

TOWARD A FRAMEWORK FOR PRESERVING MID-CENTURY MODERN
RESOURCES: AN EXAMINATION OF PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE SARASOTA
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

By

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To my family

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Current scholarship identifies public perceptions as one of the key challenges to advocating for the preservation of modern resources. Theodore H.M. Prudon in his book *Preservation of Modern Architecture* states, “Many of the period’s icons are appreciated and praised by a professional audience for aesthetic or social values, but have been rejected by the public at large, which has a great deal of negative perceptions about modern building design”.¹ Current understanding of public perception is based for the most part on anecdotal evidence. Research in documenting and analyzing and expanding stakeholder perceptions of modern heritage has been limited.

The Sarasota School of Architecture (1945-1970s) was one of the foremost regional movements of mid-century modern architecture in the United States. Adapting the core principles of modernism to the climate, geography, and social and cultural context of south Florida’s west coast, the distinct design approach and style has gained recognition over the last decade. Despite the growing national and international recognition of the Sarasota School of Architecture, a number of the key resources

associated with the movement have been demolished, including, in 2009, Riverview High School (1958). Locally little work has been done to better understand public perceptions and to gain a fuller understanding of all the values associated with a site. Understanding public perceptions is an important first step in advocating for preservation. In Sarasota, like other communities across the country, establishing significance has typically followed a positivist, or top-down approach with experts determining values. Consultation with stakeholders, including building users is often not required as part of the process to landmark a site on the local, state, or national levels.

Recent scholarship, such as the Getty Conservation Institute's project *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage* recognizes the changing need to acknowledge the values of all stakeholders when defining historical significance.² As stated by Jeremy Wells, "...the result is a much more comprehensive and accurate assessment of stakeholders' values that can help guide how we plan for changes in the historic built environment."³ This study responds to Prudon's idea that "understanding how the perception of a building has evolved is critically important to a comprehensive preservation approach," and determining the cultural heritage values associated with the site is a critical step to establishing effective frameworks for advocating for post-World War II modern resources.⁴

Through qualitative, on-site interviews, at two resources—Nokomis Beach Pavilion (1953) and Sarasota City Hall (1965)— this study attempted to gain a better understanding of public perceptions of the Sarasota School of Architecture from a cross-section of self-selected stakeholders and building users. Albeit a limited study, responses indicate that individuals place more significance on socio-cultural values than

architectural or aesthetic values, which are traditionally used to advocate for a site.

From these surveys an advocacy plan began to develop. This advocacy plan includes a focus on functionality and maintenance, rather than aesthetic or architectural significance. as well as events related and unrelated to the Sarasota School of Architecture, and education programs which would inform the public on the importance of these cultural heritage sites.

¹ Theodore Prudon *Preservation of Modern Architecture*. (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 2008). 25.

² Jeremy Wells. "Historical Significance through the lens of Contemporary Social, Cultural, and Experiential Values".
<http://heritagestudies.org/Wells%20%20Contemporary%20Values%20in%20HP.pdf>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Theodore Prudon *Preservation of Modern Architecture*. (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 2008). 30.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The historic preservation movement in the United States has changed dramatically since the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association saved the home of President George Washington. The type and scale of resources has shifted from an original focus on individual buildings and interiors to cultural landscapes, vernacular structures, and industrial resources, among others. Regardless of the expansion of heritage resources the identification of the importance of these resources has not expanded. Advocacy is, "the act of pleading or arguing in favor of something, such as a cause, idea, or policy; active support."¹ There has also been a growing recognition of the intangible aspects of historic sites that lend them a sense of place.² Yet, the criteria for evaluating and determining the significance of heritage have not changed since the National Register of Historic Places laws were established in 1966 when the U.S. Congress approved the National Historic Preservation Act.³ However, there is an understanding among United States and international historic preservation specialists that current approaches and criteria for assessing the significance does not capture all the values associated with a place.

Traditionally the evaluation process requires experts researched the history of a place and determined if the resource meets one or more of official criteria for determining a site's eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in the United States and the World Heritage List globally. To obtain World Heritage Listing built sites must demonstrate "outstanding universal value" within a set of criteria, for example, representing a masterpiece of human genius, or to be an outstanding piece of architecture.⁴ National Register listings

take into account this determined significance and apply one of the four criteria, such as a sites association with significant historical events, or a resource, which is connected, to significant historical figures.⁵

Summed up by cultural heritage expert Randal Mason, significance is "all the reasons why a building or place should be preserved, why it is meaningful or useful, and what aspects require most urgent protection".⁶ From significance, policy, planning and design decisions are made. This holds true for local, state, national and world sites. The criteria, both global and domestic, often result in a static way of viewing heritage sites that assumes perceptions of a resource do not change, when often they are dynamic and evolving over time. The focus is frequently on material authenticity, and less on the intangible economic, and other aspects of heritage. Perhaps by focusing on a wider range of values associated with a mid-century modern site, rather than focusing on material authenticity preservationists can create a more dynamic statement of significance and understanding of the resource.

Mid-century (1945-1970) modern architecture and other twentieth century heritage resources have reached an age in which significance needs to be assessed and importance recognized. However, the evaluations of these sites are presenting a distinct set of challenges. As presented by modern heritage expert Theodore H.M. Prudon in his book *Preservation of Modern Architecture*, these challenges include functionality, aesthetics, perceived obsolescence, the number of resources, and the loss of authentic material. If the true challenges to saving modern sites are as Prudon proposes, then historic preservationists need to develop new and creative ways to assess significance so these sites are not

lost. This study attempts to assess public perceptions and to better identify and understand a greater range of socio-cultural values that stakeholders may associate with a mid-century modern heritage site.

In 2000, the Getty Institute began a project, *Research on Heritage Values*, the project addressed the conservation field's growing awareness of the importance of values, markets, and other social forces that impact heritage and its stewardship—and the need for an integrated approach to conservation. As defined by a series of papers, cultural heritage values, beyond the National Register and World Heritage criteria, identified by the study include: historical, cultural, spiritual, social, aesthetic, and economic. By gaining an understanding of a greater range of stakeholders' values, it is assumed that a broader, more inclusive definition of significance will be established and a wider variety of site-users will appreciate and understand a site's importance.

The framework for the study drew from two sources. First, Theodore H. M. Prudon's conclusion that preservation of modern architecture faces a number of challenges, focusing on the issue of material authenticity and public perceptions. The second is the research done by the Getty Institute that posits that expanding significance from the traditional criteria approach to include a wider range of values, which helps engage a wider range of stakeholders.

This study focuses on two mid-century modern resources associated with the renowned Sarasota School of Architecture (1941-1966). Post World War II Sarasota saw tremendous growth, both economically and culturally. With this context a distinct, regional approach to mid-century modern architecture was established in response to, among other factors, the climate and geography.

This movement was evolved by a group of architects whose work collectively became known as the “Sarasota School of Architecture” (SSOA). The movement was led by Ralph Twitchell and Paul Rudolph, and was rounded out by Jack West, Victor Lundy, and others who utilized local, natural materials; walls of glass; wide overhangs; and operable windows in an effort to connect occupants to the outdoors.

The study sites were chosen for a number of reasons. First is the rich history of preservation in Sarasota. Secondly, the Sarasota School of Architecture has gained world recognition as an important resource over the last few years, due to Sarasota’s commitment to its regional modernism and the recent loss of a number of buildings, including but not limited to Riverview High School. In addition, Sarasota’s City Hall and Nokomis’ Beach Pavilion are easily accessible to both the interviewer and the public. Interviewees were chosen at random to gain a large cross section of stakeholders.

Two buildings, both designed by Jack West (1922-2010) were chosen for the focus of this study. Nokomis Beach Pavilion (1955) was built during the middle years of SSOA (Figure 1-1). The original plan was a simple one-story structure, which housed restrooms and changing areas for beach-goers, and a covered walk-way that afforded shade. Sarasota’s City Hall (1966) was designed during the decline of the movement, but still embodied many of the same principles (Figure 1-2). The City Hall has a flat roof, and when originally built had large windows, which opened to allow for breezes.

By using on-site surveys this study attempts to engage the community and document and assess public perceptions of Sarasota’s Nokomis Beach Pavilion

and City Hall. Stakeholders at each site include, among others, year round and seasonal residents of Sarasota. Information gathered from these interviews was evaluated to identify key findings and issues, which others can use to develop an advocacy campaign for the preservation of not only those resources studied but also other Sarasota School of Architecture sites. Advocacy plans will be better equipped to meet their goals if they are aware of the values stakeholders place on a site, and if those plans use a wide array of approaches.

As described by Randall Mason in his article “Assessing Values in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices,”

Assessment of the values attributed to heritage is a very important activity in any conservation effort, since values strongly shape the decisions that are made. However, even though values are widely understood to be critical to understanding and planning for heritage conservation, there is little knowledge about how, pragmatically, the whole range of heritage values can be assessed in the context of planning and decision making.⁷

In recent years there has been a top down approach to preservation, experts telling stakeholders what and why they should preserve. This potentially creates a disconnect between what is preserved and those who are actually using the site. By understanding what values stakeholders place on a site, preservationists can create stronger connections to a site and ideally help advocate.

Through the on site interviews, which were conducted, the following outcomes were established, interviews seem to indicate a number of items for consideration. Maintenance and functionality did seem to play a role in positive perceptions of a site. In addition most respondents agreed that each building served its function. To continue with this positive view advocates for mid-century

modern resources should consider ways for resources to have an evolving and flexible function. Social and cultural connections to a site outweighed the architectural connections individuals had. Events held on the premises would help to create these connections. Through use and programming a new group of people can be drawn into a site. Analysis of the interviews determined that education and awareness are important factors in the significance that interviewees place on a cultural heritage resource. Those individuals who were aware of the Sarasota School of Architecture placed a higher value on each site. Education would help strengthen these positive associations.

The following chapters discuss how significance is assessed and assigned, the history of the Sarasota School of Architecture, how this thesis was framed including research methods and presents the results and findings from the surveys conducted on site.

¹ The Free Dictionary. <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/advocacy>

² *The Burra Charter of the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*. Burwood VIC: Australia ICOMOS Incorporated, 2000

³ National Register Criteria. http://www.nps.gov/nr/national_register_fundamentals.htm

⁴ UNESCO World Heritage Criteria Website. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria>

⁵ National Register Criteria. http://www.nps.gov/nr/national_register_fundamentals.htm

⁶ Randall Mason. "Fixing Historic Preservation: a Constructive Critique of Significance", *Places* 16 no. 1 (2003): 65.

⁷ Randal Randall Mason, "Assessing Values in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices," in *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*, ed. Marta de la Torre (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Trust, 2002), 5.



Figure 1-1. The Nokomis Beach Plaza shortly after it was completed. View of the plaza looking north. Courtesy of the Sarasota County History Center.



Figure 1-2. Sarasota City Hall designed by Jack West in 1966. Courtesy of the Sarasota County History Center.

CHAPTER 2 ASSESSING AND ASSIGNING SIGNIFICANCE

Randall Mason sums up significance as “shorthand for the meanings of a place, and the ways a place is made useful – a sort of mission statement about why a place should be preserved.”¹ Determining significance helps identify the reasons for preserving a resource, and what aspects require protection. Once significance is determined it is used for “policy, planning and design decisions.”² Since the World Heritage Convention, and the National Preservation Act the maturation of the field has relied on significance being determined mostly by experts, leaving out the voices of the stakeholders that steward and use a resource. Typically significance is related closely to the architecture, or historical context, creating a narrow window for interpretation. Creating a “fixed” view of significance presumes a site will always retain the same meaning, and that people will view the site the same over time.³

Determining Significance

At the international level the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage established criteria for determining significance. The convention developed from the merging of two separate movements: the first focusing on the preservation of cultural sites, and the other dealing with the conservation of nature. The prestige that comes from being a State Party to the Convention and having sites inscribed on the World Heritage List often serves as a catalyst to raise awareness and preservation of the resource. To be included on the World Heritage List, sites must be determined to be of “outstanding universal value” and meet at least one of ten selection criteria:

1. to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;

2. to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
3. to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
4. to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
5. to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
6. to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria);
7. to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
8. to be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
9. to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
10. to contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.⁴

The protection, management, authenticity and integrity of properties are also important considerations for nomination and inclusion on the world heritage list.

The United States Congress declared the in 1966, “historical and cultural foundations of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of the nations community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people”.⁵

From this, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) was passed. This law put into place the National Register of Historic Places, the list of National Historic Landmarks,

the State Historic Preservation Offices, and a system for recognizing America's significant cultural heritage sites. The National Register of Historic Places is maintained by the Secretary of the Interior and includes properties of state and local significance.

To be considered for the National Register of Historic Places one of four criteria must be met. As defined by the National Park Service, The criteria include:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and...

1. That are associated with events that have made significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
2. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
3. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the works of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
4. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. ⁶

In addition to recognizing the importance of historic sites, the United States Congress acknowledged that the preservation of cultural heritage resources had always been, and needed to remain largely locally managed. In Section 1 of the NHPA, Congress declares, "the major burdens of historic preservation have been borne and major efforts initiated by private agencies and individuals, and both should continue to play a vital role," state and local criteria are also based on National Register criteria.⁷

Expanding Values

Forged in the late 1960s, the preservation movement as we know it joined with other grassroots movements concerned with natural and built environments.

Preservationists were concerned, among other things, with urban renewal programs

that were destroying historic buildings and neighborhoods and replacing them with subsidized housing, highways, and other perceived improvements.⁸

Since the passing of the fiftieth anniversary of World War II, preservationists are increasingly interested in an expanding range of resources, including vernacular structures and those from the recent past such as modern sites. This coincides with a Postmodern attempt to broaden the field by considering buildings and environments that provide testimony to the lives of people who were not wealthy and powerful.⁹ During this time there were changes in the preservation movement. Historical significance underwent revision; more recent buildings were recognized; and sites with local or state significance were considered worthy of contributing to the larger historical context.

The evolution of the field of preservation, from conservation of monumental sites, such as The White House, to the preservation of lesser-known sites, such as vernacular houses, represents a growing belief that the field of preservation should evolve to reflect the values of as many stakeholders as possible. There is an increasing recognition that current guidelines and procedures to assess significance do not identify and explore the reasons various stakeholders consider the site significant. The Burra Charter, the 2003 UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, and the English Heritage listing criteria are examples of a need to involve a greater range of cultural values when assessing significance. By re-evaluating significance to include cultural importance and other values, preservation also is able to expand its definition of authenticity.

The Burra Charter, adopted by Australia's International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in 1984 was one of the first to recognize the importance of the

larger “cultural significance”. According to the charter cultural significance is “a concept which helps in estimating the value of places. The places that are likely to be of significance are those which help an understanding of the past or enrich the present, and which will be of value to future generations.”¹⁰ Expanding significance to cover a wider range of values recognizes that the opinion of stakeholders and users of the site matter. By 1998 the Burra Charter had been revised to encompass a number of culturally significant values beyond historic. These values include, aesthetic, scientific, and social (spiritual, political, national and other cultural).¹¹

Almost a decade later the UNESCO convention *Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage* was ratified in 2003 in response to the loss of intangible cultural heritage due to globalization. The convention considered the relation between intangible and tangible cultural heritage. In addition the convention took into account the need to build awareness of the importance of cultural heritage. Most notably the convention recognized that communities and groups are the key stakeholders in safeguarding, maintaining and re-creating cultural heritage, thus helping to enrich cultural diversity and human creativity.¹²

In England’s government established the “Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act” in 1990. The Act articulated principles set out by the Secretary of State, “Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings”. These principles help determine significance, and include architectural and historical importance. However, they also include “national interest”. National interest buildings “illustrate the importance of distinctive local and regional traditions.”¹³

Socio-Cultural Values

Based in part on an assessment of the Burra Charter and other attempts to codify values and evaluate significance, Randal Mason presents categories of heritage values in his essay “Assessing Values in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices”. According to Mason, “Value suggests usefulness and benefits, heritage is valued not as an intellectual enterprise but because it plays instrumental, symbolic, and other functions in society.”¹⁴ Mason breaks down the values between socio-cultural and economic.

Socio-cultural values are at the core of traditional preservation. Historic values have “the capacity of a site to convey, embody, or stimulate a relation or reaction to the past,” they also overlap.¹⁵ All four of the National Register for Historic Places criteria are historic values as defined by Mason. Cultural values can be “historical, political, ethnic, or related to other means of living together.”¹⁶ Social values enable and facilitate social connections and networks and include place attachment aspects of heritage values. For example a community center can hold value because of its use, rather than its aesthetics. Spiritual values can also be associated with a site they can “emanate from the beliefs and teachings of organized religion, but can also encompass secular experiences of wonder, and awe.”¹⁷ Finally, aesthetic values which encompass all the senses: smell, sound, feeling, as well as sight.¹⁸ Using a values centered approach “gives priority to the memories, ideas and other social motivations that drive the urge to physically preserve the built environment.”¹⁹

Preservation of Mid-Century Modern Sites

Theodore H.M. Prudon’s book, *Preservation of Modern Architecture* examines the multiple challenges facing preservation of modern, including mid-century architecture.

In addition to the material challenges presented in mid-century buildings, Prudon addresses the philosophical issues affecting preservation and design. He recognizes the core of preservation lies with the perception of the heritage values associated with a period's architecture. Often modern architecture was inspired by optimism and opportunities that came after the Industrial Revolution, and the World War II, providing, among other things social benefits for a wider range of people.²⁰ This vision however was not shared by the people it was intended to serve, and was in fact often seen as cold and isolating. Tom Wolfe's book, *From Our House to Bauhaus* sums up what may be popular opinion of modern architecture,

Sometimes the towers are of steel, concrete and glass; sometimes of glass, steel, and small glazed white or beige bricks. Always the ceilings are low, the hallways are narrow, the rooms are narrow, the bedrooms are small, the walls are thin, the doorways and windows have no casings, the joints have no moldings, the walls have no baseboards, and the windows don't open.²¹

Following World War II criticism of modern architecture has been frequently characterized as unsympathetic to human scale, comfort, or well-being.²² In addition to being seen as isolating, functional and physical obsolescence plays a role in public perceptions. Modern buildings often were designed to support a very specific function, which could make adaptation to a new use problematic, with what Purdon and others call physical obsolescence.

In the case of mid-century modern architecture, design experts, whether they are architects, or preservationists, often have led the way in preserving these resources.

The evolution of preservation usually starts with experts, who call attention to an art, which leads to public recognition.²³ Individual icons are typically the first focus of preservationists, "especially as they come under threat from materials failure or deferred

maintenance, from functional or physical obsolescence as the buildings edge toward the half-century mark”.²⁴

During the 1970s in the United States interest in presenting iconic modern buildings began and many were nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. For example, Richard Neutra’s Lovell House [built 1927 – nominated 1971], Frank Lloyd Wright’s Fallingwater [built 1937 nominated 1974] followed by Rudolph Schindler’s Lovell beach House [built 1926 nominated 1974] (Figures 2-1, 2-2, and 2-3). After this surge though, there was little interest until the mid-1990s when the first *Preserving the Recent Past Conference* was held in Chicago.²⁵ Following the conference a number of modern buildings were nominated to the National Register of Historic places and some restored (Table 2-1). These nominations and restorations represent a shift in the understanding that modern buildings are worthy of preservation.

Table 2-1. A Sampling of Modern Sites Afforded Protection

Structure	Architect	Year Built	Year Recognized
The Glass House	Philip Johnson	1947	1997 – national register
Lever House	Gorden Bunshaft	1952	1998 –restoration
Gropius House	Walter Gropius	1938	2001- reinterpreted
Farnsworth House	Mies van der Rohe	1951	1996 – restoration
Kaufman house	Richard Neutra	1946	1999 – restored
Kennedy Space Center		1962-1965	2000 – national register
Eames House	Charles Eames	1949	2006

The World Heritage standards do not address nominating buildings under 50 years old. Instead, listing relies on the previously mentioned ten criteria and demonstrating

outstanding universal values. The UNESCO World Heritage list recognizes a number of modern buildings. The Sydney Opera House (1973), Le Corbusier's involvement in the plan of Chandigarh (1951-1965), and Walter Gropius' and Marcel Breuer's Bauhaus Building (1925).

The National Park Service has Bulletins, which help experts assessing and assigning significance, and match one of the four criteria to a site.²⁶ For example, Bulletin 13, *How to Apply National Register Criteria to Post Offices*, or Bulletin 32, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Properties Associated with Significant Persons*, guide those evaluating a historic site on how to obtain a National Register listing. Typically, the evaluation process begins with assessing historic context followed by applying one of the four types of significance (one of four criteria). Historic context as defined by the National Park Service,

An understanding of the context of a historic resource is based on knowledge of the time, historical theme, and geographical area with which the property is associated. This involves understanding, among other things, the social, political, economic, artistic, physical, architectural, or moral environment that accounted for the presence of, as well as the original and current nature of, the resource.²⁷

As a guideline, sites considered for National Register Listing are often 50 years old or older. As stated in Bulletin 15, *How to Apply the National Register of Historic Places Criteria*, "properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register."²⁸ One of the National Park Service bulletins was published to address the debate about preservation of structures built in the recent past. Bulletin 22, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties which Have Achieved Significance in the Past 50 years* was intended to explain the 50-year benchmark, and to provide information for preparing nominations of sites of the recent

past. According to the Bulletin, a site must demonstrate “exceptional importance”. To demonstrate “exceptional importance” one must be able to understand all the values associated with a property that imbues it with meaning, significance.

By assigning cultural heritage values to mid-century modern sites we can overcome the challenges Prudon implies, and assign more dynamic statements of significance, which would help preserve sites. Which is particularly relevant with modern resources, because as Prudon states, “The preservation of modern architecture requires a shift to focus on the more intangible expressions manifested in a building”.²⁹

International and National criteria for determining significance exclude many cultural heritage values. Typically determined by experts, a site’s importance often relies heavily on historical or architectural significance. Relying on this type of significance excludes important stakeholder values of the site which should hinder it’s preservation.

For example in 2007 refocusing significance from architectural to community-based values helped save Grosse Point Library. The library, a Marcel Breuer design, was slated for demolition. As with many modern buildings, the experts, architects and other designers lead the advocacy efforts for the building. In this case however the experts realized the need to generate public discussion. The group, Modern Architecture Protection Agency (mapa) held a charette to offer up ideas on alternatives to demolition. The charette was successful and a Boston, Massachusetts architecture firm was selected to design the addition to the building, saving the original structure. A founding mapa member commented on his thoughts about why this campaign was successful,

Even people who publicly admitted they did not care for the modern design of the Breuer [building] began to realize that it was a place of memories for their families as well as other families. They began to understand that even if they personally disagreed with it [the modern architecture of Grosse Pointe Public Library], the building did embody values of the community and that was something that should be discussed, explored, maybe even celebrated.... rather than quickly dismissed.³⁰

Institutionalizing a community involved event (like the Grosse Pointe Library example), helps engage a larger cross section of stakeholders in identifying shared values associated with a heritage resource. What the Grosse Point case study demonstrated was that the general public shared socio-cultural values with a site, and had no attachment to the building because of architect, architecture, or aesthetics.

Cultural heritage conservation values have expanded over time to ensure the conservation of sites through the Burra Charter, the English Heritage Program and the 2003 UNESCO Convention for Intangible Heritage. By applying social and cultural heritage values to mid-century modern sites we can expand our understanding of these resources, which can in turn in advocacy efforts for preserving sites.

¹ Randall Mason. "Fixing Historic Preservation: a Constructive Critique of Significance", *Places* 16 no. 1 (2003): 65.

² Ibid, 64.

³ Ibid, 64.

⁴ UNESCO World Heritage Criteria Website. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria>.

⁵ National Historic Preservation Act, § 1 part b (1966). Print.

⁶ "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, National Register of Historic Places Bulletin (NRB 15)." Section II

⁷ National Historic Preservation Act, § 1 part b (1966). Print.

⁸ Norman Tyler. *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to It's History, Principles and Practice*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2009). 45.

⁹ Ibid, 53.

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- ¹⁰ *The Burra Charter of the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*. Burwood VIC: Australia ICOMOS Incorporated, 2000. Pg 2
- ¹¹ *The Burra Charter of the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*. Burwood VIC: Australia ICOMOS Incorporated, 2000
- ¹² UNESCO Convention on Safeguarding Sites. Paris, 2003.
- ¹³ "English Principles for Sustainable Management of Historic Places." English Heritage. April 2008.
- ¹⁴ Randall Mason, "Assessing Values in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices," in *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*, ed. Marta de la Torre (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Trust, 2002), 8.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid*, 11.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid*.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid*, 12.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid*.
- ¹⁹ Randall Mason. "Fixing Historic Preservation: a Constructive Critique of Significance", *Places* 16 no. 1 (2003): 68.
- ²⁰ Prudon *Preservation of Modern Architecture*. (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 2008). 25.
- ²¹ Tom Wolfe. *From Bauhaus to Our House*. (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1981). 17
- ²² Prudon *Preservation of Modern Architecture*. (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 2008). 25.
- ²³ *Ibid*, 6.
- ²⁴ *Ibid*, 7.
- ²⁵ "Recent past Conferences." *U.S. National Park Service - Experience Your America*. Web. 03 Nov. 2010. <<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/recentpast/prpconfs.htm>>
- ²⁶ "Section II: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties That Have Achieved Significance within the Past Fifty Years, National Register of Historic Places Bulletin (Nrb 22)."
- ²⁷ "Section II: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties That Have Achieved Significance within the Past Fifty Years, National Register of Historic Places Bulletin (Nrb 22)."
- ²⁸ "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, National Register of Historic Places Bulletin (NRB 15)." Section II
- ²⁹ Theodore Prudon *Preservation of Modern Architecture*. (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 2008). 25.
- ³⁰ Hylton, Morris. *Modernism at Risk: Five Case Studies*. 1. World Monuments Fund 2009



Figure 2-1. Lovell House built in 1927, in Los Angeles California, designed by Richard Neutra. Photograph by Ezra Stoller for Esto, courtesy of ArtStor.



Figure 2-2. Fallingwater, built in 1937, in Bear Run, Pennsylvania, was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Photograph by Ezra Stoller for Esto, courtesy of ArtStor.



Figure 2-3. Lovell Beach House designed by Rudolf Schindler in 1926. Photo courtesy MAK Center.

CHAPTER 3 HISTORY OF SARASOTA SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

Like much of Florida during the 1930s building boom, Sarasota grew primarily around tourism. Initially the residents of Sarasota built in the Mediterranean Revival style to build the grand houses and other civic buildings used by seasonal tourists. A series of events ended this period of growth including, two hurricanes, a fruit fly epidemic, and the 1929 stock market crash. However, the end of building boom did not stop circus impresario John Ringling from continuing his construction of an art museum and school.¹ These institutions brought artists, writers, designers, and musicians to Sarasota creating a progressive-minded mix of Avant garde people in the area. These creative residents helped encourage and support a distinctive form of architecture.

The Sarasota School of Architecture architects shared an appreciation for the region's geography and climate, as well as an appreciation for local materials and new technologies. In his book *Sarasota School of Architecture 1941-1966* Florida architect and scholar, John Howey describes the movement, "Sarasota at midcentury showed that a unique new architectural heritage could develop in a special place and offer fresh social, economic, political, and historical ideas."²

The Sarasota School of Architecture

The 1950s were a time of great growth for Sarasota, economically and culturally. The progressive residents of Sarasota were attracted to the city's natural and cultural beauty. The architecture created by Ralph Twitchell and Paul Rudolph reflected the transcendent period of Sarasota's history. The two worked as a team. Twitchell had the construction know-how, client-relation skills and preference for local and natural

materials. Rudolph rounded out the relationship with his forward-looking designs and knowledge of climate controlling features. In 1947 Rudolph laid out their philosophy:

1. Clarity of construction
2. Maximum economy of means
3. Simple overall volumes penetrating vertically and horizontally
4. Clear geometry floating above Florida landscape
5. Honesty in details and in structural connections³

The Sarasota School architects utilized local, natural materials; walls of glass; wide overhangs; open plans and operable windows in an effort to connect occupants to the outdoors.

Ralph Twitchell and Paul Rudolph Partnership

Born in 1890 in Ohio, Ralph Twitchell spent part of his childhood in Winter Park, Florida (Figure 3-1). He received his degree in architecture from Columbia in 1921. He spent the early 1920s in Sarasota, overseeing construction of the popular Mediterranean Revival style houses, including the 8,000 square foot palazzo Ca d'Zan, for John Ringling (Figure 3-2).⁴ When the Florida economy went bust in the later 1920s he and his family moved to Connecticut where he spent a decade designing traditional homes for wealthy clientele. In 1936 Twitchell and his family moved backed to Sarasota permanently. Shortly after he returned he formed Associated Builders, Inc, a design and construction company.⁵ When Twitchell returned to Florida he began incorporating Art Deco and Moderne designs into the Gulf Coast landscape. He also began to mix local, natural and industrialized materials, and paint schemes, which aimed to match the colors of the sky and the Gulf of Mexico.

During World War II, Twitchell enlisted in the Air Force and stayed in the United States, in South Carolina. He was discharged in 1945 and returned to Sarasota where

he continued his company's business. However the firm's work and profile changed dramatically when he became partners with Paul Rudolph.

Born in 1918, in Kentucky, Paul Rudolph moved frequently throughout the south allowing him to become familiar with the South's vernacular architecture (Figure 3-3).⁶ He studied architecture at Alabama Polytechnic Institute - known as Auburn University today - and graduated in 1940. In the same year he was encouraged to attend Harvard University Graduate School of Design [where it was recommended to him to work with Ralph Twitchell].

Frank Lloyd Wright had received praise in 1938 for Fallingwater, and was commissioned to build Florida Southern College in Lakeland Florida in 1940. Florida Southern, 60 miles from Sarasota was built out of textile concrete block, which was made from local materials. Among other reasons, the opportunity to work so close to Florida Southern drew Rudolph to Sarasota.⁷

Once in Sarasota, Rudolph worked on Twitchell's house on Siesta Key (Figure 3-4). Though Rudolph did not receive credit for the design of the house, his influence is evident.⁸ The layout provides views of the Gulf of Mexico and has varying ceiling heights. The house was also built out of Ocala block – a type of cement block named for the city in which it was produced in Florida – which gave off a warm color because it was made from local sand.

Paul Rudolph left Sarasota to attend graduate school at Harvard in 1941. There he studied under former Bauhaus director Walter Gropius. During America's involvement in World War II Rudolph enlisted in the Navy and served as an architect at the Brooklyn Naval Yard. This assignment influenced his later work, including an

efficient use of space and experimental materials previously used by only the Navy.⁹ Following the war Rudolph returned to Harvard, where he graduated in 1947, after graduation he traveled throughout Europe and, in 1948 returned to Sarasota. During his time at Harvard, Rudolph continued to work for Twitchell's firm, Associated Builders Inc. Upon his return, Twitchell made Rudolph a full partner and the two began creating a form of modernism adapted to the geography, climate, and social context of South Florida's West coast.¹⁰

The 1960s saw a change in the cultural, political and economic climate of Sarasota. In 1958, Rudolph moved to Yale and two years later his office closed. Twitchell retired in 1965. Development companies became the dominant force in construction in Sarasota – it was no longer individual owners. Jack West, and a number of other architects stayed in the area and continued the Sarasota School of Architecture influences.¹¹

Other Architects

Rudolph and Twitchell were not the only architects creating designs with the Sarasota School's characteristics. Victor Lundy, born in 1923, like Rudolph was a graduate of the Harvard University Graduate School of Design and also like Rudolph would become known internationally.¹² However, unlike Rudolph and his other Sarasota colleagues, Lundy practiced a more expressionist form of modern architecture.¹³ Tim Seibert was born in 1927 in Seattle, Washington, and moved to Sarasota in his teens. After graduating from the University of Florida, he worked part time for Rudolph, who became his mentor. Gene Leedy was born in 1928 in Isaban, West Virginia, and graduated from the University of Florida in 1950. He moved to Sarasota and worked for

architects Ralph and William Zimmerman before he was hired by Rudolph. Leedy opened his own office in 1954 before moving to Winter Haven the following year.¹⁴

Other architects whose work was considered part of the Sarasota School of Architecture include: Carl Abbott, Boyd Blackner, Bert Brosmith, James Durden, Joseph Farrell, Phil Hall, Phil Hammill, Mark Hampton, James Holiday, William Rupp, Louis Schneider, Rollan Sellew, Frank Folsom Smith, Tollyn Twitchell, Carl Volmer, Joan Warriner, Ken Warriner, Beth Waters, Don Wilkinson, Ralph Zimmerman, and William Zimmerman.

Jack West

Born in 1922 in Galesburg, Illinois, Jack West worked for Twitchell and Rudolph after graduating from the Yale University School of Architecture in 1949 (Figure 3-5).¹⁵ Jack West worked with Twitchell for a short time in the early 1950s, until he formed his own firm in 1954. In 1956 West formed a partnership with architect Beth Waters, the firm of West and Waters lasted until 1960. West designed the Englewood Elementary School Addition, and the Fruitville Elementary School Addition with Bolton McBride (Figure 3-6 and Figure 3-7). West also had a planning education, and was elected to the first planning board in Sarasota, where he wrote the first zoning regulations for the City.¹⁶ In 1965, West designed Sarasota City Hall, and met Rolland W. Sellew and began to do U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development work. In 1966, West formed architecture and engineering partnerships with Al Conyers.¹⁷ The firm of West and Conyers/Architects and Engineers lasted well into the 1990s. West died at the age of 88, in the fall of 2010. One of his last projects was the restoration of the Nokomis beach pavilion, which he had designed.

Nokomis Beach Pavilion

In 1953, Sarasota County commissioners chose West to design the Nokomis Beach Plaza on Casey Key, 15 miles south of Sarasota. Not only was it his first public commission, but it was also the first Sarasota School of Architecture public building.¹⁸ West designed a flat-roof, single story structure consisting of two pavilions connected by a covered walkway. An area of one hundred by one hundred square feet featured a fountain and landscaping. One of the pavilions served as a concession stand and bathhouse, built out of Ocala block it also had a band of steel and glass windows around the top. The second pavilion featured murals by local artist Hilton Leech.¹⁹ The plaza was completed in 1955. Soon after the fountain was filled in and planted, because it attracted sea gulls (Figure 3-7). Jack West says in his autobiography, "This would not be the first time that my fountains were destroyed by the generally unfeeling bureaucracies," which holds true for the reflecting pool at City Hall as well.²⁰

Over the years, general lack of maintenance and a number of unsympathetic additions the county planned to demolish the plaza (Figure 3-8). A group of citizens joined together to show their support of the site, and \$40,000 was put into bathroom repairs and a boardwalk.²¹ It is assumed by the users of the building that the county planned to demolish the plaza as evidenced by the deferred maintenance. In 2002, Jack West requested \$10,000 for a feasibility study of the plaza to be done. The study found the Ocala block was failing. West recommended the plaza be rehabilitated. After a series of financial setbacks and permitting problems Nokomis beach pavilion was reconstructed under the direction of the original architect, Jack West. Former locker rooms and restrooms were turned into a meeting room with a kitchen and linear restrooms. Concrete block with a sand color replaced the original Ocala block, and

steel braces were added (Figure 3-9). West stressed the importance of adaptive use when asked about preservation of mid-century modern buildings, “What it says is that if the building makes sense – if it’s going to be useful for the public – it ought to be saved and can be saved successfully”²²

Sarasota City Hall

In 1965 Jack West was commissioned to design a new city hall for Sarasota on an uninspired, flat site without an interesting view.²³ West pictured “a paved plaza with sculpture and pools – and with the site lifted to provide a commanding aspect. It included a clock tower and my concept was for it to be built of brick, concrete and copper to last a thousand years!”²⁴ Instead the City Commission bought additional land, and reduced the budget to \$600,000. To accommodate the new budget and size, concrete block was recommended instead of brick and revised drawings were done, lowering the cost by forty-percent (Figure 3-10). West was able to keep his vision of pools and a sculpture by his friend, Jack Cartlidge. In 1967 a city commissioner fell into one of the pools and ordered them to be filled with concrete.²⁵

The building has not had any single major renovation, and has been well maintained over the years (Figure 3-11). An addition was added also designed by Jack West. As the city has grown many of the offices which were in the original city hall have been moved out to other locations.

History of Preservation in Sarasota

Often a community classifies its preservation history by its successes and losses. Sarasota is no different. Sarasota has lost three significant buildings, which have led to public awareness about what is really lost when buildings are demolished. From this

awareness however have come a few successes, which have instilled a sense of pride back in the preservation community.

Designed in 1938 by Ralph Twitchell, the Lido Casino was a project of the Works Progress Administration (Figure 3-12). The casino, located on Lido Beach, was a two-story structure built out of exposed concrete. Bright murals showing tropical scenes adored the interior spaces.²⁶ The site hosted many public community events including beauty pageants, gymnastic competitions, swim meets, and card games.²⁷ In disrepair by the 1950s, citizens passed a bond referendum for 250,000 dollars to restore the casino.²⁸ However, city leaders believed the renovations would be too costly, and the casino was torn down.

At the end of Main Street in downtown Sarasota in 1925 the Atlantic Coast Line Train Station was constructed in 1925 (Figure 3-13). Designed in the Mission Style, the station served the Tampa Southern Line, which extended from Tampa to Naples. As trains fell out of fashion, the station was used less and less.²⁹ The station was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984, but was torn down two years later. This loss brought the reality of demolition to the City's attention, and government officials revisited the policy on the demolition of historic structures. Sarasota's historic preservation ordinance was changed, binding historically designated properties to undergo a "review of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness for demolition" which would make it more difficult for a site owner to tear down a building.³⁰

A second loss for the Sarasota preservation community was the John Ringling Towers. Known for its handcrafted architectural details, the John Ringling Towers hotel was built in 1926 in a Mediterranean Revival Style (Figure 3-14). The hotel operated for

three decades, until 1964 when it was converted into apartments. Twenty-five years later the building was abandoned and dilapidated.³¹ The building was listed on the local, State, and National Historic Registers in 1987. In 1991 the city gave the owners, Huntington National Bank of Ohio, a year to come up with a plan to restore the towers. After a series of fund raising deadlines passed, title transfers and a lawsuit the building was demolished, along with a residence next door. A Ritz Carlton was constructed on the site.³²

“A lack of public support, not enough funding, and a clash of egos are all cited as reason the preservation operation failed.”³³ These three losses however have brought the importance of preservation to the attention of Sarasota. By 2002, the City updated the historic preservation chapter of its comprehensive plan, in addition to its survey of historic resources, which included sites associated with the Sarasota School of Architecture.

Sarasota School of Architecture Preservation Efforts

John Howey's book, *The Sarasota School of Architecture, 1941-1966* was published in 1995. His publication, featuring photographs and drawings, chronicles the history of the movement is credited with helping reviving interest in Sarasota modernism. Three structures, the Healy Guest House (Twitchell and Rudolph), the Burkhardt House (Rudolph), and the Sanderling Beach Club (Rudolph) were restored and placed on the National Register in the 1990s (Figure 3-15, Figure 3-16 and Figure 3-17). In addition, a survey of Sarasota's modern resources was completed, followed by a symposium in 2001. The survey led to the formation of the Sarasota Architectural Foundation (SAF). Initially the group's goal was to act as a nonprofit that could save Sarasota School of Architecture houses that were at risk; they also held lectures, tours,

book signings and movie screenings in attempt to advocate for the structures. Today the organization has about 65 members and hosts tours focusing on different architects important to the Sarasota School of Architecture movement.

Despite these steps forward, Sarasota School of Architecture has seen its share of losses. A Twitchell and Rudolph design the Miller Residence (1948) was replaced with a larger residence, in spite of attempts to move the house (Figure 3-18). The Coward Residence (1951), another Twitchell and Rudolph design, was documented to Historic American Building Survey (HABS) standard before it was demolished in 2004 (Figure 3-19).³⁴ In 2007 the Twitchell residence was demolished, on the grounds that it was beyond repair. Repairs would have cost an estimated \$800,000, a price the owner was not willing to pay. Most recently the 2009 demolition of Riverview has once again brought the Sarasota School of Architecture to the attention of the preservation community (Figure 3-20). The school was demolished, despite being a Rudolph design and an important part of the 1950s groundbreaking school construction program in Sarasota County, perhaps because the advocacy plan placed significance on the architect instead of the socio-cultural values associated with the site. Despite efforts by a number of groups advocating for it's preservation the press overwhelmingly focused on the building's connection to Paul Rudolph and the Sarasota School of Architecture rather than it's value to the community.

History of Preservation of Mid-Century Modern Architecture

A number of organizations have developed, dedicated to the conservation of modern architecture on the global level. TrustModern is a program developed by the National Trust for Historic preservation, which "challenges the nation to change how we view, steward and preserve the architectural and cultural heritage of the recent past

before more landmarks are lost.”³⁵ ICOMOS International Scientific Committee (ISC20C), established in 2005, operates through The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) to promote the identification, conservation and presentation of twentieth-century heritage places. In 1988, the International committee for Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites and Neighbourhoods of the Modern Movement (DOCMOMO) was founded. Its mission is to monitor modern movement buildings, which may be under threat, exchange ideas related to conservation and education of modern sites, encourage interest in the sites and elicit responsibility towards architectural inheritance.³⁶

Preservation of mid-century modern architecture mimics what is going on globally and in the rest of the country. Four cities in the United States are known for their mid-century modern architecture: Los Angeles and Palm Springs, California; Miami, Florida; and New Canaan, Connecticut. Los Angeles has a large demand for postwar modern houses, and a large advocacy group has emerged for a strong voice. Preservation efforts in New Canaan began 6 years ago with the Glass House donation to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Miami has two historic districts, which have encouraged rehabilitations and economic development. These five cities share public awareness and education, and they demonstrate “that preserving modern architecture can be done successfully and provide examples that can be implemented in Sarasota.”³⁷

Conclusion

Ralph Twitchell and Paul Rudolph brought a regional form of modernism to the county of Sarasota in the 1940s through the 1960s. Jack West became a part of the movement known as the Sarasota School of Architecture in the early years. West designed two of the better-known civic buildings, Nokomis Beach Pavilion erected in the

early years of the movement and Sarasota City Hall during the decline of the Sarasota School of Architecture.

Despite growing interest in preserving modernism Sarasota's preservation history has been marked by a series of success and failures, from these historic preservation in Sarasota has been strengthened. Included in this strength is the community's recognition of its Sarasota School of Architecture resources. The county could use these cities as models for future preservation efforts. Sarasota's modern resources serve as the case studies for this thesis.

¹ Muldowney, "Lido Casino," April 2, 1997.

² John Howey, *The Sarasota School of Architecture, 1941-1966* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1995), 6.

³ John Howey, *The Sarasota School of Architecture, 1941-1966* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press) 2.

⁴ Jeff LaHurd, *Quintessential Sarasota: Stories and Pictures From the 1920s to the 1950s* (Charleston, South Carolina: The History Press, 2004), 57.

⁵ Christopher Domin and Joseph King, *Paul Rudolph: The Florida Houses*, (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002), 34.

⁶ Ibid, 26.

⁷ Laura Higgins, "Impossible Goals," Sarasota Herald Tribune, May 31, 1998.

⁸ John Howey, *The Sarasota School of Architecture, 1941-1966* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press 34-39, 43.

⁹ Sarasota City Plan, The Historic Preservation Support Document, Dec. 12, 2008, 12.

¹⁰ John Howey, *The Sarasota School of Architecture, 1941-1966* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press 34-39, 43.

¹¹ John Howey, *The Sarasota School of Architecture, 1941-1966* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press) 34-39, 43.

¹² Jan Hochstim, *Florida Modern: Residential Architecture 1945-1970* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2004), 182-183.

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- ¹³ Richard Guy Wilson, introduction to *The Sarasota School of Architecture, 1941-1966* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1995), xi.
- ¹⁴ Jan Hochstim, *Florida Modern: Residential Architecture 1945-1970* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2004), 194, 208.
- ¹⁵ Jan Hochstim, *Florida Modern: Residential Architecture 1945-1970* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2004), 168.
- ¹⁶ Jack West, *The Lives of an Architect* (Sarasota: Fauve Publishing, 1988), 43.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Chris Berger. "Historic Preservation and the Sarasota School of Architecture: Three Case Studies". (A master's thesis presented to the University of Florida). 103
- ¹⁹ Jack West, *The Lives of an Architect* (Sarasota: Fauve Publishing, 1988), 17.
- ²⁰ Ibid, 43.
- ²¹ Hackett, "Architect," *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, July 22, 2003.
- ²² Bubil, "Real Estate Today," *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* video, September 20, 2008
- ²³ Jack West, *The Lives of an Architect* (Sarasota: Fauve Publishing, 1988), 75.
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ Lorrie Muldowney, "Lido Casino Offered Fun in the Sun," *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, April 2, 1997.
- ²⁷ Jeff LaHurd, *Quintessential Sarasota: Stories and Pictures From the 1920s to the 1950s* (Charleston, South Carolina: The History Press, 2004), 57
- ²⁸ Chris Berger. "Historic Preservation and the Sarasota School of Architecture: Three Case Studies". (A master's thesis presented to the University of Florida). 33.
- ²⁹ Sarasota History Alive! "Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Depot," <http://www.sarasotahistoryalive.com/markers-and-designations/historical-marker/atlantic-coast-line-railroad-depot/>
- ³⁰ Sarasota City Plan, "The Historic Preservation Support Document," December 12, 2008, 12
- ³¹ Chris Berger. "Historic Preservation and the Sarasota School of Architecture: Three Case Studies". (A master's thesis presented to the University of Florida). 50.
- ³² Ibid, 52.
- ³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Administered since 1933 through cooperative agreements with the National Park Service, the Library of Congress, and the private sector, ongoing programs of the National Park Service have recorded America's built environment in multi format surveys comprising more than 556,900 measured drawings, large-format photographs, and written histories for more than 38,600 historic structures and sites dating from Pre-Columbian times to the twentieth century.

³⁵ TrustModern website. <http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/modernism-recent-past/>

³⁶ DOMOMO website. http://www.docomomo.com/general_information.htm

³⁷ Chris Berger. "Historic Preservation and the Sarasota School of Architecture: Three Case Studies". (A master's thesis presented to the University of Florida). 17

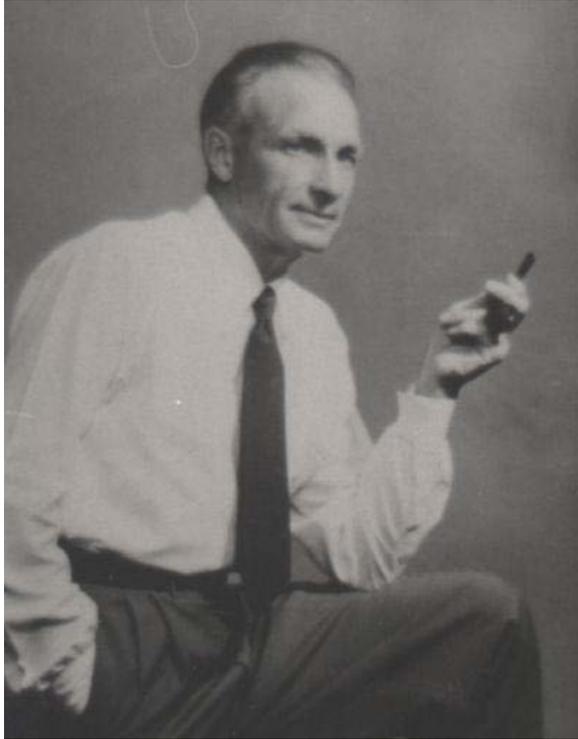


Figure 3-1. Architect Ralph Twitchell worked on Ca d'Zan and designed the Lido Casino. Courtesy of the Sarasota County History Center.



Figure 3-2. Ca d'Zan, completed in 1925, was John Ringling's mansion. Courtesy of the Sarasota County History Center.



Figure 3-3. Architect Paul Rudolph. Courtesy of the Sarasota County History Center.



Figure 3-4. The Twitchell Residence was one of the first projects Paul Rudolph worked on for Ralph Twitchell in 1941. Courtesy of the Sarasota County History Center.

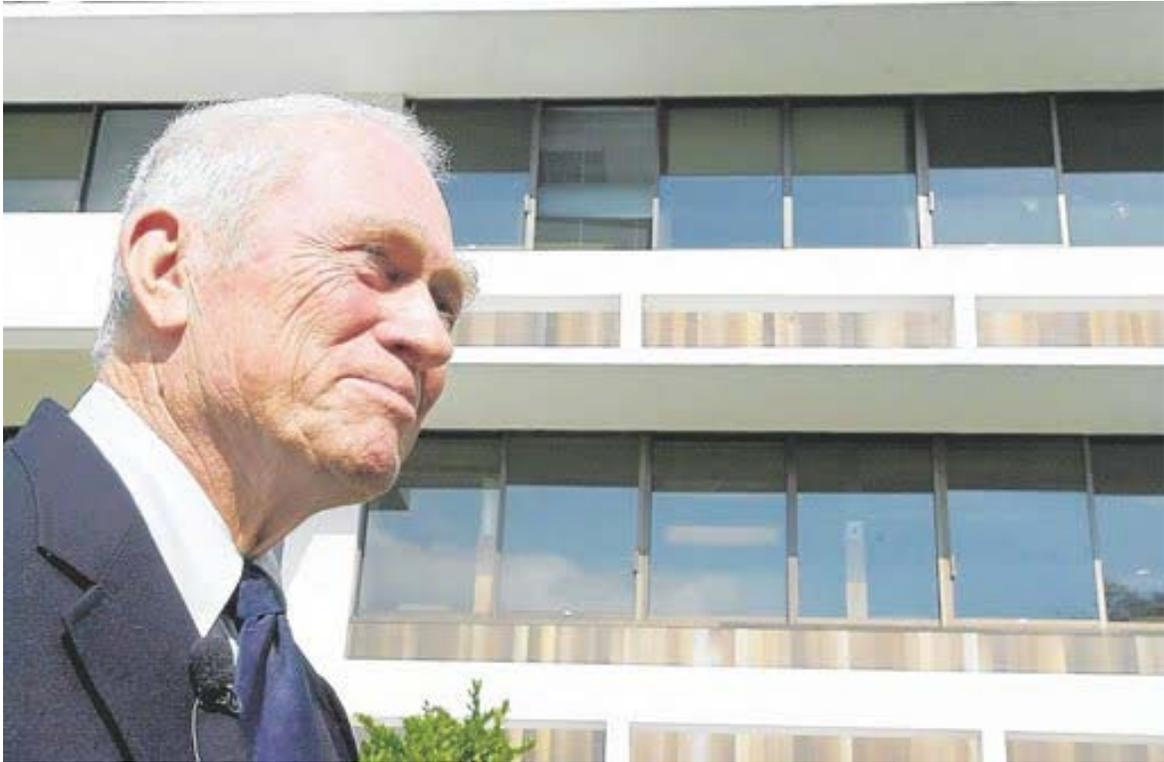


Figure 3-5. Architect Jack West in front of Sarasota City Hall. Courtesy of the “Sarasota Herald Tribune Archives.”



Figure 3-6. Fruitville Elementary Addition. Courtesy of the “Sarasota School of Architecture” website.



A



B

Figure 3-7. Nokomis Beach Pavilion, 1956 (A) facing North, (B) facing West from the parking lot. Both courtesy of the Sarasota County History Center.



Figure 3-8. The Nokomis Beach Plaza before it was rehabilitated. Looking northwest toward the north pavilion. Reprinted, by permission, from the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* archive.



Figure 3-9. The Nokomis Beach Plaza after its rehabilitation. Photo by author.



Figure 3-10. Sarasota City Hall, designed by Jack West shortly after it was built in 1966. Courtesy of the “Sarasota School of Architecture” website.



Figure 3-11. Sarasota City Hall present day. Photograph by author.



Figure 3-12. The Lido Casino was built in 1938 and demolished thirty years later. Courtesy of the Sarasota County History Center.



Figure 3-13. The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Depot was built in 1925 and demolished in 1986. Courtesy of the Sarasota County History Center.



Figure 3-14. The John Ringling Towers was built in 1926 and torn down in 1999. Courtesy of the Florida Photographic Collection.



Figure 3-15. The Healy Guest House, or Cocoon House, was designed by Paul Rudolph and Ralph Twitchell in 1950. Photograph by Ezra Stoller for Esto, courtesy of ArtStor.



Figure 3-16. The Burkhardt Residence. Photo courtesy of “Archinology” website.



Figure 3-17. The Sanderling Beach Club pavilions were designed by Paul Rudolph in 1952. Photograph by Ezra Stoller for Esto, courtesy of ArtStor.



Figure 3-18. The Miller Residence designed in 1947 by Paul Rudolph and Ralph Twitchell. Courtesy of the Sarasota County History Center.



Figure 3-19. The Coward Residence built in 1950 by Paul Rudolph and Ralph Twitchell. Courtesy of the Sarasota County History Center.

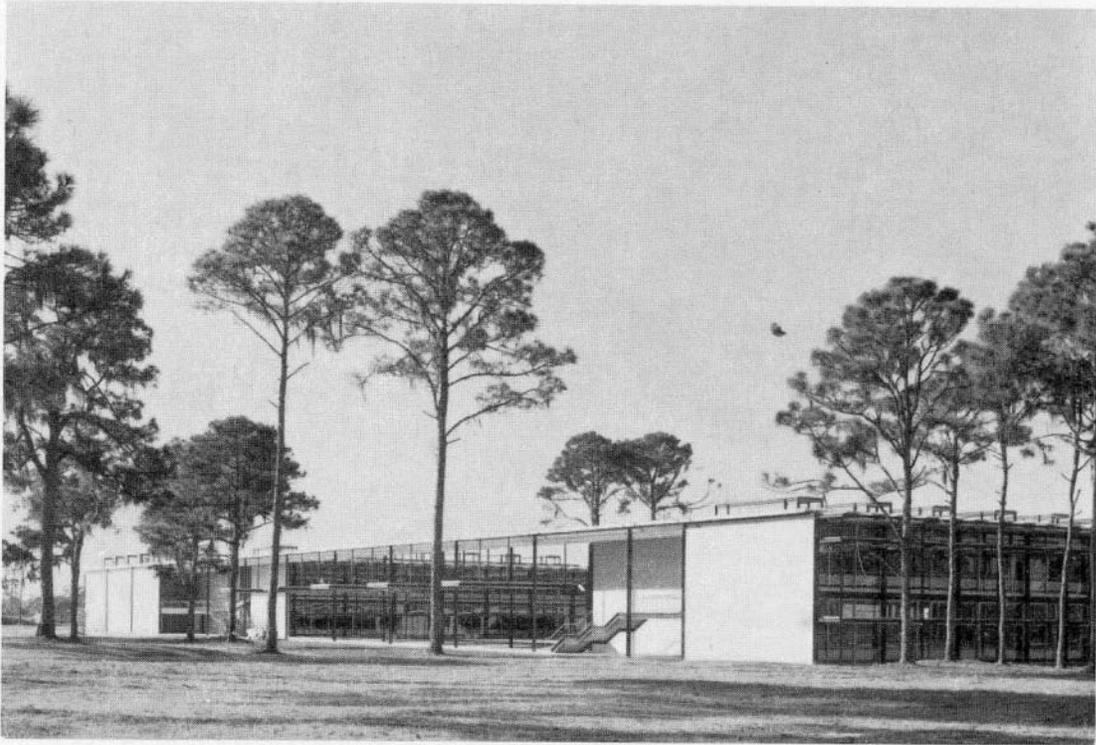


Figure 3-20. Riverview High school built by Paul Rudolph in 1957. Courtesy of the Sarasota County History Center.

CHAPTER 4 FRAMEWORK – RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

Traditionally top-down methods have been used to assess significance of historic properties. These methods are based on the belief that it is possible to get to a singular truth through scientific method.¹ Initially historians and social scientists used this approach, however in the 1960s and 1970s researchers began to question these methods. The concept of an inherent truth was called into question and it was recognized that this research design only allowed for one kind of interpretation.² Many of the social sciences have adopted post-modern approaches to research, including constructivist and relativism.³ Historic Preservation's assessment of significance however often relies on positivistic research, which separates facts from interpretation.

Post positivist methods, by contrast, embrace the values and politics contributing to a study. This is not to say that positivist methods have nothing to contribute to heritage value assessment, but rather both methods should be used when evaluating a site's significance.⁴ While a range of methodologies have some utility in evaluating heritage sites, some approaches have distinct advantages. Ethnographic research—the process of describing a culture—includes the historical, as well as the social and political, context of the site as a means of understanding cultural groups, and their perceptions of a site.⁵ Varied, ever fluctuating, shaped by contextual factors, heritage values diverge and overlap.

This study was conducted with the understanding that these difficulties exist.⁶ This study uses qualitative research, where the aim is detailed description of stakeholder's perceptions of two sites, Nokomis beach pavilion and Sarasota's City Hall.

Establishing Interview Questions

Theodore H.M. Prudon's book, *Preservation of Modern Architecture* discusses, among other things, the importance of public perception in terms of preservation efforts. According to Prudon there are a number of factors, which contribute to negative perceptions from the public including, functionality and obsolescence, both materials and building use. Traditional building practices highlighted use of material, not use of space, therefore traditional preservation focuses on material rather than design intent. Design intent is less obvious than material and therefore is less appreciated to the public.⁷ These theories are antidotal, and not based on survey or study rather professional experience within the field.

In 1995 the Getty Institute launched a project, *Research on the Values of Heritage*. The main goal of the project was to strengthen the ability of the conservation field to understand and engage a larger range of the economic, social, and other values that shape the stewardship of heritage resources. The project published a series of essays, which examined new ways of assessing and assigning significance. Included in this study was Randall Mason's paper, "Assessing Values in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices". Mason explores the meaning of heritage values. The article characterizes the values, discusses the methodological issues, presents tools for eliciting heritage values, and concludes with integrating assessments and guiding decision-making. In this paper Randall Mason's states, "Assessment of the values attributed to heritage is a very important activity in any conservation effort, since values strongly shape the decisions that are made."⁸ Setha M. Low, an expert, also involved with the Getty project, proposes using anthropological and ethnographic methods to assessing heritage values and introduces new groups of stakeholders into

the values identification process. As demonstrated in Chapter 2 assessing values associated with a heritage resource is a critical early step in its preservation.

The process for this study began with research into the sites, to understand their histories and interviews to gain knowledge about users of each site. Following this research questions for the on site surveys were drawn from the two frameworks, Prudon's book *Preservation of Modern Architecture* and the Getty Institute's project *Research on the Values of Heritage*.

The demographic questions were designed in a way to establish general knowledge about the interviewee. To better understand the interviewee's connection to a site a series of questions were asked about residency and visit. Also, based on Prudon's theory that experts and professionals in the field of architecture have more of an appreciation for modern sites, the interviewee was asked if his or her profession involved architecture, building construction, or related fields.⁹ Finally to gain an understanding of the user's connection to the site the interviewee was asked how many times a year they came to the site.

Following the demographic information were a series of questions based on Theodore Prudon's philosophical issues affecting preservation of modern architecture. These questions related to Prudon's theory that, "Functional and physical obsolescence are central to the discussion and the dilemmas of the preservation of modern architecture."¹⁰ A general question was asked about what a site user liked or disliked about the building. The goal was to try to determine if the public at large had a negative perception about modern design of each site.

The third set of questions were intended to help better understand the stakeholders socio-cultural values stakeholders placed on the site. First, site users were asked if they placed any cultural meaning on the site. Second, and closely related they were asked if they placed any value on the social use of the site. Based on those five questions, users were asked to rank the importance of each value. The following three questions were aimed at gaining knowledge of more traditional associations with buildings, architectural importance, aesthetic significance, and historical value. These questions were derived from the National Register's criteria for nominating a historic site.

The questions were designed as open-ended questions. This allowed for more conversation and the site user to add additional, unanticipated information and observations. Open-ended questions also eliminate the possibility of a respondent to be "conditioned" by choices from a list.¹¹ (Appendix A and B)

Sample

Selection of Sites –

As previously stated Sarasota has a great collection of buildings, these two buildings were chosen for the following reasons. As discussed in Chapter 3, preservation experts have recognized the importance of Sarasota's resources and tradition of preservation of its mid-century modern heritage. Sarasota Architectural Foundation has made considerable attempts to bring Sarasota's mid-century modern architecture to the forefront of the organization's preservation efforts. The 2009 Riverview High School demolition has brought both the realization of the destruction of the recent past, and Sarasota's architecture to the preservation community's attention. Modern buildings present a series of distinct challenges when it comes to preservation.

There is a large volume of mid-century modern buildings and sites, in Sarasota, one of the challenges is how to identify those resources worthy of preserving. Mid-century modern resources are coming of age. They are approaching, or have surpassed their initial intended life span. Central to this is the fact that modern architects used innovative materials, which “necessitate repair and replacement much sooner”.¹²

The criteria for choosing the Sarasota sites for the study included:

- Use: A mix of civic building types. Nokomis, a beach pavilion houses public bathrooms and a meeting space, used for recreation. City Hall is used for permitting and the mayor’s office, namely administrative purposes.
- Age: Nokomis was the first Sarasota School of Architecture’s public commission built in 1955. Sarasota’s City Hall (1966) was built in the latter years of the Sarasota School of Architecture’s prime.¹³
- Public Access: Both are open to the public which allow allowed for the interviewers to be on site without permission from the building owners.
- Location: Both have a central location to their respective communities Nokomis and Sarasota.

Selection of Interviewees

The goal of this survey was to gain insight into stakeholder perceptions, since both buildings are public, the chosen set of interviewees were self-selecting random users of the site. Interviews were done on site for a number of reasons. As time was an issue it was determined that spending a full day on each site would yield the highest number of responses. It was anticipated that there would be difficulty disseminating the survey if the interviews were not done on site. In addition, it was determined that two interviewers would be on site to gather as much information as possible in a relatively short amount of time. On-site interviews allowed for a cross section of users to be questioned and a wide variety of users. By using a cross-sectional study design an overall picture could be obtained. Conducting interviews on site also allowed for both

interviewers and interviewees to reference the site. For example one man was able to point out that the walkway at Nokomis was not to his liking because it was too low for his 6'3 height. There was no formal procedure for selecting interview subjects, the researcher simply asked if site users were willing to participate. About one-third of the subjects approached refused to be interviewed for reasons of time, language, or interest.

Sarasota's population is largely seasonal, with over 1/3 of the population only living in the county during the winter months it is recognized that a different set of users would have been interviewed at different times of the year.¹⁴ As a recreational site it was determined that a Sunday afternoon would yield the most and widest variety of users at Nokomis beach pavilion. As a government, administration site, a Monday morning was chosen to do interviews at Sarasota's City Hall. Twenty-three interviews were conducted at Nokomis, and fourteen interviews at Sarasota City Hall.

The interview questions were carefully laid out to encompass questions concerning function and aesthetics as well as socio-cultural values. A matrix was created to analyze the data. Certain variables were analyzed, including age, residential status, occupation, and compared to Prudon's distinct challenges to preservation of modern buildings, and also to the cultural values the user placed on a site. The following chapter summarizes these results and discusses how this survey and survey's like it can be used for advocating for mid-century modern buildings.

¹ Jeremy Wells. "Historical Significance through the Lens of Contemporary Social, Cultural, and Experiential Values". 2

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Setha M Low, "Anthropological-Ethnographic Methods for the Assessment of Cultural Values in Heritage Conservation," in *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*, ed. Marta la de Torre (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2002), 31.

⁵ Ibid, 32.

⁶ Randall Mason, "Assessing Values in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices," in *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*, ed. Marta de la Torre (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Trust, 2002), 11.

⁷ Theodore Prudon, *Preservation of Modern Architecture* (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2008). 35.

⁸ Randall Mason, "Assessing Values in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices," in *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*, ed. Marta de la Torre (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Trust, 2002), 8.

⁹ Theodore Prudon, *Preservation of Modern Architecture* (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2008), 18-20.

¹⁰ Theodore Prudon, *Preservation of Modern Architecture* (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2008), 4-5.

¹¹ Ranjit Kumar. *Research Methodology: A Step –By-Step Guide for Beginners*. (London, Sage Publications, 2005).

¹² Theodore Prudon, *Preservation of Modern Architecture* (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2008), 4-5.

¹³ Jack West, TLOAA (Sarasota, Florida: Fauve Publishing, 1988), 43, 75.

¹⁴ "Florida by place Population, Housing Units, Area and Density:2000". U.S. Census Bureau. (2000). Washington, DC: Retrieved from

http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/GCTTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=04000US12&-

[_box_head_nbr=GCT-PH1&-ds_name=DEC_2000_SF1_U&-format=ST-7](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/GCTTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=04000US12&-_box_head_nbr=GCT-PH1&-ds_name=DEC_2000_SF1_U&-format=ST-7) (accessed May 2011)

Table 4-1. Theodore Prudon's Observations on Why Modern Buildings are Demolished

Functionality	Perceived Obsolescence	Number of Resources	Loss of Authentic Material
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Table 4-2. Randal Mason for Getty' Institute's Research Project Sample of Socio-Cultural Values

Historic	Social	Cultural	Spiritual	Aesthetic
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CHAPTER 5 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

As described in Chapter 4, on-site interviews were conducted at the Nokomis Beach Pavilion and Sarasota City Hall to help identify and better understand the values stakeholders associate with the two resources focused on in this study. In total, twenty-three interviews were conducted at Nokomis Beach Pavilion and sixteen interviews were completed at Sarasota City Hall (Appendix D and E).

Participants were randomly solicited at both sites. Interviews at Nokomis took place on a Sunday morning and afternoon in mid-January. Because of the time of the year, most of the site users were seasonal residents of Sarasota, living there less than three months out of the year. Interviews at the City Hall were conducted on a Monday morning, and into the afternoon, also in mid-January. Since the county of Sarasota has grown since City Hall was originally built, some of the departments have been relocated due to lack of office space. This implies there are fewer site users - both people who work there and people needing the services of those relocated departments. All of those interviewed at City Hall were full time residents of Sarasota County.

A number of variables were considered that might have influenced the respondents' answers. Gender of interviewees was split between male and female, and did not seem to impact responses. Nine percent of interviewees at Nokomis Beach Pavilion and forty-seven percent of those interviewed at City Hall worked in a field related to architectural design or building construction. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 70. The participant's education ranged from high school to masters degrees.

The number of times an interviewee had been on the site varied significantly. Interviewees at Nokomis Beach Pavilion visited the site one to three times per week

over the last 15 years. The majority of the interviewees at City Hall worked in the building, therefore most use the site five days per week, though one-fourth of those interviewed were visitors who use the building only once or twice per year.

Interviewees answered a series of questions about functionality and maintenance, cultural heritage values as well as architectural and aesthetic values.

Results

As described in the previous chapters interviews were conducted over a two-day period on location to gain the largest cross section of site users. Questions were established in an attempt to assess public perceptions of both the functionality and maintenance of the two sites as well as the cultural values, if any, interviewees placed on the site.

Demographics of interviewees varied widely. Occupation and residential status did influence perceptions (Figure 6-1) Interviewees who permanently resided in Sarasota, or worked within a building construction and design field had more knowledge of the Sarasota School of Architecture as well as placing more cultural values on each site, then compared to those who did not reside in Sarasota permanently or work in a field related to building construction and design.

Functionality and Maintenance

Functionality and maintenance, or state of repair, affected public perceptions of Nokomis Beach Pavilion. Since the site was recently reconstructed, a few modern conveniences were added, while still retaining the character defining features of the Sarasota School of Architecture. All respondents stated that the site was both well maintained and served its function. One interviewee who was on site everyday for two

weeks out of every year said, “Now that the renovations are complete the site is handicap accessible able, clean and fully functional”.

Sarasota’s City Hall has not undergone any major renovation since it was built, but the site has been well maintained. Most respondents agreed that maintenance was above average ($n=14$; 93%), though two said that maintenance was, reflecting the budget, the minimum required to keep the building in good repair.

A number of offices have been moved out of the City Hall’s main building and into either the adjacent annex building, or off site. One interviewee commented on this change in use when considering the functionality of the site. This individual recognized that the function of the building had changed over the years due to the increase in size of the city. All agreed, however, the few remaining departments and meeting rooms were fully functional in the spaces. One interviewee commented, “It’s different. Not like other office buildings. It has a feeling of an older Florida style, which has gone away. It is pleasant inside the lobby with the fountain. The commission chambers are well designed. I like the face-to-face sit down style instead of having a raised platform podium.”

Related both to the functionality and the maintenance of the building a number of interviewees commented on the ambient conditions. For these site users the HVAC system and over air-conditioning of the interiors and, in some instances, the amount of windows in the building, which seemed to let in heat from the sun, were seen as negatives.

Cultural and Social Values

Cultural values are those, which a stakeholder places on a site based on their experience with that site.¹ Social values enable and facilitate social connections and

networks and include place attachment aspects of heritage values. These values were assessed by asking, “Do you have any special memories of the site?” and “Do you know of any significant events which have occurred here?”

When asked about socio-cultural values, compared to architectural significance, respondents at both sites agreed that the value of the site was in its cultural or social significance rather than it’s historical or architectural.

Approximately half of the respondents ($n=18$; 44%) at both sites had cultural or social connections to the site and half did not ($n=20$; 52%). There seems to be no significant difference between seasonal residents and year-round residents on cultural and social values. The majority of those who did have a connection to the Nokomis Beach Pavilion did so through an event, such as the monthly drum circle or seasonal craft fair, which are held on site. Two respondents had childhood memories of the site. One had gone on picnics with her aunt, and the other had visited the Pavilion as part of trips to the beach.

Since there were no seasonal residents interviewed at Sarasota’s City Hall a comparison cannot be made between similarities and differences in the responses of full-time and part-time residents. However, by looking at the years a resident has lived in Sarasota and the cultural value a user placed on the site a correlation can be made. All but two of those interviewed who had lived in Sarasota for over 10 years had some sort of cultural or social connection to the site (13 of the 17 interviewed have lived in Sarasota for over 10 years). These connections ranged from public meetings to lawn bowling matches, to launching water balloons off the roof. One interviewee even

remembered a city commissioner famously falling into the reflecting pool in the front of the building.

Architectural and Aesthetic Values

Architectural values are those, which a user places on a site based on how they feel about the style of a building.² Aesthetic values are those, which a site user places on a site, related to the visual qualities.³ Architectural significance is the most common value associated with mid-century modern sites such as the resources of the Sarasota School of Architecture. Architectural value was assessed on each site to compare traditional ways of determining significance to the cultural values a stakeholder places on a site. These values were assessed by asking, “Do you see this site as architecturally important to Sarasota? The County? The World? Why?” and, aesthetically “Does it represent Sarasota?”

The responses to the architectural and aesthetic questions were mixed. Nearly one-third of the respondents at both the Nokomis Beach Pavilion ($n=8$; 30%) and half at City Hall ($n=7$; 43%) thought the building was architecturally significant and or represented Sarasota. However, five out of ten interviewees of those who considered it important or representative of Sarasota, had read the interpretive sign at the entrance to the Pavilion, which provides information on the architect Jack West and the Sarasota School of Architecture (Figure 5-1). Most respondents agreed that the site was aesthetically pleasing, but did not find any importance in its architecture or style. One interviewee responded, “It [the Pavilion] seems to fit in because it’s near the beach in Sarasota, anywhere else it would be out of place”.

Nine of the fourteen individuals interviewed felt Sarasota’s City Hall was significant both architecturally and aesthetically. It is important to note that fifty-seven

percent of the individuals interviewed were in the building construction or design field. One interviewee stated, "I think it is great that a Sarasota School of Architecture design is used as the place where you have to come to get building permits. It says a lot about the Sarasota School of Architecture and how proud people in Sarasota are of it." Three individuals felt that the style did not represent Sarasota, and that in fact the Spanish Mediterranean Revival style did.

A number of individuals interviewed commented on the landscaping outside of the building, which to them added to the importance of the site ($n=4$; 25%). One interviewee said "It represents a very Sarasota idea of blending both the inside and outside environment."

Conclusion

Overall public perceptions of both Nokomis Beach Pavilion and Sarasota's City Hall were mixed. Both full-time residents and those in the building construction and design field placed a higher value on both sites, culturally, socially, architecturally, and aesthetically. It is therefore assumed that those with more education about a site, or personal connection to a site find a higher value in it. Gender and age did not play a role in perception.

Use of building, recreational in the case of Nokomis, or governmental in the case of City Hall did not seem to impact opinions. However, it may be inferred that the more time people spent on a site (employees working 40 hours a week in the case of City Hall), the more they knew about it's history and role in the community. In addition, those interviewees who had participated in some sort of cultural or social event at either site seem to value and appreciate the building more.

¹ Randall Mason, "Assessing Values in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices," in *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*, ed. Marta de la Torre (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Trust, 2002), 8.

² Ibid, 11.

³ Ibid, 11.



Figure 5-1. Interpretive sign at Nokomis Beach Pavilion. Photograph by author.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

As defined in the introduction, advocacy is, “the act of pleading or arguing in favor of something, such as a cause, idea, or policy; active support.”¹ As this study suggests, understanding public perceptions is key to advocacy. Instead of pleading and arguing the case for preserving cultural heritage resources, preservationists can engage stakeholders in the process of assessing and understanding values and collectively determining why and how a place should be preserved. Through this process advocacy can take a more subtle form through activities, programs and education.

The traditional connotation of advocacy limits its effectiveness. By using a myriad of approaches to advocate including multiple functions (intended as well as unintended), events (collaborations with a number of groups and getting more stakeholders involved at a site), and education (interpretive signs, lectures, fliers, newspaper articles, etc.) a larger cross section of a community will become involved and aware of a site, and could increase a site’s potential for becoming an integral part of a community and being stewarded long term.

Significance

Since its formal establishment as a discipline and profession, experts who determine the significance of a site through a set of prescribed criteria, either internationally or nationally, have led preservation. These criteria for determining significance often focus on architectural or historical importance. Traditional ways of determining significance were sufficient when the field of preservation was initially established. However, this positivist approach, using a scientific method through observation and measurement with little to no interpretation, assumes that facts and

truth exist independent of interpretation, limits the significance of sites. By including cultural heritage values in a cultural heritage resource's statement of significance, a resource's function can become more dynamic.

As offered by Theodore H.M. Prudon, modern architecture presents a distinct set of challenges such as material authenticity and public perceptions. With the challenges facing preservation of modern architecture, preservationists must come up with new ways of determining significance that involves a larger cross section of stakeholders. By determining what values stakeholders place on a location, whether they be traditional or cultural values, preservationists can begin to develop an advocacy plan.

Modern Architecture and the Sarasota School

Mid-century (1945-1970) modern architecture and other twentieth century heritage resources have reached an age in which significance needs to be assessed and importance recognized. However, the evaluations of these sites are presenting a distinct set of challenges. As presented by modern heritage expert Theodore H.M. Prudon in his book *Preservation of Modern Architecture*, these challenges include, functionality, aesthetics, perceived obsolescence, the number of resources, and the loss of authentic material. The mid-century modern resources in Sarasota present the same set of challenges.

The Sarasota School of Architecture began in the 1940s in response to, among other determinants, a growing need and desire for regional modern architecture, which mirrored the economic and cultural growth of Sarasota, Florida. Started by Paul Rudolph and Ralph Twitchell the movement came to include Jack West, Victor Lundy, and other architects. The Sarasota School of Architecture became known for its use of local materials, large expanses of glass walls, wide overhangs, and an overall effort to

connect occupants to the outdoors. Since its decline in the late 1960s the Sarasota School of Architecture has seen its share of success stories and failures within the preservation community.

This study looked at two public commissions from the Sarasota School of Architecture, Nokomis Beach Pavilion, and Sarasota's City Hall. As discussed in Chapter 4 these sites were chosen for a number of reasons: importance of preservation of mid-century modern sites in Sarasota, world recognition of the Sarasota School of Architecture, the number of mid-century modern resources in Sarasota, each site's use, age, designer, and public access.

Maintenance and Functionality

Maintenance and functionality did seem to play a role in positive perceptions of a site. Since Nokomis had recently been reconstructed and is well maintained interviewees commented on the usefulness and cleanliness of the pavilion. Sarasota's City Hall has been maintained and continues to serve its function though the building may not be big enough to support all the offices required for the growing county of Sarasota. In these cases it is not maintenance and functionality, and that they are accommodating other functions.

In addition most respondents agreed that each building served its function. To continue with this positive view advocates for mid-century modern resources should consider ways for resources to have an evolving and flexible function. In the case of Nokomis this may be as simple as letting people know how to gain access to the meeting room for events they may be interested in hosting. Currently the only information available on renting the space is on-line. By posting a sign at the pavilion the meeting room may be used more often. Two interviewees commented that they did

not know how to gain access to the meeting room, but felt events and activities in this area would bring a greater awareness to the site.

Sarasota's City Hall could be used for meetings other than those involving the City Commission, which would help associate the building with more than just government business. For example, the lobby's natural light and open feel lends itself to be used as an art gallery.

Both sites have large open outdoor spaces that could be used for a number of public gatherings such as the existing drum circle at Nokomis. Creating multiple functions for each site helps ensure that if one function becomes obsolete another option is available.

Events and Programming

These suggestions for advocacy are based upon an understanding that they may work at Nokomis, City Hall and other places, but may not work everywhere.

Social and cultural connections of a site outweighed the architectural connections individuals had. Events held on the premises would help to create these connections.

Through use and programming a new group of people can be drawn into a site.

Collaborations with different groups would be important to gain a large cross section of site users who could begin to place cultural and social values on a site. For example, at Nokomis a collaboration between a bird watching group and the village of Nokomis would bring a group of people to the Nokomis pavilion, who may have not normally have visited. In addition to these collaborations children or student groups should be considered. These events do not need to be related to historic preservation and the Sarasota School of Architecture, in order to give the venue exposure to a new group of people. For example, one interviewee commented that he was aware of the Sarasota

School of Architecture, but the importance of City Hall for him was not in the architecture, but rather the ceremony held there for the high school football team. This community engagement approach would help getting people involved with how they use a building, and not influence how they see the architecture but rather would affect their phenomenological experience with a resource.²

Education and Awareness

Analysis of the interviews determined that education and awareness are important factors in the significance that interviewees place on a cultural heritage resource. Those individuals who were aware of the Sarasota School of Architecture placed a higher value on each site. Education would help strengthen these positive associations.

Educational programs could be as simple as an interpretive sign on site, such as the one at Nokomis Beach Pavilion. Five individuals ($n = 5$; 22%) who had read the interpretive sign at Nokomis placed the highest value on the historical or architectural significance of the venue. Since most of the people who were interviewed at City Hall were long time residents, it is assumed they are more educated and aware of the Sarasota School of Architecture. In addition to this, public perceptions of the importance of Jack West's influence on the Sarasota School of Architecture, and on Sarasota itself may have been influenced by West's recent death in October 2010.³

Educational programs could include, panel lectures involving the community and raising awareness about a location, social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter, a blog, or a community calendar to keep stakeholders informed of events at a site, or newspaper articles.

Further Recommendations for Future Studies

Despite the contributions of this study to insights of public perceptions of mid-century modern buildings in Sarasota, there are several limitations. Given that it focuses on only two sites care, should be taken when applying this study to other sites outside of Sarasota. Not representative of all stakeholders, the study was only able to take place over two days in January, with a limited number of interviews conducted. This time limit also inhibited the number and quality of questions presented to each interviewee. Further recommendations for future studies include conducting the surveys at different times of the year. Also using different methods for gaining the information such as focus groups or a suggestion box.

Further research might consider a number of different variables. A larger cross section of interviewees would be ideal, as well as interviews conducted at different times of year in addition to different times of the day. Asking interviewees how they gained the knowledge of each cultural heritage resource would be helpful. In addition to this the original questions could be simplified so that interviewees who are not aware of certain words would have a better understanding of how to respond. In addition, it is recommended that follow-up surveys be conducted, as opinions and emotions are ever changing.

Examining phenomenology of sites would also be helpful when examining future sites. This would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the values that site users place on cultural heritage resource. Understanding public expectations of maintenance and functionality would also be helpful for future studies. There may be different levels of expectations when it comes to government buildings and recreational facilities.

In addition, and perhaps most helpful would be the examination of “bricks and mortar” fundraising versus fundraising for events and educational programs. The outcomes of this study seem to indicate that these programs may be more influential on stakeholders than material authenticity; therefore money spent on events and educational programs rather than on the built environment may be more beneficial to the site’s longevity.

Since the field of historic preservation was established there has been a shift from experts determining the importance of a cultural heritage resource, towards a more inclusive means of determining significance and preserving our resources. This shift represents a need for change in how preservationist advocate for our cultural heritage.

As this study seems to indicate public perception is important – surveys like the one in this study should play a larger role when integrated into assessing values as well as events, and education programs. It is a dramatic change from the current way preservation is thought about, with more work. However this initial investment of time and resources could lead to a greater amount of buildings being saved.

¹ The Free Dictionary. <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/advocacy>

² Jeremy Wells explains Phenomenological authenticity as the “individuals experience of being in and relating to the world”. It is the emotional bond an individual has with a site. Jeremy Wells. "Authenticity in More than One Dimension: Reevaluating a Core Premise of Historic Preservation." *Forum Journal*. 24.3 (2010): 36-40.

³ In a newspaper article, headlined “City Hall Designer, Jack West dies at Age 88”, Bublik discusses the importance of Jack West and the Sarasota School of Architecture in the county of Sarasota. Harold Bublik. “City Hall Designer Jack West Dies”. *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, October 27, 2010.

APPENDIX A
NOKOMIS BEACH PAVLION SURVEY

**Public Perceptions of Beach Pavilion
Sarasota, Florida**

**Interview Questions
Beach Pavilion Stakeholders**

Age: _____ Gender: _____

How many months a year do you live in Sarasota?

(if year round) How long have you lived in
Sarasota? _____

(if seasonal) How long have you been coming to Sarasota? Did you ever live here full time?

What is the highest level of your education?

Does your profession involve building construction or design?

How many times a year do you come to City Hall? _____

First we want to ask you general questions about the site

What do you like most about the site? Why?

What do you like least about the site? Why?

Is the site functional? Why or why not?

Is the site well maintained? What could be improved?

Next, we want to ask you about your views on the significance and socio-cultural values associated with the beach pavilion.

(Cultural/Symbolic) Do you have any special memories of the beach pavilion?

(Social) Do you know of any significant events that have occurred here? (i.e. Events of local significance? Or National Significance?)

Did you participate in those events?

Tell me about those events.

Where do these activities occur?
(i.e. Inside? Outside? Sidewalk?)

(Architectural) Do you see this beach pavilion as architecturally important to Sarasota? The County? The World? Why?

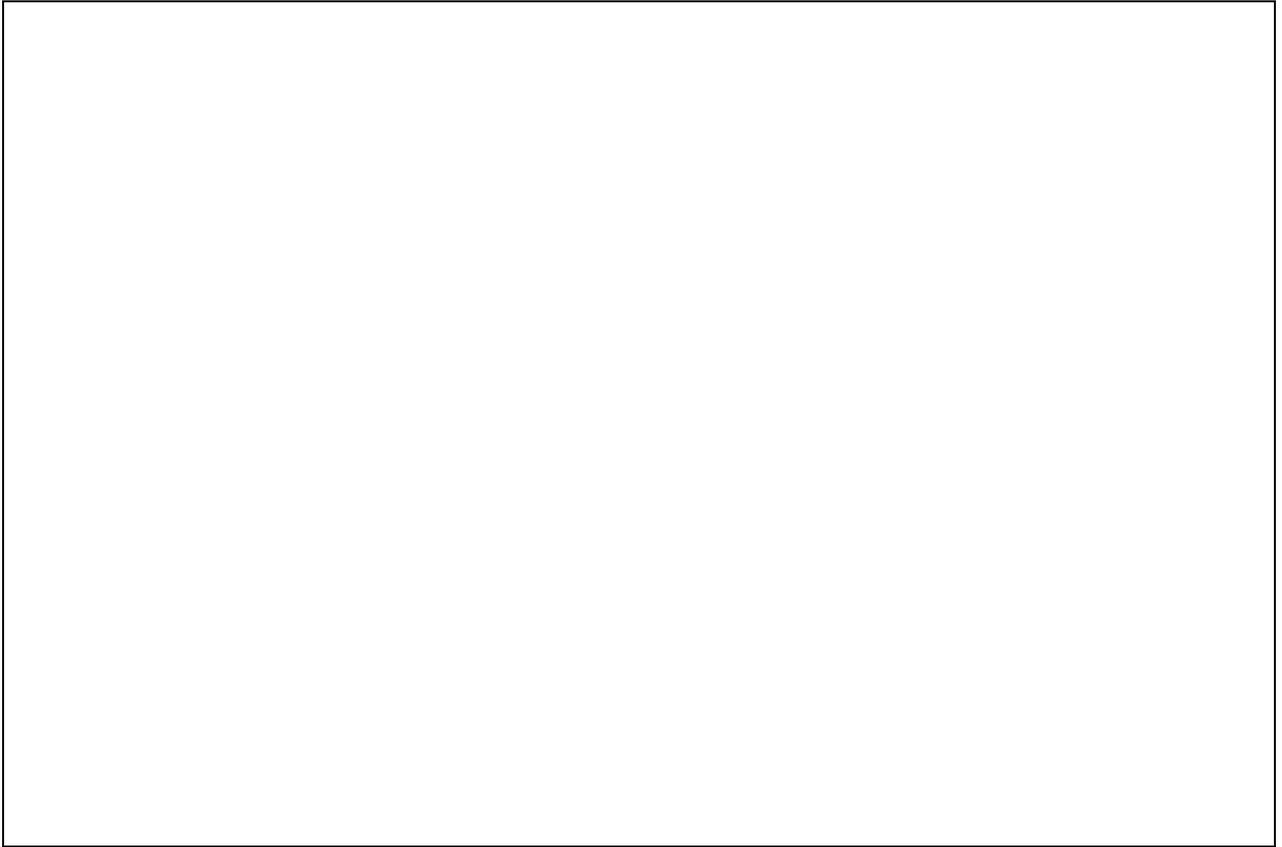
(Aesthetic) Does it represent Sarasota?
(i.e. if you had friends or family coming in from out of town and you drove by would you point out this building and say "that is a typical building here in Sarasota")

(Historical) Are you familiar with the Sarasota School of Architecture? What do you know about the Sarasota School of Architecture? Were you aware that the architect of this building, Jack West, was a part of the Sarasota School of Architecture?

Based on the above questions please rank the importance of each:

Historical_____ Cultural / Symbolic_____ Social_____ Aesthetic_____

Would you like to add any additional comments about the pavilion?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for users to provide additional comments about the pavilion.

APPENDIX B
SARASOTA CITY HALL SURVEY

Public Perceptions of City Hall
Sarasota, Florida

Interview Questions
City Hall Stakeholders

Age: _____ Gender: _____

How many months a year do you live in Sarasota?

(if year round) How long have you lived in
Sarasota? _____

(if seasonal) How long have you been coming to Sarasota? Did you ever live here full
time? _____

What is the highest level of your education?

Does your profession involve building construction or design?

How many times a year do you come to city hall? _____

First we want to ask you general questions about the building

What do you like most about the building? Why?

What do you like least about the building? Why?

Is the building functional? Why or why not?

Is the building well maintained? What could be improved?

Next, we want to ask you about your views on the significance and socio-cultural values associated with City Hall

(Cultural/Symbolic) Do you have any special memories of City Hall?

(Social) Do you know of any significant events that have occurred here? (i.e. Events of local significance? Or National Significance?)

Did you participate in those events?

Tell me about those events.

Where do these activities occur?
(i.e. Inside? Outside? Sidewalk?)

(Architectural) Do you see City Hall as architecturally important to Sarasota? The County? The World? Why?

(Aesthetic) Does it represent Sarasota?
(i.e. if you had friends or family coming in from out of town and you drove by would you point out this building and say "that is a typical building here in Sarasota")

(Historical) Are you familiar with the Sarasota School of Architecture? What do you know about the Sarasota School of Architecture ? Were you aware that the architect of this building, Jack West, was a part of the Sarasota School of Architecture?

Based on the above questions please rank the importance of each:

Historical_____ Cultural / Symbolic_____ Social_____ Aesthetic_____

Would you like to add any additional comments about City Hall?

APPENDIX C
GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF SURVEY RESULTS

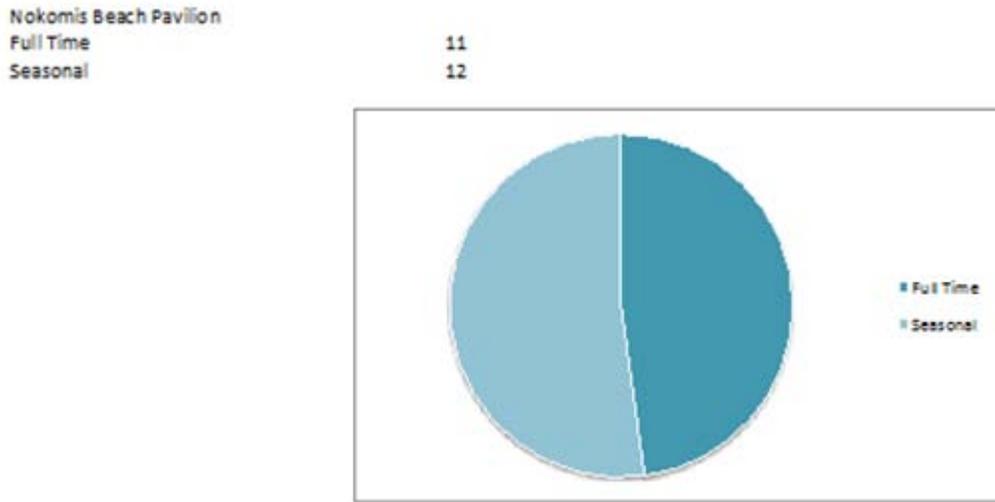


Figure C-1. Nokomis Beach Pavilion Survey – Resident Status

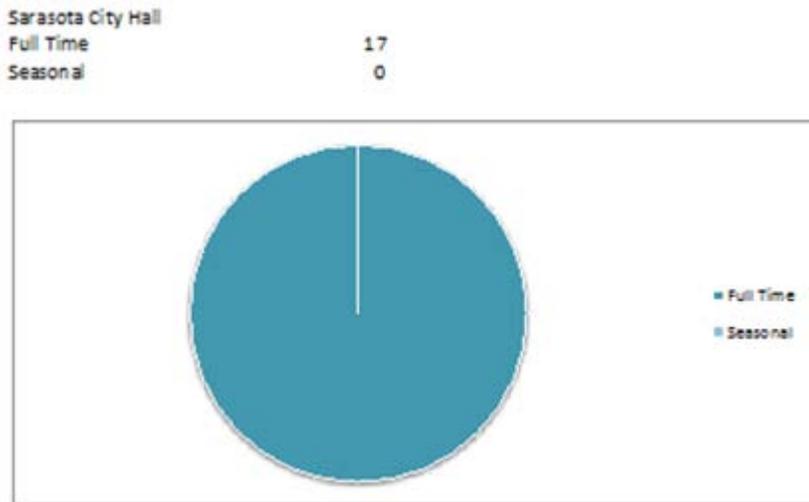


Figure C-2. Sarasota City Hall Survey – Resident Status

Building Design or Construction
Not in Related Field

2 2
21 21

I

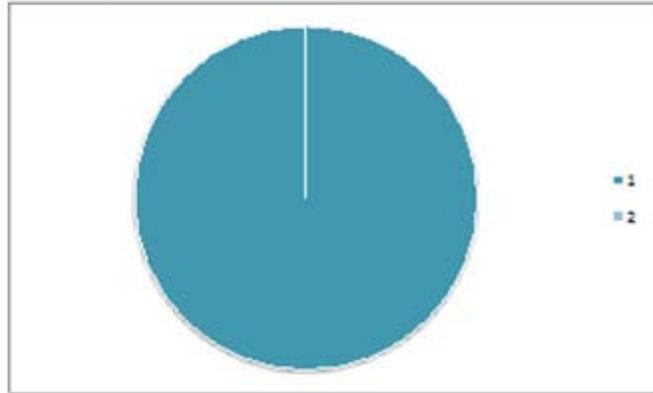


Figure C-3. Nokomis Beach Pavilion Survey – Occupational Status

Building Design or Constructio
Not in Related Field

8 8
9 9

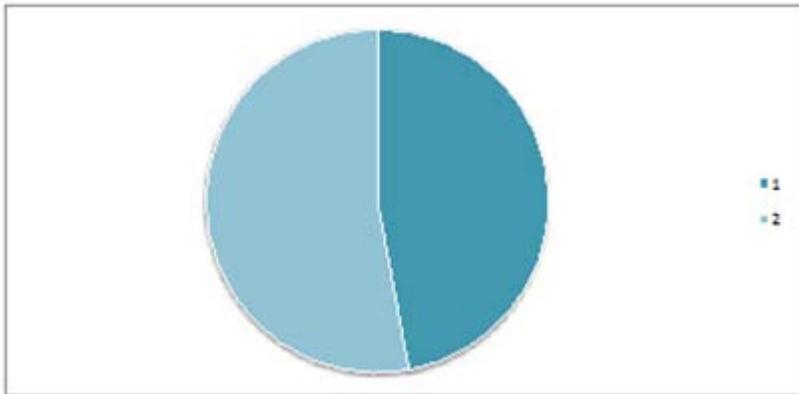


Figure C-4. Sarasota City Hall Survey – Occupational Status

	no	yes
Cultural	20	6
Social	17	9
Architectural	19	7
Aesthetic	17	9
Historical	23	3

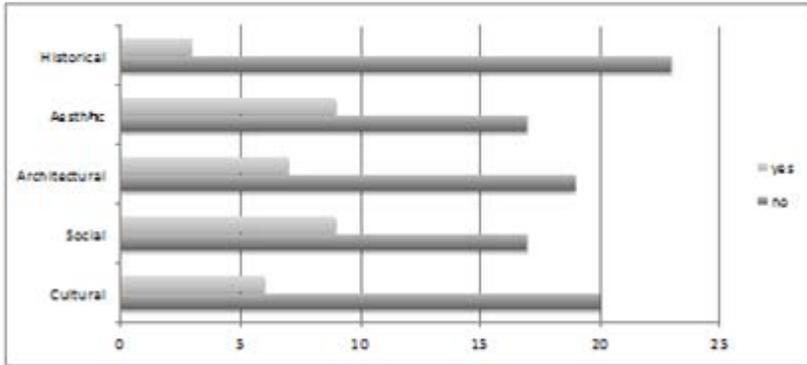


Figure C-5. Nokomis Beach Pavilion Survey – Values Placed on a Site

	no	yes
Cultural	5	13
Social	11	7
Architectural	9	9
Aesthetic	11	7
Historical	10	8

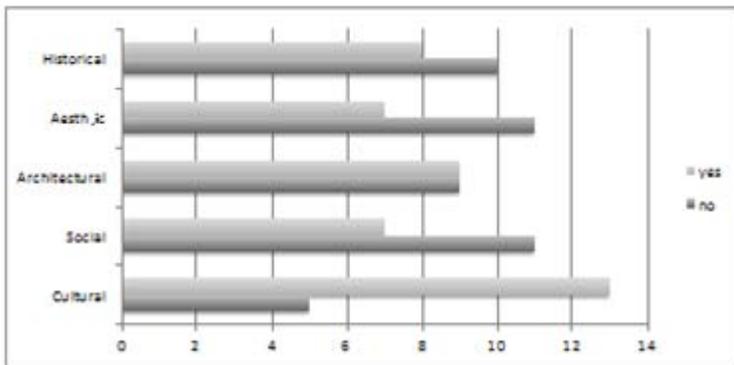


Figure C-6. Sarasota City Hall Survey – Values Placed on a Site

APPENDIX D
MATRIX OF SURVEY RESPONSES AT NOKOMIS

Aoe	Gender	Residential Status	Years a Resident	Years Visiting	Profession	Times on Site	Like	Dislike	Functional	Maintenance	Cultural	Social	Architectural	Aesthetic	Historical
20 female		full time	20		no - student		beach, newness of building	weird looking	yes - bathroom	yes	no	Drum circle - beats, lots of people	yes - modern - would like more "coastal"	the modern side of Sarasota	no
20 female		full time	6 months		no - student	3 times a week	5 bathrooms	not enough ash trays meeting room should be used more and made more public	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no
50 male		full time	1		1 no - maintenance		clean		yes	yes - the meeting room is great for small classes, and the kitchen is fully functional	no	no	yes - "historic place"	yes - looks like this area	no
46 male		full time	7		no - lifeguard	5 days a week	the bathrooms are always clean	nothing		yes	no	no	no	no	no
30 female		full time	2 months		no	a lot - 20 times in the last 3 months	the beach - close bathrooms - life guards - doesn't get too busy ("this is the busiest its been in months")		0	0 yes	no	no	no	yes - "more modern style of Sarasota"	no
20 female		full time	20		no - student yes - cabinet maker - From Boston grew up in a 300 year old home		beach	under construction	yes - bathrooms, parking	yes	no	no	yes - "different"		
40 male		full time	1			often	the beach - the restrooms	missing a refreshment stand - under used, "could be a money maker for the city"	yes - plenty of trash cans	yes	no	drum circle - should have been for weddings	no - not into modern style, but is useful	has read sign	
40 female		full time	5		no		very clean		0 nothing	yes	yes	no	no	aesthetically pleasing - but would not point out	no

Aoe	Gender	Residential Status	Years a Resident	Years Visiting	Profession	Times on Site	Like	Dislike	Functional	Maintained	Cultural	Social	Architectural	Aesthetic	Historical
40 male		seasonal		20 years - but very rarely	no		diagonal tubes - overall attractive	"blockish"	yes	yes		0	yes - "famous architect" (only knew this after reading sign)	yes	Knew about Jack West - did not know he designed the pavilion
60 male		seasonal - 4 months a year		60	no	2-3 times a day when in town	easy access - clean safe	amount of money spent on renovations	yes	yes - did a good job with renovations	as a child came on Sunday picnics - used to jump off bridge	drum circle - town meetings	no - neutral on it - typical	represents more of downtown Sarasota	yes
20 female		full time	3		no		peaceful - few crowds - free parking	not allowed to bring dog	yes	yes	no	drum circle	no	no	no
20 female		seasonal	18 years		no		covered walk way is unique		0 yes	yes	craft show	craft show - bought things	yes	no	no - had just read sign
60 female		seasonal		6	no		Convenient to beach, nice bathrooms, free parking	no shade on beach	yes - very	yes		yes participated	building is boring	no	read sign
40 male		seasonal		4	no		1 accessible to beach - location	parking		0	0 no	no	yes	no	no
40 male		seasonal		5 days	yes		clean - fountain	construction	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no
60 female		seasonal		1 week	no		1 sand and water		yes - easy access, lots of signs	yes	no	no	no	no	no
50 female		seasonal		10 years - 2 weeks a year	no - teacher	everyday when in town	clean - handicap accessible - fountain - shade - not allowed to smoke on beach	nothing	yes - more so now since renovation	yes		Aunt used to bring her, she used to bring her daughter	craft fair - drum circle	yes	yes
50 male		seasonal - in Punta Gorda		6 years	no		convenient - clean - free parking - not crowded	no shade on beach	nothing	yes	yes	craft show - in open area	yes (after reading sign) - likes fountain - "good thing I'm not taller" (standing under walk-way)	no - not fancy enough	
70 female		seasonal		2 hours	no	first time	beach	no	yes	yes - "very much so"		0	0 no	no	no

APPENDIX E
MATRIX OF SURVERY RESPONSES AT SARASOTA CITY HALL

Age	Gender	Residential Status	Years a Resident	Profession	Times on Site	Like	Dislike	Functional	Maintenance	Cultural	Social	Architectural	Aesthetic	Historical	
51	male	full time		51 yes - code enforcement	5 days a week	landscaping		0	yes	no	no	yes - the builder is well known	yes "the stuff they're building looks older"	no	
55	male	full time		48 no	5 a week		0	Age	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	
50	female	full time		yes - property appraiser	2 a month	fountain		0	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	
45	male	full time		yes - deputy building inspector	5 days a week	simplicity	bathrooms not updated	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	
50	female	full time		21 no	5 a week	location	handicap friendly	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	
60	female	full time		yes - code enforcement	5 days a week	architecture - landscaping	HVAC	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
30	male	full time		yes - construction	2 a week	fountain	"nobody's listening" sculpture	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	
60	female	full time		10 no	5 days a week	"cool looking"	HVAC - building had to be waterproofed and it cost too much		best they can do with budget	no	no	no	no	no	
60	male	full time	11 years	yes - landscape architect	5 days a week	was a apart of the SSOA - "foremost building in the collection"	acoustics		best they can do with budget - annex needs renovation	no	no	yes	yes	yes	
40	male	full time	11 years	no	5 days a week	open to the public - civic building		0	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	
40	male	full time		7 yes		12	0	outdated	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes - no to Jack West	
50	male	full time	1 week	no	twice, ever	wayfinding - didn't notice architecture	non-discript building	yes - easy to find, and easy	yes	no	no	no	no	no	
	male	full time	20 years	yes - civil engineer	1-2 a year	open air p'atios	low ceiling in main lobby	yes - city hall meetings - commission meetings	yes - higher roof	work related meetings with city staff	public meetinga setup with city staff	it appears to be an older building with some character, but not significant	no	no	
33	female		been in area for 30 years, went to school in Sarasota	BA - and Real Estate License	2-Jan	open areas	rooms are small and noisy - lacks office and meeting spaces	yes - some rooms are hard to find - maybe more signs	well maintained - landscaping could use work	no	no	no	no	yes - I am aware of this. I worked with Jack West when we renovated nokomis in 2007-8. it was interesting knowing him and his views on architecture	
31	male		7	BA - no	3-Feb	platform sodium	it's different -not like other office buildings - it has a feeling of older Florida style which has gone away. It is pleasant inside - the lobby with the fountain. The commission chambers is well designed. I like the face to face sit down style instead of having a raised entrance hall that is too low	some areas are very dark, and one of the city's operations	to house all of the city's operations	yes, although the ceiling in the main atrium appears to need repairs	no	no	yes - to Sarasoty and the State. It reflectsa style that is unique and no longer used, and it has a lot of character and significance	I have heard a lot of discussion about Sarasota School of Architecture and are familiar with other buildings in town that embody that style, although I am not sure I could precisely define what constitutes the style.	
57	female	year round	25	colleae - no	20	of the building	I love the way it seems to meld into the landscaping. Lots of shade. Easy access points from several areas. Love the color and the style	Once inside, it doesn't	The angle of the seats and floor are horrible. Sound is horrible and the ladies room is crowded	I think they do a beautiful job on maintance	when my daughter was little we started some sort of childrens walking parade from city hall. It was so much fun	I will never forget the commission meeting where the lawn bowlers came out in formal whites	Very important. That style has put Sarasota on the world map for our buildings	Yes, it represents a very Sarasota idea of blending both the inside and outside environment	Very familiar

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Nora Gallagher was born in Boynton Beach, Florida where she was raised in the same house for 19 years. Her grandfather, who has lived in a house built by his father for all of his 89 years, inspired her appreciation for history and historic buildings. When she was young her father would drag her along to the home improvement stores, and when she was old enough to hold a screw driver she was put to work. In 2003 she moved to Gainesville to attend the University of Florida where she studied history and graduated in 2007. In 2009 Nora went back to school to pursue a degree in a field she barely knew even existed, Historic Preservation. She graduated in the Fall of 2011 and hopes to educate people on the importance of our historic cultural resources.