

# CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

## PROTECTED LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

**LANDMARK NAME:** Reverend Ned P. Pullum House

**OWNER:** Rutherford B. H. Yates Museum, Inc.

**APPLICANT:** Same as Owner

**LOCATION:** 1319 Andrews Street – Freedmen’s Town  
National Register Historic District

**AGENDA ITEM:** III.b

**HPO FILE NO:** 07PL44

**DATE ACCEPTED:** June-27-2007

**HAHC HEARING:** July-25-2007

**PC HEARING:** Aug-02-2007

**SITE INFORMATION:** Lot 5, Block 64, W.R. Baker Addition, SSBB, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The site includes a historic one-story wood frame house on a high-raised foundation.

**TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED:** Protected Landmark Designation

### HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The home of Reverend Ned P. and Emma Pullum, located at 1319 Andrews Street in the Freedmen’s Town National Register Historic District, was constructed circa 1898. Reverend Pullum was at one time the Pastor of Bethel Baptist Church and later the founder and pastor of Friendship Baptist Church which are both located in Freedmen’s Town. Reverend Ned Pullum was also a successful entrepreneur who started the Pullum Standard Brickworks which had been located near the present day location of Magnolia Cemetery near Allen Parkway Drive and Montrose Boulevard. Pullum also dealt in real estate, served on the committee to create Houston’s Carnegie Library, as well as helped to found the Union Hospital, which was one of the very first hospitals to serve Houston’s African American population. Pullum was also very active socially and was a member of the Free Masons and is mentioned in Houston’s Red Book which ‘listed the social, professional, religious, educational and industrial interests of Houston’s African American population.’

Founded just after Emancipation on the southern banks of Buffalo Bayou, the original Freedmen’s Town settlement grew to become the economic, spiritual, and cultural focus of Houston’s black community. More than 95% of Houston’s first black businesses were located in the neighborhood.

The Reverend Ned P. Pullum House meets Criteria 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8, as well as being constructed before 1905, and being a contributing building to the Freedmen’s Town National Register Historic District, for Landmark and Protected Landmark Designation.

### HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

Reverend Ned Pullum was a native of Pickensville, Alabama, and moved to Texas in 1895 to become a pastor of a church in Beaumont. His wife Emma Eddings Pullum was a native of Lowndes County, Mississippi. The Pullums moved to Houston a year later where Ned became pastor of a church in the Sixth Ward. When Reverend Jack Yates died in 1897, Pullum was chosen as pastor of Bethel Baptist Church in the Freedmen’s Town area of Houston’s Fourth Ward. Pullum was also a successful entrepreneur who acquired and sold several rental properties in the neighborhood. On January 15, 1903, he resigned as pastor of Bethel Baptist due to some misunderstanding and organized Friendship Baptist Church in the Hardcastle Addition of Fourth

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Ward. At the 1905 National Negro Business League Conference held in Chicago, Illinois, Pullum commented that he paid \$25,000 to build the new church.

Reverend Pullum and wife Emma purchased Lot 5 of Block 64 in the W.R. Baker SSBB Addition in 1898. The land was purchased from an F.J. Smith for \$200 down payment with an additional \$800 to be paid in monthly payments of \$10. The Houston City Directory lists Reverend Pullum as residing at this site in 1898 so it is presumed that the home was constructed earlier in that same year. The home appears in a 1907 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map of the area, the first available for this particular area of Houston. On the map it appears largely unchanged from its current configuration.

In 1907, Pullum bought some property from the Stanley family on which he started his Pullum Standard Brickworks. The brickyard was located north of San Felipe between Taft and Montrose Streets in a section of what is now Magnolia Cemetery. He also owned two pharmacies and People's Pride Shoe Repair at 813 Prairie Street from 1908 to 1912. Pullum was very active as a civic leader in the Fourth Ward community and was known for helping his fellow man. He was a member of the Magnolia Lodge No. 4 Free and Accepted Masons, on the committee to establish the Colored Carnegie Library, and was a contributor to Union Hospital, Houston's first black hospital.

Reverend Pullum was pastor of Friendship Baptist Church for twenty-four years until his health began to fail. On June 18, 1927, Reverend Pullum died from acute indigestion leaving behind his wife Emma, sons William and Edward, and daughter Mary. He was buried in College Park Cemetery located in the 3500 block of West Dallas, which is also the burial location for Reverend Jack Yates.

In 1915, a photograph of the home was published in *The Red Book of Houston*, a publication that listed the social, professional, religious, educational and industrial interests of Houston's black population. From the early 1900s until 1936, the Houston Electric Company's San Felipe Route ran in front of Reverend Pullum's home on Andrews Street before heading north on Wilson Street.

The Pullum house was listed as a contributing property of high significance in the Freedmen's Town National Register Historic District, designated in 1985.

### **ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND RESTORATION HISTORY**

The main elevation of the house faces north on Andrews Street and features a wraparound porch. The original 1,435 square foot floor plan of the house consisted of a parlor, kitchen, dining room, master bedroom and a guest room with a door (transom overhead) that leads out to the wraparound porch. The interior of the house has wood floors, crown moldings, decorative trim, arched doorways, rounded doors, transoms, and a fireplace. A sliding pocket door once separated the dining room and parlor room.

The front door has a transom and the narrow windows flanking the door have leaded glass designs. The bay windows have art glass in the upper sashes. Two pass-through windows on the front of the house are tall enough so that when raised from the inside, one is able to walk out onto the front porch. While some gingerbread millwork suggests an older Victorian flair, the

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Doric porch columns on brick pedestals suggest an awareness of the newer Colonial Revival styles.

The house is raised several feet on a generous brick foundation with decorative brick skirting, which attests to Reverend Pullum's involvement in the brick business. Porches were prominent features of homes in the Freedmen's Town district. Not only did porches help residents survive the hot summer climate, they also served as transitional spaces between home and community, providing a sheltered space for residents to converse with friends and neighbors and to keep an eye on children playing outside. The porch in the rear of the house was later enclosed and made into a bathroom and spare bedroom. The original outbuilding has since been destroyed. There have been no modifications or structural changes to the house since the death of Emma Pullum in 1934 and the overall configuration of the building has not changed substantially since 1907.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Harris County Deed Records, Volume 66, p. 97, 130, Volume 98, p. 417, Volume 107, p. 422.

Houston City Directories, 1870-1949.

Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for Houston, 1896, 1907.

United States Census, 1880, Galveston County, Texas.

United States Census, 1880, Harris County, Texas.

*The information and sources provided by the applicant for this application have been reviewed, verified, edited and supplemented with additional research and sources by Thomas McWhorter, Planning and Development Department, City of Houston.*

## **APPROVAL CRITERIA FOR PROTECTED LANDMARK DESIGNATION**

The HAHC shall review each application for designation of a protected landmark that is included in an application for designation of a landmark at the same time and in the same manner as it reviews and considers the application for a landmark. The HAHC and the Planning Commission, in making recommendations with respect to a protected landmark designation, and the City Council, in making a designation, shall consider whether the building, structure, site, or area meets at least three of the criteria in Section 33-224, or one of the criteria in Section 33-229, as follows:

**S      NA** **S - satisfies    NA - not applicable**

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Meets at least three of the following (Sec. 33-229(a)(1):

- (1) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area possesses character, interest or value as a visible reminder of the development, heritage, and cultural and ethnic diversity of the city, state, or nation;
- (2) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is the location of a significant local, state or national event;

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- (3) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is identified with a person who, or group or event that, contributed significantly to the cultural or historical development of the city, state, or nation;
- (4) Whether the building or structure or the buildings or structures within the area exemplify a particular architectural style or building type important to the city;
- (5) Whether the building or structure or the buildings or structures within the area are the best remaining examples of an architectural style or building type in a neighborhood;
- (6) Whether the building, structure, object or site or the buildings, structures, objects or sites within the area are identified as the work of a person or group whose work has influenced the heritage of the city, state, or nation;
- (7) Whether specific evidence exists that unique archaeological resources are present;
- (8) Whether the building, structure, object or site has value as a significant element of community sentiment or public pride.

### AND

- (9) If less than 50 years old, or proposed historic district containing a majority of buildings, structures, or objects that are less than 50 years old, whether the building, structure, object, site, or area is of extraordinary importance to the city, state or nation for reasons not based on age (Sec. 33-224(b)).

### OR

- The property was constructed before 1905 (Sec. 33-229(a)(2));

### OR

- The property is listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places or designated as a “contributing structure” in an historic district listed in the National Register of Historic Places (Sec. 33-229(a)(3));

### OR

- The property is recognized by the State of Texas as a Recorded State Historical Landmark (Sec. 33-229(a)(4)).

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Houston Planning Commission accept the recommendation of the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission and recommend to Houston City Council the Landmark and Protected Landmark Designation of the Reverend Ned P. Pullum House at 1319 Andrews Street.

