

**Dallas Landmark Commission
Landmark Nomination Form**

1. Name

historic: Adams-Gullett Duplex
and/or common: 5543/5545 Sears Street
date: 1931

2. Location

address: 5543/5545 Sears Street
location/neighborhood: Ross Avenue Annex No. 2

block:B/1981 **lot:** w. 62 ft. lot 16 **land survey:** ASI 37389 **tract size:**62 x 56 ft.

3. Current Zoning 221MFR

current zoning:

4. Classification

Category

district
 building(s)
 structure
 site
 object

Ownership

public
 private
 both
Public Acquisition
 in progress
 being considered

Status

occupied
 unoccupied
 work in progress
Accessibility
 yes:restricted
 yes:unrestricted
 no

Present Use

agricultural
 commercial
 educational
 entertainment
 government
 industrial
 military

museum
 park
 residence
 religious
 scientific
 transportation
 other, specify _____

5. Ownership

Current Owner: David G. Smith
Contact: 214-883-2951

Phone: 214-883-2951

Address: 5543 Sears St. **City:** Dallas **State:** TX **Zip:** 75206

6. Form Preparation

Date: June 19, 2007
Name & Title: David G. Smith
Organization:
Contact: Marcus Watson

Phone: 214-670-1497

7. Representation on Existing Surveys

Condition, check one:

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

unaltered

altered

Check one:

original site

moved(date _____)

Describe present and original (if known) physical appearance. Include style(s) of architecture, current condition and relationship to surrounding fabric (structures, objects, etc). Elaborate on pertinent materials used and style(s) of architectural detailing, embellishments and site details.

The Adams-Gullett Duplex, a two-story, rectangular duplex at 5543/5545 Sears Street is an excellent example of the Spanish Eclectic style as interpreted in a multi-family dwelling by local architect C. D. Hutsell. This style was most prevalent in the southwest between 1915-1940 and draws its historical reference from the Spanish Colonial period of the sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth century which corresponds to the period of Spain's rule over the southwestern region of the United States. Typical of this period are light colored exterior walls of brick or stucco, low-pitched tile roofs and prominent arches above entries.

Present appearance is of the structure as originally constructed. The duplex sits close to Sears Street on half of a corner lot with the primary façade facing south. The exterior walls are wheat colored rug brick topped with a shallow pitched multicolored Spanish clay tile roof. The primary three-bay façade's main entrance faces Sears street and has a tongue-and-groove wood panel door with small window surmounted by a tiled shed roof overdoor supported by triangular brace supports. The first story six-over-six windows are set into an expanse of brickwork flanking an arched multi-colored broken tile mosaic panel, outlined in square pillow tiles. The street side second story windows are framed by battened wooden shutter panels. The Sears Street façade wall bows into shallow stepped buttresses which create the arcaded two-story integral porch. The floor of the porch is scored concrete creating a faux stone finish. The deep east side balcony presents a turned wooden railing, and four massive turned posts support a large carved roof beam with tapered ends. Two small archways wall the sides of the balcony. Porch beams and shutters are chiseled and distressed to suggest antiquity. The exterior motifs are balanced to the scale of the building.

The upper and lower plans are nearly identical, each under 1000 square feet with a living room, dining room, single bedroom, small bathroom and galley kitchen, with chutes to a common exterior incinerator.

The interior walls are plaster, utilizing metal lath supports to form curves. The walls meet the ceiling with a large gentle curve and are built up with an organic drop texture, resembling leaf veins. Small curves soften the transition from wall to doorways, and three are large flattened oval arches in the dining room and over the tub in the bathroom. The living rooms have original wrought iron lamps and sconces, and cast plaster fireplaces

Continuation Sheet

Item # 12

(Page 2 of 2)

with a figurative motif. The hardwood flooring is red oak in an uncommonly narrow width of plank—one and one-half inches. The narrow galley kitchens have a long cabinet and sink under bright monochrome tile backsplashes opposite three arched recesses for kitchen appliances. The kitchen flooring is linoleum and each floor has a small “secret panel” doorway from the back of a kitchen cabinet into the narrow back stairwell. The kitchen cabinetry is prefabricated and painted bright pink. The bathroom fixtures are citrus yellow and the bathroom walls are of the color tile of the same stock used around the exterior mosaic. The original décor features strong primary colors and color mixes as well as the use of faux texturing of the doors and windows to simulate aged planking.

13. Historical Significance

Statement of historical and cultural significance. Include: cultural influences, special events and important personages, influences on neighborhood, on the city, etc.

The duplex at 5543/5545 Sears Street is a “Spanish Eclectic” dwelling, instantly recognizable as belonging to that group from its characteristics such as the wheat colored brick, low-pitched tile roof, and rough-hewn balustrade and porch supports. The house is in remarkably sound condition, testifying to the robustness of construction which the builder applied to his projects. It is a fine example of design scaling by one of Dallas most original architect/builders, C.D. Hutsell. The Adams-Gullett Duplex is significant as it represents an approach by Hutsell to adapt his characteristic bold style of home design to a more austere post- Depression Dallas. The duplex has long been a viable housing alternative and Hutsell’s decision to construct a duplex was a practical solution to depression era economics. In his own inimitable manner Hutsell created cost effective housing with the idiosyncratic amenities available in his single family dwellings.

C. D. Hutsell’s career as a self-taught architect encompasses a number of stylistic directions, but he is mostly defined by and remembered for his work with “Spanish Eclectic” design. He was greatly influenced by the “Spanish Revival” architectural movement in California in the early part of the century (and with the home of cowboy movie star Tom Mix in particular). Hutsell experimented with a vocabulary of stylized architectural elements from this lexicon in a series of homes, of which only 45 were built, mostly in the Lakewood neighborhood before 1939. These remarkable buildings embody a sense of the Old World and with a feeling of whimsy that have endeared him as a one-of-a-kind architect.

As a builder, C. D. Hutsell had “assembled, and managed to keep intact, a construction crew consisting of skilled masons, carpenters, plasterers, tile workers and painters, moving them from one house to the next during the sequence of construction. The fine craftsmanship in each home, as well as the overall consistency in detailing, can be attributed to this group of talented artisans.”¹ This is evidenced in 5543/5545 Sears as examples of each craft are represented in this small duplex.

The building permit application for 5543/5545 Sears, from 1931, states a construction cost of \$4,000. The upper and lower units were sold separately, and the 1932 city directory lists J. K. Adams, a “salesman,” and D. H. Gullett, a division manager of the Parker Pen company as first owners and occupants of the property. The house has had a number of occupants in its 75 years, including artists and entrepreneurs (and at least one politically infamous Dallasite who made Life magazine in 1963).

¹ Willis C. Winters, AIA, “Hutsell’s Lakewood,” *Legacies*, Fall 1996, Vol. 9, Number 2, 30.
Adams-Gullett Duplex

Continuation Sheet

Item # 13

(Page 2 of 3)

Clifford D. Hutsell

The tenth of twelfth children, Clifford Hutsell was born on July 16, 1893 in Grapevine, Texas. His father, William Asbury Hutsell, was born in McMinn Co., Tennessee. He and his wife, Emely Tennessee Barb Hutsell, migrated to Texas from Athens, Tennessee in the early 1890s. William Asbury Hutsell was a farmer and lay Methodist minister in Carrollton. In 1905 the Hutsell family moved to Oklahoma. In May of that year a deadly tornado came through Oklahoma destroying the Hutsell dwelling.

At age 12, Clifford helped his father rebuild the family home formulating the beginnings of what would be his life's work. The Hutsell family returned to Carrollton in 1911 where he completed high school. Following high school he trained as a carpenter. He married Susie Dudley in 1913, the daughter of Lon Dudley, a contractor building churches and residences in Carrollton. This union allowed him the opportunity to build his first one-room house for himself and his wife.

A hearing impairment precluded Hutsell's serving in the infantry of the armed forces during World War I. Instead he was sent to San Antonio to build army barracks thus increasing his contracting skills. His first foray in development was the construction of modest homes in the Prairie, Craftsman, and Tudor styles on South Boulevard/Park Row during the early twenties. While completing these homes, he would often move into one house while building another, then selling the house he lived in and migrating to the next.

Bolstered by the success of the Park Row venture Hutsell branched out into the East Dallas area. During this phase of his career, 1924 to 1927, Hutsell designed and built various Tudor homes modifying the Tudors "to almost mannerist limits" and, most importantly, designed and built his first Spanish Eclectic.

The entrepreneur Hutsell had been watching the development of Country Club Estates in Lakewood by Albert Dines and Lee Kraft. This venture consisting of 184 acres of rich hilly, farmland was purchased from Dr. E. W. Pearson with the proviso that it be developed in the "right manner." Its success coupled with the beginnings of Westlake Park and Monticello in the mid-twenties sparked Hutsell's Lakewood period. The first residence was completed in 1926 and within a five-year period Hutsell executed many of his most prominent homes in Lakewood employing variations of three or four styles always keeping in mind the idiosyncratic details that were his trademark. The Adams-Gullett Duplex was constructed during this phase of his career.

Continuation Sheet

Item # 13

(Page 3 of 3)

The second phase began in 1936 with the extension of Lakewood Boulevard east to Lawther Road. Hutsell's challenge in this area was producing the Spanish Eclectic on hilly topography. The solution was inventive and practical, a split-level plan. Completed during this phase were homes for the Bundy Family in Birmingham and Dr. Carl Fleet in Houston, both larger versions of his 7035 Lakewood Boulevard residence, a Dallas Landmark. Hutsell Dallas left briefly to work in Houston from 1938 to 1939.

The third phase of his career consisted of ranch-style homes in Austin stone with log siding and tile roofs built on Tokalon, a distinct break from the lavish homes of Lakewood Boulevard.

Hutsell maintained his practice up to his death October 22, 1952, when he succumbed to heart failure.

As an architect, Clifford C. Hutsell brought his unique design sensibilities to Dallas, Houston and other areas of the country working primarily in the historic revival styles creating a regional architecture that is prized by the owners and communities that are fortunate to claim his works. Clifford D. Hutsell was a many-faceted individual. His contributions to the Dallas architectural resources as a self-taught architect have left a tangible legacy to Dallas.²

² Clifford D. Hutsell Residence Designation Report, 2006.
Adams-Gullett Duplex
Page 7 of 13

14. Bibliography

Blumenson, John G. *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms*. 2nd ed. New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 1981.

Gellner, Arrol. *Red Tile Style, America's Spanish Revival Architecture*, New York: Penguin Putnam, Inc. 2002.

Clifford D. Hutsell Residence Designation Report, 2006.

Jarmusch, Ann. "Mr. Hutsell's Neighborhood," *Dallas Times Herald*, June 6, 1988.

McAlester, Lee and Virginia. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991.

Winters, Willis C, AIA. "Hutsell's Lakewood," *Legacies*, Fall 1997, Vol. 9, Number 2, 30.

15. Attachments

- District or Site Map*
- X Site Plan*
- X Photos (historic & current)*

- Additional descriptive material*
- Footnotes*
- Other: _____*



5543/5545 Sears Street-Southeast Façade



5543/5545 Sears Street-South Facade



Detail of Bathroom Tile



East Façade of 5543/5545 Sears Street



Site Plan

16. Designation Criteria

x **History, heritage and culture:**

Represents the historical development, ethnic heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, state, or country.

 Historic event: *Location of or association with the site of a significant historic event.*

 Significant persons: *Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city, state, or country.*

x **Architecture:** *Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, landscape design, method of construction, exceptional craftsmanship, architectural innovation, or contains details which represent folk or ethnic art.*

x **Architect or master builder:** *Represents the work of an architect, designer or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, state or country.*

x **Historic context:** *Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites, or areas which are eligible for preservation based on historic, cultural, or architectural characteristics.*

x **Unique visual feature:** *Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the city that is a source of pride or cultural significance.*

 Archeological: *Archeological or paleontological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories of historic or prehistoric interest.*

x **National and state recognition:** *Eligible of or designated as a National Historic Landmark, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, State Archeological Landmark, American Civil Engineering Landmark, or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.*

x **Historic education:** *Represents as era of architectural, social, or economic history that allows an understanding of how the place or area was used by past generations.*

17. Recommendation

The Designation Committee requests the Landmark Commission to deem this nominated landmark meritorious of designation as outlined in Chapter 51 and Chapter 51A, Dallas Development Code.

Further, the Designation Committee endorses the Preservation Criteria, policy recommendations and landmark boundary as presented by the Department of Planning and Development.

Date: June 13, 2007

*Victoria Clow, Chair
Designation Committee*

*Marcus Watson
Historic Preservation Planner*