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Advocacy

2015 Most Endangered Historic Places

With so many historic buildings in Dallas having uncertain futures, Preservation Dallas has brought back the Most Endangered Historic Places List to call attention to several important historic sites which are too important to lose. Historic resources are irreplaceable community assets that tell the story of the city's development.

The list recognizes the many significant properties that make up our neighborhoods and reflect the lives of community leaders, important architects and builders, and the families who made Dallas their home. The 2015 list highlights the value of the city's architectural styles and building types of rapidly disappearing residential, commercial, and educational architecture. They are places that are important to the diverse history of our city and are tied to the neighborhoods and communities where they are located.

The 2015 list of the Most Endangered Historic Places in Dallas includes:

ALDREDGE HOUSE – 5500 Swiss Avenue (East Dallas)



Located in the city's first residential historic district, the Aldredge House is one of architect Hal Thomson's most important works built in the French Eclectic style with elegant Renaissance detailing. Completed in 1917 for rancher William Lewis and wife Willie Newbury, it quickly passed to local banker George Aldredge and his wife Rena Munger in 1921. It stayed in the family until Rena generously donated it to the Dallas County Medical Society Alliance in 1974 to use as its headquarters. The nonprofit has taken up the mantle of preserving and maintaining Aldredge House, which even includes some of the original furnishings. The house is one of the few properties in Dallas where the historic integrity has not been compromised and in many ways serves as an opportunity for visitors to step back in time. While the house is not threatened with demolition, it is threatened by the removal of its city permission to hold events at the house which allows the public access to one of the most wonderful historic interiors in Dallas and helps the nonprofit generate the funds necessary to maintain this historic gem. If the permission is revoked, the house will most likely have to be sold, closing it to the public and subjecting the highly intact historic interiors to modernization.

BIANCHI HOUSE – 4503 Reiger Avenue (East Dallas)



This distinctive brick Mission Revival Style house was designed by noted Dallas architects Lang & Witchell in 1912 for Italian sculptor Didaco Bianchi and his wife Ida. The stunning interior plasterwork and pilasters, unique to this style, were designed and constructed by Bianchi himself. Significant piers support the massive and intricately carved mantelpiece, while its distinctive "Alamo"-style parapet adorns the front façade. The home received awards and accolades, including "House of the Future" at the 1936

Centennial Exposition, due to its advanced ventilation, plumbing, and electrical systems. It also has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The house remained in the Bianchi family until 1979. Although there are permits issued for work on the house, the work has seemingly stopped and the house continues to deteriorate with the roof now showing visible signs of deterioration.

BRINK'S COFFEE SHOP – 4505 Gaston Avenue (East Dallas)



Designed by Paul & Paul Architects in 1964, Brink's is perhaps the city's finest remaining example of Modern "Googie" style architecture. The building features two rear-sloping zig-zag slab roofs with walls formed of alternating sections of storefront and rubble stone masonry with sloping ends. This building was the first restaurant constructed for Norman Brinker and his first wife Maureen Connolly, both former US Olympians. The Brinkers went on to develop successful restaurants including Steak and Ale, Bennigan's, and Chili's. Brinker and his wife Nancy were heavily involved in philanthropic efforts and are credited with establishing the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation in honor of Nancy's sister. The building is now vacant and boarded up. Unless this unique property is renovated and brought back to life, it will continue to deteriorate, or may eventually succumb to redevelopment pressure, leading to the erasing of a part of Dallas' culinary and architectural history.

CABANA HOTEL – 899 Stemmons Freeway (City Center)



Dallas reflects a bit of Las Vegas with the 1962 Cabana Hotel developed by Jay Sarno, who also developed Vegas properties Caesar's Palace (1966) and Circus Circus (1968). This 10-story, 300-room hotel with its striking decorative concrete screen once welcomed famed guests, including The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, The Who, Jimi Hendrix, Richard Nixon, and Norman Mailer. Raquel Welch was a cocktail waitress here before being discovered. Much of the original features are intact, including extensive tile-work, terrazzo, concrete screen-walls, curved signature walls, and unique concrete umbrellas on the terrace. After the hotel ceased operation it was converted to the Decker Jail, which is now closed. Dallas County is in the process of selling the building to a developer interested in demolishing this once hip, mid-century building tied to the cultural history of Dallas, for a new data center.

DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOLS – (City Wide)



Historic schools are very important to the sense of place in neighborhoods across Dallas and are landmarks within each respective community. Historic schools in Dallas date from the early 1900s to the 1950s and were often designed by some of the most important architects in Dallas at the time, including Mark Lemmon and C.D. Hill. They were built to last and constructed of substantial materials with a high level of craftsmanship and unique design. Many wonderful historic schools in the DISD inventory have been well preserved such as Woodrow Wilson in East Dallas, Booker T. Washington downtown, and Sunset in Oak Cliff. However, others are languishing or up for replacement in the upcoming bond election. One of those historic schools being considered for replacement is Rosemont Elementary at 719 N. Montclair Avenue in Oak Cliff. Completed in 1922, it has long been an

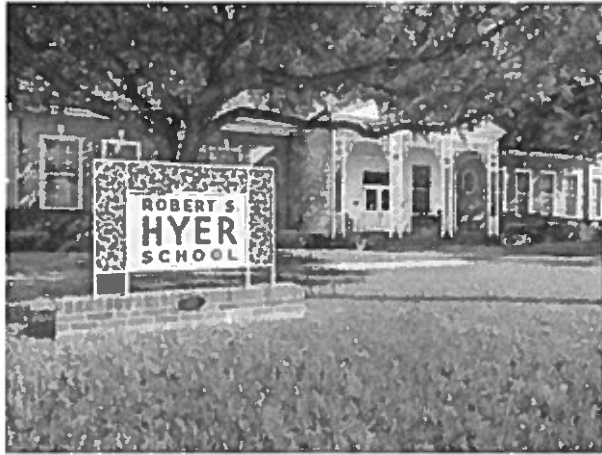
anchor for the neighborhood and the building is still rated as “Good” in DISD’s conditions inventory. Historic schools are too important to be lost due to closure or replacement and every opportunity should be afforded by DISD for their continued use and preservation.

FOREST THEATER – 1914-1920 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (South Dallas)



The Forest Theater, with its distinctive neon emblazoned tower floating over the marquee, and the attached shopping center, opened in 1949 to serve the middle-class white patrons in the area. The 1,500 seat theater was part of the Interstate Theatre chain and designed by H. F. Pettigrew of Pettigrew and Worley, who also designed the Lakewood and Circle Theaters. The Forest featured an unusual gently sweeping semi-circular ramp to the mezzanine and murals of tropical birds and flowers. In 1956, the theater changed its patron focus to that of the middle-class African American families moving into the area and became the “Colored” Forest Theater. Due to sagging ticket sales, the theater closed in 1965. Since then it has been used for special events and performances. The theater and block of original commercial spaces are now up for sale and could be demolished to make way for new development, erasing a part of the African American history of the city and taking away one of Dallas’ few remaining historic theaters. Like the Lakewood Theater, the Forest is worthy of designation as a City of Dallas Landmark and should be preserved.

HIGHLAND PARK INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOLS – Bradfield Elementary School – 4300 Southern Avenue (Highland Park), University Park Elementary School – 3505 Amherst Avenue (University Park), and Hyer Elementary School – 3920 Caruth Boulevard (Highland Park)



Three historic and architecturally significant schools in the Highland Park Independent School District are up for proposed replacement as part of this fall's bond election. The two cities of Highland Park and University Park do not have an established mechanism for protecting historic architecture. As a result, these three schools have been deemed inadequate to meet the needs of the growing school-aged population of the Park Cities. Designed by Lang & Witchell, the 1925 Bradfield Elementary School and the 1928 University Park Elementary School feature identical plans, designed in the Spanish Revival style with added Rococo detailing. The tan, scratch-faced brick facades have monumental main entrances, decorated in typical Rococo Revival detailing, with elaborate curves, scrolls, shells, and shields adorned with fleurs-de-lis. Hyer Elementary School, which opened in 1949, is an excellent example of Mark Lemmon's historicist architecture and is styled in the Georgian Revival aesthetic. The main entrance features a classically-inspired pediment, supported by original cast iron columns with lace detailing. The façades feature decorative hexagonal windows and nine-over-nine double-hung windows with prominent central keystones in the decorative brick headers. Preservation Dallas representatives have met with the HPISD administration to stress the importance of these historic schools. We encourage the administration to thoroughly explore the incorporation of these structures into new designs that will both meet the capacity needs of the district, while also honoring the 100-year legacy of the HPISD. There are many options which would both value the original buildings of these three historically-significant schools, designed by prominent Dallas architects, while at the same time providing HPISD with the needed additional capacity. Options include the targeted demolition of ancillary additions and the rehabilitation of the original core structures, while adding on multi-level spaces to accommodate new, 21st-century educational programs. A blend of old and new buildings would celebrate the importance of physical examples of civic history when educating young, elementary-aged children.

HISTORIC CEMETERIES IN DALLAS – (City Wide)



The final resting place of many of Dallas' founders and early residents are seeing the ravages of time and a lack of resources for proper maintenance and upkeep. Some of Dallas' historic cemeteries date back to the 1800s, including McAdams in Oak Cliff, McCree in Lake Highlands, and Pioneer in downtown. Thanks to a grant from the B.B. Owen Trust, Preservation Dallas is currently working to restore and preserve McCree Cemetery. These cemeteries include examples of early stone grave makers with exquisite design and symbolism. Over the years, many have suffered vandalism, deterioration, storm damage, and improper upkeep of the markers. Historic cemeteries often have limited resources for care and maintenance with many markers lost in overgrowth or toppled to the ground. Historic cemeteries must be treated with the utmost respect and the resources found to properly maintain the resting places of the early citizens who helped make Dallas the city it is today.

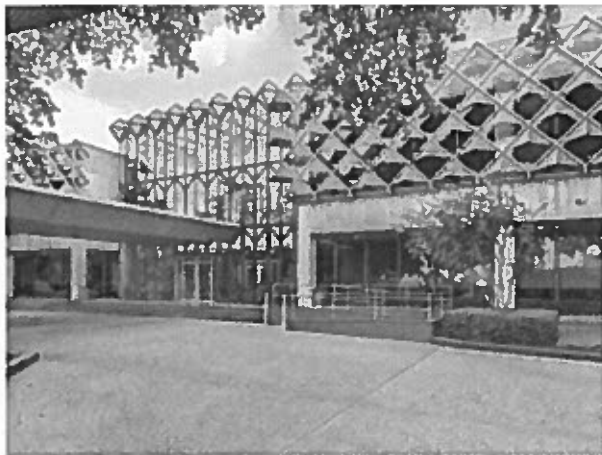
LOW-RISE HISTORIC DOWNTOWN BUILDINGS – (Downtown)



Smaller historic buildings downtown, 2 to 4 stories in height, are rapidly vanishing due to development pressure, with four between Elm and Main Streets demolished for new development just last year. These smaller historic buildings often date to the

early 1900s when Dallas was developing as a commercial center. They are tied to the retail and commercial history of the city and those that remain are often not protected by City of Dallas Landmark status. One such example is Milliner's Supply Company Building located at 911 Elm Street. This circa 1880 historic building is one of the oldest surviving in the central business district. Milliner's Supply, a wholesale/retail business for hats, moved into the building in 1925. This property is currently for sale and is not protected. It is also in a location downtown that is ripe for redevelopment with the potential to be replaced by a much larger and taller building allowed by zoning. These low-rise historic buildings give a human scale to downtown, present opportunities for business ventures not possible in larger, more expensive buildings, and are tangible reminders of Dallas' early commercial history. Their reuse, instead of replacement, should be encouraged and prioritized.

SALVATION ARMY BUILDING – 6500 Harry Hines Boulevard (Medical Center)



Originally home to the Great National Life Insurance Company this office building, completed in 1963, is an outstanding example of the 1960's garden style office complexes which sprang up around Dallas. Designed by Grayson Gill, it has a unique projecting screen of diamond shaped panels giving the building a distinctive look in contrast to the very flat, clean lines of earlier 1950s office building architecture. The Salvation Army now uses it for offices, although the building is currently for sale. The expansion and growth of medical facilities near the building raises the threat that this mid-century gem could be razed for new development.

Sites on previous Most Endangered Historic Places lists include:

2004

211 North Ervay
Old Dallas High School/ Crozier Tech
Thomas Building
Statler Hilton Hotel
Mercantile Bank Tower
Ross Avenue Baptist Church
6015 Bryan Parkway

Casa Linda Theater
James H. and Molly Ellis House
Tenth Street Historic District
Historic Public Schools

2005

Old Dallas High School/ Crozier Tech
Milliner's Supply Company Building
Awalt Buildings
Mercantile Bank Tower
6015 Bryan Parkway
Lakewood Heights
Historic Apartment Buildings
James H. and Molly Ellis House
Victorian Houses of the Cedars
Residential Historic Districts of Southern Dallas
Historic African American Churches
Kip's Big Boy Restaurant

2006

City of Dallas Historic Property Tax Incentive
Historic Resources of Old Oak Lawn
St. Joseph's Catholic Church and Academy
Turtle Creek Bridges
Wynnewood Shopping Village
Nurses Building at Old Parkland Hospital
Deep Ellum
Coombes Creek
Thomas & Mary Shiels House
Old Dallas High School/ Crozier Tech
6015 Bryan Parkway

2007

Buildings surrounding the proposed site of Main
Street Garden
Deep Ellum
Midway Hollow Neighborhood
Fort Worth Avenue's motor-court motels —
Alamo Plaza Courts Motel, The Mission Motel,
The Ranch Motel
David Crockett School

Tax Incentive Program
400 W. Page Avenue
McKinney Avenue Baptist Church Building
Caruth Homestead
Criswell College Library
Haymarket Cemetery

2008

Statler Hilton Hotel
Knights of Pythias
Old Dallas High School/ Crozier Tech
Tenth Street Historic District
Mid-Century Modern Buildings
Luna Tortilla Factory
Streetcar Retail Shops
Deep Ellum
No City Demolition Review for Historic
Resources
Adamson High School
Vanishing Community around Adamson High
School

2009

No List

2010

Historic Buildings Owned by DISD
Old Dallas High School/ Crozier Tech
South Dallas Historic Districts
Statler Hilton Hotel
Dallas Public Libraries
Deep Ellum
508 Park Avenue & 504 Young Street
Hickory Street Annex
Elm Street Buildings in Downtown
City of Dallas Historic Preservation Program

Preservation Dallas Corporate Partners



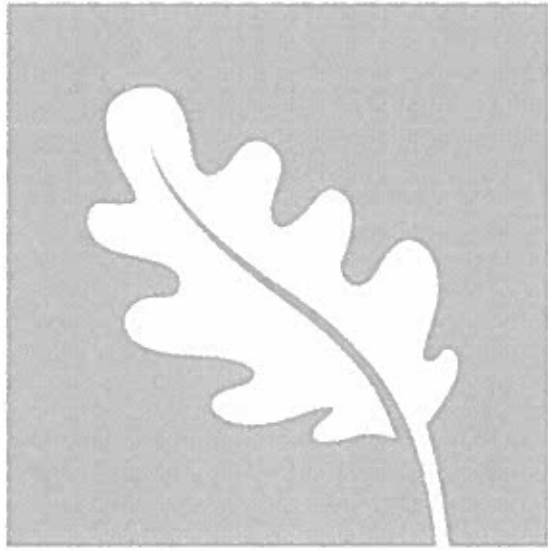
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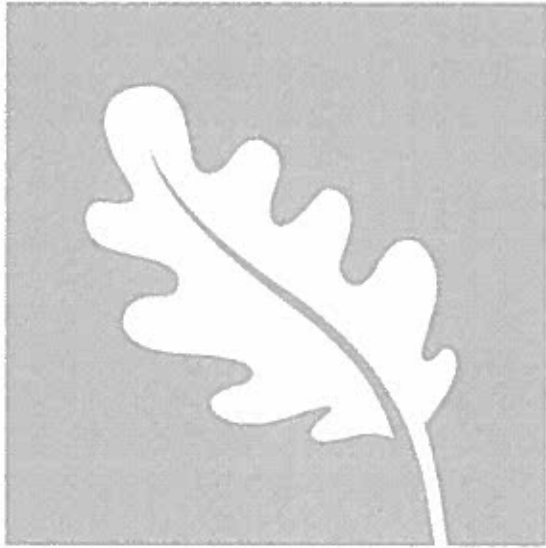
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