

CITY OF HOUSTON

Planning and Development Department



HISTORIC DISTRICT RECONSIDERATION

DISTRICT NAME: BOULEVARD OAKS
DATE OF DESIGNATION: 12/29/2009
RECONSIDERATION APPLICATION ACCEPTED: 11/16/2010
PUBLIC MEETING DATE: 12/7/2010
RECONSIDERATION SURVEY DEADLINE: 12/22/2010

BACKGROUND

An application for reconsideration was received on November 16, 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

Boulevard Oaks is one of the finest residential neighborhoods to emerge from Houston's building boom of the 1920s and epitomizes the affluent residential developments in Houston's 'South End.' Boulevard Oaks is much-admired for its lovely esplanades lined with giant oak trees along North and South Boulevards. The neighborhood contains an eclectic collection of two-story brick homes built in the 1920s and 30s, and designed by the city's finest architects and builders of the day, such as Joseph Northrop, Jr., Katharine Mott, Hiram Salisbury, Joseph Finger, and Russell Brown. The styles of architecture found in Boulevard Oaks reflect the Revival styles in vogue at the time, especially Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival, as well as French Manorial, Neoclassical, and English Picturesque. The dominance of brick facades combined with consistent setbacks and

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similar landscaping reinforces the neighborhood's cohesiveness. The landscaped esplanades planted with oaks along North and South Boulevards are an integral part of the neighborhood's plan and make Boulevard Oaks a memorable district in Houston. Retaining a high level of historic integrity with very few non-contributing structures, Boulevard Oaks is perhaps Houston's best preserved residential neighborhood of its type and period. Boulevard Oaks Historic District was designated in 2009, and is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

APPROVAL CRITERIA FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

To qualify for designation, an historic district must satisfy one or more of eight criteria. The Boulevard Oaks Historic District met the following **six** 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.
- The building, structure, object or site has value as a significant element of community sentiment or public pride.

In addition, at the time of designation, **74.77%** of buildings in Boulevard Oaks 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 Boulevard Oaks Historic District required the support of at least 51% of the property owners who owned at least 51% of the land area. Boulevard Oaks Historic District received the support of **57.94%** of property owners, who owned **62.89%** 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.

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SUPPORT FOR REPEAL OF HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

The results of the survey are as follows:

Total Tracts	Signed for Repeal	Percentage Owners for Repeal
107	17	15.89%

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.

