



CITY OF KEY WEST TREE COMMISSION  
HERITAGE TREE NOMINATION FORM



Date: MARCH 20, 2020

TREE LOCATION: 724 EATON STREET

PRIVATE OR PUBLIC  
PROPERTY: PRIVATE

TREE NAME/SPECIES: SAPODILLA "MANILKARA ZOPOTA"

NOMINATOR NAME: DR. SHIRLEY FREEMAN

ADDRESS: 724 EATON ST.

CITY, STATE, ZIP: KEY WEST FL. 33040

E-MAIL ADDRESS: CONCHREPUBLICHARVEY@YAHOO.COM

PHONE: (305) 393-0755

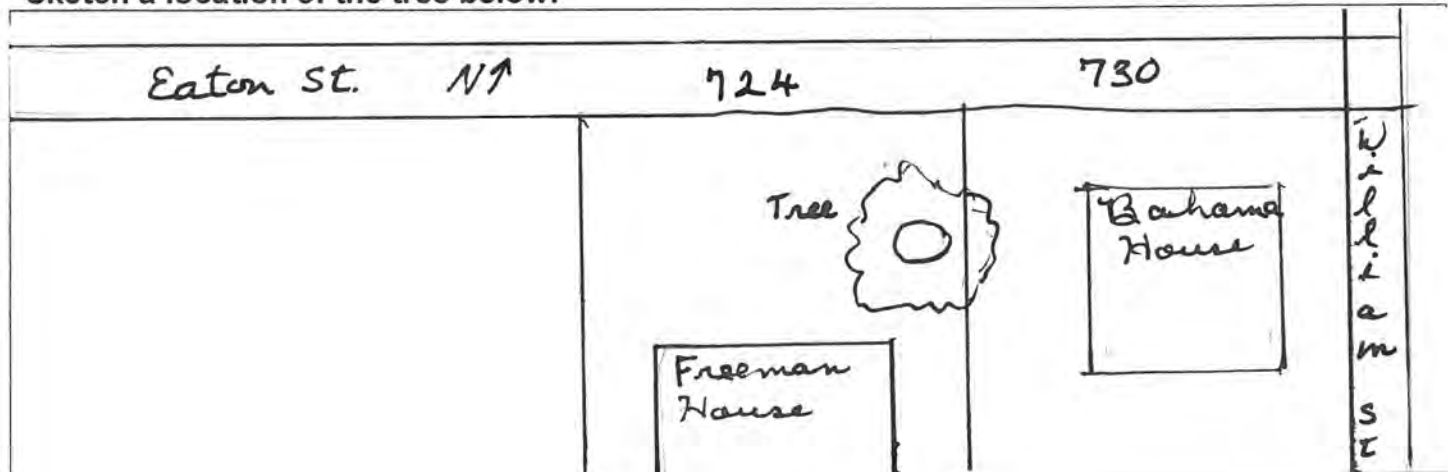
ARE YOU THE PROPERTY OWNER ☒ Yes ☐ No

Approval from the Property Owner will be required to process application

- ☐ Tree is a unique specimen, size and/or age  
☒ Tree is connected to a historical event/building, or individual  
☐ Tree was dedicated/planted as a memorial  
☐ Other

Attach supporting documentation including photos, newspaper articles, or any additional text or letters.

Sketch a location of the tree below:





## City of Key West Heritage Tree Program Property Owner's Agreement

I, Shirley Freeman (printed name), as a voluntary participant in the City of Key West Heritage Tree Program do hereby give the City of Key West (the "City") permission to display on the City's internet website the following information regarding the Heritage tree(s) on my property: species name, size measurements, and county where the tree(s) is/are located.

I acknowledge that the City will retain the following information in order to revisit the tree(s) and update their records in the future: my contact information, including name, mailing address, phone number, and email address; a map or directions to the tree location; and the latitude and longitude where each tree is located. The display of my information on the website shall be subject to my wishes indicated below. The City will prominently display verbiage on the website instructing interested parties who wish to visit my champion tree(s) to request permission from me either by phone or in writing before attempting to do so.

I acknowledge that all information provided to the City, including, but not limited to, the location of the Heritage tree and my contact information, is a public record subject to disclosure in accordance with chapter 119, Florida Statutes, regardless of whether the information is displayed on the internet website.

In consideration of the above, I agree to hold the City, its employees, and agents harmless from any and all claims, liabilities, causes of action or damages whatsoever, including all costs and attorney's fees, arising from the display of the information and photographs agreed to herein on the City's internet website.

I do ☒ do not ☐ (check one) give the City permission to display my contact information, including address, telephone number and email address, on the website, as well as a map or directions to the tree location, and the latitude and longitude where each tree is located.

I do ☒ do not ☐ (check one) give the City permission to display one or more photographs of my tree(s) on the website.

I do ☒ do not ☐ (check one), as parent or legal guardian of the minor(s) shown in any above referenced photos, approve the above release and waive any rights in the premises.

Property Owner's Signature:

Shirley Freeman

Date:

12-1-20

Tree ID#:

HT-0014

Species:

Sapodilla

Location:

724 Eaton St

April 22, 2020

The Key West Tree Commission  
Karen DeMaria, Urban Forester  
City of Key West, Florida

Re: Heritage Tree Nomination

Dear Members of the Key West Tree Commission and Ms. DeMaria,

Please accept this nomination for our beautiful, old, Sapodilla Tree (Manilkara Zopota) to be named a Heritage Tree.

It is located in front of my home at 724 Eaton Street and has provided shade and fruit for the Freeman-Curry family and earlier for the Filer family for well over a century.

The trunk is 18 feet in circumference.

### **Notable Structures**

**The Freeman-Curry House** at 724 Eaton Street was built by banker Samuel Filer circa 1865 during the Civil War and sold in the early 1920s to Jenkins and Louise Curry, grandparents of the Freeman Curry Family. The house, which has been owned only by these two families, has been a center of community leadership, politics, and community service since Key West's early days. It may well be the oldest house in Key West still serving as a private full-time residence.

**The Bahama House** next door at 730 Eaton was built in the Bahamas and floated by barge to Key West in 1847. It sits on the other side of the Sapodilla tree and also enjoys its shade and fruit.



**The Freeman Justice Center**, (the Monroe County Court House), was named for the six members of the Freeman family who served in elected public office for a total of 104 years. Four of them, Jenkins Curry, William A. Freeman, Sr, William A. Freeman, Jr, and Shirley Freeman lived in the house in the shadow of the Sapodilla tree.

## **Notable Events**

**Hurricanes** have visited the Sapodilla tree many times but it has withstood them all including the 1919 Florida Keys Hurricane, the 1935 Labor Day Hurricane, Donna in 1960, Betsy in 1965, and Irma in 2017. The limbs of the tree have always been kept thinned out so the tree does not “sail” in high winds.

## **Notable persons**

**Samuel Filer**, a Key West banker, built the house at 724 Eaton Street in the early 1860s. Samuel’s brother, William Filer, was a shipbuilder and operator of a fleet of merchant ships – probably a lucrative but dangerous enterprise during the Civil War. Samuel used his brother’s ship carpenters to build the house with Dade County virgin pine. It is a sturdy structure - built like a ship. The house stayed in the Filer family for several generations until the early 1920s.

**Commissioner Filer**, a descent of Samuel and resident of the house, served as Monroe County Commissioner in the late 1800s.

**Thomas Jenkins Curry** who was born on Green Turtle Cay in the Bahamas came to the Florida Keys around 1912, settling first in Key Largo where he had a pineapple plantation where now sits the Freeman radio tower near the 100 mile-marker. In the early 1920s in Key West, he bought the 724 Eaton Street house from the Filer family, moved the

house 40 feet back from the street and completely renovated it adding indoor plumbing, electric lights, and a new kitchen attached to the house. He commissioned Cuban Artist Joaquin Barroso to paint murals of scenes from Jenkin's life on the walls of the ballroom in 1925.

In the 1940s Curry helped start the Florida Keys Electric Co-op that now provides electricity from the 7-mile bridge to the Florida mainland and was a member of the original Electric Co-op Board. He served on the Overseas Road and Toll Bridge Authority which acquired the right-of-way of Flagler's railroad after much of it was destroyed by the 1935 Labor Day Hurricane. It is now US-1. Curry served on the Monroe County Commission 1938-40.

**Joaquin Barroso**, the renowned Cuban Artist, was sent from Havana by the Cuban government to paint the wall murals and stage backdrops in the Cuban Consulate in Key West on Duval Street, now known as the San Carlos Institute. Barroso remained in Key West and has many descendants here.

**William A. Freeman, Sr**, known affectionately as Mr. Will, was first a banker, then an employee and later owner of Porter Allen Insurance.

Mr. Will served on the Key West City Council for from 1927 to 1945 and was instrumental in the city buying the existing private electric company and establishing the city-owned utility, City Electric (now renamed Keys Energy). The final deal was signed on the dining room table at 724 Eaton Street.

**William A. Freeman, Jr**, was born and died in the 724 Eaton Street house and lived most of his life there. He worked in the family business of Porter Allen Insurance and served as an elected official in the Florida Keys for 34 years – 20 years as County Commissioner, 2 years as State Representative, and 12 years as Sheriff of Monroe County. As commissioner he championed zoning, providing county court houses

and services in the middle and upper keys, and helped bring “sunshine” into the county commission meetings by refusing to attend private, back-room meetings of the commission. He saved the Pigeon Key buildings, built by Henry Flagler during the Seven Mile Railroad Bridge construction, from the wrecker’s ball and becoming a Howard Johnson’s motel site. As state representative he obtained the money to widen and rebuild the 34 bridges that connect the Keys. As sheriff, he put a big dent in drug traffic, cleaned up the derelict sheriff’s department and brought it to national accreditation and uniform respect by other law enforcement agencies.

**David Freeman**, brother of William who also lived in the 724 Eaton Street house as a youngster, said the Sapodilla tree was huge when he played marbles under it in the 1930s. David owns and operates Porter Allen Insurance on Southard Street with his daughter Elizabeth Freeman Hale. Porter Allen, established in 1890, is the second oldest continuous business in Key West. (The Key West Citizen was established in 1879).

**Shirley Freeman**, widow of William A. Freeman, Jr, has been the care-taker of the Sapodilla tree for the 30 years since his death. She has continued to kept the limbs thinned so the wind can safely go through during a hurricane. From Arkansas, she is a retired school administrator, Monroe County Commission and Mayor. She helped shape the Rate of Growth Ordinance (ROGO) that limits development and building height in the Keys and was a founder of the Community Foundation of the Florida Keys.

Sincerely,

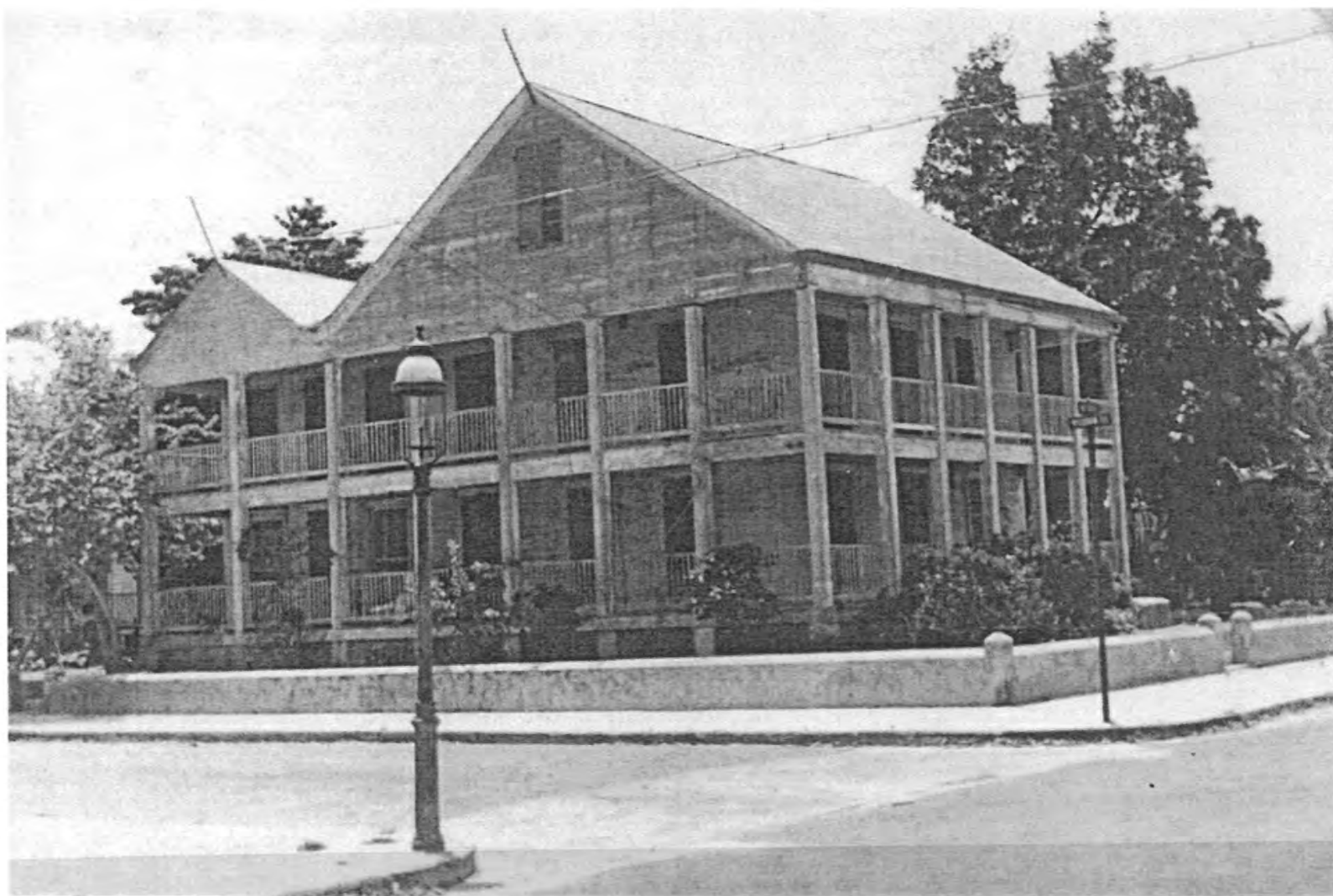
Shirley Freeman





The majestic Sapodilla tree at 724 Eaton Street, April 2020.





The Bahama House at 730 Eaton was built in the Bahamas and brought by barge to Key West in 1847. The Sapodilla tree is on right. WPA photo from the 1930s courtesy Key West Library.





Louise Curry on the front porch of 724 Eaton Street in the 1930s. Limbs from the Sapodilla tree are in upper left. The Bahama House is in background.

## Karen DeMaria

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**From:** Shirley Freeman <[sfreemankw@gmail.com](mailto:sfreemankw@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 28, 2020 9:43 AM  
**To:** Karen DeMaria  
**Subject:** age of our sapodilla tree

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Shirley Freeman <[sfreemankw@gmail.com](mailto:sfreemankw@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** age of our sapodilla tree  
**Date:** March 27, 2020 at 4:17:51 PM EDT  
**To:** Karen DeMaria <[kdemaria@cityofKeyWest.FL.gov](mailto:kdemaria@cityofKeyWest.FL.gov)>

Dear Karen:

We are submitting a Heritage Tree nomination for the sapodilla in our front yard at 724 Eaton Street and are trying to figure out how old it is.

My brother-in-law David Freeman remembers playing under the tree as a boy in the 1930s. It was a big tree then. The circumference of the trunk now is 18 feet. It is taller than the house which is three stories. The limbs have been thinned numerous times to prevent the tree from damaging the house during a hurricane. (The Conchs call this to prevent sailing.)

Do you have any suggestions to estimate its age? The house was built circa 1865.

Thanks, Shirley Freeman

PS. Our baby breadfruit tree in the Truman Waterfront Park is doing well. Thanks for shepherding it.



### Disclaimer

The Monroe County Property Appraiser's office maintains data on property within the County solely for the purpose of fulfilling its responsibility to secure a just valuation for ad valorem tax purposes of all property within the County. The Monroe County Property Appraiser's office cannot guarantee its accuracy for any other purpose. Likewise, data provided regarding one tax year may not be applicable in prior or subsequent years. By requesting such data, you hereby understand and agree that the data is intended for ad valorem tax purposes only and should not be relied on for any other purpose.

By continuing into this site you assert that you have read and agree to the above statement.

### Summary

Parcel ID 00006040-000000  
 Account# 1006262  
 Property ID 1006262  
 Millage Group 10KW  
 Location 724 EATON St, KEY WEST  
 Address  
 Legal KW PT LOT 2 SQR 35 OR252-513/16 COUNTY JUDGE'S DOCKET-9-138  
 Description COUNTY JUDGE'S DOCKET-12-53 OR547-406 OR679-201/03  
 (Note: Not to be used on legal documents.)  
 Neighborhood 6108  
 Property SINGLE FAMILY RESID (0100)  
 Class  
 Subdivision  
 Sec/Twp/Rng 06/68/25  
 Affordable No  
 Housing



### Owner

FREEMAN SHIRLEY VAN METER  
 724 Eaton St  
 Key West FL 33040

### Valuation

	2020	2019	2018	2017
+ Market Improvement Value	\$1,611,687	\$1,628,476	\$1,264,942	\$805,001
+ Market Misc Value	\$6,892	\$6,910	\$6,928	\$6,947
+ Market Land Value	\$1,003,956	\$1,058,154	\$931,692	\$931,692
= Just Market Value	\$2,622,535	\$2,693,540	\$2,203,562	\$1,743,640
= Total Assessed Value	\$636,749	\$622,434	\$610,829	\$598,266
- School Exempt Value	(\$25,000)	(\$25,000)	(\$25,000)	(\$25,000)
= School Taxable Value	\$611,749	\$597,434	\$585,829	\$573,266

### Land

Land Use	Number of Units	Unit Type	Frontage	Depth
RES SUPERIOR DRY (01SD)	12.408.00	Square Foot	70.5	176

### Buildings

Building ID 390  
 Style 2 STORY ELEV FOUNDATION  
 Building Type S.F.R. - R1 / R1  
 Gross Sq Ft 4670  
 Finished Sq Ft 3370  
 Stories 2 Floor  
 Condition AVERAGE  
 Perimeter 376  
 Functional Obs 0  
 Economic Obs 0  
 Depreciation % 5  
 Interior Walls WALL BD/WD WAL

Exterior Walls CUSTOM  
 Year Built 1938  
 EffectiveYearBuilt 2014  
 Foundation WD CONC PADS  
 Roof Type IRR/CUSTOM  
 Roof Coverage METAL  
 Flooring Type CERM/CLAY TILE  
 Heating Type FCD/AIR NON-DC with 0% NONE  
 Bedrooms 3  
 Full Bathrooms 3  
 Half Bathrooms 0  
 Grade 700  
 Number of Fire Pl 0

Code	Description	Sketch Area	Finished Area	Perimeter
OPX	EXC OPEN PORCH	1,300	0	340
FLA	FLOOR LIV AREA	3,370	3,370	382
TOTAL		4,670	3,370	722





HT-0014

THE CITY OF KEY WEST  
TREE COMMISSION  
Heritage Tree Program  
Information Sheet

Date: 11-16-20

Address: 724 Eaton St

Number of Trees: (1)

Common Name of tree: Sapodilla

Scientific Name of Tree: Manilkara zapota

Circumference (inches, measured 4.5 ft from ground on trunk): 16.6 ft Height (ft): approx 30 ft

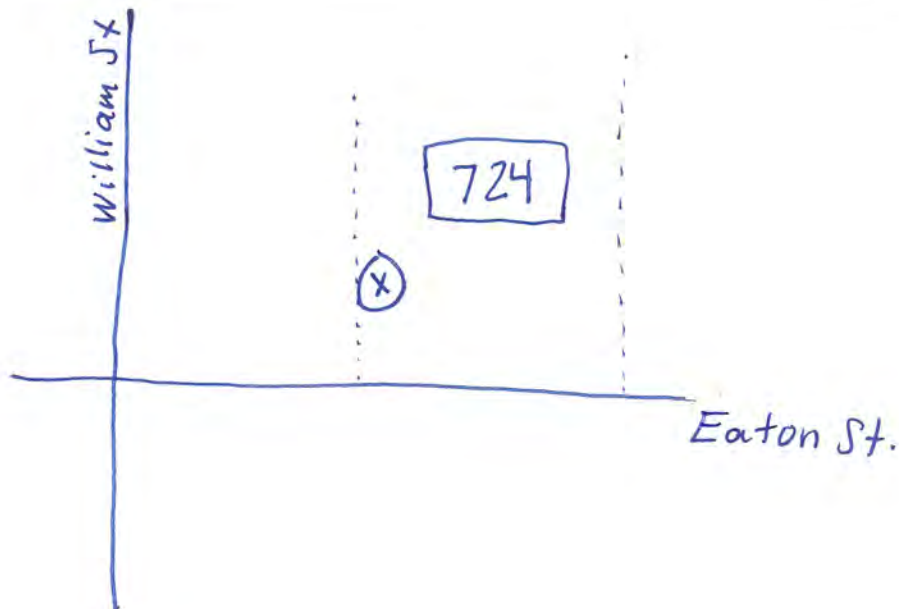
Canopy Spread (ft): 47 ft x 30 ft approx GPS: 24.33:32 N  
(over 90 yrs old documented) 81.48:00 W

Approximate Age: approx 100 yrs old +

Status of Species (Native/Indigenous/Caribbean/Invasive): Indigenous to Key West

Noteworthy Facts or Features: large diameter, healthy sapodilla tree. Sapodilla trees were important fruit trees to the KW residents in the 1800's + early 1900's. Tree was of large size in 1930's (a canopy tree). Tree is very visually located.

Location Map:



Attach Photos





Google  
Street view  
photo of  
property  
and tree,  
April 2019



Photo of  
Sapodilla  
tree, view 1.





Two photos showing whole tree, view 2.







Photo of whole tree, view 3.





Photo of whole tree, view 4.





Photo of tree trunk, view 1.





Photo of tree trunk, view 2.





Photo showing base of tree





Photo of tree canopy. Note utility line through portion (left side of photo)