



Historical Society Of Sarasota County

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May 30, 2023

Ms. Alissa Lotane, Division Director
Florida Department of State
Division of Historical Resources
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Ms. Lotane:

I am writing you today to express my support of the matching grant application for *Preserving Manufactured Housing and Communities: The Case of Sarasota, Florida*. The Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation, in partnership with Architecture Sarasota, is proposing this multi-phase, multi-year, initiative to survey, document and explore the potential nomination of manufactured housing communities in Sarasota to the National Register of Historic Places.

The application seems particularly timely considering the growing threats to these communities by changes to zoning, more intense storm events like hurricanes, and an overall perception that they are inferior to other types of housing and residential neighborhoods. Additionally, because attainable housing is an important issue in Sarasota and around the country the examination of the cultural significance of manufactured housing seems particularly important.

It is our hope that with your assistance important survey work can be done which will better inform our decisions when considering these cultural resources for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and local landmark status.

Thank you for your consideration.

Greg Dickinson - President

ARCHITECTURE SARASOTA

BACKGROUND

A recognized 501c3, non-profit organization, Architecture Sarasota was created in 2021 when the Sarasota Architectural Foundation (2003) and Center for Architecture Sarasota (2013) merged.

MISSION

Architecture Sarasota stewards the legacy of the Sarasota School of Architecture and provides a forum for the education, advocacy, and celebration of good design in the global built environment.

VISION

To transform places and inspire lives.

MEMBERS

Approximately 310 households, primarily in the Sarasota region and nearly 5,300 email subscribers.



Sarasota High School Addition (1959) by Paul Rudolph

PROGRAMS

Architecture Sarasota hosts a range of programs throughout the year including public and private tours, exhibitions, lectures, and other educational activities like a Lego Design Workshop for school age children.

MOD WEEKEND

Occurring annually in November, Architecture Sarasota's largest event is Sarasota MOD Weekend. Hundreds of residents and visitors from around the globe participate in the three-day series of events that celebrate the Sarasota School of Architecture and the continuum of innovative design that helps lend Sarasota its sense of place. Sarasota MOD Weekend is promoted by Visit Sarasota, among other local organizations and agencies.

ARCHITECTURE

SARASOTA

MODERN by DESIGN

Envisioned as a compliment to Sarasota MOD Weekend, Modern by Design will launch in March 2024 with a series of month-long events and activities that highlight forward-thinking contemporary design occurring locally, nationally, and globally. Focus areas include industrial and furniture design, interiors and architecture, and urban design.

EXISTING AND POTENTIAL PARTNERS

American Institute of Architects, Gulf Coast Chapter
Boys and Girls Clubs
City of Sarasota
County of Sarasota
Gulf Coast Community Foundation

New College of Florida
Ringling College of Art + Design
Ringling Museum of Art
Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation
Sarasota Art Museum

THEMES

The organization's activities evolve around three themes inspired by Philip Hanson Hiss and the designers associated with the Sarasota School of Architecture:

Environmental Adaptation

Sustainable and resilient design that responds to the natural environment, climate, and socio-cultural context, including heritage and traditions, of a specific place.

Experimentation and Innovation

Design that questions typical conventions and promotes experimental and innovative approaches to architecture and the built environment that seeks to change how people interact with one another and the world around them.

Democracy and Design

Design that is informed by and promotes democratic principles like inclusivity, accessibility, and responsibility for people and communities of all backgrounds and activities.

Preserving Manufactured Housing and Communities: The Case of Sarasota, Florida

LETTERS OF SUPPORT FAQ

May 25, 2023

- The author of *Wheel Estate* (1997), Allan Wallis, calls the mobile home “the single most significant and unique housing innovation in twentieth century America.” He also states that “no other innovation has been more widely adopted nor simultaneously more broadly vilified.”
- At a moment when affordable and attainable housing has become a crisis in many parts of the country, manufactured housing remains a viable option. In Florida, there are more than 828,000 manufactured homes with an estimated 600,000 built prior to ca.1975. In Sarasota County, there are, according to the 2020 Census, some 14,000 households that occupy a manufactured home, which accounts for approximately 10% of all housing units locally.
- Despite its proliferation and significance as a vernacular form of housing in twentieth century America, the mobile or manufactured home and has not be considered a cultural resource worthy of listing on the National Register of Historic Places and local landmark status. Manufactured home communities have not been documented and studied as potential landmark districts.
- Manufactured homes and communities are threatened by changes to zoning, more intense storm events like hurricanes, and an overall perception that they are inferior to other types of housing and residential neighborhoods.
- Many manufactured housing communities provide shelter for low- and moderate-income families.
- The Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation (Alliance), in partnership with Architecture Sarasota, is proposing a multi-phase, multi-year initiative to survey, document, and explore the potential nomination of manufactured housing communities in the City and County of Sarasota to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register).
- Both the Alliance and AS are official 501c3, non-profit organizations. Formed in 1985, the Alliance’s mission is to preserve and enhance the historic places of Sarasota. Formed in July 2021 with the merging of Sarasota Architectural Foundation (2003) and Center for Architecture Sarasota (2013), Architecture Sarasota’s mission is to steward the legacy of the Sarasota School of Architecture and provide a forum for the education, advocacy and celebration of good design in the global built environment.

- The Sarasota Manufactured Housing and Communities initiative will be implemented over three phases:

PHASE 1 – INVENTORY AND CONTEXT STATEMENT

This initial phase includes a comprehensive inventory of the manufactured housing communities across the City and County of Sarasota, a windshield sampling of representative properties, and a context statement. A primary goal is the evaluation and prioritization of communities that meet the criteria for listing on the National Register and adhere to the seven aspects of integrity as defined by the U.S. National Park Service. An independent panel of experts will be assembled to help identify a single community for further documentation and potential nomination to the National Register during Phase 2.

Timeframe: 2024-2025

PHASE 2 – CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY AND NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION

The focus of this phase is the comprehensive survey, documentation, and research on the priority community identified during Phase 1. Based on the results of the survey and research and utilizing the Phase 1 context statement, a National Register nomination will be prepared for the prioritized community.

Timeframe: 2025-2026

PHASE 3 – SYMPOSIUM, EXHIBITION, AND PUBLICATION

Architecture Sarasota is committed to hosting a national symposium on the history, evolution, and preservation of manufactured housing in the United States with a highlight on local examples and communities. The symposium will be held in conjunction with an exhibition and publication that are being planned.

- The Sarasota Manufactured Housing and Communities initiative is intended to serve as a model for other municipalities across Florida and the United States.
- The Alliance and AS are applying for a \$50k Small Matching Grant from the Florida Division of Historical Resource (State Historic Preservation Office) to support Phase 1 – Inventory and Context Statement. The required \$12.5k cash match will be provided by Architecture Sarasota. The remaining \$37.5k match will be provided through in-kind contributions of staff time.

- If successful, the Phase 1 project will be completed between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025.
- The project team is led by:

Lorrie Muldowney, President, Board of Directors, Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation and Dave Baber, Member of the Board of Directors. Both Lorrie and Dave managed the Sarasota County History Center and have extensive knowledge of Sarasota's cultural and architectural heritage and experience with cultural resource survey work.

Morris (Marty) Hylton III, President, Architecture Sarasota have over 25 years of experience researching, documenting, and preserving mid-20th century architecture including the Sarasota School of Architecture.