

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Mound Houseother names/site number Bungalow by the Banyon, Bayview Lodge (FMSF LL00004)

2. Location

street & number 451 Connecticut Street ☐ not for publicationcity or town Fort Myers Beach ☒ vicinitystate Florida code FL county Lee code 071 zip code 33931

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of
 Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
☒ nationally ☒ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation
 State or Federal agency and bureau

see SG 100002723
 - for SHPO signature

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional
 comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet

- ☐ determined eligible for the
 National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.


- ☐ determined not eligible for the
 National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

- ☐ removed from the National
 Register.

- ☐ other, (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action



3/22/19

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



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Alissa Lotane, DSHPO 6/8/18
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

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- ☐ removed from the National
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- ☐ other, (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Mound House
Name of Property

Lee County, Florida
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☒ buildings
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1	2	buildings
1	0	sites
0	1	structures
0	0	objects
2	3	total

Name of related multiple property listings

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

"N/A"

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

EDUCATION/Research Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH and 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

Shingle

roof Shingle

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☒ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHAEOLOGY

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

Period of Significance

100 B.C. - 700 A.D.

1909-1952

Significant Dates

1909

1921

Significant Person

Cultural Affiliation

Calusa

Architect/Builder

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of Repository

Mound House
Name of Property

Lee County, Florida
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.77

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	7	4	0	7	4	9	4	2	9	2	5	4	2	1
Zone	Easting			Northing											
2															

3															
Zone	Easting			Northing											
4															

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Max Adriel Imberman, Historic Preservationist; William H. Marquadt, Ph. D.

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date November 2018

street & number 500 Bronough Street telephone (850) 245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of Fort Myers Beach

street & number 2525 Estero Boulevard telephone

city or town Fort Myers Beach state FL zip code 33931

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Mound House

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SUMMARY

The Mound House is a two-story Craftsman house, which began as a one-story Tudor free-standing kitchen/dining room in 1906, growing and modernizing throughout the twentieth century. Its current appearance has been restored to reflect the way it looked in 1921, retaining most of the original fabric from that era. The original Tudor element of the building was removed in 1958 to make room for an addition to the house, as well as a swimming pool.

The house was built upon an ancient Calusa shell midden mound (8LL4), which dates between ca. A.D. 400 and 1500. This site measures approximately 2.77 acres, and is the highest point on Estero Island. The site borders the Matanzas Pass and Estero Bay to the east, and is bordered to the north by manmade canals.

Today the Mound House is a museum owned by the town of Fort Myers Beach, aiming to provide an insight into the town's frontier history as well as that of the Calusa. The pool has been converted into an exhibit centered on a cutaway of the shell mound, with the walls of the pool having been removed. A paved road runs around the edges of the property, with a small parking lot placed to the southern end of the site. Several non-contributing outbuildings are placed in the northern section of the property, and piers have been constructed to the east and northeast of the building along the shoreline.

The Mound House site has a sufficient degree of integrity for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, despite the alterations that have occurred since the end of the period of significance in 1952. The house has been restored to its 1921 appearance and has maintained most of its historic material. A significant portion of the Calusa site itself is intact and some of which has been studied and which also retains the potential to provide additional information.

SETTING

The Mound House site is located along the northern shore of Estero Island, along the Matanzas Pass. The Mound House site is among the largest properties on the entire island. It is located just north of Connecticut Street and is bordered by no other roads. To the northwest of the Mound House site is the Shell Mound Park subdivision, which was subdivided from land that had originally been a part of the Mound House property. The Shell Mound Park neighborhood is characterized by parallel canals, which were dredged from Mound House land in the 1950s. The area of Fort Myers Beach surrounding the Mound House is primarily residential, with the majority of businesses being closer to Estero Island's southern shore. While the neighborhood surrounding the Mound House has certainly changed since the end of its period of significance, it has not done so to such a degree that would significantly damage the integrity of setting. While the area surrounding the Mound House has developed over the decades, it retains a sufficient degree of integrity for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Overall Site Layout

The Mound House site is characterized by the centrally located Mound House, built at the highest surviving point of a Calusa shell midden mound. The layout of the Mound House site is ideally suited to serve the logistical needs of a house museum. It is ringed by an unpaved road that splits off from Connecticut Street northward into a small parking lot, and at the drive's eastern terminus to a road that wraps around the site, connecting back to that same parking lot from the northern end. Apart from the large road, the site is crisscrossed by small walking paths that connect the various accessible areas of the property, including the Mound House, the shell mound cut-out interpretive exhibit just to its southwest, two non-contributing outbuildings that serve as staff offices and public restrooms, and a pier to the southeast of the Mound House.

Mound House Architecture

The Mound House (Photo 1) is a two-story Craftsman-style house museum with a reconstructed one-room Tudor addition. The building's character-defining exterior feature is its wrap-around covered porch, with a second-floor enclosed porch supported by a set of eleven brick columns. The porch features, which are completely aligned on both floors, dominate the eastern and northern facades of the building. The second floor porch is enclosed with ribbon windows. The primary material for the Mound House's first-floor exterior is brick, and the second floor has brown shingle siding on all walls below the roofline. This creates an effect where the first and second floors leave very distinct visual impressions. The first floor brick shows evidence of having been previously painted white, but much of the paint has since faded. The gray brick beneath has been revealed, as it was in the historic period. The Mound House has a gabled roof with two gabled dormers, which face the eastern façade. The house's plan follows an approximate U-shape, with the Tudor one-room addition and the wrap-around two-story porch creating that shape.

The eastern façade of the building, facing a straight path leading to a pier jutting out over the Matanzas Pass, is the historic main entrance to the house. While it is not used this way currently, with the entrance now located in the Tudor-style reconstruction addition in the building's southwest, the eastern façade maintains its historic fenestration. Each door on this façade is topped by a decorative pediment. The first floor of this façade has no windows, but rather a collection of doors inset with patterned glass allowing visibility. There are five double-doors on the eastern façade, with the main entrance door being the only single door. The eastern façade's second floor is primarily characterized by the enclosed porch with repeating ribbon windows. Atop this porch are two gabled dormers with thin fixed windows.

The northern façade of the building (Photo 2) is visually very similar to the eastern façade. The first floor is characterized by brick columns and brick walls, with a single double-door centrally-located,

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matching the design and type of those on the eastern façade. A gated white staircase, a non-historic alteration, connects the first-floor covered porch area to the second-floor indoor porch.

The western façade of the Mound House (Photo 3) follows the same material design as the other elevations of the house, with the brick first floor and the second floor clad in brown shingle siding. The western façade is fronted by a large paved area with wooden picnic tables. The first floor has three double-door entrances, matching those on the other elevations. Two of these are facing west, and the other is tucked into the central section of the U-shaped plan, facing the Tudor structure to the south. There is also an eight-over-one single-hung window in the center of the indentation on the western façade. On the second floor, the house has sets of paired fixed windows. In the southern section of the western façade (Photo 4) is the reconstructed Tudor addition, which has a gabled roof and windows on each side. The Tudor addition provides a visual reference to the historical building which was originally on that spot.

The eastern façade of the Mound House (Photo 5) features the reconstructed Tudor Revival addition, as well as a side of the Mound House which continues the patterns of the three other elevations. The western end of this façade is the Tudor Revival addition, which serves as the main entrance to the Mound House museum. The Tudor addition is clearly visually distinguished from the rest of the Mound House, with its southern façade having a single door with three fixed windows to its left. The first floor of this elevation features two eight-over-eight sash windows and the southern terminus of the wrap-around porch. On the second floor are three fixed windows and the southern end of the indoor porch, marked by a ribbon window.

Tudor Reconstruction

The current entrance to the Mound House is the reconstruction of the building's original one-room Tudor kitchen (Photo 6), which serves as the museum's gift shop. The one-room building has a drop ceiling and is tightly packed with display shelves for various museum products. There are three windows on the north and south sides of the room, and one on the western side. A wide wood-framed opening (Photo 7) connects the Tudor Revival addition to the museum section of the Mound House.

Mound House Interior

The interior walls of the Mound House's first floor are gray brick, matching the brick used for the building's exterior. The floor is primarily wood with a brick section surrounding the room's fireplace. The first room of the museum is the historic family room, which is located at the building's southeast corner. The room has two internal exits, the wood frame opening leading to the Tudor gift shop, and a narrower northern opening (Photo 8) leading to the hall, which is dominated by the building's staircase. The room's dominant and character-defining feature is its fireplace, which dates back to the original construction of the house. The brick fireplace is decorated with an inset collection of seashells over the hearth (Photo 9) surrounded by pressed brick.

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The hall room (Photo 10) has a wooden floor and a wooden staircase, which connects with the second floor in a room which was historically a bedroom. On the second floor, the walls are finished with horizontal beadboard. The room has two windows, a small casement window to the west and a large double window to the east. Apart from the staircase, the room has a northern exit leading to the historic living room (Photo 11), which is currently used as lecture space. The dimensions of the room have been altered since the historic period, combining the historic living room with a room which had originally been to its west. An elevator has been added to the southwestern section of the room to aid disability access to the second floor of the building. Like the rest of the floor, the floors are wooden; the walls are gray brick.

The room where the staircase emerges on the second floor (Photo 12) was historically one of two bedrooms, with the second bedroom neighboring it to the south. Today, the wall between the two rooms has been removed, and the room serves as exhibit and display space. The top of the staircase faces east, just to the south of a door leading into another exhibit room. The west wall of the room has two sets of three windows, and the south side of the room has three more. The east wall has two exits which emerge onto the second-floor indoor porch.

The historic master bedroom on the second floor (Photo 13) has been converted into a second exhibit space. The southwest corner of the room has the second-floor elevator entrance, which connects with the lecture space on the first floor. The room has two sets of double doors emerging onto the indoor porch, located in the centers of the eastern (Photo 14) and northern (Photo 15) walls of the room. Windows flank each of these doors. The western wall of the room has an opening that leads to the historic bathroom of the house (Photo 16). Each side of this short hallway has a closet.

The historic bathroom (Photo 17) of the Mound House, located in the northwest corner of the second floor, is characterized by a floor made up of small hexagonal tiles with flowery designs and white ceramic tile walls, with the area nearest the ceiling finished with painted vertical beadboard. The bathroom also features a sink and a bathtub, and is currently used as an interactive interpretive space designed for children. The room has four pairs of windows, two on the western wall, and one on each of the northern and southern walls.

Calusa Shell Mound Interpretive Exhibit

The entrance to the *Stories Beneath our Feet* interpretive exhibit is located to the southwest of the Mound House building. The entrance (Photo 18) is at a much lower height than the house, corresponding to the depth of the 1958 pool. The entrance to the exhibit is a double-door inset into a concrete overhang with a railing on top. The exhibit itself consists of a cutout of the mound, which had originally been excavated in 1958, when a pool was built on the property. The wall opposite the mound cutout, which is protected by a glass barrier, is decorated with a mural depicting the Calusa culture that originally resided on the site.

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ALTERATIONS

The Mound House site was altered throughout the period of significance, and has been altered since. The original Mound House structure, a one-room Tudor kitchen, was constructed on top of a prominent Calusa shell midden mound in 1906. Through the following decades, a two-story Bungalow addition was built, which was then converted and expanded by a subsequent owner. In 1952, the house was sold once more to a new owner, who eventually further expanded the house, most notably by demolishing the original Tudor element and constructing a pool and sunroom on the premises. After the property was purchased by the city of Fort Myers Beach, the city engaged in a preservation restoration project, returning the Mound House to its 1921 appearance, and converting the house into a history museum. The design and materials of the bulk of the building were maintained since construction, with the 1921 version of the building remaining mostly intact from the time of construction. The Florida room was removed and replaced with a reconstruction of the original Tudor kitchen. The 1958 swimming pool was replaced with an underground interpretive exhibit through which one can view a cutaway of the interior of the Calusa shell midden mound. A staircase was added to the northern façade connecting the first-floor covered porch to the second-floor indoor porch, in order to provide a second means of egress for the museum. The Mound House has gone through multiple waves of alterations since its original construction, but the character-defining features on its inside, most notably the fireplace in the entrance hall, have survived in their original form. An elevator has been added to the inside of the building, and some internal walls have been removed to turn two small rooms into one large room, but the overall layout of the building has been restored to its 1921 form in a way that is historically conscious.

INTEGRITY

The Mound House site retains integrity for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, despite and perhaps because of the waves of alterations that have occurred since the period of significance ended in 1952. The Mound House has a very high degree of integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. The restoration of the building, which aimed to restore the appearance of the building to its 1921 form, has necessarily impacted the integrity of design, materials, and workmanship, but not to a degree that would prevent the site from being listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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SHELL MIDDEN MOUND

Mound house is located atop the highest point of a large shell midden mound. According to a 2002 archaeological report, the mound is “4.3 m high, 120 m long (north to south) and 90 m wide.”¹

According to shovel tests and ground penetrating radar, the mound is constructed of various layers of shell and earth.² Prior to the development of the surrounding residential neighborhood, the mound was part of a larger shell midden ridge that extended to the northwest along the bay side of Estero Island. However, the northern portion of this structure was demolished after the 1940s, with several canals cut through the ridge as part of the residential development.³

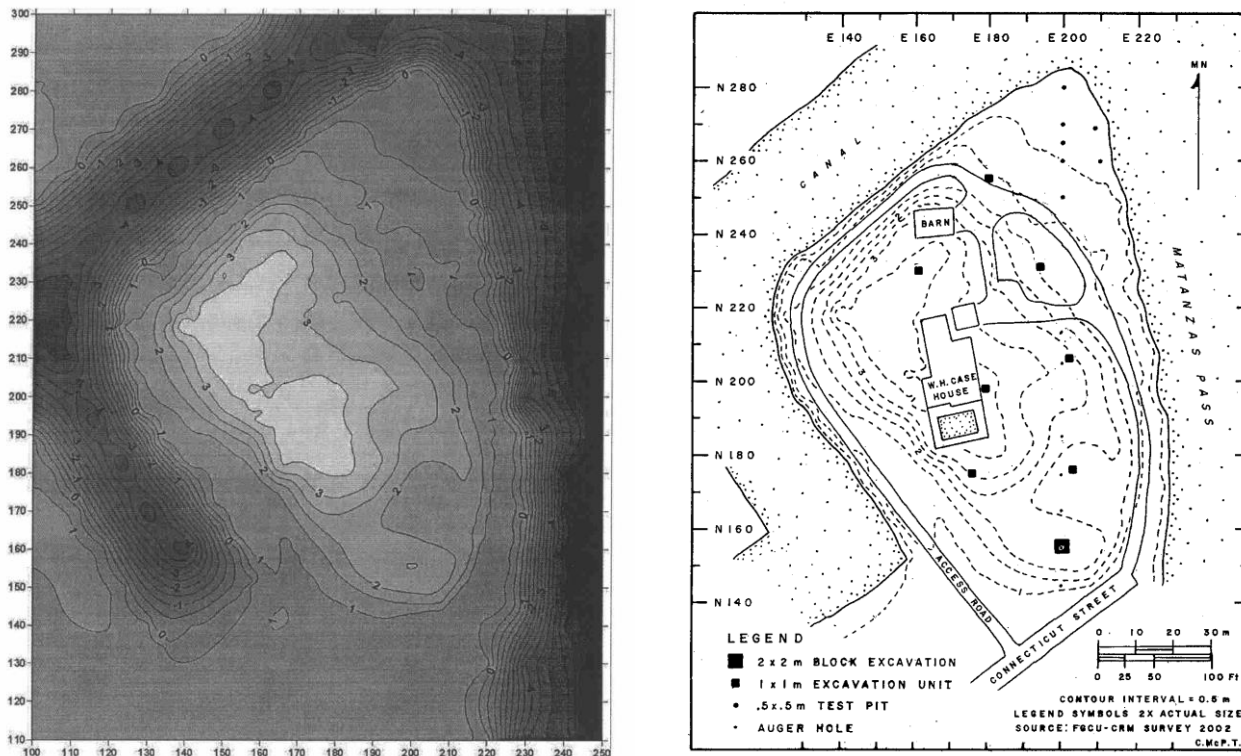


Figure 1: Contour map of the shell midden mound and site plan from 2002 archaeological investigation of the Mound House site. Source: Countour map: Schober and Torrence, 42; Site plan: Schober and Torrence, 51.

¹ Theresa M. Schober and Corbett Torrence, 2002, *Archaeological Investigations and Topographic Mapping of the Estero Island Site (8LL4)*, Lee County, Florida, pp. 41.

² Ibid., 49, 57-64,

³ Ibid., 38, 41-44.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK

Sediments were removed from the Mound House midden in the 1950s so that owner William H. Long could install a swimming pool to the south of the house. This work uncovered human remains of at least one individual, evidenced by a cranium and left humerus.⁴ Unfortunately, no records are known of the discoveries from the excavation and there is no evidence that any professional archaeological excavations were undertaken.⁵

A 2002 archaeological study on the Mound House site uncovered an array of finds ranging in age over a millennium. The largest collection of found samples was from the Caloosahatchee I period, which ranges from 500 B.C. to A.D. 500. The survey used both intrusive and non-intrusive methods, including surface collection, auger survey, ground penetrating radar survey, shovel test pit survey, and grid excavation.⁶ The studies done on the mound focused not only on the objects buried within it, but also its structure, with ground-penetrating radar surveys revealing the overall structure of the site beneath the ground.⁷ Shovel tests uncovered potsherds, including Belle Glade Plain Pottery, as well as a bead, rusted metal, and a fragment of lead casing.⁸ The evolution of technology and the analytical methods of the archaeological field allowed 21st-century archaeologists to gain a fuller understanding of the lifestyle of the Calusa who had resided there.

The most recent archaeological study conducted at the Mound House site took place from 2005-2007 while the Mound House was being updated into its current form as a museum. Archaeologists took the opportunity to study the stratification of the shell midden mound.⁹ Interpreting hand-excavated data, researchers determined that most of the organized shell accumulation occurred around AD 600 and 900, with radiocarbon studies showing a conscious and planned construction of a mound using already-existing midden material rather than a gradual growth over time. Its material was re-deposited to form a new topographic structure, a process also demonstrated in recent interdisciplinary work on nearby Mound Key (8LL2).¹⁰ A recent reassessment of the radiocarbon dates suggests that the Mound House

⁴ Ibid., 6-7. The survey report includes an image of a skull and humerus located in-situ in a shell mound identified as the Mound House site. The image was taken from Rolfe F. Schell's *History of Fort Myers Beach Florida* (Fort Myers Beach, FL: Island Press, 1980), pp. 23.

⁵ Anecdotal evidence collected by Arden Arrington and cited by Schober and Torrence stated that the remains had been relocated to the University of Florida at Gainesville, but the University and the Museum of Florida History had no records of the human remains nor did they have any in their collections according to their inventories. In addition, the university did not have any record of investigations at the Mound House site. Ibid., pp. 7-9.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 46-48.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 52-54.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 55.

⁹ Theresa Schober, 2014, "Deconstructing and Reconstructing Caloosahatchee Shell Mound Building," in *New Histories of Pre-Columbian Florida*, edited by Neill J. Wallis and Asa R. Randall, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, p. 43.

¹⁰ Victor D. Thompson, William H. Marquardt, Alexander Cherkinsky, Amanda R. Roberts Thompson, Karen J. Walker, Lee A. Newsom, and Michael Savarese, 2016, "From Shell Midden to Midden-Mound: The Geoarchaeology of Mound Key, an Anthropogenic Island in Southwest Florida, USA," *PLoS ONE* 11(4):e0154611, doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0154611;

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archaeological site was occupied ca. A.D. 400-1500, the same time as Mound Key, the historic capital town of the Calusa Indians.¹¹

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

The Mound House site was altered since the end of the Calusa period, with the present site being the last remaining section of what was originally a shell ridge that extended northward along the coast of Estero Island. Despite this loss, the remaining section of the site extends over a 2.77-acre area, and archaeological investigations have demonstrated that the mound and its deposits have stratigraphic integrity. Only a fraction of the undisturbed deposits has been excavated and the remaining sections of the site are of state-level significance in terms of ongoing interdisciplinary studies of Mound Key and its environs. The scientific potential of the Mound House site is discussed more fully below (see Section 8, Criterion D).

¹¹ Tony Krus and Victor Thompson, 2017, "Gathering Shells and Time: A Bayesian Approach to Shell Mound Formation in Southwest Florida," paper presented at the 82nd annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Vancouver.

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SUMMARY

The Mound House is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning/Development and Criterion C in the area of Architecture, and at the state level and national levels under Criterion D in the area of Archaeology. Its period of significance ranges from A.D. 400 to 1500 for the site's use by the Calusa as a shell midden and fishing settlement, a period in which the house's titular mound accumulated, and from 1909 to 1952, a period in which the property, the oldest home on Estero Island, evolved from a small free-standing Tudor single-room kitchen into a Bungalow and Arts and Crafts-style two-story home. The Mound House and the archaeological site on which it is built provide cultural and architectural insight into the period prior to the development of modern Fort Myers Beach on Estero Island.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Mound House was built on top of an ancient Calusa shell midden mound and was the site of the earliest American settlement on Estero Island, which now contains today's community of Fort Myers Beach.

Calusa-era Estero Island Historic Context

Native Americans first arrived in Florida over 12,000 years ago, heading south from the territory now occupied by Canada and the northern United States after crossing to the Western Hemisphere across the Bering Land Bridge and along the western coast of North America. During the Ice Age, the sea levels were approximately 180 feet lower than at present, due to much of the Earth's water being frozen into glaciers. The coastlines of Florida's peninsula extended further out, with the Gulf of Mexico being 100 miles further west than today. Thus, much of the remaining archaeological evidence of South Florida's ancient Native American culture is now located beneath the waves. Over the millennia, the sea levels rose as glaciers thawed, resulting in the formation of Estero Island about 5,000 years ago.

According to archaeological evidence, the Calusa were the first human occupants of Estero Island, with the oldest manmade feature on the island being the midden mound on which the Mound House was constructed. The site, the current remains of which are the intact remnants of a midden ridge that once extended northward, was accumulated between A.D. 400 and 1500.¹² Archaeological studies have shown that the site hosted a Calusa residential settlement that was probably part of a larger network of which Mound Key was the most prominent town. Archaeological work at the Mound House site (also known as the Estero Island Site) has uncovered evidence of buildings, fishing implements, jewelry, and other items. Preservation of organic deposits such as charred wood, seeds, and nutmeats, as well as the remains of fish and shellfish used as food, is excellent.^{13, 10}

¹² Krus and Thompson, op. cit.

¹³ Schober and Torrence, op. cit.

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The Calusa controlled much of the region now known as South Florida prior to European contact. According to Spanish sources from the sixteenth century, the Calusa had a very complex, stratified society, with permanent settlements as well as dominion over other neighboring tribes including the Mayaimi, Tequesta, and Jaega.¹⁴ According to Hernando D'Escalante Fontaneda, a Spaniard who was captured by and lived with the Calusa for seventeen years, the name *Calusa* meant "a fierce people" in their language.¹⁵ While most prehistoric human groups paired the development of rigid social stratification with staple-crop agriculture, the Calusa were distinguished by their fisher-gatherer-hunter structure, depending upon the yield of land and sea fauna for survival and trade.^{13, 14} While the Calusa did engage in limited horticulture, including the growth of chili peppers, papaya, and squash in small home gardens, fishing was the central productive activity of their society.¹⁶

Although the Calusa territory expanded throughout South Florida, the capital of their domain was along the shore of southwestern Florida, located to the southeast of today's Estero Island on an island now known as Mound Key. Currently known as Mound Key Archaeological State Park, the island's current form was developed by the Calusa. While the site originally appears to have been a sand bar, an oyster bar, or a mangrove island which was revealed during a period of low water prior to A.D. 400, the titular mounds of Mound Key were created over time as shellfishers collected mollusks and disposed of their shells on site, accumulating across generations and centuries as midden mounds. With the shells and other material forming into masses of waste which eventually integrated with the environment, at least part of the midden material was over time reshaped and redeposited, with older middens reconfigured into designed mounds.¹⁷ The Calusa, with a culture and society based around the yield of the sea, sometimes built midden mounds with the waste from their fishing endeavors.

First contact between the Spanish and Calusa took place on June 4, 1513. Juan Ponce de León, famous for being the first European to set foot in the southeastern United States, traveled around the Florida peninsula to its southwestern section, first encountering the Calusa near Sanibel Island. At the time of contact, the Calusa were led by a chief whom the Spanish called Carlos. Calusa society was stratified, divided into nobles and commoners. They engineered their surroundings, constructing domiciliary and burial mounds as well as plazas and canals. They were powerful militarily, and protective of their

¹⁰ Schober, op. cit.

¹⁴ William H. Marquardt, 2004, "Calusa," in *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 14: *Southeast*, pp. 204-212. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press.

¹⁵ Worth, John E., 2014, *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narratives from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

¹³ Marquardt, 2004, op. cit.

¹⁴ Randolph J. Widmer, 1988, *The Evolution of the Calusa: A Nonagricultural Chiefdom on the Southwest Florida Coast*, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

¹⁶ Thompson, Marquardt et al., 2016, op. cit., p. 2.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 14-16.

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territory and influence.¹⁸ The Calusa almost immediately attacked the Spanish fleet with twenty canoes filled with longbow archers. Hostilities continued until the Spanish fled to recover and repair their ships from the conflict.¹⁹ Ponce de León would eventually be killed by the Calusa in 1521, when he returned to the area on another expedition. Struck by a Calusa arrow, he died in Havana, Cuba.²⁰ The relationship between the Spanish and Calusa did not begin auspiciously, but over time, the continued presence of the Spanish in Florida forced the Calusa to engage with them.

By 1567, the Spanish had established a fort and Jesuit mission at the Calusa capital on Mound Key. This was the first Jesuit mission in North America. The existence of this mission did not help staunch the tensions between the Spanish and Calusa, and both the Spanish and Calusa eventually abandoned the island in 1569.

The subsequent centuries were devastating to the Calusa, with European diseases and military conflict leading to the deaths of many of the tribe. In addition, the presence of European military and luxury goods, as well as other trade items, destabilized the structure of South Florida's society and hierarchy. Since the Spanish were offering many goods the Calusa could not compete with, Calusa authority was increasingly questioned, and formerly subservient tribes began to question Calusa supremacy.²¹ A culture with a population of thousands throughout South Florida, and with a capital city that is believed to have had a population of over 1,000, completely vanished within two centuries; only its mounds remained. The society of the Calusa disintegrated, and the Calusa people merged with other groups or emigrated to other parts of the Spanish empire, including Cuba.²²

Estero Island/Fort Myers Beach Historic Context

Human habitation on Estero Island was limited and inconsistent following the decline of the Calusa. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, during periods of Spanish and British control of Florida, Cuban fishers set up fishing camps on the island, most notably at its southern end. These settlements were known as *ranchos*, and trading links were established between them and Havana, with the ranchos providing fish and Cuba providing general and construction supplies. Over the years, Spanish presence in Florida declined. The symbiotic relationship between ranchos along the Gulf Coast and Cuba faded as well, and the ranchos were abandoned.²³ This process was put into explicit action by the United States

¹⁸ Schober and Torrence, 2002, op. cit., pp. 24-25.

¹⁹ Widmer, 1988, op. cit., p. 1.

²⁰ Worth, op. cit. pp. 43-86.

²¹ William H. Marquardt, 1988, Politics and Production among the Calusa of South Florida. In *Hunters and Gatherers. Volume 1: History, Evolution, and Social Change in Hunting and Gathering Societies*, edited by Tim Ingold, David Riches, and James Woodburn. University College, London: Berg Publishers, pp. 187-188.

²² Marquardt, *ibid.*, p. 185.

²³ Mary Kaye Stevens, *Fort Myers Beach*, (2011, Images of America, Arcadia Publishing, Charleston), p. 17.

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after they conquered the territory during the Second Seminole War in 1844. Ranchos were cleared off of the land, creating space for American settlers to build homesteads.²⁴

The Homestead Act, passed in 1862, facilitated much of Florida's growth in the southern frontier of the state. After Estero Island was surveyed in 1876, the land became available for homesteading. People were able to claim tracts of land for free, with the promise that if the land was developed and occupied over a period of five years, the settlers would be able to claim the land as their own without having to purchase it. While seven groups of settlers came to Fort Myers Beach (then known as Crescent Beach) between 1898 and 1918 attempting to establish a home and a community, very few "proved" their claim by occupying it for the full five years. The homesteaders mainly attempted to make a living through agriculture, producing goods such as pineapples. The Estero Island pioneers were separated from mainland society, with no bridges connecting the island to the Florida peninsula. Boats ran between Estero Island and Fort Myers, but the trips took hours to complete. The homesteaders traveled the island by horse and tended to live in palm-thatched homes. Over the decades, even as the original homesteaders began to depart, the island became more culturally and physically connected with the mainland, with the island's first hotel, the Beach Hotel, opening in 1913, and the first bridge being built in 1921.²⁵

Among the earliest occupants of Estero Island were members of the Koreshan Unity, a communal order looking to build a utopia on the edges of society. The group was founded by New York native Dr. Cyrus Teed, who had been a Union physician during the Civil War. In 1888, while living in Chicago, Teed founded the Koreshan Unity as an order with an emphasis on communal living, equality of the sexes, and celibacy. Koreshan Unity members homesteaded the southern section of Estero Island, claiming it for the group. In 1893, they also acquired land on the mainland as well as the majority of Mound Key, the former Calusa capital. The Unity ended up with 7,000 acres of property in the area, with which they sought to establish a "New Jerusalem." The Koreshan Unity had two levels of membership. The Religious Order fully followed Teed's strictures, including celibacy and eschewing private property ownership, while the Cooperative Order lived a more traditional family life, but worked to support the Koreshan Unity. The majority of Unity members in the Cooperative Order lived on Estero Island, separated from mainstream and mainland society, looking to create a new model for society that would inspire the world.²⁶ By the second half of the twentieth century, the order was defunct. After Teed's death in 1908, the rate of recruitment declined. In addition, the Koreshan Unity's encouragement of celibacy made creating new generations of followers more difficult.

As the twentieth century progressed and Estero Island was further connected to the mainland, the infrastructure of the island was gradually improved, with new roads being paved, and more subdivisions, businesses, and churches being constructed. The island began to market itself as a vacation destination,

²⁴ Mound House, *Cuban Fishing Ranchos* Panel for *Settlers on the Shells* Exhibit, Fort Myers Beach, Florida.

²⁵ Mary Kaye Stevens, *Fort Myers Beach* (2011, Images of America, Arcadia Publishing, Charleston), pp. 17-24.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

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with many motels and hotels being constructed to support the growth of the tourism trade. The island became known as a place for fishing, much as it had been during the occupancy of the Calusa. Fort Myers Beach was not officially incorporated until 1995, but by the 1940s, the period of Estero Island's settlement and exploration had officially ended.²⁷

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Criterion A – Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning/Development



Figure 2: *The earliest known photograph of the completed first phase of the Mound House, a one-room Tudor kitchen. The height of the mound is clearly visible in this photograph.* Source: Mound House Restoration Plan

of the people who built up the community. In the late nineteenth century, when American expansion reached Estero Island, the Calusa shell mound ridge on which the Mound House currently stands was the highest point of the island.²⁸ As such, it had an appeal for settlers for its distinguished nature, connection to the Calusa past, and placement near the island's eastern coast. The site's history traced the island's evolution from a sparsely populated domain on the fringes of society into an island with settlement patterns more in line with mainland Florida and urban America.

The Mound House is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning/Development. It is the oldest standing structure on Estero Island, tied to the early settlers and homesteaders who moved to the long-abandoned island. From 1906 to 1937, the development of the Mound House demonstrates the changing patterns of Estero Island's society, and traces its growth, demonstrating the evolving needs



Figure 3: *Photograph of the 1909 addition to the Mound House, a two-story Bungalow. This photograph demonstrates the isolation of the house in that time period.* Source: Mound House Restoration Plan

Like much of Southwest Florida, the Mound House had its origins in the Homestead Act, which facilitated land acquisition for those willing to work the land. In the mid-1870s, the Underhill family

²⁷ Rolfe F. Schell, *History of Fort Myers Beach Florida* (1980, Island Press), pp. 57-63.

²⁸ John Parks, AIA, et al., *Restoration Plan: The Mound House 8LL1101*, March 2005, Section 1, p. 1.

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established an unofficial homestead on Estero Island at the shell mound site, but departed by 1891, when they moved to Sanibel Island, just 3 miles to the west.²⁹ The first official homestead on the island belonged to Robert B. Gilbert, who was granted the land in 1898. The homestead initially measured almost 172 acres, larger than the standard 160 acres, stretching both north and south of the Calusa mound. Throughout the ample acreage, Gilbert constructed buildings to support his farming. He was forced to clear the land, which was not suitable for human habitation or particularly arable. The homestead proof shows that Gilbert had built two small framed houses and a barn. None of these buildings have survived to the present. In 1909, the Gilbert family sold the land, which they had successfully homesteaded, to the Koreshan Unity, who were attempting to obtain as much land as possible on Estero Bay in order to establish a successful community. Later in that same year, the Koreshans sold the mound property to homesteader William Harrison Case.³⁰

The Case family, like many people who moved to Florida in the early twentieth century, had their origins in the northeastern United States. In 1905 they moved to Fort Myers to escape the oppressive winters in Vermont. In 1909, when the Case family purchased the 170 acres of the Calusa shell mound site from the Koreshan Unity for \$3500, they were working in the fishing trade on Estero Bay.³¹ Their official purchase of the property came after they had already been living there, however. Starting in 1906, the Cases had resided in a houseboat on Estero Bay, from which they practiced their fishing craft.



Figure 4: Photograph of William and Milia Case by their brick fireplace prior to 1921. The patriarch and matriarch of early Estero Island, the Cases made their home in the building they named "The Bungalow by the Bay," leaving a lasting mark on the community. Source: Mound House Restoration Plan

The boat often anchored off of the coast by the mound, and in 1906 they built a pre-fabricated one-room Tudor kitchen and dining room building for eating and hosting guests. Even though the Cases did not explicitly own the property, they had essentially claimed it as their own. At this time, the property, nominally owned by the Gilberts, seems to have been fully enveloped within the Koreshan Unity commune. Photographic evidence demonstrates that, at the time, other buildings were located nearby, including a barn.³² On the mound site, which was among the first places settled on the island after the Calusa left, it took a long time for a permanent residence to be built, and the Cases did not do so upon settling the site.

By 1909, the year that the Case family purchased the mound property, they were ready to live on Estero Island proper, instead of staying on their houseboat offshore and using the mound site for hosting guests. In that year, the Cases constructed a two-story

²⁹ Ibid., Section 1, p. 2.

³⁰ Ibid., Section 1, pp. 3-4.

³¹ Ibid., Section 1, p. 4.

³² Ibid., Section 3, p. 1.

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Bungalow-style addition to the east side of the Tudor kitchen building. The addition of this new feature significantly increased the livability of the site, with the house gaining a living room entrance on the first floor, and a large bedroom on the second floor. The original Tudor section of the house retained its status as a kitchen and dining room. The house did not have a bathroom during its Bungalow era.³³ In this period, the Cases transitioned away from depending upon fishing yield and used their large landholdings for farming, with crops including citrus, coconuts, tomatoes, watermelons, and figs. The Case family's honey was well-regarded in Lee County.³⁴

By 1911, William Harrison Case and his son Henry Carleton Case began to subdivide their 172-acre property. The Calusa mound property was deemed Lot 46, measuring approximately 14 acres. The Cases built rental cottages throughout the subdivision for



Figure 6: 1950 photograph of the Mound House during its time as the Shell Mound Experiment Station, published in the *Ford Times*. For the first time, trees were planted in close proximity to the house, giving it a homier impression. Source: Mound House Restoration Plan

Over time, roads and bridges were built, allowing automobile travelers to reach the island for business and pleasure. One of the individuals behind Estero Island's infrastructure boom was Captain Jack DeLysle, a British veteran of the First World War. After the war, he moved to the United States and ended up in Fort Myers in 1920. He saw Estero Island as a potential tourist destination, and aimed to



Figure 5: 1920s photograph of the Mound House, after Captain Jack DeLysle altered the building with an Arts and Crafts expansion. The Model T in front of the house illustrates the greater connection between Estero Island and the mainland. Source: Mound House Restoration Plan

tourists and visitors. Estero Island was not yet connected to the mainland, but the Case family attempted to turn it into a tourist destination and to begin to develop a residential community. Positioned at Estero Island's highest point, the Mound House became somewhat of a community center. In the years from 1914 to 1918, when William Case served as the island's postmaster, the Mound House was its post office. In these years, the Mound House was known as "The Bungalow by the Banyan."³⁵ The Case family planted the seeds for the neighborhood that now surrounds the Mound House site.

The Case family's creation of Estero Island's first subdivision dovetailed with the island's more intimate connections with the mainland and the rest of the world.

³³ Ibid., Section 1, p. 5.

³⁴ Mound House, *Early Settlers* Panel for *Settlers on the Shells* Exhibit, Fort Myers Beach, Florida.

³⁵ Mound House, *Changes to the Mound* Panel for *Settlers on the Shells* Exhibit, Fort Myers Beach, Florida.

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build upon the work that the Case family had already done to make it so. Using the capital of wealthy backers from the mainland and Estero Island, DeLysle founded the Crescent Beach Road & Bridge Company, which opened a toll bridge to Estero Island. Looking to make a fortune in the early years of the 1920s Florida Land Boom, DeLysle purchased a substantial portion of the Case subdivision for development, including the Mound House. He named the development Seminole Sands, and began to establish tourist draws along the eastern shore of the island.³⁶ Embracing wholeheartedly the Land Boom spirit, DeLysle built upon the foundation created by the Case family, and worked to create a more marketable Estero Island, which in 1925 was first referred to as Fort Myers Beach.³⁷

DeLysle had purchased the Mound House from the Cases, who had built it, and sought to transform and evolve it into a modern luxurious home in the midst of his development. According to a 1921 article in the Fort Myers Press, the house was to be “one of the prettiest homes in the country when completed, costing \$20,000.00. One room, the bath room, will cost a thousand dollars, the tiling in this room costing \$600.00 while the bath tub cost \$300.00.”³⁸ The Arts and Crafts expansion to the Mound House that DeLysle initiated expanded the house to the north, adding two rooms to both the first and second floors, as well as a second floor porch overlooking the mound. The large bedroom on the second floor was split into two. The Mound House also got its first bathroom with this alteration, located on the second floor.³⁹ Although DeLysle had purchased the Mound House property with the grandest of dreams, by the mid-1920s, as the Florida Land Boom began to bust, he had defaulted on his payments, and the house returned to the ownership of the Case family.⁴⁰ DeLysle had dramatically expanded the Mound House and transformed its surroundings, applying a Florida Land Boom panache to an island that had been almost uninhabited 20 years earlier.

After Jack DeLysle abandoned the Mound House, it was left uninhabited until 1937, when the property was sold to Henry Carleton Case by his father, who had originally built and developed the house on the site. In the intervening years, even though no one lived in the house, the Case family still worked to improve it, replacing the floors of the house with southern yellow pine boards due to a termite infestation.⁴¹ In a 1999 interview, the son of Henry Carleton Case said that the Great Miami Hurricane of 1926 salted the arable land on the island, damaging the ability to grow produce like Estero Island residents had in the settlement period. By 1937, the Mound House had been wired for electricity, but it had fallen into disrepair and overgrowth. Unoccupied, the Mound House was no longer the community center it once had been.⁴²

³⁶ John Parks, AIA, et al., *Restoration Plan: The Mound House 8LL1101*, March 2005, Section 1, p. 7.

³⁷ Ibid., Section 1, p. 10.

³⁸ Ibid., Section 1, p. 9.

³⁹ Ibid., Section 3, p. 1.

⁴⁰ Ibid., Section 1, p. 9.

⁴¹ Ibid., Section 2, p. B4.

⁴² Ibid., Section 1, p. 11.

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In the following decades, the Mound House returned to use, after first being sold to Henry Carleton Case, who then in 1947 sold the property to Dr. Robert James, who established a scientific research facility on the site. The aim of the James Foundation at the Shell Mound Experiment Station was to determine industrial uses for Southwest Florida's natural yield, including clam shells and orange pulp.⁴³ After the death of James in 1951, the property was sold to William H. Long, who converted the Mound House back into a residence, and further expanded it. He also divided the 26 acres of property, diminishing it to 2.77 acres, and creating the Shell Mound Park subdivision.⁴⁴

The Mound House, the oldest standing building on Estero Island, provides a tangible connection to the era of homesteading, settlement, and community development that characterized Fort Myers Beach in the early twentieth century through the 1920s land boom. Because the Calusa shell mound was the highest point on the island, it was a tantalizing place to build and develop. It has a strong connection with the history of the Koreshan Unity, which left a mark on the region at the turn of the century and after. The Mound House was also the base of operations for the Case family and Jack DeLysle, who each approached Estero Island with an entrepreneurial vision, attempting to connect the island with the mainland, culturally and economically. Multiple generations of owners also subdivided the originally massive property to create the surrounding neighborhoods. The Mound House was the seed from which Fort Myers Beach flowered.

Criterion C - Architecture

The Mound House is significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of Architecture for its fusion of the Craftsman and Arts and Crafts styles, and as a representation of the type of development that was prolific in Southwest Florida in the early twentieth century. The building started as a single-room Tudor kitchen and dining room, built in 1906 (since demolished and rebuilt), and by 1921 had had two sets of additions and alterations constructed. The first expansion was a two-story Bungalow-style addition, which served as a house complete with a living room, second-story bedroom, and a front porch marked by four brick columns. The 1921 Arts and Crafts-style addition widened the house, adding a family room, a bedroom, and the house's first bathroom. The original bedroom on the second floor was split into two and the front porch was widened with the building, being extended to wrap around the north side of the house. A second-floor porch was also added, wrapping around the house in the same way as the first floor one. In the years after 1921, there were multiple additions, such as a first floor bathroom, a swimming pool, and a Florida room (heavily windowed room designed to receive sunlight) to the southwest of the house, a small one-story addition with an additional bathroom, a living room, and bedroom to the northwest, as well as a carport to the northeast. The original Tudor kitchen/dining room was demolished to make way for the Florida room. Today, the floorplan and design of the house has been restored to its 1921 appearance, with the later non-historic additions being removed.

⁴³ Ibid., Section 1, pp. 13-15.

⁴⁴ Ibid., Section 1, p. 16.

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The Craftsman and Arts and Crafts styles are similar and complementary. To a certain extent, the building's first floor evinces its Craftsman roots and its second floor demonstrates its Arts and Crafts evolution. The first floor's covered porch with brick columns provides the welcoming and shaded entrance that is crucial to the Craftsman style. The central brick fireplace, which is a central feature in many historic photographs of the Mound House, is also an iconic element of the architectural style.⁴⁵ The 1921 alteration maintained the first floor's Craftsman identity, while drastically changing the second floor. The Craftsman section of the building was originally symmetrical, but the widening elements of the addition broke this symmetry, with asymmetry being a defining feature of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic. The second-floor gabled dormers, which were an addition to the remodeled second story, also fit the style. The Arts and Crafts architectural philosophy emphasizes honesty of design, with very few extraneous decorative elements and pretensions. This philosophy was followed through both eras of the house's surviving architectural construction. The exposed brick on the building's interior and exterior is emblematic of this.⁴⁶ The house, while being developed into phases of contrasting, yet similar styles, shows a class evolution. While the Case family built the house as a settler family in the Craftsman style, DeLysle aimed for a high-style expansion to demonstrate wealth and class. While the Mound House's current appearance was constructed in two stages with different architectural styles, it maintains a consistent and unified appearance.

Criterion D – Archaeology

The Mound House is significant at the state and national levels under Criterion D in the area of Archaeology. It is significant at the state level for being the last remaining Calusa shell midden mound on Estero Island and the last remaining segment of what was originally a more extensive ridge heading north from the current Mound House site. Through the detailed field investigations of Schober and Torrence, the site has already given archaeologists insights into the lifestyles of the Calusa who lived on Estero Island, and these understandings are interpreted in exhibit panels for the Mound House's visiting public.

The site is also significant at the state and national levels because of its potential to contribute data to current archaeological studies focusing on (1) the emergence of complexity and collective action, (2) climate change and sea-level fluctuations, and (3) purposeful mound-building and feasting.⁴⁷ Since

⁴⁵ "Craftsman Style – 1900 to 1930," Antiequhomestyle.com, <http://www.antiequhomestyle.com/styles/craftsman.htm>, Accessed December 26, 2017.

⁴⁶ "Arts & Crafts Style – 1880 to 1920," Antiequhomestyle.com, <http://www.antiequhomestyle.com/styles/arts-crafts.htm>, Accessed December 26, 2017.

⁴⁷ Thompson, Marquardt et al., 2016, op. cit.; William H. Marquardt, 2014, "Tracking the Calusa: A Retrospective," *Southeastern Archaeology* 33:1-24; Michael Savarese, Karen J. Walker, Shanna Stingu, Victor D. Thompson, 2016, "The Effects of Shellfish Harvesting by Aboriginal Inhabitants of Southwest Florida (USA) on Productivity of the Eastern Oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*): Implications for Estuarine Management and Restoration," *Anthropocene* 16:28-41, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ancene.2016.10.002>; Victor D. Thompson, William H. Marquardt, Karen J. Walker, Amanda D.

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2013, an interdisciplinary team of scholars from the University of Florida, Florida Gulf Coast University, Flagler College, and the University of Georgia has focused attention on Mound Key, historic capital of the Calusa, and modeled its relation to other prominent Calusa sites, such as Pineland. Taking a historical ecology approach and combining archaeology, geology, paleoethnobotany, and zooarchaeology, the team has (1) elucidated the site-formation processes at Mound Key, (2) established that Mound 1 at Mound Key was the location of the historically documented house of the Calusa king, (3) demonstrated that Fort San Antón de Carlos, established by the Spanish in 1567, was on Mound 2 at Mound Key,⁴⁸ and (4) investigated the “watercourt” structures at Mound Key, now thought to have served as fish traps and/or fish storage areas.⁴⁹

Previously, the Mound House site was interpreted to have been occupied from ca. 100 B.C. to A.D. 1000, with no substantial occupation afterwards. This interpretation was based on Schober and Torrence’s work.⁵⁰ Although their topographic mapping, ground-penetrating radar and auger surveys, and controlled excavations were thorough and well documented, unfortunately most of their radiocarbon dates were based on the shells of fighting conch (*Strombus alatus*), which are known to return spurious dates.⁵¹ Krus and Thompson discarded the suspect dates and employed Bayesian statistical analysis on the remaining Mound House radiocarbon dates, concluding that Mound House and Mound Key were probably occupied contemporaneously, that is, ca. A.D. 400-1500.⁵² This new perspective on the Mound House chronology helps to explain anomalous findings reported by Schober, including St. Johns Check Stamped pottery, Spanish beads, and Spanish pottery discovered in their investigations.

The revised Mound House chronology makes the Mound House a site of great interest to the broader research goals mentioned above. From this new vantage point, Mound House is no longer a simple fishing village that was abandoned long before the emergence of the complex Calusa kingdom whose seat of power was on nearby Mound Key. Instead, Mound House is now seen as an integral and

Roberts Thompson, and Lee A. Newsom, 2018, “Collective Action, State Building, and the Rise of the Calusa, Southwest Florida, USA,” *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 51:28-44.

⁴⁸ Victor D. Thompson, Amanda R. Roberts Thompson, William H. Marquardt, Karen J. Walker, and Lee A. Newsom, 2018, “Discovering San Antón de Carlos: the Sixteenth-Century Spanish Buildings and Fortifications of Mound Key, Capital of the Calusa,” *Historical Archaeology*, in press.

⁴⁹ William H. Marquardt, Victor D. Thompson, Karen J. Walker, Michael Savarese, and Lee A. Newsom, 2018, “Geography, Ecology, Climate, and Surplus Production in the Rise of a Coastal Kingdom,” in preparation for *Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology*; Victor D. Thompson, William H. Marquardt, Karen J. Walker, Isabelle H. Lulewicz, Michael Savarese, Lee A. Newsom, Amanda R. Thompson, and Nathan Lawres, 2018, “The Chronology and Construction of Watercourts on Mound Key, Capital of the Calusa Kingdom,” paper presented at the Southeastern Archaeological Conference, Augusta, Georgia, November 15-17, 2018.

⁵⁰ Schober and Torrence 2002, op. cit.; Schober 2014, op. cit.

⁵¹ Carla S. Hadden and Alexander Cherkinsky, 2016, “Spatiotemporal Variability in ΔR in the Northern Gulf of Mexico, USA,” *Radiocarbon* 2016, doi:10.1017/RDC.2016.65, pp. 1-11.

⁵² Krus and Thompson, 2017, op. cit.

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connected part of the broader Calusa domain during its emergence as a complex chiefdom ca. A.D. 900-1500.

Collective Action and the Rise of the Calusa Kingdom. A recently published paper makes a case for a transformation from heterarchical to hierarchical complexity in the area of Calusa influence. Based on work at Mound Key, capital of the Calusa Kingdom, the large structure on top of Mound 1 is thought to have been associated with a powerful long-lived lineage. The rise to power for this group coincided with a significant amelioration of the shallow-water estuarine environment of Estero Bay during the Medieval Warm Period, ca. A.D. 850-1200. The authors propose that prior to the sixteenth century the Calusa, and the broader landscape these groups inhabited, were organized much like the great houses were at the community level. A series of small polities participated in a fluctuating heterarchical system that were likely the result of political jockeying of high ranking houses at larger settlements. In other words, long-lived houses with their accrued political and social capital were in the best position to take advantage of events that afforded the differential exercise of agency among their peers, allowing for new, novel, and seemingly more complex engagements. The authors of this study use the Mound Key case study to examine the role of collective action for the development of the Calusa Kingdom observed by the Spanish explorers during the sixteenth century, and its broader comparative lessons for state building among similarly organized societies.⁵³ In light of this new theoretical focus and the revised chronological model of the Mound House site,⁵⁴ the Mound House site becomes a key player in evaluating whether the model of state-building can be more broadly supported.

Climate change and sea-level fluctuations. Mound House, Mound Key, Pineland and other shoreline and near-shore villages of the Calusa also attain national significance because of the role they play in the study of climate change and sea-level fluctuations. Numerous studies in southwest Florida have shown that these sites can provide multiple lines of evidence on both climatic fluctuations and short-term catastrophic weather events.⁵⁵ In similar fashion, focused excavations at Mound House can shed light on climate fluctuations and short-term weather events on Estero Island and compare these to established findings from the broader region. Not only is this of academic interest, but it can help guide planning for future climate changes and sea-level fluctuations.

⁵³ Thompson, et al., 2018, op. cit.

⁵⁴ Krus and Thompson, 2017, op. cit.

⁵⁵ William H. Marquardt and Karen J. Walker, 2012, "Southwest Florida during the Mississippi Period. In *Late Prehistoric Florida: Archaeology at the Edge of the Mississippian World*, edited by K. Ashley and N. M. White, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, pp. 29-61; Karen J. Walker, 2013, "The Pineland Site Complex: Environmental Contexts," in *The Archaeology of Pineland: A Coastal Southwest Florida Site Complex, A.D. 50 – 1710*, edited by W. H. Marquardt and K. J. Walker, Institute of Archaeology and Paleoenvironmental Studies, Monograph 4. Gainesville: University of Florida, pp. 23-52.; William H. Marquardt and Karen J. Walker, 2013, "The Pineland Site Complex: An Environmental and Cultural History, in *The Archaeology of Pineland: A Coastal Southwest Florida Site Complex, A.D. 50 – 1710*, edited by W. H. Marquardt and K. J. Walker, Institute of Archaeology and Paleoenvironmental Studies, Monograph 4. Gainesville: University of Florida, pp. 793-907.

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Mound-building and feasting interpretations. The Mound House site currently hosts archaeological interpretation, with its *Stories Beneath our Feet* exhibit featuring a cutaway of the shell mound highlighted with LED rope lights to demonstrate the complex stratification of the Mound House midden mound. This cutaway exhibit allows the public to see and comprehend how such sites are built up, and gain an appreciation for the longevity of humans in the area in which they live or visit. Visitors walk through an underground entrance to view a protected sample of the mound, complete with a 44-foot mural presenting an interpretation of Calusa life and culture.⁵⁶ A prominent thrust of current interpretation of the Mound House site stratification is that significant portions of the mound were purposefully built, and that deposits of shells dominated by a single species are evidence of feasting.⁵⁷ Both interpretations may be true. Indeed, purposeful mound-building using previously deposited midden material has been empirically documented at nearby Mound Key (8LL2),⁵⁸ and similar processes may have been at work at the Mound House site. However, some scholars have argued that many interpretations of shell mound sites as purposefully built or as feasting locales are poorly substantiated empirically,⁵⁹ thus the Mound House interpretations should be re-examined in light of new chronological insights that suggest that the Mound House and Mound Key sites were contemporaneous.⁶⁰

In sum, the Mound House site's remaining archaeological deposits are largely intact. Excellent preservation of organic materials such as animal bones and charred plant material has been demonstrated. Carefully controlled, problem-oriented excavations at the Mound House site in the future can shed light on issues of current concern to archaeologists, including the rise of Calusa social and political complexity, climate fluctuations and short-term weather events, and shell-mound formation processes. These issues are of national and state significance, and the site attains local significance as the only remaining shell mound site on Estero Island (Fort Myers Beach). Mound House is already attracting many hundreds of visitors each year, and as new information comes to light, it can readily be shared with the public. Although the Mound House site has already yielded some detailed information, a great deal more can be learned by applying specific techniques and perspectives being developed by contemporary archaeologists studying the broader Calusa region. Fortunately, a substantial amount of the once-much-larger site complex still remains and is under protection.

⁵⁶ Chelle Koster Walton, "Florida Discoveries: New Mound House Museum Explores Fort Myers Beach History," *Miami Herald*, <http://www.miamiherald.com/living/travel/florida-travel/article59384672.html>, February 10, 2016, Accessed January 30, 2018.

⁵⁷ Mound House, 2007, "Stories Beneath Our Feet," The Mound House Shell Mound Exhibit (DVD video program, White Hawk Communications).

⁵⁸ Thompson, Marquardt et al., 2016, op. cit.

⁵⁹ William H. Marquardt, 2010, "Shell Mounds in the Southeast: Middens, Monuments, Temple Mounds, Rings, or Works?" *American Antiquity* 75(3), pp. 551-570.

⁶⁰ Krus and Thompson, 2017, op. cit.

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Period of Significance Justification

The period of significance for Criterion C corresponds to the historic construction of the Mound House starting in 1909 until 1921, when it achieved its current form. The house underwent additional changes through the 1950s, but these have been removed as part of the restoration of the house to its 1920s appearance under leadership of the Mound House Museum. The period of significance for Criterion A spans from 1909 until 1952, which corresponds to the settlement of Estero Island and development of the surrounding community under the Case family, Jack DeLysle, and William H. Long. The year 1951 was chosen as the end of the period as it corresponds to William Long's final subdivision of the original Mound House property to form a residential subdivision, a pattern than started under Case and DeLysle ownership. The period of significance under Criterion D spans from A.D. 400 to 1500, corresponding to the period of most significant occupation of the site by the Calusa Indians.

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Mound House

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Mound House

Name of Property

Lee County, Florida

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Name of Property

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

CASES SUBD PB 1 PG 58 LOT PT 46.

Comprising the entire lot bounded by Connecticut Street to the south.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The above property description contains all of the surviving historic resources associated with the Mound House, which includes the house as well as the shell mound, which was once the southern end of a much larger shell ridge that extended to the northwest. Residential development in the 1940s and 1950s destroyed much of the shell ridge to the northwest, rendering that portion ineligible for the National Register and therefore meriting exclusion from the boundary.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places**
Continuation Sheet

Mound House

Name of Property

Lee County, Florida

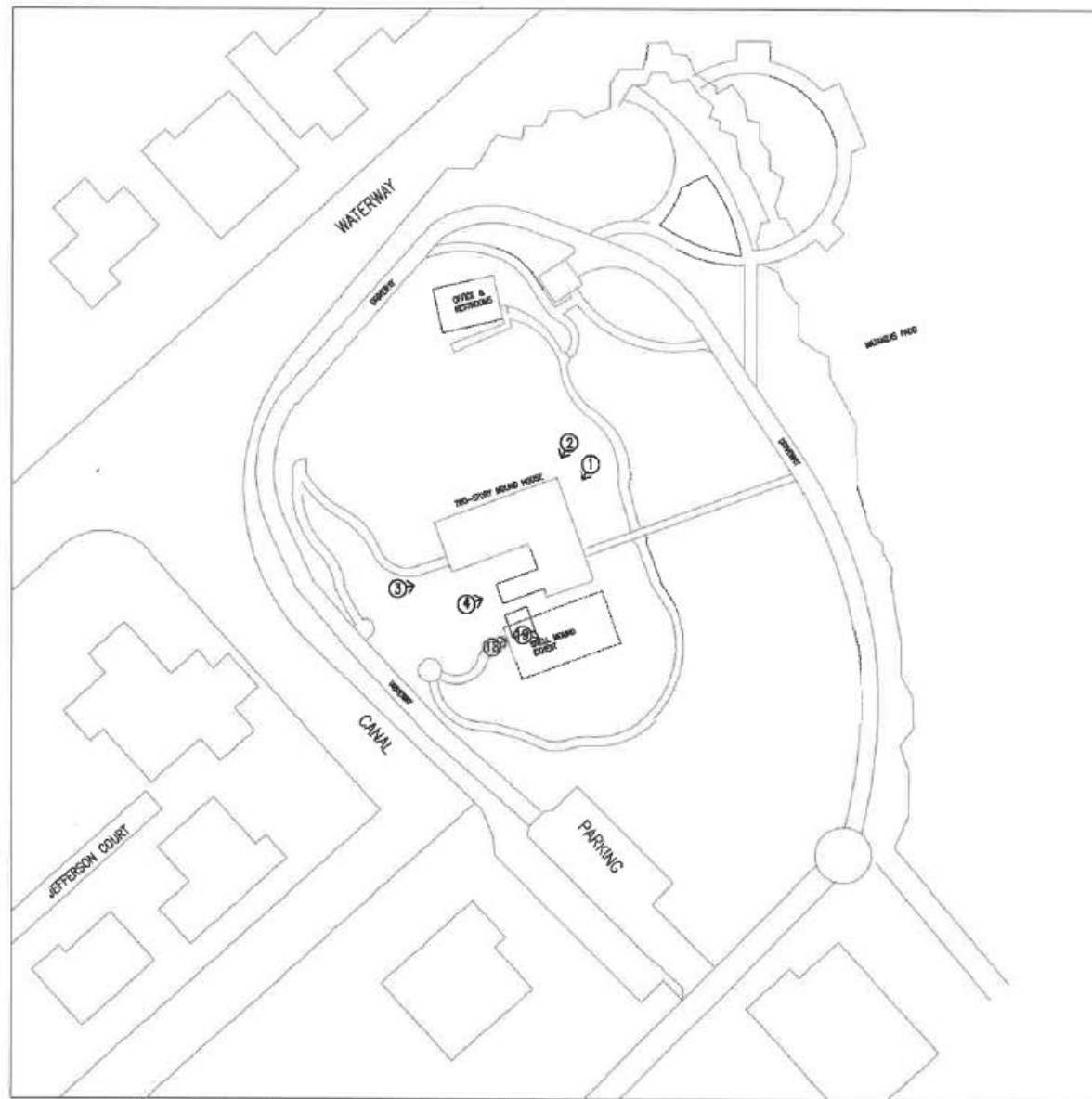
County and State

Section number Photos Page 27

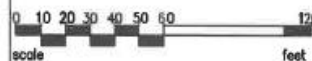
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Property Name: Mound HouseCity or Vicinity: Fort Myers BeachCounty: LeeState: FLPhotographer: Alison GiesenDate Photographed: January 2018**LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS AND SUBJECTS**

- 1:** Eastern Façade, Facing Southwest
- 2:** Northern Façade, Facing Southwest
- 3:** Western Façade, Northern Section, Facing East
- 4:** Northern Façade, Southern Section, Facing East
- 5:** Southern Façade, Facing North
- 6:** Tudor Reconstruction Gift Shop, Facing West
- 7:** Tudor Reconstruction Doorway, Facing East
- 8:** Historic Family Room, Facing Northwest
- 9:** Family Room Fireplace Detailing, Facing North
- 10:** First Floor Staircase, Facing West
- 11:** First Floor Lecture Room, Facing West
- 12:** Second Floor Exhibit Room, Facing East
- 13:** Historic Living Room, Facing Southeast
- 14:** Doorway to Enclosed Porch, Facing North
- 15:** Historic Living Room, Facing Southwest
- 16:** Closets and Historic Bathroom, Facing South
- 17:** Historic Bathroom, Facing South
- 18:** Entrance to Mound Interpretive Exhibit, Facing East
- 19:** Mound Interpretive Exhibit, Facing East



MOUND HOUSE
 451 CONNECTICUT STREET
 FORT MYERS BEACH (LEE COUNTY), FLORIDA



DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION BY
 John H. Hines
 Hines Construction, Inc.
 Fort Myers Beach, Florida

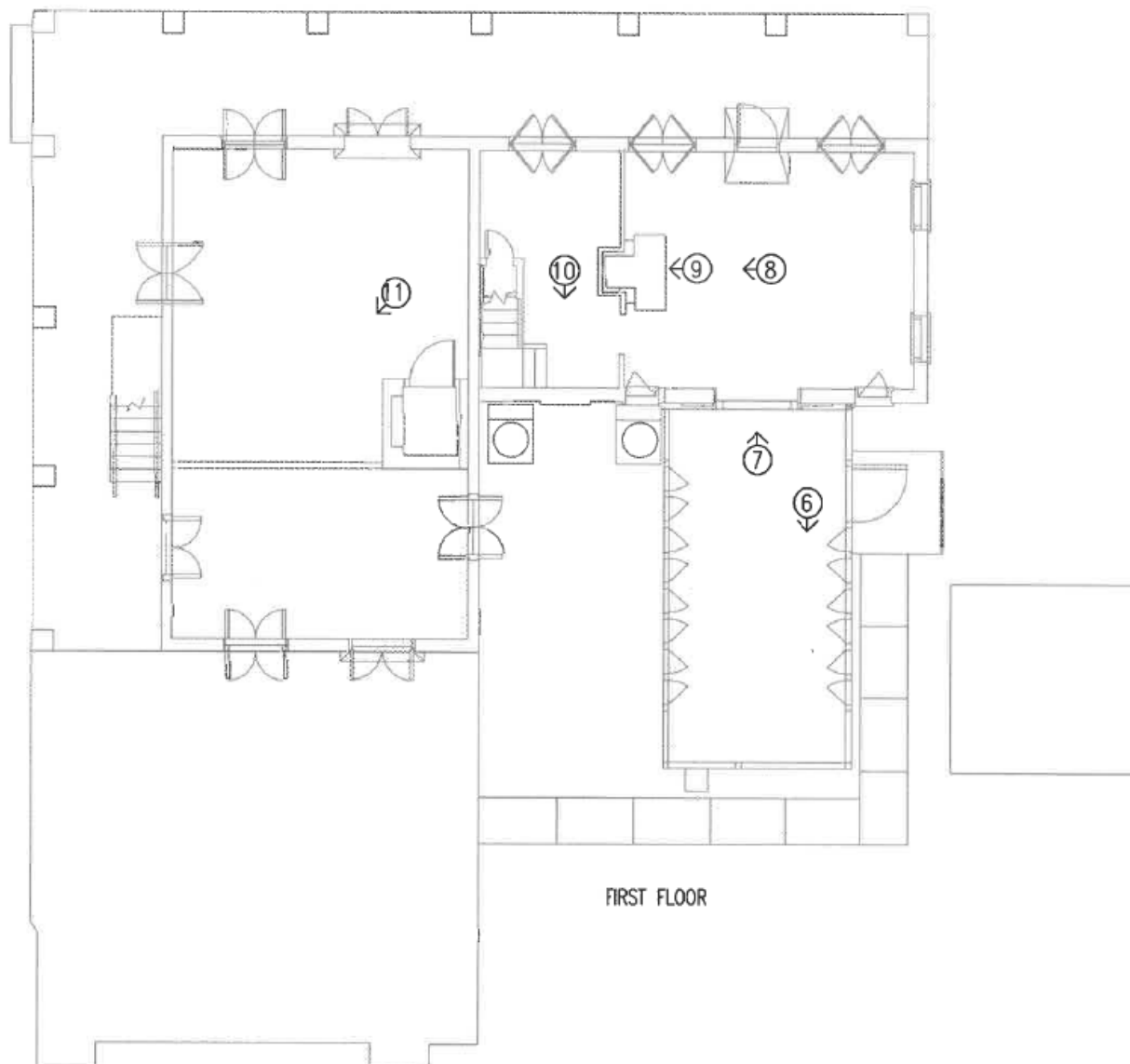
Related Rights Request Requested By
 The Hines Construction
 Bureau of Florida
 300 South Broadway Street
 Tallahassee, Florida 32301-0001
 Phone: 1-800-857-7276
 Fax: 904-340-6430

DRAWN BY: H. CARL SHIVER
DRAWING DATE: FEBRUARY 2018

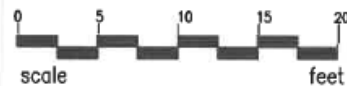
THE MOUND HOUSE SITE PLAN WAS DRAWN BY H. CARL SHIVER
 DESIGN, PHOTOGRAPHY AND LAND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
 OF ALLEN DESIGN, MOUND HOUSE, FORT MYERS BEACH
 WITH PHOTOGRAPHY AND LAND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES OF THE PHOTO
 MOUNTAIN AND BUILDING INC. THE SCALE OF THE SITE AND
 PLAN PLANS WERE DRAWN TO APPROPRIATE SCALE.

DRAWING NUMBER SHEET NO. 3 OF 3

MAP REVISIONS BY: CARL SHIVER
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 P.O. BOX 1000
 500 SOUTH BROADWAY STREET
 TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32301-0001
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 TOLL FREE NUMBER 1-800-727-7276
 FAX NUMBER (904) 340-6430



MOUND HOUSE
 451 CONNECTICUT STREET
 FORT MYERS BEACH (LEE COUNTY), FLORIDA



ORIGIN, THIS COPY OF PRINTED BY:
 Allen Shaw
 Historic Sketches, Miami Beach
 Fort Myers Beach, Florida

Revised: Original Prepared Request By:
 Mrs. J. M. Johnson
 Bureau of Historic Preservation
 200 South Congress Street
 Tallahassee, Florida 32301-0000
 Phone: 1-800-955-1279
 Fax: 904-930-6428

DRAWN BY: W. CARL SHIVER
 DRAWING DATE: FEBRUARY 2018

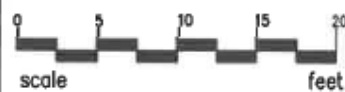
THE MOUND HOUSE SITE PLAN WAS DRAWN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FLORIDA HISTORICAL ARCHIVES PHOTOGRAPHY AND LINE DRAWING PREPARED BY ALLEN SHAW, MOUND HOUSE, FORT MYERS BEACH. SUCH RECORDING THE DRAWING AND ORIGIN OF THE FLOOR PLAN OF THE PROPERTY AND INCLUDING SKETCHES ON THE PROPERTY AND INCLUDING THE SCALE OF THE SITE AND FLOOR PLAN ARE SHOWN TO APPROXIMATE SCALE.

DRAWING NUMBER SHEET NO. 2 OF 2
 N/A
 MAP REVISION BY: CARL SHIVER
 FLORIDA BUREAU OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 P.O. BOX 1000
 200 SOUTH CONGRESS STREET
 TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32301-0000
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 FAX NUMBER (904) 245-0430



SECOND FLOOR

MOUND HOUSE
451 CONNECTICUT STREET
FORT MYERS BEACH (LEE COUNTY), FLORIDA



REVISIONS AND COPY OF RECORDS ON:
After Plans
When Plans, Ward Book
For Open Book, Plans

Initial Single Report Prepared by:
The State of Florida
Bureau of Historic Preservation
200 South Broadway Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32301-0000
Phone: 1-800-955-5276
Fax: 904-438-4528

OWNER: DR. G. CARL SHULTS
DESIGNER: DATE: FEBRUARY 2001
DATE: 2/2/01
NOTES: THIS FLOOR PLAN AND PLAN ARE ISSUED AS A PRELIMINARY PLAN. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CLIENT TO OBTAIN ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS FROM THE APPROPRIATE AGENCIES. THE CLIENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS FROM THE APPROPRIATE AGENCIES. THE CLIENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS FROM THE APPROPRIATE AGENCIES.

DRAWING NUMBER: SHEET NO. 2 OF 2
DATE: 2/2/01
PROJECT: MOUND HOUSE
200 SOUTH BROADWAY STREET
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32301-0000
PHONE: 904-438-4528
FAX: 904-438-4528
TOLL FREE NUMBER: 1-800-955-5276
FAX NUMBER: (904) 438-4528

Mound House


451 Connecticut Street
Fort Myers Beach, Lee County
Florida

Lat./Long. Coordinates:
26.446092 -81.927852

UTM:
17R 407494 2925421

Datum: WGS84

Legend

 Proposed NR Boundary

Date: 2/12/2018

N

1:1,500

0 62.5 125 250 Feet

0 15 30 60 Meters

Basemap Source: Source: Esri,
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,
and the GIS User Community



Mound House

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Fort Myers Beach, Lee County
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26.446092 -81.927852

UTM:
17R 407494 2925421

Datum: WGS84

Legend

 Proposed NR Boundary

Date: 2/12/2018

1:10,000

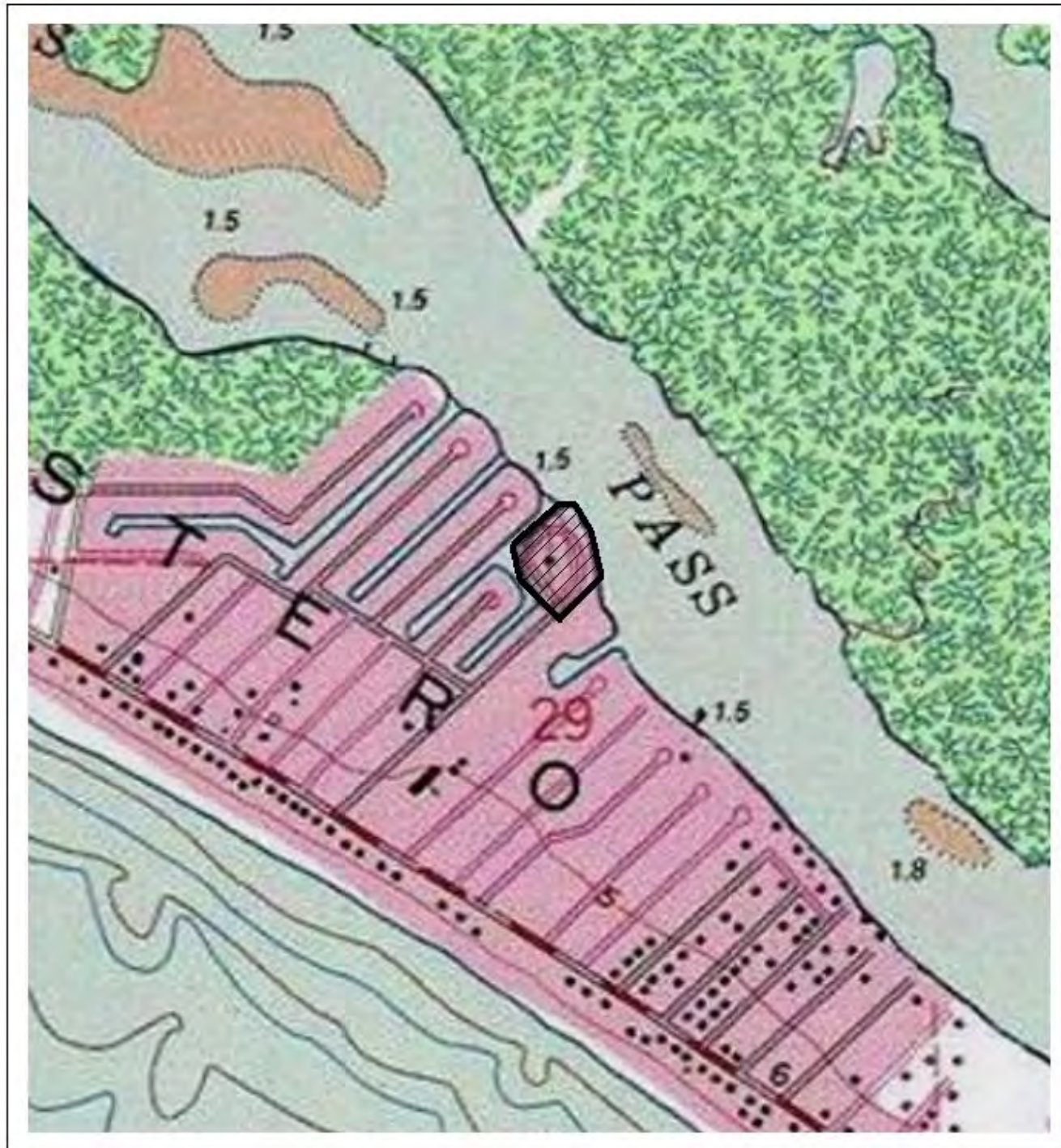
N



0 425 850 1,700 Feet

0 105 210 420 Meters

Basemap Source: 2013 National
Geographic Society, i-cubed













S

MUSEUM HOURS
9AM TO 4PM

ask about our group rates,
special tours and membership.

pieces of the Mound House. Thank you.



TICKETS
REQUIRED
BEYOND THIS
POINT











AUTOMATIC
CAUTION
DOOR
ACTIVATE SWITCH
TO OPEN

ON - AUTOMATIC DOOR

MOUND HOUSE: A CENTURY OF CHANGE

Explore the development and design of the Mound House structure over the last century.

1900s	1910s	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s	2020s
<p>1900s</p> <p>The Mound House was built in 1900 as a simple wooden structure. It was used for storage and as a meeting place for the community.</p>	<p>1910s</p> <p>In the 1910s, the Mound House was expanded to include a larger room for meetings and a kitchen.</p>	<p>1920s</p> <p>In the 1920s, the Mound House was expanded to include a larger room for meetings and a kitchen.</p>	<p>1930s</p> <p>In the 1930s, the Mound House was expanded to include a larger room for meetings and a kitchen.</p>	<p>1940s</p> <p>In the 1940s, the Mound House was expanded to include a larger room for meetings and a kitchen.</p>	<p>1950s</p> <p>In the 1950s, the Mound House was expanded to include a larger room for meetings and a kitchen.</p>	<p>1960s</p> <p>In the 1960s, the Mound House was expanded to include a larger room for meetings and a kitchen.</p>	<p>1970s</p> <p>In the 1970s, the Mound House was expanded to include a larger room for meetings and a kitchen.</p>	<p>1980s</p> <p>In the 1980s, the Mound House was expanded to include a larger room for meetings and a kitchen.</p>	<p>1990s</p> <p>In the 1990s, the Mound House was expanded to include a larger room for meetings and a kitchen.</p>	<p>2000s</p> <p>In the 2000s, the Mound House was expanded to include a larger room for meetings and a kitchen.</p>	<p>2010s</p> <p>In the 2010s, the Mound House was expanded to include a larger room for meetings and a kitchen.</p>	<p>2020s</p> <p>In the 2020s, the Mound House was expanded to include a larger room for meetings and a kitchen.</p>

ANCIENT PEOPLE

The shell mound on which this house stands was created over many generations by the once powerful Calusa Indians.

Discover how the Calusa and their ancestors adapted to changing environments and used natural resources, and how over time, the Calusa developed a rich culture that would dominate Southwest Florida.



PREHISTORIC FLORIDA



Prehistoric Florida

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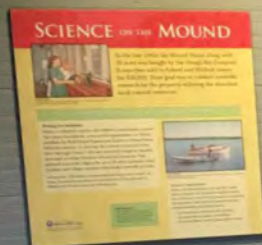
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EXIT





CUBAN JANCOS

EARLY SETTLERS

CHANGES TO THE MOUND

MOUND HOUSE
HISTORIC ARTIFACTS



DIGGING DEEPER

Exploration Gallery

IT'S FUN TO DIG HISTORY!
Explain the artifacts and artifacts that archaeologists and historians have uncovered about the Mound House's unique history.

DIGGING DEEP
Exploration Gallery



LEARNING CHALLENGE

Can you find out more about the different types of flags used by the Royal Navy? Can you find out more about the different types of flags used by the Royal Navy?

Flags used by the Royal Navy

Flags used by the Royal Navy

SIFTING SOILS & PUZZLING PIECES

How can you sift soil to find out more about the different types of soil? Can you find out more about the different types of soil?

Soil Sifting

Soil Sifting

HINDING FACTS & MULTIPLE MEASUREMENTS

How can you find out more about the different types of soil? Can you find out more about the different types of soil?

Soil Sifting

Soil Sifting



STORIES BENEATH OUR FEET



National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:	Resubmission	
Property Name:	Mound House	
Multiple Name:		
State & County:	FLORIDA, Lee	

Date Received: 2/5/2019 Date of Pending List: Date of 16th Day: Date of 45th Day: 3/22/2019 Date of Weekly List: 3/29/2019

Reference number:	RS100002723
Nominator:	SHPO

Reason For Review:

<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal	<input type="checkbox"/> PDIL	<input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> TCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLG	

☒ Accept ☐ Return ☐ Reject 3/22/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:	
-------------------------------	--

Recommendation/ Criteria	
-----------------------------	--

Reviewer	<u>Mike Roller</u>	Discipline	<u>Archeologist</u>
Telephone	<u></u>	Date	<u></u>

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



Town of Fort Myers Beach

Tracey Gore
Mayor

Joanne Shamp
Vice Mayor

Anita Cereceda
Council Member

Dennis Boback
Council Member

Bruce Butcher
Council Member

May 21, 2018

Florida National Register Review Board
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Florida National Register Review Board Members,

I am writing on behalf of the Town of Fort Myers Beach in support of the Mound House to be formally nominated to the Keeper of the National Register in Washington D.C. for consideration in the National Register for Historic Places.

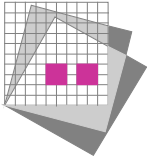
The Mound House is also a wonderful example of the ongoing preservation efforts of the Town of Fort Myers Beach to regain the historical integrity of the structure back to the way it looked in 1921. In addition, extensive archaeological research was conducted that contributed to the insight about the Calusa culture and was incorporated into the museum exhibits and programs to educate students, local residents and visitors about the unique history of the Mound House.

Achieving this status would allow the Town to further the goals of preservation and stewardship of historical resources as stated in the Town of Fort Myers Beach Comprehensive Plan. These goals and objectives enhance the town's historic and cultural heritage and ensure their sustainability for future generations.

Thank you for considering this property for the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Tracey Gore
Mayor
Town of Fort Myers Beach



RENKER EICH PARKS ARCHITECTS

May 16th, 2018

National Register Review Board
Bureau of Historic Preservation
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
c/o: Ruben A. Acosta
Survey & Registration Supervisor

Re: Mound House, 451 Connecticut Street, Fort Myers Beach, Lee County, 33931
Nomination for listing in the National Register of Historic Places

Dear Review Board,

We are pleased to write this letter in support of the nomination of the Mound House for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

My firm, including John Parks AIA, Kathryn Younkin and myself, spent over ten years at the Mound House, providing professional architectural historic preservation services. We began with the Restoration Plan, in which we documented the rich history of the site and outlined priority restoration recommendations. Several years of phased restoration work followed to accommodate grant funding cycles. With the final restoration phase, the Mound House was returned to the period of historical significance which includes multiple milestone dates representing successive expansions of the house. This is a unique element of this structure and plays an integral part in the story-telling of changes in place and people on early 20th century Estero Island.

The archeological significance of the house having been built on an ancient Calusa shell midden mound raises the cultural value to statewide and national prominence. The underground exhibit offers museum visitors rare access to see a section through the mound of the physical evidence in the layers of shells and artifacts left by the first peoples to inhabit Florida.

There are few sites such as this that capture the spirit of life in Florida, over such a broad spectrum of time, and therefore, we support the Mound House receiving recognition on the national level.

Sincerely,

Renker Eich Parks Architects

Paul C. Palmer, AIA, LEED AP, Principal
Historic Preservation Architect

LEE TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION, INC.
P.O. BOX 1035
FORT MYERS, FLORIDA 33902-1035
239-332-7123

May 15, 2018

Florida National Register Review Board
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Transmitted by email to ruben.acosta@dos.myflorida.com

Re: Mound House, Fort Myers Beach, Florida

Dear Florida National Review Board Members,

I am writing on behalf of the Lee Trust For Historic Preservation, Inc. to request that the Mound House located on Estero Island, Fort Myers Beach, Florida be formally nominated to the Keeper of the National Register in Washington D.C. for consideration on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Mound House is a spectacular example of several types of original architectural styles that are no long present on Estero Island. Furthermore the site is the only last remaining Calusa Indian Shell Mound on Fort Myers Beach. I understand that the Town of Fort Myers Beach has spent many years restoring the structure back to its 1921 appearance. Additionally the Town is collecting information through ongoing archaeological investigations to gain insights and knowledge regarding the Calusa culture. This information is incorporated into the museum exhibits and education programs at the site to educate students, residents and visitors about the unique history of the Mound House.

As president of the Lee Trust For Historic Preservation, Inc. it is important to our organization and our local communities that this unique archaeological and historically significant site be protected and preserved for future generations. A listing on the National Register for Historic Places would to achieve the goals of both the Lee Trust and the Town of Fort Myers Beach to preserve this site of approximately 2.77 acres and allow the staff to continue to education students, residents, and visitors as to the site's unique and valuable history.

Thank you for your consideration of our request,



Harry O. Hendry
President, Lee Trust For Historic Preservation, Inc.



Florida National Register Review Board
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida

May 15, 2018

Dear Florida National Review Board Members,

I am writing on behalf of the Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau to request that the Mound House located on Estero Island, Fort Myers Beach, Florida be formally nominated to the Keeper of the National Register in Washington D.C. for consideration on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Mound House is a spectacular example of several types of original architectural styles that are no longer present on Estero Island. Tourism is the lifeblood of Lee County and the museum has always been in the forefront of the many unique lures and interesting activities that our destination offers not only to visitors, but to residents. It is noteworthy that its relevance is not only educational as related to the area's natural environment, but highlights the archeology and history of the region.

Additionally, the Town is collecting information through ongoing archaeological investigations to gain insights and knowledge regarding the Calusa culture. This information is incorporated into the museum exhibits and education programs at the site to educate students, residents and visitors about the unique history of the Mound House.

As Executive Director of the Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau, it is important to our organization, and to our local communities that this unique archaeological and historically significant site be protected and preserved for future generations. A listing on the National Register for Historic Places would to achieve the goals of many dedicated citizens and the Town of Fort Myers Beach to preserve this site of approximately 2.77 acres and allow the staff to continue to educate students, residents, and visitors as to the site's unique and valuable history.

Sincerely,

Tamara Pigott
Executive Director



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT of STATE

RICK SCOTT
Governor

KEN DETZNER
Secretary of State

June 18, 2018

Dr. Julie Earnstein, Deputy Keeper and Chief,
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Dr. Earnstein:

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **Mound House (FMSF#: 8LL00004), in Lee County**, to the National Register of Historic Places. The related materials (digital images, maps, and site plan) are included.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (850) 245-6364 if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ruben A. Acosta".

Ruben A. Acosta
Supervisor, Survey & Registration
Bureau of Historic Preservation

RAA/raa

Enclosures

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



562723
OMB No. 1024-0018

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Mound House

other names/site number Bungalow by the Banyon, Bayview Lodge (FMSF LL00004)

2. Location

street & number 451 Connecticut Street ☐ not for publication

city or town Fort Myers Beach ☒ vicinity

state Florida code FL county Lee code 071 zip code 33931

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Alissa Potane, DSHPO 6/28/18
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet

- ☐ determined eligible for the
National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

- ☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

- ☐ removed from the National
Register.

- ☐ other, (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Mound House
Name of Property

Lee County, Florida
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☒ buildings
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	2	buildings
1	0	sites
0	1	structures
0	0	objects
2	3	total

Name of related multiple property listings

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

"N/A"

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

EDUCATION/Research Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH and 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

Shingle

roof Shingle

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☒ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHAEOLOGY

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

Period of Significance

100 B.C. - 700 A.D.

1909-1952

Significant Dates

1909

1921

Significant Person

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of Repository

Mound House
Name of Property

Lee County, Florida
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.77

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	7	4	0	7	4	9	4	2	9	2	5	4	2	1
Zone	Easting			Northing											
2															

3															
Zone	Easting			Northing											
4															

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Max Adriel Imberman

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date February 2018

street & number 500 Bronough Street telephone (850) 245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of Fort Myers Beach

street & number 2525 Estero Boulevard telephone

city or town Fort Myers Beach state FL zip code 33931

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mound House

Name of Property

Lee County, FL

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 1

SUMMARY

The Mound House is a two-story Craftsman house, which began as a one-story Tudor free-standing kitchen/dining room in 1906, growing and modernizing throughout the twentieth century. Its current appearance has been restored to reflect the way it looked in 1921, retaining most of the original fabric from that era. The original Tudor element of the building was removed in 1958 to make room for an addition to the house, as well as a swimming pool.

The house was built upon an ancient Calusa shell midden mound, which was constructed between 100 B.C. and 700 A.D. This site measures approximately 2.77 acres, and is the highest point on Estero Island. The mound borders the Matanzas Pass and Estero Bay to the east, and is bordered to the north by manmade canals.

Today the Mound House is a museum owned by the town of Fort Myers Beach, aiming to provide an insight into the town's frontier history, as well as that of the Calusa. The pool has been converted into an exhibit centered around a cutaway of the shell mound, with the walls of the pool having been removed. A paved road runs around the edges of the property, with a small parking lot placed to the southern end of the site. Several non-contributing outbuildings are placed in the northern section of the property, and piers have been constructed to the east and northeast of the building along the shoreline.

The Mound House site has a sufficient degree of integrity for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, despite the alterations that have occurred since the end of the period of significance in 1952. The house has been restored to its 1921 appearance and has maintained most of its historic material, and the Calusa mound site itself is intact and has been heavily studied.

SETTING

The Mound House site is located along the northern shore of Estero Island, along the Matanzas Pass. The Mound House site is among the largest properties on the entire island. The Mound House site is located just north of Connecticut Street and is bordered by no other roads. To the northwest of the Mound House site is the Shell Mound Park subdivision, which was subdivided from land that had originally been a part of the Mound House property. The Shell Mound Park neighborhood is characterized by parallel canals, which had been dredged from Mound House land in the 1950s. The area of Fort Myers Beach surrounding the Mound House is primarily residential, with the majority of businesses being closer to Estero Island's southern shore. While the neighborhood surrounding the Mound House has certainly changed since the end of its period of significance, it has not done so to such a degree that would significantly damage the integrity of setting. While the area surrounding the Mound House has developed over the decades, it retains a sufficient degree of integrity for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mound House

Name of Property

Lee County, FL

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 2

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Overall Site Layout

The Mound House site is characterized by the centrally-located Mound House, built at the highest surviving point of a Calusa shell midden mound. The layout of the Mound House site is designed to serve the logistical needs of a house museum. It is ringed by an unpaved road that splits off from Connecticut Street northward into a small parking lot, and at the drive's eastern terminus to a road that wraps around the site, connecting back to that same parking lot from the northern end. Apart from the large road, the site is criss-crossed by small walking paths which connect the various usable areas of the property, including the Mound House, the shell mound cut-out interpretive exhibit just to its southwest, two non-contributing outbuildings which serve as staff offices and public restrooms, and a pier to the southeast of the Mound House.

Mound House Architecture

The Mound House (Photo 1) is a two-story Craftsman-style house museum with a reconstructed one-room Tudor addition. The building's character-defining exterior feature is its wrap-around covered porch, with a second-floor enclosed porch supported by a set of eleven brick columns. The porch features, which are completely aligned on both floors, dominate the eastern and northern facades of the building. The second floor porch is enclosed with ribbon windows. The primary material for the Mound House's first-floor exterior is brick, and the second floor has brown shingle siding on all walls below the roofline. This creates an effect where the first and second floors leave very distinct visual impressions. The first floor brick shows evidence of having been previously painted white, but much of the paint has since faded. The gray brick beneath has been revealed, as it was in the historic period. The Mound House has a gabled roof with two gabled dormers, which face the eastern façade. The house's plan follows an approximate U-shape, with the Tudor one-room addition and the wrap-around two-story porch creating that shape.

The eastern façade of the building, facing a straight path leading to a pier jutting out over the Matanzas Pass, is the historic main entrance to the house. While it is not used this way currently, with the entrance now located in the Tudor-style reconstruction addition in the building's southwest, the eastern façade maintains its historic fenestration. Each door on this façade is topped by a decorative pediment. The first floor of this façade has no windows, but rather a collection of doors inset with patterned glass allowing visibility. There are five double-doors on the eastern façade, with the main entrance door being the only single door. The eastern façade's second floor is primarily characterized by the enclosed porch with repeating ribbon windows. Atop this porch are two gabled dormers with thin fixed windows.

The northern façade of the building (Photo 2) is visually very similar to the eastern façade. The first floor is characterized by brick columns and brick walls, with a single double-door centrally-located, matching the design and type of those on the eastern façade. A gated white staircase, a non-historic alteration, connects the first-floor covered porch area to the second-floor indoor porch.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mound House
Name of Property
Lee County, FL
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 3

The western façade of the Mound House (Photo 3) follows the same material design as the other elevations of the house, with the brick first floor and the second floor clad in brown shingle siding. The western façade is fronted by a large paved area with wooden picnic tables. The first floor has three double-door entrances, matching those on the other elevations. Two of these are facing west, and the other is tucked into the central section of the U-shaped plan, facing the Tudor structure to the south. There is also an eight-over-one single-hung window in the center of the indentation on the western façade. On the second floor, the house has sets of paired fixed windows. In the southern section of the western façade (Photo 4) is the reconstructed Tudor addition, which has a gabled roof and windows on each side. The Tudor addition provides a visual reference to the historical building which was originally on that spot.

The eastern façade of the Mound House (Photo 5) features the reconstructed Tudor Revival addition, as well as a side of the Mound House which continues the patterns of the three other elevations. The western end of this façade is the Tudor Revival addition, which serves as the main entrance to the Mound House museum. The Tudor addition is clearly visually distinguished from the rest of the Mound House, with its southern façade having a single door with three fixed windows to its left. The first floor of this elevation features two eight-over-eight sash windows and the southern terminus of the wrap-around porch. On the second floor are three fixed windows and the southern end of the indoor porch, marked by a ribbon window.

Tudor Reconstruction

The current entrance to the Mound House is the reconstruction of the building's original one-room Tudor kitchen (Photo 6), which serves as the museum's gift shop. The one-room building has a drop ceiling and is tightly packed with display shelves for various museum products. There are three windows on the north and south sides of the room, and one on the western side. A wide wood-framed opening (Photo 7) connects the Tudor Revival addition to the museum section of the Mound House.

Mound House Interior

The interior walls of the Mound House's first floor are gray brick, matching the brick used for the building's exterior. The floor is primarily wood with a brick section surrounding the room's fireplace. The first room of the museum is the historic family room, which is located at the building's southeast corner. The room has two internal exits, the wood frame opening leading to the Tudor gift shop, and a narrower northern opening (Photo 8) leading to the hall, which is dominated by the building's staircase. The room's dominant and character-defining feature is its fireplace, which dates back to the original construction of the house. The brick fireplace is decorated with an inset collection of seashells over the hearth (Photo 9) surrounded by pressed brick.

The hall room (Photo 10) has a wooden floor and a wooden staircase, which connects with the second floor in a room which was historically a bedroom. On the second floor, the walls are finished with

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mound House

Name of Property

Lee County, FL

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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horizontal beadboard. The room has two windows, a small casement window to the west, and a large double window to the east. Apart from the staircase, the room has a northern exit which leads to the historic living room (Photo 11), which is currently used as lecture space. The dimensions of the room have been altered since the historic period, combining the historic living room with a room which had originally been to its west. An elevator has been added to the southwestern section of the room to aid disability access to the second floor of the building. Like the rest of the floor, the floors are wooden and the walls are gray brick.

The room where the staircase emerges on the second floor (Photo 12) was historically one of two bedrooms, with the second bedroom neighboring it to the south. Today, the wall between the two rooms has been removed, and the room serves as exhibit and display space. The top of the staircase faces east, just to the south of a door leading into another exhibit room. The west wall of the room has two sets of three windows, and the south side of the room has three more. The east wall has two exits which emerge onto the second-floor indoor porch.

The historic master bedroom on the second floor (Photo 13) has been converted into a second exhibit space. The southwest corner of the room has the second-floor elevator entrance, which connects with the lecture space on the first floor. The room has two sets of double doors emerging onto the indoor porch, located in the centers of the eastern (Photo 14) and northern (Photo 15) walls of the room. Windows flank each of these doors. The western wall of the room has an opening which leads to the historic bathroom of the house (Photo 16). Each side of this short hallway has a closet.

The historic bathroom (Photo 17) of the Mound House, located in the northwest corner of the second floor, is characterized by a floor made up of small hexagonal tiles with flowery designs, and white ceramic tile walls, with the area nearest the ceiling finished with painted vertical beadboard. The bathroom also features a sink and a bathtub, and is currently used as an interactive interpretive space designed for children. The room has four pairs of windows, two on the western wall, and one on each of the northern and southern walls.

Calusa Shell Mound Interpretive Exhibit

The entrance to the *Stories Beneath our Feet* interpretive exhibit is located to the southwest of the Mound House building. The entrance (Photo 18) is at a much lower height than the house, corresponding to the depth of the 1958 pool. The entrance to the exhibit is a double-door inset into a concrete overhang with a railing on top. The exhibit itself consists of a cutout of the mound, which had originally been excavated in 1958, when a pool had been built on the property. The wall opposite the mound cutout, which is protected by a glass barrier, is decorated with a mural depicting the Calusa culture which had originally resided on the site.

ALTERATIONS

The Mound House site was altered throughout the period of significance, and has been altered since. The

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original Mound House structure, a one-room Tudor kitchen, was constructed on top of a millennium-old Calusa shell midden mound in 1906. Through the following decades, a two-story Bungalow addition was built, which was then converted and expanded by a subsequent owner. In 1952, the house was sold once more to a new owner, who eventually further expanded the house, most notably by demolishing the original Tudor element and constructing a pool and sunroom on the premises. After the property was purchased by the city of Fort Myers Beach, the city engaged in a preservation restoration project, returning the Mound House to its 1921 appearance, and converting the house into a history museum. The design and materials of the bulk of the building were maintained since construction, with the 1921 version of the building remaining mostly intact from the time of construction. The Florida room was removed and replaced with a reconstruction of the original Tudor kitchen. The 1958 swimming pool was replaced with an underground interpretive exhibit through which one can view a cutaway of the inside of the Calusa shell midden mound. A staircase was added to the northern façade connecting the first-floor covered porch to the second-floor indoor porch, in order to provide a second means of egress for the museum. The Mound House has gone through multiple waves of alterations since its original construction, but the character-defining features on its inside, most notably the fireplace in the entrance hall, have survived in their original form. An elevator has been added to the inside of the building, and some internal walls have been removed to turn two small rooms into one large room, but the overall layout of the building has been restored to its 1921 form in a way that is historically conscious.

INTEGRITY

The Mound House site retains sufficient integrity for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, despite and perhaps because of the waves of alterations that have occurred since the period of significance ended in 1952. The Mound House has a very high degree of integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. The restoration of the building, which aimed to restore the appearance of the building to its 1921 form, has necessarily impacted the integrity of design, materials, and workmanship, but not to a degree that would prevent the site from being listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK

The history of archaeological work at the Mound House site dates back to the mid-twentieth century. The first archaeological work at the Mound House site took place in 1958. Owned William H. Long installed a swimming pool to the south of the house, which led to the excavation of land to the south of the house. This work uncovered human remains, including a cranium and left humerus.¹ Due to poor documentation, the exact records of the discoveries from the 1958 excavation are missing, but the human remains of unknown origin provide a mystery of whether the burials were ceremonial or circumstantial.

¹ Theresa M. Schober and Corbett McP. Torrence, *Archaeological Investigations and Topographic Mapping of the Estero Island Site (8LLF), Lee County, Florida*, November 2002, 6-7.

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A 2002 archaeological study on the Mound House site uncovered an array of finds ranging in age over a millennium. The largest collection of found samples was from the Caloosahatchee I period, which ranges from 500 B.C. to 500 A.D. The survey used both intrusive and non-intrusive methods, including surface collection, auger survey, ground penetrating radar survey, shovel test pit survey, and grid excavation.² The studies done on the mound focused not only on the objects buried within it, but also its structure, with ground-penetrating radar surveys revealing the overall structure of the site beneath the ground.³ Shovel tests uncovered potsherds, including Belle Glade Plain Pottery, as well as a bead, rusted metal, and a fragment of lead casing.⁴ The evolution of technology and the analytical methods of the archaeological field allowed 21st-century archaeologists to uncover a more robust understanding of the site from what had been left there, as well as the way it was built, gaining a fuller understanding of the lifestyle of the Calusa who had resided there.

The most recent archaeological study conducted at the Mound House site took place from 2005-2007. The study took place as part of a mitigation process while the Mound House was being updated into its current form as a museum. Archaeologists took the mitigation opportunity to study the stratification of the shell midden mound.⁵ Through hand excavation data, researchers determined that most of the organized shell accumulation occurred around AD 600 and AD 900, with radiocarbon studies showing a conscious and planned construction of a mound using already-existing midden material rather than a gradual growth over time. The midden had existed previous to mound construction, and its material was re-constituted to form a monumental mound structure.⁶

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

The Mound House site was heavily altered since the end of the Calusa period, with the mound itself being the last remaining section of what was originally a shell ridge which extended northward along the coast of Estero Island. Despite this, the remnants of the mound have been carefully and sympathetically studied since the mid-twentieth century, with the site providing insight into the monumental mound construction methods of the Calusa.

² Ibid., 46-48.

³ Ibid., 52-54.

⁴ Ibid., 55.

⁵ Theresa Schober, "Deconstructing and Reconstructing Caloosahatchee Shell Mound Building," included in *New Histories of Pre-Columbian Florida*, edited by Neill J. Wallis and Asa R. Randall, 43.

⁶ Ibid., 53-54.

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SUMMARY

The Mound House is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning/Development, Criterion C in the area of Architecture, and Criterion D in the area of Archaeology. Its period of significance ranges from 100 B.C. to 700 A.D. for the site's use by the Calusa as a shell midden and fishing settlement, a period in which the house's titular mound was constructed, and from 1909 to 1952, a period in which the property, the oldest home on Estero Island, evolved from a small free-standing Tudor single-room kitchen into a Bungalow and Arts and Crafts-style two-story home. The Mound House and the mound it is built upon provide cultural and architectural insight into the period prior to the development of the modern Fort Myers Beach on Estero Island.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Mound House was built on top of an ancient Calusa shell mound and was the site of the earliest American settlement on Estero Island, which now contains today's community of Fort Myers Beach.

Calusa-era Estero Island Historic Context

Native Americans first arrived in Florida over 12,000 years ago, heading south from the territory now occupied by Canada and the northern United States after crossing to the Western Hemisphere across the Bering Land Bridge. During the Ice Age, the sea levels were approximately 180 feet lower than at present, due to much of the Earth's water being frozen into glaciers. The coastlines of Florida's peninsula extended further out, with the Gulf of Mexico being 100 miles further west than today. As such, much of the remaining archaeological evidence of South Florida's ancient Native American culture is now located beneath the waves. Over the millennia, the sea levels rose as glaciers thawed, resulting in the formation of Estero Island about 5,000 years ago.

According to archaeological evidence, the Calusa seem to have been the first human occupants of Estero Island, with the oldest manmade feature on the island being the mound on which the Mound House was constructed. The mound, the current remains of which are the last remnants of a shell ridge which extended northward, was built between 100 B.C. and 700 A.D.⁷ Archaeological studies have shown that the mound hosted a Calusa fishing settlement. Archaeological work at the Mound House (also known as the Estero Island Site) has uncovered evidence of buildings, fishing implements, jewelry, and religious practices. The mound was abandoned around 700 A.D. and was never used again by the Calusa.⁸

The Calusa controlled much of the region now known as South Florida prior to European contact. According to Spanish sources from the sixteenth century, the Calusa had a very complex and hierarchical society, with permanent settlements as well as dominion over other neighboring tribes

⁷ Ibid., 40.

⁸ Corbett Torrence and Theresa Schober, "A Walk Through Time," *Expressions*, June 2004.

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including the Mayaimi, Tequesta, and Jaega. According to Hernando D'Escalante Fontaneda, a Spaniard who was captured by and lived with the Calusa for seventeen years, the name *Calusa* meant "a fierce people" in their language.⁹ While most prehistoric human groups paired the development of rigid social stratification with staple-crop agriculture, the Calusa were distinguished by their fisher-gatherer-hunter structure, depending upon the yield of land and sea fauna for survival and trade.¹⁰ While the Calusa did engage in limited farming, including the growth of chili peppers, papaya, and squash in small home gardens, fishing was the central productive activity of their society.¹¹

While the Calusa territory expanded throughout South Florida, the capital of their domain was along the shore of southwestern Florida, located to the southeast of today's Estero Island, on an island now known as Mound Key. Currently a Florida State Park called Mound Key Archaeological State Park, the island's current form was developed by the Calusa. While the site originally appears to have been a sand bar, an oyster bar, or a mangrove island which was revealed during a period of low water prior to the year 500 A.D., the titular mounds of Mound Key were created over time as shellfishers caught mollusks and disposed of their shells on site, accumulating across generations and centuries as midden mounds. With the shells and other material forming into masses of waste which eventually integrated with the environment, the midden material was over time reshaped and redeposited, with older middens reconfigured into designed mounds.¹² The Calusa, with a culture and society based around the yield of the sea, frequently built midden mounds with the waste from their fishing endeavors. Over time they developed mounds on the islands surrounding their capital on Mound Key, including Estero Island, which had multiple fishing settlements and associated residential mounds, only one of which survives to this day.

First contact between the Spanish and Calusa took place on June 4, 1513. Juan Ponce de Leon, famous for being the first European to set foot in the southeastern United States, traveled around the Florida peninsula to its southwest section, first encountering the Calusa in Charlotte Harbor, near Port Charlotte. At the time of contact, the Calusa were led by a chief whom the Spanish called Carlos. Calusa society was extremely stratified, with nobles, commoners, and slaves. They also engineered their surroundings, constructing religious and domestic mounds, as well as plazas and canals. They were aggressive militarily, protective of their territory and influence.¹³ The Calusa almost immediately attacked the Spanish fleet with twenty canoes filled with longbow archers. Hostilities continued until the Spanish fled to recover and repair their ships from the conflict.¹⁴ Ponce de Leon would eventually be killed by the Calusa in 1521, when he returned to Charlotte Harbor on another expedition. Struck by a poisoned

⁹ Hernando D'Escalante Fontaneda, trans. Buckingham Smith, "Fontaneda's Memoir," Keyshistory.org, <http://www.keyshistory.org/Fontenada.html>, Accessed December 13, 2017.

¹⁰ William H. Marquardt, "Tracking the Calusa: A Retrospective," *Southeastern Archaeology*, (2014, Volume 33, Issue 1), 2.

¹¹ Victor D. Thompson and William H. Marquardt et al., "From Shell Midden to Midden-Mound: The Geoarchaeology of Mound key, an Anthropogenic Island in Southwest Florida, USA," *PLoS One*, (2016, Volume 11, Number 4), 2.

¹² Ibid., 14-16.

¹³ Theresa M. Schober and Corbett McP. Torrence, *Archaeological Investigations and Topographic Mapping of the Estero Island Site (8LLF)*, Lee County, Florida, November 2002, 24-25.

¹⁴ Randolph J. Widmer, *The Evolution of the Calusa: A Nonagricultural Chiefdom on the Southwest Florida Coast*, (1988, The University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa), 1.

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arrow, he died in Havana, Cuba.¹⁵ The relationship between the Spanish and Calusa did not begin auspiciously, but over time, the continued presence of the Spanish in Florida forced the Calusa to engage with them.

By 1567, the Spanish had established a Jesuit Mission at the Calusa capital on Mound Key. This was the first Jesuit Mission in North America. The existence of this mission did not help staunch the tensions between the Spanish and Calusa, and both the Spanish and Calusa eventually abandoned the island in 1569, with the Spanish setting up a new settlement on an island nearby (possibly Estero Island).¹⁶

The subsequent centuries were devastating to the Calusa, with European diseases and military conflict leading to the deaths of many of the tribe. In addition, the presence of European military and luxury goods, as well as other trade items, destabilized the structure of South Florida's society and hierarchy. Since the Spanish were offering many goods the Calusa could not compete with, the Calusa authority was increasingly questioned, and formerly subservient tribes began to question the Calusa supremacy.¹⁷ A culture with a population of thousands throughout South Florida, and with a capital city that is believed to have had a population of over 1,000 completely vanished within two centuries, only its mounds remained. The society of the Calusa disintegrated, and the Calusa people merged with other groups or emigrated to other parts of the Spanish empire, including Cuba.¹⁸

Estero Island/Fort Myers Beach Historic Context

Human habitation on Estero island was limited and inconsistent following the decline of the Calusa. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, during periods of Spanish and British control of Florida, Cuban fishers set up fishing camps on the island, most notably at its southern end. These settlements were known as *ranchos*, and trading links were established between them and Havana, with the ranchos providing fish and Cuba providing general and construction supplies. Over the years, Spanish presence in Florida declined. The symbiotic relationship between ranchos along the Gulf Coast and Cuba faded as well, and the ranchos were abandoned.¹⁹ This process was put into explicit action by the United States after they conquered the territory during the Second Seminole War in 1844. Ranchos were cleared off of the land, creating space for American settlers to build homesteads.²⁰

The Homestead Act, passed in 1862, facilitated much of Florida's growth in the southern frontier of the state. After Estero Island was surveyed in 1876, the land became available for homesteading. People were able to claim tracts of land for free, with the promise that if the land was developed and occupied

¹⁵ "This Day in History – Ponce de Leon Discovers Florida," History.com, <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/ponce-de-leon-discovers-florida>, Accessed December 14, 2017.

¹⁶ Theresa M. Schober and Corbett McP. Torrence, *Archaeological Investigations and Topographic Mapping of the Estero Island Site (8LLF), Lee County, Florida*, November 2002, 26-27.

¹⁷ Ibid., 29.

¹⁸ Randolph J. Widmer, *The Evolution of the Calusa: A Nonagricultural Chiefdom on the Southwest Florida Coast*, (1988, The University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa), 5.

¹⁹ Mary Kaye Stevens, *Fort Myers Beach*, (2011, Images of America, Arcadia Publishing, Charleston), 17.

²⁰ Mound House, *Cuban Fishing Ranchos Panel for Settlers on the Shells Exhibit*, Fort Myers Beach, FL.

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over a period of five years, the settler would be able to claim the land as their own without having to ever purchase it. While seven groups of settlers came to Fort Myers Beach (which was then known as Crescent Beach) between 1898 and 1918 attempting to establish a home and a community, very few “proved” their claim by occupying it for the full five years. The homesteaders mainly attempted to make a living through agriculture, producing goods such as pineapples. The Estero Island pioneers were separated from mainland society, with no bridges connecting the island to the Florida peninsula. Boats ran between Estero Island and Fort Myers, but the trips took hours to complete. The homesteaders traveled the island by horse and tended to live in homes called cheekes, which were characterized by palmetto-thatched roofs. Over the decades, even as the original homesteaders began to depart, the island became more culturally and physically connected with the mainland, with the island’s first hotel, the Beach Hotel, opening in 1913, and the first bridge being built in 1921.²¹

Among the earliest occupants of Estero Island were the Koreshan Unity, a communal order looking to build a utopia on the edges of society. The group was founded by New York native Dr. Cyrus Teed, who had been a Union physician during the Civil War. Teed in 1888, while living in Chicago, founded the Koreshan Unity as an order with an emphasis on communal living, equality of the sexes, and celibacy. Koreshan Unity members homesteaded the southern section of Estero Island, claiming it for the group. In 1893, they also acquired land on the mainland as well as the majority of Mound Key, the former Calusa capital. The Unity ended up with 7,000 acres of property in the area, with which they sought to establish a “New Jerusalem.” The Koreshan Unity had two levels of membership. The Religious Order fully followed Teed’s strictures, including celibacy and eschewing private property ownership, while the Cooperative Order lived a more traditional family life, but worked to support the Koreshan Unity. The majority of Unity members in the Cooperative Order lived on Estero Island, separated from mainstream and mainland society, looking to create a new model for society that would inspire the world.²² By the second half of the twentieth century, the order was defunct. After Teed’s death in 1908, the rate of recruitment declined. In addition, the Koreshan Unity’s encouragement of celibacy made creating new generations of followers more difficult.

As the twentieth century progressed and Estero Island was further connected to the mainland, the infrastructure of the island was gradually improved, with new roads being paved, and more subdivisions, businesses, and churches being constructed. The island began to market itself as a vacation destination, with many motels and hotels being constructed to support the growth of the tourism trade. The island became known as a place for fishing, much as it had been during the occupancy of the Calusa. Fort Myers Beach was not officially incorporated until 1995, but by the 1940s, the period of Estero Island’s settlement and exploration had officially ended.²³

²¹ Mary Kaye Stevens, *Fort Myers Beach*, (2011, Images of America, Arcadia Publishing, Charleston), 17-24.

²² *Ibid.*, 33.

²³ Rolfe F. Schell, *History of Fort Myers Beach Florida*, (1980, Island Press), 57-63.

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Criterion A – Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning/Development

The Mound House is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning/Development. It is the oldest standing structure on Estero Island, tied to the early settlers and homesteaders who moved to the long-abandoned island. From 1906 to 1937, the development of the Mound House demonstrates the changing patterns of Estero



Figure 1: *The earliest known photograph of the completed first phase of the Mound House, a one-room Tudor kitchen. The height of the mound is clearly visible in this photograph.* Source: Mound House Restoration Plan

society into an island with settlement patterns more in line with mainland Florida and urban America.

Like much of Southwest Florida, the Mound House had its origins in the Homestead Act, which facilitated land acquisition for those willing to work the land. In the mid-1870s, the Underhill family established an unofficial homestead on Estero Island at the shell mound site, but departed by 1891, when they moved to Sanibel Island, which was just 3 miles to the west.²⁵ The first official homestead on the island belonged to Robert B. Gilbert, who was granted the land in 1898. The homestead initially measured almost 172 acres, larger than the standard 160 acres, stretching both north and south of the Calusa mound. Throughout the ample acreage, Gilbert constructed buildings to support his farming. He was forced to clear the land, which was not suitable for human habitation or particularly arable. The homestead proof shows that Gilbert had built two small framed houses and a barn. None of

Island's society, and traces its growth, demonstrating the evolving needs of the people who built up the community. In the late nineteenth century, when American expansion reached Estero Island, the Calusa shell mound ridge on which the Mound House currently stands was the highest point of the island.²⁴ As such, it had an appeal for settlers for its distinguished nature, connection to the Calusa past, and placement near the island's eastern coast. The site's history traced the island's evolution from a sparsely-populated domain on the fringes of



Figure 2: *Photograph of the 1909 addition to the Mound House, a two-story Bungalow. This photograph demonstrates the isolation of the house in that time period.* Source: Mound House Restoration Plan

²⁴ John Parks, AIA, et al, *Restoration Plan: The Mound House 8LL1101*, March 2005, Section 1, Page 1.

²⁵ Ibid., Section 1, Page 2.

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these buildings have survived to the present. In 1909, the Gilbert family sold the land, which they had successfully homesteaded, to the Koreshan Unity, who were attempting to obtain as much land as possible on Estero Bay in order to establish a successful community. Later in that same year, the Koreshans sold the mound property to homesteader William Harrison Case.²⁶

The Case family, like many people who moved to Florida in the early twentieth century, had their origins in the northeastern United States. They in 1905 moved to Fort Myers to escape the oppressive winters in Vermont. In 1909, when the Case family purchased the 170 acres of the Calusa shell mound site from the Koreshan Unity for \$3500, they were working in the fishing trade on Estero Bay.²⁷ Their official purchase of the property came after they had already been living there, however. Starting in 1906, the Cases had resided in a houseboat on Estero Bay, from which they practiced their fishing craft. The boat often anchored off of the coast by the mound, and in 1906 they built a pre-fabricated one-room Tudor kitchen and dining room building for eating and hosting guests. Even though the Cases did not explicitly own the property, they had essentially claimed it as their own. At this time, the property, nominally owned by the Gilberts, seems to have been fully enveloped within the Koreshan Unity commune. Photographic evidence demonstrates that, at the time, other buildings were located nearby, including a barn.²⁸ On the mound site, which was among the first places settled on the island after the Calusa left, it took a long time for a permanent residence to be built, and the Cases did not do so upon settling the site.



Figure 3: Photograph of William and Milia Case by their brick fireplace prior to 1921. The patriarch and matriarch of early Estero Island, the Cases made their home in the building they named "The Bungalow by the Bay," leaving a lasting mark on the community. Source: Mound House Restoration Plan

watermelons, and figs. The Case family's honey was well-regarded in Lee County.³⁰

²⁶ Ibid., Section 1, Pages 3-4.

²⁷ Ibid., Section 1, Page 4.

²⁸ Ibid., Section 3, Page 1.

²⁹ Ibid., Section 1, Page 5.

³⁰ Mound House, *Early Settlers* Panel for *Settlers on the Shells* Exhibit, Fort Myers Beach, FL.

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By 1911, William Harrison Case and his son Henry Carleton Case began to subdivide their 172-acre property. The Calusa mound property was deemed Lot 46, measuring approximately 14 acres. The Cases built rental cottages throughout the subdivision for tourists and visitors. Estero Island was not yet connected to the mainland, but the Case family attempted to turn it into a tourist destination and to begin to develop a residential community. Positioned at Estero Island's highest point, the Mound House became somewhat of a community center. In the years from 1914 to 1918, when William Case served as the island's postmaster, the Mound House was its post office. In these years, the Mound House was known as "The Bungalow by the Banyan."³¹ The Case family planted the seeds for the neighborhood which now surrounds the Mound House site.



Figure 4: 1920s photograph of the Mound House, after Captain Jack DeLysle altered the building with an Arts and Crafts expansion. The Model T in front of the house illustrates the greater connection between Estero Island and the mainland. Source: Mound House Restoration Plan



Figure 5: 1950 photograph of the Mound House during its time as the Shell Mound Experiment Station, published in the *Ford Times*. For the first time, trees were planted in close proximity to the house, giving it a homier impression. Source: Mound House Restoration Plan

a substantial portion of the Case subdivision for development, including the Mound House. He named the development Seminole Sands, and began to establish tourist draws along the eastern shore of the island.³² Embracing wholeheartedly the Land Boom spirit, DeLysle built upon the foundation created by the Case family, and worked to create a more marketable Estero Island, which in 1925 was first referred to as Fort Myers Beach.³³

The Case family's creation of Estero Island's first subdivision dovetailed with the island's more intimate connections with the mainland and the rest of the world. Over time, roads and bridges were built, allowing automobile travelers to reach the island for business and pleasure. One of the individuals behind Estero Island's infrastructure boom was Captain Jack DeLysle, a British veteran of the First World War. After the war, he moved to the United States and ended up in Fort Myers in 1920. He saw Estero Island as a potential tourism destination, and aimed to build upon the work that the

Case family had already done to make it so. Using the capital of wealthy backers from the mainland and Estero Island, DeLysle founded the Crescent Beach Road & Bridge Company, which opened a toll bridge to Estero Island. Looking to make a fortune in the early years of the 1920s Florida Land Boom, DeLysle purchased

³¹ Mound House, *Changes to the Mound Panel for Settlers on the Shells Exhibit*, Fort Myers Beach, FL.

³² John Parks, AIA, et al, *Restoration Plan: The Mound House 8LL1101*, March 2005, Section 1, Page 7.

³³ Ibid., Section 1, Page 10.

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DeLysle had purchased the Mound House from the Cases, who had built it, and sought to transform and evolve it into a modern luxurious home in the midst of his development. According to a 1921 article in the Fort Myers Press, the house was to be “one of the prettiest homes in the country when completed, costing \$20,000.00. One room, the bath room, will cost a thousand dollars, the tiling in this room costing \$600.00 while the bath tub cost \$300.00.”³⁴ The Arts and Crafts expansion to the Mound House that DeLysle initiated expanded the house to the north, adding two rooms to both the first and second floors, as well as a second floor porch overlooking the mound. The large bedroom on the second floor was split into two. The Mound House also got its first bathroom with this alteration, located on the second floor.³⁵ Although DeLysle had purchased the Mound House property with the grandest of dreams, by the mid-1920s, as the Florida Land Boom began to bust, he had defaulted on his payments, and the house returned to the ownership of the Case family.³⁶ DeLysle had dramatically expanded the Mound House and transformed its surroundings, applying a Florida Land Boom panache to an island that had been almost uninhabited 20 years earlier.

After Jack DeLysle abandoned the Mound House, it was left uninhabited until 1937, when the property was sold to Henry Carleton Case by his father, who had originally built and developed the house on the site. In the intervening years, even though no one lived in the house, the Case family still worked to improve it, replacing the floors of the house with southern yellow pine boards due to a termite infestation.³⁷ In a 1999 interview, the son of Henry Carleton Case said that the Great Miami Hurricane of 1926 salted the arable land on the island, damaging the ability to grow produce like Estero Island residents had in the settlement period. By 1937, the Mound House had been wired for electricity, but it had fallen into disrepair and overgrowth. Unoccupied, the Mound House was no longer the community center it once had been.³⁸

In the following decades, the Mound House returned to use, after first being sold to Henry Carleton Case, who then in 1947 sold the property to Dr. Robert James, who established a scientific research facility on the site. The aim of the James Foundation at the Shell Mound Experiment Station was to determine industrial uses for Southwest Florida’s natural yield, including clam shells and orange pulp.³⁹ After the death of James in 1951, the property was sold to William H. Long, who converted the Mound House back into a residence, and further expanded it. He also divided the 26 acres of property, diminishing it to 2.77 acres, and creating the Shell Mound Park subdivision.⁴⁰

The Mound House, the oldest standing building on Estero Island, provides a tangible connection to the era of homesteading, settlement, and community development that characterized Fort Myers Beach in the early twentieth century through the 1920s land boom. Because the Calusa shell mound was the

³⁴ Ibid., Section 1, Page 9.

³⁵ Ibid., Section 3, Page 1.

³⁶ Ibid., Section 1, Page 9.

³⁷ Ibid., Section 2, Page B4.

³⁸ Ibid., Section 1, Page 11.

³⁹ Ibid., Section 1, Pages 13-15.

⁴⁰ Ibid., Section 1, Pages 16.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mound House

Name of Property

Lee County, FL

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 9

highest point on the island, it was a tantalizing place to build and develop. It has a strong connection with the history of the Koreshan Unity, who left a mark on the region at the turn of the century and after. The Mound House was also the base of operations for the Case family and Jack DeLysle, who each approached Estero Island with an entrepreneurial vision, attempting to connect the island with the mainland, culturally and economically. Multiple generations of owners also subdivided the originally-massive property to create the surrounding neighborhoods. The Mound House was the seed from which Fort Myers Beach flowered.

Criterion C - Architecture

The Mound House is significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of Architecture for its fusion of the Craftsman and Arts and Crafts styles, and as a representation of the type of development that was prolific in Southwest Florida in the early twentieth century. The building started as a single-room Tudor kitchen and dining room, built in 1906 (since demolished and rebuilt), and by 1921 had had two sets of additions and alterations constructed. The first expansion was a two-story Bungalow-style addition, which served as a house complete with a living room, second-story bedroom, and a front porch marked by four brick columns. The 1921 Arts and Crafts-style addition widened the house, adding a family room, a bedroom, and the house's first bathroom. The original bedroom on the second floor was split into two and the front porch was widened with the building, being extended to wrap around the north side of the house. A second-floor porch was also added, wrapping around the house in the same way as the first floor one. In the years after 1921, there were multiple additions, such as a first floor bathroom, a swimming pool, and a Florida room (heavily windowed room designed to receive sunlight) to the southwest of the house, a small one-story addition with an additional bathroom, a living room, and bedroom to the northwest, as well as a carport to the northeast. The original Tudor kitchen/dining room was demolished to make way for the Florida room. Today, the floorplan and design of the house has been restored to its 1921 appearance, with the later non-historic additions being removed.

The Mound House's current appearance reflects a fusion of the Craftsman and Arts and Crafts styles, which are similar and complementary. To a certain extent, the building's first floor evinces its Craftsman roots, and its second floor demonstrates its Arts and Crafts evolution. The first floor's covered porch with brick columns provide the welcoming and shaded entrance that is crucial to the Craftsman style. The central brick fireplace, which is a central feature in many historic photographs of the Mound House, is also an iconic element of the architectural style.⁴¹ The 1921 alteration maintained the first floor's Craftsman identity, while drastically changing the second floor. The Craftsman section of the building was originally symmetrical, but the widening elements of the addition broke this symmetry, with asymmetry being a defining feature of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic. The second-floor gabled dormers, which were an addition to the remodeled second story, also fit the style. The Arts and Crafts architectural philosophy emphasizes honesty of design, with very few extraneous decorative elements and pretensions. This philosophy was followed through both eras of the house's surviving

⁴¹ "Craftsman Style – 1900 to 1930," Antiquahomestyle.com, <http://www.antiquahomestyle.com/styles/craftsman.htm>, Accessed December 26, 2017.

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architectural construction. The exposed brick on the building's interior and exterior is emblematic of this.⁴² The house, while being developed into phases of different, yet similar styles, shows a class evolution. While the Case family built the house as a settler family in the Craftsman style, DeLysle aimed for a high-style expansion to demonstrate wealth and class. While the Mound House's current appearance was constructed in two stages with different architectural styles, it maintains a consistent and unified appearance.

Criterion D – Archaeology

The Mound House is significant at the local level under Criterion D in the area of Archaeology for being the last remaining Calusa shell midden mound on Estero Island, and the last remaining segment of what was originally a more extensive ridge heading north from the current Mound House site. Having been studied since the mid-twentieth century, the site has given generations of archaeologists a greater insight into the lifestyles of and construction methodologies used by the Calusa.

The Mound House site currently hosts archaeological interpretation, with its *Stories Beneath our Feet* exhibit featuring a cutaway of the shell mound highlighted with LED rope lights to demonstrate the layers of Calusa history. This cutaway was a mitigation of the original 1958 excavation of the mound for the construction of a pool. Visitors can walk through an underground entrance to view a protected sample of the mound, complete with a 44-foot mural presenting an interpretation of Calusa life and culture.⁴³

The Mound House site has already yielded a great deal of information about local Calusa life in the historic period, and future investigations could uncover more. Further study of the mound's remaining section could potentially answer questions about the diet, lifestyle, and culture of Calusa society on Estero Island, as well as providing more information on the motivations and methods of shell midden mound construction.

⁴² "Arts & Crafts Style – 1880 to 1920," Antiquehomestyle.com, <http://www.antiquehomestyle.com/styles/arts-crafts.htm>, Accessed December 26, 2017.

⁴³ Chelle Koster Walton, "Florida Discoveries: New Mound House Museum Explores Fort Myers Beach History," *Miami Herald*, <http://www.miamiherald.com/living/travel/florida-travel/article59384672.html>, February 10, 2016, Accessed January 30, 2018.

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_____, “Deconstructing and Reconstructing Caloosahatchee Shell Mound Building,” from *New Histories of Pre-Columbian Florida*, edited by Neill J. Wallis and Asa R. Randall, (2014, University Press of Florida), 38-61.

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Returned

United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation Sheet

Mound House

Name of Property

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Section number 10 Page 1

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

CASES SUBD PB 1 PG 58 LOT PT 46.

Comprising the entire lot bounded by Connecticut Street to the south.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The above property description contains all of the historic resources associated with the Mound House.

Returned

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mound House

Name of Property

Lee County, FL

County and State

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Section number Photos Page 1

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS AND SUBJECTS

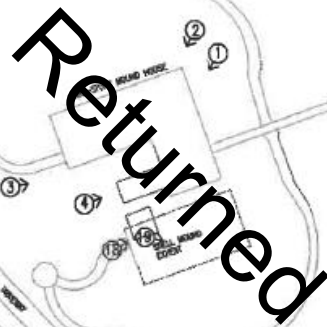
Photograph Subject: Mound House

Photograph Address: 451 Connecticut Street, Fort Myers Beach (Lee County), Florida

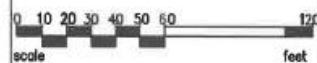
Photographer: Alison Giesen

Date Taken: January 2018

- 1:** Eastern Façade, Facing Southwest
- 2:** Northern Façade, Facing Southwest
- 3:** Western Façade, Northern Section, Facing East
- 4:** Northern Façade, Southern Section, Facing East
- 5:** Southern Façade, Facing North
- 6:** Tudor Reconstruction Gift Shop, Facing West
- 7:** Tudor Reconstruction Doorway, Facing East
- 8:** Historic Family Room, Facing Northwest
- 9:** Family Room Fireplace Detailing, Facing North
- 10:** First Floor Staircase, Facing West
- 11:** First Floor Lecture Room, Facing West
- 12:** Second Floor Exhibit Room, Facing East
- 13:** Historic Living Room, Facing Southeast
- 14:** Doorway to Enclosed Porch, Facing North
- 15:** Historic Living Room, Facing Southwest
- 16:** Closets and Historic Bathroom, Facing South
- 17:** Historic Bathroom, Facing South
- 18:** Entrance to Mound Interpretive Exhibit, Facing East
- 19:** Mound Interpretive Exhibit, Facing East



451 CONNECTICUT STREET
FORT MYERS BEACH (LEE COUNTY), FLORIDA



Original with copy of records in
New York
James Stewart, Grand Juror
Full Space Book, Public

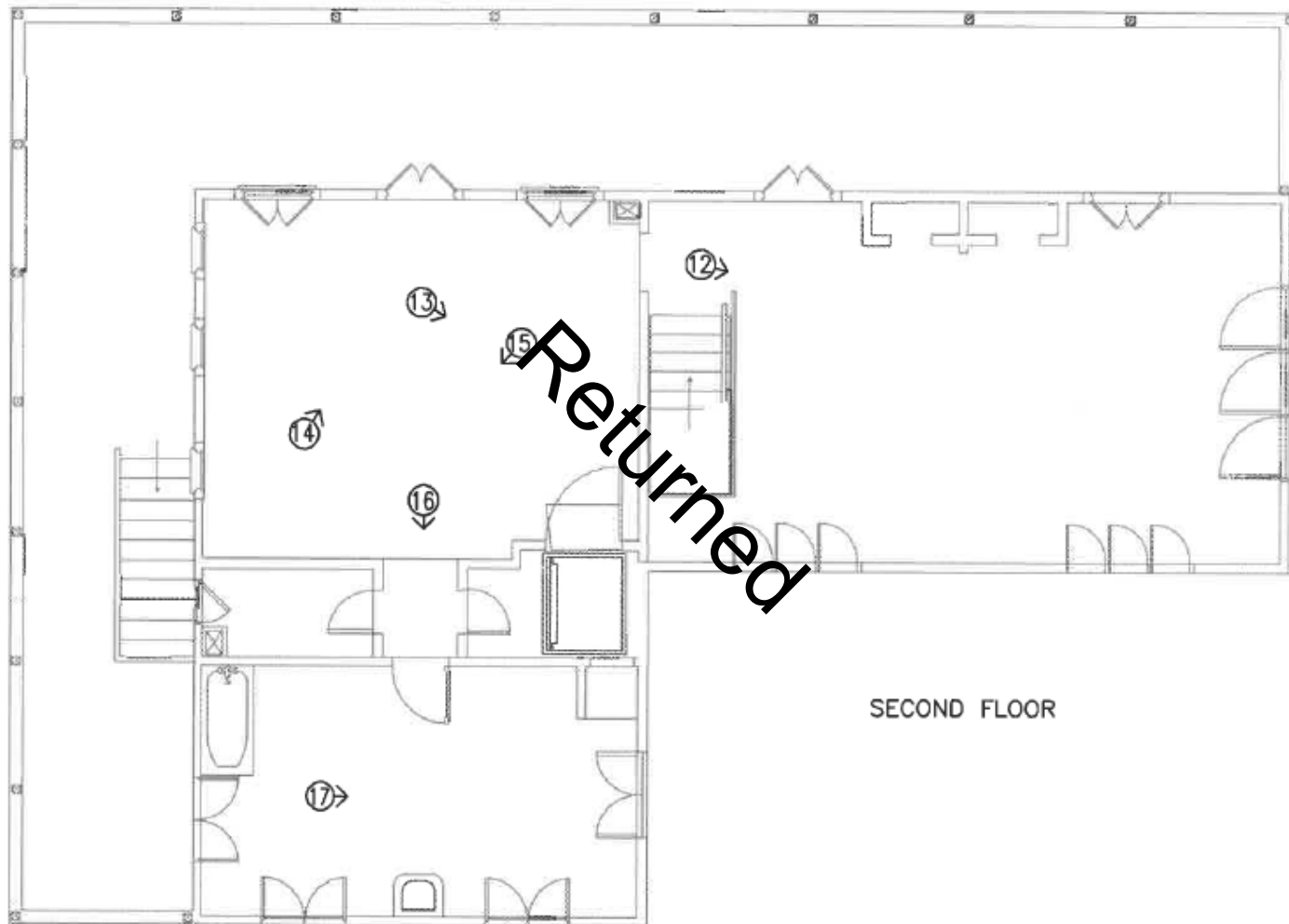
Yellow Knight Request Requested By:
the Adm. Inmate
Office of Public Protection
300 South Broadway Street
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74103-0000
Phone: 1-800-857-7776
Fax: 918-545-6430

DRAWN BY: W. CARL SNYDER
DRAWING DATE: FEBRUARY 2018

THE MOUND HOUSE PRELIMINARY PLAN WAS DRAWN BY ALSTON USING AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS AND LIME CONCRETE PREPARED BY ALTON GIBSON. MOUND HOUSE, FIRST MOUND BEACH, EACH SHOWING THE FRAMES AND ORIENTATION OF THE PHOTO TAKEN OF THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY BUILDINGS ON THE PROPERTY AND SURROUNDING ARE. THE SCALE OF THE SIZE AND PLANT PLANS WERE DRAWN IN APPROXIMATE SCALE.

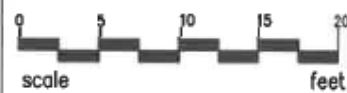
DRAWING NUMBER N/A SHEET NO. 2 OF 3

MAP REVISITED BY: CARL SHAW
FLORIDA BUREAU OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
P.O. BOX 1600
300 SOUTH BROWNSHAW STREET
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32309-0250
PHONE NUMBER (850) 245-6333
TOLL FREE NUMBER 1-800-7276
FAX NUMBER (850) 245-6436



SECOND FLOOR

MOUND HOUSE
451 CONNECTICUT STREET
FORT MYERS BEACH (LEE COUNTY), FLORIDA



REUSE, AND COPY OR FORWARD TO:
After Date
Where Works, Read Date
Put Open Book, Public

Notes: 1-400-443-4210
2-400-443-4210
3-400-443-4210

Drawn by: V.C. DURL, SHAW'S
Checked by: J. D. DURL, SHAW'S
Designated: J. D. DURL, SHAW'S
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

Drawn by: V.C. DURL, SHAW'S
Checked by: J. D. DURL, SHAW'S
Designated: J. D. DURL, SHAW'S
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

Mound House


451 Connecticut Street
Fort Myers Beach, Lee County
Florida

Lat./Long. Coordinates:
26.446092 -81.927852

UTM:
17R 407494 2925421

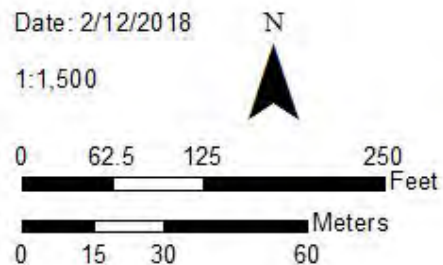
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Legend

 Proposed NR Boundary

Date: 2/12/2018

1:1,500



Basemap Source: Source: Esri,
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,
and the GIS User Community



Mound House

451 Connecticut Street
Fort Myers Beach, Lee County
Florida

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26.446092 -81.927852

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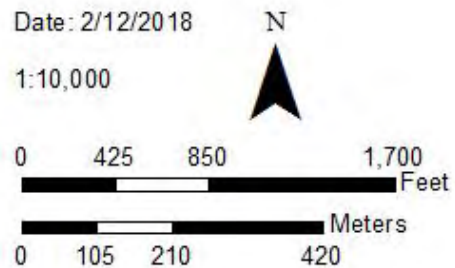
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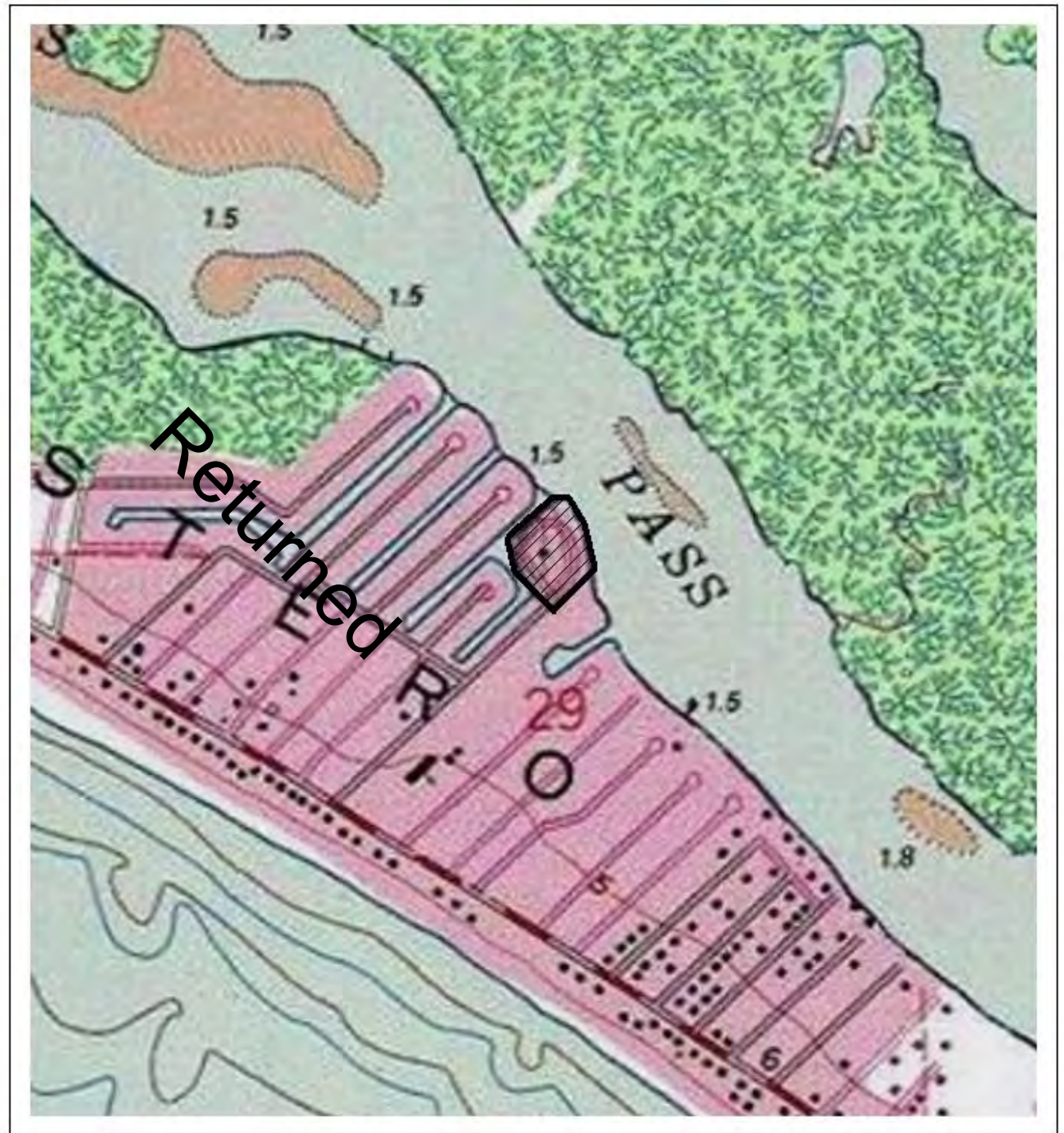
 Proposed NR Boundary

Date: 2/12/2018

1:10,000



Basemap Source: 2013 National
Geographic Society, i-cubed



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places**

**Comments
Evaluation/Return Sheet**

Property Name: Mound House

Property Location: Fort Meyers Beach, Lee County, Florida

Reference Number: 100002723

Date of Return: 8/6/18

Reason for Return

The major reason for the return of the Mound House nomination is so that its author can address substantive deficiencies with the Criterion D argument. Given the rarity of As currently presented, the documentation asserts retention of “sufficient integrity” in several places, yet fails to discuss the site’s remaining stratigraphic integrity and only presents the broadest range of research topics. A small number of research questions to which archeological data gathered from the Mound House site either have or could reasonably be expected to provide significant insights need to be presented as part of the support for the site’s archeological significance.

Nomination Summary

The Mound House is identified as significant under Criteria A (Exploration and Settlement, Community Planning/Development), C (Architecture), and D (Archeology: Prehistoric). The periods of significance associated with the property is 100 B.C. – A.D. 700, and 1909-1952. The level of significance is not specified—either within the nomination or by the nominating authority in Section 3. After reading the nomination, it appears that the building is significant at the local level whereas the archeology, once properly supported, could be argued to be significant at the state level. Please provide a statement that identifies the level of significance based on the areas of significance.

The period of significance is defined as 1909-1952, but the house itself has been “restored” to its 1921 appearance. There is no justification based on significance or integrity to extend the period of significance to 1952. Please re-evaluate and justify the period of significance.

Archeological Integrity

The nomination is inconsistent in its depiction of the mound’s subsurface integrity. While on the one hand, it opens with the assertion that “. . . the Calusa mound site itself is intact and has been

heavily studied” (Section 7, p. 1), the fact that the 1958 swimming pool cut into the mound begs the question of exactly how much of the mound remains intact. Moreover, the revelation that “Due to poor documentation, the exact records of the discoveries from the 1958 excavation are missing . . .” (Section 7, p. 5) would appear to undermine that argument. Therefore, it might be helpful to elicit the assistance of archeological staff to review the Criterion D discussion and assist in its revision. Some strong summary statements about what has been learned at this site would go far in supporting the Criterion D argument. The fact that so much of the Calusa archeology discussion relies on information from Mound Key does little to support how this site has expanded our understanding of Calusa culture, subsistence, and lifeways.

The summary provided in Section 7, p. 6 could be more specific while still retaining its brevity. What exactly was learned here? A few short, declarative sentences will serve the Criterion D argument better than assertions of “a more robust understanding of the site.” Moreover, use of the word “mitigation” at the top of this same page suggests that the work was done as some sort of a Section 106 consultation. If that is not the case, then definitely avoid use of the word “mitigation” in relation to the archeology conducted here.

And finally, the discussion in Section 8, p. 10 is where several specific statements need to be made regarding (1) what has been learned from the site to date and (2) what its remaining data potential consists of. The data potential piece is where a modest number of specific archeological research questions should be inserted. These research questions do not need to be answered. Instead, they are simply the kinds of important questions that the site can be expected to speak to. As currently configured, the blanket suggestion that “future investigations could uncover more” is not sufficiently specific and does not help make the Criterion D argument.

Boundary Justification

This should be revisited as the assertion that “all of the historic resources associated with the Mound House” are contained within the current boundaries is at odds with the statement in Section 7, p. 6 characterizing the mound as “the last remaining section of what was originally a shell ridge which extended northward along the coast of Estero Island.” Please modify the justification to reflect the truncated nature of the boundaries.

Other Edits

As long as the author is amending the archeological discussion, there are a few other edits that warrant correction, including:

- Section 7, p. 5—The second sentence of the last paragraph on that page should begin “Owner William H. Long installed . . .”.
- Section 9, p. 1 contains two nearly identical references to the same chapter in the Schober and Corbett references. We would suggest deleting the first “Deconstructing and Reconstructing Caloosahatchee Shell Mound Building” reference as the second is the more complete of the two.

United States Department of the Interior
NPS/NRHP
Evaluation/Return Sheet
Property Name: Mound House
Property Location: Lee County, Florida
Reference Number: 10002723
Date of Return: 08-06-18

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Thank you for the opportunity to read about this intriguing place. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have regarding these comments. We can be reached as follows: Julie (tel.: 202.354.2217; email: julie_ernstein@nps.gov); Jim (tel.: 202.354.2275; email: james_gabbert@nps.gov).

Julie H. Earnstein, Ph.D., RPA
Acting Chief, National Register & NHL Program
Deputy Keeper of the Register

and

James Gabbert
Historian, National Register of Historic Places



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT of STATE

RON DESANTIS
Governor

JENNIFER KENNEDY
Interim Secretary of State

January 31, 2019

Dr. Julie Ernstein, Deputy Keeper and Chief,
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

RE: Resubmission of Mound House National Register Nomination

Dear Dr. Ernstein:

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the **resubmission** for the **Mound House (FMSF#: 8LL00004), in Lee County**, to the National Register of Historic Places. The disk includes only the revised nomination form and continuation sheets, as no new photographs were added. The nomination addresses your comments and those by James Gabbert, which were provided to us August 6, 2018.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (850) 245-6364 if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Ruben A. Acosta
Supervisor, Survey & Registration
Bureau of Historic Preservation

RAA/raa

Enclosures

