

News Release



CONTACT: Suzy Hartgrove: 713-837-7719
Email: Suzy.Hartgrove@cityofhouston.net

Three Warehouse District properties designated historic

HOUSTON, February 19, 2009 – Houston City Council designated three properties near downtown in the warehouse district as historic landmarks. The newly designated properties are as follows:

Western Electric Company Building, 100 Jackson

The Western Electric Company Building at the corner of Jackson Street and Commerce Avenue is a three-story brick warehouse building built circa 1917. The building is located in Houston's Warehouse District on the east side of downtown. The Warehouse District largely developed from 1890 through the 1930s to accommodate Houston's rapid economic expansion in those decades. The building's namesake and original tenant, Western Electric, got its start in Chicago in the 1870s as a manufacturer of telegraph equipment for Western Union, and by 1882, had been acquired by Bell Telephone (later AT&T) as its manufacturing arm. By the early decades of the 20th century, Western Electric had become not only an international manufacturer of communication equipment but also one of the largest distributors of electrical household appliances in the United States. Today, the renovated building appears much as it did when built, and is home to architectural offices, art studios, and loft spaces. The building is owned by Caspian Enterprises, Inc.



Eller Wagon Works/Pittsburgh Plate Glass Building, 101 Crawford

Also owned by Caspian Enterprises, Inc., the Eller Wagon Works-Pittsburgh Plate Glass Building is an historic three-story brick warehouse building in Houston's Warehouse District. The Eller Wagon Works Building, at the corner of Crawford and Commerce, was constructed in 1909 to manufacture horse-drawn wagons just as the automobile industry was getting under way. In 1920, the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company acquired the building and added a second structure designed by Alfred C. Finn to the south side of the original Wagon Works Building. The newer building features an exposed concrete frame and stylized neoclassical decoration. The buildings now house offices, studios, and loft spaces.



more

Waddell's House furnishing Company, 800-810 Sampson

The Waddell's Housefurnishing Company Building is a four-story brick warehouse built circa 1913 as a storage facility and mattress factory for Waddell's, a successful family-run furniture business founded in Houston in the 1880s. The company was started by Hugh Waddell, an Irish immigrant, on Main Street in 1882, and was run for many years by Hugh and his two sons, Mayne Reid and Hugh Kerr Waddell. The company grew quickly, constructing a new building on Prairie Avenue at Fannin Street in 1895, and then expanding further with the Sampson Street warehouse and mattress factory circa 1913. A second two-story concrete frame structure was built on the property in 1928, where the original mattress factory once stood. After the Prairie Avenue building burned in 1938, Waddell's moved their store to the Sampson Street address, and in 1950, a new one-story showroom was built facing Sampson Street on the north side of the warehouse. The property ownership remained in the Waddell family until 1998, when it was purchased by the current owner, Mir Azizi. The building has not yet been restored.



Houston's Historic Preservation Ordinance, adopted by City Council in 1995, recognizes and protects the city's historic sites. The ordinance allows Council to designate buildings, structures, objects or sites that have historical, cultural, architectural or archaeological significance. By preserving the city's valuable historic resources, residents and visitors are visibly reminded of our culture and heritage, boosting civic pride and economic prosperity. Economic incentives and reduced permit fees are available for renovations on designated historic properties approved by the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission. More information including photos of the above mentioned properties is available online at the Planning Department web site at www.houstonplanning.com under Historic Preservation.