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PK:= Dr. Peter Klingman
JS:= James H. Shimberg

Good Morning! and welcome to the University of South Florida's Oral History Program. I'm Peter Klingman and my guest this morning is Mr. James H. Shimberg, a very prominent land developer, civic activist, an attorney and has had a profound significance that we're going to explore this morning, in the history and development of Tampa Bay. Good morning Jim!

JS: Good morning, Peter!

PK: Let's start with some background biography, if we could. You were born in Syracuse, New York.

JS: Right, I was born in Syracuse, New York in the early 20s. My father was an orthopedic surgeon in Syracuse and I lived in Syracuse for the first eight years of my life. And then in 1931 or '32, I think, my father left Syracuse and joined the Veterans Administration and so up until the time that I graduated from law school, at the University of Chicago, after World War II, in 1949, I lived all over the place because my father used to get transferred every three or four years mostly. So, I lived in New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Wisconsin, Louisiana, Kansas and now in Florida.

PK: I think that's interesting. Any memories of the Depression, Jim?

JS: Absolutely, my father was an avid supporter of FDR, in '32, and after Roosevelt got elected and was inaugurated in March of '33, in some instances he instituted somewhat of an austerity program as far as the federal government is concerned. And, part of it, including laying-off or furloughing as they called it, a certain number of doctors in the Veterans Administration, including my father. So, in the summer and fall of 1933 my father had no income, my mother and father,

who were not wealthy, had lost most of their money in the bank that failed as part of the Depression. So, I remember living out by the lake in Wisconsin for four, five or six months, until my father got recalled to the Veterans Administration, and I think mainly we lived off the fish that we caught. And, I also remember vividly, particularly when I lived in Leavenworth, Kansas, where I lived for six or seven years and went to high school, in the late '30s. My father was a doctor in a Veterans hospital there, I think he made \$3,500 a year, that's obviously worth more than \$3,500 is today but it's not a fortune. But, all the people I went to high school with, all the people that I knew, came from somewhat similar backgrounds. There wasn't such a disparity between the very wealthy and the very poor. I never felt poor, not that we lived very luxuriously or had a lot of money to spend but I guess I'm very much a product of the Depression.

PK: Yes, I think I've heard a number of people from your generation, my dad included, say that he never lost his Depression mentality.

JS: But, by the way, I view that as not all bad. I think that's good. What ever modest success I may have achieved I'm sort of proud of the fact to say that I started from nothing. I mean, financially, my father who died at a very early age in 1950, left me a 1947 Oldsmobile.

PK: Well, I think that we can say that your success has been a tad more than modest.

JS: Well, a lot of these things are based more on luck and being in the right place at the right time.

PK: You went to law school.

JS: I had three years of college before I entered the army in 1943, and after I got out of the army in 1946 I went to the University of Chicago Law School, what I consider one of the better law schools in the country. I graduated from law school in 1949. My parents lived in New York at the time. I went back to New York City, took the New York Bar and practiced law in a small law firm in New York for about 8 or 9 years. By chance, rather than pre-planning, I started to be involved in representing certain people in the home building and development business, some of whom didn't have a lot of money and I took an interest in the project especillay with one individual whose name was Charles LaMonte, in lieu of fees I took sort of an interest in the deal. And one thing led to another and in 1957, Charlie LaMonte decided to move to Tampa, Florida and become a developer and home builder in

this area. And I think between 1957 and 1958 I made like 18 trips between New York and Tampa, but I was smart enough to figure out eventually that you couldn't both practice law in New York and be in the home building business in Tampa, so by the end of '58, my wife and I moved down here permanently. And although Florida as you may know is one of only five states in the country that doesn't have reciprocity as far as automatic admission to the Bar is concerned, regardless of how long you've practiced some place else. So, although I did take the Florida Bar and somehow miraculously passed it, in 1960, I think, I've never practiced law from a private point of view in the almost 40 years that I have lived in Tampa, except for my own business and of being involved in a lot of public or civic type of things.

PK: I understand. But before we come back to Tampa and your time down here, and I do want to talk about Charlie LaMonte, tell me about World War II. What did you do in the war?

JS: I went in the army in March of 1943, I was, well, I think when I went in the army, well, I was 20 years old. Originally I was in the Air Corps, I took basic training down in Miami Beach, lived in a hotel on the beach, and then I went out to an ordinance, an air force ordinance training center which was at the Santa Anita Race Track out in California.

PK: Oh, you were having a tough life!

JS: That's right, and we moved from the hotel rooms at Miami Beach to the stables in Santa Anita. The joke was that we lived in the same stable that Sea Biscuit and War Admiral were at, and I spent a year or so in the air corps, most of it in a desolate air base in Texas called the Pyote Army Airbase. Pyote, Texas is about halfway between Fort Worth and El Paso and in those day there wasn't a great deal in between. And then in the early part of '45, I went to OCS and graduated as a Medical Administrative Officer and was about to be shipped over to the Far East when the war ended. I got out of the Army in July of 1946 and then went to law school. Thinking back, part of the time that I was in the army I was stationed at the Headquarters of the Second Airforce which is in Colorado Springs, in sort of the personnel division and among the things I was involved in was picking the personnel for, what was then a very secret, special type of unit which none of us really knew what it was going to do. There was all kinds of speculation about the unit called the 509th Composite Bomb Group which trained at Wendover Field, Utah. Well, this turned out to be the group that dropped the atom bomb, and looking back there has been a great deal of controversy, of course, historically, did Harry Truman make the right decision or the wrong decision in dropping the atom

bomb. For a very personal point of view I always felt that he made the right decision because I was probably one of those people that was slated to participate in the invasion of the Japanese Home Islands and so from a very selfish point of view, I mean, we didn't start the war, they did and I would rather be here today than not here today.

PK: I can understand that entirely.

JS: A couple of years ago, along these same lines, my wife and I took a trip in the Far East and we went to a couple of places in Japan and one of the places we went was Nagasaki where they dropped the second atom bomb. They have a museum there and most of the people on the cruise felt--acted rather guilty when they went through this museum which showed horrible things as to what happened to the people in Nagasaki and I think it was horrible, but I didn't really feel guilty, I don't regret to this day the decision that Harry Truman made.

PK: While we're on the subject and just in passing, do you have an opinion that I assume is consistent with that about the failure to produce an effective Holocaust (or A-bomb rather) in Washington that would _____ interpret it?

JS: I think that whole controversy has somewhat distorted history, I mean I think that history is the way I remember it and the way I just sort of explained it from my point of view and I think it was unfortunate that they didn't go through with the original idea, but obviously it's controversial and we live in a different world today than existed in 1945.

PK: Absolutely, and I guess I want to ask in passing, how do you recruit from a personnel office for people, for a mission, you don't know what it is?

JS: I don't know, there were certain criteria or something, the type of people they were trying to fill, pilots, bombardiers, and ordinance people and, the best guess at the time was that this involved some type of guided missile. We knew somewhat about the V-1 and the V-2 that the Germans had used, nobody had the least conception of an atomic bomb.

PK: That's interesting, and I have never met anyone who was that close to that particular subject.

JS: I don't thing, by the way, that you could keep a secret today, the way the development of the Manhattan Project and the Atomic Bomb and the development

in places like Oakridge, Tennessee and Hanford, Washington which were very big cities and nobody knew a thing about it.

PK: Including the vice president of the United States, when he became president.

JS: That's right! And another thing, I guess, that you couldn't do today, my father, because he was an orthopedic surgeon and because he specialized in prosthetics and amputees and that type of thing, my father knew all along about Franklin D. Roosevelt, the fact that he was a paraplegic and he was in a wheelchair and one thing or another, but very few, if any, people knew that.

PK: Yes, and that's very true, it's only been very recently that...

JS: I don't think that you could do that today.

PK: I don't think you can either. It's only recently that you see photographs of Roosevelt, showing him with his braces. Well, let's go back, 1957-58 you started getting interested in Tampa, Florida, and Charles LaMonte is the major reason you'd come down and you become interested in...

JS: Oh, by the way, the reason...the actual...Charlie LaMonte and I and to some extent, my brother, were in the home building business in Westchester County, New York, north of New York City, in the middle to latter part of the '50s and I was not actively involved in it on an everyday basis, I was practicing law in New York City and representing Charlie. But one day, he called me up, I wasn't married then, and said, what are you doing this weekend? and I said, nothing as far as I know, and he said, not that we have any interest, he said, but one of our subs on the job, the plasterer or somebody, has got a brother-in-law whose got some tremendous opportunity someplace down in Florida. How would you like to go down with me and look at it? So, I said, sure, I got nothing else to do. That was the first time I was ever in Tampa, Florida. We flew to Tampa, these people picked us up drove us down to Sarasota and we looked at some piece of land halfway between Bradenton and Sarasota, which we didn't have any idea what we were looking at, and when we got back to Tampa to take the plane Charlie said, you know, we ought to find somebody that knows something about Florida. And, he said, I had a former partner who was in business with a builder here in Tampa, let me see if I can find out and we'll call him. And so, the builder here in Tampa, who is now deceased, was a fella by the name of Dave Foster, and so we called him up and we met him for lunch and he said, I don't know anything about Sarasota or Bradenton but it just so happens, I hate to do it but, it just so happens I have a small

piece of land here in Tampa that I was planning to develop but I need to sell and he showed it to us, and it was someplace in South Tampa, not too far from Britton Plaza Shopping Center and it was enough land to develop in to 30 lots on two streets called Aline and Beaumont Streets, which still exist, and so to make a long story short, Charlie got interested in it and we bought the land and Charlie LaMonte, and then later my brother, moved down here in '57 and that was where the first 30 houses that we were involved in were built. I think they probably sold for \$13-14-15,000, they're now in that section of South Tampa which has suddenly become very desirable, and people are buying up houses like this and the lots on which they're located paying \$50-60-70,000, tearing down the houses and rebuilding \$2-3-400,000 mansions.

PK: What did you think of Tampa when you first saw it, or the area?

JS: Well, we within a short space of time, particularly as we tried to put together the deal and raise the money to develop what later became Town 'n Country. We did a lot of research on the Tampa area and I remember writing like a prospectus that we used, it wasn't exactly the type of prospectus that the SEC would have approved of, that we used to interest, particularly people up in New York, to invest and we painted a bright picture for Tampa. Now a lot of people have asked the question, why did you come to Tampa, Florida? And the wonderful answer would be, well what we did was, we were in the building business in New York and we commissioned the best market research firm in the country to make an analysis of the 50 leading markets to find out where would be the best place for the decade of the '60s, '70s and '80s and the answer was Tampa, Florida. But the real answer was strictly luck and chance, was when Charlie called me up and said, I know that we're not interested but look at this deal down in Florida this weekend.

PK: Well, I also know that you claimed luck on a number of issues of your successes. And I don't want to debate it with you but here's a question, Jim, that I think is kind of important. You started building in what I would call inland Florida, you didn't build on the waterfront and, you could have, and I guess what my question is, is why didn't you look at what historically every other person ever thinks about real estate in Florida?

JS: Because in the, after the war, I have a tendency now to talk about after the war. I found out, in connection with the venture that you and I were once involved in when we were on the Charter Review Board, and I went down and I made a speech in Sun City. That was the only place that when you said, after the war, everyone related to it, because they were in the same war that I was.

PK: They knew what you meant.

JS: But now you have to sort of define it. But Florida only started to develop in the late '40s and early '50s and the development along water, I mean for instance, like down in Port Charlotte and along the lower east coast and all the rest of it was more characterized in those days by retirement building. In other words what was building for people who were going to move down here and retire. We were in very much of a different market. We were always primarily in the more or less affordable housing market.

PK: Well, I guess my question is, how, knowing luck was involved and understanding the issue did not engage in sophisticated market research, obviously, when you came to Florida you would have looked at all that waterfront property and said, this can be potentially valuable.

JS: But we didn't. I think the only time we ever did that to a very minor degree was that somebody once tried to sell us some land on Longboat Key, down near Sarasota and we went down and looked at it, but it was far beyond our price range to be able to buy and one thing and another. After the first 30 houses that we built in South Tampa we then went to Brandon and developed a community in Brandon called Everina Homes, that was in '58 or so, and as a matter of fact, I am now heavily involved in land development in Brandon, almost 40 years later. But the major area that we're associated with that we developed in Tampa is really the Town 'n Country area. I remember the first time that a real estate broker took us out to try to sell us on this deal and it seems like we went forever, and when we got to what is now the corner of Hillsborough Avenue and Hanley Rd, which was then a dairy farm, owned by a man by the name of Wayne Webb, truthfully, literally, there were not, you could count on the fingers of one hand the number of people that lived within a radius of four or five miles of that spot. Today you're talking about an area where almost you have 80-90,000 people living. It almost seemed like in the middle of nowhere. Somehow we dreamed up the fact that we could create a community there and we made a deal with Mr. Webb, scraped up the magnificent sum of \$25,000 which we put down on a contract to buy his land. We bought a hundred acres outright and had an option over the remaining 400 acres or so, for a term of 8 or 9 years. Mr. Webb was represented by an attorney in Tampa then, Arthur Gibbons. Arthur Gibbons is Sam Gibbons' uncle. And, interestingly enough, all the land that encompasses Town 'n Country, and a lot more, was owned originally, or starting in the '30s, by Sam Gibbons wife (Martha's) father, a man by the name of Mr. Hanley, who the story goes, bought it from what was then

the Exchange National Bank in the Depression, for \$5 an acre. He bought 5,000 acres for \$5 an acre, in 1940. He sold 600 or 700 acres of it to the man from whom we bought the land, Mr. Webb, who paid \$100 an acre. And our deal with Mr. Webb, which stretched out over a period of time and included 6,000 feet of frontage on Hillsborough Avenue, we paid Mr. Webb, on long terms, \$1,500 a acre. Some of the land which has since become commercial and is occupied by shopping centers and the like, has risen in value to as much as \$100,000 an acre or more. So, that's a long way from the \$5 an acre that Mr. Hanley paid.

PK: It sure is. When you looked at that Webb property...

JS: As a result of this I think Congressman Gibbons always had a close attachment to Town 'n Country. And I was a supporter of Sam Gibbons from the early days that he ran for the Florida Legislature.

PK: And I do want to talk to you about your political experiences. But, we got to deal with Town 'n Country, because you are...

JS: Okay! When we first started, by the way, the first fifty houses that we built in Town 'n Country, which opened in 1959, and ultimately, by the way, depending on what you call Town 'n Country, but I or myself, or my brother was involved in ultimately grew to maybe seven or eight thousand units, a virtual city. At one time I figured out that there were more people that lived in Town 'n Country than in the smallest 8 or 9 or 10 counties in the state of Florida. But, the first 50 houses that we built sold for \$9,000 and they were on a special FHA, 40-year mortgage deal, and the monthly payments including principal, interest, taxes and insurance was \$52 a month. Now, you couldn't pay the electric bill much less, or the water and sewer bill, for \$52 a month. And the houses appreciated in value as we progressively went further north. The first fifty houses were built right off Memorial Highway and then eventually, in a year or so, we reached Hillsborough Avenue and then we crossed Hillsborough Avenue and we eventually went two miles north to Waters Avenue and by the time we got all done, the last houses that I was involved with in the Town 'n Country area we called Twelve Oaks, some of them sold for as much as \$80-90-100,000.

PK: And why did you bring down split-levels? Cause I think of split-levels as...

JS: We were the first ones to build split-levels in the Hillsborough County area. We had built split-levels extensively in the building that we did up in the New York area. The split-level really wasn't designed for the terrain of Florida, it was really

designed for a hilly type of terrain where part of it was underground and one thing or another, which you couldn't do in Florida unless you wanted a built-in swimming pool...

PK: Right, I grew up in a split-level so I understand that.

JS: But it was unique to Florida and we sort of created a fake split-level that we built all above grade. But, it turned out to be very popular. I think the original split-levels that we built in Town 'n Country, which were once featured in Good Housekeeping magazine sold for \$18,900. Those ultimately we sold, not by us, but by the people who bought them for as much as \$80-90,000. People blame builders and developers for a lot of things, I would guess, by the way, that with all the houses that we were involved in, especially when you start out at \$9,000 and sold for \$9-12-15-20-25-30,000, the developer or the builder maybe made a profit of \$3 or 4,000 a house. Many of the people that bought them and lived in them for a period of time and resold of them made a profit on the sale of their house of \$50-60,000, yet the builders are the ones that are blamed for all the evils.

PK: Let's talk about the builder as the bad guy for a minute. When you look at Town 'n Country today and recognize, and I certainly recognize, and I think the audience needs to recognize that you are the original developer of Town 'n Country.

JS: Absolutely!

PK: Are you proud?

JS: Sure! But my only negative is, or why I hesitate...Back in the 50s, honestly, there wasn't as much known about development as there is today. For instance, although we weren't involved in it, you can use North Dale Mabry as an example, which sort of grew, I mean I live outside of Carrollwood and I've lived there for 35 years. When we moved in there was almost nothing north of Waters Avenue, but if Dale Mabry, instead of being built the way it was, if it had an access road on both sides of Dale Mabry and all the shopping centers and commercial didn't empty into Dale Mabry, you'd have a totally different situation than you did. You could say some of the same things about Town 'n Country. As I mentioned before we originally acquired 6,000 feet of commercial property along Hillsborough Avenue. The thought was, in those days, that what ever land you owned along the major street, although it wasn't that major in those days, you automatically made it commercial. That really wasn't as good a concept as it could have been, but that

was the best that we knew, and we weren't unusual. So, I guess a better job could have been done but, I'll tell you what, Peter, I believe that the 6-7-8,000 families that we developed the land and built and sold houses to in the Town 'n Country area, a few of whom are probably still living there, those people, after a period of time, could not afford to buy their own house if they'd had to buy it at the prices that it appreciated to the 70s and 80s. I later built in Northdale, which is just north of Carrollwood Village, and we built the same houses in some extent that we had built in Twelve Oaks and they sold for two and three times as much, so you had somebody living in Twelve Oaks who paid maybe for \$40,000 for an identical house with somebody who lived in Northdale who paid \$80,000. So that's why I say, a lot of these people couldn't have afforded the housing if they would have had to buy it at the inflated price. In general I am proud of the job that we did, but there are people that like to criticize builders and developers. I think the best example of this, which is appropriate to tell here at WUSF-TV is, in the middle '70s when Mike Wallace came down to Tampa to produce one of the episodes of his 60 Minutes program and somehow, I don't know how, they picked me out as the villain of the program, because the program had to do with the evils of building and development, and Mike Wallace interviewed me, we were driving in a convertible through Town 'n Country and the camera man was on the hood and the sound man was in the trunk and Mike and I were sitting in the front seat. And the first question he asked, right out of the blue, he said, "Are you sensitive to the fact that Shimberg is a dirty word in Tampa?" And I think I sort of opened my mouth and I ultimately said, well you know, it depends who you talk to. And then I tried to explain that if there were problems with development the builders had no alternatives, we only followed the rules and regulations that were made by somebody else. Then, the next scene showed that he went down to the County Commission and he interviewed the man who was then chairman of the County Commission, Carl Carpenter, and he said, "What do you think about the fact that somebody like Jim Shimberg blames all the problems on you?" And, as a matter of fact, the president of this university, Betty Castor, who was then a county commissioner was also on the same Mike Wallace program.

PK: Yeh, you know, you've told me that story before and I'm glad you brought it up because it leads to another question, but...

JS: But you know what...and we didn't have to do this, and I'm not saying this egotistically, but I believe, in the development of the Town 'n Country area, which lasted almost 20 years and, as I say, is almost a city. We donated to the Hillsborough County School Board all the land where all the schools in the Town 'n Country area are located. Town 'n Country Elementary, Webb Jr. High School,

Morgan Woods Elementary, Woodbridge Elementary and Bellamy. Five or six school sites. We didn't have to do that but I think it probably was a great benefit to us, they would have built the schools eventually anyway because the people were there. But, what we were trying to do was to develop a community. We were also the first ones in the Tampa Bay area to build a Community Swim Club, which unfortunately doesn't exist anymore, where it was built, because once the builder and developer was finished with the community it was difficult for the people to keep it up themselves. Most of the houses in Town 'n Country were built and financed on VA and FHA mortgages. We sold of hundreds if not thousands of houses to people in Town 'n Country who paid no cash at all. We sold a lot of houses to people on the so-called FHA 235 Program, which involved really a subsidy from the federal government to help people until financially they were able to pay a larger part of the mortgage payment themselves. Those that we built in the Town 'n Country area, maybe there were problems in other parts of the country...it was a great success there. The only mistake the federal government made was that if they were going help you out in connection with being able to buy a house, once you achieved a certain financial security and all the rest of it, and you were able to assume the full payment yourself, once you resold that house, which most of the people eventually did, I'm not sure you were entitled to put the profit in your pocket. The government should have taken back some type of a second mortgage in which they could recoup the amount of the subsidy at the time that the people resold the houses and made a profit. This was talked about for years but for political reasons, or whatever it is, was never adopted. But there would have been much less criticism of some of the housing programs if a principle like that had been applied to it.

PK: I don't think that you would have gotten anybody elected if that had been on somebody's platform.

JS: By the way, I don't necessarily agree with that. At the time that, which goes back to '68 maybe, or earlier than that, after the World War II, the housing programs were very popular and they were very much on a bipartisan basis. Senator Taft, the then Republican leader in the Senate in the late '40s and early '50s, he was an author of among the first housing programs, so when programs like 235, 236 Section VIII came, and one thing or another, if they had been structured somewhat differently, I don't think there really would have been any political objection at all. I just think it wasn't thought of at the time.

PK: I'm sure that's true.

JS: If you tried to go back and change it and take something away from somebody that you'd given them, rightly or wrongly, not you'd run into a lot of arguments.

PK: Agreed. I want to go back to something you said because it starts with the Mike Wallace story and it deals with the developer as the bad guy and here is Jim Shimberg who has been well known and documented for having been very much a community supporter in his development role. You participated in a number of things that I think most of our audience would not understand as the role of a developer...land management.

JS: Well, for instance, along this line. When Ruben Askew became governor in 1970, I guess, Governor Askew was really the first one to really develo....he was very greatly concerned about the uncontrolled growth of the state of Florida particularly from an environmental point of view. And so, in 1972, during the legislative session in 1972, he really spearheaded, together with certain leaders in the legislature of which one of the prime ones then was Bob Graham, who was a state senator from Dade County, monumental land use and environmental legislation. And among that legislation was what was called the Land and Water Management Act the so-call "Elms Act" which created the concept of areas of critical state concern and developments of regional impact. The theory being that if you were to develop something large enough, either in the residential area or the commercial area or whatever it is, you would have an impact over the citizens of more than one county, so the state ought to have some role in the approval in projects that effected more than one county. Traditionally, all the land use controls really vested at the lowest level with the County Commission or the City Council. At the time that this legislation wended its way through the legislature in '72, I was then the president of the Florida Home Builders Association. For good or bad, we were the prime opponents of the Bill. And I can remember appearing before all kinds of legislative committees and one of the big supporters of the Bill was Bob Graham. I remember going to see Governor Askew during the course of this debate, I was at that time a very heavy smoker, which I'm happy to say I am not anymore, I haven't smoked since May 29, 1977, which is not very historically significant but...And Askew did not have any ashtrays in his office and was very anti-smoking, but I couldn't sit there and talk to the governor of the state of Florida without holding a cigarette in my hand, so the only alternative was to put it out with your fingers and put the stub in your pocket, which I remember doing. But, I remember Governor Askew said to me, he said, "Jim, don't you have five children?" I said, "Yes sir, I do." And he said, "I'm convinced that this state won't be livable for your five children in five or ten years unless we start to do some

things differently. And he said, I realize that as president of the state Home Builders you're going to do everything you can to try to defeat this legislation, but I just want to tell you that I'm going to everything that I can to try to pass it and we'll see who wins. And I said, well Governor that doesn't seem like a very even battle, you know what I mean, you're the governor of the state of Florida and I'm not sure that we have as much influence as people attribute to us. But, we did get a few changes made, but in the Bill, when it passed, was the creation of a 21 member committee called the Elms Committee which was designed to be a somewhat of an evenly balanced committee. And, among other things this committee was charged with the function of developing the criteria of what would be a development of regional impact, in other words, how many units and to develop the rules and regulations. And when Governor Askew's then Chief of Staff, a man who now lives in Tampa, Jim Apthorpe, called me up and said, Governor Askew would like to appoint you to the Elms Committee, I said, "Gee this is kind of surprising because I was among the prime opponents of the Bill," and he said, "The governor is well aware of that but he wants to create a balanced committee and he doesn't think that you're really opposed philosophically to doing some of these things." So anyway I served for a couple of years on the Elms Committee and it was a wonderful experience. Bob Graham was also a member of the Elms Committee that's how I got to know Senator Graham. The best example is really, there was a woman on the Elms Committee whose name was Alice Wainwright, Alice Wainwright was the president of the State Audubon Society, so for the first six-months or so of the meetings of the Elms Committee we had long meetings that dragged out until 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning. Everything she said, I was against. It was like a difference of black and white, she didn't agree with a thing I said, I didn't agree with a thing she said. We were like a two extreme ends, because I was like the representative of the housing industry....,

PK: You were the bad guys.

JS: But after about six months or so a interesting thing occurred which I've seen happen on a number of things that I've been involved in. One night Mrs. Wainwright and I woke up and we realized that there were a lot more things that we agreed on than we disagreed on and so as a result of the deliberation of the Elms Committee we were the ones that came up with the recommendation that every city and county in the state of Florida should develop a comprehensive plan. I remember that certain members of the committee were designated to explain to the legislature some of our recommendations. And I was delegated to explain to the legislature the recommendation of requiring every city and county in the state to develop a plan. We also recommended that there be a considerable appropriation of

money to help the cities and counties to hire the professional talent to do this. I presented this to the Governor and the Speaker of the House and the president of the Senate, I think Terrell Sessums was the Speaker of the House of Representatives at that time, this was in 1973. Ultimately, the Bill did not pass the legislature in 1973. It eventually passed in 1975, I believe, at which time the people in the legislature who was the most influential in passing it were Bill Nelson, who is now the Insurance Commissioner and the man who was then the Speaker of the House of Representatives, who is now in the insurance business, from Daytona.

PK: Oh, Hyatt Brown.

JS: Hyatt Brown, that's right. But when the Bill passed in '75 they had left out a little part and they left out the part about appropriating the money, as they are very prone to do to help the cities and counties do this. Contrary to our recommendations there was nothing really binding about the Bill, in other words, every city and county was required to develop a comprehensive plan but there was no way of enforcing that development be in accordance with the comprehensive plan. It was only in...eventually ten years later, in 1985, when the legislature passed the growth management law which made development in accordance with the comprehensive plan a mandatory thing and created certain elements having to do with water and sewer and parks and environmental concerns, that if these things were not in place, or the money was not in place to pay for them, then presumably no building permits would be issued. When Bob Graham became governor in 1978, because, I guess, of his experience in being involved in shepherding the legislation through for Governor Askew and also his service on the Elms Committee, he appointed a similar committee to really study the whole thing and determine were there any new laws or rules or regulation needed to implement what had been done in the early '70s. Somehow he asked me to be chairman of this committee which was called the Resource Management Taskforce. The press was a little critical of that, they said, what are you going to accomplish if you make a developer like Jim Shimberg the chairman of the committee, and his answer was, Jim and I served together on the Elms Committee and I think we think alike and one thing or another, and we really were the ones, among other things, that came up with the recommendation that you put some teeth in the comprehensive plan. And, it took another four or five years until '85 when it passed. We also came up with another recommendation which was implemented....at the time, all the members of regional planning commissions were representatives of local government, we felt that it would be better if you had certain lay members who were appointed by the governor, and that passed, I think, in '80 or '81, and I think that has been a benefit. I've been on more committees like this than you can shake a

stick at. I think the state of Florida spent a fortune in educating me on these matters. Whether they got their money's worth or not, I don't know. There was a Elms Committee II which I was not on and then when Lawton Chiles became governor he appointed what was called Elms III and I guess I was more of a historian than anybody else. I was the only person that was appointed and served on the third Elms Committee that had been on the original committee. And Peter, you know, Rubin Askew had great pride in a lot of this and I think that a lot of it was justified, but to some extent when Governor Askew would go to places like Harvard and other places and he would tell about all the wonderful progress that had been made in the state of Florida, particularly in the land use and the environmental area, in some regard it sounded better than it really was. Looking back on it I think a lot of the ideas were right but it took too long to implement and as a result of that a lot of things were done which couldn't be undone. I mean, a large part of the state of Florida was already developed, you couldn't go back and change it. Also, there was a tremendous amount grandfathered in, so even now, in 1996, there's been very little development that has actually been denied or turned down because it does not meet the concurrency requirements.

PK: Well but the.....I suppose the right question to ask is, if you had not had that would Hillsborough County be worse off than it is?

JS: Yes, Hillsborough County would be somewhat worse off than it was, but all this really controlled was, it controlled the large development. In Hillsborough County you had to have a development of over 3,000 residential units to be a development of regional impact which triggered this process. So although it probably made the large developments of regional impact environmentally better and better planning-wise, they don't necessarily account for the vast majority of the development. The vast majority of the development is the development of small amounts of land which were not necessarily controlled by the same process, although they were controlled after '85 by the growth management law and the concurrency requirements. Yes, things are better than then would have been without the environmental and land use legislation but, it didn't meet some of the promises that some of us who saw ourselves as the authors of the legislation tried to sell. And one of the biggest reasons for it, which is, in my book, the greatest problem in many areas that exists in the state of Florida is that the legislature was much better in passing laws than they were in providing the money to give you a fighting chance to make these laws work. And, I hate to say this, and I hate to be pessimistic, because I think really I've been pretty much of an optimist all my life, but whether you're talking about the environmental area, whether you're talking about the education area, particularly, whether you're talking about the

transportation area, roads and mass transit, the criminal justice, almost any area that you want to talk about, we have an acute shortage of money in the state of Florida that is dedicated to these things. I hate to say it, but I really sort of think that Florida will turn out to be, maybe, a better place to live for my wife and I for the last 40 years than it may be for my children and ten grandchildren as we go into the 21st century, until we get somewhat of a change in the willpower of politicians to do what the right thing to do is, notwithstanding whether you get reelected. Now, it's real easy for me to sit here and say that and it's very difficult, I guess, if you serve up in Tallahassee, which I once wanted to do, to do that. But we do really need to develop a few statesmen. But until we do that we're not going to meet some of these needs. I mean, it's wonderful that, maybe, that Florida is one of only a few states that has no personal income tax, but without a means of taxation you can't satisfy some of these needs.

PK: Well, let's.....I knew we weren't too far down the road before we get into the subject of you and politics. And yes, it's true, and we will talk about your state senate try...

JS: But along the lines of the money, I also served on something which was called the State Comprehensive Plan Commission, what's better known as the Zwick Commission, which I guess Governor Graham appointed me to in 1984-1985, and this was to look at all the financial needs of the state of Florida, which were astronomical, and to come up with some kind of suggestion as to how these needs could be met. And, we ultimately came up with the suggestion, it was politically naive to think that you're going to get the people to amend the State Constitution, to pass a personal income tax, we've got too many senior citizens who are attracted to Florida on the representation that we didn't have a personal income tax, and so...but the only real tax we had that raises a lot of money is the sales tax. But the sales tax today is primarily a tax on products and we live today on a service-based economy and so we ultimately came up with the concept that the sales tax should be extended to services and that includes things like legal fees and accounting fees and computer fees and consulting fees and haircuts and all the rest of it. And this was very controversial but by some miracle in 1987 when Bobby Martinez, a Republican, yet, became governor, he embraced the concept initially and it passed the legislature...and it would have picked up at the time somewhere near an addition billion dollars a year, and today it would probably be two billion. But once it passed the legislature and it became law then all hell broke loose. Because one of the industries that was affected was the advertising industry and the advertising industry was deathly afraid, apparently, of the imposition of sales taxes on advertising, not only because of what it would do in Florida, but because they were

afraid that it would spread to other parts of the country. So, if you own and control all the radio stations and television stations and newspapers you can conduct a campaign without investing money, except your own, into defeating this you can do almost anything. And ultimately, after two or three sessions of the legislature, the governor and the legislature caved in, as I put it, and they repealed the law. In my book, that was one of the saddest days in the history of the state of Florida. And the need hasn't gone away, the need has only gotten greater, particularly as Florida becomes more a home of senior citizens with all health care needs and all the rest of it. You can have all the commissions you want and you can study all the schemes that may be possible but since the state can't print money, and since the state has no alternative but to balance its budget, I predict that they're going to come back to this idea, at least in part, maybe they'll leave the advertising industry out of it this time, for political reasons, but that's the only great source of potential money in the state of Florida is to extend the sales tax to services and we would make this a much better, more livable, state and it really wouldn't hurt things that much.

PK: You were a heavyweight when that happened in the political scene, and so was Bob Martinez. Did you communicate with Bob Martinez before he folded back on this issue?

JS: Yes, by the way to some extent, although I've known Bob Martinez for a long period of time, I think my family was one of his biggest customers when he owned and ran a restaurant here in Tampa, Cafe Seville, before he became mayor. And when he was mayor he appointed me to a number of things, but I've been a lifelong Democrat and a strong supporter of the Democratic Party and in 1986 I was the Democratic candidate for the State Senate, for the seat then vacated by Betty Castor, when she ran for Commissioner of Education. So when Bobby Martinez asked me personally to support him when he decided to run for governor I declined the invitation, not because I had anything against Bob Martinez personally, I think he did a basically pretty good job as mayor of Tampa, and ran the government really as well as a business as I've ever seen done, but I told him I couldn't support him because I was a supporter of the Democratic Party and I later became a candidate in the same election. But before the legislature finally caved in and repealed the law, there was all kinds of discussions, by the way, the major complaints which weren't that great could have been cured. I participated in a number of meetings in which the legislation had already been drafted, to cure the complaints in the sales tax on services, but the pressure was so great, and I'll tell you the truth, and he might agree with this today, I don't know, to a great degree, I think Governor Martinez' change of will in the repeal of the sales tax on services may well have cost him the reelection.

PK: I was going to ask you, I think that's the traditional wisdom _____....

JS: See, people just don't seem to like politicians who sometimes make promises that maybe they shouldn't have made, like "Read my lips, no new taxes" and one thing or another and maybe Bill Clinton's promise that he would have a middle-class tax cut and then for some reason or another they're statesmen enough, in some instances, to not be able to live up to these things because circumstances change. But, the people remember it.

PK: Well, before we talk about your senate race, that you almost won, or....

JS: That really wasn't very significant, my one and only...I think that I tired of serving on committees, although I've served on, I guess, some of the higher level committees in the state of Florida and locally. But the thing is, that all committees can do is recommend, you don't have a vote ultimately in implementing the decisions. And so I sort of wanted to have a vote and so in 1986 I did run for the state senate in this area for the seat that Betty Castor held when she ran for Commissioner of Education, my one and only entry into politics, and I didn't do too badly, I only needed 2,000 more votes out of 101,000.

PK: I saw that, I think I read it was 51,000, 49,000, something like that. Assuming you wanted to win it.....

JS: And I ran against a man John Grant whose been a state senator ever since and had been in the legislature for six or seven years before, and although John and I disagreed on a great many things philosophically, he was a very good politician.

PK: And has remained so.

JS: And he's remained so, that's right.

PK: Absolutely. Jim, let's go back to Tampa for a minute. Before...you have been appointed or dealt with housing up and down the scale. I mean I would want everybody to know that you have been a member, and only the fifth Floridian to be in the National Housing Hall of Fame, for example, but I want to talk for just a quick second about.....

JS: And, by the way, if you went to the National Housing Center in Washington where they have plaques of all the people who are in the National Housing Hall of Fame, and there's a little description of what it was you did, if anything, that made

it notable, and I think that what it says about Jim Shimberg is that Jim Shimberg was among the first generation of home builders who not only was a large community developer but also he developed the ability and participated greatly on a governmental level in developing land use and environmental legislation.

PK: Well, and I think that's the point, you are unique and I think that is the significance of the fact that mayors in Tampa have wanted and held your interest in housing as an advisor to Sandy Freedman and Bob Martinez.

JS: When Sandy Freedman was elected mayor, and I've been a friend of hers for a long time, she had a sincere interest in the housing area, and she asked me, would I sort of be an unofficial committee of one as a housing advisor to her as mayor and I said, well I'd be happy to do what I could, and really I helped Mayor Freedman develop the so-called Challenge Fund, which is the best example...It's easy to give speeches and we've all done this, and you're done it too, in which you talk about the fact that the solution to certain things is a public/private partnership, and it may well be true in some instances, but the housing program that Sandy Freedman developed as mayor of Tampa, the so-called Challenge Fund, is the best example I've ever seen of a true public/private partnership, where you had the city on the one hand, who leveraged federal funds to help in the rehabilitation of housing in Tampa, and building low-income housing, and you had the housing industry who did the work, the private sector, and you had certain non-profit groups, particularly church groups, who participated in this. This was truly a public/private partnership. It got a lot of national publicity. The secretary of HUD, now Cisneros was down to Tampa several times and the program was used as an example throughout the country as to what could be accomplished.

PK: And I think an awful lot as a publicity was achieved. David Osborne book, Reinventing Government, certainly publicized that program. How, looking back, Jim, would Tampa, from your point of view, has it done what it was supposed to do?

JS: Has Tampa done what it was supposed to do?

PK: In terms of housing.

JS: If you could read, which I guess I've still got in the office, if you could read this thing I wrote in 1958 when we were trying to attract investors, which we ultimately came up with a couple of hundred thousand dollars, which was a large sum of money in 1958 when we started Town 'n Country. Our projections as to the growth

of the Tampa area and all the rest of it, even in my wildest imagination, I never imagined the growth that would really occur in Tampa and Hillsborough County. And so from that point of view the market certainly existed here, if you made a living by developing land or selling housing or a multitude of other things. But from the point of view of, did we overall create the best community that we could have, with the best governmental structure and all the rest of it, I think and I think you think too because you and I worked together on something involving this, that the answer is definitely, no! I was involved as early as 1968 and 1970 in one of three ill-fated movements which would have consolidated the city of Tampa and Hillsborough County into one governmental entity. I really think that that was the most important thing that could have been done, but local elected public officials inherently opposed that because it in effect would have eliminated the jobs that they held and create an entirely new government. The closest we ever came was in 1970 when it lost by 7,000 votes. Arbitrary lines exist when you go from the city of Tampa to the unincorporated area of Tampa, Hillsborough County, but the problems don't change, and most of the growth in the last 10 or 15 or 20 years has not been in the city but has been in the unincorporated part of the county and there has been a total inability of the city and county government to necessarily work together and try to solve these problems. I think that would have been a great step forward. But, I say this, but this is a democratic community that we live in and the majority of the voters in Hillsborough County believe, for one reason or another, that that would not have been a good thing. Along the same line, when the current County Charter was adopted it provides that every five-years a so-called Charter Review Board would be appointed to examine county government, to see if it's operating as best it can and to make any suggestions as to amend it or how it could be approved. You and I served on the second of the three charter review boards that existed and if one way or another, for one reason or another, although some of us believe that Hillsborough County government would work much more efficiently if we had an elected chief executive rather than the present county administrator, county commission set up, no charter review board ever succeeded in submitting a proposal to change county government to the electorate. Whether it will ever occur or not I don't know. An interesting side note to the history of Hillsborough County which surprises a lot of people when you tell them this is, there has been three charter review boards in our history. All three charter review boards were chaired by home builders. The first charter review board was chaired by Matt Jetton who developed Carrollwood, who later was appointed to the County Commission after certain county commissioners got in criminal problems, I chaired the second charter review board, and the most recent charter review board was chaired by a person who served with you and I on the second board, Jim Lee, who is a home builder in Brandon and other places in the county. So, home

builders in some regard have participated on a civic point of view in some beneficial things.

PK: Let me ask you, talking about government and development and not specifically about the Charter Review Board, but just generally Tampa, Hillsborough County. Thinking about the problems from a development point of view. I say this just as a characterization, Jim, somebody said one time, if you want to understand the history of Tampa one has to go back to Ken Good and that raging development that was.....

JS: You have to go back a lot further than that. Maybe Ken Good is a prime example of it but when we first came to Tampa in the late '50s the public body, whether you're talking about the state, the county, the city, whoever it may be, encouraged growth and development. That was a public policy of the state of Florida. They tried to attract as much money into building and development, they encouraged building and development. A prime example may be not too away from where we're sitting is in Pasco County. In the '50s and even in to the '60s there were no building controls at all in Pasco County, no zoning, no building permits, no sub-division regulations. You could build the Empire State Building in Pasco County without a building permit. The excesses like that led, in many instances, to the pendulum swinging over in the other direction. It was very easy to get permits, the time period was very short. Now, as we developed more environmental controls, land use controls, more legislation, more growth management, more government bodies of one sort or another, the time became much longer, the process has become very bureaucratic, it's become very expensive. A study was done several times at the university level, the most noteworthy one was done by Rutgers University which came up with a figure that's probably low, that 25% of the cost of housing is the cost of regulation. I think it's higher today in Florida and in the Tampa Bay area. In one of the worst things, in my point of view, although here again the public may not agree with this, is when the public thinks it is well served by regulating things at different levels of government in inconsistent ways. Certain environmental things are regulated by the Corps of Engineers of the Federal Government, they're regulated by the state environmental departments or one thing or another, they're regulated by the Water Management District and we here in Hillsborough County think that we're making things even better by having our own Environmental Protection Commission. As a builder and developer this is almost impossible to deal with because if you satisfy one you've automatically violated the provisions of somebody else, and it's terribly expensive and time consuming. But the public thinks it's well served this way.

PK: And I suppose the public would look at your role on the charter review, after we elected you chairman, and say you're there and wanting an elected administrator because some way that will make that development role easier. Was that a true idea for you?

JS: No, that wasn't my motive, I hope. I really believed that it would make Hillsborough County government more effective and I still believe this today. But only time will tell whether such a thing will ever occur. But people sometimes criticize builders and developers and say that they're too friendly with politicians, that they're too involved in the political process. Well, I've been involved in the political process for forty years since I've lived in Florida. I've been a prime contributor to political candidates that I thought would do a good job, did I do that for ulterior, selfish reasons, I hope not, but if I got anything out of it, the one thing I guess I did get, I didn't necessarily get the ability to have something that I had a personal interest in approved or one thing or another, but I did get input, I did get the opportunity sometimes to sit down with, whether it's the governor or the county commissioner or the state legislature and be able to express my opinions, which they don't always take, but if you're going to be in a business that is totally regulated by elected public officials, and if you don't somehow participate in the process and try to make it better rather than worse, then I don't understand that, I don't really think that's a conflict of interest, some people may see it as such, I don't agree with that. I'm proud of all the things that I've done and the things I've been involved in the political area, or the committees that I've served on, and whether it's made Hillsborough County a better place to live, I don't know, only time will tell, but I sincerely believe that we...I have been involved I guess in housing for 8-9,000 families that live in the community and the development of land involving more, and I'm proud of the fact that there are thousands of people today that live in homes that were built by companies that I was involved in--LaMonte-Shimberg Builders or Town 'n Country Park or whatever it may be--that probably couldn't afford their own homes today if they had to buy it at today's appreciated prices. So, we were not the type of developer or home builder on a national basis who attracted people to Florida. We were too small, we couldn't afford to advertise on a national basis, or even a state basis. All we did was respond to the need that existed once the people came to Tampa or Hillsborough County for whatever reason they came here. And, we tried to build communities which not only provided good housing, but which provided schools and Little League fields and other facilities that made it more than a home, it made it a community.

PK: And I think you succeeded, at least in my opinion, to a great degree, Jim.

JS: Thanks.

PK: A Question about all of that. The quote I read about...or the quote I read from you that you've said about ten years ago was when you were pulling of the business of building houses, was it that you were going to be the last of the private developers, that it was going to become a big public development concept, and I guess that's true. Has it been better or worse?

JS: I think what I said...or what I should have said....I'm still involved, strictly on a private basis, in being a large-scale developer of land in Hillsborough County. Okay, but I think what I said is that, people like me, Matt Jetton who developed Carrollwood, is another example, and people that developed communities like ClaireMel City and Bay Crest and other communities in Hillsborough County, were people just like myself and my associates who were private individuals. But now the housing industry has changed. The housing industry is not primarily controlled. The bulk of the housing is built by the large nation-wide public companies. Companies like Lenar, US Homes, Pulte, Ryan, Ryland, Centex. There's nothing wrong with this, these companies have vast resources, in some instances they can do a better job than people perhaps like I could have done. But the one thing they lack is, the people who locally run these companies, who are more along the corporate executive line, they don't necessarily have the same interest in the community, they may not live in Tampa all their lives, all of their children and grandchildren may not live here, so they don't participate unfortunately I've observed to the same extent in community and civic things that I did and other people like me, and even from a home builder point of view we find it difficult today to get the same leadership in the housing industry in Florida and in Tampa, that we got before, because most of the activity lies in the public company realm. I'm a great advocate...I think this country is way better off because the country benefitted in many regards from small business. I think small family business really are a great thing. Now they may be a little out of vogue today, they may not be able to compete in today's world or today's economy, but I think they contributed a lot to the development of America.

PK: And I think you've contributed a lot to the development of Tampa on that very same basis, Jim. I think there's...and the people you name, Matt Jetton and others who have been doing it or who have done it certainly changed the face of Hillsborough County, you can't argue that. One of the....just a quick question on the subject before we leave it. Do they build better or worse house today then you built when you started. I don't even know what I mean by better or worse.

JS: I don't know either. The words better or worse are relative, but the housing industry, in all the time that I've been involved with it, 50 years or more, is probably the only industry in the country that there isn't a great, tremendous change in the technology, or the way that houses were built right after World War II, even if you go back to Levitt who developed large communities in Long Island for veterans coming back from World War II, there isn't a great deal of difference in the way we built in the late '50s when we first came to Tampa as against the way that homes are being built today. The technology hasn't changed that tremendously, there hasn't been tremendous cost savings because of mass production techniques and all the rest of it. It may well be that such a thing does exist to some extent in Japan and although the Japanese have dominated many industries in the United States, computers and the like, they've never really entered into the housing industry in the United States. The housing industry in Japan is quite computerized and quite modular and all the rest of it, so our...Oh, sure, there's a lot better product, in some regards on the markets today, then there were 40-50 years ago, insulation, appliances... When we first started in Tampa, central air conditioning was not a universal thing, and obviously nobody ever heard of television or computers, but there really isn't a tremendous difference in the way houses are built in the last 50 years and the quality is really not that much different.

PK: Huh, interesting. How about the community concept of recognizing and accepting that the individuals aren't doing it. You, today, have places like Westchase and Tampa Palms...

JS: By the way, Westchase is a fine development, Westchase is owned by a large public insurance company who developed the community and sold the lots to something like 14 builders, they've developed a fine community in Westcase.

PK: But they're planned communities...and

JS: That's right! But, Peter, the thing is, and this is a kind of a discouraging thing, financially, the history of large planned community developments has been dismal. You mentioned Ken Good and Tampa Palms. Now Ken Good was a unique example...he may be an example for good or bad of one of his kind, he was a great dreamer, he, or people he talked into it, including banks and financial institutions, lost very large sums of money. Very large sums of money went into developing something like Tampa Palms with the infrastructure, with the golf course, the club house, and all the rest of it. You could almost never recoup that amount of money and so the history of large communities, like Tampa Palms, unfortunately

Carrollwood Village is another example of this, something that I'm now involved in. We bought the remaining 1,100 lots in a large community in Brandon, Bloomingdale. It turns out that in many of these cases that the original person who conceived of the idea is not the one who ultimately benefited financially from the community, but it was the person who came along second or third who may have picked it up in a distressed sale from an insurance company or a bank and that's true of a number of communities in Tampa. That wasn't true, fortunately, that wasn't true of Town 'n Country Park. We started it and we finished it. But the multiples were so much less then. We bought the land in Town 'n Country initially for \$1,500 an acre, although that was a lot of money in those days today for a comparable thing you're talking about \$10-20-30,000 an acre. Only the big companies can somehow afford to do that.

PK: I understand that Jim. Connecting your comment about development and developers needing or wanting to be associated in politics. Would you comment on the annexation of Tampa Palms by the city of Tampa, because I'm sure you must have had some insight into that.

JS: From the point of view of the people who engineered this, I think from their point of view and probably from the city's point of view, and maybe the public good in general, they did a good thing. However, they also created certain problems, because the county, particularly in the utility area, is very hard pressed today to finance their water and sewer system and all the rest of it. When areas like Tampa Palms and Hunter's Green and the like were annexed into the city of Tampa the city of Tampa took over some of the fastest growing areas of the county, thereby denying the county government the funds that would have come from those areas and created certain problems which obviously, of course, wouldn't have existed if we'd had consolidation and only one governmental entity.

PK: We've got about 15 minutes left, or so, Jim, and I would be very remiss if we didn't spend some time talking about your community involvement away from housing. I think we need to do that. The most obvious and first one has to deal with your role with the development of University Community Hospital. You were a founding father.

JS: Well I...back in the middle '60s, around the time that the University of South Florida first became a significant thing, although the University I think was chartered in 1956, and graduated it's first class I think in '60 or '61 or '62, and north Tampa, this area, did not look like it looks today. But the number of people who were involved in business and doctors in this area conceived for a long time of the

need for an acute care general hospital in the north Tampa area. And, a number of attempts were made to do it and finally, in about 1965, a small group of people which included one of the past governors of the state of Florida, Doyle Carlton, it included John Allen, who was the first president of the University of South Florida, a prominent attorney in Tampa, Mitch Emanuel, and a couple of other people, Bruce Robbins, who owned a large lumber company that did business in this area, conceived of the idea of a hospital at 30th and Fletcher (30th now called Bruce B. Downs Blvd.) And, ultimately in order to finance it, this was one of the first hospitals that this was done with, they came up through the aid of a man in New York, with the idea that the financing of the hospital would be through the sale of tax exempt securities, but in order to do that it was necessary to vest the title in a public body and so the title to the land was deeded to Hillsborough County and then tax exempt bonds were sold and in the late '67 or '68, the Board of County Commissioners of Hillsborough County had to make a choice, the hospital was under construction and opened in early '68, how was the hospital going to be operated. It was assumed at the time that it would be operated in the same way and under the same body that Tampa General was operated under. Which at that time was called the Hospital and Welfare Board, which was really the Board of County Commissioners of Hillsborough County wearing different hats on a different day. And there was an appointed group called the hospital council, which I then served on, which was sort of advisors to the county on the operation of Tampa General Hospital and it was assumed that University Community would be operated the same way. But a few of us who were involved and who saw the extreme influence of politics in the hospital, which I don't think was a good thing, convinced the then County Commission, in particularly the man who for a number of years served as the chairman of the County Commission, Elsworth Simmons, that why don't you try as an experiment, one time, in Tampa and Hillsborough County, to separate hospitals and politics, because I don't think it's a very happy marriage to begin with, and the County Commission agreed and they gave a non-profit corporation, University Community Hospital, Inc. a long-term lease to the University Community Hospital provided that it would be run by a Community Board of Trustees that would be representative of the community. And the County Commission reserved the right to appoint 25 or 30 percent of the members of the Board, I was actually one of the people that was appointed by the County Commission to be on the initial Board of the University Community Hospital. Mr. Simmons, the chairman of the County Commission, also exercised a little influence I think behind the scenes when the first meeting of the Board of Trustees of the University Community Hospital was held as to who the chairman would be, and somehow, I got elected chairman of the University Community Hospital and I served as the chairman of the hospital for the first nine years, and I'm still a member

of the executive committee of the hospital. And, I'm very proud of what we've done at the University Community Hospital, which is today a hospital of 400 beds, but you really don't measure it in beds anymore, because with the very changing nature of health care, hospitals involved in a tremendous amount of outpatient facilities and home health care, and all the rest of it, and we've become a major force, one of the three major hospitals which obviously we weren't at the beginning in Tampa and Hillsborough County. And I think collectively we've run the hospital from a financial point of view in a very sound, successful way. The hospital was originally built with the sale of \$6 million worth of bonds, which built a 200 bed hospital. The most recent refinancing and bond issue at the University Community Hospital was \$131 million.

PK: That's a lot of growth.

JS: Quite a growth. But of course the hospital field is rapidly changing today. What the future holds, whether hospitals, be it Tampa General, St. Joseph's, University Community in this community can continue to exist solely as independent entities or whether they will become part of large chains, or groups, or joint ventures, only time will tell. But up to this point I think those of us who served on the Board of the University Community Hospital, and I've been privileged to serve on the University Community Hospital Board with what I consider to be some of the most effective, eminent, business and community leaders in this community. I'm proud of what we've accomplished. One of our original bylaws of rules and regulations was that no elected public official could be appointed to serve on the Board.

PK: Well you preserved the elimination of politics....

JS: The Board, although originally appointed partly by the county and partly representative of other groups, after the original appointment was solely self perpetuating, in other words, we elected and re-elect ourselves whoever serves on the Board.

PK: That's interesting. Again, within the time that's left, I'd be remiss if we didn't at least talk enough about the James H. Shimborg Center for Affordable Housing at the University of Florida. How did that come to pass?

JS: Florida has obviously been very good to me. I was very lucky at the time I came here and how we did. I was financially successful in the housing area and the main part of the housing area that I was involved in was really affordable housing, particularly Town 'n Country. My wife and I have five wonderful children, four out

of the five graduated from the University of Florida, two from the law school at the University of Florida. The state of Florida subsidizes, to a tremendous extent, maybe an unnecessary extent, public education in Florida, particularly on the higher education level, particularly in law school and medical and everybody should have the opportunity to have an education regardless of their financial resources, but for those people who can well afford to pay for it themselves, or who can afford to pay for their children, I felt that there was an obligation to give something back. And so with a little prodding from John Lombardi, the president of the University of Florida, and a few of the people I knew there, I was fortunate enough to be able to give a donation to the University which was matched by the state of Florida, which is one of the best programs that the state of Florida ever created, like the Eminent Scholar Program, that if you give \$600,000 the state will match it with \$400,000 and the University in Gainesville was good enough to create a center called the Shimberg Center for Affordable Housing. Just recently I saw the status of this and between the money that I gave \$1,000,000 and the money that the state put in and the earnings on the money, since only the interest is used actually in cases like this, there's now almost \$1,800,000 that is in this fund and five or six percent of it each year goes to help in connection with the operation of this center for affordable housing which is starting to do some, I think, worthwhile things. So, I think, maybe to a minor degree, that was a good thing.

PK: Oh, I think it was a great thing even if you and I, at some point, disagreed about where it ought to go, at least it.... At least, I think, doing it ---both talking - can't hear---

JS: Maybe the time will come when we'll be able to do something in other places.

PK: Understood! Speaking of other places. You've also had a long time connection to the founding issues around USF as a member of this community. And, we're sitting in the middle of a...in 1996...

JS: And I'm proud to say, by the way, that just recently was I asked to, and became a member of the Board of the University of South Florida Foundation.

PK: Congratulations!

JS: And I've had a long relationship and association with Mrs. Castor who is now the president of the University of South Florida, going back to the early '70s when she was first elected to the Board of County Commissioners of Hillsborough and I think that it's fair to say, that I've been a prime friend and supporter of Mrs. Castor.

PK: I think you have been and I think the University has been well supported by you over the years, Jim. Well, you've done an awful lot in your life. What are you most proud of?

JS: I think that I am proud of my small part in the University Community Hospital. I guess I'm proud of the fact that, together with a lot of other people, we enabled a lot of people to have decent affordable housing in a community that was good and that they could afford to live in. I'm proud of the fact that, in a minor way, I've participated in the political process in Tampa, Hillsborough County and the state of Florida, not always achieving what I wanted to but that's part of the give and take of the world that we live in, and Peter, you can't necessarily pass on...it's good that you can't pass on to your children and grandchildren the bad things that you may have done or your bad characteristics, and you also can't pass on, necessarily, the things that maybe were good or worthwhile, but in many regards, whether it's participating in community affairs, whether it's being involved in certain charitable and philanthropic endeavors...and I also currently happened to be the chairman of the Community Foundation of Tampa, I hope that my children, and I think that they will, and they're starting to show signs of this, will carry on some of these same things that I've tried to do and really will be imbued with a spirit to try to make this a better community for themselves and their children.

PK: If they accomplish half of what Jim Shimberg accomplished they will be doing extremely well because you've done more than probably three other people can accomplish in their lifetime.

JS: You're kind in saying that.

PK: I suppose that it would be equally important for people to know that that civic sense of yours and that political sense of yours and that development career of yours really came together in a profound kind of way. You attributed that, in an article, or that interview that I read, to luck. Now, I still don't buy it, Jim.

JS: Luck plays a big part in a lot of things. Nobody, when they're in their teens or their twenties or they're going to school, or they first get married, nobody can sit down and put down on paper and really plan in detail how you're going to live the rest of your life. So, a lot of it is chance and, I don't know. At the same time that myself and my brother and Charlie Lamont came to Tampa in the late '50s, and we persuaded a few people to invest money in us, to help become community developers and home builders in the state of Florida, mainly people in New York,

hundreds of other people in New York invested with similar people who were going to become builders and developers in Florida and other places, and most of them lost their money. The people that invested with us were lucky that they just happened to pick out two or three individuals who somehow succeeded. The chances are that it would have gone the other way.

PK: Well the old adage is, you'd rather be lucky than good.

JS: Sure, there's no question about it. And a lot of it also has to do with being in the right place at the right time.

PK: Well, I think, all that luck notwithstanding, Jim, that you have demonstrated over your lifetime a tremendous amount of talent and I for one am please and gratified to have had the opportunity to share this time with you this morning.

JS: My feeling are mutual on that subject.

PK: And I suspect that students who come after you will benefit from the opportunity of looking at your career, maybe in ways that you didn't. What would you say to the following observation? If you could, in five words, to a student say, what would you like to be remembered for, the single thing, what would you like to be remembered for?

JS: I think that I would like to be remembered as one who tried to make his community a better place to live for his children and grandchildren, somebody who recognized that government can't do everything and there was an obligation, if you were moderately financially successful to try to contribute back something in a way to help solve a lot of these problems, not necessarily by looking for more handouts from Tallahassee and Washington....And, we've said before, you know, somebody who enabled thousands of families to live in safe, affordable, decent housing.

PK: Well, I think you accomplished whatever and however you see yourself, I know that people will see you as a major and significant contributor to Tampa forever....

JS: And I think from the point of view, by the way, which is maybe a little off the point, but, talking about big public companies and all, if you work for a large company, if you work for the government, you can retire one day, people seem to be doing it earlier, and the day after you retire you don't ever need to think about all the things that you were involved in for the last 30 or 40 years. If you're in a

situation, like mine, where you were involved in a lot of personal, financial investment, and all the rest of it, there is no such thing as retiring. But, in my book that's good. In other words, I've seen too many people who have retired, who were very talented people, who, the minute they retired they lost interest in things. I hope never to retire and to be able to participate and do the type of thing I'm doing as long as I am physically to do so. I hate these deals where they have mandatory retirement ages.

PK: Well, I know one thing, that the community will be worse off the day that that happens. Jim, thank you very much, appreciate the opportunity.

JS: Peter, thank you very much, and thank the University of South Florida for making this type of oral history available for whatever good it may do for people who see it now and years in the future.

PK: Good Enough!