

1166 Ponce de Leon Avenue (House)
Town of Rio Piedras
Municipality of San Juan
Puerto Rico

HABS No. PR-132

HABS
PR
7-RIOPI,
3-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Building Survey
National Park Service
Southeast Region
Department of the Interior
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

1166 PONCE DE LEON AVENUE (HOUSE)

HABS No. PR-132

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PR
7-RIOPI,
3-

Location: 1166 Ponce de León Avenue (House)
Town of Río Piedras, Municipality of San Juan, Puerto Rico

USGS San Juan Quadrangle (7.5')
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
N18° 23' 50.22" W066° 03' 09.90"

Present Owner: Puerto Rico Highway & Transportation Authority
P.O. Box 41269
San Juan, PR 00940-1269

Present Use: Vacant
The structures will be demolished in August, 1997
Last owner: Puerto Rico Highway & Transportation Authority
Last occupant: Metro College, Inc.
Last use: Private Educational Institution

Significance: The building individually constitutes neither a significant historical nor architectural feature, nevertheless, it can be considered potentially significant to the volumetric matrix within a denominated commercial part of the greater urban fabric. As such, its presence constitutes a visible link to the urban fabric.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. **Date(s) of erection:** circa 1940-50. Source: dams, Virginia H., Catherine de Jarnette Vieth, *Reconnaissance and Intensive Historic and Architectural Resources Survey, Tren Urbano, San Juan Metropolitan Area, Puerto Rico*. The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc., Report No. 655, October 1995.
2. **Architect:** Not Known
3. **Original and subsequent owners:** Not known
4. **Builder, contractor, suppliers:** Not known
5. **Original plans and construction drawings:** Not known/not available
6. **Alterations and additions:** Extent and dates unknown

B. Historical Context

Avenida Ponce de León at Río Piedras (formerly "Calle del Comercio") was the vital line of communication between the Capital city and the rest of the Island. Most buildings were used for dwelling, and were built of wood. During the period circa 1920-50 the majority of the 19th and early 20th century buildings were replaced with substantial multiple-story buildings along Avenida Ponce de León and around the Plaza. 1166 Ponce de León was built during the period circa 1940-50 as a residential building. During the period 1990-1996 the building was adaptively used as a private educational facility.

Information on events and persons connected with the structure remains unknown as well as the original names of the building and its occupants.

Additional sources of information for researchers include:

Ocasio Meléndez, Marcial E., *Estudio e Inventario de los Recursos Históricos y Arquitectónicos de Río Piedras Pueblo, 1823-1951*. 1995. Consejo de Seguridad Vecinal de Río Piedras Pueblo, Oficina Estatal de Preservación Histórica, Universidad de Puerto Rico, y Municipio de San Juan.

Sáez, Florencio, *Río Piedras; Estampas de mi Pueblo, 1898-1945*. 1988. Editorial Palma Real. San Juan.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. **Architectural character:** The building shares a common scale with the context of Ponce de León Avenue. In addition, the building exhibits details common to the context, including proportions of openings, texture, and Spanish clay tile details on overhangs.
2. **Condition of fabric:** There are no visible exterior signs of deterioration.

B. Description of Exterior

1. **Overall dimensions:** The building has three rectangular walls, with the southern wall angled due to existing site limitations. The building has the following dimensions: 20'-3" x 55'-0". The front facade has two bays which corresponds to the internal spatial and structural organization. The building has three stories, including a basement.
2. **Foundations:** The foundations are made of reinforced concrete spread footings of unknown thickness. The water table level is unknown.
3. **Walls:** The building has a wider base. Finish materials are a Portland cement plaster, curved red clay tiles on overhangs and parapets of the front (east) facade; the front door has a curvilinear moulding. Texture is smooth, with pink and burgundy colors. Source of materials is unknown.
4. **Structural system, framing:** All exterior walls are load-bearing, of reinforced concrete. Some interior walls are load-bearing. All load-bearing walls are positioned generally along an east-west axis perpendicular to the street. Internal partitions are of concrete block units (CMU) and/or gypsum or plycem panels. Floors and roofs are of reinforced concrete.
5. **Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads:** The front (east) facade has a porch of reinforced concrete on the first level. The upper level has balconies in the front facade.
6. **Chimneys:** The building was designed without chimneys.
7. **Openings**
 - a. **Doorways and doors:** The front facade's doorway is of the "storefront type" with aluminum-framed glass doors and galvanized steel fence. Interior doors and frames are made of wood. Due to frequent, undocumented alterations, there are several doorways that have been boarded up, as well as

several openings without doors. Entrance to basement level is thru steel rolling doors.

- b. **Windows and shutters:** First-level windows have aluminum frames with fixed glass panels . All other windows are made of operable aluminum jalousies with aluminum frames. Windows on the east (front) facade have fixed galvanized steel fences.

8. **Roof**

- a. **Shape, covering:** The roofs is flat, made of reinforced concrete.
- b. **Cornice, eaves:** There are no cornices. Overhangs made of reinforced concrete are integral to the structural walls, and are covered with Spanish clay tiles. Overhangs are located above all windows. There are no overhangs above balconies. There is also a larger triangular overhang.
- c. **Dormers, cupolas, towers:** The building was designed without dormers, cupolas, and/or towers.

C. **Description of Interior**

- 1. **Floor plans:** A sketch plan of each level is included with this documentation. The basement is reached through an alleyway shared with the adjoining building (1164). The internal spatial distribution is basically a large space divided with several gypsum board and concrete block CMU partitions. This change in spatial configuration occurred during the period 1990-1996, when the building became an educational facility.
- 2. **Stairways:** There is a single internal stairway located behind the front (east) facade. The stairway is located in the northeastern corner of the building and is oriented parallel to the facade. The stairway is made of reinforced concrete, and has railings made of reinforced concrete and wood.
- 3. **Flooring:** Typical flooring materials are hydraulic cement tiles with geometrical patterns and glossy finish of burgundy, cream and green colors. Stairway flooring surfaces are made of rough, exposed reinforced concrete.
- 4. **Wall and ceiling finish:** Typical wall and ceiling finish is Portland cement plaster with high gloss paint. Several office spaces have hung-ceiling system of 2' x 4' acoustical panel. There are no notable decorative details.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original Architectural Drawings

Research efforts have not disclosed any original and/or alteration drawings.

B. Early Views

Research efforts have not disclosed any early photographs, engravings, or other early views.

C. Interviews

Person associated with the building during the 1940-50 period have not been identified.

D. Bibliography

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Adams, Virginia H., Catherine de Jarnette Vieth, *Reconnaissance and Intensive Historic and Architectural Resources Survey, Tren Urbano, San Juan Metropolitan Area, Puerto Rico*. The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc., Report No. 655, October 1995.

Marín-Roman, Hector R. *Historical Background of the Urban Development of Río Piedras*. Ms. San Juan: Tren Urbano Office. 1995. Document located at the Tren Urbano Office and at the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office.

Ocasio-Meléndez, Marcial E. *Estudio e Inventario de los Recursos Históricos y Arquitectónicos de Río Piedras Pueblo, 1823-1921*. Ms. San Juan: Consejo de Seguridad Vecinal de Río Piedras Pueblo, Oficina Estatal de Preservación Histórica, Universidad de Puerto Rico, y Municipio de San Juan. 1995. Document located at the Tren Urbano Office and at the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office.

_____. *El Desarrollo Urbano de Río Piedras (1868-1898)*. Master's Thesis, University of Puerto Rico. 1977. Document located at the Puerto Rican Collection, University of Puerto Rico Library System, Río Piedras.

2. Secondary and published sources

Comité de Maestros de Río Piedras. *La Comunidad de Río Piedras, Año Escolar 1949-50*. Río Piedras: Comité de Maestros de Río Piedras. 1950. Document located at the Puerto Rican Collection, University of Puerto Rico Library System, Río Piedras.

Ocasio Meléndez, Marcial E. *Río Piedras (Ciudad Universitaria); Notas para su Historia*. San Juan: Comité Historia de los Pueblos. 1985. Puerto Rican Collection, University of Puerto Rico Library System. Book located at the Puerto Rican Collection, University of Puerto Rico Library System, Río Piedras.

Sáez, Florencio. *Río Piedras; Estampas de mi Pueblo, 1898-1945*. San Juan: Editorial Palma. 1988. Book located at the Puerto Rican Collection, University of Puerto Rico Library System, Río Piedras.

Ubarri Acosta, Rafael (Ed.). *Río Piedras; un Boceto Histórico*. Río Piedras: Cámara de Comercio de Río Piedras. 1981. Book located at the Puerto Rican Collection, University of Puerto Rico Library System, Río Piedras.

E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated

Research efforts have not disclosed any additional likely sources of information.

F. Supplemental Material

Research efforts have not disclosed the existence of supplemental materials.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentation is a mitigative recording required by a Memorandum of Agreement for the Tren Urbano Project, dated February 6, 1996, between the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Federal Transit Administration, the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Officer, the Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority, and the Puerto Rico Department of Transportation and Public Works.

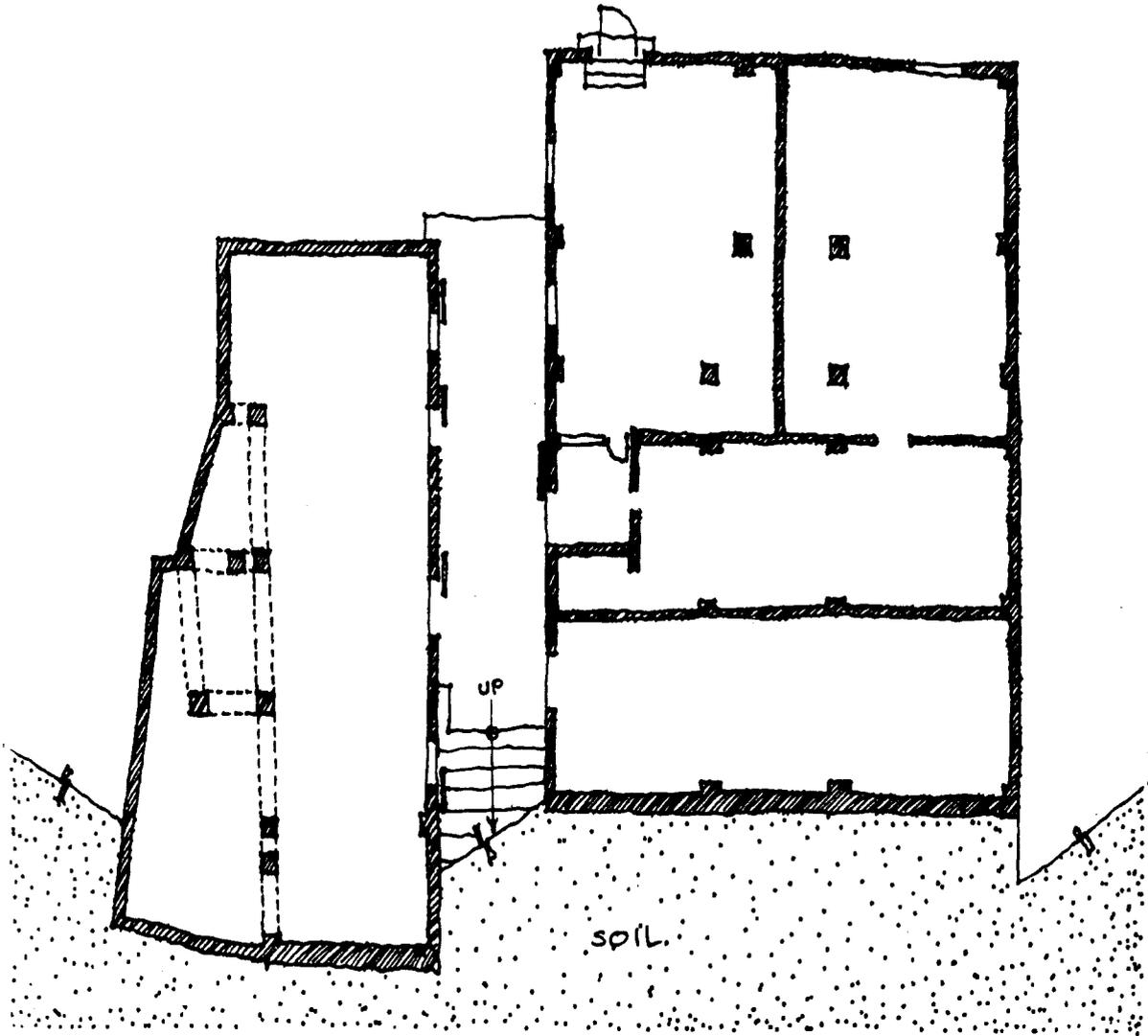
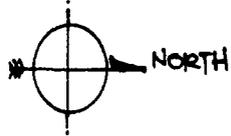
Documentation was completed and/or supervised by Pantel, Del Cueto & Associates, Historic Preservation Consultants, Urb. Torrimar, 11 Valencia, Guaynabo, Puerto Rico 00966-3011. Project personnel were:

Agamemnon Gus Pantel, Ph.D.	-	Project Director
Beatriz del Cueto de Pantel, A.I.A.	-	Architect
Alexander Fernández, M.A.	-	Architect/Graphics
Hector R. Marín, M.M.S.	-	Historian
Héctor Méndez Caratini	-	Photographer

Records were prepared during the period May to August, 1997, inclusive.

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

DRAWING: ALEXANDER FERNANDEZ
JULY 2, 1997



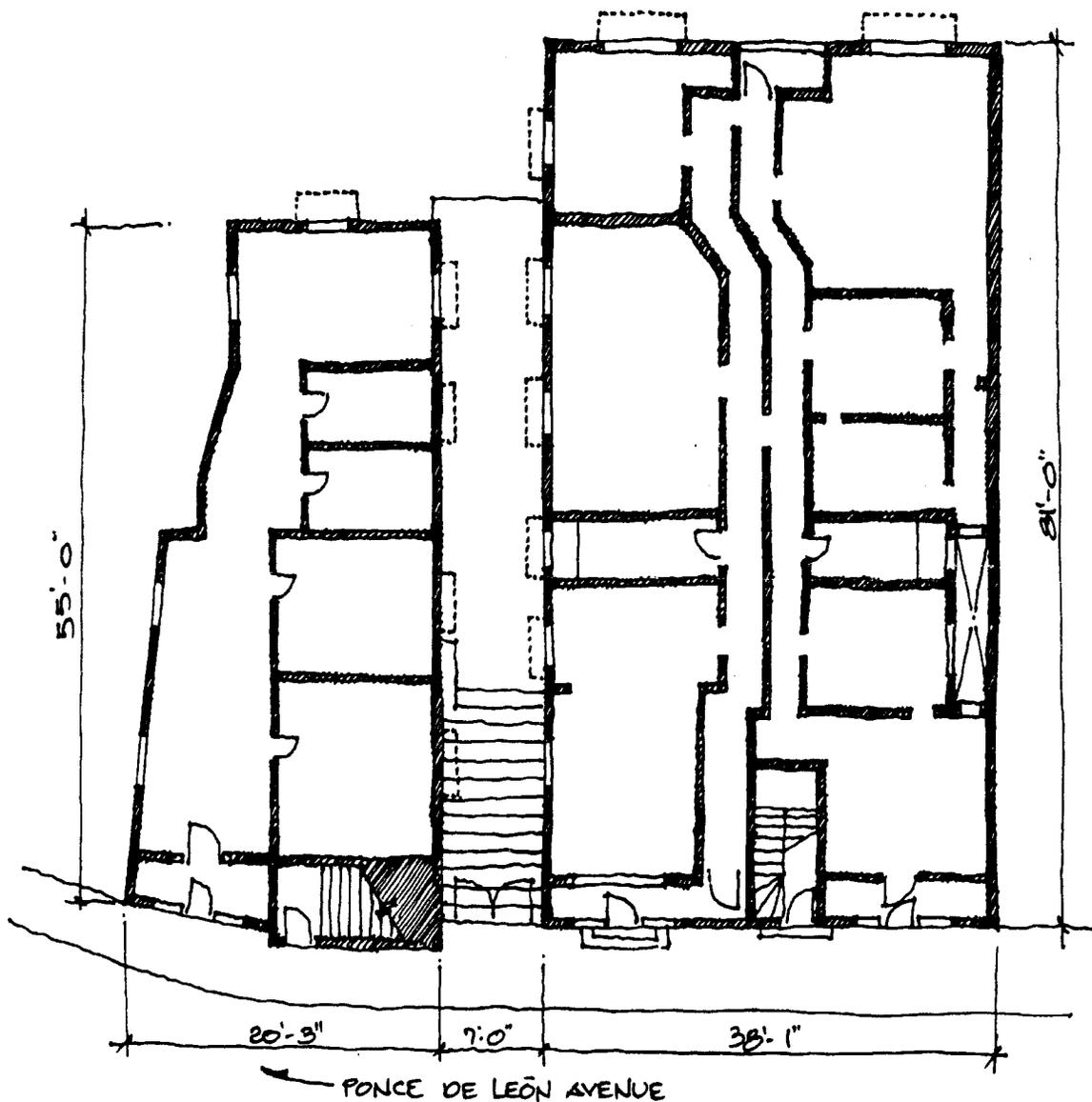
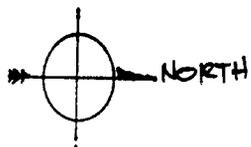
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FIRST FLOOR PLAN

DRAWING: ALEXANDER FERNANDEZ

JULY 2, 1999

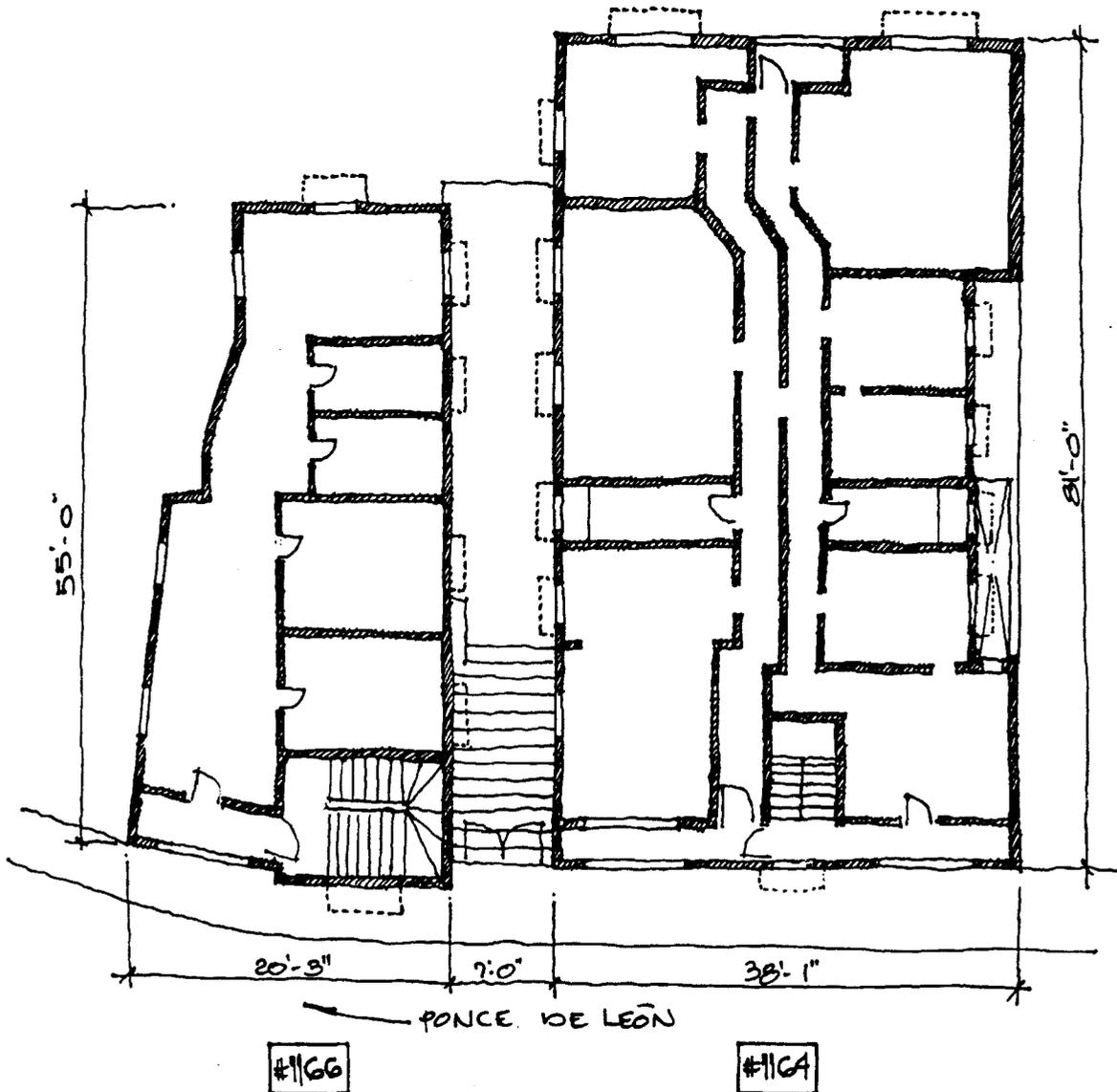
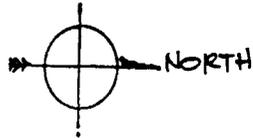


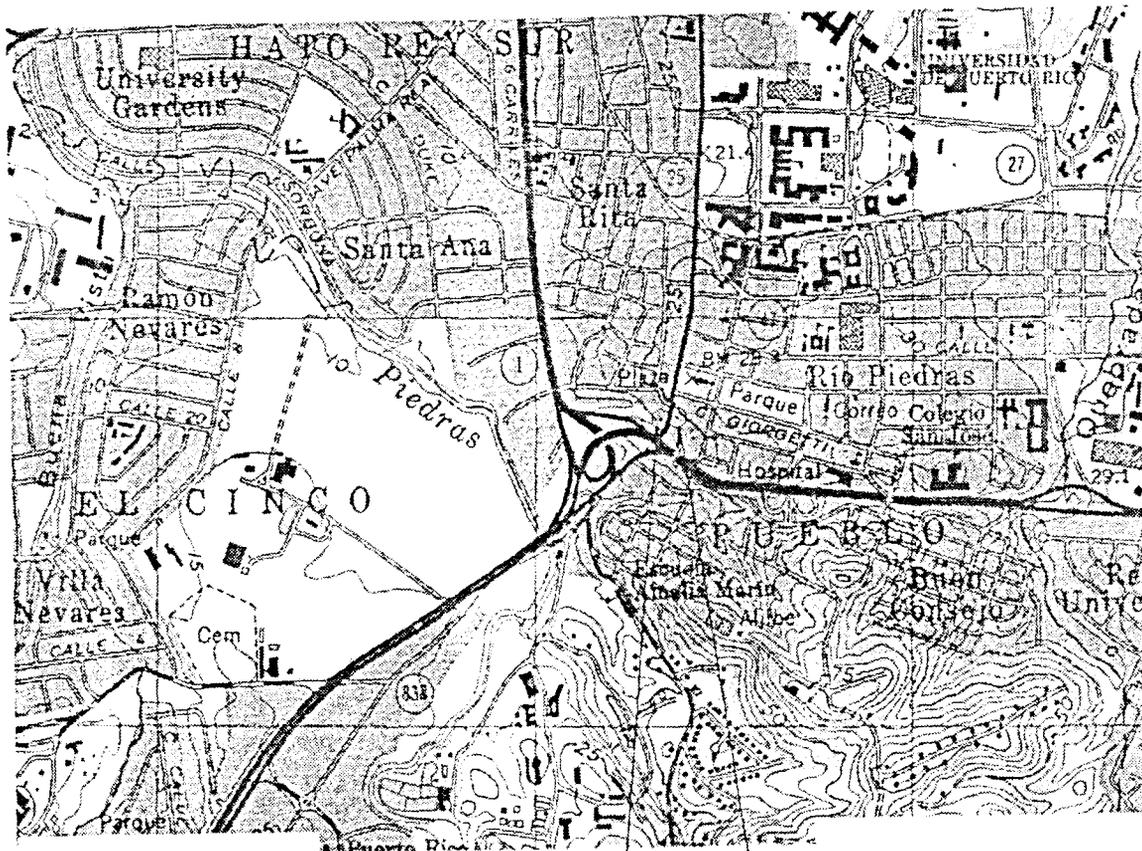
#1166

#1164

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

DRAWING: ALEXANDER PERNANDEZ
JULY 2, 1997





#1164 & #1166

#1157

