



**PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

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SR-2 – ADVISORY STAFF REPORT (09-04-2026)

This advisory report, prepared by staff, represents the opinion and advice of professional staff, and does not represent nor direct the separate review and decision of the Historic District Commission. This report serves as an addendum to SR-1, an objective staff summary of the proposal and property.

ADDRESS: 1501 SEMINOLE

MEETING DATE: 09-09-2026

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2026-00435

ADVISORY STAFF REPORT PREPARED BY: G. LANDSBERG

STAFF OBJECTIONS TO APPROVAL:

This first section describes itemized conclusions/concerns, which, in staff's professional opinion, would prevent the issue of an unconditional Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). "None" means staff has no objections and believes a COA is warranted, with no conditions. The Historic District Commission is not required to accept staff opinions or recommendations.

- Asphalt is not a historically compatible pavement material in the Indian Village Historic District.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

This second section expands on the reasoning and analysis leading to staff's conclusions given in the first section above. The Historic District Commission is not required to accept staff opinions or recommendations.

- Though examples of asphalt paving currently exist in the historic district, it is less common on private property. Typical present day uses of asphalt are for public or infrastructural spaces including the streets, parking lots/athletic courts at churches/schools, and jogging/biking paths in Mollicone Park. All of these installations were common and accepted before historic designation. There are some partial and full asphalt driveways that may (or may not) predate the historic district's establishment in 1970. There may be others installed in violation. However, none of these asphalt uses reflect conditions in the 1895-1930 Period of Significance, based on staff's research. Though asphalt (i.e., tarmac or "blacktop") began to be used for American roads in the 1920s due to its smoothness and lack of dust in the context of automobile use, its historic use did not extend into this residential neighborhood, where the roads were originally paved with brick/stone and sidewalks were either brick, gravel, or concrete.
- The Elements of Design for Indian Village are useful for identifying characteristic historic features. Element 13, *Relationship of significant landscape features and surface treatment*, is worth quoting in its entirety (staff emphasis added):

The typical treatment of individual properties is a flat front lawn area in grass turf, often subdivided by a walk leading to the front entrance, and sometimes with a walk

at the side leading to the rear. **Materials for such walks are concrete, brick, or stone, or combinations of those materials.** Some front yards have rectangular raised earthwork terraces upon which the house stands. These unpaved terraces have sloping embankments or brick and/or stone retaining walls at the change of grade. Foundation plantings, often of a deciduous character, characteristic of the period 1895 to 1930, are present virtually without exception. Hedges between properties, and ornamental front yard fences or hedges are not uncommon. The American elm is virtually extinct in the district, though once the dominant tree. Replacement trees should be characteristic of the area and period, though only a disease-resistant American elm would be a practical choice. Plantings of new trees should be directed toward the restoration of the former straight-line rows of large trees on the front yards and tree lawns. Straight side driveways leading from the street to rear garages exist, but alley-facing garages are common, particularly in the southern portion of the district. Where alley-facing garages are common, the lack of driveways lends a unity to the succession of front lawns. **Driveway materials include concrete, brick and gravel.** Side lots are not uncommon in the district, and a number of these form a part of the original site plan for the residence. Such side lots are usually landscaped, often fenced at or near the setback line, and very occasionally contain paved areas such as a tennis court. The street right-of-way of 80 feet combined with a pavement width of between 24 and 29 feet creates wide tree lawns or berm areas, which adds to the generous ambience of the urban landscape of the district. **Street pavements are now asphalt; cut stone curbs still exist in portions of the district.** Alleys are frequently paved with brick, particularly where alley-facing garages are common. Fencing ranges widely in type; fencing in public view was generally designed to complement the style, design material, and date of the residence.

- Per the above, and given that the Indian Village Elements of Design state that “Driveway materials include concrete, brick and gravel,” and note that street pavements are “now” asphalt (implying that they were *not* historically) staff did not find that an asphalt driveway, even at the rear yard, is characteristic of the significant area and period, and as such declined to issue an administrative approval within staff authority.
- However, the Commission is not bound by staff recommendation, and may instead consider the limited impact of the proposed installation at the well-hidden rear of 1501 Seminole, and the relatively low risk that it will serve as a new precedent. Certainly more modern paving materials have been accepted for rear yard patio installations. Staff is primarily concerned about a preponderance of asphalt/blacktop installations in more visible areas, as such a trend would, in our opinion, degrade the high-quality appearance of the historic landscape.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

This third and final section takes staff’s itemized “objections” identified in the first section, and presents them in the form of “conditions” in support of a proposed approval recommendation or “reasons” in support of a proposed denial recommendation, in the form required by Section 21-2-78 of the City Code. The Historic District Commission is not required to accept staff opinions or recommendations.

Section 21-2-78, Determinations of Historic District Commission

Recommendation 1 of 1, Denial

Staff recommends that the proposed work will be inappropriate according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Indian Village Historic District's Elements of Design, specifically, Standard #

9.) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

And Element of Design 13.

For the following reason:

- Asphalt is not a historically compatible pavement material in the Indian Village Historic District.