A large, stylized graphic in the background features a yellow sun with rays, a green leaf, and a light blue curved shape, all rendered in a soft, semi-transparent style.

Placida Bunkhouse

November 12, 2024



CHARLOTTE COUNTY
FLORIDA

History of Placida Bunkhouse

The community of Placida had its roots as a fishing camp in the 1870s. A town grew up around it when the American Agricultural Chemical Company built the Charlotte Harbor and Northern Railroad to transport phosphate from its mining interests in the Peace River basin to the deep-water harbor of Boca Grand Island. The Placida Bunk House was constructed to serve the Charlotte Harbor & Northern Railroad as housing for the section workers and was typical of the frame vernacular structures of this period.

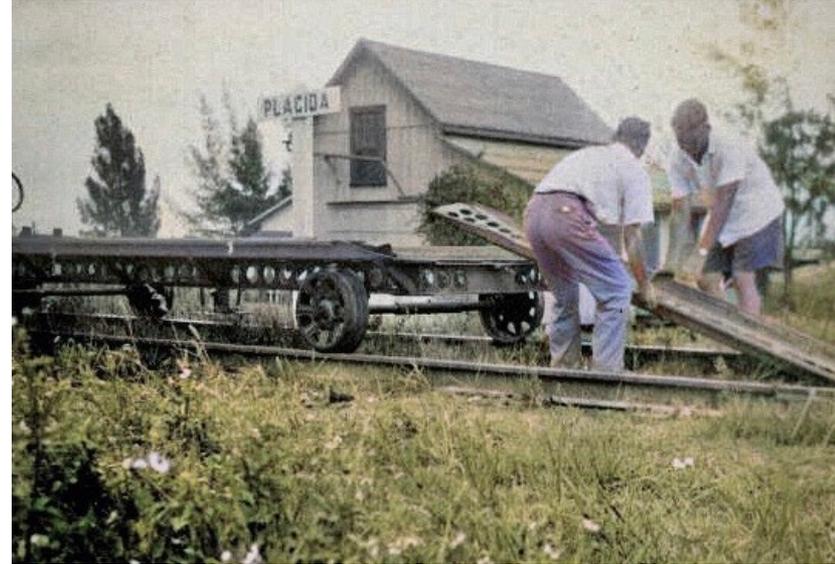
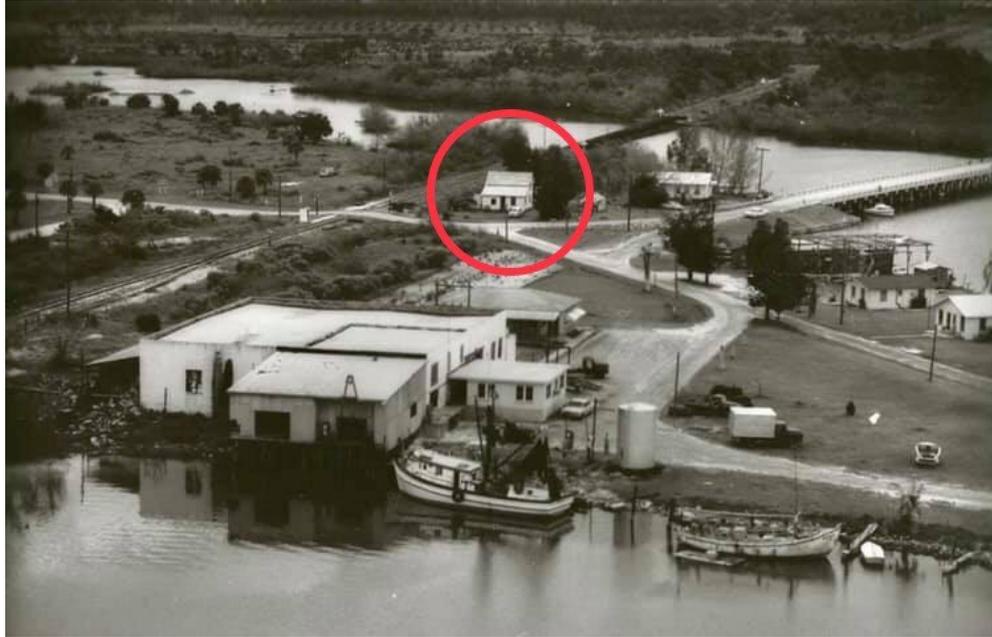
The building's character defining features include the rectangular plan, a steeply sloped gable roof, 6 over 6 double hung windows, five panel wood doors and board and batten siding. The structure was constructed from locally available materials, such as the highly decay-resistant yellow heart pine.

History of Placida Bunkhouse

By the 1920s, the structure was occupied by the Futch family, and their memories have been documented in several interviews with family members that were published in the local newspaper in the mid-1990s. The house was also used as a “Meeting House” for prayer services, beginning about 1938 and as a post office. The upper loft area became a school for children.

The Goff family occupied the house from the late 1930s to the 1950s, and we are fortunate to have the memories of those family members to document the changes made to the house during this period. In the 1950s, the house passed to John Bass and it was during this period that the house was updated with a kitchen and a bathroom in an addition to the building, It was during this period that the interior walls were covered with gypsum board.

History of Placida Bunkhouse



County purchase

Charlotte County acquired the building in 2005, and it was relocated to the new site in the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park in 2007.

Placida bunkhouse was acquired for the easement to expand the bridge at Placida, that included the ability for the County to take possession of the bunkhouse.

In the easement agreement, it says:

- *Historic Building: The Parties acknowledge that an abandoned railroad bunkhouse building is located on Parcel "E" which building may be eligible for historic preservation designation. Cloutier agrees that for a period of one (1) year following the date of closing this transaction he will allow any person(s) to remove and relocate the railroad bunkhouse building at their sole cost and expense for the **purpose of preserving the building.***





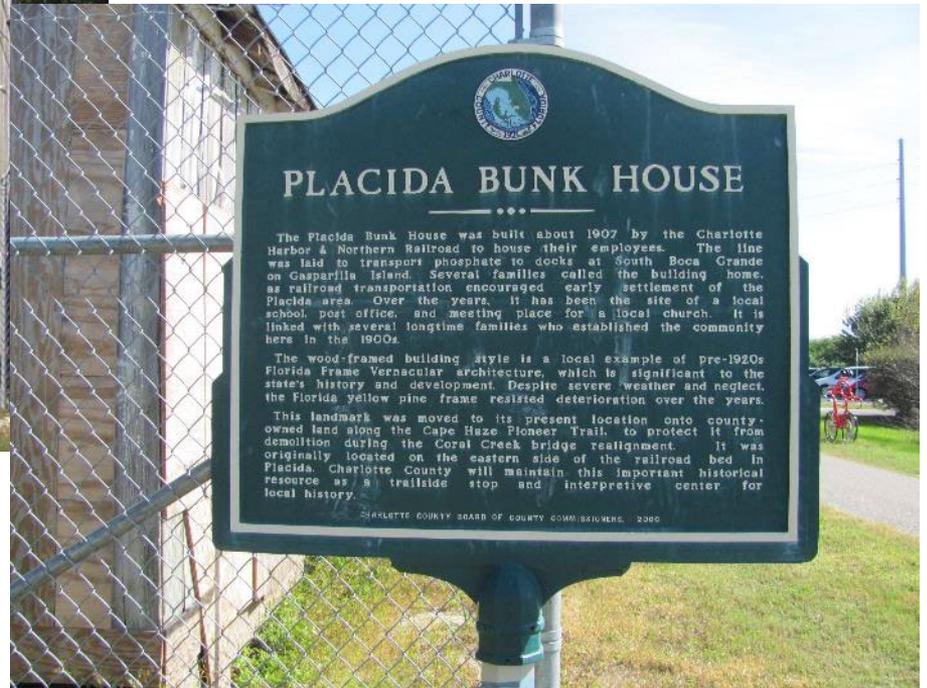
County preservation efforts

The County stabilized it for the initial moves in 2005 and 2007

Additional stabilization was funded and completed in the years 2011-2013 including:

- Interior structural supports
- Flooring stabilization
- Exterior sheathing
- Roofing
- Window securing
- Security fencing

Since that date the County has continued to monitor the building's status, execute repairs where needed and perform general maintenance on the structure such as lawn maintenance and pest control.



PLACIDA BUNK HOUSE

The Placida Bunk House was built about 1907 by the Charlotte Harbor & Northern Railroad to house their employees. The line was laid to transport phosphate to docks at South Boca Grande on Gasparilla Island. Several families called the building home, as railroad transportation encouraged early settlement of the Placida area. Over the years, it has been the site of a local school, post office, and meeting place for a local church. It is linked with several longtime families who established the community here in the 1900s.

The wood-framed building style is a local example of pre-1920s Florida Frame Vernacular architecture, which is significant to the state's history and development. Despite severe weather and neglect, the Florida yellow pine frame resisted deterioration over the years.

This landmark was moved to its present location onto county-owned land along the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail to protect it from demolition during the Coral Creek bridge realignment. It was originally located on the eastern side of the railroad bed in Placida. Charlotte County will maintain this important historical resource as a trailside stop and interpretive center for local history.

CHARLOTTE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, 2000

County preservation efforts

Since the acquisition of the building staff have made repeated efforts to obtain funding for its potential restoration from the County (CIP, Sales Tax), grants, and private donors with no success

- The Historical Advisory Committee spearheaded a fundraising campaign which only managed to raise \$2,000 and was ended due to lack of public interest

Staff determined that the best way forward was to have a structural survey performed to determine if:

- a) Is restoration even viable
- b) If so, whether the extent of restoration needed would seriously undermine the historical integrity of the structure
- c) Determine a ROM for additional preservation needs and restoration options



2024 Preservation Plan

County hired a consultant to perform the following tasks:

Task 1 – Existing conditions verification

Task 2 – Review and update preservation plan report; historical and existing conditions sections

Task 3 – Review and update preservation plan report; preservation recommendations

Task 4 – Construction documents for repair

Task 5 – Probable cost of renovation

2024 Preservation Plan

Preservation *is defined as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property*

- Protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction
- New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, limited and sensitive upgrading of electrical, systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.

Restoration *is defined as the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period*

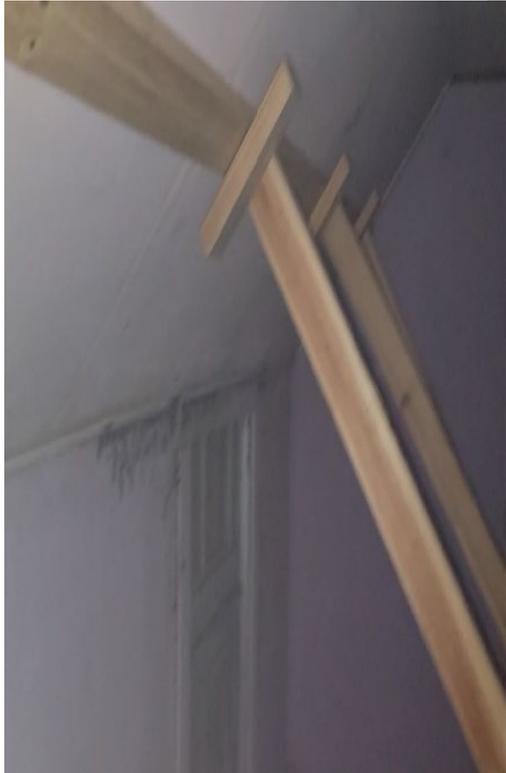
- The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.

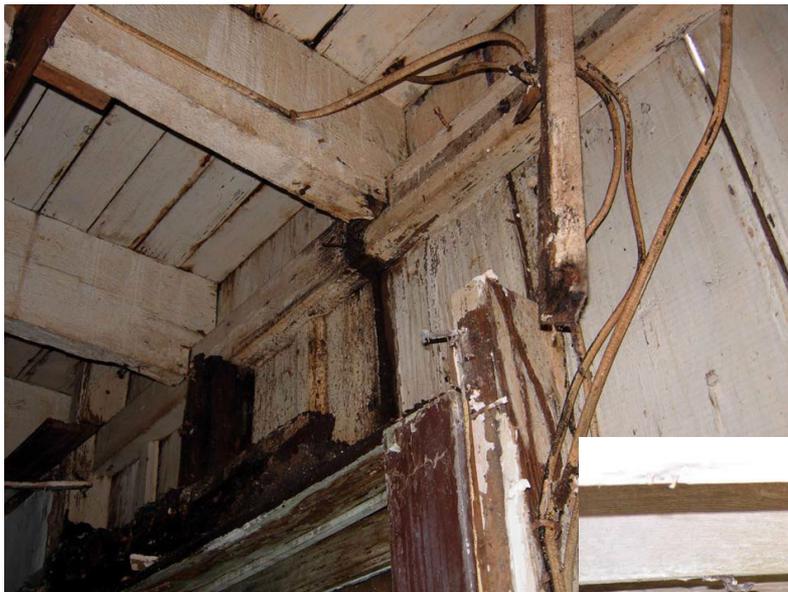
2024 Preservation Plan

- **Existing conditions**
- **Site** - The site is well maintained, and the building has been secured
- **Roof** - The roof covering, related flashings and aluminum drip edges have aged as anticipated since their installation are in fair condition
 - **Rafters** - Damaged rafter ends have been replaced in the 2012 stabilization project
 - **Deck** - The 2012 stabilization project addressed this area by replacing damaged areas of the original deck
 - **Cladding** - Some of the original beveled battens have been replaced with various sizes and types of batts
- **Interior** - The interior of the first floor of the structure is in very poor condition and is full of debris. The second floor, while free of most debris, has several shoring walls erected for roof support
- **Windows** - The windows are overall in poor condition and will need extensive restoration/ reconstruction to be re-used in any future endeavor
- **Exterior doors** - The three doors can potentially be salvaged and reused









2024 Preservation Plan

The first phase of the proposed treatment is a **Preservation** approach that is based on physical evidence still extant in the building.

The second phase of the project will be a **Restoration** to an earlier period in the building's history, to focus on the resource's primary significance as a building constructed to house railroad workers.

2024 Preservation Plan

Phase 1: Ongoing preservation and stabilization work:

- Monitor conditions of building & maintain site
- Remove invasive species
- Remove the stuff stored inside – save what is historic
- Maintain security of the site (fences, boarding of windows)
- Maintain weather-tight integrity of structure
- Monitor roof – repair/replace as needed
- Monitor & maintain plywood coverings on widows & doors (for security)
- Treat wood to reduce deterioration
- Shore or brace if/when needed

2024 Preservation Plan

Restoration: Option 1 Restore exterior of the building to its original material and finish as it stands today. No further exterior demolition to be completed

- Recreate/Replace with similar, windows and exterior doors of the two-story bunk house.
- Remove interior wall and ceiling finishes (except for wood beadboard on stair wall, building structural framing will be exposed on interior
- Remove interior light fixtures
- Create “shadowbox” display areas at each window for displaying artifacts and photos. Displays to be curated by Historical Society
- Provide convenience outlets in discrete locations for future lighting for interpretive displays
- Provide motion activated or push button audio accompaniment to the displays

2024 Preservation Plan

Restoration: Option 2 Restore exterior of the building as it stands today and portion of 1st floor interior to its original material and finish. No further exterior demolition to be completed

- Recreate/Replace with similar, windows and exterior doors of the two-story bunk house.
- Restore Northeast room adjacent to kitchen. Other rooms contain shoring walls and cannot be restored easily
- Restore/replace interior light fixtures in Northeast room
- Restored interior space viewable through the new windows from the interpretive path
- Provide convenience outlets in discrete locations for future lighting for interpretive displays
- Provide motion activated or push-button audio accompaniment to the displays at each window
- Shadowbox displays to remain at 5 other locations

2024 Preservation Plan

Both Restoration Options 1 & 2 will include the following:

- Roof replacement with appropriate materials to maintain the historic integrity of the building, including restoration of wood roof deck and structural roof framing.
- Structural repairs to wood balloon framed wall construction and completion of structural load path connections through the wood framing members
- Restoration of the weather-tight integrity of the building's materials, treatment of wood components
- New accessible interpretive walking path around exterior of bunk house to shadow box locations
- Post mounted informational plaques denoting bunkhouse history mounted along the interpretive path. Plaques to be curated by Historical Society
- Remove all interior debris and decaying materials.
- Re-work existing shoring as determined by structural

Cost estimates

<u>Restoration Rough Order of Magnitude</u>	<u>Low ROM</u>	<u>High ROM</u>
Stabilization and Restoration	\$149,350	\$208,800
Option 1 – Historical Preservation and Display Option 1	\$99,325	\$126,150
Option 2 – Historical Preservation and Display Option 2	\$24,396	\$34,445

Questions

