

# CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

## LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

**LANDMARK NAME:** R. L. Jolley House

**OWNER:** Susan Elizabeth Taylor

**APPLICANT:** Same

**LOCATION:** 2527 Pelham Drive – River Oaks

**AGENDA ITEM:** II

**HPO FILE NO:** 12LM271

**DATE ACCEPTED:** Aug-8-2012

**HAHC HEARING:** Sept-20-2012

**SITE INFORMATION:** Lot 2, Block 40, River Oaks Section 1, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The site includes a historic two-story, brick residence.

**TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED:** Landmark Designation

### HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The R. L. Jolley House at 2527 Pelham Drive, designed by well-known architect Hiram Salisbury, was built in 1930 for Russell and Loretto Jolley. Russell Jolley was a prominent engineer and longtime board member of the San Jacinto River Authority. The R. L. Jolley House is historically significant to Houston's architectural history because of its design by the locally prominent architect Hiram Salisbury. It is also significant due to its distinct styling featuring Georgian Colonial Revival design elements combined with a large turret on the primary façade. Moreover, this property is significant because of its association with the River Oaks community, which is a historically significant example of early twentieth century affluent garden suburbs. The R. L. Jolley House qualifies for Landmark designation under criteria 1, 4, 5, and 6.

### HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

#### *2527 Pellham Drive*

On June 15, 1930, a sketch of the proposed house ran in the Houston Post Dispatch under the title "R.L. Jolley Residence." It read, "Contract has been let to the Benson-Hall company for the construction of this \$15,000 home in River Oaks for Russell L. Jolley. The architecture is Georgian influence. Plans were prepared by Hiram A. Salisbury, architect."

The owner retains the original colored sketch, which was sent to her by the Jolley's grandson. She also has the original blueprints for the house, which she found in the attic of the house. The blueprints were signed by both Jolleys as the clients.

Today the building's exterior remains largely intact and retains its original appearance. The house retains many of its Georgian style elements, including six-over-six double hung windows; a broken triangular pediment above the front door; and window shutters.

#### *Russell and Loretto Jolley*

Russell LaGrange Jolley was born on July 19, 1895 in Missouri. He served in World War I as a 1st Lieutenant. He received both a Bachelors and a Masters degree in Civil Engineering from Washington University at St. Louis, where he was a member of Sigma Nu. He moved to Houston in the 1920s and was an engineer for various builders and engineering companies. The Jolleys moved to River Oaks from 2802 Wentworth. At the time of the house's construction, Jolley

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worked as the manager of the Concrete Engineering Company. Always prominent in his field, Jolley was appointed to the San Jacinto River Authority (SJRA) where he was the Vice President during the planning and building of Lake Conroe. He served on the SJRA board from 1954 to 1972. In 1962, Mr. Jolley was listed as the head of Southern Industries, Inc. and was active with the Houston Community Chest. He died on March 6, 1974. Loretto M. Jolley was born on March 3, 1896 in Missouri. Mrs. Jolley owned the house until 1988. She died on October 9, 1991.

The Jolleys had two children, Russell Jr. and Emily. Their son Russell LaGrange Jolley Jr. earned a Doctorate in Biochemistry from Oregon State University. He became a noted environmentalist and a fierce protector of the Columbia River Gorge in Oregon. He died in 2011.

### *Hiram Salisbury*

Hiram A. Salisbury (1892-1973), was born in Omaha, Nebraska. Salisbury studied architecture under a fellowship from the American Institute of Architects and later graduated from the School of Architecture at New York's Columbia University (1913-1914). He worked as a draftsman for Thomas R. Kimball from 1910-1923 and George B. Prinz from 1923-1926. Salisbury established his own architectural firm in Houston in 1926, and he is first listed in the 1927 Houston City Directory with an office in the Post-Dispatch Building (later, the Shell Building) until 1937. Salisbury served as president of the American Institute of Architects, Houston Chapter in 1954. Beginning in 1930, Salisbury and his wife lived at 3412 Yupon between Hawthorne and Harold, in Houston. By 1953, the Salisburys were living at 610 Saddlewood Lane. Salisbury continued his practice in Houston until approximately 1962, when he retired and moved to Medford, Oregon.

Beginning in 1928 Salisbury collaborated on many projects with fellow architect, T. George McHale. Their projects included both residential, commercial, and churches. Among their more notable projects are the St. John's School located at 2401 Claremont, St. Stephens Episcopal Church located at 1805 W. Alabama, as well as many of the homes located in River Oaks, Southampton and other upscale Houston neighborhoods. In 1938-39, Salisbury and partner T. George McHale relocated their office to the River Oaks Community Center, located at 2017 W. Gray. Salisbury and McHale later moved their offices to 3501 Allen Parkway in 1945.

A list of identified works of Salisbury in association with McHale and others, which was researched and provided by Stephen Fox, include:

- Masonic Temple, 118 N. 11th St., Mc Allen TX, 1926
- Southampton Home Sensible, 2218 Dunstan Rd, 1927; W. L. Pearson House, Corpus Christi TX, 1927
- Ironcraft Studio Building (altered), 3901-07 Main St. 1927
- H. Q. Rickman House, 2223 Stanmore, 1927 (American Architect 5 Jan 1928)
- Nelms Building (H. S. Tucker & Co. Oakland-Pontiac dealership) (demolished) 2310 Main St. 1927
- E. E. Johnson House, 949 S. Ohio Ave. Mercedes TX, 1927
- Emergency Clinic and Hospital Unit 2 (demolished), 1316 75th St. 1928
- Mrs. H. F. Lawson Building (demolished), 1010 Holman Ave., 1929
- Robert H. Pentz House, 2159 Inwood Dr. 1930
- Speculative House (Paul Weaver House), 3443 Inwood Dr. 1930

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- Benson-Hall Construction Co. House (A. E. Kerr, Jr., House), 2005 Bellmeade Rd., 1931
- Frank L. Webb House, 2935 Chevy Chase Dr. 1931
- W. E. Sampson House (demolished), 984 Kirby Drive, 1932
- 1005 Sul Ross Ave. c. 1932
- Stewart P. Coleman House, 6 Shadowlawn Circle, 1933
- Wilson Saville House, 3217 Groveland, 1933
- W. E. Montieth House, 5 Shadowlawn Circle, 1934
- James Anderson House, 5216 Dunlavy St., 1934
- C. Milby Dow Bay House “Raven Moor”, near Baytown, 1935
- Henry A. Sauer House, 2229 Inwood Dr. 1935
- Damon Wells House, 1659 North Blvd., 1935
- Larry J. Langdon House, 2131 Troon Rd., c. 1936
- Elwood Fouts House (altered), 3470 Inwood Dr., 1936
- Francis G. Coates House, 3417 Del Monte Dr., 1936
- J. E. Cooper House, 2247 Dryden Rd., 1936
- Pfeiffer House, River Oaks Boulevard (demolished May 2004)
- George B. Corless House, 1936 Larchmont Rd., 1936
- H. F. Junker House, 2226 Shakespeare Rd., 1936
- St. James Episcopal Church, 1500 N. Thompson St., Conroe TX, 1936-37
- J. Sayles Leach House (demolished), 2207 River Oaks Blvd., 1937
- Royston H. Patterson House, 7370 Sims Dr. 1937
- John S. Bonner House, 1705 North Blvd. 1938
- Lucien L. Powell House, 2111 Pine Valley Dr. 1938
- Wheeler Nazro House, 3400 Piping Rock Lane, 1938
- P. L. Williams House, 3612 Rio Vista Dr., 1938
- Katrina Byram House, 2135 University Blvd. 1939
- Ned Gill House, 949 Kirby Dr., c. 1940
- Harry J. Kuhn House (demolished), 22 N. West Oaks, 1940
- William S. Bonner House, 1412 North Blvd. 1940
- E. H. Lorehn House (altered), 2198 Troon Rd., 1940
- W. Leland Anderson House, 1519 South Blvd. 1940
- George C. Schmidt House (demolished), 21 Westlane Place, 1940
- Dr. Paul Ledbetter House, 3508 Inwood Dr., 1941
- Chapel, St. John The Divine Episcopal Church, 2450 River Oaks Blvd., 1941
- St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, 1805 W. Alabama Ave. 1941
- Jack Roach Building, 6000 Block of Harrisburg Blvd. 1941
- Adolph Pfeffer House, 2109 River Oaks Blvd. 1930s
- W. E. Parry House, 2407 Pelham Dr., 1930s
- **Russell L. Jolley House, 2527 Pelham Dr. 1930s**
- Jack Roach House, 3001 Del Monte Dr., 1939
- Donald Kolp House, 3434 Wickersham Lane, 1940s
- Parish House, Christ the King Lutheran Church, 2353 Rice Blvd. 1946-49
- St. John’s School, 2401 Claremont Lane, 1945-49

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- St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital, 6720 Bertner Ave., Texas Medical Center, 1946-54
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 7843 Park Place Blvd. 1946-48
- North Side State Bank Building, 2010 N. Main St. 1947-48
- Wyatt Metal & Boiler Works Building addition, 6100 Kansas, 1948
- Dr. Blume House, Houston, 1948
- Condit Elementary School addition, 7000 S. Third St. Bellaire TX 1949
- Trinity Presbyterian Church, 7000 Lawndale Ave., 1949
- St. John's Episcopal Church, 514 Carter St. Marlin TX, 1949
- Blue Triangle YWCA Building, 3005 Mc Gowen Ave. 1951
- St. George's Episcopal Church (demolished), 510 13th Ave. N., Texas City TX, 1950
- St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 1208 5th St., Rosenberg TX, 1950
- St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 207 Bob-O-Link Lane, Wharton TX, 1951
- Wheeler Nazro House "Doe Run Farm," Washington-on-the-Brazos TX vicinity, 1951
- St. John The Divine Episcopal Church, 2450 River Oaks Blvd. 1952-54
- Retreat House, 1952-53
- St. John's Lutheran Church, 3920 Ave. L, Galveston TX, 1953-54
- St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 1601 Lake Rd., La Marque TX, 1953
- Parish buildings, St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church, 1801 Sage Rd., 1955
- Walter Shult House, 500 Hillcrest Dr., Richmond TX, 1957

## *River Oaks*

When Will C. Hogg, Mike Hogg, and Hugh Potter began the development of River Oaks in 1923, it was with the intention of making it into a demonstration of the highest standards of modern community planning, a role model for the rest of Houston to follow. Will Hogg's ambitiousness and Hugh Potter's skillful management of River Oaks during its first thirty years made the community known nation-wide as a symbol of Houston. Since its creation, River Oaks has been published in national news, real estate, and design media, and has been the focus of scholarly analysis, in recognition of its significant contributions to the history of Houston and twentieth-century American elite suburban community development.

The creation of this type of subdivision was unique for Houston in many respects. The subdivision was laid out at what was then the far western edge of Houston. Prior to 1923, the majority of Houston's residential developments had occurred in a tight girdle around the downtown business district, such as Westmoreland (1902), Avondale (1907), Montrose (1911), Audubon Place (1906), Cherryhurst (1908), Binz, Southmore (1914), and Courtland Place (1906). River Oaks, however, was situated at the western city limits far away from other developments.

In addition, the developers broke with convention by laying out an organic pattern of roadways which lent a sense of spaciousness to the neighborhood, which was very different from the traditional Houston neighborhoods that followed a more rigid approach to development. These traditional neighborhoods used street grids which carved the land up into predictable square or rectangular blocks.

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## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND RESTORATION HISTORY

The R. L. Jolley House contains 2,280 square feet on a 9,550 square foot lot. It is sited facing North on Pelham in the center of its lot.

The R. L. Jolley House is classified as a Colonial Revival due to the presence of many Georgian style elements. Georgian houses were popular in the United States during much of the Eighteenth Century and the early 1800s. A revival of Georgian, and other architectural styles from America's colonial years, was common in house design during the early Twentieth Century. The Jolley House is a well-preserved example from this Colonial Revival period. The house's hipped roof and asymmetrical façade distinguish it as a revival from houses designed when Georgian styling was originally common.

The house has a wood frame and is faced in multi-colored brick. The front façade features a large two-story turret that serves as the house's signature design element. This turret contains the stair window, which is a large 24-pane fixed wood window. The rounded bay is capped with a low pointed conical roof covered in copper. To the left of the turret are two 6-over-9 wood sash windows with working shutters on the first floor façade and two 6-over-6 wood sash windows on the second floor façade. To the right of the central bay is the entry to the house.

The entry features a wood and glass door surrounded by an elaborate broken pediment and carved details. Brick stairs lead from the ground to the front entry. Above the door are two 6-over-6 wood sash windows with working shutters on the second story façade. A wooden entablature runs around the top of the house where the roof meets. The roof is asphalt shingles, except for the turret's roof.

The current owner purchased the house in 2001. Originally, the house had a one-story screened porch on the east end of the house that was recessed from the front facade. This porch was replaced in 2001 by a two story brick addition that is recessed from and subordinate to the main façade. It has approximately the same footprint as the original porch.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

City Directories, 1928 through current.

Fox, Stephen, ed. *Houston Architectural Guide*, 2nd edition, American Institute of Architects/Houston Chapter, 1999.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Alfred A. Knopf Press 1984. *River Oaks Scrapbooks*, Volumes 9 & 10

Sanborn Mapping Company, *Fire Insurance Maps for Houston Texas*, Volume 11 Slide 1104 1934.

Various resources from Ancestry.com

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

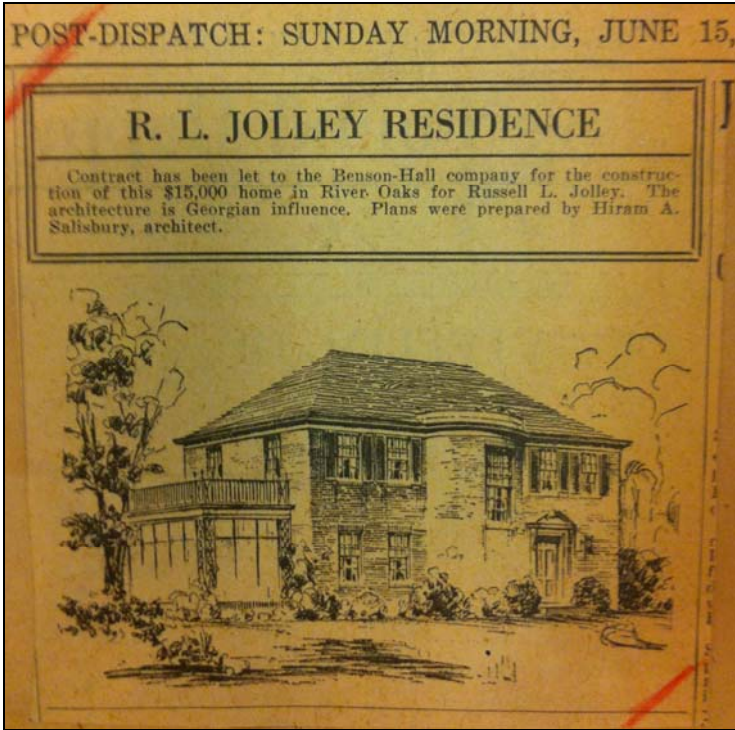


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## EXHIBIT A





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## EXHIBIT B SITE LOCATION MAP

