

News Release



CONTACT: Suzy Hartgrove: 713-837-7719
Email: Suzy.Hartgrove@houstontx.gov

City of Houston grants historic designation for the Baker-Meyer Building, Casa a la Punta House and Hilliard House

HOUSTON, August 10, 2010 – Houston City Council designated the Casa a la Punta House as a historic landmark and the Baker-Meyer Building and the Hilliard House as protected historic landmarks.

The Baker-Meyer Building at 313 Travis Street in Downtown Houston was designed in the Greek Revival style as is revealed in the corbelled brick cornice. The building was constructed circa 1870 making it among the oldest commercial buildings still standing in Houston. George Baker, a pioneer citizen of Houston, was the original owner. In 1884 George Baker's daughter Rebecca married Joseph F. Meyer and the building has remained in the Meyer family ever since. The shops and stores that have occupied the building were a feed store; a tailor shop run by former state representative Rex Braun; a toy store; and several night clubs in the late 1960s and early 1970s. For thirty years, Treebeards Restaurant has occupied the building. The restaurant has become a well known institution for lunch-time dining in the Main Street Market Square Historic District.



The residence at 3223 Chevy Chase, designed by well-known architect Charles Oliver, was built in 1929-30 for Mr. and Mrs. William Albert Ryan. The name "Casa a la Punta" or "House of the Point" refers to the home's unique location on a point of land bounded by Groveland and Chevy Chase Drive. Stephen Fox described the home as "Oliver's greatest house." It is one of the distinctive Mediterranean style homes built by Oliver in River Oaks during the late 1920s and 1930s. Of the eight original Mediterranean homes, approximately six are standing. Casa a la Punta is the first Oliver Mediterranean home to be registered as a landmark with the City.



The Hilliard House at 3375 Del Monte Drive, located in the original section of River Oaks, is an excellent example of the Tudor Revival style. The house features a steeply pitched side-gabled roof, chimney with decorative chimney pots, and decorated vergeboards over the gabled entryway. The house was built by contractor J. Leon Osborn in 1935-36 on speculation and was purchased by Harry and Susan Hilliard in July 1936. Harry Hilliard was a prominent Houstonian and one of the principals of Adams & Porter, an international marine insurance firm based in Houston. Susan Hilliard was a



founder of the Garden Club of Houston, established in 1924 and still active in the Houston community. In 1967 the house passed to the current owners, the Hilliard's son and daughter-in-law; it is one of very few homes in River Oaks that remain in the hands of the original family. Because the façade of the Hilliard House has undergone very little change since its construction 74 years ago, it is a visual reminder of the initial development of River Oaks.

You can learn more about the City's historic preservation program online at the Planning Department web site, www.houstonplanning.com.