

CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

LANDMARK NAME: D.W. Hovey House

OWNER: Lizinka Mosley Benton

APPLICANT: Same

LOCATION: 3395 Del Monte Drive – River Oaks

AGENDA ITEM: II.a

HPO FILE NO: 12L263

DATE ACCEPTED: Jan-31-2012

HAHC HEARING: May-17-2012

SITE INFORMATION: Lot 1, Block 8, River Oaks Country Club Estate, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The site includes a three-story, brick clad, residence.

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED: Landmark Designation

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The D.W. Hovey House was designed and built by Alfred and Ivan Greer as a speculative house in 1937. The Greers designed and built numerous houses in River Oaks. The D.W. Hovey House was designed in the Colonial Revival style. Its most prominent Colonial Revival details include a full height semicircular portico anchored by two full-height fluted columns, pilasters topped with simple Doric caps, a wide entablature above the columns, front door surrounded by an elliptical fanlight and sidelights.

The first occupants, Dana Hovey and his family, moved into the house in early 1938. During his career, Mr. Hovey served as president of the Independent Refining Association and worked with Danaho Oil and Refinery Company. The house was later owned by Jake and Olive Hershey. Mr. Hershey created the largest commercial barge line in the world, American Commercial Barge Line, and was a leading organizer and promoter of a national transportation system. He was also a longtime member and leader of many environmental conservation organizations. He co-founded the Jacob and Therese Hershey Foundation, a charity dedicated to the preservation and conservation of the environment. He was an incorporator of the Galveston Bay Foundation and one of the organizers of the Society for the Performing Arts. At his death in 2000 he was a member emeritus of the Texas Philosophical Society, the Galveston Bay Foundation and a director of the Houston Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Subsequent owners were Sid and Kathleen Smith. Mr. Smith was President of Napco Paint Company from 1959-1963. He then joined the commercial real estate company, W.A. Horne, which became The Horne Company, and he later founded McDade, Smith & Gould.

The D.W. Hovey House meets Criteria 1, 3, 4, and 6 for Landmark designation.

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

Dana W. Hovey

Dana W. Hovey purchased the house at 3395 Del Monte in 1938 for \$41,000. The *Houston Press* reported the sale on February 12, 1938:

“Mr. and Mrs. D.W. Hovey have bought the newly completed home at 3395 Del Monte Drive, River Oaks, for \$41,000. The building faces north on a 127 by 180-foot beautifully wooded lot. Colonial style details are followed in exterior and interior. A third floor

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provides storage and a reception room. Mr. Hovey is vice president of the Republic Oil refining Company.”

Hovey was born on November 6, 1891 in Olean, New York. He served in World War I and came to Houston from Pittsburg around the age of 42. He remained in the oil industry his entire career and his obituary described him as “very active in the oil business.” He owned the house at 3395 Del Monte until 1951. During his career, he served as president of the Independent Refining Association and worked with Danaho Oil and Refinery Company. He died at the age of 90 and his obituary lists membership in St. Martin’s Episcopal Church, the Masonic Caddo Ledge of Shreveport, and the Republican National Committee.

Jake Hershey and Olive Duncan Hershey

Jacob “Jake” Wilbur Hershey and his wife Olive Duncan Hershey purchased the house in 1951. At the time the Hersheys were residing at 2246 Del Monte and Jake was the Vice President and Sales Manager of Commercial Petroleum and Transport Company. Mr. Hershey was born December 13, 1912 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania to Eli Nissley Hershey and Carrie Mann Hershey. Mr. Hershey attended Harrisburg Academy, Phillips Academy and graduated in 1934 from Yale University with a degree in applied economic science. In 1942, he began working with a small barge line on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. Over the next three decades, Mr. Hershey expanded the company until it became the world's largest commercial barge line, American Commercial Barge Line (ACBL). He served as Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of ACBL.

Mr. Hershey remained in the transportation and inland marine industry for life. He held many positions in public and industry organizations, including directorships in the Transportation Association of America, Chairman of the Transportation Center at Northwestern University, President of the National Waterways Conference, and United States delegate to the Permanent International Association of Navigation Congresses. He was an incorporator of the Galveston Bay Foundation and one of the organizers of the Society for the Performing Arts. At his death he was a member emeritus of the Texas Philosophical Society and the Galveston Bay Foundation, a director of the Houston Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, as well as adviser for the Trust for Public Land.

Jake and Olive Hershey divorced in the 1950s and Mrs. Hershey remained in the home until 1963. When she died on August 3, 1993 she resided at 3865 Chevy Chase. Following his divorce from Olive Hershey, Jake Hershey married Therese “Terry” Tarlton and joined her in numerous environmental pursuits. They founded the Jacob and Therese Hershey Foundation dedicated to the preservation and conservation of natural areas and the establishment of parks and care facilities for animals and birds. He died April 20, 2000.

Sid and Kathleen Smith

The next owners of the house were Sidney Val Smith and his wife Kathleen Dorrance Smith, who lived there from 1963 until 1979. Mr. Smith was born in 1922 in Bryan, Texas. Following service in World War II, where he commanded a prisoner of war camp during the Nuremberg Trials, he graduated from Texas A&M and began his career in the paint business. He became President of Napco Paint Company from 1959-1963. He then joined the commercial real estate

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company, W.A. Horne, which became The Horne Company, and he later founded McDade, Smith & Gould, a real estate brokerage firm. Mr. Smith was named to the *Houston Business Journal's* Heavy Hitters Hall of Fame; Mr. Smith and his partner William McDade are two of only seven members in this prestigious club. He served on the boards of St. Luke's Hospital, the Salvation Army, St. John's School, Episcopal High School Coronado Club and the Bayou Club. He was a member of St. John the Divine. He died on December 13, 2005.

Ivan H. and Alfred W. Greer

The developer Ivan H. Greer designed and built numerous houses in River Oaks, including:

- 2128 Brentwood
- 3754 Chevy Chase (demolished)
- 3801 Chevy Chase
- 3459 Ella Lee
- 3635 Ella Lee
- 1944 Larchmont
- 3412 Meadow Lake
- 3755 Olympia
- 3655 Piping Rock
- 2184 Troon (City of Houston Landmark).

Ivan sometimes worked in partnership with his father, Alfred W. Greer, as is the case with the Hovey House.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND RESTORATION HISTORY

3395 Del Monte has a square footage of 5,951 and sits on a lot of 22,626 square feet. The house sits in the middle of the lot and faces north. It is a large house with elements of the Colonial Revival style.

Colonial Revival was a style popular in the United States between 1890 and 1935. The Colonial Revival style resulted from a rejection of the Queen Anne Revival style, and a desire to return to a more "traditional" American building type. The style took on added popularity with the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in the 1920s. This style draws from the simple building forms typical of early American colonial structures, and elements of classical or Georgian architecture. It is closely related to the Neoclassical Revival and Georgian Revival styles. Colonial Revival residential structures are typically one or two stories, with hipped or gabled roofs and symmetrical facades. The entryway or porch is the primary focus, often highlighted with a decorative crown or pediment. Other areas of elaboration are the cornice and windows.

The house has a three-part plan with a large central bay and two dependent two-story wings set back from the front façade on either side of the central bay.

The central bay contains an entrance in the center, detailed with a full height semicircular portico anchored by two full-height fluted columns tipped with acanthus leaf detailing, and two pilasters topped with simple Doric caps. A wide entablature sits above the columns and an iron railing finishes the portico. The central entrance consists of a wood paneled and glass front door surrounded by an elliptical fanlight and sidelights featuring leaded glass. The entire door

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surrounded is flanked by a brick arch. A stone keystone sits in the center of the arch. To either side of the front door are two 6-over-12 full-length wood sash windows. An entablature of vertically placed bricks and a stone keystone decorates each of these windows. Above the front door on the second story façade is a 6-over-6 wood sash window with an iron balconet. To either side of this windows are two 6-over-6 wood sash windows, placed directly over the first floor windows. All windows in the central bay have working shutters. The roof is a steeply pitched side gabled roof with stone parapets on either end. The pitch of the roof allows for a full third story below. Three dormer windows clad in wood with triangular pediments punctuate the roof. The dormer windows are 6-over-6 wood sash windows of a smaller dimension than the windows on the second story. A wide entablature with dentil molding runs under the roof and just above the second story windows. Two brick chimneys on each end of the central bay terminate the roof.

The east wing of the house features a ribbon of three 6-over-6 wood sash windows on the first story and the same on the second story. A side gabled roof with a stone parapet tops this wing.

The west wing of the house also features a ribbon of three 6-over-6 wood sash windows on the first story and the same on the second story. A side gabled roof with a stone parapet tops this wing. To the west of this wing is a one-story addition of a 6-over-6 wood sash window with working shutters. Above the window is a band of stone that the goes around this addition. A flat roof with a brick parapet caps this addition.

The house is virtually unchanged from its construction except for a modification to the west wing of the house, which has been altered to mirror the east wing and the addition of a further one-story addition to the west of this wing. Originally, the west wing had two 6-over-6 sash windows on the second floor and two 6-over-6 windows on the first floor. And, there was no one-story addition.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

“D.W. Hovey Residence in River Oaks”, *Houston Post*, February 13, 1938.

Obituary for F. Fox Benton, Jr., *Houston Chronicle*, February 6, 2001

Obituary for Jake Hershey, *Houston Chronicle*, April 21, 2000.

Obituary for Sidney Val Smith, *Houston Chronicle*, December 15, 2005.

“River Oaks House Bought for \$41,000”, *Houston Post*, February 13, 1938.

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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission recommend to City Council the Landmark Designation of the D.W. Hovey House at 3395 Del Monte Drive.

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EXHIBIT A

D.W. Hovey House

3395 Del Monte Drive



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EXHIBIT B

SITE LOCATION MAP

D.W. Hovey House
3395 Del Monte Drive

NOT TO SCALE

