

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

LANDMARK NAME: Tuttle House
OWNERS: James C. and Deanna Murphy
APPLICANTS: Same as Owners
LOCATION: 2223 Inwood Drive - River Oaks
30-DAY HEARING NOTICE: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: VII.a
HPO FILE NO: 08L193
DATE ACCEPTED: Dec-28-07
HAHC HEARING: Jan-30-08
PC HEARING: Feb-14-08

SITE INFORMATION:

Lot 4, Block 45, River Oaks Section 1, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The building on the site is an historic brick residence.

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED: Landmark Designation

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The Tuttle House at 2223 Inwood Drive is located in Section One of River Oaks, one of the earliest sections of the neighborhood. The house, designed in the Manorial style, was designed by architect William D. Bordeaux. Although Bordeaux worked in Houston for only a short time, he designed another of Houston's notable buildings, Isabella Court, a 1929 Spanish Revival apartment building on Main Street.

Since its completion in 1932, the Tuttle House has been owned by only two families, the Tuttle and the Murphys. Dr. L. L. D. Tuttle, Sr., was a well-known doctor in Houston for almost 50 years. He was one of the first interns at Hermann Hospital during its opening year in 1925, and later served as Chief of the Surgical Staff of Methodist Hospital for almost 20 years. Dr. Tuttle's children also made significant contributions to Houston. His daughter, Yvonne Tuttle Streit, founded the Briarwood School and the Brookwood Community, two establishments that have made life more fulfilling for many mentally impaired Texans. His son, Dr. L. L. D. Tuttle, Jr., served as a thoracic and general surgeon in Houston for almost 40 years. The Tuttle House qualifies for Landmark Designation under Criteria 1, 3, 4, and 6.

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE:

The Tuttle House at 2223 Inwood Drive was built in 1931-1932 for Dr. L. L. D. Tuttle, Sr., and his family. On June 28, 1931, the Houston Post noted:

"Dr. and Mrs. L. L. D. Tuttle have let contract to Worrell McKamy Construction Company for a new home in River Oaks. William Bordeaux is the architect."

Dr. Lee Lyman Dewey Tuttle, Sr., ("Dewey Tuttle") was born on May 19, 1896, in Lamar, Colorado. By 1925, he had graduated from the University of Texas Medical School in Galveston. This was the beginning of a long career in surgery that spanned almost 50 years. Immediately after completing medical school in 1925, he served as one of the first interns at Hermann Hospital, which had opened its doors to patients in 1925, following the bequest of George H. Hermann in 1914. According to his son, Dr. L. L. D. ("Lee") Tuttle, Jr., he was one of only three interns in the first class.

At the time of the home's construction in 1931, the City Directory listed the office of Dr. Tuttle, Sr., at 228 Medical Arts Building. In 1932, he and his wife, Vita, and their two children, L. L. D., Jr., and Yvonne, moved into the new home. His career would include important leadership positions in the

CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

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Houston medical community. According to his son, he served as the Chief of the Surgical Staff at Methodist Hospital circa 1945 to 1964. After vision problems caused him to retire from surgery in 1964, he continued to teach in the nursing program for approximately a decade. His obituary listed Dr. Tuttle as Clinical Professor of Surgery Emeritus for Baylor College of Medicine and as the President of the Harris County Medical Society. In addition, he was a member of the Houston Surgical Society, Texas Surgical Society, Southwestern Surgical Society, Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, and the American Board of Surgery.

Dr. Tuttle was active in the Houston community, serving as a member of Holland Lodge No. 1 A. F. and A. M. for 50 years and as a member of the First United Methodist Church Administrative Board. Dr. Tuttle lived in the Inwood house for approximately 36 years until 1968, and died in Houston on January 19, 1981.

Dr. Tuttle's children would also go on to serve the community. Dr. L. L. D. Tuttle, Jr., served as a general and thoracic surgeon in Houston for almost 40 years. Yvonne Tuttle Streit is best known as the founder and former executive director of The Briarwood School and the founder and executive director of the Brookwood Community. Mrs. Streit had a daughter who was severely mentally impaired. Due to a lack of facilities, she started the Briarwood School for her child and other children with severe learning disabilities. The school has received national praise as a model school for educating these children. She also established and serves as executive director of the Brookwood Community, a 475-acre residential care facility for functionally disabled adults. Brookwood is a not-for-profit community designed to provide an enhanced life for adults with disabilities through life-long opportunities for vocational, social, emotional, and spiritual growth. It serves as a teaching model in an entrepreneurial, residential and educational environment. Yvonne Tuttle Streit received the Southern Methodist University (SMU) Distinguished Alumni Award in 1981 for her "distinguished contributions to the community of mankind that, in turn, have brought distinction to SMU."

The house at 2223 Inwood Drive was designed by architect, William D. Bordeaux. From census information, it appears that Mr. Bordeaux was born in New York in 1888. According to architectural historian, Stephen Fox, Bordeaux moved to Houston after practicing architecture in New York, Chicago, St Louis, and Los Angeles, but lived in Houston for only a few years with his wife, Celia. He is listed in the City Directory for the years 1928 through 1930-31 with an office at 3940 Main Street, Room 101. He left Houston in 1932, and spent the remainder of his career and life in Miami. Bordeaux's two other known remaining Houston works were designed in the Spanish Revival style, which was fashionable in Los Angeles in the 1920s. Bordeaux designed one of Houston's most notable landmarks, the Isabella Courts, a 1929 apartment building in the Spanish Revival style. The three-story building features an internal, open air courtyard with stucco finishes and a clay tile roof.

The builder of 2223 Inwood Drive was Worrell McKamy Construction Company, which operated briefly in Houston for the years 1930-1935, according to Houston City Directories. Their offices were located in 846 Electric Building, and James K. McKamy was one of the owners of the company.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND RESTORATION HISTORY:

The Tuttle House at 2223 Inwood is a compact interpretation of the Manorial style. The house has an asymmetrical floor plan, which is reflected in the building's façade. The principal façade is marked by a prominent front facing gable that extends forward of the main body of the house and serves as the location for the home's main entry. The main entry is located in a small vestibule trimmed by a stone pediment and pilasters carved in high relief. Smaller gables are located on either side of the entry bay at the roofline, which extend no further than the main body of the house. A large masonry chimney, executed in matching brick, is located on the east side of the main facade.

CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

The home utilizes an alternating configuration of multi-lite, wood sash, casement windows and a combination of double hung, multi-lite and 1/1 lite, wood sash windows. The exterior is clad in a red brick veneer with the various additions clad in a horizontal lap siding.

Historic photographs from the construction period in 1931-32, passed from the Tuttle family to the current owners, help to depict the architectural evolution of the house from its original appearance to the present. The bulk of the exterior alterations occurred during the original Tuttle family ownership. These changes include:

- A rear den and a second story addition to the master bedroom were added by the Tuttle family in 1939. The den has a fireplace clad with Oklahoma field stone.
- The enclosure of the second story porch on the east side of the home during Tuttle family ownership.
- The original back porch, located adjacent to the kitchen, was enclosed to make a utility room.
- The interior was remodeled to enlarge the kitchen and master bath during Murphy family ownership.

According to the owners, “architecturally the original downstairs (save the kitchen) was finished with stained gum wood window facings, crown molding, and baseboards. Archways lead into the various rooms with a wooden capstone centered at the top. The front entryway still sports a telephone nook built into the wall under the stairway. We have retained the original, stained and varnished gum finish for all the trim. I think it presents a nice contemporary, 1930s look and feel.”

Two factors make this home important to the neighborhood. First, it is a part of Section One of River Oaks, which was one of the first areas to be developed in the neighborhood after Country Club Estates. The home is a surviving example of the original small homes constructed in the neighborhood. At just 3,100 square feet, the Tuttle house and other historic homes of this size in River Oaks are currently being demolished and replaced with structures twice the size of the originals.

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.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Stephen Fox and Gerald Moorehead, Houston Architectural Guide, AIA Houston, 1990.

Houston Chronicle, Dr. L.L.D. Tuttle, Sr., Obituary, January 20, 1981.

Interview with Dr. L.L.D. Tuttle, Jr., by Kelley Trammell, December 12, 2007.

Houston City Directories, 1928-1973.

Memorial Hermann website, <http://www.memorialhermann.org/aboutus/SlideShow.html>.

Brookwood Community website, <http://www.brookwoodcommunity.org>.

SMU website, <http://www.smu.edu/ps/Sponsors.asp>.

APPROVAL CRITERIA FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:

The HAHC and the Planning Commission, in making recommendations with respect to designation, and the City Council, in making a designation, shall consider one or more of the following criteria, as appropriate for the type of designation:

CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

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

- (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 (Sec. 33-224(a)(1));
- (2) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is the location of a significant local, state or national event (Sec. 33-224(a)(2));
- (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 (Sec. 33-224(a)(3));
- (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 (Sec. 33-224(a)(4));
- (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 (Sec. 33-224(a)(5));
- (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 (Sec. 33-224(a)(6));
- (7) Whether specific evidence exists that unique archaeological resources are present (Sec. 33-224(a)(7));
- (8) Whether the building, structure, object or site has value as a significant element of community sentiment or public pride (Sec. 33-224(a)(8)).

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)).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Houston Planning Commission accept the recommendation of the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission and recommend to City Council the Landmark Designation of the Tuttle House at 2223 Inwood Drive.

CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

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SITE LOCATION MAP
TUTTLE HOUSE
2223 INWOOD DRIVE
NOT TO SCALE

