



Preservation. Education. Advocacy.
Founded 1972

Dade Heritage Trust's Preservation of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) Initiative

The NOAH initiative continues to grow and serve Miamians in need of healthy, affordable housing

In 2020, through a partnership with Miami-Dade County, Dade Heritage Trust purchased a 4-unit 1938 multi-family Art Deco building in Little Havana to preserve the building and preserve the naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) it offered.

NOAH is defined as housing that is voluntarily affordable, meaning the landlord receives no vouchers or subsidies, mainly due to the sub-standard living conditions the buildings provide. When DHT purchased the Art Deco building at 1401 SW 5th Street, inspections revealed termites, roaches, leaky plumbing, leaky windows and non-functioning appliances. This all changed with a complete rehab including new roof, new impact windows, new kitchens, new baths, new flooring, new AC and restoration of Art Deco details. With lush native landscaping around the property, the building is a shining example of a beautiful restoration project that provides lovely and healthy affordable housing.

The partnership with Miami-Dade County requires Dade Heritage Trust to purchase, rehabilitate, and historically designate a multi-family residential building that is in need of restoration and maintain the levels of affordability as required under housing guidelines.

Seeing the success and the positive impacts of the SW 5th Street project, Miami-Dade County has granted DHT additional funding over the last three years to continue the preservation of NOAH initiative.

In December 2022, DHT closed on an 8-unit property at 1269 NW 5th Street. This 2-story Mediterranean Revival central-hallway apartment building is a classic Little Havana property. Constructed in 1928, it was called the Totowa Apartments and featured a garage building for the tenants that decades ago was converted into four living units. The previous owners removed and plastered over original windows and removed some of the lovely architectural detailing that adorned the front entrance. In addition, the City

of Miami had placed unsafe structure violations on the property for non-permitted work by the previous owner and failure to complete the required 40-year building certification. Again, inspections uncovered termites, roaches, and some plumbing and structural issues. DHT's team of architects, engineers, and contractors is working diligently to ensure that those violations are cured and restoration is set to begin this year. The large corner lot that is included in this property will be used to create a tiny urban forest of native plants, offering shade and habitat for birds and butterflies in an area largely devoid of trees.

Not letting any construction dust settle, DHT purchased an additional property to preserve and restore—another Art Deco gem we refer to as The Keyhole Building at 523 SW 7th Avenue. This 6-unit property has a very distinctive design and was once featured on the cover of Dr. Paul George's Little Havana Walking Tour Guide. Plans for The Keyhole include a total restoration and re-landscaping of the charming and unique 1940 property.

From the perspective of Dade Heritage Trust's board of directors, NOAH represents some of the organization's best work and it will continue. DHT is using historic preservation to solve one of Miami-Dade County's most pressing problems, a lack of healthy affordable housing. Dade Heritage Trust deeply appreciates the support of the County Commission and the Mayor that began in 2020 with District 5 Commissioner Eileen Higgins's backing of this proposed initiative.