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# J. JACOB HUBBARD HOUSE

138 NW 16<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE

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## Designation Report



City of Miami

REPORT OF THE CITY OF MIAMI  
PRESERVATION OFFICER  
TO THE HISTORIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION BOARD  
ON THE POTENTIAL DESIGNATION OF THE  
J. JACOB HUBBARD HOUSE  
AS A HISTORIC SITE

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Consultant

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Passed and  
Adopted on October 29, 2003

Resolution No. 2003-59

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Historic Name:

J. Jacob Hubbard House

Current Name:

138 NW 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Location:

138 NW 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Miami, Florida 33125

Present Owner:

Dade Heritage Trust  
190 Se 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Miami, Florida 33131

Present Use:

Residential

Zoning District:

R-3

Tax Folio Number:

01-4102-005-8540

Boundary Description:

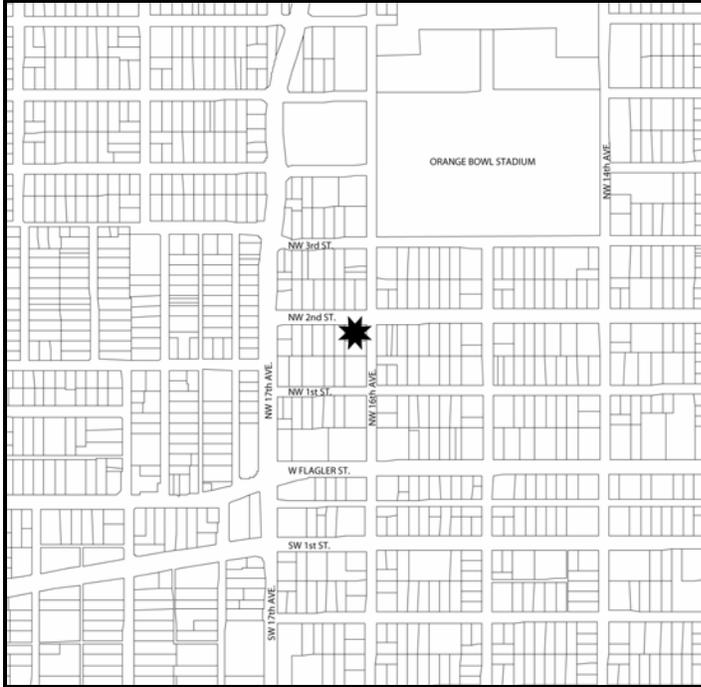
The north 85 feet of Lots 1 and 2, less the north 10 feet, of Block 56 of the plat of LAWRENCE ESTATE LAND COMPANY SUBDIVISION as recorded in Plat Book 2 at Page 46, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Classification:

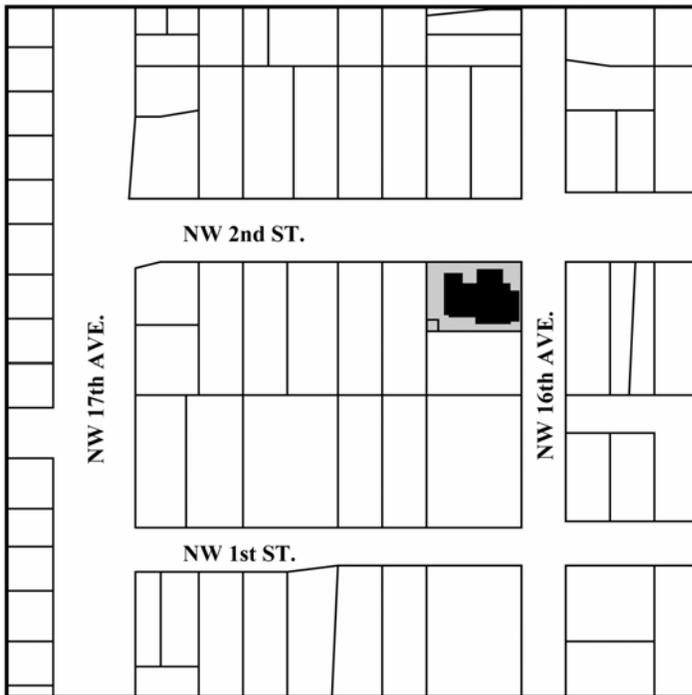
Historic Site

# J. JACOB HUBBARD HOUSE

138 NW 16<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE



  
location



  
site plan

## II. SIGNIFICANCE

### Specific Dates:

Circa 1921

### Architect:

Unknown

### Builder/Contractor:

Unknown

### Statement of Significance:

The J. Jacob Hubbard House is architecturally significant as an outstanding example of an intact early-1920s Belvedere Bungalow. The house is particularly noteworthy for its design, details, materials, and craftsmanship, as evidenced in its exterior materials, prominent front porch, and oolitic limestone porch elements and chimney. This house is also historically significant as a reflection of the residential development trends during the early twentieth century in the Lawrence Estate Land Company Subdivision, which is encompassed within the community currently known as Little Havana.

This house embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Belvedere Bungalow style, including intersecting gabled roof planes, wide overhanging eaves, exposed rafter ends, beams, decorative timbers, casement windows with Prairie style light configurations, and a second-story belvedere. The prominent front porch, which extends across the east elevation, features flared oolitic limestone piers topped with concrete caps and short wood post supports. The entire structure is covered with wood shingles, a typical characteristic of the style.

The residence also features elements of design, detail, and craftsmanship that represent an adaptation to the South Florida environment. During the 1910s and 1920s, the population was rapidly increasing in Miami and South Florida, and the new residents embraced the idea of low-cost housing that was particularly well suited to the sub-tropical climate. The house's broadly-pitched, gabled roof planes with wide, overhanging eaves, deep-set front porch, windows arranged to allow for cross ventilation, and second-story mass are features that were integrated into the building design in response to South Florida's climate. Each of these elements provided shade and assisted air circulation throughout the house. In particular, the belvedere, which gives this Bungalow building form its name, was historically used as a sleeping porch when all the windows were open and the breezes moved through the room. The extensive use of oolitic limestone, a

granular calcium carbonate stone commonly found in South Florida, on the porch and the chimney also reflects local craftsmanship and building materials.

The Hubbard House also represents residential development within the City during the early part of the twentieth century, leading up to and continuing through the Florida Land Boom era. The house is located within the Lawrence Estate Land Company Subdivision, one of the largest subdivisions in the Miami area. The Tatum brothers—Bethel, Smiley, and John—who came to Miami from Georgia, subdivided this area. The Tatums settled in Miami in 1899 and soon became important businessmen with an abstract company. They also built the first street car railway in 1906 and operated the Miami Street Railway Company. The brothers evolved into real estate moguls with the purchase of nearly 400 acres of land from General Samuel C. Lawrence. This 400-acre tract later became known as Lawrence Estate Land Company Subdivision.

Platted in 1912, the Lawrence Estate Subdivision once reflected a varied and eclectic collection of building styles that were popular during the early growth of the City of Miami. Historically, this subdivision included single-family dwellings as well as multi-unit complexes and commercial structures. Residences were often constructed in the Craftsman, Belvedere Bungalow, and Mission styles. Commercial buildings exhibited the Art Deco, Masonry Vernacular, and Mission styles.

Between 1914 and 1920, Bungalows as a housing form dominated the new subdivisions throughout the country and became one of the most popular housing forms for middle-class Americans. During the latter part of the 1910s, the local newspapers, such as the *Miami Metropolis*, regularly featured large-scale advertisements by the Tatum brothers touting their developments and the beautiful Bungalow homes being constructed. Advertisements hyped the “Miami Belvederes,” which were a “Type of Bungalow Especially Designed for Life in the Tropics.” Also during this time period, several articles in the local publication, *The Tropic Magazine*, discussed the beauty and practicality of the Belvedere homes in Miami.

According to the publication, *From Wilderness to Metropolis*, the Lawrence Estate Subdivision area exhibited both the largest number and finest examples of Bungalow residences during its period of development.

#### Relationship to Criteria for Designation:

The J. Jacob Hubbard House has significance in the historical and architectural heritage of the City of Miami; possesses integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association; and is eligible for designation under the following criteria:

3. Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economic, or social trends of the community.

The J. Jacob Hubbard House is historically significant as it reflects the residential development trends within the City during the early part of the twentieth century. During the 1910s and 1920s, housing was being rapidly constructed within subdivisions such as Lawrence Estate Land Company Subdivision and Riverview Heights, and building types, such as Craftsman and Belvedere Bungalows, were among the most popular houses being built during those years.

5. Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction.

The J. Jacob Hubbard House is architecturally significant as an excellent intact example of a Belvedere Bungalow that was constructed in the early part of the twentieth century. This residence embodies the distinguishing characteristics of the Belvedere Bungalow style, including intersecting gabled roof planes, wide overhanging eaves, exposed rafter ends, beams, and decorative timbers, casement windows with Prairie style light configurations, and a second-story belvedere. The prominent front porch, which extends across the east elevation, features flared oolitic limestone piers topped with concrete caps and short wood post supports. The entire structure is covered with wood shingles, a typical characteristic of the style.

7. Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship of outstanding quality or which represent a significant innovation or adaptation to the South Florida environment.

The J. Jacob Hubbard House contains elements of design, detail, and craftsmanship that represent an adaptation to the South Florida environment. The residence's broadly-pitched, gabled roof planes with wide, overhanging eaves, deep-set front porch, windows arranged to allow for cross ventilation, and second-story mass are features that were integrated into the building design in response to South Florida's climate. These elements provided shade and assisted air circulation throughout the house. The extensive use of oolitic limestone on the porch and the chimney also reflects local craftsmanship and building materials.

### III. DESCRIPTION

#### Present and Original Appearance:

#### Setting:

The size of the subject property is 75 x 100 feet and, based on the historic Sanborn Fire Insurance and Hopkins maps, the current size of the lot is the same as the historic lot size. The house is surrounded by a small yard, and concrete driveway ribbons leading to the shed are located on the south side of the property. The main house was constructed circa 1921 and the date of the non-historic, non-contributing shed located on the southwest corner of the property is unknown. According to historic plumbing inspection records and Sanborn Fire Insurance and Hopkins maps, a garage was located on the southwest portion of the property until the late 1940s.

#### Main House:

This two-story residence reflects the Belvedere or Airplane Bungalow style. The massing of the residence's one-story portion exhibits a low profile, and a central second-story mass, or "belvedere," extends from the roof plane. The building's exterior walls are clad in wood shingles and the various low-pitched, gabled roof planes are covered with composition shingles. The intersecting gables feature wide, overhanging eaves with exposed rafter tails, roof beams, and brackets. The main body of the wood house sits on piers and raised concrete foundation walls, and the prominent porch appears to have oolitic limestone foundation walls. An exterior oolitic limestone chimney is located on the south elevation.

The one-story, full-width front porch is the most distinguishing feature of the residence. The deep-set porch extends the entire width of the east elevation and continues around to the northeast and southeast corners. It features flared oolitic limestone piers topped with concrete caps. Simple wood railings are located between the porch piers; these do not appear to be original to the building. The porch's entry bay, located to the left side of the front elevation, has a front-gabled roof, and decorative timbers and roof beams are found underneath the eaves. The remaining portion of the porch has a side-gabled roof, which is set perpendicular to the street. Underneath the eaves of this portion of the porch, decorative timbers and rafter tails are also evident.

Throughout the first floor, narrow, wood-frame casement windows with Prairie style light arrangements are present. These windows are typically paired and set in simple wood window surrounds. Contrasting wood trim is located above and below the first floor windows. The second floor's original windows have been replaced with jalousie windows and several openings are covered with plywood. The window openings maintain their original shape and configuration and the

simple wood surrounds are still evident. The house's main entrance is located on the east elevation and the rear entrance is found on the west elevation.

Contributing Structures and/or Landscape Features:

The contributing structure within the site is the main house. A non-contributing shed also is located on the site. There are no contributing landscape features on the site.



J. Jacob Hubbard House  
138 NW 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
North façade  
2002

#### IV. PLANNING CONTEXT

##### Present Trends and Conditions:

The J. Jacob Hubbard House is located within the Lawrence Estate Land Company Subdivision, which historically exhibited both the largest number and finest examples of Bungalow residences during its period of development. Today, this subdivision is included within the Little Havana neighborhood.

The future of the remaining historic Bungalow residences in this area is uncertain, given the redevelopment pressures west of downtown Miami. Many Bungalows, particularly Belvedere Bungalows, in the immediate area surrounding the Hubbard House have experienced extensive alterations, and the once prevalent historic houses are disappearing.

The Dade Heritage Trust purchased the J. Jacob Hubbard House in August of 2003 through its revolving fund. A thorough rehabilitation of the home is planned, including the restoration of interior and exterior features and the demolition of non-historic additions. This project will illustrate the potential of Little Havana's historic homes in a highly visible manner. Dade Heritage Trust hopes that the rehabilitation of the J. Jacob Hubbard House will inspire community pride in the neighborhood's historic housing stock, encourage home ownership, and stimulate revitalization activity in the Little Havana neighborhood.

##### Preservation Incentives:

Based on the rarity of existing intact Belvedere Bungalows, particularly in the area southwest of downtown, the preservation of these types of resources should be a priority. The City is prepared to work with the property owners in identifying solutions to retain these threatened properties.

Financial incentives available for substantial rehabilitation projects conducted according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards are the ad valorem property tax abatement program currently available in Miami-Dade County. It is hoped the City will adopt a tax abatement program in the future.

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