

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

LANDMARK NAME: The Edward H. Artz House

OWNERS: Dorothy Boone

APPLICANTS: Dorothy Boone and Todd Crocken

LOCATION: 1610 Hickory Street, Houston, Texas, 77007 – Historic First Ward

AGENDA ITEM:

HPO FILE NO.:

DATE ACCEPTED:

HAHC HEARING:

SITE INFORMATION: South 50 Ft of Lots 5 & 6, Block 265, Baker North Side Buffalo Bayou, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The site includes a one-story 1,413 square foot residential, single family building on a 5,000 square foot lot.

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED: Landmark Designation

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The Edward H. Artz House is a c.1903 one-story frame, vernacular Victorian home in Houston’s historic First Ward neighborhood. The home was owned by the Artz family for approximately 60 years. The first owner was Edward Herbert Artz, a native Texan of German heritage. He lived in the home with his wife Freda Panzram Artz and their four children. Edward worked as a clerk, porter and butcher for most of his life. After Edward and Freda passed away (in 1910 and 1912 respectively), their son Edward Charles Artz took over ownership of the home with his wife Dorothy Ruffels. When Edward Charles died in 1962, Dorothy moved and the home became a rental property through a series of subsequent owners. The current owner, Dorothy Boone, purchased 1610 Hickory in 2019.

The First Ward is one of the four original wards created by the City of Houston in 1840. It included part of Houston’s early business district, and was strategically located at the intersection of Buffalo Bayou and White Oak Bayou near Allen’s Landing at the foot of Main Street. The term “First Ward” is still used today and generally refers to the area immediately west of I-45, east of Sawyer Street, south of I-10 and north of Washington Avenue.

In recent years, rapid development in the First Ward has drastically reduced the historic housing stock in the neighborhood. The neighborhood still has a number of Folk Victorian, Queen Anne and Craftsman style homes built between 1890-1930, representing some of the oldest structures in Houston. Concerted efforts by residents and advocacy groups to preserve historic housing resulted in the City of Houston designating the High First Ward Historic District on May 28, 2014. However, 1610 Hickory Street is not in the boundaries of the historic district.

The current owner is seeking a landmark designation for the home. The Edward H. Artz House meets criteria 1, 4 and 5 for landmark designation.

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

FIRST WARD

The First Ward is one of the four original wards created by the City of Houston in 1840. It included part of Houston's early business district, and was strategically located at the intersection of Buffalo Bayou and White Oak Bayou near Allen's Landing at the foot of Main Street. First Ward was defined as all areas within the city limits northwest of Congress Street and Main Street. In 1866, First Ward's boundaries changed; land to the north and east of White Oak Bayou and Little White Oak Bayou became part of Fifth Ward. Although the ward system is no longer in place, the name First Ward is still used to describe the general area immediately west of I-45, east of Sawyer Street, south of I-10 and north of Washington Avenue.

The neighborhood was historically working-class and consisted of many grocers and railroad workers. The area's proximity to the Houston and Texas Central railroad lines, Market Square and Buffalo Bayou resulted in an ample source of jobs. The success of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad greatly influenced the growth of the First Ward. Economic opportunity attracted many immigrants from Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America, who sought employment on the railroad or started their own businesses.

In recent years, development in the First Ward has drastically reduced the historic housing stock in the neighborhood. Rampant and rapid construction of townhomes predominates over the preservation of historic homes that were built between 1890-1930, including vernacular Victorian cottages and Craftsman bungalows. Nevertheless, the First Ward still has a number of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century architecture representing some of the oldest structures in Houston. Concerted efforts by residents and advocacy groups to preserve historic housing resulted in the City of Houston designating the High First Ward Historic District on May 28, 2014.

BAKER NORTH SIDE BUFFALO BAYOU (NSBB) SUBDIVISION

William Robinson Baker (b. May 21, 1820, d. April 30, 1890)

William Robinson Baker was born on May 21, 1820 in Baldwinsville, New York, to Asa and Hannah (née Robinson) Baker. William Baker moved to Texas in 1837 and worked as a bookkeeper for the Houston Town Company. He was elected Harris County clerk in 1841, a position he held for sixteen years. Baker married Hester Eleanor Runnels on December 15, 1845. They had one child, Lucy.

Baker was the mayor of Houston from 1880 to 1886, a Texas state legislator, president of the City Bank of Houston, and president of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad. He was also instrumental in developing early neighborhoods, such as the First Ward and the Sixth Ward.

Shortly after John K. and Augustus C. Allen founded the town of Houston, the area immediately west of the townsite, now known as First Ward and Old Sixth Ward, was surveyed and sold to private landholders including William Baker. According to local historian Neal Parker, Baker bought lots in the part of Houston that is now the Baker NSBB subdivision from Angus McNeil, Augustus C. Allen and James S. Holman in 1838. By 1858, William R. Baker owned or held several mortgages on most of the land in this area.

1610 HICKORY STREET HISTORY

Edward Herbert Artz (b. March 7, 1869, d. December 22, 1910)

Freda Emma Panzram Artz (b. May 10, 1874, d. August 27, 1912)

Edward Herbert Artz was born on March 7, 1869 in Texas to German parents Gustavus Otto Artz and Caroline Stelter Artz. Edward worked as a clerk, porter and butcher for most of his life. In the late 1890s, he was a porter for Theodore Keller, whose business included goods like cotton, wholesale groceries, wine, liquor, cigars, grain, hay, feed and mineral water.

Edward married Freda Emma Panzram on September 25, 1894 in Houston. Freda was born on May 10, 1874 in New Orleans, Louisiana to German parents M. E. Panzram and Julia Bader Panzram. She was a housewife. Edward and Freda had three sons and one daughter – Edward Jr., Alfred, Charles and Mabel.

Edward Sr. lived at 193 Commerce Street in the late 1880s, and at 1215 Edwards Street from the 1890s to the early 1900s. Edward and Freda were first listed at 1610 Hickory Street in the 1903-1904 Houston City Directory, which was also the first time the address appears in the directories. The footprint of the house first appeared in the 1907 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. The release vendors lien for 1610 Hickory dated August 18, 1906 stated that William Buvinghausen sold and conveyed to Ed Artz the “North Side of Buffalo Bayou being the South one-half of each of lots five (5) and six (6) in block two hundred and sixty-five (265) in W. R. Baker’s Addition on February 23, 1904.”

Edward Sr. died on December 22, 1910. He was buried at German Cemetery (later Washington Cemetery and currently part of Glenwood Cemetery). Freda died two years later on August 27, 1912. She was buried with her husband.

After Edward Sr. and Freda passed away, their son Edward Jr. (Edward Charles Artz) continued to live at 1610 Hickory. Edward was employed in a variety of occupations including embosser, salesman, painter for the Ford Auto Company, driver for Famous Cleaners and Dryers and supervisor at the Tool and Maintenance Supply Company. He married Dorothy Lee Ruffels on June 20, 1922, and the couple resided at 1610 Hickory until Edward's death in 1962. Shortly after Edward's death, Dorothy moved out of the home.

Subsequently, the house became primarily a rental property through a series of owners. Earl Staley, a local artist and educator, owned the home from the late 1970s to the early 1980s. According to current homeowner Dorothy Boone, during these years the property was part of David Folkman’s Little Egypt Enterprises and Related Studios. 1610 Hickory was a ceramics and painting studio and the house next door (since demolished) was Folkman’s printing studio, which later relocated to the Montrose area and closed in 1989. Folkman was a well-known master printer, and is often credited with providing educational opportunities for Houston’s artists to explore printmaking.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND RESTORATION HISTORY

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The house at 1610 Hickory Street is a one-story frame, vernacular Victorian house. The house has a half-hipped roof with a front-facing clipped gable. Centered in the gable is a 6-pane inset window with a slightly projecting simple wood surround and flanked by decorative shutters. The roof and gable are typical of Craftsman-style houses and suggest that the roof was reconstructed at some point in the house's history. The roof is covered in composition shingles and has boxed eaves. The house sits on a pier and beam foundation.

The asymmetrical front façade is two bays wide. The first (left) bay contains two 2-over-2 sash windows with a simple wood surround. Each window has a simple ledge molding above and below the window.

The second (right) bay contains an inset, partial-width porch with two low brick piers flanking the wooden front steps. One is engaged in the left-hand corner of the porch, and the other one is topped by a plain white iron post supporting the porch roof.

The paneled front door is set in a plain wood frame. To the right of the door, there are two 2-over-2 sash windows with simple wood surrounds. Each window has a simple ledge molding above and below the window.

At the end of the second (right) bay is one full-height brick pier supporting the southwest corner of the porch.

RESTORATION HISTORY

When the current owner Dorothy Boone purchased the property in 2019, she replaced the iron support on the front porch with a simple white support.

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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**

- (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;
- (2) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is the location of a significant local, state or national event;
- (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;
- (4) Whether the building or structure or the buildings or structures within the area exemplify a particular architectural style or building type important to the city;
- (5) Whether the building or structure or the buildings or structures within the area are the best remaining examples of an architectural style or building type in a neighborhood;
- (6) Whether the building, structure, object or site or the buildings, structures, objects or sites within the area are identified as the work of a person or group whose work has influenced the heritage of the city, state, or nation;
- (7) Whether specific evidence exists that unique archaeological resources are present;
- (8) Whether the building, structure, object or site has value as a significant element of community sentiment or public pride.

AND

- (9) If less than 50 years old, or proposed historic district containing a majority of buildings, structures, or objects that are less than 50 years old, whether the building, structure, object, site, or area is of extraordinary importance to the city, state or nation for reasons not based on age (Sec. 33-224(b)).

Sec. 33-229. Criteria for protected landmark designation

S NA **S - satisfies D - does not satisfy NA - not applicable**

- (1) Meets at least three of the criteria for designation in section 33-224 of this Code;
- (2) Was constructed more than 100 years before application for designation was received by the director;

CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

- (3) Is listed individually or as a contributing structure in an historic district on the National Register of Historic Places; or
- (4) Is recognized by the State of Texas as a Recorded State Historical Landmark.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

HAHC RECOMMENDATION

EXHIBIT A

PHOTO

THE EDWARD H. ARTZ HOUSE
1610 HICKORY STREET, HOUSTON, TEXAS, 77007



PHOTO BY JIM PARSONS

EXHIBIT C
SANBORN MAP (1907)
THE EDWARD H. ARTZ HOUSE
1610 HICKORY STREET, HOUSTON, TEXAS, 77007



Original located at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin