



HISTORIC RESOURCES REPORT

FOR

1200 OCEAN DRIVE

MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA 33139

PREPARED BY:

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FOR THE:

CITY of MIAMI BEACH HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD

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NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

"This part of the island was originally owned by Henry Lum who tried to start a coconut plantation here. In 1886 his son Charles Lum built a two story house on the ocean at 12th Street. By 1890 the nut business had failed and the Lums abandoned the beach." (8)

"..In May, 1912 two Miami banking brothers, John Newton Lummus and James Edward Lummus, originally from Bronson, Florida, were the major shareholders in the (newly formed) Ocean Beach Realty Company along with Carl Fisher and others, which purchased about 580 acres of mostly swamp and mangrove land at the southern end of the peninsula...as a real estate investment" (6)

"To raise more money for development, the Lummus' sold 200 acres of beachfront to the City of Miami Beach for \$40,000.00 in 1915 with the provision that it not be used for commercial purposes." (8)

"When the Collins bridge opened up the area to automobile traffic, they built a road along the oceanfront and began selling small lots and vacation cottages." (8)

" In 1914, to encourage the building of homes, the Lummus brothers gave away 32 lots near the ocean south of Fifteenth Street, (which is) today's famous Ocean Drive and South Beach. These homes were all completed and occupied by the latter part of 1914. Fisher sold bigger lots for more expensive homes, but the Lummus brothers sold smaller lots at moderate prices to anyone who was white, law-abiding, and could pay the down payment." (6)

Lummus showed a commitment to his properties by building his own home at 1204 Ocean Drive. - as pictured in the photograph at top right dated 1915.

"Across the street was a beautiful lawn, surrounded by palm trees, and beyond that were the beautiful waves of the Atlantic Ocean... The house was named 'Salubrity' seen written in wrought iron at the entrance arch above the sidewalk at right front of photograph.... The arch also reads: "Residence of J. N. Lummus" (5)

Other contemporary local notables also built homes on Ocean Drive at that time, including Miami Beach Mayor Val Cleary at 800 Ocean Drive and long time Miami Beach city manager Claude Renshaw at 844 Ocean Drive.

John Newton Lummus was elected as the first Mayor of the City of Miami Beach and served from 1915 to 1918..



TOP PHOTO: J. N. LUMMUS HOME AT 12TH & OCEAN DRIVE 1915
'SALUBRITY'

MIDDLE PHOTO: OLD OCEAN DRIVE CIRCA 1924, COURTESY
HISTORY MIAMI CLAUDE MATLACK COLLECTION

LOWER PHOTO: AERIAL VIEW OF MIAMI BEACH IN 1920

1200 OCEAN DRIVE

BUILDING NAME: 1200 OCEAN DRIVE
BUILDING ADDRESS: 1200 OCEAN DRIVE
ORIGINAL ARCHITECT: GILBERT FEIN
YEAR BUILT: 1958
STYLE: INTERNATIONAL
STATUS: CONTRIBUTING

This three story full-lot retail / restaurant and apartment building is designed in the mid century modern and the International Style of architecture. Designed by Architect Gilbert Fein - the building originally contained 26 efficiencies + 2 hotel rooms + 2 one bedroom 2-bath apartments and 1 two bedroom/two bath apartment. Its original cost of construction was \$160,000.00.

The exterior of the building still looks essentially the same as when originally constructed, except for the first floor former lobby area which has been converted to bar and restaurant use.

The building presents different architectural treatments on the two major elevations. The front facing east onto Ocean Drive displays sleek continuous metal louver railings on the second and third floor balconies. It also shows a wide overhanging horizontal concrete canopy over the third floor which connects to the vertical 1200 concrete signboard on the 12th Street elevation. And there are also the continuous concrete eyebrows on the 12th Street elevation. the eyebrows.

Prior to the ground floor renovations there existed various window configurations along both 12th Street and Ocean drive at the lobby area - as is shown in the historic photographs.

Originally the right third of the first floor front elevation was enclosed as can be confirmed in the historic architectural drawing on page 21 of this report as well as in the photo at right.

"This modest postwar apartment building, ornamented with a crab orchard stone pylon and rakish, metal-louvered balcony parapets, illustrates the nearly seamless integration of mid-century Modern architecture with the strip's more characteristic Mediterranean Revival and Art Deco structures." (4)



TOP PHOTO: 1959 EAST AND SOUTH ELEVATIONS SHOWS ORIGINAL FULL HEIGHT WINDOWS AT FRONT CORNER LOBBY AREA ON FIRST FLOOR. (9)

LOWER PHOTO: EAST ELEVATION 1970 (9)

GILBERT M. FEIN ARCHITECT (1920-2003)

Born in Brooklyn, New York Fein received his degree in architecture from New York University in 1942. Similar to the experience of many veterans after the War, he came to Florida for a two week vacation and never left. He had served in the Army Corps of Engineers during World War II and then settled in Miami Beach after the war.

His first job in Miami Beach was working for Norman Giller Architect. He left after one year to open his own office in Miami Beach in 1948 since there was so much architectural work during that post-War period.

“He designed more buildings than he could keep track of. The log of building permits issued by the City of Miami Beach shows that he built seventy-nine apartment buildings from 1949 - 1971, in styles variously described as garden style, postwar Mediterranean Deco, postwar modern and international. Most of the courtyard apartments buildings in the postwar community of Normandy Isle, if not actually built by Fein, reflects his style.” (2)

“He designed hundreds of residential and commercial buildings in South Florida in the new Post-War Modern style. One of his trademarks was a type of mirrored garden apartment building, featuring two 2-story buildings joined at the front by a marquee or gable roof, and framing a landscaped courtyard. Most of Fein’s comfortably livable buildings are function extremely well in Miami Beach’s low scale multi-family neighborhoods.” (7)

Fein’s firm designed a variety of structures including garden-type and high-rise apartment buildings, motels, medical and office buildings, banks, shopping centers, automobile showrooms and bowling alleys.

“Fein resisted interpretation of his work, but the most compelling aspect is its often overt symbolism in contrast to the prevailing aesthetic of structural expression, Fein chose to emphasize decorative or purely symbolic elements, like the thickly articulated but structurally un-necessary eaves and delta angles.” (3)

TOP PHOTO: GILBERT FEIN

MIDDLE PHOTO 777 17th STREET (10)

LOWER PHOTO: 1674 MERIDIAN OFFICE BUILDING (10)

