

Village of Pinecrest to honor historic Flagler Grove neighborhood

Pinecrest leaders will salute the first home and business erected in the village during a marker unveiling Wednesday.

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Southern Miami-Dade typically is omitted from historical depictions of Miami's evolution. The Village of Pinecrest, while new among the county's incorporated areas, is about to spotlight a neighborhood some believe has not gotten its proper recognition.

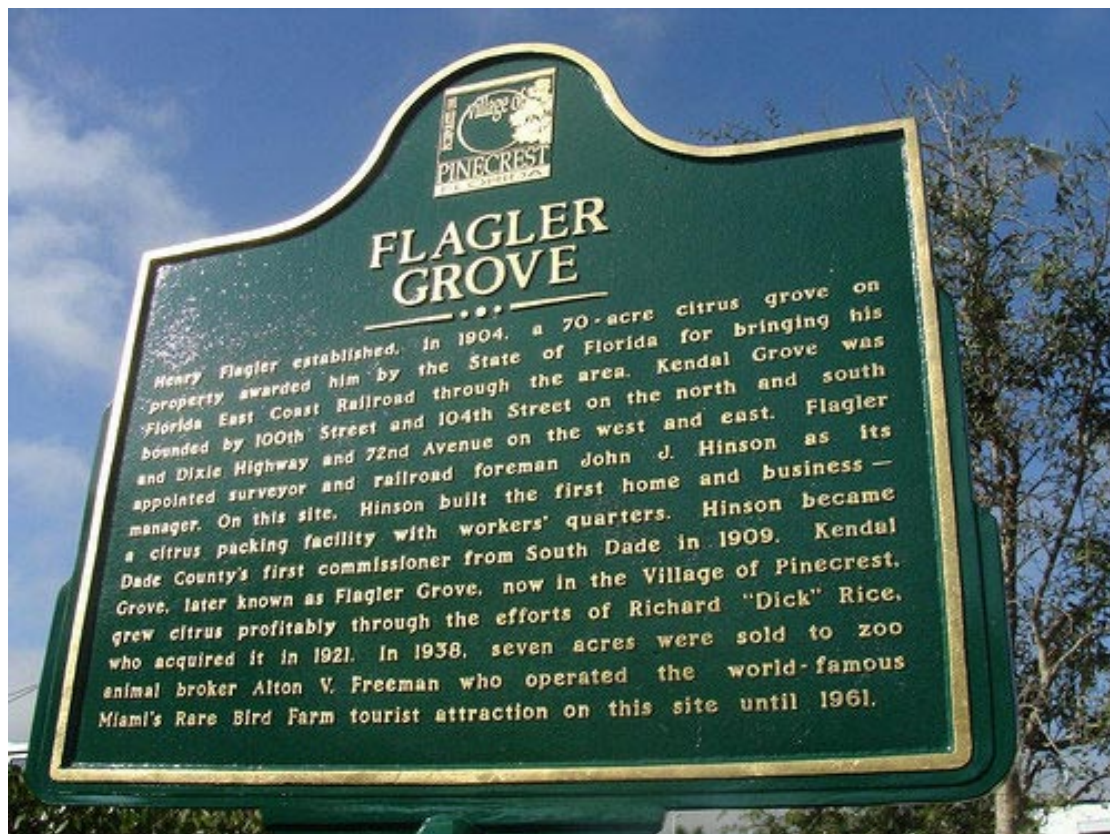
On Wednesday morning, the mayor and village council members will unveil a marker to recognize the 106-year-old Flagler Grove neighborhood, among the first communities settled in south Miami-Dade.

The ceremony, which specifically recognizes the first home and business erected in Pinecrest, will be at the intersection of U.S. 1 and Southwest 102nd Street.

In attendance will be lifelong Pinecrest resident Scott Kenward, an avid history buff who pushed for the historic designation in a series of articles published in the local Pinecrest Tribune.

"There is no historic marker, no mention of this historic site. I thought this was wrong," said Kenward.

"This site is full of history and it is important to the history of South Dade."



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Kenward's articles recounted the neighborhood's beginnings in 1904 as Kendal Grove, a 70-acre citrus grove founded by railroad magnate Henry Flagler. The land, between 100th and 104th streets between Dixie Highway and Southwest 72nd Avenue, was a gift for Flagler bringing the Florida East Coast railroad through the area.

According to Kenward, Flagler appointed surveyor and railroad foreman John J. Hinson as its manager.

On this site, Hinson built the first home and business -- a citrus packing facility with workers' quarters. In 1909, Hinson became the county's first commissioner from South Dade.

Kenward's articles caught the eye of village Councilman Bob Ross.

"He read the article and took it as a challenge," Kenward said.

The council approved a resolution late last year for the historical signpost.

Kenward isn't sure how many people will attend the ceremony. He wants to continue to "raise awareness about the history of our village and South Dade."

He already has his eyes set on another historic designation -- a street named in honor of Hinson.

"He built Flagler Grove. [Hinson] was a true pioneer down here," Kenward said. "Yet he's been forgotten."