



916 Holland Street
Navasota, Texas 77868

Navasota, Texas

Navasota is an Indian word meaning “muddy water” - likely a reference to the Navasota River, known to run muddy. The red clay banks of the Brazos and the Navasota rivers made clay digging convenient and pottery making possible. The “muddy Brazos” and her little sister, the Navasota River were the domain of one of Texas’ few pottery making tribes, the Caddo, who were famous for their earthenware. Navas + Ota means “prickly bones” or skeletons. Not only had European adventurers left many of their bones here, but Native Americans had killed legions of buffalo along the banks of the Navasota for centuries.

Navasota was the second stop on the main Texas railroad which carried cotton, corn and lumber to and from markets, the first being Galveston. Thus, prolific families built incredible homes in these two communities. Galveston, obviously, has grown. Navasota remains a hidden gem of rare Texas architecture. Over the years, homes have been ignored or misused. Many were not restored enough to ruin them. Such is the case of the Holland House. In 1822, Francis Holland purchased land located on a bend of the Navasota River in southeastern Grimes County. The site of present day Navasota was named Hollandale in honor of its original settler. More settlers followed Holland to the

area. Francis Holland became a prominent leader with Stephen F. Austin. Navasota was incorporated 10 years before the Texas Agricultural and Mechanical (Texas A&M) college was founded, and five years before Bryan was incorporated.



Downtown Navasota – late 1800's, early 1900's

We have spoken with many senior locals and they believe the home to have been built by a prominent family, and they attest that they were kin to the Youens. Also on Ketchum street, a few doors down, is the famed Youens home. Jesse Youens home built 1871 was a "Tower Cottage", originating in Dartford, Kent, England, occupied by his family continuously. Though the courthouse burned and most deed records were lost sometime mid-century, many locals have told stories of their visits to the Holland house. The wood came from the same river bottoms, and was harvested likely no more than five miles from the home.

The home built approximately 1917 is the main home of an original three-home estate, including the servants' home which is south adjacent, and the guest house which has since burned down and is west of the home (now brick). The home is a rare custom estate craftsman, in that it is not a catalog plan of the arts and crafts movement (post-Victorian). It dons incredible hardwood shiplap, rare in its size and curing. The boards are so dense, heavy (old) and hard, they have created an incredible strength and insulation that is rare in wooden homes. Even common shiplap found in Texas homes from the 30s and 40s (and made famous by Fixer Upper) is not as wide or hard, because the wood used to build walls in these homes was not as old or not as expensive at the time. Because the home was so aerated, it was able to cure the

boards. The boards are currently exposed for our enjoyment, and can be covered or painted once and for all. We did not have the heart to do it.

We fully restored the home, it had been patched over with three layers of wall paper and wood paneling and carpet. We essentially gave it a make-over revealing its incredible bones and design. While many tower cottage style homes are more romantic, we fell in love with what was under the paneling - the high ceilings, simple design of square details, and the placement of the home prominently on the street. It is ideally located on very wide streets which will never be encumbered, as most of the properties in the area have historical home status adjacencies, and cannot be altered more than slightly. This home has been altered more than slightly, thus it is not available for historical status. We think the back porch addition was too much of a modification for the state. The home, nonetheless, remains rare in its simplicity and the quality of its components.

Sometime in the 50's, a family attempted to update the home, and put in bad plastic cabinetry which was small and dated. There was not much of it, and we love an open kitchen concept, and my husband being a carpenter, was slowly adding shelves and cupboards as we needed them. The garage addition was a huge undertaking, the carport, garage and driveway did not exist three years ago. We also added the neighboring fence and the shrubs. Hundreds- and I mean hundreds of people have stopped and thanked us for the restoration.

The front porch, we chose a horizontal cedar plank as the original porch had some brick columns, but we are unclear why those were spackled over. It was more sound for us to just cover them. Cedar deters insects and wears beautifully. We coated it with five coats of stain. We left the porch exposed for water to pass through to continue to aerate the home. We were in the home during Harvey, and the rain flooded the streets and yard, but never approached the porch edge. Again, the home is rare in height also in its pier and beam foundation, thus we were able to add a massive HVAC system under it, and not alter the original floors more than necessary. That was pure luck. We added a large board cedar deck at the back door entrance. We fully converted the upstairs bath with custom garden glass shower doors and intended to add a parlour bath downstairs near the garden window.

We are unclear when the stairwell glass was removed and framed over. The stained glass lamp in the stairwell is original. It is incredibly delicate and we have given great care to maintain it. The medicine cabinet and some of the fixtures are also original, as well as all of the windows, and the incredible mahogany sleeping porch. (Families would prop the windows open during hot nights and all lay parallel to enjoy the breeze.) The massive original fan was working when we bought the home; we rewired the entire

home and simply unattached those original wires. The fireplaces were exhaust for wood-burning stoves, there were originally several. The gas lines on the floor edge are all dead; the only gas line that remains is the brand new one we installed for the cooktop. Speaking of the attic, we put in insulation and a thin-ply floor with screws for easy removal, after it was rewired. We painted it with primer to lighten it up. We intentionally put HVAC around the edges to be able to enjoy the middle for storage or movie screen use, or become a kids bunk.

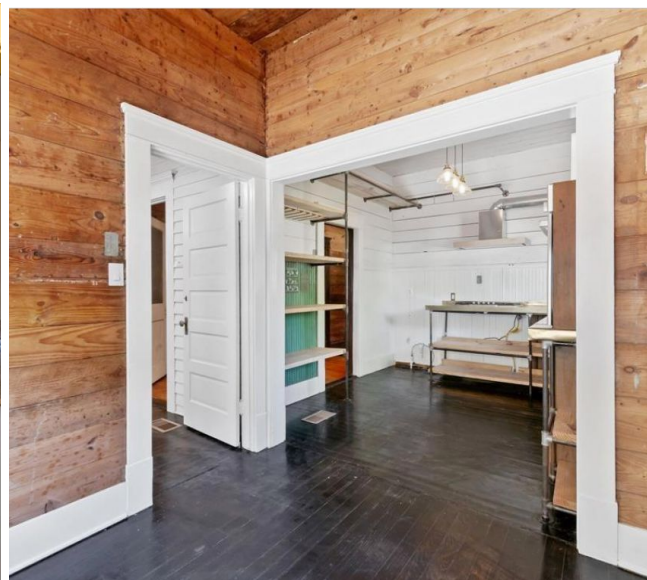
All of the blinds are custom and loved. While the home feels dark, it is up to the new buyer to decide their ideal layout, the colors they want on the walls, the changes they will make. It was our job to show its incredible design, bones and history, the new owner should be able to take it into the next century with honor.

It took three years to slowly and carefully make under the home. The trees were allowed to flourish on the east side to reduce east sun in the summer. We hand white-washed the master. We enjoyed the fireplace which was virtually not used. We added a brand new front sidewalk and made a huge walk-in closet, the hall tree there from the original Patout's women's boutique in Navasota, likely the exact decade.

The home has been blessed and it has been incredibly loved, heirloom roses all around the perimeter, just starting to flourish. Herb gardens in planters we added, jasmine on the fence. Burr oaks have been planted around the yard edge, they are beginning to sprout. We hope and pray a new family can love it for the rare gem that it is.



Before



After