

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received OCT 22 1985

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

OCT 2 1985

1. Name

historic CASA CONSISTORIAL DE MAYAGUEZ

and/or common ALCALDIA DE MAYAGUEZ (CITY HALL)

2. Location

street & number PERAL STREET

not for publication

city, town MAYAGUEZ

vicinity of

state PUERTO RICO

code P.R. 72

county MAYAGÜEZ

code 0650

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name MAYAGUEZ MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT , CITY HALL

street & number PERAL AND MC KINLEY STREETS

city, town MAYAGUEZ,

vicinity of

state PUERTO RICO

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. REGISTRO DE LA PROPIEDAD, DEPARTAMENTO DE HACIENDA
(RECORDER'S OFFICE)

street & number GOVERNMENT BUILDING, BARRIO MIRADERO

city, town MAYAGUEZ,

state PUERTO RICO

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title SURVEY AND PLANNING
PROJECT OF MAYAGUEZ

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date JULY, 1984

federal state county local

depository for survey records STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

city, town SAN JUAN,

state PUERTO RICO

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

In 1845, the Town Hall or Casa Consistorial of Mayaguez was completed. Following the Spanish model established on the "Laws of the Indies", the two story building was located in a lot which faced three streets, directly across from the town's Church at the opposite end of the main Plaza.

The original 1845 structure was in keeping with Spanish Military Architecture of the times. Its main facade was planar and austere, divided in eight bays; underlining the presence of those at each corner. The ground floor was rusticated above a low base, exhibiting rectangular door openings. Flat pilasters defined the bays on the second story. The door openings were accented with arched mouldings and iron railings. Three flat pediments crowned the building, one above the central bay and one above each end bay. As in most buildings of the time, an interior patio was provided, for ventilation and the celebration of activities.

The earthquake of 1918 destroyed the Casa Consistorial and most of the city as well. After the alternative of rehabilitating the damaged building was discarded, the Department of the Interior of the United States, in charge of such works for the Island since 1898, finally decided upon the construction of a new Town Hall. According to city records found, Antonio S. Bures and F. Sevillano, and Rafael Carmoega (later), were the Department Architects who worked in the design of the project. The construction of the new two story reinforced concrete building was done at a cost of \$125,000.00 on the same site occupied by the former Casa Consistorial.

The new building, Neoclassical in style, reflected the North American idea of a City Hall. The three facades share a uniform treatment, flat corinthian columns and pilasters which run two stories high divide the building into nine bays. An entablature ties the building horizontally. The end bays turn the corner at forty five degree angles, reinforcing the facades' continuous treatment.

On the ground floor, there are sets of double wood and glass windows with arched transoms. These are set between the pilasters and columns on the second floor. Windows are also located between the pilasters. These rest upon flat solid railings, except in the forty-five degree bays, where balconies with concrete balaustrades change the design slightly.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below					
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		

Specific dates 1926 Builder/Architect Rafael Carmoega

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

More than any other building, Casa Consistorial de Mayaguez or Mayaguez City Hall, is a symbol of the spirit of the city. As "theater" of local significant events, its history, & the city's are very much the same. The building constitutes one of our finest examples of Neoclassical Architecture.

Founded in 1760, Mayaguez was one of the first towns established on the Island. After being declared "Villa" (large village) in 1836, it progressed rapidly. Given the title of City in 1845 and the "Excellence Treatment" in 1894, both by the Spanish Crown, the growth of the new city was notable. The first sewer system of the island was inaugurated in Mayaguez in 1862. This positive growth continued even after the U.S. took possession of the island in 1898, and today, Mayaguez is the third largest city of Puerto Rico; home of one of the island's most important universities.

The great development experienced by the city is important, as it was destroyed almost completely by a series of fires during the nineteenth century and by an earthquake in 1918. Together with private institutions, the Municipal government, which ruled from Casa Consistorial, has always planned and directed the general progress of the city.

As home of the local government, the building has been the site of important events in the life of the city and of the island. Of historic relevance is August 11, 1898, when the North American troops entered and took possession of the city. They stopped in front of Casa Consistorial, where mayor Dr. Eliseo Font y Guillot awaited with twelve municipal guards. This event is retold through generations.

On June 6, 1934, Franklin D. Roosevelt, then President of the U.S. visited the city. That day, Ramón Sanchez Justiniano, a private citizen, created a turmoil by handing the President a document in name of "Liga Defensora de Mayaguez" (League for the Defense of Mayaguez), containing twelve written requests for improving the physical, economic and general living conditions of the city.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Barrios Román, Angel de. Antropología Socioeconómica en el Caribe. Mayaguez, P.R., 1840-1875.

General Archives of Puerto Rico. Series: Municipalities and Public Works, 1925.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1,495 sq.mts.

Quadrangle name USGS MAYAGUEZ 1964

Quadrangle scale 1: 20,000

UTM References Lambert: 18°12'11"
67°08'23"

A

Zone	Easting			Northing					

B

Zone	Easting			Northing					

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET (Site Plan)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Architects Manuel Bermúdez, Beatriz del Cueto de Pantel

organization Colegio de Arquitectos de Puerto Rico date September, 1984

street & number Box 2299 telephone 809/ 724-1213

city or town Hato Rey, state Puerto Rico

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date October 15, 1985

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date 12/2/85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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The facade treatment is broken only on the three center bays of the facade facing the Plaza, with the inclusion of a narrow, Neo-Palladian entrance portico. Six corinthian columns support a triangular pediment with an oculus. Three double wood doors, also with arched transoms provide the access to the ground floor. This level rises approximately three feet above the street level. In the upper floor, three double rectangular wood and glass doors open to balconies that have also concrete balustrades.

Behind the pediment, and crowning the structure rises a clock tower. This element displays four sets of double corinthian columns at 45° degree angles at each corner and, is topped with domed copper roof and lantern.

The building's interior greets the visitor with a large colonnaded hall inside which a staircase leads to the second floor. Another vestibule is to be found here. The main spaces are surrounded by offices. At diverse locations, and located between some of these, are three light shafts. These shafts are the result of previous remodelling jobs. They are small and unpretentious.

The ground floor and colonnaded hall is by far, the noblest space in the building. Square columns and pilasters support an immense coffered ceiling. The symmetrically located staircase descends elegantly in the center of the space, and is flanked by two pairs of columns. Double door openings leading to offices are framed by mouldings and cornices on consoles, resembling an exterior facade. All these combine to create an interesting effect to the space, giving it scale.

The upper colonnaded vestibule repeats many of these features, although to a smaller scale. Walls exhibit simple mouldings which frame the door openings. Black and white cement floor tiles locally produced, geometric patterned rims, add richness to all spaces, including the corridors that connect them.

The building still functions as City Hall, and as such, is the home of the most important offices and departments of the municipality. Changes and alterations have been many; mainly consisting on changing original woodwork (doors and windows and windows) and subdividing the original office spaces both in plan and in section.. Temporary plywood and gypsum board walls, many with wall paper, constitute today an unwelcome addition. Vinyl tile is all over. All original lighting fixtures have been substituted and fluorescent lighting has been provided. Fortunately, all of these changes are not major and could be done without.

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MAYAGUEZ

In architectural terms, the actual building is relevant because it represents the evolution experienced in the Island architectural thought after the change of sovereignty. Spanish-ruled, the local architecture responded to the military condition of the island. As the former Casa Consistorial de Mayaguez, most of the edifications were austere, functional buildings, with few or no ornamentation at all. When the U.S. took possession of the island, the prevailing Architectural styles on the mainland were implanted in Puerto Rico, especially by architects working for the government. Among these Rafael Carmoega stands as one of the period's most versatile.*

The 1926 Mayaguez City Hall is a typical example of the Neoclassical style imported to the island. Uniformity and monumentality through the use of classical elements, and measured but correct ornamentation, resulted in a building of grand institutional character unique in the island.

The location of the building is important in historical terms, because it follows the traditional Spanish model established for the town center of the New World cities. The State and the Church, as the two colonial powers, faced each other across the main plaza, provided the proper sense of identity, and gave character to the city's core. Thanks to the presence of City Hall, this still holds true in Mayaguez.

*One of the most outstanding architects of Puerto Rico in the 1920's was Rafael Carmoega, designer of City Hall. Among his many projects, he is responsible for the design of the Capitol Building in San Juan, the School of Tropical Medicine, the Quadrangle at the University of Puerto Rico (already included in the National Register of Historic Places) and the Central High School all jewels of the Island's architecture.

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NOMBRE COMUN	ALCALDIA		
NOMBRE HISTORICO	CASA CONSISTORIAL DE MAYAGUEZ		
ARQUITECTO	RAFAEL CARMOEGA		
DIRECCION	PERAL	Parcela 329	Solar 7

Scale: 1:1000