

Sea Lounge

105 E. Avenue B Melbourne, FL

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Designation Report



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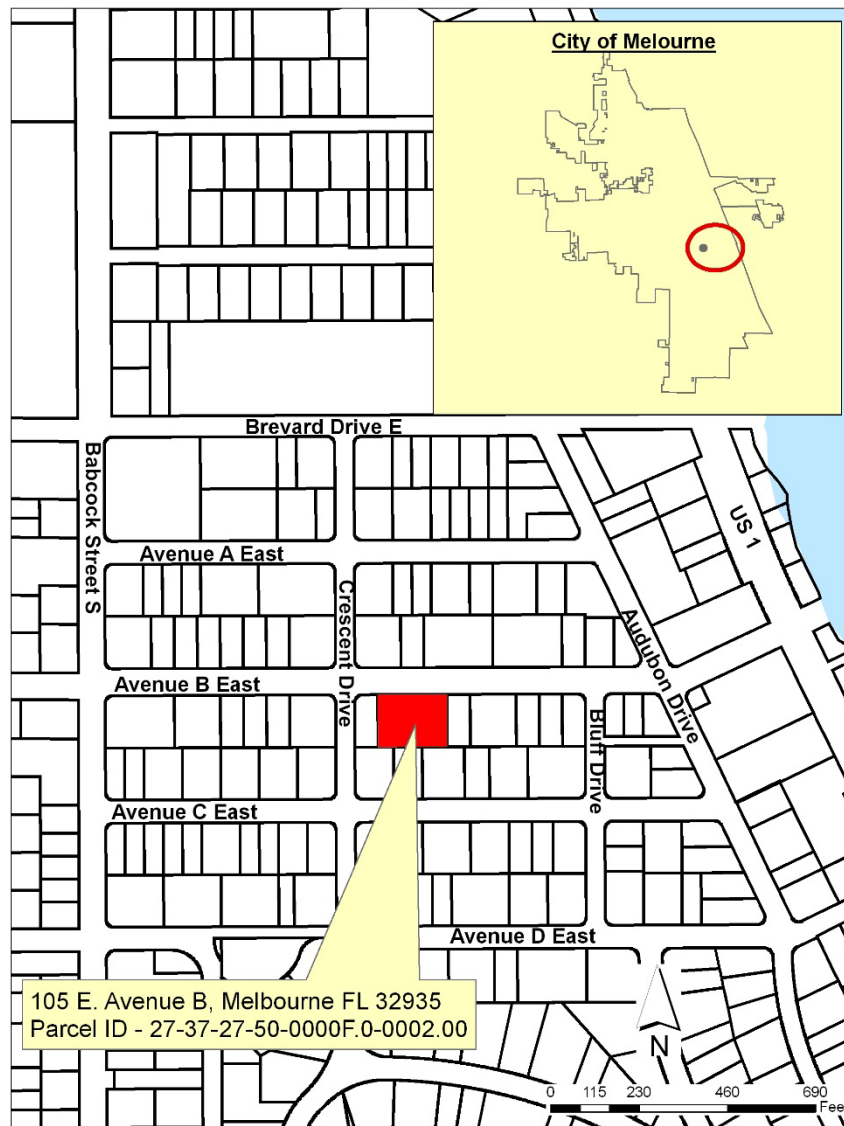
Sea Lounge

105 E. Avenue B

Local Historic Designation Report

I. Location

The property is located at 105 E. Avenue B, generally east of Babcock Street and west of US 1, in the City of Melbourne. The property is located in a block formed by Avenue B on the north, Avenue C on the south, Crescent Drive on the west and Bluff Drive on the east side. Figure 1 identifies the specific location of the property within the block.

Figure 1: Location Map

Source: City of Melbourne GIS Data and Land Design Innovations, Inc., 2008.

II. General Information

The general information related to the 105 E. Avenue B property is as follows:

A. Name of the Property

1. Historic Names

The property was originally built as a private residence and was known as “Sea Lounge¹”. The origin of the name is unknown. According to Brevard County Property Appraiser information the building was built in 1925.

2. Current Name

The property is currently the Ingram Residence. However, the property is still known by its historic name, “Sea Lounge”.

B. Brevard County Property Appraiser Information

1. Property Address

The property address is 105 E. Avenue B, Melbourne, Florida 32901.

2. Present Owner

The present owners of the property are Michael J. Ingram and Elspeth Ingram.

3. Present Use

The present use of the property is a single-family residence.

4. Zoning District

The property is located in an R1AA zoning district, which allows single family use.

5. Site Size

The site is approximately 0.57 acres in size.

6. Parcel Identification Number

The parcel identification number of the property is 27-37-27-50-0000F.0-0002.00.

7. Boundary Description

The legal description is Lots 2 and 3, Block F, Indian River Bluff, according to the plat recorded in Plat Book 3, page 95 of the public records of Brevard County, Florida.

¹ BR-1519, Florida Master Site File, recorded on September 12, 1990.

III. Significance

A. Ownership History of the Land²

According to the Indian River Abstract and Guaranty Co. records, the 105 E. Avenue B property was first deeded to Emma R. Gurney from the United States of America in 1885. The property changed ownership numerous times until 2004 when the current owners, Michael and Elspeth Ingram, bought the property from Mrs. Edmond Cherson. . Based on the historic data available on the “ABSTRACT OF TITLE”, the ownership history of the land is listed below.

- 1885 – Emma R. Gurney and L. H. Gurney
- 1893 – Roy T. McFadden
- 1910 – William T. Wells and Nora Sanford Wells
- 1924 – Fred B. Houghton and Oscar E. Elliot
- 1929 – Estate of Nora Sanford Wells
- 1934 – Sanford W. Griffith and Frank W. Griffith
- 1946 – James H. Pruitt and Mary A. Pruitt
- 1950 – R. S. Pilkington and Madeleine
- 1961 – Paul Andreasen and Gladys Andreasen
- 1960s – Mrs. Edmond Cherson³
- 2004 – Michael and Elspeth Ingram⁴

B. Construction History

1. Construction

The house was constructed in 1925.

2. Additions and Alterations

The building has gone through several interior and exterior alterations, as follows:

- 1950s: Replaced awning aluminum windows with single-hung aluminum windows.
- 2003: Installed new electrical, air conditioning and heat.
- 2004: Installed new bath tub and sink, new herringbone marble floor, hexagon Saltillo tiles in greenroom (sun room), updated kitchen using 1922 nickel plated faucet and other hardware, and soapstone counter.
- 2006-2007: Drilled new well and added sod and gardens in the front yard.
- 2007: Added rectangular shaped swimming pool in the rear yard with vintage glazed Italian waterline tiles.

3. Construction Materials

The building is constructed of concrete blocks with exterior stucco finish, and has a hip roof covered with barrel tiles.

² Indian River Abstract & Guaranty Co., and Brevard Title & Abstract Company, 105 E. Avenue B.

³ Ingram, Elspeth. Phone Interview, 2008

⁴ Ingram, Elspeth. Phone Interview, 2008

C. Statement of Significance

The 105 E. Avenue B property was built in 1925 as a private residence, and has been known as the “Sea Lounge”. The property was part of the Indian River Bluff subdivision, approved in 1899. The Indian River Bluff subdivision was designed by the landscape architects who embraced the tenets of the City Beautiful Movement during The Great Florida Land Boom period of 1920s. The building is one of the several buildings associated with the development of Melbourne’s residential area that was developed north of the Town of Melbourne’s commercial district in the 1920s. The building is a two-story stucco finish Mediterranean Revival building that features two hip roofs covered with original barrel tiles, curved parapet walls, original wrought iron outdoor lighting fixtures and metal railing in balconies, and a brick chimney. The balcony located on the northwest side of the building has the original metal railing. The balcony located on the second floor above the main entrance displays an overlapping barrel tile wall design. The building has asymmetrical facades. The main entrance is offset and is accessed through a curved masonry archway. The entrance door is the original curved wood with glass panel door⁵. The building has undergone some alterations throughout its long history. In the 1950s, the owner replaced the front windows with aluminum single-hung windows, which are not consistent with the Mediterranean Revival style. However, the building is a rare surviving example that reflects national trends in architecture during the period in which it was constructed, and is associated with the development of the Melbourne’s residential neighborhoods during the 1920s.

⁵ Information provided by the Current Owners

IV. Contextual History⁶

The 105 E. Avenue B property was built in 1925 in the town that was known as Melbourne. Melbourne is located on a natural harbor on the Indian River Lagoon, which was originally named “Crane Creek”. William H. Gleason was the first person who made an attempt to settle in this area and purchased a large tract of land along the Indian River in 1869. In the 1880s, the first official subdivisions were recorded in the Village of Eau Gallie and Town of Melbourne; in 1884, William Gleason filed the Eau Gallie Village Plat; and in 1886, William Camp filed the first plat of Melbourne.⁷

The Town of Melbourne was incorporated on December 22, 1888, adopting a corporate seal that included a pineapple plant, a crane, and a palmetto tree⁸. Before its incorporation, the name of Melbourne had been selected for the town. The town was named for its first postmaster, Cornthwaite John Hector, an Englishman who was said to have come from Melbourne, Australia⁹.

As in many other Florida cities, the growth of Melbourne and neighboring Eau Gallie would not begin in earnest until the arrival of the railroad. Henry Flagler’s Florida East Coast Railway arrived in Eau Gallie in 1893, and just months later was extended to Melbourne. Flagler’s tracks would continue their march down the east coast, arriving in Miami in 1896, and to Key West in 1912. The railroad brought tourists, settlers, and an inestimable boost to the region’s economy, as produce and timber could now be shipped to out-of-state markets.

Melbourne developed steadily during the 1880s and first half of the 1890s. The coming of the Florida East Coast railway brought a period of significant development within Melbourne. The financial profit in the citrus grove industry attracted a number of settlers to Melbourne. During the 1890s, a large number of residential buildings were built along Riverview Drive and Melbourne Avenue. To service the community needs, Melbourne’s commercial area started growing north of Crane Creek along Front Street. Some of the businesses included merchandise stores, a meat market, a newspaper, lumber yards, hotels, telegraph and post office. The local economy, however, suffered serious devastating freezes during the winter of 1894-1895, which killed citrus groves and other crops in the area.

Between 1896 and 1920, the area recovered from the devastating effects of the freezes. The replanting of orange groves along with the development of other industries, such as commercial fishing, lumbering, naval stores production, and ranching helped the local economy recover. The Union Cypress Lumber Company at Hopkins, established by George Hopkins south of Crane Creek in 1912, was the most important industrial complex constructed near Melbourne.

In 1919, a devastating fire destroyed the commercial district along First Street in downtown Melbourne. In 1920, another fire destroyed the Union Cypress Sawmill in Hopkins leaving hundreds of workers out of jobs. The fires along with the national economic depression during World War I, was the end of a prosperous period of development.

The end of World War I, however, brought a wave of new settlers to Florida, and by 1920s, the State was poised for the phenomenon dubbed as the “Florida Real Estate Boom”. In a 1925 book, “The Truth about Florida”, author Charles Donald Fox explains that the Boom in Florida eclipsed all other mass migrations, including the California Gold Rush in 1849.

“There is reflected in the great migration to Florida the natural result of the knowledge, that here, within thirty-six to forty hours’ train travel of sixty million of our population.

⁶ Barile, Diane. “The Elizabeth Eaton Residence Designation Report”, October 2007.

⁷ Olausen, Stephen. Page 9.

⁸ www.melbourneflorida.org/info/history

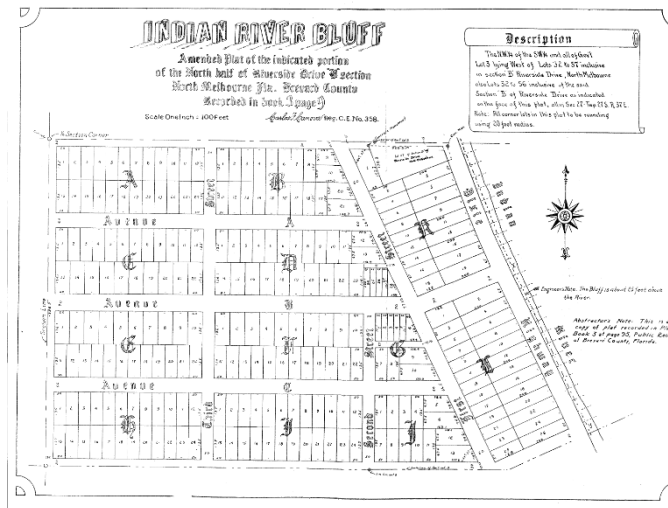
⁹ Other sources say Hector was actually from New Zealand

Lies a land of upwards of thirty million acres. Two-thirds of this immense area is capable of agricultural development, and because Nature has cast her favoring smile upon it above practically all other sections of our country, it is capable of producing scores of varieties to satisfy the demands and needs of half the population of the United States.”¹⁰

By 1923, Melbourne had made significant strides toward civic improvement, including the construction of paved roads, concrete sidewalks, electric street lamps and improved water and sewer systems. A new commercial area was developed along Melbourne and New Haven Avenues to replace the old commercial area along First Street that was destroyed by the 1919 fire. The tremendous increase in tourism and record breaking citrus crops attracted lots of people to the Melbourne area. Due to the increase in the population, along with the increasing demands for expansion, the Town of Melbourne reincorporated as a City in 1923 and Eau Gallie in 1925.

Between 1921 and 1926, Melbourne experienced tremendous development in the commercial and residential areas. Mediterranean and Florida Vernacular were the dominant building styles. Several new subdivisions were platted in areas north and west of Melbourne’s commercial district based on the tenets of the national City Beautiful Movement. Indian River Bluff and Country Club Colony were some of the subdivisions that were designed by incorporating curvilinear streets and irregular building lots to produce more interesting building sites¹¹. The 105 E. Avenue B property is located in the Indian River Bluff subdivision that was approved in 1899¹².

Figure 2: Indian River Bluff Subdivision Plan



Source: Michael and Elspeth Ingram and Public Record of Brevard County, Florida (Plat Book 3, Page 9).

After World War II, Melbourne experienced dramatic growth with the development of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) facilities in Cape Canaveral. In 1969, the City of Eau Gallie merged with the City of Melbourne and formed the largest city in Brevard County.

¹⁰ Fox, Charles Donald. *The Truth about Florida*, pages 10-11.

¹¹ Olausen, Stephen., page 19.

¹² City of Melbourne Application for Preliminary Local Historic Designation for 105 E. Avenue B, Melbourne FL.

V. Architectural Significance

A. Property Features

The predominant architectural and site features of the property include:

- A 2-storyhouse
- Swimming pool on the rear side of the property
- Detached 2-car parking garage

B. Building Placement/Orientation

The building is setback approximately twenty-five feet from East Avenue B. The main entrance and the primary façade of the building are oriented toward the public right-of-way. The garage is located on the east side of the property and is accessed from E. Avenue B by a driveway.

C. Building Form and Architecture

The homes constructed with the Mediterranean Revival style display considerable Spanish influence. Some of the features typical of Mediterranean Revival style include:

- Flat or hip roofs, usually with some form of parapet;
- Clay barrel tile roof surfacing;
- Stucco facades;
- Flat roof entrance porches, commonly with arched openings supported by square columns;
- Casement and double-hung sash windows; and
- Ceramic tile decorations.

The 105 E. Avenue B property has a 2-story building that exhibits the following features:

- Hip roof covered with clay barrel tiles.
- One-story flat roof wings (side and rear) with curvilinear parapet.
- Single-hung aluminum windows.
- Offset main entrance accessed through a masonry arch with original curved wood paned glass door.
- Brick chimney.
- Wrought iron balcony in front of west side window.
- Balcony above the main entrance, decorated with overlapping barrel tile.
- Original wrought iron lighting fixtures with amber glass
- White colored stucco finish.

The building was constructed of concrete blocks. The building is irregular in shape with frontage along E. Avenue B. The balanced, but asymmetrical facade which rises to a two-story hip roof, confirm its Mediterranean Revival style. The north side of the building, facing E. Avenue B, is designed as a primary façade with a main door recessed inside a masonry arch. The front façade is characterized by three roof planes, curvilinear parapet, windows, a balcony and an arched entrance. In addition, there are eight wooden transom windows: two rectangular and two arch shaped on the second floor of the main façade, and two on the east façade and two in the west

Figure 3: Main (North) Façade and Entrance

Source: City of Melbourne, January 2008.

Figure 4: Decorative Features

Source: City of Melbourne, January 2008.

The 2-car garage has a flat roof with a curvilinear parapet and exterior white stucco finish. The design of the garage matches the Mediterranean Revival style adopted by the primary structure on this property. The doors of the garage are not original.

Figure 5: Garage and Driveway

Source: City of Melbourne, January 2008.

The northwest side of the building has a one story flat roof with curvilinear parapet which ascends to the second story eave line. The window located on the northwest side has a balcony with original metal railing.

Figure 6: Northwest Side View

Source: City of Melbourne, January 2008.

The east and the west sides of the building are the side facades. The side facades are characterized by vertical windows, doors, exterior lighting fixtures and white stucco finish. The south side of the building forms the rear façade of the building. The rear facade exhibits similar features as the side facades. The two-story hip roofs are located on the front along the right-of-way and the flat roofs with curved parapet walls are located on the side and the rear façades.

Figure 7: Northeast and South Sides of the Building



Source: City of Melbourne, January 2008.

According to the current owner, the interior of the building exhibits Merritt Island Pine and Oak flooring and a brick fireplace.

VI. Eligibility Criteria

Article XI of the Melbourne City Code, “Preservation of Historic Resources and Districts, Archaeological Sites and Zones,” contains the criteria for designating historical properties on the Melbourne Register of Historical Places. The following is an excerpt from Section 10-229:

“...the historic preservation board shall recommend for designation as historic resources [those resources] that are significant in Melbourne’s history, architecture, archeology, 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 105 E. Avenue B 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?
- 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?
- Do the window openings maintain their original dimensions, even though the window-type may be different from the original configuration?
- Are the original roof slopes maintained?
- Are the original construction materials still evident?
- Is the original character of the resource, dating from its initial construction period, still apparent even though additions and alterations may have occurred?
- Do the major alterations/additions affect a major elevation?

The major alteration to the exterior was the replacement of the original windows with single-hung aluminum windows in the 1950s. The aluminum windows are not consistent with the Mediterranean Revival Style. A picture of the house taken in 1969 shows that the building has maintained its basic form and features except a missing balcony with metal railing on the 2nd floor window, the wooden sash windows and the front yard landscaping. These alterations have had minimal impact on the main façade of the building. The building has maintained its general form and most of the original materials including the exterior stucco finish, barrel tiles over the hip roofs, exterior lighting fixtures, and metal railing on the west window.

In addition, the swimming pool in the backyard was located to preserve an old mango tree. The pool was designed in a traditional rectangular shape with vintage glazed Italian waterline tile. There were some alterations done inside the house which have not had an effect on the exterior of the house.

Figure 8: Property in 1969



Source: Michael and Elspeth Ingram, 1969.

Despite the alterations, the residence still maintains its Mediterranean Revival style characteristics, including its construction materials, basic roof-form and plan, window apertures and verticality.

Therefore, the 105 E. Avenue B property meets the “test” for the retention of sufficient integrity.

B. Designation Criteria

The 105 E. Avenue B property is significant in Melbourne’s history and architecture; possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship; and meets the following criteria contained in Section 10-229 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance:

Recognizes the quality of design and construction, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architecture type, period, style and method of construction.

C. Recommendation

LDI/Staff proposes that the City of Melbourne’s Historic Preservation Board recommend to the City Council the listing of the 105 E. Avenue B property in the Melbourne Register of Historic Places.

VII. Planning Context

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

The designation of the 105 E. Avenue B property will provide protection into 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. The designation may also serve as an “object lesson” to others who may consider the designation of their historic properties.

VIII. Bibliography

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