

CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

PROTECTED LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

LANDMARK NAME: William L. Shipp House

OWNERS: Ruben Obregon

APPLICANTS: Same

LOCATION: 1511 Everett Street – Near Northside

30-DAY HEARING NOTICE: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: VI.a

HPO FILE NO: 10PL91

DATE ACCEPTED: 03-05-10

HAHC HEARING: 07-15-10

PC HEARING: 07-22-10

SITE INFORMATION

Lot 10, Block 11, A.C. Allen Addition, NSBB, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The site includes a one-story wood-frame single-family residence and a small one-story accessory structure at the rear of the property.

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED: Landmark and Protected Landmark Designation

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The William L. Shipp House is a Queen Anne style house built circa 1900 in Houston's historic Near Northside neighborhood. The Near Northside, located just north of downtown, was settled in the late 1800s, with many residents employed by the nearby railyards. The Southern Pacific shops in the Northside were said to be the largest in the southwest at the turn of the century, employing some 5,000 men and contributing greatly to the growth of the Northside neighborhood. Like many of his neighbors, William L. Shipp, the first owner of 1511 Everett Street, worked for the railroad. Many early residents were immigrants of Irish and German descent. After World War II, the Near Northside transitioned into a predominantly Hispanic neighborhood, which it remains today. The neighborhood still contains many examples of Victorian homes and cottages built by its earliest residents.

The William L. Shipp House features an unusual and unique pierced frieze above the porch, as well as other elaborate decorative woodwork, and is an architectural gem of the neighborhood. The house is an excellent representative of the Near Northside's early houses, and if designated, will be the City of Houston's first historic landmark in the neighborhood. The William L. Shipp House meets Criteria 1, 3, and 4, and was built before 1905 - all considerations for Landmark and Protected Landmark designation.

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

Near Northside

Houston's Near Northside neighborhood dates from the 1880s, when residential development began to meet the expansion of the adjacent railyards. The Near Northside was once part of the Fifth Ward that was formed in 1866 out of the First and Second wards north of Buffalo Bayou and east of White Oak Bayou. Houston's wards were established as political districts, each represented by elected aldermen. When Houston adopted a commission form of government in 1905, the political life of the wards ended yet their name continues to this day to describe geographic areas of the inner

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city. Today, the western boundary of the Fifth Ward zigzags between Maury and Hwy 59, and the area west of Maury to I-45 is known as the Near Northside.

Development of the Near Northside as a residential area began in the late 1800s, spurred by the neighborhood's proximity to the many railroads being built. The earliest land platted in the Northside was the Ryon plat, which was filed on November 17, 1862. Ryon's boundaries were Maury Street to the east, Line Street to the south, Terry and Robertson streets to the west and Gaines Street to the north. The A.C. Allen Addition was filed the next month, on December 30, 1862, and carved 65 blocks of varying sizes out of roughly 300 acres located north of Burnet Street to Morris Street, and from White Oak Bayou on the west to Common Street on the east. This plat laid out many of the main streets in today's Near Northside neighborhood – North Main, Fulton, Quitman, and Hogan.

South of Ryon, Miss Helen Culver of Chicago filed the plat for Cascara, a subdivision out of C.T. Hull's subdivision out of the Noble Tract, on December 10, 1890. This subdivision was platted with long blocks and narrow lots with alleys. Cascara school was located on Block 4 between Terry and McKee streets. The boundaries of the Cascara plat are two lots south of Noble Street for the northern boundary, Gano Street on the west, Maury Street on the east, and Harrington Street on the south. John R. Irvin filed the plat of Irvinton on May 3, 1891. This 86 block plat had a western boundary of Fulton, a northern boundary at Cavalcade, and east and west boundaries in an irregular paths on either side of Irvington Boulevard.

In the far southern portion of Near Northside is Chapman's First plat, which spans the north and south sides of Buffalo Bayou. Filed by William Chapman on March 11, 1861, this plat extends into the Warehouse District south of I-10 up to the Southern Pacific railyards.

Much of the housing stock in the Near Northside dates from these early years in Houston's history. A significant portion of the neighborhood's structures dates from 1880-1910, with Queen Anne and Folk Victorian styles predominant. Most of the remaining housing consists of bungalows from the early 20th century, with some later ranch style houses. Industrial and commercial buildings from the period are scattered throughout the neighborhood.

Early residents of Houston's Near Northside were working class, with many of them employed in the nearby railyards. Many of these early residents were Irish and German immigrants. With the decrease of rail traffic and increase in suburban development, the neighborhood began to decline after World War II. The area transitioned into a predominately Hispanic neighborhood, which it remains today. Key landmarks in the neighborhood include Jeff Davis High School, Marshall Middle School, Carnegie Library, Moody Park, and Holy Name Catholic Church.

A.C. Allen Addition

The A.C. Allen Addition was filed by Charlotte Baldwin Allen in 1862, who was a founder of the City of Houston. Charlotte was the wife of Augustus C. Allen, who along with his brother John Kirby Allen, platted the original town of Houston at the confluence of Buffalo and White Oak bayous in 1836. Charlotte Baldwin was the daughter of Dr. Jonas Baldwin, founder and mayor of Baldwinsville, New York. She married Augustus Allen in May 1831 in New York. Charlotte Allen followed her husband from New York, as did many other Allen and Baldwin family members.

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Although many of their relatives became prominent Houstonians, the two Allen brothers themselves did not remain long in the city. John Kirby Allen died in 1838 at age 28. Augustus Allen left Houston in the 1840s to go to Mexico, where he engaged in business and served as a U.S. consul until his death in Washington, D.C., in 1864. Charlotte and Augustus quietly separated in 1850, and she remained in Houston until her death in 1895 at the age of 90. Charlotte's daughter, Eliza, married James Converse, an engineer, and had a son Thomas Pierce, born in 1876. Charlotte left an estate of \$51,867 to be administered by her nephew, A.C. Allen. Her grandson Thomas Pierce Allen Converse was her only living descendant when she died.

In 1856, Augustus Allen conveyed to Charlotte an 'interest in all unsold property in and about' the city of Houston. Six years later, in December 1862, the A.C. Allen Addition was filed with the city of Houston, subdividing roughly 300 acres on the north side of Buffalo Bayou into 65 blocks of varying sizes. Block 11, located on the southernmost edge of the plat nearest to the Southern Pacific railyards, did not begin to develop, however, until thirty years later. In 1883, Charlotte Allen conveyed Block 11 to her son-in-law James Converse, for \$1000. Not until late 1896 did Converse, acting as attorney in fact for Thomas Pierce Converse, and H.M. Davis, sell the first lots in Block 11. The final lots sold, Lots 9 and 10, were purchased by William Shipp on March 10, 1900 for \$600.

William Shipp obtained a mortgage from Bayou City Building and Loan Association on Feb 4, 1901, for \$1200. It's possible that he used these funds to build the house at 1511 Everett, as well as 1509 Everett on Lot 9. Two years later, Shipp sold Lot 9, "a certain improved lot of ground" (the southern of the two lots), to Jennie F. DeLane for \$450. Mrs. DeLane (married to Philip DeLane) owned the lot for five years, until May 10, 1907, when she sold Lot 9 to Bettie R. Daniel. At the same time, Bettie Daniel also purchased Lot 10 from William Shipp, combining the two lots under common ownership once again. Daniel paid \$1600 to Shipp, and \$1750 to DeLane and her husband Philip.

William Shipp, the first purchaser of the lot at 1511 Everett, was boarding with the Sullivan family at 1611 Montgomery Street (now known as North Main) in the 1900 Census. He was born in Louisiana in 1862 and was still single at the time of the census. Shipp had been boarding with the Sullivans for over ten years, and worked as a freight clerk with Southern Pacific railroad until the mid 1890s, when he went to work for T&NO freight depot.

The house at 1511 Everett first appears in Houston's 1902-1903 City Directory. Other families living on the street at that time included the Fitzgeralds at the southwest corner of Everett and Waverly; the McElgunns at 1507 Everett; and the Johnsons at 1501 Everett. James Fitzgerald was a chief car inspector and foreman, Patrick McElgunn was a carpenter, and Walter Johnson was a switchman, all three employed at the Southern Pacific railyards. By the time William Shipp built his house on Everett, he had been employed by the Texas and New Orleans (T&NO) railroad, which was part of the Southern Pacific system, for several years as a freight clerk. The T&NO freight depot was located at the corner of Willow Street and Liberty Avenue, which was within walking distance of the Everett house.

By the time of the 1910 Census, Shipp was living in a much smaller house at 1813 Freeman Street, several blocks from 1511 Everett Street, with his wife Margaret (Maggie), and their young daughters, Virginia and Mary. The Shipp family eventually moved to Keene Street, also in the

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Near Northside, where they lived for a number of years. William Shipp died in 1936 and Margaret died in 1945.

In 1945, Dave and Laura Key sold the house at 1511 Everett to Antonia Flores, who transferred the house to Margaret Flores in 1972. On May 31, 2000, the house was purchased by its current owners, Ruben and Saul O'Bregon, who removed later incompatible alterations and restored the house's original façade.

Railroads

In 1850s, Houston got its first railroad with a rail line from Harrisburg to Austin. By 1861, there were 357 miles of railway centering in Houston. By 1893, this number had increased to 8,857 miles with fourteen rail lines transporting predominantly cotton and cattle. The Near Northside, north of Buffalo Bayou from downtown Houston, was chosen for the majority of the new rail lines, as well as the Southern Pacific rail shops, due to the availability of open land and lack of development at the time.

Because of the abundance of jobs, the rail shops supported the development of the neighborhood as railroad employees chose to live near their work. Large industrial buildings were constructed on the Southern Pacific site to house fabrication and repair services. Neighborhood development occurred largely due to the presence of the Southern Pacific yards.

Railroads helped immeasurably in Houston's growth. By 1903-4 Houston City Directory states "Seventy-two passenger trains arrive and depart from Houston every 24 hours. Three times as many freight trains are operated in the city during the same time. No city south of St. Louis can show such a railway traffic as this." During the early 1900s, Houston's Chamber of Commerce adopted the slogan "Where Seventeen Railroads Meet the Sea." The official seal of the City of Houston encircles an ancient locomotive and a plow.

Southern Pacific

The Southern Pacific Transportation Company was founded as a land holding company in 1865, later acquiring the Central Pacific Railroad by lease. By 1900, the Southern Pacific Company had grown into a major railroad system which incorporated many smaller companies, such as the Texas and New Orleans Railroad and Morgan's Louisiana and Texas Railroad, and which extended from New Orleans through Texas to El Paso, across New Mexico and through Tucson, to Los Angeles, throughout most of California including San Francisco and Sacramento; it also included the Central Pacific Railroad extending eastward across Nevada to Ogden, Utah and had lines reaching north throughout and across Oregon to Portland.

Many of the Southern Pacific rail shops in the Near Northside were constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Southern Pacific shops were said to be the largest in the southwest at the turn of the century, employing some 5,000 men.

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T&NO Railroad

The Texas and New Orleans Railroad was one of the antebellum railroads of Texas. At one point the company was the largest railroad in Texas, with 3,713 miles of track in 1934, but by 1961 there were only 3,385 miles remaining when it was merged with parent company Southern Pacific.

In 1881, the Southern Pacific Railroad Company bought the Texas and New Orleans as well as many other railroads in the southern United States. As a result of this acquisition by Southern Pacific, The Texas and New Orleans Railroad found itself as part of a major trans-continental route from San Francisco to New Orleans. In 1882, The T&NO made passenger earnings of \$235,000 and freight earnings of \$1.3 million and owned 36 locomotives as well as over 1000 pieces of rolling stock. Also in 1882 the T&NO acquired the 103-mile Sabine and East Texas Railway Company. Many more companies were merged into T&NO from 1880 to 1900. In the early years of the 20th century The Texas and New Orleans built over 160 miles of track in East Texas, opening up a through route from Dallas to Beaumont.

Although the Texas and New Orleans accounted for less than 13 percent of Southern Pacific owned mileage in Texas and Louisiana, it was the company used to simplify the corporate structure in the two states. On March 1, 1927, the railroad leased several lines in Texas, namely on April 1, 1928. In 1926-1928, to simplify SP's corporate holdings, the T&NO leased a number of SP lines in Texas and Louisiana, including the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railway Company, the Houston and Texas Central Railroad Company, the Houston East and West Texas Railway Company, the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railway Company, the Southern Pacific Terminal Company, the Dayton-Goose Creek Railway Company, and the Texas Midland Railroad. In 1934, all of these were merged into T&NO, making it the largest railroad in Texas with 3,713 miles of track. On November 1, 1961, the remaining 3,385 miles were merged into the Southern Pacific, and the T&NO's separate existence ended.

Streetcar

The earliest public transportation in the Northside was a mule-drawn car that crossed Buffalo Bayou at San Jacinto Street. This car traveled north on Willow Street and made a zigzag loop onto Liberty, then north on McKee, east on Conti, south on Semmes, west on Providence, then south on McKee to Third and back to Liberty. This was the only streetcar line in the Northside at a time when lines south of Buffalo Bayou were expanding further to the south and west.

Electric rail service on the Montgomery route began in mid-1892; unlike most of the early electric lines, this was not a former mulecar service. The electric rail service allowed people to live further from downtown. A key motivation to provide service to the Northside was the Southern Pacific rail shops, for decades one of the city's largest industrial employers. The Montgomery route of the 1890s extended only as far north as Hogan Street, but it was later lengthened and by 1903 it provided a loop service. Cars now proceeded on Hogan and Lorraine as far as West Street. Service was provided to both industrial and residential neighborhoods as well as the massive Southern Pacific Lines railroad shops.

The Montgomery line initially crossed Buffalo Bayou over the narrow San Jacinto Street bridge. Construction of the Main Street Viaduct in 1913 was the first of two major improvements to

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service; the other was the double-tracking of Montgomery Road (renamed North Main Street in 1913) and Hogan. The line was renamed "North Side" the following January. North Side streetcars remained in operation until early 1939.

Bridges

The Main Street viaduct opened in 1913 and was hailed by residents as the "Gateway to the Northside." The bridge, designed by F.L. Dormant, City Engineer, was the largest single-arch concrete span in Texas at the time of its construction. In later years, the McKee Street bridge provided another connection to the Northside from Houston's warehouse district on the northeast side of downtown. Built in the 1950s, the Elysian Viaduct provides a connection from Crawford Street downtown over the railyards to Elysian and Hardy streets on the eastern edge of the Northside neighborhood.

Prominent Buildings and Landmarks

Sunset Hospital/Southern Pacific Hospital [now Thomas Street Clinic] was built in 1911 as a staff hospital for workers of the Southern Pacific's shops, the largest industrial employer in the Northside neighborhood in the last 1800s and early 1900s.

Hollywood Cemetery on North Main is on a 60-acre site on the banks of Little White Oak Bayou. Famous people buried there include Julia Ideson (1880-1945), largely credited with developing Houston's public library system and served as its first librarian. When Hollywood Cemetery opened in 1896, its location was described as on the west side of West Montgomery Road, half a mile north of the city limits. Holy Cross Cemetery, a Catholic cemetery adjacent to Hollywood Cemetery, opened in 1904. Buried here are Maurice Sullivan (1884-1961), an important Houston architect, and members of the Foley family. Sullivan designed Northside's Jefferson Davis High School in 1926, in collaboration with Birdsall P. Briscoe.

The Near Northside was named one of 'Texas' Most Endangered Historic Places' by Preservation Texas in 2005. The neighborhood is facing threats from redevelopment pressures as many lots in Houston's inner city neighborhoods are being subdivided for townhouses. Also, plans to widen IH-45 and to extend Hardy Toll Road through the neighborhood threaten many blocks of historic housing stock. Other projects currently being implemented are the extension of Metro's North light rail from downtown Houston to Northline Mall along Fulton Street. The Hardy Yards mixed-use project will extend San Jacinto Street from downtown to connect to Fulton at Burnett Street, just a few blocks east of the subject property.

Many properties in the Near Northside are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. A section of the neighborhood, located west of North Main and north of Hogan Street, has been nominated as a National Register Historic District, still pending.

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ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND RESTORATION HISTORY

The Queen Anne styled William Shipp house at 1511 Everett Street has changed hands several times. This style gained popularity in America during the last decades of Queen Victoria's reign in England. This style's popularity among homeowners rests largely upon increased industrialization and the growth of the railroad industry. Mass-produced wood, now easily transportable due to the expanding network of railroad tracks that lay in close proximity just south of where the home is situated, is used throughout the structure and exterior of the home beside the smooth paned glass used in the fenestration.

The home is sited centrally amongst a row of homes facing Everett Street, the lot's width along the street being half the distance of its length into the interior of the block. The home's L-shaped plan, a telling feature of the Folk Victorian home, stretches to a depth that takes advantage of the length of the lot. The shingled normally pitched front-gable roofed volume running along the length of the north half of the lot intersects with a shingled side-gable roofed single unit, a simple pent roof extending from the side-gable providing shelter over the porch, obscuring three-fifths of the front façade and accentuating the façade's asymmetry. A second hidden front-gable roofed structure occupies the remainder of the rectangular shaped lot in the southwestern corner.

Clad around the balloon frame structure of the home is horizontal lap wood siding framed by simple smooth planed wood trim. A few concrete steps guarded by solid white stoops lead up to the raised porch. The edges of the porch are guarded by the simple repeating element of slender turned balusters, a smooth band of wood rests on top forming a decorative yet functional rail. A series of full-sized turned balusters reach from the ground surface of the porch to the edge of the porch pent roof eave, their presence breaking the massing of the shaded porch space into a set of thirds. From the front of the home, the slim piers provide a frame of view to two full-length windows on the porch. A smaller set of two similarly proportioned windows are placed on the main front-gabled volume. Each window is trimmed by a decorative molded wood sill and smooth wood jambs.

Another feature that affirms the house's identity as a Folk Victorian home is the presence of spindlework detailing attached at the eaves of the home. A decorative arched spindlework detailing is mounted at the eave of the apex of the front-gable roof. An extension of an eave stretching from each end of the front-gable roof creates the form of a pediment; the surface of the tympanum differentiated and given primacy by being clad in a lapping fish-scale shaped wood siding. Another series of spindlework detailing is set just below the eave of the porch roof. Along the porch is an unusual and unique pierced frieze featuring wave or 'dragon' shaped trim.

When the current owners purchased the house, they removed an earlier alteration that had enclosed the porch, and discovered the house's original ornamentation intact. Although simple in form, the unique ornamentation and intact architectural features of 1511 Everett warrant its designation as a protected landmark.

The information and sources provided by the applicant for this application have been reviewed, verified, edited and supplemented with additional research and sources by Diana DuCroz, Planning and Development Department, City of Houston.

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Johnston, Marguerite, *Houston: The Unknown City, 1836-1946*, Texas A&M University Press, 1991.

Northside Village Economic Revitalization Plan, City of Houston, June 2002.

Preservation Texas, *Texas' Most Endangered Historic Places*:
<http://www.preservationtexas.org/endangered/nearnorthside.pdf>

Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1896, 1900, 1924-1955.

US Census records, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930.

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:

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

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (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; |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | (2) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is the location of a significant local, state or national event; |

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- ☐ ☒ (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;
- ☒ ☐ (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;
- ☒ ☐ (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;
- ☐ ☒ (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;
- ☐ ☒ (7) Whether specific evidence exists that unique archaeological resources are present;
- ☐ ☒ (8) Whether the building, structure, object or site has value as a significant element of community sentiment or public pride.

AND

- ☐ ☒ (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

Accept the recommendation of the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission and recommend to City Council the Landmark and Protected Landmark Designation of the William Shipp House at 1511 Everett Street.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

Recommended to City Council the Landmark and Protected Landmark Designation of the William Shipp House at 1511 Everett Street.

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EXHIBIT A
WILLIAM L. SHIPP HOUSE
1511 EVERETT STREET



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EXHIBIT B
SITE LOCATION MAP
WILLIAM L. SHIPP HOUSE
1511 EVERETT STREET
NOT TO SCALE

