

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **NOV 21 1984**

date entered **JAN 2 1985**

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

**1. Name**

historic Cardona Residence

and/or common Quiñones-Elias Lawyers' Office

**2. Location**

street & number Betances St. #55 \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Aguadilla \_\_\_ vicinity of

state Puerto Rico code \_\_\_\_\_ county Aguadilla code 005

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Offices

**4. Owner of Property**

name Baltasar & Santiago Quiñones-Elias, Esquires

street & number Betances St. #55

city, town Aguadilla \_\_\_ vicinity of state Puerto Rico

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds

street & number Aguadilla Courthouse, Progreso Street

city, town Aguadilla state Puerto Rico

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Aguadilla Architectural Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1983-1984 \_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records P.R. State Historic Preservation Office

city, town San Juan state Puerto Rico

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<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
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date .....

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

This building was originally the Cardona Residence; a single story, towered and multi-gabled early 20th century structure with an elevated balcony, Ionic tapered columns in its facade, ornamented door openings, cast iron balcony railings, ornamented roof balcony (in the manner of a widow's walk) and a cupola-topped eight-sided tower. Curiously, all of these eclectic elements are patterned and placed following the neo-classical mode of arrangement.

The front elevation has a raised first floor level with four clover-leafed basement openings (used for ventilation purposes), four tapered fluted Ionic columns which, in turn, support three molded regressed square ceiling wells and a richly ornamented leafed and molded frontispiece. This facade is recessed three quarters of its length, forming a wide balcony which sports a cast iron ornamental railing. An eight-sided tower to its left extends all the way to and above roof level. It is topped by a modified cupola which depicts an Oriental air, due to its pointed finial. The cupola sits on a cantilevered leaf ornamented molding. The facade was crowned by a wooden or cast iron balauster in the manner of a widow's walk. This feature, now created with concrete screen blocks, introduces a morphological element that is not common in the Island, the so-called widow's walk. The two door openings of the main facade originally were closed with wooden louvered doors which have been replaced with glass and metal doors. These changes, however, do not alter or detract significantly from the integrity of the facade. The doors are framed by shell-like leaf and scrolled lintels.

Side elevations were kept relatively simple, void of any special ornamental detail. The back facade, usually left untreated for it faced the back of the property, has been treated in a very elegant fashion. The two wings of the back part of the house enclose an arched portal, closed by an iron gate. This facade, which faced (and still does) the county jail, is decorated with stucco-reliefs, moldings and a miniature shell motif. Entering through the back portal, a U-shaped patio is formed by the two projecting wings of the house and the main portion of the house. A balcony surrounds this area. Cast iron railings, similar to the ones present in the front facade, are seen in this area.

The multigabled roof, covered with metal sheets (zinc) seems to be the original one. Its fanciful outline contrasts sharply and charmingly with the neo-classical front facade.

The interior of the house was symmetrically disposed, with central living and dining areas divided by a beautiful and unique screen ("mediopunto"). Sleeping, bathroom and kitchen facilities were placed on the side wings. These spaces are now dedicated to offices. Ceilings are made of grooved wooden planks with peripheral finishing moldings. Walls are built of the same materials. Floors in the main areas are wooden, local cement tiles were used in the wings. The designs created with these tiles are of great beauty. Of special interest too is the wooden spiral staircase that provides access to the roof level.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1913 **Builder/Architect** Manuel Gómez-Tejera

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Constructed in 1913, this structure is one, if not the most, interesting and best preserved examples of the residential style prevalent in urban Aguadilla during the early part of the 20th century. This impressive structure was designed and constructed by Manuel Gómez Tejera, a wood ebanist by trade. Mr. Gómez, upon graduating from high school, became an ebanist and later in his life an architect. Although he did not possess the official title of architect, his houses are certainly works of art and architecture of the highest caliber. Houses built under his supervision show great workmanship in terms of the novel treatment of wood, great imagination in terms of the arrangement of the different parts, creating new morphological arrangements in the typical Puerto Rican floor plan. His architectural works are of such an outstanding quality that he was given the title of architect (Honoris Causa) by the Puerto Rican Legislature later in his life.

Stylistically speaking, this house not only breaks away with the typical floor plan, but the roof profile is unique not only to Aguadilla, but to all Puerto Rico. The multi-gabled fanciful shapes and the so-called widow's walk, represent a new mode of expression in the area. The "mediopunto" by itself is a genuine work of art and all efforts should be made to preserve it.

The Cardona family sold the residence to David Crawford, who in turn sold the property, in 1977, to the Quiñones Elias law firm. Baltasar, one of the present owners, was a distinguished member of the Puerto Rican Legislature for 12 years and a founder of the Puerto Rican Independence Party in the Island. Both brothers are distinguished members of the Aguadilla community.

Besides its very own important architectural value, the building is localized on Betances St., near other very important, if different, residential buildings creating a very interesting and unique urban complex that could, at a later date, be proposed as a district. Of great importance too is the fact that this building is located very close to the town plaza, the urban core of the city of Aguadilla.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Personal interviews with Professor Herman Reichard and with Attorneys B. & S. Quiñones Elias.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 260 sq. meters

Quadrangle name Aguadilla

Quadrangle scale 1:20,000

UTM References 18°-25'-47" Lat. North, 67°-08'-47" Long. West

A 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

B 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

C 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

D 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

E 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

F 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

G 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

H 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is bounded to the North by the property of Mr. Nestor Rodriguez Escudero; to the South by Corchado St.; to the East by Ruiz Belvis St.; and to the West by Betances St.

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Eng. José Bourdony & Ass. (Revised by the SHPO staff)

organization Centro Cultural José de Diego Inc.

date August 30, 1984

street & number San Carlos, Box 966

telephone 891-767-1458

city or town Aguadilla

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 for Puerto Rico

date November 1, 1984

For NPS use only

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

date 1/2/85

for Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration