

Building

1157 Ponce de Leon Avenue (Commercial)  
Town of Rio Piedras  
Municipality of San Juan  
Puerto Rico

HABS No. PR-130

HABS  
PR  
7-RIOPI,  
1-

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<sup>1</sup> SURVEY

1157 PONCE DE LEON AVENUE (COMMERCIAL)

HABS No. PR-130

HABS  
PR  
7-RIOP,  
1-

**Location:** 1157 Ponce de León Avenue (Commercial Building)  
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 early 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:** 1960. Source: 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.
2. **Architect:** Not Known
3. **Original and subsequent owners:** Sr. Jose L. Corral Peguero & Angela Nieves
4. **Builder, contractor, suppliers:** Not known
5. **Original plans and construction:** 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 1920-40 most of the original buildings were replaced with substantial buildings. During the 1960 decade many of the early 20th century buildings on Avenida Ponce de León were replaced with other substantial buildings of no specific style. Although the newer buildings were designed specifically for the dual role of commerce on the street level and dwelling on the upper levels, some, such as "1157 Ponce de León" were of a single level and designed specifically for commercial and/or light industry uses. Typically, this latter building type contained a large interior work/storage space and very small spaces dedicated to administrative/clerical and sanitary uses. The Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Officer has requested that it be specified that this building was formerly a bakery.

Information on events and persons connected with the building has not been found. The original names, occupants and various uses for the building are unknown.

Additional sources of information for researchers include:

Ocasio Meléndez, Marcial E., *Estudio e Inventario de los Recursos Históricas y Arquitectónicas 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.

1157 PONCE DE LEON AVENUE (COMMERCIAL)  
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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 exhibits neither architectural interests or merits, nor does it help to maintain the volumetric scale of the street wall due to separation from the street.
2. **Condition of fabric:** The building shows evidence of various drastic interventions which have eliminated the possibility of understanding the historical condition of the fabric.

**B. Description of Exterior**

1. **Overall dimensions:** The building is "L" shaped with the following exterior dimensions: front facade of 54' - 2", rear of building 96' - 0", longest depth There are five bays across the front elevation of the single story. It contains no basement, loft, or galleries. There is only one main section with no wings.
2. **Foundations:** Foundations are of reinforced concrete of unknown thickness. The water table is unknown.
3. **Walls:** Walls are finished with Portland cement plaster and pink-colored semi-gloss paint. The wall base exhibits burgundy-colored semi-gloss. Ornamental features are flat clay tiles. The source of materials is unknown.
4. **Structural system, framing:** The structural system is based on a structural grid supported by load-bearing columns and load-bearing exterior walls. The floor system is reinforced concrete. The northern half of the building contains a steel joist structural frame system.
5. **Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads:** There are no porches, stoops, balconies, or bulkheads.
6. **Chimneys:** The building was designed without chimney.
7. **Openings**
  - a. **Doorways and doors:** The frontal (west) facade contains a storefront-type double door. Doors consist of aluminum frames with fixed glass panels. The frontal facade door opening is protected with metal gates. Internal doorways have been vandalized, and frames and doors have been removed.

- b. **Windows and shutters:** The frontal (west) facade contains two fixed glass panel windows with aluminum frames. Other window openings have been vandalized, and window panels and frames have been removed.

8. **Roof**

- a. **Shape, covering:** The roof is flat. The north half is of galvanized steel channeled panels. The south half is of reinforced concrete.
- b. **Cornice, eaves:** The frontal (west) facade contains a straight overhang covered with flat clay tiles. There are no cornices or eaves. There are no notable features.
- c. **Dormers, cupolas, towers:** There are no dormers, cupolas, or towers.

C. **Description of Interior**

- 1. **Floor plans:** See enclosed sketch plan.
- 2. **Stairways:** There are no stairways in the building.
- 3. **Flooring:** Flooring is of reinforced concrete with smooth surface of natural color.
- 4. **Wall and ceiling finish:** Walls are finished with Portland cement plaster covered with beige colored semi-gloss paint. There are no cornices or any other notable decorative details. The north half of the ceiling contained 2' x 4' acoustical panel which has been vandalized and removed. The south half of the ceiling is of exposed reinforced concrete slab.
- 5. **Openings**
  - a. **Doorways and doors:** Typical doorways originally consisted of wood frames and wood panel doors which have been vandalized and removed. There are no notable doorways.
  - b. **Windows:** There are no notable interior window trims. Natural lighting is limited to door and window openings.
- 6. **Decorative features and trim:** There are no decorative features or trims.
- 7. **Hardware:** All hardware has been vandalized and removed.

**8. Mechanical equipment**

- a. **Heating, air conditioning, ventilation:** The original ventilation system was forced-draft air conditioning. There are no remaining devices of interest.
- b. **Lighting:** The original pendant lighting fixtures have been vandalized and removed.
- c. **Plumbing:** The original plumbing system consisted of cast iron pipe imbedded into concrete floors and walls. All exposed plumbing components have been vandalized and removed.

9. **Original furnishings:** Research efforts have not disclosed the description and/or location of any original pieces of historical interest.

**D. Site**

1. **General setting and orientation:** The building is located in the eastern street wall of Ponce de León Avenue, and its frontal facade faces west. Vegetation within the property consists primarily of small patches of grass growing in cracks and fissures on the pavement and surfaces of the parking lot.
2. **Historic landscape design:** Research efforts have not disclosed any evidence of historic landscape design.
3. **Outbuildings:** Research efforts have not disclosed any evidence of the existence of outbuildings.

**PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- A. **Original Architectural Drawings:** Research efforts have not disclosed original and alteration drawings.
- B. **Early Views:** Research efforts have not disclosed photographs, engravings, or any other early views.
- C. **Interviews:** Research efforts have not identified any persons associated with the early use of the building.
- 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. Document located at the Tren Urbano Office and at the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office.

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 likely sources of information not yet investigated.

**F. Supplemental Material**

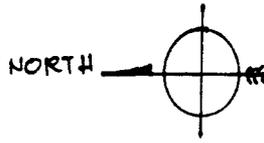
Research efforts have not disclosed any supplemental materials.

**PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION**

This documentation is a mitigative recording required by a Memorandum of Agreement 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.

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



FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
DRAWING: ALEXANDER FERNANDEZ  
JULY 2, 1997

