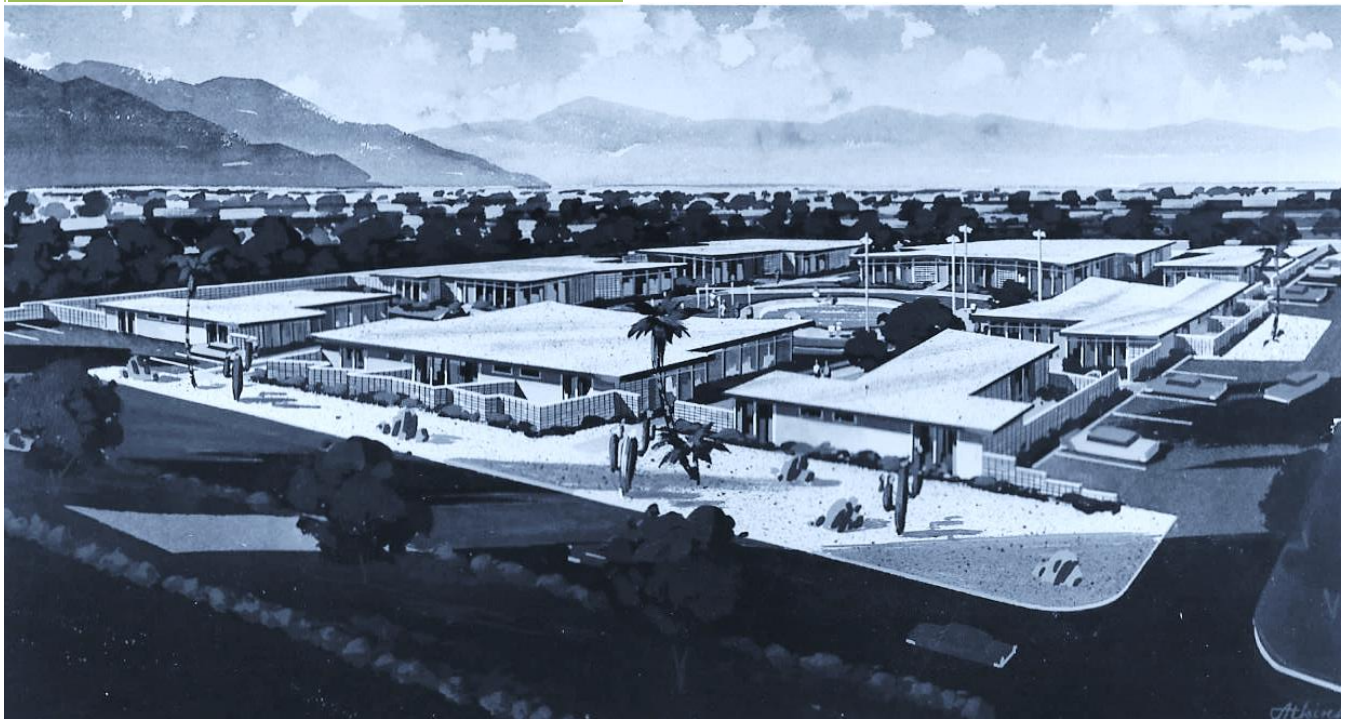


Desert Holly

2244 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

**Nomination Application
for City of Palm Springs
Historic District**



Prepared by

Ron & Barbara Marshall

for the

Palm Springs Preservation Foundation

March 2019 (REV. 1 – October 4, 2019)

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the following individuals for contributing to this nomination:

Desert Holly Homeowners

Ron Duby

Jim Harlan



Desert Holly (*Atriplex hymenelytra*)

**Cover: Vintage architectural rendering of Desert Holly circa 1957.
This rendering (untinted) was frequently used in advertisements for the complex.
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)**

HISTORIC DISTRICT NOMINATION

TABLE of CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: PAGE 3

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: PAGE 4

HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION APPLICATION FORM: PAGE 5

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: PAGE 9

EVALUATION for HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION: PAGE 22

INTEGRITY ANALYSIS: PAGE 23

APPENDICES

- I Assessor's Map
- II Current Addresses and Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs)
- III Partial Photographic Documentation of Buildings and Site Including Architectural Features
- IV Historic Preservation Plan
- V Miscellaneous

Introduction

The Palm Springs Preservation Foundation (PSPF) is a non-profit organization whose mission is “to educate and promote public awareness of the importance of preserving the historical resources and architecture of the city of Palm Springs and the Coachella Valley area.”

Starting in 2008, PSPF has actively lobbied local governments throughout the Coachella Valley to support the creation of historic districts in accordance with their local ordinances. However, due to the foundation’s limited resources, PSPF can only support efforts to create historic districts if there is strong homeowner interest and enthusiasm for such an undertaking.

On March 15, 2018, PSPF was notified by the Desert Holly Homeowners Association (HOA) that they had voted to pursue historic district designation. On December 19, 2018, PSPF was provided various documents of owner support indicating that a majority of owners (13 of 14) supported pursuing historic district designation. Copies of these documents (and the photographic survey of the Desert Holly complex) have been provided to the city’s Director of Planning Services on a thumb drive.



**An extraordinary photograph (dated May 1957)
showing construction underway at Desert Holly.
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SIGNIFICANCE: Built in 1957, Desert Holly is a 14-unit condominium located in the city of Palm Springs' officially-recognized Sunrise Park neighborhood. Originally "cooperative apartments," Desert Holly was converted to condominiums in 1998. Desert Holly is significant for two reasons: it is an intact example of a specific "building type" and it exhibits numerous stylistic markers that place it in Palm Springs' modern period.

Regarding its significance as a specific building type, Desert Holly is an excellent example of the "small" seasonal rental property or hotel/apartment, a building type popular in Palm Springs from about 1920 until 1965. ("Small" is defined in this nomination as 25 units or less.) In recent decades many fine examples of this building type, including the Bisonte Lodge, Canyon View Apartments, El Pueblito, Sunny Sands Hotel, etc., have been demolished. Desert Holly is a highly-intact example of this historically important building type.

Additionally, Desert Holly is a fine example of the significant modernist architecture for which Palm Springs is internationally known and should be viewed as a component of the historic trends that define the city's image as a center of important midcentury architecture (i.e., an historic trend that exemplifies "a particular period of the national, state or local history").

DESIGNATION CRITERIA: Desert Holly has been identified as a potential historic resource in the Palm Springs Historic Structures Inventory of 2001, the Palm Springs Citywide Reconnaissance Survey Master List of June 2004, and the Historic Resource Survey Inventory and Context Statement of 2015 (Final Draft 2018).

A brief summary of the evaluation contained in this nomination is as follows:

Palm Springs Municipal Code (PSMC) 8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 3, 4 & 5 - **Design/Construction:** Desert Holly is eligible under the theme of Modern architecture because it possesses numerous distinctive characteristics that make up the modernist style including load-bearing concrete block walls and post-and-beam construction, overall horizontality, low-pitched roofs, use of inexpensive mass-produced materials (like concrete block) and man-made materials suitable to the harsh desert environment (including steel, glass and concrete), deep eaves (to moderate the solar heat) and an architectural design that blurs the line between the indoors and outdoors. *Therefore, for its distinctive characteristics and high artistic values, Desert Holly qualifies as a Historic District under Criteria 3, 4 and 5.*

SUMMARY: This evaluation finds Desert Holly eligible for listing as a Palm Springs Historic District under PSMC 8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 3, 4 & 5 of the local ordinance's seven criteria (criteria 6 is deemed as inapplicable as the various buildings in Desert Holly possess "individual distinction"). Additionally, the buildings in the proposed historic district retain a high degree of architectural integrity.



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

Department of Planning Services

3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm
Springs, CA 92262 Telephone: 760-323-
8245 ~ Fax: 760-322-8360

HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION

The City of Palm Springs allows for the local designation of historic buildings, sites or districts within the City (Section 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code.) This application packet is to be completed in order to request a historic designation. For additional information, please contact the Department of Planning Services at 760-323-8245 or planning@palmspringsca.gov.

APPLICATION

The completed application and required materials may be submitted to the Department of Planning Services. The submittal will be given a cursory check and will be accepted for filing only if the basic requirements have been met. A case planner will be assigned to the project and will be responsible for a detailed review of the application and all exhibits to ensure that all required information is adequate and accurate. Incomplete applications due to missing or inadequate information will not be accepted for filing. Applicants may be asked to attend scheduled meetings pertaining to their project. These will include the Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) and the City Council.

HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD (HSPB)

Once the application has been determined to be complete, the HSPB will review the application to determine whether the site meets the minimum qualifications for designation pursuant to Chapter 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code. If such determination is made, a public hearing will be scheduled for a future meeting.

A public hearing will be held by the HSPB to receive testimony from all interested persons concerning the Historic Site Designation. The public hearing may be continued from time to time, and upon complete consideration, the HSPB will make a recommendation to the City Council. Notice will be provided as indicated below.

CITY COUNCIL

After receiving the recommendation of the Historic Site Preservation Board, a public hearing will be held by the City Council to receive testimony from all interested persons concerning the requested Historic Site Designation. The public hearing may be continued from time to time, and upon complete consideration, the City Council will then conditionally approve, deny, or approve the application as submitted. The City Council's decision on the application is final.

NOTIFICATION

Prior to consideration of the application by the HSPB and the City Council, a notice of public hearing for a Historic Site Designation request will be mailed to all property owners within 400 feet of the subject property a minimum of ten (10) days prior to the hearing dates.



Office Use Only

Date:
Case No.
HSPB No.
Planner:

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS Department of Planning Services

HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION APPLICATION

TO THE APPLICANT:

Your cooperation in completing this application and supplying the information requested will expedite City review of your application. Application submitted will not be considered until all submittal requirements are met. Staff may require additional information depending upon the specific project. Please submit this completed application and any subsequent material to the Department of Planning Services.

This form is to be used to nominate individual properties for Class 1 or 2 historic designations, or to nominate the formation of historic districts. Applicants are encouraged to review two bulletins from the US Department of Interior for additional information:

- "How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form" (National Register Bulletin 16A / <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/>); and
- "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation" (National Register Bulletin 15; <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/>).

Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions in the Bulletins.

1. Property Information

Historic name: Desert Holly

Other names: In early advertisements occasionally called "Desert Holly Apartments"

Address: 2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way (originally 2244 (and sporadically 2144) McCallum Way)

Assessor Parcel Numbers: 502-085-001 through 014 (see Appendix II)

Owner's Name: Mr. Dave Eck (HOA President)

Owner's Address: 2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way

City: Palm Springs State: CA Zip: 92262

(Note: The Desert Holly Homeowners Association is self-managed.)

Telephone: (714) 906-3937

Fax number: Not applicable

E-mail address: dave.eckp1@gmail.com

2. Classifications

Ownership of Property. Fill as many boxes as apply.

- ☒ Private
- ☐ Public - Local
- ☐ Public - State
- ☐ Public - Federal

Category of Property. Fill only one box.

- ☐ Building (Note can include site)
- ☒ District
- ☐ Site (Exclusive of Structures)
- ☐ Structure
- ☐ Object

Number of Resources within Property. Total must include at least One (1) in Contributing Column.

Contributing	Non-contributing	
8		Buildings (comprising 14 condo units with patios)
1		Sites
2		Structures (pool and perimeter concrete block wall)
1		Objects ("Desert Holly" signage)
<hr/> 12		Total

If the building or site is part of a larger group of properties, enter the name of the multiple-property group; otherwise enter "N/A".

"N/A"

3. Use or Function

Historic Use or Function: Multi-family residential housing

Current Use or Function: Multi-family residential housing

4. Description

Architect: Unknown (Builder, William J. O'Brien, Jr.)

Construction Date and Source: 1957 (from multiple sources, including building permits)

Architectural Classification: International Style - Desert Regional Variation

Construction Materials:

Foundation:	Concrete slab	Roof:	Composition
Walls:	Concrete block & wooden posts	Other:	N/A

Building Description: *Attach a description of the Building / Site / District, including all character defining features on one or more additional sheets. (See pages 15-17 and Appendix III).*

5. Criteria (Fill all boxes that apply for the criteria qualifying the property for listing.)

Events

- ☐ (1) Fill this box if the property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

Persons

- ☐ (2) Fill this box if the property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

Architecture

- ☒ (3) Fill this box if the property reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, State or local history, or

- ☒ (4) Fill this box if the property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or

- ☒ (5) Fill this box if the property represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or

- ☐ (6) Fill this box if the property represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

Archeology

- ☐ (7) Fill this box if the property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Other Criteria Considerations (Check all the boxes that apply.)

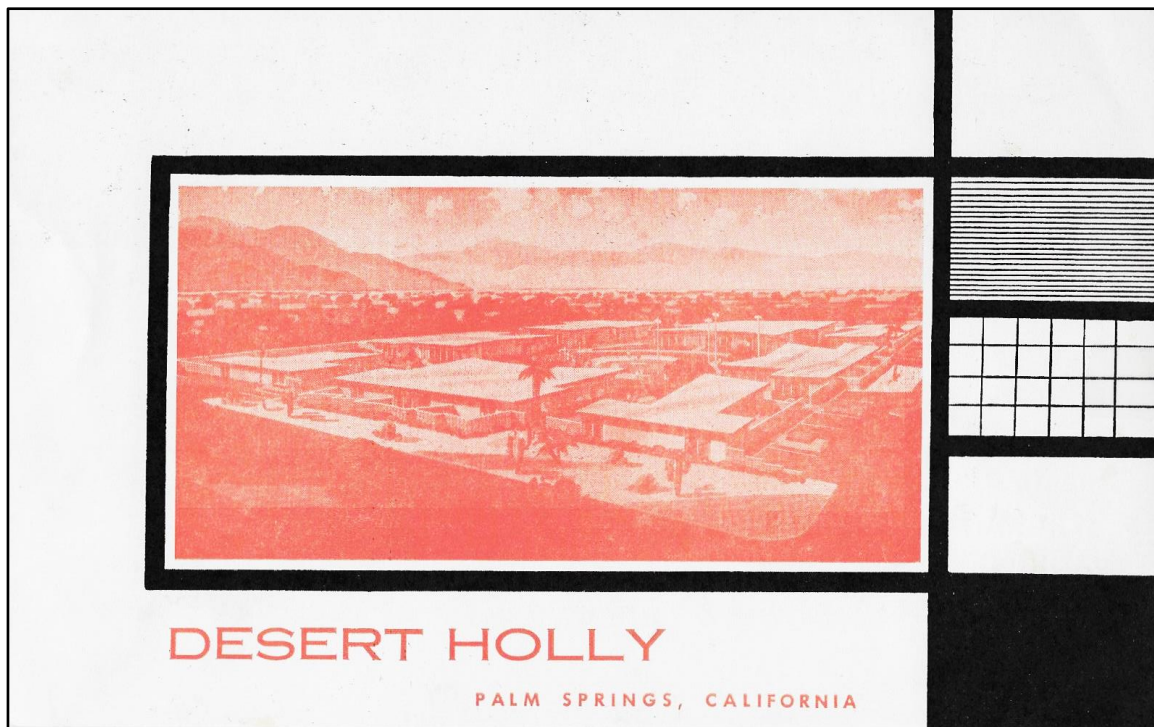
- ☐ the property is owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ the property has been removed from its original location
- ☐ the property is a birthplace
- ☐ the property is a grave or cemetery
- ☐ the property is a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ the property is commemorative
- ☐ the property is less than 50 years of age or has achieved significance within the past 50 years

6. Statement of Significance

History

Built in 1957, and originally conceived as a 42-unit complex, Desert Holly is a 14-unit complex comprised of eight buildings. The buildings surround a recreational area whose major component is a large pool. Parking is sited on the outer perimeter of the complex. Located at 2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way in Palm Springs' Sunrise Park neighborhood, the complex was built by Long Beach, California, builder and developer William J. O'Brien, Jr. Originally a cooperative, Desert Holly was converted to condominiums in 1998. Desert Holly is visible from one of the city's busiest streets.

The early history of Desert Holly is well-documented and a wealth of marketing material (newspaper advertisements, brochures and other ephemera) exists. Described as a "new approach to desert living," and the "most modern and deluxe" apartments, Desert Holly's amenities included "Complete Built-in Kitchens," "Air Refrigeration," "Private Patios," "Drapes Throughout," and "Fireplaces." Recreational amenities included "Heated Pool," "Shuffleboard Courts," and a "9 Hole Putting Course." Because the cooperative ownership concept was new, early sales advertisements told buyers that while they would own their own apartment "with deed to home and undivided interest in the entire plot of land," that ownership would come "with no maintenance or upkeep problems." Original costs for Desert Holly units were advertised as "2 Bedrooms 2 Baths" at \$21,900 and "1 Bedroom 1 Bath" at \$16,900.



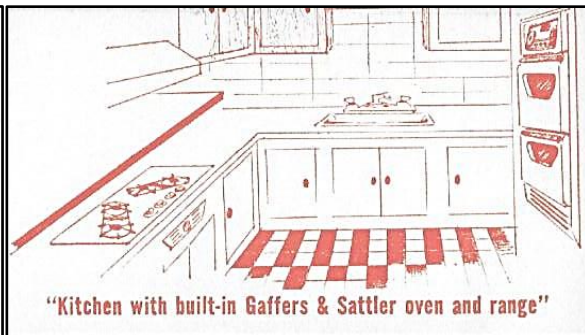
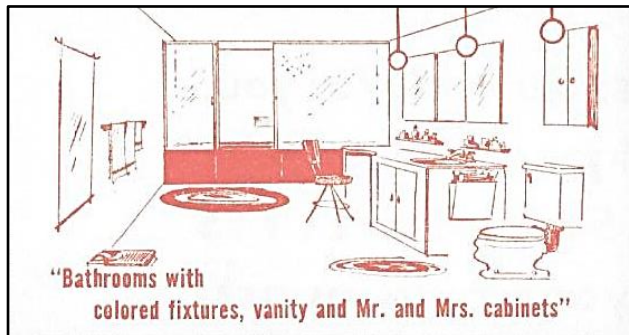
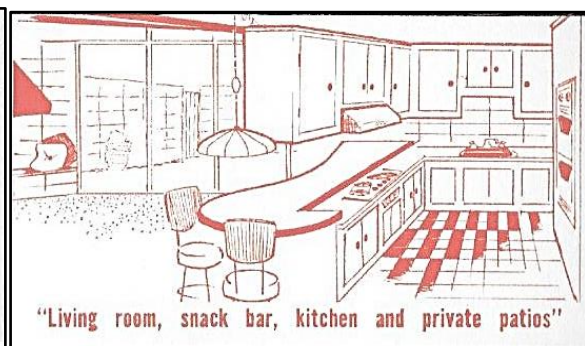
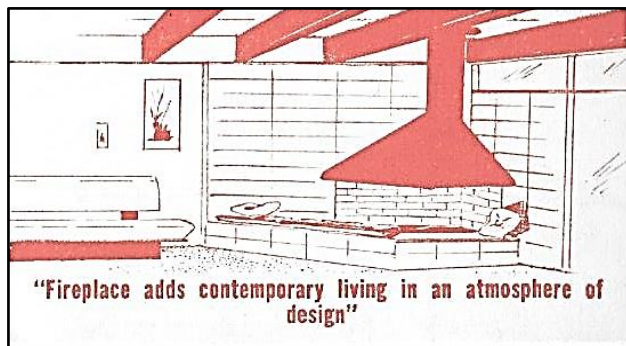
A Desert Holly advertising brochure circa 1957. The bold graphic design of the pamphlet alluded to modernist architecture being marketed.
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)

The Riverside County Assessor's Office, Property Information Center online database, has recorded the following information about the Desert Holly units at 2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way:

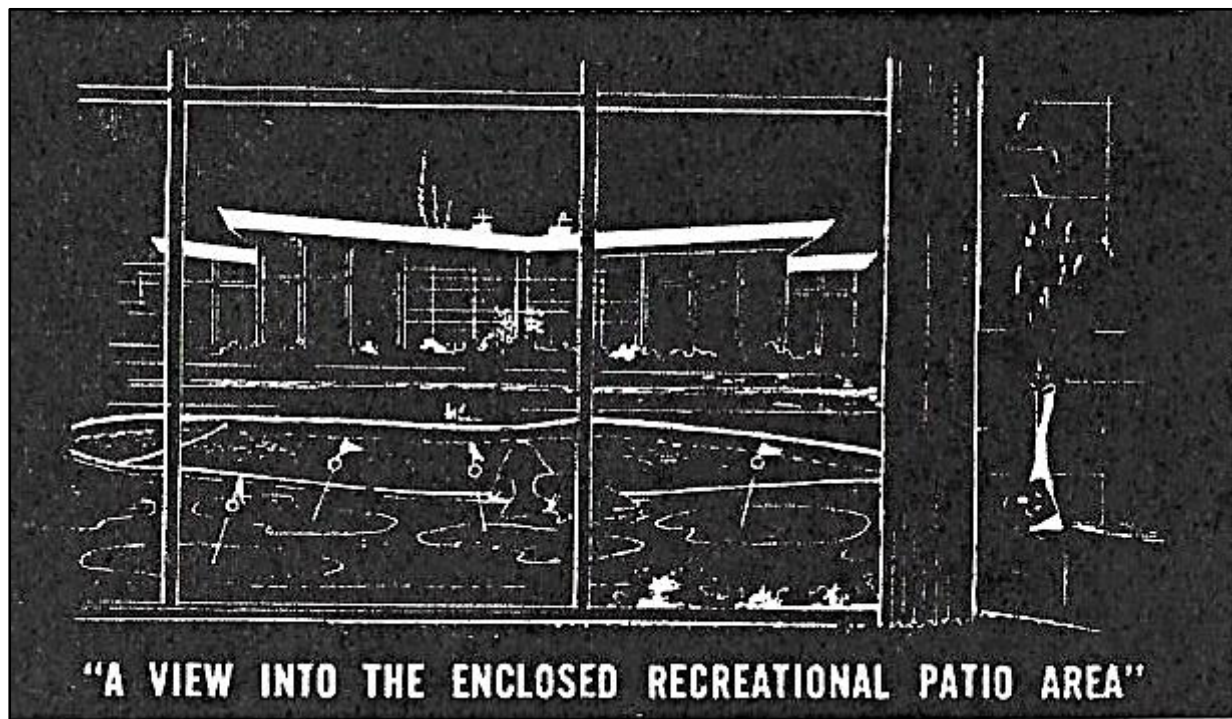
<u>Building #*</u>	<u>Unit #**</u>	<u>Bedrooms</u>	<u>Bathrooms</u>	<u>Square Feet</u>
1	1	2	1.75	1,122
2	2	1	1	789
2	3	1	1	789
3	4	2	1.75	1,122
4	5	1	1	763
4	6	1	1	740
4	7	1	1	763
5	8	2	1.75	1,122
6	9	1	1	790
6	10	1	1	790
7	11	2	1.75	1,122
8	12	1	1	763
8	14	1	1.75	740
8	15	1	1	763

* The building numbers are arbitrarily assigned for reference purposes only.

** There is no Unit #13.



Various vignettes from a Desert Holly advertisement circa 1957.
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)



Despite the poor quality of this vignette, it is one of the few views that captures the placement and density of the "9-hole putt course" originally installed at Desert Holly (note the hole "flags"). This view is likely from Desert Holly Building #2, Unit #3, looking east (from a Desert Holly advertisement circa 1957).
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)



This circa 1958 color advertising postcard provides a wealth of information about the Desert Holly complex including (1) the location of the two original shuffleboard courts (the second court is barely visible) and associated spectator benches, (2) the original stone waterfall on the west side of the pool (later removed for safety reasons), (3) the biomorphically-shaped pool and diving board (also later removed for safety reasons), and (4) various building features (e.g., concrete block, shed roofs, etc.).
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)

" all of **DESERT HOLLY'S** design, beauty, conveniences and facilities are available because of the following professional services:

CONCRETE ROCK AND SAND	MASSEY ROCK & SAND CO.
MASONRY	RALPH WHYTE
PLUMBING	CALIFORNIA PLUMBING & HEATING
REFRIGERATORS & DISHWASHERS	WESTINGHOUSE ELECTRIC COMPANY
GARBAGE DISPOSAL	WASTE KING
LUMBER	COACHELLA VALLEY LUMBER & SUPPLY CO., INC.
DRAPERIES	SHELTONS-INDIO
ASPHALT PAVING	J & S PAVING COMPANY
ELECTRICAL	ROSSINI ELECTRIC CO.
POOL INSTALLATION	PADDOCK POOL OF CALIFORNIA
PLASTERING	FOREST CRAVY
FIREPLACE	CHUCKS WELDING
GLASS	HARRIS GLASS CO.
HEATING	CALIFORNIA PLUMBING & HEATING
AIR REFRIGERATION	UTILITY HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING
BUILT-IN RANGE & OVEN	GAFFERS & SATTLER

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY
RIVERSIDE TITLE INSURANCE COMPANY
DAVIS ART STUDIOS

Wm. J. O'Brien, Jr. & Associates
2244 McCALLUM WAY FAirview 5-2997
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
BUILDERS AND DEVELOPERS

MODEL APARTMENT FURNISHED BY IMPERIAL HARDWARE CO., INDIO, CALIFORNIA

This extract from a circa 1957 Desert Holly advertisement provides a historical "snapshot" of some of the building trades (e.g., masons, plumbers, etc.) operating in the Palm Springs area.
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)

The Builder

William J. O'Brien, Jr., (1915-1976) is variously identified as the builder, contractor, manager, and developer of Desert Holly.

O'Brien's father, William J. O'Brien, Sr. (1885-1973), was a successful builder in Long Beach, California, and, around 1946, O'Brien, Jr. entered the family business. In 1949, O'Brien, Jr. and his wife Edna, built their own residence at 515 Panama Avenue in Long Beach. The residence was twice featured in the local newspaper and still stands today. The 1949 O'Brien Residence was remarkably modern for the day featuring a shed roof and presaging the modernist architecture later found at Desert Holly.



The June 10, 1958 issue of the *Desert Sun* shows William J. O'Brien, Jr. and Edna O'Brien (at left), presenting keys to new Desert Holly owners. Edna had a career as an interior decorator in the Long Beach area.
(Courtesy *Desert Sun* newspaper)

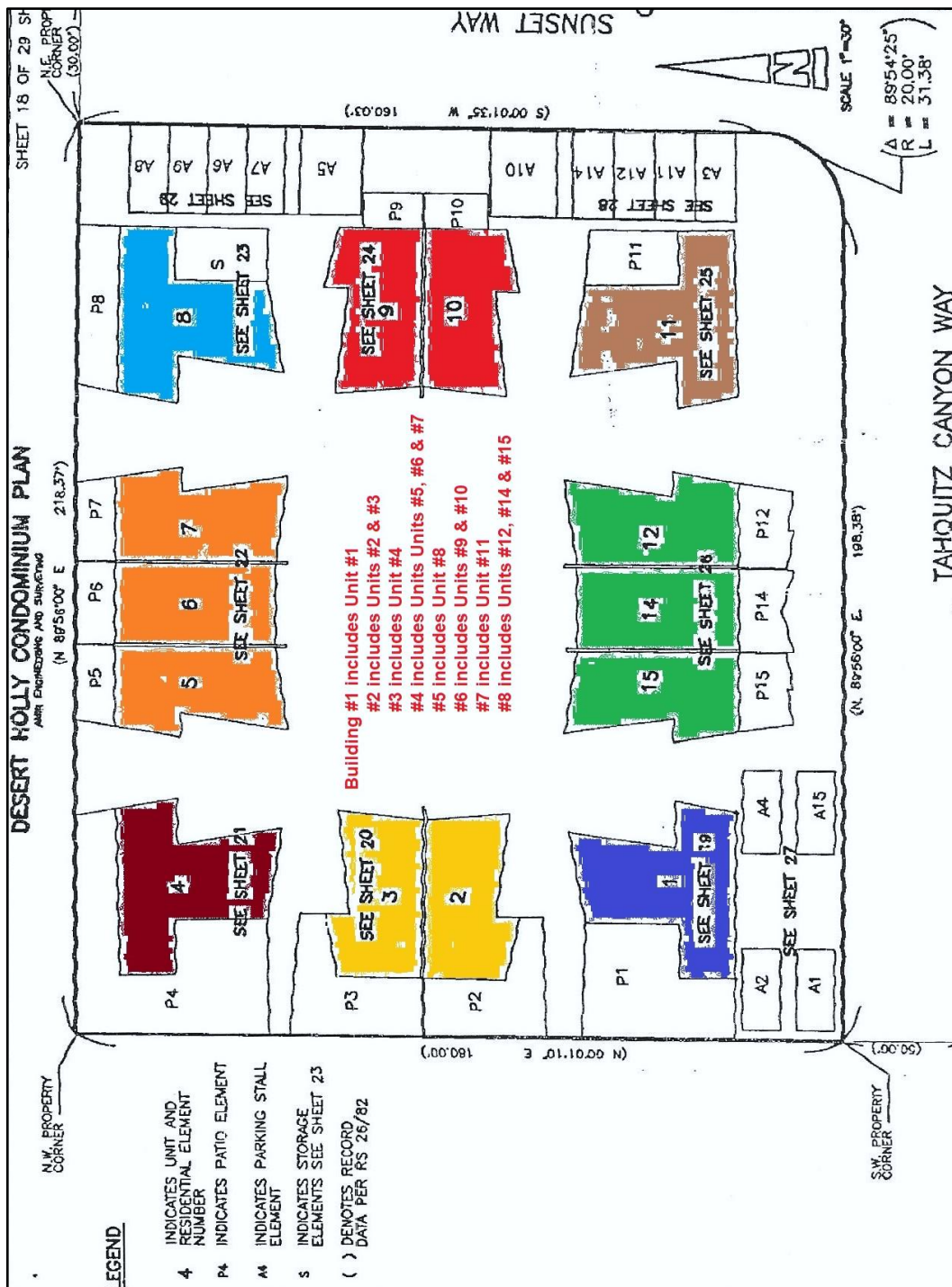
In April of 1951, William J. O'Brien, Jr., was elected a director to the board of the Long Beach Building Contractors Association

William J. O'Brien, Jr., was responsible for the construction of many buildings in the Long Beach area, some in conjunction with architects and architectural firms including Anthony & Langford (noted designers of many civic landmarks including the McCallum Theater for the Performing Arts in Palm Desert); architect George J. Adams (who specialized in the design of Catholic church and school projects); pioneering Chinese-American modernist architect Eugene Kinn Choy (the Choy-designed house O'Brien built at 1230 Los Altos Avenue in Long Beach is still standing); and architect Kenneth S. Wing (who designed many civic, church and commercial projects, and was the first Long Beach architect to be honored as a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects).

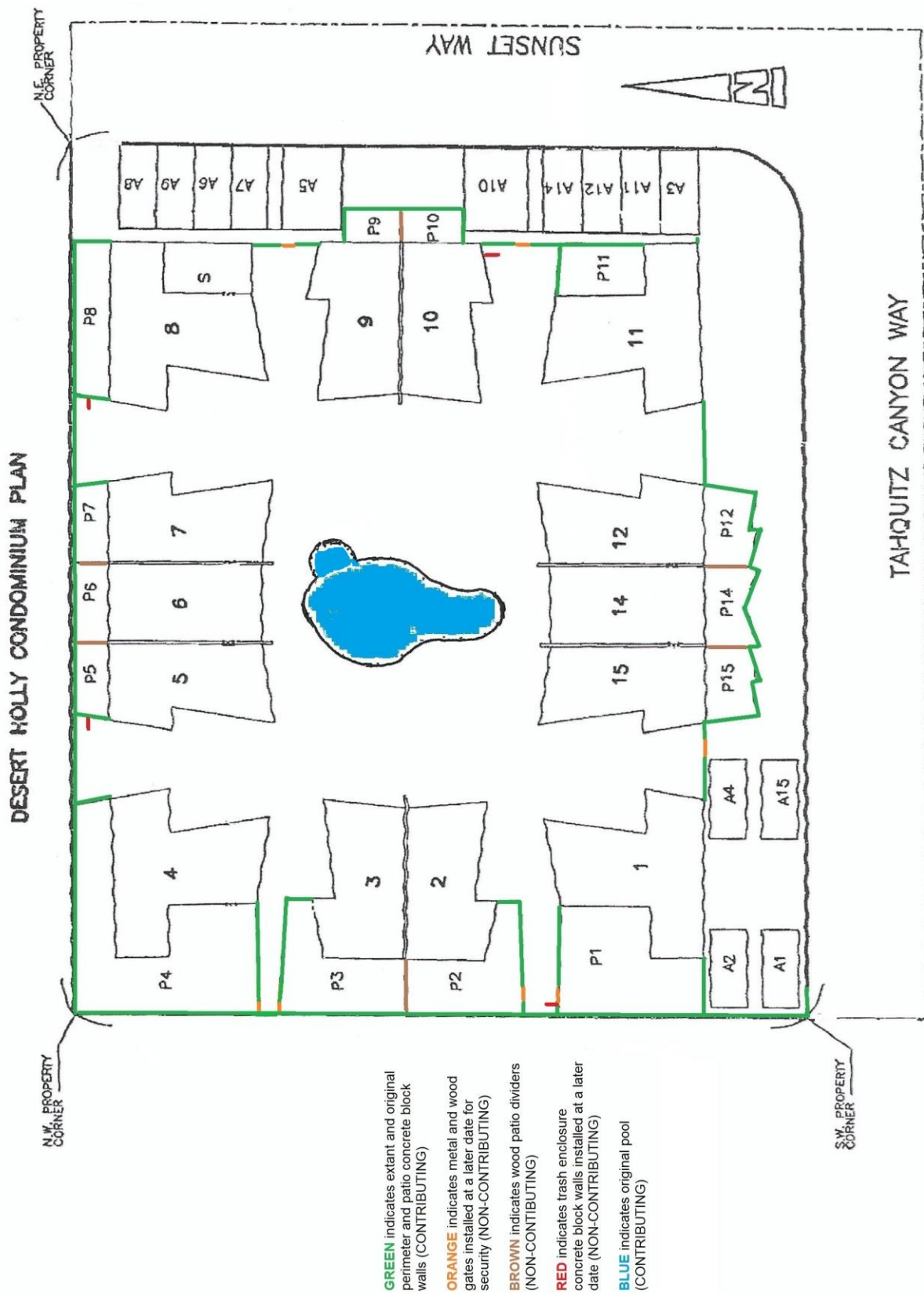
Because builder O'Brien, Jr., worked with many gifted modernist architects (such as Eugene Choy) just before his work at Desert Holly, it is tempting to speculate that his professional interaction with these talents influenced his design of Desert Holly.

Site Plan

The 1998 Desert Holly Condominium Plan (annotated) provides a detailed site plan of the complex.



Site plan of Desert Holly showing the locations of the complex's eight buildings (building numbers are arbitrarily assigned for reference purposes only) and 14 condominium units (unit numbers are shown). This site plan is very useful because it shows the associated "elements" of the complex including patios ("P"), parking stalls ("A"), and the common storage area ("S").
 (Courtesy Desert Holly archives)



Site plan of Desert Holly showing various physical features including the perimeter and patio concrete block walls, various gates, patio dividers, trash enclosures and the pool.
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)

Site Description

Location. Desert Holly is bounded by residential parcels to the north, East Tahquitz Canyon Way to the south, North Sunset Way to the east, and a commercial parcel to the west. A listing of current mailing addresses and individual assessor parcel numbers is provided at Appendix II.

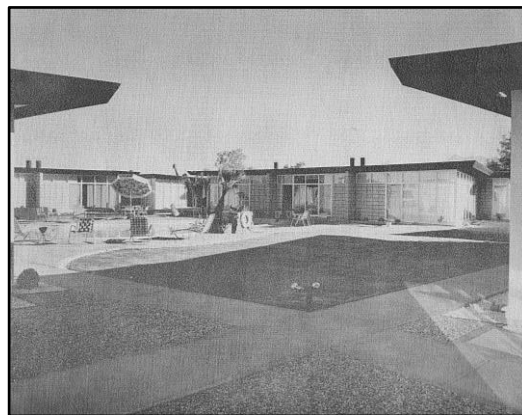


An aerial view of Desert Holly (oriented north)
(Yahoo Maps)

Legal Description

The Desert Holly Condominium Plan identifies the Desert Holly site as “Parcel 3 of Record of Survey, as shown by Map on file in Book 26, Page 82 of records of Survey, in the Office of the Recorder of Riverside County, California.”

The Architecture



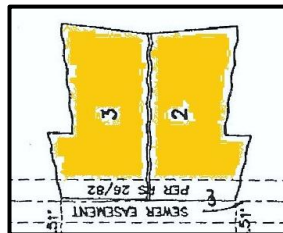
A vintage professional photograph of the central courtyard showing various exterior features most notably the projecting angular roof eaves.
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)

Desert Holly is a grouping of eight skillfully articulated modernist buildings. The assemblage contains four single-unit buildings (Buildings #1, #3, #5 and #7), two double-unit buildings (Buildings #2 and #6) and two triple-unit buildings (Buildings #4

and #8). As shown in the site plan, Desert Holly's buildings are bilaterally symmetrical along both a north-south axis and an east-west axis. While some might see the architecture as stark and unadorned, others will see the architecture as pure, crisp, and simple capturing architect Le Corbusier's view that a house "is a machine for living in." Immediately evident is the high degree of workmanship.

Also as shown in the site plan, Desert Holly's buildings "turn in" towards the central courtyard and pool, effectively turning their backs on the outside world. This creates a serene and protected residential environment free of the noise and distractions of the outside world. Reaching all the way back to 19th century British planner Ebenezer Howard's Garden City, architects and designers have tried to combine the best of city and rural life to create utopian environments. The design of Desert Holly strives to achieve this ideal by creating an environment free from cars (a popular symbol of urban distress), siting parking areas on the perimeter of the complex.

Desert Holly's buildings exhibit overall horizontality with each of its eight buildings featuring low-pitched shed roofs (.25" rise per 1-foot run, or 1.2 degrees) which, depending on the building and elevation, create either gentle shed or butterfly rooflines. The illusion of butterfly rooflines is cleverly created due to the angularity of the floor plan. This illusion is subtly created in the front elevations of Buildings #4 and #8 and is especially noticeable in the front elevations of Buildings #2 and #6.



Plan View of Building #2, Units #2 and #3.
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)



Although Building #2 is capped by a conventional shed roof, the V-shaped notch in the plan (top) creates the illusion of a gentle butterfly roofline from this elevation (bottom).

Undoubtedly, the most striking feature of Desert Holly's architecture is the structural concrete blockwork using 8"x8"x16" concrete masonry units. As testament to the skill of the mason, the concrete block is precisely laid. Notably, the concrete block is painted light gray but the mortar is colored dark gray. This is not an arbitrary design decision but an intentional one. By creating this noticeable contrast between block and mortar, the block is accentuated and its materiality celebrated rather than hidden or obscured. (For example, the Albert Frey-designed portion of the Palm Springs City Hall chooses to match, rather than contrast, the redness of the concrete block by using reddish mortar.) Block walls also protect the exterior of the complex and celebrate the skill of the mason with a quirky zig-zag design facing East Tahquitz Canyon Way. Further, the concrete block at Desert Holly is carried into the interiors of the units thereby softening the indoor-outdoor transition and reinforcing the design theme of unapologetic materiality. The selection of concrete block as a building material is not only an aesthetic choice, but a practical one as well: block is both low-maintenance and well-suited to the harsh desert environment.

Another striking architectural feature of all of the eight buildings in Desert Holly can be found in the elegantly projecting roof eaves. To achieve this pleasing effect, the following design features work in concert:

- The roof eaves (when viewed in plan) form an acute angle of 75 degrees, mimicking the floor plan.
- The shed roofs slope upwards.
- The deep eaves visually separate the roof from the underlying structure.
- The fascia boards tilt inwards about 30-degrees "sharpening" the effect.

Desert Holly floor plans are quite interesting with corners meeting at both 75-degree and 105-degree angles. This unusual geometry creates visual interest and is testament to the skill of the builder. Other architectural features at Desert Holly include large windows (36"x75") which help blur the indoor-outdoor transition and allow residents to enjoy the beauty of the interior courtyard. Also featured are trapezoidal clerestory windows and jalousie windows (i.e., windows of parallel glass louvres set in a frame and joined onto a track). Turning a crank, the jalousie windows can be tilted open and shut to control airflow allowing for cross-ventilation and fresh air. Tapering rafters (4'6" on center and covered by 13" fascia boards) support the roof and extend about 2-feet from the exterior wall to create the deep eave.

Other notable architectural features of the units include wooden slab front doors featuring octagonal decorative elements (all are intact), large metal-hooded fireplaces and round metal chimney flues which pierce the roof and are topped by unusual "pancake" spark arrestors. Finally, the biomorphic shape of the pool serves as a design foil to the otherwise rectilinear and angular architecture of the buildings.

Throughout the entirety of Desert Holly, the exterior facades are surprisingly intact with little or no compromise. Although the light gray block is painted, vintage photographs indicate it was painted soon after construction as was the mortar stained (a field test indicates that the mortar is not integrally-colored). The buildings and site retain a high degree of integrity (see Section 7, Integrity Analysis).

Landscape Architecture

The Desert Holly landscape features rock, sand and plantings suitable to the desert environment. Plantings include mature saguaro cacti (both on the exterior and interior of the complex), barrel cacti, pencil cacti, agave, etc. While not a native species, early architectural renderings of Desert Holly show the mature saguaro cacti as part of the original design scheme. Grass and desert landscaping are featured in the interior courtyard, consistent with early renderings and photographs.

Summary of Contributing, Non-Contributing and Lost Characteristics and Elements

The Desert Holly historic district's contributing characteristics and elements include:

- Overall horizontality of all buildings #1-#8
- Low-pitch, shed roofs on buildings #1-#8
- Buildings #1-#8 sited to "look inward" to a central courtyard
- Pool equipment hidden underground to soften central courtyard environment
- Extensive glazing on buildings #1-#8
- Clerestory windows on buildings #1-#8
- Jalousie windows on buildings #1-#8
- Concrete blockwork using 8"x8"x16" concrete masonry units on buildings #1-#8 (the concrete blockwork is carried into the interiors of the buildings softening the indoor-outdoor transition and emphasizing its materiality).
- Deep and elegantly projecting roof eaves with tilting fascia boards on buildings #1-#8
- Tapering rafters on buildings #1-#8
- Wooden slab front doors featuring octagonal decorative elements on buildings #1-#8
- Round metal chimney flues topped by unusual "pancake" spark arrestors on buildings #1-#8
- Desert Holly original pegboard signage
- Biomorphically-shaped pool (speculated to have been slightly modified with a tanning deck at an unknown later date, see permit B35281)
- Parking spaces sited on the perimeter of the complex
- Mature saguaro cacti (likely an element of the original landscape architecture)

The Desert Holly historic district's non-contributing characteristics and elements include:

- Corrugated metal walls (behind Units #4, #5 and #6) surmounting the original concrete block walls (installed for additional privacy)
- Metal doors installed in original openings of concrete block wall (a later addition to address security concerns)
- Concrete flatwork (i.e., sidewalks) (due to lack of documentation)
- Metal cylindrical lighting sconces (installed in the last decade)
- Privacy walls (mostly wooden) between unit patios
- Metal screen doors

The Desert Holly historic district's lost (e.g., demolished, removed etc.) original contributing characteristics or elements include:

- Original 9-hole pitch-and-putt course
- Original two shuffleboard courts (with associated benches)
- Original waterfall feature on west side of pool

While overall the Desert Holly complex is highly-intact, an "Historic Preservation Plan" is provided at Appendix IV to help guide future improvements to the Desert Holly Historic District and to expedite Certificates of Appropriateness.

Permit History

Microfiche city permit records of Desert Holly are as follows:

<u>Permit #</u>	<u>Date (M/D/Y)</u>	<u>Description</u>
9482	3-26-57	Plumbing
6587	[illegible]-57	Sewer
8314	5-2-57	Electrical
9689	5-22-57	Const. 24x42 Gunitite Swimming Pool.
9535	8-20-57	Construct 14 apartment units. Frame, masonry and stucco, compo roof.
A4700	11-9-64	Sewer
M3692	12-18-75	Mechanical
B2136	8-23-83	Repipe gas line [Unit] #7
B09607	10-31-86	Patio Cover Unit #1
10819	6-25-87	Roofing
16025	8-3-89	Foam Roofing

Computerized city permit records of Desert Holly are as follows:

<u>Permit #</u>	<u>M/D Unknown</u>	<u>Description</u>
2012-2885	2012	Water heater
2015-933	2015	Gas line (pool)
2015-1174	2015	Gas repipe
2015-2049	2015	Gas repipe
2015-2159	2015	Replace window, same size/same loc.
2017-123	2017	AC
2017-815	2017	Gas repipe
C13532	Unknown	Gas line
C22348	Unknown	AC
B35281	Unknown	Pool

Note: As can be readily discerned from the foregoing tables, there are large gaps in the permit history of Desert Holly. This creates a challenge for researchers and anyone else attempting to determine permitted, or unpermitted, changes to Desert Holly. Major permit gaps appear from September 1957 through October 1964; December 1964 through November 1975; January 1976 through July 1983; and September 1989 through 2011. These significant gaps in permit history make it virtually impossible to assert with certainty the "legality" of changes made to the site over the years. It also argues for a full documentation of the site in its current state.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

To qualify as a Palm Springs Historic District, the contributing structures must be significant; that is, they must represent a significant part of the history, architecture, or archeology of an area and they must have the characteristics that make them a good representative of properties associated with that aspect of the past. The significance of an historic district can be properly understood when it is evaluated within its historic context. Historic contexts are those patterns or trends in history by which a specific district is understood and its meaning (and ultimately its significance) within history is made clear. In order to decide whether a district's contributing properties are significant within their historic context, it must be determined which facet of history the district represents; the significance of that facet of history; whether the subject district has relevance in illustrating the historic context; how the district illustrates that history; and an analysis of the physical features the contributing properties in the district possess to determine if they convey the aspect or history with which they are associated. If the subject district represents an important aspect of the area's history (under any of the seven criteria recognized by the Municipal Code) *and* possesses the requisite quality of integrity, then it qualifies as a historic district.

BACKGROUND / HISTORIC CONTEXT

The relatively short history of Palm Springs can be organized into three more or less distinct periods that include Prehistory, the Settlement Period, and the Modern Period. It is within the context of the last period that Desert Holly will be evaluated.

Modern Period (1925-1960s): This period can be considered to have begun with the construction of the area's first "modern" structure, Rudolph Schindler's Paul and Betty Popenoe Cabin in 1922. With this building the area's predominant architectural style, which was based on well-established Mexican and Spanish Colonial motifs, began to change. Incorporation of the town of Palm Springs followed in 1938. During the post-WWII era, Palm Springs' economy prospered through tourism. Hollywood celebrities discovered the desert oasis and patronized its hotels, inns, nightclubs and restaurants; celebrity-seeking tourists soon followed, transforming Palm Springs from a sleepy village into an increasingly cosmopolitan environment that saw the construction of schools, hospitals, an airport and other important public works projects. The commercial core along Palm Canyon Drive (originally Main Street) flourished. In the 1950s the downtown core was expanded by the construction of the cross-axis of Tahquitz-McCallum Way that extended from the center of the original settlement to the airport, spurring new development along the way. Early private residential development also expanded into new sub-divisions composed of midcentury modern second homes in the flat lands surrounding the town's original core.

Desert Holly's construction location is representative of Palm Springs' Modern Period, to wit, *"In the 1950s the downtown core was expanded by the construction of the cross-axis of Tahquitz-McCallum Way that extended from the center of the original settlement to the airport, spurring new development along the way."*

EVALUATION:

ARCHITECTURE (Criteria 3 – 6)

Criterion 3: *(That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history)*

The buildings of the Desert Holly historic district represent a specific building-type and exhibit stylistic markers which place them directly in the historic context of Palm Springs' Modern Period. One of the city's better-known condominium complexes, by virtue of its location on East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Desert Holly is a prime and largely intact example of a particular building-type and the significant modernist architecture for which Palm Springs is widely known. As such, the contributing properties in the district may be viewed as an important component of the historic trends that have come to define Palm Springs' image as a vacation resort destination and the center of important midcentury architecture, i.e., an historic trend that exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history. The contributing properties within Desert Holly qualify for listing as a Historic District on the local registry under Criterion 3.

Criterion 4: *(That embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction)*

"Type, period, or method of construction" refers to the way certain properties are related to one another by cultural tradition or function, by dates of construction or style, or by choice or availability of materials and technology. To be eligible under this Criterion, a property must clearly illustrate, through "distinctive characteristics" a pattern of features common to a particular class of resources. "Distinctive characteristics" are the physical features or traits that commonly recur in individual types, periods, or methods of construction. To be eligible under this criterion, a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction. Characteristics can be expressed in terms such as form, proportion, structure, plan, style, or materials.

The contributing properties in the district are eligible under this criterion as they represent a fine example of a particular building-type (specifically, the "small" seasonal rental property or hotel/apartment) that slowly established itself in the resort community of Palm Springs from about 1920-1965. Desert Holly's buildings also qualify under the theme of Modern architecture because they possess distinctive characteristics that make up the many qualities of the style, such as overall horizontality, expression of structure (i.e., load-bearing concrete block walls and post-and-beam construction), expansive amounts of glass, use of inexpensive, machine-produced materials (i.e., concrete block), etc. The contributing properties in the district are eligible because, in total, they represent an important example of building practices in Palm Springs from 1920-1965 and at "midcentury." The contributing properties at Desert Holly qualify as a Historic District on the local registry under Criterion 4.

Criterion 5: *(That (a): represents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or (b): that possesses high artistic value)*

5a: Work of a Master: It is noteworthy that the city's qualifying criteria recognizes the work of "master builders." Long Beach builder William J. O'Brien, Jr.'s very impressive result at Desert Holly certainly deserves recognition along with the city's other notable builders (e.g., Alvah Hicks, Bob Higgins, Joe Pawling, Boris Gertzen, etc.). O'Brien's record of building in Long Beach, California, reinforces this view.

5b: Properties possessing high artistic values: High artistic values may be expressed in many ways, including areas as diverse as community design or planning, engineering, and sculpture. As an example of the maturing modernist movement, Desert Holly expresses those modernist ideals to a level of excellence and confidence that, in total, could easily be considered an aesthetic ideal. For its high artistic values, Desert Holly qualifies for listing as a Historic District on the local registry under Criterion 5.

7. Integrity Analysis (using U.S. Secretary of Interior Standards)

INTEGRITY

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be listed in the local registry, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the criteria, but it also must have integrity. The evaluation of integrity is sometimes a subjective judgment, but it must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. Historic properties either retain integrity (that is, convey their significance) or they do not. The definition of integrity includes seven aspects or qualities. To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects. The retention of specific aspects of integrity is paramount for a property to convey its significance. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a particular property requires knowing why, where, and when the property is significant. The following sections define the seven aspects and explain how they combine to produce integrity.

LOCATION

Location is the place where an historic property was constructed or the place where an historic event occurred. The relationship between the property and its location is often important to understanding why the property was created or why something happened. The actual location of a historic property, complemented by its setting, is particularly important in recapturing the sense of historic events and persons. Except in rare cases, the relationship between a property and its historic associations is destroyed if the property is moved. ***Desert Holly remains in its original location and therefore fully meets this criterion.***

DESIGN

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. It results from conscious decisions made during the original conception and planning of a property and applies to activities as diverse as community planning, engineering, architecture, and landscape architecture. Design includes such elements as organization of space, proportion, scale, technology, ornamentation, and materials. A property's design reflects historic functions and technologies as well as aesthetics. It includes such considerations as the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; textures and colors of surface materials; type, amount, and style of ornamental detailing. ***The essential characteristics of form, plan, space, structure, and style have survived intact at Desert Holly. Similarly, the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; and the type, amount, and style of detailing, have largely survived intact. About 70% (34 of 49) of the jalousie windows are intact, the remainder having been replaced with single-pane glass or glass block. In recent years, the original exterior front door exterior light fixtures were replaced with inoffensive modernist aluminum cylinder light fixtures. Additionally, unsympathetic patio covers were added to Units #4, #9, #10 and #11. Fortunately, all of these conditions are reversible and the historic designation will curtail future unsympathetic changes. Additionally, the Historic Preservation Plan (provided at Appendix IV) creates a framework to reverse the few current integrity issues.***

SETTING

Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. Whereas location refers to the specific place where a property was built or an event occurred, setting refers to the *character* of the place in which the property played its historical role. It involves *how*, not just *where*, the property is situated and its relationship to surrounding features and open space. Setting often reflects the basic physical conditions under which a property was built and the functions it was intended to serve. In addition, the way in which a property is positioned in its environment can reflect the designer's concept of nature and aesthetic preferences. ***The setting of Desert Holly continues to reflect the master builder's original design relationship of site and structure. The most important original elements of Desert Holly are intact and in place as originally designed.***

MATERIALS

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. The choice and combination of materials reveals the preferences of those who created the property and indicate the availability of particular types of materials and technologies. ***Desert Holly exhibits a high level of design in part due to the choice of materials and a sophisticated effect is accomplished by the cohesive and striking combination of those materials.***

WORKMANSHIP

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. It is the evidence of artisans' labor and skill in constructing or altering a building, structure, object, or site. Workmanship can apply to the property as a whole or to its individual components. It can be expressed in vernacular methods of construction and plain finishes or in highly sophisticated configurations and ornamental detailing. It can be based on common traditions or innovative period techniques. Workmanship is important because it can furnish evidence of the technology of a craft, illustrate the aesthetic principles of a historic or prehistoric period, and reveal individual, local, regional, or national applications of both technological practices and aesthetic principles. Examples of workmanship in historic buildings include tooling, carving, painting, graining, turning, and joinery. ***The workmanship evident at Desert Holly represents a high level of design expression. Desert Holly also exhibits high construction standards that can be expected to be associated with an "upscale" apartment complex. Therefore, the property continues to express a high degree of contemporary period workmanship.***

FEELING

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. For example, a rural historic district retaining original design, materials, workmanship, and setting will relate the feeling of agricultural life in the 19th century. ***When constructed, Desert Holly catered to the aspiring middle class. As such, the "feeling" of the buildings necessarily had to exude urbanity albeit in a resort location. The late-1950s were a sophisticated, forward-looking and optimistic time, a feeling still expressed in the design of the complex. Accordingly, Desert Holly retains the integrity of feeling.***

ASSOCIATION

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. A property retains association if it is the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. Like feeling, association requires the presence of physical features that convey a property's historic character. For example, a Revolutionary War battlefield whose natural and man-made elements have remained intact since the 18th century will retain its quality of association with the battle. Because feeling and association depend on individual perceptions, their retention alone is never sufficient to support eligibility of a property for the National Register. ***Desert Holly is an important example of a small, midcentury apartment complex in Palm Springs. Accordingly, it continues its association with a pattern of events that have made a meaningful contribution to the community.***

INTEGRITY SUMMARY: Desert Holly appears to be in excellent condition partially due to the use of construction materials suitable for the harsh desert environment. This integrity analysis confirms that the buildings and site of Desert Holly still possess all seven aspects of integrity. The buildings of Desert Holly have undergone very few changes since construction and while some secondary recreational amenities have been lost (i.e., shuffleboard courts and putting course), all of the character-defining features survive as originally designed. The buildings and site retain a high degree of integrity sufficient to qualify them for designation as an historic district.

Included in this nomination is a “Historic Preservation Plan” at Appendix IV. The plan is intended to serve as a road map for the Desert Holly HOA to further improve the integrity of the complex.

8. Bibliography

Attached is a list of books, articles, and other sources cited or used in preparing this application and other documentation that may be relevant.

Books

Bogert, Frank. *First Hundred Years*. Palm Springs, CA. Palm Springs Heritage Associates, 1987

Cygelman, Adele. *Palm Springs Modern*. New York: Rizzoli, 1999

Hess, Alan and Andrew Danish. *Palm Springs Weekend: The Architecture and Design of a Midcentury Oasis*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2001

National Park Service. *National Register Bulletin 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.

Rosenow, Erik. *The Architecture of Desert Leisure*. Palm Springs: Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, 2013

Newspapers, Magazines & Telephone Books

The Desert Sun newspaper. There are over 150 mentions of Desert Holly in the *Desert Sun* newspaper. While the majority are advertisements, the following articles bear mention: April 6, 1957 (New 42-Unit Cooperative Apartment Project Planned by Long Beach Man); June 6, 1957 (Variance Board To Hold Two Public Hearings); February 14, 1958 (Luxury of Hotel Living Offered in Your Own Home); March 1, 1958 (THIS SIDE of The Sun); and April 11, 1958 (Recreation, Comfort is Keynote at Desert Holly Co-op Apartments).

Independent-Press-Telegram newspaper. May 21, 1950 (Contemporary Preferred); June 11, 1950 (Makeup Problem Solved); April 29, 1951 (Contractors Association); April 25, 1954 (12-Unit Apartment); August 20, 1955 (Building Permits); August 26, 1955 (Building Permits); March 30, 1956 (Building Permits); April 21, 1957 (Building Palm Springs Apartments); October 27, 1957 (Desert Holly Apartments in Palm Springs Selling); November 3, 1957 (Introducing A New Way of Life in Palm Springs); April 24, 1960 (Palm Springs Units Selling); May 1, 1960 (New Comet Compact Visits Canyons of Palm Springs); November 18, 1961 (New Church Unit); July 29, 1962 (A Designer Proves Her Skill at Home); November 4, 1962 (LBCC Sets 5 Public Lectures); September 6, 1963 (Radio Note); August 29, 1965 (Temple Sinai to Rebuild); February 20, 1966 (Golden Sails Motel, Restaurant Complex Rising in Long Beach); April 4, 1967 (Building Permits Top \$1/2 Million); January 12, 1969 (Decorator's Dream); November 28, 1971 (Symphony Guild plans tour to spotlight four area homes); January 3, 1973 (Services set for W. J. O'Brien [Sr.], L.B. Contractor); and January 5, 1976 (Obituaries – Funerals).

Los Angeles Times newspaper. October 13, 1957 (Introducing A New Way of Life in Palm Springs).

The Tidings newspaper. March 2, 1958 (Desert Holly: Own Your Own Apt. in Palm Springs).

Palm Springs Villager magazine (January 1958, February 1958, March 1958, April 1958, and May 1958).

Telephone Directory. California Water & Telephone Company (for Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Desert Hot Springs, and Rancho Mirage), December, 1958.

"Yellow Book." Western Directory Co.'s Palm Springs Directory, 1961.

Other Sources Consulted

Historic Resources Group. *City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings*. Pasadena, 2015 (Final Draft, December 2018).

Architectural Resources Group. *City of Palm Springs Historic Resources Survey*. San Francisco, 2004.

Historic Site Preservation Board. *Inventory of Historic Structures*. Palm Springs, 2001.

www.newspapers.com

City of Palm Springs (Planning and Building Departments)

Palm Springs Historical Society

Riverside County Assessor's Office

9. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Approximately 0.771 acres (or 33,600 sq. ft.)
Property Boundary Description: See Appendices I and II.

10. Prepared By

Name/title: Ron & Barbara Marshall
Organization: Submitted on behalf of the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation in partnership with the Desert Holly Homeowners Association
Street address: 1775 East Palm Canyon Drive, Suite 110-195
City: Palm Springs State: CA Zip: 92264
Telephone: (760) 837-7117
e-mail address: info@pspreservationfoundation.org

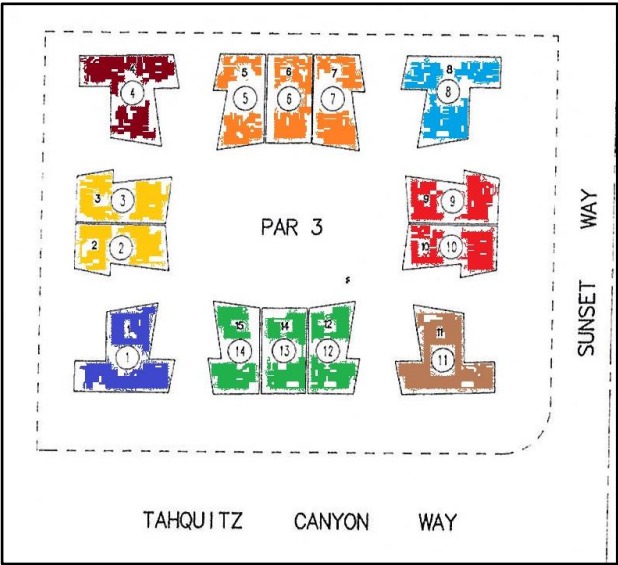
11. Required Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed application form. **Do not mount any exhibits on a board.**

1. **Attachment Sheets.** Include all supplemental information based on application form above).
2. **Maps:** For Historic Districts, include a sketch map identifying the proposed districts boundaries.
3. **Photographs:** Eight (8) sets of color photographs showing each elevation of the property and its surroundings.
4. **Non-owner's Notarized Signature:** If the applicant is not the owner, a notarized affidavit shall be provided (see following page).
5. **Site Plan:** One 1/8" to 1/4" scale drawing of the site, and eight reduction copies (8 ½ x 11 inches) The site plan shall show all of the following: Property boundaries, north arrow and scale, all existing buildings, structures, mechanical equipment, landscape materials, fences, walls, sidewalks, driveways, parking areas showing location of parking spaces, and signs. **Indicate the square footage and use of each building and the date(s) of construction.**
6. **Public Hearing Labels:** Three (3) sets of typed self-adhesive labels of all property owners, lessees, and sub-lessees of record. **The labels shall include the Assessor's parcel number, owner's name and mailing address of each property with 400 feet from the exterior limits of the subject property.** Additionally, all Assessor Parcel Maps clearly indicating the 400-foot radius and a certified letter from a title company licensed to conduct business in Riverside County, California shall be submitted.

Note: If any property on this list is owned by the United States Government in trust for the Agua Caliente Indian Tribe or individual allottee, copies of notices with postage paid envelopes will be submitted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to notify the individual Indian land owners of the public hearings.

Appendix I: Assessor's Map (oriented north)



Appendix II: Current Addresses and Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs)

<u>Address</u>	<u>APN</u>	<u>Building #</u>
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #1	502-085-001	1
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #2	502-085-002	2
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #3	502-085-003	2
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #4	502-085-004	3
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #5	502-085-005	4
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #6	502-085-006	4
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #7	502-085-007	4
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #8	502-085-008	5
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #9	502-085-009	6
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #10	502-085-010	6
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #11	502-085-011	7
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #12	502-085-012	8
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #14	502-085-013	8
2244 East Tahquitz Canyon Way Unit #15	502-085-014	8

(All addresses within Palm Springs, CA 92262)
(Building numbers are arbitrarily assigned for reference purposes only)

Appendix III: Partial Photographic Documentation of Buildings and Site Including Architectural Features

Note: Detailed photographic documentation of the Desert Holly condominium complex and common areas have been provided to the city's Director of Planning Services on a thumb drive. The following photographs are provided to illustrate various elevations and architectural features of the buildings, units and common areas.



This view of the southeast corner of Building #4, Unit #7 of Desert Holly, shows a number of architectural features including structural concrete blockwork married to post-and-beam construction, a 75-degree corner, shed roof, extensive glazing (including trapezoidal clerestory windows), deep eaves (including a projecting eave), tapering rafters, and inwardly-tilting fascia boards.



Jalousie window facing interior courtyard.



Detail of deep eave and tapering beams.



Looking north, one can discern the subtle butterfly roof line, jalousie and clerestory windows of Building #4. The biomorphically-shaped pool is in the foreground.



8"x8"x16" concrete block and colored mortar.



Round chimney flues are topped by unusual “pancake” spark arrestors.



Original Desert Holly signage (wooden letters mounted on pegboard) and small jalousie windows.



A portion of the eave on the east side of Building #2, Unit #3 was removed to accommodate this mature saguaro.



Original wooden door.

Appendix IV: Historic Preservation Plan

The following historic preservation plan is intended to help guide future improvements to Desert Holly and to expedite Certificates of Appropriateness. To that end, these specific improvements at Desert Holly are recommended:

1. Restoration of missing signage to its original location (one sign is extant, the other missing).
2. Restoration of missing jalousie windows.
3. Reconstruction of the demolished shuffleboard courts and spectator benches in their original location.
4. Reconstruction of the demolished “Pitch-and-Putt” golf course in its original location.
5. Removal of patio covers currently installed at Units #4, #9, #10, and #11.

No assessment has been made as to whether or not there is substantial merit in replacing the current front door light fixtures with the original front door light fixtures. The original light fixtures do not appear to be of any exceptional quality or unique design. To its credit, the Desert Holly HOA retains the original front door light fixtures in storage. What are assumed to be the original patio light fixtures still survive at Units #5, #9, and #10.

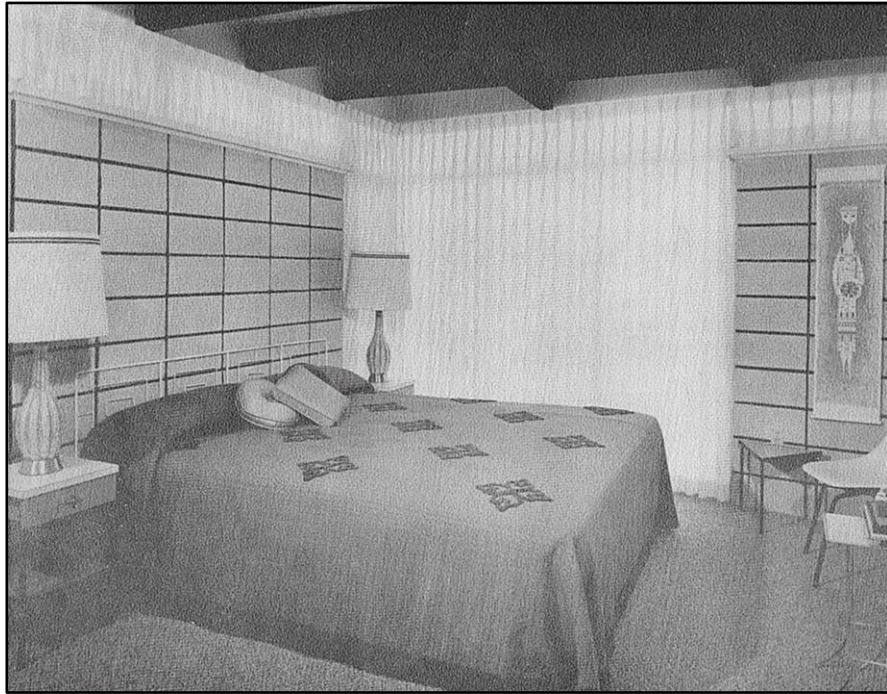


Vintage photograph of original front door light fixture.
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)

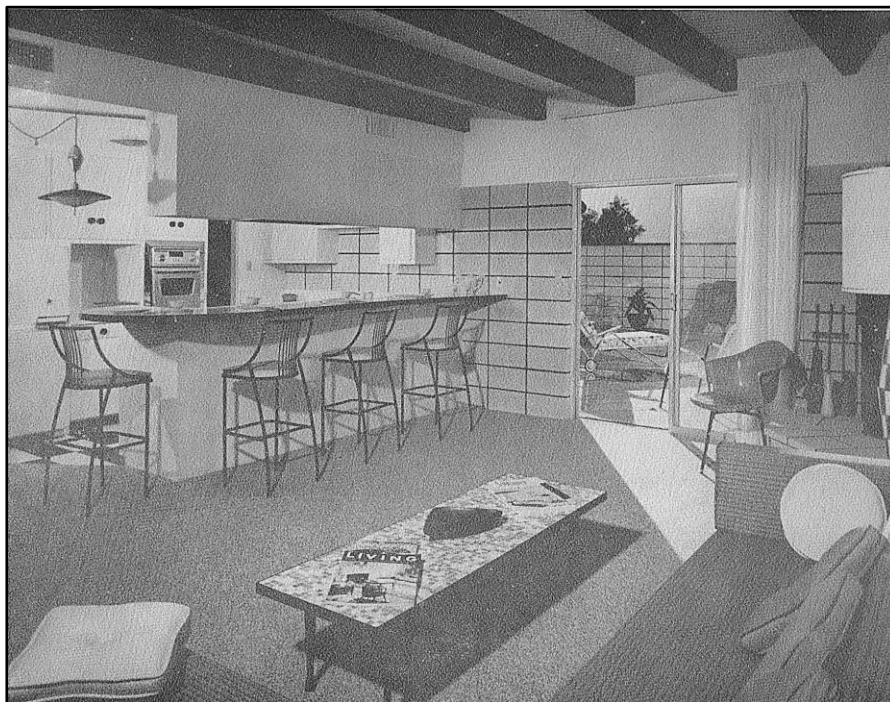


Photograph of patio light fixture (assumed to be original) at Unit #9.

Appendix V: Miscellaneous



Vintage professional photograph of the interior of a Desert Holly unit showing the concrete block and colored mortar in the bedroom.
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)



Vintage professional photograph of a Desert Holly unit showing the concrete block, colored mortar and painted ceiling beams in the kitchen and living room.
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)

New 42-Unit Cooperative Apartment Project Planned by Long Beach Man

Ultimate construction of a 42-unit cooperative apartment project to be known as Desert Holly, with the first 14 units now under construction, was announced this week by William O'Brien, contractor and builder.

The new cooperative is located at the corner of McCallum Way and Sunset Way, approximately 2,000 feet east of Sunrise Way, and is expected to cost approximately \$750,000 when completed, O'Brien said.

THE FIRST 14 units will be ready for occupancy sometime in October of this year. O'Brien said the sale of these units will have unique features,

THE RECREATIONAL area in addition to a large swimming pool, will have a shuffleboard zone. O'Brien, who hails from Long Beach, has been a general building contractor in that city for more than 11 years. His father, William O'Brien, Sr., although 70 years of age, has been engaged in construction for more than 38 years and is taking an active interest in the cooperative apartment now under construction here.

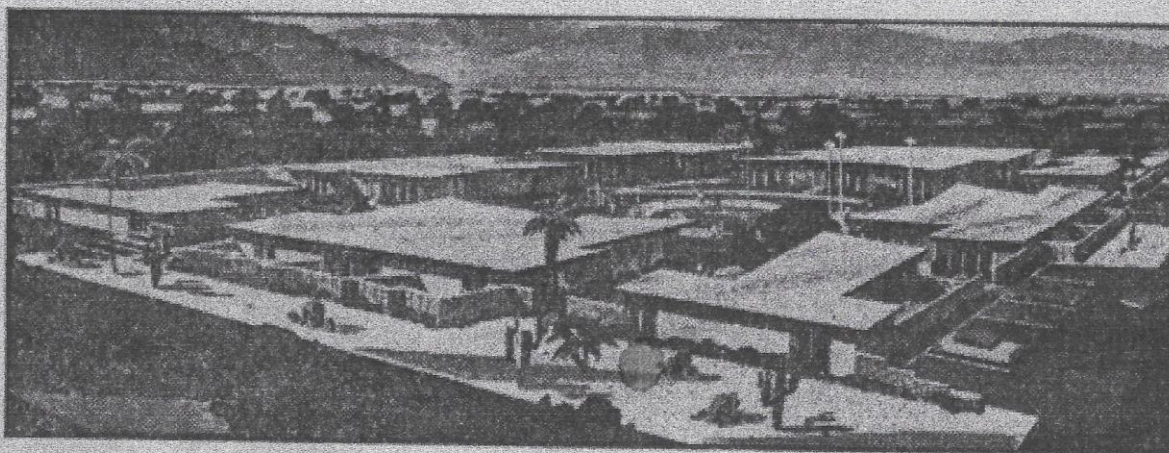


NEW COOPERATIVE to be known as the Desert Holly Apartments, which will ultimately cost approximately \$750,000, is under construction at McCallum Way and Sunset Way. William O'Brien, Long Beach general contractor, is the owner and builder, with sale of the apartments to take place sometime this summer when the sales plans are completed, he said.

The April 6, 1957 issue of the *Desert Sun* newspaper heralded the coming Desert Holly Apartments and identified "William O'Brien, Long Beach general contractor" as the "owner and builder" of the complex. The newspaper also reported the construction cost of Desert Holly as "approximately \$750,000." (Courtesy Desert Holly archives)

DESERT HOLLY

Own Your Own
Apt. in Palm Springs



Own one of these beautiful apartments
with no maintenance or upkeep problems.

Here is permanent ownership, without responsibility, that offers you a new concept of living, plus all these exclusive advantages:

- ✓ Maintenance and upkeep of your apartment provided for.
- ✓ You actually own the deed to your apartment and an undivided interest in the entire plot of land.
- ✓ 14 all ground floor units planned for the utmost in privacy.
- ✓ Large swimming pool, shuffle board courts, 9-hole putting green.
- ✓ 2-bedroom, 2 baths or 1 bedroom, 1 bath units.
- ✓ Furnished & Unfurnished
- ✓ Built-in ranges, ovens.
- ✓ Fireplaces.
- ✓ Completely draped.
- ✓ Refrigerated air-conditioning.
- ✓ Private Patios.

Models Open Daily—2244 McCallum Way, Palm Springs—FAirview 5-2238 or 5-2997

Wm. J. O'Brien Jr. & Associates, Owner-Builder

GRAHAM DEXTER, REALTOR, EXCLUSIVE AGENT, 315 N. PALM CANYON DRIVE, PALM SPRINGS

The Tidings newspaper (published by the Los Angeles Diocese of the Catholic Church) ran this advertisement for Desert Holly on March 2, 1958.
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)

DESERT HOLLY Apartment Homes

2244 McCallum Way



You Own Your Own

A True Co-op — Live in Luxury
Eliminate Maintenance and Up-keep Problems

Sun in Your Private Patio — Swim in Your Heated Pool —
Putt on Your 9-Hole Green — Play Shuffleboard

Know the Convenience of Your Modern Kitchen —
Built-in Stove, Oven, Dishwasher, Disposal,
Exhaust Fan and Refrigerator

Know the Comfort of Refrigerated Air-Conditioning
Fireplace and Furnace Heat

Deed and Policy of Title Insurance
14 ALL GROUND FLOOR UNITS

Exclusive Agents

Graham Dexter, Realtor

315 N. Palm Canyon Dr. FA: 5-2238

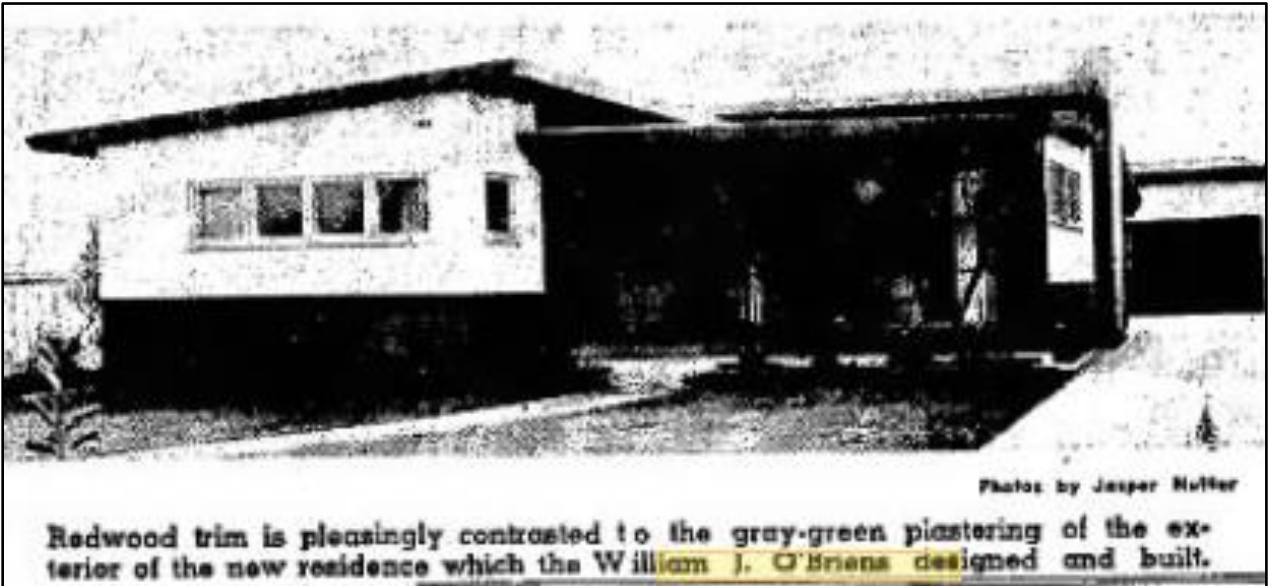
The February 1958 issue of *Palm Springs Villager* magazine ran this advertisement which shows an elevated view of Desert Holly looking towards the southeast.
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)



The February 28, 1958 issue of the *Desert Sun* newspaper featured this photograph of new Desert Holly residents receiving their keys. The new residents appear to be sitting on the original benches of the shuffleboard court. Two chimneys can be seen on the background.
(Courtesy *Desert Sun* newspaper)



The May 1, 1961 issue of the *Independent-Press-Telegram* newspaper of Long Beach chronicled the arrival of the new Mercury Comet station wagon to Desert Holly. Shown are the O'Briens and some of the original Desert Holly signage.
(Courtesy Desert Holly archives)



The May 21, 1950 issue of the *Independent-Press-Telegram* newspaper featured an article entitled "Contemporary Preferred," showing a photograph of O'Brien's modernist home (with shed roof) at 515 Panama Avenue in Long Beach. The caption asserts the home was "designed and built" by the O'Briens.
(Courtesy *Independent-Press-Telegram* newspaper)

O'BRIEN, William J.,
age 61. Survived by sister, **Madeline S. Dallas;**
and aunt, Mrs. Marshall
B. Craig. Rosary Monday,
7:30 p.m., Sheelar/Stricklin
Chapel. Funeral Mass Tuesday,
9:00 a.m., St. Matthew's Church.

The January 5, 1976 issue of the *Independent-Press-Telegram* newspaper of Long Beach reported the death of William J. O'Brien, Jr.
(Courtesy *Independent-Press-Telegram* newspaper)