



MANATEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
"TO SERVE WITH EXCELLENCE"

May 27, 2003

Dr. Janet Matthews
Florida Department of State
Division of Historical Resources, Grants and Education Section
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Dear Dr. Matthews:

The Manatee County Clerk of Circuit Court's Office is submitting a grant application to the Division of Historical Resources for the restoration of the Cortez Schoolhouse. This building was constructed in 1912 as the second schoolhouse for the community of Cortez. The Cortez Schoolhouse is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Cortez Historic District, which was designated in 1995.

This letter is to support this grant application. The funds will be used to remove hazardous materials, conduct selective demolition, restore the building, and provide a ramp for handicapped access.

The historic Fishing Village of Cortez is a wonderful example of partnerships for preservation. Cortez's community elders have enlisted the aid of industries, non-profits, local government, and its own younger generations in a joint effort to preserve this village at a time when ongoing development has already dramatically altered, or completely replaced, most of Florida's other unique, traditional, coastal communities. Upon renovation, the Cortez Schoolhouse is to serve as a cultural anchor for the ongoing effort. Functioning as the Florida Gulf Coast Maritime Museum at Cortez, in conjunction with the Cortez Village Historical Society and the Florida Institute for Saltwater Heritage, its programs and exhibitions will interpret historic Cortez Fishing Village within the greater context of Florida's rich maritime heritage. Local lore and the story of Cortez will explain how Florida Gulf Coast Pioneers made their living upon the sea and depended on its bounty. Additional programming is to include hands-on classes in such traditional maritime skills as boat building, oar, tool, sail, net, and model making, among others, making use of skilled local practitioners.

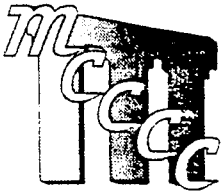
In partnership with the Florida Institute for Saltwater Heritage (F.I.S.H.), special emphasis will be given to the fishing industry with the purpose of educating the public about a way of life that is in danger of extinction. Making use of the ninety-five acre F.I.S.H. Preserve, adjacent to the Cortez coastal environmental and how changes in it have affected the fishing industry and, in turn, the Cortez people. They will see how decisions made today with regards to our environment have a long reaching effect on groups as well as individuals.

I urge you to provide funding for this worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

Allen Garner, Chairman
Historic Preservation Board

HP20030616DOC004



Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

R.B. "Chips" Shore

P.O. Box 25400 • Bradenton, Florida 34206 • (941) 749-1800 • FAX (941) 741-4082 • www.clerkofcourts.com

May 5, 2003

Allen Garner
Manatee County Historic Preservation Board
Bradenton, Florida 34206

Dear Allen:

This letter is to request a support letter for a grant application that my office is submitting to the Florida Division of Historical Resources for the restoration of the Cortez Schoolhouse. Your support of this application is vital to its success.

This project was ranked 22 of over 100 projects last fall, and there is still a possibility that this project will be funded by the State Legislature for the upcoming fiscal year. However, due to budget constraints, we cannot be sure that this will happen. Therefore, we are preparing an application for the following fiscal year, which must be submitted this month. Should we receive state funding sooner, as we hope, we will withdraw this application.

We are applying in the Special Grants Category, which will go to the State Legislature next spring for funding in the 2004/2005 fiscal year. We are asking for funding to remove hazardous materials, conduct selective demolition, restore the building, and provide a ramp for handicapped access for this 1912 building. It was the second schoolhouse for the community of Cortez and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Cortez Historic District, which was designated in 1995.

The schoolhouse will be the focal point of a Watercraft and Maritime Heritage Center for the Gulf Coast of Florida, which will be based in Cortez. It is vital that you let the department know of your support for this project, which will benefit not only the residents and visitors of Manatee County, but also the entire state of Florida.

The letter should be returned to my office by May 19, but addressed to:

Director, Division of Historical Resources
c/o Bureau of Historic Preservation, Grants and Education Section
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

I have attached a sample support letter for your use. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the support letter or this grant request. Thank you for your assistance. I look forward to hearing from you by May 19.

Sincerely,

R.B. Shore
Clerk of Circuit Court

Director, Division of Historical Resources
c/o Bureau of Historic Preservation, Grants and Education Section
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

Dear Director:

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In partnership with the Florida Institute for Saltwater Heritage (F.I.S.H.), special emphasis will be given to the fishing industry with the purpose of educating the public about a way of life that is in danger of extinction. Making use of the ninety-five acre F.I.S.H. Preserve, adjacent to the Cortez Schoolhouse property, additional programming will explain to participants about the fragile coastal environment and how changes in it have affected the fishing industry and, in turn, the Cortez people. They will see how decisions made today with regards to our environment have a long reaching effect on groups as well as individuals.

I urge you to provide funding for this worthwhile project.

Sincerely,