2011
Most Endangered Places

May is National Historic Preservation Month
Victorian Inn Apartments

1800 Hemphill Street

Most recently used as a motel, the 1922 Victorian Inn Apartment Building is a contributing structure to the Fairmount/Southside National Register & Local Historic District. The building is clad in red brick with cast stone trim, and features stepped parapets and large brackets. It stands out as one of the few remaining historic buildings on Hemphill Street.

This two-story craftsman-styled apartment building was built for the Management Company of Texas. Each apartment was equipped with a full kitchen, a living room, a dining room and either one or two bedrooms. All tenants had covered parking.

The Victorian Inn Apartments are the victim of long-term neglect. Closed by the City of Fort Worth for numerous structural and health violations, the building has been vacant for many years. It is adjacent to the high-styled homes that line Chase Court and stands out as one of the few, remaining, historic, commercial buildings on Hemphill Street. It desperately needs a new owner who will restore it for continued use.
ACH Child & Family Services’ Summit Campus

1424 Summit Avenue
In 1937 the ACH moved to the Samuel Burk Burnett mansion on Summit Avenue. In the 1950-60’s this outstanding, youth-serving agency replaced the mansion with modern-styled, single-storied group homes and an administration building. The original Burnett mansion carriage house was adapted into a gymnasium. In 1977 the two-storied Annie Richardson Bass Library was added to the campus. The Library’s entrance and administrative offices are at ground level, and an internal staircase connects to the library and crafts room at the bottom of the bluff.

ACH Child & Family Services is moving to the former site of the Masonic Home & School of Texas, 3600 Wichita Street, and no plans have been announced for the current campus. If the site is not going to be used by ACH, what will become of it? With its close proximity to the hospital district, the site could continue to serve children or other non-profit organizations. It could also be an incubator for non-profit organizations much like the Meadows Foundation has done for Dallas’ Wilson block on Swiss Avenue.

1598 Sunset Terrace:
In 1967 the Cobb-Burney House, a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, was deeded to ACH and restored for lodging and meeting space. Designed in the Chicago Prairie School style with a low-pitched roof, wide overhanging eaves and multiple casement windows, this home was built for mortgage president Lyman D. Cobb and his wife Emma. In 1919 the Cobbs sold the house to Judge Ivy Burney, a lawyer whose specialty was the cattle industry.
Throughout Fort Worth historic neighborhoods are under siege by encroaching development. Within these neighborhoods houses are being demolished one by one and often replaced with “McMansions,” large houses that are incompatible with surrounding houses and their streetscapes. Losing the original houses and the essential charm of Fort Worth’s older neighborhoods is akin to losing Fort Worth’s cultural artifacts.

Residents of undesignated historic neighborhoods lose their property rights when large, new houses tower over their house. Moreover, these inappropriately-sized houses drive up property taxes throughout the entire neighborhood and affect the character and street appeal of the established neighborhood.

The way to protect your home, your neighborhood and your property rights is through preservation zoning called designation. A qualifying single house can be designated historic and cultural; however, two or more contiguous houses can establish a historic district. A historic district allows those neighbors in the district to select the design guidelines for the district. The design guidelines are used to control new construction that is too close, too dense, too tall, or completely out of character.

Historic preservation zoning both protects your house from demolition and generates an economic incentive when improving your property. This is done through a ten year property valuation freeze on the city’s portion of your property tax bill when improvements to your property utilize the appropriate design guidelines.

This is the second time HFW has included undesignated neighborhoods on the endangered list. Although the following list of neighborhoods would benefit both visually and financially from historic preservation zoning, it is not a complete list. However, the list does illustrate the spectrum of undesignated neighborhoods in Fort Worth, Texas.

Chase Court** p.10
Arlington Heights
Berkeley
Crestwood
Monticello
Park Hill
Ridglea
Samuels Avenue
Tanglewood
TCU
Westcliff
Etc.
Farrington Field

1502 North University Drive

Built in 1938-39, Farrington Field was designed by Preston M. Geren in the Classical Moderne style. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD) jointly funded the $244,000 project. The facility was named in memory of E.S. Farrington, a long time superintendent of the FWISD. Millions of students and their parents cherish memories of games and athletic competitions at Farrington Field. This is the fourth time Farrington Field has been included on HFW’s Most Endangered List.

With the new development on 7th Street and the large parking lot adjacent and to the east of Farrington Field, this treasure in our city is under tremendous development pressure. Historic Fort Worth, Inc. encourages the FWISD to designate Farrington Field as a Historic & Cultural Landmark of the City of Fort Worth. This designation is the best protection against demolition, should the FWISD ever sell Farrington Field.

Should the FWISD ever relocate its athletic facilities, Farrington Field, with its proximity to the Will Rogers Coliseum, the John Justin Arena and the proposed new arena, would be an interesting structure to adapt into an arena in association with a school for the equestrian arts. If Farrington Field were listed in the National Register of Historic Places, a new use that respects the historic architecture may be eligible for the Federal Historic Tax Credit Program.

See: Oregon High School Equestrian Team  www.ohset.com
Fort Worth Power & Light Co/TXU Power Plant

100-300 Blocks of North Main Street
For the sixth time, the Fort Worth Power & Light Co./TXU Power Plant building is included on Historic Fort Worth’s Most Endangered Places list. Built during 1911-13 on the north bank of the Trinity River, the former TXU Power Plant is now owned by Tarrant County College District. This behemoth of a building originally had four commanding smokestacks. The last two were demolished in 2005, prior to the transfer of ownership to TCCD.

This iconic building should be professionally “mothballed” until a project is underway, or sold to an entity that will take care of it. Mothballing prevents additional damage to this important resource and would mean that the leaks in the roof would be repaired and the windows and doors would be boarded up to decrease the chance of vandalism. An excellent example of “mothballing” a building is at 900 East 2nd Street.

The Fort Worth Power & Light Co./TXU Power Plant building is a major contributor to the unique identity of Fort Worth, Texas. We encourage TCCD to apply for its designation as a Historic & Cultural Landmark of the City of Fort Worth, and to submit the nomination that has already been written for the building to the National Park Service because these two designations come with economic incentives that can assist with the restoration of this important building.

Other cities have adapted power plants into new uses, and the following websites are instructive for Tarrant County College District:

www.seaholm.info
http://education.homansquare.org/content/index.php?cat=2
http://www.bpgroup.net/wharf-rivertown.htm
Hazel Harvey Peace House

1103 East Terrell Avenue

In 2008 Hazel Harvey Peace, one of Fort Worth’s most beloved citizens, died at the age of 101. This is the second time her 1922 home, a contributing structure to the Terrell Heights Local Historic District, has been placed on HFW’s Most Endangered List. The house is owned by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth who would like to demolish it for a parking lot. At the April 12, 2010 meeting of the Cultural & Historic Landmarks Commission of the City of Fort Worth, the Diocese’s agent submitted bids to rehab the building that exceeded $186,000. Because the bids were so high, Historic Fort Worth, Inc. appealed the decision of the Landmarks Commission to let the Diocese demolish the house. HFW won the appeal based on new bids secured by HFW. The case was remanded back to Landmarks where demolition was granted, again. Once again, HFW appealed the case to determine if the Landmark Commissioners are appropriately applying Fort Worth’s preservation ordinance. That appeal is pending.

Ms. Peace, an educator, community activist, humanitarian and philanthropist, graduated from the Fort Worth Colored High School (now I.M. Terrell High School) at the age of 13. She obtained her B.A. degree in education at Howard University and began teaching at I.M. Terrell High School in 1924 at the age of 16. She also received a M.A. from Columbia University and did postgraduate studies at the University of Wisconsin, Vassar College, Hampton University and Atlanta University. Ms. Peace’s FWISD teaching career spanned 50 years. When she retired, Ms. Peace served as the director of student affairs at Bishop College in Dallas for the next decade. Se also taught at Paul Quinn College in Waco, Huston-Tillotson College in Austin, and Prairie View A&M in Prairie View.

Ms. Peace received many awards including United Way’s Herculean Award, FWISD’s Distinguish Alumni Award, TCC” President’s Cup Award and an honorary doctorate of humanities from Texas Wesleyan University. For the people of Terrell Heights Mrs. Peace’s home is a daily reminder of her dedication to education.
Texas & Pacific Warehouse

401 West Lancaster Avenue
This is the sixth time the Texas & Pacific Warehouse building has been placed on HFW’s Most Endangered Places list. The 1930-31 T&P Warehouse building reflects Fort Worth’s enviable railroad heritage and plays a dominant role in the revitalization of Lancaster Avenue.

Historic Fort Worth, Inc. is aware of a project planned for the T&P Warehouse building, but given the downturn in the economy and the building’s size, this building joins other large-scaled rehabilitation projects at risk. Fortunately, the T&P Warehouse building is already listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is designated a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark and is designated a Highly-Significant Endangered Landmark of the City of Fort Worth. These designations qualify the project for the maximum level of governmental incentives available to rehabilitate a historic building.

If this project fails, could a firm like Williams Jackson Ewing transform Fort Worth’s Texas & Pacific Warehouse Building? The following link is to some of their projects, including Grand Central Terminal in New York:

http://www.wjeinc.com/Portfolio/index.shtm
Oklahoma City developer John J. Harden had this hall built in 1930 to provide market space for local farmers, vendors and retail businesses. Designed by B. Gaylord Noftsger, also of Oklahoma City, it is an eclectic design that playfully incorporates traditional and modern elements. In composition, the market is a masonry block, nearly square plan, with towers at the three corners of its two principal facades. High arched windows are set in the walls. The parapet is trimmed in polychrome tile. The stepped entrance tower is remarkable, featuring polychrome terra cotta trim and tall vertical window panels with stained glass set in abstract patterns.

The interior space was originally one open story with a skylight and mezzanines along the east and south walls, but has been altered. In 2010 the wooden stalls that wrapped around the south and west sides of the building were consumed by a fire and their charred remains stand today.

The market was plagued with economic difficulties during the Depression and closed in 1941. It has since housed a number of businesses, but has been vacant and in need of attention for several years. In 1980 the building was designated a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, and in 1995 was designated Demolition Delay by the city of Fort Worth. This is the third time the Fort Worth Public Market Building has been placed on HFW’s Most Endangered Places list.

The board and staff of Historic Fort Worth would welcome the opportunity to assist the current or new owners with information on federal historic tax credits to accompany a new, sustainable use for this beloved Fort Worth building.
Established in 1969 and selected in 2001 as a *Local Partner of the National Trust for Historic Preservation*, Historic Fort Worth, Inc. is a non-profit, membership organization that is dedicated to preserving Fort Worth’s unique historic identity through stewardship, education and leadership. Administrative offices and the Preservation Resource Center library are located at the Ball-Eddleman-McFarland House, 1110 Penn Street. HFW owns, operates and restores the 1899 McFarland House and the 1904 Thistle Hill and makes both of these local, state, and national landmarks available to the public for educational tours, meetings and special events. Additionally, Historic Fort Worth owns, maintains and leases the locally-landmarked, mid-century modern 1953 Yates-Ottmann Building located at 1020 Summit Avenue.

Programs at Historic Fort Worth include tours of historic sites for adults (Tour Today) and children (History Detectives), Restoration & Property Management Program, Historic Property Research Program, Gifts-of-Property Program, Economic Incentives Training for Developers of Historic Properties, Preservation Awards & Lecture Program, Heritage Tourism Program, Emergency Leadership and Education Program and Façade Easement Program. Events include The Hidden Gardens Tour of Fort Worth, *Preservation is the Art of the City*®, Cattle Baron Holidays, and designer showhouses.

** Chase Court received a specific nomination to the 2011 Endangered List. It is unusual because it is a private street in Fairmount that has state recognition, but no local designation. The street is in poor condition and the signature entry gates are deteriorating. Those owning houses in Chase Court would benefit from the city’s economic incentive.
For more information contact Jerre Tracy, executive director, Historic Fort Worth, Inc. 1110 Penn Street
Fort Worth, Texas 76102 817.336.2344 x 101 or www.historicfortworth.org.