

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

LANDMARK NAME: David House

OWNER: Tapley House LLC

APPLICANT: David Bucek, FAIA

LOCATION: 1807 Wroxtton Road – Southampton Place

AGENDA ITEM: C

HPO FILE NO.: 14L302

DATE ACCEPTED: 10-13-2014

HAHC HEARING DATE: 10-23-2014

SITE INFORMATION

Lot 11, Block 34, Southampton Place, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The building on the site is a 2,500 square foot, two-story residence situated on a 6,600 square foot property.

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED: Landmark Designation

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The David House at 1807 Wroxtton Road, completed in 1971, was designed in 1969 by the noted architect and landscape architect Charles Tapley, FAIA. The David House was designed for Grace David and her husband Henry David. In the 1960s and 1970s, Grace David was known in Houston as a discriminating art collector, astute business woman, outstanding hostess, and sophisticated owner of the Bookman bookstore and the David Art Gallery. Grace David was close friends with author Larry McMurtry, who based the character of Aurora in his novel *Terms of Endearment* on his observations of Grace David and her colorful life. Her husband Henry David was a drilling-mud pioneer and self-made tycoon. In 1978, Charles Tapley became the second owner of 1807 Wroxtton, which became his residence until the early 1980s.

The David House is located in the traditional subdivision of Southampton, north of Rice University, and is tucked behind a tall masonry wall, a modernist strategy in the 1960s and 1970s for inserting modern houses into traditional neighborhoods. Also known as the “Pod House,” Tapley designed each space as a separate transparent pod along the central spine opening to small gardens in between.¹ The primary design intent was to maximize day-lighting and provide views to the sky and to the exterior courtyards from every room.

The David House is an exceptional example of contemporary Houston architecture of the late 1960s and early 1970s influenced by modern architecture and experimentation with modern forms. The design of the house is significant for the integration of interior and exterior spaces, innovative experimentation, juxtaposition of solid and transparent facing materials, and geometric abstraction in plan and elevation. The design is also significant for the integration of landscape architecture.

The David House received an Award of Honor for Residential Design from the Houston Chapter American Institute of Architects in 1975.² The house was featured on the 1978 Rice Design Alliance Home Tour. The David House was published internationally in *The Architectural Review* (London) in

¹ Plate, Norman A. "Pod House - Each Room Is a "pod ...open to the Sky and to a Central Living Area." Editorial. *Sunset - New Home Ideas*, 1976.

² Tapley and Associates. *Various Drawings, Photos and Publications*. Rice University - Fondren Library - Woodson Research Center, Charles Tapley Architectural Collection, 1960-2007, Houston.

1978; nationally in *Sunset Magazine - New Home Ideas* in 1976; and locally in the *Houston Post* in 1978.

The David House meets Criteria 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9 for Landmark designation.

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

Henry and Grace David

Henry David, a drilling-mud pioneer and self-made tycoon, developed a superior method for drilling mud and became very wealthy. He was the former owner and President of Milwhite Mud Sales in Houston. Milwhite was a mining, manufacturer, and supplier of nonmetallic minerals used as drilling mud in the sinking of oil and gas wells. Henry David worked as a salesman for Milwhite in 1938 and 1939. From 1940 to 1952, David acted on a commission basis as exclusive sales representative of Milwhite's drilling mud. In 1952, at David's suggestion and with Milwhite's financial support, a separate company was organized to handle the sales of Milwhite's drilling mud, known as the Milwhite Mud Sales Company. Henry David had already built a sales organization of some thirty-odd men, and after the incorporation of the Milwhite Mud Sales Company, that organization was greatly expanded, but continued to be based primarily on his personal contacts and reputation in the industry. Henry David was one of the most outstanding salesmen of drilling mud, and was the dominant personality and key man in the Milwhite's Mud Sales Company.³

In the 1960s and 1970s, Grace David was best known in Houston as the sophisticated owner of the Bookman bookstore and the David Art Gallery. Grace David was a discriminating collector, an astute business woman and an outstanding hostess.⁴ Mrs. David was born in Mason, Texas, a small town in the hill country where her father was a rancher. She received a teaching degree from the Texas Women's University in 1935. Grace raised two children, C. Dorman David and Dianne David. Grace David was known for her free-spirit and independent mind. She learned to follow her own artistic path, becoming an award-winning photographer, and the first woman in the Houston Camera Club.⁵ Grace David had an appreciation for art, sculpture, woodcraft, and fine furnishings, an appreciation she shared with her children.⁶ Her daughter Dianne established the David Gallery (1963-1982), which was influential in fostering many Houston modern artists, some of which became nationally recognized.⁷ The David Gallery was attached to the Bookman, a Houston bookstore that specialized in rare books and Texana that Charles Tapley also designed. Grace David's son, Dorman David, established the Bookman with her support. After Dorman nearly ran the bookstore into bankruptcy, Grace David took over the Bookman and ran the store herself with the help of a friend.⁸ The two-story book-lined interior of the Bookman was so magical that Robert Altman used it as a setting for his Houston-based movie *Brewster McCLOUD*.⁹ Above the Bookman, Charles Tapley designed a penthouse apartment for Grace and Henry

³ Henry David and Wife, Grace David, Appellants, v. Robert L. Phinney, District Director of Internal Revenue, Appellee (U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit - 350 F.2d 371 July 21, 1965).

⁴ Woestendiek, Jo. "The Lady Who Lives in a 'Tree'" *Texas Magazine*, November 12, 1967, 14-17.

⁵ Todhunter Brode, Ann. "Grace David 1913-2010 Artist and Muse." Obituary. *Santa Barbara Independent*, October 14, 2010.

⁶ Curtis, Gregory. "Forgery, Texas Style." *Texas Monthly*, March 1989, 179.

⁷ Reynolds, Sarah C. "Houston Reflections: Art in the City, 1950s, 60s, and 70s." Rice Oral History Series. Houston: Rice University Press, 2008. 127.

⁸ McMurtry, Larry. *Books: A Memoir*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008. 75-83.

⁹ Fox, Stephen. "A Tapley Tour." *Cite Magazine*, Spring 2000, 27.

David, known as the “Tree House,” which served as their residence prior to commissioning the residence at 1807 Wroxton.¹⁰

For a time, Grace employed the writer and book aficionado Larry McMurtry to run the Bookman and they developed a close friendship. McMurtry’s memoir states, he “was hired on the spot, and began one of the best friendships of (his) life, with Grace David, who faced many discouragements with a powerful spirit.”¹¹ It is widely acknowledged that McMurtry fashioned his classic character Aurora in *Terms of Endearment* from his observations of Grace David and her colorful life. He dedicated the sequel, *The Evening Star*, to Grace.¹²

The following excerpts from Larry McMurtry’s memoir reveal much about his friendship with Grace David, her marriage with Henry, and her colorful life:

“Grace was married at the time to Henry David; as a young man in the oilfields Henry had developed a superior kind of drilling mud and became very rich. At some point before I entered the story, Henry sold his company for millions of dollars, after which he had nothing to do but drink, play golf, and watch his wife and children spend his money on things that were to him, meaningless: art, pots, tropical fish, sculpture, woodcraft, telephones. (Grace never liked being more than a step from a telephone; at one point the Bookman had nineteen.) ... Henry sober was a nice man; Henry drunk was to be avoided, as Grace was well aware. She kept a bicycle by her bed, in case she needed to flee; she also saw to it that there were about a dozen doors between her bedroom and Henry’s—once, at least, she locked herself out of all twelve... She (Grace) loved architecture, and was always buying and selling houses, some of which she then rebought. She, Dorman, and Diane were constantly trading with one another: it might be a Stuart table, it might be a totem pole, but it was not likely to be books.”¹³

“I was very happy running the Bookman. There was an element of craziness about it, but that can be said of many bookshops. The objects Grace traded for were always attractive, whether a Greek cheese board or a Hungarian shepherd’s crook. I still wish I’d bought that shepherd’s crook... As a commercial venture the Bookman was hopeless from the first. At one point Grace had a penthouse built on the property— the penthouse contained a wall-sized aquarium, containing hundreds of lovely, mysterious fish. What it cost to maintain I never knew... Needless to say there were ruckuses with Henry, who watched millions of dollars flowing away, to purchase items he had no interest in. Some days he might come home from the golf course to find that Grace David had made a unilateral decision to separate from him. In these cases she simply called the movers; there was a small company that made a sufficient career just moving out the Davids. They would come get Henry’s stuff and haul it out to a house he kept on the golf course. The move would be completed between nine to five. I came to have great affection for the gentleman of this moving company. They knew just how to handle each of the hundreds of objects the Davids owned. They had some trouble with the cannon collection, but otherwise were adequate to the profusion the Davids threw at them.”¹⁴

¹⁰ Woestendiek, 14.

¹¹ McMurtry, 76.

¹² Todhunter Brode

¹³ McMurtry, 77.

¹⁴ McMurtry, 79.

“I am very glad that Grace survived Henry-it was, for a while, a near thing. She even oversaw the building of another great house (1807 Wroxton), before she left Houston... The architects, the painters, the artists, the wood-carvers, the pot makers, and the weavers all miss Grace David-who helped them out from time to time. I suspect the gentlemen of the little moving company miss her too...as I do.”¹⁵

Grace eventually divorced Henry and closed the Bookman. She moved to London, then Switzerland, finally settling in Santa Barbara.¹⁶ After she left Houston, she sold 1807 Wroxton to Charles Tapley who became the second owner where he lived with his family until the early 1980s.¹⁷

Charles Tapley

Charles Tapley, FAIA, studied architecture at Rice University in the early 1950s. His student work often integrated landscape design elements, not common at the time. After he graduated in 1955, he spent nine months traveling across Europe. After returning to Houston, he was hired by the architectural firm, Pierce and Pierce. He later worked for Hamilton Brown’s office, and eventually worked with landscape architect Fed Buxton. He became a registered architect in Texas in 1960 and a registered landscape architect in 1970. In 1960, he founded Tapley & Associates, with Charles H. Pagan as partner.¹⁸

Tapley is best known for his park designs and church architecture. Architect W.O. Neuhaus III, FAIA, who worked in Tapley’s office from 1969 to 1972, describes the Tapley aesthetic as being “about open space and light – never about the photos” that could be taken of his designs. And while open space and natural light are desirable attributes in almost any building, in a church they become part of the fabric of reverence, an ethereal but physical evidence of what worship is about.¹⁹ The pursuit of these same qualities can found in the David House at 1807 Wroxton.

Tapley’s breakthrough job was a 1967 commission for the Oblate Retreat Center, now the Christian Retreat Center in Dickinson. His work on the Oblate Center won him an award from the Texas Society of Architects, and his firm, which now included his future partner Jerry Lunow and Neuhaus among others, took off.²⁰

The following excerpts from an article authored by Tapley’s office reveals much about the two major periods in the firm’s development:

“Tapley’s architecture of the early 1970s, when Joe Masburn, Bill Neuhaus, Charlie Keith, Jerry Lunow, and Beverly Spears were in his office and he worked with Charles H. Pagan and Robert H. Wilson, explored spontaneity. It rejected the arid formalism of so much modern architecture of the 1960s in an effort to “spatialize” immediacy, anti-elitism, and responsiveness to the natural settings where the firm’s buildings were built...Tapley’s involvement with urban planning in the context of nature began with his firm’s work on Buffalo Bayou in the 1970s. Tapley’s involvement in the later 1970s and through the 1980s with the design of places of worship resonates with this consciousness, as has his involvement in the rehabilitation of historic buildings. Jerry Lunow (his partner in the late 1980s and early 1990s), Gerald Moorhead, Carl

¹⁵ McMurtry, 83.

¹⁶ Todhunter Brode

¹⁷ Hodge.

¹⁸ Theis, David. "Down in the Dirt: Digging Deep with Charles Tapley." *Cite Magazine*, Spring 2000, 25.

¹⁹ Theis, 26.

²⁰ Theis, 25.

Brustig, Mark Hoistad, Greg Harper, and Leslie K. Elkins were among the architects in his office who contributed to this work.”²¹

His signature projects include the Oblate Retreat Center; Tranquility Park; the Bookman; Contemporary Art Museum as associate architect with Gunner Birkets; a courtyard landscape at the Museum of Fine Arts; Buffalo Bayou parks and improvements; the Camp Allen Retreat; various churches including St. Cecilia’s Catholic Church in Hedwig Village; Christ the King Lutheran in the Village and Northwoods Presbyterian Church; Post Oak Park Townhouses; numerous residences; and playgrounds and parks for the Texas Medical Center.

For many years, Tapley was an Adjunct Professor in Architecture at the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture at the University of Houston. Tapley was elected to the AIA College of Fellows in 1979 for his outstanding contributions to the profession. In 2003, AIA Houston organized an exhibit about Charles Tapley titled “An Exhibit of a Life Merging Architecture and Nature,” and awarded Tapley the Jefferson Award. In 2011, Tapley received the AIA Houston Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2012, Tapley received the Texas Society of Architects Lifetime Achievement Award.

Tapley was also a strong mentor and influence to many of his peers. His influence can be seen in the numerous young architects who worked for him, later to be recognized for their own contributions to the profession. This distinguish list includes John Casbarian, FAIA, Leslie Elkins, FAIA, W.O. (Bill) Neuhaus III, FAIA, Joe Mashburn, FAIA (former Dean of the UH College of Architecture), Gerald Moorhead, FAIA, and Peter Rowe (former Dean of the Graduate School of Design – Harvard University), to name a few.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND RESTORATION HISTORY

The David House is located behind tall brick masonry walls along the front and side lot lines, which was a common practice in the 1960s and 1970s. The wall allowed the insertion of a modernist new house in the predominately traditional Southampton neighborhood, insulating new from old. The *Houston Architectural Guide* describes the house as follows, “Behind this brick wall is a fascinating collection of little buildings strung together along a central causeway. All that is visible from the street, however, are the thrusting hoods and skylights of this architectural conclave.”²²

The design requirements given to Tapley for the David House were to “create special, individual places for both public and private activities. Provide a view to the sky from every room. Keep the house full of alternatives and variables.”²³ Tapley’s solution was to string six open but separate rooms along a central corridor that runs the length of the house, north to south. Each of the rooms provides views of the sky and the outdoor garden courts that surround each building form, which have also been described as pods. Each of these rooms, or pods, attach differently to the central corridor. The kitchen and living/dining areas are fully open to the central corridor; whereas the two bedroom pods can be partially open and the utility/craft room and the garage area are usually kept completely closed.²⁴

In an interview with the *Houston Post*, about 1807 Wroxton, Tapley described the quality of light as an important design feature of the house. Tapley stated, “More important than furnishings and artwork is the natural phenomenon of light as it plays across the walls, through the glass-sliding doors, skylights

²¹ Tapley and Associates

²² Fox, Stephen. *Houston Architectural Guide*, 187. 3rd ed. Houston, TX: AIA Houston, 2012.

²³ Plate, 31.

²⁴ Plate, 31.

and windows. As an architect, I'm very interested in light and light quality. It's constantly changing. It's continually modifying during the day."²⁵

Ever-changing roof forms and view directions differentiate the pods and provide each of the interior spaces with a unique daylighting quality. Glass areas are kept to the east and north to avoid sun while walls exposed to the west sun are heavily insulated or windowless.²⁶ The shed-roofed living/dining area looks up to the east sky and collects intense shafts of light along the walls via large clerestory windows with direct views of the sky and the ever-changing external lighting conditions. The flat-roofed kitchen looks north to a garden court.

The one-story-tall bedroom pod, designed for Henry David, features a stepped-roof with a clerestory light well and an east-facing window wall that transmits varying amounts of indirect light. The other sleeping pod, designed for Grace David, is two stories tall with views to the south and east. This double height bedroom contains a loft, study/library and roof access. This two-story bedroom may have been influenced by the double height space Tapley designed for the Bookman, years earlier. The bedrooms connect to the central corridor with double doors. With the double doors closed, the sleeping/study areas become private rooms for the occupants. With the double doors open, the spaces become miniature living rooms. When both bedrooms have their doors open simultaneously, the rooms imitate a Victorian double parlor arrangement.²⁷

The central corridor connects the individual building elements and provides separation to form numerous residual garden courtyards. The 1969 construction drawings indicate the central corridor was originally designed with a roof comprised entirely of skylights and exterior glass walls, with thin steel supports and overhead beams to maximizing the window and skylight openings.²⁸ By enlarging the glazed openings to the maximum extent possible, Tapley sought to achieve a dynamic range of ever changing day-lighting conditions.²⁹ The customized steel detailing also reflects the level of experimentation found throughout the overall design.

In an interview with Joe Mashburn, who worked for Tapley's office in the late 1960s and was responsible for the drawings of the David House, Mashburn revealed the cost for the custom thin steel supporting structure proved too great for the budget.³⁰ Therefore the glass corridor was constructed utilizing thicker built-up wood columns and perimeter beams. This resulted in larger supporting columns and reduced the size of the window and skylight openings.

In addition to the multiple small garden courts, the David House has two large exterior gathering spaces: the front entry courtyard and a large roof deck/garden located mainly above the utility/craft room and garage. The front entry courtyard is shaded by a mature live oak and features a swimming pool. The roof deck/garden, which was Tapley's favorite space to hang out, can be accessed directly from the two-story bedroom suite or an external stair behind the kitchen.

The exterior roofs of the house have flat and sloped roofing. The existing flat roof is currently constructed with built-up modified roofing, which was originally a river rock ballast built-up roof. The

²⁵ Hodge, Shelby. "At Home with Charles Tapley." *Houston Post*, April 8, 1978.

²⁶ Amery, Colin, and David Woodcock. "David/Tapley House." *The Architectural Review: Texas*. London: Architectural Press, 1978.

²⁷ Plate, 31.

²⁸ Tapley and Associates

²⁹ Theis, 26.

³⁰ Mashburn, Joe, FAIA. Interview by David Bucek. September 22, 2014.

sloped shed roof, currently clad with aluminum shingles, was originally clad with wood shingles. Pine decking with solid steel horizontal railing are located above portions of the flat roofs to form the roof/garden terrace.

The exterior wall surfaces of the David House are clad with 1x6 T&G diagonal cedar siding. The construction drawings reveal many of the interior wall surfaces were also clad with 1x6 T&G diagonal cedar siding to unify the exterior and interior spaces. During this time period Tapley often used similar wood siding or stucco to clad the exterior of his designs. The use of diagonal siding and the variety of wall transitions produced by the various connecting conditions also speaks to the extent of design experimentation. Unfortunately, many of these conditions proved difficult to flash, and the use of diagonal siding, which is strongly discouraged by the wood siding industry, resulted in a significant amount of deterioration of the siding and wall framing. As a result, subsequent owners have altered the original siding with numerous horizontal patches and the original natural un-stained cedar finish, which had a light appearance, has been painted tan.

The interior wall surfaces are currently all sheetrock and some of the interior spaces have been altered. It appears the original oak wood flooring largely survives, but many areas have cupped and deteriorated due to the numerous water penetrations that have resulted from the wall detailing and use of diagonal siding. Most of the wood windows are also greatly deteriorated and numerous repairs, utilizing different wood species, are evident.

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Hodge, Shelby. "At Home with Charles Tapley." *Houston Post*, April 8, 1978.

Mashburn, Joe, FAIA. Interview. September 22, 2014.

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Todhunter Brode, Ann. "Grace David 1913-2010 Artist and Muse." Obituary. *Santa Barbara Independent*, October 14, 2010.

Woestendiek, Jo. "The Lady Who Lives in a "Tree"" *Texas Magazine*, November 12, 1967, 14-17.

The information and sources provided by the owner and applicant for this application have been reviewed, verified, edited and supplemented with additional research and sources by Delaney Harris-Finch, Planning and Development Department, City of Houston.

EXHIBIT A - CURRENT PHOTOS
THE DAVID HOUSE, 1807 WROXTON ROAD

STREET FRONT OBSCURED BY PRIVACY WALL



FRONT OF RESIDENCE



EXHIBIT A - CURRENT PHOTOS
THE DAVID HOUSE, 1807 WROXTON ROAD

INTERIOR – LOOKING TOWARDS FRONT DOOR



EXHIBIT A - CURRENT PHOTOS
THE DAVID HOUSE, 1807 WROXTON ROAD

ROOF DECK – LOOKING TOWARDS STREET



CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning & Development Department

EXHIBIT B - SITE MAP THE DAVID HOUSE, 1807 WROXTON ROAD

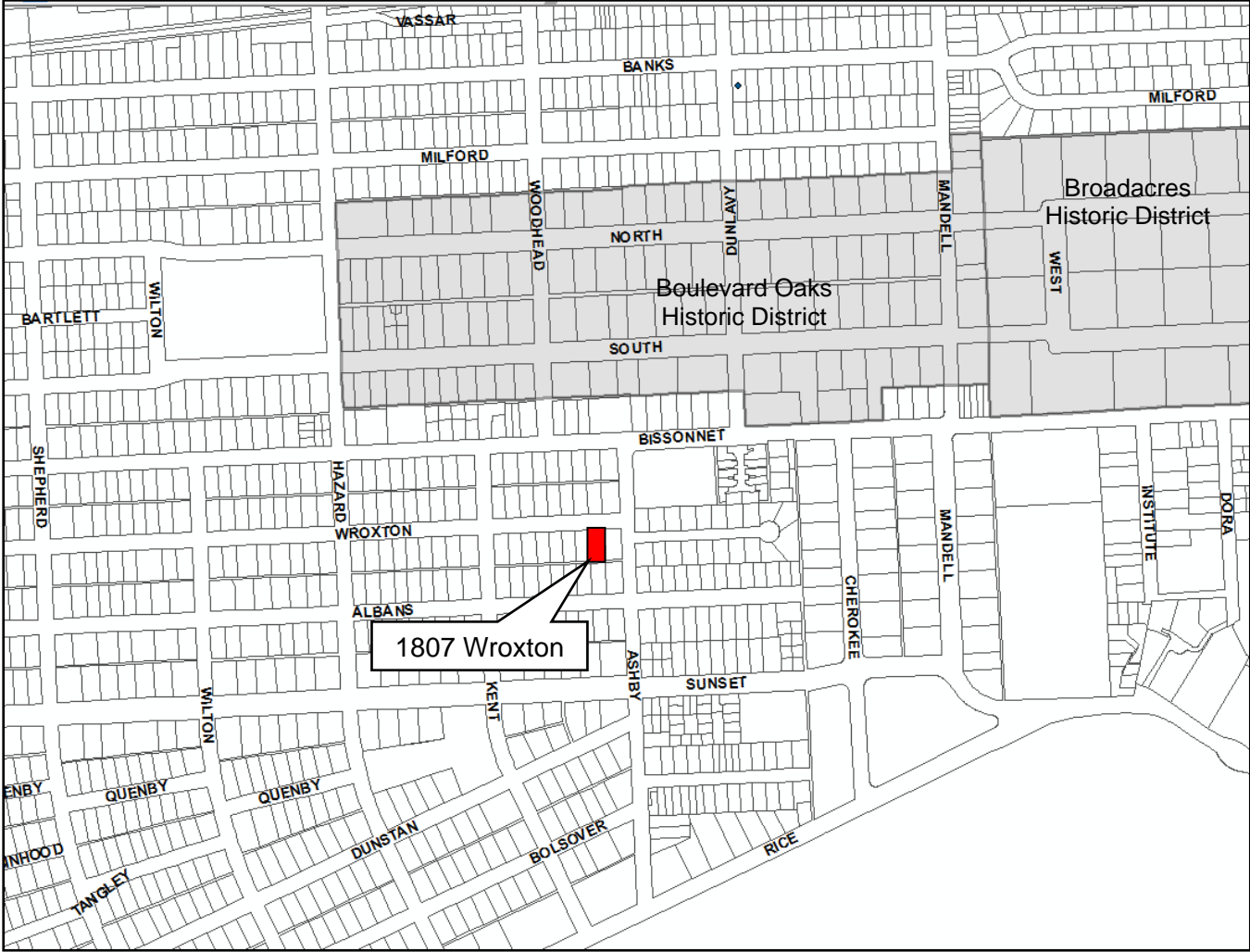


EXHIBIT C – DRAWINGS
THE DAVID HOUSE, 1807 WROXTON ROAD

SITE / ROOF PLAN, TAPLEY & ASSOCIATES, 1969

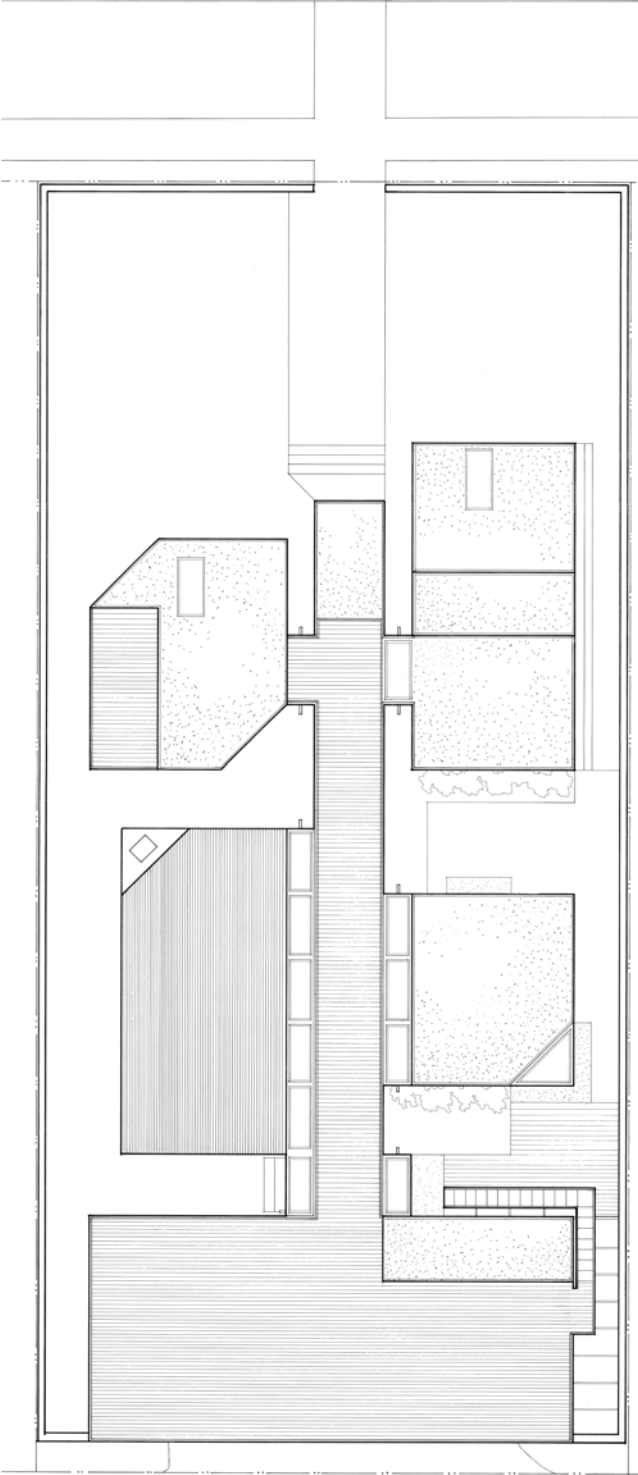


EXHIBIT C – DRAWINGS THE DAVID HOUSE, 1807 WROXTON ROAD

FLOOR PLAN, TAPLEY & ASSOCIATES, 1969

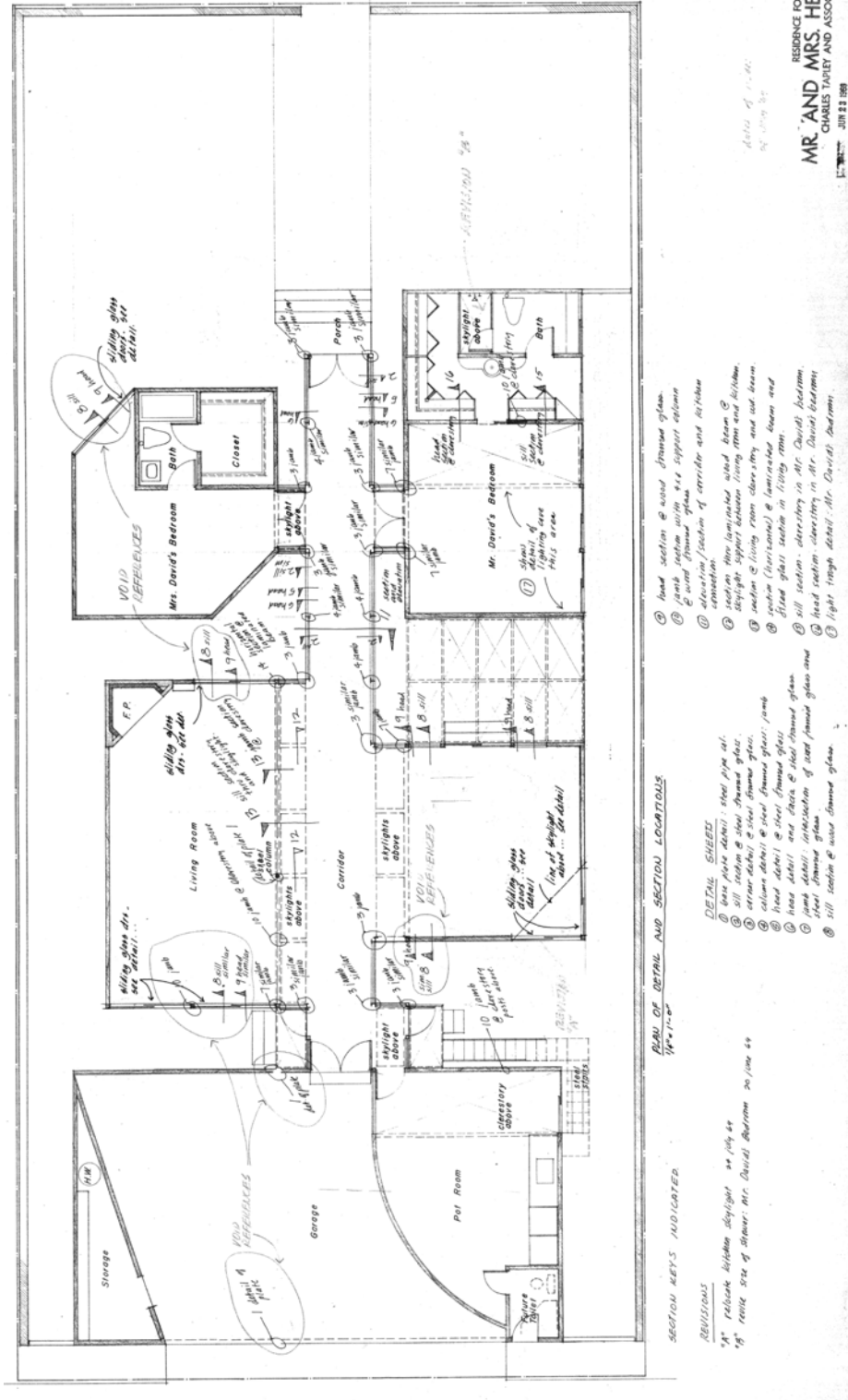


EXHIBIT C – DRAWINGS
THE DAVID HOUSE, 1807 WROXTON ROAD
ISOMETRIC, TAPLEY & ASSOCIATES, 1969

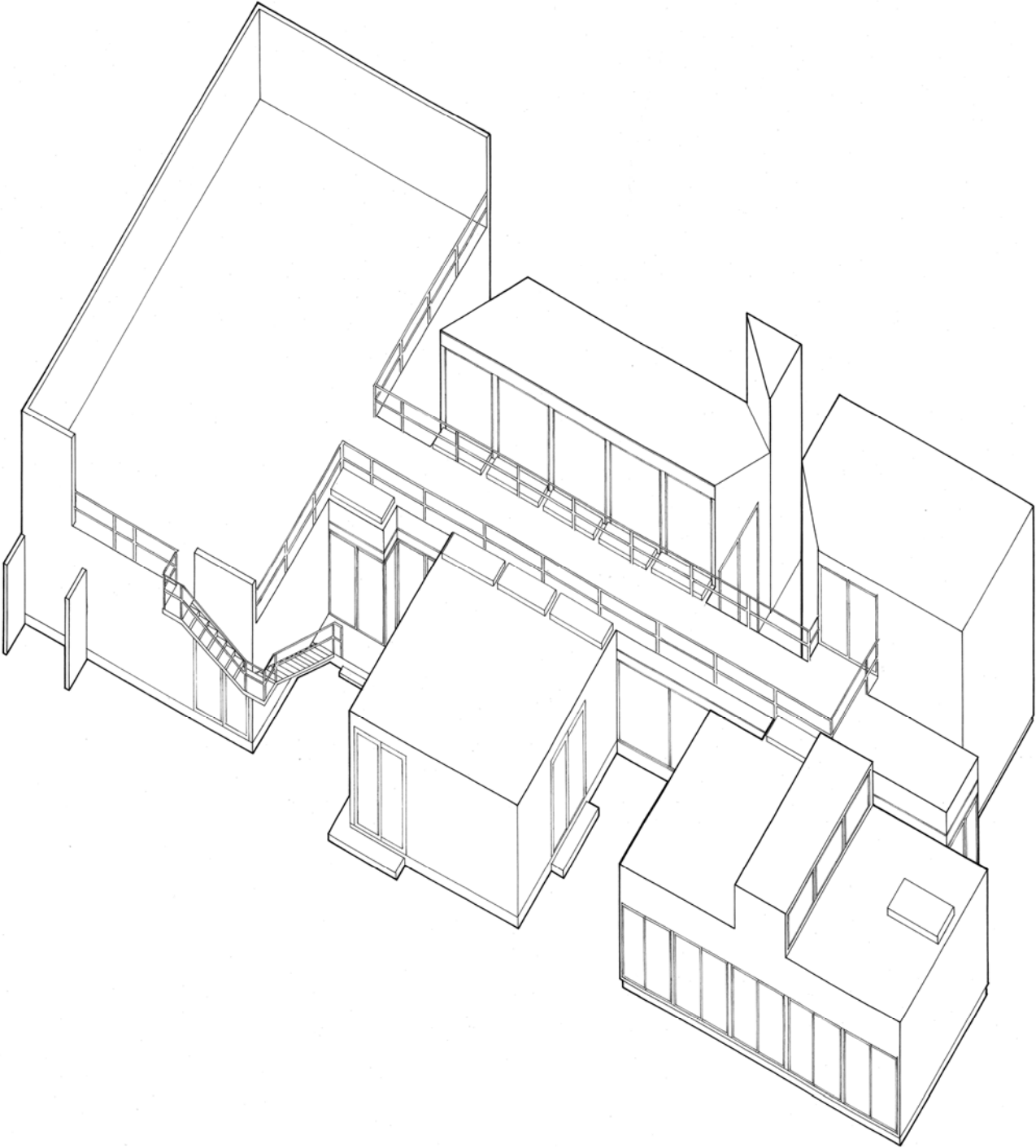


EXHIBIT C – DRAWINGS
THE DAVID HOUSE, 1807 WROXTON ROAD

ISOMETRIC, TAPLEY & ASSOCIATES, 1969

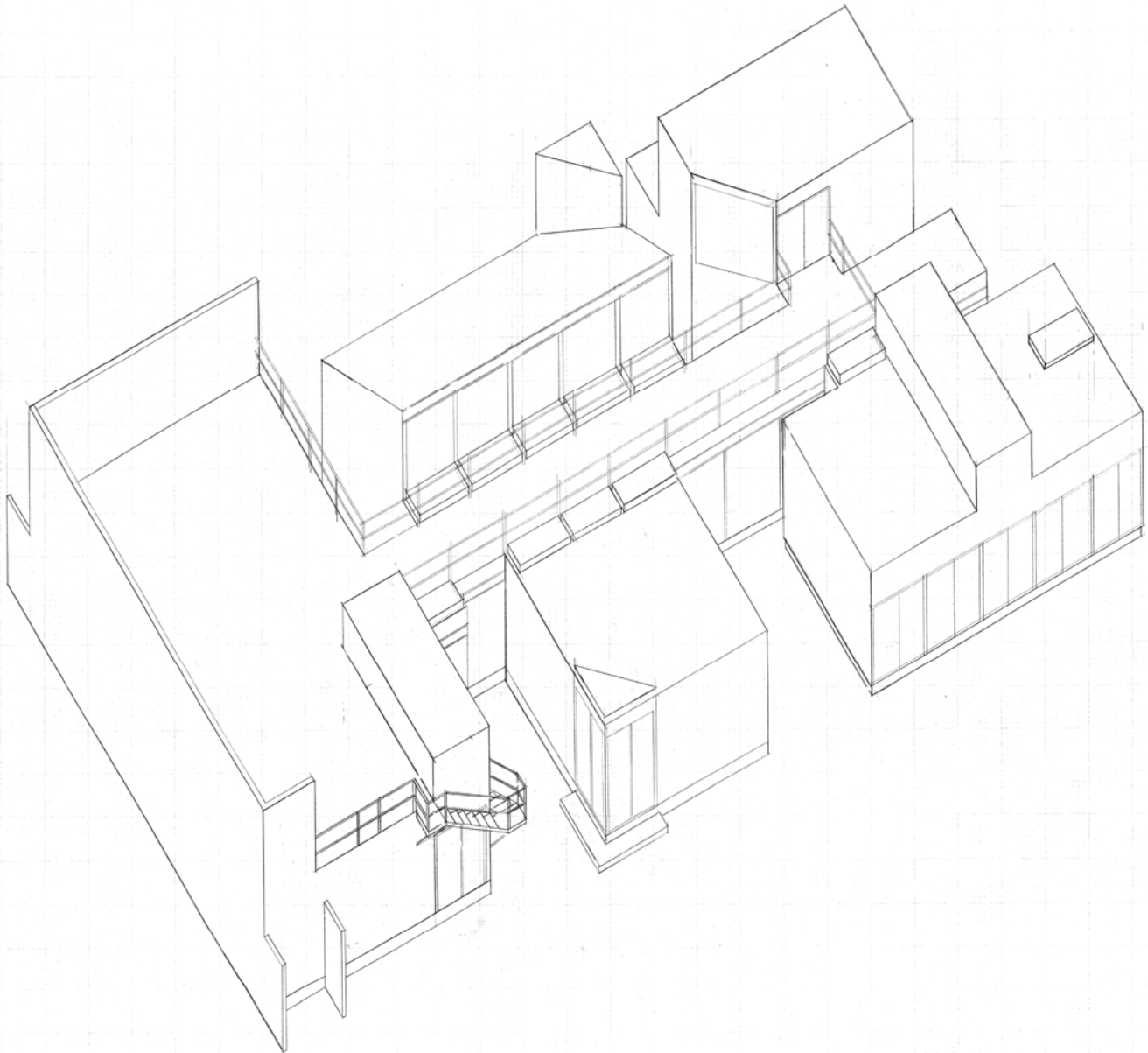


EXHIBIT D – HISTORIC PHOTOS & PUBLICATIONS THE DAVID HOUSE, 1807 WROXTON ROAD

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, NOVEMBER 1978

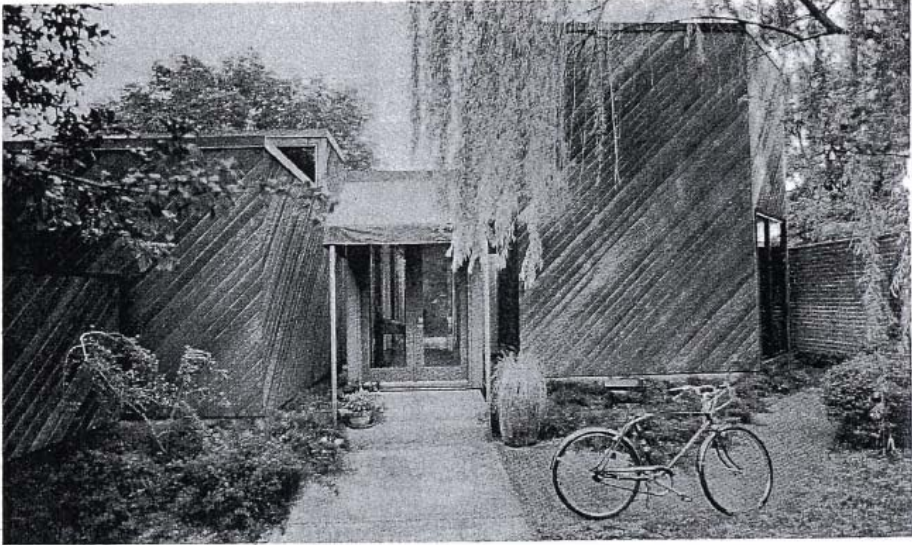
David/Tapley house

Architect: Charles Tapley

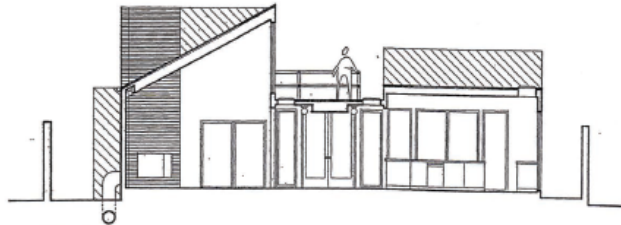
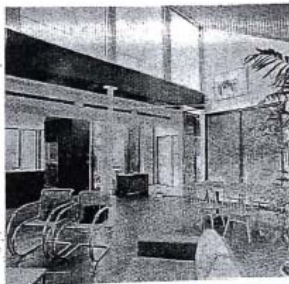
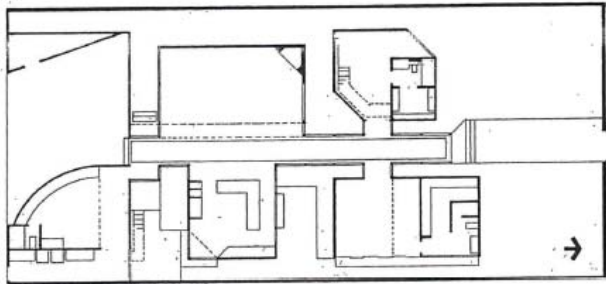
The David house is located near Rice University in a dense, by Texas standards, residential area. The 2500 sq ft house is tightly surrounded by a high brick wall. Only deed restrictions prohibited the house from coming in contact with this wall-which allows a great deal of transparency without compromising privacy requirements. The house was planned as a gallery space connecting private living pavilions set within a continuous garden, 22, a reminder that the architect Charles Tapley is also a registered landscape architect.

The house offers a satisfying architectural circuit. Through the front door, the length of the house can be seen along the gallery spine. This space provides just the right amount of dialectical tension between its function of separating the house into a series of pavilions and collecting the rooms into a cohesive whole.

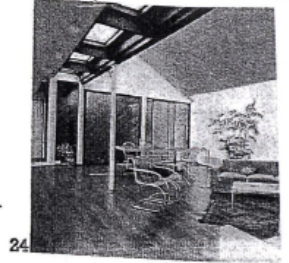
After passing the front bedrooms and a glimpse of the garden, we come to the dining/living centre of the house, 23, 24, space that is experienced as a complex unity. The drywall ceiling of the seating area is kept away from the lower edge of the living room ceiling and downlighting along the side wall is provided by incandescent bulbs inserted between each exposed rafter. A similar device is echoed at the work island in the kitchen area. The cool blue/grey ceiling of the living area is lifted to let light into the room, fully revealing the stepped section of the gallery and inflecting towards the kitchen beyond. Up steel stairs is the roof garden which is high enough to catch the breeze but low enough to be beneath the surrounding tree canopy. From here one is able to cross along the top of the gallery past the skylights to the front of the house and into the upper portion of the study/bedroom. Descent to the lower level of this room is possible by way of an open riser stair that parallels an angled wall of bookcases and deposits one close to the entry gallery. Glass areas are kept to the east and north to avoid sun while walls exposed to the devastating west sun are heavily insulated and windowless.



22



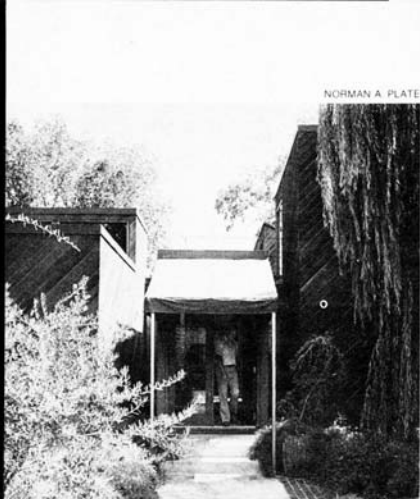
David/Tapley house: cross section



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EXHIBIT D – HISTORIC PHOTOS & PUBLICATIONS
THE DAVID HOUSE, 1807 WROXTON ROAD

SUNSET MAGAZINE, 1976



NORMAN A. PLATE

Entry: Sheltered from sun and rain by canvas canopy



Hallway: With doors open, one sleeping pod spills across hall into the other



Living room: Sky windows fill this gathering spot with daylight, glimpses of changing clouds. Upstairs deck runs past these windows

Pod house

Each room is a “pod”...open to the sky and to a central living area

EXHIBIT D – HISTORIC PHOTOS & PUBLICATIONS THE DAVID HOUSE, 1807 WROXTON ROAD

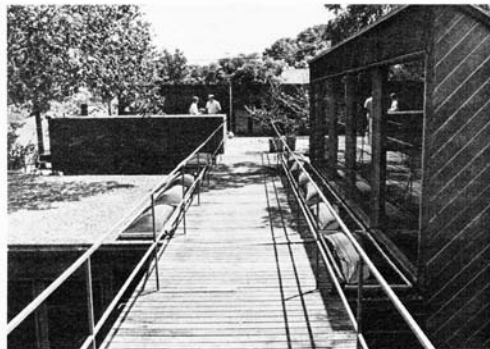
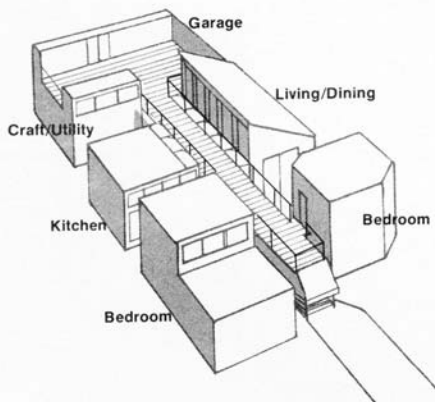
SUNSET MAGAZINE, 1976



Kitchen: Behind spacious counter, cook can work unbindered, but still chat with visitors. Window-wall opens to garden court and rear wall of sleeping pod



Bedroom: Above loft of two-story sleeping pod, skylight opens view to sky



Upstairs deck: Running length of house from bedrooms to terrace area over garage and utility pods, roof decking provides view of treetops and garden

"Create special, individual places for both public and private activities. Provide a view to the sky from every room. Keep the house full of alternatives and variables." These were the design requirements given to Houston architect Charles Tapley.

His solution strings six open but separate "pods" from a central corridor that runs the length of this house. Each room opens to the sky, to an outdoor garden court, or sometimes spills across the central corridor into the opposite room.

Different roof forms and view directions make each of these pods into an individual structure with its own unique light quality. The flat-roofed

kitchen looks north to a garden court and usually has even, balanced, indirect light. The shed-roofed living-dining area looks up to the east sky and collects intense shafts of light along the walls.

One sleeping pod has a step-roof, clerestory light well and an east-facing window wall that transmit varying amounts of indirect light. The other sleeping pod has two levels with a second-story, above-the-roof view to the south and east.

Each of the pods attaches differently to the central corridor. Two pods (kitchen and living-dining area) are fully open to the central corridor; two can be partially open (sleeping areas);

and two are usually kept completely closed (utility-crafts room and the garage area).

The "command-post" kitchen is separated from the living area by the change in ceiling height and by the extra-wide counter, but guests are welcome around the counter to kibitz. And the cook always has a full view of the living area.

With double doors closed, the sleeping-study pods become private worlds for the occupants. With their double doors open, they can become miniature living rooms. And when both pods have their doors open simultaneously, the rooms imitate a Victorian double parlor arrangement.

EXHIBIT D – HISTORIC PHOTOS & PUBLICATIONS THE DAVID HOUSE, 1807 WROXTON ROAD

HOUSTON POST, 1978


At home with: Charles Tapley

The Houston Post/Sat. Apr. 8, 1978/ 1A-A

Today

'I don't know that we have a lifestyle that's identifiable. We have a very casual and informal lifestyle. We're not highly structured,' says Tapley

— Post photo by Joel Draut



By SHELBY HODGE
Post Reporter

The situation is something like that of the artist who creates an outstanding painting, sells it and later buys it back. Architect Charles Tapley designed the house at 1807 Wroxton in 1969 for a client. Just last month, Charles, his wife Charlotte and their two teen-age sons moved into the house.

"We thought it would be an interesting experience. It's radically different from the house we'd been in," Charles said.

The Tapleys had lived for a

number of years on University Boulevard in a traditional 1930s structure. Although their furnishings and artwork were contemporary, the spaces of the older house were conventional.

Today, they are making their home in a house that was designed with a central spine off of which all formal living spaces are arranged. Each room is almost a separate structure in itself, each with three outside walls, all connected along the center hallway.

"IN DESIGNING THE house, we were trying to allow as much

natural light in as possible. So we used a transparent spine," Charles explained.

"What we were trying to do with this house was . . . in maximize special qualities both within the building and from views without . . . We made the small courtyards and, in so doing, solved a lot of problems in the original program (problems associated with neighborhood sideline restrictions). The small courts provide visual relief and introduction of light to the interiors of the house," he said.

Although he very much likes

the house, it is not necessarily one he would design for his family today. An architect's thoughts evolve continuously, he said. And cost considerations change. To build that same house today would mean a much larger investment. And the house was designed for someone else's lifestyle.

"I don't know that we have a lifestyle that's identifiable. We have a very casual and informal lifestyle. We're not highly structured," Charles said.

HE IS AN EARLY riser, going to bed early. Charlotte is

a night person, preferring to sleep late in the mornings. One son is involved in athletics and the other is busy with the theater and drama. Yet, the house works beautifully for them.

"The separate spaces contribute to the individual pursuits without disturbing the common spaces," he said.

While every room of the extremely contemporary house is unique, the most interesting aspect is the roof garden. The flat areas of the roof were decked to provide a second level, outdoor living space. It is Charles' favorite part of the house. An avid

gardener, he already has blooming hibiscus, a number of potted shrubs and plans for vegetable and herb boxes.

CHARLOTTE SAID THE spot is so popular that their friends tend to migrate there. On a recent Sunday, there was a gathering of the Tapleys and friends on the roof. The deck is equipped with phone jack and electrical outlets for all the comforts of home downstairs.

While most of their furnishings are still in the University

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HOUSTON POST, 1978



At home with . . .

From page 1

Boulevard house, the Tapleys have made do in an attractive fashion with table and chairs and area rug from his office. They are in no rush to fill the new house with things from the old house.

"I'm trying to understand and appreciate the spaces first. Plus, I kind of hate to have anything on the walls at first," Charles said as he surveyed the sparsely furnished living area.

MORE IMPORTANT THAN furnishings and artwork is the natural phenomenon of light as

it plays across the walls, through the glass-sliding doors, skylights and windows.

"As an architect, I'm very interested in light and light quality. It's constantly changing, it's continually modifying during the day (in the house)," he said.

The Tapleys' is one of seven

houses to be featured on the Rice Design Alliance home tour set from noon to 6 p.m. this afternoon and 1-6 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$5 for all homes or \$1 each and will be available at the homes. Houses on the tour will include those at 3452 Inwood; 2 Sunset Blvd.; 428 Westmoreland; 17 Shadowlawn Circle; 1723 Colquitt and 8 Tiel Way.