



**TO:** Honorable Mayor & Members of the  
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

**FROM:** Lee R. Feldman, ICMA-CM, City Manager

**DATE:** November 3, 2015

**TITLE:** Quasi-Judicial – Resolution Approving a Landmark Designation – Alhambra  
Beach Resort, 3021 Alhambra Street – Case Number H15019

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**Recommendation**

It is recommended the City Commission consider the request to designate the Alhambra Beach Resort and property located at 3021 Alhambra Street as a historic landmark.

**Background**

An application for the historic designation of the structure located at 3021 Alhambra Street, Fort Lauderdale, Florida was filed on June 26, 2015, by Fort Lauderdale residents Erika E. Klee and Charlie Esposito, and is attached as Exhibit 1. On August 31, 2015, the Historic Preservation Board (“HPB”) reviewed the application and recommended by a vote of 4-3 that the City Commission deny the landmark designation. HPB minutes are attached as Exhibit 2.

The HPB considered the memorandum prepared by Merrilyn Rathbun, the City’s Historic Preservation Consultant (Exhibit 3). Ms. Rathbun qualifies as a history and architectural history professional in accordance with the National Park Service, Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards for Architectural History as published in 48 Federal Registry 44716-01, previously published in the Code of Federal Regulations 36 CFR Part 61. The consultant’s report concludes that the Alhambra Beach Resort meets the criteria for designation under Section 47-24.11.B.6 of the Unified Land Development Regulations (“ULDR”) under criterion d.

In addition to the submission by the applicant and the City’s Historic Consultant memorandum, the HPB also considered information from party interveners. The property owner, Raymond Tucker of TC Ventures, LLC is not the applicant for this Landmark Designation. Legal Counsel, Jordana L. Jarjura of Tripp Scott, representing the contract purchaser/developer, OTO Development, submitted documentation objecting to the request and is attached as Exhibit 4. Jordana L. Jarjura and Stephanie J. Toothaker of Tripp Scott are representatives of OTO Development who is a contract purchaser for the 3021 Alhambra Street property along with two other properties including 3017 and 3029 Alhambra Street, the latter was recently demolished. A testimony document from Steve  
11/3/2015

Glassman, President of the Broward Trust for Historic Preservation was also submitted to the HPB, attached as Exhibit 5.

**Summary of City’s Historic Consultant Memorandum**

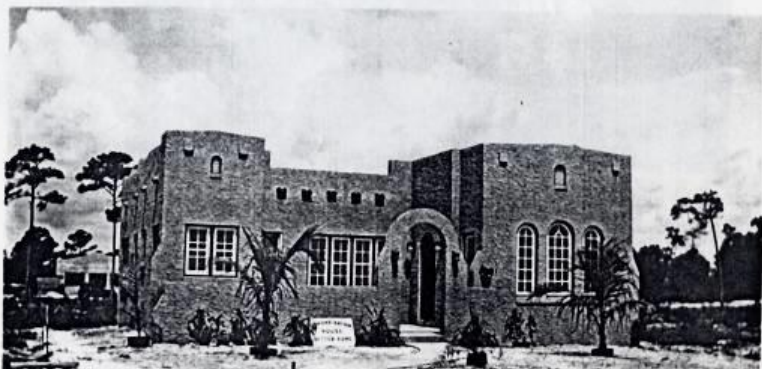
The City’s Historic Preservation Consultant’s report notes that the apartment/hotel building at 3021 Alhambra Street, designed by architect Courtney Stewart, Jr. in 1938, is located in the Lauder del Mar subdivision on Fort Lauderdale Beach. The subdivision was platted by 1920’s developer W.H. Morang’s Broward Estates Corporation in 1925, although major building activity in the area did not happen until the 1930’s. In 1991, a City directed building survey identified the area has having a significant number of Art Moderne/Deco and International Style buildings in the City. Many of those identified buildings have been lost through the reconfiguration of the street pattern of the area, (i.e. the construction of Seabreeze Boulevard extension through the subdivision).

**Historic Context**

The following biography is from the City’s Historic Preservation consultant’s HPB memorandum for the designation of the Courtney Stewart, Jr. designed Coca Cola Bottling Plant in Fort Lauderdale.

The Stewart family lived in Fort Lauderdale during the 1920’s real estate “boom”; Stewart’s father, Albert C. Stewart, Sr. was a building contractor and house designer, although not a registered architect. The father, A.C. Stewart, advertised a Spanish style house in

Victoria Park in the January 1, 1925 *Fort Lauderdale Evening Sentinel* that was featured as a show house as part of the city’s 1925 Home Beautiful event<sup>1</sup>. At that time (1925) Courtney, Jr. was a student in architecture at the University of Florida; however, a year or so later, the young man was forced to leave the university and return to Fort Lauderdale because of the illness of his father. Apparently Courtney, Jr. was needed to help his father in his business.



*Fig. 1* 1925 Home Beautiful show house by A.C. Stewart, Sr. FLHS Collections.

In 1926 the City of Fort Lauderdale hired nationally prominent planner Richard Schermerhorn to develop the municipality’s first city plan. Courtney, Jr. took a job with the city to work on maps and drawings for the project.

Although they are unsigned, the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society has drawings for the Schermerhorn Plan that may have been the work of the young man. Stewart was able to

<sup>1</sup> The Home Beautiful events, which were held around the country, were an outgrowth of the Better Houses in America movement; this movement was an educational effort to improve housing in America that was promoted by then Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover.

return to the university and graduate in 1929. Later that year, Stewart was working as a draftsman for Addison Mizner.<sup>2</sup>

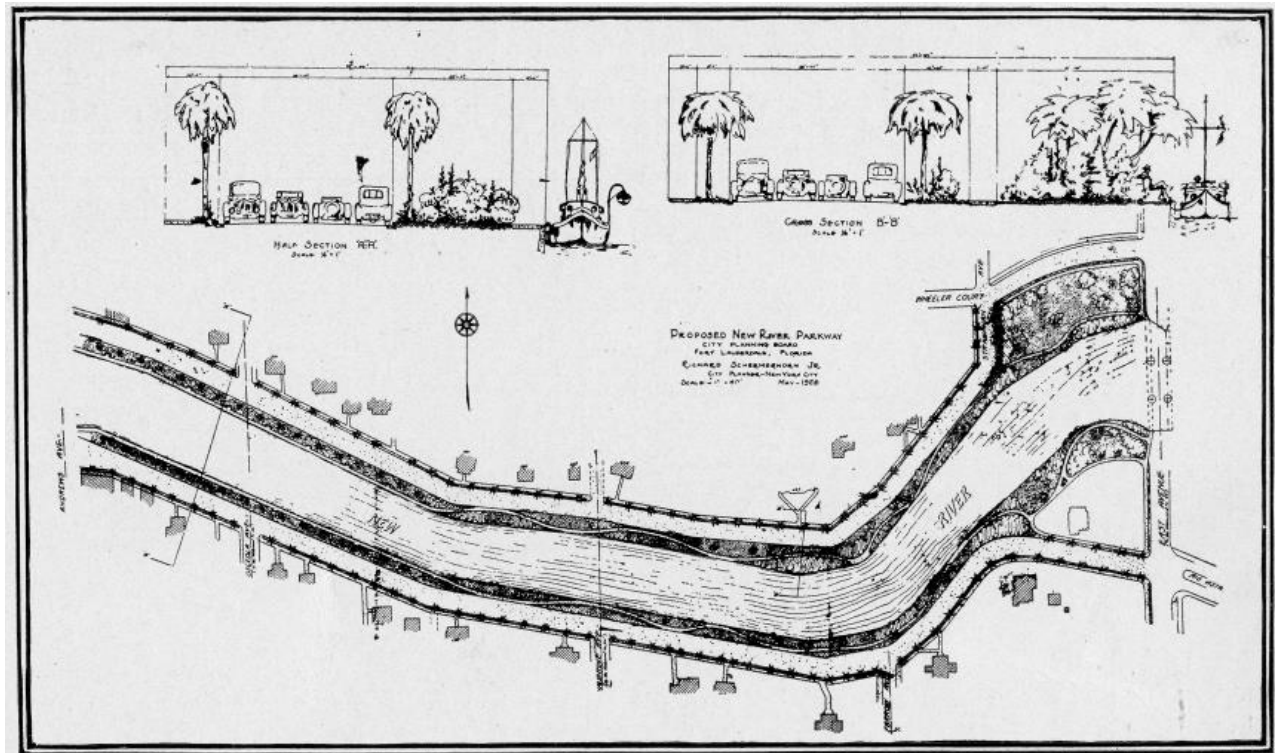


Fig. 2 Drawing for the Schermerhorn Plan showing a proposed linear park for the riverfront. Collections of the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society

The architect is first noted as working in Fort Lauderdale in 1936.<sup>3</sup> Stewart is

considered to be the first Florida trained architect to open an office in Fort Lauderdale. Although he was not listed in city directories until 1936, his commission book shows him accepting a Las Olas by the Sea (Lot 3, Blk 2) commercial project for Spencer S. Thomas on May 3, 1934; the architect's book shows that he had four other projects that year.<sup>4</sup> According to a narrative in the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society history files, written by Fort Lauderdale architect Robert Hansen, Stewart opened an office on the ninth floor of the Sweet Building on Andrews Avenue in 1936 and then hired Mr. Hansen as a full time associate.<sup>5</sup>

Courtney Stewart, Jr. had a distinguished career in Fort Lauderdale finally retiring in 1983. In the 1956 *American Architect's Directory* the architect identified the two 1939 Coca Cola buildings (in Fort Lauderdale and Ocala, Florida), a 1940 addition to the McCrory's Store at Andrews Avenue and Wall Street (now West Las Olas Boulevard), a 1952 education

<sup>2</sup> *American Architect's Directory*. 1956. Biographical listing. P. 537.

<sup>3</sup> *Miller's Fort Lauderdale, Fla. City Directory*, Vol. VI, 1936-1937, Southern Directory Company, Asheville, NC, p. 283.

<sup>4</sup> *Architectural Collection; Stewart Collection*. A access dtb file in the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society digital finding aides.

<sup>5</sup> Hansen, Robert. *REH Notes, Architecture w/W. Gentry (Bill) Crawford, at FTL, 1935/43*. Fort Lauderdale Historical Society History Files—Architecture: Architects, Various.

building for the First Baptist Church in Fort Lauderdale as among his principle works at that time. In 1939, the architect took up a commission for a dairy plant for Williams McWilliams dairy products. Additionally, the architect was responsible for the design of many beautiful homes throughout the city. Some of his residential projects include the frame vernacular Victoria Park Road house for A.T. Dares, the 1935 Ulliam house, listed on the Florida master Site File, also on Victoria Park Road, the 1935 Edward Heimberger house in Rio Vista and the 1938 Martin Westervelt residence on the Stillwell Isles.

### **Building Description**

The building at 3021 Alhambra Street, now called the Alhambra Beach Resort, is two stories with a rectangular footprint and flat roof with a parapet. The building is identified as vernacular in the City's *Central Beach Architectural Resource Survey* although it has Art Moderne design elements; it is of masonry construction with stucco wall cladding. The main entry to the building is on the east side elevation through a centered double height projecting porch; the porch has block columns supporting the roof and second floor. The original design called for slender steel posts as support columns for the porch but at some point they were replaced by block columns. In 1953, two story bump outs were added on either side of the porch to accommodate additional bathrooms. This 1953 alteration to the east elevation also required the blocking of original windows and the installation of new windows at the corners of the elevation. As this alteration was done over 50 years ago, it is considered historic. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards states:

*4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*

Section 47-24.11.C.3.c.ii of the ULDR states:

*d) Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.*

The west elevation of the building has recessed porches centered on both floors.

The consultant concludes that the building at 3021 Alhambra Street is significant as the work of a distinguished architect in Fort Lauderdale, A. Courtney Stewart, Jr. It can be designated under criterion d. *"Its identification as the work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, state, or nation"*.

### **Required Designation Process**

Pursuant to Section 47-24.11.B.5, the City Commission shall hold a public hearing to consider the application, the record, and recommendation of the HPB review, and shall hear public comment and determine whether the proposed application meets criteria found in Section 47-24.11.B. If the City Commission determines the proposed designation meets the criteria, the City Commission shall approve the landmark designation by adopting a resolution accordingly. If the City Commission determines that the proposed designation does not meet criteria for designation, the City Commission shall deny

designation.

The landmark designation shall automatically include the designation of the site upon which the landmark exists as a landmark site. As a result, once the City Commission approves the landmark designation, the property will be subject to the provisions set forth in Section 47-24.11 of the ULDR. This includes the requirement that the property owner or designee shall obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (“COA”) from the Historic Preservation Board prior to undertaking any of the following actions:

- Alteration of an archeological site, new construction, demolition, or relocation.
- Alteration of the exterior part of a building or a structure or designated interior or portion thereof of a building or structure, however, ordinary repairs and maintenance that are otherwise permitted by law may be undertaken without a Certificate of Appropriateness, provided this work on a designated landmark, a designated landmark site, or a property in a designated historic district does not alter the exterior appearance of the building, structure or archeological site, or alter elements significant to its architectural or historic integrity.

Additionally, any future proposed impacts to the historic resource such as development of adjacent properties may require said properties to report to the HPB for review and comment.

### **Resource Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

### **Strategic Connections**

This item is a *Press Play Fort Lauderdale Strategic Plan 2018* initiative, included within the Neighborhood Enhancement Cylinder of Excellence, specifically advancing:

- Goal 6: Be an inclusive community made up of distinct, complementary, and diverse neighborhoods.

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale Vision Plan 2035: We Are Community*.

### **Attachments**

Exhibit 1 – HPB-H15019 Application

Exhibit 2 – 08/31/15 HPB Minutes

Exhibit 3 – City’s Historic Preservation Consultant Memorandum

Exhibit 4 – Tripp Scott – Objection Letter and Associated Documents

Exhibit 5 – Broward Trust for Historic Preservation, Steve Glassman

Exhibit 6 – Resolution Landmark Designation – Approving

Exhibit 7 – Resolution Landmark Designation – Denying

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Prepared by: Linda Mia Franco, AICP, Principal Planner, HPB Liaison

Department Director: Jenni Morejon, Sustainable Development

11/3/2015

CAM #15-1296