

# CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

## LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

**LANDMARK NAME:** The Forrest R. and Myrtle Oldham House    **AGENDA ITEM:** III  
**OWNERS:** David and Danielle Magdol    **HPO FILE NO:** 14L293  
**APPLICANTS:** Same as Owners    **DATE ACCEPTED:** Jan-29-2014  
**LOCATION:** 2504 Brentwood Drive - River Oaks    **HAHC HEARING:** Apr-24-2014

**SITE INFORMATION:** Lot 8, Block 36, River Oaks Section 1, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The site includes a historic two-story, brick, single-family residence.

**TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED:** Landmark Designation

### HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The Forrest R. and Myrtle Oldham House was designed and built by local builder C.C. Rouse circa 1928. Forrest Oldham was a purchasing agent for Gulf Oil. The home was later owned for many years by Malcolm and Anita Baker.

C.C. Rouse developed numerous homes in River Oaks. The house is designed in a Neoclassical style, and is an early home for Brentwood Drive and River Oaks. An addition was added to the residence by the current owners in 2013. The house is significant for its architecture, its connection to C.C. Rouse, and its occupants.

The Forrest R. and Myrtle Oldham House at 2504 Brentwood Drive meets Criteria 1, 4, and 6 for Landmark designation.

### HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

#### *Forrest Robert Oldham*

Forrest Robert Oldham was born on October 7, 1883 in Montalba, Texas. His parents were farmers. He started work as a clerk for Gulf Oil in Beaumont and moved to Houston by 1918 to work as a purchasing agent. Prior to living in River Oaks, the family lived in the Castle Court subdivision. They moved to River Oaks by 1930.

#### *Myrtle Gertrude King Oldham*

Myrtle Oldham was born on May 15, 1883 in Goss, Texas. She and Forrest were married in Jefferson County in 1912. They had one son, Forrest Jr, born in 1920. Myrtle Oldham died of bronchial pneumonia on September 20, 1936. Mr. Oldham and his son moved to Beaumont in 1941. Forrest Oldham, Sr. died in March, 1963.

#### *Malcolm Graham Baker*

The home was purchased by Malcolm Baker and Anita Stewart Baker in 1941. Malcolm was a son of Captain James A. Baker. Malcolm was born in Houston on February 18, 1906. He was raised on his parents' estates, The Oaks, and graduated from The Rice Institute in 1928. Once married, he and his wife lived on The Oaks property at 2211 Baldwin and then at 211 Bremond.

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Malcolm was the Assistant Cashier at South Texas Commercial National Bank, which was chaired by Captain James A. Baker until his death in 1941. By the mid-1950s, Malcolm operated an independent investment firm. He died March 9, 1994.

## *Anita Stewart Baker*

Anita Dee Stewart was born at her family's summer home in La Porte, Texas on June 27, 1908. She was raised in Houston. She was also a member of the Class of 1928 at The Rice Institute, where she was crowned Queen of May. She and Malcolm married in 1929. According to her obituary, she lived a very full life of "family, her many life-long friends, her social clubs, golf and bridge, her garden and her church, St. John the Divine, where she and her husband were founding members in 1939." Anita Stewart Baker died on November 10, 2003.

## *Subsequent Owners*

The Bakers sold the home in the mid-1970s to Granville and Elaine Knight. They sold it to Nancy and David Pustka in 1991, who in turn sold to the current owners in 2012.

## *C.C. Rouse*

Claude Clay Rouse, the builder of the home at 2136 Brentwood Drive, was born in Pleasant Valley, Oklahoma, in February 1897. He resided in Houston for sixty years and founded the C. C. Rouse Company, which survives today as Tynes Sparks Building Corporation. The company started as Rouse Lumber & Building Company on Montrose Street. According to the Tynes Sparks website, "Rouse was confident in his idea for building a spec home in River Oaks. One of the company's business mottos was to take the party out of the country club and bring it home to a mansion. Floor plans of C. C. Rouse homes were designed so that 100 people at a time could gather and circulate in the home with ease. Bedrooms were separated from the main living areas for privacy. Kitchens were built to handle the preparation of major social events. Living rooms featured palatial detailing."

Mr. Rouse groomed his son-in-law, Tynes Sparks, to eventually take over the business in 1966 when C. C. Rouse retired. In October 1979, C. C. Rouse passed away in Houston. According to Tynes Sparks and the River Oaks scrapbooks, some of the C. C. Rouse homes built in River Oaks include:

- 2429 Brentwood Drive
- 2437 Brentwood Drive
- 2504 Brentwood Drive
- 3024 Chevy Chase Drive
- 3842 Chevy Chase Drive (demolished)
- 2440 Del Monte Drive
- 3014 Del Monte Drive
- 3218 Del Monte Drive
- 3627 Del Monte Drive
- 3637 Del Monte Drive (demolished)
- 3612 Ella Lee Lane
- 3665 Ella Lee Lane
- 3001 Inwood Drive
- 3609 Inwood Drive
- 3617 Inwood Drive
- 3660 Inwood Drive
- 3671 Inwood Drive
- 3719 Inwood Drive (demolished)
- 930 Kirby Drive
- 3218 Locke Lane
- 3609 Meadow Lake Lane
- 3637 Olympia Drive (demolished)
- 2914 San Felipe Road

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- 2248 Stanmore Drive (demolished)
- 2204 Troon Road
- 3418 Wickersham Lane
- 3630 Willowick Road

## **ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND RESTORATION HISTORY**

The 4,454 square foot residence is sited on an 18,033 square foot south-facing lot. The house is designed in the Neoclassical style with a full height entry porch. The house is faced in painted brick. The house features a side gable roof and the full height porch features a front gable roof. The front porch is supported by four doric columns. The residence was renovated by the current owners in 2013.

In 2013 a rear second story addition was added to the residence and the side gable roof was raised 5'. The addition features divided lite sash windows and windows were replaced on the east and west elevations.

The residence features a centered front entrance that projects slightly from the front façade. The east and west elevations of the front entrance feature small rectangular windows on the second story. The front gable over the entrance features an arched window. The front entrance features a wood paneled entry door with a wood surround, leaded glass side lites, and transom. The door surround is topped with a triangular pediment. Octagonal leaded glass windows are located on either side of the front entry. A ribbon of three sash windows, two 4-over-4 and a 6-over-6 sash windows, are centered above the entry on the second floor. To the east and west of the front entrance are 10-over-10 wood sash windows on the first and second floor, four windows in all. All of the windows feature brick sills.

The west façade has been altered towards the rear half of the structure where the addition ties into the original house. Moving from north to south, the first floor features two 6 lite casement windows that were added during the 2013 addition, a divided lite entry door, and two 6-over-6 wood sash windows. The second floor features two 6-over-6 sash windows, added during the 2013 addition, a new 6-over-6 sash window that was installed in an existing window opening , and two original 6-over-6 wood sash windows. A ribbon of three 6-over-6 wood sash windows was added to the gable in 2013.

The east façade was altered towards the rear due to the 2013 addition. Moving north to south the first floor features two 6-over-6 sash windows. The second floor features a new divided lite casement window, added in 2013, a new 6-over-6 sash window located in an original window opening, and two original 6-over-6 wood sash windows. A ribbon of three 6-over-6 wood sash windows was added to the gable in 2013. The east façade features an exterior brick chimney. The east elevation also features a one-story side gable bay. The south elevation of the bay features a set of divided lite French doors with a fan lite. The east elevation of the bay features a 6-over-6 wood sash window in the gable that was added during the 2013 addition.



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## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission recommend to City Council the Landmark Designation of the Forrest R. and Myrtle Oldham House at 2504 Brentwood Drive.

## **HAHC RECOMMENDATION**

The Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission recommends to City Council the Landmark Designation of the Forrest R. and Myrtle Oldham House at 2504 Brentwood Drive.

## **EXHIBIT A**

### **PHOTO**

**FORREST R. AND MYRTLE OLDHAM HOUSE  
2504 BRENTWOOD DRIVE**



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## EXHIBIT B

### SITE LOCATION MAP FORREST R. AND MYRTLE OLDHAM HOUSE 2504 BRENTWOOD DRIVE

