United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

____X___ New Submission _____ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

La Pietra Townhouses

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

The development of townhouse condominium complexes on Oahu from 1962-1971

C. Form Prepared by:

name/title Don Hibbard
organization self
street & number 45-287 Kokokahi Place
city or town Kaneohe state Hawaii zip code 96744
e-mail
telephone 542-6230 date November 15, 2021

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

_____ _____ _____
Signature of certifying official Title Date

_____
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

_____ _____
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Create a Table of Contents and list the page numbers for each of these sections in the space below.
Provide narrative explanations for each of these sections on continuation sheets. In the header of each section, cite the letter, page number, and name of the multiple property listing. Refer to *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* for additional guidance.

Page Numbers

E. Statement of Historic Contexts 3
(If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)

Introductory Statement on condominium townhouse development on Oahu during the 1960s 3

Multiple Dwelling Antecedents in Hawaii 3

Cooperative Apartments 8

Condominiums 10

The Emergence of Townhouse Condominiums in Hawaii 12

La Pietra 18

Louis Pursel 20

F. Associated Property Types 22

Dwelling Units 22

Description 22

Significance 25

Criterion C: Architecture 25

Criterion A: Townhouse Development 27

Criterion A: Historic Preservation 28

Registration Requirements 30

G. Geographical Data 36

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods 38

I. Major Bibliographical References 39

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

(If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)

Introductory Statement on condominium townhouse development on Oahu during the 1960s

During the 1960s a new housing type appeared in Hawaii, townhouse condominiums. This type most frequently was constructed as a complex of similar appearing buildings, usually one or two stories in height, each containing multiple dwelling units. The units often shared the same roof as well as one or two walls with adjoining units, but each unit had its own individual entry from the street. The buildings were sited on a commonly owned parcel of land sufficiently large to provide green space between the multi-unit structures, as well as vehicle parking. Usually the buildings were uniform in design, with minor variations to accommodate different size units, and took on the appearance of a residential community. Each unit was individually owned, and as a result, over time, the interiors came to vary considerably to accommodate individual owners' tastes and needs. While the interiors of each unit were individually owned, the land and complex, including building exteriors, was owned and/or administered by a Home Owners' Association, and might include amenities such as a swimming pool and community recreation/meeting hall.

The concept of developing townhouses in Hawaii did not appear out of thin air, but rather emerged over the course of a half century as Hawaii's limited land and high housing costs led its inhabitants to turn to multiple unit dwelling as an economic and social solution to their increasingly restricted housing opportunities. An examination of the various types of multiple unit dwellings which preceded the emergence of townhouses, and the laws which made such developments possible will enhance our understanding of this building type.

Multiple Unit Dwelling Antecedents in Hawaii

During the nineteenth century single family detached dwellings were the primary residential form in Hawaii; however in the late nineteenth century a number of wood tenement houses and flats began to be constructed in Chinatown and the area to the west of Nuuanu Stream to house the increasing number of former plantation workers moving to Honolulu. Few examples of such housing remain, although several extant two story flats on Akau and Eu Lanes, built in 1900-1901 by Lee Chu, the president of Oahu Lumber and Building Company and "one of the most prominent and wealthy Chinese in the city," remain standing. [*Hawaiian Gazette*, October 31, 1899, page 5 and *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 16, 1900 page 14] Similarly, the three, single wall, two-story, four plexes behind the Tong Fat Building on King Street built as rentals for Percy James Hayselden circa 1915 , [Jones, Lesleigh, 2019], and the 1920 two-story four-plex near the corner of King and Kamenani Street initially owned by the Prendergast sisters [Deed in the Bureau of Conveyances, book 562, page 109], members of a prominent and politically active Hawaiian family, are other rare examples of early twentieth century two story multi-unit buildings. As opposed to apartments and most tenements, these buildings provided their occupants with individual entries from the street.

Prendergast Four-plex in Kalihi-Palama

While flats and tenements were common forms of housing in the Kalihi-Palama, Liliha and Aala neighborhoods, they were viewed as a less desirable form of housing, associated with a less affluent social status, and as a result very few multi-family buildings stood in the other parts of Honolulu. Indeed, in 1915 the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* reported the ruminations of an unnamed Honolulu architect who marveled at the lack of modern apartment houses in Honolulu, as most mainland cities the size of Honolulu, "possess anywhere from one or two to a score of structures given over to rent business of this character." [*Honolulu Advertiser*, September 23,. 1915, page 2] The newspaper and architect speculated that anyone willing to be a pioneer in constructing, "such buildings, of the right class," would, "more than likely find them filled to capacity by permanent patrons."

The architect went on to conjecture,

> To make apartment houses desirable in Honolulu, however, one feature would have to be kept constantly in mind in planning their construction. This is a semi-tropical land, and buildings of the type in vogue in the middle western and eastern states are inappropriate here. Apartments would have to be tropical in architecture, in style and appointments.
>
> Light and coolness would have to be features prominent above all others in such edifices. Broad lanais [sic], screened sleeping porches, good bathing facilities, and

> furniture and color schemes in the various suites---all these should be provided in combinations especially for comfort of the occupants. [*Ibid.*]

The article concluded, "the man who initiates the movement should find excellent profit in it---- provided he understands the subject well enough to know the difference between a real apartment house and a tenement."

Earlier, in the same year as the article, William Wolters commenced construction of a straight-forward, reinforced concrete, three-story building on Union Street in downtown Honolulu. It had stores at ground level and apartments on the upper floors, [*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, May 6, 1915, page 2] and apparently met with success. However, outside of Chinatown, where the J. H. Schnack Building (1916) on Maunakea Street was constructed, few followed in Wolters' footsteps, as investors remained uncertain of the demand for such housing. Two years later, in 1917, Dr. H. Homer Hayes announced plans to build a $200,000, four-story, concrete apartment building which would have a courtyard in the middle with a swimming pool and a roof garden, plus excellent cross ventilation thanks to the courtyard. [*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, July 16, 1917, page 1 and *Star Bulletin*, August 11, 1917, page 7] Apparently he could not obtain the requisite support as the project never materialized.

Proposed Hayes Apartments

Also in 1917, Honolulu architects Emory & Webb presented in the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* an architectural rendering for a Spanish style apartment building with "lanai sleeping rooms and other adaptations suitable for the Honolulu climate." Although the architects pointed to, "the success which has attended the pioneering of W. Wolters and John A. Palmer", and argued, "the time has come when the demand for rooms and apartments in Honolulu will justify the erection of a number of apartment houses," [*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 8, 1917, page 6] their proposal met with no takers.

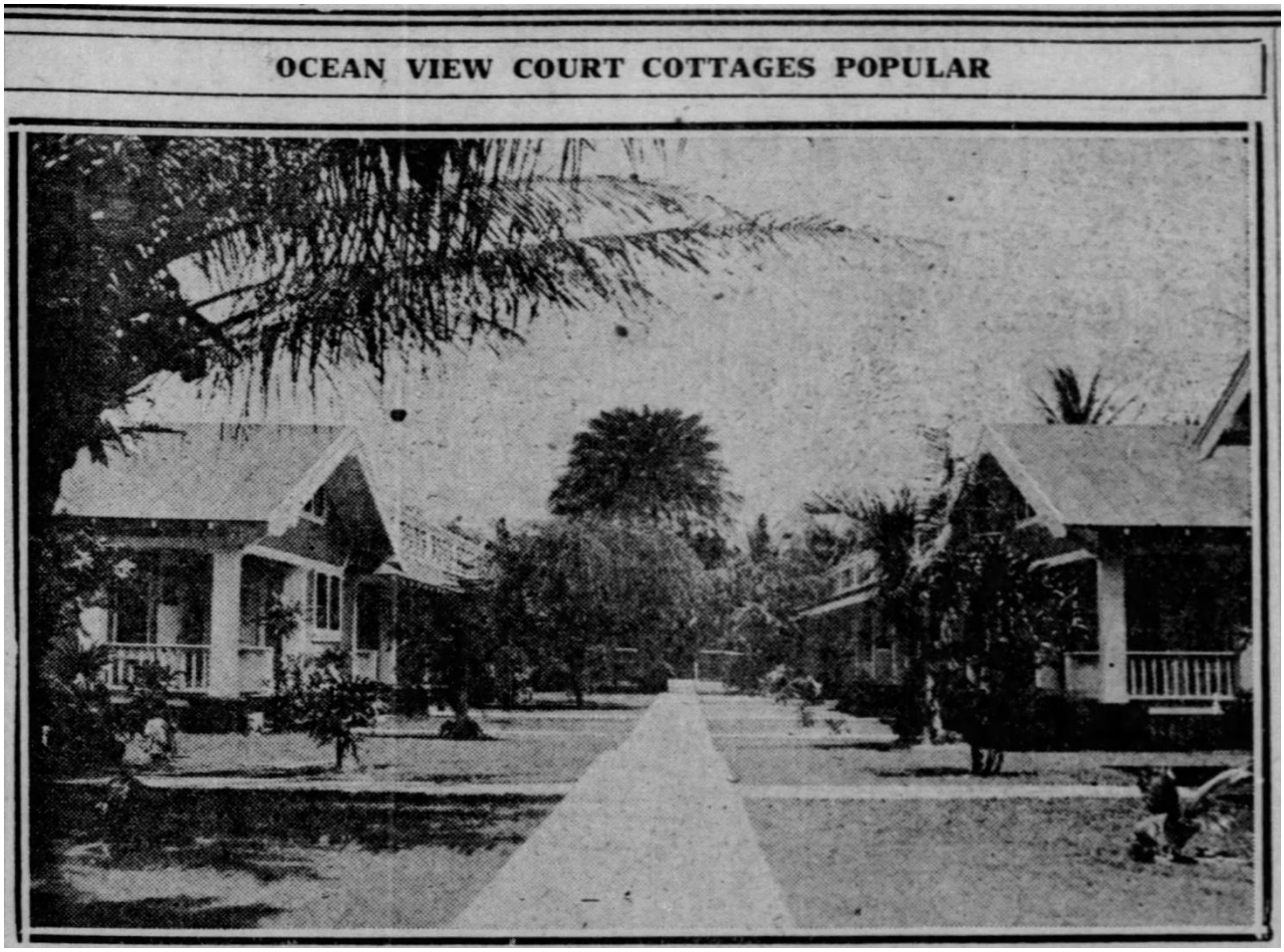
Bowler Apartments proposed for present site of Honolulu Hale

Again, in 1919 John F. Bowler proposed to construct a four-story apartment designed by Ripley & Davis at the corner of Punchbowl and King streets, where Honolulu Hale now stands, [*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, March 6, 1919, page 8] but this scheme also failed to move forward. However, while investors shied away from the construction of apartment buildings for the use of Honolulu's residents, the expanding visitor counts encouraged property owners to consider erecting furnished apartments in Waikiki, with O. C. Scott being one of the first to venture into this realm, constructing two apartments on Lewers Road in 1919. [*Star Bulletin*, March 4, 1919, page 2]

Among the early furnished apartments to appear in Waikiki was the Ocean View Court, situated on the beachfront property Ewa of the Halekulani Hotel, which Mrs. Mary Ostergaard leased for twenty years from the Damon family. Designed by Arthur Reynolds and completed in August 1921, the project introduced "attached houses," to Hawaii. [*Star Bulletin*, May 18, 1921, page 10] Similar to today's townhouses, the Ocean View Court's four, single-story buildings each contained eight units connected side by side to each other, with "each having its own lanai, entrance, front and back yards and being separated from the other houses in the unit by a sound proof wall." [*Star Bulletin*, April 6, 1921, page 10]. The *Advertiser* found the complex to be, "unique in its arrangement. Two rows of neatly constructed apartments face each other on a pretty tropical court, where beauty is prevalent in the shape of numerous lacy trees, shrubs, ferns and a velvety lawn. The court reaches to the beach at one end and Kalia Road at the other. . . . and the view from its own broad stretch of sandy beach is of the kind that one never grows tired of." [*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 9, 1922, page 23]

Advertised as sitting "on the best bathing beach at Waikiki," [*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, September 20, 1922, page 7] the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* went on to exude, "For those who wish to enjoy surf bathing, delightful sea breezes, and bask in the healthful sunshine, Ocean View Court at Waikiki offers an exceptional home location." [*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 9, 1922, page 23] The "cheerful," bungalow style apartments each had their own private entry, one bedroom and a screened lanai off a 12' x 20' living room. Their kitchens included a built-in breakfast table and seats, "after the Dutch fashion, that has grown popular in the east," and each apartment also had a dressing closet, shower, and bathroom. The apartments initially rented for $75-$100 a month, according to proximity to the beach, and enjoyed "capacity patronage" during the winter of 1921-22.

For the summer of 1922 Mrs. Ostergaard offered special rates of $65 to $90 a month, with short tenancy considered.



Ocean View Court

Lewers & Cooke provided the building materials for the Ocean View Court and were credited with introducing the concept of attached houses to Honolulu. The company explained the development of this building type,

> Land in Waikiki is valuable and cottages such as were built there for several years have been found to be uneconomical when the high cost and high taxation on the land is taken into consideration. The plan was recently evolved by Lewers & Cooke, in conjunction with architects, to build so-called attached cottages, in this manner making effective use of land of high valuation.
>
> Apartment houses, which in this district would be the most advantageous type of construction from the landowners' point of view, are forbidden without the consent of 60 per cent of the surrounding property owners and this is found to be difficult to secure, especially when the owners happen to live in cottages or small bungalows. [*Star Bulletin*, May 18, 1921, page 10]

Technically, in the Building Inspector's eyes, not apartments, the attached houses were a means to build apartments in residential areas by avoiding the requirement of approval by sixty percent of the neighbors. The city's second set of attached houses was also built in the Beach Walk area of Waikiki in 1921, when Willard Judson Coon, and his soon to be widowed wife, Frances, erected five, two-story structures, at 247 Lewers, [*Ibid*.] and then Mrs. Lillian Sapira contracted with Lewers & Cooke for four, two-story houses, with each containing two units, [*Ibid.*] and C. S. Bailey constructed eight, two-story attached houses on Beretania Street, near Punahou Street. [*Star Bulletin*, May 25, 1921, page 10] None of these early attached houses remain standing.

Starting in 1921, with Honolulu facing a housing shortage, the Chamber of Commerce's housing committee began to investigate ways to facilitate the construction of apartments. As a result, at the end of July 1921the Planning Commission approved a "drastic" redraft of the City's zoning ordinance, which eliminated the need for surrounding property owners to consent to the construction of hotels and apartments so long as the new projects were situated in districts designated for hotel and apartment use. [*Star Bulletin*, July 22, 1921, p 1], On April 7, 1922 Mayor John Wilson signed into law Ordinance 207, which included the establishment of hotel and apartment districts, [*Honolulu Advertiser*, April 11, 1922, page 9] with one such district including almost all of Waikiki, and another encompassing much of Makiki. Thanks to the new law, attached houses fell by the wayside as they were no longer needed to circumvent the sixty percent approval of neighbors, and apartments began to dot Waikiki for the use of residents and visitors alike. During the ensuing three decades two-story walk-up apartments became a more and more common site in Waikiki, with many of the buildings rendered in a modern style following the designs of Dahl & Conrad, as well as Roy Kelley and Claude Stiehl.

Cooperative Apartments

In 1953 the multi-unit apartment building paradigm dramatically changed in Hawaii with the passage of a law allowing cooperative land tenure. This form of real estate ownership can be traced back to 6th Century B.C. Rome, but was not a common way to hold property in the United States, with Florida and New York City (where approximately seventy percent of the apartments are coops) being two of the few places in the United States, other than Hawaii, with cooperative apartments.

This form of ownership allowed individuals to acquire rather than rent an apartment. Rather than purchase real estate, a co-op buyer purchased stock in a non-profit company which owned the building and all the units, and also had legal control of the land on which the building sat. Ownership of shares entitled a stockholder to enter into a proprietary lease for the unit they occupied and required their payment of monthly mortgage fees. Each owner also possessed an equal interest in the common elements of the building, such as the stairs, elevator, roof, halls, grounds, etc., and the non-profit company managed the upkeep of these areas and collected maintenance fees. As the non-profit owned all the units, with all residents being shareholders, the board and membership decided if proprietary leases to units could be sold and to whom they might be sold.

While opening up the possibility of home ownership to more people, this form of ownership also placed real estate developers on a sounder fiscal footing, as they could go to possible financing institutions with partial financing in hand from down payments from persons who purchased shares in the non-profit cooperative apartment project. By allowing easier financing, this new land tenure

facilitated the construction of high rise apartments in Hawaii, and indeed, made such high rise developments possible.

After several unsuccessful cooperative apartment proposals, including the Ululani Apartments (1954) on the slopes of Punchbowl, a number of cooperative apartment projects were constructed between 1955-1960, including the twelve story Rosalei (1955) in Waikiki, Hawaii's earliest known high rise cooperative apartment. Others included the fourteen story, Ossipoff designed, Diamond Head Apartments (1957) and nine story Tahitienne (1957), both by Kapiolani Park; and the eight story Oahuan (1958) in Makiki, the first high rise apartment built outside Waikiki. Additionally, a number of low rise cooperative apartments were built, such as the Oahuan (1956), Makikian (1956), Diamond Head Ambassador (1956) and Punahou Terrace (1957). Also, Finance Investment Company constructed a cluster of five cooperative apartments around Pualei Circle between 1959-1961, which included: Diamond Head Hale (1959) designed by Bradley & Wong, Diamond Head Surf (1959), Diamond Head Terrace (1959), Diamond Head Gardens (1960), and Diamond Head Alii (1961), with the last four designed by Lemmon, Freeth, Haines & Jones. Described as "a garden of co-op apartments," the two and three story, walk-up apartments were sited around a circular drive, lined with now-mature trees, which resulted in a pleasant neighborhood ambiance, and provided an early glimpse of the thinking which would eventually lead to the development of townhouses. [For more information on Pualei Circle see, *Honolulu Advertiser*, October 11, 1959, page 33, and *Star Bulletin*, March 20, 1960, page 56]

Finance Investment Company's PualeiCircle

.

The introduction of cooperative apartments led to increased apartment construction in Waikiki, as is well indicated by the fact that in 1950 there were 17.4 hotel rooms for every apartment unit in the district, but by 1960 that ratio had dropped to 2.6 to 1, despite the opening of the Surfrider, Biltmore, Princess Kaiulani, Hawaiian Village, and Reef hotels during the decade. [*Hawaii Business and Industry*, December 1962, page 32] The Tahitienne is the only Hawaii cooperative apartment to be listed in the Hawaii or National Registers of Historic Places.

The Tahitienne

Participation in a cooperative apartment opened shareholders to potential risks. As the non-profit organization was responsible for the property's master mortgage, if one of the shareholders or the corporation defaulted on their mortgage or tax payments, the other shareholders would be responsible for any shortfalls. Also, as people purchased shares in a cooperative apartment project prior to it even commencing construction, an unscrupulous developer, as in the case of the proposed Hawaiian Monarch Apartment project proposed for construction behind the International Market Place, could divert the moneys for his own personal purposes.

Condominiums

The failure of the proposed Hawaiian Monarch co-op, with its investors' lossing over $100,000, not to mention architect's, engineers' and other creditors' unpaid costs, [*Honolulu Advertiser*, July 17, 1960, page 1] dampened enthusiasm for acquiring co-ops in general. As a result in 1961, the Hawaii State Legislature, in an attempt to better control the development and sale of cooperative apartments, passed House Bill 1142, the first horizontal property regime, or condominium, law in the United States. With this law the Legislature essentially reformed the concept of cooperative apartments by supplanting it with condominiums, which allowed the actual private ownership of a unit within a multiple unit building. The law defined a horizontal property regime as "a multi-unit structure with individual ownership of single units and common ownership of hallways, stairways, elevators and driveways." [*Honolulu Advertiser*, May 27, 1961, page 3] The law also set forth regulations governing such units. It allowed each unit to be mortgaged separately and taxed separately, and also required the deeds and mortgages be recorded with the State Bureau of Conveyances. To further protect

investors, the law required that all proposed condominium projects be submitted to the State Real Estate Commission for review. The commission in turn would issue a report based on strict disclosure provisions intended to prevent fraud, misrepresentation or deceit. Through the passage of this law apartment unit owners were provided ownership status comparable to single family residence owners. Indeed, the Park Tower Condominium in its advertising referred to itself as "the vertical subdivision." [*Honolulu Advertiser*, December 6, 1963, page 35]

In formulating this law Hawaii followed the lead of Puerto Rico, which had adopted such a law in 1958. Puerto Rican legislators had knowledge of condominium ownership through other Latin American countries where this form of real estate ownership had been in use since its inception in Brazil in 1925. Following the passage of Puerto Rico's law, Congress studied authorizing the Federal Housing Authority to insure mortgages for individual condominium units, which eventually became federal law in 1961, providing an extra incentive for Hawaii lawmakers to move forward with their condominium measure. [*Star Bulletin*, June 27, 1965, page B1]

At the end of 1961 the fourteen story 3019 Kalakaua became the first condominium for which the Hawaii State Real Estate Commission issued a report. Constructed to be a luxury cooperative apartment with only twelve, 2,500 square foot apartments, each occupying one floor, the building opened in February 1961, but after selling two units was withdrawn from the market pending the outcome of House Bill 1142. With the passage of the bill, the building's developer and contractor, E.E. Black submitted an application for condominium status. At the time of the Real Estate Commission's release of its report, commission executive secretary Robert E. Bekeart predicted, "Condominiums will be the most dynamic factor in the home building industry in the next 10 years." [*Star Bulletin*, December 8, 1961 page 20] The accuracy of Bekeart's foresight was verified in 1967 when the City and County of Honolulu's Building Department issued more building permits for apartment units than single family dwellings, as the 133 permitted apartment buildings' 3,159 units, most all of which were condominium apartments, accounted for slightly over fifty percent of the state's new housing units, when compared to the 3,005 permits issued for single family dwellings that year. [*Star Bulletin*, March 8, 1968 page 7] With the ensuing years the number of apartment unit permits continued to expand beyond those issued for single family residences.

Chinn Ho, whose Capital Investment Company was developing the Ilikai Apartment and Hotel, also re-configured the project from a co-op to a condo. The 1,056 unit, twenty-seven story building was reputed to be the largest residential condominium development in the world upon its opening at the end of 1963.[*Honolulu Advertiser*, December 11, 1963, page 9 and December 14, 1963, page 36] Another early condominium project, the 12 story 1001 Wilder (1964), had failed to generate interest as a proposed co-op, but was able to pre-sell sufficient apartments as a condominium to have Equitable Life Assurance Society agree to provide the necessary financing. This was the first time in the United States that an insurance company agreed to offer financing on individual apartment units.

The financing of 1001 Wilder was also greatly assisted by the 1964 Hawaii State Legislature's passing of Act 8 which allowed developers to pre-sell condominium units and present owners with a deed. This became a useful and common practice in Hawaii, allowing developers to reassure potential lending institutions of the existence of a market for their real estate. By June 1965 *Hawaii Business and Industry* noted,

> The success story of condominiums in Hawaii can be visibly affirmed by anyone surveying the Honolulu skyline: most of the high rise apartment buildings in various stages of completion are condominiums. Since on most of them no construction starts until the building is substantially pre-sold, each one that actually comes up is an automatic success story: in some cases, like the Sandalwood, appreciation as high as 25 percent of the purchase price occurred between the time of buy and the time the unit was constructed—as evidenced by one case where an early buyer sold out an apartment before even moving in, and realized a $6,000 profit. (page 27)

The idea of condominiums as an abode and as an investment opportunity immediately took hold in Hawaii, and was more popular here than in any other state which authorized condominium developments. During the first four years after passage of the condominium law eighty projects received necessary reports from the Hawaii Real Estate Commission, and by the beginning of 1968 there were 186 high-rise condominiums of over forty units, containing a total of over 7,500 living units. [*Star Bulletin*, April 10, 1968 page A-1] One indication of the high demand for condominiums during the 1960s, is revealed by the 230 unit Marine Surf (1968) at 364 Seaside Avenue in Waikiki having been sold out in two days. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, February 16, 1967, page E-6] The FHA and Hawaii Real Estate Commission eventually warned prospective buyers that high pre-sale numbers were often skewed by real estate speculators who would frequently buy multiple units in a condominium project in hopes of reselling them at a profit when the project was completed. To date, no condominiums in Hawaii have been placed in the Hawaii or National Registers of Historic Places. .

The Emergence of Townhouse Condominiums in Hawaii

The 1961 condominium law not only facilitated the construction of high rise apartment buildings, but also townhouses, A townhouse is a multi-unit building that is designed to mimic a detached house. Each unit has its own entrance from the street, while sharing a common wall or walls with other units. Like a detached dwelling, the owners hold title to their units, but unlike a detached dwelling they share the surrounding land with others. Townhouses usually offer the space and privacy of a house, as well as providing landscaped outdoor areas.

Robert Gerholtz, a home builder from Michigan and the former president of both the National Association of Home Builders and the National Association of Realty Boards, was one of the first people to bring the concept of townhouse development to the attention of the public in Hawaii. While on a four week vacation in Hawaii during February 1960, he informed the press that a “modern version” of row houses might help alleviate Hawaii’s dearth of low cost housing. He went on to explain, “the improved row housing idea now is called ‘the Town House design,” and that it was, “catching on across the nation.” He further noted,

> Instead of rows and rows of monotonous, look-alike fronts, the modern concept is units of four, six, eight, and so on, with ‘better design and all the amenities of living.’ . . . The cluster of houses includes such things as swimming pool, common storage and laundry space. [*Star Bulletin*, February 16, 1960, page 20]

Four months later, Martin S. Bartling, the then current president of the National Home Builders Association, on a June 1960 vacation to Hawaii, echoed Gerholtz's opinion that town houses might aid in providing lower priced housing for Hawaii. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, June 19, 1960, page 26]

With interest in townhouses rising, Mayor Blaisdell's September 1960 urban renewal conference again broached the idea as a means to reduce Hawaii's heavy demand for low cost housing. Speakers, including Norman P. Mason, the administrator of the federal Housing and Home Finance Agency, emphasized the advantages of reduced cost of construction and increased density. However, an editorial in the *Star Bulletin* expressed concern that row houses might result in a lower quality of life, and noted,

> The City Planning office is resisting the row housing concept but the weight of opinion in favor of it may soon be overpowering, considering the influence the subdividers and the real estate boys have had at City Hall. [*Star Bulletin,* September 25, 1960, page 4, "Do We Want Row Housing?"]

With the Planning Office's reluctance to embrace townhouses as a desirable housing type, it was not until 1962, that modern row houses appeared in Hawaii. In that year Henry Kaiser introduced at Hawaii Kai "attached Lanai houses," which were to be sold in two series: the Terrace Lanai and the Garden Lanai. Sold as condominiums, the Terrace Lanai houses were to be eleven row houses, containing four to eight units each, sited one after the other along Kawaihae Street, fronting on the water, while the Garden Lanai dwellings were to be duplexes and quadraplexes built in U-shaped clusters. The Terrace Lanai units were split level, while the Garden Lanai buildings were all single story. David Slipher, the vice president and general manager of Hawaii Kai Development Company, called the new condominium development,

> a break-through that will save the home buyer several thousand dollars on the purchase of a top quality house in Hawaii. . . . Ingenious planning where three or four Garden Lanai homes are clustered around a common garden area makes possible a substantial reduction in the cost of land improvement, yet retains the openness associated with Hawaiian outdoor living. [*Star Bulletin*, June 29, 1962, page 10]

Terrace Lanai in Hawaii Kai

The “attached Lanai houses” projects were made possible thanks to the passage of the condominium law. In addition, the Garden Lanai houses were to follow the new idea of “cluster housing” which the Honolulu Planning Department finally embraced in May 1962, after observing its successful implementation on the mainland.

The City Council in March 1963 passed a cluster housing ordinance authorizing such projects in residentially zoned areas. [*Honolulu, Advertiser*, March 14, 1963, page 6] The new ordinance allowed developments greater than ten acres in size to reduce their required minimum lot size for each unit by twenty percent. Instead of having individual lots for each house, the dwellings formed a cluster of detached and/or joined condominium units around an open courtyard, allowing for more units on the available land, with the saved space placed in open space.

Among the first projects approved under the new cluster housing law were Waipahu Garden Court (1965) and Kalani-Iki (1966), both developed by Amity Developers Inc. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, December 18, 1964, page 15 and *Star Bulletin*, December 23, 1964, page A-13] The former, located *makai* of Farrington Highway between Waipahu Depot Road and Pahu Street, featured sixty-five, three bedroom detached houses on thirteen acres, which were built to be rentals. The latter, “a horizontal condominium”, the first single dwelling, cluster housing condominium offered in Hawaii, was located in a more bucolic setting at the end of Kalani Iki Street in Waialae-Kahala. Kalani-Iki, included ninety five single family dwellings on twenty acres. Offering three models designed by Honolulu architect Frank Slavsky, the houses reflected, “Hawaii’s way of life” and featured aluminum sliding doors, hip-gablet roofs, a “deck lanai”, high ceilings, large areas of glass, and flowing interior spaces. Other elements of the project included centralized carports, a recreation center, and garbage collection by a private company, as the roadways did not conform to city standards. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, December 19, 1965, page B-3]

Another early cluster housing project, Tropicana Village, also was in Waialae-Kahala. Rather than single detached dwellings, this project was comprised of twenty four, four-unit buildings and

Tropicana Village, Waialae Kahala

located *mauka* of Waialae Avenue, off Hunakai Street. Developed by J. Albert and Frances Warford, and designed by Honolulu architect George K. C. Lee, advertising for the complex boasted, "nobody lives above (or below) you" [*Honolulu Advertiser*, September 26, 1965, page 22] as each building was comprised of a pair of side-by-side, split level, two bedroom units flanked on either side by a single story three bedroom unit and two bedroom unit. The buildings were built in, "a Polynesian motif" [*Star Bulletin*, January 30, 1965, page 28] and had hollow tile walls, hip-gablet roofs, and 8' high aluminum sliding doors. The grounds were landscaped, "to provide an atmosphere of exclusive residential living amidst tropical verdure and many trees." [*Honolulu Advertiser*, May 19, 1963, page B-5]

Both Tropicana Village and Waipahu Garden Court were constructed as rental properties, but Tropicana Village converted to condominium ownership in 1965 and Waipahu Garden Court followed in 1971. In addition to converting existing units to be condominiums, Tropicana Village also added an additional 68 condominium units in 1965.

Developers in Hawaii Kai also utilized the provisions of the new cluster housing ordinance. The 21 unit condominium Kauhale Kai (1966), originally marketed as the Marina Club and now named Marina Palms, was designed for "mature" mainland residents in the 40-70 year old age bracket seeking a second home. Following plans by George S. K. Lee, the developers, Personal Security Investment Company, echoed the Tropicana Village advertising, promoted no one lives above you [*Honolulu Advertiser*, April 24, 1965, page 15] Offering one, two and three bedroom units in one and two story multi-unit buildings, the development introduced a, "beautiful new way of living you can enjoy on the water." [*Star Bulletin*, November 6, 1965, page 22].

Marina Palms, Hawaii Kai

Following up on the idea of waterfront living, the 124 unit townhouse complex, Leisurmarina Patio Homes, located on Koko Isle, a 13.5 acre, man-made island in Kuapa Pond, opened in Hawaii Kai during 1967. [*Star Bulletin*, June 16, 1968, page G-2] In order to build this complex, Kaiser had to get the island rezoned from residential to low-density apartment, as there still was no law specifically addressing the construction of townhouses. Designed by John Carl Warnecke, this low rise condominium complex was essentially sold out in four weeks, with only five units still available, proving the advertising claims that, "lots of folks in Hawaii want to convert yardwork time into livin' 'an loafin' leisure yet still enjoy the advantages of single home ownership." [*Star Bulletin*, December 10, 1967, page 53] The advertisement went on to explain, "you will not be concerned with the usual homeowner maintenance duties. All building exteriors, roofs, grounds, lawns and garden work will be done for you by experts under the maintenance service agreement provided with your Koko Isle leasehold home and included in your monthly payments." [*Ibid.*] The townhouse also offered such amenities as a two story, private boating and recreation center which included lounges, kitchens, rest and exercise rooms and a sauna. Outside the building were a swimming pool, picnic areas, and lounging decks, as well as docks and a boat yard. Each two, three or four bedroom unit had a two-car carport. The recreation center required the granting of a conditional use permit by the Planning Commission. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, June 30, 1967, page 13]

Koko Isle, Hawaii Kai

Other Hawaii Kai townhouse developments included the Moorings and Village Green. The Moorings (1969), with its community building's forty foot high observation tower, had two-story buildings with stucco walls which contained sixty four, three bedroom, two and a half bath, split level units Designed by John Tatom, the units featured anodized aluminum sliding doors, a red brick, enclosed entry and garden courtyard, and the second floor master bedroom opened on a view balcony. The site was landscaped by the San Francisco landscape architecture firm, Eckbo, Dean, Austin and Williams. . {*Star Bulletin* November 20, 1968, page 53 and November 24, 1968, page 48]

Village Green, Hawaii Kai

Village Green (1970), also utilized the talents of Eckbo, Dean, Austin and Williams to develop an "open garden atmosphere.". The fifty-six unit, "horizontal condominium development," featured "garden lanai townhouses" on 4.5 acres Located off Hawaii Kai Drive, on Pepeekeo Street, the complex was designed by Honolulu architects John Rummel and Associates, and included three and four bedroom units in two story townhouses with stucco walls, steep shed roofs, clerestory windows, and inset private lanai with enclosed garden views. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, September 1, 1968, page 39 and *Star Bulletin*, February 16, 1969, page 68 and August 16, 1969, page 22]

The passage of the City and County's Comprehensive Zoning Code (CZC) in January 1969, established standards for the construction of townhouses, limiting them to areas zoned A-1 Apartment. The new regulations allowed one unit per 6,500 square feet of land, and required a maximum lot coverage of 50% and a floor area-lot area ratio of 40%. Among the first townhouses developed under the new law was Pearl Ridge's planned community on Kaonohi Ridge, which included two major townhouse projects Pacific Village (1970) with one hundred, Mansard roofed units designed by architect Robert A. Miller in collaboration with John H. Anderson, and the 204 unit Tropicana Village West (1969) designed by Herbert Beyer. Also in May 1969, Oceanic Properties placed on the market Mililani's first townhouse project, a series of 414 "garden homes", designed by Honolulu architect John Tatom scheduled to be built over the ensuing two years. However, two months later, following the construction of four model units, Oceanic placed the nascent project on hold and disbanded its fifteen member planning department, the result of an uncertain money market, which included a raise in the prime interest rate to 8.5% and Metropolitan Life Insurance Company's withdrawal of its commitment for over $2 million for homeowner mortgages. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, July 30, 1969 page 14] As a result Oceanic did not venture into the development of townhouses in Mililani until 1970, when it developed Mililani Garden Homes, with most of the units designed by Leo S. Wou, although 28 higher priced units followed the 1969 John Tatom design. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, July 22, 1970, page C-10]. Other early townhouse development following the adoption of the CZC included Mariner's Village I and II (1971) as well as Gateway Peninsula (1971) in Hawaii Kai, Ewa Villa Estates (1970), Ewa Colony Estates (1971), the Ridgeway (1971) in Pearl City, and Yacht Club Knolls (1972) in Kaneohe.

To date, no townhouses in Hawaii are listed in either the Hawaii or National Registers of Historic Places.

La Pietra

La Pietra Townhouses was one of the early townhouse complexes developed in Honolulu before the passage of the CZC, and indeed had to apply for all its permits prior to the passage of the new law, as it did not comply with all of the new requirements. Planning for the project commenced in January 1967, when Bert Williams, who previously developed real estate in Los Angeles and Texas, obtained from Punahou School an eighteen month option on the former Walter F. Dillingham residence, La Pietra. In addition to the Florentine style mansion and its 2.1 acre grounds, which had been willed to Punahou School in 1964, Williams also held an option on an additional eight acres surrounding the house, which were owned by Retlaw Corp., a Dillingham family corporation. The two parcels were zoned Class A Residential, which permitted the construction of two units on every

10,000 square feet for a legal build out of eighty six units. Both the Dillingham family and Punahou trustees expressed a desire to see a less dense development with more open space, and Williams whittled his proposed project down to seventy six "luxury" townhouse units, with each selling for more than $100,000. To accommodate this plan, La Pietra would be demolished. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, September 2, 1967, page 1].

La Pietra circa 1960

The Mayor's Historic Buildings Task Force, headed by Nancy Bannick, reacted to Williams' proposal by writing to the Hawaii State Senate President and the Speaker of the House requesting their support in a campaign to save the residence. The task force noted the building's,

> distinctive architecture---set off by handsome gardens and a Diamond Head backdrop---and its importance in local history as the home of the Dillinghams and visiting place of many prominent national and international figures of this century." [October 11, 1967, page 1]

Bannick suggested the State purchase the house with the intention of eventually using it as a governor's mansion. Until the State was ready to convert the house into a Governor's mansion, Bannick put forth a variety of possible adaptive reuses for the house including, a restaurant, conference center, a VIP hostel, or a headquarters for a group of service organizations. [*Ibid*.] She also suggested rezoning the lands adjacent to the house to allow the developer a higher density in return for saving the house. Alfred Preis, the director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, came out in favor of saving the house and recommended the house be converted into an East-West conference center. Located conveniently close to Waikiki , yet sufficiently remote, he envisioned the house would, "lend itself brilliantly to a retreat for thinking and decision-making in every field." [*Honolulu Advertiser*, October 21, 1967, page 7]

In January 1968, County Council member George, "Scotty", Koga sent a letter asking Mayor Neal S. Blaisdell to investigate the possibility of acquiring La Pietra and its surrounding lands as an extension of Kapiolani Park. He thought the property could be leased as a restaurant or museum.

Nancy Bannick estimated the house could be acquired for 2.5 million dollars, which the City could pay off in twenty years. She pointed to the successful operation of Queen's Surf restaurant, which netted the City $100,000 a year. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, January 31, 1968, page 34] While Council member Koga was exploring acquisition options, the students at Punahou started a petition, urging the preservation of La Pietra. Signed by over 500 students, the petition asserted if the school allowed La Pietra to be destroyed, it would deny, "everything that it stands for as a school and as a heritage," by "placing immediate financial gain above beauty, tradition and ideals." [*Star Bulletin*, January 30, 1968, page B-2] In response to the petition, C. Dudley Pratt, the chair of the school's Board of Trustees, indicated the school also would like to see the house retained, but the school could not carry the $1,200 a month cost to maintain it. Pratt also indicated that the school had offered the estate to both the State and City, but received no favorable responses. Meanwhile in a January press conference developer Williams announced that half the units in his proposed townhouse condominium were sold and he anticipated demolition of La Pietra to begin in May 1968.

However, May came and went, and then at the end of July 1968 it was announced that the Hawaii School for Girls, thanks to the efforts of Mrs. Richard A. (Lorraine) Cooke and Mrs. Garner Anthony, had acquired La Pietra and approximately five surrounding acres for a reported one million dollars. Williams released his option on these lands, refunded the approximately thirty checks he had received from his initial townhouse offering, and proceeded to move forward with a scaled down townhouse condominium project on the remaining land. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, July 30, 1968, page 1] The revised plan called for the construction of thirty eight units in nineteen buildings on a 5.5 acre parcel. An effort was made to incorporate existing mature trees in the landscaping, and the buildings faithfully, "followed the guidelines laid down by the Dillingham family." [*Honolulu Advertiser*, November 26, 1968, page 15] The two bedroom-two and a half bath and three bedroom-three and a half bath units were set in "Polynesian style buildings" and placed on the market for $110,000 to $140,000 per unit. Designed by Honolulu architect Louis Pursel, each bedroom had its own lanai and the living and dining rooms' sliding glass doors opened on a private backyard. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, November 26, 1968 page 15] Using a part of La Pietra as a sales office, Williams in August started advertising units at, "the prestige area of Honolulu, offering the ultimate in island living." [*Star Bulletin*, August 11, 1968, page 66]

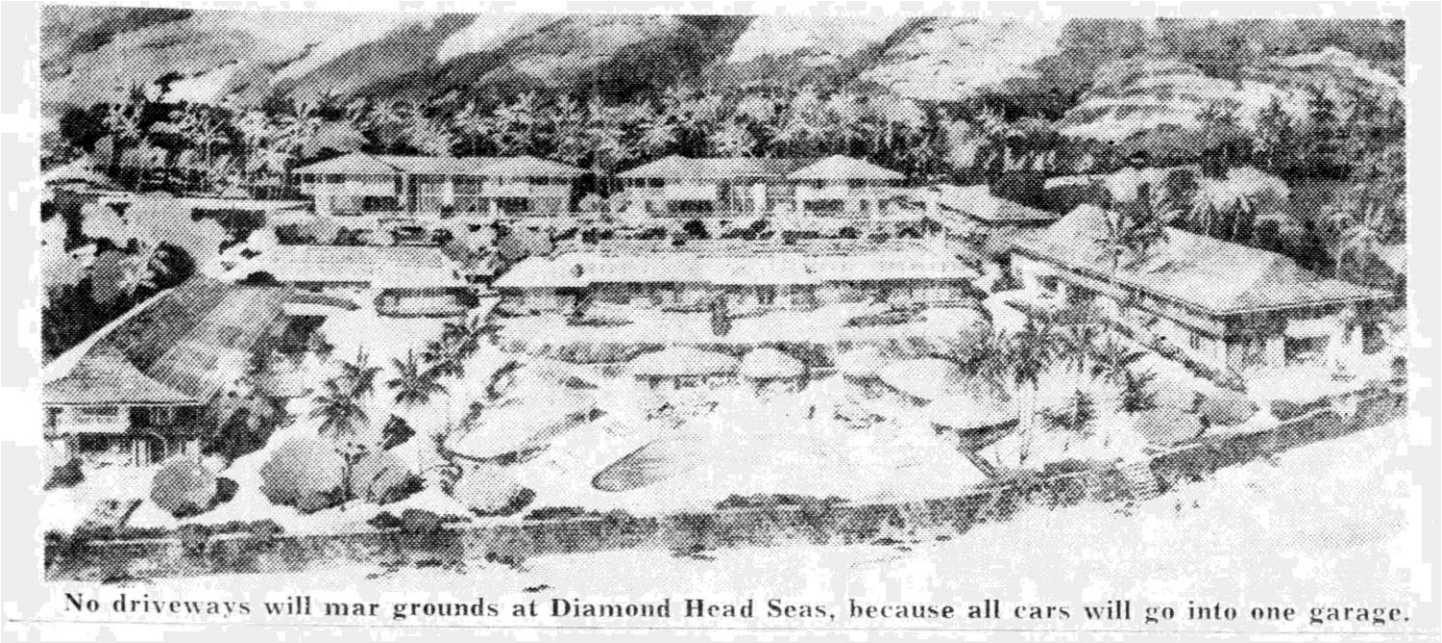
With the Dillingham subsidiary, Hawaiian Dredging & Construction as general contractors, the project got underway in November 1968 [*Star Bulletin*, November 26, 1968, page 15] and in March 1969, one building, with two units was completed, and opened as a model house. [*Star Bulletin*, March 9, 1969, page G-2] Over a year later, in April1970, with 26 units sold, the newly selected general contractors, Headrick Development Company, began construction on the "garden type condominiums." [*Star Bulletin*, April 2, 1970, page D-12]. The delay in construction was in part engendered by a cloud of uncertainty surrounding development in the Diamond Head area, as the Advisory Committee on Diamond Head and then the Save Diamond Head Coalition attempted to have the City enact a building moratorium in the Kapiolani Park-Diamond Head area until such time as a plan could be developed for the area. Although Williams had fulfilled all steps and obtained all agency approvals with regards to a building permit for the project in December 1968, prior to the adoption of the new CZC, the City Building Department refused to issue the final building permit, forcing Williams to go to court. On March 11, 1970 Judge Yasutaka Fukushima ruled in Williams' favor and ordered that the building permit be issued. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, March 12, 1970, page 20]

Once the green light to begin construction came, the process went smoothly. The nineteen townhouse buildings were constructed with their lava rock first stories and wood second, with each unit capped by its own hip-gablet roof. Balconies and sun screens ran between the first and second stories. A number of mature trees were retained and enhanced by a landscape designed by the internationally reknown San Francisco firm of Eckbo, Dean, Austin & Williams, with partner Don Austin personally supervising the project. The complex had one entry off Poni Moi Road with a guardhouse. In addition there was an office and a resident manager's house, as well as a swimming pool

The general contracting company, Headrick Construction, was headed by brothers R. George and Harold Headrick. They specialized in custom homes, as well as commercial projects, and offered clients complete service from drafting through finished product, including financing. Following the La Pietra townhouse project, Headrick became not only the contractor, but also the developer of a thirty acre, 698 unit condominium apartment project in Waipio off Kamehameha Highway. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, May 30, 1971, page 11] Their project located between Mililani and Wahiawa eventually expanded to over 2,000 apartment units.

Louis Pursel

The architect for La Pietra townhouses was Louis Pursel. Pursel (1907-2001) was born in Hollywood, California to William F. and Maude (Booth) Pursel, and graduated from the University of Southern California's College of Architecture. He came to Hawaii in 1956, to open and head the Honolulu branch of Thomas Bourne. Associates, a Washington D. C. based architecture-engineering firm, for whom he worked in Tokyo, prior to the closing of that office. Specializing in military and municipal projects, the office occupied most of the second floor of the Piikoi Parkway Building, offering architectural as well as civil, structural, electrical and mechanical engineering services. [*Star Bulletin*, May 23, 1956, page 28] Over the next several years Pursel oversaw such projects as the design and construction of Dole's new canning plant in Iwilei, the design and construction of Aiea High School, and the rehabilitation of Hickam Air force Base's Hale Makai which had suffered major damage in the December 7, 1941 attack. In 1960 Pursel opened his own office, Louis Pursel & Associates. During the 1960s he garnered such projects as the Manoa-Woodlawn Public Library (1966), Alii Enterprises' clay products manufacturing plant at Campbell Industrial Park (1961), the Nimitz Business Center (1963), Pearl Harbor Volkswagon (1965), and Holiday Motors' Automotive Center on Nimitz Highway (1964). All these projects were rendered in a clean modern style, with most having low profiles and flat roofs. While working on the La Pietra Townhouse project, Pursel was also involved with the Diamond Head Seas project, a six building, eleven unit townhouse complex to be built on Diamond Head Road on the 55,000 square foot Harold Dillingham estate. This ill-fated project included buildings similar in character to the La Pietra townhouses, but was never realized, due to public objections, with the City eventually purchasing the property.



Rendering for Diamond Head Seas

Following his La Pietra Townhouses commission Pursel designed the 150 unit Woodwinds with its three, six-and-a-half-story towers overlooking Lake Wilson in Wahiawa (1974), as well as two condominium projects in Hilo: the seven story, 47 unit Hale Moana (1972) and the seven story Hale Kahakai (1973). The former was the first FHA approved vertical condominium in the United States on leasehold land. All three of the projects emphasized their being designed, “to blend in with, rather than intrude upon, the natural beauty of its surroundings.” [*Hilo Tribune Herald*, April 2, 1972, page 12]

F. Associated Property Types
(Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)

A number of building and structure types are associated with the La Pietra Townhouses. These include the individual dwelling units, parking accommodations, a guard house, a manager's office and residence, a swimming pool, and common area circulation and landscaping. At this time only the individual dwelling units will be considered in this nomination.

Dwelling Units

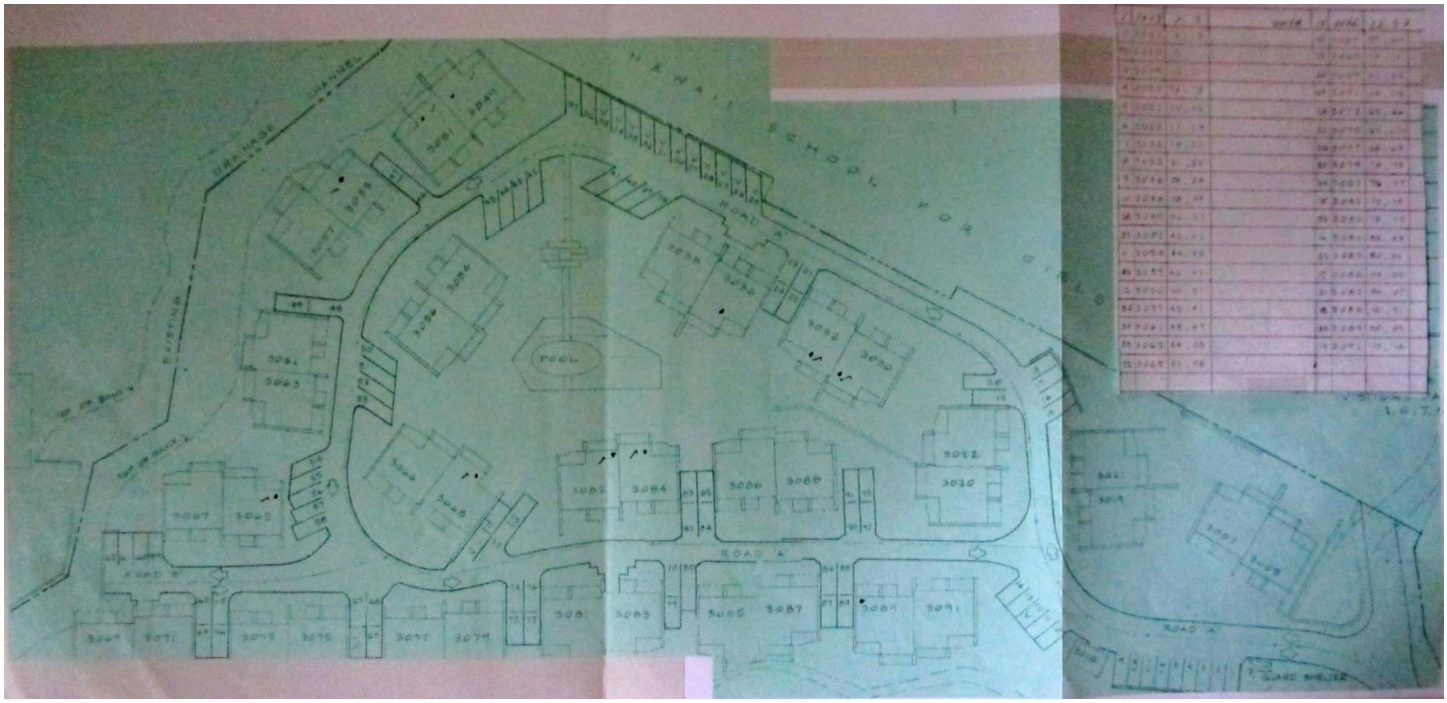
Description of Dwelling Units.

La Pietra Townhouses view to the east from Kapiolani Park. Diamond Head in background

The La Pietra townhouses sit above Kapiolani Park, separated from the park by an approximately 12' high lava rock retaining wall. The townhouse development is comprised of nineteen duplexes, for a total of thirty eight units. The duplexes all front on the curving La Pietra Circle with shallow front yards, mimicking the appearance of a suburban residential community The buildings are very similar in design, with all of them being two-stories high and rendered in a modern Hawaii style, with lava rock walls on the first story and horizontal lap siding on the second. The façade line of the two units is staggered so one unit projects slightly from its neighbor. Each unit is two bays wide and has a low pitched, hip-gablet roof with overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails. In addition to an off center entry, each unit's front façade features a pair of anodized aluminum sliding doors in one of the bays. In addition, the rear elevation includes three sets of anodized aluminum sliding doors at ground level. Between the first and second stories there are balconies and sun screens, which are supported by extended, lava rock walls. Both the front and rear balconies are accessed from sliding doors from the bedrooms. Throughout the townhouse complex the balcony's metal railings are uniform. Each unit

has its own private backyard, which often contains a patio as well as tropical landscaping. The buildings sit on a poured in place reinforced concrete foundation.

La Pietra Townhouses looking north, unit 7 in foreground, unit 38 in background

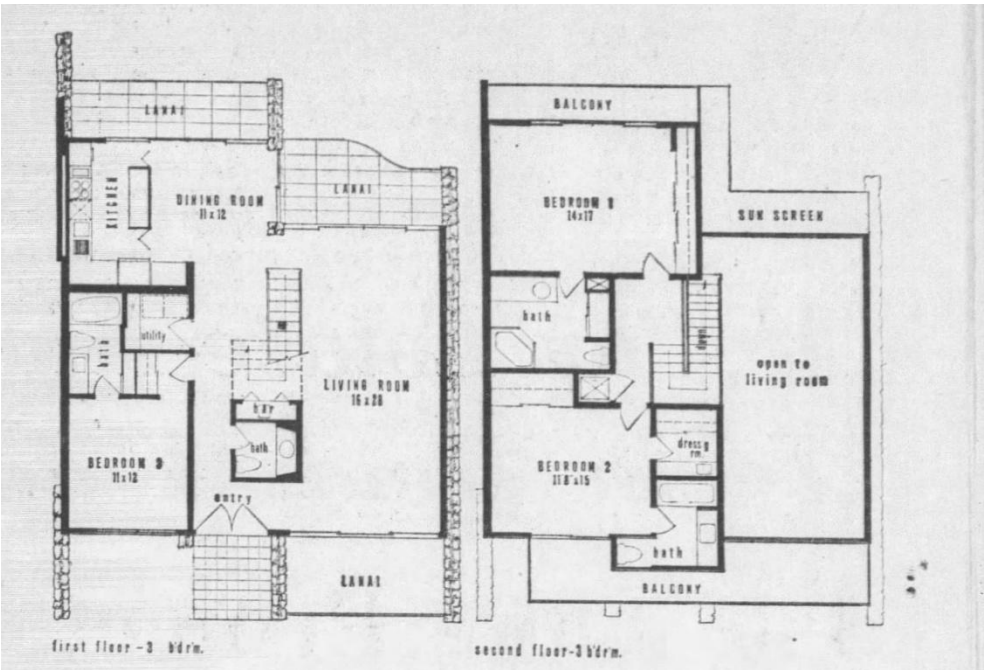


La Pietra Townhouses Site Plan

La Pietra Townhouses looking south, unit 14 to left; units 23-24to the right

La Pietra Townhouses looking north, units 25-26 to the left

On the interiors the units present similar basic floor plans with the entry doors opening on a foyer, with a powder room behind the foyer's rear wall. On one side the foyer opens on a living room which extends the depth of the unit, while a front bedroom/office/den is located to the opposite side. At the



Floor plan of three-bedroom unit, showing both floors.

rear of the unit a kitchen-dining area is opposite the living room. Both the front and rear ends of the living room terminate with anodized aluminum sliding doors, as does the rear and side walls of the dining area. The 16' x 28' living room has a 17' high ceiling with exposed beams. The stair to the second floor is at the juncture of the living room and dining area. On the second floor, a hallway overlooks the living room, and accesses a front and rear bedroom. Both bedrooms have their own private baths, as does the downstairs bedroom. Also, both second floor bedrooms access balconies. Modifications which have been made to this plan are readily apparent and the underlying plan remains recognizable. Originally the living room featured teak paneling, but to date no unit has been found which retains a substantial part of this original finish.

Significance of Dwelling Units

The dwelling units at La Pietra Townhouses are significant on the local level under criterion C, as a very good example of a luxury townhouse unit built in Honolulu during the late 1960s-early 1970s in a modern Hawaii style. The units include a number of distinctive features and are typical of their period in their design, materials, workmanship and methods of construction. The dwelling units are also significant at the local level under criterion A for their associations with the development of townhouse complexes in Hawaii and their associations with the historic preservation movement.

Criterion C

The La Pietra Townhouses' dwelling units are significant on the local level under criterion C, as a good example of a luxury townhouse unit built in Honolulu during the late 1960s in a modern Hawaii style. The units include a number of distinctive features and are typical of their period in their design, materials, workmanship and methods of construction. .

The idea of developing a residential style of architecture appropriate for Hawaii extends back into the mid-nineteenth century and may be associated with the conscious development of the lanai as a place for outdoor living. During the late 1870s and early 1880s, the more or less typical five-foot-wide American porch was greatly widened in Hawaii, and gradually residents transformed it into a living space, essentially an open-air living room, completely furnished with tables, lounging chairs, rockers, and lauhala mats and adorned with tropical plants and orchids often placed in Chinese ceramic pots. The lanai served not only as a transition between house and garden but also as an informal arena for socialization and quietude, its atmosphere sharply contrasting with the staid Victorian parlor. Often the family dined here, and callers were received, allowing the ebb and flow of household life to be conducted in an open-air environment.

As life, under the gentle sway of the tropics, became more liberated from certain outward social conventions, the lanai became a tangible embodiment within the home of Hawaii's more casual, open, hospitable way of life. Offering a relaxed setting within an outdoor context, cooled by the trade winds and shaded by its roof, the lanai epitomized the leisurely, carefree style of life ingrained in the Western conceptualization of a South Seas paradise.

At the end of the nineteenth century a young C. W.Dickey, with his partner C. B. Ripley, worked to develop an appropriate regional style of architecture for Hawaii and placed an emphasis on the lanai and open, flowing interior spaces. Dickey's thinking matured in the mid-1920s at a time when members of Hawaii's society were seeking a style of architecture appropriate for the Islands. In 1926 Dickey introduced what he termed , "a distinctive Hawaiian type of architecture," [*Honolulu Advertiser,* March 14, 1926, page 16] with the Halekulani cottages (no longer extant). These buildings had enclosed lanai, lava rock foundations and piers, casement windows, and gracefully sloping, double pitched hipped roofs which became known as the "Hawaiian" or "Dickey" roof. The new Hawaiian style as promulgated by C. W. Dickey was characterized by its double pitched hipped roof, use of casement or sliding windows, the presence of lanai, the use of local materials, and an emphasis on cross ventilation and indoor-outdoor relationships. The character of these houses derived from their simple massing and dominant roof, rather than applied ornamentation.

The La Pietra Townhouses convey the basic premises Dickey laid out with the Halekulani cottages in a more modern manner and with more modern materials. The character of the units derives from their simple massing and horizontal profile, rather than applied ornamentation. Although they do not include a double pitched hipped roof, they employ a low pitched hip-gablet roof with overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails resulting in a horizontal profile. From the late 1930s through the 1970s the hip-gablet roof was associated with a Hawaii regional style of architecture. The townhouses' walls are constructed of local lava rock as well as horizontal lap siding, and the units maintain a strong relationship to the outdoors as a result of their numerous large sliding glass doors which open on lanai and patios. The presence of the lanai and patios, flowing out from the house into the back yards, well typifies the period's ideal of living outside. The integration of the house with the outdoors, especially in the dining room and living room's floor to ceiling sliding doors, essentially forming walls

of glass, is well handled, and further attests to the ease of access between indoor-outdoor spaces common in Hawaii's mid-century regional architecture.

Equally, the second floor bedrooms' sliding doors' opening on balconies, further facilitate and celebrate the units' stellar indoor-outdoor relationships. Thanks to the extensive use of sliding doors, as well as the use of sliding windows, the units maintain superb cross ventilation, and perpetuate the importance of the lanai as a central part of living. In addition, the advancing and receding planes of the duplex units add to the informality of the overall composition, and their placement in a lushly landscaped setting with mature trees, the work of the prominent San Francisco landscape architectural firm of Eckbo, Dean, Austin and Williams, further proclaims a tropical sensibility. The use of overhanging balconies and sun screens also reflect the units' appropriate response to their environment All these design aspects well represent the late-1960s-early 1970s modern regional architecture of Hawaii at its best.

The open flowing interior spaces are also typical of the modern style, and Hawaii's regional architecture. The units' flowing floor plans instill a strong sense of well lit and airy openness, while still maintaining the discreet sense of enclosure and intimacy of the individual rooms.

Following the design vision of the Dillingham family, the La Pietra townhouses stand as the best example of a 1960s townhouse complex embodying a modern Hawaii regional style. With its use of local lava rock, its low pitched hip-gablet roofs, and its extensive indoor-outdoor opportunities, the La Pietra Townhouse project stands alone for its time period, with no comparable townhouse complexes to be found, They represent a regional design ideal which townhouses rarely attain. Indeed, the *Star Bulletin*, in its obituary for Berton Williams, remembered him as, "the developer who created a unique Polynesian condominium at La Pietra." [*Star Bulletin*, June 20, 1978, page 37]

Criterion A

The La Pietra Townhouses' dwelling units are also significant at the local level under criterion A for their associations with the development of townhouse complexes in Hawaii and their associations with the historic preservation movement.

Townhouse Development

Following the passage of the condominium law in 1962, the vast majority of condominium applications received by the Real Estate Commission were for projects involving apartment buildings, which more often than not were six or more stories in height. However, a number of low rise walk-up apartments also used this new form of dwelling ownership. As compared to most low rise apartments, which usually involved solo building projects, townhouse developments involved the construction of a number of multi-unit buildings placed in relationship to each other and sharing a common landscaped property. The La Pietra Townhouses are among the few townhouse projects to be erected in the years after the passage of House Bill 1142 and before the adoption of the revamped CZC in 1969. Other early townhouses developed during the 1960s include Tropicana Village in Waialae-Kahala, and several projects at Hawaii Kai: the Terrace Lanai, Kauhale Kai, Koko Isle, the Moorings, and Village Green. Pacific Village and Tropicana Village West, both part of the Pearl

Ridge Planned Unit Development, were among the first townhouses constructed after Honolulu's new CZC was enacted, as were Mariners Village I and II in Hawaii Kai. From the mid-1970s onward, townhouses became a more prevalent dwelling for Hawaii's people, especially in such newly emerging communities as Mililani, Ahuimanu, and Makakilo.

La Pietra Townhouses is similar to other townhouses of its period in the offering of a community swimming pool and on-site manager, but differed from many others with the presence of a security guard house at its entrance and the absence of a recreation center. Also, the La Pietra Townhouses further deviated from the other projects of its time by the employment of duplexes, as well as the size of the individual units, with 2,228 square feet of living space, and the size and privacy of the back yards. The development's amount of green, open space, organized along a curving roadway and designed by Don Austin of Eckbo, Dean, Austin& Williams, is also noteworthy. The inclusion of a private back yard accessed via sliding doors and a lanai, while uncommon at the time of La Pietra townhouses' construction, would became standard for many subsequent townhouse designs, although never on quite as generous a scale. Also, as a result of being sited along a meandering roadway rather than parking lots, the La Pietra Townhouses came the closest of all 1960s townhouse developments to emulate a detached house neighborhood. The only Hawaii Kai townhouse project, that at Koko Isle designed by John Carl Warnecke, even approaches the sophistication of design presented at La Pietra Townhouses.

The fee-simple La Pietra Townhouses were of higher quality and design than other townhouses of the period. Advertised as "luxury" townhouses, they were placed on the market at prices ranging from $110,000-$140,000. In comparison, prices for three bedroom units in the leasehold Hawaii Kai projects ranged from approximately $33,396 to $45,800, with the more expensive units primarily being on the water. Prices for the fee simple Pearl Ridge Pacific Village townhouse project started at $31,300, while units in the leasehold Tropicana Village at Waialae Kahala when it converted to condominium ownership in 1965 were in the $22,000 to $26,000 price range.

As such the La Pietra townhouses stand as an outstanding example of superb townhouse design for its period. To date no townhouses have been placed in the Hawaii or national registers of historic places.

Historic Preservation

The La Pietra Townhouses are also significant for their associations with historic preservation in Hawaii. The call for the need to preserve La Pietra in the face of impending demolition, was among, if not the earliest, successful public outcry against a large-scale private development proposal in the name of historic preservation.

The National Historic Preservation Act was signed into law in 1966; however, Hawaii would not start its statewide program to implement the new law until 1969. Historic Hawaii Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to historic preservation was not formed until 1974. In short, when Bert Williams announced in 1967 his plans to demolish La Pietra and build in its stead a seventy six unit townhouse development, the historic preservation movement in Hawaii was in its nascent stage, with the Historic Buildings Task Force, a working group of Mayor Blaisdell's Action for Beautification Council (ABC), being the sole entity directly concerned with the general retention of historic buildings in Hawaii. A group composed of all volunteers, the task force was organized in the summer of 1965,

when Nancy Bannick was able to have the ABC establish the working sub-group. Previously Bannick had served as a member of the Chamber of Commerce's Beautification Committee, and in that capacity during 1963 had written a series of articles in the *Honolulu Advertiser* decrying the loss of irreplaceable historic buildings in the Honolulu Redevelopment Agency's (HRA) Kukui Redevelopment Project area. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, May 15, 1966, page 32] Of the multiple temples and shrines in that area, only the Izumo Taisha Mission was saved, being relocated to College Walk in 1963, and then restored in 1968, thanks in part to Nancy Bannick's guidance and efforts.

The *Honolulu Advertiser* introduced its readers to the Historic Buildings Task Force in an editorial,

> One of the quieter aspects of the City's beautification program involves preserving ugliness. The Historic Buildings Task Force is a part of the Mayor's Action for Beautification Council. Its job is to help determine which buildings on Oahu are worth saving as historically or architecturally significant. Not all such buildings are ugly, of course. Some are eloquent old structures with a beauty and dignity that is ageless. But there are many buildings in Honolulu and on rural Oahu that deserve to be saved because they have cultural charm or retain the spirit of an era in Hawaii's history. Man will never build such structures again and that in some cases is the reason for saving them. [*Honolulu Advertiser*, May 8, 1966, page 10]

The editor went on to praise the task force's survey work undertaken by thirty five University of Hawaii architecture students to identify historic buildings throughout the island. Their work not only provided a valuable record of these buildings, but also, "equally important, it is a reminder to all of us, private citizens, planners and developers alike, that in building a new Hawaii it is not necessary to eliminate the best of the old." [*Ibid*.]

A committee of historians and architects involved with the task force reviewed the forms and materials prepared by the students and developed a list of, "buildings of merit worthy of preservation." The committee evaluated the buildings using twelve metrics: historical significance, cultural contribution, educational merit, appropriateness to the environment, architectural interest, uniqueness of design, integrity of original materials, apparent soundness of structure, practicality of preserving or restoring, possible future use, contribution of flavor to the city, and accessibility to the public. [*Star Bulletin*, May 24, 1966, page B-1] Eventually, in March 1968, the task force submitted a list of sixty buildings to Mayor Neal Blaisdell, stating in their cover letter, "We hope you will welcome this landmark list with the enthusiasm we have had in determining it. We feel that if these buildings can be preserved Honolulu and Oahu will indeed be keeping the best of the old alongside the new. These interesting and colorful buildings help tell the story of our Island's illustrious past and give identity and continuity to its changing landscape." [*Honolulu Advertiser*, March 28, 1968, page 24] At the time of its submission, the task force noted the list did not include residences and might be expanded with more buildings in the future. Finally, in 1969, the Task Force was able to publish *Old Honolulu, A Guide to Oahu's Historic Buildings*, which included the recommended buildings as well as a few new additions, presenting a total of eighty five buildings, including a Chinatown district and the general category, plantation housing. In the introduction, the editors noted that of the initial list of sixty buildings submitted to the mayor, six had already been demolished. The first entry presented in the book was La Pietra.

The undertaking of the building survey was the task force's primary project, but it was also involved with a number of other preservation efforts during 1966, participating in developing plans for the preservation of Waipahu, Chinatown, and Ewa, [*Star Bulletin*, October 22, 1966, page 8] as well as working with the members of the Lanakila Congregational Church in Hauula to support their efforts to preserve their 1921, wood frame church. To raise awareness for historic preservation, in October 1966, the task force helped sponsor a three week exhibition of Jack Boucher's HABS photographs at the Hawaii State Library, and also a sixteen part television series on planning, historic preservation, and restoration, hosted by Herb Mark. The *Star Bulletin* expressed its support for the group and noted, "These are worthwhile efforts to stimulate interest in and support for a program which may not be fully appreciated until some future generation salutes it for recognizing and saving important landmarks that might otherwise be destroyed." [*Star Bulletin*, October 21, 1966, page 10]

The task force also urged the City without immediate success, to establish a board to designate landmarks and pass an ordinance to protect them, and also establish preservation districts such as Punchbowl, Chinatown, and Diamond Head, for as Bannick explained to the press, "All we have now is persuasion to save the buildings" [*Honolulu Advertiser*, May 15, 1966, page 32]

During 1967, the group worked with the YWCA to find a path for the organization to retain their Richards Street Building rather than build a high rise on the property, and encouraged the Department of Transportation to not construct a proposed high rise on the Aloha Tower site. When Williams announced in September 1967, his plans to demolish La Pietra and construct a townhouse project, the task force stepped forward to champion the preservation of the Dillingham home. Calling the significance of the house to the public's attention, they looked for alternatives for the use of the house. The eventual decision to scale back the townhouse project and preserve La Pietra may have been the result of problems concerning inadequate water pressure for the proposed townhouse project [discussions with Jack Gillmar], but certainly the role of public conscience voiced by the Historic Buildings Task Force also played a part. In the public's eye the concerted effort to save La Pietra and the scaling down of the townhouse project by a private developer stands as an early historic preservation success. As the *Star Bulletin* noted in its obituary for Berton Williams, his townhouse proposal, "came at the beginning of a rapidly increasing environmental awareness by the general public. Williams could have proceeded under the existing zoning at that time, 1967, but decided to go for a master plan in keeping with the area." [*Star Bulletin*, June 20, 1978, page 37] Now, a little over fifty years later, that which Williams wrought, has itself become a part of Hawaii's heritage, and to use Nancy Bannick's words, "Hawaii needs just such good examples of its storied past to give continuity and a sense of place to its increasingly modern, all-over-the-world-like scene." [*Star Bulletin*, September 29, 1968, page 47 written in support of a fund raising effort to save the dome of the 1890 Central Union Church, which was slated for demolition to make way for the State Capitol]

Thus the La Pietra Townhouses stand not only as a reflection of their time in terms of their design and as a new housing type, but also as a reminder of the role public advocacy for historic preservation plays in shaping the course of our society.

Level of Significance

The La Pietra Townhouses are being nominated to the Hawaii Register at the local level. They indeed may be significant at the State level, but more research needs to be undertaken to ascertain such a level of significance.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible for listing as part of the La Pietra Townhouse multiple property nomination a residential unit must: a) be located within the geographic area defined in section G; b) have been developed substantially between 1967 and 1971, inclusive; and c) retain sufficient historic integrity to convey its significance.

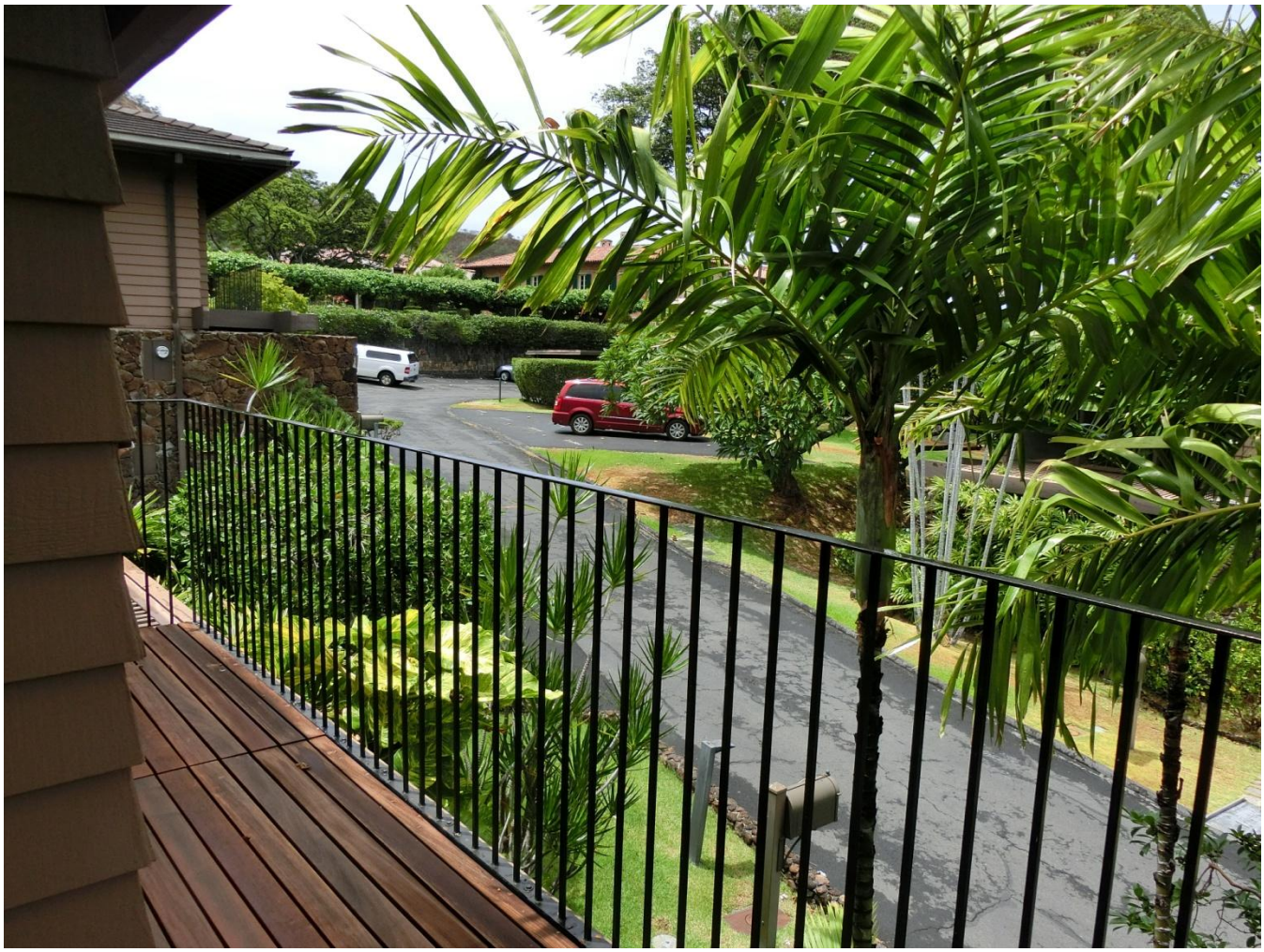
Typical La PietraTownhouse

To be eligible for listing the buildings in which the units are located should retain the spatial organization, physical components, aspects of exterior design, and historic associations that the complex acquired during its period of significance. Primary character defining features which should

be present include the two story massing of the buildings and their relationship to the street, the lava rock walls and wood second story, the hip-gablet roofs, the presence of balconies and sun screens, and window and door placement. Common, exterior alterations which have not led to a loss of historic integrity include the reroofing of the buildings with Euroshield shingles in lieu of shake shingles in 2017, and the rehabilitation of the balconies in 2007, following the design of Honolulu architect Jeff Nishi. The rubber product used in the reroofing, is visually similar to the original shake roof and from the street conveys a similar sensibility as the original roof, while the repaired balconies

Euroshield Roof

used materials the same or similar to the original, but the railings did not exactly replicate the original railing's design. Both these alterations were handled in a sensitive manner and do not detract from the historic character of the townhouse community when taken in the context of the entire development. Similarly the addition of carports to the complex in 1982 following plans by George Hogan, was handled in a manner to not detract from the overall historic design and character of the townhouses, unobtrusively integrating the single story carports into the original design so as to not compromise the historic integrity of the neighborhood. Such alterations do not diminish the historic integrity of the resource. Alterations that change the height, relationship to the street, or massing are more detrimental, as are the removal of character defining features such as the, lava rock walls, window and door placement, or additions incompatible in scale to the original construction.



Repaired railing

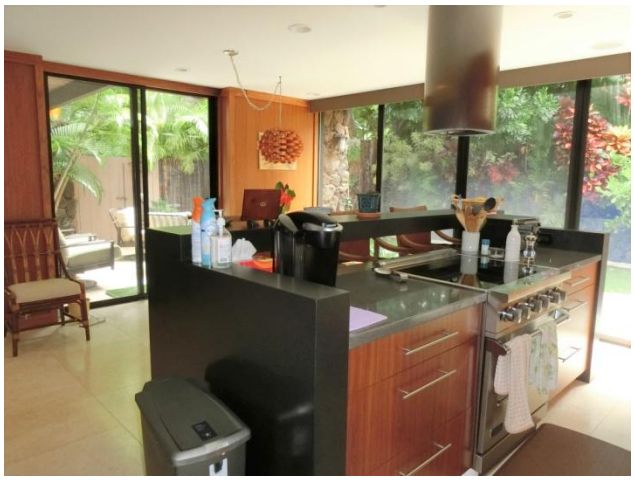
As for the interiors of the units, a large amount of leeway needs to be given when considering the character defining features. The interiors at the time of purchase were essentially standardized, following only two or three plans. To date, no completely intact interior has been found in the complex, and rarely are any original fixtures and finishes encountered. Early on, the interiors were adapted and elaborated upon, in an effort by the individual owners to make their home their own. Thus the integrity of units in La Pietra Townhouse, and condominiums in general, should not be assessed solely by the condition of the finished unit at the time of purchase. Rather the interiors need to be considered as only the beginning stage in an on-going process of adjustment, elaboration and individualization. As such, the exterior integrity of La Pietra Townhouses, and condominiums in general, is of much higher significance than the interior appointments.

In the La Pietra townhouses the primary interior historic characteristics which confer significance to the units, are their light, flowing floor plans and the well handled indoor-outdoor relationships established by the large expanses of glass at either end of the living room with their sliding doors, the dining area's floor to ceiling sliding doors, and the second floor bedroom's floor to ceiling sliding doors accessing the front and rear balconies. Several alterations have been commonly made, including the

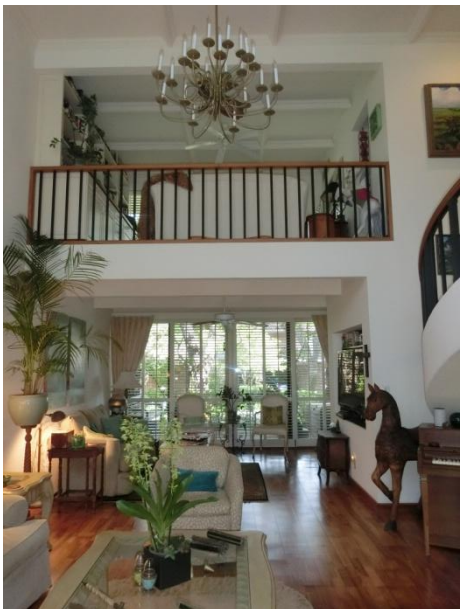
replacement of the original stairs to the second floor, the refinishing of the wall and floor surfaces, the addition of a second floor mezzanine above the living room, and the enclosure of the rear lanai.

Living room looking towards rear of unit

Living room looking to backyard



Kitchen-dining



Living room looking towards front

Front entry looking towards rear

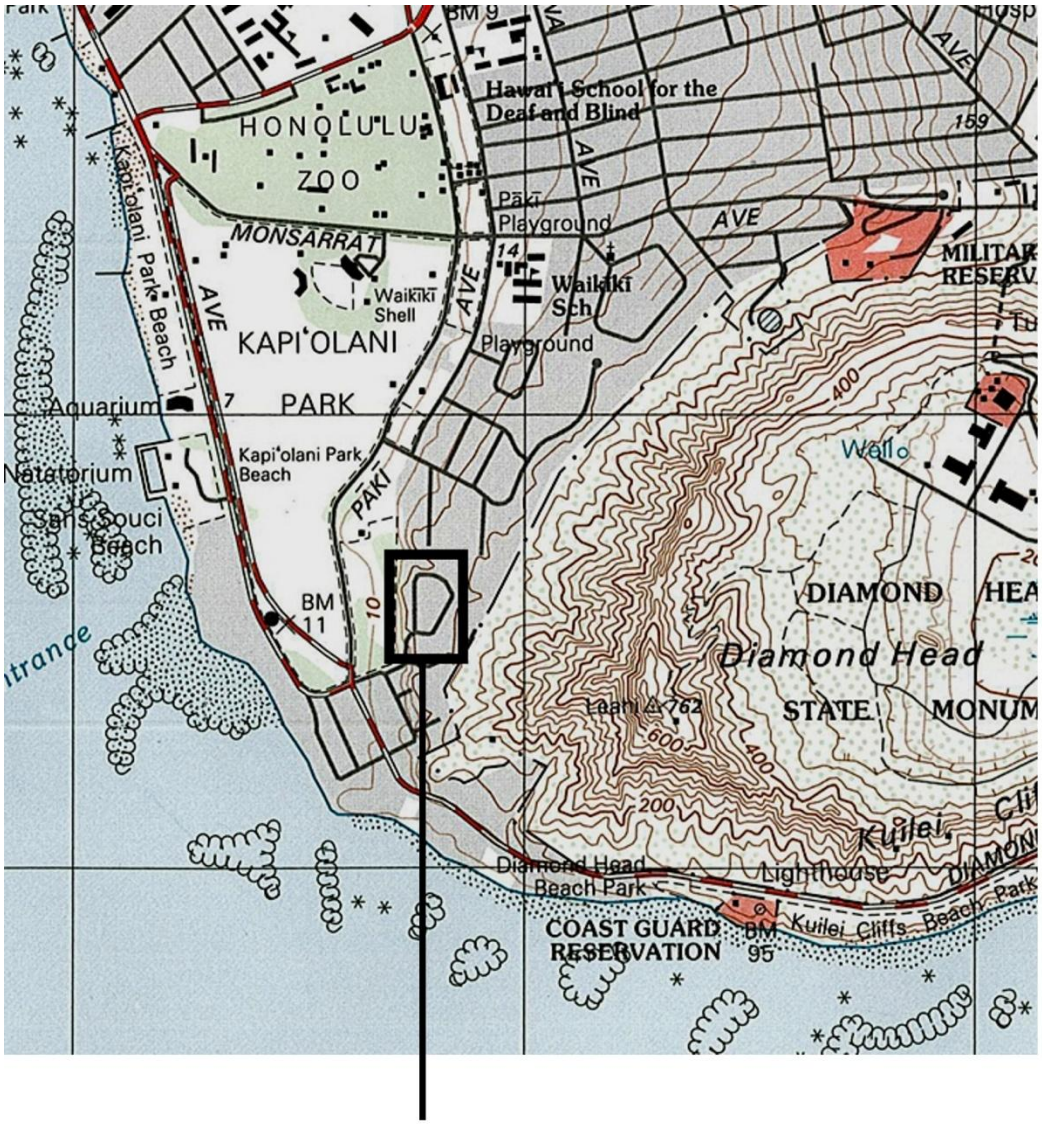
Living room looking towards front

Invariably, such secondary spaces as the kitchens and bathrooms have been remodeled, and the private backyards have been designed to fit individual owners' desires. Such interior alterations, as described above, do not diminish the historic integrity of the townhouse units, when compared to the overall ambiance conveyed by the units' indoor-outdoor relationships and readily recognizable flowing floor plans.

G. Geographical Data

This multiple property nomination encompasses all the area under the administration of the La Pietra Condo Master in 2022 as described by tax map key: 3-1-29:0330000. This parcel contains 5.48 acres

Tax Map for 3-1-29:0330000



La Pietra Townhouse

USGS Map showing location of La Pietra Townhouses

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

(Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)

Dr. Don Hibbard, who meets the Secretary of Interior's Standards as an architectural historian, and Kikuyo Akao walked the area on March 15, 2021 and photographed the buildings and streetscapes. On subsequent visits to the property individual condominium units were examined and photographed in depth. Each unit was visited for approximately two hours.

On the initial site visit, maps and plans were obtained from the property manager. Following the site visit additional research was undertaken using newspapers.com. This work entailed not only

finding information on La Pietra Townhouses but also the development in Hawaii of apartments, cooperative apartments, condominiums and townhouses in general during the 1960s. In addition, tax office records, the minutes of the Real Estate Commission, primary and secondary sources in the Hawaii State public library, records at the Hawaii State Bureau of Conveyances, and building permit files were consulted. The Bishop Museum Archive's Dillingham collection was checked, but these records only run through 1960, so contained no information on this project. No comparable studies on townhouse development have been located. In addition, various row houses, cluster housing, and townhouse projects developed in Hawaii during the 1960s were inspected.

I. Major Bibliographical References

(List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)

County tax records and building permit records

Hawaii State Bureau of Conveyances documents associated with TMK 3-1-029:033xxxx

Original plans for La Pietra Condominium

Minutes of the Real Estate Commission found at:
http://cca.hawaii.gov/reb/agendas_minutes/ .

Gillmar, Jack N. S., "Alive and Well at Sixty," *Historic Hawaii News*, November 1983, pages 4-5

Jones, Lesleigh, national register nomination, "Wood Tenement Buildings Behind Tong Fat Co," Mason Architects, 2019

The Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Proposed for the City and County of Honolulu, Honolulu: Oahu Development Conference, 1966

"Another Rash of Construction in Waikiki What Happens When It Is Over?" *Hawaii Business and Industry*, December 1962, pages 32-34

"The Success Story of Residential Condominiums," *Hawaii Business and Industry*, June 1965, pages 27-29

Hawaiian Gazette, "Local Brevities," October 31, 1899, page 5

Hilo Tribune Herald, "Condominium Sales Underway," April 2, 1972, page 12

Pacific Commercial Advertiser

June 16, 1900 page 14, "Building Applications,"

May 6, 1915, page 2, "Work Begun on $75,000 Building"

September 23, 1915, page 2, "Says City Needs Tropic Apartment"

February 8, 1917, page 6, "Modern Apartment House Proposed for Honolulu"

March 6, 1919, page 8. "Private Plans Would End Big Idea for Home of Music Here"

Honolulu Advertiser

March 14, 1926, page 16, "Calls this 'Hawaiian" Architecture"

October 11, 1959, page 33. ""16 New cooperative Units Opened at Pualei Circle"

June 19, 1960, page 26, "Housing Problem for Low Incomes"

July 17, 1960, page 1, "Attorney General to Ask Co-op Crackdown"

May 27, 1961, page 3, "Calendar of Bills"

March 14, 1963, page 6, "Cluster Housing Bill Approved"

May 19, 1963, page B-5, "Garden Type Apartments"

December 6, 1963, page 35, advertisement for the Park Tower Condominium

December 11, 1963, page 9, "State's OK in Ilikai Change Due"

December 14, 1963, page 36, "Condominium Plans Gaining Across U.S."

December 18, 1964, page 15, "Cluster Housing Building Starts at Waipahu Site"

April 24, 1965, page 15, advertisement for the Marina Club

September 26, 1965, page 22, "68 Units in Tropicana Condominium"

December 19, 1965, page B-3, "Furnished Models Open at Kalani-Iki"

May 8, 1966, page 10, "Saving Old Hawaii"

May 15, 1966, page 32, ""ABC Volunteers Sought for Classification Job"

February 16, 1967, page E-6, "Isle Condo Picture Seen as Healthy"

June 30, 1967, page 13, "Hawaii Kai Isle Gets Planning OK"

September 2, 1967 page 1 "Developer Plans Townhouse in Place of Dillingham Mansion"

October 11, 1967, page 1, "Move Launched to Save La Pietra"

October 12, 1967, page 19, "La Pietra Must Be Preserved, Dillingham Says"

October 21, 1967, page 7, "Preis Proposes E-W Center Use of La Pietra"

January 31, 1968, page 34, "Koga Still Hopes for La Pietra"

March 28, 1968, page 24, "Task Force Asks 60 Buildings Be Kept"

July 30, 1968, page 1, "School Buys La Pietra"

September 1, 1968, page 39, "'Village Green' for Hawaii Kai"

November 26, 1968, page 15, "Condo Construction Begins Adjacent to La Pietra"

May 6, 1969, page 6, "Panel Cites Confusion"

July 30, 1969 page 14, "Mililani Town Townhouse Development Suspended"

March 12, 1970, page 20, "Court Orders City OK for La Pietra Project"

July 22, 1970, page C-10, "Mililani Townhouse Plans Unveiled"

May 30, 1971, page 11, "Council to Wait on Waipio"

Honolulu Star Bulletin

July 16, 1917, page 1, "Elaborate Apartment House to Cost $200,000 Planned; Site Remains to be Chosen"

August 11, 1917, page 7, "$200,000 Apartment Soon to be Built"

March 4, 1919, page 2, "Two Apartments on Lewers Road"

April 6, 1921, page 10, "Project for Construction of 32 Cottages on Beach Near Halekulani Closed"

May 18, 1921, page 10, "Success Attending New Building Idea Developed Locally"

May 23, 1956, page 28, "Engineering Firm Opens Honolulu Branch Offices"

February 16, 1960, page 20, "Modern Version of 'Row Housing' Called an Answer to Isle Needs"

March 20, 1960, page 56, "3 More Units Planned at Diamond Head Gardens"

March 20, 1960, page 56, advertisement for Pualei Circle

September 25, 1960, page 4, "Do We Want Row Housing?"

December 8, 1961 page 20, "Condominium Project Given Green Light"

June 29, 1962, page 10, "Hawaii Kai to Offer Condominium Homes at Marina"

December 23, 1964, page A-13, "Cluster Condominium Planned for Waialae-Iki"

January 30, 1965, page 28, "Apartments Seen at World's Fair"

June 27, 1965, page B1, "Condominiums Take Major Role in Hawaii's Modern Pattern of Growth, Development"

May 24, 1966, page B-1, "Task Force Hopes to Preserve Chinatown"

October 21, 1966, page 10, "Accent on Preservation"

October 22, 1966, page 8, "Buildings Force Sets Meeting"

November 6, 1965, page 22, advertisement for Kauhale Kai

December 10, 1967, page 53, advertisement for Koko Isle

January 30, 1968, page B-2, "Punahou Students Urge School to Save La Pietra"

March 8, 1968 page 7, "More Apartment Units Than Houses Constructed in 1967"

April 10, 1968 page A-1, "High-Rise Way of Life Appeals to Islanders"

June 16, 1968, page G-1+, "Koko Isle Condominium Receives Design Award"

August 11, 1968, page 66, advertisement for La Pietra

September 29, 1968, page 47, "'Save the Dome' Appeal"

November 26, 1968, page 15, "Condominium Construction Starts on La Pietra Site"

February 16, 1969, page 68, advertisement for Village Green

March 9, 1969, page G-2, "La Pietra Model Homes Open"

May 11, 1969, page G-4, "Garden Houses Being Built"

May 25, 1969, page 80, advertisement: "La Pietra Honolulu's Finest Luxury Address,"

November 20, 1968, page 53, "New Marina Condominiums Readied"

November 24, 1968, page 48, “64 Unit Condo is Planned”

August 16, 1969, page 22, advertisement for Village Green

April 2, 1970, page D-12, “Apartment Construction Begins on La Pietra Site”

June 20, 1978, page 37, “Berton Williams”

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.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 250 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, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.