

PROTECTED LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT**Landmark Name:** West Edgemont's "Dream Home"**Owners:** Lois Zamora**Applicants:** Same as Owner; Preservation Houston**Location:** 1707 Milford Street, Houston, Texas 77098 - West Edgemont/Ormand Place (North)**Agenda Item:** A**HPO File No.:** HP2025_0125**Date Accepted:** April 30, 2025**HAHC Hearing:** June 5, 2025

Site Information: Lot 2A 2B & 3A, Block 3, West Edgemont Addition, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. Designation is requested for the two-story house. The building is 2,711 square feet on a 9,960 square foot lot.

Type of Approval Requested: Protected Landmark Designation

History and Significance Summary:

The house at 1707 Milford is a two-story brick veneer Tudor-Revival style house designed by the Bonita Building and Lumber Company for a Houston Post-Dispatch newspaper contest in 1927. This house is significant for its architectural style. The property meets Criteria 1, 4, and 5 for Landmark designation and Criterion 1 for Protected Landmark designation.

The current owner, Lois Zamora, bought the home with her husband in 1978. The owner is seeking protected landmark status for the house to preserve it as an example of the work completed by the Bonita Building and Lumber Company as well as for its significance as a Tudor-Revival style single family residence. Protected status would only include the main residence. The detached garage apartment is classified as noncontributing. Protected Landmark designation for 1707 Milford would be the first in West Edgemont. The designation report was researched and written by Inga McGuire with Preservation Houston.

History and Significance:*West Edgemont Addition*

In 1924, the land west of the Edgemont addition was platted and aptly named West Edgemont. This new neighborhood was one of many neighborhoods platted within the City of Houston limits during the first half of 1924. Presently, the West Edgemont neighborhood boundaries are not clear. Originally, the addition was said to be "north of Bissonnet and West of Dunlavy." The City of Houston considers West Edgemont to comprise the lots "along North and South Boulevards, starting at Dunlavy and extending toward Woodhead Street." However, HoustonProperties.com states West Edgemont only includes houses within 1701 – 1730 Banks, 1701 – 1728 Milford, and 1702 – 1727 Vassar. Notedly, a 2001 City of Houston Landmark Designation Report for 1753 North Boulevard, places that house in the Orman Place subdivision, not in West Edgemont which contradicts the City of Houston boundaries for West Edgemont. While the West Edgemont boundaries vary between sources, 1707 Milford sits squarely

within each boundary given for the neighborhood. Research for this nomination focused specifically on the 1700 blocks Milford and Banks.

An early advertisement for the West Edgemont neighborhood by G. E. Simpson Realty Service, boasted “extremely favorable prices” for the West Edgemont lots which were conveniently located so that residents could view “50 or more of the most handsome homes of Houston in Edgemont, Broadacres, Jandor Gardens, Cherokee and Southampton.” Like the aforementioned neighborhoods, West Edgemont was promoted as close to Rice University, creating along with its surrounding residential sections a “cultured atmosphere” on paved roads with “every city convenience.” Along with G. E. Simpson Realty Service, the Labor Bank and Trust Company and San Jacinto Trust Company were both involved in the selling and development of West Edgemont lots during the first few years.

Development in West Edgemont proved slow in the early years following incorporation. No construction commenced in West Edgemont on Milford or Banks in 1924 or 1925. By 1926, 1720 Milford was constructed but vacant and no buildings had been built on the 1700 block of Banks. In spring of 1927, the Bonita Building and Lumber Company started to develop 28 lots in West Edgemont on the 1700 block of Banks and Milford. By 1928, five residences on Milford, 1706, 1707, 1709, 1710, and 1723, were in place.

Bonita Building and Lumber Company

Incorporated in 1926, the Bonita Building and Lumber Company specialized in single and multi-family residence construction. Located in Harrisburg, the company built a Spanish revival-style plant on Broadway (no longer extant) and advertised with their logo, a Mexican sombrero with their name around the brim. While their plant, logo, and name drew inspiration from Hispanic and Latino cultures, all the buildings attributed to Bonita Building and Lumber are in the Tudor Revival architectural style, a type of English vernacular architecture that was prevalent in the United States from 1890 to 1940. While active in the first two years following their charter, the company seems to have been short lived, ceasing operations by 1928.

The Bonita Building and Lumber Company utilized the local newspapers to advertise and promote their residential designs in 1926 and 1927. The general manager of Bonita Building and Lumber Jacob Cox “J. C.” Stedman, who later would go on to co-found the Toddle House restaurant chain, appears in connection to the company on most advertisements along with the company logo. In a 1927 advertisement, the company boasted of “favorable criticisms” and “the most liberal compliments” directed towards their newly finished residence at 1604 Milford. It goes on to say, “This home was wholly designed by our architectural department; all materials furnished from our yards; all interior finishings, including doors casements, cabinets and built-in accessories were milled in our plant, and every detail of construction handled by our own workmen.” Research did not reveal the individual draftsman or architects who worked for the company.

The Bonita Building and Lumber Company designed brick veneer bungalows and two-story residences in the West Edgemont neighborhood. Along with their work in West Edgemont, Bonita Building and Lumber built on West Clay (Feagin Apartments 409-417 West Clay, single family residences 401 & 405 West Clay), as well as residences in Edgemont, Rice Court, River Oaks, Meadowbrook, Southampton

and Almeda Place. Most notable in their early work was the brick-veneer house at 2929 Rice Boulevard for the developer of the nearby Rice Court neighborhood, Preston R. Plumb in 1926.

1707 Ownership History

In March 1928, Dr. Hugh Sanders Dew sold lots 2 and 3, block 3 to C. L. Killingsworth. While Dr. Dew's connection to the house was not revealed during research, C. L. Killingsworth worked for the Labor Bank and Trust Company, who was involved with the Houston Post naming contest and construction of 1707 Milford in the summer of 1927. Shortly after acquiring the home, Killingsworth sold the property to R. P. Baker in May 1928, this time the listing included that the property was improved with a "two-story brick veneer home" situated on the lot. Interestingly, the house which sold for \$11,000 was wrongly listed as 1708 Milford.

1707 Milford was listed for sale again in May 1929, this time with a description. B. R. Bogy and Grady Ellis were charged with selling the "Beautifully finished two-story English type home" that included "...three bedrooms and two tiled baths, floored attic; attractive arrangement downstairs" and had been plastered throughout. The advertisement states the house at the time was one year old, which rings true, since construction did not finish until the summer of 1927. Using city directories to track the owner history of 1707 Milford, it seems the house changed hands three times from 1929 until 1939 when Delilah and Col. Robert Gay (veteran of both World War I and II) moved into the house, remaining until their deaths in 1948 and 1959, respectively. By 1961, local architect W. Jackson Wisdom and his wife, teacher Margaret "Tiny" Wisdom moved into 1707 and remained owners until 1971. Margaret Wisdom could be considered the most well-known and successful owner of 1707 Milford. A local high school was recently renamed to honor her commitment to education and the local community at large. Two additional owners shortly occupied 1707 Milford; the current owner acquired the house in 1978.

Architectural Description and Restoration History:

1707 Milford History

The Bonita Building and Lumber Company seems to have found success in their short history, culminating in 1927 with their purchase of the West Edgemont addition. After advertising an open house for 1604 Milford in which thousands of Houstonians visited and "warmly admired" the Tudor Revival-style house, Bonita Building and Lumber Company took to the newspapers again, this time to promote their development in West Edgemont through a naming contest. In May of 1927, the Houston Post-Dispatch partnered with Bonita Building and Lumber and The Labor Bank and Trust Company to sponsor the naming of a new two-story residence on Milford. The house, 1707 Milford, became known as the "Dream Home" and was followed closely for two months. After construction started with the garage followed by the main residence and the paving of Dunlavy Street, the public was kept updated on the progress. A sketch rendering of 1707 Milford depicting the seven-room brick veneer house was included in the Houston Post on May 22nd, followed on July 10th by a photo of the house under construction. By August 1926, the construction was completed, and no new newspaper articles mentioned the naming contest. However, it is clear that the public involvement of the community, not only in the naming of the house but throughout the construction, created interest in West Edgemont and more development in the neighborhood soon followed.

Architectural Description

1707 Milford Street consists of a two-story Tudor Revival-style house that faces north onto Milford Street, on the block bounded by Dunlavy and Woodhead. The property sits towards the western edge of the multi-lot parcel, slightly recessed from Milford Street and in line with neighboring residences. A driveway along the eastern parcel boundary abuts a metal fence that delineates the driveway and front lawn with a side garden. Behind the garden, a two-story secondary (noncontributing) building, originally a garage with living space and later converted into one large apartment, is nestled into the southeast corner of the parcel. A paved courtyard and pool occupy the remaining space between the main residence and the former garage building.

The two-story house at 1707 Milford Street features a steeply pitched irregular-shaped asphalt shingle roof which caps the cross-gabled building. A front-facing gable with wing plan creates a prominent asymmetrical facade. The building is clad with a gray brick-veneer set into a running bond with portions of the main (south) elevation and east elevation partially clad in wooden shakes.

From left to right, the main elevation features two bays, the first bay slightly recessed from the more prominent second bay. The first bay makes up the wing of the building plan and is defined by a second story, clad in wood shakes, that overhangs slightly over the brick veneer of the ground floor. Flanked by the brick veneer, a large multi-pane metal casement window, tall and narrow indicative of the Tudor Revival Style, is encased by a simple wooden surround. Above the metal casement windows on the second floor, a pair of wooden single-hung windows disrupt the cornice, creating a faux dormer or false thatched roof feel. A small rectangular fixed window sits directly below the cornice to the right of the paired single hung windows.

The front-facing gable of the second bay dominates the main elevation, extending farther along the western section of the bay, sloping slightly in front of the first bay, below the small, fixed window. The second bay contains a recessed rectangular doorway, encased by a stucco frame scored to emulate a stone lintel above and quoins on either side. The original wood panel door features copper accents, now verdigris with age, including a finial-shaped door knocker, finial-shaped door handle, medieval-style hinges, and a kick plate. The door also includes a small rectangular window set on a decorative ledge. Directly above the entryway, two large wooden corbels remain of what most likely was a window box for the second-story wooden (now fixed) window, framed by an unusually decorative surround and exceedingly large lintel. Arguably the focal point of the front gable is the tall arched metal casement window that extends from the first to second floor, illuminating the interior stairwell with two-tiers of metal multi-pane casement windows, capped with a metal fanlight. The tall window is highlighted by decorative brick work, with an arch voussoir extending out in an uneven radial orientation, juxtaposing the horizontal running bond of the brick veneer. This motif is used again in the brick archway that extends out of the first floor of the second bay. Capped by a small side gable roof with exposed rafters, this arched entrance, along with a black metal security gate, obscure the east elevation from view.

Restoration History

Minimal alterations and no additions have affected the integrity of 1707 Milford since its construction in 1927. The side porch on the west elevation was enclosed prior to the current owner's possession of the

house. The flower box that originally rested on top of the extant corbels was also removed prior to the 1970s. The only other alteration noted is directly above the corbels, where the original window has been replaced with a single pane fixed window.

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_____, "English Home In Rice Court Open Today," August 22, 1926, 56.
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_____, "Building Permits Granted Tuesday," July 21, 1926, 3.
_____, "The Beautiful Feagin Apartments Were Built By The Bonita Building & Lumber Co.," October 31, 1926.

- _____, "Meadowbrook to Get Three More New Residences," August 29, 1926, 3.
- _____, "Bonita Building Two New Dwellings," October 10, 1926, 5.
- _____, "Bonita Building & Lumber Labor Bank & Trust Co. To Building Post-Dispatch Home," May 15, 1927, 5.
- _____, "The Naming Contest to Close 6 P. M. Today," May 27, 4.
- _____, "Mrs. J. A. Shifflette Wins \$25 Cash For 'Dream Home' In Home Naming Contest, May 27, 1927, 2.
- _____, "Good Progress is Made on Dream Home," June 19, 1927, 9.
- _____, "New Post-Dispatch West Edgemont Home," May 22, 1927, 2.
- _____, "New Post-Dispatch 'Home of Dreams'," July 10, 1927, 2.
- _____, "North Edgemont," May 2, 1929.
- _____, "Bonita Building Enjoys Big Growth," February 13, 1927, 15.

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The information and sources provided by the applicant for this application have been reviewed, verified, edited and supplemented with additional research and sources by Cara Quigley, Planning and Development Department, City of Houston.

APPROVAL CRITERIA FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION**Sec. 33-224. Criteria for designation**

(a) The HAHC, 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	NA	S - satisfies	D - does not satisfy	NA - not applicable
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
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AND				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

Sec. 33-229. Criteria for protected landmark designation

S	NA	S - satisfies	D - does not satisfy	NA - not applicable
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission recommend to City Council the Landmark Designation of West Edgemont's "Dream House" at 1707 Milford Street, Houston, TX 77098.

HAHC RECOMMENDATION [LEAVE BLANK FOR HAHC REPORT – INCLUDE FOR ACTION REPORT]

The Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission recommends to City Council the Landmark Designation of the [Full Name of Landmark] at [Address].

DRAFT

**EXHIBIT A
PHOTOS
1707 MILFORD ST
WEST EDMONT'S "DREAM HOUSE"**

Photo 1: North (front) elevation facing south from Milford Street. Photo by applicant, 2025.



Photo 2: Oblique view of the northeast (front/left) elevation facing southwest from Milford Street. Photo by applicant, 2025.



Photo 3: Oblique view of the northwest (front/right) elevation facing southeast from Milford Street. Photo by applicant, 2025.



EXHIBIT B
SITE MAP
1707 MILFORD STREET
WEST EDMONT'S "DREAM HOUSE"

Map 1: Harris Central Appraisal District account detail map of 1707 Milford. Accessed 2025.



Map 2: Aerial view of the site via Google Maps. Accessed 2025.

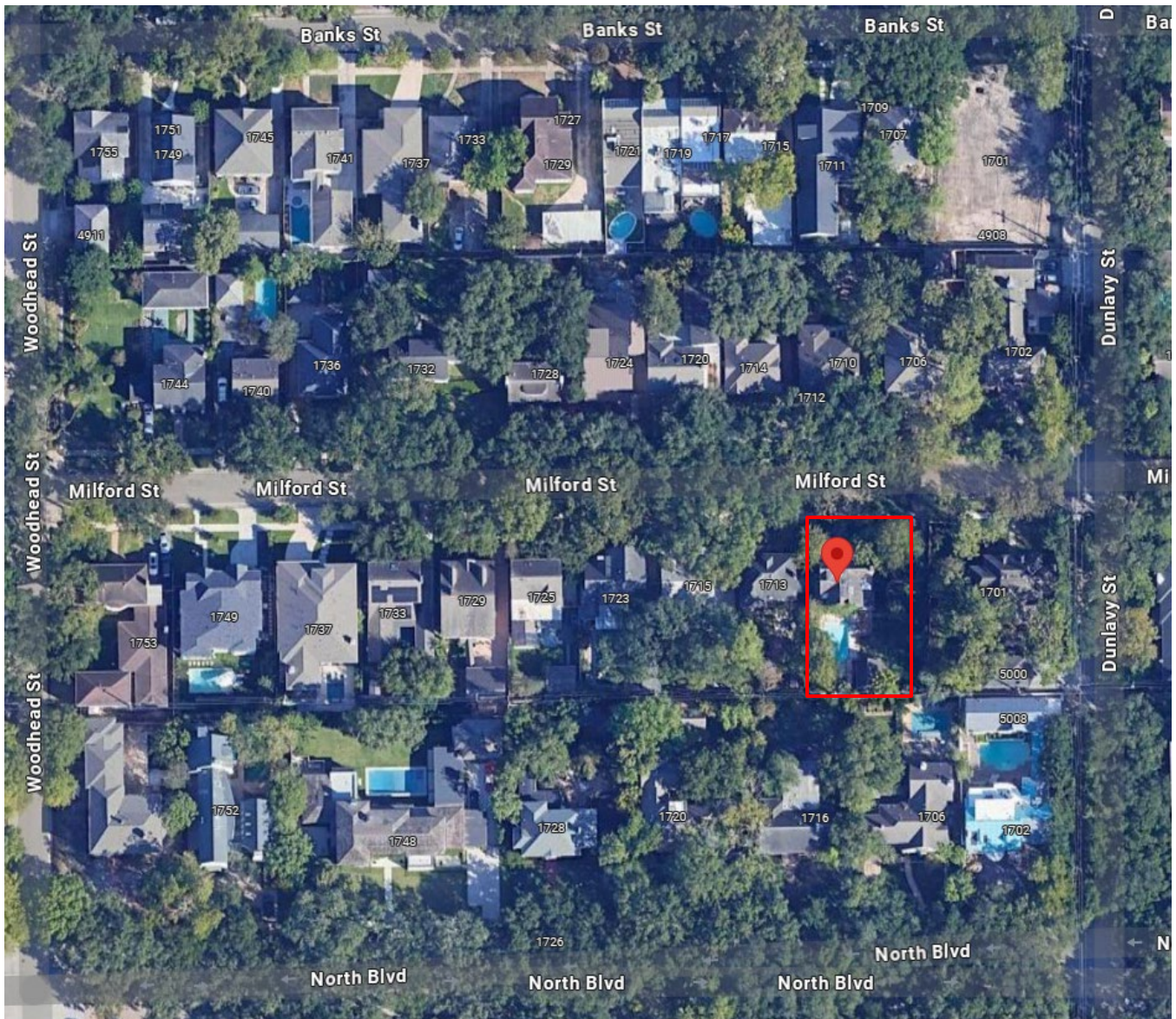


EXHIBIT C HISTORIC DOCUMENTATION 1707 MILFORD STREET WEST EDMONT'S "DREAM HOUSE"

Figure 1: Sanborn Map of Houston 1924-February 1951, Vol. 5, 1924, Sheet 594. Accessed 2025.

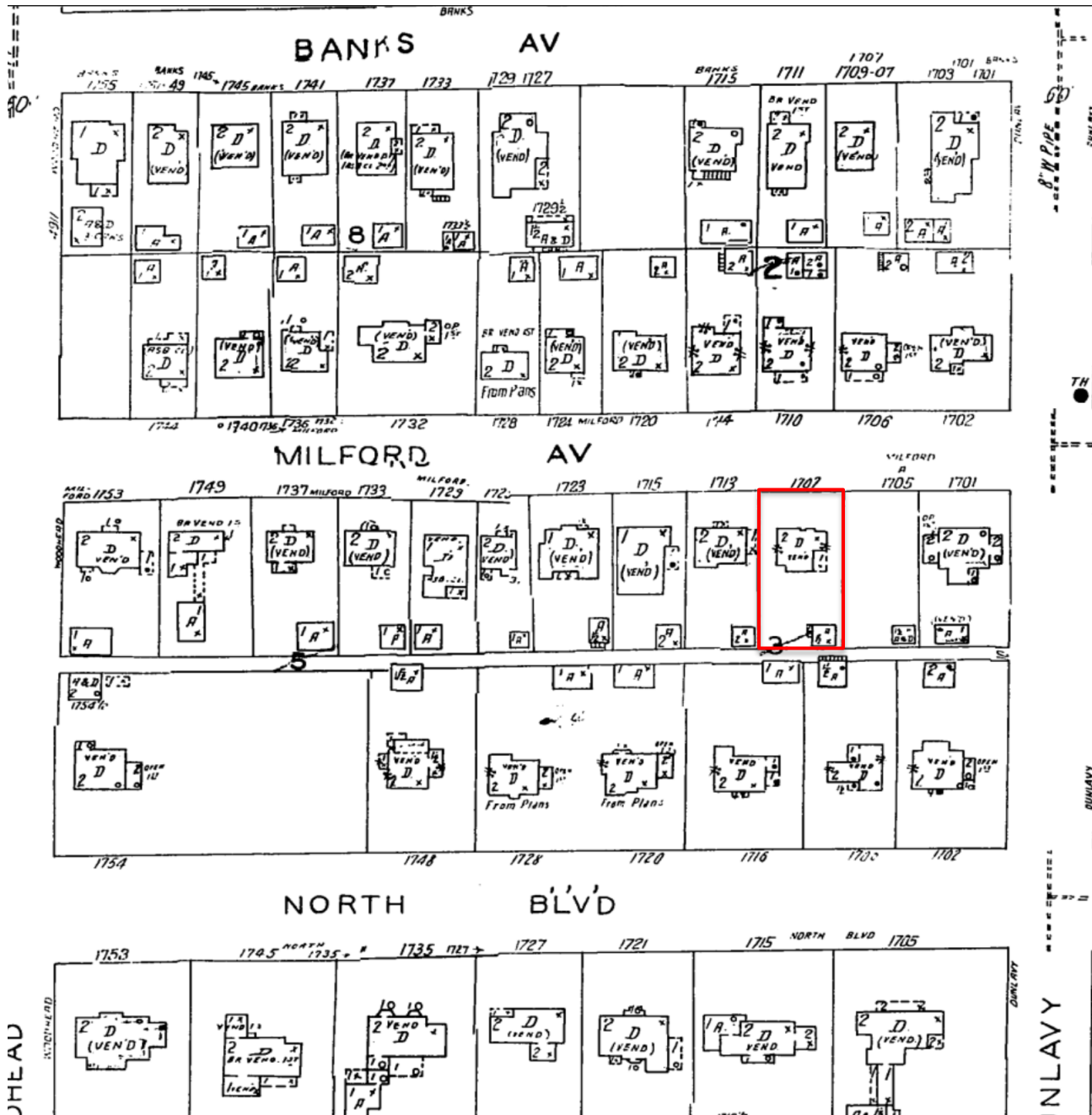


Figure 2: Newspaper advertisement from the Houston Post, May 22, 1927, of 1707 Milford being built in West Edgemont by the Bonita Building and Lumber Company. Accessed 2025 by applicant.

