

REGENCY REVIVAL

The Regency Revival style, also known as Hollywood Regency, is seen almost exclusively in the design of single-family and multi-family residential architecture from about the mid-1930s until about 1970; most examples in Palm Springs date to the 1960s. The style references in part the architecture and design that developed in Britain in the early 19th century. Like the original Regency style, Regency Revival includes elements of Neoclassical and French Empire design; however, its attenuated classical ornament and simple surfaces reflect the influence of the Modern Movement. The style first appeared in the United States in the mid-1930s as a stripped-down version of Neoclassicism that exhibited both the influence of Streamline Moderne and the simplified yet exaggerated qualities of Hollywood film sets. Its early development was interrupted by World War II and the resulting halt of private construction. It resumed after the war with the work of architects such as John Elgin Woolf, whose designs emphasized symmetry, privacy, exaggerated entrances and prominent mansard roofs. Post-World War II Regency Revival buildings are characterized by theatrical arched entrances with an exaggerated vertical emphasis, usually positioned in projecting pavilions with high, steep roofs; symmetrical, largely blank primary façades; and eccentrically detailed, unconventionally proportioned Classical columns and ornamentation juxtaposed against large expanses of blank wall.

In Palm Springs, Regency Revival design can be found in custom residences, such as that at 2205 Yosemite (c. 1965), as well as in multi-family developments. In some cases a Regency Revival portico was tacked on to dress up an otherwise standard tract home, as at 2996 Avery Drive in Araby Estates. Designer James McNaughton was a local practitioner of the style.

Character-defining features include:

- Symmetrical façade
- Tall, steeply pitched mansard, hipped or gable roofs, especially over entrance; frequently a flat roof over remainder
- Blank wall surfaces veneered in smooth plaster; some examples may have brick veneer or wood
- Vertically exaggerated arched entrance doors, sometimes set in projecting pavilions
- Tall, narrow windows, often with arched tops
- Eccentrically detailed and unconventionally proportioned Neo-Classical features including double-height porticoes, thin columns, pediments, fluted pilasters, niches, and balconettes with iron railings
- Exaggerated applied ornament, such as large lanterns or sconces



Araby Estates Model Home 1 (1965-1966) at 2996 Avery Drive.

FINAL DRAFT – FOR CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL

City of Palm Springs

Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings

HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP