

# City of Titusville

## Historic Designation Report

HPB# 01-2014

~~March 20~~ April 22, 2014



902 Indian River Ave  
Titusville, Florida 32780

Prepared By:



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## **902 Indian River Avenue Local Historic Designation Report**

### **I. Location**

The property is located at 902 Indian River Avenue. The property is located in a block formed by South Street on the north, St. Johns Street on the south, South Washington Avenue on the west and Indian River Avenue on the east. **Figure 1** shows the specific location of the property within the block.



**Figure 1: Location Map**

**Source:** Brevard County GIS Data and Littlejohn Engineering Associates, Inc., 2014.

## **II. General Information**

The general information related to the 902 Indian River Avenue property is as follows:

### **A. Name of the Property**

#### **1. Historic Names**

The property does not have a historic name.

#### **2. Current Name**

The property is not currently named.

### **B. Brevard County Property Appraiser Information**

#### **1. Property Address**

The property address is 902 Indian River Avenue, Titusville, Florida 32780. Indian River Avenue was originally known as 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The property is a part of Wilbur's Subdivision.

#### **2. Present Owner**

The present owners of the property are Raymond and Valerie Francis.

#### **3. Present Use**

The present use of the property is a Single-Family Residence.

#### **4. Zoning District**

The property is located in a RHP (Residential Historic Preservation) zoning district. The RHP district is intended to preserve the character and harmony of the unique downtown residential area along the Indian River. The only permitted principal use is single family detached dwellings, with allowed accessory buildings, private swimming pools and tennis courts, and home occupations. Recreational parks, churches, and schools (providing that all structures at the school are set back a minimum of 50 feet from any abutting residential use/zoning district) are conditional uses within this district. The maximum allowable density within this district is 5.80 units per acre. Buildings are not allowed to exceed 35 feet in height, and yards must be at least 25 feet on the front and rear, 10 feet on the side, 20 feet on the side corners. Lots must be a minimum of 7,500 square feet, with a minimum width of 75 feet. The buildings must not cover more than 35% of the lot, and must be a minimum of 1,300 square feet.

#### **5. Site Size**

The site is approximately 0.13 acres in size.

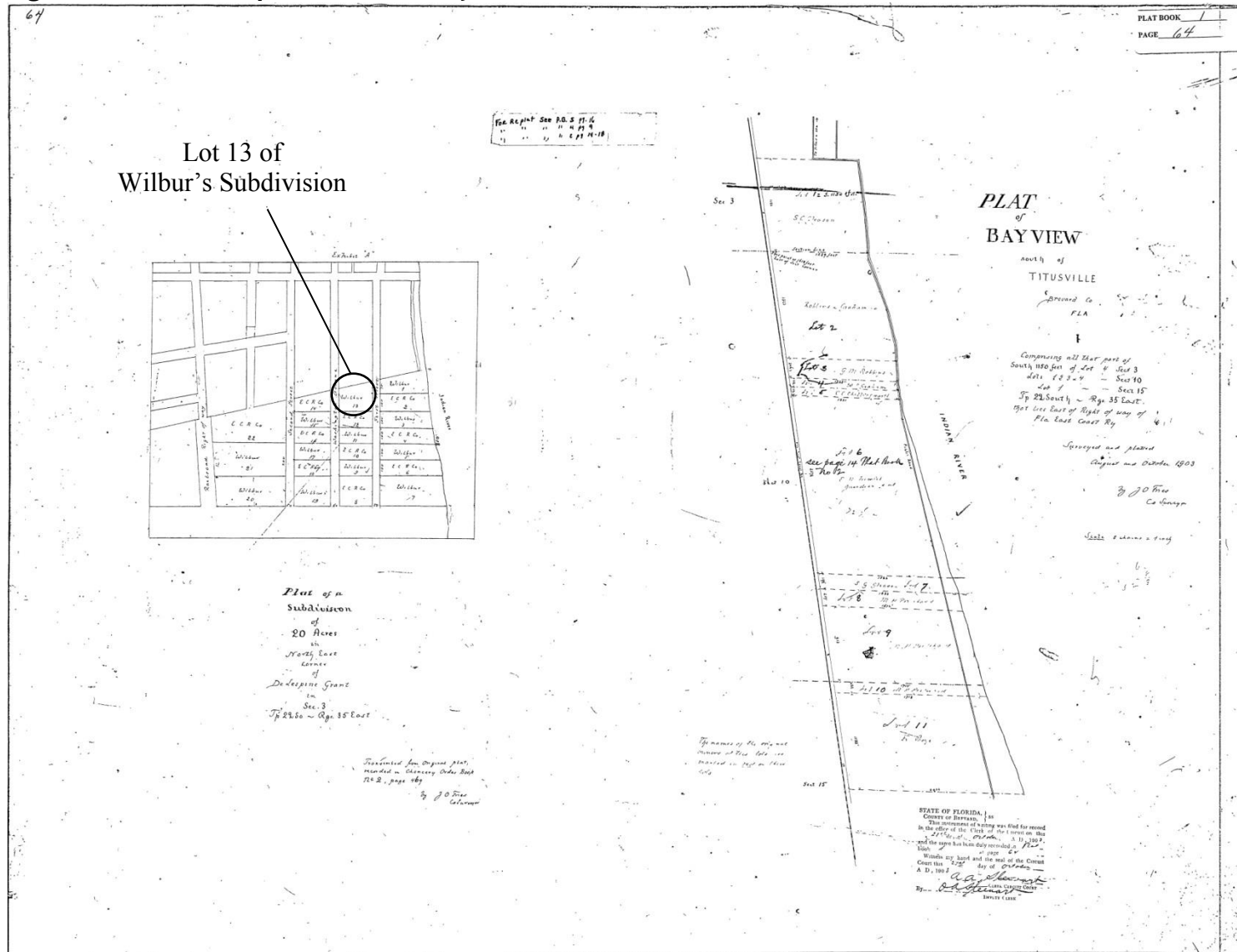
#### **6. Parcel Identification Number**

The parcel identification number of the property is 22-35-03-53-\*13.04.

**7. Boundary Description**

The legal description according to the public records of Brevard County, Florida is: The North 50 feet of the South 150 feet of the East 106 ½ feet of Lot 13 of Wilbur's Subdivision of the Northeast 20 acres of the Delespine Grant according to the Plat thereof in Chancery Order Book 2, Page 469, Public Records of Brevard County, Florida, being a part of Section 3, Township 22 South, Range 35 East.

Figure 2: Plot of Delespine Grant and Bayview



Source: Public Record of Brevard County, Florida (Plat Book 1, Page 64).

### III. Significance

#### A. Ownership History of the Land

- Original Owner – Thomas G. Knight
- 1920 – Wm. B. Dobson
- No records found on ownership between Wm. B. Dobson's purchase of home (1920) to Michael Dey's sale of home (1983).
- 1983 – Bobby & Shelve Estes
- 1985 – David Griffin
- 1988 – Lloyd & Joyce Ann Kendrick
- 1997 – Raymond & Valerie Francis

#### B. Construction History

##### 1. Construction

According to the Brevard County Property Appraiser, the structure was built in 1926; however, the Florida Master Site File places construction between 1915 and 1920. The property and structure first appear on the historic maps produced by the Sanborn Map Company in 1920 (see [Figure 3](#) ~~Figure 3~~). Prior Sanborn maps (five of which were produced between 1893 and 1915) do not show the land on which the house was built. The 1920 Sanborn Map shows a one-story house, with a porch spanning the eastern side of the house, and a 4" water pipe crossing the property.

##### 2. Additions and Alterations

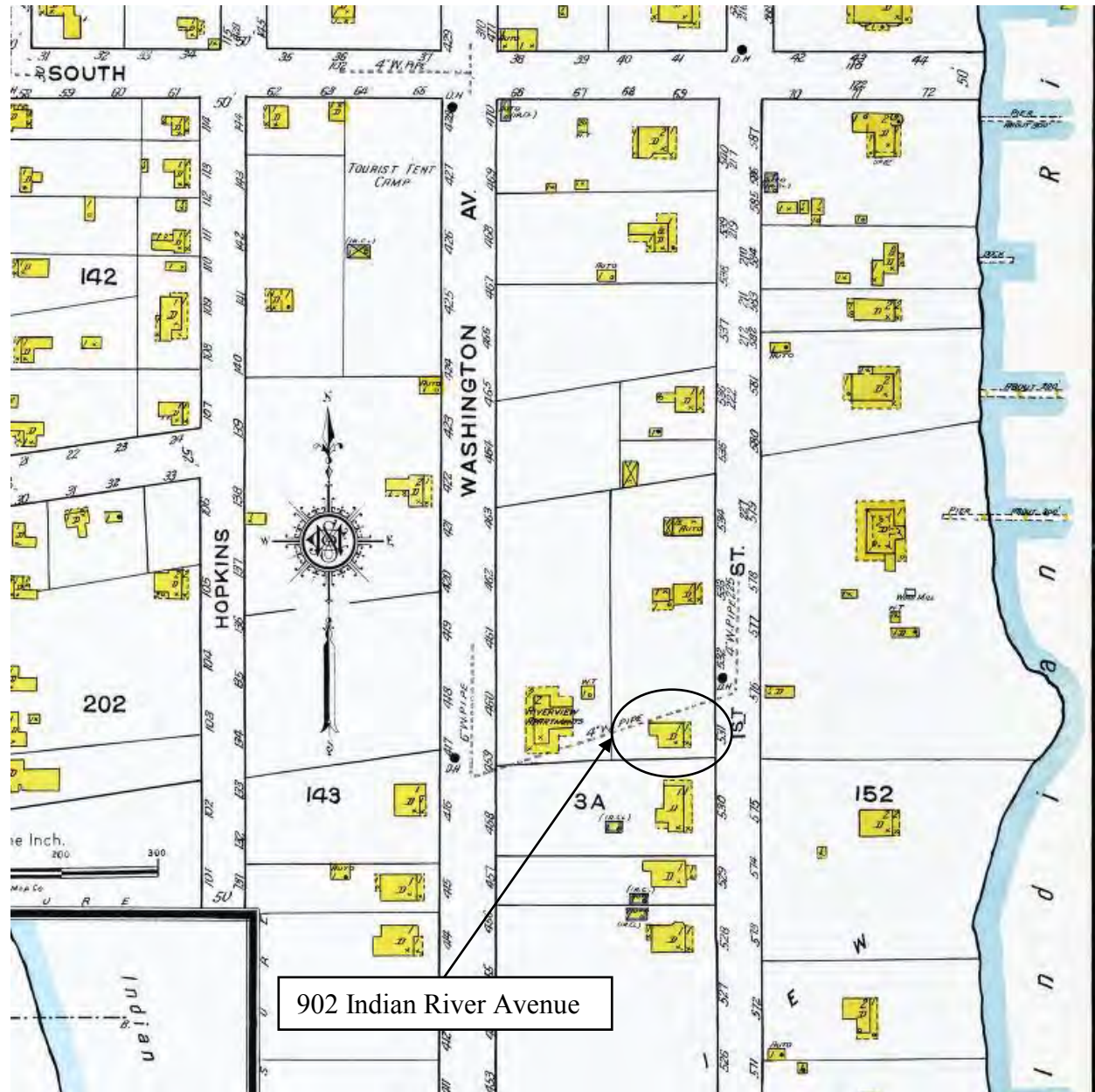
The property has had numerous additions and alterations. An additional bedroom was added onto the north side of the house near the time of the original construction, as the materials and windows in the room match the materials used in the original construction of the house. However, this addition was not shown on the 1920 Sanborn map, and thus was not added by the original builder (the house was sold in 1920). A door was included in this new room, allowing access to the north end of the porch.

There were also additions and alterations that occurred at an unknown point in time. A few feet of the north end of the porch were enclosed to form an additional closet for the north bedroom. A utility room was added onto the rear of the house. The windows on the utility room are vinyl and do not match the fenestration on the older portions of the house. The casing around the original windows was covered with aluminum; however, the original wood casing, muntins, etc. remain. An HVAC system has been added to the house. The porch was screened in at one point in time; however, the screen has been removed and replaced with vinyl pickets and railings. The lattice between the bottom of the porch and the ground was filled in with a solid plaster. The original brick piers under the porch columns have also been removed.



The current owners made some changes to interior walls and doorways from 1997-2005. They closed an original opening from the living room into a hallway and reduced the size of the original opening from the living room to the dining room. Vinyl siding was installed over the original siding in 2004. The roof was replaced with a hurricane resistant (asphalt shingle) roof in 2005. The original exposed roof rafters were removed or concealed with the roof modifications. A screened room was added to the rear of the house in 2010.

**Figure 3: Sanborn Map Company, 1920**



**Source:** University of Florida Digital Collection

### 3. Construction Materials

The building is a 1 story Bungalow style home. The house foundation has multiple masonry materials (original brick which was later covered with stucco, continuous concrete, concrete block). The structural system is wood (balloon) construction. The exterior fabric of the house was originally wood clapboard; however, the wood clapboard was covered with vinyl siding in 2004. The windows which are original to the house are 3/1 and 5/1 double hung sash wooden windows. There are two chimneys on the structure – one of which is brick (fireplace) and the other which is metal (vent/chimney?). The brick chimney was originally on the outside of the house, but was enclosed when the additional bedroom was added. The roof is covered in asphalt shingles.

### C. Statement of Significance

The property at 902 Indian River Ave. was built between 1915 and 1920 as an investment property ~~private home for~~ by Mr. Thomas G. Knight, whose personal residence was across the street along the Indian River. Mr. Knight organized the Superior Motor Works company to manufacture automobile parts and equipment. He sold the house in 1920 to William B. Dobson, who published the Cocoa Star and purchased the East Coast Advocate, combining them into the Star-Advocate in 1920. The property was part of the original Delespine Grant, dated 1903. The building is a one-story wooden-frame building that features a hip roof, an end porch, two dormers with hip roofs, original battered (slanted) porch columns, and original 5/1 and 3/1 double hung sash windows with battered (tapered) casings. The building has undergone some alteration/additions throughout its long history. The structure is significant for its association with the development of Titusville's residential area during the Florida Period of Expansion of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The building architecture, Bungalow Style, reflects the State of Florida's trend in building architecture during the period in which it was constructed.

#### IV. Contextual History<sup>1</sup>

The Titusville area has evidence of aboriginal inhabitants dating from 6,000 B.C. An Indian tribe known as the Ais inhabited the area by the early 1500s, when the first documented contacts between the North American Indians and European explorers occurred. The Ais were known as cruel, fierce warriors, who took prisoners from shipwreck victims along the coast and resisted the efforts of Spanish missionaries to Christianize them. However, by the time the Spanish left Florida in the 1760s, the Ais had been decimated due to disease, warfare, and malnutrition. However, the Spanish introduced citrus (orange groves) to the region during their first occupation. The 21-year British occupation of Florida focused on the development of trade and commercial agriculture, and it was during this time that Florida became a refuge for British loyalists with the outbreak of rebellion in the thirteen colonies. When the Spanish reoccupied Florida, many of the British settlers left for the United States or other parts of the British Empire. Two of the landowners in the Titusville area during this occupation were Domingo Reyes, who owned 1,000 acres at the headwaters of the Indian River, and Joseph Delespine, who owned 43,000 acres in part within the southern section of Titusville. While under Spanish control, Florida was a haven for runaway slaves and for the Seminole Indians, who were involved in armed conflict with settlers in the lower portion of the United States, which presented problems for the United States. Andrew Jackson invaded Florida in 1818 during the First Seminole War, which resulted in Florida joining the United States in 1821. As part of the treaty allowing for the transfer, all private land ownings (including what was granted to Domingo Reyes and Joseph Delespine) were preserved.

Settlement in the Titusville area did not begin until 1835, and remained largely undeveloped until after the Civil War. Titusville was founded in 1867 by Confederate Colonel Henry Theodore Titus, who arrived in the area known as Sand Point with the idea of building a town on land owned by his wife. The town was officially renamed Titusville in 1873. Titus is credited with building the first hotel, donating land for the courthouse and four churches, laying out many of the town's streets, and connecting the St. Johns and Indian Rivers with mule-drawn wagons. The town became the county seat of Brevard County in 1879, with Colonel Titus donating land for county buildings.

The community began shipping Indian River Citrus in the 1880s, which led to the incorporation of Titusville in 1886 and construction of schools, roads (including permanent street paving), a bridge across the Indian River, a water system, fire department, banks, and a stormwater drainage system. The railroad arrived circa 1890, improving the accessibility of Titusville. Freezes in the late 1890s greatly impacted the citrus industry, but the Florida Boom allowed the city to continue growing into the mid-1920s. It was during this time that many buildings were constructed in the Spanish,

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<sup>1</sup> Historical Development of Titusville from the Historic Properties Survey, Historic Property Associates, Inc.

Spanish Colonial, Italian, or eclectic style mixture, and the growth pushed development outside of the traditional town center.

Titusville was deeply affected by the burst of the Florida Boom in the mid-1920s and the economic depression of the 1930s. However, the City grew in the 1950s and 1960s with the consolidation of the towns of Whispering Hills and Indian River City into Titusville and the beginning of the space program. With the arrival of Kennedy Space Center, the accompanying boom produced motels, the first multi-rise apartment building, a public hospital, shopping centers, golf courses, churches, and subdivisions.

## V. Architectural Significance

### A. Property Features

The predominant architectural and site features of the property include:

- A 1-story main house
- A hipped roof
- A front porch featuring battered (tapered) columns
- Battered (tapered) exterior walls just above the foundation
- Two Dormers
- 5/1 and 3/1 double hung sash windows with battered (tapered) casings

### B. Building Placement/Orientation

The primary building is setback approximately 40 feet from the public street is offset to the right of the rectangular lot (facing the lot from the street). The main entrance and the primary façade of the building are oriented toward Indian River Avenue.

### C. Building Form and Architecture

The architectural style of the structure is Bungalow. The Bungalow was an outgrowth of the Craftsman Style. The Craftsman/Bungalow style was inspired primarily by the work of Charles Sumner Greene and Henry Mather Greene in Pasadena, California from 1893 to 1914. Said to be influenced by the English Arts and Crafts movement, an interest in oriental wooden architecture, and training in the manual arts, the Bungalow style features intricately detailed buildings. The style was quickly spread throughout the country by pattern books and popular magazines, such as the *Western Architect*, *The Architect*, *House Beautiful*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Architectural Record*, *Country Life in America*, and *Ladies' Home Journal*.<sup>2</sup>

The style faded from favor after the mid-1920s, and few were built in the 1930s. The Craftsman Bungalow Style was the popular style for smaller houses being built throughout the Country from 1905 to 1920. Bungalow Style houses were mass produced and rarely designed by architects. Therefore, they were popular for middle- and working-class residences. It was economical to build; as affordable housing, it became widely used in the early development of suburban residential areas across the county. The Bungalow had a comfortable floor plan. One of the features of a Bungalow, a front porch spanning at least 2/3 of the width of the house, if not the entire house, encouraged an informal life-style that began to take root in American society after World War I.

The most prominent characteristic of the bungalow is its horizontal form. The low-pitched roof and wide overhangs make the house appear to nestle into the earth. The horizontal quality of the house is emphasized through use of rectangular shapes

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<sup>2</sup> A Field Guide to American Houses



and horizontal bands of windows. The house is usually rectangular, with the narrow side oriented toward the street. The foundation is masonry piers (occasionally flared at the bottom), continuous brick, or concrete block. Lattice or louvered panels are normally used to cover the porch crawlspace.

**Figure 4: Main (East) Façade**



**Source:** Littlejohn Engineering Associates, March 2014

**Figure 5: Historical Photo of Main Façade**

**Source:** Florida Master Site File, assumed 1990's

*The historical photograph shows some of the details of the Craftsman/Bungalow style. On the underside of the roof of the dormer, exposed rafters are seen. Also, there is lattice work between the floor of the porch and the ground, which has now been filled in with plaster. At some point, the porch was screened in, but the screen has been removed and replaced with vinyl pickets and railings along the edge of the porch.*

**Figure 65:** West/South Façades



**Source:** Littlejohn Engineering Associates, March 2014



**Figure 76: North/West Façades**

**Source:** Littlejohn Engineering Associates, March 2014

**Figure 84: Sloping (Battered) Walls above Foundation**

**Source:** Littlejohn Engineering Associates, March 2014

Craftsman Bungalows are normally one or one-and-a-half stories, and elevated 2'-6" to 3'-4" above grade. The front porch is an essential element of all Craftsman Style houses; they are often the most prominent architectural feature of the house and are wide and deep enough to feel like an outside room. Porch wide beams help define the horizontal proportions of the style. Porches are either full or partial width (usually a minimum of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the front façade), or in some cases wrapped around the

side of the house. Partial porches are placed at the center or the main body or fully to one side. Porch roofs are normally supported by tapered square columns, made of wood, concrete, or masonry. They frequently extend to ground level (without a break at the level of the porch floor). Moldings are normally found at the top and the bottom of the columns. Solid knee walls, matching column bases, are used between the column bases. Railings and balusters which are occasionally used consist of open, heavy wood railings with regular or irregular pattern.

**Figure 97: Porch Columns**



**Source:** Littlejohn Engineering Associates, March 2014

*The porch columns reflect the typical Bungalow style in the entasis of the column (tapered from the top to the bottom). The columns originally rested on brick piers, which have been removed. One of the columns is now against an exterior wall where a portion of the porch was enclosed to form a closet for the master bedroom.*

There are four types of roofs typically associated with Craftsman Bungalows:

- Hip roof over one-and-a-half story, with a shed dormer on the main façade;
- One of more front gable roofs, with one being the most dominant, usually above the porch;
- Side gable roof parallel to the street with cross gable intersecting; cross gable typically covers the front porch and entrance to the building;
- Side gable roof parallel to the street and incorporating a dormer.

Craftsman roofs are low- to moderately-pitched roofs, emphasizing the horizontal massing of the style. Integral porch roof may match main pitch, or break at front wall to a 3:12 or 4:12 pitch. Rafter ends normally extend beyond the face of the wall, and



often display a decorative cut. Decorative (false) beams or braces are commonly found under the gables. Roof coverings are normally wood, composition, or metal shingles, or crimped metal panels. Shingles are often patterned. Chimneys are typically brick and tapered to match the column base, with simple decorative caps and are normally located on the outside of gable wall.

**Figure 1014: Chimneys**



*The original brick chimney was initially on the outside of the house, but was enclosed into the house with the addition of a bedroom within a few years of original construction. The metal chimney structure appears to be located near the bathroom/bedroom; however, there is no extension of this chimney into the first floor of the house.*

Wood siding, shingle and clapboard are the most common exterior wall surface materials used in the Bungalow style. Corner trim is used with siding. Stucco and brick are less frequently used. Different siding is generally used on the first and second floors with wooden clapboards on the first floor and wooden shingles on the second, although only one material is also common.

Doors are generally simple, often with panes of glass, but without transom or sidelights used. Windows are large and wide proportioned, made of wood, either single or double-hung, or casement sash. Windows are often grouped in clusters of two or three windows. Windows can be single-pane, 2- or 4-pane; the upper sashes may be multiple-pane (vertical) with the lower sashes single pane. Dormer windows do not cover the full width of the dormer. Shutters are not typically used. The window trim is thick to project out from the wall.

**Figure 118:** 3/1 and 5/1 Double Hung Sash Windows

**Source:** Littlejohn Engineering Associates, March 2014

*The original windows on the house are 3/1 double hung sash windows, except for the windows onto the porch which are 5/1 double hung sash windows. The casing of the windows has been covered with aluminum, but the wooden windows remain. The windows feature unique battered casings which are wider at the bottom than the top, and a lintel that extends past the vertical casing.*

The exterior of the Bungalow Style generally incorporates a great degree of ornamentation, but the ornament was used to emphasize the structure and construction of the building rather than to adorn for the sake of adornment. Carved rafter ends, decorative gable end trim, knee braces, and battered porch piers are common. Windows generally feature window surrounds. Lattice attic vents are generally present in the gable ends.

**Figure 12: Dormer**

*The vents on both dormers have the same unique shape of the window casings. With the new roof/soffits, the lintel can no longer be seen. The original exposed rafter ends have also been removed or concealed by roof modifications. In the historic photograph (page 13), the original lintels and exposed rafter ends are shown.*

Any future additions to the original structure should be smaller than the main body and gable roofs should be of equal or lower pitch than the main roof.

#### **D. Interior**

Many of the interior details have been preserved. The original Merritt Island Pine flooring has been retained in the front half of the house; however, the original flooring has been covered in the back of the house. The bedroom doors contain the original hardware. The trim around the doors is original to the house and reflects the same shape as the lintel of the window trim. The original picture rail is found in the living spaces.

**Figure 13: Interior Details**

**Source:** Littlejohn Engineering Associates, March 2014

## VI. Eligibility Criteria

Chapter 48 of the City of Titusville Land Development Code, “Preservation of Historic Resources, Archaeological Sites and Zones,” contains the criteria for designating historical properties on the Titusville Register of Historical Places. The following is an excerpt from Section 48-6:

“...these sites or zones must be significant in Titusville’s history, architecture, archaeology and culture, and possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship or association...”

### A. Integrity Issue

Before determining the significance of a property nominated for designation, the property must be reviewed for “integrity”, that is, the property must maintain its original character despite any alterations that may have occurred over time.

In the case of the 902 Indian River Avenue property, it is clear that additions and alterations have been made over the course of time. The following are considerations that can be objectively evaluated:

- Has the general form (plan shape) been maintained? **Yes**
- Have the alterations/additions been made during a period of significance, whereby those alterations have been a part of the evolving history of the house? **Yes (additional bedroom); No (utility room)**
- Do the window openings maintain their original dimensions, even though the window type may be different from the original configuration? **Yes**
- Are the original roof slopes maintained? **Yes**
- Are the original construction materials still evident? **Yes (windows); No (clapboard siding/roof/exposed rafter ends)**
- Is the original character of the resource, dating from its initial construction period, still apparent even though additions and alterations may have occurred? **Yes**
- Do the major alterations/additions affect a major elevation? **No**

The alterations to the exterior include the addition of a bedroom, utility room, and screened porch. There were some alterations done inside the main structure, which have not had an effect on the exterior of the house.

Despite the alterations, the structure still maintains its Bungalow style characteristics, including its basic roof-form and plan, window apertures, original columns and windows. “It is significant for its association with the development of Titusville’s residential area during the Florida Period of Expansion of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.”



Therefore, the 902 Indian River Avenue property meets the “test” for the retention of sufficient integrity.

**B. Designation Criteria**

The 902 Indian River Avenue property is significant in Titusville’s history and architecture; possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship; and meets the following criteria contained in Section 48-6 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance:

*Design and Construction:* Recognizes the quality of design and construction and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural type, period, style or method of construction; or the work of a prominent designer or builder; or contains elements of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship of outstanding quality; or that represents a significant innovation or adaptation to the local Florida environment; or represents a distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. In order to justify eligibility for a property under the "design and construction" criterion, the property must physically convey the qualities for which it is nominated. Distinctive characteristics refer to the physical features or traits that commonly recur in individual types, periods or methods of construction. Characteristics may be expressed in terms such as form, proportion, structure, plan, style or materials. They can be general, referring to ideas of design and construction such as basic plan or form, or they can be specific, referring to precise ways of combining particular kinds of materials. Properties associated with design and construction could include a residence or commercial building representing a significant style of architecture; a movie theater embodying high artistic value in its decorative features or a bridge representing technological advances.

**C. Recommendation**

LEA/Staff proposes that the City of Titusville’s Historic Preservation Board recommend to the City Council the listing of the 902 Indian River Avenue property in the Titusville Register of Historic Places.

## VII. Planning Context

The historic designation is a tool for a community to retain its physical integrity. Many of the historic structures that have made a significant contribution to the history of the community have been destroyed.

The designation of the 902 Indian River Avenue property will provide protection in the future from its subsequent owners from inaccurate or unsympathetic alterations and unnecessary demolition to assure the preservation of the character and uniqueness of the property. [Once the house is designated as a local historic landmark, exterior alterations to the building will require the approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the City.](#) The designation may also serve as an “object lesson” to others who may consider the designation of their historic properties.

**VIII. Bibliography**

902 Indian River Avenue. City of Titusville Local Historic Resource Nomination Form, March 2013.

City of Titusville, CRA Historic Property Survey, Prepared by Janus Research, March 2012.

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Florida, University of Florida Digital Collection

Brevard County Township Data Sets (GIS)

[www.titusville.com](http://www.titusville.com)