



**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE  
City Commission Agenda Memo  
REGULAR MEETING**

**#23-0654**

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

**FROM:** Greg Chavarria, City Manager

**DATE:** September 19, 2023

**TITLE:** Quasi-Judicial De Novo Hearing – Consideration of a Resolution for a  
Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition – Case No. UDP-HP23016 –  
301 SW 14th Way - (**Commission District 2**)

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**Recommendation**

Staff recommends the City Commission consider a resolution for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for Demolition (Case No. UDP-HP23016).

**Background**

On June 20, 2023, the City Commission made a motion to defer the item to the September 19, 2023, meeting to allow for additional time at the request of the property owner.

The applicant, Curt John Fretham, is proposing to demolish structures located at 301 SW 14<sup>th</sup> Way, which is the site of an existing one-story single-family residence, a metal shed, and two wood frame sheds. The site has a Residential - Single Family land use designation and is within the Residential Single Family/Low Medium Density (RS-8) Zoning District.

The Historic Preservation Board (HPB) reviewed and approved the application by a vote of (6-1) on May 1, 2023, with staff conditions. The application and supporting documents are provided as Exhibit 1. The May 1, 2023 HPB Staff Report is attached as Exhibit 2. The May 1, 2023 Draft HPB Meeting Minutes are attached as Exhibit 3. The signed HPB Resolution No. 23-10 is attached as Exhibit 4.

Pursuant to the City's Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR) Section 47-26.A.2, City Commission Request for Review, on May 16, 2023, the City Commission set a de novo hearing to review the application on the June 20, 2023 City Commission agenda.

**Review Criteria**

The following criteria apply to the proposed request:

- ULDR Section 47-24.11.D.3.c.i, Certificate of Appropriateness Criteria - General
- ULDR Section 47-24.11.D.4, Criteria - Demolition

### **Criteria for Certificate of Appropriateness – General**

Pursuant to ULDR, Section 47-24.11.D.3.c.i, in approving or denying applications for certificates of appropriateness for demolition the project shall demonstrate compliance with general criteria which state the following:

- a) The effect of the proposed work on the landmark or the property upon which such work is to be done; and
- b) The relationship between such work and other structures on the landmark site or other property in the historic district; and
- c) The extent to which the historic, architectural, or archeological significance, architectural style, design, arrangement, texture, materials and color of the landmark or the property will be affected; and
- d) Whether the denial of a certificate of appropriateness would deprive the property owner of all reasonable beneficial use of his property.

Complete demolition is proposed for all structures on the site. Although this property was identified as non-contributing to the Sailboat Bend Historic District because the primary residential structure on the site was constructed outside of the identified Periods of Significance, it was suggested as part of the Architectural Resource Survey that this structure designed by William Bigoney be studied further and was identified as a potential individual Historic Landmark. The other structures located on the site, the metal shed and two wood frame sheds, were constructed at a later date and do not exhibit any identifiable architecturally significant features related to the primary structure on the site.

Along SW 14<sup>th</sup> Way abutting the New River, there are four single-family homes that were designed by the same local architect, William Bigoney. One of these homes, located at 215 SW 14<sup>th</sup> Way, was designed for himself in 1969. In 1989, the home located at 333 SW 14<sup>th</sup> Way was designed for Jim Naugle who served as Mayor of Fort Lauderdale between 1991-2009. Another home located at 425 SW 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue was constructed in 1978 for Charles and Hallie Willard who still own the property. The subject property was constructed in 1971 and original plans state the residence was designed for “M.H. Bigoney.”

Denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness would not deprive the property owner of all reasonable beneficial use of his property.

### **Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition**

Pursuant to ULDR, Section 47-24.11.D.4.c., in approving or denying applications for certificates of appropriateness for demolition the applicant shall demonstrate compliance with criteria, which state the following:

- i. The designated landmark, landmark site or property within the historic district no longer contributes to a historic district; or
- ii. The property or building no longer has significance as a historic architectural or archeological landmark; or
- iii. The demolition or redevelopment project is of major benefit to a historic district.

Within the most recent Architectural Resource Survey, this property was identified as non-contributing to the Sailboat Bend Historic District. The property was also identified as a potential historic landmark and it was recommended that the main residential structure on the property designed by William Bigoney be studied further for its ability to meet at least one criterion for historic designation. This property is non-contributing to the Sailboat Bend Historic District because it was constructed in 1971 and is outside of the Periods of Significance.

The house maintains a high level of architectural integrity, retaining its distinctive architectural features that are hallmarks of Bigoney's residential structures and his strive to combine design and nature. The residence located at 301 SW 14<sup>th</sup> Way is designed in a Sub-Tropical Modern Style with a low-profile gable built-up roof, floor to ceiling windows with wooden slats facing the exterior that are operable from the interior, plywood siding, and deep eaves with exposed rafters. Sitting on piers, the house is elevated above the ground level and a deck that stretches out into the natural shoreline that marries the house with the neighboring New River. In 1991, the rear deck was enclosed as a screened-in porch, which is the only known alteration.

Within the City of Fort Lauderdale, there is one William Bigoney designed residence, the Willard Van Orsdel King House constructed in 1951, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This property is located at 1336 Seabreeze Boulevard, near the Harbor Beach subdivision. Within the National Register Nomination, it states:

*"Bigoney-designed homes catch the ocean breezes, find and expand the shade, help the owners to live as closely and comfortably as possible to nature. In ways both obvious and hidden, creative and practical, civic and professional, Bigoney has left his mark by living and working his philosophy, sometimes against the strong currents of change."*

This philosophy is evident in many of Bigoney's designs that remain in their original condition. In August 1971, an article in the Fort Lauderdale News highlighted the home Bigoney designed for himself at 215 SW 14<sup>th</sup> Way where he describes how the "house goes back to nature." Architectural elements that were incorporated into the design to fit within its natural environment and to provide ample ventilation in various forms were implemented so that the house would not need to rely on air conditioning. Bigoney studied architecture at Pratt Institute and Harvard University in the late 1940s and became well known for his modern designs including residences constructed in the sub-tropical modern style.

In accordance with Section 47-26A.2.B. of the ULDR, if the City Commission determines that the proposed demolition meets the standards and criteria applicable for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition, based upon the de novo hearing supplemented by the record below, the City Commission shall either approve or approve with conditions or deny the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition.

### **Resource Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

### **Strategic Connections**

This item supports the *Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2024* Strategic Plan, specifically advancing:

- The Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area
- Goal 4: Build a thriving and inclusive community of neighborhoods.
- Objective: Create a continuum of education services and support

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

This item supports the Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040 Comprehensive Plan specifically advancing:

- The Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area
- The Historic Preservation Element
- Goal 1: The City shall prepare and adopt a long-term approach to historic preservation which identifies and evaluates the City's historic resources.

### **Attachments**

Exhibit 1 – COA Application and Supporting Documents

Exhibit 2 – May 1, 2023, HPB Staff Report

Exhibit 3 – May 1, 2023, Draft HPB Meeting Minutes

Exhibit 4 – Signed HPB Resolution No. 23-10

Exhibit 5 – Resolution Approving

Exhibit 6 – Resolution Denying

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