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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National 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 an 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 Seminole Heights Residential District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Bounded by Osborne, Florida, Hanna and Cherokee Avenues N/A  not for publication

city or town Tampa N/A  vicinity

state Florida code FL county Hillsborough code 057 zip code 33603

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.)

Suzanne P. Walker / Deputy SHPO 6/28/93  
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources  
 State of 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.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper *Andrew Byrne* **Entered in the National Register** Date of Action 8/5/93

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)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
325	113	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
325	113	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(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/School

Religion/Church

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Education/School

Religion/Church

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Bungalow

No Style/Wood Frame Vernacular

Gothic Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Wood

roof Asphalt

other Wood: Porch

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 67) 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)

Architecture

Community Planning and Development

**Period of Significance**

c. 1912-1939

**Significant Dates**

c. 1912

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Seminole Heights Residential District  
Name of Property

Hillsborough, Florida  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 170 apprx.

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

17	356460	30916620
Zone	Easting	Northing

3 

17	357000	3098220
Zone	Easting	Northing

2 

17	356460	30918220
Zone	Easting	Northing

4 

17	357000	3096620
Zone	Easting	Northing

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 Carl Shiver, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservatio date June 16, 1993

street & number 500 South Bronough Street telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida 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 N/A

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**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 to amend existing 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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

Description

Summary Description

The Seminole Heights Residential District is an approximately 170 acre residential neighborhood located about three miles from downtown Tampa. The district contains mainly single family dwellings dating from c. 1912 to 1939. In addition, the area contains a school, several churches and other buildings associated with non-commercial functions. The houses in the district are mainly bungalows, but a wide variety of architectural styles--typical of those that were popular in the first half of the 20th century in the United States--are represented in the neighborhood. The district comprises 438 structures, of which 325 are contributing and 113 are noncontributing. Noncontributing buildings include those erected after 1942 or those constructed prior to that date that have been severely altered.

Present and Original Physical Appearance

The city of Tampa is part of a metropolitan area of more than one million residents. It is the seat of Hillsborough County and is located on Old Tampa Bay about 20 miles from the Gulf of Mexico. The Seminole Heights Residential District is one of numerous residential subdivisions that grew up surrounding downtown Tampa in the first two decades of the twentieth century, when the community was still experiencing rapid population growth as a result of expansion of the cigar, transportation, citrus, and phosphate industries. The boundaries of the district are defined by U.S. Highway I-275 on the east, North Florida Avenue on the west, Osborne Avenue on the south and Hanna Avenue on the north. Before the construction of I-275, the limits of the neighborhood were less well defined than they are today. One reason for this is that the neighborhood grew up as a series of small contiguous subdivisions, rather than as a single unified development.

Florida Avenue was the traditional western limit of the neighborhood. That thoroughfare historically linked some of the northwestern Tampa subdivisions with the downtown area and with the community of Sulphur Springs. Development along both sides of the roadway was mainly commercial, with the businesses serving residential areas on both sides of it. The eastern limit of Seminole Heights was Nebraska Avenue (State Road 60) that linked downtown Tampa with the communities of Sulphur Springs and Temple Terrace, and there was very little development east of Nebraska

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Description

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Avenue at that point north of downtown Tampa during the period of significance covered by this nomination proposal.

A one block wide strip between I-275 and Nebraska Avenue is all that remains of the neighborhood east of Cherokee Avenue; therefore, the physical and visual association with the buildings in the historic district has been lost. Development of the area north of Hanna Avenue also came at a later period. The southern limit of the Seminole Heights area was probably Martin Luther King Boulevard (formerly Buffalo Avenue) which lies about seven blocks south of Osborne Avenue, but development of this area was rather spotty, and most of the buildings are either badly altered or represent a later period of development. For the reasons given above, the boundaries of the district are fairly well defined.

Most of the streetscapes in the district present similar vistas: asphalt or brick streets lined with small bungalows or wood frame vernacular houses set beneath a canopy of large live oaks, palmettos, and other trees. Most, but not all, of the streets feature curbs and sidewalks. Most of the buildings in the district have an east-west orientation, with the majority of the ones having a north-south axis being found between Branch and Central avenues north of Henry Street. The structures that anchor the north and south boundaries of the district are the Seminole Heights United Methodist Church (Photo 15) at 6111 Central Avenue and the Seminole Heights High School (Photo 44) at 5000 Central Avenue. Both of these landmarks meet the criteria for individual nomination to the National Register.

Central Avenue was the first street to be developed. It paralleled the trolley line constructed in 1912 to link downtown Tampa with Sulphur Springs. No evidence of this line exists today. The house lots along Central Avenue are somewhat larger than the others in the district and, for that reason, some of the older and larger residences are found along Central. The house at 5902 Central Avenue (Photo 21) was constructed c. 1916 and combines features of the Colonial Revival style with those of bungalows which had been rapidly gaining in popularity in Tampa since the turn of the century. The two-story structure has a one-story, L-shaped veranda which embraces the main facade and one of the side elevations. Perhaps the most striking feature of the residence is the pedimented roof gable containing a "Palladian" attic window/louwer vent. Other fairly large residences on Central Avenue include the bungalow at 5606 (Photo 22) and the wood frame vernacular structure at 5912 (Photo 23).

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Description

The overwhelming majority of the residences in the Seminole Heights Residential District are bungalows. Most of the bungalows in the neighborhood show the influences of the Craftsman movement and are rather small structures with a rectangular plan, gable roof, and full-width porch featuring columns set on masonry piers. Some of the bungalows in the district, however, are more elaborate than the usual run. The residences at 5701 Central Avenue (Photo 25) and 5806 Branch Avenue (Photo 26) are among the more impressive Craftsman style bungalows in the area. Both structures incorporate wood siding and stone as exterior materials. In both cases rough cut stone is used for the foundation, chimney, and balustrade wall of the porch. The residence at 5806 also features a "camelback" second story, and the influence of Japanese architectural traditions can be seen in the upturned and rounded rafter ends and porch trusses.

Only a handful of residences in the historic district exhibits styles other than bungalow or wood frame vernacular. The house at 5807 Branch Avenue (Photo 42) is a Mediterranean Revival style structure constructed c. 1925. It is a masonry building with stuccoed exterior walls and features a flat roof surrounded by a parapet. Its visual character is probably rooted in the Mission style which is often noted for its lack of ornamentation. A house similar in character and age is the one at 5507 Suwannee Avenue (Photo 44). The Mediterranean Revival style--even in sometimes elaborate and fanciful manifestations--is well represented in the Tampa area; however, the housing stock of some of the residential subdivisions that developed in the environs of the city during the same period of significance as Seminole Heights seem restricted mainly to bungalows.

The most significant resource in the district, the Hillsborough High School (Photo 44) at 5000 Central Avenue, is a Gothic Revival style building constructed in 1928. It is a major contributing resource within the neighborhood. The structure occupies all of a large city block located at the south end of the historic district. Designed by local architect Francis Kennard, it is one of the most ornate schools in the Tampa area. It was built to accommodate over 2,000 students. Some alterations and renovations have taken place in the 65 years of the school's existence, but the building retains most of its original physical integrity and is certainly one of the largest and most significant Gothic Revival style resources in Tampa. The red brick facade features a variety of detail. The main

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Description

block of the building is composed of several wings with flat roofs surrounded with castellated parapets. There is a large clock tower on the south and the walls are decorated with a variety of buttresses, spires, and string courses. The building also has pointed arch, tracery windows with stained glass. Four noncontributing structures of recent construction are also located on the school property.

Secondary Structures

Outbuildings and secondary structures in the district are mainly limited to small one-story wood frame garages and are not shown on the district map or included in the resource count. Because of visual obstructions and limited access to the properties in the district, obtaining an accurate count and description of such resources proved to be impossible. The majority of those observed appeared to be garages and storage sheds constructed at the same period as the primary building.

Noncontributing Structures

The noncontributing sites in the district comprise severely altered buildings erected during the period of significance and those that were less than 50 years old.



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Photographs

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List of Photographs

1. 200 Block of Hillsborough Avenue, Seminole Heights Residential District
2. Tampa (Hillsborough County), Florida
3. Lori Thompson
4. 1992
5. Historic Tampa/Hillsborough County Preservation Board
6. Looking South from Suwannee Avenue
7. Photo No. 1 of 50

Numbers 2-5 are the same for the remaining photographs

1. 5100 Block of Branch Avenue
6. Looking North from Wilder Avenue
7. Photo No. 2 of 50

1. 5101-5107 Branch Avenue
2. West Facades, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 3 of 50

1. 5400 Block of Suwannee Avenue
6. Looking North from Hillsborough Avenue
7. Photo No. 4 of 50

1. 5500 Block of Suwannee Avenue
6. West Side of Street, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 5 of 50

1. 6000 Block of Suwannee Avenue
6. West Side of Street, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 6 of 50

1. 5100 Block of Seminole Avenue
6. West Side of Street, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 7 of 50

1. 401-405 Hanna Avenue
6. North Facades, Looking South
7. Photo No. 8 of 50

1. 300-400 Block of Paris Street
6. North Side of Street, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 9 of 50

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Photographs

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1. 300-400 Block of Idlewild Avenue
6. North Side of Street, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 10 of 50
  
1. 5700 Block of Cherokee Avenue
6. Looking North from Powhattan Avenue
7. Photo No. 11 of 50
  
1. 5600 Block of Cherokee Avenue
6. Looking South from Powhattan Avenue
7. Photo No. 12 of 50
  
1. 5702 & 5704 Cherokee Avenue
6. East Facades, Looking West
7. Photo No. 13 of 50
  
1. 6100 Block of Central Avenue
6. Looking South from Hanna Avenue
7. Photo No. 14 of 50
  
1. 6111 Central Avenue
6. West Facade, Looking East
7. Photo No. 15 of 50
  
1. 6108-6116 Central Avenue
6. East Facade & North Elevation, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 16 of 50
  
1. 407-411 Hanna Avenue
6. North Facade, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 17 of 50
  
1. 6108-6116 Central Avenue
6. East Facade, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 18 of 50
  
1. 5913 Branch Avenue
6. West Facade, Looking East
7. Photo No. 19 of 50
  
1. 303 & 305 Paris Street
2. North Facades, Looking Southwest
3. Photo No. 20 of 50

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Photographs

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1. 5902 Central Avenue
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 21 of 50
  
1. 5606 Central Avenue
6. East Facade & North Elevation, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 22 of 50
  
1. 5912 Central Avenue
6. East Facade, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 23 of 50
  
1. 5701 Central Avenue
6. West Facade, Looking East
7. Photo No 24 of 50
  
1. 5710 Central Avenue
6. West Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 25 of 50
  
1. 5806 Branch Avenue
6. East Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 26 of 50
  
1. 6008-6010 Central Avenue
6. East Facades & North Elevations, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 27 of 50
  
1. 6002 Central Avenue
6. East Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 28 of 50
  
1. 5601 & 5603 Central Avenue
6. West Facades, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 29 of 50
  
1. 5704 Central Avenue
6. East Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 30 of 50
  
1. 5509 Central Avenue
6. West Facade, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 31 of 50

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Photographs

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1. 5309 Seminole Avenue
6. West Facade, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 32 of 50

1. 5307 Seminole Avenue
6. West Facade, Looking East
7. Photo No. 33 of 50

1. 5401 Seminole Avenue
6. West Facade, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 34 of 50

1. 5402 Branch Avenue
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 35 of 50

1. 5405 Branch Avenue
6. West Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 36 of 50

1. 5114 Suwannee Avenue
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 37 of 50

1. 5704 Suwannee Avenue
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 38 of 50

1. 5902 & 5904 Suwannee Avenue
6. East Facades, Looking West
7. Photo No. 39 of 50

1. 5210 Seminole Avenue
6. East Facade & North Elevation, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 40 of 50

1. 5807 & 5809 Branch Avenue
6. West Elevations, Looking East
7. Photo No. 41 of 50

1. 5805 & 5807 Branch Avenue
6. West Elevations, Looking East
7. Photo No. 42 of 50

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Photographs

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1. 5507 Suwannee Avenue
6. West Elevation, Looking East
7. Photo No. 43 of 50
  
1. 5000 Central Avenue
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 44 of 50
  
1. 5113 Branch Avenue
6. West Facade, Looking East
7. Photo No. 45 of 50
  
1. 5118 Branch Avenue
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 46 of 50
  
1. 5707 Suwannee Avenue
6. West Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 47 of 50
  
1. 6010 Suwannee Avenue
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 48 of 50
  
1. 305-309 Paris Street
6. North Facades, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 49 of 50
  
1. 310 & 314 Paris Street
6. South Facades, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 50 of 50

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Contributing Buildings

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List of Contributing Buildings

Branch Avenue

Branch Avenue (cont.)

4916

5405

5407

5002

5408

5004

5008

5501

5010

5502

5014

5505

5016

5506

5018

5508

5020

5510

5101

5601

5102

5603

5103

5604

5104

5605

5105

5607

5106

5609

5107

5610

5108

5109

5701

5110

5702

5111

5704

5115

5705

5117

5706

5119

5709

5120

5710

5201

5802

5202

5805

5303

5806

5205

5807

5210

5809

5810

5301

5901

5302

5902

5303

5904

5305

5906

5309

5908

5310

5909

5402

5911

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Contributing Buildings

Branch Avenue (cont.)

5912

5913

6002

6006

6010

6108

6110

Central Avenue

4901

4905

4913

5000

5102

5106

5108

5110

5112

5114

5117

5118

5202

5205

5206

5207

5208

5209

5210

5211

5301

5302

5303

5306

5308

5310

5406

Central Avenue (cont.)

5410

5502

5504

5505

5506

5509

5510

5601

5602

5603

5606

5609

5610

5701

5704

5706

5707

5709

5801

5805

5902

5903

5912

6002

6006

6008

6010

6106

6108-16

6111

Cherokee Avenue

5502

5504

5506

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Contributing Buildings

Cherokee Avenue (cont.)

5610

5704

5706

5708

5710

5806

5902

5904

5905

5906

5909

Clifton Street

305

306

308

312

314

316

Comanche Avenue

307

Frierson Street

504

505

Giddens Street

504

505

507

Hanna Avenue

309

401

Hanna Avenue (cont.)

403

405

407-411

Henry Avenue

302

304

308

Idlewild Avenue

302

303

304

305

307

308

310

402

403

404

405

507

508

510

514

Paris Street

302

303

310

406

407

408

409



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Contributing Buildings

Seminole Avenue

5102  
5103  
5104  
5106  
5107  
5108  
5110  
5111  
5112  
5114  
5115  
5116  
5118  
5119  
5120

5201  
5202  
5203  
5207  
5209  
5210

5301  
5302  
5303  
5304  
5306  
5307  
5308  
5309  
5310

5401  
5402  
5403  
5406  
5409  
5410

5501  
5504  
5505  
5506

Seminole Avenue (cont.)

5508  
  
5601  
5602  
5605  
5607  
5608  
5609  
  
5701  
5702  
5706  
5707  
5709  
5710

Suwannee Avenue

4902  
4904  
4911  
4612  
4913  
4915  
4916  
4917  
4918  
4920  
4922  
4923  
  
5021  
  
5101  
5105  
5109  
5110  
5111  
5114  
5115  
5117  
5118  
5119  
5120

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Contributing Buildings

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Suwannee Avenue (cont.)

5202  
5204  
5205  
5206  
5207  
5209

5302  
5304  
5306

5401  
5402  
5405  
5406  
5408  
5410

5501  
5502  
5504  
5505  
5506  
5507  
5508  
5510

5601  
5602  
5605  
5607  
5608  
5609  
5610

5700  
5701  
5704  
5708

5901  
5902  
5903  
5904

Suwannee Avenue (cont.)

5905  
5906  
5909  
5910  
5911  
5912

6001  
6002  
6004  
6005  
6006  
6009

6101  
6102  
6104  
6105  
6109

Wilder Avenue

217

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Noncontributing Buildings

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Noncontributing Buildings

Branch Avenue

4918  
4920

5006  
5012

5113  
5114  
5118

5206  
5209

5401

5507  
5509  
5510

5602  
5606  
5608  
5609

5707  
5708

5808

5910

6004  
6008

6102  
6104  
6106

Central Avenue (cont.)

5000 A  
5000 B  
5000 C  
5000 D

5116

5201

5304

5408

5607

5702

5703  
5705

5708  
5710

5800  
5803

5901  
5905

5908  
5909

5910

6102

Cherokee Avenue

5702

5802

5907  
5908

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## Noncontributing Buildings

Cherokee Avenue (cont.)

5911

Clifton Street

310

Frierson Street

503

Giddens Street

501

503

Henry Avenue

306

Idlewild Avenue

301

407

408

Paris Street

301

305

306

307

309

314

403

405

410

Seminole Avenue

5101

5105

5109

Seminole Avenue (cont.)

5113

5206

5405

5407

5408

5502

5503

5507

5603

5604

5610

5703

5704

5705

Suwannee Avenue

4906

4908

4914

4921

5103

5107

5112

5113

5116

5203

5205

5210

5303

5305

5309

5407

5409

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Noncontributing Buildings

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Suwannee Avenue (cont.)

5509

5603

5604

5907

6008

6010

6103

6107

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Significance

Summary Paragraph

The Seminole Heights Residential District is significant under criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture and Community Planning and Development. The district developed as a distinct residential area beginning c. 1912 along the streetcar route between downtown Tampa and the suburban community of Sulphur Springs. This "bungalow" neighborhood is representative of those middle class residential areas that developed in Florida's larger cities during the 1910s and 1920s. The district is also significant for a handful of landmark buildings that individually meet the criteria for listing in the National Register. Chief among these is the large Gothic Revival style Hillsborough High School, which was constructed in 1928.

Supporting Narrative

The heart of the city of Tampa is found at the confluence of the Hillsborough River and Old Tampa Bay. The area was visited as early as the sixteenth century by Spanish explorers but had no permanent settlement until the U.S. Army established Fort Brooke in 1824 during the First Seminole War. The small town of Tampa grew up around the fort, and when Hillsborough County was created in 1834, Tampa was made the county seat. Poor transportation and primitive living conditions limited development of the area until the South Florida Railroad connected the community with the city of Jacksonville in 1884. The construction of deep water port facilities, the discovery of commercial grade phosphate deposits in the vicinity of Tampa, the extensive planting of citrus groves, and the establishment of the cigar industry in the community, precipitated a population and building boom that Tampa was to enjoy for more than three decades.

The downtown area of Tampa began to expand rapidly in the 1890s, quickly producing new suburban residential areas and satellite communities such as Ybor City, West Tampa, Port Tampa, and Sulphur Springs. In 1883, Tampa had a population of less than 1,000 residents. By 1901 that number had grown to more than 15,000, but by 1925 the number of permanent residents had incredibly grown to 125,000. The turn of the century saw the beginnings of the growth of the community of Sulphur Springs when a developer purchased property surrounding the mineral spring north of Tampa and began constructing bathhouses and tourist cottages to attract visitors to this natural attraction. In response to the growing popularity of the recreational area, the Sulphur Springs Traction Company constructed a trolley line

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Significance

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linking downtown Tampa with Sulphur Springs. The line opened for business in 1907.

The popularity of Sulphur Springs as a vacation and recreation area made property between the communities-- particularly that found along the trolley line--ideal for development. Development of Seminole Heights began in 1911 when the Seminole Development Company purchased forty acres of land just north of the Tampa city limits. This tract encompasses the area bounded by Hillsborough Avenue, Florida Avenue, Wilder Avenue, and Central Avenue and remains the core of the historic district. Subsequent subdivisions platted over the next decade expanded the neighborhood until it assumed approximately its present configuration.

The character of the area was middle class and distinguished by the bungalow. Bungalows began to appear in Tampa about 1903 and are found to some degree in all of the residential neighborhoods that began to develop prior to the 1920s. Seminole Heights, however, is one of the few residential areas in the community where the bungalow almost completely dominates the landscape and is the best preserved of those remaining areas. A variety of bungalow designs are represented in the district, most of them based on the Craftsman models. Some are little more than wood frame vernacular structures distinguishable as a bungalow only by the distinctive porch representative of the building type. Others are relatively ornate and make use of a variety of building materials, including wood, stone, and stucco to produce attractive residences. Perhaps the most distinctive bungalows in the neighborhood take their inspiration from Japanese architecture, employing the visual motifs on exposed wood members and in the arrangement of stone foundations, chimneys, and porch elements.

The district contains a sprinkling of non-residential buildings, including commercial structures, churches, and one large school complex. These buildings, like the residences, were constructed mainly in the 1920s. The most important of the churches is the Seminole Heights Methodist Church, located at the southeast corner of Hanna Avenue and Central Avenue. The large, red brick, English Gothic Revival style building is one of the two most prominent architectural landmarks in the district. The other is the Gothic Revival style Hillsborough High School located at the south boundary of the district.

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Significance

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The Seminole Heights neighborhood was established and grew up in response to the rapidly expanding character of the city of Tampa. The constant need for more commercial property in the downtown area prompted the development of residential subdivisions ever more distant from the business center of the city. The location of Seminole Heights almost three miles north of the downtown area was also made possible by the existence of street rail transportation that connected the center of Tampa with the community of Sulphur Springs. This pattern of development is reflected both in the location and present appearance of the district. The architectural character of the district represents a particular period in the history of the economic and social development of the city of Tampa.



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Boundary Description & Justification

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Verbal Boundary Description

The official boundaries of the Seminole Heights Residential District are those shown on the historic district map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the most significant concentration of extant resources located in the area historically known as the Seminole Heights neighborhood. Those resources are associated with the early residential suburban development of the city of Tampa during the period c. 1912-1939. The boundaries follow historic platted streets and subdivision block and lot lines. No significant concentration of historic resources associated with the development of the Seminole Heights area are located outside the boundaries shown on the district map.