

# CITY OF HOUSTON

Planning and Development Department



## HISTORIC DISTRICT RECONSIDERATION

**DISTRICT NAME:** AVONDALE WEST  
**DATE OF DESIGNATION:** 10/9/2007  
**RECONSIDERATION APPLICATION ACCEPTED:** 11/17/2010  
**PUBLIC MEETING DATE:** 12/7/2010  
**RECONSIDERATION SURVEY DEADLINE:** 12/22/2010

### BACKGROUND

An application for reconsideration was received on November 17, 2010, and was signed by the required minimum 10% of property owners in favor of reconsideration. A public meeting was held at Montrose Counseling Center on December 7, 2010, and survey forms were due back by December 22, 2010. Surveys were allowed to be turned in at the end of the meeting, email, mail, fax or hand delivered to the Planning and Development Department.

### CRITERIA FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT RECONSIDERATION

According to Ordinance No. 2010-813, the Director shall consider each request for historic district reconsideration pursuant to:

1. The criteria for designation of the historic district;
2. The provisions of Article VII of Chapter 33 of the Code that were applicable to the percentage of property owners required to initiate an application;
3. Any changed circumstances identified in the request for reconsideration; and
4. The current level of support for repeal of the designation.

The ordinance also requires the director to make findings with each request for reconsideration and report the findings to the City Council. The director may recommend that City Council:

1. Take no action with respect to the designation of the historic district;
2. Repeals the resolution creating the historic district if the owners of 51 percent of the tracts in the Designated Historic District indicate that they do not support the continued designation of the Designated Historic District; or
3. Amend the resolution designating the historic district to reduce its boundaries.

### HISTORIC DISTRICT SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

Avondale, developed in the early 20th century, was home to many of Houston's early business and social leaders before the development of River Oaks and Broadacres. The neighborhood was designed with special attention paid to quality of life. The main streets, Avondale and Stratford, were both very wide and were paved with oyster shell with cement curbs and gutters, and utility poles were placed out of sight in rear alleys. The historic homes of Avondale are representative of the architectural styles in vogue in that time period, such as Prairie, American Four Square, Craftsman, and Tudor Revival. Influential Houstonians who lived in Avondale included Ross Sterling, the founder of Humble Oil Company and Governor of Texas from 1931-1932 (600 Avondale); Albert L. Bath, manager of a cotton exporting firm, and his daughter Harriet, a founder

# CITY OF HOUSTON

## Planning and Development Department



and lifelong supporter of the Houston Ballet; Neal Pickett, mayor of Houston during World War II (217 Avondale); Abe and Esther Levy, owners of the Levy Dry Goods stores (309 Avondale); and J. Robert Neal, Vice President of Cheek Neal Coffee Company, which later became Maxwell House Coffee (603 Avondale). The eastern portion of Avondale was designated in 1999 as Avondale East Historic District. Avondale West was designated in 2007.

### APPROVAL CRITERIA FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

To qualify for designation, an historic district must satisfy one or more of eight criteria. The Avondale West Historic District met the following **five** criteria:

- The building, structure, object, site or area possesses character, interest or value as a visible reminder of the development, heritage, and cultural and ethnic diversity of the city, state, or nation.
- The building, structure, object, site or area is identified with a person who, or group or event that, contributed significantly to the cultural or historical development of the city, state, or nation.
- The building or structure or the buildings or structures within the area exemplify a particular architectural style or building type important to the city.
- The building or structure or the buildings or structures within the area are the best remaining examples of an architectural style or building type in a neighborhood.
- The building, structure, object or site or the buildings, structures, objects or sites within the area are identified as the work of a person or group whose work has influenced the heritage of the city, state, or nation.

In addition, at the time of designation, **73.00%** of buildings in Avondale West Historic District were at least 50 years old and classified as contributing or potentially contributing to the district.

### PROPERTY OWNER SUPPORT TO INITIATE AN APPLICATION

The application for designation of Avondale West Historic District required the support of at least 51% of the property owners who owned at least 51% of the land area. Avondale West Historic District received the support of **55.00%** of property owners, who owned **73.12%** of the land area.

### CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES

The only changed circumstances identified in the request for reconsideration were the October 13, 2010 amendments to the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

### SUPPORT FOR REPEAL OF HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

The results of the survey are as follows:

Total Tracts	Signed for Repeal	Percentage Owners for Repeal
75	24	32.00%

# CITY OF HOUSTON

## Planning and Development Department

---

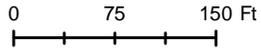


### **DIRECTOR FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATION**

The surveys requesting repeal of the district designation were dispersed throughout the district. The reconsideration of the district designation was not supported by the owners of 51% of the tracts in the district, therefore a repeal of the historic district designation is not recommended. The Director recommends taking no action with respect to the designation of the historic district.

# Avondale West Historic District

-  Repeal - 32%
-  Contributing
-  Noncontributing



Nm

Disclaimer: COHGS data is prepared and made available for general reference purposes only and should not be used, or relied upon for specific applications, without independent verification. The City of Houston neither represents, nor warrants COHGS data accuracy, or completeness, nor will the City of Houston accept liability of any kind in conjunction with its use.

