

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED **AUG 13 1980**
DATE ENTERED **OCT 16 1980**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Boca Raton Old City Hall

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

71 N. Federal Highway

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Boca Raton

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

11

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Florida

CODE

12

COUNTY

Palm Beach

CODE

099

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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Boca Raton

STREET & NUMBER

201 W. Palmetto Park Rd.

CITY, TOWN

Boca Raton

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Florida

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Palm Beach County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Boca Raton

STATE

Florida

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Boca Raton Old City Hall is an example of the Mediterranean Revival architectural style of Addison Mizner. The building is irregular in plan and it's composed of three distinct functional parts; a flat roofed one-story element which serves as office space, a two-story element that serves as the main entrance and lobby, and a one-story hipped roof element situated perpendicular to the rest of the building which contains a council chamber and office spaces.

The flat roofed one-story element has 3 windows fronting on the east (main) facade. This section was doubled to its present size in 1960 and was originally used for the engineering and fire departments and had one fire engine bay. This section had a curvilinear parapet and a segmentally arched opening with rusticated voussoirs and quoins. The size of this part of the building was doubled to accommodate a second fire engine in 1960. This addition also had a curvilinear parapet. In 1965, the openings were infilled to reach the present configuration.

The three bay, two-story entrance section has a curvilinear gabled roof which supports a domed bell tower. The bell tower is square with chamfered corners and is capped with a dome. An arched opening is found in each face of the tower. The east facade of this section provides the main entrance. The frontispiece of the east facade is composed of a semi-circular arched doorway with rusticated voussoirs and engaged columns supporting a broken pediment. The pediment frames a plaster relief shield with drapery. Centered between the escutcheon and the bell tower, in the face of the gable is a blind bulls-eye which serves only as ornamentation. A small one-story, flat roofed section is between the two-story structure and the section perpendicular to the east facade. This intermediate section has two bays with a parapet with red barrel tile coping.

The perpendicular section has its entrance facade to the north. The east facade has three bays with a curvilinear parapet over the central bay. The north facade provides a secondary entrance to the building which affords direct access to the council chambers.

This entrance also is composed of an arched doorway and rusticated voussoirs. The door is constructed of weathered wood and is ornamented with iron strap hinges to present an "antique" Spanish appearance. The curvilinear parapet of the north elevation is highlighted by a miniature belfry with red tile coping. The west facade of this section has three bays, each with an arched window.

On the west facade, the two-story section has a curvilinear gable. The entrance to this section has an arched doorway with radiating voussoirs. This west entrance has an archivolt with bracketed supports. Above the entrance are French doors with a wrought iron balconet.

(See Continuation Sheet)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

+1926

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

(See Continuation Sheet)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Boca Raton City Hall is significant as one of the few planned buildings constructed for architect Addison Mizner's dream city, Boca Raton. The overall design of the structure is attributable to Mizner, who envisioned a completely Spanish styled city on the banks of Lake Boca Raton. The building also served as the center of municipal government until 1963. At that time most of the city functions were moved to a new building. The building is still used as offices for the city and also houses the Boca Raton Historical Society and Preservation Board.

*Considered a "world famous architect" during the 1920's Addison Mizner was known for his significant and distinctive interpretation of Spanish architecture. Brought to Palm Beach from New York in 1918 as the guest of Paris Singer (heir to the Singer Sewing Machine fortune), Mizner felt that the northern architectural styles he found in Palm Beach were out of place in the tropical setting of Florida. He, with the financial support of Singer, introduced the architecture which would eventually become synonymous with the rich of South Florida in the 1920's- the Mediterranean Revival style. Placing emphasis on flat, simple surfaces with rhythmic but random window placement, asymmetrical plans, loggias, and an integration of exterior design and interior decoration, Mizner designed such Palm Beach landmarks as the Everglades Club (1918), Via Mizner (1924) and the Embassy Club (1928) (now the Society of the Four Arts).¹

Mizner's acquaintance with Spanish 16th and 17th century design came at the early age of 17 when his father served as a U.S. minister in Central America. Three years later Mizner attended the University of Salamanca in Spain.² The red tile roofs, towers and arcaded entrances and windows incorporated in his architectural designs recreated the atmosphere that Mizner came to know and love during his youth.

Mizner, unlike most of his contemporaries, went one step further in designing in the Spanish mode in Florida. Due to the World War I shipping embargo and the unacceptable quality of American made roof tile, Mizner decided to manufacture his own roof and floor tiles and also to produce ironwork and furniture. In 1918 with

(See Continuation Sheet)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Continuation Sheet)

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approximately 1 acre.

QUADRANGLE NAME USGS Boca Raton, 1962

QUADRANGLE SCALE 7.5

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 591100 2914700
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Boca Raton Land Company, Block 2, Lots 6, 7, 8, 9.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Rolla L. Queen, Historic Sites Specialist

ORGANIZATION

Florida Division of Archives History and Records Management

DATE

July 11, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

The Capitol

TELEPHONE

(904) 487-2333

CITY OR TOWN

Tallahassee

STATE

Florida

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

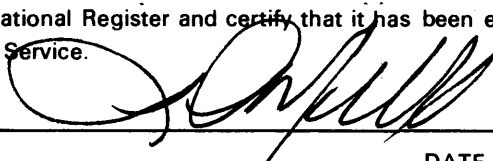
NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL x

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



8/5/80

TITLE

L. Ross Morrell, State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Ray Price
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 10/16/80

ATTEST: Carol Dubie
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 10/11/80

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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Although the building has a variety of window sizes and styles, most all are awning sash. Originally these were all casement windows with pairs of three light leaves.

The interior of the building is used predominately for office space. The ceiling was of pecky cypress but this has been covered by a drop ceiling. The north wing of the building housed a records vault and the city council chambers.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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Builder - Link, F.H. (1926), Cramer, J.F. (1927)

Architect - Mizner, Addison (1926), Alsmeyer, William E. (1927)

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help from Paris Singer, he started the firm "Las Manos" (handcrafted) in West Palm Beach.³ Mizner eventually bought out Singer's share in the company and later renamed Las Manos, Mizner Industries, Incorporated.⁴ Over the years and due to its continuous success, his industry expanded -- light fixtures, pottery and stone detailing were also produced. He even created his own "antiques" by purposely cracking stonework and rusting wrought iron.^{5*}

Mizner had desired to architecturally transform Palm Beach into a Spanish style city. However, Palm Beach had already developed as a diverse architectural community and a complete transformation would have been impossible. Therefore, Mizner expressed his hopes and dreams in a design of his own, the new town of Boca Raton.⁶

The Mizner development at Boca Raton was advertised to be a "cosmopolitan world - community - destined to be the world's most architecturally beautiful playground".⁷ The dream began to materialize in April, 1925, when Mizner purchased more than two miles of waterfront property along Lake Boca Raton and 16,000 acres of land around a town then known as Boca Ratone.⁸

Through the Mizner Development Corporation, Addison Mizner began work on the Boca Raton project, placing the largest requisition for construction materials to that date in the State of Florida. By the end of 1925, more than 2100 men were working in a "...mighty symphony of progress..." on the construction of the city. An additional 1500 engineers, architects and sales and management personnel brought the total of all men working on the development to more than 3500.⁹

Mizner planned Boca Raton to be a restricted residential community. Stringent requirements were established for the purchase of property and the design and construction of buildings. Mizner realized that he could not design all of the buildings, so he demanded that all buildings be designed in the Spanish style and required that all designs have his prior approval.¹⁰

The development required a substantial system of support facilities. To meet those needs, Mizner designed housing for his service staff, the management, and community leaders. The development also was to have a water tower, two railroad stations, a radio station, a water distribution and sewage disposal system (both owned by the development company), and a town hall.¹¹

The City of Boca Raton was incorporated in 1924. Early city council meetings were conducted in the field offices of the Mizner Development Corporation.

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Discussions concerning the need for a permanent city hall were undertaken by the city with the Mizner Development Corporation in August, 1925.¹² The city council appointed a committee to locate a site for the construction of the building and contracted Addison Mizner to design a one-story structure.¹³ The city then advertised for bids for the construction of the city hall, and on February 18, 1926, awarded the project to contractor F.H. Link for \$106,300. Two of Mizner's companies, Los Manos Pottery and Antique Shops, were to provide the stonework, iron grills and rails for the building.¹⁴

Although the city commission had advertised for the construction of a one-story city hall, it appears that Mizner designed a two-story building. An advertisement in the Palm Beach Post, January 24, 1926, depicted the elaborate two-story structure. The fact that Mizner had been chosen to design the City Hall, claimed the ad, "... is a fitting commentary upon his work of developing Florida's playground".¹⁵

Mizner never abandoned the two-story concept. However, by May, 1926, the collapsing Florida real estate market forced Mizner to redesign the structure in order to remain within the limits of the budget. Construction on the building appears to have stopped completely by September, 1926, because of the economic conditions, and in December, work was officially suspended because of insufficient funds. The building had cost \$35,000 to construct to that date.¹⁶

In January, 1927, J.F. Cramer of C and C Construction Company agreed to complete the building at a cost of \$57,700. William E. Alsmeyer was chosen as the architect.¹⁷ It is difficult to determine how extensively Alsmeyer modified or changed Mizner's design for the building. More than likely, major changes were made only to the interior design. The exterior changes probably resulted in a scaling down of the main facade plus the addition of columns at the main entrance. The south wing was altered to accommodate a fire engine. Upon completion, the city hall building cost \$102,891, about \$3,000 less than was allotted in the original contract.

The vicissitudes of construction of the city hall served well as an economic barometer for the rising and falling fortunes of the Boca Raton development. The development itself failed financially amidst the chaos of the collapse of the Florida land market and the hurricanes of 1926 and 1928. Mizner's legacy remained, embodied in the completed El Camino Real, the Ritz-Carlton Cloister, the twenty-four houses of the Floresta development, and also in the Boca Raton City Hall.¹⁸

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The city hall received national publicity in April, 1928, after a forty-five foot high, fifty foot long wooden camel was erected over the Dixie Highway at the rear of the building. This was a promotional gimmick to greet Shriners on their way to a convention in Miami. The camel's hump was removed and antlers were added soon after to greet those on their way to an Elks convention in West Palm Beach.¹⁹

The building served as the Boca Raton City Hall until 1963 when most of the city government offices were moved to a new building. The city still uses the building for office space. Throughout its history, the building has housed all city offices, police and fire departments, a residence for the fire chief, and a Woman's Club library. The fire hall was expanded in 1959 to accommodate two fire trucks. After the departure of the fire department to new quarters, the fire engine bays were enclosed to provide additional office space. The building presently serves as offices for the city engineer and houses the offices of both the Boca Raton Historical Society and the Historic Boca Raton Preservation Board.

Footnotes

1. Christina Orr, Addison Mizner: Architect of Dreams and Realities (Stuart, Florida: Southeastern Printing Co., Inc., 1977), pp.60-62.
2. Ibid., p. 52.
3. Ibid.
4. Addison Mizner, Incomplete Manuscript, ca. 1932, Private Collection, p. 55. from Orr, p. 52.
5. Orr, p. 54.
6. Orr, p. 20.
7. Orr, p. 40.
8. Smith, Sanford. Background Information for the Municipal Building in the Town of Boca Raton. (unpublished report), copy of file at Florida Division of Archives History and Records Management, p. 1; Diary of Karl Riddle. (unpublished), information provided by Sanford Smith, copy is on file at the Historic Boca Raton Preservation Board.

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9. Ibid.
10. Orr, p. 40.
11. Ibid.
12. Delray Beach News (Delray Beach), August 14, 1925.
13. Palm Beach Post (Palm Beach), November 25, 1925.
14. The Spanish River Papers (Boca Raton: Boca Raton Historical Society, February, 1976), p. 1-8.
15. Palm Beach Post (Palm Beach), January 24, 1926.
16. Boca Raton Historical Society, Archives. Letter dated November 29, 1926; December 23, 1926;
17. Boca Raton Historical Society, Archives. January 3, 1927; January 24, 1927;
18. Orr, p. 41.
19. Smith, p. 4.

* The text about Mizner was excerpted from a National Register Nomination completed for Casa Coe de Sol in St. Petersburg, Florida. It was written by Robin Strassburger (Historic Sites Specialist) in 1979.

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Archives, Boca Raton Historical Society. Correspondence dated November 29, 1926; December 23, 1926; January 3, 1927; January 24, 1927.

Delray Beach News (Delray Beach), August 14, 1925.

Mizner, Addison. Incomplete Manuscript, ca. 1932, Private Collection, p. 55. from Orr.

Orr, Christina, Addison Mizner: Architect of Dreams and Realities. Stuart, Florida: Southeastern Printing Company, 1977.

Palm Beach Post (Palm Beach), November 25, 1925; January 24, 1926.

Smith, Sanford. "Background Information for the Municipal Building in the Town of Boca Raton." (unpublished report). 1980. Copy on file with Florida Division of Archives History and Records Management.

Riddle, Karl. Unpublished diary. Information provided by Sanford Smith, Historic Boca Raton Preservation Board.