

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE February 19, 2020

TO City of Dallas Landmark Commissioners

SUBJECT **Landmark Commission Authorized Hearing**

Landmark Commission Chair, Emily Williams, and Commissioner Hinojosa requested that the Landmark Commission authorize a public hearing to consider initiation of the historic designation process for 1221 Singleton Blvd, the Clyde Barrow Family Home and Filling Station. Attached is the statement of intent for your review.

This case was held under advisement from the February 3, 2020, Landmark Commission meeting. This is a hearing to consider the request to authorize the hearing and not the designation of property at this time.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Liz Casso'.

Liz Casso, Senior Planner
Office of Historic Preservation



CITY OF DALLAS

CERTIFIED MAIL #7013 3020 0001 1420 8789

January 27, 2020

WILLIEJAXON VIB LLC
1212 W COMMERCE ST
DALLAS, TEXAS 75208-1616

RE: 1221 SINGLETON BLVD (CLYDE BARROW FAMILY HOME & FILLING STATION) STATEMENT OF INTENT

Dear Property Owner:

The Clyde Barrow Family Home and Filling Station site is to be considered for possible initiation as a City of Dallas Landmark at the City of Dallas Landmark Commission's meeting on Monday, February 3, 2020. The meeting will be held at Dallas City Hall, 1500 Marilla St., in the City Council Chambers beginning at 1:00 p.m.

The purpose of an historic designation as a City of Dallas Landmark is to protect, enhance and perpetuate places and areas which represent distinctive and important elements of the city, state or country's historical, cultural, economic, archaeological, paleontological, ethnic, political and architectural history. Designation brings awareness of our historic sites and increases public knowledge and appreciation of our historic past. Designation also helps us to protect, restore and preserve our historic sites so that future generations may experience and enjoy them.

Commissioner Hinojosa and I believe that the Barrow residence and filling station at 1221 Singleton Boulevard may be eligible for designation as a City of Dallas Landmark for local and national significance under the National Register of Historic Properties Criterion A (property associated with an historical trend) and Criterion B (association with significant person(s) in our past) of the national criteria for evaluation. We believe the site meets the following local City of Dallas criteria qualifying it for local Landmark designation: History, Heritage and Culture (represents the historical development, ethnic heritage or cultural characteristics of the city state, or country); Significant Persons (identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city, state, or country); and Historic Education (represents an era of architectural, social, or economic history that allows an understanding of how the place or area was used by past generations).

The structure was the family home of Clyde Chestnut Barrow (b. 1909 in Telico, TX; d. 1934 in Bienville Parish, LA) and members of the Barrow Gang. In 1922, Henry and Cumie Barrow moved to Cement City west of Downtown Dallas with their children. They relocated their small house to this site (then called Eagle Ford Road) and attached a filling station to the front of the property. According to Clyde Barrow's sister, Marie, the station was constructed while Clyde was serving his first prison term, which would date it between April 1930 and February 1932. The family operated the station and continued to live in the attached house. The exact date of the structure is not known at this time.

Clyde visited this residence often after he and Bonnie Parker, whom he met in 1930, became outlaws.

The association with Clyde Barrow and the Barrow Gang is of local and national significance. The first few years of the 1930s saw a rise in the number of Midwestern outlaws committing robbery and murder in the American heartland. Their notoriety was bolstered by an American public who had lost confidence in government institutions and the U.S. banking system during the Great Depression. Overexposure by the media of gangster activities offered a means of escape from harsh economic reality for many whom regarded them as “Robin Hood” type folk figures. By 1935, J. Edgar Hoover’s Special Forces largely eradicated the Midwestern outlaws. The story of Bonnie and Clyde fit within this larger story and, as the childhood home of several members of the Barrow Gang, qualify the property for initiation under Criterion A (associations with an historical trend) and Criterion B (association with significant person(s) in our past), as well as the previously stated local criteria for designation.

Glamorization of the pair has led to dozens of books and a major motion picture starring Warren Beaty and Faye Dunaway. Remaining sites associated with them in Dallas and elsewhere are still regularly visited and photographed today. Of the remaining structures associated with Bonnie and Clyde in Dallas, none retain historic designations or protection. Aside from their grave markers, Staff is aware of only one historical plaque in Texas associated with their crime spree (a plaque to fallen officer Wheeler in Southlake, Texas).

The property appears to retain the basic form shown in a photograph of Henry Barrow in front of the station in the 1920-30s, but alterations have been made to the front façade and roofline. It is possible that the building can be returned to its original appearance, but more research is required. Designation of the Barrow Residence and Filling Station is an opportunity to protect a site that is associated with the early history of Clyde Barrow and to add context to the Bonnie and Clyde story through further research of the Barrow family and property.

We look forward to the opportunity to discuss the potential historic designation of this important site with you at the February 3rd City of Dallas Landmark Commission meeting. Please contact Office of Preservation staff at (214) 671-5052 if you have any questions or need more information prior to the meeting.

Sincerely,



Emily Williams
Chair, Dallas Landmark Commission



Rosemary Hinojosa
Dallas Landmark Commissioner (District 6)