

MEMORANDUM

TO: Historic Preservation Board
FROM: Merrilyn C. Rathbun, Fort Lauderdale Historical Society
SUBJECT: Agenda for February 2, 2015
DATE: January 23, 2015

1.

Case	H14020	FMSF #	BD2048
Applicant	Michael Trigg		
Owner	Michael Trigg		
Address	600 SW 9 th Street		
General Location	The corner of SW 9 th Street and SW 6 th Avenue.		
Legal Description	.LAUDERDALE 2-9D LOT 1,2 E1/2 BLK 10 TOGETHER W ½ OF PART OFVAC'D SW 6 AVE WHIDH LIES E OF ADJACENT TO LOT 1 BLK 10		
Existing Use	Apartment building		
Proposed Use	Same		
Applicable ULDR Sections	Section 47-24.11.B.6		
Request(s)	1. Historic Designation of House.		

Property Background:

The Knapps of Missouri, the original owners of the house at 600 SW 9th Street, were among those people who were residents of Fort Lauderdale when it was incorporated in 1911¹. According to his daughter² Mr. Henry Knapp was attracted to the area by the Everglades Drainage project and in 1911, Mr. Knapp took part in the Progresso Land Sale (the Bolles land lottery); he probably, acquired land in the “new” town of Progresso and the newly dredged Everglades.

Leaving his family at their home in St. Louis, Mr. Knapp came to Fort Lauderdale in 1910. According to the family history provided by the applicant, Mr. Knapp acquired property in the largely undeveloped southwest section of town and built the 9th Street house sometime in 1910. Early Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps do not cover this area of the city and, as the town was unincorporated at this point there are no building records, so this early date cannot be confirmed. The historic address for the house was 302 South Street. The early Sanborn maps do show a few properties on the north side of South Street, but the maps do not show the south side of the street where the Knapp house is located; however, the 1918 City of Fort Lauderdale City Directory shows Mr. Henry Knapp and family residing at “W South Street” in that year.

Mr. Knapp’s wife, Margaret Mahala and their three children³ arrived in Fort Lauderdale in 1911. Henry Knapp was a workman who obviously had construction skills and was capable of building a substantial (for the time) home for his family. The 1918 City of Fort Lauderdale City Directory lists Mr. Knapp as a driver for the Standard Oil Company. The 1924-25 directory lists Mr. Knapp as the foreman for J.L. Gibbons, a concrete contractor, which indicates that he had skill with that material. The house walls and porches, built with coral rock, were replaced after the 1926 hurricane with concrete.

¹ Gillis, Susan. *1911 Fort Lauderdale Residents*. A 2011 City of Fort Lauderdale Centennial Project.

² Knapp family history provided by applicant, included in this HPB packet.

³ The Knapp children were daughters Grace and Ruth and a son who is unnamed in the family narrative. Henry Knapp died in 1941 and is buried in a plot at Evergreen cemetery; also buried in that same plot is Harold Knapp, who died in 1918 at the age of 12.

Criteria for Historic Designation:

ULDR Section 47-24.11.B.6	Consultant Response
<i>f. Its distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials.</i>	CONSULTANT RESPONSE: The house at 600 SW 9 th Street is a vernacular or folk style house built by the owner. The builder originally used indigenous materials, i.e. coral rock, but this was later (1926) replaced with poured concrete. He combined elements of the Bungalow style and referenced early Colonial elements in the roof and porch style.

Building Description:

The main body of the house at 600 SW 9th Street has a rectangular footprint. The house has a full width front porch, which extends along both sides of the main body of the house, and a dual pitched hip (a modified pyramid) roof; i.e. a moderately steep pitched roof with extended eaves that cover the wrap around porch. The house has three roof dormers, one on the front and one on each side. The dormers have small gable roofs, called gablets. The original shingle roof cladding has been replaced with metal shingles. The house is built on a raised masonry pier foundation. Interior floors, ceilings and wood elements are Dade County Pine

The porch was originally open, although screened. According to the applicant’s narrative, the house walls and the porch columns were originally built of coral rock; however the native rock was replaced with poured concrete after the 1926 hurricane. At that time Mr. Knapp, trying for greater structural stability, essentially rebuilt the main body of the house. The porch has been enclosed, but it retains its concrete columns and configuration.

The Knapp family was originally from the St. Louis, Mo. Area. The town of Saint Genevieve, Mo., which has a collection of original rural tradition French Colonial style houses,⁴ is about fifty miles south of St. Louis. A part of the rural tradition of this style features dual pitched hip roofs and wrap around porches on a raised foundation⁵. It may be that Mr. Knapp knew of this roof and porch style and recognizing its suitability to a southern climate he adapted it to his “modern” early 20th century home. In recent times the house has been repurposed as a four unit apartment building.

Criteria for Historic Designation:

ULDR Section 47-24.11.B.6	Consultant Response
<i>e. Its value as a building recognized for the quality of its architecture, and sufficient elements showing its architectural significance.</i>	CONSULTANT RESPONSE Although there have been modifications over the years the house retains its historic configuration. The replacement of the indigenous coral rock as a structural element took place in 1926 and is considered an historic replacement.

Summary Conclusion:

The Knapp House at 600 SW 9th Street meets the requirements for historic designation under the ULDR Section 47-24.11.B.6 under criteria e. and f.; the application should be approved. Although the Knapp family assertion that the house was built in 1910 could not be proved it is a reasonable assumption. At that date the house could be considered one of the oldest remaining houses in the city. However the provable date of 1918 (City Directory) puts the house in the historic catalog of the City’s built fabric.

⁴ McAlester, Virginia and Lee, *A Field Guide to American Houses* pp.122-123. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1984.

⁵ Ibid.

Historic Preservation Board Action:

For each requested Certificate of Appropriateness, the board may:

1. Approve the application as presented; or
2. Approve the application with modification; or
3. Deny the application.