

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Via Mizner

other names/site number 8PB550

2. Location

street & number 337-339 Worth Avenue n/a  not for publication

city or town Palm Beach n/a  vicinity

state Florida code FL county Palm Beach code 099 zip code 33480

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Suzanne P. Walker / Deputy SHPO 2/22/93  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Shelover Jeyen

Entered in the  
National Register of Action

4/1/93

Via Mizner  
Name of Property

Palm Beach Co., FL  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
11	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
1	0	objects
12	0	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

n/a

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Multiple Dwelling

Commerce/Trade: Business

Professional

Specialty Store

Restaurant

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Multiple Dwelling

Commerce/Trade: Business

Professional

Specialty Store

Restaurant

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals:

Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stucco

walls Stucco

roof Terra Cotta

other Wood

Cast Stone

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

(See Continuation Sheet 7-9)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
Commerce
Community Planning & Development

Period of Significance

1923-c1940

Significant Dates

1923

1933

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Mizner, Addison

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Mizner, Addison/Wilcox Brothers;

Vought, Harry

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Via Mizner  
Name of Property

Palm Beach Co., FL  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** Less than 1 acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	7
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5	9	5	4	6	0
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2	9	5	3	5	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3 

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Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Donald W. Curl/Barbara E. Mattick, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date February 1993

street & number R.A. Gray Bldg., 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Via Mizner Associates Limited Partnership

street & number 337-339 Worth Avenue telephone (407) 655-6505

city or town Palm Beach state Florida zip code 33480

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Palm Beach Co., FL

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## SUMMARY

The Via Mizner at 337-339 Worth Avenue in Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, is a small district of 11 one-, two-, three-, or five-story buildings connected by loggias and arcades forming a series of patios, and used for both commercial and residential purposes. All but one, an Art Deco style building, are built in the Mediterranean Revival style. There is also one object, a fountain in one of the patios. The original plan for the Via Mizner, designed by and built for the architect Addison Mizner, called for seven Mediterranean Revival style buildings. These were constructed between 1923 and 1925. In addition to the original buildings, there are four related buildings on the east side which were built between 1923 and c1940.

The Via has shed, gabled, and hipped roofs covered with barrel tile, and is finished with both textured stucco and stucco scored to resemble stone on its primary elevations. The Via features arcaded walkways with cast stone cartouches, roof-top terraces and a pergola, cast stone window and door surrounds, stained glass windows, and ornamental wrought iron balconies, railings, and brackets. The interior contains retail space, offices, and apartments. The largest apartment, the most significant feature of the Via and known as the Villa Mizner, was the residence of Addison Mizner from 1925 until his death there in 1933.

The Aston Development Corporation, with the approval and support of the Landmarks Commission of the Town of Palm Beach, has continually restored and updated the Via Mizner since 1986.

## SETTING

The Via Mizner was instrumental in changing the character of Worth Avenue from a residential street to one of the premier shopping streets of the world with branches of Saks Fifth Avenue, Brooks Brothers, Gucci, Tiffany's, Cartier, and dozens of specialty shops selling courtier clothing, art, antiques, books, and linens. When Addison Mizner built the first section of the Via Mizner (Building 1) in 1923 for his office, drafting rooms, and sales shops for the pottery, furniture, and tiles he produced in his own workshops and the antiques he imported from abroad, only the Everglades Club and its row of shops and apartments, known as the Masionettes, broke the residential character of the street. Before completing the Via Mizner, the architect designed

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the Via Parigi, another complex of apartments, shops, and offices which borders and connects to the Via Mizner on the west. Within the next few years, he and other architects designed the Avenue's Mediterranean Revival commercial structures that give the street its distinctive charm.

**PRESENT APPEARANCE****Exterior**

The Via Mizner fronts on Worth Avenue to the south and Peruvian Avenue to the north (Photo 1). The "via" itself, a meandering pedestrian walkway, is entered between the two major elements of the Worth Avenue facade. On the right is the original three-story building of the via, the 1923 studio, office, and sales building for Mizner's many professional activities (Building 1, Photos 2 & 3). A five arch arcade rises directly from the curb on Worth Avenue (Photo 4). Its pointed arches, springing from short, Gothic, cast stone columns with carved capitals, contain four elaborate cast stone cartouches in their spandrels. The arcade is smooth finished stucco, incised and painted to appear as sandstone. With the exception of the arcade, the entire building is covered with rough finished stucco, painted white. On the facade three plate glass windows and a large glass double door, all surmounted by transoms with vertical muntins, and an open secondary entrance to the via echoes the pointed Gothic arches of the arcade. A cypress pergola, supported by slender cast stone columns and laced with bougainvillaea vines, covers the arcade roof. Five French doors provide access to the pergola terrace. On the third floor, the openings of the two eastern bays have cast stone surrounds framing French doors opening onto wrought iron balconies. A casement window with a cast stone surround forms the center bay, while the two bays on the west end are casement windows without surrounds. The ground floor arcade extends east for two additional arches incorporating a small two-story building that was added to the via complex c1940 (Building 11, Photo 1). Its second floor terrace is covered by a blue canvas awning.

A nine arch arcade continues to the west of the via entrance, across the main facade of Building 2 (Photo 5). The pointed Gothic arches are framed by cast stone and spring from round piers. Again, windows and doorways, giving entrance to the streetfront stores, echo the arching of the arcade. The "Villa Mizner", Addison Mizner's personal living quarters, is located

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Palm Beach Co., FL

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above the ground floor stores. An open, irregularly shaped terrace covers the eastern five bays of the arcade. Enclosed by a wrought iron railing, the clay tiled terrace is protected by a blue awning in front of the two French doors leading to the dining room.

The Villa Mizner Tower rises above the terrace level for four floors (Photos 6, 7, & 8). Over the dining room are two floors containing two bedrooms and two bath rooms each. The rough textured white stucco facade is broken on the third floor by two casement windows and on the fourth by paired casement windows on the right side and a French door and wrought iron balcony on the left. Above these on the fifth floor is a large mirador room which Mizner used as a study (Photo 9). A heavy cast stone frame contains a series of four windows with low segmental arched transoms on the south and north facades of the tower, five windows on the west facade, and four on the east facade with a chimney extending through the center section. In the northwest corner of the tower a small elevator shaft with a tiled hipped roof extends a few feet above the main roof.

A low entrance hall serves as a link between the tower and the lofty living room. A three-bay, glazed arcade, with round-headed arches divided by cast stone columns, provides access to the roof-top terrace. The living room rises directly over the four western bays of the streetfront arcade. Its rich decorative detailing contrasts sharply with the simplicity of the tower. Two high cast stone windows framed with hood molds, each enclose three cinquefoil arches separated by slender free standing columns with carved capitals (Photo 10). The framing is duplicated within the room with stained glass windows installed between the two sets of frames. The two outside sets of windows can slide into pockets in the walls. Two matching cast stone frames, with only two arches, serve as doors to the roof terrace. Here also there are pockets for the stained glass doors. The entire living room wing of the building is capped by a richly molded cast stone cornice.

Entrance to the via is through a 12 feet 11 inches opening between the two Worth Avenue buildings (Buildings 1 & 2) and is framed by a closed arched bridge between the villa's dining room and the hallway of the studio building (Photos 11 & 12). Gothic arched windows, echoing those of the arcades, allow glimpses into the shops on either side. On the left, a large wooden doorway with wrought iron hardware is framed by an antique, carved stone

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Palm Beach Co., FL

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arch. The doorway is raised one step above the level of the via. Two additional risers inside the door bring the floor to the level of the staircase which rises to the villa on the second floor (Photo 13).

Opposite from the entrance is a second matching arch which opens to the western patio, three steps down from the hall floor. Originally, this patio of 45 feet by 60 feet was completely enclosed with entrance only through the hallway. In 1986, to provide handicapped access and greater visibility for the shopholders, an outside staircase and a section of one shop was removed, allowing a level entrance to the patio. On the ground level on the south side, doors and windows of the Worth Avenue shops overlook the patio. On the second floor are two sets of windows from the villa living room matching those of the Worth Avenue facade.

A series of three, low, one-story shops with French doors encloses the west side of the patio. On its north side is a two-story building (Building 3, Photo 14). There are several small shops on the first floor, and an outside staircase with tiled risers provides access to the offices on the second floor (Photo 15). The original staircase ended on a small porch with a tiled roof supported by cypress posts. This small porch has been retained as a balcony (Photo 16). Cast stone squares pave the patio which also has a cast stone Spanish-Romanesque style fountain (Photo 17). Between the new and old entrances to the patio is a small shop entered from the via. An engaged column separates the entrance to this shop and its bay display window (Photo 18).

Directly across the via, a gate made of pecky cypress leads through the stucco wall into the eastern patio (Photos 19 & 20). Later owners had added a series of shops to the east side of the via, blocking access to this patio. In 1986 these shops were removed and the old wall and gate were recreated. On the south side of the patio an outside stairway (Photo 21) rises to what were Mizner's business offices on the second floor (Photo 22). A cast stone fountain has been attached to the stairway. On the east side of the patio are large glass doors to the shops of Building 11 and an outside staircase with tiled risers to the second floor of the building to the north (Building 4, Photo 23). A passageway under the second story at the far east end of Building 1 provides a second entrance to the patio from Worth Avenue (Photo 24). It is guarded by an antique, wrought-iron



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gate imported from Europe. The head of a conquistador makes up the center emblem on the gate. In 1925 Building 4 had only one story (Photo 25). It served as the kitchen for a restaurant in the patio. Within two years, a second story had been added to provide an indoor dining room. The second story extended beyond the walls of the old first story, providing a loggia supported by cypress posts along the north side of the patio (Photo 26). When later owners converted the kitchen and dining room space into small stores and offices, they enclosed the first floor loggia with inappropriate aluminum framed picture windows. These were removed during the 1986 restorations.

As the via continues north it passes through a broad segmental arch in the two story buildings (Buildings 3 & 4) which form the north side of the two patios. Above the arch are two sets of French doors which open upon a balcony with a wrought-iron railing (Photo 27). Shops open on each side as the via continues through the building. On exiting the passage, the via widens and then turns diagonally to the northwest and then back to the north. The one-story building on the right (Building 6) and its entrance provide a focus for the north half of the via (Photo 28). Originally a display window for a shop, it has been converted into the entrance to the restaurant that now occupies this space. To the east of this building a service court has been made into a patio, accessed from the restaurant through a wall of French doors (Photo 29). Broad eaves, supported by cypress rafters, shelter the French doors and the many windows on the via side.

A three-story building (Building 5), with shops on the ground level and dormitory rooms for the staffs of the various apartments of the via on the second and third floors, defines the west side of the via (Photos 30 & 31). The shops on the first floor have large glazed display windows. The second story projects out over the via and is supported by cypress brackets. While simple casement windows are uniformly placed across the second floor on the third floor, an asymmetrically placed wooden balcony with a tile-covered roof gives interest to the facade. At the north end of this building a passage opens giving access to the Via Parigi to the west.

The final two-story building (Building 7) in the original Via Mizner complex is placed on an east/west axis, parallel to Peruvian Avenue. A covered passage with round arches at both ends marks the northern entrance to the via (Photo 32). Shops

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open on the passage and an outdoor staircase on Peruvian Avenue provides access to the second story apartment with its many casement windows (Photo 33). At the east end on both the north and south facades, a slightly projecting bay with half-timbering defines the living room of the apartment.

**Interior**

The most significant interior space in the Via Mizner is the apartment of Addison Mizner, usually called the "Villa Mizner". In the almost seventy years since Mizner first moved into the residence, it has been left almost completely unaltered. This is probably true for no other Mizner designed building in Palm Beach. From the ground floor hallway, an open staircase and an elevator give access to the private second story entrance hall. This hall, with a barrel vault ceiling, connects the tower section of the apartment to the large living room (Photo 34). Its floor is paved in large rectangular unglazed clay tiles and it has two windows and a door, each separated by free standing cast stone columns with carved capitals, that overlook the second story roof-top terrace. A short hallway with a lower barrel vault has a closet and lavatory on each side and provides the actual entrance to the living room. The effect of moving through the small, low hall into the large, one-and-a-half story high living room is quite dramatic. Each of the double doors has eight linen fold panels that appear to be quite old. The door on the living room side is surrounded by a border of polychrome tiles that step up above the door to form a base for a statue. In Mizner's time this was used to display a medieval figure of St. Barbara holding her tower. Black glazed tiles laid in an octagonal pattern form a border surrounding a hard wood floor. Later, the size of the 36 by 42 foot room led some to call it "the ballroom", and claim that the hard wood floor was for dancing. In reality, Mizner often used tile for wood floor borders. The wood floor was designed to better protect the fine antique oriental rugs which he used to decorate his rooms. A large fireplace is centered on the west wall of the room. Its cast stone mantel sloped outward to form a hood with a crown-like wrought iron center piece. Below this, a heraldic shield was centered on a horizontal element which ended on both sides of the mantel in projecting brackets. The wood paneled ceiling is supported by four large wooden beams. On both the north and south walls of the room are two sets of windows with the same elaborate framing as on the exterior of the building. On the

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east wall two sets of doors with the same framing provide access to the roof-top terrace.

The door to the dining room is framed by a Gothic stone surround with narrow, attached shafts on either side and a low segmental arch beneath a carved entablature. The walls of the room are at least partially covered by paneling Mizner claimed to have acquired from a room at the University of Salamanca. The current owners have determined that some of the paneling is quite old and had some reproduced to complete the covering of the wall. In The Legendary Mizners, Alva Johnston claimed that Columbus received his final orders from Isabella and Ferdinand before leaving for America in the Salamanca room. Mizner, however, believed it was the room in which the Spanish Grand Inquisitor issued orders in 1492 for the expulsion of the Jews.

#### Alterations

As commercial retail and rental space, the shops of the Via Mizner were continually remodeled and added to in the years after Mizner's death. In 1986, after the via's purchase by the Aston Corporation, the entire complex was rehabilitated under the direction of the Palm Beach building department and with the approval of the town's Landmarks Commission. Architects for the Aston Corporation used Florida Architecture of Addison Mizner and the resources of the Historical Society of Palm Beach County and its Addison Mizner collection of drawings and photographs to complete their plans for the restoration. Some later additions to the complex were removed and inappropriate materials such as door and window frames were replaced. While the removal of the staircase to open the western patio might be regretted, the new staircase and the handling of the new opening to meet handicapped access requirements was done in keeping with the original Mizner concept.

The four buildings on the eastern perimeter of the via were not completed in 1925 by Addison Mizner as part of the original Via Mizner, though Mizner has been credited with the 1928 one-story building on Peruvian Avenue (Building 8, Photos 35, 36, & 37). It is not known who the architect was for Building 9 (Photo 38) built c1923, Building 10 (Photo 39) completed c1937, or Building 11 (Photo 1) constructed c1940. Buildings 8, 9, 10, and 11 were purchased in the 1950s by Mortimer Sachs, then owner of the Via Mizner. As part of the Via Mizner since before World War II, they have provided a visual terminus for the two eastern

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patios and permit the present owners of the Via Mizner to control their detailing. They, too, have been restored in keeping with the architecture and design of the Via Mizner and present an overall harmonious appearance, and, therefore, contribute to the significance of the Via Mizner.

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**INVENTORY OF RESOURCES  
(All contributing)**

<b>Blg. No.</b>	<b>Style</b>	<b>No. Stories</b>	<b>Use</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	MR	3	Studio/Office/Shops	1923
2	MR	5/1	Villa Mizner/Shops	1923-25
3	MR	2	Shops/Offices	1923-25
4	MR	2	Restaurant	1923-25/ 1927
5	MR	3	Shops/Dormitory	1923-25
6	MR	1	Restaurant	1923-25
7	MR	2	Shops/Apartment	1923-25
8	MR	1	Shop	1928
9	MR	3	Shops	c1923
10	AD	2	Shops	c1937
11	MR	2	Shops	c1940
Fountain	-	-	-	1923-25

MR = Mediterranean Revival, AD = Art Deco

**MATERIALS**

Other: Wood  
Cast Stone  
Metal

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## SUMMARY

The Via Mizner, in Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, has significance at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce and Community Development and Planning, and at the statewide level under Criterion B as the studio, office, and residence from 1923 until his death in 1933 of Addison Mizner, author, bon vivant, and leading society architect of his day. It is also significant at the local level under Criterion C as an outstanding example of Spanish Colonial Revival, or Mediterranean Revival, architecture, which Mizner introduced and popularized in Florida during the 1920s.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### Palm Beach

The earliest pioneers reached what would be the resort of Palm Beach as early as the 1870s, and by 1880 Elisha N. Dimick had added eight rooms to his house and opened it as a hotel for winter visitors. The first of the prosperous winter residents to arrive was Denver businessman Robert R. McCormick who built a large house on the lakefront. He was soon joined by Charles I. Cragin of Philadelphia, C. Vanderbilt Barton of New York, Charles J. Clarke of Pittsburgh, and Chicago Mayor George B. Swift. Nonetheless, until Henry M. Flagler's railroad arrived in what would become West Palm Beach in March 1894, the area remained virtually an isolated wilderness.

Although Flagler and his architects, Carrere and Hastings, had adopted a Spanish Colonial Revival style as appropriate for the railroad builder's first hotels and churches in St. Augustine, in moving south down the Florida coast they had abandoned this style. The lakefront Royal Poinciana, Flagler's first Palm Beach hotel, was Georgian in style with green shutters, Corinthian-columned porches, and a lofty tower. When it opened in 1894 it had 540 guest rooms. Although skeptics questioned Flagler's abilities to entice that many guests into the south Florida wilderness, it proved so popular that after numerous additions, its three miles of corridors led to 1,081 rooms. In 1896 Flagler constructed the Palm Beach Inn on the oceanfront, which in 1900 was renamed The Breakers. Although Flagler built his railroad south to Miami in 1896 and opened the Royal Palm Hotel on the shores of Biscayne Bay, Palm Beach remained America's leading winter social resort.

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For over two decades the nation's leaders of finance and fashion registered at either the Royal Poinciana or The Breakers for the early-January to February 22 winter season. Since their stay was so short, few resorters maintained houses in town. Those who did usually followed the example of the earliest residents in building modest frame-and-shingle cottages along the shore of Lake Worth. In the years just before America entered World War I, some resorters built impressive Victorian mansions along the ocean shore. Both Mrs. Frederick Guest and her brother Henry C. Phipps completed villas designed by F. Burrall Hoffman, Jr., the architect of James Deering's Vizcaya. These Beaux-Arts mansions might have been acceptable in Newport or Bar Harbor. Still, Palm Beach had developed no real architectural style, and its society remained centered around the two Flagler hotels and the Beach Club, Edward Riley Bradley's gambling casino.

Addison Cairns Mizner, Architect (1872-1933)

Addison Mizner, the son of a prominent pioneer family of California, lived in Guatemala for a time as a youth while his father served as the American minister to the five Central American republics. He later attended the University of Salamanca in Spain. These experiences introduced him to the art and culture of Spain and her colonies and helped determine his decision to pursue architecture as his career. In 1893 Mizner entered the San Francisco office of Willis Polk, a young architect who also had an interest in Spanish architecture, where as an apprentice he served until 1897. Here Mizner became involved in the entire design process and learned the fundamentals of the profession.

After extensive travel in the Pacific, Central America, and Europe, in 1904 Mizner decided to become a New York society architect in the mold of his idol, Stanford White. Through Mrs. Herman Oelrichs, the former Tessie Fair of San Francisco and a grande dame of New York society, Mizner met White, the designer of her white marble palace in Newport. Mizner later said that his first New York work came from commissions "too small" for the McKim, Mead and White office.

Although Mizner's reputation as a society architect came from his flamboyant Palm Beach villas built in the 1920s in the Mediterranean Revival style, he laid the framework for his Florida success in the period between 1904 and 1917, when he

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completed numerous northern projects. Even in these years he designed several Spanish-style houses. One of these, a house for William Prime (1911), in Brookville, New York, became, after many additions, Hillwood, the Tudor-style mansion of Marjorie Merriweather Post. America's entry into World War I halted residential construction, and allowed Mizner to vacation in Palm Beach. Although he expected to stay for only a few months, he spent the rest of his life in the resort.

Mizner went to Palm Beach in January 1918 as the guest of Paris Singer, the sewing machine heir, who commissioned him to design a convalescent hospital for shell-shocked officers of the American armed services that could later serve as a private social club. Mizner commented that the site on the shores of Lake Worth suggested a Spanish building with Venetian and Spanish colonial elements. The war ended before construction was completed, so the building was never used as a hospital. It opened in January 1919 as the Everglades Club and immediately became the exclusive new center of Palm Beach resort life.

As an attractive and romantic alternative to the existing frame and shingle, northeastern seashore-style buildings of the resort, the club's architectural success soon equalled its social triumph. Before the season's end the fashionableness of the style was confirmed when Mizner received the commission for a great oceanfront villa from Mrs. Edward T. Stotesbury, the wife of the Philadelphia banker and undisputed leader of Palm Beach society.

Mizner's architectural style thereafter swept the resort; almost all construction for the next six years, no matter who the architect, followed Mizner's design concepts. These years, from 1920 to 1926 were also Mizner's most productive. In 1923 alone he designed Playa Riente, his most magnificent Palm Beach mansion; eleven other large villas for society clients; a clubhouse for the Gulfstream Golf Club; and the studio and office building for himself which became the first section of the Via Mizner. By mid-decade Palm Beach had been transformed. The nondescript shingled cottages, Beaux-Arts mansions, and wooden hotels of the earlier era had given way to the great Mediterranean Revival mansions that lined both the ocean and lakefronts. The town called itself the winter Newport and its villas, clubs, hotels, and restaurants, and shops all endeavored to maintain this image.



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When Mizner was unable to attain "authentic" roof tiles for the Everglades Club he established his own factory to produce them. This became the first of the Mizner Industries which not only made barrel tiles, floor tiles, and pottery, but also cast stone door and window surrounds, decorative wrought-iron work and lighting fixtures, and even the furniture used to decorate his houses.

In 1925, at the height of the Florida land boom, Mizner also became a developer, promoting the new resort of Boca Raton. Unfortunately, the boom peaked just as he inaugurated his project. Although Boca Raton real estate sold well for six months, by the late fall of 1925 the boom had ended. The collapse led to the loss of Mizner's own fortune and health, the bankruptcy of his development, and the decline in fashion for his architecture. Although he maintained his Palm Beach practice and continued to live in the Villa Mizner until his death there in 1933, he never reattained his earlier success. Nonetheless, during his decade and a half in Palm Beach, Mizner's Mediterranean Revival buildings revolutionized architectural design in the town and set an identifying style for Florida during the 1920s.

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Addison Mizner designed the Via Mizner to house his offices, architectural studio, drafting rooms, sales rooms for his manufactured products and imported antiques, and his own residence, and to provide an income from the rental of offices, shops, and apartments. Beginning with the studio and office building in 1923 and continuing to the completion of the Villa Mizner in 1925, the complex transformed Worth Avenue and shopping patterns in Palm Beach. Before the completion of Via Mizner, fashionable resorters shopped at the Fashion Beaux-Arts Center on the lakefront north of the Royal Poinciana hotel. In less than a decade, most of the most distinguished stores were located on Worth Avenue, which had gained its reputation as the southern Fifth Avenue, and shared many of its shops with that famous street.

An article in the Palm Beach Daily News of 8 January 1925 said that the Via Mizner was an original concept of Mizner's and embodied ideas that his close knowledge of Spain and her history had given him.

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It is the custom in the buildings in Spain to provide small cellar rooms. These rooms were built for the ostensible purpose of keeping the armies of the castle and in extreme cases could be converted into dungeons. With the advent of more civilized times the armies were dismissed and the commercially minded people converted the cellar-like rooms into small shops. These usually faced on small winding streets and were entirely open to the people who traversed the narrow pathways. Mr. Mizner has carried out the same idea of the small roadway and has erected the beautiful building in such a way that the Via Mizner follows an irregular path from Worth Avenue to Peruvian Avenue. The imaginative shopper can stroll along the quaint street and look into the shop windows and imagine himself transported to the romantic regions of Seville.

After the completion of the Via Mizner, this romantic vision also saw the construction of the Mizner-designed Via Parigi for Paris Singer and dozens of other "vias" along Worth Avenue.

**ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT**Mediterranean Revival Style

The Mediterranean Revival Style generally refers to a style derived from a combination of architectural elements borrowed from countries and cultures surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, particularly Spain and Italy. This practice became popular in the 1910s as part of the increased national interest in historical styles and architecture. Interest in such styles was especially fostered by the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego in 1915. The style, so suitable for Florida's Mediterranean-like climate and Spanish history became extremely popular in Florida and is closely associated with the Florida Land Boom of the 1920s.

General design characteristics include the use of Moorish columns; low pitched, clay tile gable and hip roofs, or parapeted flat roofs; stucco exteriors with terra cotta decorative features; and multi-level plans. Loggias and arcades are common features with plans in a U or L-shape, enclosing a courtyard or patio. The walls may be decorated with cartouches, tile, and terra cotta insets. Highly decorated arched door and window surrounds are common. Additional distinguishing features often

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include round or square towers; casements, fanlight windows, or double hung sash. Ornamental ironwork is often used for window grilles and balconets. Exterior colors are most often white, yellow-brown, and rose.

**Palm Beach Style**

The Everglades Club, El Mirasol, and houses Mizner designed for the Munn brothers and himself in 1919 created a new architectural movement in the resort often called the Palm Beach style. There were four major elements in that style. The first was obviously that of appearance. Mizner's buildings had characteristics that allowed them to be labeled Mediterranean Revival. For his roofs, he used barrel tiles which he imported from Europe or Cuba, or made in his own factories, and for his walls, he used roughly patterned stucco. His buildings gained decorative detail from his own iron work, another product of his industries, as were his cast stone window frames, doorways, arches, and columns. Although he borrowed from several historical periods, his taste acted as a force which militated against slavish copying of a design. Overall, as some of his more important buildings show, Mizner favored working with a Spanish Gothic vocabulary.

The architectural writer Kenneth Frampton has said that style has ideological implications that go beyond appearances and this was certainly true of Mizner's work. The second element in his style, at least in the first years of the 1920s, was an emphasis on its exclusiveness. Compared to what preceded it, Mizner's style was an expensive architecture calling for hand-crafted floors, ceilings, and walls, extensive landscaped grounds, and one-of-a-kind imported antique furnishings. A Mizner house never looked less expensive than it was, and thus it made an important statement to the community about its owner.

Mizner also recognized that his clients and their guests came to Palm Beach to enjoy the sun, surf, and sports. They wanted a house that related easily to these pursuits. Thus, the third element in his style was the ability to design a house that provided a setting for the "life style" favored by Palm Beach resorters. This meant a house suited to the casual and relaxed daytime activities that could also become the setting for elaborate formal evening occasions. Palm Beachers entertained at home and demanded a setting that would impress their guests.

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Finally, as the fourth element in his style, Mizner recognized that the south Florida subtropical climate was unique in the United States, and he adapted his architecture to make his clients and their guests comfortable in these conditions. In general, his houses were designed only one room deep to allow every breeze to be captured. He also opened his room to lake and oceanfront terraces and secluded patios with masses of windows and French doors. Arcaded cloisters and loggias sheltered principal rooms from the hot sun. His patios and courtyards were filled with plants and grass which, because vegetation was not reflective, became cooling devices. For that same reason, Mizner also used fountains and pools in his patios and courtyards.

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Via Mizner is the most important complex of Mizner buildings in Palm Beach. Although the wealth of Palm Beach has allowed its buildings to be remodeled, enlarged, and modified with the changing ideas of fashion, the Via Mizner, and especially the Villa Mizner, has remained true to its overall plan and has retained most of its original Mizner detailing. At least half of Mizner's Palm Beach houses have been destroyed or significantly altered. The town government has even given permission for the destruction of the Worth Avenue house he designed for his brother Wilson. The Via Mizner, with its low-pitched, barrel tiled roofs; loggias; courtyards; stucco exteriors; cast stone surrounds; and wrought iron fixtures, epitomizes its era and style and, as the home and studio of Addison Mizner during the peak of his career and to his death, remains a monument to one of Palm Beach's and Florida's most innovative and significant architects.

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**BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

LOTS 9 thru 12, inclusive and LOTS 44 thru 50, inclusive, BLOCK 14, of Royal Park Addition, an Addition of the Town of Palm Beach, Florida, according to the Revised Plat thereof on file in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court in and for Palm Beach County, Florida recorded in Plat Book 4, page 1.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary includes the city lots that have been historically associated with the property.

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Photographs 1

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Palm Beach Co., FL

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- 1    1) Via Mizner Historic District, 337-339 Worth Avenue  
      2) Palm Beach, Palm Beach Co., FL  
      3) Jim Remey  
      4) September 1992  
      5) Via Mizner Associates Limited Partnership  
      6) S elevation, Buildings 11, 1, & 2, camera facing NW  
      7) 1 of 39

All photos are of buildings in the Via Mizner Historic District,  
Palm Beach, Palm Beach Co., FL. Items 3-5 are the same for the  
remaining photos, unless otherwise noted.

- 2    6) S elevation, Building 1, camera facing NW  
      7) 2 of 39
- 3    3) Unknown  
      4) c. 1924  
      5) Historical Society of Palm Beach County  
      6) S elevation, Building 1, camera facing NW  
      7) 3 of 39
- 4    6) Arcade on S elevation of Building 1, camera facing E  
      7) 4 of 39
- 5    6) S elevation of Villa Mizner (Building 2) camera  
      facing NW  
      7) 5 of 39
- 6    3) unknown  
      4) c. 1927  
      5) Historical Society of Palm Beach County  
      6) S elevation, showing Building 1 and Villa Mizner  
          Tower (Building 2)  
      7) 6 of 39
- 7    6) S elevation, Villa Mizner Tower, camera facing NW  
      7) 7 of 39
- 8    6) N elevation, Villa Mizner Tower, camera facing SE  
      7) 8 of 39
- 9    6) Roof-tops from Villa Mizner Tower, camera facing N  
      7) 9 of 39



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Photographs 2

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_ Via Mizner, Palm Beach,  
Palm Beach Co., FL

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- 10 6) S elevation, Villa Mizner (Building 2), showing  
detail of living room window, camera facing NW  
7) 10 of 39
- 11 6) Worth Avenue (S) entrance to Via Mizner, camera  
facing N  
7) 11 of 39
- 12 6) Worth Avenue entrance to Via Mizner, camera facing S  
7) 12 of 39
- 13 6) Entrance to Villa Mizner from the via, camera facing  
W  
7) 13 of 39
- 14 3) Unknown  
4) c. 1924  
5) Historical Society of Palm Beach County  
6) S elevation, Building 3, camera facing N  
7) 14 of 39
- 15 6) S elevation, Building 3, stairway to second floor;  
camera facing W  
7) 15 of 39
- 16 6) S elevation, Building 3, showing balcony, camera  
facing NW  
7) 16 of 39
- 17 6) E elevation of 1-story shops of Building 2 and  
fountain in west patio, camera facing W  
7) 17 of 39
- 18 6) Entrance to #5 Via Mizner (Building 2), camera  
facing W  
7) 18 of 39
- 19 6) Villa Mizner entrance from west patio, camera facing  
E  
7) 19 of 39
- 20 6) East patio, camera facing W  
7) 20 of 39

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Photographs 3

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_ Via Mizner, Palm Beach,  
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- 21 6) Stairway to second floor, Building 1, east patio,  
camera facing W  
7) 21 of 39
- 22 6) N elevation, Building 1, east patio, camera facing  
SW  
7) 22 of 39
- 23 6) W elevation, Building 11, east patio, camera facing  
E  
7) 23 of 39
- 24 6) Passage to Worth Avenue from east patio, camera  
facing S  
7) 24 of 39
- 25 3) Unknown  
4) c. 1926  
5) Historical Society of Palm Beach County  
6) N and E elevations of Buildings 1 & 2, east patio,  
camera facing SW  
7) 25 of 39
- 26 3) Unknown  
4) c. 1928  
5) Historical Society of Palm Beach County  
6) S and W elevations of Buildings 4 & 11, east patio,  
camera facing NE  
7) 26 of 39
- 27 6) S elevation, Buildings 3 & 4, balcony over passage,  
camera facing N  
7) 27 of 39
- 28 6) S elevation, Building 6, camera facing N  
7) 28 of 39
- 29 6) E elevation, Building 6, camera facing NW  
7) 29 of 39
- 30 6) The via between Buildings 6 & 5, camera facing N  
7) 30 of 39
- 31 6) E elevation, Building 5, camera facing NW  
7) 31 of 39

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Photographs 4

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

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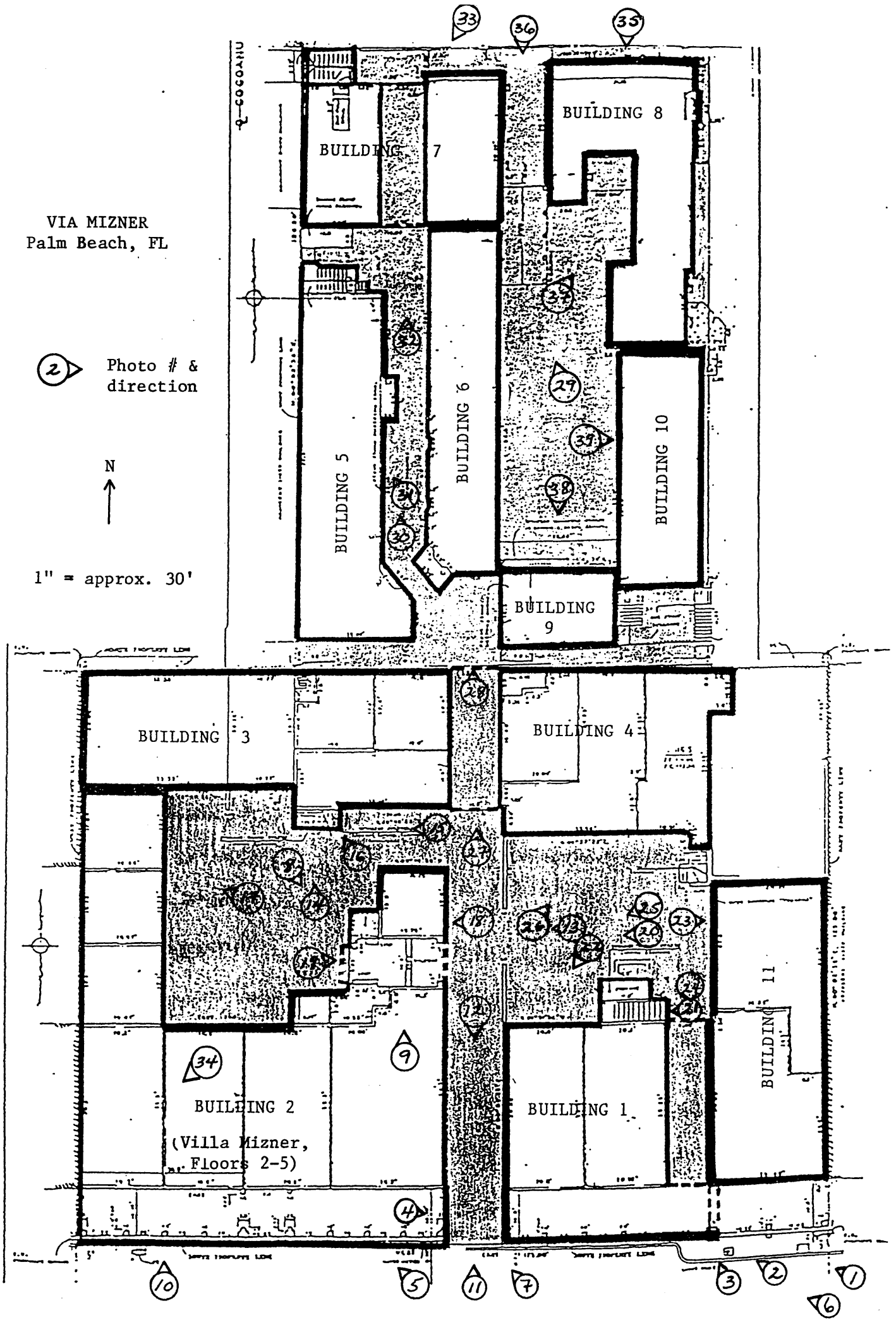
- 32 6) S elevation, Building 7, camera facing N  
7) 32 of 39
  
- 33 6) N elevation, Building 7, Peruvian Avenue entrance to  
Via Mizner, camera facing SW  
7) 33 of 39
  
- 34 3) Unknown  
4) c. 1928  
5) Historical Society of Palm Beach County  
6) Addison Mizner's living room, second floor of the  
Villa Mizner in Building 2, camera facing SW  
7) 34 of 39
  
- 35 6) N elevation, Building 8, camera facing S  
7) 35 of 39
  
- 36 6) N elevation of Buildings 8 & 7, and Peruvian Avenue  
entrance to Via Mizner, camera facing SW  
7) 36 of 39
  
- 37 6) S elevation, Building 8, camera facing NE  
7) 37 of 39
  
- 38 6) N elevation, Building 9, camera facing S  
7) 38 of 39
  
- 39 6) W elevation, Building 10, camera facing E  
7) 39 of 39

VIA MIZNER  
Palm Beach, FL

2 Photo # &  
direction



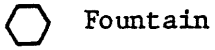
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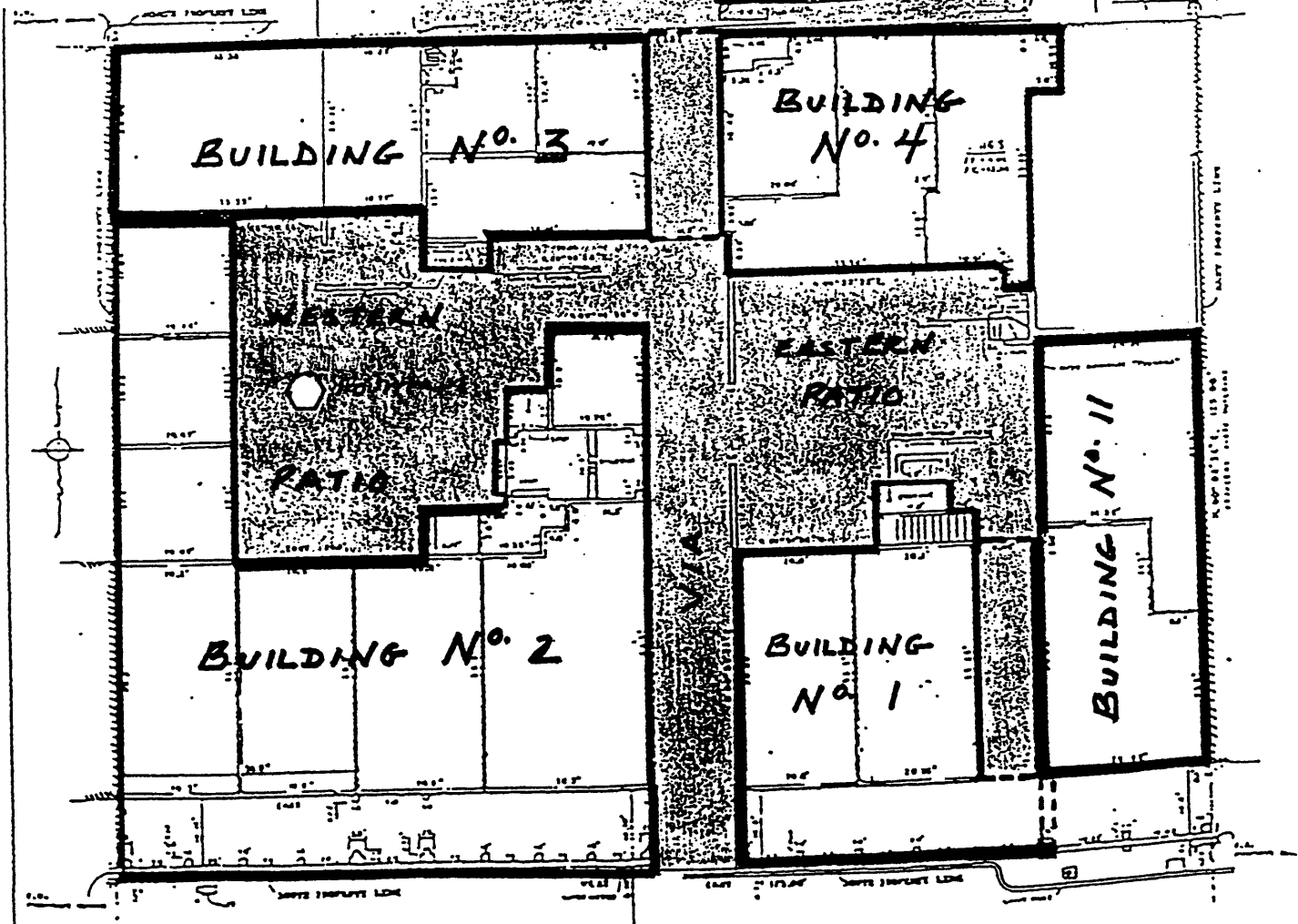
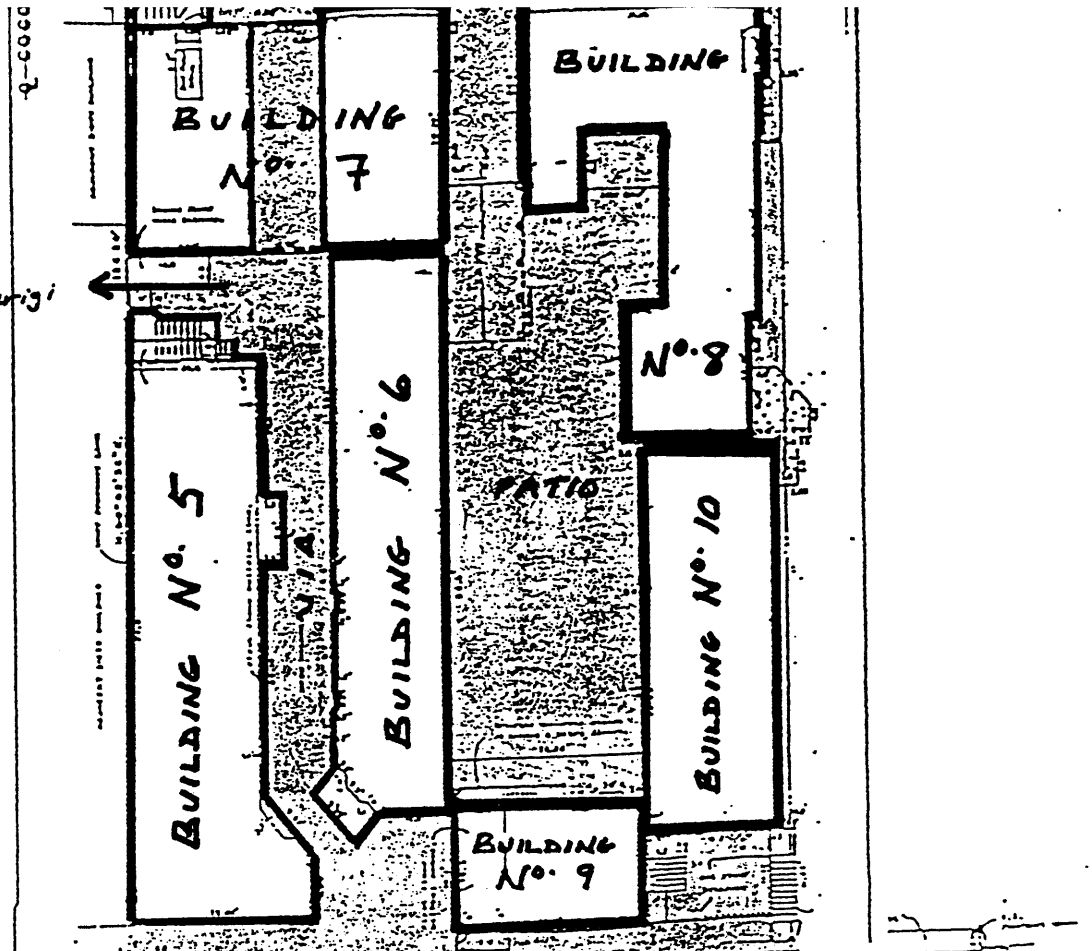
VIA MIZNER  
Palm Beach, FL



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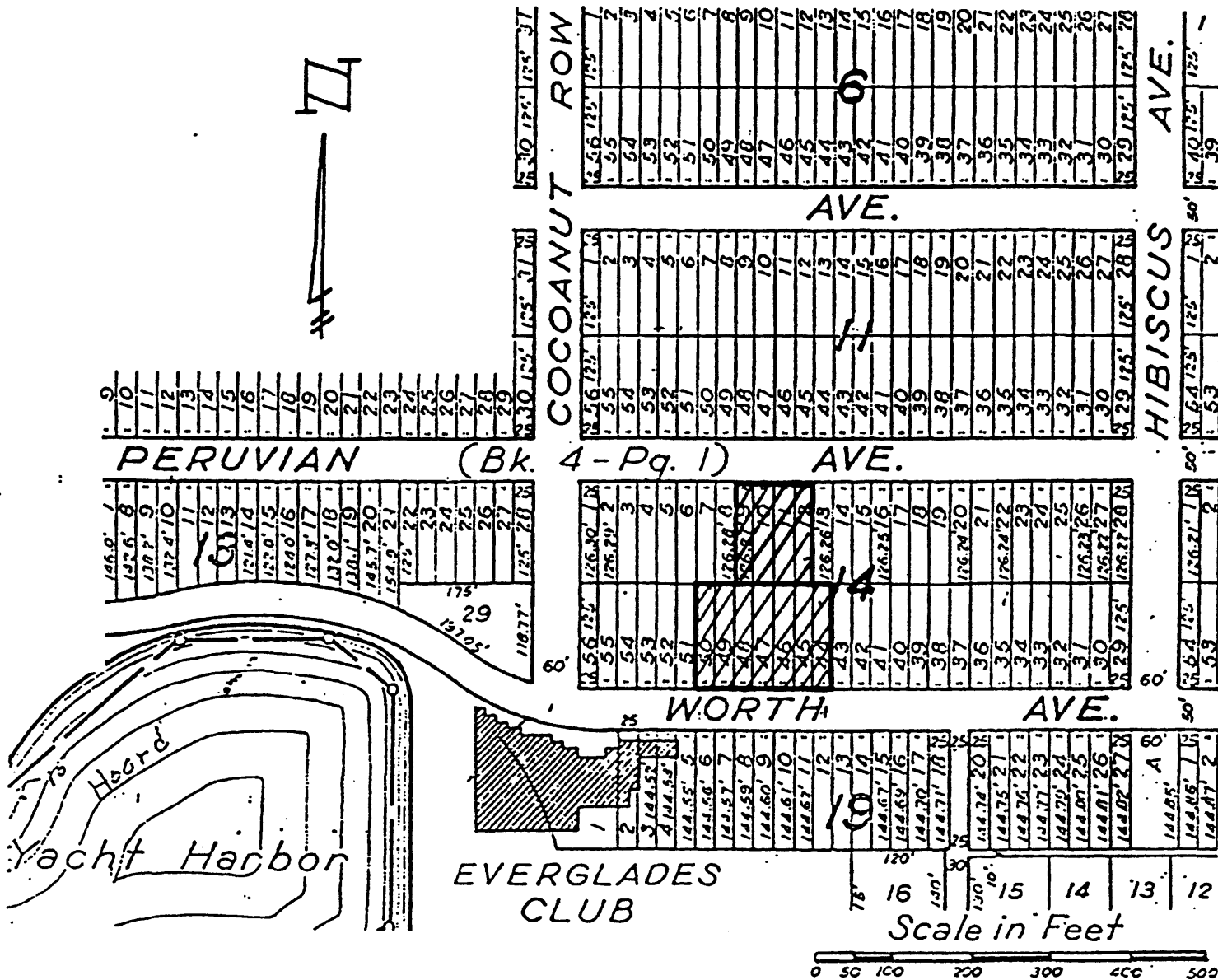


To  
Via Parigi



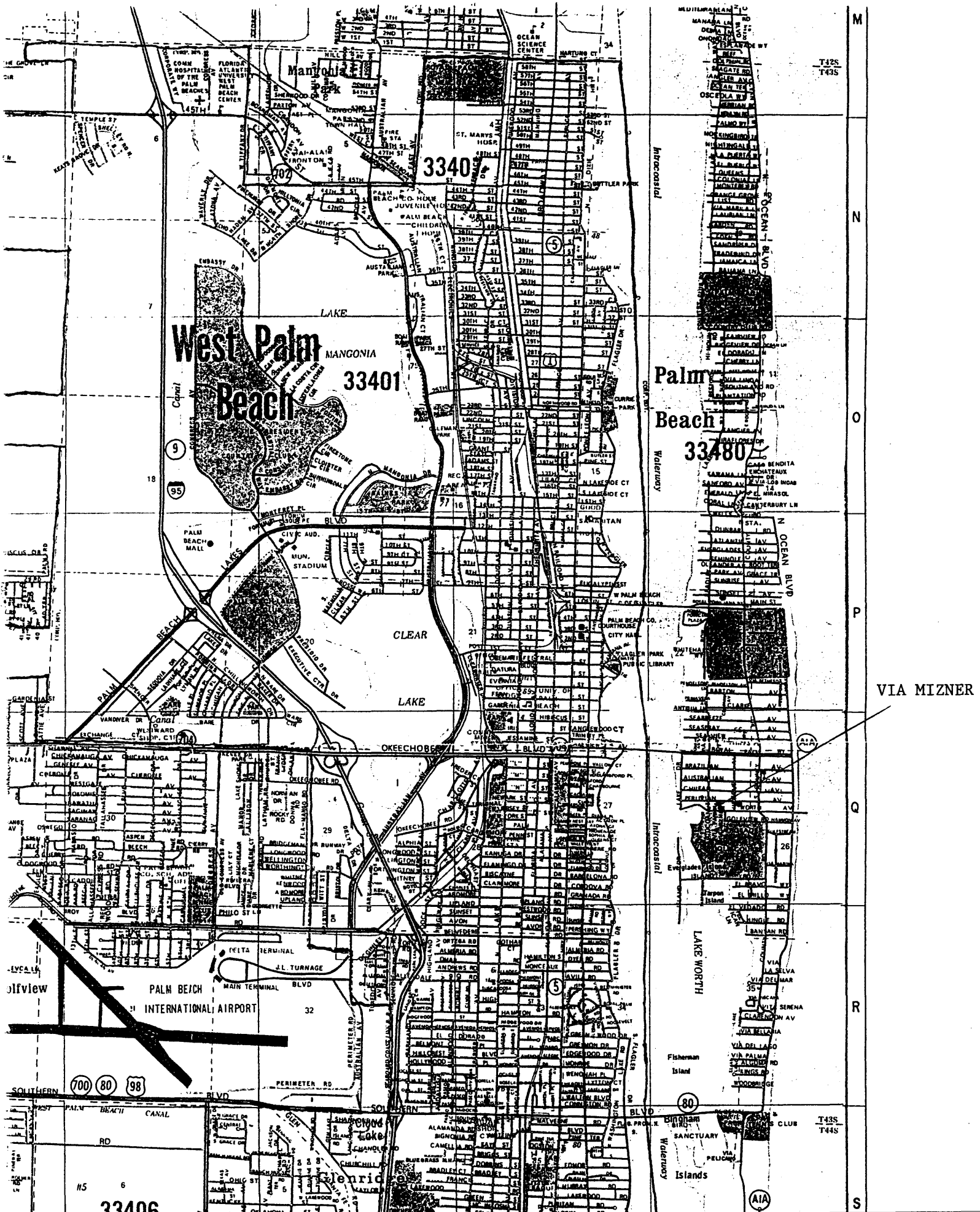
WORTH AVENUE

LOCATION MAP



VIA MIZNER  
 337-339 Worth Avenue  
 Palm Beach, Palm Beach Co., FL

LOCATOR MAP



West Palm Beach

33401

Palm Beach  
33480

VIA MIZNER

33406

T42S  
T43S

T43S  
T44S

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