

AGENDA ITEM: Ie

HPO File no. 101003

SITE NAME:

SITE LOCATION: 238 W. 16th Street – Houston Heights Historic District West

Owner: Laura Thompson

Applicant: John Leonard

Time Frame	Date Accepted	90-day Waiver
	Sept-10-2010	N/A

SITE INFORMATION: Tract 1A and TR 2A, Block 143, (formerly account # 0201390000037 now combined with tax account # 0201390000001 being the westerly 32' x 100' of lots 1 and 2 block 143)Houston Heights Subdivision, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The building on the site is a two-story, wood frame garage apartment.

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED:

The applicant was approved a certificate of appropriateness for the demolition of the subject building at the August 19, 2009 meeting of the Houston archaeological and Historical Commission. The demolition of the building was never commenced and the C of A expired after one calendar year. The owner and applicant requests approval of a certificate of appropriateness for the following work:

- Demolition of two-story garage apartment;

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE:

At the time of the Houston Heights Historic District West survey, the primary building, re-constructed in its current configuration circa 1940, was initially classified on the inventory as "Potentially-Contributing". The building appears to have been initially constructed as a one story house circa 1915-1920. The building's current classification is due to numerous alterations which have changed the entire character of the original building. In several different phases, a one story house was moved to its current location and raised on very tall masonry and iron piers to accommodate parking area beneath. In addition to raising the one story building to create a two story garage apartment, an enclosed carport was constructed at the ground floor level in front of the building and a side porch located at the second floor level was enclosed.

The property is contained within the boundary of the Houston Heights Historic District. 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 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 19th Street was established by the Texas Historical Commission and the

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

AGENDA ITEM: 1e

HPO File no. 101003

SITE NAME:

SITE LOCATION: 238 W. 16th Street – Houston Heights Historic District West

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 20th 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 19th century, one-story cottages and larger, two-story Victorian-era homes, and numerous early 20th century bungalow style buildings. It also boasts a thriving business district on 19th 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 DEMOLITION:

Sec. 33-247. Same—Demolition of landmark, protected landmark, contributing structure, potentially contributing structure or within archaeological site

- (a) The issuance of a certificate of appropriateness for the demolition of a landmark, a contributing structure or a potentially contributing structure, or for the demolition of a building, structure or object on or in an archaeological site shall be subject to the establishment of an unusual and compelling circumstance.

(3) Determination of the existence of an unusual or compelling circumstance shall be based upon the following criteria:

S D N/A S – satisfies D – does not satisfy N/A – not applicable

- (a) That current information does not support the historic or archaeological significance of this building, structure or object or its importance to the integrity of an historic district, if applicable;
- (b) Whether there are definite plans for reuse of the property if the proposed demolition is carried out and what effect such plans have on the architectural, cultural, historical or archaeological character of the surrounding area;
- (c) Whether reasonable measures can be taken to save the building, structure or object from further deterioration, collapse, arson, vandalism or neglect.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the certificate of appropriateness as requested by the applicant.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

AGENDA ITEM: 1e

SITE NAME:

HPO File no. 101003

SITE LOCATION: 238 W. 16th Street – Houston Heights Historic District West

**Site Location Map
Not to Scale**



CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

AGENDA ITEM: Ie

SITE NAME:

HPO File no. 101003

SITE LOCATION: 238 W. 16th Street – Houston Heights Historic District West

Photo Showing Current Condition



CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

AGENDA ITEM: 1e

SITE NAME:

HPO File no. 101003

SITE LOCATION: 238 W. 16th Street – Houston Heights Historic District West

Photos Showing Current Condition



CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

AGENDA ITEM: Ie

HPO File no. 101003

SITE NAME:

SITE LOCATION: 238 W. 16th Street – Houston Heights Historic District West

Photos Showing Current Condition



CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

AGENDA ITEM: 1e

HPO File no. 101003

SITE NAME:

SITE LOCATION: 238 W. 16th Street – Houston Heights Historic District West

Statement from Property Owners

To: City of Houston Planning & Development Department

From: Laura Thompson & John Leonard

RE: Proposed Demolition for 238 W 16th St Houston TX 77008

Certificate of Appropriateness Checklist Response to Question 5:

5A. – Describe the condition and reason for the demolition

Answer – The structures condition is that it is dilapidated beyond the point of repair. The structure is not habitable.

The reason for demolition is three-fold.

- First, the cost of repair exceeds the cost of new construction. (SEE PHOTOS)
- Second, the back right 28’ length of the structure is built more than 48” over the lot line into the alley. (SEE SURVEY)
- Third, the structure is built on what should be the natural back parts of the 2 adjacent lots that face Allston St. (SEE HCAD DETAIL MAP)

5B. – Describe the reuse of the site, including drawings of any proposed new structures, site features, or landscaping.

Answer – The reuse of the site would simply be a grass covered back yard serving the adjacent lot at 1545 Allston.

5C. – Include evidence of unusual circumstances, or an economic hardship.

Answer – The dilapidated structure is preventing the possibility of restoring two lots in the back to their original size- matching the rest of the lots on the 1500 block of Allston. (SEE SURVEY & HCAD DETAIL MAP)

5D. – Time table for demolition and clearing of the site.

Answer - The time table would be 45 to 60 days

5E. – Submit an erosion control and soil stabilization plan.

Answer – The property, which runs along the alley, would be sloped from east to west- carrying the rain water to the alley side of the property which would in turn, carry the water to the street. Required yardage of final grade sand would be imported and sod would be laid to stabilize the soil and control erosion. If necessary, a silt fence would be installed until the sod is installed. (SEE EROSION CONTROL & SOIL STABILIZATION PLAN)

NOTE: The subject property is under the HCAD tax account # of 0201390000001, however, it was previously under 0201390000037.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS