

Seven notable homes awarded historic status

In September, Houston City Council designated the Colburn House as a protected historic landmark. Council also designated the Early Republic House, the Baker-Jones House, the Murray-Bertrand House, the Wahlberg House, the Eugene Rolfs House and the Ernest L. Shult-John B. Connally Jr. House as historic landmarks.

The Colburn House at 301 E 8th Street is an excellent example of a Queen Anne style house in Houston Heights. Built in 1906, its first owner was Carey Marshall Colburn, the chief train dispatcher for the Texas & New Orleans Railroad. The house features typical features of a Queen Anne house – a steeply pitched pyramidal roof, a wraparound one-story porch, a multi-paned front bay window, and decorative wood detailing such as delicate turned porch supports and spindlework ornamentation.



The Early Republic House was constructed in 1925-26 and designed by the prolific Houston architect, John F. Staub. It was one of two early speculative houses commissioned by the River Oaks Corporation and designed by Staub. Hugh Potter, president of the River Oaks Corporation, purchased the house in 1926 and lived there until his death in 1968. Potter was one of the developers of the River Oaks subdivision along with his longtime friends, the Hogg Brothers.

The Baker-Jones House at 22 Courtlandt Place was a present from prominent Houston attorney James Addison Baker to his daughter, Alice Graham Baker and her husband, Murray Brashear Jones. Noted Houston architect Birdsall P. Briscoe design the house. Murray Jones was a respected lawyer who served as assistant district attorney and Harris County judge. Alice Baker Jones was a prominent local civic leader involved in numerous church and charitable activities.

Completed in 1917, the Baker-Jones House is an excellent local example of an early-20th century Georgian Revival residence, with its refined and symmetrical proportions. The structure's architectural features include a pedimented entrance pavilion flanked by Doric pilasters with a recessed entry portico supported by fluted Doric columns. Also of note are the multi-light windows and round-headed dormers.



The Murray-Bertrand House, located at 3720 Inwood Drive, was constructed in 1946 and designed by Houston architect, Hermon Lloyd. The two-story painted brick house is in a restrained traditional style with elements of Neo-classical and Colonial Revival architecture. Lloyd designed many houses in River Oaks, and in conjunction with Harvin C. Moore. The house was commissioned by William Gay and Reynolds Murray. Mr. Murray was an independent oilman. The second owner of the house, Jay Bertrand, was an independent businessman and Colonel in the

Army Reserves during World War II.

The Eugene Rolfs House was designed in 1949 and built in 1950, at the height of the careers of its architects, MacKie & Kamrath. The house was designed during a pivotal period for Karl Kamrath, who had met Frank Lloyd Wright in 1947 and then hosted Wright for a tour of Houston in 1949, when he was in town to receive the AIA Gold Medal. The Eugene Rolfs House, like other MacKie & Kamrath houses situated on Tiel Way in River Oaks, is an example of the Houston firm's interpretation of Wright's architectural principles, particularly the relationship between nature and architecture, as it is played out on the rolling terrain of Tiel Way.



The Wahlberg House at 816 Arlington is a Craftsman-style bungalow built in 1922 by Phillip Wahlberg for his family. The Wahlberg House features a low-pitched, clipped gable roof with wide, unenclosed eave overhangs, triangular knee braces, a partial width porch with a roof supported by square wood columns with brick bases, and attic windows in both front facing gables. The house was completely restored in 2008, including the construction of a compatible, one-story side addition.

The modern Ernest L. Shult-John B. Connally Jr. House was built in 1959 by Houston architect Ernest L. Shult as his own residence. Shult was born in Wharton County in 1901 and graduated from Rice University in 1923. By 1930, he was practicing as an architect in Houston, and during the 1940s and 50s, had his own architectural office on Fannin Street. Shult was also a longtime associate of Alfred C. Finn, a major Houston architect. Texas Governor John Connally Jr. and Nellie Connally moved into 2411 River Oaks Boulevard in January 1969 as their first private home after living in the Governor's Mansion in Austin.



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