

PROTECTED LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT**LANDMARK NAME:** The Wilbanks-Hannah House**OWNERS:** Asif Mahmood**APPLICANTS:** Asif Mahmood**LOCATION:** 2506 Rosedale Street, Houston, Texas, 77004**AGENDA ITEM:** B**HPO FILE NO.:** HP2022_0148**DATE ACCEPTED:** 06/01/2022**HAHC HEARING:** 1/26/2023

SITE INFORMATION: TRS 6 & 7A, Block 15, Riverside Terrace Section 1, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. Designation is requested for the 2,292 square foot, single-family house on a 8,775 square foot lot.

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED: Protected Landmark Designation

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The Wilbanks-Hannah House at 2506 Rosedale Street is a two-story, brick veneer house with a Colonial Revival-style entrance. The house was built in 1928; at that time, it was listed for sale by the Guardian Trust Company. The home is located in the historic Riverside Terrace subdivision in Third Ward.

There have been several long-term owners of the home. Charles Kavanaugh Wilbanks and his wife Maidie Autry Wilbanks purchased the home in the early 1930s. Charles was a cotton broker and Maidie a homemaker. The most prominent owner was African American businessman and civic leader Mack Henry Hannah, Jr., who lived in the house with his wife Reba Othelene Hicks Hannah and their children. Reba Hannah was a committed community leader and dedicated teacher. The house remained in the Hannah family from 1974 to 2012..

The current owner, Asif Mahmood, purchased the home in 2021. He is seeking a protected landmark designation for 2506 Rosedale Street to preserve the home's history and ensure that it remains a part of Riverside Terrace's historic housing stock. The Wilbanks-Hannah House meets criteria 1, 3, 5, 6 and 8 for landmark designation and criteria 1 and 3 for protected landmark designation.

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE*RIVERSIDE TERRACE*

The first section of Riverside Terrace was platted in 1924. Development of the area was started by Henry Frederick MacGregor, who came to Houston in 1883 and began investing in real estate. By 1900, MacGregor had helped to extend Houston's residential area southward by building several subdivisions in the South End. During the first two decades of the 20th century, "street-car suburbs" flourished in Houston and residential developments spurred the extension of streetcar lines.

By the mid-1920s, the growing popularity of the automobile led to new “automobile suburbs” in Houston. Several of these residential subdivisions were platted on either side of Brays Bayou in the vicinity of Hermann Park. One such suburb was Riverside Terrace.

Early Riverside Terrace sales brochures stressed the area’s premier location. The subdivision was promoted as being near South Main’s cultural, medical, educational and social facilities. The first section of the project, an area bounded by Almeda, Blodgett, Live Oak and Oakdale streets, was financed by the Guardian Trust Company. The developer, using similar sales language to that used by the River Oaks Corporation, noted that there would be “rigid building restrictions ... so that each purchaser is assured beforehand of the exact character of the improvements with which he will be surrounded.”

The success of Riverside Terrace attracted other developers, and the subdivisions of Washington Terrace and Riverside were platted in the vicinity. Today, the entire area is known as Riverside Terrace. Riverside Terrace was once home to many Jewish families, including such prominent names as Weingarten, Finger, Sakowitz and Battlestein, who were excluded from residing in River Oaks. From the 1930s until the postwar era, the neighborhood was unofficially known as the “Jewish River Oaks” for its affluent residents and impressive homes, particularly those on MacGregor Way overlooking Brays Bayou.

Architects who designed homes in the neighborhood include John Staub, Birdsall Briscoe, Bolton & Barnstone and Joseph Finger. Several distinctive modern houses were designed by the office of Bailey A. Swenson. The architectural firm of MacKie & Kamrath also produced homes of modern design. One house, featured in *Architectural Record* in 1942, was described as having excited neighborhood controversy for being so modern. Today, the neighborhood contains numerous outstanding examples of residential architecture ranging from traditional revival styles to late Art Deco and mid-century modern, interspersed with small motels, apartment buildings and, most recently, townhouse developments.

The neighborhood’s demographics began to change in 1952 when affluent African-American cattleman Jack Caesar moved his family into Riverside Terrace. Caesar remained in his house even after a bomb was detonated on the front porch. In the mid-1950s, white families began moving to more distant suburbs. In the early 1960s, white residents who saw the potential for an integrated neighborhood tried to stabilize the area by posting signs that read, “This Is Our Home, It Is Not for Sale,” which became the title of a 1985 documentary by Jon Schwartz that gave a 60-year overview of the community and its struggle to integrate.

Eventually, all but a few white homeowners left Riverside Terrace, but the neighborhood once again became home to prominent professionals – this time African-American college professors, doctors, lawyers and politicians. Home construction and commercial development have recently revived, especially on the southern edge of the neighborhood.

OWNERSHIP HISTORY

Charles Kavanaugh Wilbanks (b. February 1, 1874, d. October 15, 1941)

Maidie Autry Wilbanks (b. on October 2, 1890, d. June 27, 1975)

The house at 2506 Rosedale Street was built around 1928 and was listed for sale by the Guardian Trust Company. The property remained vacant until the early 1930s, when the Wilbanks family moved in. Charles Kavanaugh Wilbanks and his wife, Maidie Autry Wilbanks, were first listed at the address in the 1932 Houston City Directory.

Charles Wilbanks was born on February 1, 1874, in Edna, Texas, to Thomas Gillham Wilbanks of Louisiana and Augusta Maria Loomis Wilbanks of Arkansas. Charles married his first wife, Alice Adcock, on December 25, 1900, in Victoria County, Texas. They had three children. The couple later divorced, and Charles married Maidie Autry on June 1, 1923 in Houston. Maidie was born in Hallettsville, Texas, on October 2, 1890, to Francis Ashbury Autry of Mississippi and Lavinia Elmira Reagan Autry of Texas. S

Charles was a cotton broker for 25 years and Maidie was a housewife. Maidie remained in the house after Charles' death on October 15, 1941, but sold the property by 1948. Maidie died on June 27, 1975. Maidie and Charles are buried at Hollywood Cemetery in Houston.

Raymond Albert Dickens (b. August 6, 1906, d. June 8, 1992)

Virginia Conyers Dickens (b. February 14, 1911, d. May 31, 2004)

The second owners of 2506 Rosedale were Raymond Albert Dickens, an accountant in the oil industry, and his wife, Virginia Conyers Dickens. They lived at the house with their children, Raymond Albert Dickens, Jr. and Henry Conyers Dickens. The Dickens are first listed at the address in 1948 and last listed in 1956.

Beulah B. Taylor (b. December 29, 1907, d. December 13, 1967)

Lincoln R. Taylor (b. April 21, 2000, d. April 18, 1973)

Mrs. Beulah Gibson Taylor was listed at the address in 1958, along with her husband Lincoln R. Taylor. Beulah was a teacher and Lincoln was a shipping clerk. She passed away in 1967, followed by Lincoln in 1973. At the time of his death, Lincoln was residing at 2535 N. MacGregor.

By 1974, Mrs. Reba O. Hannah was the new resident at 2506 Rosedale.

Mack Henry Hannah, Jr. (b. February 8, 1904, d. April 2, 1994)

Reba Othelene Hicks Hannah (b. March 7, 1907, d. October 1, 2009)

Mack Hannah, Jr. and his wife Reba were the owners of 2506 Rosedale by 1974.

Mack Henry Hannah, Jr. was a successful Black business owner, millionaire, financier, developer and prolific civic and political leader. He was born on February 8, 1904, in Brenham, Texas, to Mack Henry, Sr. and Daisy Brown Hannah. His family moved to Port Arthur, Texas, where he attended Lincoln High School. After graduating, Mack attended Bishop College in Marshall, Texas. Mack was a talented athlete, achieving the college's first All-American honors as a football player in 1927. He went on to coach football at Lincoln High School until 1930, when he began several business ventures.

From 1930 to 1944, Mack travelled extensively around the South as a salesman for the Orange Casket Company and eventually owned the company. In 1939, he founded the Metropolitan Service Life Insurance Company in New Orleans. He also founded the Gulf Western Mortgage Company and the Standard Savings & Loan Association, was a director of Homestead Bank and operated the Mack H. Hannah and Sons Funeral Home in Port Arthur. He was also the developer of three subdivisions in Port Arthur: Hannah Estates, Hannah Gardens and Sunset Gardens.

Along with his extensive business ventures, Mack served in educational institutions and business organizations, and was involved in politics. He was the founder and president of the Texas Federation of Burial Associations and a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Masons and the Elks. Mack was also regent of Texas Southern University and the University of Houston. He participated in the White House Conference on Youth and Children and served as the United States consul to the Republic of Liberia for 42 years.

Mack received an honorary Doctor of Law degree from Bishop College in 1968 and a Doctor of Humanities degree from Texas Southern University in 1974. Mack Hannah, Jr. died on April 2, 1994, in Houston.

Reba Othelene Hicks Hannah was born on March 4, 1907, in Waxahachie, Texas, to William and Zetta Hamilton Hicks. She attended Bishop College and graduated in 1927. She moved to Port Arthur and began her career as a teacher at Lincoln High School, where she taught Latin and homemaking. Mack H. Hannah, Jr. was a coach at Lincoln High School and her college sweetheart. They married in 1927. The couple had four children: Daisy D. Hannah, Mack H. Hannah III, Barbra L. Hannah-Keys and Wilma Gene Hannah. Reba joined her husband in Houston around 1970.

She was very involved in her local church and community. She was one of the founders of Barnes Memorial United Methodist Church and acting church treasurer from 1947 to 1970. She was a member of the United Methodist Women and served as Hospitality Committee and Sunday School Superintendent. She also began a bus ministry to take children from the west side of Port Arthur to Sunday school, church and back home. Reba Hannah lived until the age of 102, passing away on October 1, 2009, in Port Arthur.

Additional Owners

According to the Harris County Appraisal District, additional owners of the property include: Zetta Daisy D. Hannah (1999-2012), Federal National Mortgage Association (2012-2013) and Ksenia McAdie (2013-2021).

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND RESTORATION HISTORY*ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION*

The Wilbanks-Hannah House at 2506 Rosedale Street is a two-story, brick veneer house that sits on a pier and beam foundation. An exterior brick chimney is on the right side of the house. Based on StreetView images, the brick has been painted since at least 2007.

The house has a low-pitched, side-gabled roof with boxed eaves. The symmetrical front façade consists of three bays. All of the windows of the are one-over-one sash windows with brick sills.

The first (left) bay contains two symmetrically spaced windows on each floor. The window placement on the third (right) bay mirrors the first bay. The second (central) bay contains a Colonial Revival-style portico. There is a paneled wooden entry door with sidelights. Each sidelight contains four lights above a decorative wooden panel. The semicircular portico is supported by four columns under a plain entablature. There is a simple metal railing atop the portico. A single window is center on the second floor above the portico.

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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 [Planner Name], 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
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EXHIBIT A
CURRENT PHOTOS
THE WILBANKS-HANNAH HOUSE
2506 ROSEDALE STREET, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77004



EXHIBIT B SITE MAP

THE WILBANKS-HANNAH HOUSE
2506 ROSEDALE STREET, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77004

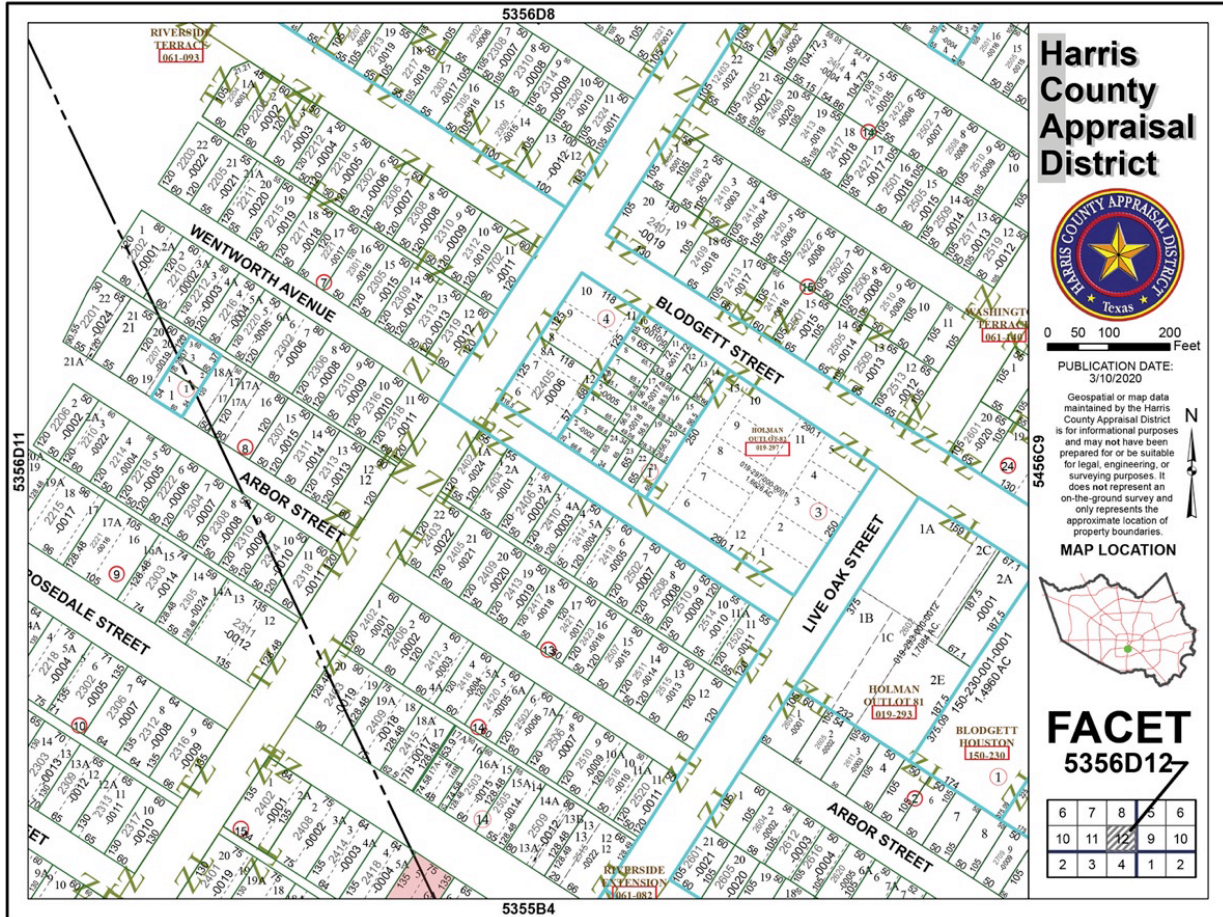


EXHIBIT C
SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE MAP
HOUSTON 1924-1951, VOL. 9, SHEET 968
THE WILBANKS-HANNAH HOUSE
2506 ROSEDALE STREET, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77004



EXHIBIT D
ADVERTISEMENT

HOUSTON CHRONICLE, OCTOBER 28, 1928
THE WILBANKS-HANNAH HOUSE
2506 ROSEDALE STREET, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77004

REAL ESTATE

88—Improved Property for Sale 88—Improved Property for Sale

Two Distinctive Homes
Open for Inspection Today
IN RIVERSIDE TERRACE
10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

2420 WICHITA

Another new home in the heart of Riverside Terrace. Two-story red brick, built on a spacious site 75 feet wide by 140 feet deep. Convenient arrangement, consisting of front hall, southeast living room with fireplace, dining room, breakfast room, kitchen with many built-in specialties; rear service hall. Upper hall, serving 3 large bedrooms, 2 of which connect; 2 tiled baths. Beautiful cream enamel woodwork and attractive wall paper throughout the house. Gas-steam heat. Double garage and servant quarters.

2506 ROSEDALE

One of those homes whose architectural designs are appealing because of the simplicity and the suggestion of roominess and comfort. Attractive red brick with green roof and shutters. Semi-colonial entrance, consisting of a circular porch with round supporting columns. House plan: Front hall, living room with fireplace, south dining room, breakfast room, kitchen with built-in features; hot water heater and ventilating fan; south terrace on the rear. Upstairs: 3 bedrooms with south or southeast exposures, or both; 2 tiled baths, one with shower. Here's a splendid home in an ideal location, and the price is moderate.

Guardian Trust Company

EXCLUSIVE AGENTS

ESPERSON BLDG. PRESTON 2704
FIELD OFFICE, CALUMET AND ALMEDA—HADLEY 5908

SOURCE: HOUSTON CHRONICLE DIGITAL ARCHIVES