

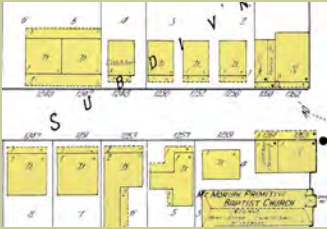
**JOHNSON BROTHERS HOUSES
1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street
Tampa, Florida**



**CITY OF TAMPA
CITY COUNCIL
August 24, 2023**



**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**



JOHNSON BROTHERS HOUSES
1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street
Tampa, Florida

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Designation Report 3

Designation Summary 7

Legal Description 8

Maps 10

Architectural and Site Description 13

Historic Context 15

Statement of Significance 34

References 35



**CITY OF TAMPA
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW & HISTORIC PRESERVATION
1400 N. BOULEVARD
TAMPA, FLORIDA 33607
813.274.3100**

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Name of Property: JOHNSON BROTHERS HOUSES

Historic Name of Property: _____

Street Address: 1248 & 1250 E. SCOTT STREET

City: TAMPA Neighborhood: ENCORE

County: HILLSBOROUGH State: FLORIDA Zip Code: 33602

Acreage: 0.10 MOL Folio Number: 192846.0000 FMSF No: _____

Property Owners: OPEN SPACE ACQUISITIONS, LLC

Owners' Address: 5301 W. CYPRESS STREET

City, State, Zip Code: TAMPA, FLORIDA 33607

JOHNSON BROTHERS HOUSES

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

Ownership	Resources	Contributing	Non-Contributing
<input type="checkbox"/> Private	Buildings	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public - Local	Sites	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Public - State	Structures	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Public - Federal	Objects	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Historic Function: RESIDENTIAL

Current Function: VACANT

Architectural Classification: FRAME VERNACULAR

Materials: Foundation: BRICK PIER

Walls: HORIZONTAL WOOD

Roof: METAL GABLE

Areas of Significance: A: COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

B: ETHNIC HERITAGE: AFRICAN-AMERICAN

C: ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance: c.1900-1973

Significant Dates: c.1900, DATE OF CONSTRUCTION

Significant Person(s): _____

Cultural Affiliation: _____

Architect/Builder: UNKNOWN

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE

AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES

MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

JOHNSON BROTHERS HOUSES

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

The proposed landmark has a quality of significance in American, state or local history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture which is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association and that

Criteria A: is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;

B: is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

C: embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction; or

D: has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

JOHNSON BROTHERS HOUSES

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

Report Prepared by: Historic Preservation Commission
Dennis W. Fernandez, Manager
Elaine Lund, Historic Preservation Specialist

Organization: City of Tampa
1400 N. Boulevard
Tampa, Florida 33607

Telephone Number: 813.274.3100

Date of Presentation to HPC May 16, 2023

Date of Presentation to City Council August 24, 2023

All research material located in the offices of:
Architectural Review & Historic Preservation
City of Tampa
1400 N. Boulevard
Tampa, Florida 33607

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

DESIGNATION SUMMARY

The African-American Heritage Sites Multiple Property Local Historic Designation is locally significant under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, Criterion B, In the area of Ethnic Heritage, and Criterion C, in the area of Architecture. These buildings rank among the few remaining structures that represent an enclave that formed among the African-American community, from prior to the turn of the century. Racial segregation included residential, social, economic and religious segregation. The Central Avenue Business District, adjacent to the segregated neighborhood known as The Scrub, was the heartbeat of Tampa's Black community and provided all services needed for daily life. These areas were razed by Urban Renewal in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. The surviving buildings proposed for designation represent two of over 600 residences that formerly comprised the Scrub.



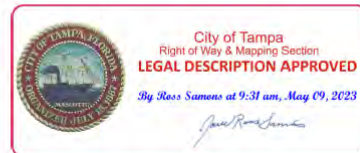
Johnson Brothers Houses, 1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street, Facing North

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses
1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street
Tampa, Florida

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: 1248 E. Scott Street
EXHIBIT A

Lot 4, Block 1, of CARRUTH AND SPENCER'S SUBDIVISION according to map or plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 1, Page 42, of the Public Records of Hillsborough County, Florida.

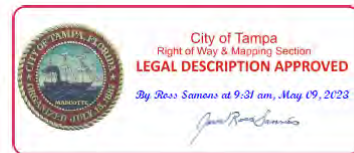


LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

Johnson Brothers Houses
1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street
Tampa, Florida

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: 1250 E. Scott Street
EXHIBIT A

Lot 3, Block 1, LESS and EXCEPT the East 15 feet thereof, of CARRUTH AND SPENCER'S SUBDIVISION according to map or plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 1, Page 42, of the Public Records of Hillsborough County, Florida.



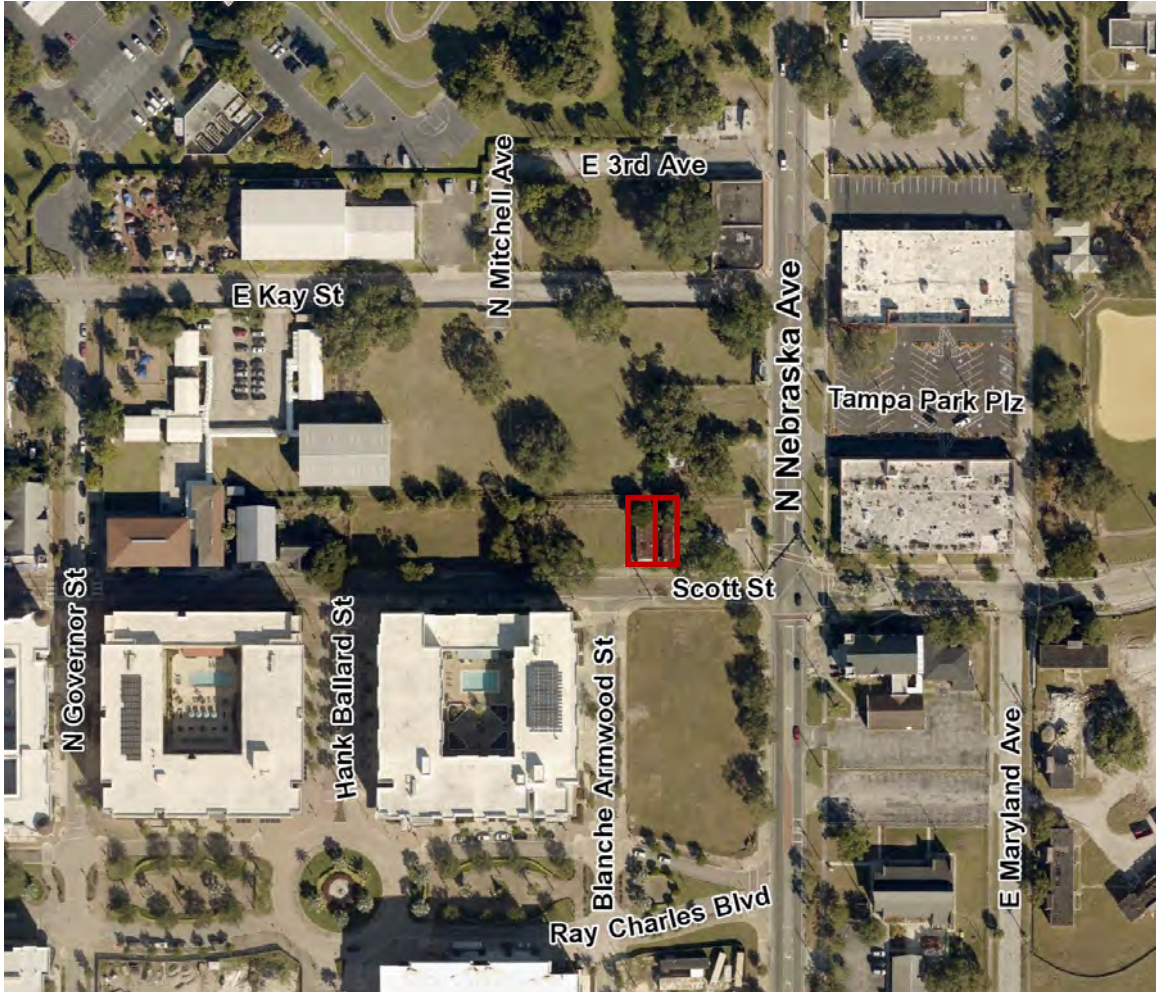
LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

MAPS



AERIAL MAP

2022

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses
1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street
Tampa, Florida

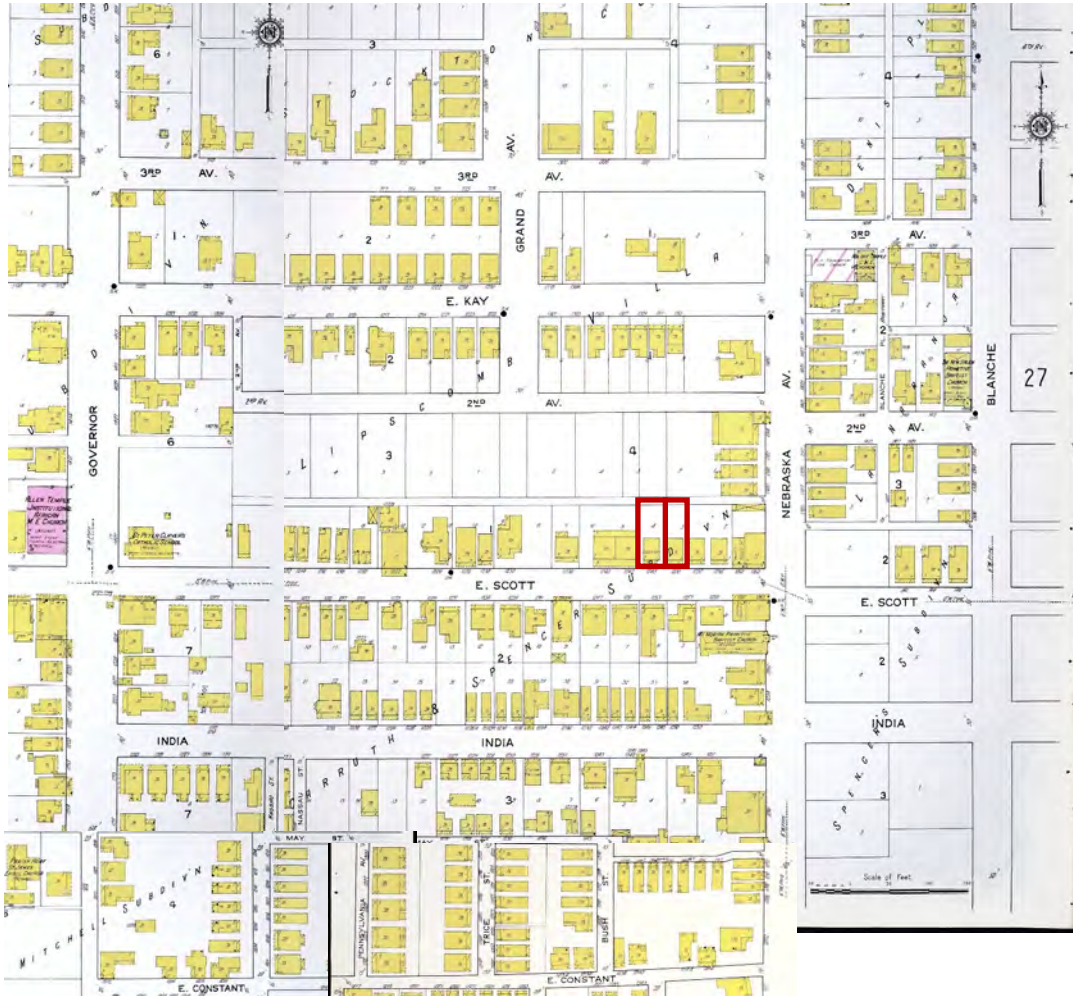
MAPS



SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY MAP
1903

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

Johnson Brothers Houses
1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street
Tampa, Florida



SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY MAP

1915

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

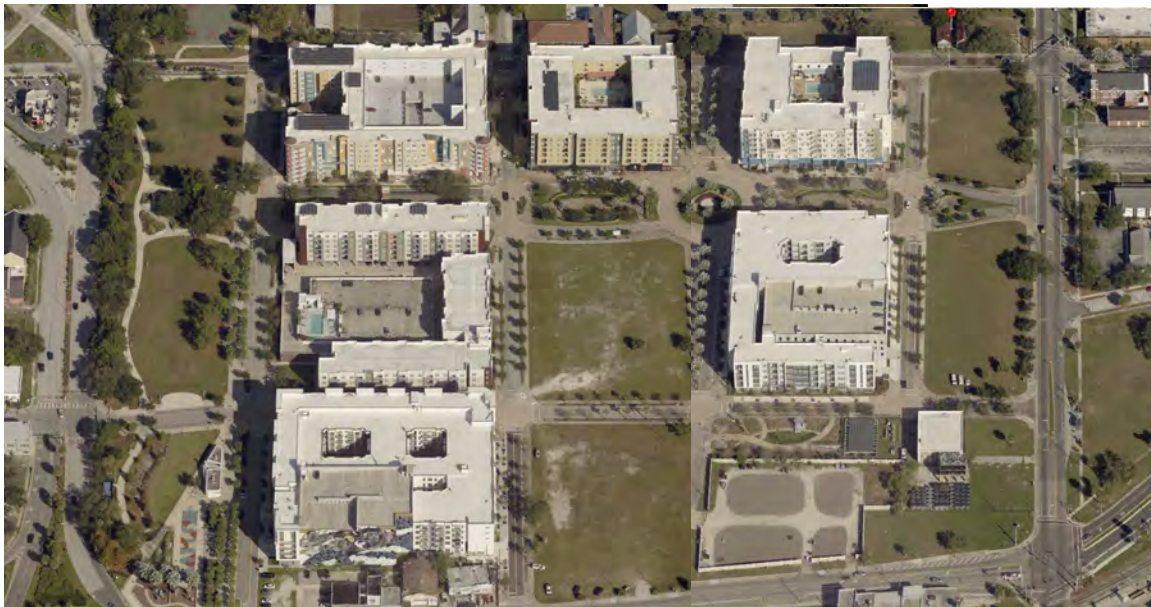
Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE DESCRIPTION

The Johnson Brothers Houses, located at 1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street, are the last remaining original housing stock of the Scrub neighborhood, an African-American residential area that began to take shape in the late nineteenth century, north of downtown Tampa and west of Ybor City. The Scrub remained intact until Urban Renewal efforts replaced it with public housing, Central Park Village, in 1954. Today the neighborhood has undergone a revitalization into Encore. It is a mixed-use district of apartment residences, senior housing, office, and retail space adorned with public art and park space. Encore celebrates the history and culture of The Scrub and Central Avenue through the renaming of streets to honor significant individuals from the neighborhood and the installation of public art and interpretive signage that calls attention to the area's rich history.



Aerial View of Encore, Facing North

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses 1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street Tampa, Florida

The Johnson Brothers Houses exemplify the typical housing found in the Scrub: small wood-frame structures with v-crimp metal front-gabled roofs and a rectangular plan. Large vents in the gable ends provide attic ventilation. The houses are clad in horizontal wood siding with a “Dolly Varden” or drop profile, trimmed with wood cornerboards. The shed roofs over the full-width front porches are supported by square wood columns with jigsaw-cut braces. Fenestration consists of one-over-one and two-over-two double-hung wood sash windows with wood trim. Brick-pier foundations support the houses.



Johnson Brothers Houses, West and South Elevations

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Spanish explorers were familiar with the Tampa Bay area as early as the 16th century. Florida officially became a United States territory in 1821, when the U.S. acquired it from Spain under the Adams-Onís Treaty. In 1822, U.S. President James Monroe appointed General Andrew Jackson as Governor of the recently acquired territory. Treaties between the native nations and the U.S. established the boundaries of the Seminole territory, pushing the native people away from the coastlines toward the center of the Florida peninsula. In 1824, the U.S. Army established an outpost at Tampa Bay to monitor the Seminoles and ensure that they stayed in their territory and did not intimidate or harass white settlers. Colonel George Mercer Brooke commanded the fort, which served as the main garrison for the Seminole Wars.

With the establishment of Fort Brooke, the surrounding population securely increased. The fort served as a trading post for both the white and Seminole population. In 1831, a post office was established for Tampa Bay to serve the post and small settlement, the name being shortened to Tampa shortly thereafter. Hillsborough County was created from Alachua County in 1834.



Geographical Statistical and Historical
Map of Florida, 1822

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

In the early 1800s, Florida provided a refuge for runaway slaves. The 1818 First Seminole War waged by Andrew Jackson hoped to recapture many of these exiles that had taken safety in free-Black settlements such as the Manatee River Settlement.

Within ten years, white settlers were demanding more land - land that was inhabited by American natives and runaway Blacks. The second Seminole War broke out in 1835 when Major Francis Dade and his men lost in battle, no doubt an attack aided by his Black guide Louis Fatio Pacheco, a slave of Fort Brooke's commanding officer, on the Fort Brooke-Fort King military road. As the fighting escalated, fueled by the large number of runaway slaves, this conflict comprised the greatest slave rebellion in the United States history.

The negotiations of 1842 ending the Second Seminole War forced most runaway slaves and Seminoles to migrate to the West or restricted Native American settlements out of what is now Hillsborough County, thereby opening the area to increased white settlement through land grants. A free Black, Mills Holloman, applied for a land grants but was denied due to his race. In 1850, the population for Hillsborough County, which included present-day Pinellas, Polk and Manatee Counties, was 2377; 660 were slaves and 11 were free Blacks.



Map of Fort Brooke, 1824

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE

AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES

MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

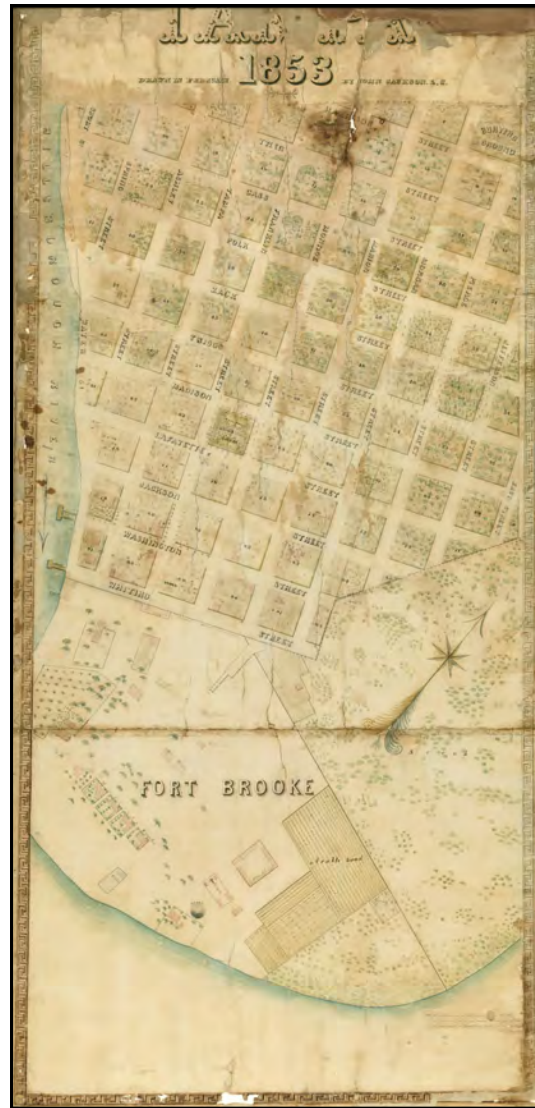
Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

Florida achieved statehood in 1845. In 1846, the size of Fort Brooke reduced, making more land available for civilian settlement. Through the 1840s and 1850s, more development occurred in present-day downtown Tampa. The population consisted mainly of military personnel. By 1858 Tampa had about 1,000 inhabitants, the town dotted with houses, churches and businesses.

At the end of the Civil War in 1865, Fort Brooke deactivated and the population of Tampa began to decline. In 1879, a large portion of the land reserved for Fort Brooke was restored to the public domain at a land sale in Gainesville. Colonels Hooker, Sparkman, and Captain John T. Lesley purchased some of the larger lots for themselves and on behalf of others. In 1883, the remainder of the Fort Brooke military reservation opened to civilian settlement causing a flurry of real estate speculation.



John Jackson's Map of Tampa, 1853

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

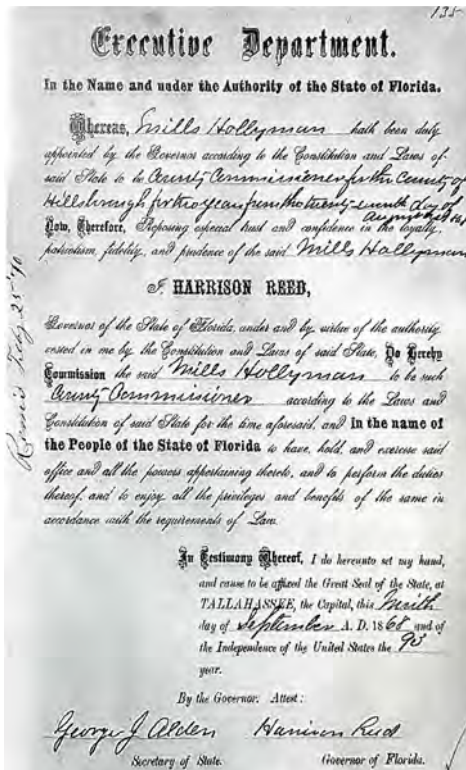
Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

At the end of the Civil War, postwar economic devastation struck all residents including freed slaves who now attempted to farm on their own or hire out. A freedman's school operated sporadically in 1867 and then permanently in 1870 on Harrison between Morgan and Marion, which was replaced by the Harlem School in 1889. By 1867, Blacks had the right to vote and Hillsborough County's first African-American official, voter registrar Frederick D. Newberry, assisted 87 men in the process. Mills Holloman, who was denied access to the land grants of 1842, was appointed by the Governor to serve as a county

commissioner from 1868 to 1872. Even after the end of Reconstruction in 1877, Tampa area African-Americans lived in an isolated, economically challenged community but labor was always a marketable force. Unfortunately, the Great Freeze of 1895 took a toll on all farming families, including African-American families such as the Armwoods, who had been enjoying moderate prosperity.



Commission of Office for Mills Holloman, 1868

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

Johnson Brothers Houses

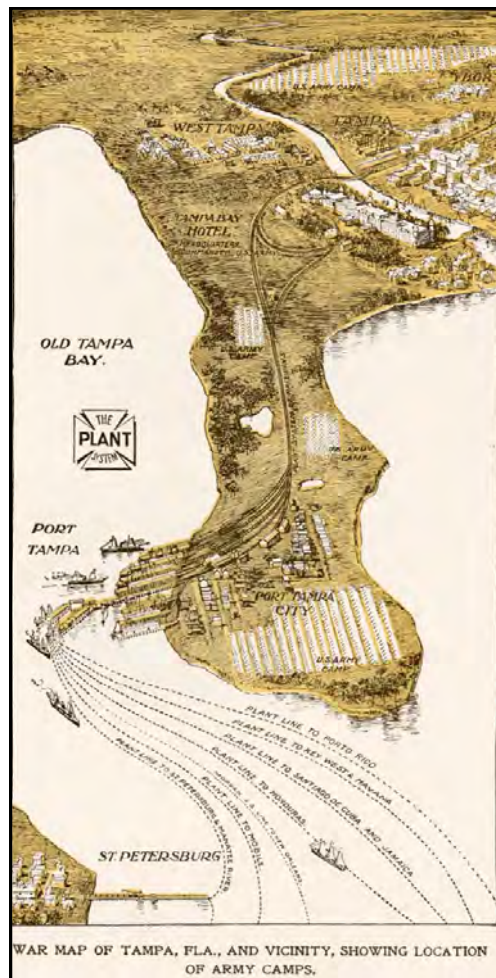
1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

For Tampa, the end of the 19th century was a time of phenomenal growth. January 1884 saw the completion of Henry Bradley Plant's South Florida Railroad, linking Tampa with Jacksonville, as well as the discovery of phosphate in the vicinity. Plant built the Tampa Bay Hotel on the west bank of the Hillsborough River. In 1888, the first bridge over the Hillsborough River linked the original town of Tampa with the Hyde Park neighborhood and Plant's hotel.

Plant's railroad extended to Port Tampa, connecting his rail and steamship lines. Port Tampa played a major role in the 1898 Spanish-American War, as military forces embarked from there for Cuba. U.S. troops spent many months at camp in West Tampa, Tampa Heights, and Ybor City, waiting for orders to invade Cuba. The war brought many Black soldiers to Tampa for encampment of the 24th and 15th Infantry Regiments and the Ninth Cavalry, known as the Buffalo Soldiers, before their departure to Cuba.

Tampa's role in this war prompted the U.S. Congress to provide funding for the improvement of the city's downtown docking facilities.



LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

Henry B. Plant died in New York City in 1899. With about 940 miles of track, the Florida Central & Peninsular Railroad (FC&P) was one of Plant's few rivals. The FC&P acquired several rail lines in central Florida, making it a prime carrier of agriculture and phosphate. Mr. Erwin, the succeeding president of the Plant System, invited the Seaboard Air Line Railway (SAL), majority owner of FC&P, to use the Port Tampa terminal jointly. Tampa attorney Peter O. Knight urged the SAL to terminate in Tampa. He purchased Seddon Island and five miles of waterfront property, which SAL subsequently used for its terminals. Following the purchase of the FC&P and the Tampa Northern Railroad, the SAL ran through the south side of Ybor City and along both sides of the Ybor Estuary to its shipping terminals on Seddon Island and Hooker's Point. The new terminals induced the federal government to invest in the City of Tampa's harbor.



Tampa Board of Trade aerial map, 1912

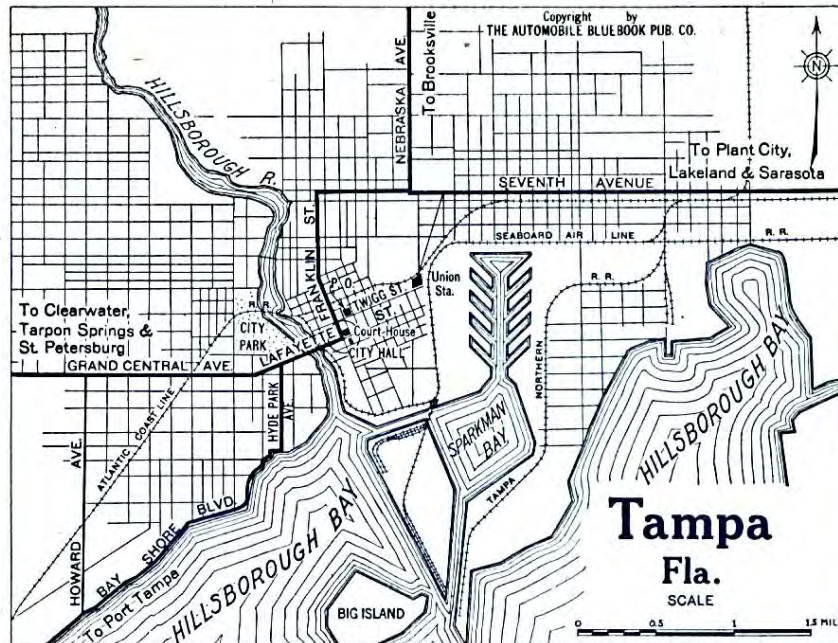
LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street
Tampa, Florida

By 1905, Congress was convinced to authorize the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to dredge the main shipping channels into Tampa to a 20-foot depth. In addition, two of the men who had acquired much of the Fort Brooke waterfront property, E.M. Hendry and A.J. Knight, dredged their own 20-foot channel, further extending navigable waters, and opened a shipping terminal at the mouth of the river. Tampa became a major deep water port and a major phosphate shipping port with warehouses lining the railroad spurs that ran along the downtown harbor.

In the River and Harbor Act of 1910, Congress authorized the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to dredge Tampa's channels to 24 feet and create a new turning basin at the mouth of the Ybor Estuary. This project included a condition that no expenditures would be made on the Ybor Channel until the local municipality agreed to construct public wharves and to secure and control at least 700 feet in width on either sides of the channel, thereby ensuring the channel's use primarily in the interest of general commerce on equal terms to all.



Map showing major routes through Tampa, 1919

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

Growing prosperity saw the spread of residential development from downtown to the new suburbs of Hyde Park and Tampa Heights, areas that had previously been wilderness and farmland. By 1894, West Tampa was established as a second cigar-making city, incorporating in 1895 and remaining independent of Tampa until 1925. During the early twentieth century, Tampa was a thriving community. Downtown, masonry buildings began replacing wooden structures and Tampa's first "skyscrapers" were constructed. The expanding business district spread into the old Fort Brooke area, which was annexed into the city in 1907. This area contained the neighborhood known as The Scrub, an African-American neighborhood that began in the latter half of the nineteenth century.



Bird's Eye View of Tampa, 1892

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

The Scrub began as a small Black settlement supplying housing for nearby lumber mill workers. At that point, Tampa was but a village with a northern boundary of (now) Kennedy Boulevard. Ybor City grew in the late 1880s to the east, wedging The Scrub between two profoundly different cultures. The conditions in The Scrub were modest at best and the deterioration of its structures and quality of living was rapid. This neighborhood was home to three of the staple institutions that were established early in Tampa's history: 1863, Mt. Sinai African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (1863), Beulah Baptist Church (1865); and St. Paul's AME Church (1870).



A Street in The Scrub, c.1927

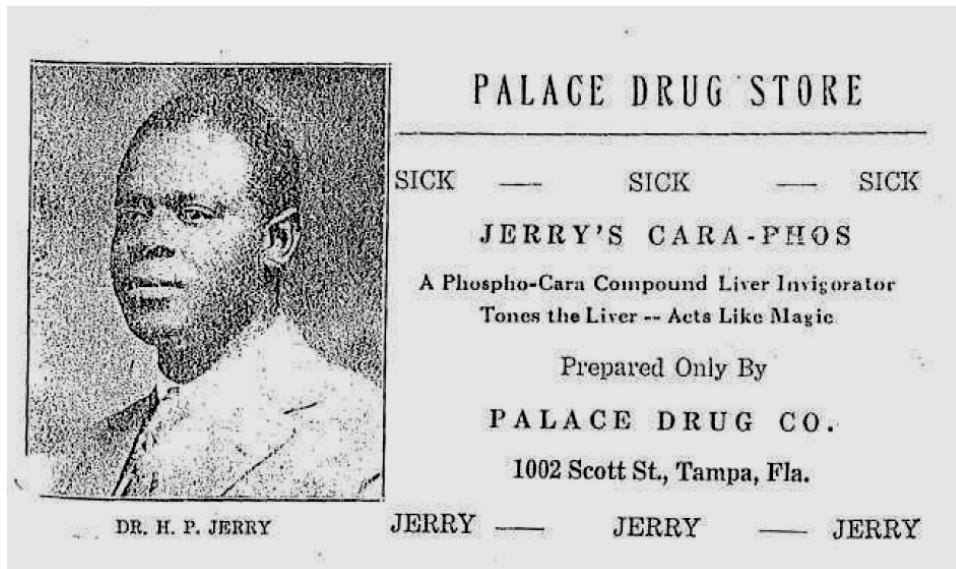
**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

State and local laws ensured that racial segregation was legally enforceable, preventing Black people from attending white churches and schools, shopping at businesses, using the same public facilities, and even being buried in the same cemeteries. Distant enough from downtown Tampa's Franklin Street commercial district, the Black business district in Tampa grew along Central Avenue and its surrounding streets. The Williams Cigar Company opened in 1906 on Scott Street. The number of Black-owned businesses along Central Avenue grew to over 80 by 1910. In 1912 the first Black dentist, Dr. G. Coffee bought property on Scott and Central to build his office. Walter Armwood opened the first Black-owned drugstore, the Gem Drug Store in 1913 on Central Avenue. Clara Frye opened a hospital on Lamar Avenue for the poor, regardless of race. *The Tampa Bulletin* started in 1914 on Orange Avenue and became one of the leading Black-owned newspapers in the country. 1914 saw the organization of the Negro Board of Trade arise from a meeting at the Central Avenue Odd Fellows Hall.



PALACE DRUG STORE

SICK — SICK — SICK

JERRY'S CARA-PHOS

A Phospho-Cara Compound Liver Invigorator
Tones the Liver -- Acts Like Magic

Prepared Only By

PALACE DRUG CO.

1002 Scott St., Tampa, Fla.

DR. H. P. JERRY

JERRY — JERRY — JERRY

Advertisement from *The Negro Blue Book of Tampa*, 1926

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

After World War I ended, prosperity began to spread once again throughout the U.S. and in Florida in particular. It was during this period that many Florida communities experienced a building boom. Like many towns along the coast of Florida, most of Tampa thrived during the Land Boom years of the early 1920s.

On Central Avenue, enterprising entrepreneurs such as Isaac Gardner, Sr. and Garfield Devoe Rogers founded many real estate and business interests during Florida Boom Times of the 1920s. Rogers' business successes were many, including co-founding the Central Life Insurance Company with Mary McLeod Bethune and C. Blythe Andrews in 1922, starting with six employees in a building on Harrison Street. Dr. Jacob White Sr. had his doctor's offices on Central Avenue and Scott Street. While many Black individuals succeeded, it was the sense of community that tied prosperous times. "Today as we enter the second quarter of the twentieth century, we can say very proudly that we came through the past successfully, and are looking to the future full of hope and new inspiration to make our life a life of usefulness, and to discharge our obligation to our fellowmen, and thereby make the world better by our having lived in it," said Samuel J. McCall in 1925. Mr. McCall was an attorney and community activist in Tampa.



SAMUEL J. McCALL.

The above is the likeness of Mr. Samuel J. McCall, the only son of Mrs. Mattie McCall, who resides at 2014 Oli Ave. He is very popular in the social life of Tampa, where he has lived all his life, and has a large circle of friends throughout the state.

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

The Tampa Urban League headed by Blanche Armwood and the Harlem Branch of the Tampa Public Library were two very important community organizations of the 1920s. Education was a primary concern, and when government funding fell short, the Tampa Urban League and the Community Chest sponsored The Helping Hand Day Nursery and Kindergarten on Lamar and Kay to provide care for Black children so that their parents could work. During this era, these children would not have been accepted into the segregated childcare centers and schools for white children. By 1922 Blanche Armwood was supervisor of Negro Schools in Tampa while Christina Meacham principalized at the Harlem Academy. Churches flourished as well by the 1920s, many which had started out without even so much as any structure at all were now being rebuilt from tents to modest wooden structures to those of brick, claiming their stability, success and permanence to their congregations.



1310 Marion Street, c.1923

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

The Great Depression hit Florida's economy hard, particularly on the heels of the real estate bust. Growth in Tampa overall slowed over the next two decades. In 1939, the Federal Writers' Project of the Work Projects Administration recorded:

"The majority of Tampa's 21,000 Negroes live in the thickly populated Scrub section north of the business center; the name originally referring to its natural setting. Early settlers, building close to Fort Brooke, assigned less protected territory among the oaks to the Negroes. Later this group was augmented by Cuban and West Indian refugees and cargoes of contraband slaves. After the War Between the States, southern planters brought freed slaves to Tampa because of the fishing and shipping industries.

"The Scrub has its newspapers, schools, churches--Protestant and Catholic- a library, and municipal hospital. A theater features 'all-colored' production and numerous business enterprises are conducted by and for Negroes. Many of the inhabitants are skilled cigar makers and work in factories side by side with Cuban and Italian workers, but the greater proportion are employed as laborers and in domestic service. They have a jargon of English, Spanish, and Cuban, spiced with ancestral dialects and interpretations. The Tampa Urban League, a civic organization led by Negroes, has the co-operation of the city government and acts as a clearing house for economic and social problems of the race in Tampa."

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

The Great Depression of the early 1930s brought hard times for all, particularly the Black community. Some relief came as the Tampa Urban League sponsored the Tampa Cooperative Unemployment Council, offering sewing shop jobs. Health care improved with a clinic on Marion and Tyler opening in 1931. The City of Tampa opened the Tampa Negro Hospital on Lamar in 1930 to help relieve the load assumed by churches, families and health-care organizations such as the Padgett Nursing Home on Palafox. Tampa Black business owners continued to provide employment as they could, including the Central Life Insurance Company, the Afro-American Insurance Company on Constant Street and the Pyramid Hotel and Investment Company. Education continued as a focus with the Harlem Academy next door to St. Paul's and the Lomax school being the largest Black school in Hillsborough County. WPA programs from Roosevelt's New Deal in the later 1930s offered job opportunities as well.



Tampa Cooperative Unemployment Council Sewing Room, c.1932

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

Serving the military in World War II was viewed as having two goals within the African-American community: the fight against fascism and the end to discrimination and racism here in the United States. A favorite spot for servicemen was Watts Sanderson's Central Terrace Beer Garden on Central Avenue. After the War, Central Avenue continued to thrive with businesses such as the Central Avenue Sandwich Shop, later El Chico Bar. The Apollo Ballroom at Harrison Street was a popular spot for African-American performers including James Brown, Cab Calloway, Ray Charles, Ella Fitzgerald with the Chick Webb Band, B.B. King, Cannonball Adderley, who along with his brother hailed from Tampa, and the Ink Spots. During the Jim Crow era, shops, clubs and churches were a refuge from segregation. Several of these traveling entertainers, as well as other Black travelers and railway porters, stayed at The Jackson House on Zack Street. The Central/Pyramid Hotel also offered accommodations for African-American travelers.



Central Hotel, c.1942

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

The 1950s offered more for Black Tampa residents in terms of opportunities with the end of segregation, although the Civil Rights Movement was slow to reach Tampa. An increase in Black population led to increasingly difficult housing problems and The Scrub continued to offer only the most meager of shelter. In 1952, architects Franklin O. Adams and Frank A. Parziale designed Central Park Village, a low-rent housing complex intended to transform The Scrub. Tampa Housing Authority intended this housing project to provide rent within the financial reach of some 1,970 African-Americans who lived in the neighborhood. The original plans included 57 residential buildings and the complex office to replace the majority of the houses in The Scrub. Only a few houses north of Scott Street remained, including those occupied by Johnnie Johnson and his family. Listed in the 1950 Census, Johnson worked for a railroad company and lived with his wife Louella and two lodgers.



Aerial View of Central Park Village, 1957

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses 1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street Tampa, Florida

In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court decided the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, which concluded that racially segregated schools were inherently unequal and therefore a violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Hillsborough County public schools were placed under various court desegregation orders beginning in 1962 (these orders remained in effect until 2001). In general, the Civil Rights Movement was slow to reach Tampa. An increase in the black population led to increasingly fractious housing problems, and Central Park Village offered a meager form of shelter. However, Central Avenue was still a prime area, offering all services to its African-American clientele, including restaurants, entertainment, doctor and dentist offices, and barber and beauty shops. The Pyramid Hotel maintained its status as a stellar success, providing a multitude of jobs, and thus served as the anchor for Central Avenue.



Central Avenue, 1960s

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

Johnson Brothers Houses **1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street** Tampa, Florida

Unfortunately, the riots of 1967 took a heavy toll on Central Avenue. Even with the 100-member African-American patrol, the White Hats, to deter violence, Central Avenue succumbed to violence and several buildings were burned and destroyed. More business closed after integration as Black residents no longer were obliged to shop on Central Avenue, and the business district was razed in 1974. Between Urban Renewal and the construction of the Interstate Highway System, Central Avenue lost its identity and the tight-knit community eventually dispersed.

In an effort to stimulate growth, Tampa City Council adopted the plan for the Central Park Community Redevelopment Area in June 2006. The plan identified measures to foster public/private partnerships that maximized redevelopment investment in a manner that respected the unique history of the neighborhood. This plan included the demolition of the Central Park Village housing complex, the redesign of Perry Harvey, Sr. Park, and the construction of a mixed-use community including affordable and market rate apartments.



View Looking West along Scott Street at Johnson Brothers Houses and Encore, 2022

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT **ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE** **AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES** **MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

The new mixed-use community is known as Encore!, a public-private partnership with 28 acres under development by the Tampa Housing Authority. The overall 40-acre site blends multi-family, retail, and office uses with a hotel and a grocery store into an energetic downtown neighborhood, home to young professionals, families, and active seniors. The concept encourages mix of uses and service efficiency through space conservation of multiple functions. Encore! is accented by the planned public art, some of which has already been installed, the revitalization of Perry Harvey Park, the renovation of the old St. James church located on Ray Charles Blvd into an African American history museum, and a town square. The Johnson Brothers Houses, once home to generations of the Johnson family, sit on the north side of Encore! and are now property of the Tampa Housing Authority.



Johnson Brothers Houses, 2012

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

CRITERION A: RECREATION, COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURE

The Historic Central Avenue/African-American Heritage Sites Multiple Properties Listing is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development and under Criterion B in the area of African-American Ethnicity. These buildings rank among the few remaining structures that represent an enclave that formed among the African-American community, starting as early as prior to the turn of the century. Racial segregation included residential, social, economic and religious segregation. The Central Avenue Business District, adjacent to the segregated neighborhood known as The Scrub, was the heartbeat of Tampa's Black community and provided all services needed for daily life. These areas were razed by Urban Renewal in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.

The buildings in the Historic Central Avenue/African-American Heritage Sites Multiple Properties Listing are locally significant under Criterion C, as well. They represent the structures that exemplified the way of life in the cohesive community that formed around the Central Avenue area. The five buildings previously designated under this Multiple Properties Group are masonry civic and religious institutions that represent the stability, permanence, and success of the community. These historic structures are:

- St. James Episcopal Church, 1202 N Governor Street, c.1921, Romanesque Revival style;
- Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church, 1212 E. Scott Street, c.1922, Gothic Revival style;
- Greater Bethel Baptist Church, 805 E. Laurel Street, c.1947, Gothic Revival style;
- Paradise Missionary Baptist Church, 1112 E. Scott Street, c.1924, Gothic Revival style;
- Greater Mt. Moriah Primitive Baptist Church, 1225 N Nebraska Avenue, c.1948, Gothic Revival style.

Two remaining buildings represent the over 600 residences that formerly comprised The Scrub. The majority of the homes in The Scrub were simple wood frame structures such as these. The two houses are:

- 1248 E. Scott Street, c.1900, Frame Vernacular style;
- 1250 E. Scott Street, c.1900, Frame Vernacular style.

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

Johnson Brothers Houses
1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street
Tampa, Florida

REFERENCES

_____, *Railroad Gazette*, v.19 1887.

Brady, Rowena Ferrell, *Things Remembered: An Album of African Americans in Tampa*, University of Tampa Press, 1997.

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

Cichanski, W.J., *Port of Embarkation, Tampa, During the Spanish-American War*, University of South Florida Senior Seminar HTY 592, 1969.

City of Tampa, Proclamation, Dick A. Greco, Mayor, December 6, 1997.

Covington, James, *Florida Historical Quarterly* 40, 1967.

Cutler, Harry Gardner, *History of Florida: Past and Present, Historical and Biographical, Volume 2*, Lewis Publishing Company, 1923.

Davis, William Watson, *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Florida*, Columbia University, 1913.

Dunn, Hampton, *Yesterday's Tampa*, Miami: E.A. Seemann Publishing Inc., 1972.

Federal Writers' Project, WPA, *Florida: A Guide to the Southernmost State*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1939.

Grismer, Karl Hiram, *A History of the City of Tampa and the Tampa Bay Region of Florida*, St. Petersburg Print Company, 1950.

Guzzo, Paul. "Central Avenue Riots: the real story." *Cigar City*, Issue 22, 2009.

Hawes, Leland, "History and Heritage", *The Tampa Tribune*, 10.16.94.

Howard, Oliver Otis, *Fighting for Humanity: or, Camp and Quarter-Deck*, F. T. Neely, 1898.

Jones, Maxine D and Kevin M. McCarthy, *African-Americans in Florida*, Pineapple Press, Inc., Sarasota, 1993.

Kalberer, O.S.B., Augustine, *Lives of the Saints*, Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago, 1983.

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

Lanier, Sidney, *Florida: its Scenery, Climate, and History, with an Account of Charleston, Savannah, Augusta, and Aiken; A Chapter for Consumptives; Various Papers on Fruit-Culture; and A Complete Hand-Book and Guide*, J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1876.

Long, Durwood, "The Historical Beginnings of Ybor City and Modern Tampa," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XLV.

Long, John H., Ed., *Florida Atlas of Historical County Boundaries*, Simon & Schuster Macmillan, New York, 1997.

Mahon, John K, *History of the Second Seminole War*, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1967.

Manning v. School Board of Hillsborough County. 244 F.3d 927 (2001).

McCarthy, Kevin, M., *Black Florida*, University Press of Florida, 2001.

Moore, D.D., et al., eds., *Men of the South: a work for the newspaper reference library*, Southern Biographical Association, 1922.

Mormino, Gary R. and George E. Pozzetta, *The Immigrant World of Ybor City*, University Press of Florida, 1998.

Nixon Smiley, *Yesterday's Miami*, E.A. Seemann Publishing, Miami, 1973

Norton, Charles Ledyard, *A Handbook of Florida, Third Edition, Revised*, Longmans, Green, & Co. 1892.

Pizzo, Anthony P., *Tampa The Treasure City*, Continental Heritage Press, 1983.

Robinson, Ernest L., *History of Hillsborough County Florida*, The Record Company, 1928

Saunders, Robert W. Dr., *Bridging the Gap*, University of Tampa Press, Tampa, 2000.

Smyth, George Hutchinson and George Sherwood Dickerman, *The Life of Henry Bradley Plant: Founder and President of the Plant System of Railroads and Steamships and Also of the Southern Express Company*, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1898.

United States Congress, House of Representatives, *Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers, United States Army*, 1881-1903.

War Department, *Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers, United States Army*, 1914-1920.

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE

AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES

MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

PHOTOGRAPHS

City of Tampa: Historic Preservation Commission Staff

Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative: Burgert Brothers Photographic Collection

State Archives of Florida: Florida Memory Project

University of South Florida Digital Collections: Burgert Brothers Photograph Collection of Tampa Photographs

MAPS

City of Tampa: Development & Growth Management Department Staff

Hillsborough County Clerk of Court, Official Records: Plat Books

Hillsborough County Property Appraiser: Parcel and Aerial Maps

Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative: H&G Maps & Atlases, Sanborn Map Company

Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Maps, 1915-1976

Tampa Bay History Center: Touchton Map Library

University of South Florida Digital Collections: Florida Map Collection

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**

Johnson Brothers Houses

1248 & 1250 E. Scott Street

Tampa, Florida

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT
ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC CENTRAL AVENUE
AREA / AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY GROUP**