

Community Background Report

Redland

County

Miami-Dade

Boundaries

North: S.W. 216th Street

South: S.W. 296th Street

West: S.W. 217th Avenue

East: US 1 / South Dixie Highway

Community Type

Neighborhood

History

Redland, a South Miami-Dade farming community dates its history to just under 100 years. Redland is the “outback” of cosmopolitan Miami (Jensen & Wiggins 2001). Redland originated in anticipation of Henry Flagler's railroad, which never came. The area was given its name by Frank Kanen, an early homesteader, in retrospect to its fertile soil. The redness of the clay and marl soil came from the oxidation of a small quantity of iron it contained. “Redland” was chosen to distinguish itself from the well-known Californian plural noun, “Redlands”. Eventually the entire area south of Cutler Ridge became known as the “Redland District”. By 1912, there were about 300 homesteads and all land available for “homestead purposes” in the area had been taken up according to the Miami Metropolis who published a special supplement to the Newspaper called the “Redland Edition” (Gehrke, 2000). Al Lindgren’s 1915 invention of the sacrifier (tractor device) allowed farmers to expand their farms and increase their productivity. The sacrifier was eventually use to build roads and trails, where in the past this was a lengthy and tedious process restricting farmer’s access. Roads, which lead from township to township, could now be graded. Many of the today’s existing roads are named after past settlers of the area (Jensen & Wiggins 2001).

Redland planning policy was mainly directed by its agricultural industry and, often, seasonal populations and work. There was little regulation concerning the condition or duration of labor farm workers engaged in, often leading to field accidents and general victimization. In response

to these conditions, several not-for-profit organizations were founded in the area. The Redland's Christian Migrant Association created and fostered opportunities for migrant families and other low-income rural families to maximize the choices in their lives, potentially becoming permanent residents and finding employment in other industries.

Redland became known as the "Winter Salad Bowl", the nation's most prolific producer of winter vegetables. Farmers built cottages and two-story Victorian homes with broad porches, many surviving to become the largest concentration of historic buildings in unincorporated Miami-Dade (Gehrke, 2000). While South Miami-Dade's economy has remained sluggish since Hurricane Andrew's immediate rebuilding boom, there is evidence that it is beginning to rebound. Population has now surpassed pre-Andrew levels and this area is experiencing some of the greatest population increase in the County (Kerr, 2005).

Community Dynamics

According to unofficial boundaries and official census tracts, one can estimate the Redland's population at 12,000 people in the year 2000. The 2000 Census reports the area is 75 percent white, 15 percent African American, and 10 percent 'other' or mix race, but these are not official numbers (Kerr, 2005). Redland's population is greatly composed of single-family homes and the area has a low per capita income, \$21,047, compared with Miami-Dade County's \$26,780 per capita. The education level is also lower than the County's, with 45 percent of the population having no schooling, more specifically 33 percent of the area's population has attained a High School diploma, and only 15 of that same 33 percent went on and acquired college education. Redland's population is considered a commuter community with 45 percent of its workforce traveling out of the Redland to work and more than half of the working population drives 30 minutes or more (US Census, 2000).

Though the Redland community is quickly growing in population and density, it is not currently incorporated. Residents are divided over zoning and development issues, some encouraging the rezoning of agricultural land to residential and believing the Redland is the 'last frontier' for development in Miami-Dade (Cara, 2002). Currently parts of the community lay beyond the County's Urban Development Boundary, which limits growth to one residence for every five acres.

The Redland's Farmers Association and Redland's Citizens Association argue against progressive plans encouraging residential development (Baum, 2006). Spacious neighborhoods free of congested traffic are currently the rule rather than the exception. Area industry is embracing non-traditional agriculture, some farmers growing tropical fruit and others investing in potted plants. Redland planners look toward "agri-tourist" activity in the near future which ranges from embracing bikeways to plans for an indoor aquarium and village shops on the

former site of the Homestead Air Force Base (HAFB). Also in stages of development is a revitalization of the HAFB as a commercial airport.

Sources

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