

AFFIDAVIT OF LYN DUNSAVAGE YOUNG

THE STATE OF TEXAS §
§
COUNTY OF DALLAS §

Before me, the undersigned notary personally appeared Lyn Dunsavage Young, who being duly sworn did depose as follows:

1. My name is Lyn Dunsavage Young. I am over the age of twenty-one (21), of sound mind and body, and competent to make this affidavit. The statements set forth in this affidavit are true and correct based upon my personal knowledge.

2. I lived on Bryan Parkway, near the Aldredge House, from 1971 until 1981.

3. In the 1970s and 1980s, I ~~worked in~~^{represented} the banking industry ^{nationally.}

4. I have been a leader in the Swiss Avenue Historic District (“SAHD”), and was involved with its development and zoning. I have personal knowledge of the events described below and of Swiss Avenue in the 1970s through the present.

5. The setting of Swiss Avenue, before it became a historic district, in the very early 1970s was a two-sided extreme. On one side, there were those individuals holding onto properties in hopes that they would one day be able to tear them down to develop their property into a high rise because Swiss Avenue and much of Old East Dallas had been blanket zoned “HR” or multi-family after the war. On the other side, most of the houses on Swiss Avenue had been subdivided into tenements and which many were in ruin others were rapidly headed that way because owners generally could not get funding from local banks to either buy or repair them.

6. In the very early 1970s, banks were reluctant to finance in “the neighborhood” that included Swiss Avenue. “The neighborhood” for which banks would not provide loans was not just Swiss Avenue and Bryan Parkway; it included most of Old East Dallas.

7. In the 1970s, the homes around the Aldredge House were deteriorating. For example, at one house across the street and two houses down from the Aldredge House, the city condemned the property and it was left to rot because no one would buy it. Shortly before the city was slated to come tear it down, a young man purchased it and began its restoration, which took years because of the extensive damage done.

8. The situation was far worse within four or five blocks of the Aldredge House. Apartments behind Swiss Avenue were often the location of shootings. The majority of houses in Munger Place had been converted into tenements, with old cars or broken down cars parked in their front yards, and missing porches and columns on several houses because they had been stripped for either firewood or pillars to hold up the foundations.

9. Virginia McAlester and I would take reporters, potential buyers, real estate agents, bankers, and, later, FNMA officials – all kinds of people -- to see Munger Place, hopeful they could see what we in the Historic Preservation League envisioned it could be one day. Again and again, when we would enter the neighborhood, they would lock their car doors and look blankly at us when we described one house after another and attempted to get them to see how it could positively evolve with appropriate care. We humorously called it the “click click” neighborhood, because friends and residents could sit on their front porches and hear the double click sound of people locking their doors as soon as they turned into Munger Place.

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10. When the “doctors’ wives” began negotiating to purchase the Aldredge House over 40 years ago, about the time when we were fighting to obtain the first back zoning case in the history of Dallas (from high rise to single family residential), they were venturing into a neighborhood that many people viewed as “too far gone.”

11. At that time, Baylor Hospital was also contemplating moving out of its dilapidated neighborhood. This institution that was the bulwark of Old East Dallas was seriously considering packing up and moving its entire campus out of the neighborhood.

12. The Historic Preservation League was given “a few years” by Baylor to see if we could turn things around in Old East Dallas through the creation of the Swiss Avenue Historic District. We had the support of them City Manager George Schrader and the City Plan staff, headed by Weiming Lu and Jim Schroeder.

13. The purpose of the first Swiss Avenue Home Tour, sponsored by the Historic Preservation League, was not only to introduce to the community the few homes that had been restored and maintained, but also it had a primary purpose of showing that law abiding people could live and flourish in this “inner city” neighborhood. We understood and embraced that the community was drawn to the neighborhood because of the mixture of homes similar to a small town, with small houses just a block away from mansions, with young people mixed with older residents, with a diversity of housing and architectural styles and, yes, with an incredible investment opportunity for others to come in and “roll up your sleeves ” to join a group whom we dubbed “urban pioneers.” The Aldredge House now frequently participates in the Swiss Avenue Home Tour.

14. We created flyers, books, brochures and even a bumper sticker: “I’m an urban pioneer. I live in Old East Dallas.” We created names for all the neighborhoods by

researching their histories and defining their architectural style and, like a developer, plastered those names on everything, so people could identify with the neighborhoods' character.

15. The history described above illuminates what the neighborhood looked like when "the doctors' wives" came. They wanted a special use for this one property in the middle of the Swiss Avenue Historic District, and the neighborhood wanted their support, particularly because we knew how fragile the scale that could tip with the exit of the greatest institution out of Old East Dallas, Baylor Hospital.

16. It was not an easy decision for the City of Dallas to grant the Aldredge House a mixed-use ordinance while there was a push to make the neighborhood zoned for single family, but they recognized what the Aldredge House could offer to the neighborhood.

17. The "doctors' wives" were not the people you would normally think of as "urban pioneers," but they loved the property and promised that they would restore it and keep it up.

18. It was a quid pro quo relationship. We needed their support and they needed ours, and they stayed true to their word, not only by what they said they would do with the Aldredge House but, also, in support of what we subsequently did in Munger Place and throughout all of Old East Dallas, which ultimately turned into the largest zoning project in the history of the city of Dallas with approximately 45,000 properties.

19. Over the years, the people in the neighborhood who had fought so hard for single family zoning began to understand the importance of the basic character of Old East Dallas, which was its diversity. We have mixed use through all its neighborhoods.

20. There was only one "mixed use" in the Swiss Avenue Historic District, if you exclude the post office, but the Aldredge House and its new owners had panache. They came to understand that people can live side by side with mixed use which is the essence of Old East Dallas. It is NOT a suburban neighborhood, in which all the houses are the same size, the same materials, the same uses. Within a block of the Aldredge House, you still have apartments. Within ten, you still have the Lakewood Shopping Center. Within twenty, a hospital, which we are proud to say is still there.

21. The fact that a select few "new" residents of Swiss Avenue do not appreciate the diversity component as much as those of us who fought so hard to protect it is not a reason to force the Alliance to sell the Adredge House.

22. The decision was made in the 1970's that the grandeur of the Aldredge House was not meant to be a single family house anymore, and I personally think it's abhorrent to think it could be reversed to that status, particular when we, the City, basically shook hands with them -- something I value enormously -- and they have spent 40 years living up to their end of the bargain, both with us and to Rena Munger Aldredge. She believed they would treasure its history and take care of the property. Her judgment was sound.


23. The Alliance has opened the Aldredge House up not only to their members, but to nonprofits and to the public as well, and in doing so provide an experience many of our citizens may never have if it is closed to the public. The Aldredge House is the ONLY residential landmark of its kind in Dallas.

24. The Aldredge House is an inspiration and the essence of the American dream, which I personally think the diversity of Old East Dallas is as well.

25. It was no mistake my husband and I put a house on Bryan Parkway on the first Swiss Avenue Home Tour and another on the second, ad infinitum. We wanted people to understand that Old East Dallas' diversity is intrinsic to its character.

26. The Aldredge House is still, after all these years, bringing in people to Old East Dallas who might not otherwise EVER have come into the neighborhood. Everyone is richer for understanding the value of this diversity.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

Evelyn Dunsavage Young 

Name:

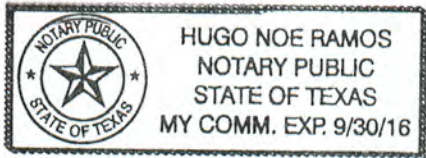
FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

Evelyn Dunsavage Young
Name: _____
Title: Founder of Historic Preservation League
and former resident of East Dallas, and former
Dallas City Plan Commissioner

THE STATE OF Texas §
COUNTY OF Tarrant §

BEFORE ME, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared Lyn Dunsavage Young known to me to be the person who executed the foregoing instrument and she acknowledged to me that she executed the same for the purposes and considerations therein expressed.

October GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE this 8th day of 2015.



[Signature]
NOTARY PUBLIC IN AND FOR
THE STATE OF Texas
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES: Sept 30, 2016