

**Florida National Register Review Board
R. A. Gray Building, Room 307
Tallahassee, Florida
February 7, 2019
Meeting Minutes**

Commission Members Present In-Person: Dr. Clifford Smith, Chair; Mr. Rick Gonzalez, Vice Chair; Ms. Marion Almy

Commission Members Present via Webinar: None

Florida Department of State Officials and Staff Present: Timothy Parsons, Division Director and State Historic Preservation Officer; Angela E. Tomlinson, Assistant Director and Deputy SHPO; Alissa Slade Lotane, Bureau Chief and Deputy SHPO; Susanne Hunt, Outreach Programs Supervisor; Ruben Acosta, Survey and Registration Supervisor; Timothy Knoepke, Historic Preservation Grants Supervisor; Michael Hart, State Historical Marker Coordinator; Megan McDonald, Certified Local Government Coordinator; Andrew Waber, Historic Preservationist; Max Adriel Imberman, Historic Preservationist; Eric Case, Historic Preservation Grants Specialist; Laura Bright, Historic Preservation Grants Specialist; Corey Lentz, Historic Sites Specialist; Robin Jackson, Historic Preservationist, State Land Projects; Kristen Hall, Historic Sites Specialist

Florida Department of State Officials Present via Webinar: None

Guests Present: Vinnie Luisi, Director of Dunedin Historical Museum and member of the Florida Historical Commission; Charlene Neuterman, Deputy Director of Community Service, Cocoa; Kelley Kyle, Deland Hotel; Ross Janke, Deland Hotel, Owner

Guests Present via Webinar: None

I. Call to Order and Roll Call
The meeting was called to order by Dr. Smith at 1:34 p.m. Mr. Acosta read the housekeeping notes addressing the webinar. All board members were present.

II. Introduction of Commission, Staff, and Guests
Commission, staff, and guests introduced themselves.

III. Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Almy made a motion to adopt the agenda for the meeting. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

IV. Election of Officers

Mr. Acosta explained that the National Register Review Board bylaws require an election at the first meeting of each calendar year. Ms. Almy made a motion to retain the board which was elected at the previous meeting, with Dr. Smith as Chair and Mr. Gonzalez as Vice-Chair. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

V. Remarks by Chairperson on Purpose of Meeting

Dr. Smith described the purpose and process of the National Register Review Board.

VI. Approval of Minutes from November 8, 2018 Meeting

Mr. Gonzalez made a motion to approve the minutes for the November 8, 2018 meeting. Ms. Almy seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

VII. Director's Comments

Dr. Parsons welcomed the commissioners and thanked them for their time and their service.

VIII. Review of Nomination Proposals

- A. Florida Historic Black Public Schools Multiple Property Submission Additional Documentation** was presented by Mr. Acosta. The additional documentation expanded the scope of material covered by the Florida Historic Black Public Schools Multiple Property Submission to add context through 1972. The documentation provides context for Florida's black public schools in the period following the Supreme Court decision of Brown v. Board of Education, as the state struggled to transition its school systems out of segregation.

Ms. Almy and Mr. Gonzalez complimented the research and writing of the additional documentation for the Multiple Property Submission.

A motion was made by Ms. Almy to forward the additional documentation to the National Park Service to amend the listed Florida Historic Black Public Schools Multiple Property Submission. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

- B. Cocoa Junior High School, Cocoa, Brevard County** was presented by Mr. Acosta. The building is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Education and Ethnic Heritage: Black. The period of significance extends from its date of construction in 1923 until the building ceased to be used as a school in 1954. Constructed with support from the Julius Rosenwald Fund in 1923, Cocoa Junior High School is the oldest remaining Rosenwald School in the state of Florida. It was the first school built specifically for African American children in Cocoa, and was the only public school for black children in that community for many years. The building also housed Cocoa's first black high school starting in 1947, when it was renamed Monroe High School. The school was built in the heart of an African American neighborhood and quickly became a focal point in African American community life, hosting numerous meetings and community events. Teachers at Cocoa Junior High School were revered and respected, and two of its educators initiated one of the earliest civil rights cases in the state of Florida. For much of the local community, Cocoa Junior High School has come to represent the significant accomplishments of Cocoa's African American community in the long struggle for educational equality.

Cocoa Junior High School is also being proposed at the local and state level for listing under Criterion B for its association with Harry T. Moore and John E. Gilbert. Moore was a former

fourth grade teacher at the school who initiated a pioneering 1938 civil rights case *Gilbert v. Board of Public Instruction of Brevard County, Florida* with John E. Gilbert, principal of Cocoa Junior High School.

Cocoa Junior High School also contributes to the *Florida's Historic Black Public Schools* Multiple Property Submission under the historic contexts Section E: Progressive Era Through the Florida Land Boom, 1897-1928 and Great Depression to the Era of Integration, 1929-1971, and the F.1 Property Type: Black Public Schools.

Mr. Gonzalez asked Mr. Acosta why the nomination was not written to include Criterion C for the area of significance in Architecture. Mr. Acosta responded that integrity concerns for the interior prevented that criterion from being utilized in this particular nomination.

Mr. Gonzalez asked whether or not the life and work of Harry T. Moore will be included in the museum housed in the building. Ms. Neuterman responded affirmatively, saying that research on the topic is ongoing.

Ms. Neuterman spoke after the presentation, saying that the city acquired the building after it had been converted into a childcare center, a process which had already damaged its historic integrity. The interior walls were not structurally stable, according to Ms. Neuterman, but the conversion process into a museum is being done sympathetically.

Ms. Almy described the Cocoa Junior High School as a flagship project for the Florida Division of Historical Resources and how preservation can be an economic engine to develop and empower communities.

A motion was made by Mr. Gonzalez to forward the nomination to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Ms. Almy seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

- C. **Cocoa Post Office, Cocoa, Brevard County** was presented by Mr. Acosta. The building is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Politics/Government, and Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Its period of significance begins in 1940, when it was constructed as a modern post office through the New Deal WPA program, through 1970, after it had been converted into offices for several government organizations by the General Services Administration. Through these three decades, the Cocoa Post Office was a building from which the government of the United States served the Cocoa community, first as a post office, then as a location for armed forces recruitment. It also housed the local draft board during the Vietnam War. The building served as a field office for the Federal Bureau of Investigation during the height of the Space Race in the 1960s. The building was constructed in a characteristic WPA Art Deco style, and is the only Cocoa representative of this Moderne WPA influence, in a city downtown primarily defined by the earlier styles popular during the Florida Land Boom. Both visually and in terms of its usage through the first three decades of its history and beyond, the building is representative of the impact of the United States government upon the city of Cocoa.

The Cocoa Post Office also contributes to the *Florida's New Deal Resources* Multiple Property Submission under this historic context of The New Deal in Florida, 1933-1943, and the F.1 Property Type: Buildings.

Mr. Luisi asked why national level of significance was not pursued for this nomination. Mr. Acosta responded saying that while the building is associated with national events, its significance is primarily associated with activities in Cocoa and Brevard County.

A motion was made by Ms. Almy to forward the nomination to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Mr. Rodriguez seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

- D. The Grove Additional Documentation and Boundary Increase, Tallahassee, Leon County** was presented by Mr. Acosta. The presented document is an amendment to the existing Grove National Register nomination, which was listed in 1972. The Grove was originally listed under Criterion A for Politics and Criterion C for Architecture. This amendment seeks to both expand the existing criteria plus establish additional criteria based upon further research which has taken place at The Grove since 1972. In addition to its significance under Politics/Government, The Grove is also being listed under Criterion A at the local level for Exploration/Settlement. The Grove is also being proposed for listing under Criterion B at the state and local levels in the areas of Politics, Military and Conservation for its association with Governor Thomas “LeRoy” Collins, Mary Call Darby Collins, Governor Richard Keith Call, Ellen Call Long and Milton S. Littlefield. The Grove is also being listed under Criterion B at the local level for Exploration/Settlement and Commerce for its association with Governor Richard Keith Call and Social History for its association with Ellen Call Long.

The amendment also seeks to expand and clarify the existing National Register boundaries of the property to include the full property of The Grove as it appeared under the ownership of the Collins family (1942-1985). The original nomination for The Grove does not clearly state a boundary for the nominated property, providing only a single location point and encompassing an area of less than one acre. This implies that only the Call-Collins House is listed in the National Register and excludes significant associated historic resources. In addition to clarifying the boundary, the expansion includes the contributing cemetery, which is the oldest resource on the property, and the Burr Cottage, which was constructed by Grove owner Reinette Long Hunt in the 1930s as part of the Grove Hotel operations. It was later acquired by the Collins family and was part of their holdings while living at The Grove.

Mr. Gonzalez said that he considered The Grove to be one of the most exquisite buildings in the State of Florida.

A motion was made by Mr. Gonzalez to forward the additional documentation and boundary increase to the National Park Service to amend the listed nomination for The Grove. Ms. Almy seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

- E. Spook Hill, Lake Wales, Polk County** was presented by Mr. Acosta. The site is significant at the local level in the area of Entertainment/Recreation. The period of significance for Spook Hill is 1950-1969, starting in the year with the oldest recorded image of the site as a tourist attraction, and running through the mid-century period in which it had its greatest local prominence. Spook Hill was a significant local tourist attraction well-suited to the automotive age following World War II. A gravity hill optical illusion which presents visitors with the feeling of driving uphill when they are truly going downhill, the site has experienced the development of a rich heritage of

local legends, mostly concerned with the supernatural. Expressed through signage, advertising brochures, and even a locally-produced play, the legends of Spook Hill are an excellent example of the craft of legend-building applied to a local tourist attraction. With an expansive lore consisting of a series of narratives which increasingly connected the site to the pivotal aspects of Florida history, the stories of Spook Hill show the ways that successful branding imbued a site with increased meaning and appeal. The site's history also demonstrates the connections between Lakes Wales' mid-century tourist attractions and other local businesses, a synergistic relationship characterized by sponsorships, advertising and printed materials.

A motion was made by Ms. Almy to forward the nomination to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

- F. Eastwood Terrace Hotel, Deland, Volusia County** was presented by Mr. Acosta. The building is significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a good example of a Prairie style hotel remaining in Deland. The Eastwood Terrace Hotel served as a hotel from its initial opening in 1924 through 1975. During the 1930s, in addition to serving as a hotel, the property also housed the winter session students of the Sea Pines School of Charm and Personality for Young Women. The main location of the school was in Cape Cod, Massachusetts. The hotel closed in 1975, was remodeled and re-opened in the 1990s as a bed & breakfast inn along with a restaurant, shops, professional offices and a hair salon. Now known as the Deland Hotel, the boutique hotel caters to both visitors to Deland and residents. This consistency of use resulted in the property undergoing minimal changes over the years. Consequently, this property retains a high degree of its original architectural integrity.

Mr. Janke discussed the process and complexities of preserving the Eastwood Terrace Hotel. Ms. Almy asked Mr. Janke what got him interested in preserving the Eastwood Terrace Hotel. He responded that he was in the market to buy a historic house, saw the building, and almost immediately decided to purchase it, having fallen in love with it.

Mr. Gonzalez said he loved the intact setting.

A motion was made by Mr. Gonzalez to forward the nomination to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Ms. Almy seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

IX. Other Business

Mr. Gonzalez asked if staff could keep track of when National Register listed resources come under threat or are impacted by damage from natural disasters. He cited the example of the Coconut Grove Playhouse as a recently listed resource which current local development plans seem to be adversely impacting. He asked if the SHPO could educate Certified Local Governments on their power to consult with the state on development plans and National Register eligibility impact.

Regarding the impact of disasters, Dr. Parsons responded that the Section 106 process and the federal government would usually have the most immediate and tangible impact upon environmental and resiliency concerns. But as a counter example he also stated that the

National Park Service’s position on building elevation as incompatible with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation results in delays to sustainability and resiliency projects for historic properties in flood-prone areas.

Responding to Mr. Gonzalez’s development concerns, Dr. Parsons said that local preservation boards have the power to make determinations, and that the Miami preservation board is consulting the SHPO on the particulars of the Coconut Grove Playhouse alterations.

X. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

XI. Motion to Adjourn

Ms. Almy moved to adjourn. The meeting ended at 3:46 p.m.

Chair, National Register Review Board

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

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