

RECORD NUMBER: 281

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**HISTORICAL STRUCTURE FORM
FLORIDA MASTER SITE FILE**

Site 8 MT 346

SITE NAME: Methodist Episcopal Church
HISTORIC CONTEXTS: Post-Reconstruction
NAT. REGISTER CATEGORY: Building
OTHER NAMES OR MSF NOS:

COUNTY: Martin **OWNERSHIP TYPE:** Private, individual

PROJECT NAME: Stuart, S+P

DHR NO. 2761

LOCATION:

ADDRESS: 310 West 3rd Street

CITY: Stuart

VICINITY OF/ROUTE TO: See attached maps

SUB: Potsdam Subdivision

BLOCK 8

LOT 10

PLAT OR OTHER MAP: Property Appraisers Map of Stuart

TOWNSHIP: 38S **RANGE:** 41E **SECTION:** 5 1/4: 1/4-1/4:

IRREGULAR SEC? y n **LAND GRANT:** None

USGS 7.5 MAP: Palm City, FL, 1948: PR 1983

UTM: ZONE: **EASTING:** **NORTHING:**

COORDINATES: LATITUDE: D M S **LONGITUDE:** D M S

HISTORY

ARCHITECT:

BUILDER:

CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1895 **RESTORATION DATE(S):**

MODIFICATION DATE(S): c 1980

MOVE: DATE: 1951

ORIG. LOCATION: N. end South Federal Hwy

ORIGINAL USE (S): Religious

PRESENT USE (S): Commercial

DESCRIPTION

STYLE: Frame Vernacular

PLAN: EXTERIOR: Rectangular

PLAN: INTERIOR:

NO. STORIES: 1 **OUTBLDGS:** 0 **PORCHES:** 0 **DORMERS:** 0

STRUCTURAL SYSTEM(S): Wood, balloon

EXTERIOR FABRIC(S): Stucco

FOUNDATION: TYPE: Continuous

MATERIALS: Concrete block

INFILL:

PORCHES:

ROOF: TYPE: Gable

SURFACING: Composition shingle

SECONDARY STRUCS:

CHIMNEY: NO.: 0

MATERIALS:

LOCATIONS:

WINDOWS: Double-hung sash, 1/1 lights

EXTERIOR ORNAMENT:

CONDITION: Good

SURROUNDINGS: Commercial

NARRATIVE:

See Continuation Sheet

**SEE SITE FILE STAFF FOR
ORIGINAL PHOTO(S) OR MAP(S)**

RN 281

CONTINUATION SHEET

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architectural Narrative: This one-story Frame Vernacular church is located at 310 West 3rd Street. Notable architectural features include a front-facing gable roof, symmetrical facade, and center entrance. Fenestration consists of 1/1 double-hung sash windows with applied lancet surrounds. The exterior wall fabric is stucco. Alterations consist of the stucco exterior wall fabric, and lancet window surrounds.

Architectural Context: Frame Vernacular, the prevalent style of residential architecture in Florida, refers to the common wood frame construction technique employed by lay or self-taught builders. Before the Civil War, residents relied upon local materials and their own methods and designs to construct buildings. The Industrial Revolution permitted standardization of building materials and parts and exerted a pervasive influence over vernacular house design. Popular magazines helped to make architectural trends universal throughout the country. The railroad provided cheap and efficient transportation for manufactured building materials. Ultimately, individual builders had access to a myriad of finished architectural products from which to create their own designs.

Frame Vernacular houses are typically one or two stories in height, with wood balloon frame structural systems and brick pier foundations. Plans are usually rectangular, though L-shaped plans were often used to maximize cross-ventilation. Gable or hip roofs usually have steep pitches which accommodate attic space. Horizontal drop siding and weatherboard are the most common exterior wall surface materials. Wood shingles were often used to cover the roofs, but they have nearly always been replaced by composition shingle. Porches, most commonly simple entrance or end porches, are common features of the style. Fenestration is regular, but not always symmetrical. Windows are generally double-hung sash with multi-pane glazing and doors contain recessed wood panels. Exterior decoration is sparse and limited to ornamental woodwork.

Historical Narrative: According to local sources, the Methodist Episcopal Church was constructed in 1895. Sanborn maps indicate that the church was located on the west side, near the north end of Avenue E, now South Federal Highway. In 1915, the church, which still had its steeple, was used as the print shop for the *Stuart Times*. By 1920 the church had lost its steeple and had been converted into a dwelling. In 1926 was being used as a meeting hall for the Chamber of Commerce. In 1932 the building was consecrated as the St. Mary's Episcopal Church. The building was enlarged and moved to its present location in 1951. Some of the original interior fabric is still intact. The building is presently used for commercial purposes.

Historical Context: Stuart is located on Florida's southeast coast, near the confluence of the Indian and St. Lucie Rivers. Although there was some limited Native American and European contact with that area during Florida's colonial period, permanent settlement of Stuart did not occur until the late nineteenth century. Originally called Potsdam, Stuart grew steadily after 1894, when the Florida East Coast Railway extended tracks through the community. A number of residential buildings were constructed by pineapple plantation owners along the banks of the St. Lucie River and its south fork during the 1890s and early twentieth century. To improve the quality of life in the community, streets were paved, electric and water services became available in 1917, and bridges across the St. Lucie River and its south fork were completed in 1918 and 1919. Like many other Florida communities, Stuart experienced its most intensive period of development during the 1920s. The Great Florida Land Boom of the 1920s brought hordes of speculators and settlers to the state and sparked an unprecedented period of development. The population of the community soared from 778 in 1920 to nearly 2,000 ten years later. In 1925, the town was reincorporated as a city and Martin County was created from parts of St. Lucie and Palm Beach counties. The largest population center in the new county, Stuart became the seat of government. The speculative bubble, which some predicted would continue indefinitely, burst early in 1926, throwing much of Florida into a depression three years in advance of the rest of the nation. Stuart, like many Florida communities, languished after the collapse of the land boom and failed to recover fully until after World War II. The historic buildings that remain from Stuart's historic period reflect an important part of its cultural heritage and evoke feelings of association with the city's past.

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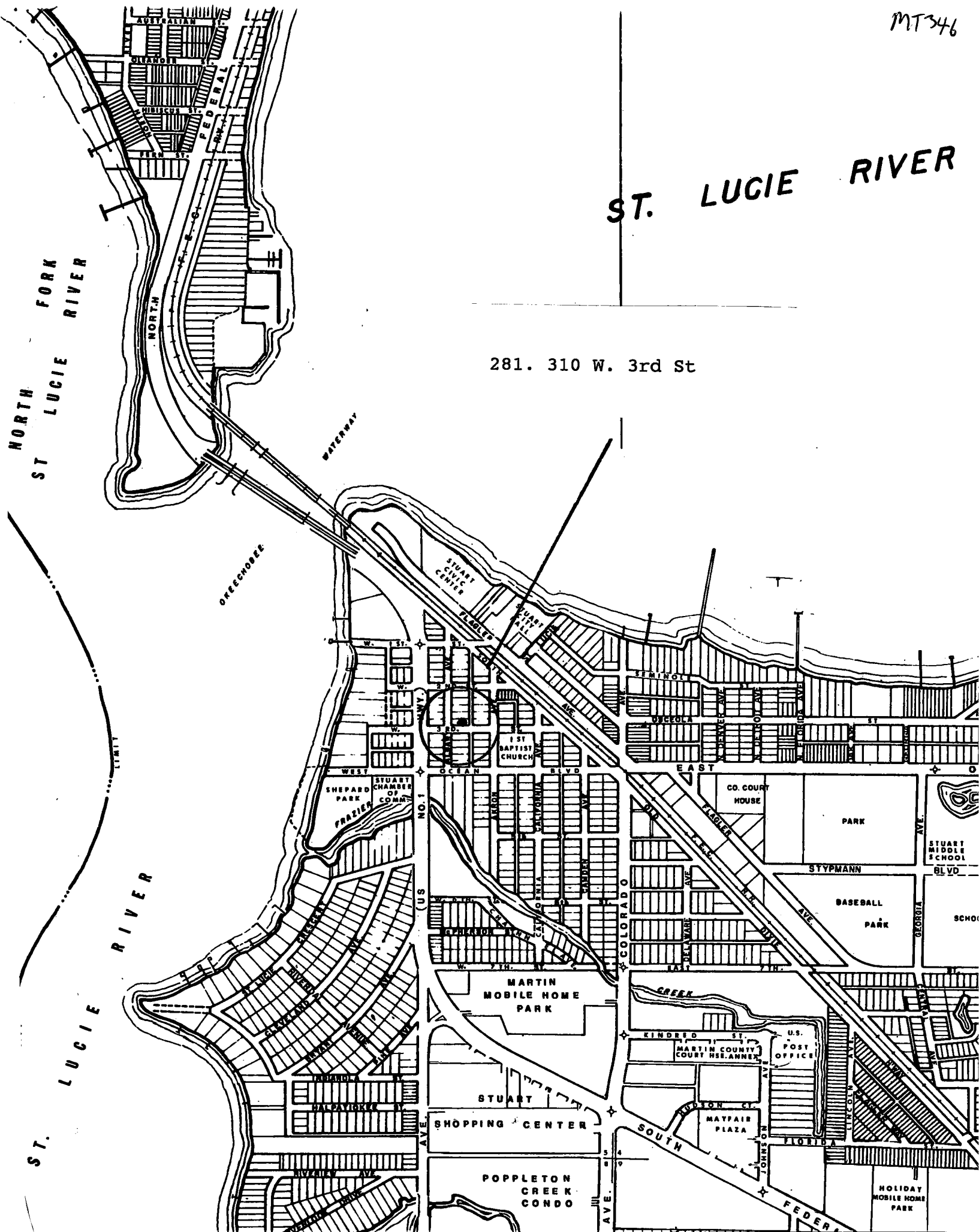
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Historical Narrative: According to local sources, the building was constructed in 1895 to serve as the Methodist Episcopal Church. Sanborn Map research indicates that this building was constructed after 1926. According to an article published in June, 1986 in the *Miami Herald*, the original Methodist Episcopal church burned to the ground in 1915, and a new building was constructed on the old foundations at the corner of West 2nd Street and Albany Avenue. Architectural evidence, based on comparisons with buildings of similar size and design indicates that the church was constructed about 1935. It significant for its contribution to Stuart's residential development during the Depression Era of the 1930s.

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ST. LUCIE RIVER

281. 310 W. 3rd St



NORTH
ST LUCIE
RIVER

ST. LUCIE
RIVER

NORTH

OKECHOBEE

WATERWAY

STUART
CIVIC
CENTER

ST. BAPTIST
CHURCH

WEST
SHEPARD
PARK

STUART
CHAMBER
OF
COMMERCE

MARTIN
MOBILE HOME
PARK

STUART
SHOPPING CENTER

POPPLETON
CREEK
CONDO

CO. COURT
HOUSE

PARK

BASEBALL
PARK

MARTIN COUNTY
COURT HOUSE

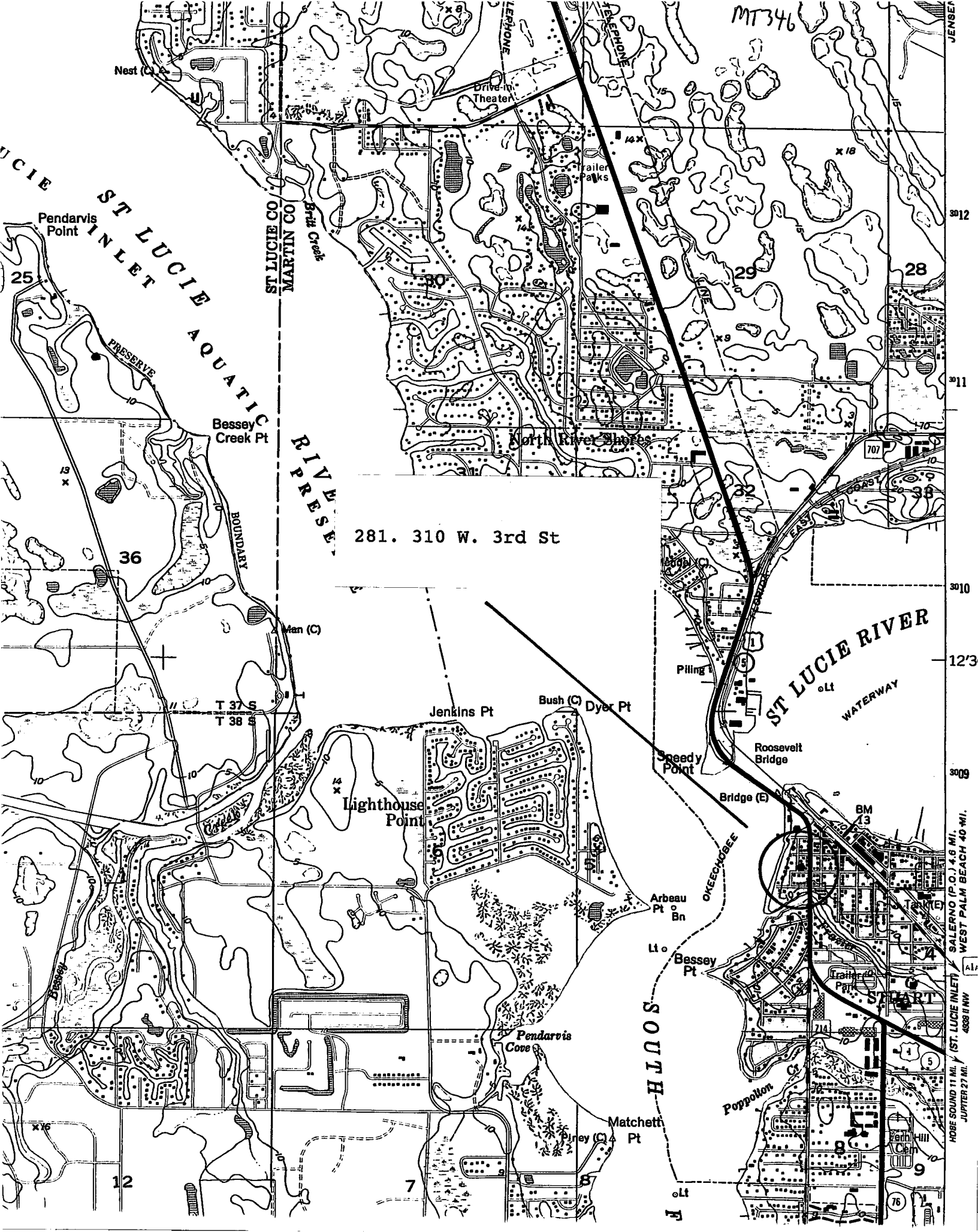
U.S.
POST OFFICE

MAYFAIR
PLAZA

HOLIDAY
MOBILE HOME
PARK

STUART
MIDDLE
SCHOOL

SCHOOL



MT346

JENSEN

3012

3011

3010

1233

3009

HOBE SOUND 11 MI. / ST. LUCIE INLET / SALERNO (P.O.) 4.6 MI. / WEST PALM BEACH 40 MI. / JUPITER 27 MI. / 4938 II NW

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281. 310 W. 3rd St

ST LUCIE INLET

ST LUCIE AQUATIC PRESERVE

ST LUCIE CO / MARTIN CO

RIVER PRESERVE

ST LUCIE RIVER

SOUTH

12

7

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MT 346

281. 310 W. 3rd St