

## PROTECTED LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

**LANDMARK NAME:** Houston Heights Church of Christ Building

**OWNER:** Heights Church of Christ Congregation

**APPLICANT:** Same as Owner

**LOCATION:** 1548 Heights Boulevard (aka 120 E. 16<sup>th</sup> Street) -  
Houston Heights Historic District East

**30-DAY HEARING NOTICE:** N/A

**AGENDA ITEM:** VI

**HPO FILE No.:** 08PL65

**DATE ACCEPTED:** May-31-08

**HAHC HEARING:** July-10-08

**PC HEARING:** July-17-08

### SITE INFORMATION

Lots 1, 2, 23, 24, and the north 5.44 feet of Lot 3 (HCAD Tract 3A), Block 140, Houston Heights Subdivision, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The site includes a raised, two-story brick church building.

**TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED:** Landmark and Protected Landmark Designation

### HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

Houston Heights Church of Christ, located at 1548 Heights Boulevard, was first established in February 1915 on the second floor of the Frank M. Johnson Drug Store, located at 350 W. 19<sup>th</sup> at Ashland, in Houston Heights. It was the first Church of Christ congregation established in Houston Heights, and the second in the city of Houston. Since the first Houston congregation is no longer active, the Houston Heights Church of Christ congregation has the distinction of being the oldest Church of Christ congregation still active in the city. The congregation also served as the mother church for many other local church congregations. The Heights Church of Christ congregation moved into the present sanctuary in March 1925.

The Neo-Georgian style building, at the corner of E. 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Harvard Street, was designed by renowned Houston architect, Alfred C. Finn, and construction began in June 1924. Most of its construction costs were provided by church member and benefactor, Emerson F. Woodward, whose architecturally significant home, also designed by Finn, still stands at 1605 Heights Boulevard, just a block away from the church. Woodward was a pioneer oil industry entrepreneur, and with his vast wealth, he funded the establishment of several church congregations and orphanages in Texas.

The Heights Church of Christ congregation received a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) subject marker in 1990. The building is classified as a contributing building to the Houston Heights Historic District East, designated as a City of Houston historic district in 2008. The Heights Church of Christ Building meets Criteria 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 for Landmark and Protected Landmark designation, as well as being designated as a RTHL.

### HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

Houston Heights was developed by the Omaha and South Texas Land Company in 1891. Directors of the Omaha and South Texas Land Company developed public utility systems, sidewalks, and streets, including Heights Boulevard with its grand, 60-foot wide esplanade and street car service; allocated sites for parks and schools; encouraged the establishment of churches; and facilitated the development of a major industrial, manufacturing district in the northwest section of Houston Heights served by railroads.

Houston Heights incorporated as a city in 1896, and in 1918, Heights residents voted to be annexed to the City of Houston. Houston Heights grew rapidly in the 20th century, but continued to maintain its unique identity reflected in its original planning. Today the area maintains its distinctive “small town” feel, with many small 19th century one-story cottages and two-story Victorian-era homes, and numerous early 20th century bungalows, as well as a thriving business district on W. 19th Street and a large industrial district northwest of the business section. Also located in the neighborhood are the original Houston Heights city hall and fire station, a number of theatres, corner stores, private and public parks, fraternal halls, schools, and many historic churches, including the Houston Heights Church of Christ.

The churches of the community were of great importance during the early period of development of Houston Heights, contributing to the town's image of respectability. The religious life of the neighborhood was an important part of the social activities. No other area of Houston has a more concentrated grouping of historic church buildings than Houston Heights, where numerous denominations flourished.

### *Church of Christ in Texas*

According to Handbook of Texas, “the Church of Christ in Texas developed as a part of the westward advance of an American religious movement growing out of the Second Great Awakening that became known as the Restoration Movement or the Reformation of the Nineteenth Century. The movement sought to restore first-century Christianity and used the Bible as the sole religious authority. From this effort two movements evolved, the ‘Christians’ of Barton W. Stone of Kentucky and the ‘Reformers’ or ‘Reforming Baptists’ led by Alexander Campbell of Pennsylvania; the two merged in 1832. Sharing this heritage today, in addition to the Church of Christ, are two other fellowships in the movement: the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Churches of Christ. (Members of the Church of Christ, because of the church's strict congregational autonomy, often refer to the aggregate of congregations as Churches of Christ.)”

“In 1824 Collin McKinney, a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence, became the first known member of the Church of Christ to settle in Texas. William P. DeFee, who established the Antioch Church of Christ near San Augustine in 1836, was the first minister of the church to preach in Texas. The first Church of Christ in Texas was a church on wheels begun by Mansell W. Matthews, a surgeon in the revolutionary army and a member of the First and Seventh congresses of the Republic of Texas. Many early immigrants to Texas were from Kentucky, Tennessee, and northern Alabama, where Stone's influence was strongest. José María Jesús Carbajal, the first native Texan to become a member, lived in Alexander Campbell's home in Bethany, Virginia, from 1827 to 1830, when he brought back to Texas all of Campbell's writings. Early Texas Churches of Christ sprang from converted Baptist congregations; Thomas Washington Cox, a Baptist minister, is credited with several of these conversions.”

“During the republic the Church of Christ grew in Deep East Texas and South Texas, and expanded west beyond the Colorado River. After statehood, immigration swelled the membership, especially after midcentury.” The Wilmeth family came to Texas during this time period, and Collin McKinney Wilmeth, a prominent family member, was aptly named after Collin McKinney, the first known member of the Church of Christ to settle in Texas.

According to the Handbook of Texas, “Collin McKinney Wilmeth, preacher and missionary, the son of Joseph Bryce and Nancy (Ferguson) Wilmeth, was born on January 2, 1848. The Wilmeths moved to Texas in 1845, stopped in Dallas at Christmas, when Dallas consisted of three cabins, and settled near what is now Grand Prairie. Fearful of Indians the family decided to go back East, but instead settled two miles north of the site of present McKinney, Texas. Wilmeth was educated at the University of

Kentucky, College of the Bible. He also established the first Church of Christ in McKinney, Texas. He married Mary Griffith Rutherford of Tennessee in 1873. As a prominent young minister, Wilmeth preached extensively in North Texas and made preaching journeys to the frontier. As a full-time evangelist he traveled the state preaching and debating and, with his brother, taught for a time at Add-Ran College (later Texas Christian University). Wilmeth and his older brother, James Ranson Wilmeth, began the Texas Christian Monthly in McKinney in 1875. This monthly periodical soon changed its name to the Christian Monthly and was moved to Dallas, where it merged with a similar paper called the Iron Preacher, published in New Orleans, and became the Christian Preacher. C. M. Wilmeth was editor and publisher. In the 1880s in the movement for state missionary societies, Wilmeth and his paper were influential voices for conservatism. After serving as state evangelist for Texas churches from 1882 until 1886, when the Texas State Missionary Society was organized, Wilmeth returned to Dallas and established Nazareth University in West Dallas. In 1892 Wilmeth moved the school and the paper to Corinth, Arkansas, and operated them there until he moved to Mexico in 1896. Wilmeth was probably the leading evangelist among Churches of Christ for the last quarter of the nineteenth century in Texas. His leadership is evident as editor, educator, debater, state evangelist, and missionary to Mexico. The attempt to evangelize through colonization near Tampico was called an "Exodus to Mexico," a bold missionary effort of Wilmeth and some Texas congregations. For a brief period, due to Wilmeth's energy and zeal, the effort was successful, but his death from a malaria attack and overexertion on October 12, 1898, ended the colonization effort."

Although many unheeded appeals for missionaries in Texas were made, the churches increased in membership chiefly through the efforts of men otherwise employed during the week who preached on weekends and during the summer months. The number of such ministers grew by 1860; more than 100 can be identified. Few churches had buildings of their own and often met in homes, schoolhouses, courthouses, union halls, or, during warm months, at camp-meeting grounds. The first permanent church was built by John Henry Moore, an Indian fighter and founder of La Grange, Fayette County. By 1860 the church had 2,500 members in Texas, in fifty-three congregations scattered along the frontier in Montague, Parker, Erath, Burnet, and Gillespie counties and extending westward to Batesville in Zavala County. The Civil War had little adverse affect on the churches, although many young men participated in the struggle. The churches continued to grow through vigorous evangelism."

"By 1876 such itinerant preachers as W. H. Stewart, Silas Scarborough, and Thomas Nance began expansion on West Texas prairies and in the Panhandle. Several churches were started in West Texas by colonization, notably at Abilene, San Angelo, Lockney, and Lubbock. Similar ventures in Mexico had begun in 1896, when Collin McKinney Wilmeth led an 'Exodus to Mexico.' In the next two decades ministers led more successful American colonies in Mexico, which ended in 1916 as a result of Pancho (Francisco) Villa's activities."

The Handbook of Texas continues "Because the Churches of Christ had no organizational structure above the local church, evangelism depended heavily on individual efforts of frontier preachers and camp meetings. Later, cooperative ventures were undertaken by churches and individuals regionally, and in 1872 a state cooperative effort began through the efforts of Carroll Kendrick. In 1862 division in the Churches of Christ began on a national level when progressives and conservatives began differing over innovations in worship and clericalism. Texas churches were divided in San Marcos, Waco, Dallas, Waxahachie and other towns when organs, favored by the progressives, were introduced into the church service. A statewide division occurred at the state meeting in Austin in July 1886, when progressives established a Texas Christian Missionary Society to mimic the American Christian Missionary Society, founded in 1849. The conservatives believed that supra-congregational organization and instrumental music had no scriptural basis. In 1906 the United States census officially divided the two groups into the

Churches of Christ (conservatives) and the Disciples of Christ (progressives). While the Churches of Christ stressed the restoration principle, the Disciples were more ecumenical. In the 1960s another separation occurred between the Disciples and the Churches of Christ due to heightened ecumenical emphasis by the Disciples. In 1886 the undivided body had approximately 30,000 members, about evenly split between progressives and conservatives. However, by 1906, signs of more rapid growth among Churches of Christ were becoming evident. The increase over the Disciples of Christ was due largely to the labors of itinerant preachers and the agrarian nature of the Texas population. In the small-town and rural areas the militantly autonomous Churches of Christ grew most rapidly. Pulpit-centered churches were led by an aggressive, often combatant, ministry. In 1906 the Church of Christ had 627 congregations and 34,006 members. By the mid-twentieth century Texas accounted for 35 percent of the 450,000 members in the United States. The number of Texas congregations, stable since midcentury, reached 2,215 in the 1990s, when the membership numbered 292,585. Decline in Texas rural population brought a concomitant decline in rural churches. City churches increased after World War II until recent decades, when growth leveled off. The greatest growth of the church occurred in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Significant growth in recent decades has been only in suburban areas, and much of this is due to the mobility of church members.”

### *Houston Heights Church of Christ*

Houston Heights Church of Christ was first established in February 1915 in the “small town” of Houston Heights. The congregante convened on the second floor of the 19th Avenue Drug Store, operated by Frank M. Johnson, at 350 19th Avenue, according to the Houston City Directory. The brick building was located on the southeast corner at Ashland, which is now the site of Harold’s Menswear at 350 W. 19th Street. Twenty-six members were present at that first church service, which was the first Church of Christ congregation established in Houston Heights. At that time, there was only one Church of Christ congregation in Houston, the Spring Street Church of Christ, located at 1507 Spring Street in First Ward, and established in 1903. The preacher there in 1915 was Reverend Benjamin West, who was followed by J. E. Arceneaux in 1919. Another congregation formed at 1601 Summer and Johnson Streets in the First Ward, which later relocated to Pierce and Baldwin, before becoming the Northwest Congregation in 1965.

Gustus Albert Dunn, who became the first preacher of Heights Church of Christ in January 1916, had first held a tent meeting in Houston Heights in October 1915. Under Dunn’s leadership, the Houston Heights congregation built a frame tabernacle at 120 E. 16th Avenue at Harvard in April 1916, where Brother Dunn continued his ministry in Houston Heights until 1917.

According to the website “The Restoration Movement,” “Gustus Albert Dunn was born in Readyville, Tennessee, June 2, 1876. His parents were T. F. and Elizabeth Dunn (buried in Murfreesboro, Tennessee). He was part of a family of five brothers, all of whom preached the gospel in the course of their lives. He was married to Mae Mather, and together they had four children. One son, Gus A. Dunn, Jr. also preached the gospel.” Gus was baptized by James A. Harding in March of 1895, at the age of eighteen. The following year he began preaching the gospel of Christ. He was educated at College in Winchester, Tennessee; then at Nashville Bible School and Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee; and then at Clark University where he received the M.A. Degree; later at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas where he received the B.D. Degree. In 1897 in Oak Ridge, Mississippi he baptized 88 during the course of the meeting, including two Baptist preachers, John W. Thompson and E.S. Martin.

While in Tennessee, Dunn preached at various locations on a regular basis, preaching in Gospel meetings throughout central Tennessee. When he moved to Texas he preached regularly in Cleburne, Texas from 1904-1905, and had 88 to “obey the gospel.” As an evangelist Dunn held hundreds of Gospel Meetings, averaging about 20 to 25 per year with great success. At the turn of the 20th century, many debates were necessary to clarify the teaching of truth against an array of the false teachings of the day. There was the Dunn-Milborn Debate in 1909. He debated the great Baptist champion, Ben M. Bogard in 1910. There was the Dunn-Sands Debate on Catholicism as well. In 1912 in Hodges, Alabama he had a meeting where 74 were “baptized into Christ.”

Dunn was called to preach at Houston Heights Church of Christ from 1916-1917. Dunn had left Houston Heights to preach at the Central church in Houston, Texas which first met at 2501 Fannin in the Chamber of Commerce building rooms. That congregation was made up of some former members of the Houston Heights and Spring Street churches. Dunn served Central Church of Christ in Houston from 1918-1920. He left Central church and continued his Gospel meetings, when in 1920 he held one Gospel Meeting in Sherman, Texas. In it there were 123 responses, of which 95 were baptized. In 1922 another meeting was held in Sherman that saw 70 “additions to the kingdom.” Through the years Dunn baptized more than 1,000 former Baptist church members among the many thousands he baptized. The Central Church of Christ relocated to 102 Drew Street, where they remained for a few years, under the leadership of Rev. W. E. Starnes, pastor; followed by Rev. L. E. Carpenter.

Gustus A. Dunn had a great interest in writing. He submitted articles to the Gospel Advocate and Firm Foundation on a regular basis. He did radio work in Paducah, Kentucky; Montgomery, Alabama; Key West, Florida; Dallas, Texas; and Florence, South Carolina. He served as president of three high schools and two Bible colleges in his lifetime. He was quoted as saying, "I wish I had done more for the Lord and mankind. My work has not been enough nor good enough to satisfy me. May God have mercy on it and me." Widely known, loved, and respected, G. A. Dunn was a power among sound preachers of the gospel in his generation. Every preacher forty years after his death had a Gus Dunn story. He spent the last forty-five years of his life in Dallas, Texas, where he died February 28, 1967 and was buried in the Laurel Land Cemetery in Dallas, Texas. The late I. L. Boles once said of Brother Dunn: "No dancing master was ever more graceful on the dance floor than G. A. Dunn was in the pulpit." He was tall, handsome and genial in manner. He was always dignified and well-dressed. Brother Dunn was a man of great intellect. He held two graduate degrees—the M.A. and the B.D. degrees. Except for Gus Nichols, I never knew a man who had committed to memory so much of the Scriptures and thus could call up the book, chapter, and verse that would express so accurately the point at hand.”

After Dunn left the Houston Heights congregation in 1918, Rev. J. M. Rice became the preacher at Heights Church of Christ, but served only one year. He was succeeded by Rev. Oscar Smith in 1920. Smith was a native of Illinois, and by that time, the church provided a parsonage for their preacher located at 301 E. 16th Street. In the 1920 City Directory, Rev. Oscar Smith is living there with his wife, Flossie A. Smith, and son, Oscar Smith, Jr. who had been born in 1916 in Texas.

Houston Heights Church of Christ continued to grow during its early years. The congregation began construction of their new church building in June 1924. The contract was let that month to C. W. Raper, a Houston contractor, in the amount of \$100,000, according to the Texas General Contractors Association Monthly Bulletin dated June, 1924. The congregation moved into the new building in March 1925, where it continues its worship services today. The original marble cornerstone, located on the northwest corner of the building, denotes:

“HOUSTON HEIGHTS  
CHURCH OF CHRIST  
ERECTED A.D. 1924”

The Neo-Georgian style church building, with its 650 seat auditorium, was designed by renowned Houston architect, Alfred C. Finn. According to the Finn Collection, housed at the Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Julia Ideson Library (City of Houston Protected Landmark), Finn assigned the design for the Heights Church of Christ as Job No. 318. Finn’s job log confirms that C. W. Raper was the contractor. The total cost of the building and furnishings was \$135,000, most of which was donated by Emerson F. Woodward, whose home, also designed by Finn, still stands at 1605 Heights Boulevard.

All Church of Christ congregations in Houston were growing, with Houston Heights Church of Christ as the mother church for many other local church congregations. The first indication of growth was when the Central church group was formed under the leadership of G. A. Dunn. That congregation would eventually build, in 1941, the Central Church of Christ at 4100 Montrose Boulevard (William Ward Watkin, architect), which today is being adaptively used as the City of Houston Montrose Branch Library (Ray Bailey, Architects – 1986, 1988). Secondly, Rev. Oscar Smith (1888-1966) would leave Heights Church of Christ in 1926, and 150 members went with him to establish the Norhill Church of Christ at 624 W. Cottage at Reagan Street (contributing building to the City of Houston Norhill Historic District). According to the Texas General Contractors Association Monthly Bulletin for August, 1927 the construction contract for the church was let in the amount of \$18,340 to C. W. Raper & Son, Houston contractors. Rev. Smith served the Norhill congregation for seventeen years, but lived during that time at 1511 Harvard Street in Houston Heights. His son, Oscar Smith, Jr., followed his father as preacher of the Norhill congregation from 1943-1980, and after retirement, remained a member there until he died in Houston in 1987. He was succeeded as preacher in 1980 by Derrel Shaw, the current minister.

Following the departure of Rev. Oscar Smith from Heights Church of Christ, Brother Austin McGary became interim preacher for a year. At the time, McGary was living in Willis, Montgomery County, Texas, and was retired. McGary was one of the most well-known preachers in Texas. It is likely he was chosen not only for his many years as a dedicated preacher, but also because he may have been a distant relative of Bessie McGary Woodward, the wife of Emerson Woodward. Austin McGary and his wife, Lillian, most likely resided with the Woodwards at their home at 1605 Heights Boulevard until taking up residence at 1700 Yale, according to the 1927 Houston City Directory.

According to the Handbook of Texas and “The Restoration Movement” website, “Austin (Aus) McGary, minister, journalist, and lawman, was born at Huntsville, Texas, on February 6, 1846, the son of Isaac and Elizabeth (Visier) McGary. Isaac McGary, according to the San Jacinto Museum biographies online, fought at the Battle of San Jacinto and was said to have guarded the recently-captured Antonio López de Santa Anna. Isaac McGary died while Austin McGary was a child. His father settled in Texas and was also Sheriff of Montgomery County, Texas, in the turbulent times of long ago, and for twenty years was County Clerk of Walker County, Texas. Isaac McGary was a candidate for the Legislature on the Sam Houston ticket in 1858, but his opponent defeated him by the close margin of three votes, in the counties of Grimes, Madison, and Walker. He died in 1866.”

Austin McGary “spent his boyhood at Huntsville. Part of his early education was under three preachers of the Church of Christ—the brothers Benton, Thomas, and Basil Sweeney. McGary was also associated with the family of Joseph A. Clark, especially Addison and Randolph Clark, with whom he joined the Confederate Army. He served in the Huntsville Grays with Sam Houston, Jr. He was elected sheriff of

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Madison County in 1872 and served almost two terms before resigning to become conveying agent for the Texas State Penitentiary at Huntsville. In two years of conveying condemned prisoners and desperadoes, he never lost a man. As sheriff, McGary neither owned nor carried a gun. He had become a Christian years earlier and used instead what he claimed was the best two-barreled weapon: the Old Testament and the New Testament. By the time he became a member of the Church of Christ in 1881, he was thirty-five years old and had already lived a colorful life. He soon began preaching, and became a journalist. The character, Praxiteles Swan, in John W. Thomason's 'The Lone Star Preacher' (1941), is based on tales Thomason heard about Austin McGary."

"McGary became interested in religion, and, with a desire to know the truth, he decided to carefully investigate the evidences of Christianity. Carrying out this purpose, he began to study the arguments, pro and con, in the Campbell and Owen debate (Alexander Campbell-Robert Owen debate of 1829). While he was reading this book, he heard Harry Hamilton preach a series of sermons at Madisonville, Texas. Being convinced by what he read and heard that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, he was baptized by Brother Hamilton, December 24, 1881." Soon after he was baptized, he began to preach.

"McGary moved to Austin in 1883 and, prompted by what he saw and heard at a state meeting of representatives of the Church of Christ at Bryan in June 1884, established in September of that year the Firm Foundation, a weekly paper issued from Austin, Texas. In the first number he declared the paper's intent: 'to oppose everything in the work and worship of the church, for which there was not a command or an apostolic example or a necessary scriptural inference.' McGary wrote mostly on controversial issues in a style seldom equaled, and his influence became widespread among many preachers in the Churches of Christ. During this time the paper had a circulation of over 9,700 subscribers. He was the senior editor, and he also preached extensively in Texas, and made several tours into other States. His paper had a general circulation in all the States of the South, and many subscribers in other parts of the United States. In addition to his work as editor and preacher, he successfully managed some important business enterprises. After resigning the editorship of the Firm Foundation, McGary lived in California and then in Oregon before returning to live in Texas. Other later periodicals published by McGary included, The Lookout and The Open Arena."

McGary married Cyrene Narcissus Jenkins in 1866, and the couple had two children. Narcissus died in 1872, and in 1875 McGary married Lucie Kitrell, who bore him nine children. She was noted especially for the strength of her faith, the purity of her life, and the constancy and fervor of her zeal as a Christian. She encouraged her husband in every way she could to be a Christian and preach the gospel, and no sacrifice was too great, no burden too heavy, for her to assume cheerfully and gladly to help him in the work of the Lord. She died on June 1, 1897, and her dying request was that he devote his whole life to preaching the gospel.

After Lucie's death in 1897, McGary married Lillian Otey on June 26, 1898. She was from Huntsville, Texas, and McGary had known her since she was a child. He gained respect as a man of strong convictions and indomitable energy, and by perseverance had made his way through life against formidable obstacles. McGary retired from Heights Church of Christ in 1927, and he died on June 15, 1928, in Houston, and he was buried beside his mother in Huntsville."

After McGary retired from Heights Church of Christ, the church hired Ernest C. Coffman in January, 1927 to preach. Ernest Carroll Coffman was born in 1890 in Lawrence County, Tennessee. He married Ethel Jacynthia Holt, and they had a son, Ernest Carl Coffman, who was born in Houston on June 16, 1927. Another son, Herbert Lyle Coffman, was born in Houston on October 5, 1930. E. C. Coffman was a lecturer and debater, who in 1937, at Abilene Christian University, presented, "The Responsibility of the Local Congregation in Preaching the Gospel." He also presented there the "New Testament

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Church” lessons. During the next several years, other Churches of Christ were begun at West End in 1925; 26th and North Shepherd, now Shady Acres (black) in 1928; Crosby, Texas in 1928; Frazier Street, Conroe, Texas in 1930; Highlands, Texas in 1933; Humble Road in 1935; Stonewall and Waco (black) in 1938; West University in 1939; Shaw Street (now Watters Road), Pasadena, Texas in 1941; Columbus, Texas in 1942; Crowville, Louisiana in 1948; and Bammel Road, Houston, Texas in 1972. The Bammel church is now the largest Church of Christ in Houston. Mission points as well have been supported in most of the New England states. Foreign missions included ones in France, Mexico as well as Eastern European Missions in Vienna, Austria and Manila, Philippines. In addition, several children homes are supported too. E. C. Coffman left Heights Church of Christ, like several other preachers before him, to take up the ministry at a new congregation, West University Church of Christ, located at 3407 Bissonnet Street, Houston, Texas, which first met in January, 1939.

The preacher who followed Coffman at Heights Church of Christ was Perry Davis (P. D.) Wilmeth. Wilmeth, who was born in Fort Sumner, De Baca County, New Mexico, on May 17, 1907, was a son of Lawrence J. and Minnie A. Wilmeth. P. D. Wilmeth had a very early and intense exposure to the Church of Christ faith. The Wilmeth family first came to Texas as early as 1845. His grandfather, Andrew Jackson Wilmeth (1845-1912), was a brother of Collin McKinney Wilmeth, who established the first Church of Christ in McKinney, Texas (Ancestry.com - Wilmeth family). According to a family genealogist on the GenForum website, Perry Davis Wilmeth married Pauline May Goodrum, who was born in Weldon, Houston County, Texas in 1912. They had at least two children: Elizabeth Ann, born in 1935 and Don Burton Wilmeth, born in 1939. P. D. Wilmeth had graduated in 1931 from Abilene Christian College, Abilene, Texas and had served the Manhattan Church of Christ at 48 East 80th Street, New York, as their interim preacher. Eventually he came to Heights Church of Christ in 1939 where he would serve until 1941. Wilmeth left Heights Church of Christ and become the preacher in Corsicana, Texas. Wilmeth later became very active in lecturing, radio broadcasting and also authored several books, including: “A Father Talks to Teenagers about Their Problems;” “A Square Look at War;” “The Christian Home;” and “Love, Courtship and Marriage.” P. D. Wilmeth died in Dallas, Texas, on May 19, 1987.

By 1942, the Heights Church of Christ congregation had purchased the home at 1548 Heights Boulevard to use as a church parsonage. Listed there at that address in the 1943 Houston City Directory was Rev. Jack Meyer and his wife, Mary E. Meyer. The home was eventually demolished, and the site today is used as a parking lot for the church. However, Houston Heights Church of Christ now uses the address of 1548 Heights as the address for the church, even though it is setback some distance from Heights Boulevard. Meyer, who followed Wilmeth as preacher of Heights Church of Christ, served until 1948. The list of preachers after Meyer included: Anthony E. Emmons (1949); A. Chester Grimes (1950-1962); Alstone Tabor (1963-1969); Joe Glenn (1970-1972); Howard Mahle (1973-1981); Kenneth Espinwall (1981-1982); Bill Clayton ((1983-1985); and Charles Sheppard (1985 – 1990), who compiled a history of the church for the 75th anniversary. On April 1, 1990 that occasion was highlighted with the dedication of a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark subject marker, which now stands at the northwest corner of the building, and reads:

“Heights Church of Christ - Founded in 1915, this was the second Church of Christ congregation established in Houston. G. A. Dunn served as minister when the congregation built its first place of worship in 1916. In 1924 noted Houston architect Alfred C. Finn was hired to design a new church structure in the Renaissance Revival style with Georgian Revival influences. A significant element in the Houston Heights neighborhood, the church has established new congregations throughout the Houston area and has been involved in foreign missionary endeavors, as well.”

The current minister is Dr. Lynn Mitchell, who has been a teacher, preacher, and professor for more than 50 years. He presently teaches at the University of Houston, where he is the Resident Scholar of Religion, Professor of Religious Studies, and Director of the Religious Studies Program.

### *Alfred C. Finn, architect*

According to the Handbook of Texas, “Alfred Charles Finn, architect of Heights Church of Christ, was born in Bellville, Texas, on July 2, 1883, the son of Edwin E. and Bertha (Rogge) Finn. He grew up in Hempstead, where he attended public schools. In 1900 he moved to Houston and worked for the Southern Pacific Railroad as a carpenter, then as a draftsman. Between 1904 and 1913 Finn was employed by the architects, Sanguinet and Staats, first in Dallas (1904-07), then in the firm's head office in Fort Worth (1907-12), and finally in its Houston office (1912-13). Finn began independent practice in Houston in 1913. His first job was to supervise construction of the Rice Hotel (City of Houston Landmark), designed by the St. Louis architects Mauran, Russell, and Crowell for the Houston entrepreneur, Jesse H. Jones. This began his life-long association with Jones, Houston's foremost real estate developer and builder. During the first years of his practice Finn designed a variety of building types. These included the ten-story Foster Building (1914), for newspaper publisher Marcellus E. Foster, and the adjoining Rusk Building (1916), for Jesse Jones; large houses for Sid Westheimer (1920) and Walter W. Fondren (1923) in Montrose, Earl K. Wharton in Shadyside (1920), and Sarah Brashear Jones in Courtlandt Place (1921) (N.R.; contributing to City of Houston Courtlandt Place Historic District); the Humble Oil and Refining Company's first retail service station (1918, demolished); the Melba Theater in Dallas (with W. Scott Dunne, 1921, demolished) for Jesse H. Jones and John T. Jones, and buildings in Shreveport, Wharton, Bellville, and Sealy. By the mid-1920s Finn had become Houston's leading commercial architect, producing skyscraper office buildings, hotels, retail stores, and theaters in the downtown business district. For Jones he designed a seventeen-story addition to the Rice Hotel (1926), the sixteen-story Lamar Hotel and adjoining Metropolitan Theater (1926; demolished), the Loew's State Theater (1927; demolished), and the tallest building constructed in Texas in the 1920s, the thirty-seven-story Gulf Building (City of Houston Landmark) (1929, with Kenneth Franzheim and J. E. R. Carpenter). Finn's office produced the eleven-story Kirby Building (1927) for John H. Kirby; large houses for William L. Moody III in Galveston (1927) and Ross S. Sterling at Bay Ridge (1928), and such institutional buildings as the Houston Light Guard Armory (City of Houston Protected Landmark) (1925), the Pilgrim Building (c. 1928, demolished), and St. Paul's Methodist Church (1930). His firm collaborated with the Fort Worth architect, Wyatt C. Hedrick on the Worth Hotel and Worth Theater (1928), the eighteen-story Electric Building and Hollywood Theater (1929), and the nineteen-story Fair Building (1930) in downtown Fort Worth. Finn's office designed major buildings in Galveston and Brenham. During the early years of the Great Depression, Finn was able to secure such substantial commissions as the Forest Hill Abbey mausoleum in Kansas City, Missouri, (1931) and the fifteen-story Peoples National Bank Building in Tyler (1932).

Coinciding with Jesse Jones's move from business into government in the 1930s, Finn obtained some of the most prominent publicly financed building commissions in Texas. Under the auspices of the Public Works Administration, his office designed the Sam Houston Coliseum and Music Hall (1937; demolished), the twelve-story Jefferson Davis Hospital (1937, demolished; with Joseph Finger), the United States Post Office, Courthouse, and Customhouse in Galveston (1937, with Andrew Fraser), a twelve-building dormitory complex at Texas A&M College (1940), and the 570-foot tall San Jacinto Monument (1939). He was appointed to the board of Reconstruction Finance Corporation and went on to serve as FRA's secretary of commerce from 1940 to 1945. Subsequently, Finn became an architectural supervisor for the Federal Housing Administration. During World War II Finn designed

the 1,000-bed, 37-building U.S. Naval Hospital complex in Houston (1945, subsequently the Veterans Administration Hospital, demolished). Finn's office participated in the postwar building boom that occurred in Houston, designing the twenty-four-story City National Bank Building (City of Houston Landmark) for Judge James A. Elkins (1947), the Ezekiel W. Cullen Building at the University of Houston (1950), the downtown specialty store of Sakowitz Brothers (1951), and the suburban headquarters building of the Great Southern Life Insurance Company (1952). Finn also produced plans for the ten-story First National Bank Building in Longview (1956). Finn designed two hospitals in the Texas Medical Center, the Arabia Temple Crippled Children's Hospital (1952) and Ben Taub Hospital (1963, with H. E. Maddox and C. A. Johnson). Controversy in 1953 over an earlier version of what became Ben Taub Hospital led to serious financial reversals for Finn, after he was unable to collect fees for preparing a full set of construction documents. This was followed by a stroke he suffered in December 1953 that left him partially paralyzed. Finn maintained his practice but his participation in its day-to-day operations was limited. Finn died in Houston on June 26, 1964, and is buried in Forest Park Cemetery. His papers are deposited at the Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Julia Ideson Library.

Finn's architecture was stylistically conservative. It was abreast of current trends, but never at the forefront. After the late 1910s Finn seems to have delegated design responsibility to his associates, notably H. Jordan MacKenzie, who had a significant independent career in New Orleans between 1904 and 1916. MacKenzie worked with Finn between 1920 and 1940. Victor E. Johnson, who was with Finn between 1928 and 1952, also did design work, as did Robert C. Smallwood, who was in the office between 1923 and 1928. Other longtime associates were Milton R. Scholl, J. Russ Baty, and Ernest L. Shult. Finn's eldest son, Alfred C. Finn, Jr., joined the firm in 1934. Finn served twice as a trustee of the Houston Independent School District. He was also a member of the first City of Houston Planning Commission. Finn belonged to the Gray Lodge No. 329, the York and Scottish Rite bodies, the Arabia Temple Shrine, the Rotary Club, and the Houston Club. He joined the American Institute of Architects in 1920 and was elected to fellowship in the institute in 1949. Finn was a member of St. Paul's Methodist Church. In 1909 he married Mary Elizabeth Riley. They were the parents of two sons.

Known as the "Builder of Houston," Alfred C. Finn mostly designed large, commercial projects. But he also designed many large and significant houses in Houston, including the one he designed in 1918 for Emerson F. Woodward at 1605 Heights Boulevard. Finn also designed the distinctive, large automobile garage with servants' quarters above that is still located at the rear of the house. At the time Emerson's home was constructed, Heights Boulevard was known simply as "Boulevard." After the City of Houston annexed Houston Heights in 1918, the name of the thoroughfare was changed to Houston Heights Boulevard. Today, it is known as Heights Boulevard, whose 60-wide, green esplanade and grand thoroughfare, modeled after Commonwealth Boulevard in Boston, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and as contributing to the Houston Heights Historic District East of the City of Houston.

### *Emerson and Bessie Woodward*

Emerson F. Woodward, who was also the major benefactor for the construction of Houston Heights Church of Christ in 1924, had chosen Finn as the architect, since Finn had designed his personal home. Local Heights lore also relates that Mr. Finn occasionally stayed overnight at Woodward's home periodically to supervise the construction of Heights Church of Christ, located just a block away.

According to Wikipedia, "Emerson Francis Woodward was born on February 23, 1879 at Podunk (about 70 miles southwest of Syracuse), New York to William W. and Ida May LaGrange Woodward. Because his father made his living in the oil business in its earliest days at Titusville, Pennsylvania, Emerson

wanted to follow in his footsteps. After receiving an early education in the Goodwill Hill public schools in Pennsylvania, Woodward, at the age of eleven, went to work in the oil fields, and before the end of his career, he would be affiliated with the industry in various states, including Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. Emerson married Bessie McGary in 1901 at Woodsfield, Monroe County, Ohio.

The Producers Oil Company employed Emerson Woodward for eleven years, and during this stretch, he met his lifelong associate, Thomas Peter Lee, who worked for the same firm. Woodward advanced quickly within the organization and received a promotion to assistant superintendent of its southern division, which encompassed the area from New Orleans to El Paso. Lee also became friends with J. S. Cullinan, and the two, along with Emerson F. Woodward, Will C. Hogg, and James L. Autry, joined in 1913 to form the Farmers Petroleum Company, of which Lee became superintendent and then president.

In 1916 Lee, along with Cullinan, Woodward, and other associates, organized the American Republics Corporation of which Lee became President. That same year, Lee purchased the Link House at 3800 Montrose Boulevard (City of Houston Landmark). Realizing it to be too small in 1922, Lee hired Alfred C. Finn to enlarge the Link-Lee House for his huge family, consisting of six daughters. Finn most likely had been recommended for the job by his friend, E. F. Emerson, for whom Finn had designed his house.

The American Republics Corporation, founded by Lee and Emerson, would later control twenty-one subsidiaries involved in all facets of the oil industry: prospecting, production, refining, and transportation, as well as manufacturing ships, tank cars, and oil tools. E. F. Woodward, according to the 1919 Houston City Directory, was President of Federal Petroleum Company also. He was Vice-President of Republic Production Company, both companies having offices in the Carter Building on Main Street (City of Houston Landmark). While serving on the board of directors, Lee also held the position of vice president in charge of production for the American Republics Corporation. But things would eventually sour between Lee and Cullinan, and several years later, they headed opposing forces bitterly engaged in a stock war for control of the corporation. Cullinan not only defeated Lee in the struggle, but he put his own son Craig into Lee's position as vice president. More than he could bear, Lee resigned and began a lucrative career in the investment field.

At the suggestion of Lee's older brother, William Ellsworth "Bill" Lee, T. P. Lee agreed to meet with a young wildcatter named, Miles Franklin Yount, at the time a resident of Sour Lake, Texas, and afterward, T. P. Lee invested \$25,000 in the new enterprise that became the Yount-Lee Oil Company, one of the most successful independent oil producers of its day. Yount-Lee went on to drill numerous deep-flank oil wells in both East Texas and Louisiana, and was responsible for the Second Spindletop boom begun at Beaumont, Texas on November 14, 1925. With the formation of the Yount-Lee Oil Company, E. F. Woodward eventually became one of the largest stockholders.

After the Yount-Lee sale to Wright Morrow, Woodward announced, "Well, I sold the last of my oil interests today (in Yount-Lee). I've got nothing to do but fool with horses." Emerson kept his word, retired from the oil business, and he spent much of his time occupied with the sport of the kings at his ranch.

In 1922 Woodward established what is claimed to be a world's record for trapshooting double targets during the Mississippi State Tournament. Emerson Woodward in January 1924 advanced \$28,000 to build the Houston Gun Club on Westheimer Road, of which he was the founder. He actively participated in his favorite hobby of trapshooting too in the company of friends, such as Hank A. Hausmann of LaGrange, Texas and Forest McNeir, a fellow Houstonian. He was a member of the Texas Trapshooters Association – winning the Texas singles All-American championship in 1925 – 1931 and 1933. He

captured the Texas State 16-yard title six times, smashing perfect 200s to win in 1931 and 1939, and in 1941 and 1942, he tied for the crown, but forfeited in favor of younger shooters. He also was the state's 1931 doubles champion, and he won seven all-around titles from 1924 to 1932. Emerson used an L C. Smith Premier and Deluxe shotgun, which was an American classic and is unquestionably "one of the finest shotguns ever made."

His expert marksmanship earned for him places in the National Trapshooting Hall of Fame, which inducted him on August 24, 1973, and in the Texas Trapshooters Association Hall of Fame, which reciprocated in 1983. One of his records in 1933 set a yearly ATA (American Trapshooters Association) 16-yard average record of .9950 that was not broken or tied until 1965, some thirty-two years later – thus he was also inducted into the ATA Hall of Fame as well.

During the late 1930s and early 1940s, Emerson focused on his ranch, Valdina Farms, which spanned 18,127 acres. The ranch was located in both Uvalde and Medina Counties in Texas, hence the name Valdina, where Emerson raised, trained, and sent his horses, such as Valdina Myth, Valdina Orphan, and Rounder, to racetracks all over the country. He had his own training barns, stables, stud paddock, jockeys and trainers. In fact he engaged his old friend, Alfred C. Finn, to design a stable at the ranch (Finn Collection No. 450 – dated July 14, 1937-March 8, 1938 – consisting of fifteen sheets of tracings and blueprints). Woodward made a big splash on the racing scene, "sending more horses to the track than any other man during that time period." Emerson's horse racing entries competed head to head with some of the best the racing world had to offer. Valdina Myth finished first at the 1941 running at Kentucky Oaks; Valdina Orphan, with jockey Carroll Bierman aboard, ran third at the 1942 Kentucky Derby; and Rounder "became the only horse to ever outrun 1941 Triple Crown winner and Horse of the Year, Whirlaway, in wire-to-wire fashion." For his contributions to the industry, the Texas Horse Racing Hall of Fame inducted Woodward as a member in 2001.

As late as the 1926 Houston City Directory, Emerson was still listed as President of Republic Production Company, including the listing as Vice President of Texas Sporting Goods Company, Inc., located at 1301-7 Second National Bank building, 807-09 Fannin Street. Emerson and his wife not only spent their vast wealth on horses and other sport, but were well recognized for their philanthropic accomplishments beyond the substantial construction costs that they donated for the building of the Houston Heights Church of Christ. According to Jack Meyer, their pastor at the Heights Church of Christ in Houston, "They financed an orphanage in Hope, Arkansas ..., built the Church of Christ at College Station, contributed heavily to the Boles Orphans home at Quinlan, Texas. They also sent many girls through the Abilene Christian College, paying all their expenses." The Church of Christ in Texas had been supportive for many years of the indigent and needy. Belle Haven was the first home for orphans supported by the Churches of Christ in the West. Mrs. Jennie Clarke established this pioneer benevolent institution in her home at Luling, Texas, in May 1898, and she was the director until her death in 1929. After that time, the home was dissolved in July 1930, but not before fostering a home at Canadian, Texas (now Tipton Home, Tipton, Oklahoma) and Boles Home at Quinlan. Current homes include Boles Home, Cherokee Children's Home (Cherokee), Gunter Home for the Aged (Gunter), the Christian Care Center (Mesquite), and Medina Children's Home (Medina).

Unfortunately, an automobile driven by Woodward collided into the side of a train at a grade crossing near D'Hanis, Texas, close to the ranch, near Hondo in Medina County, and the accident claimed both his life and that of his wife, the only other passenger in the vehicle. Bessie McGary Woodward died of injuries on May 22, 1943, and Emerson followed her in death, at the age of sixty-four, two days later while a patient at the Medina Hospital in Hondo. A double funeral was held in Houston at Heights

Church of Christ, officiated by Rev. Jack Meyer. The Emersons were entombed in a mausoleum at the city's Forest Park Cemetery.

The Emersons had only one son, Harley Emerson Woodward, who was born in 1903 in Ohio. He was listed as living with his parents in the 1919 Houston City Directory, and his occupation was listed as driller -- thus he worked in the oil business like his father. Harley E. Woodward eventually married Grace Junnetta Logan in Harris County, Texas, and they continued to live with the Emersons at 1605 Heights Boulevard. The younger Emersons had a son, Robert Royce Woodward, who was born on July 13, 1927. Harley E. Woodward and his cousin, Edward Martin, died in a plane crash in 1936 near Mena, Arkansas. Woodward had just purchased the plane in Ohio and was flying back to Houston when it crashed. Although their only child and heir had preceded them in death, Emerson F. Woodward and his wife, left a vital legacy as evidenced today by the congregation, as well as by the historic Houston Heights Church of Christ building.

### *Houston Heights Historic Churches*

The Heights Church of Christ building is contributing to the Houston Heights Historic District East, which includes a majority of historically and architecturally significant sites. The historic district not only contains much historic residential architecture, but is also remarkable for its concentration of significant church buildings located within the historic district, unmatched by any other neighborhood in Houston. The churches of the community were and are still of great importance to Houston Heights, contributing to the town's image of respectability since the early days.

Today, still extant in Houston Heights are religious, historic buildings for many denominations, including Lutheran, Church of Christ, Heights Christian Church, First Baptist, Baptist Temple, Methodist, Episcopal, Catholic (church and school buildings), Assembly of God, and Presbyterian. Many historic sanctuary buildings still survive within the district, although some have been adapted to residential or office uses, such as the Second Church of Christ, Scientist (1922) at 1402 Harvard Street (residence), the Assembly of God (1927) at 1408 Allston (office), and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (1930, demolished; Educational Hall) at 945 Oxford (residence).

The most significant religious buildings located within the Houston Heights Historic District East, in addition to Heights Church of Christ, are: Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church at 1448 Cortland (aka 306 E. 15th Street) (1932; Gothic Revival; N.R.), the unusual Immanuel Lutheran Church Gymnasium and Parish Hall at 1448 Cortlandt (1949, Barrel Roof style) and the new Immanuel Lutheran Church at 1447 Arlington (1961, Neo-Gothic style); Second Church of Christ, Scientist at 1402 Harvard (1922, Craftsman style); Heights Christian Church at 1703 Heights Boulevard (1927; C. N. Nelson, architect; Classical Revival style, N.R., and utilized today by Opera in the Heights) as well as the newer Heights Christian Church at 1745 Heights Boulevard (1965; Neo-Gothic style); Assembly of God (1927; Gable front building); Heights Methodist Episcopal Church, South, renamed Grace United Methodist Church in 1950, at 1245 Heights (1971; Neo-Gothic style) and the Grace Methodist Church Chapel/Educational Building/Office at 1226 Yale (1951, Gothic Revival style) as well as Grace Methodist Church Hall (1926; Craftsman style) at 1240 Yale (aka 116 W. 13th) which is located directly behind the present sanctuary; and also of importance are the iron horse hitching rings that are still installed in the concrete street curb adjacent to Grace Methodist Church Hall at 116 W. 13th -- the rings most likely date from 1912 when the original red brick church was built facing Yale at 13th (demolished 1970); and lastly, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church at 1819 Heights Boulevard (1947; Gothic Revival style).

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND RESTORATION HISTORY**

The original, raised two-story brick church building and its interior have changed little from its original construction in 1924. The building, which fronts on a residential street, features an original, one-story porte-cochere which shades the original, main entry doors facing E. 16th Street at Harvard Street. The porte-cochere features a balcony above, which is skirted by a decorative, iron balustrade. The western elevation, adjacent to the parking lot, features a colonnaded veranda which also features a balcony above, which is skirted by the same iron balustrade. The most striking features of the building are the numerous two-story high, multi-light windows with arched tops, pierced in the center by a decorative keystone. The center window lights of these tall windows consist of stained glass panes, while the outer lights around the edges feature frosted, patterned glass panes. Each one of the tall, multi-light windows is separated by a round modillion. The magnificent auditorium, which seats 650 people, remains original, including the custom-made pews which were imported from Germany. Other elements which are original and have been maintained or restored are the stained glass windows and beautiful woodwork. Other elements of the building include the semi-circular rostrum area, featuring ornate Neo-classical columns, capped by elaborately carved capitals, located on either side of the baptistery. The large interior balcony is accessed by several adjacent classrooms. The original boiler and extensive system of steamed heated radiators still functions as heat for the building. Also, the original ceiling fans are still functioning. A hydraulic elevator was installed shortly after the construction of the building to assist member access (which is reported to be the first elevator of its kind in the Southwest). Central air-conditioning was installed at that time too. In 1957, a large, compatible one-story educational wing was added to the south side of the building, which includes church offices, library and conference room. The building features a full basement, partially above ground, where are housed several classrooms, kitchen, and large area for fellowship. This area was remodeled in 1989.

According to Stephen Fox, who authored the Houston AIA guide, “Rejecting conventional religious imagery, Finn detailed this small but imposing box-like church with an extremely reduced neo-Georgian vocabulary. The location of the nave atop a raised basement was characteristic of Protestant churches in the 1910s and '20s, as can be seen time and again in the Heights.”

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*The information and sources provided by the applicant for this application have been reviewed, verified, edited and supplemented with additional research and sources by Randy Pace, Historic Preservation Officer, Planning and Development Department, City of Houston.*

## **APPROVAL CRITERIA FOR PROTECTED LANDMARK DESIGNATION**

The HAHC shall review each application for designation of a protected landmark that is included in an application for designation of a landmark at the same time and in the same manner as it reviews and considers the application for a landmark. The HAHC and the Planning Commission, in making recommendations with respect to a protected landmark designation, and the City Council, in making a designation, shall consider whether the building, structure, site, or area meets at least three of the criteria in Section 33-224, or one of the criteria in Section 33-229, as follows:

<b>S</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>S - satisfies</b>	<b>NA - not applicable</b>
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Meets at least three of the following (Sec. 33-229(a)(1):

- (1) Whether 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 (Sec. 33-224(a)(1);
- (2) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is the location of a significant local, state or national event (Sec. 33-224(a)(2);
- (3) Whether 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 (Sec. 33-224(a)(3);
- (4) Whether the building or structure or the buildings or structures within the area exemplify a particular architectural style or building type important to the city (Sec. 33-224(a)(4);
- (5) Whether 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 (Sec. 33-224(a)(5);
- (6) Whether 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 (Sec. 33-224(a)(6);
- (7) Whether specific evidence exists that unique archaeological resources are present (Sec. 33-224(a)(7);
- (8) Whether the building, structure, object or site has value as a significant element of community sentiment or public pride (Sec. 33-224(a)(8).

**AND**

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- (9) If less than 50 years old, or proposed historic district containing a majority of buildings, structures, or objects that are less than 50 years old, whether the building, structure, object, site, or area is of extraordinary importance to the city, state or nation for reasons not based on age (Sec. 33-224(b)).

**OR**

- The property was constructed before 1905 (Sec. 33-229(a)(2));

**OR**

- The property is listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places or designated as a “contributing structure” in an historic district listed in the National Register of Historic Places (Sec. 33-229(a)(3));

**OR**

- The property is recognized by the State of Texas as a Recorded State Historical Landmark (Sec. 33-229(a)(4)).

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission accept the recommendation of the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission and recommend to City Council the Landmark and Protected Landmark Designation of the Heights Church of Christ Building at 1548 Heights Boulevard.



# CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

SITE LOCATION MAP  
HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST BUILDING  
1548 HEIGHTS BOULEVARD  
NOT TO SCALE

