

News Release



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City of Houston designates two protected historic landmarks in Midtown/Neartown

HOUSTON, February 25, 2009 – Houston City Council recently designated the Elbert C. Crawford house at 428 Westmoreland Avenue in the Westmoreland Historic District and the Richardson House at 3307 Austin Street in Midtown and as protected historic landmarks.

Elbert C. Crawford House

Owned by Ann K. Hubbard and Houston City Controller, Annise D. Parker, the Crawford House was built in 1904 by August LeBrun Metcalf. Metcalf constructed numerous homes in Houston's historic districts. In 1906, Metcalf sold the newly constructed house to Clara Edwards Crawford. Her husband, Elbert C. Crawford, founded many city businesses, including The Texas Coffee, Tea, and Spice Company. The Crawford House, one of the first houses to be built in the Westmoreland Addition, retains a very high level of architectural integrity.



The two and a half story frame house exhibits characteristics of the Colonial Revival style, and features giant Corinthian columns, Palladian windows, and a small cantilevered second floor balcony. When it was built in 1904 by August LeBrun Metcalf, most of the houses in Westmoreland were of the Victorian Era. The Elbert C. Crawford House was architecturally much more forward-looking. The house is one of the larger and more elaborate houses in Westmoreland.

Richardson House

Owned by Magnificat Houses, Inc, the Richardson House was the home of many prosperous Houston citizens and their families at its original location on Block 1, Lot 40 of the James S. Holman Survey of the City of Houston. Over its first 25 years, the house's occupants reflected the evolution of Houston's economy, which was first built upon the cotton trade and land development. Edward R. Richardson, a real estate dealer and cotton broker, constructed and first occupied the house. Richardson House



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was later the residence of Congressman Joe Henry Eagle, who helped secure funding to improve the Houston Ship Channel. As timber eclipsed cotton as Houston's primary export product, the Roderick MacDonald family, with multiple interests in timberlands and real estate, lived there.

After its relocation across Austin Street in 1926, to make room for the construction of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Richardson House was for 40 years the home of the Stiles family, who had lived on that block of Austin Street, on and off, since the Cedar Lawn Addition was originally subdivided in 1890. Magnificat Houses, Inc. purchased the house in 1971, and today it serves as a clubhouse for residents in their social services programs.

Houston's Historic Preservation Ordinance, adopted by City Council in 1995, recognizes and protects the city's historic sites. The ordinance allows Council to designate buildings, structures, objects or sites that have historical, cultural, architectural or archaeological significance. By preserving the city's valuable historic resources, residents and visitors are visibly reminded of our culture and heritage, boosting civic pride and economic prosperity. Economic incentives and reduced permit fees are available for renovations on designated historic properties approved by the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission. More information is available online including photos of the properties above at the Planning Department web site at www.houstonplanning.com under Historic Preservation.