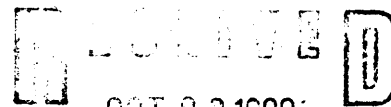


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 18). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Tarpon Springs Historic District
other names/site number N/A 8PI 1712

2. Location

street & number See continuation sheet N/A not for publication
city, town Tarpons Springs N/A vicinity
state Florida code FL county Pinellas code 103 zip code 34688

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>145</u>	<u>73</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>145</u>	<u>73</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 3

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.
Suzanne P. Walker (deputy) 10/17/90
Signature of certifying official Date
State Historic Preservation Officer, 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.
Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. Coral R. Shull 12-6-90
 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 Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Commerce/Trade

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Commerce/Trade

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

No Style/Wood Frame Vernacular

No Style/Masonry Vernacular

Bungalow

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Wood: Weatherboard

Brick

roof Composition Shingle

other Wood: Porch

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See continuation Sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Commerce
Exploration/Settlement
Ethnic Heritage

Period of Significance

1881-1943

Significant Dates

1881
1894
1905

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acres of property 70 apprx. _____

UTM References

A

1	7
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3	2	7	0	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	3	1	4	8	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

 Zone Easting Northing

C

1	7
---	---

3	2	8	1	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	3	1	4	2	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

B

1	7
---	---

3	2	8	1	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	3	1	4	8	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

 Zone Easting Northing

D

1	7
---	---

3	2	7	0	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	3	1	4	2	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title W. Carl Shiver, Historic Sites Specialist
 organization Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation date October 17, 1990
 street & number 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (904) 487-2333
 city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

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Description

Present and Original Physical Appearance

The Tarpon Springs Historic District comprises approximately 70 acres of the historic residential and commercial areas of the city of Tarpon Springs, Florida. There are 145 contributing and 73 noncontributing buildings, a ratio of 66 percent to 34 percent. With the exception of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral, which was constructed in 1943, all of the contributing structures were built between 1881 and 1935. The buildings in the district represent a number of architectural styles and types that were popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The most prominent styles are Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Bungalow, Mediterranean Revival, and Shingle Style. The district also contains a large percentage of wood frame vernacular residences and masonry vernacular commercial buildings. The rough boundaries of the district are Read Street on the north, Boyer Street on the south, Levis Avenue on the east, and Canal Street on the west.

The City of Tarpon Springs is located in Pinellas County on the west coast of Florida near the mid-point of the Florida peninsula. It is located approximately 30 miles northwest of Tampa and 35 miles north of St. Petersburg. The corporate limits of the municipality comprise about twelve square miles and include portions of the Anclote River and its surrounding bayous. Tarpon Springs is the northernmost city in Pinellas County, and is part of an area of intense development along the west coast of Florida stretching almost 100 miles from New Port Richey in Pasco County on the north to Venice in Sarasota County on the south. Tarpon Springs is the sixth largest city in Pinellas County, with a population of approximately 15,500 residents. The climate is semitropical. Commercial and sport fishing, sponging, and tourism have historically formed the economic bases for the community.

Some residences and commercial buildings in the historic district date from the late nineteenth century and are associated with the city's first period of development, when the city served primarily as a winter resort for wealthy northerners. The majority, however, were built between 1905 and 1935 when the community emerged as a leading sponge producing center. The Florida Land Boom of 1920 to 1925 provided little added impetus for new construction within the district, but a few important commercial buildings and a number of residences were erected during the 1920s, some of them after the boom had collapsed. Because of the continued survival of the sponge industry during

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the 1930s, Tarpon Springs weathered the first years of the Great Depression better than some other Florida communities, and the construction of new buildings continued, albeit at a much slower rate, until about 1935. In fact, St. Nicholas Cathedral (Photo 15), probably the most significant building in Tarpon Springs associated with the Greek community, was constructed in 1943 during the height of World War II. It, however, represents an exception to local building trends during this period and is included as a contributing structure only because of its important association with the Greek population of the city.

The early residential development of Tarpon Springs (1883-1905) was concentrated around Spring Bayou. Building types common to the early period of development were wood frame residences and several large hotels. The private residences, particularly those around the Bayou, are among the finest ever built in Tarpon Springs. The oldest building in the district, the Anson Safford House at 23 Parkin Court, was constructed about 1883 (Photo 16). Approximately a dozen buildings in the historic district, all of them originally residences, appear to have been constructed before 1900. Tarpon Springs experienced moderate growth during the first decade of the 1900s. The buildings within the district dating from these years represent a transitional period of development. The pre-1905 buildings are generally larger in scale and exhibit better design quality and materials.

The early commercial development of the district occurred along Tarpon Avenue. Many of the early wood frame commercial buildings were destroyed by fire in 1894 and were subsequently replaced with masonry structures. The oldest commercial building in the historic district is the G.W. Fernald building (Photo 18) at 121 East Tarpon Avenue, constructed immediately after the fire. By 1895 Tarpon Springs had approximately 135 buildings. The city streets were laid out in a traditional grid, except around Spring Bayou, and in the vicinity of some waterways where the streets conformed to the shape of the natural landscape features.

The rapid growth of the sponge industry and the arrival of the Greek population, beginning in 1905, produced a period of unprecedented economic and physical growth for the town. Sponge warehouses, packing plants, and wholesale outlets replaced the tourist hotel as major business buildings. Simple wood frame residences were constructed on the fringes of the commercial section of town and just outside the boundary of the grand winter

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cottages around Spring Bayou. The Greeks also built their own church, commercial buildings, and social clubs. However, with the exception of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral and several downtown businesses, most of the development associated with the Greek community is located outside the proposed historic district.

The city continued growing during the 1920s. The rampant speculation that was prevalent in most other Florida communities during the land boom of the early to mid-1920s was not strongly felt in Tarpon Springs, which remained a community economically dependant largely on commercial sponging and fishing. Some new construction, however, took place along Tarpon Avenue and began to develop along Pinellas Avenue. Construction activity slowed considerably in the 1930s and took place mainly in the northern section of town where facilities associated with the sponge industry were located.

The boundaries of the district are necessarily irregular in order to include the most significant buildings and topographical features of the area while excluding most non-contributing structures. Roughly, the district boundary runs from Read Street at the intersection of Canal on the north, moving east and south in an irregular line southeast along West Orange Street to Hibiscus Street. The boundary continues east to include the contributing structures along East Tarpon Avenue up to Levis Avenue. From there returns to Pinellas Avenue by way of East Court Street where it juts south two blocks to include the Old Tarpon Springs City Hall and the Arcade Hotel. It continues west along Boyer Street and meanders north and west along Banana, Lemon, and Bath streets to South Spring Boulevard. The western boundary is drawn across Spring Bayou to include natural features that are distinctive and influenced the settlement patterns of the community, and returns to its beginning point.

Buildings contributing to the district are drawn from a wide variety of popular styles and types of architecture. Most are either Frame Vernacular or masonry Vernacular. Bungalows are the only styled buildings represented in any appreciable numbers. A few buildings constructed during 1920 exhibit a Mediterranean Revival influence. Other stylistic categories represented within the district include Shingle, Queen Anne, Neoclassical, Colonial Revival, Second Empire, and Byzantine Revival. Types of historic properties within the Tarpon Springs District include commercial, governmental, religious, educational, and residential buildings

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that are associated with the city's settlement and subsequent development between 1883 and 1943.

Most commercial buildings in Tarpon Springs embody masonry vernacular designs commonly found in the United States during the early twentieth century. The historic commercial buildings in the district were constructed between 1894 and c. 1935. They are located along East Tarpon and Pinellas avenues. They are one- and two-story, attached masonry buildings. They are generally divided horizontally into two zones. The first floor was originally designed for use as public spaces such as banking rooms, insurance offices, lobbies, and retail storefronts with offices, entertainment, and meeting places on the second.

The storefront architecture of these buildings is significant. The storefront was an innovation of the mid-nineteenth century in the United States. The two part block was the most common commercial design used in small cities and towns in the United States between 1850 and 1950. Generally limited to between two and four story buildings, it is characterized by a horizontal division into two distinct zones. The two zones are separated by the use of the interior space of the building. The lower zone is usually reserved for retail space and often contains large plate glass display windows, while the upper part contains space for offices or apartments. The exterior design of the building is usually homogeneous, but in some cases different building materials and exterior fabrics are used to visually divide the two zones.

The Masonry Vernacular storefronts of Tarpon Springs are consistent with the design and materials of historic storefront architecture throughout the United States. The extant commercial buildings in Tarpon Springs were originally red or buff brick or stucco and had flat roofs with parapets. In several instances, the original brick finish has been obscured through painting or the application of stucco. In virtually every instance the buildings have a boxy form and a rectangular plan. Unless they are detached or sited on a corner, they exhibit a single, primary facade where all entrances, windows, and decorative elements are placed. They generally contain linked display windows on the first floor and double-hung sash windows on the second, usually in a 1/1 light pattern. Other noteworthy features of these buildings are corbelling and dentil and dog's tooth string courses. They are also characterized by such features as flat parapet roofs, belt courses, decorative brick work, and date and name panels.

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Among the most striking commercial buildings, and one that breaks with the vernacular tradition, is the Arcade Hotel at 200 South Pinellas Avenue (photo 19). This arcaded block with Spanish Eclectic styling was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984. The arcaded block type commercial building is a variant of the two-part commercial block. It is based on a style derived from loggias - great arcaded porches - built in Italian cities during the Renaissance. Designed primarily for banks and large retail stores, most of the buildings of this type date from the first three decades of the 20th century. Generally two or three stories high, the building type is characterized by a series of tall, evenly spaced, round-arched openings extending across a wide facade.

The Arcade exhibits all of these features. It is a two-story building with a series of round arch openings along its ground level story. The roof is flat with a pent roof overhang running between its corner towers. The roof is surfaced with barrel tile and the exterior wall fabric is smooth stucco. The first story of the arcade is used for retail space for a number of different shops, while the second story contains space for offices.

Residential architecture in the Tarpon Springs district ranges from grandiose mansions to simple wood frame dwellings. Most of the historic residential buildings are simple Frame Vernacular designs built during the first several decades of the community's development. On the fringes of the historic district are Bungalows dating from the 1910s and 1920s. There are scattered examples of the Queen Anne, Shingle, Colonial Revival, and Neoclassical styles within the district.

Frame Vernacular is the dominant architectural style in residential areas throughout the district during all periods of development. Vernacular describes the use of common wood frame construction techniques by lay or self-taught builders, a product of their experience, available resources, and responses to the local environment. The buildings they constructed did not represent stylistically the major contemporary trends and were not based on formal academic or technical training. In Tarpon Springs, like elsewhere in Florida, Frame Vernacular buildings are generally one or two stories in height, with a balloon frame structural system constructed of pine. They have a regular plan, usually rectangular, and are mounted on masonry piers, most often made of bricks. They have gable or hip roofs steep enough to

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accommodate an attic. Horizontal weatherboard or drop siding were the most widely used exterior wall surface materials. Wood shingles were used originally as a roof surfacing material, but they have nearly always been replaced by composition shingles in a variety of shapes and colors. The facade was often placed on the gable end, making the height of the facade greater than its width. Porches were also a common feature and include one- and two-story end porches or verandas. Decoration was sparse. It was generally limited to ornamental woodwork, including a variety of patterned shingles, turned porch columns and balustrades, and ornamental eaves and porch brackets.

During the 1910s and 1920s Frame Vernacular remained an important influence on the architecture of the city. Its design reflected a trend toward simplicity. Residences influenced by it were smaller than those of previous decades, usually measuring only one story in height. The decrease in size of the private residence was largely a reflection of the diminishing size of the American family. Another influence on residential design was the proliferation of the automobile which resulted in the addition of garages and carports. The Bungalow became the major stylistic model during and after World War I, Not only was it present in its pure form, but it was a major influence on the vernacular architecture of the period.

A typical Frame Vernacular building is the residence at 29 West Orange Avenue (photo 20). It is a two-story frame building with a steeply pitched gable roof with an intersecting cross-gable. The building is sheathed in drop siding and rests atop concrete piers. The residence features cross-hip roof extensions, and a wrap-around veranda with turned posts and balustrade. The exterior fabric is drop siding, and the windows are double hung sashes with 1/1 lights. The house also has a prominent chimney with corbelled brick cap.

Among the high-styled residential buildings in Tarpon Springs, those exhibiting Queen Anne features are the most picturesque. Together with those designed in the Shingle style, they give the area around Spring Bayou its Victorian era flavor. As it developed in the United States the Queen Anne style was almost exclusively domestic and was usually executed in wood frame. The Queen Anne was popular in Florida from approximately 1876 until 1910. The fully developed Queen Anne house is usually a two story building, distinguished by asymmetrical massing and an elaborate use of shapes and textures intent on producing a highly picturesque effect. Vertical elements are separated by

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horizontal bands in which one finds the use of various siding materials such as stone, brick, weatherboard, and shingles. Steep gables, towers, dormers, balconies, and verandas further enrich the building. Richard Norman Shaw (1831-1912), a successful designer of country homes led a group of nineteenth century architects who named and popularized the style. The name given to the genre in which they worked was inappropriate, for the precedents they used had little to do with the formal Renaissance architectural forms dominant during the reign of Queen Anne (1707-1714).

Tarpon Springs has three examples of Queen Anne architecture, all fronting on Spring Bayou. These are the Edward Newton Knapp House at 115 South Spring Boulevard and the Jacob Disston and William T. Fleming houses, located at 36 and 22 North Spring Boulevard respectively. The two-story Disston House features a steeply-pitched hip roof with two front-facing cross gable extensions and a wide polygonal bay extension. A veranda porch with square brick columns supports wraps around the front facade and both sides of the building. It has a brick veneer exterior wall fabric and its windows are double-hung sash windows with 8/1 lights. The Fleming House has a steeply-pitched side gable roof with open eaves and a front-facing cross-gable extension. A decorative, octagonal, corner tower with conical roof and third-story cupola is located on the southwest corner of the building. There is a veranda porch with decorative latticework and turned post supports. A flared entrance overhang on carved brackets extends from the southwest bay of the porch. The fenestration consists of double-hung sash windows with 1/1 and 2/2 lights.

The largest private residence in the city is the George Clemson House located at 110 North Spring Boulevard (photo 17). The other Shingle style building is the Spring Bayou Inn located at 32 West Tarpon Avenue (photo 22). The Shingle style found its widest popularity in the Northeastern United States between 1880 and 1900. The first examples were designed by some of the most prominent architects of the late 19th century, including Henry Hobson Richardson and the firm of McKim, Mead, and White, as summer residences for wealthy clients. From this fashionable base, well publicized in contemporary architectural magazines, the style spread throughout the country. Shingle style designs drew heavily upon Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Richardsonian Romanesque precedents. From the Queen Anne it borrowed wide porches, shingle surfaces, and asymmetrical forms. From the Colonial Revival style came the often used gambrel roofs,

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classical columns, and Palladian windows. Adapted from the Richardsonian Romanesque was the emphasis on irregular, sculpted shapes, Romanesque arches, and, in some examples, stone lower stories.

There are relatively few surviving examples of Shingle style residences in Florida. The style lost most of its popularity in the late 1800s, before Florida's intensive period of historical development. The examples that have survived were generally built by wealthy winter residents from the Northeast where the style was most prevalent. Identifying features of the Shingle style are irregular roof planes, most often broken by a series of dormers; cross-gable and cross-hip roof extensions; polygonal bays; unpainted wood shingle exterior fabric; Palladian and double-hung sash windows with multi-pane upper sashes and single pane lower sashes; and wide veranda porches.

The Colonial Revival is another style common to the district. The Colonial Revival style had its genesis in the Centennial Exposition of 1876 at Philadelphia. Many state buildings at the Exposition were interpretations of historically significant colonial structures. Important examples included the Connecticut and Massachusetts Pavilions and the New England Kitchen. Publicity on the Exposition and appeals for the preservation of Old South Church in Boston and Mount Vernon appeared in periodicals simultaneously. Long-term efforts to save the buildings were mounted by organizations with patriotic motives and national coverage. Associated with the drives were attempts to preserve indigenous American architecture. About the same time a series of articles about eighteenth century American architecture appeared in the American Architect, the New York Sketch Book of Architecture and Harpers.

The earliest buildings designed in the Colonial Revival style were large residences in New York and New England where genuine colonial architecture was still found. There were generally two approaches to Colonial Revival design: the formal and the picturesque. The picturesque mode emphasized quaintness, asymmetry and a variety of building materials. These characteristics owed as much to the Queen Anne style as to historical precedent. The formal approach used fewer materials and emphasized classical symmetry.

The symmetry of the second approach to the Colonial Revival house was inspired by its progenitors, Georgian and Federal buildings. These eighteenth and early nineteenth century houses

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had symmetrical two-story facades with gable roofs and end chimney. The plans were also symmetrical with central stair halls and two or four major rooms per floor. The fenestration was generally three or five bays on double-hung sash with 6/6 lights. Windows were frequently paired or flanked by blinds. The central doorway was the focal point of the main facade and was protected by a small entry portico or hood. The doorway architrave was heavily molded, had sidelights and transom sash and frequently a pediment. The wood door had six panels.

Colonial Revival houses of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did maintain many of the features of the originals. The Colonial Revival interior plan was a modification of the original colonial two or four room, central hall design. Because of the modern use of the specialized but subsidiary kitchen and bathroom, which had not been present during the colonial era, the rear portion of most Colonial Revival houses was laid out to accommodate the new rooms and did not copy the symmetry of historical antecedents. The front rooms and entrance hall, however, usually remained symmetrical.

In Tarpon Springs, one of the best examples of the Colonial Revival style is located at 47 Read Street, within the boundaries of the historic district (photo 23). Here the Colonial Revival styling is expressed by its steeply-pitched hip roof with boxed eaves; prominent triangular dormer; hip roof end porch supported by truncated columns on cast stone piers; double-hung sash windows with 2/2 lights; and brick pier foundation.

There is one example of the Dutch Colonial Revival in the district. It is located at 321 East Tarpon Avenue (photo 24). The Dutch Colonial Revival style was contemporaneous with the Colonial Revival. The most recognizable feature of the style is, of course, the Gambrel roof, which covers the main portion of the building and its intersecting porches and dormers. The Gambrel roof was devised to provide ample headroom under a pitched roof and like the Mansard roof, it created a full additional story out of marginal attic space. Window treatments vary but generally they are wood double-hung sash and range from 1/1 to multi-light to decorative pattern. Decorative elements include classically detailed porch columns, dentiled cornices, and Palladian windows.

There are three examples of the Neoclassical style in the historic district. The Neoclassical style evolved from a renewed interest in the architectural forms of the ancient Greeks and Romans. The revival of interest in classical models in the

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United States dates from the World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893. Many of the best known architects of the day designed buildings for the Exposition based on Adam, Georgian, and early Classical Revival residences built in the United States in the eighteenth century. The exposition was well attended and publicized and soon the Neoclassical style became the fashion.

In Florida, the Neoclassical style became a popular style for commercial and government buildings, such as banks and courthouses. The application of the Neoclassical style to residential architecture is less common. Some of the characteristics of the style include a symmetrical facade dominated by a full height porch on classical columns, typically with Ionic or Corinthian capitals; gable or hip roofs with boxed eaves, frequently with dentils or modillions beneath the roof and a wide frieze band surrounding the building; doorways featuring decorative pediments; double-hung sash windows, usually with six or nine panes per sash; and roof line balustrades.

The former Tarpon Springs City Hall, located at 101 South Pinellas Avenue, is an example of the Neoclassical style as it was applied to public buildings (photo 25). Built in 1914, the old City Hall's Neoclassical styling is expressed by its low-pitched hip roof with boxed eaves and domed clock tower. A simple entablature with dentils surrounds the building at its roof line. There is a full-height pedimented gable portico located in the center of the facade. The exterior fabric is brick, and there are brick quoins on the corners. The double door entrance has a cornice overhang and transom lights, and the double-hung sash windows have lintels with keystones and concrete sills. Residential buildings in the district exhibiting the style are 164 and 208 North Spring Boulevard.

The most grandiose building in Tarpon Springs is St. Nicholas Church, which was designed in the Byzantine Revival style. Built in 1943, at the height of the Second World War, St. Nicholas represents the affluence that the sponge industry brought to Tarpon Springs during the late 1930s and early 1940s. The Byzantine Revival style emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century when many architects were making world tours to gather new ideas. It was most frequently used in church designs and drew upon Byzantine or Roman architectural precedents. The most famous example of Byzantine architecture is the Hagia Sophia cathedral in Istanbul. The style is characterized by large domes, round arches, elaborate columns, and rich decorative elements.

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St. Nicholas exhibits all of the defining characteristics of the Byzantine Revival. Among its most notable architectural features are its low-pitched gable roofs with gabled parapet ends and decorative, corbelled, brick cornice. A three-story domed rotunda with round arch window openings is set back to the rear of the building. A north side cross-gable extension and a soaring domed tower with round arch belfry openings are located on the northwest corner. A smaller, two-story, flat roof tower with round arch belfry openings is located on the southwest corner. The windows have round arches with decorative surrounds. The exterior wall fabric is buff colored brick, and there is an arcaded entrance porch.

The bungalow was derived from the "Bengali Bangla," a low house with porches, used as a wayside shelter by British travelers in India during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was what one such traveler remarked, "a purely utilitarian contrivance developed under hard and limited conditions." In addition to major features of encircling porches and utilitarian construction, a marked attempt at the low profile, ventilation by means of bands of windows and axial door placement were items upon which considerable attention was spent because of the hot climate. When similar locales were chosen as building sites in the United States (notably California and Florida), these features became underscored as the characteristics of the new style.

While the origin of the word "Bungalow" and name of its design features were Bengalese, many of its details were of Japanese inspiration. Japanese construction techniques had been exhibited at the Centennial Exposition, the Columbian Exposition and the California Mid-Winter Exposition of 1894. Several of these techniques, particularly the extensive display of structural members and the interplay of angles and planes, became integral parts of Bungalow design.

The earliest American buildings which were consciously Bungalows appeared in the 1890s. For the most part these were either seasonal homes on the New England coast or year-round homes in California. They were usually large residences designed by architects. By the turn of the century, however, the building market was flooded by catalogs of plans of inexpensive Bungalows. At about the same time the Bungalow Magazine and The Craftsman appeared. Both featured series of house plans available for purchase and articles about economical use of space, modern

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kitchens, interior decoration and landscaping. Houses in these magazines were duplicated throughout the United States and reinforced the humbler aspects of the Bungalow. In large measure the earlier grand designs were eclipsed by the smaller versions.

The first discernible characteristic of the style was its lack of height. With rare exceptions the Bungalow was a one, or at most one and one-half, story structure with shallow roof pitch. The typical Bungalow was built on low masonry piers and had a plan with at least two rooms across the main facade, again emphasizing horizontality at the expense of height.

The porch was an integral part of Bungalow design and its roof generally reflected that of the main block or was incorporated in it. Often the massive masonry piers on which the porch rested were continued above the sill line and served as part of the porch balustrade. The piers were surmounted by short wood columns upon which the porch roofing members rested.

The vast majority of Bungalows were of wood frame construction. This was due to the availability of wood and the desire for cheap housing. The choice of exterior sheathing materials varied, however. In New England stucco was popular. In Tarpon Springs, most Bungalows were sheathed in drop siding and/or wood shingles.

Bungalow fenestration was consciously asymmetrical, with the exception of two small windows flanking the exterior chimney. Windows were frequently hung in groups of two or three, the upper sash of the double-hung sash being commonly divided vertically into several panes. Like fenestration in Queen Anne houses, Bungalows often featured other glass materials.

The plan of the Bungalow was asymmetrical. The main entrance, invariably off-center in the facade, opened directly into the living room, which itself was a new feature. The formal parlor of the nineteenth century largely disappeared with the twentieth century introduction of a less formal lifestyle (the Colonial Revival style was an exception to this trend). A consistent feature of the new room was the fireplace, usually of brick or cobble with a rustic mantel shelf and flanking bookcases. Associated with the fireplace was the inglenook. Beamed ceilings, built-in furnishings and wainscoting decorate the interior.

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Description

One of the best examples of a Bungalow in Tarpon Springs is a "craftsman" type located at 112 Read Street (photo 26). The building features a low-pitched front gabled roof with open eaves, exposed rafter end, and triangular knee braces; enclosed full-width front end porch with square posts; double-hung sash windows with 4/1 lights; transom windows flanking front entry; and a ridge chimney with a corbelled brick cap.

The integrity of the proposed historic district is good. The area surrounding Spring Bayou is relatively undisturbed by modern construction. There are numerous large residences that remain as evidence of the city's early tourist oriented development. The historic commercial buildings in the district are less distinctive and more altered. The architecture of Tarpon Springs is expressive of the people who lived and worked in the city and their life styles, which ranged from the modest to the extravagant.

The contributing buildings in the Tarpon Springs Historic District embody the city's cultural heritage. They convey a sense of time and place and represent the significant development of the city from the 1880s until the 1940s. The historical legacy of Tarpon Springs can provide a bold visual foundation for continued development that will leave residents with a comfortable feeling about the built environment surrounding them. This legacy provides a link between old and new as Tarpon Springs moves into the 21st century.

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Photographs

Inventory of Photographs

1. Spring Bayou, Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Paul Weaver
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. View Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 1 of 34

1. Spring Bayou, Tarpon Spring Historic District
2. Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Paul Weaver
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. View Looking West from Tarpon Ave. and Spring Blvd.
7. Photo No. 2 of 34

1. East Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 200 Block of E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Paul Weaver
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. View Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 3 of 34

1. East Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 200 Block of E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Paul Weaver
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. View Looking Southeast from Safford Ave.
7. Photo No. 4 of 34

1. East Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 100 Block of E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Paul Weaver
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. View Looking Southwest from Safford Ave.
7. Photo No. 5 of 34

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Photographs

1. Taylor Arcade, et al, Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 102-120 E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
 3. Paul Weaver
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. View Looking Southwest
 7. Photo No. 6 of 34
-
1. East Court St., Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 100 Block E. Court St., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
 3. Paul Weaver
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. View Looking Northeast
 7. Photo No. 7 of 34
-
1. Old A.C.L. Railroad Station, Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 160 E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
 3. Paul Weaver
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. North and East Elevations, Looking Southwest
 7. Photo No. 8 of 34
-
1. 163-165 E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 163-165 E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
 3. Paul Weaver
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. South and East Elevations, Looking Northwest
 7. Photo No. 9 of 34
-
1. South Pinellas Ave., Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 100 Block S. Pinellas Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
 3. Paul Weaver
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. View Looking Southwest from Court St.
 7. Photo No. 10 of 34

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Photographs

1. East Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 400 Block E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Paul Weaver
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. Looking Northwest from Levis Ave.
7. Photo No. 11 of 34

1. 412 and 420 E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 412 and 420 E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Paul Weaver
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. View Looking South
7. Photo No. 12 of 34

1. North Pinellas Ave., Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 100 Block of N. Pinellas Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Paul Weaver
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. View Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 13 of 34

1. East Orange Ave., Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 115, 123, and 129 E. Orange Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Paul Weaver
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. View Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 14 of 34

1. St. Nicholas Cathedral, Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 36 N. Pinellas Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Paul Weaver
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. North Elevation, Looking South
7. Photo No. 15 of 34

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Photographs

1. Safford House, Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 23 Parkin Ct., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
 3. Paul Weaver
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. North Facade, Looking South
 7. Photo No. 16 of 34
-
1. Clemson House, Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 110 N. Spring Blvd., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
 3. Paul Weaver
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. South Facade and West Elevation, Looking Northeast
 7. Photo No. 17 of 34
-
1. Fernald Building, Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 121 E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County) FL
 3. Bill Adams
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. South Facade, Looking North
 7. Photo No. 18 of 34
-
1. Arcade Hotel, Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 200 S. Pinellas Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
 3. Bill Adams
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. East Facade and South Elevation, Looking Northwest
 7. Photo 19 of 34
-
1. 29 W. Orange St., Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 29 W. Orange St., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
 3. Bill Adams
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. South Facade, Looking North
 7. Photo 20 of 34

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Photographs

1. Alworth House, Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 144 N. Spring Blvd., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Bill Adams
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. South Facade, Looking North
7. Photo 21 of 34

1. Spring Bayou Inn, Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 32 W. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Bill Adams
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. North Facade, Looking South
7. Photo 22 of 34

1. 47 Read St., Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 47 Read St., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Bill Adams
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. South Facade, Looking North
7. Photo 23 of 34

1. 321 E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 321 E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Bill Adams
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. South Facade, Looking North
7. Photo 24 of 34

1. Old Tarpon Springs City Hall, Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 101 S. Pinellas Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Bill Adams
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. West Facade, Looking Northeast
7. Photo 25 of 34

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Photographs

1. 112 Read St., Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 112 Read St., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
 3. Bill Adams
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. North Facade, Looking South
 7. Photo 26 of 34
-
1. Inness House, Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 34 W. Orange St., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County) FL
 3. Bill Adams
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. South Facade, Looking North
 7. Photo 27 of 34
-
1. Meres Building, Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 102 E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
 3. Bill Adams
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. North Facade, Looking South
 7. Photo 28 of 34
-
1. Harvest Temple Church, Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 200 Grand Blvd., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
 3. Bill Adams
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. South Facade, Looking North
 7. Photo 29 of 34
-
1. Emory House , Tarpon Springs Historic District
 2. 106 Banana St., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
 3. Bill Adams
 4. 1989
 5. Historic Property Associates
 6. West Facade, Looking East
 7. Photo 30 of 34

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1. 28 W. Center St., Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 28 W. Center St., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Bill Adams
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. South Facade, Looking East
7. Photo 31 of 34

1. 1 W. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 1 W. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Paul Weaver
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. South and East Elevations, Looking Northeast
7. Photo 32 of 34

1. 17 W. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 17 W. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Paul Weaver
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. South Facade, Looking North
7. Photo 33 of 34

1. Ellis Building, Tarpon Springs Historic District
2. 23 E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County), FL
3. Paul Weaver
4. 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. South Facade and East Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo 34 of 34

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Building List

CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS LIST

Banana Street

104
105
106
213

Boyer Street

24
30
40

Center Street, West

38
44
48
58

Cyrpress Street

28

Grand Boulevard

199
200
201
209
216
233
303
305

Grosse Avenue, North

101
109
115
121

Grosse Avenue, South

112

Hibiscus Street

124
131
227
229

Lemon Street, West

27
33
48
110

Orange Street, East

115
123
129
137
312-314
321
324
418
428
436

Orange Street, West

4
12
17
26
29
34
39
39 (rear)
63

Parkin Court

21
22

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Building List

Parkin Court (cont.)

28

Pinellas Avenue, North

44

117

127

133

210

215

218

Pinellas Avenue, South

100-104

101

210

Read Street, East

28

Read Street, West

15

21

28

31

46

47

48

50

53

55

56

57

58

62

66

101

112

123

153

154

Read Street, West (cont.)

158

166

Ring Avenue, North

20

30

100

Safford Avenue, North

13-17

21

Safford Avenue, South

101-105

Spring Boulevard, North

22

36

110

134

144

150

164

170

184

Spring Boulevard, South

103

115

119

127

Tarpon Avenue, East

19-23

101-105

102

111-113

116-120

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Building List

Tarpon Avenue, East (cont.)

121
124
128
138
148
151
155-159
160
163-165
200
203
210
214
218
301
309
310
312
317
318
321
412
420
423
427
428
436
451
455
456

Tarpon Avenue, West

20
32
53

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Building List

NONCONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS LIST

Banana Street

213 (rear)
217

Boyer Street

50A
50B

Center Street, West

40
43
49

Grand Boulevard

100
219

Grosse Avenue, North

13
28

Hibiscus Street

16
99
109
205
207
225

Lemon Street

35
44
55
65
114

Orange Avenue, East

11
17-27
116
118
400
424
432

Orange Avenue, West

17 (rear)
44

Pinellas Avenue, North

1
7
11
13
15
17
20
22
116
117B
128
201
221
229
230

Pinellas Avenue, South

4
10
110
116

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Building List

Read Street, West

33

Ring Avenue, North

18

Safford Avenue, South

109-111

Spring Boulevard, North

16

16B

Tarpon Avenue, East

1-3

5-17

104-110

119

123

130

140

143

312 (rear)

313

419

450

Tarpon Avenue, West

23

27

43

45

47

57

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Significance

The Tarpon Springs Historic District fulfills criteria A and C for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It is associated with events significant in the areas of architecture, commerce, exploration and settlement, and ethnic heritage. The establishment of Tarpon Springs led the way for the development of the central Gulf coast of Florida. During the period from 1881 to 1943 Tarpon Springs developed from a frontier settlement to a nationally important sponge harvesting area, an industry made successful largely by the immigration of sponge fishermen from Greece, beginning in 1905. They and their descendants left a distinct cultural stamp upon Tarpon Springs that is still reflected in the social, political, and religious character of the community. The architecture of the district includes individually significant structures that reflect each phase of development in the period of significance, plus a variety of building types and styles that typify popular tastes and attitudes during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. St. Nicholas Cathedral must be considered architecturally significant under criteria exception consideration G. The building was constructed in 1943 and is important architecturally and for its association with the Greek community.

Historical Context

The period of significance of the district is well defined. It begins shortly after the Disston Land Purchase of 1881. After Florida gained statehood in 1845, much of the land still belonged to the federal government, but in 1850, the U.S. government gave the state some 10,000,000 acres of swamp and overflow land for the purpose of drainage and reclamation. In 1851 the Florida legislature created the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund to manage that land and another 500,000 acres the state had received upon entering the union. The trust fund set up by the state was not sufficient to manage or improve this vast acreage and became mired in debt after the Civil War. The board of trustees wished to dispose of these lands, but state law required that all debts incurred by the trust fund be paid before any land could be sold.

The search for a purchaser willing to buy enough of the unimproved land to pay the fund's debt remained unsuccessful until 1881 when Hamilton Disston, a wealthy saw manufacturer from Philadelphia, worked a deal with the State Board of Trustees for the purchase of 4,000,000 acres of land at a cost of twenty-five cents per acre. The Disston Purchase cleared the trust fund

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Significance

of its debts, and allowed the state to distribute large land subsidies to railroad companies wishing to construct transportation routes throughout Florida. Disston planned to recoup his investment by the widespread development of agricultural lands in Central Florida, access to which was to be provided by the construction of railroads in which he expected to have a major financial interest.

Disston picked the site of Tarpon Springs as his base of operations, because it lay along the major sailing route of the west coast of Florida, approximately half way between Cedar Key and Tampa. Access to the site of the proposed settlement, which lay several miles from the coast, was made possible by the Anclote River, which was navigable as far inland as Spring Bayou. In 1882, Disston and a group of business associates arrived by ship from Cedar Key at the small fishing village located at the mouth of the Anclote River. Among the ship's passengers was Mathew Marks who surveyed and laid out the original town plat of Tarpon Springs. To market the property in the new community and the other vast tract of land at his disposal, Disston formed the Lake Butler Villa Company, which was responsible for much of the early construction in the fledgling settlement.

A second figure closely associated with the city's early development was Anson P.K. Safford, a native of Vermont and former governor of the territory of Arizona under the presidential administration of Ulysses S. Grant (1869-1877). Safford became wealthy through mining in Arizona and later moved to Philadelphia, where he became acquainted with Hamilton Disston. Disston and Safford intended to make the new town of Tarpon Springs a winter resort for wealthy Northerners, hoping to interest these seasonal visitors in investing capital in land development projects. To this end, Disston and Safford created the Florida Land and Improvement Company, which deeded approximately 9,500 acres of land to the Lake Butler Villa Company for the development of Tarpon Springs and set aside nearly 20,000 acres for other projects in the area. Safford was elected president of the Lake Butler Villa Company and settled in Tarpon Springs to direct its operations.

The Safford House, known as "Ansonia," was the first residence constructed (ca. 1881) in the new community (photo 16). Safford lived in Tarpon Springs until his death eight years later and was responsible for much of the city's early development. He built the town's first small school and gave land to several churches. The Safford House was originally located at Spring

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Significance

Bayou on the lot now occupied by the George Clemson House. Shortly after Safford died, his widow sold the land to Clemson and moved "Ansonia" to its present location at Parkin Court. The Safford House was listed in the National Register in October, 1974.

Following the arrival of Governor Safford, Tarpon Springs began to take form. The town was laid out in a regular grid, except around Spring Bayou where the blocks and streets conformed to the shape of the most important natural feature of the town. There the town was laid out with streets and blocks that produced scenic vistas of the natural spring. On May 5, 1884, the original town plat of Tarpon Springs was recorded in the Hillsborough County courthouse. In 1884 a post office was established, and three years later the settlement, with a population of about 300, was incorporated as a town.

The year 1887 also marked the arrival in Tarpon Springs of the first railroad, the Orange Belt Railway. Construction of the rail line began in 1884 and the city of Tarpon Springs granted the railroad land for construction of a depot. The right-of-way for the railroad was donated by Disston's Florida Land and Improvement Company. The Orange Belt Railway was taken over by the Plant System after going into receivership in 1891. The principal historic building associated with rail transportation in the Tarpon Springs Historic District is the Old Atlantic Coast Line Railroad station at 160 East Tarpon Avenue (now the Tarpon Springs Area Historical Society) constructed in 1916 (photo 8).

Following the arrival of the railroad, tourism and winter residency began to play an important role in the development of Tarpon Springs, and a number of the extant buildings in the historic district, particularly those surrounding Spring Bayou, remain as vestiges of an era when Tarpon Springs attracted wealthy and middle class Americans seeking to escape the harsh northern winters. Brochures promoting the advantages of wintering and settling permanently in Tarpon Springs were printed and distributed in northern cities. One was titled An Interesting History of Florida and the famous Tarpon Springs. Using hyperbolic language, such pamphlets described the natural beauty of the bayous and woodlands in the area. The natural springs around Tarpon Springs gave it a reputation as a health resort. The publications were distributed by the Gulf Coast Land Company, the agent for Disston's Florida interests, which maintained offices in Tarpon Springs, Jacksonville, Philadelphia, Chicago, and New York.

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Significance

The commercial growth of Tarpon Springs proceeded rapidly during the late 1880s, Tarpon Avenue becoming the focus of this activity. By the end of the decade there were eight stores, a bank, a telegraph office, and two hotels located along the avenue. Tarpon Springs continued to grow as a winter resort during the 1890s and continued into the first decade of the twentieth century. The focal point of the resort was, naturally, Spring Bayou. More than a dozen wealthy seasonal residents constructed expensive homes overlooking the spring. Among the largest of these residences was the George Clemson House at 110 North Spring Boulevard (Photo No. 17), constructed on the former site of the Safford House ca. 1903. Clemson, a native of Middletown, New York, built an imposing wood shingle covered mansion, featuring a large veranda, tall brick chimneys, multiple bay windows with as many rooms as a small hotel.

The commercial sector of the district along Tarpon Avenue dates mainly from 1894 and later. In that year much of the business district was destroyed by fire. The mainly wood frame structures were quickly destroyed, and although the fire in Tarpon Springs constituted a great loss to the merchants, it resulted in the replacement of buildings with improved materials and construction techniques. New buildings were built of brick and stone, with tin ceilings and metal roofs. The oldest commercial structure in the district is the Fernald Building (Photo No. 18), which was constructed immediately after the fire.

The major development that would change the character of Tarpon Springs forever was the founding of the commercial sponge industry in 1890. Sponges began to be commercially harvested in the Florida Keys around 1849, and the industry continued to grow, so that by the 1880s Florida sponges had become a commodity of world-wide demand. The early spongers used small boats and long grappling poles to collect sponges. The shallow waters of the Florida Reef contained an abundant supply of various types of commercial grade sponges, and the use of diving equipment was, at least for several decades, unnecessary.

The sponge beds in the vicinity of Tarpon Springs were discovered in 1873 by fishermen from Key West, Florida. Sponging vessels began to arrive from Key West and the Bahamas to work the beds. In 1889 Tarpon Springs businessman John K. Cheyney went to Key West to learn about sponge business and upon his return to Tarpon Springs formed a company for processing and selling sponges. He built warehouses and financed the construction of

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Significance

the first sponge hooking boat launched at Tarpon Springs. Soon other businessmen began to follow his example. Cheyney had been attracted to Tarpon Springs because of a business relationship with Hamilton Disston. Like Disston, he was from Philadelphia. He had become president of Lake Butler Villa Company upon the death of Governor Safford.

Between 1870 and 1890 the center of commercial sponging in the United States had been at Key West. During the 1890s, however, an increasing amount of buying and packing activity began shifting to Tarpon Springs. Packing houses were built, sponge presses installed, and buyers established offices there. With the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898, many of the sponge boats that had operated out of Key West were moved to Tarpon Springs because the U.S. Navy occupied most of the harbor facilities in Key West. A fleet of sponging vessels from points as far distant as Apalachicola and Key West came to sell their sponges in Tarpon Springs. By the early 1900s Tarpon Springs had become the foremost sponge port in the United States.

While the sponge industry had begun to thrive before their arrival, it was the Greek immigrants to Tarpon Springs who expanded and refined it. The person who spearheaded the Greek involvement in sponging was John Cocoris, himself a Greek native, who arrived in Tarpon Springs in 1896 as a buyer for the Lembessi Sponge Company of New York. A year after his arrival he began working for John Cheyney, who financed Cocoris's early efforts to make the industry more efficient. In 1905 Cocoris introduced the first sailing/motor sponge diving boat to Tarpon Springs and brought in a crew of Greek divers to operate it.

In 1905 approximately 500 Greek divers arrived from Greece, and others soon followed, prompting the immigration of a number of their countrymen who came to establish businesses to serve the growing Greek community. These entrepreneurs opened restaurants, bakeries, and retail shops. In their wake came sponge merchants and brokers from Greece who established their own offices and warehouses in Tarpon Springs. These new settlers built their own boats, extended loans to other boat owners, established business houses, and supplied tools and food stuffs to the entire sponge fleet. As the sponge industry boomed, the Greek population extended its interest to yet other businesses, such as finance, insurance, transportation, fishing, lumber, citrus, and building construction.

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Significance

The sponge industry changed the character of Tarpon Springs forever. Prior to 1890 it had been primarily a winter resort and fishing village, which catered to a small group of wealthy Northerners. There were few streets and a handful of stores. Less than two decades later it was the center of the sponge industry in the United States. In 1906 the Sponge Exchange Bank was established in the Fernald Building on East Tarpon Avenue. Profits from sponging were invested in downtown businesses, and many of the commercial buildings in the district owe their existence to the industry.

The Greeks who arrived in Tarpon Springs quickly developed a community infrastructure that included religious, educational, recreational, cultural, and social welfare institutions. Religion was at the center of Greek community life. The first Greek Church, St. Nicholas, was a wooden structure built in 1909. The descendant of this early building is the present St. Nicholas Cathedral at 36 North Pinellas Avenue. This Byzantine Revival style church, constructed in 1943, is certainly the most significant religious structure associated with the Greek community found in the historic district. The church is constructed of buff-colored brick and has a low dome over the transept. A tall bell tower, or campanile, stands at the northwest corner of the structure, and the interior features mural paintings of saints and the apostles. An elaborate marble screen stands between the main body of the church and the high altar.

The 1910s were a decade of political and economic maturation for Tarpon Springs. A number of community building projects were undertaken, among the most important of which was construction in 1914 of the Tarpon Springs City Hall at 101 South Pinellas Avenue (photo 25). The new Atlantic Coast Line passenger station was erected just two years later and the Tampa and Gulf Coast Railroad constructed a rail spur that directly linked Tampa and Tarpon Springs for the first time. Other projects benefiting the community included the building of an ice plant and an electric power plant. Many substantial businesses were constructed in the downtown area. By the end of the decade, the business area boasted more than twenty retail stores, several banks, and a post office. Between 1911 and 1919 the population of the city rose from 1,500 to 5,000.

During the early 1920s Florida entered a period of frenzied real estate speculation and population growth that has become known as the "Florida Land Boom," famous as the "golden era" of

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development in cities like Miami Beach, Coral Gables, Palm Beach, Tampa, and St. Petersburg. Between 1920 and 1925, tourists and new residents poured into the state, driving up the price of real estate. Led by the dramatic rise in the price of building lots in areas suitable for tourism, many would-be capitalists made a small down payment on property, hoping to resell the land at a profit before further payment came due. By 1926, however, the speculation bubble had burst, forcing many banks and other financial institutions into bankruptcy because of delinquent mortgage payments. The resulting crash devastated the state's economy, and Florida preceded much of the rest of the nation by several years in entering the Great Depression that struck the United States in the 1930s.

During the brief period of the land boom, however, Tarpon Springs was well poised to feed the hunger for Florida land that gripped investors in the early 1920s. The city offered an attractive setting laid out on the shores of pristine waterways, and rail transportation and newly-paved highways linked it to nearby urban centers and the beaches of the Gulf of Mexico. Within the town itself were sufficient services to insure the comfortable supply of modern amenities. Above all, promotional machinery was in place. But Tarpon Springs was able to enjoy only modest gains from the boom, as more intensive activity was centered in Tampa and St. Petersburg. A few new subdivisions were laid out, but these saw little construction. The most important building erected in the historic district during the 1920s actually post-dates the boom. This was the Arcade Hotel at 200 South Pinellas Avenue (photo 19), a two-story, Mediterranean Revival style structure, constructed in 1928 at a cost of \$100,000. The building was listed in the National Register on December 1, 1984.

Tourism remained a major factor in the local economy of Tarpon Springs during the 1920s, although it was quite different in character from the early years of the city's development. Instead of wealthy tourists and winter residents who visited Tarpon Springs during the 1880s and 1890s, the tourists of the 1920s were mainly middle class Americans who came as members of tourist clubs or individual families that drove their own cars. They lived as cheaply as possible, bringing their own supplies and cooking their own food. Often they lived in tents and homemade campers, frequently gathering in communal campgrounds near scenic attractions or on the beaches. Their vagabond lifestyle earned them the name "tin can tourists." The impact of these self-sufficient visitors on the economy of Florida,

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therefore, was seasonal and was not great enough to promote the construction of new businesses or residential areas.

The onset of the Great Depression, beginning in 1929, was as deeply felt in Tarpon Springs as in other Florida communities. The city's delinquent tax rolls grew and resulted in an inability of the municipal government to pay its bonded indebtedness. Other disasters dogged the community as well. The Tarpon Inn hotel was destroyed by fire, as were both of the city's lumber mills, throwing dozens of citizens out of work. Salt water intrusion in Lake Tarpon rendered the newly constructed \$500,000 water plant unusable, and a Mediterranean Fruit Fly infestation dealt a severe blow to the citrus industry. The sponge industry, however, continued to prosper for a while, but in 1938, a blight infested the sponge beds and many of the sponges were killed. The sponges beds were again devastated in 1948 by red, and the development of cheap synthetic sponges made the gathering of natural sponges in Tarpon Springs unprofitable as a large-scale industry. Today, tourism has largely replaced sponging as the major economic activity in Tarpon Springs. However, the city attracts visitors by emphasizing its past link with sponging through tours, exhibits, and the sale of novelties. Greek culture and food are also successful lures in attracting tourists, particularly the annual blessing of the fleet and diving for the cross during the celebration of Epiphany.

Statement of Significance

It is clear from the above narrative that the Tarpon Springs Historic District fulfills criterion A in the areas of exploration and settlement, commerce, and ethnic heritage. The founding of the town opened the way for the development of much of the central Gulf coast area of Florida, creating the conditions for the founding and growth of other communities in the Pinellas peninsula, such as Clearwater, St. Petersburg, and Largo. Commercial development locally was promoted by attracting tourists to the area and by the establishment and expansion of the sponge industry. The ethnic heritage of Tarpon Springs is reflected in the names and businesses and social activities of the city's residents, many of whose antecedents came from the islands of Greece.

Although the sponging industry was largely responsible for the growth of Tarpon Springs during the first three decades of the twentieth century, it was not possible to consider maritime history as another area of significance. No structures in the

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history as another area of significance. No structures in the district are directly linked to the gathering, processing, or merchandizing of sponges. The docks, vessels, ship building and repair facilities, and warehouses all lie outside the historic district. It was determined, therefore, that maritime history should not be considered as an area of significance for the Tarpon Springs Historic District.

The district also fulfills criterion C in the area of architecture. Some of the structures in the district survive from the late nineteenth century and reflect the business habits, lifestyles and architectural tastes of that period. The town prospered as a result of the introduction of commercial sponging ca. 1890, and the population grew with the large-scale immigration of Greek spongers who established their own cultural stamp on the community. These settlers were responsible for the construction of many of the buildings in the district during the period ca. 1905-1938.

The architectural significance of the district can be seen in important structures that are individually listed in the National Register (such as the Safford House, the Arcade Hotel, and the Old City Hall) and those that appear to meet individual National Register criteria (the Old S.C.L. Depot, the George Clemson House, and others), and many other residential and commercial buildings in the district boundaries that collectively reflect the historic period of development.

The Tarpon Springs Historic District contains numerous examples of buildings that typify the early development of Tarpon Springs. The architectural styles which predominate include wood frame vernacular in residential areas and masonry vernacular in commercial areas. Also a scattering of high style can be found in various parts of the district. These include the Queen Anne, Carpenter Gothic, and Colonial Revival styles. Bungalow, Beaux-Arts Classical, and Spanish Revival style buildings are also present. Spring Bayou also provides a dramatic and scenic setting for some of the large early residences, which are among the finest of their type and design in Florida.

St. Nicholas Cathedral must be considered architecturally significant under criteria exception consideration G. The building was constructed in 1943 and shows architectural significance in its scale and its notable use of Byzantine Revival decorative detailing. The date of the construction of the building also represents the culmination of the influence of

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the sponge industry on the development of Tarpon Springs and the high water mark of the prosperity and social influence of the Greek immigrant community. With the decline of the sponge industry, that community began to lose its cultural cohesiveness, with much of the population drifting to other cities in search of other employment, while the children of those that remained became more acculturated to distinctly "American" habits and lifestyles.

The Tarpon Springs Historic District contains numerous examples of buildings that typify the early development of Tarpon Springs. The architectural styles which predominate include wood frame vernacular in residential areas and masonry vernacular in commercial areas. Also a scattering of high style can be found in various parts of the district. These include the Queen Anne, Carpenter Gothic, and Colonial Revival styles. Bungalow, Beaux-Arts Classical, and Spanish Revival style buildings are also present. Spring Bayou also provides a dramatic and scenic setting for some of the large early residences, which are among the finest of their type and design in Florida.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Begin at the southeast corner of the intersection of Read and Canal streets and run north along the east curb line of Canal Street to a point parallel with the north property line of 168 Read Street; then run east along the north property lines of 168, 158, and 154 Read Street to the east property line of 154 Read Street; then run south along said property line and continue to the south curb line of Read Street; then run east along said curb line to a point parallel with the west property line of 112 Read Street; then run north along said line to the north line of the property; then run east along the north property lines of 112 Read Street and 305 Grand Boulevard to the west curb line of Grand Boulevard; then run south along said curb line to the intersection of the east continuation of Read Street; then run east along the north curb line of Read Street to a point parallel with the west property line of 66 Read Street; then run north along said line to the north line of the property.

Then run east along the north property lines of the buildings fronting on the north side of Read Street to the east property line of 46 Read Street; then run south along said line to the south curb line of Read Street; then run east along said curb line to the intersection of North Pinellas Avenue; then run south along the west curb line of North Pinellas Avenue to the intersection of Cypress Street; then run east along the south curb line of Cypress Street to the intersection of Hibiscus Street; then run south along the west curb line of Hibiscus Street to a point parallel with the north property line of 124 Hibiscus Street; then run east along said property line and continue along the north property lines of the buildings fronting on the north side of East Orange Street to the east property line of 137 East Orange Street; then run south along said property line to the south curb line of East Orange Street; then run east along said curb line to the intersection of North Safford Avenue.

Then run south along the west curb line of North Safford Avenue to a point parallel with the north property line of 203 Tarpon Avenue; then run east along said line and continue to the east curb line of North Ring Avenue; then run north along said curb line to a point parallel with the north property line of 100 North Ring Avenue; then run east along said property line to the west property lines of the buildings fronting on the west side of North Grosse Avenue; then run north along said property lines to the north property line of 121 North Grosse Avenue; then run east along said line to the west curb line of North Grosse Avenue; then run south along said curb line to the southwest corner of the intersection with East Orange Street; then run east along the

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south curb line of East Orange Street to a point parallel with the east property line of 438 East Orange Street; then run south along said line to a point parallel with the north property lines of 451 and 455 Tarpon Avenue.

Then run east along said lines to the west curb line of North Levis Avenue; then run south along said curb line to a point parallel with the south property lines of the buildings fronting on the south side of Tarpon Avenue; then run west along said lines to the east curb line of South Grosse Avenue; then run south along said curb line to a point parallel with the south property line of 112 South Grosse Avenue; then run west along said line to a point parallel with the west property line of 310 Tarpon Avenue; then run north along said line to the south curb line of Tarpon Avenue; then run west along said curb line to a point parallel with the east property line of 218 Tarpon Avenue; then run south along said line to a point parallel with the south property line of 105 South Safford Avenue; then run west along said line to the east curb line of South Safford Avenue; then run north along said curb line to the intersection with Court Street and run west on the north curb line of Court Street to the intersection of Park Lane.

Then run south along the west curb line of Park Lane to the intersection of East Lemon Street; then run west along the north curb line of East Lemon Street to the west curb line of South Pinellas Avenue; then run south along said curb line to the intersection of West Boyer Street; then run west along the north curb line of West Boyer Street to the intersection of Banana Street; then run north along the east curb line of Banana Street to the north curb line of West Lemon Street; then run west along said curb line to the intersection of Bath Street; then run north along the east curb line of Bath Street to the north curb line of South Spring Boulevard; then run west along said curb line approximately 200 feet; then run north approximately 200 feet to the shore line of Spring Bayou; then run north and west along said shore line approximately 250; then run north across Spring Bayou to the north curb line of North Spring Boulevard; then run west and north along said curb line to the intersection of Read Street, the point of beginning.

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Boundary Justification

Boundary Justification

The boundaries described in the Verbal Boundary Description encompass all of the major contiguous historic and architectural resources associated with the development of the main commercial and residential sections of the city of Tarpon Springs during the period 1881-1943. Resources directly associated with such enterprises as the development of the sponging industry are not geographically close enough to the proposed district to be included within its boundaries. Resources such as sailing vessels, sponge warehouses, harbor facilities, and other properties associated with maritime history will be dealt with in separate nominations to the National Register.