

**AGENDA ITEM: 1e**

**SITE NAME:**

**HPO File no. 100905**

**SITE LOCATION:** 1810 Columbia Street (AKA 501 E. 18<sup>th</sup> St) – Houston Heights Historic District East

**Owner:** Vicinus Homes LLC.

**Applicant:** Bob Kretschmer – Vicinus Homes LLC

Time Frame	Date Accepted	90-day Waiver
	September-07-2010	December-06-2010

**SITE INFORMATION:**

Lot 16, Block 108, Houston Heights Subdivision, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The site currently contains a non contributing modern one-story garage.

**TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED:**

The applicant was approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction of a two-story residence and attached two-story garage at the May 20, 2010 meeting of the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission. The applicant has made revisions to the original design and now requests approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following work:

- Original design called for a 6'-0" north side setback and 8'-11" south side setback, in order to accommodate a new drive way to be located on the north side of the house the new design calls for a 3'-5" north side setback and 11'-5" south side setback; Original design consisted of an attached two-story garage, new design will feature an attached one-story garage; Garage will have a gable roof covered in composition shingles with overall height to roof ridge of 18'-0"; Garage will be clad in horizontal lap fiber cement siding
- West Elevation (front facing Columbia): Elevation of main structure will remain the same; Garage will feature one overhead roll up type garage door
- South Elevation (facing side property line): New design will feature a slight variation of original fenestration on main structure; Garage will feature one pedestrian door; Please see elevation drawings for fenestration details;
- North Elevation (facing side property line): New design will feature a slight variation of original fenestration on main structure; Garage will not feature any window or door openings; Please see elevation drawings for new fenestration details
- East Elevation (facing rear property line): Elevation on main structure will remain the same; Garage will not feature any window or door openings; Please see elevation drawings for fenestration details

**HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE:**

At the time of the Houston Heights Historic District East survey, the site, also known as 501 E. 18<sup>th</sup> St. was classified on the inventory as a "non-contributing" funeral home.

The property is contained within the boundary of the Houston Heights Historic District, East. The Historic District is contained within the boundaries of Houston Heights, which was designated as a Multiple Resource Area (MRA) on June 22, 1983 by the National Park Service. Houston Heights was designated as a MRA because it was at one time an independent municipality of less than 50,000 inhabitants (1896-1918), a requirement of the designation, and the area also contains a large number of buildings that have been individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places, another requirement. On April 10, 1991 in conjunction with the Houston Heights Centennial

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Celebration that year, Houston City Council designated the entire Houston Heights Subdivision as Houston Heights Historic District of the City of Houston (Resolution No. 91-15). The resolution proclaimed Houston Heights as “one of the first planned communities in the State of Texas ... the largest intact historic district in the city .... tangible evidence of Houston’s architectural and historical legacy .... an area with great potential for enhancement and revitalization as a point of interest in the city.” While that designation granted no powers or conferred no rights or privileges associated with the designation, it was the second of such resolutions passed by City Council to recognize neighborhoods in Houston for their historical and architectural significance to the city. The resolution designating Houston Heights had also been recommended to City Council by the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission (HAHC) at the request of the Houston Heights Association (HHA). The action taken by City Council was also warranted as Houston Heights had been honored previously in 1988 when the Houston Heights Urban Main Street Project on West 19<sup>th</sup> Street was established by the Texas Historical Commission and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The program successfully achieved economic development and at the same time preserved the historic buildings which enhanced the success and made it unique. The Texas Historical Commission approved a Recorded Texas Historical Landmark (Subject Marker) for Houston Heights which was dedicated during the Centennial Celebration in 1991. Many other sites and buildings in Houston Heights have been designated as Recorded Texas Historical Landmarks as well. After the passage of the city’s Historic Preservation Ordinance in 1995 by City Council, many buildings have been designated also as City of Houston Landmarks and Protected Landmarks.

Houston Heights was so well planned from its inception by the Omaha and South Texas Land Company in 1891, and as the result, it became very attractive to investors, and Houston Heights grew rapidly and eventually was incorporated as a city in 1896. It flourished as a distinct municipality until 1918 when the residents, by vote, agreed to be annexed to the City of Houston. The reason that the citizens of Houston Heights voted for the annexation to Houston was primarily to guarantee a broader tax base with which to support their public schools. Houston Heights voted "dry" in 1912, guaranteeing that alcohol may not be sold – an extremely unique ordinance adopted by Houston Heights and continuously enforced by the City of Houston. Houston Heights grew rapidly in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but continued to maintain its unique identity, which was reflected in its original planning. Today the area still maintains the feeling of a distinctive, self contained “small town” with its predominantly small 19<sup>th</sup> century, one-story cottages and larger, two-story Victorian-era homes, and numerous early 20<sup>th</sup> century bungalow style buildings. It also boasts a thriving business district on 19<sup>th</sup> Street (now predominantly antique shops, retail and restaurants) and a large industrial district west of the business section. The neighborhood also contains the original city hall of Houston Heights (also the fire station and jail). Also located there are a number of historic churches, theatres, corner stores, private and public parks, fraternal halls and schools.

**APPROVAL CRITERIA FOR ALTERATION:**

**Sec. 33-241. Same-Alteration, rehabilitation, restoration, and construction.**

(a) The HAHC shall issue a certificate of appropriateness for the alteration, rehabilitation, restoration or construction of an exterior feature of (I) any landmark, (II) any building, structure or object in an historic district, or (III) any building, structure or object that is part of an archaeological site, upon finding that the application satisfies the following criteria, as applicable:

S D NA S - satisfies D - does not satisfy NA - not applicable

S D NA S - satisfies D - does not satisfy NA - not applicable

(1) The proposed activity must retain and preserve the historical character of the property;

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- (2) The proposed activity must contribute to the continued availability of the property for a contemporary use;
- (3) The proposed activity must recognize the building, structure, object or site as a product of its own time and avoid alterations that seek to create an earlier or later appearance;
- (4) The proposed activity must preserve the distinguishing qualities or character of the building, structure, object or site and its environment;
- (5) The proposed activity must maintain or replicate distinctive stylistic exterior features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize the building, structure, object or site;
- (6) New materials to be used for any exterior feature must be compatible with the materials being replaced in composition, design, texture and other visual qualities;
- (7) The proposed replacement of missing exterior features, if any, should be based on an accurate duplication of features, substantiated by available historical, physical or pictorial evidence, where that evidence is available, rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other structures;
- (8) Proposed additions or alterations must be done in a manner that, if removed in the future, would leave unimpaired the essential form and integrity of the building, structure, object or site;
- (9) The proposed design for alterations or construction must not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material and must be compatible with the size, scale, material and character of the property and the area in which it is located;
- (10) The setback of any proposed construction or alteration must be compatible with existing setbacks along the blockface and facing blockface(s); and
- (11) The proposed activity will comply with any applicable deed restrictions.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Approval of the certificate of appropriateness

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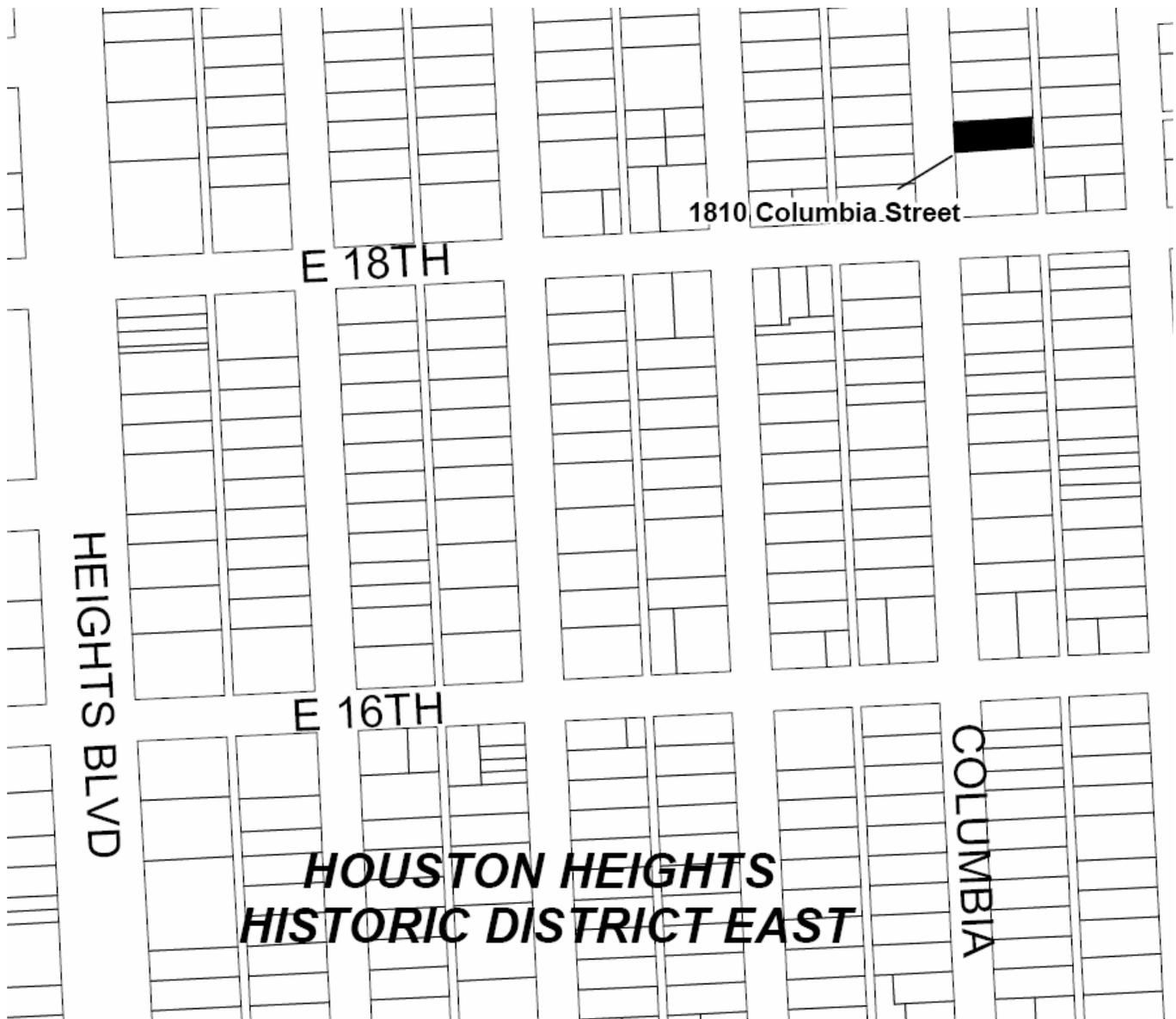
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**Site Location Map  
Not to Scale**



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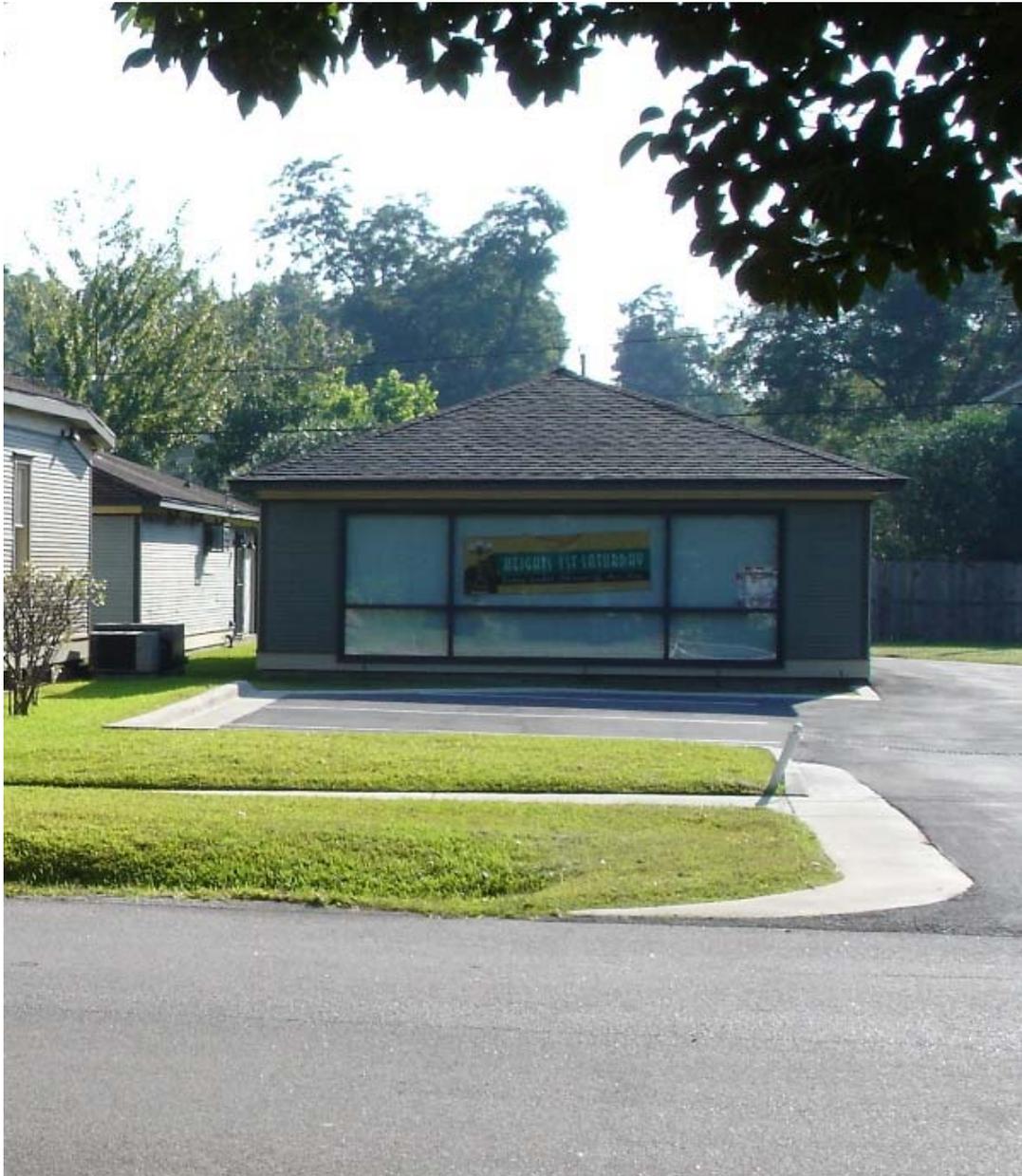
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**Current Photograph  
Showing Parking Lot and Non-Contributing Garage**



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**West (front) Elevation  
Facing Columbia Street  
Not to Scale**



**Original Elevation**



**Revised Elevation**

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**South (side) Elevation  
Not to Scale**



**Original Elevation**



**Revised Elevation**

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**North (side) Elevation  
Not to Scale**



**Original Elevation**



**Revised Elevation**

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**East (rear) Elevation  
Not to Scale**



**Original Elevation**



**Revised Elevation**

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