

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

LANDMARK/SITE NAME:Rutherford B. Yates House**OWNER:**Mrs. Catherine M. Roberts**APPLICANT:**Mrs. Catherine M. Roberts**LOCATION:**1314 Andrews Street - Freedmen's Town
Historic District**30-DAY HEARING NOTICE:**Aug-11-96**AGENDA ITEM:**IIIb**MEETING DATE:**Sept-12-96**HPO FILE NO.:**96L008**DATE ACCEPTED:**Aug-6-96**HEARING DATE:**Sept-12-96**SITE INFORMATION:**

Lot 8, Block 22 of the Justin Castanie Survey, SSBB, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas, being a 50' X 100' parcel. The building on the site is a one-story, wood-frame cottage.

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED:Landmark Designation**HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE:**

The property is contained within the boundary of the Freedmen's Town Historic District, which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places at a national level of significance in 1984. Known originally as Freedmantown and later the San Felipe District, the neighborhood lies on the edge of downtown Houston where emancipated slaves settled in the late 1860's. Comprising about 90 blocks, Fourth Ward, as the community is now known, once extended as far north as Buffalo Bayou (San Felipe Courts sits on what was the original site of Freedmantown) and as far east as Smith Street, where an institutional and business center existed around Antioch Missionary Baptist Church. It also extended as far west as Taft Street and as far south as Sutton Street. West Dallas Avenue, the original San Felipe Road, was the main business corridor. The current district of forty blocks is all that remains of the original Freedmen's Town (Freedmantown) settlement. It grew to become the economic, spiritual, and cultural focus of Houston's black community. Within its boundaries lay a thriving black business district and residential neighborhood. Since 1940, however, through urban renewal, Federal highway projects and the continual expansion of the central business district, this community has been reduced to its current size that lies just west of Interstate 45 and the current district represents all that remains of the oldest and one of the most important black communities in Houston.

Because of its unusual architectural characteristics and because it represents an urban neighborhood that has always been primarily associated with Houston's Afro-American community, this district maintains a significance that is unique in the State of Texas. The neighborhood is composed for the most part of wood-frame residential units that range in date from about 1870 to 1935. There are a number of significant church buildings as well scattered throughout the neighborhood and a circa 1920 brick gas station. Most notable about the Fourth Ward is that it conserves a way of life once typical of Southern communities, white as well as black. Residents still spend time on their front porches socializing with passersby. Since the houses are unusually close to the edge of the street, a very unique characteristic of this neighborhood, it is not unusual for traffic in the narrow streets (also a unique characteristic to Houston), to be brought to a halt while a motorist converses leisurely with an acquaintance on a porch.

The building at 1314 Andrews Street is a Queen Anne style cottage with wraparound porch and prominent front-facing gable with pent roof. It was constructed by Rutherford B. Yates in 1912. He was the son of John Henry "Jack" Yates who purchased lots 7 and 8 in 1870. "Jack" Yates was chosen the first full-time pastor of the

Antioch Missionary Baptist Church, which was organized in 1866 for emancipated slaves. Yates built a house on Lot 7 (1318 Andrews) which has since been relocated to Sam Houston Park. It was the oldest datable building in the Fourth Ward. Yates' son, Rutherford, built the house at 1314 Andrews. Rutherford Yates was a teacher and owned the first black printing press in Houston. Through the years, this press published such notable black papers as the Texas Freedman, the Houston Informer, and the Houston Defender.

Andrews Street contains some of the most substantial and significant houses remaining in Fourth Ward. They contrast markedly with the towers of downtown Houston, which at this point loom dramatically over the neighborhood.

RESTORATION HISTORY/CURRENT CONDITION:

There have been no structural changes or modifications of any consequence since the original construction. However, the building has suffered from many years of neglect. The new owner and applicant applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness to restore the building which was to be reviewed by the HAHC on August 15, 1996. Since there was no quorum present for that meeting and the HAHC was unable to act upon it within the 35 days of receipt of the application, it was approved automatically on August 27, 1996. Work which was being recommended by staff for approval included: repair as needed siding, cornerboards, watertable, fascia and soffit, wood-sash, double-hung windows, doors and patterned tin shingle roof including metal finials using materials to match original; repair existing red brick pier foundation as needed for porch and reconstruct wraparound porch same footprint as original; porch to be constructed with hip roof supported by six classical, round columns (8" circumference) and 1 and 1/4" wood, stick balustrade and tongue and groove decking; reconstruct rear porch same footprint as original on east elevation using tongue and groove decking and four square, posts (5 and 1/2" square) to support hip roof clad with same metal roof as house; reconstruct front steps with wood risers flanked by paneled wood stoop; install wood, lattice panels between piers; paint building; construction of wood picket fence 3' 6" in height and paint to match trim of house.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Recommends that the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission recommends designation of the Rutherford B. Yates House as a landmark to the Planning Commission since the application complies with the applicable criteria of Section 33-224.

APPROVAL CRITERIA FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION....:

Sec. 33-224. Criteria for designation of a Landmark.

(a) The HAHC and the commission, in making recommendations with respect to designation, and the city council, in making a designation, shall consider one or more of the following criteria, as appropriate for the type of designation:

S D NA

S - satisfies D - does not satisfy NA - not applicable

- (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;
- (2) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is the location of a significant local, state or national event;

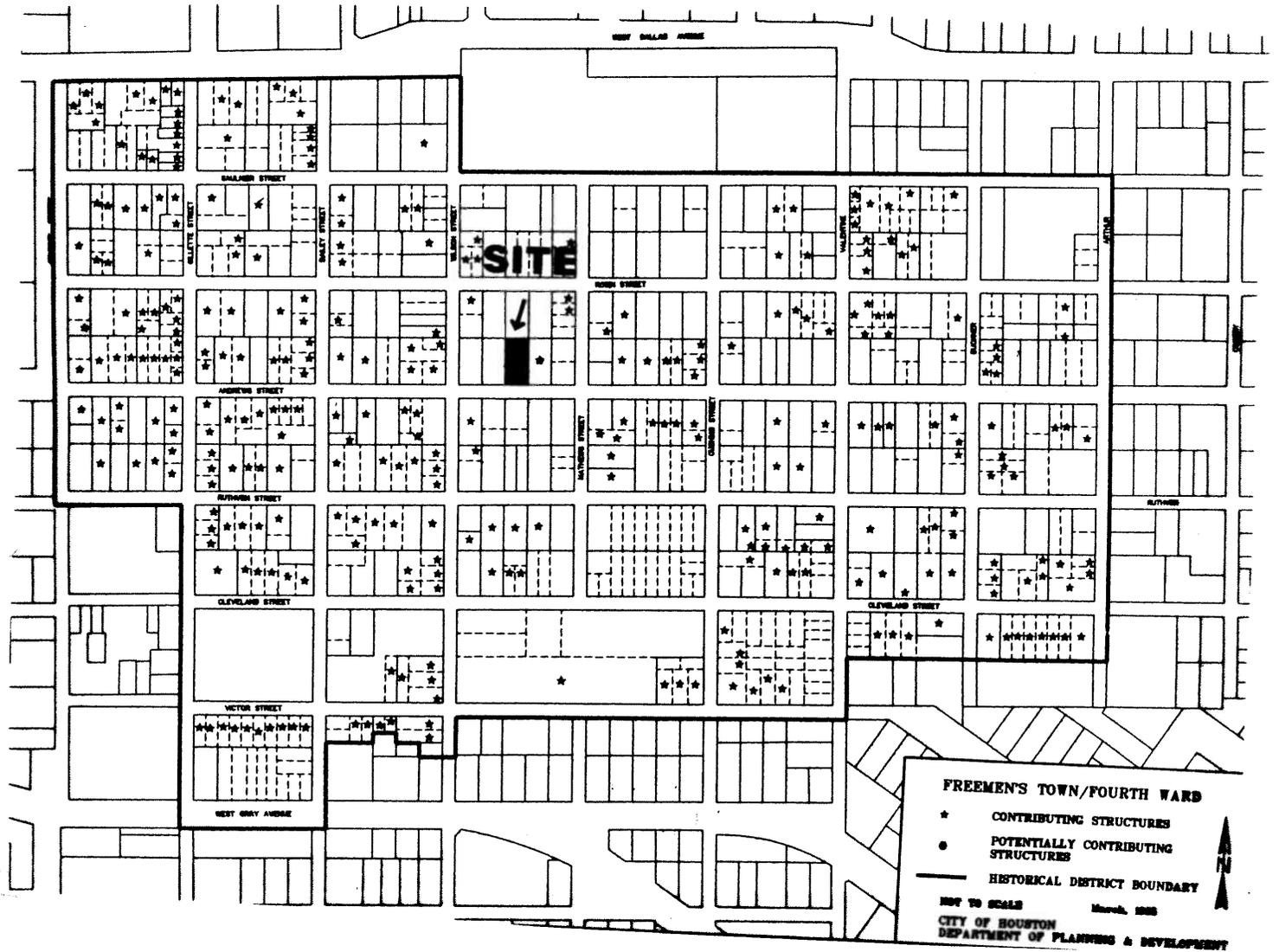
- (3) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is identified with a person who, or group or event that, contributed significantly to the cultural or historical development of the city, state, or nation;
- (4) Whether the building or structure or the buildings or structures within the area 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.

CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

SITE LOCATION MAP
1314 ANDREWS STREET
NOT TO SCALE



CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

FRONT (SOUTH ELEVATION)
1314 ANDREWS STREET
NOT TO SCALE

