

PROTECTED LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

LANDMARK NAME: Mr. & Mrs. Alfred E. Riedel House

OWNERS: Collin and Jacquelyn Cox

APPLICANTS: Same

LOCATION: 3428 Piping Rock Lane, Houston, Texas 77027

AGENDA ITEM: B

HPO FILE NO.: 21PL191

DATE ACCEPTED: 04/12/2021

HAHC HEARING: 04/22/2021

SITE INFORMATION: Lot 13, Block 59, River Oaks Section 7. The site includes a two-story, single-family 5,291 square foot brick house built in 1939 and situated on a 15,720 square foot lot.

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED: Protected Landmark Designation

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The Alfred E. Riedel House was designed in 1939 by Houston architects, Harvin C. Moore and Hermon Lloyd. Prolific developer Claude Clay Rouse built the house on spec. and it was sold to Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Emanuel Riedel in 1940. During their career, architects Moore and Lloyd created a substantial body of work in Houston, including over eighty-four houses in River Oaks, as well as public and commercial buildings such as the Memorial Center and Chapel at Rice University.

Mr. Alfred Riedel and his wife, Mrs. Mildred Schlafke Riedel were the first owners of the Colonial Revival home on 3428 Piping Rock Lane. The Riedel family moved from Minnesota to Houston and resided on Piping Rock for over fifty years. For more than twenty years Alfred Riedel was employed as the Secretary and Treasurer at Sanitary Farms Dairies, Inc. a large company that had operations in Iowa, Minnesota and Texas.

The Riedel House at 3428 Piping Rock meets Criteria 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 for Landmark Designation and Criteria 1 for Protected Landmark Designation.

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

River Oaks

River Oaks is adjacent to Buffalo Bayou and Memorial Park in west central Houston. Development in the residential garden suburb, which comprises 1,100 acres, began in the 1920s through the foresight and persistence of brothers Will Hogg (1875-1930) and Mike Hogg (1885-1941), and attorney Hugh Potter (1888-1968). The nucleus of the expansive subdivision predates the Hoggs' and Potter's involvement. By 1924, Country Club Estates, the section south of the newly established River Oaks Country Club, had been platted, but not developed. The Hogg brothers bought out the original investors and established Country Club Estates, Inc., later renamed the River Oaks Corporation.

Mike Hogg's friend, Hugh Potter, was installed as president of the corporation. Under his expert direction, the development of River Oaks began in earnest. Not only was the existing section developed, the corporation also busily acquired land on all sides of the original Country Club Estates. Between 1926 and 1947, an additional nineteen platted subdivisions were joined to River Oaks.

A study of noteworthy American suburban communities, particularly Roland Park in Baltimore and the Country Club District in Kansas City, was responsible for such innovative ideas as the institution of architectural controls in River Oaks, the levying of a private tax to support a maintenance and services fund, and the creation of a property owners' association to enforce deed restrictions. Will Hogg was especially determined that River Oaks serve as a model of enlightened community planning standards for Houston. He retained Kansas City landscape architects Hare & Hare to provide a master plan that would protect the environmental integrity and natural beauty of the area.

The developers also hired J. C. Nichols, who built Kansas City's Country Club Plaza, one of the first major shopping centers in the United States, to serve as a design consultant. The River Oaks master plan included home sites, a fifteen-acre campus for River Oaks Elementary School (1926, Harry D. Payne), two shopping centers, and esplanades planted with flowers. The plan called for underground utility lines, eliminated alleys, allowed only three intersecting streets and provided rigid building codes. Deed restrictions and centralized community control assured exclusivity; approval of house designs by a panel of architects and citizens and a minimum purchase price of \$7,000 were required.

On March 15, 1926, the subdivision's developers announced a "Room for All Predevelopment Sale" for River Oaks: Section 1. An additional 134 lots were put on the market, nearly doubling the number of house sites offered in the original development. The lots in Block 40 on Skokie Drive (renamed Pelham Drive) served as the southern boundary of River Oaks. The general restrictions for the new tract required that single-family homes be at least two-stories tall with the exception of 13 lots in Block 40. The least expensive homes in Block 40 were to cost no less than \$7,500, while the price requirements on the remaining homes on Pelham Drive ranged from \$12,000 to \$18,000.

C.C. Rouse, Builder/Developer (1896-1979)

Claude Clay Rouse was a prolific and well-known builder who was responsible for constructing more than a dozen homes in River Oaks, and many more throughout the Riverside, Tanglewood and Southampton neighborhoods. Mr. Rouse often reused the same basic designs for his houses and customized them by adding or subtracting elements according to the owner's desires and budget.

C.C. Rouse was born in Pleasant Valley, Oklahoma, to parents George Rouse and Emma Davis on February 15, 1896. In 1925, Rouse founded his lumber and construction business. The firm began as Rouse Lumber & Building Company on Montrose Boulevard and later moved to 1409 Lincoln Street and was renamed C.C. Rouse Building Company.

Rouses' son-in-law Tynes Sparks joined the family business in 1948, and took over the operations when C.C. Rouse retired in 1966. C. C. Rouse died in Houston in October 1979 and was laid to rest in Forest Park Westheimer Cemetery. Rouse's company is still in business today as the Tynes Sparks Building Corporation.

According to the Tynes Sparks website, "In the late 1920s C. C. Rouse began to change the role of a typical house in Houston from shelter to a place for splendid entertainment." During this time, oil was booming in Houston. It was increasingly popular for newly wealthy oilmen and their families to entertain. Rouse took note of this trend and began to build large spec homes capable of hosting the parties that were being held at country clubs. The website elaborates, "Rouse was confident in his idea for building a spec home in River Oaks. One of the company's business mottos was to take the party out

of the country club and bring it home to a mansion. Floor plans of C. C. Rouse homes were designed so that 100 people at a time could gather and circulate in the home with ease. Bedrooms were separated from the main living areas for privacy. Kitchens were built to handle the preparation of major social events. Living rooms featured palatial detailing.” By the 1930s Rouse’s idea had taken off and he was building many large spec houses in River Oaks. Some of the other C. C. Rouse homes built in the neighborhood include:

- 3612 Ella Lee
- 3215 Locke Lane
- 3602 Wickersham
- 3469 Piping Rock Lane
- 2136 Brentwood Drive (City of Houston Landmark)
- 3646 Piping Rock Lane
- 2429 Brentwood Drive
- 3014 Del Monte Drive
- 2504 Brentwood Drive
- 3627 Del Monte Drive
- 3609 Inwood Drive (City of Houston Landmark)
- 3663 Del Monte Drive
- 3671 Inwood Drive
- 3637 Olympia
- 3719 Inwood Drive
- 3814 Chevy Chase

Harvin Moore, architect (1905-1994)

Hermon Lloyd, architect (1909-1989)

Hermon Lloyd, a 1931 Rice graduate, teamed up with Harvin Moore, another undergraduate in the Rice architecture program, to design party decorations and sets. The two worked well together, and in 1934, they formed the firm of Moore & Lloyd. They were first located in the Citizen’s State Bank Building downtown. Several years later, they designed a building at 2006 West Alabama which became the first architectural office in Houston with central air conditioning. According to Harvin Moore’s son, architect Barry Moore, “Moore and Lloyd were soon very popular and very busy. The reputation of the firm rested largely on their works in River Oaks.” The firm’s work continually increased during the 1930s. The commercial work was often for the same clients as their residential designs. The residences were usually traditional in style and the commercial buildings were more “Moderne.” Barry Moore attributes this to the fact that clients wished to appear “progressive in business and traditional in family values.”

During their partnership, Moore and Lloyd designed many commercial, civic and military buildings, including over eighty-four homes in River Oaks. The catalogue of Moore and Lloyd works put together by Michael Wilson for the Houston Public Library is extensive. A selection of their River Oaks homes includes:

- 3379 Inwood (Hamman House, City Landmark)
- 2132 Troon (Kendall-Levine House, City Landmark)
- 3310 Del Monte Drive (1934) (demolished)

- 2228 Del Monte Drive (1934) (demolished)
- 2133 Pine Valley (1935) *“Home of the Month: McCall’s”*
- 1839 Kirby Drive (1935) (demolished)
- 1927 Bellmeade Road (1935) (demolished)
“Architectural Forum: 101 Finest Small Homes”
- 2125 Bellmeade Road (1935)
- 3257 Ella Lee (1935) (demolished)
- 2940 Chevy Chase (1935)
- 1558 Kirby Drive (1935)
- 2148 Looscan Lane (1935)
- 2117 Looscan Lane (1935) (demolished)
“Home of the Month: McCall’s”
- 2129 Looscan Lane (1936) (demolished)
- 1112 Shepherd Drive (1935)
- 2404 Brentwood Drive (1935)
- 2216 Chilton Road (1936) (demolished)
“Home of the Month: McCall’s”
- 2137 Chilton Road (1936) (demolished)
- 2132 Troon Road (1936)
- 1801 Sharp Place (1937)
- 3239 Locke Lane (1936)
- 1537 Kirby Drive (1936)
- 2022 Chilton Road (1936) (demolished)
- 2136 Pelham Drive (1936)
- 3215 Ella Lee (1937)
- 2036 Chilton Road (1936) (demolished)
- 3324 Ella Lee Lane (1937) (demolished)
- 3068 Reba (1937)
- 5 Briarwood Court (1937)
- 2440 Inwood Drive (1937)
- 3417 Ella Lee Lane (1938)
- 3412 Piping Rock Lane (1938)
- 7 Briarwood Court (1938)
- 3208 Chevy Chase Drive (1938)
- 1910 Kirby Drive (1938) (demolished)
- 2327 Claremont Lane (1938) (demolished)
- 2057 Claremont Lane (1939)
- 3689 Del Monte Drive (1939) (demolished)
- 3413 Piping Rock Lane (1939)
- 2033 Claremont Lane (1940)
- 1909 Olympia Drive (1939)
- 3610 Meadow Lake Lane (1940) (demolished)
- 3225 Reba Drive (1940)
- 1665 Willowick (1940) (demolished)
- 3666 Chevy Chase Drive (1940) (demolished)

By the end of the 1930’s, Moore and Lloyd began to move in different directions and, by the entry of the United States into World War II, the firm had dissolved. Hermon Lloyd sought out more commercial contracts and established the firms Lloyd and Morgan and then Lloyd, Morgan and Jones. After the partnership ended, Moore became an architect for the U.S. Navy and designed naval bases and federal buildings in Houston and throughout Texas. Harvin Moore is also credited with being one of Houston’s earliest preservationists.

Following Pearl Harbor, Moore applied to Congressman Albert Thomas to gain entrance to the Naval Officers Candidate School. The Congressman convinced Moore that he would better serve the government in his capacity as an experienced architect. Thus started a twenty-year relationship where Moore received military commissions for naval bases in Texas, and later, for federal projects in Texas. During this phase of his career, he also received commissions for churches and industrial buildings.

In 1954, Moore became one of Houston’s earliest preservationists by saving the Kellum-Noble house (City of Houston Protected Landmark), which had fallen into disrepair after many years of use as a City of Houston Parks Department facility. Moore was one of three who started the Harris County Heritage Society with the mission to save the Kellum-Noble house from demolition. According to Barry Moore, “Moore was one of the few practicing architects of the time who did not see a concern with historic preservation as incompatible with an interest in modern architecture. With the Heritage Society, he worked to locate worthy historic structures, raise funds for their restoration, and move them to Sam Houston Park. Moore restored the Nichols-Rice-Cherry House (c.1850) and the San Felipe Cottage, among others, during his years with the Society.”

Alfred E. Riedel (11/30/1904-12/16/1979)

Mildred S. Riedel (c.1900-July 11,1998)

Alfred Emanuel Riedel was born in Fridley, Minnesota on November 30, 1904 to parents Albin Riedel and Ida Nelson. He graduated from the University of Minnesota where he was a member of the Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity. In 1925, at age 21, he was working as a Bank Teller in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Riedel moved to Houston in 1928 where he began working as the Secretary and Treasurer of Sanitary Farm Dairies, Inc. The dairy company had operations in three states: Iowa, Minnesota and Texas. Its largest presence was in Iowa with locations in three cities there: Iowa City, Cedar Rapids and Clinton. St. Paul, Minnesota and Houston, Texas were the other cities where the dairy had facilities. In the 1940s, the dairy's motto was "Extra Care makes it Extra Good" and "Ice Cream, it's Wonderful." These slogans were emblazoned on the company milk bottles, cottage cheese containers and other packaging.

In October 1929, Alfred married Mildred Schlafke, of Outagamie, Wisconsin. Mildred was born around 1900 to immigrant parents, William from Germany and Veronica from Austria. In 1910, her father William was working as a cheesemaker at his own factory, ten years later he was employed as an auto mechanic.

Mildred grew up in Marshfield, Wisconsin where she graduated from Marshfield High School in the class of 1915. By age 19 she was working as a stenographer. A few years later she became a teacher.

In the late 1920s, Mildred attended Lawrence College and the University of Minnesota and was a member of Kappa Delta sorority. Alfred and Mildred met at the University of Minnesota and they were married on October 19, 1929 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Their wedding announcement appeared on October 21, 1929 in the Appleton, Wisconsin *Post-Crescent* newspaper and stated that "after a honeymoon in New Orleans and other southern points, Mr. and Mrs. Riedel will make their home in Houston, Texas."

In 1940, Mr. & Mrs. Riedel purchased the spec house on Piping Rock from developer C.C. Rouse. The home was valued at \$18,000. At the time, Mr. Riedel was earning a salary of \$5,000 a year as Secretary/Treasurer at Sanitary Farms Dairies. The Riedel's raised their three children, Betty Lynn, William and Nancy Ann at the address. Alfred Riedel lived at 3428 Piping Rock for nearly forty years, until his passing in 1979. Mrs. Riedel sold the home in 1994 to William and Gaile Proler after living there for fifty-four years. In 2002, Michael Alsup and Madeleine Duvic bought the home. In 2019, they sold it to the current owners, the Cox family, who have beautifully restored the property.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Colonial Revival Style

The Riedel House is an excellent example of the Colonial Revival style, which was popular in the United States between 1890 and 1935. Colonial Revival style resulted from a rejection of the ornate Queen Anne Revival style, and a desire to return to a more "traditional" American building type. The

style took on added popularity with the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in the 1920s. This style draws from the simple building forms typical of early American colonial structures, and elements of classical or Georgian architecture. It is closely related to the Neoclassical Revival and Georgian Revival styles. Colonial Revival residential structures are typically one or two stories, with hipped or gabled roofs and symmetrical facades. The entryway or porch is the primary focus, often highlighted with a decorative crown or pediment. Other areas of elaboration include the cornice and windows.

Architectural Description

The two-story Riedel house comprises 5,291 square feet on a 15,720 square foot lot and faces north on Piping Rock Lane. The house is sited in the middle of the lot, and is constructed of brick veneer that has been painted white. Its façade consists of five symmetrically arranged bays and is dominated by a central, full-height portico supported by four Doric columns.

An oversized, eight-over-twelve, double-hung window is on the first floor of the far left bay. Centered above this window is a smaller eight-over-eight window. Each of the windows has louvered shutters. A side-gabled roof with grey asphalt shingles tops the left bay.

The second bay is positioned immediately to the left of the central portico. It mimics the design of the first bay and it is also comprised of a matching set of windows. A six-over-nine double-hung window on the first floor is mirrored by a six-over-six window above on the second floor. The side-gabled roof and copper gutters continue above this bay.

The third, central bay of the house consists of a prominent two-story portico that dominates the façade. On the first floor, the front door is centered and flanked on either side by six-over-nine double-hung windows. The entry is topped by a fanlight. The original front door has been restored. The door has three square, centered, raised panels. Three six-over-six windows are positioned on the second story above and mirror the arrangement below. A triangular pediment with a horizontal cornice surmounts the colonnade below. Four rosettes are positioned above the capitals of each of the columns.

The fourth bay, to the right of the portico, corresponds exactly to the second bay on the left side. It consists of a matching arrangement of windows.

The fifth and final bay on the far right side of the home has a pair of six-over-six windows on the first floor, with an eight-over-eight window centered above. The pair of windows on the first floor is surrounded by decorative wood paneling that mirrors the shutters on the second floor window above. As on the left side of the home, the roof is side gabled.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ancestry.com, *1910, 1920, 1930, and 1940 United States Federal Census*. Accessed March 2021.
_____, *U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995*.
_____, *Texas Birth Certificates, 1880-1982*.
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_____, *Texas Marriage Records and Index, 1837-2015*.

HAHC RECOMMENDATION

The Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission recommends to City Council the Protected Landmark Designation of the [Mr. & Mrs. Alfred E. Riedel House](#) at [3428 Piping Rock Lane](#).

EXHIBIT A

PHOTO

MR. & MRS. ALFRED E. RIEDEL HOUSE
3428 PIPING ROCK



EXHIBIT B
SITE MAP
MR. & MRS. ALFRED E. RIEDEL HOUSE
3428 PIPING ROCK

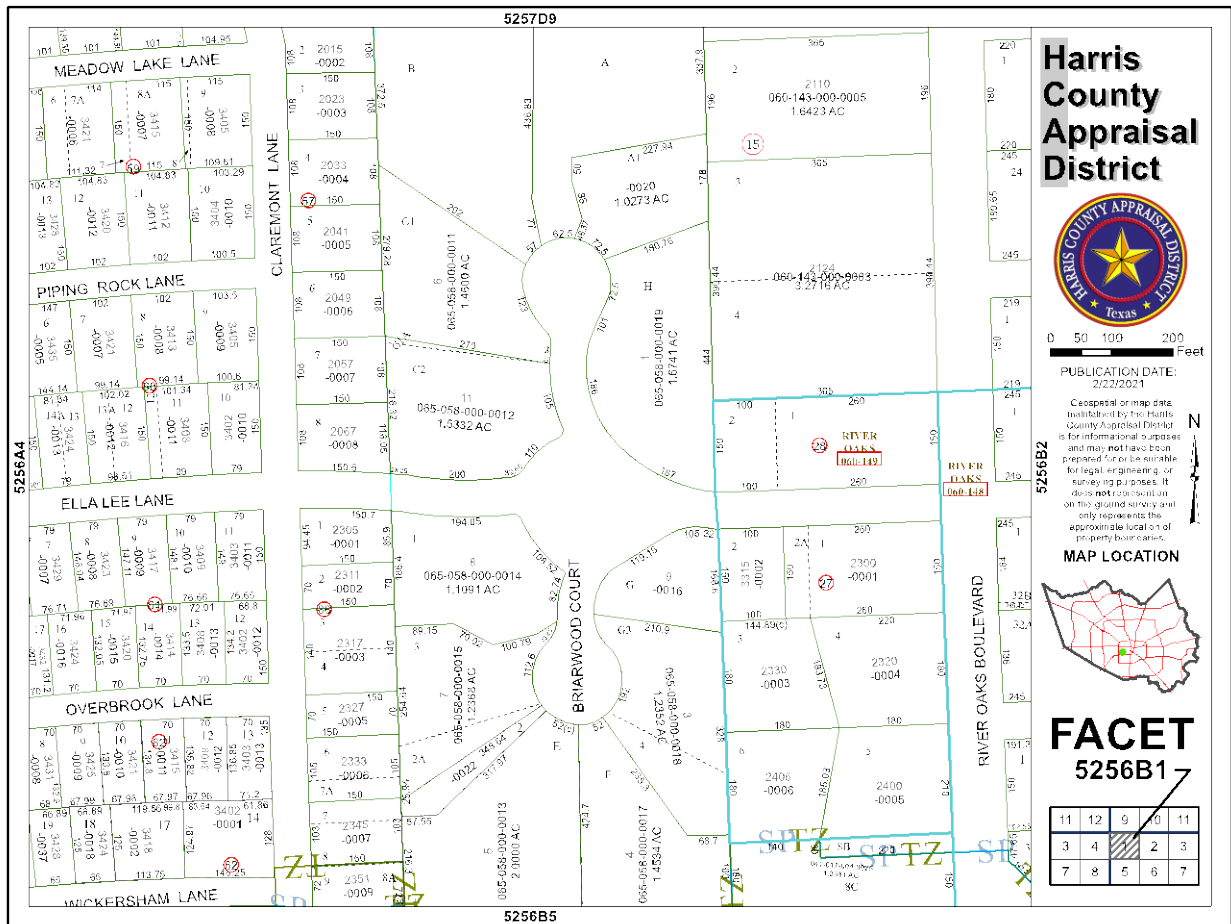


EXHIBIT C
SURVEY
3428 PIPING ROCK

