



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF ZONING

Request:

The Office of Historic Preservation requests a change of zoning to add “HL” Historic Landmark designation to 903 W Huisache and to waive all related fees. *OHP staff recommends approval.*

Case Comments:

On April 17, 2019, the Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC) agreed with the applicant’s finding of historic significance and supported the designation of the property as a local landmark.

Case History:

June 4, 2019	Zoning Commission hearing
April 17, 2019	Historic & Design Review Commission (HDRC) hearing
March 29, 2019	Application for Historic Landmark Designation submitted to OHP

Applicable Citations:

Note: In accordance with the process for designation of a historic landmark, as outlined in Section 35-607 of the UDC, properties must meet three of sixteen criteria. This property meets five Criteria for Evaluation.

Unified Development Code Sec. 35-607. – Designation Criteria for Historic Districts and Landmarks.

- a. **Process for Considering Designation of Historic Districts and Landmarks.** Historic districts and landmarks shall be evaluated for designation using the criteria listed in subsection (b) and the criteria applied to evaluate properties for inclusion in the National Register. In order to be eligible for historic landmark designation, properties shall meet at least three (3) of the criteria listed. Historic districts shall consist of at least two (2) or more structures within a legally defined boundary that meet at least three (3) of the criteria. Additionally, all designated landmarks and districts shall demonstrate clear delineation of the legal boundaries of such designated resources.
- b. **Criteria for Evaluation.**
 6. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the community, county, state, or nation;
 5. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials;
 7. Its unique location or singular physical characteristics that make it an established or familiar visual feature;
 11. It is distinctive in character, interest or value; strongly exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, ethnic or historical heritage of San Antonio, Texas or the United States;
 13. It bears an important and significant relationship to other distinctive structures, sites, or areas, either as an important collection of properties or architectural style or craftsmanship with few intrusions, or by contributing to the overall character of the area according to the plan based on architectural, historic or cultural motif.

Findings of Fact:

- a. The request for landmark designation was initiated by the property owner.
- b. **HISTORIC CONTEXT:** The structure at 903 W Huisache Ave is a one-story Craftsman with Tudor Revival influences built c. 1925 and located in Beacon Hill. Jordan Ghawi and Stephanie Phillips currently own the property. The address first appears in the 1924 San Antonio city directory as the residence of renters P & Bertha Tyrell. The structure is included in the 1951 Sanborn map, along

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with an accessory structure that is no longer extant. According to the Beacon Hill Neighborhood Association's website, "the neighborhood was among the first 'modern' platted subdivisions developed in San Antonio," and included subdivisions within the boundaries, namely Laurel Heights Addition, Treasure Hill, Fox's Beacon Hill, Beacon Hill, Beacon Hill Terrace, and North Haven, which developed from the early 1890s to the late 1920s. According to newspaper archive research, the area where Beacon Hill is now located was originally platted by Nicholson, Furnish, and Smith in 1908 and was an addition to Fox's Beacon Hill, originally platted in 1907. The land where 903 W Huisache Ave is located is part of the originally platted Beacon Hill Addition subdivision. Dr. Charles Haggard owned 903 W Huisache Ave from c. 1929 through 1939, and the applicant discovered through newspaper archive research that he and his family were active in the San Antonio community. Their daughter, Helen, married Walter Brennan in 1939; Brennan was later appointed to the University of Texas Board of Regents and is cited for his contribution to establishing the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio and University Hospital.

- c. **SITE CONTEXT:** 903 W Huisache is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of W Huisache Ave and Blanco Rd in the Beacon Hill neighborhood conservation district (NCD-5). The primary façade faces south toward W Huisache Ave, and there is a brick walkway running south from the front porch past the sidewalk to the street. The lot is rectangular, with the short end on W Huisache Ave, and the house sits approximately 11 to 20 feet from the primary right-of-way and about six to eight feet from the right-of-way along Blanco Rd. A gravel parking pad at the northeast corner of the lot is accessed via a gate along Blanco Rd. Aside from this metal gate, the yard is enclosed by a wood fence.
- d. **ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:** The home is designed in the Craftsman style, which characterizes this particular area of the Beacon Hill neighborhood. The primary form of the house is symmetrical with two identical side gables facing east-west connected by a central bay with a cross gable facing north-south; roof material is composition shingle. The central bay is inset on the west and east, creating two side porches covered by low sloping shed roofs. The shed roofs are supported by simple square columns with square bases and two horizontal cross beams with tapered edges. The front, rear, and porch roof forms feature exposed wood rafter tails. The facade of the entire structure is wood bevel siding with a 6 inch reveal. The front facade fenestration is nearly symmetrical with two ganged one-over-one wood windows on either side and a front door located on the central axis. A front-facing gable is located directly above the front door and features a horizontal ganged window with two wood sashes featuring six divided lites each. The front facade is dominated by a tapered chimney clad in stucco, a feature most commonly associated with the Tudor Revival style. The chimney features an arched inset detail with three diamond tiles. The chimney is capped with a decorative Flemish bond brick detailing. The front side gable on the east facade contains four square leaded stained glass wood windows. The sashes are identical and feature a quintessential Craftsman-influenced design with a tulip flower surrounded by geometric detailing. Character-defining features of 903 W Huisache Ave include:
 - Its overall symmetry
 - One-over-one wood windows
 - Chimney on façade
 - Exposed rafter tails
 - Side porches
- e. **EVALUATION:** In order to be eligible for historic landmark designation, properties shall meet at least three (3) of the 16 criteria listed. Staff evaluated the structure against all 16 criteria and determined that it was consistent with UDC sec. 35-607(b):

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1. **Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the community, county, state, or nation;** Dr. Charles Haggard and his wife were significantly involved in their local community, and the Haggard's daughter Helen and her husband, Walter Brenan, continued to be involved in San Antonio through social activities, advocacy, and administration, including Walter's involvement with the University of Texas Board of Regents.
 5. **Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials;** While the style of the structure is predominantly Craftsman, the home also features a prominent, character-defining chimney on the front facade that is most commonly associated with the Tudor Revival style.
 7. **Its unique location or singular physical characteristics that make it an established or familiar visible feature;** The structure is located prominently on the corner of Huisache Ave and Blanco Rd. In addition, the structure's dominant, character-defining front chimney is a unique feature amongst Beacon Hill's Craftsman-style single story homes.
 11. **It is distinctive in character, interest or value: strongly exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, ethnic, or historical heritage of San Antonio, Texas or the United States;** This structure represents the architectural design, detail work, form, and craftsmanship that is consistent with the homes built during the development period of the neighborhood.
 13. **It bears an important and significant relationship to other distinctive structures, sites, or areas, either as an important collection of properties or architectural style or craftsmanship with few intrusions, or by contributing to the overall character of the area according to the plan based on architectural, historic or cultural motif;** The structure is part of the eligible historic district of Beacon Hill and would be considered contributing were the neighborhood to pursue designation. Additionally, 903 W Huisache Ave is part of the original plat for the Beacon Hill Addition subdivision.
- f. The City offers a tax incentive for the substantial rehabilitation of historic properties because historic landmarks possess cultural and historical value and contribute to the overall quality and character of the City and its neighborhoods. If historic designation is approved, rehabilitation and restoration work may be eligible for this incentive. State and Federal tax incentives are also available for properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and provide substantial relief for rehabilitation projects.
- g. If the HDRC approves the Finding of Historic Significance, then the recommendation for designation is submitted to the zoning commission. The zoning commission will schedule a hearing and then forward its recommendation to the City Council. City Council has the ultimate authority to approve the historic designation zoning overlay.
- h. Per UDC Sec. 35-453, once the commission makes a recommendation for designation, property owners must receive a written approval (a Certificate of Appropriateness) for any exterior work until the City Council makes their final decision.

ATTACHMENTS:

HDRC recommendation

HDRC published exhibits

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