

City of Houston - Designated Protected Landmarks

Staff recommends designating the following Landmarks as " Protected Landmarks " under the proposed Amendments to Chapter 33 of the Code of Ordinances - Historic Preservation. The following 8 Designated Landmarks met at least (3) or more criteria for Landmark Designation at the time of designation and comply with the proposed amendments to Chapter 33 of the Code of Ordinances for Protected Landmark Designation.

Julia Ideson Library 500 McKinney

The Julia Ideson Building is significant in several categories: COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT; ART; EDUCATION; and ARCHITECTURE. The building is one of the finest examples of Spanish Renaissance Revival architecture in Houston, and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places and was also designated a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark. The Julia Ideson Building, named for Julia Ideson, the City Librarian from 1903 until 1945, is significant in four different areas: 1) The building was part of pre-depression Houston city planning. A plan that called for a complex of municipal buildings in downtown with this type of architecture. The Ideson Building was the only building constructed in the overall plan. 2) It is distinctive in its architectural design. Built in 1926 from designs of noted architect, Dr. Ralph Adams Cram of Cram and Ferguson, Boston, it was a style prominent in early twentieth century American and Texas history. There are only a few remaining examples of this type of architecture in Houston. 3) Since the Ideson Building's construction, its interior has been decorated with eight Public Works Administration (P. W. A.) murals, a type of art that is an important part of our heritage. 4) The building is significant because the Houston Public Library has designated it as the home of the Houston Metropolitan Research Center, a prototype of research institutions for the study of the urban experience and for the dissemination of that knowledge. The interior of the building is architecturally distinctive as well .

Arthur B. Cohn House 700 Avenida de las Americas

Arthur Benjamin Cohn House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places and was also designated a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark. The house was constructed primarily in 1905 in the late Queen Anne style with classical detailing and is only one of two turn-of-the-century houses remaining in the once fashionable Quality Hill neighborhood. Incorporated into the rear two-story addition is a late 1860s house originally constructed by Winnifred Browne. Oral history maintains that all or part of the Browne house is incorporated into the Cohn House as it now stands. Physical evidence for this claim includes old flooring in the two-story kitchen wing. Arthur Cohn was instrumental in the founding of the Rice Institute (Rice University), having served as the accountant of William Marsh Rice and then as the agent for Rice's estate and the new William Marsh Rice Institute. He was the first business manager of Rice University and was an influential and respected member of this community, both in his business dealings and in his association with Beth Israel Temple, of which he was a member.

Houston Fire Station No. 7
2403 Milam

The Fire Station No. 7 has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places as well as being designated as a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark. Fire Station No. 7 was designed in 1898 by Olle J. Lorehn (1864-1939), one of Houston's most well known turn-of-the-century architects. The building is the oldest surviving fire station and the only fire station remaining of Lorehn's work. The architectural style of this fire station is Lorehn's own interpretation of the Romanesque style of the Victorian-era period. Because of its restoration and accessibility to the public as a museum, it is even more important not only for its architectural significance but also for the educational resource about the fire department that it provides the community today.

Kellum-Noble House - Sam Houston Park
212 Dallas Street

The Kellum-Noble House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places and was also designated a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark. The house was built in 1847 in the Greek Revival style. It is the oldest surviving brick residence in Houston, being built outside the original townsite on the "upper part" of Houston, adjacent to Nathaniel Kelly Kellum's brickyard. It is a double pen house with central dogtrot passage. The hipped roof, encircling galleries, and brick construction were all departures from conventional Houston house types. The house was included in the city's purchase of Sam Houston Park in 1899. A move to demolish it in 1954 led to the formation of the Harris County Heritage Society, which rescued the building and opened it to the public as a house museum in 1958, following restoration by Harvin C. Moore.

Houston Heights City Hall and City of Houston Fire Station No. 14
107 W 12th Avenue (Street) - Houston Heights Multiple Resource Area (HH MRA)

The Houston Heights City Hall and Fire Station was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as well as being designated a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark. It is located within the boundaries of Houston Heights, which was designated as a Multiple Resource Area (MRA) by the National Register of Historic Places. The building was constructed in 1914 in the Jacobean Revival style, a unique style for a fire station, and designed by Houston architect, Alonzo C. Pigg. It is the best remaining example of a City Hall, Fire Station and Jail, constructed by the City of Houston Heights, which was annexed by the City of Houston in 1918. Thereafter it was used as a City of Houston Fire Station until abandoned in 1994. It was leased to the Houston Heights Association in 1996, as a community center, and has been restored since by that group.

Houston City Hall and Hermann Square
901 Bagby Street

Houston City Hall was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It was constructed in 1939 and designed by Joseph Finger, one of Houston's premier architects. Houston City Hall is uniquely an example of a sky-scraper type municipal building, constructed in the post modern era of solidly, massed blocks faced with Texas Cordova shell limestone. The notable aluminum panels, constructed over the entry doors depicting famous lawgivers in history, were also the work of Finger's office. Hermann Square, accessed from a series of paved terraces extending from City Hall, comprises a block of ground bequeathed to the City of Houston in 1914 by George H. Hermann, one of Houston's most prominent philanthropists. In 1939 the Kansas City landscape architects, Hare & Hare, installed the reflecting basin that stretches out on axis with City Hall, as well as the broad grass terrace, hedgerows and live oak trees that ring the pool.

Gregory School

1300 Victor Street - Freedmen's Town National Register Historic District

Freedmen's Town Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places which included Gregory School as a "contributing" building to the historic district. Gregory School was designated also as a State Archaeological Landmark (SAL) under the following criteria: A) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; C) Is important to a particular cultural or ethnic group; D) Is the work of a significant architect, master builder, or craftsman; and F) Has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to the understanding of Texas culture or history. The school building was constructed by the Houston Independent School District (HISD) in 1926 as an elementary school for Black children in the Fourth Ward. Gregory School was named in honor of the former Gregory Institute that was the namesake of General Edgar M. Gregory, the first assistant commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau in Texas and who donated the land for the Institute. The Gregory Institute was a high school for Black children in Houston, located on Jefferson Avenue between Smith and Louisiana Streets. The school building, which was built with Classical Revival influences (including parapets over entry doors at each end of the building), features two cast reliefs of the wise old "owl" which were placed above each large window over each entry door on Victor Street. Gregory School was designed by Hedrick and Gottlieb, a prestigious architectural firm. They not only designed other historically and architecturally significant Houston buildings, including schools, but also designed numerous other important buildings throughout Texas.

Houston Public Library - Heights Branch

1302 Heights Boulevard - Houston Heights Multiple Resource Area

Houston Public Library Heights Branch was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as an individual landmark, and the building is included within the boundaries of Houston Heights, which was designated as a Multiple Resource Area (MRA) by the National Register Program. Constructed in 1925 from the design by James M. Glover, Houston architect, the Houston Public Library Heights Branch is constructed of hollow tile blocks with an exterior cladding of stucco and a pitched, terra-cotta tiled roof. The Italian Renaissance detail, executed in cast stone, marks the impressive, monument entrance bay. The entrance bay was constructed to project slightly forward of the tile-roofed library building. The graceful protruding entrance bay features large, round arched portals flanked by aedicular framed smaller windows over which are square, decorative panels with ocular windows. Pilasters with arabesque decorations rise to a heavy cornice over which is a niched parapet that emphasizes the entrance. Also notable are the three bays flanking on either side of the entrance bay and each of the side bays features fanlit casement windows with round arches. The interior of the building is architecturally distinctive as well. The building was officially dedicated on March 18, 1926.