



CITY OF FORT PIERCE

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

REBECCA GROHALL, AICP, PLANNING MANAGER
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING ♦ DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ♦ URBAN DESIGN ♦ URBAN FORESTRY ♦ ZONING

TO: Members of the City of Fort Pierce Historic Preservation Board

THROUGH: Rebecca Grohall, AICP, Planning Manager

FROM: Kori Benton, Historic Preservation Officer

RE: **Discussion of Zora Neale Hurston Exhibit**
809 N 9th Street

DATE: March 16, 2015

The St. Lucie County Welfare Home, located at 809 N. 9th Street has garnered a significant amount of attention over the last few years based upon the findings that the site is the last residency of renowned writer, folklorist, anthropologist, playwright and poet, Zora Neale Hurston.

The present Director and program facilitator, Brenda Cooper, has established an exhibit of Zora Neale Hurston's life, and death at the facility. On display at the site are the room Zora passed away in, replicas of her bed, typewriter, furniture and a collection of family pictures. A copy of the original death certificate shows the removal of her body from the home to Peaks Funeral Home.

Ms. Cooper is exploring further promotion of the exhibit, and prospective designation on the local registry of Historic Places. St. Lucie County is the current property owner, and has not formally signed such request; therefore the discussion item is being presented to provide the Board with further history and information about the site. Action towards designation would be required to be initiated by St. Lucie County, or the Historic Preservation Board. Staff will continue coordinating with St. Lucie County to facilitate the processing of a designation request, if selected by the Board of County Commissioners, or County Administration.