



LETTER TO THE COMMISSION

LTC No: 26-025

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager *RW*

DATE: January 29, 2026

SUBJECT: North Fork Elementary School – Site History and Archaeological Review

The purpose of this Letter to the Commission (LTC) is to provide the City Commission with information on the site history and archaeological review of North Fork Elementary School (the site), located at 101 NW 15 Avenue. Following a discussion at the January 6, 2026, City Commission Conference Meeting concerning the Broward County Schools “Redefining our Schools” Initiative (CAM #26-0082), the Commission requested that staff research and provide information on the historical nature or significance of the site. Staff subsequently reviewed the site’s history and potential for archeological significance. On January 21, 2026, the Broward County School Board decided to close the North Fork Elementary School, noting that there were four (4) proposals with one (1) pending for potential redevelopment of the site.

A consideration for the potential acquisition and the redevelopment of the site is the archaeological requirements that will apply to this location. The property is located in the North Fork New River Archaeological Zone, which contains portions of the Annie Tommie Camp and a Seminole Burial Ground. Annie Jumper Tommie, a respected Seminole matriarch, along with her family, established a Panther clan camp around 1902 near the north fork of the New River, east of today’s Broward Boulevard bridge. Known as Annie Tommie’s Camp, it was the final enduring Seminole settlement within Fort Lauderdale and became a notable tourist destination, especially renowned for Annie’s innovation in crafting and selling Seminole Indian dolls, which later became a significant industry for the tribe. The Seminole Burial Ground was utilized for Seminole burials during the same time period as the Annie Tommie Camp.

Matt DeFelice, President of Coastal Archaeology and History Research, Inc, the City’s archaeology consultant, provided a desktop archaeology review of the property including the examination of Florida Master Site File (FMSF) forms on file with the Florida Division of Historical Resources that document this site as well as consideration of any prior development that has occurred on the site. This review resulted in a summary of potential

archaeological findings, as well as requirements related to archaeology testing and/or monitoring with future redevelopment of the parcel. The archeology review is provided as an attachment to this LTC.

In summary, the property is likely to contain elements of the Annie Tommie Camp and possibly portions of the Seminole Burial Ground. While there have been historical reports of a burial discovered in adjacent properties, there has not been a systematic archaeological investigation to locate a specific site. Redevelopment of the property is likely to have an adverse effect on these resources, and prior to any ground disturbances an intensive archaeological survey (Phase 1b-Phase II) should be completed. The results of the archaeological survey should determine whether additional archaeological work is recommended or required.



Photo of the Annie Tommie Seminole Camp, Source: Legendary Locals of Fort Lauderdale

The purpose of a Phase 1b survey is to determine the presence or absence of archaeological deposits within the parcel. The survey shall be conducted by a professional archaeologist who meets the United States Secretary of the Interior Professional Standards (36 CFR Part 61) and the work should conform to Chapter 267, Florida Statutes, Module 3: Guidelines and Chapter 1A-42 Florida Administrative Code.

A Phase II archaeological survey would be performed to determine the boundaries, integrity, and significance of archaeological deposits within the parcel. The survey shall be conducted by a professional archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior Professional Standards (36 CFR Part 61) and the work should conform to Chapter 267, Florida Statutes, Module 3: Guidelines and Chapter 1A-42 Florida Administrative Code.

Descriptions of archaeological requirements are posted on the City's Website:

<http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/government/departments-a-h/development-services/urban-design-and-planning/historic-preservation/archaeologically-significant-zones>

The location of the site within an archaeologically significant zone does not prevent or preclude alteration, demolition, or new development from occurring on the site so long as appropriate archaeological testing and/or monitoring is provided. However, if any

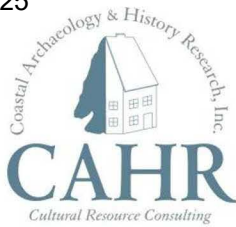
unmarked human remains are encountered during development activity, then excavation in the vicinity of the remains shall halt immediately, and the City's historic preservation staff shall implement Chapter 872.05 Florida Statutes as it pertains to the discovery of unmarked human remains. If the age of the remains is determined to be more than seventy-five (75) years old, the State of Florida Archaeologist will conduct an investigation to determine next steps which may include coordination with the Seminole Tribe to reinter the remains on site. If the age of the remains is determined to be less than seventy-five (75) years old, the local medical examiner will intervene.

If you have any questions, contact Trisha Logan, AICP, Principal Urban Planner, at 954-828-7101 or via email at TLogan@fortlauderdale.gov.

Attachment:

1. Archaeology Review - North Fork Elementary School - 101 NW 15 Avenue

c: Shari McCartney, City Attorney
David R. Soloman, City Clerk
Patrick Reilly, City Auditor
City Manager's Office
Department Directors



Coastal Archaeology & History Research, Inc.

Cultural Resource Consultants

Friday, January 16, 2026

Trisha Logan, AICP
Principal Urban Planner and Historic Preservation Board Liaison
City of Ft. Lauderdale Urban Design & Planning Division
Development Services Department
700 NW 19th Ave
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33311
t: 954-828-7107
e: tlogan@fortlauderdale.gov

Re: Archaeological Resource Review
Address: 101 NW 15th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33311
Parcel(s): 504204000120

Trisha,

In capacity as archaeological consultant to the City of Fort Lauderdale I have reviewed the referenced application in accordance with Chapters 267, *Florida Statutes* and Section 47-25.5P, *Fort Lauderdale U.L.D.R* for possible effects to historic properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the *National Register of Historic Places* (NRHP) and/or designated, or eligible for designation, as City historical landmarks or sites, or otherwise of historical, architectural or archaeological value.

The subject property concerns ± 11 acres (North Fork Elementary School) at 101 NW 15th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Florida (Folio number 504204000120) and located east of the North Fork New River and north of West Broward Boulevard (BCPA 2025). The property is within the North Fork New River Archaeological Zone, an area that has demonstrated potential to contain intact archaeological deposits. The property contains elements of previously recorded Florida Master Site File archaeological site 8BD2915 / Annie Tommie Camp (Seminole) and is in close proximity (< 300 feet) to Florida Master Site File archaeological site 8BD2906 / Seminole Burial Ground (FMSF 2025). The structure on the property is not-yet fifty-years old (BCP 2025).

Site 8BD2915 / Annie Tommie Camp (Seminole) was occupied during the turn-of-the-century (circa 1900) and is historically documented however more recent (1990s) limited archaeological testing on the property did not produce any artifactual evidence, however this testing was very limited in scope. Pre-development archaeological survey and testing as well as archaeological monitoring of ground disturbance within the property is recommended. (FMSF 2025)

Site 8BD2906 / Seminole Burial Ground was utilized for Seminole burials prior to the turn-of-the-century and shortly after thought the full duration of utilization is not known. The site is historically known and there are historical reports of burials being discovered in adjacent yards and roadways during the early-mid 20th century. There has been no systematic archaeological investigation to locate the site as it is believed to be impacted by mid-century and modern development. Based on historical records and the FMSF, it is not anticipated that the site is located within the subject property, but the potential does exist for discovery. Pre-development archaeological survey and testing as well as archaeological monitoring of ground disturbances is recommended (FMSF 2025).

In my capacity as the City's archaeological consultant, based on the available information and in consideration of this information, it is my determination that the property is likely to contain site 8BD2915 / Annie Tommie Camp and possibly portions of site 8BD2906 / Seminole Burial Ground. Future development of the property is likely to have an adverse effect on these resources and prior to any ground disturbances an intensive archaeological survey (Phase 1b-Phase II) should be completed. The results of that survey should inform whether additional archaeological work is recommended or required.

If any archaeological deposits or unmarked human remains encountered during development activity, then excavation in the vicinity of the find shall halt immediately and the owner/agent shall alert the City's historic preservation staff to coordinate the discovery and take measures to implement Chapter 872.05 Florida Statutes as it pertains to the discovery of unmarked human remains

Please contact me if you have any questions about the information or recommendations made in this letter.

Regards,



Matthew DeFelice, M.A.
President / Archaeologist, CAHR, Inc.

cc: Lina Allakhverdieva, Urban Planner II (vasilyaa@fortlauderdale.gov)

REF:

- 1949 Aerial Photographs of Broward County, (1949), Map and Imagery Library, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida. (26 Feb 2024). [<https://ufdc.ufl.edu/collections/aerials>] (26 Feb 2024).
- 1958 Aerial Photographs of Broward County, (1958), Map and Imagery Library, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida. [<https://ufdc.ufl.edu/collections/aerials>] (26 Feb 2024).
- 2025 Broward County Property Appraiser. [bcpa.net] (6 May 2024).
- 2025 Florida Master Site File, Florida Dept. of State, Division of Historical Resources, Tallahassee, Fl.