

News Release



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Three homes added to protected historic list

HOUSTON, March 25, 2009 – Houston City Council recently designated the Lamberth-Abercrombie House, Williams A. Wilson House and Matthews-Johnson House, as protected historic landmarks.

Lamberth-Abercrombie House, 2221 River Oaks

The Southern Colonial-style residence was designed in 1928 by Cameron Fairchild, a prominent Houston architect, for Clarence O. Lamberth. The home was one of the first built on River Oaks Boulevard, and the Lamberth family was one of the pioneer families of River Oaks. The home was also owned for many years by James S. Abercrombie, an oilman, civic leader, and philanthropist, who was the lead benefactor to the construction of Texas Children's Hospital.



William A. Wilson House, 205 Bayland

The Wilson House was built in 1910 by Houston developer William Wilson as his own residence. Wilson founded the William A. Wilson Realty Company in 1898 and was an active participant in the development of the Houston Heights, Woodland Heights, and Eastwood neighborhoods. Wilson was also active in the community, serving on many boards, including the City of Houston's first Board of Park Commissioners. He is especially known for the many trees he planted in his residential subdivisions, which today provide a beautiful mature tree canopy in these historic Houston neighborhoods.



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Matthews-Johnson House, 1835 Cortland Street

An early Craftsman Bungalow with late Victorian influence, this house is a good example of high craftsmanship from the early 1900s. The house is representative of the homes of many of the middle-class working residents of the time, and most of its original features are intact. On September 6, 1915,



just five days after purchasing the lot, William J. Matthews, a civil engineer and chief draftsman at the Sunset Central Lines, contracted with W. T. Carter Lumber and Building Company to build the house. Matthews is significant to the history of the Houston Heights neighborhood because, at a time when most residents earned minimum wage in labor jobs, he was a well-educated, high-ranking railroad official.

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 at the Planning Department web site at www.houstonplanning.com under Historic Preservation.