

# News Release



**CONTACT:** Suzy Hartgrove: 713-837-7719  
Email: Suzy.Hartgrove@cityofhouston.net

## Notable Star Engraving Building Now A Protected Landmark

**HOUSTON, March 10, 2010** – Houston City Council designated the Star Engraving Company Building at 3201 Allen Parkway as a protected historic landmark. This designation prevents the building from being inappropriately altered or demolished.

The Star Engraving Company Building was designed in 1930 by architect R.B. Steele in the Spanish Mediterranean-style and built on a small bluff overlooking Buffalo Bayou. For nearly half a century, the Star Engraving Company manufactured and sold high school class rings and other commencement-related products, such as engraved diplomas and graduation announcements. Incorporated in Houston in 1911, the company's trade territory grew to encompass 16 Southern states. The Star Engraving Company is the most intact commercial building designed by architect Steele, who practiced in Houston from 1892 until his death in 1936.



Steele's extant body of work includes the Henke Building on Market Square, Baptist Temple in the Heights, and Sidney Lanier Middle School.

Constructed in 1925-26, Allen Parkway linked Houston's downtown with the new garden suburb of River Oaks. Soon after, three printing plants, all in the Spanish-Mediterranean style, sprung up in a cluster at a bend on the scenic bayou parkway just west of Waugh Drive: Gulf Publishing Company and Rein Company in 1927 and 1928, and Star Engraving Company in 1930. The Star Engraving Company occupied their building on Allen Parkway until 1965. After sitting vacant for awhile, the building was rehabilitated in the mid-1980s to serve as a cultural center and office building. In 1992, the City of Houston purchased the building to prevent its demolition and ensure its continued use as a cultural arts center. Since this time, the Star Engraving Company Building has housed the offices of the Cultural Arts Council of Houston (now the Houston Arts Alliance) and other non-profit arts groups and most currently, Stages Repertory Theater.

For information regarding historic preservation, go to [www.houstonplanning.com](http://www.houstonplanning.com).