



City of Stuart

**HISTORIC SURVEY UPDATE REPORT
FOR
DOWNTOWN STUART
THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA**



Prepared for
STUART MAIN STREET, INC.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Historic Property Associates, Inc. (HPA) of St. Augustine, Florida conducted an area survey of historic properties in Downtown Stuart, Florida beginning in November 2022. Stuart is located in the St. Lucie River Region of Martin County, Florida (Figure 1). The city is a major transportation hub with connections to highways, railways [we currently do not have any actual connections to railways; however, the tracks go through town], and waterways. The area surveyed covers thirty-seven (37) blocks in the urban core of the city, specifically the Main Street District and the Triangle, consisting primarily of the 1912 Potsdam Plat Subdivision (Figure 2). The survey was sponsored and conducted for Stuart Main Street, Inc. and occurred between November 2022 and June 2023. The survey was conducted to fulfill requirements under a Historic Preservation Small-Matching Grant, grant number 23. h.sm.200.037.

The objectives of the survey were to, at a minimum, record 196 combined original and updated properties using Florida Master Site File (FMSF) forms for all properties 50 years or older. HPA utilized the Historic Structure Form v5 and assessed properties for their individual eligibility for listing in the *National Register of Historic Places* (NRHP) as well as their potential for contribution to a historic district. All work was intended to comply with Section 106 of the *National Historic Preservation Act* (NHPA) of 1966 (as amended) implemented by 36 CFR 800 (Protection of Historic Properties), Chapter 267 F.S. and the minimum field methods, data analysis, and reporting standards embodied in the Florida Department of Historic Resources (FDHR) *Historic Compliance Review Program* (November 1990). All work also conformed to the professional guidelines set forth in the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation* (48 FR 4416). Field survey methods complied with Chapter 1A-46 *Florida Administrative Code*.

The survey consisted of field inspection to verify all historic resources, including buildings, structures, sites and objects, and linear resources (such as roads and railways), within the project area constructed in 1974 or earlier. Data from the Martin County Property Appraiser and the FMSF was collected and cross referenced to ensure the accuracy of information with respect to buildings. A survey roster was obtained from the FMSF to verify previously recorded sites and avoid their duplication. Research conducted at local and state repositories focused on the historical context of the project area and site-specific information for individual buildings and other properties.

In total, 480 properties were assessed through a desktop reconnaissance and field inspection, including one (1) statue, one (1) railroad, and (1) structure (the City of Stuart Water Tower). Of the surveyed properties, HPA recorded two hundred (200), using the FMSF form, that satisfied the age and integrity requirements for historic property surveys. Of those recorded, one hundred and eighteen (118) resources were previously recorded and were updated. The remaining eighty-two (82) resources were recorded for the first time. The survey resulted in the potential eligibility for one National Register Historic District within the survey area. The evaluation includes a map and an inventory of contributing buildings and other properties in the potential district. Additional buildings were evaluated as being individually eligible for the National Register. The staff of the Bureau of Historic Preservation confirmed eligibility of the district through review and approval of a Preliminary Site Information Questionnaire in May, 2023.



Final deliverables include both new and updated FMSF forms, maps, images, and all other associated data; a Survey Log Sheet and associated map; and a file database. An inventory of resources can be found in **Appendix I** of this report.

The survey data will be curated by the City of Stuart as part of the Martin County Digital Resource Initiative. The Martin County Library is the lead organizer of the Initiative. The City of Stuart and Stuart Main Street will retain hard and digital copies of the data and will make digital copies available to the Stuart Heritage Museum. The Florida Master Site File will also receive hard and digital copies of the data.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project was financed in part with the historic preservation grant assistance provided by the Bureau of Historic Preservation, Division of Historical Resources, Florida Department of State, assisted by the Florida Historical Commission.

HPA would like to thank the Stuart Main Street, Inc. and City of Stuart Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) staffs for their assistance. In particular, Stuart Main Street Executive Director, Candace Callahan provided historical information and accompanied the consultant on a field survey of Downtown Stuart. Pinal Gandhi-Savdas, Executive Director of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), City of Stuart provided maps and property appraiser data on all pre-1975 properties in the survey area. Dr. Jacqui May, Grants Administrator of the City of Stuart, greatly assisted with historic research on many individual properties and accompanied the consultant on several days of field survey, and with editorial support. Jodi Riley of Jodi Riley Consulting, LLC administered the grant and kept the project on schedule. The Florida Master Site File staff, particularly Christopher Fowler, were invaluable for providing prompt baseline information for the project team to build upon.

The project team would like to thank local historians Janice Hutchinson, Emeline Paige, Sandra Henderson Thurlow, and Alice L. Luckhardt for their detailed histories of Stuart and Martin County. Ms. Thurlow's *Stuart on the St. Lucie, A Pictorial History* with its copious bibliography, footnotes and photographs was particularly helpful. Sadly, Ms. Luckhardt passed in the fall of 2022, but her books and her historical articles in the *Stuart News* live on. HPA hopes that the 2023 Survey of Downtown Stuart will build on their legacy.



INTRODUCTION

Until recent decades historic preservation occupied little attention in the nation's communities. Its advocates were until then often regarded as elitists who joined a cause reserved to people of wealth and leisure. Before the 1960s, moreover, federal and state government devoted few resources to historic preservation, leaving the field to municipal government and, largely, local effort. Since the late 1960's that situation has changed. The post-World War II flight to suburbia and commencement of the interstate highway construction program seriously undermined the nation's historic fabric and resources. A developing sense of historical consciousness and the hard economic realities of inner-city decline, among other factors, inspired the development of a national historic preservation program that after nearly six decades embraces thousands of local governments, neighborhoods, preservation groups, businessmen, and private citizens.

In every community where buildings, structures, or historic sites and objects have survived the passage of time preservation of a kind has occurred. We usually associate the term historic preservation, however, with an organized effort to identify, evaluate, and protect buildings and sites that possess cultural or aesthetic value. The survey update of historic buildings in Downtown Stuart constitutes a necessary step in a rational program to preserve the community's significant cultural resources.

The 2022-2023 survey of historic properties in Downtown Stuart is a follow-up to an earlier survey conducted in 1991. Historic Property Associates conducted the initial survey, entitled "Historic Properties Survey of the City of Stuart, Florida" The 1991 survey focused on the pre-1940 era, although a few post-1940 buildings were included.

The purpose of the 2023 Survey is to update the original data including Florida Master Site File forms. A further purpose is to record additional buildings and sites in Downtown Stuart constructed between 1940 and 1974 and any other resources at least fifty years old not recorded in previous surveys. The present study is intended to provide an authoritative basis for the designation of Downtown Stuart as a National Register District. The survey will ensure that there is data for all buildings that are at least fifty years old and may be considered contributing to the district. Historic contexts for the area have been reviewed, confirmed and expanded to include the Depression/New Deal/World War II and Post-World War II eras.

A potential National Register District will provide recognition for Downtown Stuart as well as limited protection from state and federal activities which could impact them. This protection is particularly important since major state and federal highways and a railroad crisscross the area and are one of the principal threats to historic buildings. National Register designation would further provide a source for local recognition of the district and protection of individual buildings from thoughtless demolition from federal and state developmental activities.



RESULTS OF LISTING A PROPERTY IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

WILL NOT DO

- Listing in the National Register or being determined eligible for listing **does not automatically preserve a building**, and does not keep a property from being modified or even destroyed.
- Unless an undertaking is state or federally funded, or regulated by local ordinance, private property owners may deal with their property in any way they see fit. Architects at the Division of Historical Resources are available to provide advice concerning the best ways to approach rehabilitation needs while maintaining the historic character of a property. For more information, call the Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation's [Architectural Preservation Services](#) Section at 850.245.6333.
- Private owners are **not** required to open their listed property to the public for visitation.
- The federal and state governments will **not** attach restrictive covenants to a property or seek to acquire it because of its listing in the National Register.

WILL DO

- The National Register provides recognition that the property is deemed by the federal and state governments to be significant in our history at the national, state, and/or local levels. Most properties are significant because of their local significance.
- The National Register identifies the properties that local, state, and federal planners should carefully consider when developing projects. Projects involving federal funding, permitting, licensing, or assistance and that may result in damage or loss of the historic values of a property that is **listed in the National Register or is eligible for listing** are reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Office and the federal [Advisory Council on Historic Preservation](#). A similar review takes place under state law for state or state-assisted undertakings. A typical example of projects that are given such review is road construction or improvement. For more information, visit the [Compliance Review Section](#) webpage or call the Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation at 850.245.6333.
- Listing may make a property eligible for a [Federal Income Tax Credit](#). If a registered property that is income producing undergoes a substantial rehabilitation carried out according to the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation](#), the owner may apply for a 20% income tax credit. The credit amounts to 20% of the cost of the rehabilitation. For more information, contact the [Architectural Preservation Services](#) Section of the Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation at 850.245.6333.

From Florida Division of Historical Resources website: dos.myflorida.com



SURVEY CRITERIA

Surveys conducted in association with the Division of Historical Resources, Florida Department of State, use the criteria for placement of historic properties in the National Register of Historic Places as a basis for site evaluations. In this way, the survey results can be used as a data bank for those agencies required to comply with state and federal preservation regulations. The criteria are worded in a subjective manner to provide for the diversity of resources in the United States. The following is taken from criteria published by United States Department of the Interior to evaluate properties for inclusion in the National Register.

Criteria for Evaluation

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association, and:

- A) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of our history; or
- B) that are associated with the lives of persons significant in the past; or
- C) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history.

Certain properties shall not ordinarily be considered for inclusion in the National Register. They include cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

- A) a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
- B) a building or structure from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or

C) a birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no appropriate site or building directly associated with his productive life; or

D) a cemetery that derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or

E) a reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or

F) a property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own historical significance; or

G) a property achieving significance within the past fifty years if it is of exceptional importance.

It should be pointed out that the Florida Master Site File is not a state historic register, but an inventory intended for use as a planning tool and as a central repository of archival data on the physical remains of Florida's history.



SURVEY METHOD

Cultural resource management, or the preservation of architectural and archaeological sites that have historical value, involves a series of progressive activities. Preservation begins with a survey, which establishes the basis for subsequent work. A survey is a systematic, detailed examination of historic properties within either thematic or geographic limits. It is undertaken to determine the number and character of historic resources. Using the definition of the National Park Service, historic resources consist of buildings, structures, objects, sites, or districts that are significant in national, state, or local history or pre-history (pre-history is generally defined, in Florida, as the time before 1513).

There are several methods for conducting a survey. One approach, the thematic survey, identifies historic properties of a related type within a given area or period. A survey of county courthouses or Spanish mission sites in Florida are examples of thematic types. The second and most common survey is the geographic or area type. The area survey records all historic properties within established geographic boundaries. The geographic boundaries for a survey might be a subdivision, a Downtown area, a residential neighborhood, or a political subdivision such as a town, city, or county limit.

The survey of Downtown Stuart is an area survey. The boundaries for the area are well-defined. They are the St. Lucie River on the north and west; US Highway 1 on the west; and Florida Avenue, a boundary of the Main Street area on the south. The study resulted in a survey of 196 updates and new recordings in the Florida Master Site File.

The purpose of the 2023 Survey is to record buildings and other historic properties in Downtown Stuart constructed between 1894 and 1974 and any other resources at least fifty years old not recorded in previous surveys. Two hundred (200) properties, which appeared based on documentary and visual evidence or testimony to be fifty years of age, were recorded. The condition of the buildings surveyed was evaluated by standards established by the National Register and the Florida Master Site File. 1974 was chosen as the cut-off date for the survey because that year falls close to the fifty-year criterion used by the National Register. It also coincides with the date of construction of Stuart City Hall, the last major building constructed in Downtown Stuart during the period.

The present study, together with previous studies, is intended to provide a basis for the listing of Downtown Stuart in the National Register of Historic Places. The survey will ensure that there is data for all buildings that are at least fifty years old and may be considered contributing to the district. As part of the survey report historic contexts for the area and the specific neighborhoods have been developed. Particularly important was the development of a context for the Depression/New Deal/World War II and Post-World War II eras, largely omitted from previous studies.

The survey began with documentary research to establish a chronological basis for settlement and reveal the major developments and individuals associated with the settlement of Stuart. The next step consisted of field survey to identify the buildings that met the criteria for survey and record their architectural characteristics. The Martin County Property Appraiser provided a list of



addresses and dates of construction in the area and was employed as the basis for determining the buildings the survey team recorded on Florida Master Site File forms. Martin County property records provided the principal source for dates of construction, particularly for the post-World War II period. General historical research was conducted using primary and secondary sources, including online sources such as *Stuart News*, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, and the Florida Memory Photographic Archives.

Following preliminary historical research, each building was field inspected. Buildings were identified on a Property Appraiser's assessment map, providing a legal description for the property. The building was photographed, and its architectural characteristics recorded. The standards for recording are those established by the National Register, which is supervised by the U.S. Department of the Interior and the Division of Historical Resources of the Florida Department of State. As part of the field survey, the condition of each building was assessed based on a visual inspection.

The architectural and historical information was recorded on Florida Master Site File forms. The consultant employed an Excel program specifically designed to conform to computerization fields established for the Florida Master Site File by the Bureau of Historic Preservation. The forms were updated as additional information was generated and then were printed in hard copy. Analysis of the data, particularly the results of the field survey, was facilitated by the Excel program. Information about historic properties was recorded in a digital format on computer drives and USB drives. The inventory in this report contains a list of one hundred and ninety-six (196) buildings and other historic properties judged potentially significant to the history of Downtown Stuart.

After recording the architectural and historical information, the consultant evaluated each building for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or as a contributing building in a potential National Register District. The Results and Recommendations section of this report describes potential National Register properties and contributing resources to the potential district nomination.

The development of a historical context for evaluating properties relied greatly on the 1991 survey. However, the earlier study focused on the pre-1940 period of Stuart's development. The present survey updates the contexts to include the Depression/New Deal and Post-World War II eras. The latter context is particularly important for evaluating the Downtown area, where significant development occurred in the post-1930 period.

Based on the visual reconnaissance, information gleaned from property appraiser's records, cartographic sources, city directories, newspapers and other primary and secondary source materials, the survey team established a date of construction for each standing structure. In most cases, it proved impossible to establish a firm date of construction. In those cases, the survey team entered an approximate date with a "c." for circa before it. As a rule, the date of construction that the Property Appraiser assigned each property was found to be accurate. The results of the architectural and historical research have been incorporated into this report and on the Florida Master Site File forms.



FIGURE 1. ST. LUCIE REGION INCLUDING STUART, 1958 USGS TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP



FIGURE 2. DOWNTOWN STUART HISTORIC SURVEY AREA



HISTORIC CONTEXT OF THE SURVEY AREA

Introduction

The City of Stuart is located along what is known as the Treasure Coast of Florida in the St. Lucie Region at the confluence of the St. Lucie and Indian rivers. The area has a recorded history dating back to the exploration of Ponce de Leon in 1513. Historic contexts for this survey area have been established for the Prehistory (15000 BC-1513); Colonial Period (1513-1821); Territorial and Statehood Periods to Civil War (1821-1865); Post-Civil War Period (1866-1893); Railroad and Early Settlement Period (1894-1918); Florida Boom (1919-1926); Depression and World War II (1929-1945); and Post World War II Period (1946-1974). Particularly important is the development of a context for the Depression/New Deal/World War II and Post-World War II eras, largely omitted from previous studies. Research was conducted using the Martin County Property Appraiser's Office; the Bureau of Historic Preservation and Florida Master Site, Tallahassee; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps; *Stuart News* and the Florida Memory Collection.

Prehistory (15,000 BC-1513)

Since the earliest of times the St. Lucie Region has been rich in marine resources. There has always been an abundance of fish in offshore and inland waters; shellfish in the inland waters of both rivers; and game, particularly deer and birds, in inland areas. Aboriginal settlement of Florida dates back 15,000 years. The period from 15000 to 6500 BC is known as the Paleo-Indian Era. During this period, aboriginals were nomads who survived by hunting and gathering. They relied heavily on the abundant marine resources of the area. Later Paleo Indians were supplanted by more sedentary tribes from the central ridge area of Florida. The City of Stuart is in a pre-historic area described by archaeologists as the Circum-Glades cultural region.¹

Among the Indian tribes in the Stuart area at the time of European contact were the Ais and Jeaga. They continued the tradition of fishing and hunting without sedentary agricultural. The aboriginal population was small, numbering only about 2,000 along the coast from what today is Palm Beach, north to Vero Beach. The major archaeological site in the Stuart vicinity is the Stuart Mound, located on the south bank of the south fork of the St. Lucie River and identified in 1922 by C.B. Moore.² No patterns of pre-historic occupation in Stuart have yet been established. There are two additional archaeological sites within the limits of the City of Stuart.³

¹ Emeline Paige, ed. *History of Martin County* (Hutchinson Island, 1975), pp. 1-9.

² C.B. Moore, "Mound Investigation on the East Coast of Florida" Indian Notes and Monographs, No. 26, M.A.I.H.F. New York, 1922; Florida Master Site File, #MT1.

³ Florida Master Site Files, Roster of Properties Recorded in the city of Stuart. C.B. Moore, "Mound Investigation on the East Coast of Florida" Indian Notes and Monographs, No. 26, M.A.I.H.F. New York, 1922; Florida Master Site File, #MT1.



Colonial Period (1513-1821)

The area where the City of Stuart is located was unoccupied during the Florida Colonial Period. Beginning with the voyages of Juan Ponce de Leon, the St. Lucie River Region was identified and mapped because of its proximity to the Gulf Stream, known to the Spanish as the *Carrera de Indias*. The *Carrera de Indias* was the annual route of the Spanish Treasure Fleet as it returned to Spain from Havana, Cuba. The wreck of the 1715 Spanish treasure fleet gave the region its name as the Treasure Coast. Spain's settlement on the Atlantic Coast of Florida was largely limited to St. Augustine. Its presence in the area was mainly for military patrols and search parties seeking shipwreck victims. The most well-known shipwreck victim was Jonathan Dickinson. Dickinson, a native of Jamaica was shipwrecked with his family, his slaves and the passengers and crew of the English ship *Reformation* on Jupiter Island. Dickinson composed a journal documenting his travels north to St. Augustine, including his contact with the Jobe (Hobe) Indians on Hutchinson Island. Spanish missions were established near Vero Beach in 1567 and Miami in 1743, but they failed within two years of their founding.⁴

During the British Period (1763-1784) and Second Spanish Period (1784-1821), no significant development occurred in the Indian Region surrounding Stuart and Martin County. Only a few plantations were established in the region, but they quickly failed. The Revolutionary War left the area ripe for plunder and discouraged development. The Spanish returned in 1784 and initiated a generous land grant program. No grants were located within the City of Stuart, but the Hanson, Miles, Hedrick and Sequi grants were located in the vicinity. The Hanson grant was located just south of the city and has been identified on U.S. Government Surveys (Figure 3).⁵

Territorial and Statehood Period, 1821-1865

Spain ceded East and West Florida to the United States in 1821. The Indian River region, including the St. Lucie River was initially part of St. Johns County which included all of the territory in Florida east of the Suwannee River. In 1824 Mosquitos County was formed and extended south along the east coast from what today is Ormond Beach to include the Indian River region. Some development occurred in the northern area of what today is Volusia County, but none extended to the vicinity of Stuart. The outbreak of the Second Seminole War (1835-1842) eradicated virtually all settlement in the Florida peninsula outside of St. Augustine.⁶

⁴ Paige, *Martin County*, pp. 15-16.

⁵Ibid. p. 24.

⁶ Ibid, pp. 26-27.



The Seminole War, nonetheless, opened the peninsula for military occupation, road construction and mapping. Fortifications in South Florida were scattered and, in the Indian River region, included Jupiter, Lloyd, Pierce and Van Swearingen. Late in the war, a small military depot was located on the South Fork of the St. Lucie River, but otherwise the future site of Stuart was unaffected by the war. The extensive system of military trails failed to connect with the St. Lucie River, maintaining the isolation of the region (Figure 4).⁷

A key to the settlement of Stuart was the Armed Occupation Act passed by the US Congress in 1842 at the conclusion of the Seminole War. The act provided 160-acre tracts to settlers who met certain criteria, particularly establishing residency for five years and clearing and improving the land. Enabling the federal land program were United States Government Surveys of the Florida peninsula. In 1842 the St. Lucie River region was surveyed in 1842 as part of Township 38E, Range 41E (Figure 3). Still, settlement south of Ft. Pierce was minimal prior to 1845.⁸

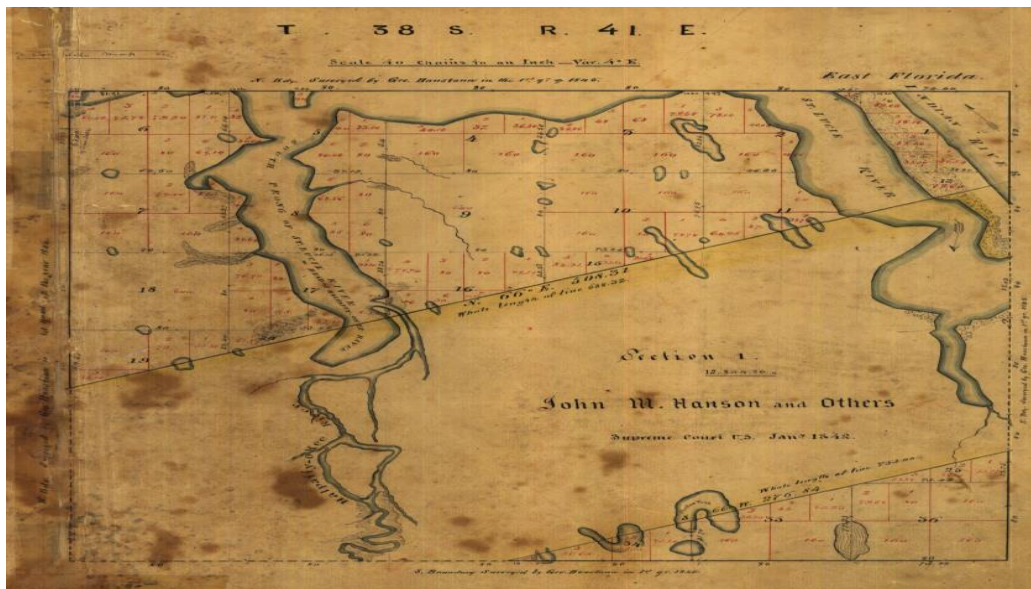


FIGURE 3. US SURVEY OF T 38 S, R 41E SHOWING FUTURE SITE OF STUART, 1842

Population growth in the Indian River Region resulted in the creation of St. Lucia County in 1844. In the 1850s the State of Florida officially renamed the county Brevard, for Florida State Comptroller Theodore Washington Brevard. Prior to the Civil War, the Indian River region, including Stuart remained largely unpopulated. During the Civil War, the Union Navy patrolled the Florida coastline to prevent Confederate smuggling of timber and salt. Federal vessels captured Confederate ships carrying contraband at Jupiter Inlet, but otherwise, due to the sparse settlement, there was little naval activity along the southeast Florida coast.⁹

⁷ Annual Report of the Surveyor General for 1859 (New York, NY: General Land Office, 1859), Map #3755.

⁸ Paige, *Martin County*, pp. 33, 39, 169, 427.

⁹ Paige, *Martin County*, p. 43; Historic Property Associates, Inc. "Survey of Stuart," 1991, p. 6.



Brevard County, 1859
 Annual Report of the Surveyor General for 1859 (New York, NY: General Land Office, 1859)
 Downloaded from Maps ETC, on the web at <http://etc.usf.edu/maps> [map #3755]

FIGURE 4. BREVARD COUNTY INCLUDING FUTURE SITE OF STUART, 1859

Post-Civil War Period, 1866-1893

At the end of the Civil War, South Florida remained an undeveloped wilderness. Travel along the Indian River was by sailboat.¹⁰ Virtually the only permanent resident in St. Lucie River Region was the lighthouse keeper at Jupiter Inlet. Population growth in Central Florida resulted in the Florida State Legislature's extension of Dade County north to the St. Lucie River as well as the creation of new counties. Long a center of shipwrecks, the isolation and desolation of the region prompted the federal government to create houses of refuge. These buildings would house rescue teams and provide shelter for shipwreck victims.. In 1875, five were established along the Florida Coast. Most notable of these was Gilbert's Bar House on Hutchinson Island, east of Stuart,

¹⁰Sandra Henderson Thurlow. *Stuart on the St. Lucie: A Pictorial History*, (2001), p. 5.

listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.¹¹ The keepers of the houses of refuge and their families were the first non-native Americans in the region.

In 1879, Captain Thomas E. Richards settled at Eden on the Indian River, several miles north of the St. Lucie River. He was the first to grow pineapples in the area. The following year, Dr. William Baker and his family settled at a place he named Waveland on Sewell's Point, a peninsula between the St. Lucie and Indian rivers. The United States Government established a post office at Waveland shortly thereafter.¹²

The first settlers of Stuart were Herbert and William Bessey and Ernest and Otto Stypmann and their families. The Besseys, Stypmanns, and all other pioneers of Stuart received land through federal land patents in Township 38S, Range 41E, Section 4. The federal government conceded the lands through the Cash Entry Act of 1820 or Homestead Act of 1862. The Cash Entry Act provided land to purchases at \$1.25 per acre. The Homestead Act tracts were typically 160 acres or quarter sections. Their acquisition was conditioned on paying a filing fee, residing on the land for five years, and cultivating crops or making other improvements. The federal land tracts in Stuart were typically rectangular or square, except for those along the St. Lucie River where their form was irregular. When the railroad arrived, it was awarded lands through state deeds from the Trustees of the Florida Internal Improvement Fund (T.I.I.F.) as an incentive to build railroads.¹³

Despite the availability of cheap land, the St. Lucie Precinct of Dade County, where Stuart was located, numbered only 41 residents in the 1890 federal census. Herbert Bessey from Ohio cultivated pineapples on his homestead at Bessey Point on the south fork of the St. Lucie River and became a well-respected boatbuilder. Walter Kitching, another homesteader, settled at the point where the South Fork and St. Lucie rivers join. He operated a schooner on the Indian River, shipping food and supplies to settlers. Otto Stypmann owned what became Downtown Stuart on the south side of the St. Lucie River, where he raised pineapples. In 1892, Stypmann applied for a post office which the United States postal service established on March 12 and named Potsdam (Figure 5). Stypmann served as postmaster and operated the office out of his house.¹⁴

¹¹Paige, *Martin County*, pp. 53-60.

¹²Thurlow, *Stuart*, p. 5.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7.



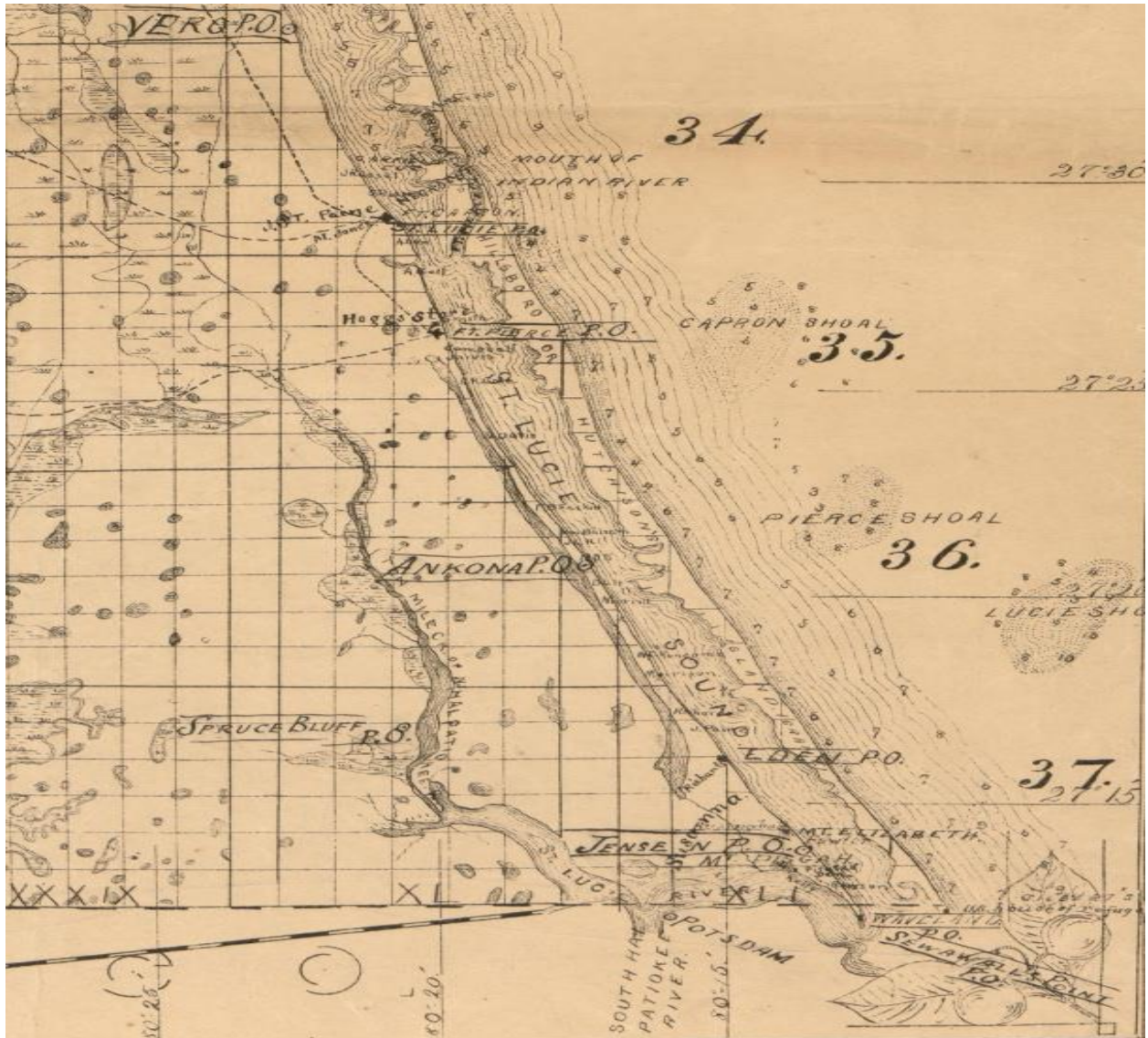


FIGURE 5. C. 1892 MAP SHOWING POTSDAM POST OFFICE PRIOR TO RAILROAD

Early Development of Stuart, 1894-1919

The arrival of the Florida East Coast Railway (FEC), originally known as the Jacksonville, St. Augustine and the Indian River Railway, in 1894 stimulated the first substantial development of Stuart. Walter Kitching offered the railroad a right-of-way through his property at a prominent point at the northwest corner of Downtown Stuart where the St. Lucie River and its South Fork meet. The rail connection to Stuart included tracks through the city, a station and a dock on the St. Lucie River, integrating rail and water transportation systems. The town was named for Homer (Jack) Hine Stuart, Jr. an early homesteader who lived on the north side of the St. Lucie River, where the FEC initially terminated and where a depot was located. Potsdam at first was only a flag stop.¹⁵ Walter Kitching persuaded the railroad to relocate the Stuart depot to the south side of the river and with it came the sign and name (Figure 5). The United States Postal service officially renamed the local office Stuart in July 1895. At the time the railroad arrived, Stuart was still a part of Dade County.¹⁶ Downtown Stuart initially was concentrated along the rail line and Railroad, now Flagler, Avenue (Figure 6).



FIGURE 6. SECOND STUART FLORIDA EAST COAST RAILWAY DEPOT, 1913

¹⁵ Historic Property Associates, Inc. "Survey of Stuart," 1991, pp. 7-8; Thurman, *Stuart*, p. 7.

¹⁶Ibid.



FIGURE 7. WALTER KITCHING STORE AND STUART POST OFFICE, C. 1895

The arrival of the railroad stimulated population growth and economic development. One of the earliest economic activities in Stuart was pineapple cultivation (Figure 8). Pineapple production was introduced to Florida as early as 1860. The pineapple is a tropical fruit and is easily injured by cold temperatures. After some early experimentation in various parts of the state, the pineapple industry, facilitated by construction of the railroad, became, by 1895, concentrated in an area extending south from Ft. Pierce and including Stuart and Jensen.¹⁷ Jensen, just north of Stuart, proclaimed itself the “Pineapple Capital of the World.” In 1902, Stuart, not to be outdone, claimed to be the principal port for pineapple shipments in Florida. It was an important rail and river point for shipping pineapple and citrus.¹⁸ Still the 1900 federal census, listed only ninety-seven residents in the St. Lucie District.

¹⁷ Dr. Herbert J. Webber, “The Pineapple Industry in the United States,” Yearbook of the US Department of Agriculture, 1895, pp. 269-272.

¹⁸ Historic Property Associates, Inc. “Survey of Stuart,” 1991, p. 8.



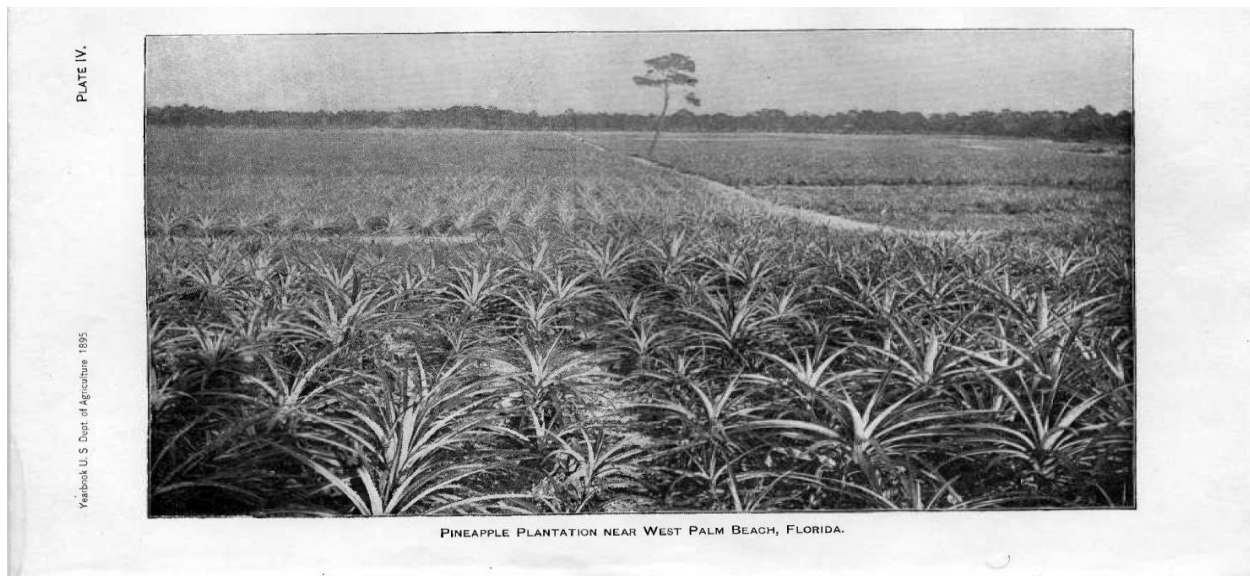


FIGURE 8. PINEAPPLE FIELD, JENSEN, FLORIDA, 1895

Walter Kitching, an English immigrant, was an important early settler of Stuart. Kitching settled the south bank of the St. Lucie River in the pre-railroad era. He was a pioneer pineapple grower and in 1894, the same year the railroad arrived, built a wood-frame residence known as the Kitching House on the south bank of the St. Lucie River. In 1910, Kitching's Addition, the oldest residential subdivision in Stuart was platted and developed. An early history of Martin County indicates that Kitching was among the first to recruit black pineapple workers.¹⁹

Black workers were drawn to Stuart from its earliest days by job opportunities created by the railroad and the growing agricultural economy. Their labor largely built the Florida East Coast Railroad. They were, however, routinely exploited and worked under harsh conditions. According to census data, fifteen Blacks lived in the vicinity of Stuart in 1900. By 1910, the community had dozens of Black residents.²⁰ Blacks came to Stuart from Florida, Georgia, and other parts of the South. While not the majority, Blacks from the Bahamas were an important part of the local workforce. The Bahamian immigration was logical given the short distance between the islands and the Florida east coast. Moreover, the Bahamas were one of the most important centers of pineapple production in the world in the 1890s and the early twentieth century.²¹ Again, census data indicates many of the Bahamian immigrants were farm laborers and likely had skills and experience in pineapple cultivation.²²

¹⁹ Works Project Administration, "History of Martin County, Florida," pp. 2-3.

²⁰ Sandra Henderson Thurlow. *Stuart on the St. Lucie: A Pictorial History*, (Sewall's Point Company, 2001), p. 134; See US Census Returns for Stuart, Palm Beach County, 1910.

²¹ Webber, "The Pineapple Industry in the United States," pp. 269-272.

²² See US Census Returns for Stuart, Palm Beach County, 1910, 1920, Stuart Martin County 1930, 1940.





FIGURE 9. STUART'S FIRST FISH HOUSE SOUTH SIDE RAILROAD BRIDGE, C. 1895

Since pre-historic times the St. Lucie River teemed with marine life such as black bass, bream, catfish, alligators, and manatee. The dredging of St. Lucie Inlet in 1892 opened the river to saltwater species. The first local commercial fish house was constructed on the north side of the St. Lucie in 1895 (Figure 9). Ernest Stypmann was an early investor in the operation which later merged with the East Coast Fish Company of Palm Beach. Soon, E.J. Ricou and others built fish houses along the Stuart waterfront. Ricou's Fish House was located at the end of Porter's Dock on what today is Colorado Avenue. Commercial fishing stimulated other industries such as ice making, boat building and hardware stores which provided equipment for both commercial and recreational fishing. In the early days fishing was done with row or sailboats but in the first years of the twentieth century transitioned to motorized craft. Former U.S. President Grover Cleveland, an ardent fisherman, visited Stuart in 1900. He charted a fishing trip with Captain Hubert Bessey and returned the following year for a six week stay. In 1905 he purchased a waterfront lot on the St. Lucie River, where the Stuart City Hall presently stands. Following his death in 1908, his widow Frances sold the property. Cleveland is credited with popularizing recreational fishing in Stuart.²³

The earliest building in Downtown Stuart is the George W. Parks General Store, built in 1901 at what today is 161 SW Flagler Avenue (Figure 10). Sam Mathews, a skilled and prolific builder from Massachusetts, constructed the building for Parks. The Parks Store, with its false front, is an extremely rare example of a wood-frame commercial building in Florida. Nearly all these pioneer structures were lost to fires or building codes mandating masonry fireproof structures in response to fires. Initially a general merchandise store, George Parks partnered with Riley Christensen in 1913 and renamed the business the Stuart Mercantile Company. The new business

²³ Thurlow, *Stuart*, p. 47



sold paints, hardware, and fishing equipment for one of Stuart's most important industries and past times. In 1946 the Truman Fertilizer Company purchased the building and renamed it the Stuart Feed Store. The Stuart Feed Store operated until the 1980s, when the City of Stuart purchased the property. Since 1992, Stuart Heritage, Inc. has operated the Stuart Heritage Museum in the building.²⁴



FIGURE 10. GEORGE W. PARKS STORE, 161 SW FLAGLER AVE,

The growing population and economy of Stuart resulted in the need for governmental services. In 1909, Palm Beach County was formed from the northern part of Dade County. It extended to the St. Lucie River, just north of the fledgling community of Stuart. In 1914 the Town of Stuart was formally incorporated and divided into five wards or precincts. Among the first councilmen was John Boggan. Boggan served as president of the newly formed council and was a pioneer pineapple grower with a 50-acre tract under cultivation in the spring of 1914.²⁵

Paralleling the Kitching's Addition in 1910, the Potsdam Plat was formally recorded in 1912 (Figure 11). Surveyed in 1897, it is known historically and contemporaneously as the "Triangle" because of its distinctive form (Figure 12).²⁶ It was formed on the east side by the diagonal course of the FEC Railway and on the south by Frazier's Creek. It contained fourteen blocks and eighty-five building lots. Ironically, because of its survey date, the original plat indicates it was in Dade County, but it was recorded in Palm Beach County. The Potsdam Plat, along with the Feroe Subdivision, forms one of the two major areas of Downtown Stuart and the historic properties survey area.

²⁴Alice L. Luckhardt, *Images of America: Stuart*, (Arcadia Publishing, 2016), p.25; FMSF MT046.

²⁵Works Project Administration, "History of Martin County, Florida," p. 1.

²⁶ Historic Property Associates, Inc. "Survey of Stuart," 1991, p. 8.





FIGURE 11. POTSDAM PLAT, A MAJOR PORTION OF DOWNTOWN STUART

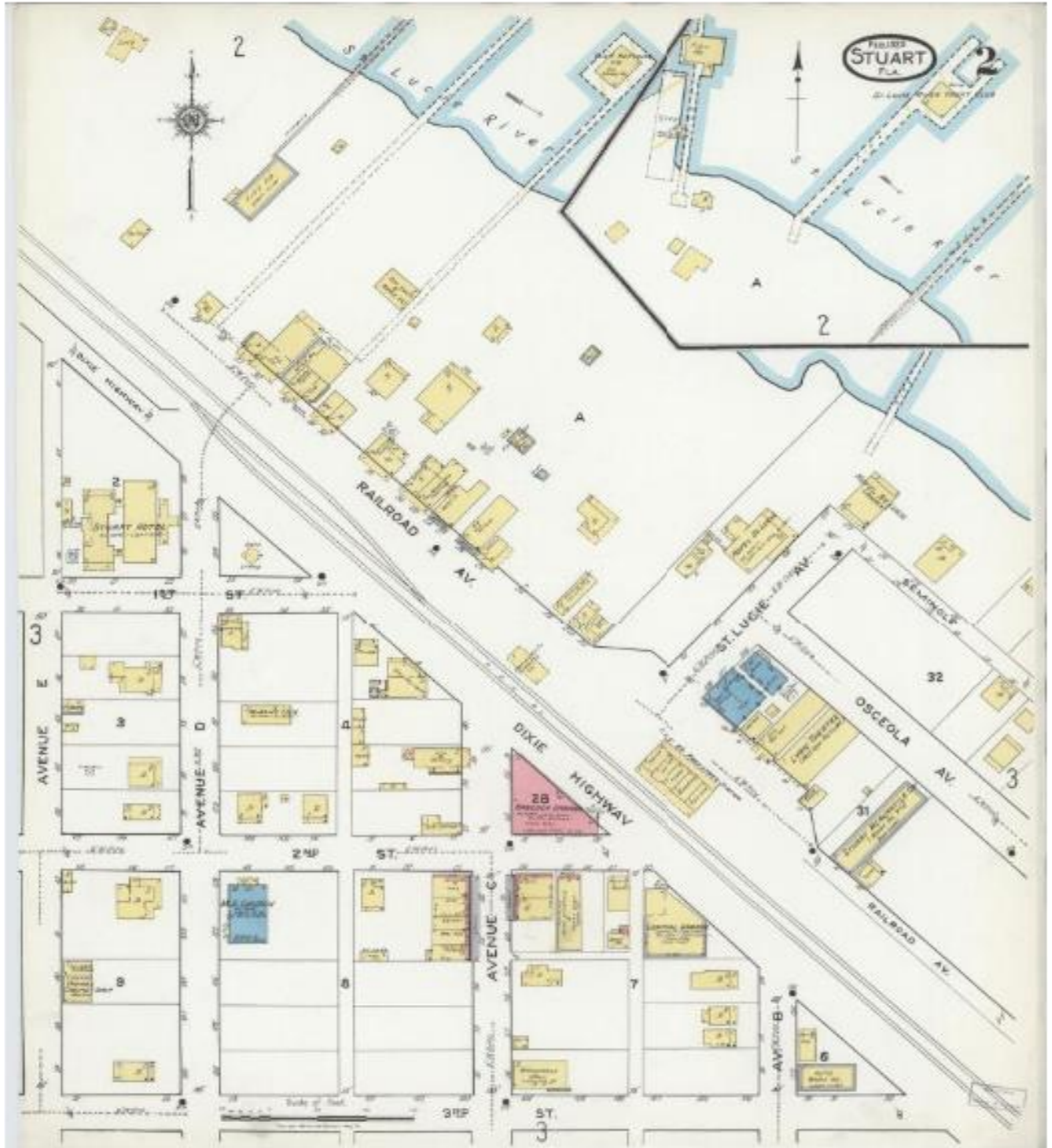
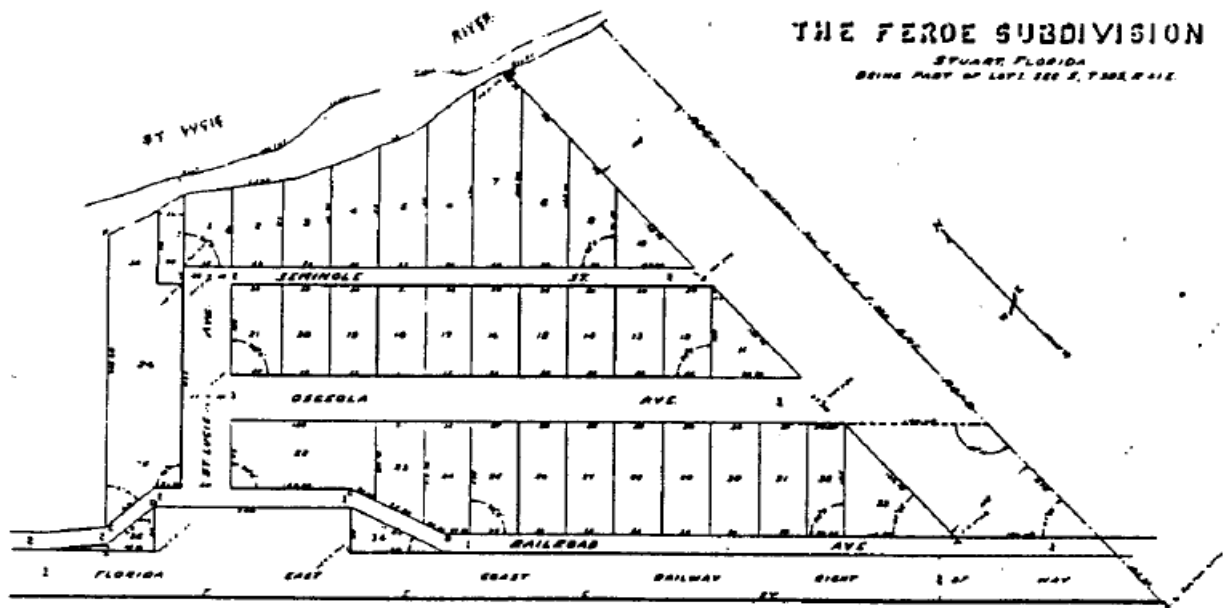


FIGURE 12. 1915 SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE MAP SHOWING THE TRIANGLE

The Feroe Subdivision, platted in 1912 by local developer Harry E. Feroe, was opposite the Triangle on the east side of the FEC Railway line (Figure 13).²⁷ The Feroe Subdivision and the Potsdam Plat illustrate the boom and bust, organic development of Stuart and many other East Coast, Florida communities. Stuart had no formal town plan. The irregularity of Downtown Stuart is in part a result of the diagonal course of the FEC Railway line and the undulating shoreline of the St. Lucie River. Thus, the Feroe Subdivision has an overall irregular form. Blocks, nonetheless, are rectangular. Flagler Avenue, originally Railroad Avenue, Osceola Avenue and Seminole Street run parallel to the rail line while St. Lucie and later Colorado run perpendicular. In contrast, the streets of Potsdam run north-south and east-west. Lots in the Potsdam Plat along the Dixie Highway on the southwest side of the railway are triangular in form. The junction of the two subdivisions, the Dixie Highway, the FEC rail line, and Colorado Avenue has resulted in a five-way intersection, nationally known as Confusion Corner. The triangular blocks and circular and irregular street patterns give Downtown Stuart a unique character and a historic sense of time and place.



The Feroe Subdivision
Platted in 1912 by Harry E. Feroe
FIGURE 13. FEROE SUBDIVISION

²⁷ Historic Property Associates, Inc. "Survey of Stuart," 1991, p. 10.

Two early commercial buildings in Downtown Stuart were the Stuart Bank and the Feroe Building, both built in 1912 and 1913 in the Feroe Subdivision (Figures 13-14). Henry C. Feroe donated the land for the bank and served on the initial board of directors. The bank opened on November 1, 1912, at 301 St. Lucie Avenue at the corner of Osceola. The first president was Stuart pioneer Walter Kitching. In 1922 the Stuart Bank moved across the street to the newly constructed Osceola Building. The building then housed city hall and by the following year, the Seminole Bank. The President of the Seminole Bank was John E. Taylor, who also served as Mayor of Stuart. Following the onset of the Great Depression in 1929, the Seminole Bank and all other banks in Stuart failed. Stuart was without a bank until 1933 when the Citizen's Bank of Stuart moved into the building. The Stuart Bank was constructed with a veneer of faux concrete blocks produced by local manufacturer, Frank J. Frazier. Frazier began producing the blocks, two at a time, between 1906 and 1909. In addition to the Stuart Bank, Frazier's blocks were used in the construction of the adjacent Feroe Building in 1913, the Stuart School in 1909 and for his mother, Margaret Frazier's, house in the Triangle area of Stuart.²⁸

Adjacent the Stuart Bank Building at 73 SW Flagler Avenue is the Feroe Building located at the corner of St. Lucie and Flagler opposite the FEC railroad depot. It was constructed in 1913 by local builder Sam Mathews using Dade County Pine and rough-face concrete blocks furnished by Frank Frazier. Its original owner was local real estate developer Henry C. Feroe. The two-story, two-part commercial building began as the Stuart Drug Store and later served as the Stuart Post Office.²⁹ It housed a real estate office and various other businesses upstairs.

Another building constructed by Sam Mathews in Downtown Stuart was the Owl House at 100 Colorado Avenue. Built in 1904 for Francis Marion Platt, it was purchased in 1908 by Ethel and Charles Porter. The Owl House and other dwelling houses along Seminole Avenue are located on the banks of the St. Lucie Rivers and are historically distinct from the commercial area to the west. A highly unusual design, the Owl House features four triangular corner gables and eye-like windows which resemble the pointed ears and face of an owl. The four corners take the form of the prow of a ship, an appropriate design for Pratt who was a ship's captain.³⁰

Another building constructed by contractor Sam Mathews is the Woodman Hall at 217 Akron Avenue in the Potsdam Plat, west of the railroad. Completed in 1915, the building was a meeting hall for the Woodmen of the World, a national fraternal organization, and community meeting house. Many prominent residents were members of the Woodmen, including George W. Parks, the owner of the Park Mercantile Store. Stuart Main Street supported the restoration of the building in recent years.³¹

²⁸ *Stuart News*, July 31, 2013, p. 56; Luckhardt, *Stuart* p. 34.

²⁹ *Ibid.*; pp. 37, 57; Thurlow, *Stuart*, pp. 16, 18, 41, 69, 122, 160, 167, 173.

³⁰ HPA, p. 9; Luckhardt, *Stuart*, p. 105

³¹ HPA, pp. 11-12.



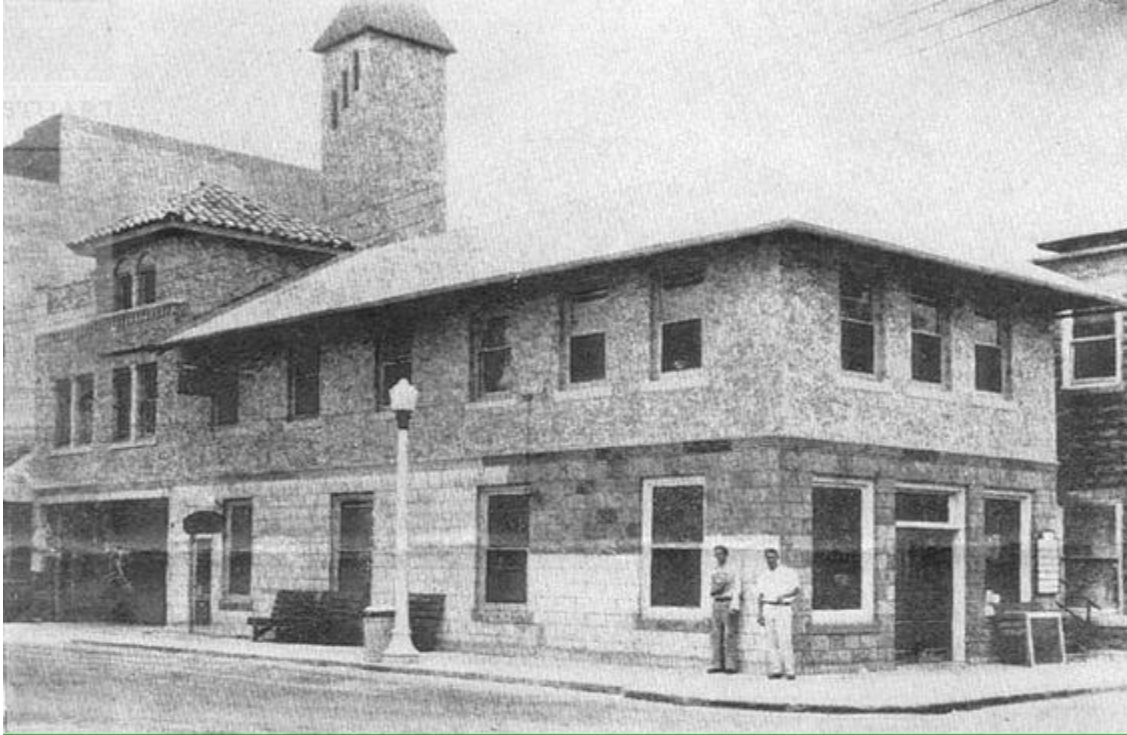


FIGURE 14. STUART BANK, 301 ST. LUCIE AVENUE, 1912



FIGURE 15. FEROE BUILDING, 1913, 73 SW FLAGLER AVENUE

Florida Land Boom, 1920-1928

Florida's economy blossomed after World War I. Stuart, like other communities throughout the state, benefitted from the Great Florida Land Boom. Real estate values rose dramatically during the Boom. In virtually all communities, new subdivisions were platted and recorded, lots were sold and re-sold, and new buildings were constructed. The City of Stuart experienced its most dynamic period of growth. Its population increased from 778 in 1920 to nearly 2000 in 1930. In 1925 Stuart reincorporated as a city.³²

The most important event of the 1920s in Stuart was the creation of Martin County in 1925. When Palm Beach County was created in 1909, the most populous city was West Palm Beach some forty miles to the south. Stuart, at the northern end of the county, felt isolated, underrepresented, and overtaxed. Residents of Stuart had only one county commissioner and felt they were asked to pay more than their fair share of taxes for county improvements. The situation came to a head in 1925, when the county commission passed a major road building program with only a small portion being spent in the Stuart area. A major concern was the lack of a highway bridge across the St. Lucie River, which then was only served by a ferry. A bill was passed by the Florida State Legislature and in May 1925 Martin County, named for Governor John W. Martin, was created from southern St. Lucie County and northern Palm Beach County. Stuart, with the largest population, became the county seat.³³

Increasingly, middle class visitors to Stuart came by automobile. State and local road construction was key to this development. Construction of US Highway 1 in Florida began in 1920 and was largely complete by 1925. It incorporated much of the earlier Dixie Highway. The section of US 1 from Vero Beach through Stuart to Miami was fully paved by 1923 as were the streets of the city. The road system spread west to Lake Okeechobee and agricultural parts of Palm Beach County, connecting these areas with the rail head at Stuart.³⁴

During the Boom, Downtown Stuart expanded south along Flagler Avenue and Osceola Street and along the Dixie Highway on the west side of the FEC Railway tracks. The first major building constructed was the Fuge or Osceola Building at 61 Osceola Street (Figure 16). Erected in 1921 by contractor J.A. Spiers, the Osceola Building was a one-story Mediterranean Revival commercial block with a rounded corner that wrapped around to St. Lucie Avenue. Its major tenant was the Bank of Stuart which re-located across the street from its original location upon completion of construction. The building was initially named for E.A. Fuge its owner and president of the bank. He, along with Stanley Kitching and J.R. Anthony, financed construction of the building. The bank was robbed by the Ashley Gang in 1924 and failed upon the collapse of the Florida Boom in 1926. The Osceola Building later housed an A. & P. Grocery Store.³⁵

The major building constructed in Downtown Stuart during the 1920s was the Lyric Theatre at 59 SW Flagler Avenue (Figure 17). The Lyric Theatre was constructed by Judge John C. Hancock.

³² Ibid., pp. 12-16

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 13

³⁵ Thurlow, *Stuart*, pp. 124-125; HPA, pp. 13-14; Luckhardt, *Stuart*, p. 61.



Hancock, born in Illinois, lived in Jacksonville where he operated the Lyric and Lyceum theatres before moving to Stuart in 1902. He was appointed Justice of the Peace shortly after his arrival and thus obtained the title of judge. He invested in pineapple cultivation and ran an insurance business. In 1913, Hancock returned to the theatre business and built the first of three theatres on the site on Flagler Avenue.³⁶

When constructed in 1925, the third Lyric Theater was one of the largest buildings in Martin County. It was the first building in Downtown Stuart documented to be designed by an architect. The architect was John N. Sherwood in association with Mark J. Casto. The contractor was F.M. Walton who built the theatre at a cost of \$100,000. John Sherwood was based in Miami from 1922 to 1927. By 1927 he was practicing and living in Fort Pierce with offices also listed in Miami and Stuart. Sherwood designed several apartment buildings in Stuart, the Boom Period Fort Pierce High School, and the Sunrise Theatre in Fort Pierce.³⁷

Mark J. Casto, Sherwood's associate, was a native of New Jersey. Born in 1897, Casto was working as a mechanical draftsman in Stuart in 1920. Following his work on the Lyric Theatre, he moved to St. Augustine. During the 1930s, he worked as a construction superintendent for a number of New Deal, Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects in Flagler and St. Johns counties. The 1930 census listed him as an engineer working in architecture. Between 1935 and 1937, he supervised several WPA projects, most prominently the Bunnell and Hastings community centers. The Hastings Community Center, designed by St. Augustine Francis A. Hollingsworth, was listed in the National Register in 2007.³⁸

The Lyric Theatre, with its large size and highly detailed exterior, remains an anchor of Downtown Stuart. It embodies the Florida Boom period and conveys a strong sense of time and place. By the 1970s the Lyric Theatre and much of Downtown Stuart were in a period of decline. Since the 1980s local organizations such as Stuart Main Street have worked successfully for the revitalization of Downtown. The restoration of the Lyric Theatre, including its listing in the National Register of Historic Places in 1993, served as a catalyst for the rehabilitation of other buildings and extensive streetscape improvements in Downtown Stuart.

³⁶ Thurlow, *Stuart*, pp. 110-111.

³⁷ Lyric Theatre, NR nomination.

³⁸ Hastings Community Center, Hastings, Florida NR nomination.





FIGURE 16. OSCEOLA BUILDING, LEFT/LYRIC THEATRE IN RIGHT BACKGROUND



FIGURE 17. LYRIC THEATRE, 59 SW FLAGLER AVENUE

The third major building constructed in Downtown Stuart during the Florida Boom was the Mediterranean Revival Style Post Office Arcade at 13-31 SW Osceola Avenue (Figure 18). E.A. Fuge, President of the Stuart Bank, was a major investor in the Arcade. Designed by the architectural firm of Pfeiffer & O'Reilly of Miami and built by Sam Mathews, the Arcade was completed in April 1925. Located at the center of the Downtown business district, it contained over 700 post office boxes with 24-hour access. It extended nearly to Colorado Avenue. It operated from its opening until 1959, when a new post office was opened. It features two grand arched openings on Osceola and Seminole streets with a breezeway connecting the two. Once vacant and in distressed condition, the restoration of the Post Office Arcade was another key component in the revitalization of Downtown Stuart during the 1980s.³⁹

By the mid-1920s, at the height of the Great Florida Land Boom, Osceola Street, because of the increase in automobile transportation, had evolved into the primary commercial thoroughfare in Stuart. The last major building in Downtown Stuart prior to the collapse of the Boom in 1926 was the Minschke Building completed in December 1927. Constructed by Boleslaw Frank Minschke the Minschke Building was located on five lots and extended from Flagler to Osceola with storefronts on both sides. Along with the Lyric Theatre, the three-story structure was one of the largest in Stuart. Its major tenant was the Osceola Furniture Store. In the 1930s it became known as the Holleran Building. Beyond it to the south to Colorado, there were no buildings constructed until the late 1930s in Downtown Stuart.⁴⁰

Beyond Downtown, other important buildings were constructed in Stuart during the 1920s. One was Stuart High School at 500 East Ocean Boulevard (Figure 19). The school was designed by architect F.H. Trimble and built in 1922 by general contractor J.C. Hammer. The school opened for the fall term in September 1923. A large, two-story masonry structure, the school contained a 600-seat auditorium which was an attractive feature for community events. Eventually, as the population of Stuart grew and the building grew functionally obsolete, the school was adapted for use as the Martin County Administrative Offices. It currently is being converted to a performing arts center.⁴¹

A native of Canada, Frank Homer Trimble studied architecture at Morning Side College in Sioux City, Iowa. In 1914, he moved to Florida where he became one of the state's most prolific architects. He initially practiced in Fellsmere in Indian River County but moved to Orlando in 1916. He designed over fifty schools and the campus plan and several buildings on the Florida Southern College campus in Lakeland, Florida. In nearby Indian River County he designed the Fellsmere School, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1996. In Vero Beach he designed a number of Mediterranean Revival style buildings, including the Farmers Bank, 1924; the Orange Apartments, 1924; and the Vero Theatre, 1924 also listed in the National Register.⁴² The Stuart High School was one his earliest educational facilities.

³⁹ HPA, p. 15; Thurlow, *Stuart*, pp. 9, 122, 124-125, 162, 167.

⁴⁰ Luckhardt, *Stuart*, p. 99.

⁴¹ Thurlow, *Stuart*, pp. 176-178.

⁴² Vero Beach Theatre NR nomination.





FIGURE 18. POST OFFICE ARCADE 13-31 SW OSCEOLA AVE, C. 1936



FIGURE 19. STUART HIGH SCHOOL, 500 SE OCEAN BLVD

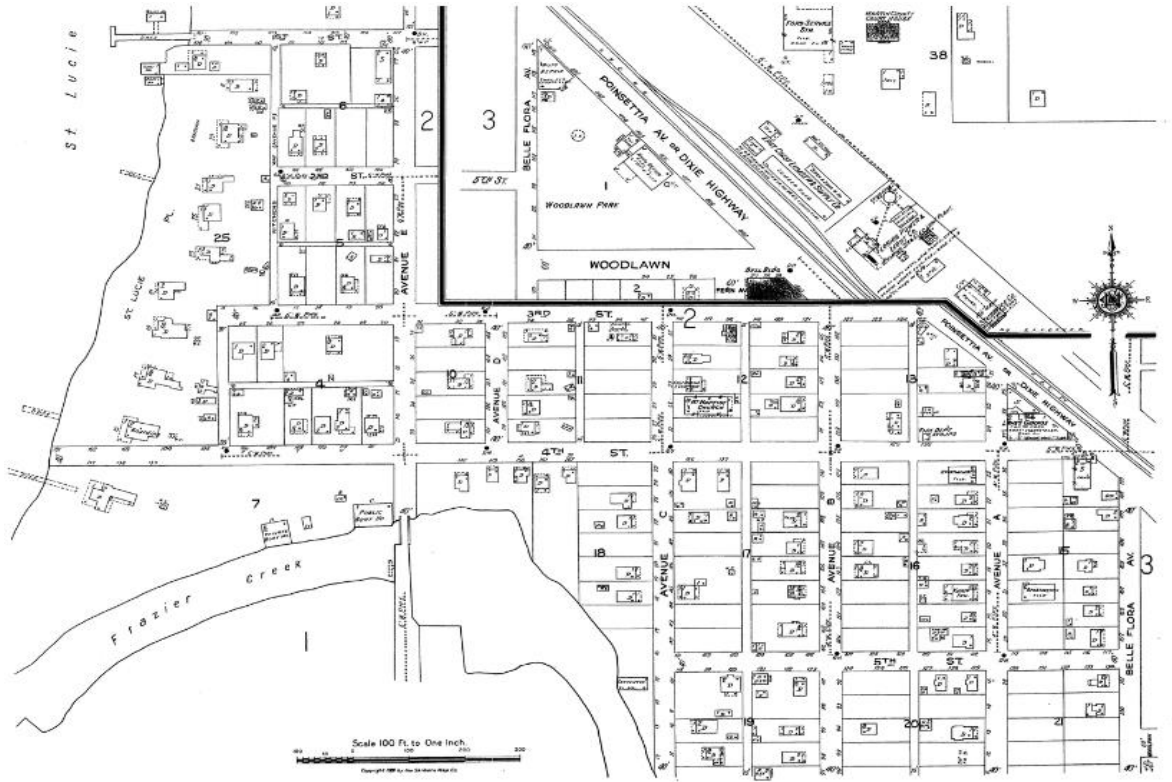


FIGURE 20. TRIANGLE AREA, 1926



FIGURE 21. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 200 SW AKRON AVE, NOW DEMOLISHED

Other important buildings constructed in the Stuart Survey Area included the Mediterranean Revival First Baptist Church at 200 Akron Avenue completed in 1925, but since demolished. Small apartment buildings and scattered residences were constructed in the Triangle along SW Ocean Boulevard, SW Camden Avenue, and SW Fifth Street (Figures 20-21). Most of these were designed in the Mediterranean Revival Style.

Great Depression and World War II, 1929-1945

The prospects for the City of Stuart seemed limitless to its boosters during the summer of 1926. There were signs elsewhere, however, that the speculative bubble that fueled the boom was beginning to deflate. In late-summer 1925, the Florida East Coast Railway declared an embargo of building materials to the already overloaded freight yards of South Florida. Northern newspapers began to run articles about corrupt speculative practices and cautioned their readers to be leery of promises of easy fortunes to be made through investment in Florida real estate. A final blow to the land boom came as a devastating hurricane hit South Florida in September 1926, bringing an abrupt halt to development there. A second hurricane entered Florida at nearby Palm Beach in 1928 and killed thousands particularly around Lake Okeechobee. Finally, the pineapple industry collapsed by 1929. Martin County growers were forced out of business by a nematode infestation and competition from foreign producers, particularly.⁴³

The collapse of the Florida Land Boom was soon followed by the onset of the Great Depression in 1929. Initially, the experience of Stuart during the Great Depression differed little from other communities in Florida. The economy was hard hit by a dramatic drop in tourism during the late 1920s. Several of the city's banks failed, never to reopen. From 1931 to 1933 Stuart had no bank. Real estate sales and building activity dropped precipitously as the number of tourists entering the community slowed to a trickle. From 1927 until 1936, there was no new construction in the downtown area.⁴⁴ By 1937, it was estimated that half the population of Stuart was on relief.⁴⁵

New Deal programs, particularly the Federal Works Projects Administration and the Works Progress Administration (WPA), offered relief to the city particularly through public works projects. These programs offered decent wages and temporary employment to Martin County residents and contributed to a return to prosperity. The most important public works project of the 1930s was the 1937 Art Deco addition to the extant Martin County Courthouse, originally constructed in 1908 (Figure 22).

When Martin County was created in 1925, Stuart was made the temporary county seat for a five-year period. The City of Stuart offered the old schoolhouse to the county for a rental of \$150 per month. The county initially refused but after negotiations accepted the school facility rent free. In 1930 Stuart officially became the permanent county seat. County offices remained in the original building until 1936, when the county purchased the property.⁴⁶

⁴³ HPA, pp. 12-14.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 16.

⁴⁵ Martin County Courthouse, NR.

⁴⁶ Ibid.



Martin County officials hired West Palm Beach architect L. Phillips Clark to adapt the old building and design a new front addition. They awarded the construction contract to West Palm Beach contractor Chalker and Lund in 1937. Construction was financed with both county and federal funds, with the county paying for 45 per cent of the cost. Chalker and Lund integrated the rear wall of the new structure with the façade of the old building creating a single structure.⁴⁷

The courthouse was designed in the context of Public Works Progress Administration architecture, sometimes called PWA Moderne. It was Stuart's first building of modern design, breaking with the vernacular and revival styles of the city's earlier architecture. The Art Deco façade of the courthouse featured a character defining zig-zag frieze, cast concrete detailing applied to a smooth white stucco exterior finish, a stepped and set-back main elevation, geometric linear forms, metal frame windows and floral and tropical motifs (Figure 22).⁴⁸

L. Phillips Clarke, the architect of the courthouse, was born in 1897 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. While a native of Pittsburgh Clarke wintered from his infancy in Palm Beach, Florida. He was a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. Following his graduation, he formed an architectural firm with Henry Stephen Harvey, a fellow Penn graduate. After initially practicing in Philadelphia, Clarke and Harvey moved their practice to West Palm Beach in 1921. During the Florida Land Boom, they became one of the most prominent architectural firms in Palm Beach County. They designed many important buildings including the West Palm Beach City Hall and fire station, the Daily News Building, and the iconic West Palm Beach Seaboard Air Line Railroad Station. Clarke, in fact, was the architect for all Seaboard Air Line Stations in Florida. His design for the West Palm Beach Station is high-style Spanish Baroque, often referred to as Mission Style. Of national architectural significance, the station was a very early National Register listing in Florida, designated in 1973.⁴⁹

During the mid-1930s, Stuart began to slowly climb out of the Depression. In 1936 Earl J. Ricou built the first building since 1927. Ricou had been in the hardware business since 1921 and in November 1936 he built a one-story masonry store on the north side of the Post Office Arcade. The Ricou Hardware Building carried all types of hardware and, indicative of the growing outdoor activities, he carried a variety of sport fishing equipment.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid; West Palm Beach Seaboard Air Line, NR.

⁵⁰ Luckhardt, *Stuart*, p. 102.



Others commercial buildings opened in Downtown Stuart prior to the war. Green's Department Store, a two-story, two-part commercial block opened in November 1940. It was owned by H.J. Green and located between the Lyric Theatre and the Holleran Building. South of the Holleran Building, Lester A. Pressel built a one-story commercial block in late 1940.⁵¹

In 1938, L. Phillips Clarke also designed the Art Moderne Citizen's Bank at the corner of Osceola and Colorado streets (Figure 23). The contractor was Watt and Sinclair. The bank was the first major building constructed in Downtown Stuart since the mid-1920s.⁵² It had a rounded façade reflecting its Art Moderne design and its location on the Haney Circle Park. In 1946 the bank became a member of the Federal Reserve System. Three years later, the bank added a wing at 1 SW Osceola. In 1958, the bank received a national charter and became the First National Bank of Stuart. In 1961 the First National Bank of Stuart moved to a new location.⁵³

Modernistic design continued south of the intersection of the Haney Circle Park with the construction of the Theodore Dehon Building at 11 SE Osceola Street and the Hipson Building at 31-33 SE Osceola Street just prior to World War II. Both buildings were designed by Palm Beach architect Frederick G. Seelman and were examples of the Art Moderne style of architecture. Located at the corner of Colorado and SE Osceola streets the building was designed with a turned corner, a characteristic of the Art Moderne style, and to conform with the curve around Haney Circle.⁵⁴ The Hipson Building, just south of the Dehon Building was completed in June 1941 with a design inspired by the architecture of the 1939 New York World's Fair. Dr. Harry H. Hipson, Mayor of Stuart at the time, financed construction of the building which was the first professional office building in Stuart. Hipson, a resident of Stuart since 1923, was a dentist and had his office on the right side of the building. Dr. John Huggins occupied the second office. Between the two wings of the building was a sunken garden.⁵⁵ The Hipson Building was the best example of the Art Modern style in Stuart.

Stuart was recovering from the Great Depression when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The United States Congress declared war on Japan the next day, and Germany, in response, declared war against the United States on December 11th. The war soon hit close to Stuart. German U-boat began torpedoing ships in the nearby Atlantic Ocean and residents could hear explosions and see pillars of smoke on the east horizon.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Stuart News, July 4, 2018.

⁵² Stuart News, October 27, 2013, p. 122.

⁵³ Thurlow, *Stuart*, p. 161; Luckhardt, *Stuart*, p. 123.

⁵⁴ Stuart News, October 27, 2013, p. 126; Stuart News, July 24, 2013, p. 39; Stuart News, August 7, 1941, p. 1..

⁵⁵ Stuart News, June 26, 1941, p. 1; HPA, p. 17.

⁵⁶ Thurlow, *Stuart*, p. 9





FIGURE 22. MARTIN COUNTY COURTHOUSE, C. 1937



FIGURE 23. ART MODERNE CITIZEN'S BANK OF STUART, C. 1938

Florida immediately became a major military training facility, particularly for United States Army and Navy aviators. In October 1942 Martin County leased the local municipal airport to the United States government for use as an aviation training facility. The United States Navy took possession of the airport and invested \$10 million dollars in improvements. Known originally as MacArthur Field, it was renamed Witham Field in remembrance of Naval Aviator Paul Witham who was the first of his rank from Stuart to die in the war. Witham Field was a Naval Auxiliary Airfield (NAAF) subordinate to Naval Air Station (NAS) Vero Beach. It provided support to the main air station for initial training and proficiency for U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine carrier and land-based aviators. Witham Field was decommissioned in July 1947 and returned to Martin County. During the 1950s and 1960s Northrop Grumman leased much of the airport property. The company manufactured parts and conducted flight tests on several military aircraft. It was a major employer in Stuart and Martin County. In addition to the naval aviators at Witham Field, there were signal corps trainees at Camp Murphy in Hobe Sound as well as personnel at the Jensen Coast Guard Station and the Port of Fort Pierce. Camp Murphy alone had 2500 to 3000 trainees monthly.

The Federal Recreation Building on Flagler Avenue was the major building constructed in Stuart during World War II (Figure 24). The Victory Hotel in Stuart was initially used for recreation and relaxation for off-duty servicemen, but local facilities quickly proved inadequate for the volume of visitors. Designed by local architect Bert Keck, the Federal Recreation Building was constructed through \$35,000 in federal government financing. It officially opened on Sunday, October 10, 1943, as the Martin County Service Club with approximately 1000 attendees. The building housed a variety of recreational activities and hosted dances, particularly on Saturday nights. Martin County and the City of Stuart contributed funds for maintenance of the building totaling about \$16,000.⁵⁷

At the end of World War II, the City of Stuart began negotiating with the federal government for the purchase of the recreation center. On May 2, 1946, the city purchased the building and renamed it the Stuart Civic Center (Figure 26). It made the building available for local residents, civic organizations, social groups and community clubs. The auditorium served large meetings and as a venue for dances, particularly for the city's youth. By the early 1960s, the Stuart Civic Center was informally known as the Stuart Recreation Center and later the Stuart Rec Center. It would later be officially renamed the Flagler Recreation Center and Flagler Place. In 2020 Stuart Main Street assumed operations of the building, moved its administrative offices there and renamed the venue "Flagler Center."⁵⁸

The architect of the Federal Recreation Building was Bert D. Keck, Stuart's most important historic architect (Figure 25). Bertin Daniel Keck was a native of Iowa but was educated in Illinois. Keck learned his construction skills from a cousin who was a contractor and his design skills from a second cousin who was an architect with whom he apprenticed. In 1901 Keck moved to Grand Forks, North Dakota and the following year to Crookston, Minnesota. He maintained offices in both places. He developed a prolific and accomplished architectural practice. He designed

⁵⁷ Thurlow, *Stuart*, p. 185.

⁵⁸ Alice L. Luckhardt, "Stuart Service Men's Club-Stuart Civic Center-Stuart Recreation Center-Flag Place-Flagler Center" *Stuart Main Street*, 2020, pp. 1-3.



buildings in North Dakota, Minnesota and several adjacent states. His practice extended into the Canadian cities of Winnipeg, Calgary and Edmonton. He designed hotels, business blocks, government buildings and residential buildings. Three of his designs in Crookston have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places.⁵⁹

In 1925, tired of the cold Minnesota winters, Bert Keck moved to Stuart at the height of the Florida Boom and practiced there the rest of his career. In addition to the Federal Recreation Building, Keck designed a similar recreation center in Fort Pierce. He designed a 1954 addition to the Martin County Courthouse and was Martin County school board architect for over two decades. In total, he designed over 500 buildings of various types. He also maintained an office in Palm Beach, which was managed by his son, Konrad who followed his father into the practice of architecture.⁶⁰

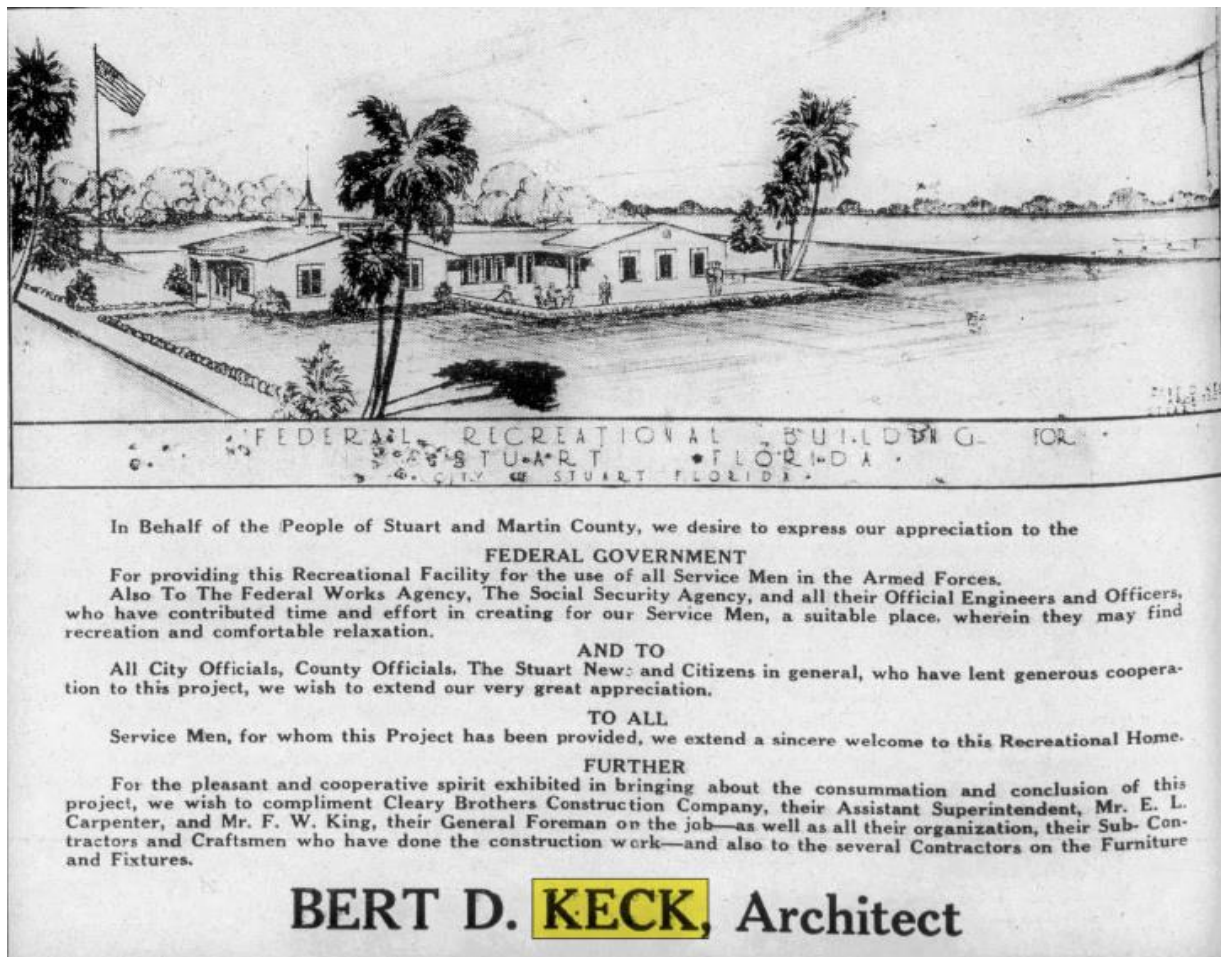


FIGURE 24. RENDERING OF FEDERAL RECREATIONAL CENTER, 1943

⁵⁹ *Stuart News*, May 3, 1945, p. 6.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*



FIGURE 25. BERT D. KECK, ARCHITECT

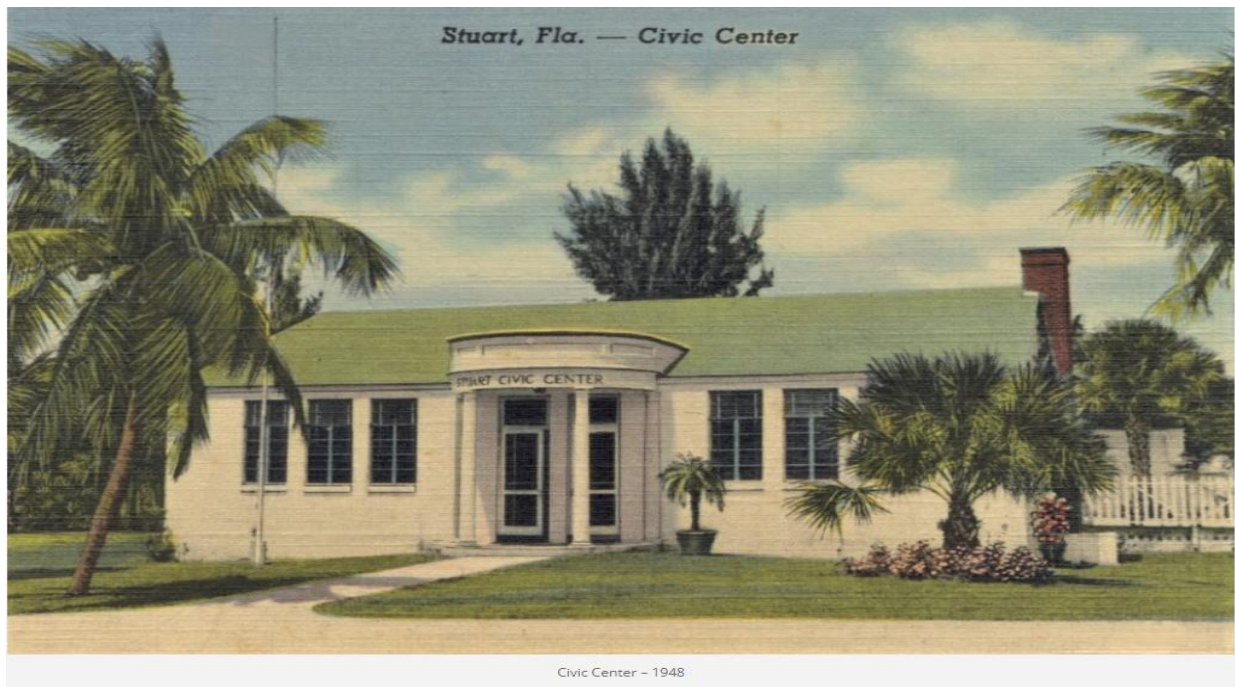


FIGURE 26. STUART CIVIC CENTER 1948

Post-World War II to 1974, (1945-1974), Period of Slow Decline

In the post-World War II years the central commercial district was completed around Haney Circle at the intersection of Osceola and Colorado avenues. Haney Circle was one of Stuart's first three parks, dedicated to the city in 1912 along with a circular roadway as part of the recording of the Charles Porter Subdivision.⁶¹ It became the centerpiece of Downtown Stuart (Figure 27).

Haney Circle was named for Cynthia Burnette Haney. Mrs. Haney was a newspaper columnist and the wife of Dr. Horace John Haney, a pioneer physician in Stuart. She was a national leader in the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and was assigned to Florida in 1897. She was a founder of the Stuart Women's Club and became highly respected in the community. She continued to write newspaper columns until shortly before her death in 1932.⁶²

Originally named Flower Circle, in 1920 the Stuart Town Council renamed the park for Mrs. Haney in recognition of her work in temperance and women's rights. In the late 1940s, Haney Circle was only landscaped with modest flowers and a centrally placed palm tree. Seeking to improve its appearance, in 1949 the Stuart Women's Club learned of the availability of an award-winning statue which had been exhibited at the 1939 New York World's Fair. Known as the "Goddess of Abundance" the statue was the work of sculptress Manya Komole, Venice, Italy and was cast in bronze in Paris by Alexis Rudier. While valued at \$25,000 the Women's Club was able to obtain the statue for only storage costs.⁶³

The City of Stuart and the Women's Club planned to install the Abundance Statue at the center of Haney Circle. However, upon arrival, it was discovered that the Abundance Statue was, in fact, a scantily dressed voluptuous women holding a wine jug. It was decided that such a statue in Haney Circle would be disrespectful to Mrs. Haney, a conservative teetotaler and supporter of temperance. Instead, the statue was placed on the west side of the Martin County Courthouse and relocated to Memorial Park in 1961. Finally, in 1991, Abundance was installed in Haney Circle as originally intended (Figure 28).⁶⁴

Building around the Haney Circle was completed in 1948 with the construction of the Arthur Dehon Building at the southwest corner of Colorado and Osceola Avenue with additional frontage on Flagler Avenue. The Arthur Dehon Building was one of the larger buildings in Downtown Stuart. It featured a corner turn on Haney Circle. It was built by prominent local contractor Herb Young using steel reinforced concrete construction and concrete block. It housed retail businesses on the first floor and professional offices on the second. It was two stories in height and had 114 front feet on Flagler Avenue, 70 feet on Colorado and 140 feet on Osceola.⁶⁵

⁶¹Thurlow, *Stuart*, pp. 64, 108, 173; *Stuart News* October 27, 2013, p. 80.

⁶²Thurlow, *Stuart*, pp. 64, 108, 173

⁶³*Stuart News*, July 23, 1961, p. 21.

⁶⁴Thurlow, p. 108; *Stuart News*, July 6, 1961, p. 21; July 13, 1961, 7-A; October 12, 1961, p. 23.

⁶⁵*Stuart News* October 27, 2013, p. 126.





FIGURE 27. HANEY CIRCLE WITH CITIZENS BANK IN BACKGROUND, C. 1940



FIGURE 28. HANEY CIRCLE SHOWING ABUNDANCE STATUE



FIGURE 29. DOWNTOWN STUART, 1948

Another leading building in downtown Stuart was the Masonic Temple at 14 SW Osceola. Constructed in 1949, it was located just south of Haney Circle opposite the Theodore Dehon Building at 11 SW Osceola and the Hipson Medical Building at 31-33 SW Osceola Avenue. In 1950 Downtown Stuart saw another addition as construction began on the King and Parks Pontiac and GMC dealership. Located at the intersection of Colorado and Flagler Avenue, the dealership sold both cars and trucks and included a Gulf service station. With rounded corners and a white stucco finish, horizontal grooves accented with blue paint and a flat roof, the building fit in perfectly with the buildings around Haney Circle.⁶⁶ Another important building was the Stuart Department Store at 101 SW Flagler Avenue designed by Stuart Architect Bert D. Keck. By the mid-1950s the historic development of Downtown Stuart was largely complete (Figures 29 & 30).

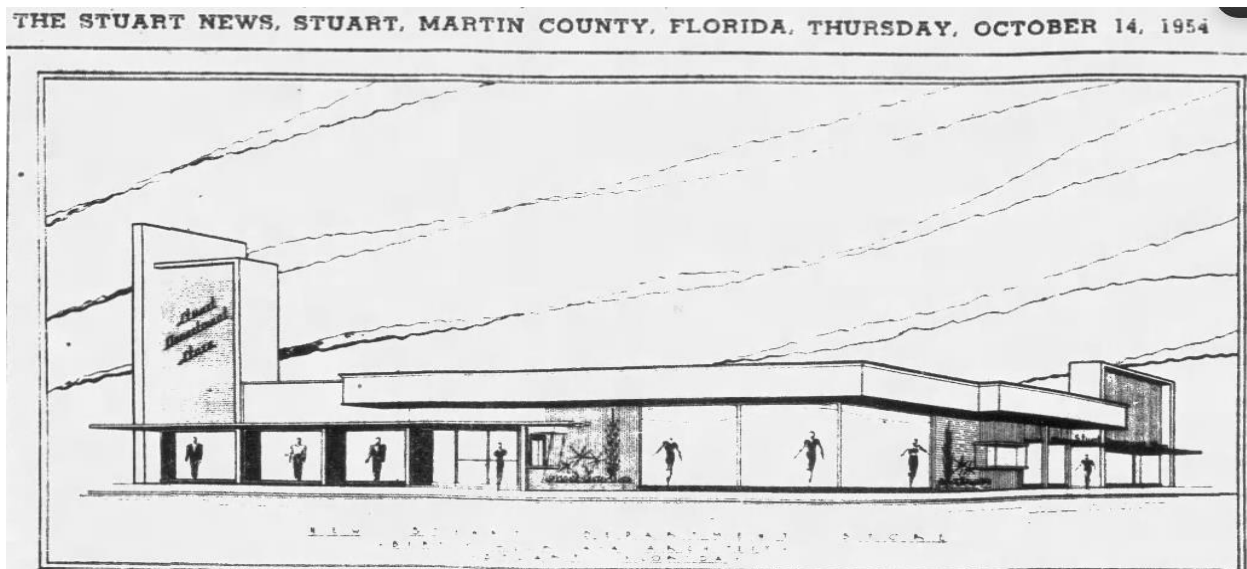


FIGURE 30. STUART DEPARTMENT STORE, 1954, 101 SW FLAGLER AVENUE

⁶⁶ Luckhardt, *Stuart*, p. 125.

Since its founding commercial and recreational fishing in Stuart has been an important part of the local economy. During the 1950s the city chamber of commerce undertook a publicity campaign that resulted in Stuart being proclaimed the “Sailfish Capital of the World” in 1957. Credit for the catchphrase is given to Stuart News editor Ernie Lyons. In January 1938 Lyons hosted half-a-dozen sportswriters from several of the largest newspapers in the United States. The group included Fred Fletcher of the New York Daily News, considered the dean of American sports writers; Raymond Camp, New York Times, fishing editor; and Bob Monroe, fishing editor for the Miami Daily News. The group fished with Captain Add Whitcarr and his sons Jack, Johnson and Curt. The charter resulted in over 1,000 catches in less than a week. Upon returning home, the writers referred to Stuart as being the “World Capital of Sailfish” (Figures 30-31).⁶⁷

By the 1950s, sport fishermen had been coming to Stuart for decades. The Stuart Sailfish Club, organized in the 1930s to promote fishing tourism in Stuart, was officially chartered in 1941. It publicized sport fishing opportunities, organized tournaments, and created the first conservation program. While sailfish were once abundant, over-fishing and pollution threatened commercial, recreational, and sport fishing. The catch and release program, which the club promoted, was ultimately successful, and the reputation of Stuart as the “Sailfish Capital of the World” was preserved.⁶⁸

Although it was already well-known for its sport fishing, in the 1940s and 1950s Ernest Dutton, a documentary film producer from Sewall’s Point, made a series of films about sport fishing in Stuart. The films were shown to civic clubs and fishing organizations across the country. Over the years various celebrities further promoted Stuart as a center of sport and recreation fishing. The first was President Grover Cleveland at the outset of the twentieth century. Presidents Chester Arthur, William Howard Taft, Theodore Roosevelt and Warren G. Harding followed. Other well-known individuals who visited Stuart for sport fishing were Lt. General Walter Bedell Smith, adjutant to General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who accepted the German surrender on V-E Day; Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr; newspaper publisher Herbert Pulitzer; actress Francis Langford and Ralph Evinrude, manufacturer of outboard motors.⁶⁹

The Stuart Chamber of Commerce campaign resulted in R.A. Gray, the Florida Secretary of State, issuing an official certificate in 1957 proclaiming the city “Sailfish Capital of the World.” This state trademark gave Stuart the right to use the slogan for advertising purposes and created an identity for the city. Subsequently, the Stuart High School yearbook became known as the Sailfish. Patches worn by the City of Stuart Police Department display a sailfish logo.⁷⁰ The identity of the sailfish with Stuart was cemented with the construction of the 18-foot bronze Sailfish Statue and Fountain at Jefferson Circle in Downtown Stuart in 2002.

Physical development of Florida cities, such as Stuart, following the collapse of Florida Land Boom, the onset of the Great Depression, and World War II, resumed with vigor in the late 1940s..

⁶⁷ discovermartin.com/sailfish-capital-world/Thurlow, *Stuart*, pp. 54-56; *Stuart News*, October 27, 2013, p. 84.

⁶⁸ Thurlow, *Stuart*, pp. 52-53; Luckhardt, *Stuart*, 83-88.

⁶⁹ Luckhardt, *Stuart*, 83-88.

⁷⁰ Ibid.



Many veterans who had served in Florida during the war visited became permanent residents. In the postwar era, Stuart faced developmental pressure like virtually every Florida city. Condominiums, hotels, apartment buildings, and commercial plazas replaced many historic commercial buildings and residences. Stuart was not exempt from development pressures and would face many challenges in updating its infrastructure while still preserving its historic sites and buildings in the post-World War period.

Like other Florida cities, in the 1950s and 1960s, Downtown Stuart suffered an exodus of major businesses and governmental services. Florida Power and Light Company, Southern Bell Telephone, the U.S. Post Office, the Martin County Savings and Loan Association, and the First National Bank all left Downtown between 1956 and 1966. The Hotel Commodore on SW Flagler Avenue burned, killing two men, and threatening all buildings in the Downtown core. Fire also destroyed a major religious structure, the St. Joseph Catholic Church.⁷¹

In the mid-1960s and early 1970 Stuart experienced highs and lows. Robert Hall was elected as the first African American to serve on the Stuart City Commission. The city changed its charter to end Jim Crow law and the Martin County School system was integrated without major incidents. A new city hall was built Downtown on the site of the Hotel Commodore. Designed by architect Phillip R. Braden, Jr. it was one of the only substantive buildings constructed in Downtown Stuart between 1950 and 1987, when the Stuart Main Street Program began. The exodus from Downtown continued in the 1970s, including the loss of the Amtrak Station, leaving Stuart without rail passenger service for the first time since 1894.⁷²

⁷¹ *Stuart News* October 27, 2013, p. 90.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 34Z





FIGURE 31. STUART SAILFISH CAPITAL OF THE WORLD



FIGURE 32. EARLY SAILFISHING IN STUART, C. 1940

Downtown Stuart 1974-Present, From Vacant to Vibrant

Downtown Stuart continued to decline during the late 1970s and early 1980s. The fortunes of Downtown began to turn with the election of Joan Jefferson, historic preservationist to the Stuart City Commission in 1979. Jefferson would later be elected Stuart's first female mayor in 1982. She and others lead the effort to preserve and revitalize Downtown Stuart. The preservation community opposed efforts to eliminate the iconic "Confusion Corner" and demolish the landmark WPA, Art Deco Martin County Courthouse. Preservation became institutionalized in Stuart with the establishment of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program in 1987.⁷³

Preservation of the 1937 Art Deco Martin County Courthouse was Stuart's first major preservation battle. By the 1970s with an exploding population, it was clear Martin County needed a larger facility. The old courthouse was functionally obsolete, undersized, and infested with rodents and roaches. In 1988 the county commission committed funds for a larger, modern judicial facility. The initial plan for construction of the new courthouse included demolition of the old one. Paralleling the county courthouse planning, the City of Stuart selected Miami architects and planners Andres Duany and his partner and wife, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk to update the city urban code and develop a master plan for the revitalization of Downtown Stuart. Duany argued for the preservation of the courthouse. He felt it was historically and architecturally the most important building in Stuart.⁷⁴

Many city and county officials and some members of the public disagreed with Duany, but he received strong support from local architects and Stuart Heritage, Inc., a private, non-profit historic preservation organization. In August 1988, the Martin County Commission applied to the Florida Department of State for a \$200,000 grant-in-aid to pay for restoration of the old courthouse. The grant was funded, and the old courthouse was restored and adapted for use as a local cultural center. In 1996, Jane Dickerson of the Cultural Center Board of Directors along with Dr. Carl Shiver of the Division of Historical Resources wrote an application for listing the courthouse in the National Register of Historic Places. The Keeper of the National Register approved the application, and the courthouse was listed in February 1997.⁷⁵ A major Stuart historic landmark had been officially recognized and preserved.

Since 1987 Stuart Main Street has been the prime mover in the remarkable revitalization of Downtown Stuart. In 1986 historic preservationist and city commissioner Joan Jefferson approached the Downtown Business and Professional Association and asked for support to form a National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Program. In 1987, the State of Florida, Bureau of Historic Preservation designated Stuart a National Main Street community. The business community contributed \$20,000 in funding for the program and donated office space. Donna Renninger was selected as Stuart's first Main Street Manager.⁷⁶

⁷³ Stuart News October 27, 2013, p. 98

⁷⁴ Martin County Courthouse, National Register nomination.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Stuart News October 27, 2013, p. 90.



When the Main Street program started, Downtown Stuart was full of vacant, run-down buildings. Competition from outside retailers such as the Treasure Coast Square Mall in Jensen Beach were drawing shoppers from Downtown. The occupancy rate Downtown was less than fifty percent. In 1987 Joan Jefferson and her architect husband, Peter, learned of plans to partially demolish the Post Office Arcade for parking. In 1990, along with bookstore owner Ann MacMillan and her physician husband David, they were able to purchase and preserve the building.⁷⁷

Commissioner Jefferson, originally from South Florida, brought in Andres Duany to lead a series of charrettes and workshops about how to revitalize Downtown. The City of Stuart and the Downtown business community sponsored the workshops. The workshops resulted in a re-writing of a new city building and zoning codes and the concept of a “people oriented” community. In 1991 the City of Stuart sponsored a historic properties survey which identified over 200 potential historic buildings in the city. Encouraged by the direction of Downtown, another group bought the Lyric Theatre, then being used as a church, and returned it to its historic use as an entertainment center. The Lyric Theatre became an anchor for Downtown, drawing crowds on nights and weekends and contributing to the success of restaurants and other Downtown businesses. Local architect Donald Armstrong, Jr. wrote an application for listing the Theatre in the National Register of Historic Places, which was approved in November 1993.⁷⁸

Other important accomplishments in Downtown Stuart included the “Dancing in the Streets” program on Sundays. The “Abundance Statue” was moved to Haney Circle in 1991 and a roundabout with a statue of a sailfish was created on Joan Jefferson Way, named for preservationist, city commissioner and former Mayor Joan Jefferson. Riverwalk was created along the south shore of the St. Lucie. Boutique and specialty shops and restaurants began moving into Downtown as Main Street programs and the Duany plan were implemented.⁷⁹

Established in 1987, Stuart Main Street has been the principal community revitalization organization for Downtown Stuart for over thirty-five years. Working within the framework of the National Main Street’s Four Point Approach of Organization, Design, Economic Vitality, and Promotion, Stuart Main Street focuses on community vision, unique assets, and market realities to build a thriving Downtown for residents and visitors. It sponsors community events such as the Rock’N Riverwalk concert series, Christmas on Main Street tree lighting, and the annual Downtown Art Festival. These events attract over 80,000 visitors to Downtown Stuart every year. In 2012 Stuart Main Street invested \$15,000 in improvements to the historic Flagler Center at 201 SW Flagler Avenue. The center hosts annually more than 200 private events and several conventions. Presently, Stuart Main Street is working with the City of Stuart Community Redevelopment Agency on this update of the 1991 historic properties survey. One of the primary goals of the survey is to establish the basis for a National Register historic district for Downtown Stuart. This will bring recognition and authenticity to the Downtown area well as financial incentives for renovation such as federal tax credits and state and federal grants.

⁷⁷ Stuart News October 27, 2013, p. 38Z.

⁷⁸ Stuart News October 27, 2013, p. 38Z.

⁷⁹ Ibid.



STUART HISTORIC PRESERVATIONIST, CITY COMMISSIONER AND MAYOR JOAN JEFFERSON AND HER ARCHITECT HUSBAND PETER JEFFERSON ALONG WITH ARCHITECT AND URBAN PLANNER ANDRES DUANY WERE MAJOR PLAYERS IN THE REVITALIZATION OF DOWNTOWN STUART IN THE 1980S.



FIGURE 33. JOAN AND PETER JEFFERSON AND ANDRES DUANY



FIGURE 34. JOAN JEFFERSON CIRCLE/SAILFISH STATUE DOWNTOWN STUART



ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES IN DOWNTOWN STUART

Summary

The Downtown Stuart Survey Update focuses on the Main Street area of the city and the commercial core east of US Highway 1. It has identified 200 historic buildings and other historic property types in the city dating from the period 1901 to 1974. It encompasses all or part of thirty-seven (37) city blocks. This area contains two main subdivisions: the Feroe Subdivision and the Potsdam Plat, known historically and contemporaneously as the Triangle. The Potsdam Plat, along with the Feroe Subdivision, form the core of Downtown Stuart.

At the core of Downtown Stuart, primarily in the Feroe Subdivision, is a historic commercial area encompassing all or part of fourteen (14) city blocks. It is the area covered by Stuart Main Street (Figure 34). Most of the buildings in the commercial area were constructed between 1912 and 1950 and are one-two story masonry commercial blocks. Within the Downtown area are the Art Deco style Stuart High School, Martin County Courthouse, and the Mid-Century Modern 1974 Stuart City Hall, the city's principal historic governmental buildings. Also, in the Downtown core are the Art Deco style courthouse and the Mediterranean Revival style Lyric Theatre, the two most architecturally significant buildings.

Surrounding the Downtown core are residential areas. Frame vernacular is the most common building tradition in the area, but scattered examples of formal architectural styles are found. The Bungalow and Mediterranean inspired styles are the most common prior to 1930. After World War II there were a small number of the Ranch and Minimal Traditional styles. In addition to commercial and governmental buildings, the survey area contains two important civic buildings, a church, apartments, Haney Circle, a historic city park, and the City of Stuart Water Tower, a structure. The physical integrity and condition of the area is good, particularly in the commercial core where the Stuart Main Street program has had a very positive effect since 1987.

Setting

The City of Stuart is located on the banks of the St. Lucie River, approximately forty miles north of the major city of West Palm Beach, Florida. Stuart is the seat of Martin County. It is a medium-sized city in a rapidly developing county. The primary thoroughfares are U.S. 1, Florida A1A which links Stuart with the Atlantic Coast, and Florida State Road 76, which leads to U.S. Interstate Highway 95. The Florida East Coast Railway line runs north and south through the historic core and the survey area.

The Potsdam Plat, along with the Feroe Subdivision, form the two major areas of Downtown Stuart (Figure 35). The Feroe Subdivision has an overall irregular form. Its form is shaped by the diagonal line of the FEC rail line and the irregular shoreline of the St. Lucie River. Blocks

are rectangular. The major north-south streets are Flagler Avenue, originally Railroad Avenue, Osceola Avenue and Seminole Streets. The major east-west streets are Colorado (formerly Belle Flora) Avenue and St. Lucie Avenue. The north-south streets run parallel to the rail line while St. Lucie and Colorado run perpendicular.

South of the Feroe Subdivision, from Colorado to Florida Avenue, is the Charles Porter Subdivision. This area is also part of the Downtown core. It is transitional in historic use with commercial buildings at Haney Circle, the intersection of Osceola and Colorado, and primarily residential buildings the more one proceeds south. This area includes Denver and Detroit avenues which run east-west, Ocean and the continuation of SW Seminole Street and Osceola Avenues.

Although no zoning laws existed at the time it was platted, the Feroe Subdivision was originally mixed use. Flagler Avenue and Osceola Street were commercial and governmental while the east side along Seminole Avenue and the St. Lucie River featured private large residences on waterfront lots. This historic use pattern remains today, although developmental pressures have resulted in the demolition of some residences along the river and their replacement with large scale condominiums and apartments.

The Potsdam Plat was formally recorded in 1912. Surveyed in 1897, it is known historically and contemporaneously as the “Triangle” because of its distinctive form. It was formed on the east side by the diagonal course of the FEC Railway and on the south by Frazier’s Creek. It contains fourteen blocks and eighty-five building lots. Southwest of the Potsdam Plat, the survey area includes the Frazier’s Addition, a primary residential neighborhood containing an additional thirteen blocks.

In contrast to the Feroe Subdivision, the streets of Potsdam run north-south and east-west. Lots in the Potsdam Plat along the Dixie Highway on the southwest side of the railway are triangular in form. The junction of the two subdivisions, the Dixie Highway, the FEC rail line, and Colorado Avenue has resulted in a five-way intersection, nationally known as Confusion Corner.

Downtown Stuart has beautiful vistas of the St. Lucie River on its north and east sides. The landscape of the survey area is flat. Vegetation takes the form of oak, palm and pine trees. Landscaping is largely informal. The Downtown core contains a circle or roundabout known as Haney Circle. Within the circle is Haney Park containing plantings and a statue known as “Abundance.”

The Feroe Subdivision and the Potsdam Plat illustrate the boom and bust, organic development of Stuart and many other East Coast, Florida communities. Stuart had no formal town plan. The irregularity of Downtown Stuart is in part a result of the diagonal course of the FEC Railway line and the undulating shoreline of the St. Lucie River. The triangular blocks and circular and irregular street patterns give Downtown Stuart a unique character and a historic sense of time and place.

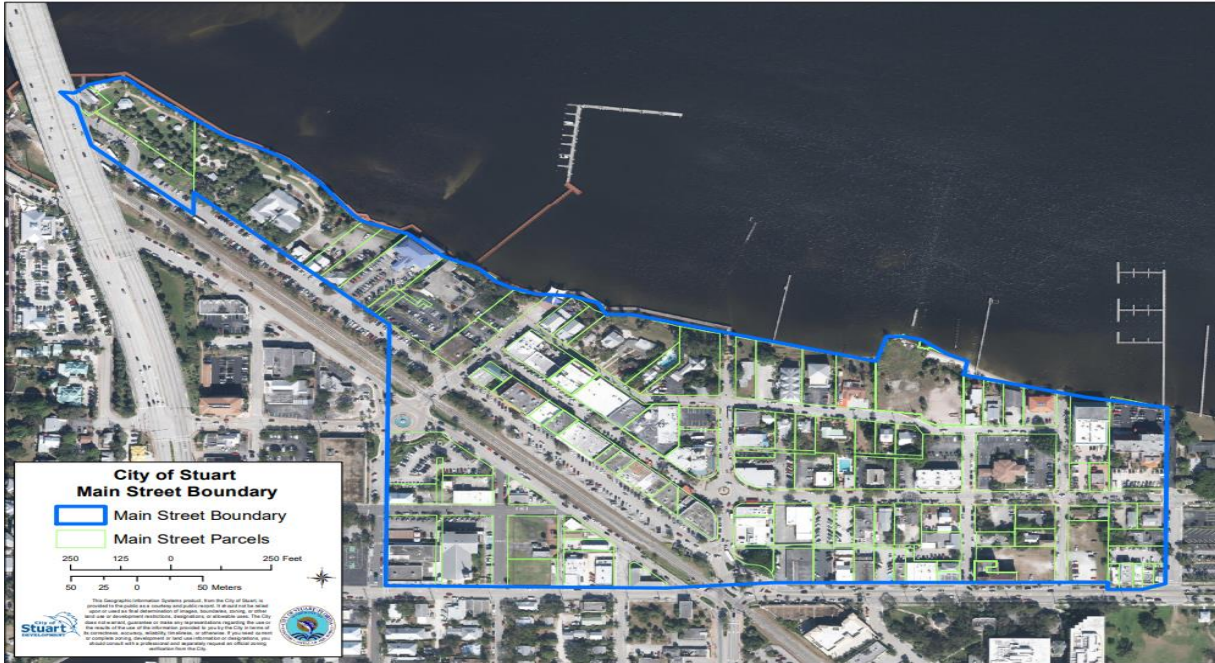


FIGURE 35. STUART MAIN STREET JURISDICTION

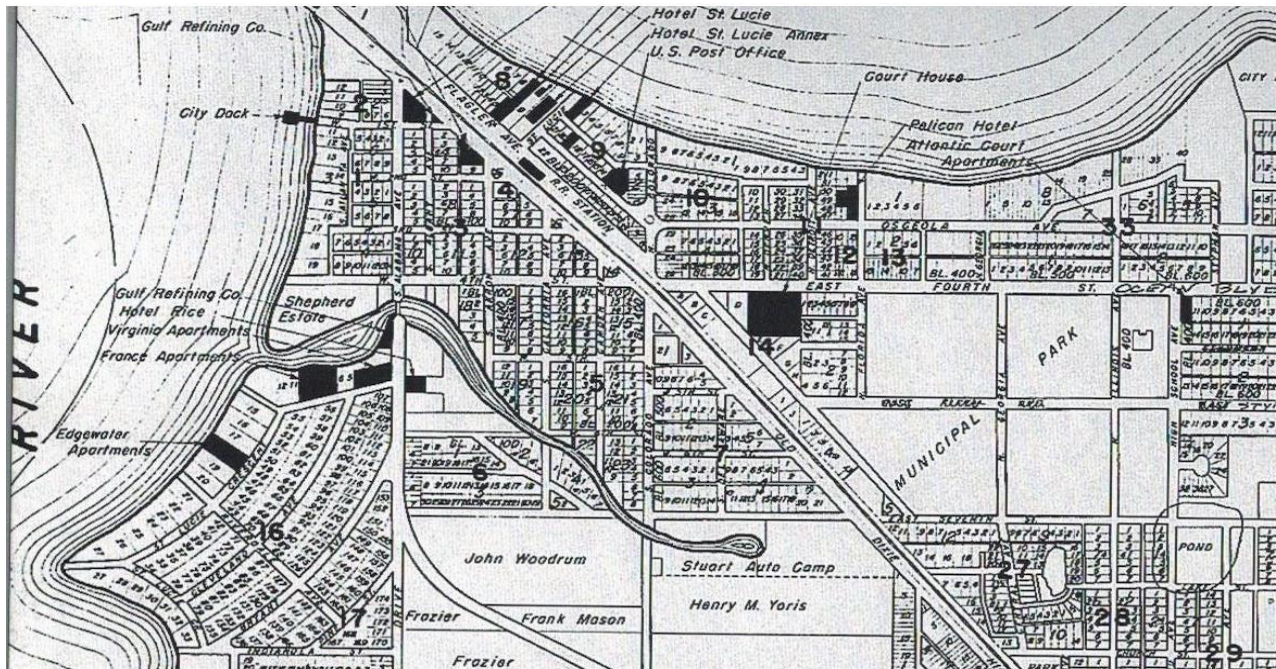


FIGURE 36. HISTORIC SUBDIVISIONS IN DOWNTOWN STUART

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE DOWNTOWN STUART: BUILDING TYPES/ STYLES

Historic buildings in Downtown Stuart embody typical building types and architectural styles with some regional adaptations to climate, materials, design, and function. Materials became readily available as transportation became accessible to more and more parts of the city through train and auto usage. Downtown Stuart has an unusual building material in the form of locally produced cast concrete block. As means of communication developed and systems of transportation developed, methods of construction and styles of buildings expanded. Some architectural styles are interchangeable across residential and commercial uses while a select few styles are limited to a specific building type. The various architectural styles and building types described below are those prevalent in the survey area. They are representative of resources from the early settlement period to the post-World War II era, and contemporary or Mid- Century Modern architectural styles found nationally (Figure 36).



FIGURE 37. DOWNTOWN STUART, ST. LUCIE AVENUE, C. 1940

DESCRIPTION OF BUILDING TYPES

Downtown Stuart, specifically the Main Street area, serves as the location for most of the city's landmark buildings. These buildings include governmental, commercial, entertainment, educational, religious, multi-family apartments and some of the finest historic residences in the city. Two—the Lyric Theatre and the Martin County Courthouse—have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Main Street area contains the principal governmental and commercial buildings and important historic residences on Seminole Avenue along the St. Lucie River. This area is defined by Flagler and Ocean Avenues on the west, the St. Lucie River on the north and east, and Florida Avenue on the south. The other major area of Downtown—The Triangle or Potsdam Plat Subdivision--includes an important civic building, the Woodmen of the World; an important religious building, the First Baptist Church; and a concentration of historic residences including the Sam Mathews House and several apartments.

Governmental Buildings

The major governmental building in Downtown Stuart is the Martin County Courthouse. Part of the building includes the first schoolhouse in Stuart constructed in 1908. In 1937 a combination of county and federal funds paid for an Art Deco addition to the front of the old school.

L. Phillips Clarke, an important West Palm Beach architect, designed the Art Deco addition. The building has been adapted for use as a cultural center and today houses two fine arts galleries. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1997.



FIGURE.38. MARTIN COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 100 SE OCEAN BOULEVARD

Designed by local architect Bert Keck, the Federal Recreation Building was constructed in 1943 for local G.I.S. On May 2, 1946, the city purchased the building and renamed it the Stuart Civic Center. By the early 1960s, the Stuart Civic Center was informally known as the Stuart Recreation Center and later the Stuart Rec Center. It would later be officially renamed the Flagler Recreation Center and Flagler Place. In 2020 Stuart Main Street assumed operations of the building and renamed the venue “Flagler Center.”



FIGURE 39. FEDERAL RECREATION BUILDING, 201 SW FLAGLER AVENUE

The current Stuart City Hall was constructed in 1974 and was one of the few new buildings in Downtown Stuart built since 1950. Phillip R. Braden, Jr. was the architect. The City Hall, with its extensive use of glass, steel and concrete, is the only significant example of Mid-Century Modern architecture in the survey area.



FIGURE 40. 1974 STUART CITY HALL, 121 SW FLAGLER AVENUE



The Post Office Arcade was one of Downtown Stuart's most significant Florida Boom period buildings. Constructed in 1925, it served as the town post office until 1959. In addition to being a governmental building it is a rare example in Florida of an arcade building type. An arcade is a covered shopping street flanked by shops. Arcades first developed in France and Italy during the late nineteenth century as elaborate structures of cast iron and glass with vaulted ceilings. In the United States, arcades were initially located in large urban areas. They were popular because they permitted shopping in several stores without having to go outside in inclement weather. As they spread to small town America, commercial arcades became simpler and were constructed of wood-frame or steel. They were precursors of the commercial malls which spread throughout the United States after World War II.

Arcades first appeared in Florida during the 1920s. They became a very popular building type as they offered shaded, cool areas for shopping as well as shelter from the frequent rain showers associated with the state's hot humid climate. Often designed in Mediterranean-influenced styles, such as the Stuart Arcade, they reflected the growing sophistication of Florida's commercial architecture. Few survive. Commonly, the passage through the building is altered to capture additional space. The Stuart Arcade was similarly threatened in the 1980s, until Stuart preservationist Joan Jefferson, her husband and business partners rescued the building from partial demolition.



FIGURE 41. STUART POST OFFICE ARCADE, 13-31 SW OSCEOLA STREET

Historic Sites

Haney Circle, a site; the “Abundance Statue,” an object; and a fountain, a structure; form a city owned park at the intersection of Osceola and Colorado avenues. Originally named Flower Circle, in 1920 the Stuart Town Council renamed the park for Mrs. Cynthia Burnette Haney in recognition of her work in journalism, temperance and women’s rights. Seeking to improve its appearance, in 1949 the Stuart Women’s Club learned of the availability of a statue which had been exhibited at the 1939 New York World’s Fair. Known as the “Goddess of Abundance” the statue was the work of sculptress Manya Komole, of Venice, Italy and was cast in bronze in Paris by Alexis Rudier. The City of Stuart and the Women’s Club planned to install the Abundance Statue at the center of Haney Circle. However, upon arrival, it was discovered that the Abundance Statue was, in fact, a scantily dressed voluptuous women holding a wine jug. It was decided that such a statue in Haney Circle would be disrespectful to Mrs. Haney, a conservative teetotaler and supporter of temperance. Instead, the statue was placed on the west side of the Martin County Courthouse and relocated to Memorial Park in 1961. Finally, in 1991, Abundance was installed in Haney Circle as originally intended. Memorial Park, which dates to the post-World War II period is a second city park or site within the survey area.



FIGURE 42. HANEY CIRCLE AND ABUNDANCE STATUE

Historic Structures

The City of Stuart Water Tower is an iconic symbol of the city. The Martin County High School Bi-Centennial Class of 1976 suggested painting an American Flag on the tank in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the United States Declaration of Independence. In 1988, the City of Stuart selected Miami architects and planners Andres Duany and his partner and wife, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk to develop a master plan for the revitalization of Downtown Stuart. Duany argued for the preservation of the water tower and the old Martin County Courthouse.⁸⁰ As a result, both properties were preserved. In 1991, the city considered repainting the tower. However, members of the community came forward to support preserving the flag. The City Commission agreed and added a second flag and the name Stuart to the structure. The Water Tower has become a landmark for both residents and visitors. Although remote from the commercial core of Stuart it is considered a historic property.

A second structure in Downtown Stuart is the Stuart Bandstand in Memorial Park. In 1940, the city built the structure for speeches, public concerts, holiday celebrations and high school graduation. The designer of the concave, semi-dome concrete structure was James Crowley, director of the Stuart High School Band.⁸¹ The fountain at Haney Circle is a final structure.



FIGURE 43. CITY OF STUART WATER TOWER, 1959, VICINITY COURTHOUSE

⁸⁰ Martin County Courthouse, National Register nomination.

⁸¹ Luckhardt, *Stuart*, 126.



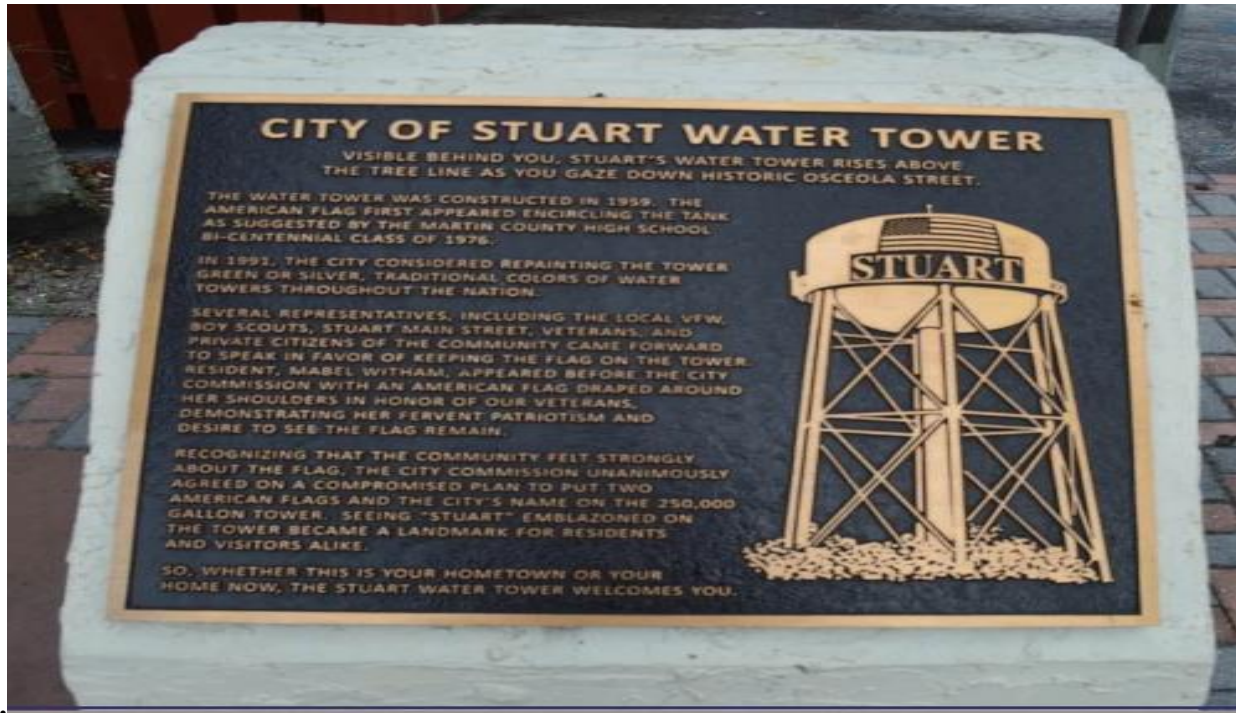


FIGURE 44. CITY OF STUART WATER TOWER, 1959, MARKER



FIGURE 45. CITY OF STUART BANDSHELL, 1940, MEMORIAL PARK

Entertainment Buildings

When constructed in 1925, the third Lyric Theater was one of the largest buildings in Martin County. The Lyric Theatre was constructed for Judge John C. Hancock. It was the first building in Downtown Stuart documented to be designed by an architect. The architect was John N. Sherwood in association with Mark J. Casto. The Lyric Theatre was originally a silent theatre designed in an eclectic style incorporating elements of the Beaux Arts Classical and Mediterranean Revival styles. Like many businesses, the theatre closed in the Great Depression. Over the next fifty years it was sold multiple times before becoming a church in 1979. The theatre was purchased and restored in the late 1980s and has been a catalyst for the revitalization of Downtown Stuart since. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1993.



FIGURE 46. LYRIC THEATRE, 59 SW FLAGLER AVENUE

Educational Buildings

The Stuart High School at 500 East Ocean Boulevard was designed by architect F.H. Trimble and built in 1922 by general contractor J.C. Hammer. The school opened for the fall term in September 1923. A large, two-story masonry structure, it was set back from Ocean Boulevard 100 feet. The entrance is highly ornate with wide steps, Art Deco surrounds, and double doors with decorative panels. The interior featured a 600-seat auditorium. The architect, Frank Homer Trimble, was a prolific designer of schools with over fifty in his portfolio.





FIGURE 43. STUART HIGH SCHOOL, 500 SE OCEAN BOULEVARD

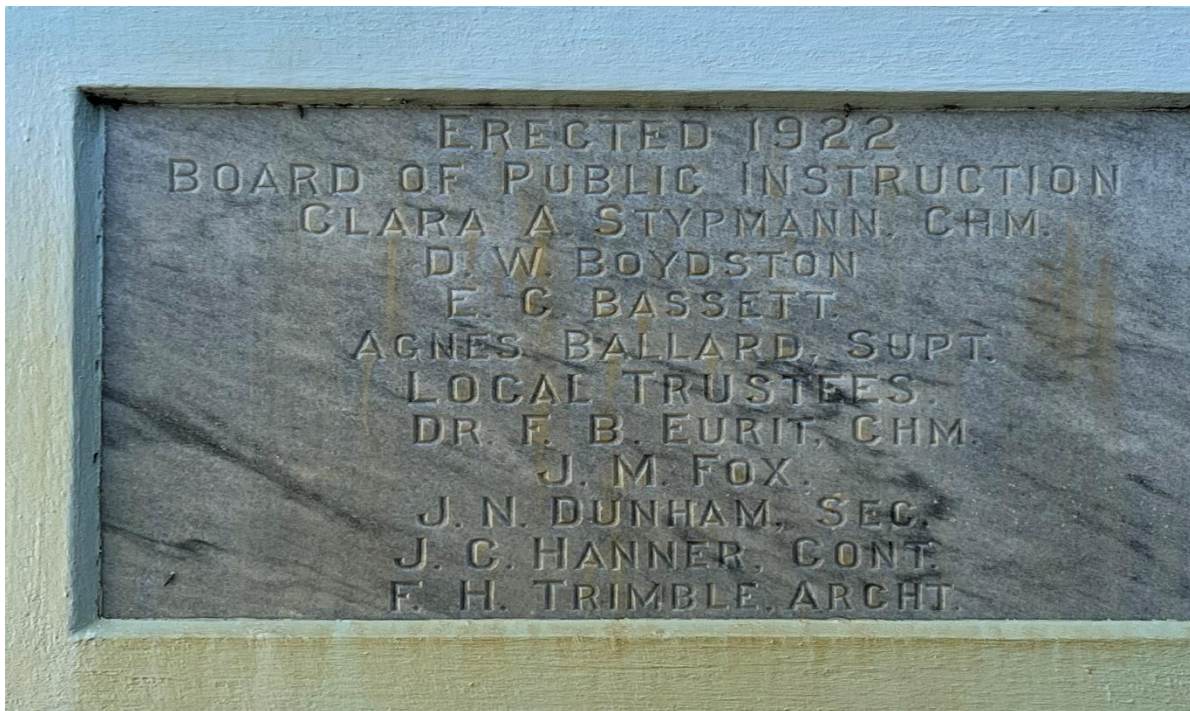


FIGURE 44. STUART HIGH SCHOOL, 500 SE OCEAN BOULEVARD, DEDICATION
TABLET

Civic Buildings

The principal civic building in Downtown Stuart is the Woodman Hall at 217 Akron Avenue. Woodman Hall is a two-story frame vernacular building constructed in 1915 by master carpenter Sam Mathews. It originally served as a meeting hall for the fraternal organization Woodmen of the World. Subsequently, Woodman Hall has been adapted for a number of other uses, including a telephone exchange, business offices, and an insurance agency, its current use. A final important building in Downtown Stuart is the Acadia Lodge Masonic Temple at 14 SW Osceola. Constructed in 1949, it is located just south of Haney Circle at 14 SE Osceola Street.



FIGURE 45. WOODMEN OF THE WORLD BUILDING, 217 SW AKRON AVENUE



FIGURE 46. ACADIA LODGE, 14 SE OSCEOLA STREET



FIGURE 47. ACADIA LODGE CORNER STONE

Downtown Stuart Commercial Buildings

Historic commercial buildings in Downtown Stuart range in height from one to three stories. All, except the Parks General Store, are constructed with masonry materials, including brick, ceramic hollow tile, and concrete block. Most of the roofs are flat built-up types with raised parapets. Decorative elements are generally restricted to the facade, except in cases where buildings are located on corner lots. The facades of two and three-story buildings are divided into two distinct zones. The lower levels contain storefronts that consist of large plate glass display windows, at least one entrance, and kick panels. The upper stories have rectangular openings that contain double-hung sash windows.

False Front Commercial

The George W. Parks General Store is an extremely rare example of a false front commercial building in Florida. It was constructed in 1901 by master builder Sam Mathews following the arrival of the railroad. False front commercial buildings are a building type typically associated with boom towns of the West. They were the first commercial buildings in early mining and railroad towns. Proprietors were reluctant to invest large amounts of money during the uncertain times of a town's earliest development. A false front allowed an owner to invest more money in the façade while relegating the secondary sides to a less expensive treatment. Character-defining features of a false front building include a front wall that extends above the main roof to create a more impressive façade. The main roof is almost always a front facing gable type. Higher quality materials and more architectural detailing are typically used on the false front. These are all features of the Parks Store. The store has a commercial entrance on the first floor leading to retail space in the interior. The upstairs served as the proprietor's residence in its early years.



FIGURE 48. STUART FEED STORE, FALSE FRONT COMMERCIAL BLDG.



FIGURE 49. HISTORIC VIEW GEORGE PARKS STORE



FIGURE 50. FALSE FRONT WOOD FRAME COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS COLORADO

One-part Commercial Blocks

The one-part commercial block was another common commercial building type in the United States from the 1850s until the 1950s. The one-part commercial block is defined by a single, horizontal zone. The zone typically housed public areas such as retail space, offices, banking rooms and lobbies. Common features included show windows, a canted, recessed entry, kick panels, transom above the entrance, a cornice and a flat roof with parapet topped with coping.



FIGURE 51-52. 27-29 FLAGLER AND PRESSEL BUILDING FLAGLER AVENUE



FIGURE 53. OSCEOLA BUILDING 61 SW OSCEOLA STREET



FIGURE 54. ONE-PART COMMERCIAL BUILDING FLAGLER AVENUE

Two-part Commercial Blocks

The Greene Building at 51 SW Flagler Avenue is an example of a two-part commercial block building type in Downtown Stuart. The two-part commercial block was the most common commercial building type used in small cities and towns in the United States between 1850 and 1930. Generally limited to two and four-story buildings, the two-part block is characterized by a horizontal division into two distinct zones, expressed by the interior use of the building. The lower zone is usually reserved for retail space and often contains large plate glass show windows and the other first floor features of a one-part commercial block. The upper zone contains space for offices or apartments. The exterior design of the building is usually uniform, but in some cases different materials and architectural detailing are employed to visually distinguish the two zones.



FIGURE 55. GREEN BUILDING 51 SW FLAGLE AVENUE

Residential Architecture, Downtown Stuart

The historic residential buildings of Downtown Stuart are associated with the development of the neighborhoods in the area and reflect a variety of architectural styles that are consistent with designs found in cities throughout Florida. Historic residential buildings are mainly single-family homes, apartments, boarding houses, and outbuildings built before 1960. Many of these buildings were constructed by people who played important roles in the development of Stuart during the historic period. Many former residential buildings have been converted to multi-family or commercial use. Residential buildings range in size from three and one-half-story apartment houses to small three-room bungalows. A wide variety of materials including wood, rough-faced and interlocking concrete block, hollow tile, stucco, and glass were used in their construction. The buildings reflect designs that were popular during the first half of the twentieth century. Frame Vernacular architecture predominates, but there are also examples of the Craftsman Bungalow and Mediterranean Revival styles.

Frame Vernacular

The earliest wooden residential buildings in Stuart were likely balloon-frame. From the arrival of the railroad in 1894 until about 1910, frame vernacular architecture was characterized by the balloon-frame method of construction. Balloon-frame construction began in Chicago and reached Florida with the arrival of the railroad. It featured closely spaced two-inch-deep boards of varying widths joined by nails. This method of framing eliminated the hewn joints and massive timbers employed in braced frame construction. Corner posts and principal horizontal members consisted of two or more two-inch boards nailed together. Studs in multi-story buildings rose continuously from the floors to the roof. Floors hung on the studs. Balloon framing allowed cheaper and more rapid construction and permitted taller buildings. Brick piers provided the principal foundation type. Roofs were generally gable, hip or pyramidal. Metal roof surfacing, including ornamental metal, became common in Florida during the period. Roof forms were more complex, featuring dormers, cross gables, and other secondary roof structures. Windows were double-hung sash, often in a 2/2 light pattern. Porches and verandas were universal features.

By 1920, the Bungalow was a major influence on frame vernacular design in Stuart. As a result, the form, plan, and features of frame buildings tended to be more regular and smaller. After 1920 frame vernacular buildings often diminished to one story. In addition to height and methods of construction frame vernacular buildings of the 1920s and 1930s shared additional characteristics. Framing rested on pier foundations, commonly brick or concrete block. The exterior sheathing was usually horizontal wood siding. Roof types were gable or hip, covered with V-crimp or embossed sheet metal or composition or asbestos cement shingles. Brick chimneys constituted a



common feature. Windows were double-hung sash. The size of panes increased in size to 1/1 lights. Bungalow windows, with a single lower light and 3,4 or more lights in the upper sash, were typical. Porches, usually full-widths entrance types, remained common.

The Sam Mathews House at 501 Akron Avenue in the Triangle area of Downtown Stuart is a fine example of Frame Vernacular architecture in Stuart. 501 Akron was built in 1912 by Mathews as his personal residence. The Mathews House is one-and-one-half stories with a front-facing gable roof, shed and gable dormers, wood drop siding and wood shingles in the gable ends and dormers. The entrance porch is covered by a hip roof supported by turned wood posts. Windows are double-hung sash in a 1/1 light pattern.



FIGURE 56. SAM MATHEWS HOUSE, 501 AKRON AVENUE

Another of Sam Matthews's buildings in Downtown Stuart is the Frame Vernacular Owl House at 100 Colorado Ave. A highly unusual design, the Owl House features four triangular corner gables and eye-like windows which resemble the pointed ears and face of an owl. The four corners are like the prow of a ship, an appropriate design for the owner who was a ship's captain.



FIGURE 57. THE OWL HOUSE, 100 COLORADO AVENUE

ADDITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Bungalow

The Triangle area of Downtown Stuart west of the railroad line contains significant examples of the Bungalow style. 416 California Street is an outstanding individual example of Bungalow with its gable-over-gable roof profile on the main elevation. The Bungalow was the most popular residential building design in Florida during the first three decades of the twentieth century. Its name was derived from the Bengalese *bangla*, a low house with porches, used as a wayside shelter by travelers in India during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although the name and some of the general characteristics of the Bungalow have their origins in India, the Japanese had the most profound influence on the style. Japanese construction techniques exhibited at the California Mid-Winter Exposition of 1894 emphasized the interplay of angles and planes and extensive display of structural members that became integral components of American Bungalow design.

The earliest American buildings which were consciously bungalows appeared in California and New England in the 1890s. They generally were large residences designed by architects. However, by the turn of the century publications like *Bungalow Magazine* and *The Craftsman* flooded the building market with plans for inexpensive bungalows. Featured in these magazines were articles about the economical use of space, interior decoration, and landscaping. It was this scaled down version of the Bungalow which became so pervasive in Florida during the early twentieth century. The Bungalow is typically a one or one and one-half story building with a low-pitched gable roof with wide unenclosed eave overhangs. Roof rafters are usually exposed, and false brackets or beams are commonly added under gables. Porches are often the dominant feature of a Bungalow. They are generally either full or partial width, with the roof supported by tapered square columns that frequently extend to ground level or sit on massive brick piers.



FIGURE 58. 416 SW CALIFORNIA AVENUE

Mediterranean Revival/Spanish Eclectic

Examples of Mediterranean influenced architecture in Stuart include the Sunrise Apartments at 402 SW Camden Avenue. Mediterranean Revival is an eclectic style containing architectural elements with Spanish or Middle Eastern precedents. Found in those states that have a Spanish colonial heritage, Mediterranean Revival broadly defines the Mission, Moorish, Turkish, Byzantine, and Spanish Eclectic revival styles which became popular in the Southwest and Florida during the twentieth century. The influence of those Mediterranean styles found expression through a detailed study in 1915 of Latin American architecture made by Bertram Grovesnor Goodhue at the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego. The Goodhue exhibit prominently featured the rich Spanish architectural variety of South America. Encouraged by the publicity afforded the exposition, other architects began to look directly to Spain and elsewhere in the Mediterranean where they found still more interesting building traditions.

Mediterranean Revival buildings in Florida display considerable Spanish influence. A popular building style in Florida during the 1920s, construction continued following the collapse of the land boom and even into the 1930s. The style was adapted for a variety of building types ranging from grandiose tourist hotels to two-room residences. The popularity of the style became widespread, and many commercial and residential buildings underwent renovation in the 1920s to reflect the Mediterranean influence. Identifying features of the style include flat (sometimes hip) roofs, usually with some form of parapet; ceramic tile roof surfacing; stuccoed facades; flat roof entrance porches, commonly with arched openings supported by square columns; casement and double-hung sash windows; and ceramic tile decorations.



FIGURE 59. SUNRISE APARTMENTS, 402 SW CAMDEN AVENUE

Mission Style

The Mission style was also a popular design during the Florida Land Boom years of the 1920s. It drew inspiration from the Spanish Mission of California and the Old Southwest. Mission style residences featured curvilinear parapets, red tile coping and roof covering, arched openings and smooth or textured stucco exterior finishes. A typical residential example of the style in Stuart is the house located at 428 Camden Avenue. It features a character defining gable roof with a curvilinear parapet. The main entrance is accessed through a porch with arched openings.



FIGURE 60. MISSION STYLE, 428 SW CAMDEN AVENUE

Art Moderne Style

The Art Moderne Style of the 1930s represented a break with traditional design, particularly the vernacular and revival styles which characterized the architecture of Stuart prior to that time. It emphasized futuristic concepts rather than architectural antecedents. It gained favor in the 1930s when industrial designs began to exhibit streamlined shapes. The idea of round corners to make automobiles and airplanes more aerodynamic was applied to buildings. In addition to rounded corners, Art Modern Style buildings have flat roofs, smoother exterior surfaces, glass block, horizontal grooves, and cantilevered overhangs.

An excellent example of the Art Modern in Stuart is the Hipson Office Building at 31-33 SE Osceola Street. With its turned corner, round windows, horizontal grooves, smooth stucco wall surface, and flat roof with coping at the roof line, the Hipson Building is a textbook example.



of the Art Moderne Style and the best example of the style in Stuart. The Hipson Building was completed in June 1941 with a design inspired by the architecture of the 1939 New York World's Fair. Architect Frederick Seelman of West Palm Beach designed the Hipson Building. Another good example is the nearby Dehon Building at 11 SW Osceola Street on Haney Circle.



FIGURE 61. HIPSON OFFICE BUILDING, 31-33 SE OSCEOLA STREET



FIGURE 62. DEHON BUILDING, 11 SE OSCEOLA STREET

Art Deco Style

Art Deco was the first of the modernistic styles to become popular in America. Much like Art Moderne, it represented a break with traditional design. The style got its name from the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes (International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts) held in Paris in 1925. Art Deco was most popular during the 1920s and early 1930s. It was almost exclusively used on commercial and governmental buildings and is seldom found on private residences. Character defining features of Art Deco are a flat roof, irregular plan, stucco finish, zig-zag detailing. Geometric, floral and Chevron designs. Two excellent examples in Stuart are the Martin County Courthouse and Stuart High School.



FIGURE 63. ART DECO, MARTIN COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 100 SE OCEAN BLVD

Tudor Revival Style

The Tudor Revival Style became popular in America during the first three decades of the twentieth century. It was loosely based on a combination of buildings styles common to the architecture of sixteenth-century Tudor England and a variety of Medieval English prototype ranging from thatched-roof folk cottages to grand manor houses. The first American examples of the style were erected in the late-nineteenth century and tended to be large architect designed building closely related to English precedents. As the style was adapted to smaller residential designs, the Tudor Revival lost much of its resemblance to its English antecedents.

Most Tudor Revival residences in Florida date from the 1920s, when the style reached its zenith in popularity throughout the United States. Characteristic features of the style were steeply pitched, usually side-gabled roofs; decorative half-timbering; exterior stucco walls; tall, narrow casement windows with multi-pane glazing; and massive end-exterior chimneys, often located on the main façade. There are few examples in Stuart. The best is the Crary House, formerly located at 311 Cardinal Way but moved to 171 SW Flagler Avenue in 2010.



FIGURE 64. TUDOR REVIVAL, CRARY HOUSE, 171 SW FLAGLER AVE

MATERIALS

Concrete Block

Some of the earliest examples of the use of concrete block and cast concrete as a building material in the United States are found in St. Augustine, Florida in 1880s. Concrete block was first used on Villa Zorayda in 1883. In Stuart, the use of concrete block as a building material dates to the first decade of the 20th century. Frank J. Frazier began producing the blocks, two at a time, between 1906 and 1909. The Stuart Bank was constructed with a veneer of faux concrete blocks produced by Frazier in 1912. In addition to the Stuart Bank, Frazier's blocks were used in the construction of the adjacent Feroe Building in 1913, the Stuart School in 1909 and for his mother, Margaret Frazier's house in the Triangle area of Stuart.



FIGURE 65. FEROE BUILDING, 73 SW FLALGER AVE

NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

Non-contributing buildings in the survey area fall into two categories. The first category are those that were constructed during the historic period, but that have been radically altered to the point where they no longer exhibit their original materials and/or have large additions that seriously compromise the historic appearance of the original building. The second category includes those that were constructed after the district's period of historic significance.



FIGURE 66. MODERN CONDOMINIUMS 47 OSCEOLA STREET DOWNTOWN STUART

CONCLUSIONS

Update Of Historic Resources in Survey Area

The 1991 Historic Properties of the City of Stuart Florida recommended a number of buildings for individual National Register listing. Since that time only two in the present survey area have been listed: the Lyric Theatre, 59 SW Flagler Avenue, listed in 1993 and the Martin County Courthouse, 100 SE Ocean Boulevard, listed in 1997. The current survey has updated the original list, added additional properties not included on the list, and is recommending the pursuit of a National Register of Historic Places District for Downtown Stuart.

The potential district is located within the Main Street area. Its general boundaries are the St. Lucie River on the east, SW Flagler and SE Ocean Boulevard on the west, SE Denver Avenue on the south, and the north side of the Federal Recreational Center at 201 SW Flagler Avenue. At the time of the 1991 survey, parts of this area, particularly the area around and south of Haney Circle had not achieved the minimum age for consideration for listing in the National Register. This area contains a concentration of buildings that date from the late 1930s, early 1940s and the post-World War II period to about 1950. Many of these buildings embody the significant architecture of the period, particularly the Art Moderne Style. Most buildings in this area were designed by professional architects, in contrast to earlier historic periods when frame and masonry vernacular buildings pre-dominated. Prominent architects designing buildings in Downtown Stuart included Bert Keck, AIA; Frederick Seelman, AIA; L. Phillips Clarke; and John N. Sherwood. Master builders, such as Sam Mathews, constructed many of the buildings in the potential district.

The present survey update is intended to not only update the previous survey and other historic resources within the survey area but to provide an authoritative basis for local preservation planning. Historic preservation needs to be coordinated with development activities in Stuart to maintain and protect historic resources. A planning document by architects and planners Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk entitled “Report to the Citizens of Stuart, Florida, Downtown Redevelopment District” in 1988 was a key to the revitalization of Downtown Stuart. It contributed to the preservation of the Martin County Courthouse, the Lyric Theater and the Post Office Arcade among others. The initiation of Stuart Main Street in 1987 further contributed to the dramatic turnaround and revitalization of the area.

Moreover, a National Register designation will provide recognition for the city’s historic resources and limited protection from state and federal activities which could impact them. This protection is particularly important since major state and federal highways crisscross the area and are one of the principal threats to historic buildings. The National Register designation also provides an authoritative source for local recognition of the town’s historic resources and state and federal financial incentives such as grants and tax credits.

The survey update includes an assessment of altered and demolished buildings and an updating of the inventory to include buildings constructed outside the previous period of significance, which ended in 1940. Updated photography of the setting, boundaries, representative building types and styles and significant materials have been undertaken. A map of the proposed district showing boundaries, an inventory of contributing and noncontributing buildings, and other relevant information are included with this report.

Architectural Analysis

Most of the inventoried buildings in the Stuart Survey date from 1901 to 1950 and are associated with the railroad era of 1894-1918 and the Florida Boom of the 1920s. From 1928 to 1936 little building occurred in the survey area and none occurred Downtown until 1936. During the late 1930s and early 1940s several important commercial buildings were constructed, particularly in the vicinity of Haney Circle. World War II was again a period of little real estate development, except for the Federal Recreation Center on 201 SW Flagler Avenue. The completion of historic Downtown Stuart occurred in the late 1940s and was largely complete by 1950. Stuart City Hall, completed in 1974, was the only major building completed in Downtown Stuart in the interim as the area went into an extended period of decline.

The design of buildings, the materials and methods of construction in the Stuart Survey area are consistent with the historic contexts outlined above and national and state trends in architecture. They were, however, subject to the skills of local builders, such as master carpenter Sam Mathews, and building materials such as cast concrete block produced by local mason Frank J. Frazier. The great majority of historic buildings in Stuart were erected by local contractors not formally trained in building construction or design. These buildings are referred to as Frame and Masonry Vernacular. The Bungalow Style in residential areas was the most prevalent formal style. Other significant styles included Mediterranean Revival from the 1920s, Art Deco and Art Moderne from the 1930s and 1930s and individual examples of the Tudor and Mission Styles.

The Downtown area also contains a park or site, Haney Circle; an object, the Abundance Statue and two structures, the Haney Circle Fountain, and the City of Stuart Water Tower. Haney Circle was originally a Stuart City Park with a large palm tree and simple landscaping. In 1949, the City of Stuart and the Stuart Women's Club planned to install the Abundance Statue at the center of Haney Circle. However, upon arrival, it was discovered that the Abundance Statue was deemed inappropriate for the site. Instead, the statue was placed on the west side of the Martin County Courthouse and relocated to Memorial Park in 1961. Finally, in 1991, the Abundance Statue was installed in Haney Circle as originally intended and placed on new fountain.⁸²

⁸² Thurlow, p. 108; Stuart News, July 6, 1961, p. 21; July 13, 1961, 7-A; October 12, 1961, p. 23.



NATIONAL REGISTER EVALUATION

Summary: Potential Downtown Stuart Historic District

Downtown Stuart is potentially eligible for listing in the National Register at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development. The concentrated development of the district extends from 1901 to the early 1950s. Scattered infill occurred in the district after that time until 1974 when the current City Hall of Stuart was completed. The district is associated with the physical development of the city as it became the commercial and transportation center of Martin County and the St. Lucie River Region. The district is further significant under Criterion C for its embodiment of important periods of architecture, architectural styles and building types and its association with master builders and architects. Within the district are the city's most important commercial buildings, its principal entertainment venue, a post office arcade, its first professional office, and a significant civic building. At the core of Downtown is a designed landscape known as Haney Circle. Along the east margin of the district, bordering the St. Lucie River, is an area containing some of the earliest and most significant private residences in the city.

Evaluation Criteria

This Downtown Stuart Survey Update is designed to produce a level of documentation, identification of resources, and assessment adequate to provide an update of historic resources within the Downtown Stuart Area. The report is supplemented with a building inventory, maps and photographs and a description of individual properties.

The analysis and evaluation of historic resources in the survey area is based on professional standards and criteria. Of particular importance are those standards and criteria associated with the National Register of Historic Places, the benchmark program for cultural resource evaluation. Of specific value to this study are the criteria for significance as defined by *National Register Bulletin 16A*, an authoritative technical manual providing information on comprehensive planning, survey of cultural resources, and registration in the National Register of Historic Places and *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

In the potential Downtown Stuart National Register Historic District historic properties are described as contributing to the district. National Register Bulletin 15 provides a definition of what constitutes contributing and noncontributing buildings. A contributing building is significant because:

- It was present during the period of significance and possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time; or
- The building or structure independently meets the criteria for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places.



Contributing buildings in the Study Area are further defined as follows:

Contributing buildings and structures are those built during the period of significance of the district (1901-1974) that have not been substantially altered. Contributing properties also include secondary buildings such as garage apartments and outbuildings.

For the purposes of this study, contributing properties are divided into two categories. The first category is a building, structure or site of outstanding historical or architectural significance. These types of historic properties have been recognized as being individually significant in past surveys, in the case of the Lyric Theatre, already listed in the National Register. These historic properties are potentially eligible for individual listing in the National Register or for local designation. Their removal or substantial alteration would be a significant loss to the district in which they are located. A list of these properties within the survey area is included at the end of this report. The second category of historic or contributing buildings includes those that were constructed within the period of significance of the district that retain their historic appearance but are not individually of outstanding historical or architectural significance. Nonetheless, collectively they are part of an important group of buildings or form a significant streetscape. Their removal or substantial alteration would be a loss to a district, but not to the same degree as a building of individual significance. However, the removal of large numbers of contributing buildings, particularly where they are concentrated, will have a major negative effect on the district and may result in changes to boundaries or even loss of a district as an entity.

Non-contributing buildings fall into two categories: 1) those that were constructed after the district's period of historic significance; and 2) those that were constructed during the historic period, but that have been altered to the point where they no longer exhibit integrity. A significant issue in evaluating historic properties is their physical integrity. This is particularly true in the survey area, where historic buildings have been subjected to alterations for many years. The criterion of integrity is very well developed in *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. For residential buildings significant alterations include radical alteration of original plan, enclosing of porches, additions to a façade, wholesale changes in windows, and replacement of exterior finishes with inappropriate or non-historic materials. For commercial buildings, such alterations include removal of storefronts, replacement of historic entrances, covering of historic materials with non-historical materials such as stucco or permastone, wholesale changes in windows and fenestration pattern, changes to roof form and type, and additions which overwhelm or radically change the mass of a historic building. Individual alterations may not render a building noncontributing. However, when alterations reach a point where the building no longer conveys its overall appearance during the period of significance of the district, the building no longer contributes.



Criterion of Integrity

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be listed in the National Register of Historic Places, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the National Register 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 (this is, convey their significance) or they do not. Within the concept of integrity, the National Register criteria recognizes seven aspects or qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity.

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.

Seven Aspects of Integrity

- Location
- Design
- Setting
- Materials
- Workmanship
- Feeling
- Association

The integrity of *setting* of the buildings in the Downtown Stuart survey area is particularly important. *Historic setting* is defined as follows:

“Setting is the physical environment of a historic property...and refers to the character of the place in which the property played its historical roles. It involves, however, not just where the building is situated but its relationship to surrounding features and open spaces.”⁸³

The setting of historic areas and individual buildings in the survey area has changed substantially in recent years. This change has come about primarily through the demolition of individual and groups of buildings, primarily along SW Dixie Highway in the Triangle area of Downtown Stuart. The change in setting is an important factor in establishing boundaries for a National Register District in the area.

⁸³National Register Bulletin 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, pp. 44-49 .





FIGURE 67. POTENTIAL DOWNTOWN STUART NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT.

INVENTORY OF CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS IN DOWNTOWN STUART DISTRICT**COLORADO AVENUE (9)**

100	Frame Vern.	1904	MT095/Owl House
101	Ranch	1955	MT1888
106	Cape Cod	1934	MT094
201	Masonry Vern.	1915	MT097/Coventry House
211	Masonry Vern.	1926	MT098/Col. House Apts.
300	Art Moderne	1950	MT1889 /Stuart Bank.
301-303	Art Moderne	1950	MT1890 /Dehan Bldg.
307-313	Art Moderne	1950	MT1891 /Gas Station
Colorado/Osceola	Fountain	1961	MT1892/Haney Circle

SE DENVER AVENUE (3)

309	Frame Vern	c. 1920	MT0109
313	Frame Vern.	c. 1920	MT0110
320	Frame Vern.	c. 1926	MT0111

SE DETROIT AVENUE (4)

301	Bungalow	c. 1926	MT0108
305	Frame Vern.	c. 1920	MT0107
306	Bungalow	c. 1926	MT0129
309	Frame Vern.	c. 1926	MT0106

SW FLAGLER AVENUE (15)

1-13*	Masonry Vern.	1949	MT1905/Dehon Bldg.
15-21	Masonry Vern.	1949	MT01565
23-25	Masonry Vern.	1938	MT01566
27-29	Masonry Vern.	1938	MT01567
37-47	Masonry Vern.	1939	MT01568/Pressel Bldg.
47-49	Masonry Vern.	1926	MT088
51	Masonry Vern.	1939	MT087



59	Med. Revival	1926	MT086/Lyric Theatre
73	Masonry Vern.	1913	MT084/Feroe Bldg.
101*	Masonry Vern.	1959	MT1905
105	Frame Vern.	1916	MT083/Main St. Office:
121*	Mid-Cent. Modern	1974	MT1906City Hall
161(101)	Frame Commercial	1901	MT046/Stuart Feed Store
171(151)	Tudor	1925	MT307/Crary House
201*	Col. Revival	1943	MT1907/Flagler Rec. Center

SW OSCEOLA STREET (5)

1*	Art Moderne	1949	MT1923/Stuart Bank Annex
13-31	Med. Revival	1925	MT089/Post Office Arcade
33*	Masonry Vern.	1940	MT1924
37*	Masonry Vern.	1936	MT1925/Ricou Hardware
61	Med. Revival	1922	MT0127/Osceola Bldg.

SE OSCEOLA STREET (5)

11*	Art Moderne	1941	MT1928 /Dehon Bldg.
14*	Masonry Vern.	1949	MT1929/Masonic Lodge
31-33	Art Moderne	1941	MT0119/Hipson Med. Bldg.
34	Bungalow	1922	MT0112
40*	Masonry Vern.	1952	MT1930

ST LUCIE AVENUE (1)

301 St. Lucie	Masonry Vern.	1914	MT0128/City Hall
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SW SEMINOLE STREET (3)

29*	Bungalow	1915	MT01918
45	Bungalow	1915	MT00091
49*	Frame Vern.	c. 1920	MT01932



SE SEMINOLE STREET (7)

4	Frame Vern.	c.1935	MT0118
15	Frame Vern.	1913	MT096/Riverview Apts.
18	Frame Vern.	1926	MT0117
22	Frame Vern	1930	MT0116
31-33*	Art Moderne	1939	MT1933
37	Frame Vern	1935	MT099
38	Bungalow	1915	MT0104

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING: 52**NON-CONTRIBUTING****SW OSCEOLA STREET (1)**

47	CONDOMINIUM	2010
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INDIVIDUALLY SIGNIFICANT BLDS. IN DOWNTOWN STUART SURVEY AREA

1. Crary House	1925	171 SW Flagler Avenue
2. Stuart Feed Store & Heritage Museum	1901	161 SW Flagler Avenue
3. The Feroe Building	1913	73 Flagler Avenue
4. Lyric Theatre	1926	59 SW Flagler Avenue
5. Post Office Arcade	1925	13-31 SW Osceola Street
6. The Owl (Platt) House	1904	100 Colorado Avenue
7. Old Colorado Inn	1914	201-211 Colorado Avenue
8. Ernie Lyons House	1890	18 SE Seminole Street
9. Hipson Office Building	1941	31-33 SE Osceola Street
10. Old Stuart High School	1922	500 East Ocean Boulevard
11. Martin County Courthouse	1937	100 East Ocean Boulevard
12. Hull/Lane House	1913	30 SE 5 TH Street
13. 428 Camden Avenue	1923	428 Camden Avenue
14. Woodman Hall	1915	217 Akron Avenue
15. Pitchford Apartments	1924	SW Fifth Street
16. Sam Mathews House	1912	501 Akron Avenue
17. Thomas Edenfield House	1902	200 S. Albany Avenue
18. Flagler Recreation Center	1943	201 SW Flagler Avenue



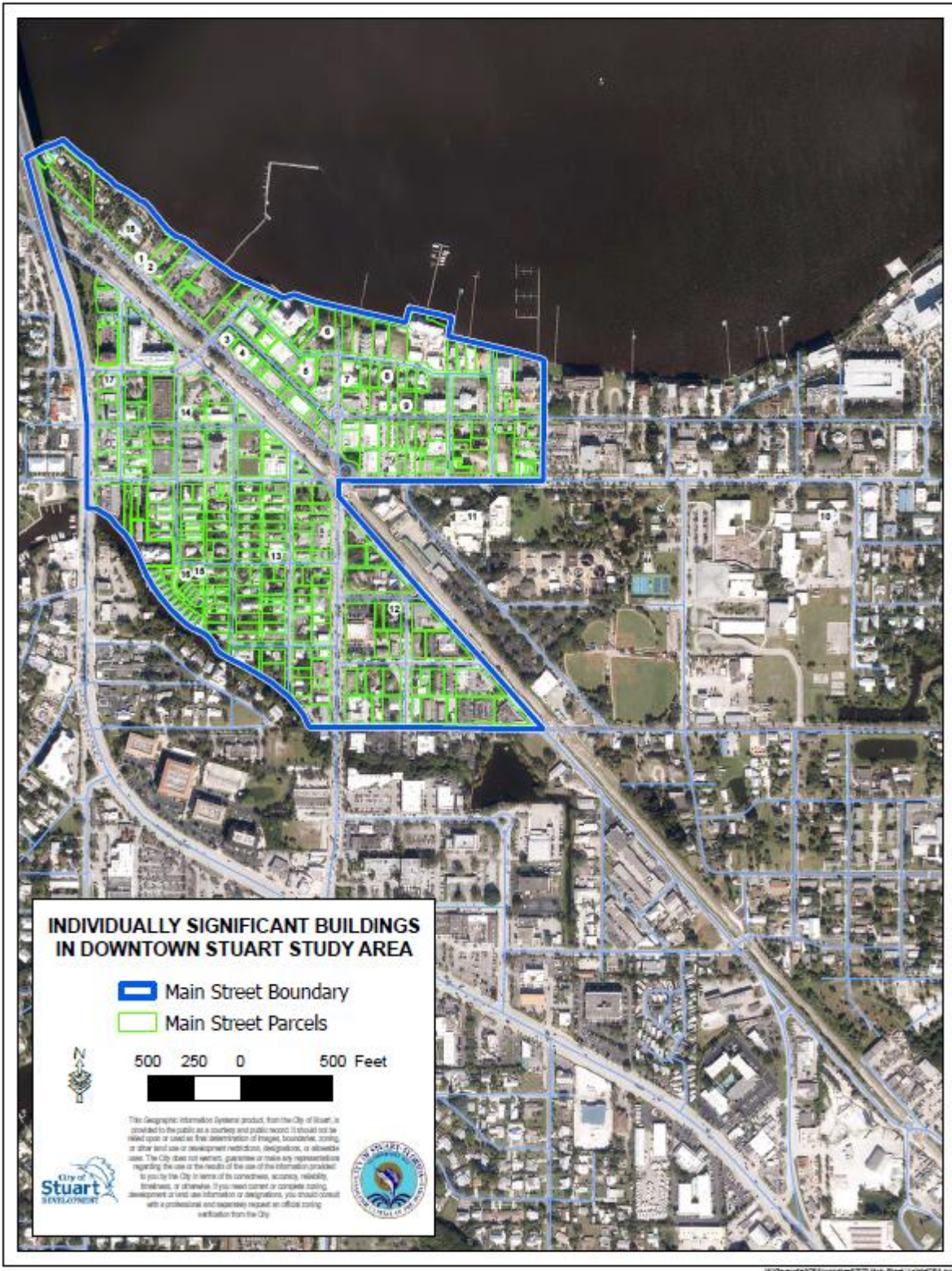


FIGURE 68. INDIVIDUALLY SIGNIFICANT BLDs. IN DOWNTOWN STUART

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APPENDIX I. INVENTORY OF BUILDINGS***Indicates a new survey form**

Address	Style	Date	ID#/Name
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SW FIRST STREET (AKA JOAN JEFFERSON WAY) (5)

216*	Masonry Vern.	1950	MT01940
310	Masonry Vern.	c. 1912	MT00120/Demolished
501	Frame Vern.	c. 1939	MT00063/Demolished
601*	Frame Vern.	1920	MT01860
605-09	Bungalow	c. 1920	MT00064

SW SECOND STREET (2)

521	Frame Vern.	c. 1920	MT00136/Demolished
513	Col. Revival	c. 1921	MT00062/Demolished

SW THIRD STREET (7)

203*	Masonry Vern.	1955	MT01861
311	Frame Vern.	1895	MT00346/Methodist Church
319*	Masonry Vern.	1950	MT01862
512	Bungalow	1918	MT00057
519	Colonial Rev.	1924	MT00058
521	Frame Vern.	c. 1926	MT00136
525	Frame Vern.	c. 1926	MT00059

SE FIFTH STREET (3)

25	Frame Vern.	c. 1943	MT00134/Demolished
26	Frame Vern.	c. 1926	MT00133/Demolished
34	Frame Vern.	c. 1920	MT00132/Hull-Lane House

SE SIXTH STREET (3)

26*	Bungalow	1920	MT01865
34*	Bungalow	1920	MT01867
124*	Masonry Vern.	1955	MT01868

SW FIFTH STREET (8)

20	Frame Vern.	c. 1926	MT00176
100*	Frame Vern.	1940	MT01869
110*	Frame Vern.	1940	MT01863
112*	Frame Vern.	1949	MT01870



119*	Masonry Vern.	1956	MT01871
120*	Masonry Vern.	1949	MT01872
210*	Frame Vern.	1924	MT01873
212	Med Rev.	1924	MT00152/Pitchford Apartments

SW AKRON AVENUE (11)

200	Med. Revival	1925	MT0144/1 st Baptist/Demolished
201-17	Masonry Vern.	1913	MT0121/ Demolished
210	Med. Revival	c. 1926	MT0122/ Demolished
217	Frame Vern.	1914	MT047/Woodmen Hall
410	Frame Vern.	c. 1915	MT0146/ Demolished
411	Bungalow	c. 1920	MT00147
416	Bungalow	1920	MT00149
421	Min. Traditional	1935	MT00148/Demolished
422*	Bungalow	1920	MT01873
429	Frame Vernacular	1915	MT00150
501	Frame Vernacular	1915	MT00151/Sam Mathews House

SW ALBANY AVENUE (4)

200	Frame	1903	MT00123
208	Masonry Vern.	c. 1926	MT00122
200-210	Masonry Vern.	1930	MT00124/Kreuger Bldg./Demolished
317	Frame Vern.	c. 1925	MT00143

SW CALIFORNIA AVENUE (17)

401	Bungalow	1915	MT00164
405	Bungalow.	1913	MT00163
410	Colonial Revival	1925	MT00160
412	Bungalow	1915	MT00159/Old Red Brick House
413	Frame Vern.	1920	MT00162/Richard Knapp House
416	Bungalow	1915	MT00158
417	Bungalow	1915	MT00161/Mayor Hogarth House
420	Bungalow	1915	MT00157/Coutant House
425*	Masonry Vern.	1955	MT01874
430	Bungalow	1915	MT00156/Frank Minsche House
500	Bungalow	1915	MT00155/Dr.JA Newnham House
509	Bungalow	1915	MT00154
512	Frame Vern.	1915	MT00153/Homer Witham House
520*	Masonry Vern.	1950	MT01875
521*	Masonry Vern.	1954	MT01876
525*	Frame Vern.	1956	MT01877
528*	Masonry Vern.	1955	MT01878



SW CAMDEN AVENUE (21)

402	Med. Revival	1926	MT00166/Sunrise Apts.
404	Frame Vern.	1910	MT00167
408	Frame Vern.	c. 1915	MT00168
410	Frame Vern.	c. 1915	MT00170
412	Frame Vern.	c. 1915	MT00169
417-419	Med. Revival	1924	MT00173
416*	Frame Vern.	1915	MT01879/Knapp Inn/FL Inn
421	Med. Revival	1925	MT00174/Halleran Apts.
422	Bungalow	1915	MT00171
428	Med. Revival	1924	MT00172
429*	Masonry Vern.	c. 1950	MT01880
506	Frame Vern.	c. 1926	MT00177
509*	Frame Vern.	1953	MT01881
513*	Masonry Vern.	1953	MT01882
520 *	Mid-Century	c. 1950	MT01883
525*	Masonry Vern.	1946	MT01884
528	Bungalow	c. 1915	MT00178/Demolished
600*	Frame Vern.	c. 1915	MT01885
603*	Masonry Vern.	1963	MT01886
606*	Bungalow	c. 1920	MT01887
611*	Frame Vern.	1920	MT01904

S. COLORADO AVENUE (20)

100	Frame Vern.	1910	MT00095/Owl House
101*	Ranch	1955	MT01888
106	Cape Cod	1934	MT00094
201	Masonry Vern.	1915	MT00097/Coventry Hotel
211	Masonry Vern.	1926	MT00098/Coventry Apts.
262*	Art Moderne	1938	MT01889 /Stuart Bank.
301-303*	Art Moderne	1940	MT01890 /E.J. Ricou Bldg.
307-313*	Art Moderne	1950	MT01891 /Gulf Gas Station
404	Masonry Vern.	1926	MT00180/Demolished
408*	Mid.-Modern .	1973	MT01893
410*	Masonry Vern.	1959	MT01894
430	Frame Vern.	1948	MT00390
502	Bungalow .	1927	MT00179
508-510*	Masonry Vern.	1955	MT01896
522*	Masonry Vern.	1962	MT01897
532*	Masonry Vern.	1955	MT01898
555*	Masonry Vern.	1954	MT01899
608-610*	Masonry Vern.	1968	MT01900
612-614*	Masonry Vern.	1968	MT01901
620-622*	Masonry Vern.	1957	MT01902



SE DENVER AVENUE (3)

309	Frame Vern.	c. 1920	MT00109
313	Frame Vern.	c. 1920	MT00110
320	Frame Vern.	c. 1926	MT00111

SE DETROIT AVENUE (5)

300 *	Frame Vern.	c. 1950	MT01937
301	Bungalow	c. 1926	MT00108
305	Frame Vern.	c. 1920	MT00107/Demolished
306	Bungalow	c. 1926	MT00129
309	Frame Vern.	c. 1926	MT00106

SW DIXIE HIGHWAY (10)

11 (10)	Masonry Vern.	1915	MT00181
114	Masonry Vern.	1949	MT01565/demolished
200-10	Masonry Vern.	1938	MT01566/demolished
228	Masonry Vern.	1960	MT01550
290	Masonry Vern.	1949	MT01551
300	Masonry Vern.	1927	MT01552
310	Masonry Vern.	1927	MT00165
243	Masonry Vern.	c. 1930	MT01567/demolished
500*	Masonry Vern.	c. 1930	MT01903

SW FLAGLER AVENUE (16)

1-13*	Masonry Vern.	1949	MT1905/Dehon Bldg.
15-21	Masonry Vern.	1949	MT01565/Kanner Dept. Store
23-25	Masonry Vern.	1938	MT01566/Bozone Bldg.
27-29	Masonry Vern.	1938	MT01567/Osceola Street Cafe
37-47	Masonry Vern.	1939	MT01568/Pressel Bldg.
47-49	Masonry Vern.	1926	MT00088/ Minschke/Holleran Bldg.
51	Masonry Vern.	1939	MT00087/H.J. Greene Bldg.
59	Med. Revival	1926	MT086/Lyric Theatre
61	Masonry Vern.	1915	MT085/Demolished.
73	Masonry Vern.	1913	MT084/Feroe Bldg..
101*	Mid-Cent. Modern	1954	MT1905/Stuart Dept. Store
105	Frame Vern.	1916	MT083/Main St. Office:
121*	Mid-Cent. Modern	1974	MT1906City Hall
161(101)	Frame Commercial	1901	MT046/Stuart Feed Store
171(151)	Tudor	1925	MT307/Crary House
201*	Col. Revival	1943	MT1907/Flagler Rec. Center



FLORIDA AVENUE (1)

306*	Masonry Vern.	1947	MT1908
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SE OCEAN BOULEVARD (8)

20	Masonry Vern.	1948	MT01563/Demolished
100	Art Deco	1937	MT00348 /Martin Count CH
101	Masonry Vern.	1958	MT01553/Demolished
205*	Masonry Vern.	1965	MT01909
213-215*	Masonry Vern.	1958	MT01910
221*	Masonry Vern.	1957	MT01911
227*	Masonry Vern.	1949	MT00105
500	Art Deco	1922	MT0259/Stuart High School

SW OCEAN BOULEVARD (12)

11*	Masonry Vern.	1949	MT01554
11*	Masonry Vern.	1949	MT01955
101*	Masonry Vern.	1950	MT01953
101*	Masonry Vern.	1950	MT01914
120	Frame Vern.	1949	MT00164/401SW California
200-10*	Masonry Vern.	1938	MT01916
201*	Masonry Vern.	1966	MT01917/1 st Baptist Church
212*	Bungalow	c. 1926	MT01919
214*	Bungalow	c. 1926	MT00145
312*	Frame Vern.	c. 1935	MT01920
316-320*	Frame Vern.	c. 1935	MT01921
322*	Frame Vern.	c. 1935	MT01922

SW OSCEOLA STREET (5)

1*	Art Moderne	1949	MT01923/Stuart Bank Annex
13-31	Med. Revival	1925	MT00089/Post Office Arcade
37*	Masonry Vern.	1936	MT01925/Ricou Hardware
41-45*	Masonry Vern.	1960	MT0001924
61	Med. Revival	1922	MT00127/Osceola Bldg.



SE OSCEOLA STREET (19)

11-15*	Art Moderne	1941	MT1928 /Dehon Bldg.
14*	Masonry Vern.	1949	MT1929/Masonic Lodge
31-33	Art Moderne	1941	MT0119/Hipson Med. Bldg.
34	Bungalow	1922	MT00112
38 *	Masonry Vern.	1952	MT01930
40*	Masonry Vern.	1952	MT01935
48*	Masonry Vern.	1952	MT01936
208*	Garage.	1952	MT01935
215	Frame Vern.	1926	MT00088
216*	Frame Vern.	1948	MT01938
221 (309)	Med. Revival	1926	MT00104/Pelican Hotel
301 (319)	Col. Revival	1926	MT00267/Schroeder House
321	Bungalow.	1913	MT00266/Demolished
323	Med. Revival	1926	MT0265/Demolished
332	Frame Vern.	c.1920	MT0268/ Demolished
416	Frame Vern.	1924	MT0270/ Demolished
418	Frame Vern.	1925	MT0271/ Demolished
424	Bungalow	c. 1920	MT0272/ Demolished
432	Bungalow	1920	MT0273/ Demolished

ST LUCIE AVENUE (1)

301 St. Lucie	Masonry Vern.	1914	MT00128/City Hall
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SW SEMINOLE STREET (3)

29*	Bungalow	1915	MT01918
45	Bungalow	1915	MT00091
49*	Frame Vern.	c. 1920	MT01932

SE SEMINOLE STREET (16)

4	Frame Vern.	c. 1935	MT00118
15	Frame Vern.	1913	MT00096/Riverview Apts.
18	Frame Vern.	1926	MT00117
22	Frame Vern	1930	MT00116
26	Frame Vern	1890	MT00115/Ernie Lyons House
32	Bungalow	1913	MT00092/Clifton Lodge
37	Frame Vern	1935	MT00099/Demolished
38	Bungalow	1915	MT00114
42	Bungalow	1925	MT00113/Tunnley House
55	Frame Vern.	c. 1920	MT00100/Demolished
551/2	Frame Vern.	1915	MT00101/Demolished



57	Frame Vern.	1926	MT00102/Demolished
571/2	Frame Vern.	1915	MT00103/Demolished
105*	Mas. Vern.	1954	MT01934
200	Frame Vern.	c. 1920	MT00090/Demolished
224	Bungalow	1925	MT00093/Demolished

Structures

City of Stuart Water Tower*	c. 1960	MT01944
Mem. Park Bandstand *	1940	MT01909
Haney Circle Fountain*	c. 1991	MT01941

Sites

Colorado/Osceola* Park	1920	MT01892/Haney Circle
Colorado/Flagler* Site/Traffic Circle	1948	MT01948/Confusion Corner
300 Block SW Ocean Mem. Park	1940	MT01947 Memorial Park

Object

Colorado/Osceola*	1949	MT01933/Abundance Statue
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Total Sites:

200: 118 Updates/82 New Forms

Property Types:

Buildings	193
Structure	3
Sites	3
Objects	1



APPENDIX II - STATE-FEDERAL BENEFITS AND PROTECTIONS FOR HISTORIC RESOURCES

Historic Preservation Tax Advantages:

There are several notable tax incentives that property owners can take advantage of in rehabilitating historic buildings. This section describes the major incentives.

State of Florida Ad Valorem Exemptions for Rehabilitated Historic Buildings:

Florida voters in 1992 approved a constitutional amendment authorizing ad valorem tax exemptions for the increased value assessed for improvements made to qualified historic buildings. Local communities must approve adoption of provisions through a local ordinance. The local government can exempt up to 100 percent of the assessed value of the improvements for a period up to ten years.

The provisions of the amendment apply to qualified historic buildings; that is, buildings listed individually on the National Register or as contributing elements in a district; or buildings designated under an approved local ordinance.

The exemption will apply to as much as 100 percent of the assessed value of the qualified improvements. The period of exemption can be ten years. Local ordinance will establish the specific percentage of exempted value as well as the duration and the location of qualifying buildings. The exemptions will be passed on to the new owners of a property. At the end of the exemption period, the tax obligation will return to full assessed value, including improvements.

The exemption can be even greater for improvements to historic properties used for non-profit or governmental purposes and open to the public. Such properties may upon local governmental authorization, receive up to 100 percent tax exemption for the full assessed value, not just the improvements. The value of improvements must equal or exceed at least 50 percent of the total assessed value of the property, as improved. Unlike the exemption for privately-owned buildings, however, the latter exemption will not be passed on to new owners.

By covenant or agreement, the property owner must agree to maintain the qualifying improvements and the character of the property for the period of exemption. The Florida Department of State has adopted rules specifying property eligibility criteria, guidelines for determining if improvements qualify, application review criteria, procedures for cancellation of exemption in the event of covenant or agreement violation, and procedures and criteria for certification of local historic preservation offices.

Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits:

Federal tax credits upon the expenses incurred in the rehabilitation of an income-producing qualified historic structure have been available for well over two decades. A qualified historic



building is one that is listed in the National register of Historic Places. The 1986 Tax Reform Act provides for a 20 percent credit for certified historic structures and a 10 percent credit for structures more than fifty years old. It is important to note, however, that the federal tax credits apply only to income producing properties and not to owner-occupied residences.

Despite the severe restrictions placed upon the use of real estate and other forms of tax shelter in the 1986 law, the tax credit increases the attractiveness of old and historic building rehabilitation by virtually eliminating all forms of competing real estate investment, with the exception of the low-income housing tax credit.

The 1986 Act opens new opportunities for the nonprofit organization to become involved in real estate. The Act's extension of the depreciation period for real estate considerably reduces the penalties enacted in the Tax Reform Act of 1984 to discourage taxpayers from entering into long-term leases or partnerships with tax-exempt entities. Those penalties had the effect of hampering partnerships between nonprofits and government agencies and private developers.

In addition, an increasing emphasis on "economic" incentives, rather than tax-driven benefits, that is a result of the 1986 Act's limitations on the use of tax shelter and the 10 percent set-aside for nonprofit sponsors under the new low-income housing tax credit, ensure that tax-exempt organizations will participate increasingly in rehabilitation projects. That legal change has begun to open new and innovative ownership and tax structuring and financing opportunities for both the development community and nonprofit preservation organizations.

FEMA VARIANCE FOR HISTORIC STRUCTURES

Communities may exempt historic buildings from NFIP substantial improvement and substantial damage requirements in either of two ways. First, they can exempt them through their definition of substantial improvement. Second, they can issue variances for historic structures. However, the improvement must not preclude the structures continued designation as a historic structure and must be the minimum necessary to preserve its historic character.

Definition/Description:

Any structure that is:

- (a) Listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places or preliminarily determined as meeting the requirements for individual listing on the National Register;
- (b) Certified or preliminarily determined as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district;
- (c) Individually listed on a state inventory of historic places; or
- (d) Individually listed on a local inventory of historic places.

State Preservation Program:

The State of Florida has become increasingly active in historic preservation. It currently spends more dollars on historic preservation than any other state in the nation. The Florida Department of



State is responsible for disbursing state preservation dollars. It provides funding in the areas of acquisition and development, survey and registration, and preservation education.

The City of Stuart and Stuart Main Street are on the current mailing list of the Bureau of Historic Preservation and should consider applying for grants for appropriate projects in the future. Any public or private agency or group within the community that requires current information on available loans, grants, and funding sources or programs for historic preservation is advised to inquire with:

State Historic Preservation Officer

Department of State

Division of Historical Resources

R.A. Gray Building

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Florida Trust for Historic Preservation

P.O. Box 11206

Tallahassee, Florida 32302

Among the projects for which funding may be sought are surveys, National Register nominations, historic preservation planning, community education, acquisition of culturally significant properties, and rehabilitation of historic structures. Eligible recipients of grants include local government and nonprofit organizations. There are two major types of grants distributed through the auspices of the State grant program.



APPENDIX III - MISCELLANEOUS PROGRAMS

Marker program: Markers usually appear in the form of bronze or wood signs that describe a historical event that occurred in the vicinity or that call attention to a building or other object of historical or architectural interest. The State of Florida has a marker program, as do several counties and cities throughout the state. A marker program must be carefully implemented and administered and the sites for placement of markers chosen with caution. Promotion of this history can draw tourists to the area and enhance their experience while there.

Information materials: Through its various offices and departments, the City of Stuart can promote historic resources within the Study Area as heritage tourism destinations. The production of maps, brochures, websites, and other informational material can add heritage tourism for marketing of the area. Stuart Main Street has also done a nice job of promoting the Downtown Area through signage.

Historic Building Flood Mitigation

REVIEW REQUIREMENTS FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS

HISTORIC BUILDING DEFINITION - FLORIDA BUILDING CODE

For the purposes of the Florida Building Code (FBC), a historic building is defined as a building or structure that is:

- Individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or
- A contributing resource in a National Register of Historic Places listed district, or
- Designated as historic property under an official municipal, county, special district or state designation, law, ordinance or resolution either individually or as a contributing property in a district, provided the local program making the designation is approved by the Department of the Interior (the Florida state historic preservation officer maintains a list of approved local programs); or
- Determined eligible by the Florida State Historic Preservation Officer for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as a contributing property in a district

[Florida Building Code, 7th edition 2020]

FLOODPLAIN ORDINANCE EXEMPTION

Historic properties in Florida are NOT automatically exempt from floodplain regulation. However, Florida Statutes does provide consideration for historic properties with regard to definitions of substantial improvement.

If the building is designated as a contributing resource to a national or local designation and compliance with floodplain management requirements would cause the building to lose its designation, local governments may offer an exemption or a variance from the flood protection ordinance.



Stuart's House of Refuge on the barrier island is receiving rehabilitation grant funds to make the building more resilient.



The Old Calhoun County Courthouse is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It suffered damage from Hurricane Michael.

HISTORIC BUILDING FLOOD MITIGATION REVIEW

Historic buildings in Florida include those designated as a contributing resource to a National Register Historic District or a local historic district, or an individually designated building either locally or on the National Register. The local planning department or the Florida Division of Historical Resources (DHR) can verify the historic designation status or provide information on the designation process. *Although the NFIP and FBC provide provisions for historic properties, all properties in Florida are subject to the local floodplain regulations, including historic properties, unless specifically exempted or granted a variance based upon their historic designation.* Keep in mind that any variance for floodplain compliance has consequences:

- Buildings are still vulnerable to flooding and associated damage;
- Flood insurance may still be required and insurance companies may have mitigation requirements; and
- The variance may provide a false belief that the flood risk is somehow reduced or eliminated.

In many municipalities, if a property has been substantially damaged and the necessary repairs would cause the building to lose its historic designation, a flood protection variance can be sought to forego full floodplain management compliance. *If alterations occur at a property as a result of substantial damage or as part of a substantial improvement causing it to lose its historic designation, the property must comply with all requirements of the municipality's floodplain management ordinance and the FBC. The local government that designated the property as significant is responsible for determining whether the property could lose its designation because of mitigation projects. National Register designation evaluations are made by DHR. (Refer to Substantial Improvement, page 9.3, Substantial Damage, page 9.4, Historic Preservation Boards, sidebar page 9.7, and Florida Division of Historical Resources, sidebar page 9.13.)*