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Silver Palm

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Community Background Report

Silver Palm

County

Miami-Dade

Boundaries

North: Hainlin Mill Drive (SW 216th Street)

East: US1

South: Coconut Plum Drive (SW 248th Street)

West: Krome Ave (SW 177th Ave)

Community Type

Suburban/rural Neighborhood

History

Silver Palm is reputed to be one of the first settlements south of Cutler Ridge in Miami-Dade County. Silver Palm was a crossroads community built in the 1900s at SW 157th Avenue and 232nd Street. Will Anderson came from Indiana in the early days of the twentieth century to join his friend and hunting companion Charles Gossman, the first settler in the area. Silver Palm was known for its extensive pinelands and plentiful game.

In 1911 Anderson established the William Anderson General Merchandise Store which sold a myriad of items to residents and businesses. With living quarters on the second floor, Anderson's Corner was strategically located across from the Silver Palm School at the intersection of two well-built roads -- much easier to reach than the town of Cutler, some 15 miles away.

After serving as a general store until the 1930s, it was converted into apartments. Finally condemned in 1975, a reprieve was granted for rehabilitation. Listed on the National Registry of Historic Places in 1977, the site became a local historic site in October 1981. The rehabilitation was completed in 1985.

The SW 157th Avenue and 232nd Street intersection is home to several simple wood structures in a style known as "frame vernacular." The structures include an old country store known as

Anderson's Corner Country Inn (b. 1912), the Silver Palm Schoolhouse (1904), and the Redland District Lion's Club (1934). Another structure, the Betty Clark homestead was demolished in 1986 before historic preservation was enacted, and the Kelly store was demolished in 1992 after hurricane Andrew (1992). The Schoolhouse was added to the U.S. National Register of Historic Places in July 1987.

The Silver Palm community was named after the silver palm tree which grows in the area and the name survives in Silver Palm Drive (SW 232nd Street), a major road stretching in an east-west direction and the Silver Palm Schoolhouse.

Community Dynamics

Silver Palm is a suburban/rural area in unincorporated Miami-Dade County with low population density. There are approximately 5,600 residents and under 2,000 housing units. The housing units are a combination of low- and middle-income residences and upper scale mansion-style houses. The largest residential community in the Silver Palm area is *Estate Mansions* located at SW 216th Street and 132nd Avenue. *Estate Mansions* has single family homes on half-acre lots. The other large residential community is the Silver Palm Mobile Home Park located at Silver Palm Drive and SW 173rd Avenue. Hurricane Andrew did extensive damage to the homes in the park but all 112 lots were reconstructed.

Silver Palm has several county parks within its bounds. Castellow Hammock is a 112-acre park and preserve that contains a mature tropical hardwood forest with a half-mile self-guided nature trail. The park was named in honor of James S. Castellow, a citrus farmer who homesteaded the property in the early 1900s. In 1974, the park became one of the first environmental education centers in Miami-Dade County and is popular with birders, butterfly watchers, and botanists.

Another park is Miami South BMX at Pine Ridge Park, a bike clay track with steep inclines and banked turns. Just on the outskirts of the Silver Palm neighborhood is *Monkey Jungle*, a 30-acre wildlife park established in 1933 for the exhibition and study of endangered monkeys in semi-natural habitats.

Krome Avenue (SW 177th Avenue) is the main north-south traffic artery in the western part of the county and serves as the western boundary of the community. The other major thoroughfare is US-1 which also flows in a north-south direction and is the eastern boundary of the community.

Business Landscape:

The businesses in the area (zip code 33170) are predominantly in the wholesale and retail trade, construction, and healthcare and social assistance sectors. There are a number of establishments in the agriculture sector as well. One of them is Silver Palm Nursery which produces over one hundred varieties of plants and palms. The nursery was established in 1995 on one acre, and has grown to ninety acres in Miami-Dade County. Other businesses include Miami Tropical Bonsai, which offers bonsai trees from around the world.

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