

PROTECTED LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

LANDMARK NAME: Earl and Berthea Carpenter House

AGENDA ITEM: C

OWNERS: Peter and Fannie Morris

HPO FILE NO.: HP2022_0283

APPLICANTS: Same as Owner

DATE ACCEPTED: 11/21/2022

LOCATION: 5330 Mandell Street, Houston, Texas 77005 –
Cherokee Place

HAHC HEARING: 01/26/2023

SITE INFORMATION: Lot 9, Block 2, Cherokee Addition, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. Designation is requested for the one-story house. The building is 3,203 square feet on a 15,995 square foot lot.

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED: Protected Landmark Designation

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The house at 5330 Mandell is a single story classic contemporary ranch-style house designed by noted Houston architect Lucian T. Hood, Jr. It was built for contractor Earl A. Carpenter and wife Berthea in 1959. The house is significant for its architectural style as well as its time as a rectory for the sixth bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas.

The current owners of 5330 Mandell, Peter and Fannie Morris, purchased the house in 1993 and undertook minor renovations in 2002 and 2014. A remodel of the rear pool house is currently in progress. The couple is seeking protected landmark status for the house to preserve it as an example of the early residential work of Lucian T. Hood, Jr. Protected status would extend to the entire residence including the house, breezeway, garage/pool house, and brick privacy wall. The property meets Criteria 1, 3, 4, and 6 for Landmark designation and Criterion 1 for Protected Landmark designation. Protected landmark designation for 5330 Mandell would be the first in Cherokee Place. The designation report was researched and written by David Putz and Emily Ardoin with Preservation Houston.

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

CHEROKEE PLACE

Cherokee Place was platted in 1923 and was one of several neighborhoods, including Broadacres, Shadyside, and Shadowlawn, that were aimed at Houston's middle and upper middle classes after nearby Rice University opened its doors in 1912.

Oilman Henry Birdsall Masterson developed Cherokee Place on 14 acres between Bissonnet and Sunset and had it divided by two streets, Mandell and Cherokee, each lined with 16 large lots that were over one-third an acre. Five houses were completed during the initial stages of Cherokee's development, from 1922-1930, including Masterson's own house at 5359 Mandell (1924). The rest of the neighborhood was built up between 1934 and 1940. At various times, investor and philanthropist Faye Sarofim, noted

heart surgeon Dr. Michael Debakey, and Episcopal Bishop Maurice M. Benitez have called Cherokee Place home.

The original houses in Cherokee Place were designed in styles that were popular in Houston in the 1920s and 1930s, including Georgian, Tudor, Colonial Revival, and French Eclectic. Architect Joseph Finger designed one of the first houses in Houston with air conditioning at 5345 Mandell (1935). Well-known builders C.C. Rouse (5303 Cherokee, 1936; 5310 Cherokee, 1935), who built many of the houses in River Oaks, and William Farrington (5315 Cherokee, 1936; 5324 Mandell, 1940), who would later develop Tanglewood in the Memorial area, also designed and completed houses in the neighborhood. Prolific home builder Russell Brown (5309 Mandell, 1924; 5327 Mandell, 1935) was active in the neighborhood, and one of the earliest houses designed by builder De Witt Krahl can be found at 5319 Mandell (1934). More recently, the neighborhood showcases the work of noted Houston architect Lucian T. Hood, Jr. (5330 Mandell, 1959).

Cherokee Place has maintained much of its housing stock from the 1920s and 1930s, however, in the past few years, several original houses have been lost to redevelopment. There are currently no historical protections for the neighborhood.

LUCIAN T. HOOD, JR.

Lucian T. Hood, Jr. (1916-2001) was one of the leading architects in Houston during the 1970s and 1980s. In a career that spanned 40 years, Hood was known primarily for designing traditional houses for Houston's elite. Though most of his work was in the Tanglewood area of west Houston, examples of his designs stretch from downtown, to the Museum District, and west to the Memorial Villages.

Hood was born in Talpa, Texas in 1916 but grew up in Ft. Worth. He attended the University of Texas for two years, from 1935 to 1937, but returned to Ft. Worth where he worked as a draftsman for architect Robert P. Woltz, Jr.. In 1942, Hood joined the US Army Air Corp, and after the end of the war, married Edna Allen. Shortly thereafter, the couple had a son, Lucian T. Hood III.

In 1946 Hood moved with his family to Houston where he enrolled in the architecture program at the University of Houston and studied under well-known architect Howard Barnstone. While at UH, Hood continued his work as a draftsman, this time in the office of Houston architect Philip G. Willard. It was in Willard's office where Hood first began designing low-slung ranch style houses, often working closely with Willard on projects, such as the houses at 4127 Drummond (1952) in Braeswood Place and 4511 North Roseneath (1953) in Riverside Terrace.

Shortly after his graduation from UH in 1952 and his departure from his work with Willard in 1953, Hood entered into a short-lived partnership with Lars Bang and designed two commercial buildings in Houston, the Times Building (1955) at 2444 Times and the Century Building (1956) at 2120 Travis. In 1955, Hood opened his own architectural practice where he returned to designing houses such as 5330 Mandell (1959) in the contemporary ranch style he began while at Willard's office. It was around this time that Hood started supplementing his residential work with small commercial buildings and apartment complexes such as 2414 Mimosa (1958) in the River Oaks area. Houses at 2203 Briarstead

(1958) in Briarwood and 9302 Memorial (1957) are typical of his work as an independent residential architect during this period.

Hood began working with a small team of draftsmen in the 1960s where he developed a reputation for both his attention to detail and historically accurate designs, two skills that appealed to his wealthy clients. As a result, Hood designed houses in many of the city's most prestigious neighborhoods during this period, including Tanglewood, River Oaks, and the Memorial Villages. His designs at 713 Tanglewood (1976) and 302 Fall River Court (1976) showcase his skill at designing both contemporary and transitional houses during this mid-career period. Hood did not limit his work to custom residential designs. He also designed houses for Houston-area real estate developers and mass market builders such as 12311 Mossycup (1962) in Frostwood for Dreabon Copeland and the "Dover Place" model for builder John Robbins at 7823 Meadowbriar (1962) in Briar Meadow.

Hood closed his Houston office in 1992 and died in 2001. He leaves behind a large body of work, and many of his later drawings are now housed at the University of Houston.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND RESTORATION HISTORY

HISTORY OF 5330 MANDELL

Earl Anthony Carpenter (b. January 11, 1911; d. July 5, 1978)

Berthea Dorothy Erickson Carpenter (b. October 21, 1909; d. September 3, 1978)

Earl Carpenter and wife Berthea Dorothy Erickson Carpenter were the first owners of the house at 5330 Mandell. Earl Carpenter was born January 11, 1911 in Duluth, Minnesota to Canadian immigrants Patrick Carpenter and Mary Fortune Carpenter. He was the youngest of five children born to the couple. Berthea Dorothy Erickson Carpenter was born October 21, 1909 to Swedish immigrants Eric Erickson and Signe Haggblad Erickson in Duluth, Minnesota. She was the oldest of six children. Both Earl and Berthea grew up in working class households.

Carpenter started his career in building construction in his hometown of Duluth shortly after the couple married. The two moved to Houston around 1942 where Carpenter once again began working in the construction industry, this time with Fulton Construction. After a brief stay in an apartment at 1102 Banks, the couple moved to 5330 Mandell by 1948, ten years before they commissioned their new house.

Carpenter continued his work in the construction industry and would go on to found his own firm, Carpenter Construction, in 1968 that specialized in marine and industrial projects. Much of the firm's work centered around the Houston Ship Channel and the oil refineries of southeast Texas. Carpenter was also involved in ship channel-area real estate and served on the board of the now-defunct Port City State Bank on the Eastex Freeway.

Earl and Berthea Carpenter remained at 5330 Mandell until their deaths in 1978, Earl's in July of that year and Berthea's in September. Both Earl and Berthea are interred at Forest Park Westheimer in Houston.

Rev. Maurice Manuel Benitez (b. January 23, 1928; d. February 27, 2014)
Joanne Dossett Benitez (b. December 3, 1928; d. July 25, 2012)

Later occupants of the house were Reverend Maurice M. Benitez, sixth bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas, and his wife Joanne Benitez. Reverend Benitez had relocated to Houston from San Antonio when he was named rector of St. John the Divine Episcopal Church in River Oaks in 1974. He was elected bishop in 1980. The same year, the Benitez family moved into a smaller townhouse on Mandell, and the diocese sold a larger rectory in River Oaks. By 1984, reportedly in need of more space for entertaining, they had moved to 5330 Mandell. While in Houston, Joanne Benitez earned a Master of Education in Counseling at the University of Houston and subsequently worked as a counselor; she also taught weekly Bible classes at St. John the Divine. Benitez served as Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas for 15 years. The Benitezes relocated to Austin in 1994 and remained there until their deaths in 2012 and 2014. They are interred at Saint John the Divine Episcopal Church Cemetery in Houston.

The house's current owners, Peter and Fannie Morris, purchased the property from the Episcopal Diocese of Texas in 1993 when the Benitez family relocated to Austin. Though they initially considered demolishing it, the Morris family came to appreciate the house's contemporary style so much that they made few alterations and ultimately chose to pursue Protected Landmark designation.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

5330 Mandell Street is a one-story, L-shaped contemporary ranch house situated at the corner of Mandell Street and Sunset Boulevard, facing tree-lined Mandell Street. A driveway along the northern edge of the property leads to a one-story rear garage and pool house connected to the house with a covered breezeway. An ornamental metal gate with a Greek key pattern encloses the driveway; similar ornamental metal columns and railings are present in the breezeway and rear courtyard. The garage has a low-pitched side gabled roof and is clad in brick veneer matching the main house. The house, garage, and breezeway form a U-shaped rear courtyard that frames a kidney-shaped swimming pool.

The house is set on a concrete slab foundation and is clad primarily in pink brick veneer in running bond. Columns and other accents are clad in rough square-cut stone veneer in irregular courses; this material continues to the interior in some locations. The low-pitched cross-gabled roof is covered with asphalt shingles and has wide boxed eaves. An asymmetrical double chimney clad in stone veneer penetrates the roof near its center.

The primary (east) façade is asymmetrical. The north (right) side features a projecting front gable enclosed with fixed windows on two sides; three openings feature wood paneling instead of glazing. A wide column clad in stone veneer supports the gable ridge and extends into dining room interior. A low built-in planter clad in the same veneer surrounds the projecting gable; the stone material continues across the front steps of the recessed entry porch, which is located north of center. The double entry

doors are wood with full-height sidelights and centered brass knobs with large rosettes. The south (left) portion of the façade is symmetrical with four pairs of sliding aluminum windows flanking a smaller sliding window in the center. All windows have brick rowlock sills. An integrated brick planter wall approximately 4 feet high and capped with a header course spans this portion of the façade. Five cantilevered wood columns attached to the planter wall support the wide eave, and a stone veneer column at the north edge separates the planter wall from the entry porch. Five rectangular openings in the eave are aligned with the front windows; these openings were added c. 2002. The brick planter wall wraps around the south side of the house and becomes a privacy wall partially concealing the south elevation and a portion of the west (rear) elevation.

The south elevation faces Sunset Boulevard. Behind the brick privacy wall, this elevation is asymmetrical with a projecting low-pitched gable on the right (east) side. The gabled portion has a wood vent below the ridge and asymmetrically spaced aluminum sliding windows. The west portion includes two grouped aluminum sliding windows toward the east and one fixed-pane aluminum window toward the west; each window has a corresponding opening in the eave. Outside of the privacy wall is a low semicircular brick planter positioned east of center.

The west (rear) side is mostly screened from a rear alley by the brick privacy wall, which terminates with a wood gate at the edge of the garage. The rear wall of the garage has no openings.

RESTORATION HISTORY

5330 Mandell remains substantially unchanged from its original appearance. The only notable recent façade alteration is a series of openings cut into the front (east) and south eaves; this was completed c. 2002 in a renovation designed by Glassman Shoemake Maldonado Architects. The original cedar shake roof was replaced with asphalt shingles at an unknown time.

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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 |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|----------------------|---------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (1) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area possesses character, interest or value as a visible reminder of the development, heritage, and cultural and ethnic diversity of the city, state, or nation; | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | (2) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is the location of a significant local, state or national event; | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (3) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is identified with a person who, or group or event that, contributed significantly to the cultural or historical development of the city, state, or nation; | | |

EXHIBIT A CURRENT PHOTOS



East (front) elevation facing west from Mandell St.



Northeast corner facing southwest from driveway



East (front) elevation facing northwest from sidewalk



Front entry facing west



South (side) elevation facing north from Sunset Blvd.

EXHIBIT B Floor Plan

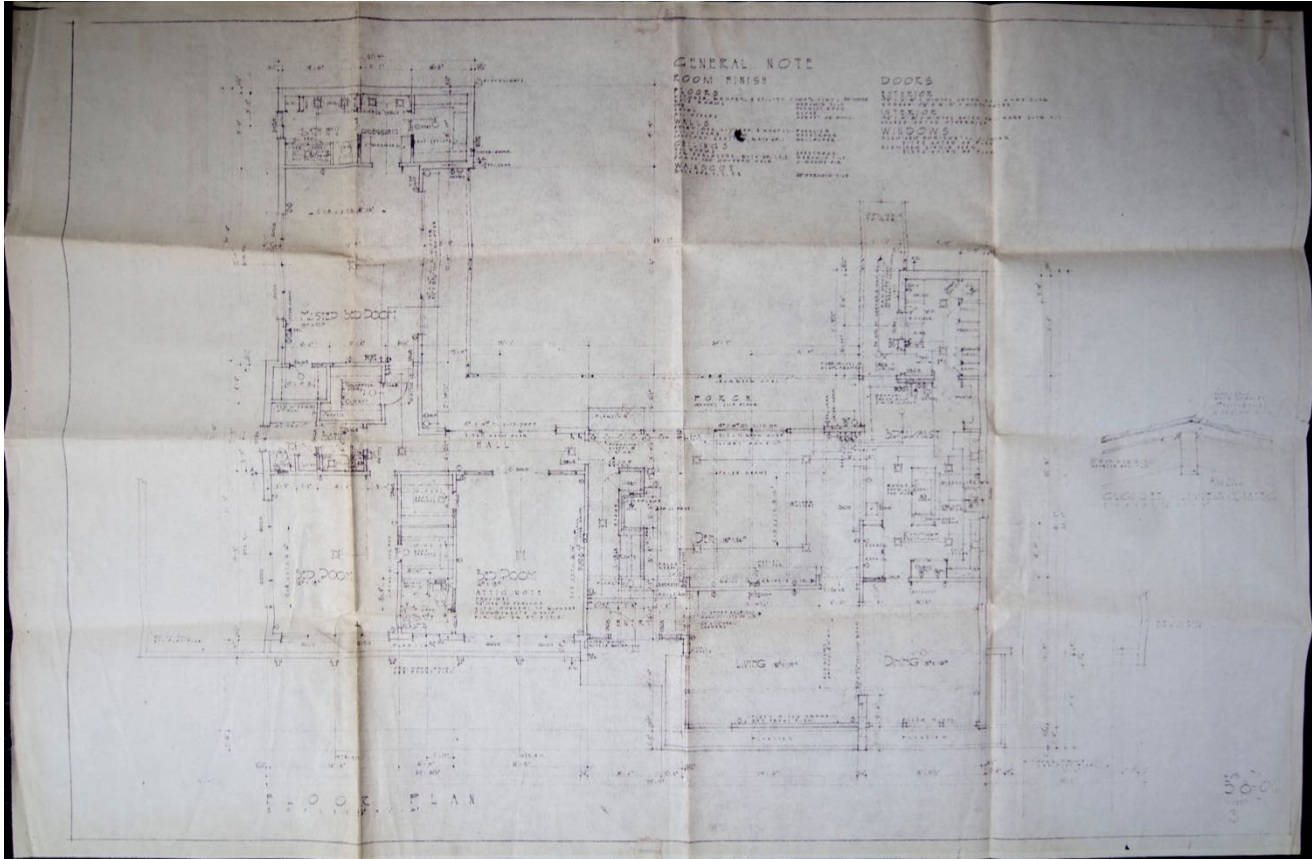


EXHIBIT C Property Location

