

REQUEST: **Rescission of Historic Landmark Site Designation of Robinson Cobb House at 1109 NE 16th Place**

Case Number	UDP-HPD25001	FMSF#	
Owner	Benny V. Robinson, Jeffrey S. Cobb		
Address	1109 NE 16 th Place		
General Location	Located on the east side of NE 17th Avenue approximately 75 feet south of the intersection of NE 8th Street and NE 17th Avenue		
Legal Description	LAUDERDALE PARK 6-33 1/2 B LOT 10 TO 13 BLK 4		
Existing Use	Single-Family Residential		
Zoning	RMS-15		
Applicable ULDR Sections	47-24.11.C.		
Landmark/Historic District	Robinson Cobb House/Leonard Glasser Model Home		
Authored By	Vasilya Allakhverdieva, Urban Planner II Trisha Logan, Principal Urban Planner		

Property Background:



Aerial View



Location Map

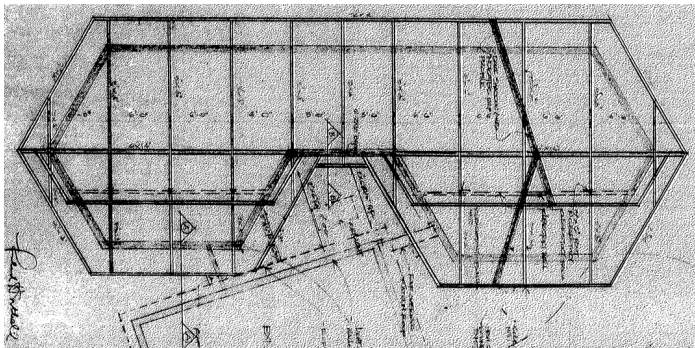
The Robinson-Cobb House/Leonard Glasser Model Home, located at 1109 NE 16th Place, was designated a Historic Landmark on September 4, 2002, under Resolution No. 02-138. The historic designation was requested by the owners, Jeffrey S. Cobb and Benny V. Robinson, who appeared before the **Historic Preservation Board (HPB) on July 8, 2002**. In the narrative submitted with the current rescission request, Mr. Robinson explains that the original application was led by his partner, Jeffrey Cobb, who has recently passed away. Now, 23 years later, Mr. Robinson is requesting the rescission of the landmark status. Statements made in the narrative submitted as part of the application indicate that this request is due to financial hardship and difficulties in selling the historic property.

During the 2002 HPB meeting, it was noted that the house was built in 1952 by architect Leonard H. Glasser as the model home for a planned subdivision known as Lauderdale Park. The applicant acknowledged that while the original structure was fairly typical for its era, a distinctive addition made in 1979 set the house apart architecturally. The application emphasized a desire to preserve this addition along with the principal house. One of the key motivations for seeking landmark status was to help preserve the single-family residential

character of the neighborhood in the face of increasing townhouse development along Dixie Highway.



The house is a low-slung minimal ranch-style home with an extended footprint and low-pitched hip roof, featuring a later-added freestanding new-Mediterranean arcade that defines its front façade.



A substantial addition built in the 1970s doubled the home's size, featuring two identical hexagonal rooms beneath a cathedral ceiling with exposed, oversized redwood beams.



View from the street looking northwest, with the addition in the background.

Merrilyn Rathbun, consultant to the HPB and an advocate for the property's designation in 2002, stated that the house could be considered "historically worthy" under ULDR Section 47-

24.11.A.11. She noted that the home is representative of the modern ranch style commonly associated with the post-World War II development era in the city.

The applicant stated that the house meets the following criteria and provided arguments:

Criteria under section 47-24.11.C.7	Narrative (summarized)
Criterion (c): Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state or nation	The property is associated with several individuals, including its first homeowner, Edward Palatki (also known as Eddie Weber), a virtuoso pianist and accordionist active in Fort Lauderdale's nightclub scene during the 1940s and 1950s. It is also linked to Leonard Glasser - the developer, architect, and contractor behind the Lauderdale Park subdivision.
Criterion (f): Its distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials	The original design of the house was typical of 1950s residential architecture, reflecting the prevailing style of its era. A later addition, designed by local architect Richard H. Mitchell, was included in the application as a "more interesting feature of the house."
Criterion (g): Its character as a geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration of continuity of sites, buildings, objects, or structures united in past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development	The house was built in 1952 by Leonard H. Glasser and his company, Land of Sun Homes, Inc., as the model home for a new subdivision in Fort Lauderdale known as Lauderdale Park. Positioned alongside the house across NE 16 th Place, the two properties formed a gateway into the planned community. Entry signs placed on the front corners of both lots welcomed visitors with the message: "Welcome to Lauderdale Park."
Criterion (h): Its character as an established and geographically definable neighborhood, united in culture, architectural style of physical plan and development.	<p>Lauderdale Park was originally platted in 1925 along Dixie Highway, one of Florida's earliest north-south roadways. While limited construction took place in the 1920s, the neighborhood saw significant residential development beginning in the early 1950s, spurred by post-World War II migration to Florida's east coast. The original streets were named after trees - such as Cherry, Oak, and Pine - with the subject property located on what was then known as Spruce Street.</p> <p>The area is easily recognized as an early 1950's neighborhood characterized by numerous small, single-story homes in the "Atomic Style." This architectural style is distinguished by flat façades, front-facing roof pitches, and angular forms that evoke a subtle, space-age aesthetic.</p>

The application recieved a mixed response from the Historic Preservation board. According to the **July 8, 2002, HPB meeting minutes**:

Mr. Polatky remarked that *"the application was interesting, but did not meet such a level of significance."* **Todd Fogel** noted that *"there is a fine line between historical significance and design,"* expressing doubt about whether the house possessed true historical value beyond its architectural interest. **Tom Tatum** argued that *"he did not feel there was enough significance in the relationship to the surrounding area,"* as neighboring structures were significantly older. He also emphasized that while the term *"architecturally worthy"* is commonly used to describe

architectural history, it was not part of the formal criteria, and therefore, he believed the designation would be inappropriate.

As a result, the **motion failed** with five votes against and three in favor.

On September 4, 2002, the City Commission approved HPB Case #25-H-02/CAM #02-1190 unanimously (5-0), thereby designating the property despite the HPB's recommendation for denial.

Request for Rescission Historic Landmark Designation

The applicant is requesting rescission of historic landmark designation of the Robinson Cobb House located at 1109 NE 16th Place that was designated under criteria (c), (f), (g) and (h) as listed in Section 47-24.11.C.7 of the ULDR.

Criterion (c): *Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state or nation.*



The property is associated with its first owner, Edward Palatki (stage name Eddie Weber), a popular local pianist and accordionist who performed at Fort Lauderdale's riverfront venues during the 1950s, including The Idle Hour, Vogue Room, Galigher's, the Sea Garden Hotel, and various yacht clubs.

Photo to the Left: Advertisement notice - Fort lauderdale News, May 9, 1954

While Mr. Palatki was a talented entertainer, this criterion is generally reserved for individuals with a broader community or national significance - such as Frank Stranahan, Commodore A.H. Brook, or prominent public figures. Designation under this criterion for the first property owner would be more appropriate if there was documentation directly associated with Mr. Palatki, including written and oral history, that connects the association of this property with his productive life as a prominent entertainer. Given the modest historical

relevance and limited documentation, the property does not meet this criterion.

The property is also associated with architect Leonard H. Glasser, who designed the residence and was better known for his role as Chief Building Inspector in Hallandale. After earning his architecture degree from the University of Florida in 1948, he returned to South Florida and joined his brother's architectural firm. He was active as a real estate agent, served as president of the Florida Council of the American Society of Registered Architects, and was commander of American Legion Post 85. Beginning in the 1960s, his architectural work focused primarily on projects in Central and South America and the Caribbean.

Designation under Criterion (c) is not applicable in relation to the architect. A more appropriate consideration would be under Criterion (d): "Identification as the work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, state, or nation." Although the house located at 1109 NE 16th Place is associated with a known architect, it is not a sufficient representation of the work of a master architect as an individual historic landmark due to the multiple alterations and the lack of distinctive architectural features. Per the National Register Bulletin "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation"

published by the National Park Service which is used in conjunction with the City's criteria in evaluating a potential landmark, it states the following:

- A property is not eligible as the work of a master, however, simply because it was designed by a prominent architect; and
- The property must express a particular phase in the development of the master's career, an aspect of his or her work, or a particular idea or theme in his or her craft.

Criterion (f): *Its distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials.*

The property at 1109 NE 16th Place represents typical minimal ranch residential design, characterised by a single-story layout, low-pitched roof, clean lines, and minimal ornamentation. Its most prominent feature - a freestanding new-Mediterranean arcade at the front - was a later addition and is not original to the structure.

Also included in the application as a "more interesting feature" is a 1970s addition designed by local architect Richard H. Mitchell, composed of two hexagonal structures with a skylight. While this addition reflects architectural trends of its time and adds visual interest, designation based on the significance of a later addition is not typical.



View of 1109 NE 16th Place Looking Northeast

In summary, due to the multiple additions and the lack of significant architectural features outside of the primary structure, this property does not meet this criterion.

Criterion (g): *Its character as a geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration of continuity of sites, buildings, objects, or structures united in past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development.*

Reportedly, the subject property, constructed in 1952 by architect and contractor Leonard H. Glasser, originally served as a model home for the planned subdivision known as Lauderdale Park in Fort Lauderdale. The house was oriented at an angle to face southeast toward Dixie Highway and, along with a similarly angled home across NE 16th Place, formed a mirrored gateway into the subdivision. Entry signs on both lots welcomed visitors with the message: "Welcome to Lauderdale Park."



Streetview Showing Entrance to Lauderdale Park

However, the current physical context no longer reflects the original subdivision plan. There is a clear loss of integrity in both spatial layout and architectural coherence. The area lacks a “significant concentration or continuity of sites, buildings, objects, or structures” that would establish a unified historical or developmental character.

Regardless, this criterion is typically reserved for historic districts, and as such, criterion (g) is not applicable in this case.

Criterion (h): *Its character as an established and geographically defineable neighborhood, united in culture, architectural style of physical plan and development.*

The application’s description of the area as “easily recognized as an early 1950s neighborhood” is overly broad and not clearly reflected in the current built environment. References to tree-themed street names, while charming, offer little in terms of architectural or planning cohesion.

The applicant also conflates Atomic style with minimal ranch-style architecture. The house designed by Leonard H. Glasser is a typical minimal ranch structure, characterized by its single-story construction, flat façades, and lack of decorative detailing. In contrast, Atomic style - commonly aligned with mid-century modern design - is defined by dynamic rooflines, innovative materials, and distinctive futuristic angles. If the reference was meant to describe the 1970s addition, that is unclear and the feature itself is not architecturally significant enough to define neighborhood character.

This criterion is intended to reflect the collective identity of a neighborhood or subdivision, such as a historic district, rather than an individual property. Therefore, criterion (h) is not applicable in this case.

Summary

The original designation application was generally underdeveloped, lacking substantive evidence, supporting exhibits, and clear definitions. It relied on vague and broadly used terminology, with weak and unsubstantiated references and undefined ties to historically significant events.

While the applicant cited four designation criteria, none were supported by adequate theoretical or factual grounding. Criteria (c) and (f) may have potential if further developed into meaningful analysis with historical or architectural relevance. However, Criteria (g) and (h) would be more appropriately applied to a neighborhood, historic district, or group of properties rather than a single site. Additionally, the application received a mixed response from the Historic Preservation Board and was ultimately denied.

Criteria for Rescission of Historic Designation

Pursuant Section 47-24.11.C.11 of the ULDR, the designation of any landmark and landmark site, historic building or historic district may be amended or rescinded through the same procedure utilized for the original designation. In the original designation application, the Historic Preservation Board and the City Commission found that the property met Criteria (c), (f), (g), and (h) for historic designation.

To rescind the historic landmark designation, the Historic Preservation Board and the City Commission must find that the property no longer meets Criteria (c), (f), (g), and (h) for historic designation.

ULDR, Section 47-24.11.C.7
Criteria (c): <i>Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state or nation.</i>
Applicant Response In the original application, a list of people tracing the lineage of the house's ownership. With all due respect for their personal characters and the lives they have lived, no one would merit any consideration as noteworthy or having contributed to the broader scope of their existence.
Staff Response Designation under this criterion for the first property owner would be more appropriate if there was documentation directly associated with Mr. Palatki, including written and oral history, that connects the association of this property with his productive life as a prominent entertainer. Given the modest historical relevance and limited documentation, the property does not satisfy this criterion. This criterion is not applicable for an architect designing the structure. Application does not meet this criterion.
Criteria (f): <i>Its distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials.</i>
Applicant Response Though many have been charmed by the uniqueness of the property, it is a uniqueness characteristic which only prevails in comparison to surrounding properties and accented by the scope of frontal and side yard landscape and roominess. It does not represent historical or architectural advancement by way of any innovative construction or composition that some might say deserves promotion and/or preservation. It has never been featured in any periodical locally, regionally or nationally for any of the concepts mentioned.
Staff Response Due to the multiple additions and the lack of significant architectural features outside of the primary structure, this property does not meet this criterion. Application does not meet this criterion.
Criteria (g): <i>Its character as a geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration of continuity of sites, buildings, objects, or structures united in past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development.</i>
Applicant Response The additions of both the chalet-style wing (lofted ceilings and wooden beam structured) and front arcade built in the 1970s, regardless of degree of composite visibility from the street, in no way reflects Florida style architectural heritage and diffuses any consideration of the property as classic mid-century Florida ranch style home as argued back at the time of its designation.

Some might even argue that these features hid and distract from the simplistic beauty and culture-based heritage of Florida homes built mid-century and even after.

Staff Response

This criterion is typically reserved for historic districts, and as such, criterion (g) is not applicable in this case.

Application does not meet this criterion.

Criteria (h): *Its character as an established and geographically defineable neighborhood, united in culture, architectural style of physical plan and development.*

Applicant Response

NA

Staff Response

This criterion is intended to reflect the collective identity of a neighborhood or subdivision, such as a historic district, rather than an individual property. Therefore, criterion (h) is not applicable in this case.

Application does not meet this criterion.

Summary Conclusion:

In accordance with Section 47-24.11.C. of the ULDR, staff finds that the application Rescission of Historic Landmark Site Designation of the 1109 NE 16th Place commonly known as the Robinson Cobb House/ Leonard Glasser Model Home under case number UDP-HPD25001 no longer meets criteria (c), (f), (g) and (h) as outlined in Section 47-24.11.C.7 of the ULDR.

Historic Preservation Board Suggested Motion:

I move to recommend to **(approve) (deny) (approve with conditions) (continue)** the request for Rescission of Historic Landmark Site Designation of the Phil Resnik House located at 1109 NE 16th Place commonly known as the Robinson Cobb House/ Leonard Glasser Model Home to the City Commission under case number UDP-HPD25001 based on a finding this request **(still meets) (no longer meets)** criteria (c), (f), (g) and (h) as outlined in Section 47-24.11.C.7. of the ULDR.