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Sarasota Architectural Foundation to Open Cocoon House for Public Tours

Historic Rudolph Home Under Restoration for July Opening

Sarasota, FL. (May 16, 2018) – Sarasota Architectural Foundation (SAF) is pleased to announce that Ralph Twitchell and Paul Rudolph’s historic 1950 Cocoon House will open for public tours beginning in July 2018.

“Cocoon House exemplifies one of the major characteristics of modern architecture, open space planning, which has recently been popularized by HGTV as ‘open concept,’ but has been practiced since the early 20th century,” said Christopher Wilson, SAF board chair.

Advocating the importance of preserving these midcentury modern gems is part of the SAF mission and in conjunction with Pat Ball of Ball Construction, the organization is moving forward with certain cosmetic repairs to restore the iconic residence close to its original appearance.

SAF has secured a 12-month lease on the historic Healy Guest House, nicknamed Cocoon House. Through its network of like-minded followers, SAF was alerted that the building was available for rent. Aware of the unique opportunity this represented, SAF moved to sign a lease that allows opening up the building to the public during this Paul Rudolph centennial year.

The Cocoon House will be available for regularly scheduled tours beginning in July 2018 similar to the SAF sponsored tours of the Paul Rudolph’s 1953 Umbrella House on Lido Shores.

Cocoon House was named “Best House Design of the Year” from the AIA in 1949; selected by MoMA New York as one of 19 examples of houses built since WWII that were

"pioneers of design" in 1953; and locally designated as a historic property by the City of Sarasota in 1985.

Located on Bayou Louise Lane on Siesta Key, Cocoon House is a two-bedroom, one-bath, 800-square-foot cottage built as a guesthouse for Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Healy. The house gets its name from the technology used to build its roof: a polymer spray that Paul Rudolph saw being used at the Brooklyn Navy Yard on warships returning after WWII in order to "cocoon" or moth-ball them. Rudolph's creativity made him realize that this material could also be used in the construction industry.

SAF's previous preservation initiatives have included conducting a community-wide charette to convince the Sarasota County School Board to properly renovate Paul Rudolph's 1960 Sarasota High School 1960. SAF was also instrumental in preserving the concrete canopies that connect Rudolph's high school with the original high school, now being transformed into the Sarasota Museum of Art by Ringling College of Art + Design.

SAF continues to educate about, advocate and celebrate mid-century architecture as represented by the Sarasota School of Architecture.

For more information, visit sarasotaarchitecturalfoundation.org.