*, October 20, 1997: 3, 19.

¹⁵ Haberman, Douglas, "Party-limit plan advances," *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, May 28, 1998: 13.

¹⁶ DiPiero, Amy, "Elvis honeymoon house price drops yet again," *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, October 19, 2018: S10.

Ownership History

The ownership history table below is compiled from a chain of title prepared by WFG National Title Company on June 7, 2021. According to the grant deed records, the subject property is currently on a single parcel comprised of all of Lot 25 of the Vista Las Palmas No. 1 tract (Lot 25) and a portion of Lot 18 of the Vista Las Palmas No. 2 tract (Lot 18), adjacent to the west. Previously considered separate parcels, a lot line adjustment was completed in 2019.

As the chain of title indicates, the subject property was also associated with Lot 24 of the Vista Las Palmas No. 1 tract (Lot 24), adjacent to the east. Lot 24 is shown deeded along with Lots 25 and 18 to Jill Land Company and Golden Estates in 1968 and was associated with the subject property until at least 2006. Lot 24 is not included in any subsequent deed in the chain of title and currently contains a tennis court, likely constructed during the 1980s based on historic aerials and building permits. As Lot 24 does not appear to have been owned by Bob and Helene Alexander during their residency at the subject property, it does not appear to have any historic association with the Alexanders. Maps of Vista Las Palmas No. 1, Vista Las Palmas No. 2, and the 2019 lot line adjustment are included in Attachment B.

Following the deaths of Bob and Helene Alexander, the subject property was deeded to Jill Land Company on August 29, 1968. Jill Land Company did not appear in any available historic newspaper articles or other historic documentation for review, though it was likely formed to support Bob and Helene’s daughter Jill.

Lorraine V. Boccardo (Lorraine) was deeded the subject property on March 5, 1970. Lorraine’s husband, James F. Boccardo (James), was an attorney, landowner, and rancher based in San Jose who was recognized in publications such as *Time* and *Forbes* and was listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records* for record trial jury awards.¹⁷ Lorraine and James were married in 1936, but separated and filed for divorce in 1971, during their ownership of the subject property. A 1972 *Los Gatos Times-Saratoga Observer* article notes that the family home of the Boccardos was at 17020 Wildwood Way in Los Gatos, though they also owned a home in Palm Springs.¹⁸ In 1973, Lorraine and James had sold the subject property to Ernest Jay Primm. As the subject property was not the primary residence of Lorraine and James Boccardo and James’ work as a lawyer is more closely associated with his firm in San Jose, the Boccardos do not appear to rise to the level of association with significant people necessary to fulfill City Criterion ii.

Bob and Helene Alexander represent the earliest and most prominent owners of the subject property. A historic context on Bob and Helene Alexander is included in Section VI.

Date	Title Type	Grantor	Grantee	Property
3/30/1960	Grant Deed	Eastwood Estates, a General Co- Partnership	Robert Alexander and Helene Alexander, husband and wife as community property	Lot 25, Vista Las Palmas No. 1

¹⁷ Boccardo Management Group, LLC, “History | Boccardo Management Group,” <<https://www.boccadocorp.com/history/>> accessed June 30, 2021.

¹⁸ “Judge grants \$10,650 in Boccardo divorce,” *Los Gatos Times-Saratoga Observer*, January 7, 1972: 1.

Date	Title Type	Grantor	Grantee	Property
7/27/1960	Grant Deed	Las Palmas Estates, a Co-Partnership	Robert Alexander and Helene Alexander, husband and wife as community property	Lot 18 of Vista Las Palmas Unit No. 2
8/29/1968	Grant Deed	Leon J. Alexander and Crocker-Citizens National Bank, as Co-Executors of the Estate of Robert Alexander, Deceased, Leon J. Alexander and Crocker-Citizens National Bank, as Co-Executors of the Estate of Helene A. Alexander, Deceased, as to an undivided one-half interest in each of the name decedents	Jill Land Company, a corporation and Golden Estates, Inc., a corporation, jointly	Parcel 1: Lots 24 and 25 of Vista Las Palmas No. 1 Parcel 2: Lot 18 of Vista Las Palmas No. 2
3/5/1970	Corporation Grant Deed	Jill Land Company, a corporation and Golden Estates Inc., a corporation	Lorraine V. Boccardo, a married woman	Parcel 1: Lots 24 and 25 of Vista Las Palmas No. 1 Parcel 2: Lot 18 of Vista Las Palmas No. 2
11/30/1973	Grant Deed	Lorraine V. Boccardo, a married woman and James F. Boccardo, her husband	Ernest Jay Primm, an unmarried man	Parcel 1: Lots 24 and 25 of Vista Las Palmas No. 1 Parcel 2: Lot 18 of Vista Las Palmas No. 2

Date	Title Type	Grantor	Grantee	Property
3/25/1980	Order Settling First Account and Report of Executors, Authorizing Preliminary Distribution and Allowance on Fees and Commissions	Estate of: Ernest J. Primm, Deceased	---	Parcel 1: Lots 24 and 25 of Vista Las Palmas No. 1 Parcel 2: Lot 18 of Vista Las Palmas No. 2
6/1/1985	Grant Deed	Glenna Wilk Primm	Dorothy Watson, an unmarried woman	Parcel 1: Lots 24 and 25 of Vista Las Palmas No. 1 Parcel 2: Lot 18 of Vista Las Palmas No. 2
4/1/1987	Trustee's Deed Upon Sale	Trustee: T.D. Service Company Trutor: Dorothy Watson	Beneficiary: Boston Safe Deposit & Trust Company	Parcel 1: Lots 24 and 25 of Vista Las Palmas No. 1 Parcel 2: Lot 18 of Vista Las Palmas No. 2
10/28/1987	Corporation Grant Deed	Boston Safe Deposit & Trust Company	M. Leonard Lewis and Barbara Lewis Rubin, Trustees of the Tri-Villa Trust dated September 22, 1987	Parcel 1: Lots 24 and 25 of Vista Las Palmas No. 1 Parcel 2: Lot 18 of Vista Las Palmas No. 2
3/9/2006	Grant Deed	M. Leonard Lewis and Barbara Lewis Rubin, Trustees of the Tri-Villa Trust dated September 22, 1987	Ann Marie Lewis and Barbara Lewis Rubin Trustee of the Tri-Villa Trust dated September 22, 1987	Parcel 1: Lots 24 and 25 of Vista Las Palmas No. 1 Parcel 2: Lot 18 of Vista Las Palmas No. 2

Date	Title Type	Grantor	Grantee	Property
1/23/2019	Grant Deed	Ann Marie Lewis and Barbara Lewis Rubin Trustee of the Tri-Villa Trust dated September 22, 1987	Mark J. Baumli, Trustee of the Baaumli Costa Family Living Trust dated June 30, 2016	Lot 18 of Vista Las Palmas No. 2
7/12/2019	Lot Line Adjustment Grant Deed	Mark J. Baumli, Trustee of the Baaumli Costa Family Living Trust dated June 30, 2016	Ann Marie Lewis and Barbara Lewis Rubin Trustee of the Tri-Villa Trust dated September 22, 1987	Parcel 1: Being all of Lot 25, Vista Las Palmas No. 1, and a portion of Lot 18, Vista Las Palmas No. 2 Parcel 2: Being a portion of Lot 18, Vista Las Palmas No. 2
12/15/2020	Grant Deed	Ann Marie Lewis and Barbara Lewis Rubin Trustee of the Tri-Villa Trust dated September 22, 1987	40225 Sand Dune LLC, a WA Limited Liability Company	Parcel 1: Being all of Lot 25, Vista Las Palmas No. 1, and a portion of Lot 18, Vista Las Palmas No. 2

Period of Significance

The period of significance for the subject property is from 1960, when the residence was built, to 1965, with the deaths of Bob and Helene Alexander.

VI. HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Historic contexts or significant historical themes provide the relevant framework within which to evaluate significance of the subject property. The subject property has been evaluated under the following historic contexts: post-World War II residential development in Palm Springs; Vista Las Palmas; Alexander Construction Company; Robert and Helene Alexander; Elvis and Priscilla Presley in Palm Springs; William Krisel, AIA; and the Mid-Century Modern architectural style.

Post-World War II Residential Development in Palm Springs

The following context was compiled and summarized using excerpts from the “Post-World War II Palm Springs (1945-1969)” theme of the Citywide Historic Context Statement prepared by HRG in 2018:¹⁹

The exuberance and optimism from the war victory, the population explosion, and the creation of automobile-centric suburbia in the building boom that followed meant great changes for the way Americans lived in the post-World War II era. Southern California was at the forefront of this new era, and its tradition of experimentation in architecture placed it in an ideal position to lead the exploration of suburban residential architecture after World War II. The desert climate and casual lifestyle of Palm Springs all but demanded unconventional design, and clients were more accepting of, even sought out, a more adventurous style in the resort atmosphere of Palm Springs than they would have in their primary residences. In the two decades after the war, Palm Springs was transformed with new commercial and institutional buildings, custom homes, and many housing tracts.

In the immediate post-World War II era, California in general experienced a period of unprecedented growth. Many individuals who came west to participate in the war effort, including former military personnel, decided to settle permanently. Between 1940 and 1950, California’s population increased by 53 percent, which was partially accounted for by the 850,000 veterans who took up residence after the war. As a result, the construction of residential properties became a major focus of development in the post-World War II era. The immediate and widespread need for housing inspired a variety of responses. For communities that were largely built out, land previously considered “unbuildable” became more attractive. For newer communities, large new tracts were developed.

Development in Palm Springs during this period reflected these wider trends. The permanent population of Palm Springs rose 292 percent between 1940 and 1960, from 3,434 to 13,468 people. Charting the local population shows this steep growth lasted in Palm Springs for decades after the war. The post-World War II population boom coincided with the peak of Modern architecture’s popularity in Southern California, and Palm Springs has a vast number of architecturally significant single-family residences from this period designed by prominent local and regional architects of the period.

In the 1950s, with the town’s expansive growth, Palm Springs architects were able to explore a wide range of residential architectural ideas with willing clients interested in Modern design. These respond in various ways to the demands of the location: controlling the sun’s heat, respecting the natural landscape, and creating homes of pleasure and

¹⁹ Historic Resources Group, “City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings,” December 2018.

recreation. Palm Springs' residential architecture of this period included affordable, mass-produced housing, along with custom homes designed with sizeable budgets. The distinctive solutions of several local architects show a high quality of concept and execution that matches the quality of the more widely publicized Los Angeles Modern architects of the same period. Individually significant examples are custom-designed homes located throughout the city [such as] the Kaufmann House, 470 W. Vista Chino (HSPB-29B); the Loewy House, 600 W. Panorama Road (HSPB-33); Frey House II, 686 W. Palisades Drive (HSPB-33); the Carey House, 651 W. Via Escuale (HSPB-33); the Grace Miller House, 2311 N. Indian Canyon Drive (HSPB-45); and the Edris House, 1030 W. Cielo Drive (HSPB-46). Palm Springs architects continued their wide-ranging, eclectic exploration of Modern architecture in the 1960s, [including] William Krisel's Robert Alexander House (1960, 1350 Ladera Circle) [and] John Lautner's concrete Elrod House (1968, 2175 Southridge Drive, listed in the National Register).

The building which was, and remains, the most famous in terms of international recognition [is] Richard Neutra's Kaufmann House. The 1946 Kaufmann House (470 W. Vista Chino; HSPB-29B) was designed by Richard Neutra as the winter home of Pittsburgh department store owner Edgar Kaufmann. Kauffman was already known for building another world-famous house, Fallingwater by Frank Lloyd Wright (designed 1935; main house constructed 1936-38, followed by the guest house in 1939). The design of his Palm Springs home summarized Neutra's ideas at the time: the flat roof, steel frame, and glass walls embodied one prominent version of Modernism by using sharp, clean, minimalist, machine-made lines contrasting with the beauty of the open, natural site with the rugged slopes of Mt. San Jacinto as backdrop. The use of stone and wood finishes represented an evolution of Neutra's ideas from those seen in the earlier Miller House (1937, 2311 N. Indian Canyon Drive; HSPB-45). When photographed by Julius Shulman and disseminated worldwide, the Kaufmann House became an iconic image of Modern architecture.

One of the key features of Palm Springs' postwar homes was the presence of the individual, private swimming pool. In keeping with the resort lifestyle, many home builders and home owners added the backyard attractions to their parcels. A more practical, yet important factor in residential development in Palm Springs and the entire southwest was the accessibility of air conditioning. Although individual residential air-conditioning units were available as early as 1939, widespread acquisition and use was delayed by the war. For communities like Palm Springs, air conditioning meant the "season" could be extended and year-round living was practically viable for the first time.

During the 1950s, residential development in Palm Springs continued to expand eastward and southward. Like other locations in Southern California, it was a period in which large developers dominated the scene; among them were William Grant, Noel B. Clarke, A. R. Simon, George and Robert Alexander, Roy Fey, and Jack Meiselman.

In Palm Springs, postwar single-family residential development followed several patterns. First, expansion/tract development occurred eastward, and then southward into the flat exposed parcels of the desert floor with the creation of homes for middle-class and upper-middle class residents. Second, empty parcels within existing developments were subject to in-fill development. Third, previously "unbuildable" parcels in the foothills were now economically viable for the development of luxury homes. Fourth, after 1959, new laws permitted the lease and development of the checkerboard of open parcels owned by the

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. This offered developers a wide variety of opportunities previously denied within the city.

By the close of the 1950s, great changes were afoot for Palm Springs residential development. New communities to the south and east including Palm Desert, Indian Wells, and Rancho Mirage were beginning to encroach on Palm Springs as the chic desert destination for home ownership. Another important factor was the 1959 Equalization Law signed by President Eisenhower that equalized allotted Indian lands, thereby setting the stage for development of Reservation lands within the City of Palm Springs. With increased demand, economic prosperity, air conditioning, and availability of new land for development, Palm Springs became home to a number of custom and tract home developments by prominent Southern California developers and wealthy speculators. From early on, many of these subdivisions emphasized architecture and/or the glamour associated with Palm Springs.

Relationship to Subject Property

The subject property was constructed in Palm Springs in 1960 within the 1945-1969 span of time described in this context. As a single-family residence in the Vista Las Palmas subdivision, it reflects wider trends in housing at the time with a private swimming pool reflecting the resort lifestyle for which the City came to be known. The context written by HRG specifically identifies the subject property as an example of architects continuing their eclectic exploration of Modern architecture at the time.

Vista Las Palmas

The following excerpt is from the “Post-World War II Palm Springs (1945-1969)” theme of the Citywide Historic Context Statement prepared by HRG in 2018:²⁰

In December of 1956, the Alexanders subdivided the first phase of Vista Las Palmas (1956-59). This included the area bordered by properties fronting the north side of Via Las Palmas to the north, properties fronting the south side of Regal Drive to the south, Via Monte Vista to the east, and Rose Avenue to the West. Because of its central location and adjacency to Las Palmas Estates, this development was targeted to a more upscale clientele than Twin Palms.

Vista Las Palmas was developed in three phases and these phases appear to be loosely tied to their architectural heritage. The first phase, in 1956, is the northern portion of the development from the north side of Via Las Palmas to the south side of Camino del Sur. Many of these designs are attributed to architect Charles E. DuBois. Phase II includes Rose Avenue and the southwestern bend of Abrigo Road with houses all attributed to Palmer & Krisel. Phase III was subdivided in 1959 and included Fairview, Tuxedo, and Comet Circles along with Regal Drive; these houses are also attributed to Palmer & Krisel.

The three-bedroom plus maid’s room designs for the Palmer & Krisel-designed homes in Vista Las Palmas included three rectangular floor plans and three versions of each plan. One design included “...a striking porte-cochere option.” Placement of the carport on these designs varied from street-facing to set at a right angle to the residence – contributing to a distinctive visual architectural cadence for this neighborhood. The designs featured long, low Mid-century Modern lines with varying rooflines of the butterfly, low-pitch, and folded plate. The model home was located at the corner of Via Las Palmas and Via Monte. A second model home was located at 1215 Via Paraiso.

The DuBois-designed homes in Vista Las Palmas featured “...floorplans with the living rooms angled at forty-five degrees and complementary stone walls likewise extended at that angle.” DuBois is credited with the design of the “Swiss Miss” houses that are dotted throughout Vista Las Palmas. These designs feature a distinctive A-frame roofline that projects above the rooflines of the surrounding houses. Based on the marketing materials, the steeply pitched A-frame elements which some have interpreted as alpine, may in fact draw more inspiration from Tiki or Polynesian architecture.

Vista Las Palmas was the second residential subdivision attributed to the Alexander Construction Company following development of Twin Palms Estates. At 330 homes, it was also the second-largest, only exceeded by the Racquet Club Road Estates with 360 homes.²¹ As part of the Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings, HRG identified Vista Las Palmas as a potential historic district “significant under local Criterion 3 for its association with residential development in the City of Palm Springs in the postwar era, reflecting an important period of growth in the city, and for its association with the Alexander Construction Company” and “significant under local Criterion 4/5 for its Mid-century Modern architecture designed by Palmer &

²⁰ Historic Resources Group, “City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings,” December 2018.

²¹ Harlan, 57.

Krisel and Charles E. DuBois.”²² HRG noted 161 total properties, with 79 contributors and a period of significance from 1957 to 1961.

Relationship to Subject Property

The subject property is located in the Vista Las Palmas tract and was identified by HRG as a contributor to the potential Vista Las Palmas Historic District, constructed within the period of significance of the district. Though it is located in the Phase I portion of Vista Las Palmas that is typically attributed to Charles E. DuBois, the subject property was designed by William Krisel, AIA, of Palmer & Krisel, the firm largely responsible for the designs of the residences in Phases II and III.

²² Historic Resources Group, “City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings,” December 2018.

Alexander Construction Company

The Alexander Construction Company has its origins in the George Alexander Company, founded by George Alexander (George), which built residential tracts and apartments in Los Angeles for almost 15 years before starting up operations in Palm Springs.²³ Shortly after World War II, Robert “Bob” Alexander (Bob) joined his father at the firm. The two Alexanders initially had different philosophies on the direction of the company. While George sought what was traditional and typical, Bob “started to chart a different direction, building modernist homes that were well-designed, attractive and geared to improve the buyer’s quality of life.”²⁴

In Los Angeles, the George Alexander Company “built a tract of ten architect-designed modernist homes in Los Angeles’ burgeoning San Fernando Valley named Lurline Park,” whose success led to the development of the 287-home Corbin Palms tract.²⁵ The homes in Corbin Palms were constructed between 1953 and 1955 and designed by the architectural firm Palmer & Krisel, who the Alexanders would continue to collaborate with in Palm Springs.

George moved to the Palm Springs in 1955 to rest and attend to his health, but soon formed the Alexander Construction Company after “he quickly became restless...seeing that the growing desert city needed housing.”²⁶ Though often written as “Alexander Construction Company” in various media including company brochures, advertisements through 1958 extend the name to “George Alexander Construction Company.” The expansion into Palm Springs was motivated by the growing competitiveness of the construction market in Los Angeles and the apparent lack of “builders as competent and savvy as the Alexanders.”²⁷ Bob was in charge of the day-to-day operations of the company in Palm Springs.

The Alexander Construction Company was a collaborative affair and George and Bob “wisely brought in many of the major subcontractors that they had worked with in Los Angeles, making them partners in the ACC.”²⁸ Joe Dunas was also brought in as an investor and partner with some level of autonomy. One of the earliest projects that the Alexander Construction Company developed in Palm Springs with Joe Dunas and Palmer & Krisel as architect was the Ocotillo Lodge, designed in 1954-1955 but completed in 1957.²⁹

The first subdivision developed by the Alexander Construction Company was Twin Palms Estates, comprised of 90 homes. Twin Palms Estates was subdivided in 1955, with homes designed by Palmer & Krisel constructed between 1957 and 1958.³⁰ The next subdivisions would include Vista Las Palmas, with 300 homes, and the Ramon Rise Estates, with 84 homes. Palmer & Krisel would contribute to designs at both of these subdivisions. The Alexander Construction Company employed a technique of providing the framing materials for the homes they built as a

²³ Harlan, 10.

²⁴ Ibid, 10.

²⁵ Ibid, 11.

²⁶ Ibid, 11.

²⁷ Ibid, 11.

²⁸ Ibid, 11.

²⁹ Ibid, 21.

³⁰ Historic Resources Group, “City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings,” December 2018.

kit of pre-cut parts that could easily be assembled.³¹ Subdivisions such as Vista Las Palmas included “three rectangular floor plans and three versions of each plan.”³²

In a 1959 advertisement in the *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, the Alexander Construction Company explained its attitude towards business:³³

We gave as our formula for success, “Give the people something better at a price, and on terms they can afford.” In our case this means better homes at the lowest possible prices and the easiest of terms. What makes a home better? First, its location. Second, its design, and third, the quality of workmanship that goes into every phase of its construction. [...]

We plan our developments to be integrated communities of individual estates serving their owners in the most desirable fashion. The location of these developments is selected with the utmost care having in mind the requirements of the home owners to be served.

The advertisement highlighted the company’s properties in Racquet Club Road Estates, Vista Las Palmas Estates, and Golden Vista Estates. The office address is given as 1280 N. Palm Canyon Drive. Another advertisement that same year describes a goal of making Palm Springs more livable year-round:³⁴

We have never believed, as some do, that Palm Springs is a three month out of the year resort. Every month in the year has its merits. To live here the year around [sic] most of us must have jobs. To provide as many jobs as we can, The George Alexander Construction Company plans its building programs on a twelve-month basis. This attracts permanent residents who are assured steady employment.

The Alexander Construction Company managed to develop many subdivisions in Palm Springs within the span of only a decade. The following table lists residential subdivisions in Palm Springs attributed to the Alexander Construction Company as developer in the Historic Context Statement and Survey Findings prepared by HRG:³⁵

Subdivision Name	Subdivision Year
Twin Palms Estates	1955
Vista Las Palmas	1956
Ramon Rise Estates	1956
Enchanted Homes	1957
Racquet Club Road Estates	1958
Golden Vista Estates	1960
Calcor Prefabricated Homes/Steel Development Houses	1961
New Riviera Gardens	1961

³¹ Harlan, 14.

³² Historic Resources Group, “City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings,” December 2018.

³³ “Advertisement: Give the People Something Better At a Price, and on Terms They Can Afford,” *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, June 25, 1959: 12.

³⁴ “Advertisement: This is Our Home Town...and We Love It!” *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, June 18, 1959: 12.

³⁵ Ibid.

Subdivision Name	Subdivision Year
Golf Club Estates	1961
Las Palmas Summit	1962
Desert Lanai	c. 1963
Farrell Canyon Estates	1963
Sunrise Estates	1964
Green Fairway Estates	1964
Araby Estates	1964

Note that there are some slight differences between what is described in the previous table and what is included on the list of subdivisions attributed to the Alexander Construction Company in the book *The Alexanders: A Desert Legacy* by James Harlan:³⁶

Subdivision Name	# of Homes	Years of Development
Twin Palms Estates	90	1957-1958
Vista Las Palmas	330	1957-1963
Ramon Rise	84	1957-1958
Sunmor Estates	141	1957-1959
Racquet Club Road Estates	360	1959-1962
Steel Houses	7	1962
New Riviera Gardens	31	1963-1964
Farrell Canyon Estates	57	1964
Golf Club Estates	52	1964
Sunrise Estates	21	1965
Green Fairway Estates	27	1965-1966
Araby Estates	40	1965-1966

Altogether, as Harlan notes, “while the ACC has been enthusiastically credited with building as many as 2,500 homes in Palm Springs, the actual number (based on direct count) is closer to 1,200 homes.”³⁷

George and Bob, along with their wives Mildred and Helene, died in a private jet crash five miles north of Indio on November 14, 1965.³⁸ The death of the Alexanders heralded the end of the Alexander Construction Company, though the legacy of the family continues to be recognized today. On February 14, 2020, the Alexander Family was honored with a star on the Palm Springs Walk of Stars at 300 S. Palm Canyon Drive. At the ceremony, Bob and Helene’s daughter Jill Kitnick was quoted saying, “I am overjoyed to be celebrating my family and the beautiful and thoughtful contributions they made to this wonderful city...I love that my maiden name has become a noun: ‘I live in an Alexander,’ ‘I remodeled an Alexander,’ ‘I flipped an Alexander.’”³⁹

³⁶ Harlan, 57.

³⁷ Harlan, 11.

³⁸ Berman, Art, “Millionaire, Wife Among 8 Killed in Private Jet Crash,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 16, 1965, 1, 26.

³⁹ KESQ News Channel 3, “Alexander Family to receive 439th star on Palm Springs Walk of the Stars,” <<https://kesq.com/news/2020/02/05/alexander-family-to-receive-439th-star-on-palm-springs-walk-of-the-stars/>> accessed June 10, 2021.

Relationship to Subject Property

The subject property was developed by the Alexander Construction Company as a showcase home in Vista Las Palmas, the second subdivision and the second-largest subdivision developed by the company. It is one of over 1,000 homes developed by the company during their tenure in Palm Springs and was designed by frequent Alexander Construction Company collaborator William Krisel, AIA, of Palmer & Krisel. Bob and Helene Alexander made the subject property their home from its construction in 1960 until their deaths in 1965.

Robert and Helene Alexander

Robert “Bob” Lawrence Alexander (Bob) was born to George and Mildred Alexander on March 13, 1925 in Brooklyn, New York.⁴⁰ Not much is known about his early life, but in 1946, at the age of 21, Bob was recorded as living with his parents in Los Angeles, California. A year later, the *Los Angeles Times* published a wedding announcement noting his marriage to Helene L. Appel (Helene, born August 7, 1927) at the Beverly Hills Hotel, with the couple honeymooning in Mexico.⁴¹

Bob’s father George had worked in the real estate industry and was listed as a broker in the 1940 Los Angeles U.S. Census. Bob would come to join George in developing residential construction projects, initially in Los Angeles where he “started to chart a different direction, building modernist homes that were well-designed, attractive and geared to improve the buyer’s quality of life.”⁴² Where George was more traditional in his approach, Bob sought to be innovative and “had carte blanche with regard to the general design and aesthetics of the final, constructed, product.”⁴³ When George established the Alexander Construction Company in Palm Springs, Bob was in charge of operations, where “he was the face of the company, appearing in advertisements for the various neighborhood developments.”⁴⁴ His projects included the Ocotillo Lodge, Vista Las Palmas, and Racquet Club Road Estates.

In 1959, Bob sought to construct a showcase home at the subject property designed by Palmer & Krisel, though drawings marking spaces for “Bob”, “Helene”, and daughter “Jill” indicate that the home would be designed with the Alexander family in mind. After moving into the property, Bob, Helene, and Jill were featured in the September 25, 1962 issue of *Look Magazine*, which highlighted both the subject property and the Alexanders’ colorful lifestyle in Palm Springs. Described as “attractive young marrieds,” the article profiles Bob and Helene’s typical activities in the desert:

The ordinary housewife may be busy, but not as busy as Mrs. Robert Alexander. She does her own supermarket shopping, but needs a cook and butler to lighten the household chores. Reason: The chic, athletic life of Palm Springs requires her to play hard and stay in glamorous trim.

In the morning, she often needs the first hour and five ointments to put on false eyelashes and mascara. Then off to the Racquet Club, play spot of movie stars, to take her tennis lesson. It firms her legs. Some days, her husband gets their horses out for a ride; on Thursdays, he takes off to water-ski upon the Salton Sea. At night, in the social season, it’s parties, parties, parties. “It is,” he says, “undulating.”⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Ancestry.com. *U.S., World War II Draft Cards Young Men, 1940-1947* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

⁴¹ “Weddings,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 21, 1947: 15.

⁴² Harlan, 10.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 11.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 11.

⁴⁵ Harris, 40.

The article continues:

Robert Alexander, 37, and Helene, 35, [who] have had their share of trouble (five miscarriages, one stillborn child), want their share of pleasure. When they moved to Palm Springs five years ago, they found the place to get it.

Photographs of Helene at the property were prominent in the *Look Magazine* article with two pages specifically dedicated to her daily routine balancing housework with the casual lifestyle of the city. Helene was an avid tennis player, even winning tournaments at the local Racquet Club with doubles partner Minette Haber.⁴⁶

Both Bob and Helene were active in Palm Springs community affairs including philanthropy. Bob was president of the Palm Springs Desert Circus Association, a charity organization with donations going to the United Fund, in 1964 and 1965.⁴⁷ He was also treasurer for the Palm Springs Boys Club, involved with the Desert Riders and Los Compadres, and a fundraiser for the City of Hope.⁴⁸ Helene served as “co-chairperson of the bloodmobile committee, the Desert Hospital Auxiliary and the World Adoption International Fund (WAIF).”⁴⁹ She also was a frequent supporter of the Palm Springs Desert Circus, dressing up as a sheriff deputy to help “raid” various clubs and restaurants in Palm Springs to collect donations for local charities.⁵⁰

Tragically, Bob and Helene were killed in a private jet crash five miles north of Indio on November 14, 1965, along with George and Mildred Alexander and several others. A *Los Angeles Times* article that reported the deaths noted, “the Robert Alexanders, who lived in a showplace home in Palm Springs near where ex-President Eisenhower has vacationed, leave a daughter, Jil [sic] Ann.”⁵¹

Relationship to Subject Property

The subject property was home to Bob and Helene Alexander and their daughter Jill from its completion until Bob and Helene’s untimely death in 1965. In that span of time, it gained nationwide recognition, tied to the lifestyle of the Alexander family that helped define the carefree nature of Palm Springs to the rest of the country. The subject property was a showcase home in the Vista Las Palmas tract developed by the Alexander Construction Company, and from the upper level master bedroom, Bob was able to survey the progress of development in the tract from a residence he commissioned himself. Historic documentation of the subject property by Krisel clearly shows its intention for use by the Alexander family.

⁴⁶ “Tournament Winners at Racquet Club,” *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, December 14, 1961: 14.

⁴⁷ “Complete Desert Circus Program Set; Here It Is!” *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, April 2, 1964: 1.

⁴⁸ Harlan, 12.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 12.

⁵⁰ “Circus Deputies at Work,” *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, February 25, 1961: 4.

⁵¹ Berman, Art, “Millionaire, Wife Among 8 Killed in Private Jet Crash,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 16, 1965, 1, 26.

Elvis and Priscilla Presley in Palm Springs

On May 1, 1967, Elvis Presley (Elvis, January 8, 1935 – August 16, 1977) married Priscilla Beaulieu (Priscilla, born May 24, 1945) at the Aladdin Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. Elvis had met Priscilla in Germany while he was serving in the U.S. Army eight years prior in 1959.⁵² The September after Priscilla had turned 21 in 1966, Elvis⁵³ took out a one-year lease at the subject property and the two “began spending a lot of time in Palm Springs on breaks from his film projects.”⁵⁴ Elvis had already been familiar with Palm Springs prior to spending time at the subject property, having arrived in the city for the first time in 1957 on a train with his manager, Colonel Tom Parker (Colonel Parker), while promoting the film *Loving You*.⁵⁵ Since then, he came to like Palm Springs and leased other houses in the area in the years that followed.

Elvis proposed to Priscilla in Memphis on December 24, 1966. In the days leading up to the wedding, showbusiness reporter Rona Barrett (Barrett) noticed a flurry of activity at the house. She recounts her memory of that time in a 1997 *Palm Springs Desert Sun* article:

“Flowers were arriving all the time,” she said. “Limousines were coming and going, lots of car activity, people we noticed had not been around for a long time were coming around. There was a real sense of busyness that wasn’t normal busyness. Something was about to brew and of course the rumors had been going around for quite some time and it all started to fall in place.”⁵⁶

Barrett broke the news to ABC affiliates across the nation that a wedding was imminent in Palm Springs, believing it to be happening soon at the subject property. Instead, Colonel Parker had arranged for Elvis and Priscilla to leave the property undetected and fly to Las Vegas on Frank Sinatra’s private jet to wed in a private ceremony.⁵⁷ Following the wedding, the couple flew back to Palm Springs to begin their honeymoon.

Initial reports in the days following the wedding noted that the Presleys would take a month-long honeymoon “in a well-guarded desert retreat” and that “the newlyweds flew [to Palm Springs] Monday night to begin their honeymoon at Presley’s luxurious house in the Las Palmas section of this desert resort.”⁵⁸ Elvis and Priscilla’s time together at the subject property was cut short when Elvis had to return to Hollywood the next day to complete dubbing for an upcoming film, and the couple returned to Memphis on May 4 before continuing the honeymoon at their Mississippi ranch.⁵⁹

The influence of the subject property on the Presleys is alluded to in two one-bedroom suites at the Graceland Hotel & Resort in Memphis, built by Priscilla and opened in 2016. The suites are named after Elvis’ parents, Vernon and Gladys, and are described as “filled with mid-century flair” and “inspired by Elvis’ iconic Palm Springs home.” Among the interior décor are a serpentine sofa

⁵² “Elvis Weds a Brunette,” *San Francisco Examiner*, May 1, 1967: 1.

⁵³ Most sources state that it was Elvis who took out the lease, though at least one article noted that the subject property was leased by Elvis’ father, Vernon.

⁵⁴ Fessier, Bruce, “Elvis’ desert legacy lives in Stagecoach,” *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, May 2, 2017: A10.

⁵⁵ “Presley’s Palm Springs parties,” *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, August 14, 1987, 55, 60.

⁵⁶ Fessier, Bruce, “One night with you,” *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, April 29, 1997: 19.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ “Presleys honeymoon at home in Palm Springs,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, May 2, 1967: 8.

⁵⁹ Fessier, Bruce, “One night with you,” *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, April 29, 1997: 19.

and conical ceiling fixtures that recall the curved sofa and conical ceiling hoods at the living room and kitchen of the subject property.

In 1970, Elvis paid \$105,000 to purchase a home in Palm Springs at 845 Chino Canyon Road (Chino Canyon house), “spending a week’s Vegas salary to refurbish it.”⁶⁰ Road manager Greg McDonald, who would later purchase the property, remembered the house as a “24-hour-a-day party.”⁶¹ Following his divorce from Priscilla in 1973, Elvis won the house in the settlement. According to McDonald:

“[Elvis] split his time in the last years between here and Memphis...Priscilla got the house in Hollywood, so Elvis only had this and Graceland. He loved Palm Springs. He really didn’t like Los Angeles, and he hated Las Vegas with a passion. He’d often fly back here after a Las Vegas engagement and spend the night because he really didn’t want to spend a night in that town.”⁶²

Elvis owned the Chino Canyon house until his death in 1977. The property would come to be called various names including the Elvis Presley Hideaway and Graceland West and was later identified by HRG in the Citywide Historic Context Statement and Survey Findings as significant for its association with Elvis and as an example of Hacienda Ranch-style residential architecture by the firm Clark & Frey.

Both the subject property and the Chino Canyon house hosted tours for guests who wanted to walk through the same rooms that Elvis and Priscilla did during their time in Palm Springs. In addition, the subject property served as a venue for various events celebrating Elvis’ life, including anniversaries of his honeymoon with Priscilla and his death. Though the interiors are closed to the public today, both properties still attract visitors each year who stop by and continue to appreciate the residences and Elvis’ history with them from the street.

Relationship to Subject Property

The subject property served as a honeymoon location for both Elvis and Priscilla and was later used and promoted as the Elvis Presley Honeymoon Hideaway, attracting visitors from around the world, many who still visit the subject property from the exterior today. Still, the subject property was not a long-term residence of the Presleys and was not the only property in Palm Springs associated with the couple. Elvis owned the home at 845 Chino Canyon Road from 1970 until his death in 1977.

⁶⁰ Skolsky, Sidney, “Gossipel Truth for Hollywood,” *Los Angeles Evening Citizen News*, June 23, 1970, 23.

⁶¹ “Presley’s Palm Springs parties,” *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, August 14, 1987, 55, 60.

⁶² *Ibid.*

William Krisel, AIA

William Krisel, AIA (Krisel), was born on November 14, 1924 in Shanghai, China. Krisel's father, Alexander Krisel, was a member of the United States Consular Service, and the family returned permanently to the United States in 1937 at the onset of the Second Sino-Japanese War.⁶³ In 1941, Krisel began studying at the University of Southern California (USC) School of Architecture, though his studies were interrupted when he was called for active duty in the Army and trained as an interpreter for intelligence gathering due to his fluency in different Chinese dialects.⁶⁴ He resumed his studies at USC in 1946 and graduated with honors in 1949.

During his time at USC, Krisel had been employed at the firm Gruen and Krummeck under Modern architect Victor Gruen (Gruen). Along with Gruen, Krisel saw mentorship from other leaders in the architecture and design field including Maynard Lyndon, Garrett Eckbo, Calvin Straub, Verle Annis, and Paul Laszlo. It was at Gruen and Krummeck that Krisel would meet his future business partner Dan Saxon Palmer (Palmer), starting a firm in Los Angeles known as Palmer & Krisel in 1949.⁶⁵ At this time, Krisel had not yet been licensed as an architect, though he became licensed in the state of California in 1950. In 1954, he became a licensed landscape architect and in 1955, he was licensed in architecture in all 50 states under the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards.⁶⁶

In their early work together, Palmer & Krisel “decided to focus on the mass-produced tract housing industry, a field that most architects...considered beneath the dignity of serious architects.”⁶⁷ Krisel took his experience from his studies and proceeded with designing these homes with the intention “to create Modern living spaces using Modern methods and materials” by “[analyzing] each step in the process to determine how Modernist design could cut costs and deliver value using new forms and methods.”⁶⁸ Palmer & Krisel put this practice into use when the firm was engaged by George and Bob Alexander to design the Corbin Palms tract in the San Fernando Valley. Corbin Palms “consisted of simple and elegant post-and-beam homes that sold rapidly” and “Krisel showed the Alexanders how to bring excellent and modern design to mass-produced housing while saving on construction costs, thereby increasing the profitability of the project.”⁶⁹ The success of Corbin Palms soon attracted other clients to the firm.

Throughout the 1950s, Palmer & Krisel “received national Awards of Merit from the National Association for Home Builders for their designs in the San Fernando Valley, Orange County, and Palm Springs for builders such as Harlan Lee, Jerry Snyder and Max Levine, Lawrence Weinberg, and George and Robert Alexander.”⁷⁰ The work was also featured in publications including *Architectural Record* and *Progressive Architecture*.

⁶³ Winship, Sian (2016). Ingredients for an Extraordinary Career. In Chris Menrad and Heidi Crichton (Ed.), *William Krisel's Palm Springs: The Language of Modernism* (pp. 23-33). Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 24-25.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 25.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 29.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 29.

⁶⁷ Hess, Alan (2016). Modernism is a Language. In Chris Menrad and Heidi Crichton (Ed.), *William Krisel's Palm Springs: The Language of Modernism* (pp. 35-41). Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 36.

⁶⁸ Hess, 36.

⁶⁹ Harlan, Jim (2016). On Tract. In Chris Menrad and Heidi Crichton (Ed.), *William Krisel's Palm Springs: The Language of Modernism* (pp. 43-65). Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 44.

⁷⁰ Winship, 31.

Krisel would be given the opportunity to expand his work into the development of Palm Springs when the Alexander Construction Company asked Palmer & Krisel to design the Twin Palms Estates tract. The 90-home tract constructed between 1956 and 1957 allowed Krisel to improve on ideas he had explored at Corbin Palms and “[balance] the advantages of mass production with the appeal of diversity.”⁷¹ At the Twin Palms Estates, “each house repeated the identical square plan, taking advantage of the cost savings in repetitive production – but [Krisel] rotated the plan on each site to present a different façade.”⁷² Krisel also offered an assortment of roof styles to choose from in order to further develop variety in design that appealed to those looking to buy a vacation home.

As described by architect and historian Alan Hess in *William Krisel’s Palm Springs: The Language of Modernism*, edited by Chris Menrad and Heidi Crichton:

*Krisel’s designs included plans as cutting edge as any in Southern California: open plans united kitchen, dining room, living room, and outdoor patios to serve the informal lifestyles emerging after World War II. Instead of traditional boxy rooms, he designed sloping ceilings and clerestory windows that spread natural air and light through his houses.*⁷³

In Palm Springs, Krisel would design many more tracts and buildings, including the 360-home Racquet Club Road Estates for the Alexander Construction Company, the largest tract in Palm Springs. Additionally, Palmer & Krisel, along with architect Charles E. Dubois, designed the homes in the Vista Las Palmas tract where the subject property is located. While associated with the development of mass-produced homes, Krisel also designed custom homes that allowed him to continue innovating in design. Krisel designed 62 custom homes between 1950 and 1969, of which 55 were actually built and at least 10 were built directly for developers.⁷⁴

The subject property, built for Bob Alexander and his wife, Helene, in 1960, is considered one of Krisel’s “most adventurous and high spirited” custom homes.⁷⁵ Krisel was able to use his experience with developers to cater to their individual tastes and needs. For the subject property, he took “the generous clerestories that follow below a sloping roofline in some of Krisel’s tract models” and “brought [it] to a crescendo” in the building’s design, “[synthesizing] what he knew – and loved – about the Alexander family [and integrating] that knowledge into the site.”⁷⁶ Krisel also designed the Kemp Residence (1963) in Palm Desert and the Tipper-Grundt Residence (1968) in Palm Springs.

By 1964, Krisel was effectively operating independently from Palmer, though the partnership was not officially dissolved until 1966.⁷⁷ Krisel formed a new partnership with Abraham Shapiro in 1969, known as Krisel/Shapiro Architects, until Krisel sold his share of the firm in 1979.⁷⁸ From then on, he served as a consultant, first with A.C. Martin and Associates, and then independently. Among his many accolades for his building projects, Krisel was recognized with a star on the

⁷¹ Hess, 39-40.

⁷² Ibid, 39-40.

⁷³ Ibid, 36.

⁷⁴ Lamprecht, Barbara (2016). Krisel Goes Kustom. In Chris Menrad and Heidi Crichton (Ed.), *William Krisel’s Palm Springs: The Language of Modernism* (pp. 139-161). Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 139.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 140.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 140.

⁷⁷ Winship, 32.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 32.

Palm Springs Walk of Stars on February 13, 2009, where master of ceremonies Michael Stern noted:

“Bill is a virtuoso at creating so much from so little – and it is a testament to his caliber that he didn’t create mundane tracts that are based on numbing, endless, banal repetition, but instead created true neighborhoods that feel like neighborhoods oozing with vitality and charm.”⁷⁹

Krisel died at his home in Beverly Hills on June 5, 2017. He was survived by his wife Corinne R. Jaffe, who he married in 1953, and their children William and Michelle Krisel.⁸⁰ Krisel’s archives are held as part of the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles.

Relationship to Subject Property

Krisel was a master architect who was responsible for designing many important buildings in Palm Springs, including the subject property, and elsewhere in southern California. Working with Bob Alexander, Krisel designed the subject property as a home that suited the needs of the Alexander family, while being innovative and visually distinct from the other residences he had previously designed. The subject property is a prominent example of Krisel’s design aesthetics and workmanship principles that has appeared in several publications since first being introduced to the nation in a 1962 issue of *Look Magazine*.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 32.

⁸⁰ Noland, Claire, “Modernist architect to the masses,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 9, 2017: B6.

Mid-Century Modern

The Mid-Century Modern context in this report includes general description of the Mid-Century Modern style as well as related Organic and Googie subtypes. The following is excerpted from the “Architectural Styles & Local Practitioners” theme of the Citywide Historic Context Statement prepared by HRG in 2018:⁸¹

Mid-century Modern is a term used to describe the post-World War II iteration of various Modern styles in both residential and commercial design, including the International Style. International Style architecture is characterized by geometric forms, smooth wall surfaces, and an absence of exterior decoration. Mid-century Modern represents the adaptation of these elements to the local climate, new building technologies (such as modular materials and structural systems), and to the postwar need for efficiently-built, moderately priced homes. In Palm Springs, this often meant the use of wood post-and-beam construction. Mid-century Modernism is often characterized by a clear expression of structure and materials, large expanses of glass, and open interior plans. It was adapted to Palm Springs by the use of concrete block, perforated concrete, and other forms of wood, concrete, and metal screens to shield against the intense desert sun while allowing for air flow.

The roots of the style can be traced to early Modernists like Richard Neutra and Rudolph Schindler, whose local work inspired “second generation” Modern architects like Gregory Ain, Craig Ellwood, and Harwell Hamilton Harris, to name a few. Mid-century Modernism was adapted to Palm Springs by prominent local architects including John Porter Clark, William Cody, Albert Frey, Donald Wexler, and E. Stewart Williams, as well as Los Angeles architects such as Dan Palmer and William Krisel. These postwar architects developed an indigenous Modernism that was born from international Modernism and but [sic] matured into a fundamentally regional style, fostered in part by Art and Architecture magazine’s pivotal Case Study Program (1945-1966), along with specific local conditions. The style gained popularity because its use of standardized, prefabricated materials permitted quick and economical construction. It became the predominant architectural style in Palm Springs in the postwar years and is represented in almost every property type, from single-family residences to commercial buildings to gas stations.

Character-defining features include:

- *One or two-story configuration*
- *Horizontal massing (for small-scale buildings)*
- *Simple geometric forms*
- *Expressed post-and-beam construction, in wood or steel*
- *Flat roof or low-pitched gable roof with wide overhanging eaves and cantilevered canopies; some examples have folded plate roofs*
- *Unadorned wall surfaces*
- *Wood, glass, plaster, concrete, steel, brick or stone used as exterior wall panels or accent materials*
- *Flush-mounted metal frame fixed windows and sliding doors, and clerestory windows*

⁸¹ Historic Resources Group, “City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings,” December 2018.

- *Concrete, wood, or metal screens*
- *Little or no exterior decorative detailing*
- *Expressionistic/Organic subtype: sculptural forms and geometric shapes, including butterfly, A-frame, folded plate or barrel vault roofs*

Although not mentioned in the Citywide Historic Context Statement, another notable feature prevalent in many post-World War II homes was the carport. Unlike garages, carports were not surrounded by four walls, allowing ventilation which “enabled airflow around a vehicle so that it would not rust in the confines of a garage.”⁸² Carports became increasingly popular throughout the 1950s and were incorporated in homes within the Vista Las Palmas tract of Palm Springs, where their placement “varied from street-facing to set at a right angle to the residence – contributing to a distinctive visual architectural cadence for this neighborhood.”⁸³

Organic Architecture

According to the Citywide Historic Context Statement:

The chief concept of Organic architecture is the merging of building and nature, so that the design responds to the environment rather than imposing itself upon it. Organic architecture grew out of the site from within, employing natural shapes, complex geometries, and new building materials and technologies to unify all elements of the design – site, structure, spaces, fixtures, finishes, and furnishing – into a single harmonious unit. [...]

Character-defining features include:

- *Merging of building and nature*
- *Use of natural shapes and complex geometries*
- *Use of innovative building materials and technologies*
- *Unification of all elements of the design into a single harmonious unit*

Googie Architecture

According to the Citywide Historic Context Statement:

Googie has been described as Modernism for the masses. With its swooping lines and organic shapes, the style captured the playful exuberance of postwar America. Named for the John Lautner-designed Googie’s Restaurant in Los Angeles, the style was widely employed in automobile-oriented commercial architecture of the 1950s, including coffee shops, bowling alleys, and car washes. It exaggerated the vocabulary of Mid-century Modern design to catch the eye of passing motorists with dramatic sculptural rooflines, shimmering walls of glass, abstract shapes, and prominent integral signage. [...]

⁸² Swanson, Dale, “A Brief History of the Carport,” Dale Does the Desert, <<https://www.daledoesthedesert.com/single-post/2017/12/21/a-brief-history-of-the-carport>> accessed July 9, 2021.

⁸³ Historic Resources Group, “City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings,” December 2018.

Character-defining features include:

- *Expressive rooflines, including butterfly, folded-plate, and cantilevers*
- *Organic, abstract, and parabolic shapes*
- *Clear expression of materials, including concrete, steel, asbestos, cement, glass block, plastic, and plywood*
- *Large expanses of plate glass*
- *Thematic ornamentation, including tiki and space age motifs*
- *Primacy of signage, including the pervasive use of neon*

Relationship to Subject Property

The subject property expresses character-defining features of the Mid-Century Modern style including one-to-two story configuration; wood, glass, plaster, concrete, steel, brick, or stone used as exterior wall panels or accent materials; and flush-mounted metal frame fixed windows and sliding doors, and clerestory windows. Furthermore, its construction as a custom home allowed architect Krisel to innovate and experiment outside of the traditional mass-produced Mid-Century Modern tract homes he designed, using elements of Organic and Googie architecture to design a one-of-a-kind building. Taking from the Organic style, the subject property merges building with nature through use of sculptural forms and geometric shapes via a complex tiered design that conforms with the slope of the site. There is also extensive use of natural fieldstone. Taking from the Googie style, the subject property has an expressive roofline with organic and abstract shapes, clear expression of materials, and expansive glass windows. Rather than represent space age motifs via ornamentation, the roofline and building shape itself reflects the space age aesthetic of the period, appearing to lift off as the roof rises towards the front façade.

VII. HISTORIC RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

This section evaluates the subject property for eligibility as a Class 1 or Class 2 historic resource under the City Historic Preservation Ordinance.

City of Palm Springs

Designation Criteria

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

The subject property does not appear to be associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state, or community. Taking guidance from Criterion A of the National Register of Historic Places, on which City Criterion i appears to be based, a property is associated with events that either mark an important moment in American pre-history or history or represent a pattern of events or historic trends that made a significant contribution to development of a community, a State, or the nation. Though Elvis and Priscilla had their honeymoon at the subject property, that event itself does not constitute a meaningful contribution under this criterion. The subject property does not qualify as a historic resource under Criterion i.

(ii) The resource is associated with the lives of persons who made a meaningful contribution to national, state or local history.

The subject property was evaluated for association with the lives of Bob and Helene Alexander and Elvis and Priscilla Presley. Early plans drawn by William Krisel, AIA, of Palmer & Krisel are labeled as "Residence for Mr. & Mrs. Robert Alexander," showing that the intent was for Bob and Helene to live at the subject property once completed. As part of his duties in the Alexander Construction Company, Bob was able to use the view from the upper level master bedroom to survey the development in the Vista Las Palmas tract. He was still doing his important work in Palm Springs at the time and both Bob and Helene were active in community affairs and philanthropy. Though Bob and Helene only lived at the subject property between 1960 and their deaths in 1965, they were closely associated with the residence as their lives there were profiled in a 1962 issue of *Look Magazine*. The magazine not only highlighted the subject property, but focused in on how the Alexanders represented the resort lifestyle of Palm Springs through their activities, dedicating two pages of the spread to following Helene's beauty and exercise routine.

Though Elvis and Priscilla Presley spent their honeymoon at the subject property and are important figures in history, their association with the property does not rise to the level of significance for designation. The subject property was never their primary residence and only rented for a year, though Elvis and Priscilla did not live there the full span of time. While Elvis and Priscilla were married on May 1, 1967, the couple returned to Memphis on May 4 to resume the rest of their honeymoon period there. There is already another property in Palm Springs at 845 Chino Canyon Road that is more closely linked to the life of Elvis and was owned by him for seven years until his death.

Though not significant for association with the lives of Elvis and Priscilla Presley, the subject property is significant for association with the lives of Bob and Helene Alexander. The subject property qualifies as a historic resource under Criterion ii.

(iii) The resource reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, state or local history.

The subject property reflects innovative design principles that characterize the Post-World War II period of single-family residential development in Palm Springs through its unique interpretation of the Mid-Century Modern style with Organic and Googie elements. Locally, this period was important in helping to further define the notion of Palm Springs as a center for architecture and leisure at a time when the population was growing significantly.

As a Mid-Century Modern building, the subject property expresses character-defining features of the style including one-to-two story configuration, flush-mounted metal frame fixed windows and sliding doors, and clerestory windows. In addition, the subject property features an open floor plan that supports the flow of movement between the living room, dining room, and kitchen, as well as indoor and outdoor spaces, further emphasized by floor-to-ceiling glass that seem to blend interior with exterior.

As a custom home, architect Krisel was able to further innovate and experiment outside of the traditional mass-produced Mid-Century Modern tract homes that he designed, using elements of Organic and Googie architecture to design a distinct and one-of-a-kind building. Elements of Organic style are incorporated in the merging of building with nature, evident in the use of a complex tiered design that conforms with the slope of the site. Though the Googie style is more traditionally associated with commercial architecture, the subject property uniquely incorporates many of the design elements associated with the style in its construction as a single-family residence. The space age aesthetic often associated with the style is represented by the roof and building shape that appear to lift off as the roof rises towards the front façade. The roofline is distinctive and there is clear expression of materials including fieldstone and use of expansive glass windows. As a unique mix of elements from Mid-Century Modern, Organic, and Googie styles, the subject property exceptionally embodies the design aesthetics of the period.

Regarded as “the House of Tomorrow,” the subject property was initially featured and highlighted to the nation in a 1962 issue of *Look Magazine*. The article celebrated the subject property for its innovation and its excess as a “pleasure dome,” showcasing the trend of Mid-Century Modern design that became characteristic of Palm Springs. Since then, the subject property has been highlighted as a remarkable example of the Mid-Century Modern style in other media including documentaries, television segments, and published books such as *The Alexanders: A Desert Legacy* by James R. Harlan and *William Krisel’s Palm Springs: The Language of Modernism*, edited by Chris Menrad and Heidi Creighton. The subject property qualifies as a historic resource under Criterion iii.

(iv) The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction.

The method of construction of the subject property incorporates extensive use of steel to achieve the long spans of the distinctive roof and open plan. While other custom houses in the Post-World War II period expose steel structure for effect, in this case, the extensive use of steel is hidden behind finishes, belying the source of structural stability. This achievement in method of construction emphasizes the subject property’s one-of-a-kind design. The subject property qualifies as a historic resource under Criterion iv.

(v) The resource presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age, or that possesses high artistic value.

The subject property, as a work of master architect William Krisel, AIA, of Palmer & Krisel, is considered an innovative design that expands on many of the techniques he had used in his earlier projects. Whereas Krisel's tract houses often represented variations in floor plan, roofline and façade treatment for ease of production and to cater to buyers, the subject property allowed Krisel to experiment with non-traditional shapes and forms that responded to the sloped site. It is one of several custom homes Krisel designed for builders and developers with whom he had worked, including the Kemp Residence (1963) in Palm Desert for William Kemp and the Tipper-Grundt Residence (1968) in Palm Springs for Robert Grundt. It also displays high artistic value in the variety of materials and the complexity of its one-of-a-kind floor plan using a series of circular pavilions at each corner of the residence. The subject property qualifies as a historic resource under Criterion v.

(vi) The resource represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, as used in evaluating applications for designation of historic districts, for parcels on which more than one entity exists.

The subject property does not represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. The subject property does not qualify as a historic resource under Criterion vi.

(vii) The resource has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to national, state or local history or prehistory.

The scope of this report did not include evaluation of the subject property for significance relative to prehistory.

Contributor to a Potential Historic District

The scope of this report is limited to determining if the subject property is eligible as a Class 1 or Class 2 historic resource under the City Historic Preservation Ordinance. While it does not include an evaluation of whether or not the subject property is a contributor to a potential historic district, cursory analysis finds that it is likely a contributor to the potential Vista Las Palmas Historic District identified by HRG as part of the Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings. As with many of the surrounding properties in the Vista Las Palmas tract, the subject property was constructed within the identified period of significance of 1957 to 1961 and represents the work of key figures in the development of the tract, Palmer & Krisel and the Alexander Construction Company.

Integrity

To be eligible as a Class 1 historic resource, a property must also retain sufficient integrity to convey historic significance. A Class 2 historic resource does not have to meet the integrity criteria. A property either retains its integrity, the physical and visual characteristics necessary to convey its significance, or it does not. Evaluation of integrity is founded on “an understanding of a property’s physical features and how they relate to its significance.” The seven aspects of integrity are Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association. *National Register Bulletin #15 “How to Apply National Register Criteria for Evaluation” (National Register Bulletin #15)* states that “[to] retain historic integrity, a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects.”⁸⁴

Location

The subject property was constructed at its current location and has not been moved. The subject property retains integrity of location.

Design

Though the subject property reflects much of the original unique design of the residence as constructed, recent work has destroyed or altered some character-defining features. The swimming pool finishes have been demolished, with original terrazzo and concrete pool deck, concrete coping, and pool plaster and tile removed. The relationship between the indoors and outdoors has been partially compromised due to loss of the terrazzo steps at the exterior rear yard extending from the interior living room and dining room. Most of the original landscape has also been removed.

The room addition visually impairs the symmetry of the west elevation facing the rear yard, as this elevation was previously entirely framed by fieldstone-clad walls. It is unclear whether the room addition was previously permitted as work to construct it does not appear in available City building permits. Removal would return additional integrity to the subject property as viewed from the rear yard, important as a center for outdoor living and entertaining. Similarly, the conversion of the carport to a garage also affects integrity of design. Open carports allowed ventilation and were common features in post-World War II Mid-Century Modern residences of the Vista Las Palmas tract. Enclosing the carport as a garage alters a character-defining feature of the subject property and contradicts design intent of enabling airflow around a vehicle.

Regardless of these alterations, many more character-defining features are still evident at the subject property including the vast shed roof with expansive eaves and triangular cut-outs; orientation of interior space with multiple levels that change in elevation using stairs and conforms with the slope of the site; flush-mounted and metal-framed floor-to-ceiling windows, bands of windows, and clerestory windows and glass sliding doors; circular, seeded aggregate steppingstones and rectangular landing set over a water feature with fieldstone; and more. Based on the remaining character-defining features and overall design of the subject property, a historical contemporary would still recognize it as it was during its period of significance. The subject property retains integrity of design.

⁸⁴ National Register Bulletin #15, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (National Park Service, 1990, revised 2002), 44.

Setting

The subject property was constructed as a single-family residence in the Vista Las Palmas subdivision of Palm Springs. Though the area has experienced encroaching development, with new residences constructed adjacent to the subject property and resulting in partial loss of views and privacy, the subject property continues to read as part of a single-family residential neighborhood with Mount San Jacinto and its associated mountain range still visible from the rear yard. The removal of much of the original landscape is unfortunate as it diminishes integrity of setting as the current landscape no longer reflects the lush vegetation shown in historic photographs, though some original palms appear to remain. Other key aspects of the setting, such as the orientation of the subject property on a slope and its role as the focal point at the end of a cul-de-sac are also still largely evident. The subject property retains integrity of setting.

Materials

Though not visible from the street, the rear yard was an important space for entertainment and leisure that emphasized the indoor-outdoor relationship characteristic of homes built in Palm Springs at the time. The demolition of swimming pool finishes, including related elements such as the original terrazzo and concrete pool deck, concrete coping, and pool plaster and tile, diminishes integrity of materials. On the interior, loss of textured ceiling diminishes integrity of materials as well. Still, the subject property retains a substantial number of original materials, including exterior and interior fieldstone-clad walls at the front façade, rear yard, living room, family room, and master bedroom; circular, seeded aggregate steppingstones and rectangular landing and flagstone-clad water feature; terrazzo-clad projecting stoop; stucco-clad walls; and glass-and-metal windows. All exterior glazing appears to be original, single-pane glass. The subject property retains integrity of materials.

Workmanship

The subject property reflects a high level of quality in workmanship, evident in the details of its design such as the hand-laid fieldstone-clad walls, careful method of integrating the frameless clerestory windows, and the precise detailing of the aluminum strips in areas such as the family room where the terrazzo dividers at the floor converge at the fireplace. The overall layout of the subject property itself exhibits high workmanship quality, with the many irregular angles formed by the canted walls and circular form of the pavilions. As a custom home for a high-profile client, the workmanship reflects an attention to detail and precision expected of such a property that is still evident today. The subject property retains integrity of workmanship.

Feeling

The subject property continues to read as a single-family residence due to its configuration of spaces that include a living room, kitchen, family room, bedrooms, and bathrooms. Its presence sitting on a slope at the end of a cul-de-sac still commands attention from the street as it did when it was first constructed. The subject property retains integrity of feeling.

Association

The subject property continues to be admired for its Mid-Century Modern architectural design that was celebrated in 1962 with the publication of the spread in *Look Magazine*. It is still closely associated with the lives of Bob and Helene Alexander, architect William Krisel, and post-WWII residential development in Palm Springs. The subject property retains integrity of association.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This report evaluated the subject property located at 1350 Ladera Circle, Palm Springs, California for eligibility as a Class 1 or Class 2 historic resource under the City Historic Preservation Ordinance. For the reasons stated in this report, the subject property is eligible for local designation as a Class 1 historic resource under City Criterion ii for association with the lives of Bob and Helene Alexander; Criterion iii for reflecting innovative design principles that characterize the Post-World War II period of single-family residential development in Palm Springs through its unique interpretation of the Mid-Century Modern style with Organic and Googie elements; Criterion iv for embodying distinctive characteristics of a method of construction through its extensive use of steel to achieve the long spans of its distinctive roof and open plan; and Criterion v as a work of master architect William Krisel, AIA of Palmer & Krisel which possesses high artistic value. Additionally, the subject property continues to retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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ATTACHMENT A:
DPR 523A FORMS

**ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (“HOUSE OF TOMORROW”)
1350 LADERA CIRCLE
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA**

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PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
 HRI # _____
 Trinomial _____
 NRHP Status Code 35

Other Listings
 Review Code _____

Reviewer _____

Date _____

Page 1 of 3

Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) House of Tomorrow

P1. Other Identifier:

P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

a. County Riverside

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

b. USGS 7.5' Quad Palm Springs Date 1996 T _____ ; R _____ ; 1/4 of _____ 1/4 of Sec _____ ; B.M. _____

c. Address 1350 Ladera Circle City Palm Springs Zip 92263

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone 11 ; _____ mE/ _____ mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)

City of Palm Springs Section 10

Parcel No. 505 082 011, 012

P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

Originally constructed in 1962 by builder Robert Alexander for use as his custom model home, the futuristic design for this home was created by architects William Krisel and Dan Palmer. Krisel and Palmer collaborated with Alexander on the design of both custom and tract homes and commercial buildings constructed by the Alexander Company in Palm Springs. Located in the foothills of the San Jacinto Mountains that border the western edge of Palm Springs, the House of Tomorrow is sited at the end of a short cul-de-sac on Ladera Circle and features a stylized front gable roof with wide elongated eaves on the east and west elevations. Aside from the futuristic roofline, the residence is principally defined by a raised circular room with high clerestory windows and set atop a high uncoursed fieldstone wall. As shown in the photograph below, the circular theme is central to the design of the residence. Research reveals that the circular theme is exhibited throughout the interior of the custom built home. The rear and side elevations feature smooth stucco exterior walls and contain additional stone and glass detailing. A stacked flagstone path ascends the front entry gate on the west side of the house, and an asphalt drive on the east side of the lot leads to the rear of the property. The house is associated with Elvis Presley and is known as the Elvis Honeymoon Retreat. Overall, the House of Tomorrow appears to be in good condition.

P3b. Resource Attributes: HP2 - Single Family Property

P4. Resources Present: Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo:

(View, date, accession #)
 View North
 August 2003

P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:

Historic Prehistoric Both
 1962

P7. Owner and Address:

M Lewis & B L Rubin c/o Tri Villa Trust
 266 Beacon Street
 Boston MA 02116

P8. Recorded by:

Maley/Petrin/Tinsley/Watson
 Architectural Resources Group
 Pier 9, The Embarcadero
 San Francisco, CA 94111

P9. Date Recorded: August 2003

P10. Survey Type (Describe)

Reconnaissance Survey

P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

Architectural Resources Group, City of Palm Springs Historic Resources Survey Summary Report, 2004.

Attachments:

- None Continuation Sheet District Record Rock Art Record Other (List)
 Location Map Building, Structure, and Object Record Linear Feature Record Artifact Record
 Sketch Map Archaeological Record Milling Station Record Photograph Record

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Page 2 of 3

NRHP Status Code 3S

Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) House of Tomorrow

B1. Historic Name: House of Tomorrow

B2. Common Name: 1350 Ladera Circle

B3. Original Use: Residential

B4. Present Use: Residential

B5. Architectural Style: mid-century Modern

B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

This house was constructed in 1962.

B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____

B8. Related Features:

Cul-de-sac location. Related features include a high uncoursed fieldstone wall and a stacked flagstone path.

B9a. Architect: William Krisel & Dan Palmer

b. Builder: Robert Alexander

B10. Significance: Theme residential architecture/development Area Palm Springs

Period of Significance 1960s-1970s Property Type residence Applicable Criteria A, C (G)

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

For centuries the habitat of the Agua Caliente band of Cahuilla Indians, Palm Springs, site of natural hot springs and sunny desert climate, drew its first non-Indian visitors in the late 19th century. For reasons of improved health and recuperation, the first settlers established early hotels and inns. Not until 1938 did the village of Palm Springs incorporate, setting out a gridded street plan and zoning controls. By then Palm Springs had already acquired an identity as a winter retreat for Hollywood stars and the wealthy, as evidenced by the exclusive older neighborhoods of Old Las Palmas, the Movie Colony, Little Tuscany, and the Tennis Club quarter, initially built for winter residents. Defined by elegant, grand architecture in predominantly Spanish and Mediterranean styles, these and other neighborhoods were later filled in with mid-century Modern homes by the end of the 1960s.

During the post-WWII era, the City of Palm Springs prospered, relying on tourism, resorts, and the appeal of golf, tennis, polo, and other sports to fuel the economy. During the Palm Springs heyday, tourists and Hollywood discovered the desert oasis and full-scale hotels, smaller inns, nightclubs and restaurants prospered. Concurrently, from the 1940s through the 1960s, Palm Springs was transformed into an increasingly urban environment, building schools, hospitals and an airport and other civic amenities. The commercial core of the City, long concentrated along the main thoroughfares of Palm Canyon Drive and Indian Canyon Drive, flourished. Expanding residential development began in the early 1960s when large tracts of popular, reasonably priced, Modernist-style homes were constructed by Jack Meiselman and later, George and Robert Alexander throughout Palm Springs. Tract subdivision development was followed by the establishment of condominiums, initially as second-homes in the 1960s. (See Continuation Sheet)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: HP2 - Single Family Property

B12. References:

Architectural Resources Group, *City of Palm Springs Historic Resources Survey Summary Report*, 2004. (report contains full bibliography)

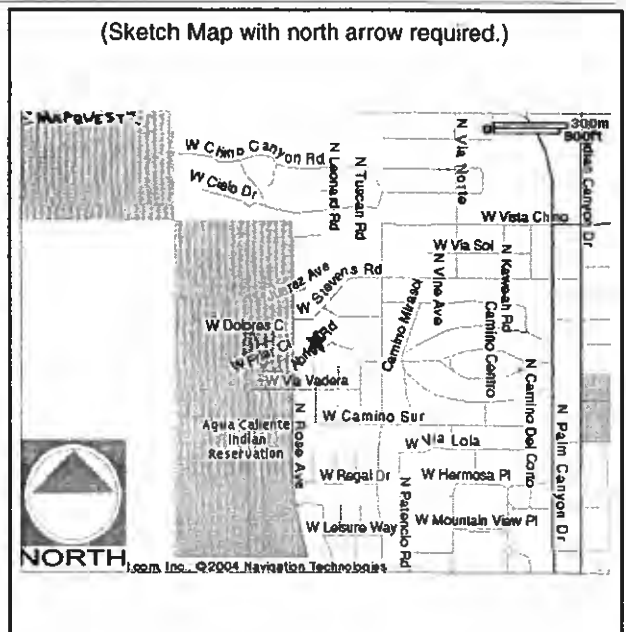
B13. Remarks:

Maley/Petrin/Tinsley/Watson

B14. Evaluator: Architectural Resources Group

Date of Evaluation: August 2003

(This space reserved for official comments.)



Page 3 of 3

Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) House of Tomorrow

Recorded by Maley/Petrin/Tinsley/Watson Arch. Resources Group Date August 2003 Continuation Update

B10. Significance Continued

Located in the Las Palmas district, the House of Tomorrow reflects the architectural ingenuity of the post-war era, particularly evidenced in this unique residence designed by architects William Krisel and Dan Palmer. The House of Tomorrow was built as a model house in 1962 but developer Robert Alexander decided to make it his own home. Prominent local builders, the father and son team of George and Robert Alexander of the Alexander Construction Company, in collaboration with William Krisel, were developers of mass produced homes for the middle classes. This spaceship-like structure achieved national recognition when appeared in Look magazine in the late 1960s. Elvis and Priscilla Presley honeymooned here for two weeks.

Built in 1962, the House of Tomorrow does not appear to be significantly modified on the exterior. The house retains a high degree of integrity; the location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association appear to remain unchanged since the building was constructed. The setting of 1350 Ladera Circle within a residential neighborhood of houses similar in age and scale remains intact.

The house appears to meet the level of significance necessary for individual National Register of Historic Places or California Register of Historical Resources eligibility at the national level. Though innovative in design, the residence is typical of the pattern of residential development that occurred in the City of Palm Springs in the 1960s and 1970s; it is an outstanding example of innovative residential buildings. Further, it is associated with Robert Alexander, builder of local prominence, and entertainer Elvis Presley. Further, the building is the work of master architect, William Krisel. It is an excellent example of its type, period, or method of construction.

Because of the building's visual quality, history, intact setting, and high integrity, the building represents the overall residential development of this neighborhood in the 1960s and 1970s and contributes to the historic identity of Palm Springs as an enclave for progressive architecture. The structure represents the overall development of residential architecture during the post-war era and contributes to the mid-century modernist character so strongly identified with Palm Springs.

This property is nearing 50 years of age. According to *National Register Bulletin 15*, properties that have achieved significance within the last 50 years, must meet Criteria G. This consideration of exceptional importance guards against the listing of properties of passing contemporary interest. As stated above, this property appears to meet the level of significance necessary for individual National Register of Historic Places or California Register of Historical Resources eligibility at the local level and is typical of the pattern of development that occurred in the City of Palm Springs in the 1950s and 1960s and the house is an outstanding example of residential buildings within this context.

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Assessor Parcel Number	Additional APNs			2016 Status Code	3S	3CS	5B
505082012							
Address	1350	Direction	Prefix	Street	Ladera	Suffix	Cir
Location							

2016 FIELD PHOTO



CONSTRUCTION INFORMATION

Date from Tax Assessor	1960	Date from Research	
Date Source			
Architect	Palmer & Krisel		
Architect Source			
Builder			
Original Owner	Alexander, Robert		
Other Owner(s)			
Historic Name	Robert Alexander Residence; "House of Tomorrow"; "Th		
Common Name	Robert Alexander Residence; "House of Tomorrow"; "The Elvis Presley Honeymoon House"		

RESOURCE INFORMATION

Original Use	Single-family residence	Stories	1.5
Current Use	Single-family residence	Tract/Neighborhood	Vista Las Palmas
Resource Attribute	HP2. Single family property	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Located in a District?	District Vista Las Palmas
Architectural Style	Mid-century Modern	Additional Style	

CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

- One-story configuration with complex geometric forms
- Low-pitched gable roof with wide overhanging eaves
- Unadorned wall surfaces with little decorative detailing
- Plaster, wood and stone used as exterior wall panels and accent materials
- Flush-mounted metal frame windows and sliding doors, and clerestory windows

Sloping site with stone retaining walls and circular exposed aggregate concrete stepped path; lush landscaping; complex plan composed of four clustered polygonal shapes under a single diamond-shaped gable roof with cut-out canopies;

GENERAL ALTERATIONS

No major alterations

CUSTOM ALTERATIONS

--

PREVIOUS SURVEY EVALUATION

City Historic Resources Database

HRI Code

2003 Status Code

HSPB No.

2016 EVALUATION

National Register 3S

California Register 3CS

Local 5B

Period of Significance 1960

Criterion C/3/4, 5

Context Architectural Styles & Local Practitioners

Theme Post-World War II Modernism

Sub-theme Mid-century Modern

Period of Significance

Criterion

Context

Theme

Sub-theme

Period of Significance

Criterion

Context

Theme

Sub-theme

Statement of Significance

This property is significant as an excellent example of Mid-century Modern architecture designed by the prominent architectural firm of Palmer & Krisel. It exhibits quality of design with distinctive features including its complex plan of clustered polygonal forms, wide front gable roof with wide overhanging eaves, and extensive use of glass, plaster, stone, and wood.

Notes/Additional Information

The growing prosperity of the post-World War II years and the rise of the car culture contributed to a rapid increase in Palm Springs' seasonal and permanent population, coinciding with the peak of Modernism's popularity. This created a demand for both mass-produced and custom housing that afforded architects and developers the opportunity to explore and develop a wide range of architectural types and ideas, sometimes influenced by sophisticated global design trends. These conditions and the architects' talents led to the development of an exceptional group of Modern buildings which later came to be identified as "Palm Springs Modernism" or "The Palm Springs School." Architects Dan Saxon Palmer and William Krisel, AIA, formed their partnership in 1950 after working together in the Los Angeles office of Victor Gruen. The partners designed custom modern houses of modular post-and-beam construction, with open floor plans, glass walls, and simple lines. They used the same features in the design of their first housing tract, Corbin Palms (1954-1955), for the Los Angeles based Alexander Construction Company and for subsequent Alexander subdivisions in Palm Springs including Twin Palms Estates (1955), Vista Las Palmas (Phases II and III, 1956-59) and Racquet Club Road Estates (1958-61). The designs were based on standardized materials that were pre-cut, labeled, and transported to the site as a kit, enabling quick and efficient assembly. In each tract, the architects used a limited number of simple square or rectangular floor plans that were flipped to minimize monotony, and offered limited exterior options such as butterfly, gable, and flat roofs to individualize each house. Ultimately, Palmer and Krisel designed more than 20,000 houses for the Alexanders and other developers in subdivisions in Southern California, Arizona, Nevada, Texas, and Florida before dissolving their partnership in 1964. This property is located within the Vista Las Palmas subdivision, established in 1956 by the Alexander Construction Company. The Robert Alexander Residence "House of Tomorrow" is also known as "The Elvis Presley Honeymoon House" because it was rented for a year by Elvis Presley and his bride Priscilla after their 1967 nuptials.

ATTACHMENT B:
MAPS AND AERIALS

**ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (“HOUSE OF TOMORROW”)
1350 LADERA CIRCLE
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA**

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ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
 ATTACHMENT B: MAPS AND AERIALS

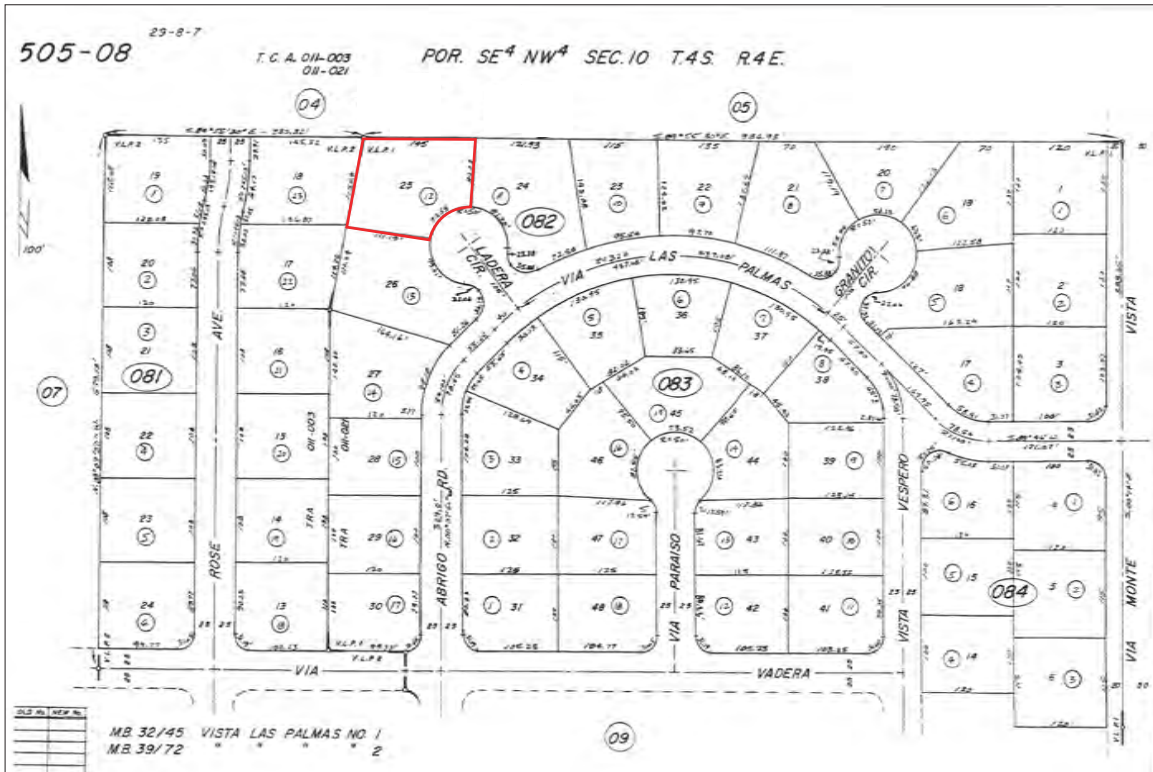


Image 5: Assessor map, subject property before lot line adjustment outlined in red (County of Riverside Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder, 1968)

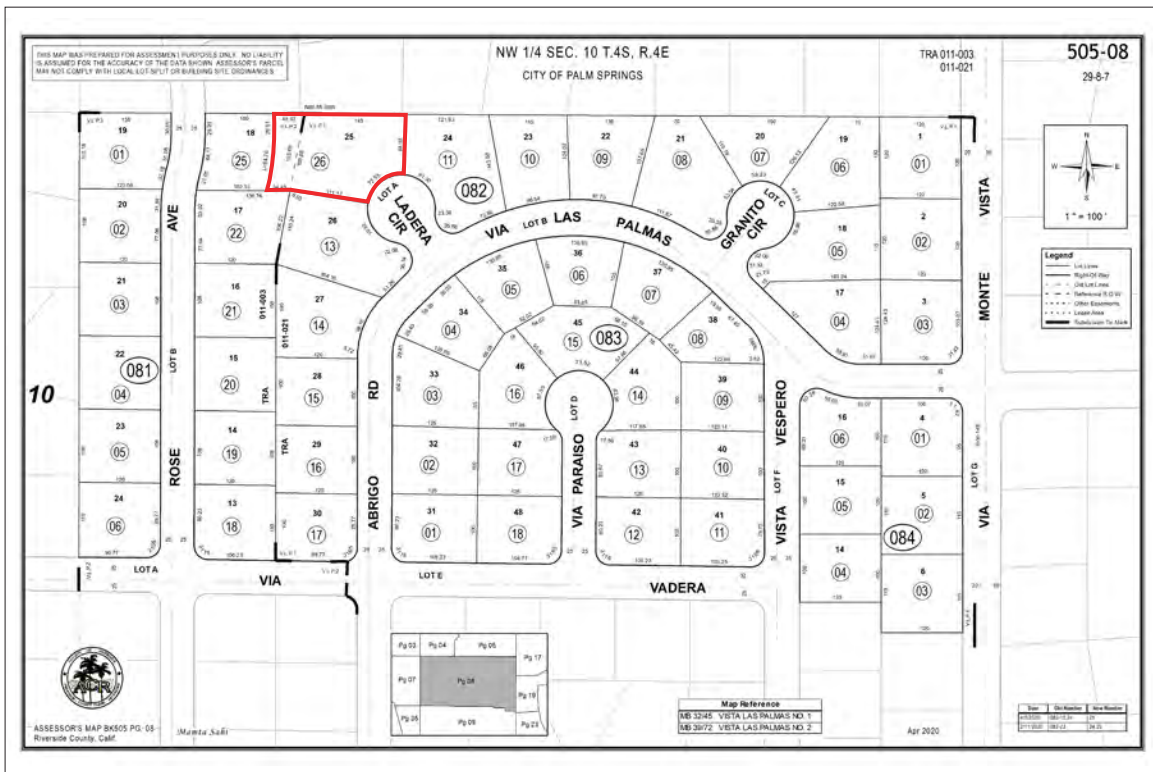


Image 6: Assessor map, subject property after lot line adjustment outlined in red (County of Riverside Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder, 2020)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
 ATTACHMENT B: MAPS AND AERIALS

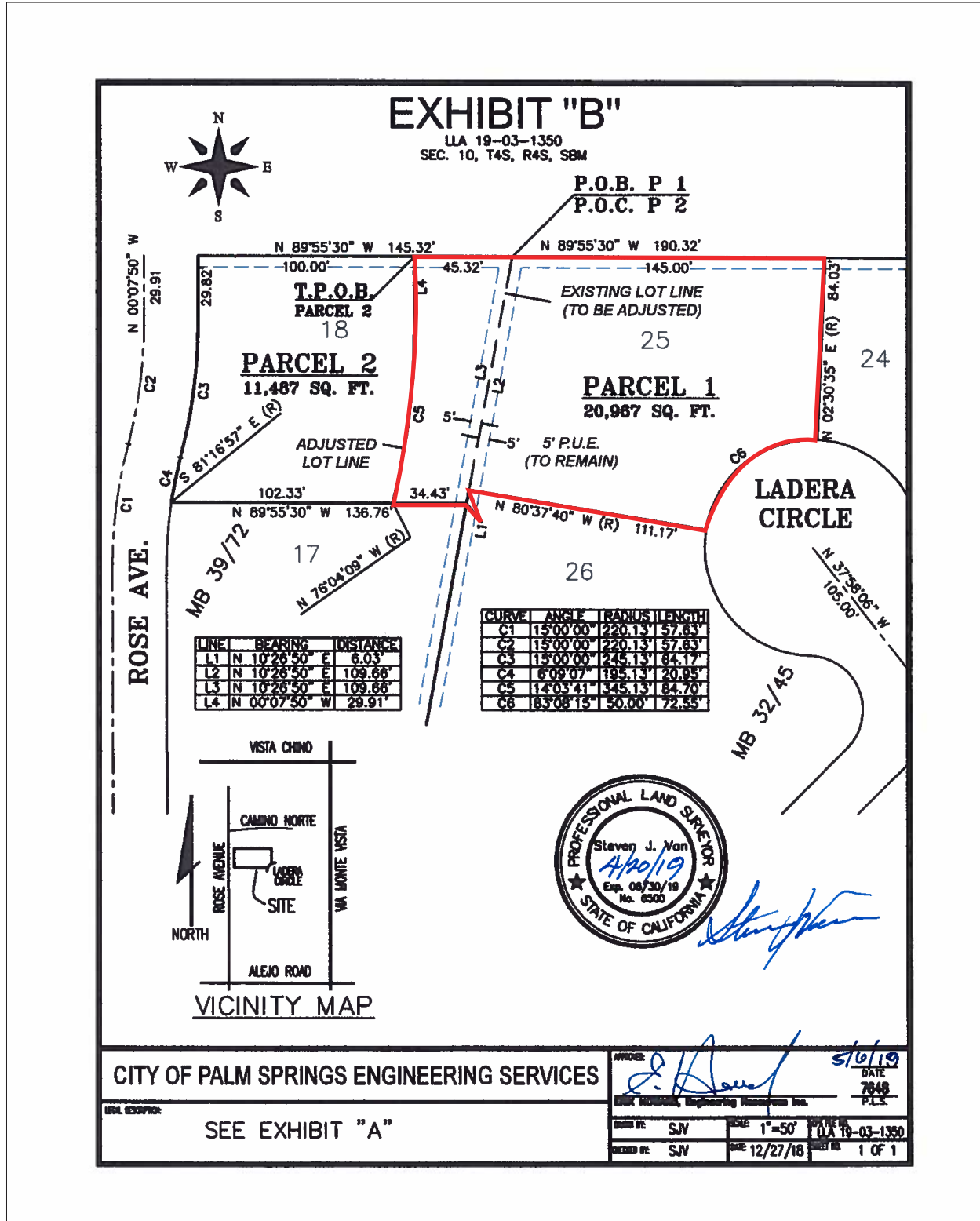


Image 7: Map showing lot line adjustment to the west, subject property outlined in red (City of Palm Springs Engineering Services, 2019)

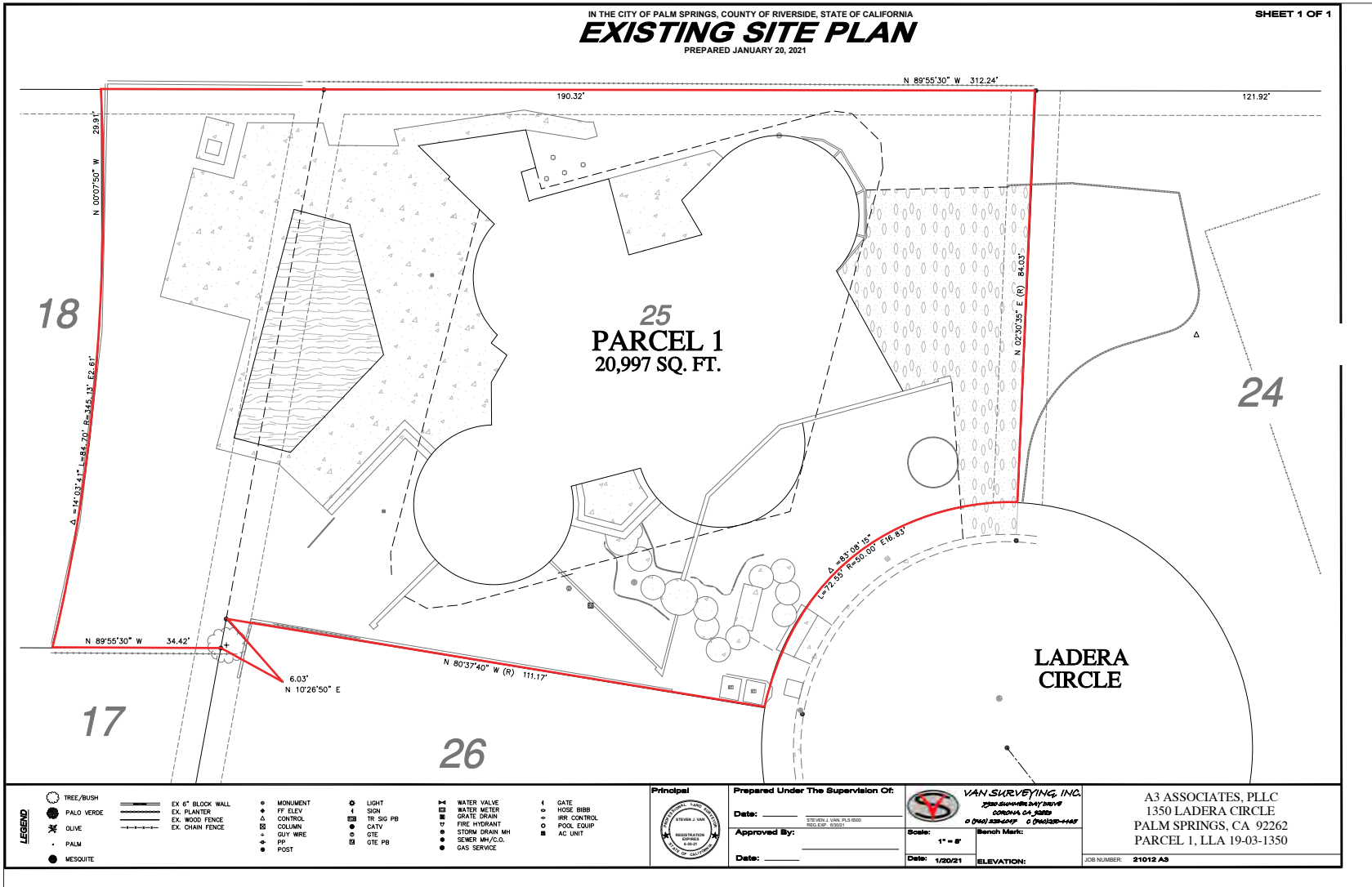


Image 8: Survey map of subject property, subject property outlined in red (Van Surveying, Inc., 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
 ATTACHMENT B: MAPS AND AERIALS

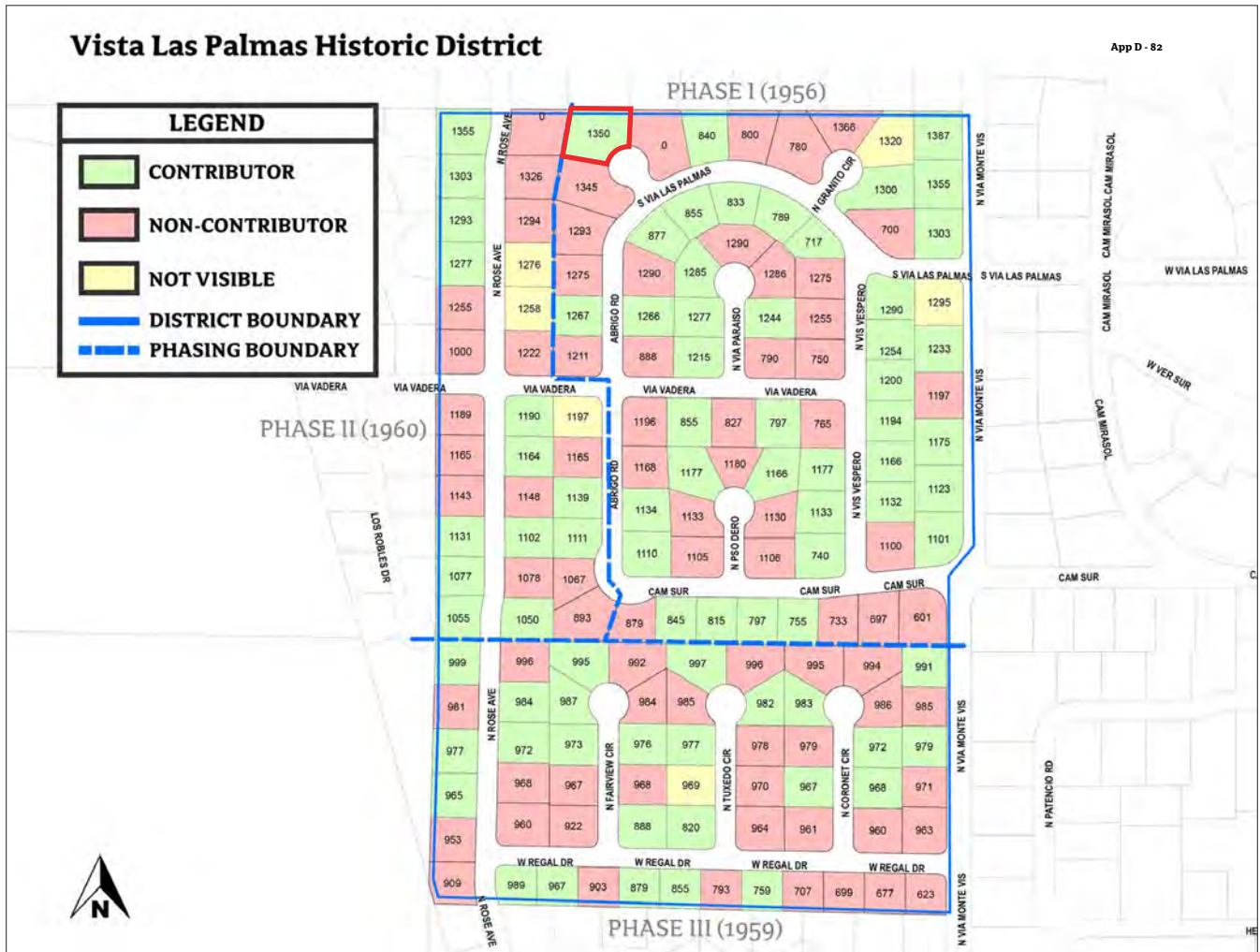


Image 9: Map of potential V

Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings, 2018)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT B: MAPS AND AERIALS



Image 10: 1978 aerial of Palm Springs, potential Vista Las Palmas Historic District

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT B: MAPS AND AERIALS



Image 11: 1972 aerial of subject property
(Historic Aerials)



Image 12: 2021 aerial of subject property
(Google Maps)

ATTACHMENT C:
HISTORIC IMAGES

**ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (“HOUSE OF TOMORROW”)
1350 LADERA CIRCLE
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA**

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ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 1: Subject property under construction in background with model being photographed by Robert Doisneau, view north (Robert Doisneau, 1960)



Image 2: Subject property under construction, view north (Harlan, The Alexanders: A Desert Legacy, Kitnick Family Collection, c. 1960)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 3: Subject property under construction, view west (Harlan, *The Alexanders: A Desert Legacy*, Kitnick Family Collection, c. 1960)



Image 4: Robert Alexander and facade of subject property, view northwest (Cal Bernstein, *Look Magazine*, 1962)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 5: Helene Alexander with Mrs. Zeppo Marx crossing steppingstone path at subject property entrance, view northwest (Cal Bernstein, *Look Magazine*, 1962)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 6: Helene Alexander with Mrs. Zeppo Marx crossing steppingstone path at subject property entrance, view northwest (Cal Bernstein, *Look Magazine* Photo Collection, Library of Congress, 1962)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 7: Robert and Helene Alexander in living room, view southeast (Harlan, *The Alexanders: A Desert Legacy*, Kitnick Family Collection, c. 1960)



Image 8: Robert and Helene Alexander in living room, view southeast, note non-extant pony wall at left (Cal Bernstein, *Look Magazine* Photo Collection, Library of Congress, 1962)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 9: Robert and Helene Alexander in living room, view east, note non-extant pony wall at right (Cal Bernstein, *Look Magazine*, 1962)

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ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 10: Kitchen at subject property, view west (Cal Bernstein, *Look Magazine* Photo Collection, Library of Congress, 1962)



Image 11: Helene Alexander using non-extant “Roman tub” in master bathroom, view west (Cal Bernstein, *Look Magazine*, 1962)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 12: Partygoers dancing at rear yard of subject property, view northeast (Cal Bernstein, *Look Magazine* Photo Collection, Library of Congress, 1962)



Image 13: Partygoers dancing at rear yard of subject property, view east (Cal Bernstein, *Look Magazine*, 1962)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 14: Exterior, west elevation with swimming pool visible, view east (Gail B. Thompson, Willows Historic Palms Springs Inn, c. 1960s)

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ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 15: Elvis and Priscilla Presley, stone path and entrance gate visible, view east (Elvis Honeymoon Hideaway, c. 1967)



Image 16: Elvis and Priscilla Presley, entrance gate visible, view east (Elvis Honeymoon Hideaway, c. 1967)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 17: Elvis and Priscilla Presley with guests in living room, view south (Elvis Honeymoon Hideaway, c. 1967)



Image 18: Elvis and Priscilla Presley in dining room, view east, note non-extant pony wall at left (Elvis Honeymoon Hideaway, c. 1967)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES

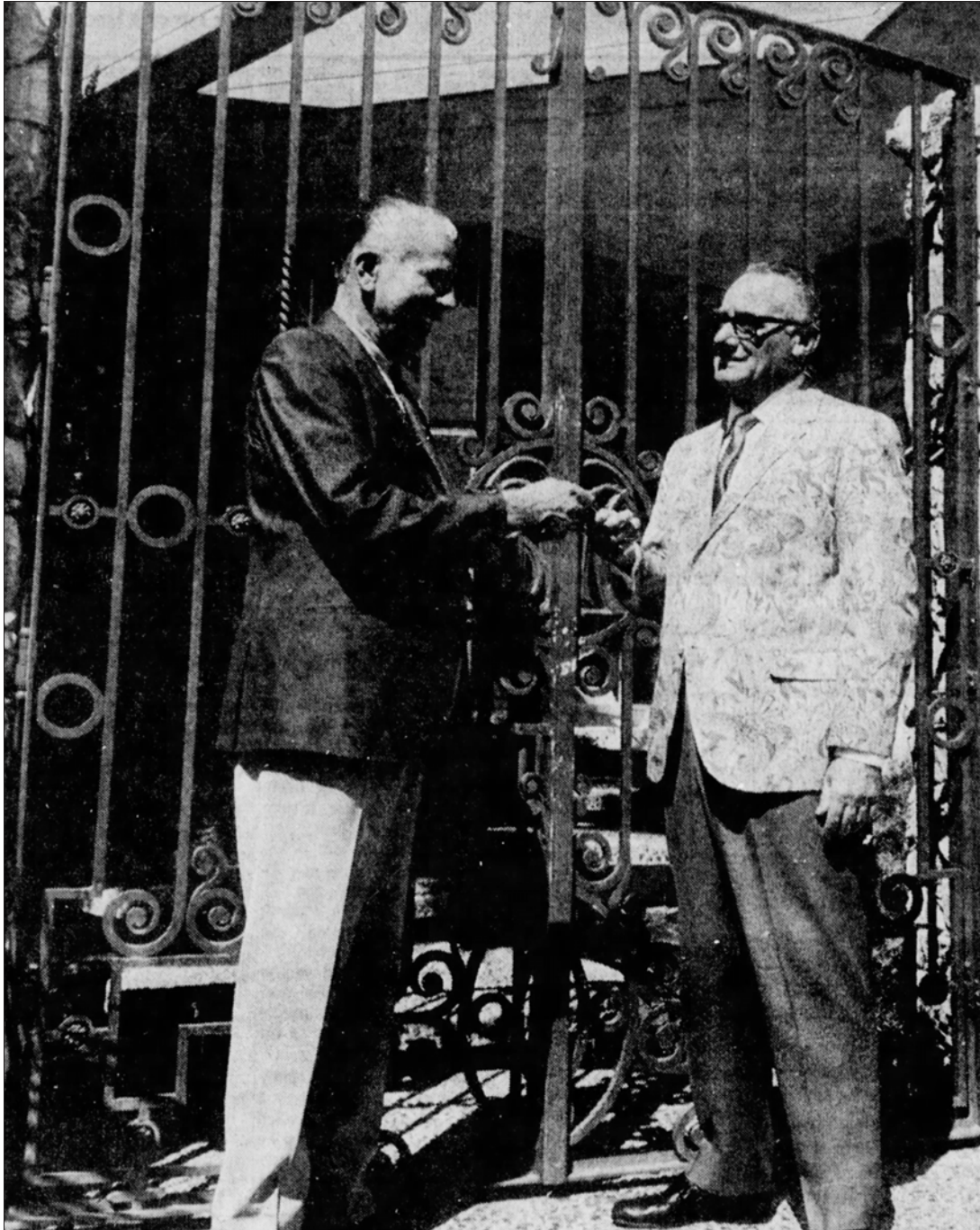


Image 19: Realtor Ernie Lindberg giving keys to James F. Boccardo, entrance gate visible (*Palm Springs Desert Sun*, 1970)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 20: Subject property, exterior, facade, note landscape prior to purchase by current owner, view northwest (Palm Springs Regional Association of Realtors via Realtor.com, c. 2020)



Image 21: Subject property, exterior, south elevation, note landscape prior to purchase by current owner, view northwest (Palm Springs Regional Association of Realtors via Realtor.com, c. 2020)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 22: Subject property, exterior, rear yard, swimming pool prior to purchase by current owner, view southwest (Palm Springs Regional Association of Realtors via Realtor.com, c. 2020)



Image 23: Subject property, exterior, rear yard, swimming pool prior to purchase by current owner, view northeast (Palm Springs Regional Association of Realtors via Realtor.com, c. 2020)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 24: Subject property, interior, living room prior to purchase by current owner, view west (Palm Springs Regional Association of Realtors via Realtor.com, c. 2020)



Image 25: Subject property, interior, dining room prior to purchase by current owner, (Palm Springs Regional Association of Realtors via Realtor.com, c. 2020)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 26: Subject property, interior, kitchen prior to purchase by current owner, view southwest (Palm Springs Regional Association of Realtors via Realtor.com, c. 2020)



Image 27: Subject property, interior, family room prior to purchase by current owner, view northwest (Palm Springs Regional Association of Realtors via Realtor.com, c. 2020)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT C: HISTORIC IMAGES



Image 28: Subject property, interior, master bedroom prior to purchase by current owner, view west (Palm Springs Regional Association of Realtors via Realtor.com, c. 2020)



Image 29: Subject property, interior, master bathroom prior to purchase by current owner, view north (Palm Springs Regional Association of Realtors via Realtor.com, c. 2020)

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ATTACHMENT D:
CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS

**ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (“HOUSE OF TOMORROW”)
1350 LADERA CIRCLE
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA**

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ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 1: Subject property, site context, residence and Ladera Circle from Abrigo Road and S. Via Las Palmas, view north (Chattel, 2021)



Image 2: Subject property, site context, residence from Ladera Circle, view northwest (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 3: Subject property, exterior, facade, note driveway to garage at east elevation, view northwest (Chattel, 2021)



Image 4: Subject property, exterior, facade, note circular seeded aggregate steppingstones, view north (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 5: Subject property, exterior, facade, detail of upper level master bedroom projection, view north (Chattel, 2021)

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ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 6: Subject property, exterior, circular seeded aggregate steppingstones, 2021)



Image 7: Subject property, exterior, circular seeded aggregate steppingstones and rectangular landing, view southeast (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 8: Subject property, exterior, entrance courtyard gate, view southeast (Chattel, 2021)



Image 9: Subject property, exterior, circular seeded aggregate steppingstones inside entrance courtyard, view east (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 10: Subject property, exterior, south elevation, view north (Chattel, 2021)



Image 11: Subject property, exterior, south elevation, pentagon-shaped, terrazzo-clad projecting stoop, view north (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 12: Subject property, exterior

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ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS

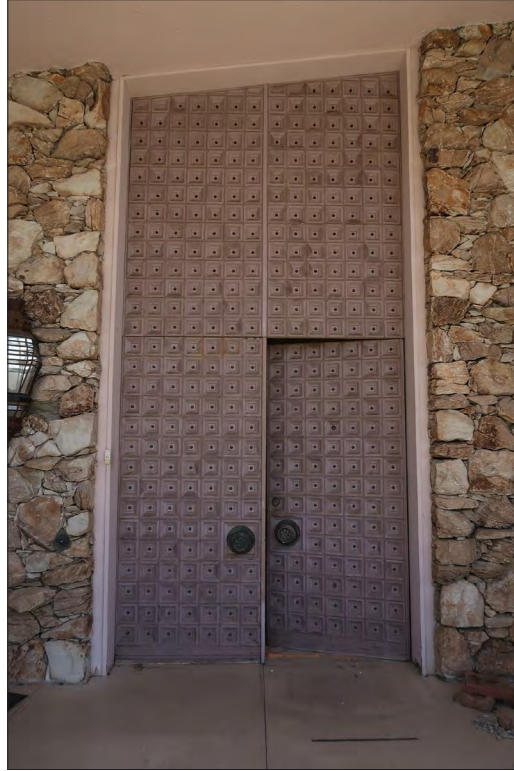


Image 13: Subject property, exterior, south elevation, highly decorative multi-paneled double-door entry, view north (Chattel, 2021)



Image 14: Subject property, exterior, detail of oversized bronze doorknobs featuring densely textured patterns (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 15: Subject property, exterior elevation, view west (Chattel, 2021)



Image 16: Subject property, exterior, east elevation, carport with garage door and

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 17: Subject property, exterior, east elevation, view northwest (Chattel, 2021)



Image 18: Subject property, exterior, north elevation, view southwest (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 19: Subject property, exterior, north elevation, inset patio, view south
(Chattel, 2021)



Image 20: Subject property, exterior, north elevation, inset patio, view west
(Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 21: Subject property, exterior, north elevation, sliding doors at inset patio, view east (Chattel, 2021)



Image 22: Subject property, exterior, north elevation, inset patio and mechanical equipment, view west (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 23: Subject property, exterior, north elevation, inset patio, view south (Chattel, 2021)



Image 24: Subject property, exterior, north elevation, sliding doors at inset patio, view southwest (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 25: Subject property, exterior, west elevation, rear yard, view east (Chattel, 2021)



Image 26: Subject property, exterior, west elevation, rear yard, view southeast (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
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Image 27: Subject property, exterior, rear yard, view south (Chattel, 2021)



Image 28: Subject property, exterior, rear yard, view northeast, note pool vault

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
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Image 29: Subject property, exterior, rear yard, detail of gunite swimming pool, view south (Chattel, 2021)



Image 30: Subject property, exterior, rear yard, detail of gunite swimming pool, view northwest (Chattel, 2021)



Image 31: Subject property, exterior, rear yard, detail of gunite swimming pool, view east (Chattel, 2021)

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ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 32: Subject property, exterior, north (left) and west (right) elevations, room addition, view southeast (Chattel, 2021)



Image 33: Subject property, exterior, west elevation, room addition to north of

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
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Image 34: Subject property, exterior, west elevation, view southeast (Chattel, 2021)



Image 35: Subject property, exterior, west elevation, view east (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
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Image 36: Subject property, exterior, west elevation, view southeast (Chattel, 2021)



Image 37: Subject property, exterior, west elevation, detail of triangular cutout in roof, view north (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 38: Subject property, exterior

view southeast (Chattel, 2021)



Image 39: Subject property, exterior, west elevation, view northeast (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
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Image 40: Subject property, exterior, south elevation, view east (Chattel, 2021)



Image 41: Subject property, exterior, south elevation, view west (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 42: Subject property, exterior, facade, detail of upper-level master bedroom projection from roof of carport, view southwest (Chattel, 2021)



Image 43: Subject property, exterior, east elevation, view of side yard from roof of carport, view north (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 44: Subject property, exterior, east elevation, roof of carport accessed via door in master bathroom, view west, note security bar above stairs to carport



Image 45: Subject property, exterior, roof of carport, view east (Chattel, 2021)



Image 46: Subject property, exterior, detail of triangular cutout at roof (Chattel, 2021)

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ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 47: Subject property, interior, foyer, double-door entry, view south (Chattel, 2021)

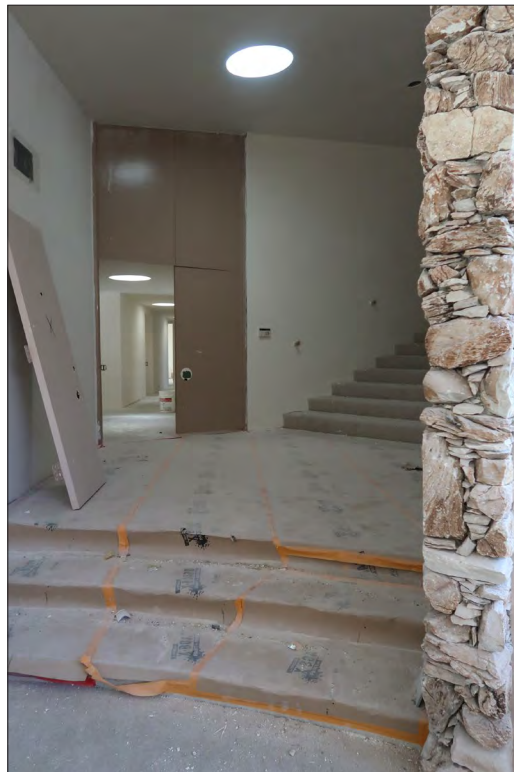


Image 48: Subject property, interior, foyer, steps down to living room and up to master bedroom visible, view east (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 49: Subject property, interior, living room, view west (Chattel, 2021)



Image 50: Subject property, interior clad wall, clerestory windows, conical sheet metal vent, and low dividing wall (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
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Image 51: Subject property, interior



Image 52: Subject property, interior, dining room and steps from living room, view northwest (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 53: Subject property, interior, living room and dining room, view northwest, arrow (Chattel, 2021)

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ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 54: Subject property, interior, kitchen, view southwest (Chattel, 2021)



Image 55: Subject property, interior, kitchen, detail of conical sheet metal vent, view west (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 56: Subject property, interior, family room, view west (Chattel, 2021)



Image 57: Subject property, interior
view east (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
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Image 58: Subject property, interior, room addition, view west (Chattel, 2021)



Image 59: Subject property, interior, room addition, view northwest (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 60: Subject property, interior, hallway, view north (Chattel, 2021)



Image 61: Subject property, interior, laundry room, view north (Chattel, 2021)



Image 62: Subject property, interior, bedroom, view east (Chattel, 2021)

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ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 63: Subject property, interior, bathroom, view north (Chattel, 2021)



Image 64: Subject property, interior, bathroom, detail of round shower, view southeast (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 65: Subject property, interior, bedroom, view southeast (Chattel, 2021)



Image 66: Subject property, interior, bedroom, view northwest (Chattel, 2021)



Image 67: Subject property, interior, bathroom, view northeast (Chattel, 2021)

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ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS

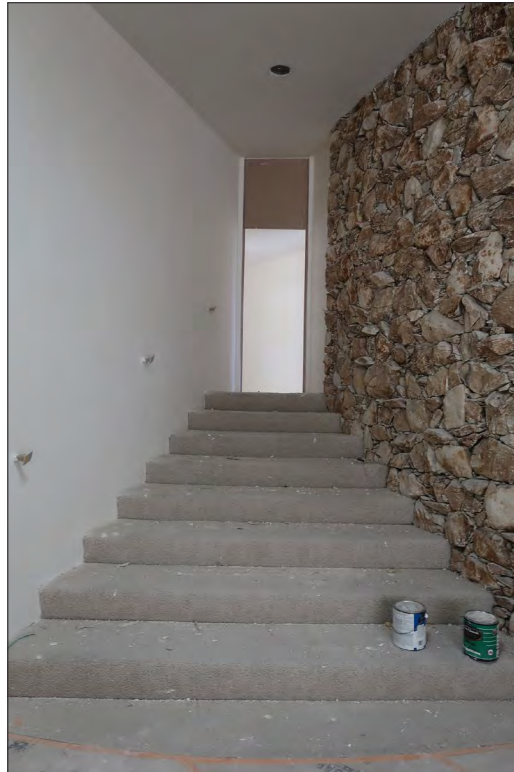


Image 68: Subject property, interior, stairs from foyer to master bedroom, view east (Chattel, 2021)



Image 69: Subject property, interior clad wall and privacy wall (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 70: Subject property, interior, master bedroom, view east, note added tint



Image 71: Subject property, interior, master bedroom, view west, note added tint

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 72: Subject property, interior, master bedroom, detail of privacy wall, view northwest (Chattel, 2021)



Image 73: Subject property, interior, master bedroom, view south, note added tint

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 74: Subject property, interior, master bedroom, entrance to master bathroom (left) and privacy wall (right), view north (Chattel, 2021)



Image 75: Subject property, interior, master bathroom, view northwest (Chattel, 2021)

ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
ATTACHMENT D: CONTEMPORARY PHOTOS



Image 76: Subject property, interior, stairs to carport, view east, note security bars shown in Image 44 (Chattel, 2021)



Image 77: Subject property, interior, carport, view southwest (Chattel, 2021)

ATTACHMENT E:
SELECTED HISTORIC BUILDING PERMITS

**ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (“HOUSE OF TOMORROW”)
1350 LADERA CIRCLE
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA**

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ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (HOUSE OF TOMORROW), 1350 LADERA CIRCLE, PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
 ATTACHMENT E: SELECTED HISTORIC BUILDING PERMITS

450-9-P Rev. 8-57 CITY OF PALM SPRINGS BUILDING PERMIT ACCOUNT NO. 11-223

OWNER: Robert Alexander JOB LOCATION: 1350 Ladera Circle CONTRACTOR: Alexander Const. Co.

LOT NO. 35 BLOCK: VISTA LAS PALMAS #1

TRACT: Triangle

LOT SIZE	ZONE	FIRE ZONE	HEIGHT
20	R-1	III	

SET BACKS: FRONT 20, SIDE 10, REAR 20

DESCRIPTION OF WORK: 8 room steel frame, masonry and stucco dwelling with carport; compo roof

REMARKS & CONDITIONS OF PERMIT: THIS PERMIT VOID IF CONSTRUCTION IS NOT STARTED WITHIN (60) SIXTY DAYS.

USE: Dwelling AREA: 4,000 sq.ft.

TOTAL VALUE OF WORK \$ 60,000. TOTAL FEE \$ 100.00

OWNER OR CONTRACTOR: [Signature] BUILDING DEPT.: John Chandler - 78 DATE: 5-20-60 B 2209

This Permit Must Bear City Treasurer's Validation

Image 1: Original building permit for construction of "8 room steel frame, masonry and stucco dwelling with carport; compo roof" (City Building Department, 1960)

450-9-P Rev. 8-57 CITY OF PALM SPRINGS BUILDING PERMIT ACCOUNT NO. 11-223

OWNER: Alexander JOB LOCATION: 1350 Ladera Circle CONTRACTOR: Padlock

LOT NO. BLOCK:

TRACT:

LOT SIZE	ZONE	FIRE ZONE	HEIGHT

SET BACKS: FRONT, SIDE, REAR

DESCRIPTION OF WORK: Construct 15 x 30 gunite swimming pool.

REMARKS & CONDITIONS OF PERMIT: THIS PERMIT VOID IF CONSTRUCTION IS NOT STARTED WITHIN (60) SIXTY DAYS. All equipment to be underground.

USE: Dwelling AREA: 15 x 30

TOTAL VALUE OF WORK \$ 3,000. TOTAL FEE \$ 92.00 (32.00 Permit, 6.00 Plan Check)

OWNER OR CONTRACTOR: [Signature] BUILDING DEPT.: H. Beck DATE: 8/23/60 B 2519

This Permit Must Bear City Treasurer's Validation

Image 2: Building permit for construction of "15 x 30 gunite swimming pool" (City Building Department, 1960)

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ATTACHMENT F:
1962 *LOOK* MAGAZINE SPREAD

**ALEXANDER RESIDENCE (“HOUSE OF TOMORROW”)
1350 LADERA CIRCLE
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA**

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THE WAY-OUT WAY OF LIFE

At Palm Springs, dreams of modern luxury come true

HELENE AND ROBERT ALEXANDER are attractive young marrieds living in Palm Springs, Calif. Like others in this desert dreamworld, they wanted their home to add a glossy new style to indoor-outdoor living. "A lot of people were building Roman things," said Helene, "so we went Egyptian."

The Alexanders' architect, improving on the Egyptians, used glass and peanut-brittle stonework to inscribe four perfect circles on three levels. He in-

stalled electronic controls to manipulate the indoor climate, the outside lights and automatic rain. The decorator did the walls in textured plastic, took a Nile formality right out into the artificial landscape. The table-tennis set stands by the heated pool upon stately Egyptian pedestals.

Result: a \$300,000 pleasure dome that proves California has only begun to show how luxurious things can be on this planet. The U. S., having copied the earlier Western indoor-outdoor style, can now learn sleek new ways to play up the play side of life.





Palm Springs is lit at night by color spotlights splashed upon palms and shrubbery—plants brought into the desert and nursed by a complex irrigation system. In such a gaudy, man-made world, the line between fact and dream easily becomes blurred. Naturally enough, the Alexanders and daughter Jill often play (left) in bright make-believe costumes.

“In the evening, when we’re in the living room, it’s kind of an illusion,” says Mrs. Alexander, in a Cleopatra hairdo (below). The couple fitted their new oasis with a 64-foot couch (cost: \$100 a foot), a kitchen-in-the-round, gold-plated bath fixtures, sculpture (Nude Basking), a blend of plastic plants and nursery shrubs, plus a 2,000-year-old specimen palm tree (\$1,200).

continued





"I never feel I'm awake without mascara," said Helene, who wears blue and green.

"MY LEGS ARE FIRMER THIS YEAR."



To pad around her carpeted house, she finds Cleopatra slippers handy.

The ordinary housewife may be busy, but not as busy as Mrs. Robert Alexander. She does her own supermarket shopping, but needs a cook and butler to lighten the household chores. Reason: The chic, athletic life of Palm Springs requires her to play hard and stay in glamorous trim.

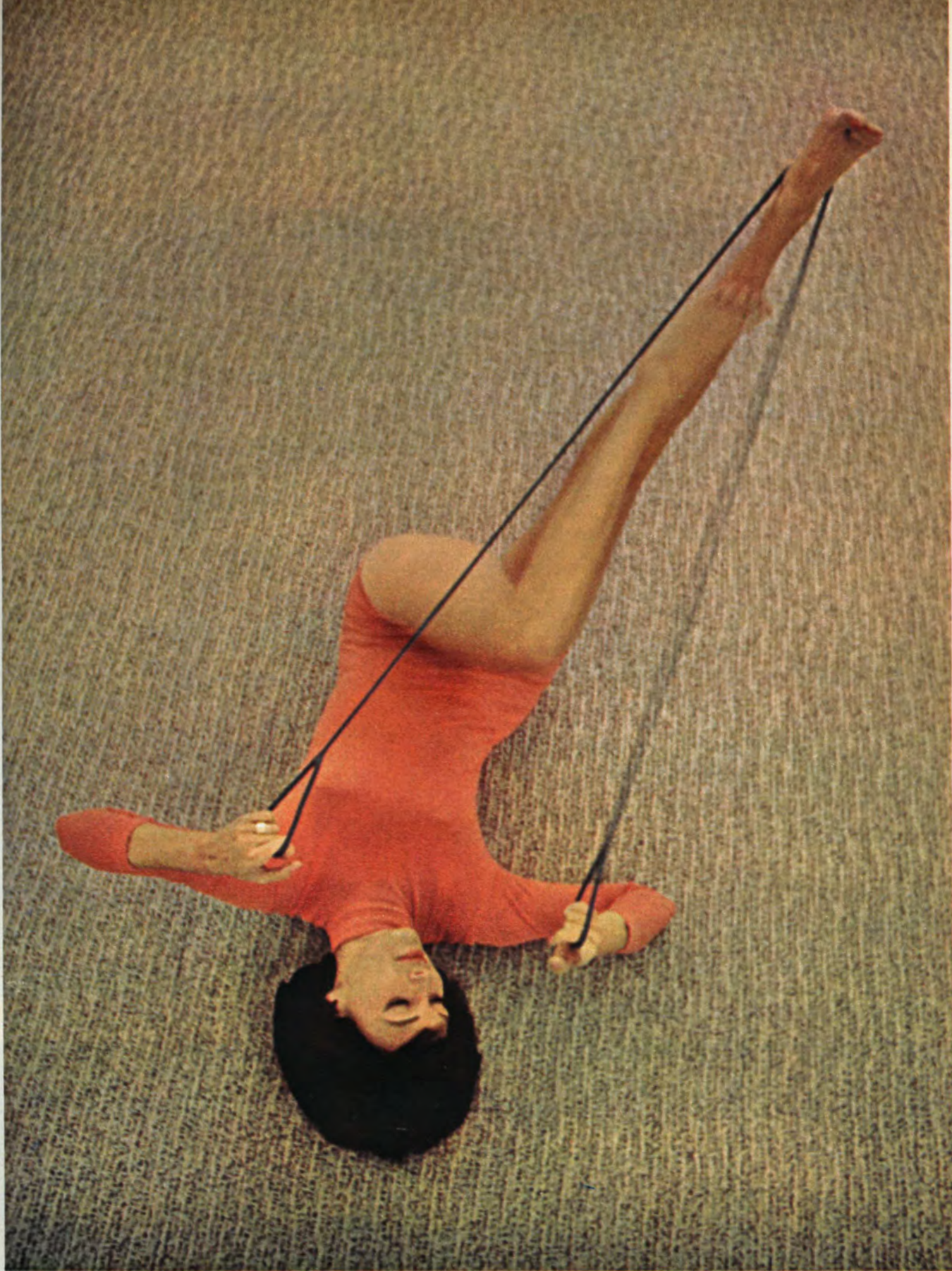
In the morning, she often needs the first hour and five ointments to put on false eyelashes and mascara. Then off to the Racquet Club, play spot of movie stars, to take her tennis lesson. It firms her legs. Some days, her husband gets their horses out for a ride; on Thursdays, he takes off to water-ski upon the Salton Sea. At night, in the social season, it's parties, parties, parties. "It is," he says, "undulating."



At The Spa, she diligently takes weekly treatments of steam and mineral waters.



At home, she dawdles daily in two dollars' worth of bubble bath.



Glamour straps, hula hoops and an hour's supervised exercise help her to feel, "Boy, am I alive!"



Twice a week, she gets her hair done (\$70 a month) in styles set by Cleopatra and Jacqueline Kennedy.



Helene and daughter Jill, 10, spend happy hours in the beauty shop.



If the day's pleasures leave no time for beauticians, she sends her wig over to be set for evening wear.

continued



Off to the office, four minutes by Jaguar, Bob wears Belafonte shirt, shorts, espadrilles. He builds pleasant homes for others.



When the twist became the rage, the Alexanders hired a twistmaker to teach friends at a party. Later (above), they went on to learn the slop.

Jill prays, "Now I lay me down to sleep," ends with, "Make me a good girl." She joined the Temple after her father found "she had an instinct for religion."



"IT'S HARD TO LIVE THE GOOD OLD RELIABLE LIFE."

Robert Alexander, 37, and Helene, 35, have had their share of trouble (five miscarriages, one stillborn child), want their share of pleasure. When they moved to Palm Springs five years ago, they found the place to get it.

Here, America has come full circle from the self-denying austerity of its Puritan founders to the self-fulfilling fun—and pains—of affluence. Pleasure is pursued with a wealth of imagination and resources.

Except for plentiful sunshine, the environment is what man makes it, a free-form civilization built on watered sand. Nature's products do not often fit. Natural fertilizer, once used by the ton to grow lush grass and trees, gives off an odor. So the city council passed an ordinance in favor of artificial fertilizer. Even owning a pound of natural fertilizer is a misdemeanor, punishable by six months in jail.

In Palm Springs, the heated pool takes the place of the family fireside. So many pools have been built—more in proportion to the permanent residents than anywhere in the world—that old desert hands complain of rising humidity. Then came golf, 15 courses for a winter population of 50,000. Promoters learned to build a course as the heart of a new development, then sell mansion sites along the fairways. U. S. industrialists bid for choice lots—outside the firing line of slicers.

Residents lavish modern technology on their homes. One installed subterranean elevators to serve up endless chains of Scotch bottles. "It saves four seconds," he joyfully reports, "between drinks."

In such a climate of luxury, the individual takes the test of character that the Puritans avoided: how to be good in comfort. "It's hard to live the good old reliable life," says Helene Alexander's best friend. "The good people stay OK," observes her husband. "The ones who can't take it go bad—faster."

Thousands more are ready to try. Alexander, once a Los Angeles builder, moved to Palm Springs to test the market for less expensive homes. With his first 1,550 sold, he looks forward to the mass market of "engineers and office workers out of L.A." To survive the sands of pleasure, they need a strong sense of personal purpose. "I have to remind myself that I'm at work," says Alexander, "and everybody else is on vacation."



With Mrs. Zeppo Marx, water-loving Mrs. Alexander navigates the artificial brook at her doorstep

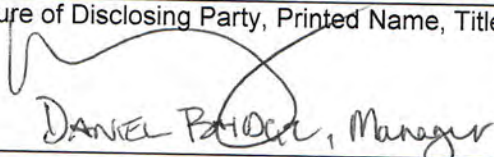


PUBLIC INTEGRITY DISCLOSURE APPLICANT DISCLOSURE FORM

1.	Name of Entity	AB Sea Development
2.	Address of Entity (Principle Place of Business)	111 West Highland Drive, Seattle WA 98119
3.	Local or California Address (if different than #2)	
4.	State where Entity is Registered with Secretary of State	Washington
		If other than California, is the Entity also registered in California? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.	Type of Entity	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Limited Liability Company <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Trust <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
6.	Officers, Directors, Members, Managers, Trustees, Other Fiduciaries (please specify) <i>Note: If any response is not a natural person, please identify all officers, directors, members, managers and other fiduciaries for the member, manager, trust or other entity</i>	
	<u>Daniel Bridge</u> [name]	<input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Director <input type="checkbox"/> Member <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General Partner <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Partner <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
	<u>Paul Armitstead</u> [name]	<input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Director <input type="checkbox"/> Member <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General Partner <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Partner <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
	_____ [name]	<input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Director <input type="checkbox"/> Member <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> General Partner <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Partner <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

7. Owners/Investors with a 5% beneficial interest in the Applicant Entity or a related entity	
EXAMPLE <i>JANE DOE</i> <hr/> [name of owner/investor]	 <i>50%, ABC COMPANY, Inc.</i> <hr/> [percentage of beneficial interest in entity and name of entity]
A. <hr/> [name of owner/investor]	 <hr/> [percentage of beneficial interest in entity and name of entity]
B. <hr/> [name of owner/investor]	 <hr/> [percentage of beneficial interest in entity and name of entity]
C. <hr/> [name of owner/investor]	 <hr/> [percentage of beneficial interest in entity and name of entity]
D. <hr/> [name of owner/investor]	 <hr/> [percentage of beneficial interest in entity and name of entity]
E. <hr/> [name of owner/investor]	 <hr/> [percentage of beneficial interest in entity and name of entity]

I DECLARE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA THAT THE FOREGOING IS TRUE AND CORRECT.

Signature of Disclosing Party, Printed Name, Title  DANIEL B. [unclear], Manager	Date 8/10/2021
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PENALTIES
 Falsification of information or failure to report information required to be reported may subject you to administrative action by the City.