

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

LANDMARK NAME: The Frank A. Watts House

AGENDA ITEM: [x]

OWNERS: Bruce and Gerry Fehn

HPO FILE NO.: HP2024_0089

APPLICANTS: Bruce and Gerry Fehn

DATE ACCEPTED: Apr-08-2024

LOCATION: 2529 Stanmore Drive, Houston, Texas, 77019 – River Oaks

HAHC HEARING: May-09-2024

SITE INFORMATION: Lot 4 & Tract 5A, Block 41, River Oaks Sec 1, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The site includes a two-story wood frame, brick veneer single-family residence and two-story garage and living quarters.

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED: Landmark Designation

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The residence at 2529 Stanmore Drive, designed by well-known architect Cameron Fairchild, was constructed in 1934 for Frank A. and Betty Watts. The brick veneer residence was designed in the eclectic style incorporating Colonial Revival details centered around a horseshoe shaped court made-up of five other single-family dwellings. Cameron Fairchild designed all five of the dwellings that the River Oaks Corporation built in 1934 around the first of the River Oaks Courts on Stanmore Drive. Cameron Fairchild's architectural career was noted for his eclectic single-family residences, primarily in River Oaks. The Frank A. Watts House located at 2529 Stanmore Drive, Houston, Texas, 77019 meets criteria 1, 4, and 6 for Landmark Designation.

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

Cameron Fairchild

Cameron Douglas Fairchild was born on August 20, 1902, in Waco, Texas. He attended Southwestern University and the University of Texas, where he was a member of Alpha Rho Chi, the architecture fraternity. He graduated from the University of Texas in 1924 and began his architectural practice in Houston in 1925. He quickly became known for his residential architecture. He designed homes in Houston's top neighborhoods, including River Oaks, Shadowlawn, Old Braeswood, Riverside Terrace, and Boulevard Oaks. In River Oaks, he was commissioned by the River Oaks Corporation to design the River Oaks Court homes, the first homes built on the lots on Stanmore Drive.

Fairchild designed the Lamberth-Abercrombie House at 2221 River Oaks Boulevard (1928, COH Protected Landmark), one of the first houses built on River Oaks Boulevard. Fairchild designed all five of the houses that the River Oaks Corporation built around the first of the River Oaks Courts on Stanmore Drive in 1934. He also designed 212 Brentwood (1934, COH Landmark); 2911 Ella Lee Lane for his brother William Fairchild (1936, COH Landmark), 3244 Ella Lee Lane; 3320 Chevy Chase Drive; and the 17-story River Oaks Apartments (1965).

Fairchild also worked across the state. In Galveston, he designed homes on Broadway, in Denver Court, and Cedar Lawn. He was also the architect of Galveston's Windsor Court Apartments (1705 35th Street (1937)) and UTMB's dormitory Nolan Hall (1955). Fairchild also served as the campus architect at Southwestern University before and after his deployment during World War II. At Southwestern, he designed the chapel with university president, Dr. J.N.R. Score. He also designed the Taylor City Library, constructed in 1960.

Fairchild during his long career designed or remodeled numerous public buildings in Houston, including the Jesse H. Jones Library Building at the Texas Medical Center (1954); the 14-story downtown First Savings Building (1964; demolished 2002); and South Texas College of Law. He was responsible for numerous alterations and additions to Trinity Episcopal Church on Main Street, where he was a parishioner, vestry member, and senior warden.

In River Oaks, Fairchild designed the following homes:

959 Kirby Drive; 1001 Kirby Drive; 959 Kirby Dr.; 1001 Kirby Dr.; 1812 Kirby Dr.; 2107 Bellmeade Road; 2112 Brentwood Dr.; 2120 Troon Road; 2212 Looscan Lane; 2221 River Oaks Blvd.; 2232 Troon Road; 2521 Stanmore Dr.; 2523 Stanmore Dr.; 2525 Stanmore Dr.; 2529 Stanmore Dr.; 3038 San Felipe Road; 3044 San Felipe Road; 3195 Del Monte Dr.; 3207 Inwood Dr.; 3208 Avalon Place; 3209 Ella Lee Lane; 3220 Avalon Place; 3262 Ella Lee Lane; 3320 Del Monte Dr.; 3335 Chevy Chase Dr.; 3403 Locke Lane; 3431 Inwood Dr.; 3435 Piping Rock Lane; 3506 Del Monte Dr.; 3645 Del Monte Dr.; 3677 Willowick Road; 3722 Knollwood Dr.; 3244 Ella Lee Lane; 2221 River Oaks Blvd.

During World War II, Fairchild served as a Major in the Airforce where he helped develop frangible bullets for use by the Army. He maintained his practice for over 50 years before retiring to Pine Bluff Arkansas, where he passed away in June 1985. He was buried in Taylor, Texas.

River Oaks Courts

The concept of the River Oaks Courts was conceived by the River Oaks Corporation to avoid placing homes on the heavily traveled San Felipe Road. By turning homes inward around a horseshoe and thus in a sense creating a common front yard, the River Oaks Corporation was able to place more homes for sale. There are six such courts on Stanmore Drive, and two on adjacent Sharp Place. The House at 2529 Stanmore was the first of the five homes built under this concept. These original homes were priced to sell between \$12,000 - \$15,000.

Cameron Fairchild was the architect engaged to design the first five homes (#2517, #2521, #2523, #2525, and #2529 Stanmore Drive) to create a unity of design that would showcase the idea to homebuyers. The 1980 *Houston Architectural Survey* describes the similar "enclave" plans that were used successfully in contemporary garden suburbs as in Greenbelt, Maryland.

The survey also reports that:

“H.A. Kipp, engineer for the River Oaks Corporation, laid out the site plan. E.B. Crawford was the contractor for the houses. The Court was originally designed for seven houses, but the River Oaks Corporation partitioned off middle lots to provide larger sites on either side.”

The homes received a lot of notice and articles appeared in *Good Housekeeping* and the *Houston Post*. In February 1937, *Good Housekeeping* extolled the virtue of planned suburbs, and described the River Oaks Court homes:

“Today, fortunately, in many of our cities and towns “new developments,” as new community planning is often called, are to be found. Consider these carefully where large tracts of land are bought and planned for residential sections by a responsible real estate company, your risks are lessened. Good developments have the proper restrictions in architecture, intercommunity planning, parkways, recreation centers for children, fine schools, churches, and even convenient shopping centers.

This month, we illustrate a group of moderately priced houses, built on a central court, in the beautiful River Oaks section of Houston, Texas, under the direction of Hugh Potter...Here are moderately priced houses, ideally planned, which are excellent examples of the importance of neighborhood. They are a part of a beautiful general plan, where the finest residences with the larger property are at the core or heart of some 1000 acres, graduating to smaller plots which come under the same fine restrictions, and good architectural and building standards. Notice the care with which the garage drives are kept to the back, adjoining a boulevard: notice the space between the houses and the privacy which each house enjoys, although sharing the charm of the trees, green grass and roses of the central court.

We thus see that the restrictions, the careful planning by the real-estate developers to keep each small section a part of a beautiful whole, maintain property values and pleasant surroundings at a high standard through a period of years. This, then, established the fact - “Neighborhood is of First Importance.”

On December 20, 1936, the *Houston Post* ran the following about the Courts:

“River Oaks Corporation today presents something new in subdivision development and home building, an idea which relates land plating to home architecture. The above five homes have been completed, facing a private court on Stanmore Drive. Each home is different in design, but there is an architectural harmony within the group. The court idea presents a new defense from traffic hazards, especially where children are concerned. The property in the center of the court has been set aside and developed into a private park, utilizable as part front yard by all residents of the court. The homes were designed by Cameron D. Fairchild, Houston architect. Each has an electrically controlled heating system”.

The first owner of 2529 Stanmore was Frank A. Watts and his wife Betty A. Watts. He and his family lived in the house until 1964, when it was purchased by Jeffrey Baker and his family lived there until 1989. W.R. Brinkoeter purchased the home in 1989; Christopher J. Lyons bought the home in 1996; and the current owners, Gerry and Bruce Fehn, purchased the house in 1999.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND RESTORATION HISTORY

The dwelling at 2529 Stanmore Drive is located on an interior lot, facing north along Stanmore Drive and east onto the “court”, which has been infilled with grass since the building’s original construction. The two-story Colonial Revival style house is clad in handmade Cedar Bayou brick veneer. The building is topped by a hip and valley sloped roof with a slight eave overhang, covered connection to the garage and quarters above. The front façade of the main dwelling is asymmetrical resulting from the hip and valley sloped roof that projects outward creating a T-shaped floor plan. The front door faces east towards the court and opens onto a brick clad entry covered by a triangular corner roof supported by two wood columns. A central chimney is positioned on the north elevation providing access to the primary interior living spaces. Wood framed six-over-six windows make up the lite pattern of the building.

A later addition to the southeast side of the house is clad in cedar shingles. Although this is clearly a non-historic addition, it relates to the original in form, height, and detailing. The design work on the addition remodel was undertaken by Stern and Bucek Architects taking into consideration Cameron Fairchild’s design and details. The southeast addition features wood sash windows 6-over-6 on the front, side and rear façade on both levels including the quarters. The house includes functional shutters on the north and east sides and on the east, west and north sides of the guest quarters above the garage.

A covered slight eave overhang provides a connection to the garage and its living quarters along the north elevation fronting Stanmore Drive. The one-story covered overhang leads from the main house into a one-and-a-half story brick veneered garage with living space on the second floor. The accessory building is topped by a steep pitch hipped roof with projecting dormer windows on the west, south, and east elevations. Two inset dormer-like windows appear along the roofline on the north elevation fronting Stanmore Drive. Two garage door openings are positioned on the west side elevation with a driveway bordering the property line of the neighboring residence. The garage doors are sheltered by a small projecting roof overhang.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Fox, Stephen, ed., *Houston Architectural Guide*, 2nd edition, American Institute of Architects/Houston Chapter, 1999.

Good Housekeeping, “The Studio Decorated this House for Exhibition Houston, Texas”. February 1937.

Harris County Appraisal District, Real Property Account Information and Ownership Information for 2529 Stanmore Dr., Houston, Texas, 77019. Accessed April 2024.

Harris County Tax Records for 2529 Stanmore Dr., Houston, Texas, 77019. Accessed April 2024.

Houston Architectural Survey, City of Houston, 1980.

Houston Post, “*Plan for the Development of River Oaks Court*,” June 21, 1936.

Houston City Directories. 1937 to present.

McAlester, Virginia Savage. *A Field Guide to American Houses: Revised and Expanded*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013.

Peter Papademetriou, ed., *Houston An Architectural Guide* (Houston Chapter, American Institute of Architects, 1972).

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Houston, Harris County, Texas. Sanborn Map Company, 1934-Aug 1950 Vol. 11, Sheet 1104. Accessed April 2024.
https://www.loc.gov/resource/g4034hm.g4034hm_g08580195011/?sp=4&st=image&r=0.354,0.633,0.723,0.432,0

The information and sources provided by the applicant for this application have been reviewed, verified, edited and supplemented with additional research and sources by Cara Quigley, Planning and Development Department, City of Houston.

APPROVAL CRITERIA FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION

Sec. 33-224. Criteria for designation

(a) The HAHC, in making recommendations with respect to designation, and the city council, in making a designation, shall consider one or more of the following criteria, as appropriate for the type of designation:

S	NA	S - satisfies	D - does not satisfy	NA - not applicable
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(1) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area possesses character, interest or value as a visible reminder of the development, heritage, and cultural and ethnic diversity of the city, state, or nation;		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(2) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is the location of a significant local, state or national event;		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(3) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is identified with a person who, or group or event that, contributed significantly to the cultural or historical development of the city, state, or nation;		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(4) Whether the building or structure or the buildings or structures within the area exemplify a particular architectural style or building type important to the city;		

EXHIBIT A

PHOTOS

THE FRANK A. WATTS HOUSE 2529 STANMORE DRIVE

Photo 1: Oblique view of the north (front) elevation of the Frank A. Watts House. Camera facing southwest. Photo by applicant, 2024.



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Photo 2: Oblique view of the north (front) elevation of the Frank A. Watts House. Camera facing southeast. Photo by applicant, 2024.



Photo 3: Oblique view of the one-and-a-half story garage and living quarters on the west side of the dwelling. Camera facing southeast. Photo by applicant, 2024.



Photo 4: Oblique view of the south (rear) elevation of the Frank A. Watts House, which includes the location of the later wood shingle clad addition. Camera facing northeast. Photo by applicant, 2024.



Photo 5: Oblique view of the southeast (rear/side) elevation of detached garage and guest living quarters of the Frank A. Watts House. Camera facing northwest. Photo by applicant, 2024.



Photo 6: West (side) elevation of the garage and guest living quarters, showing the car garage door access from the side of the lot. Camera facing northeast. Photo by applicant, 2024.

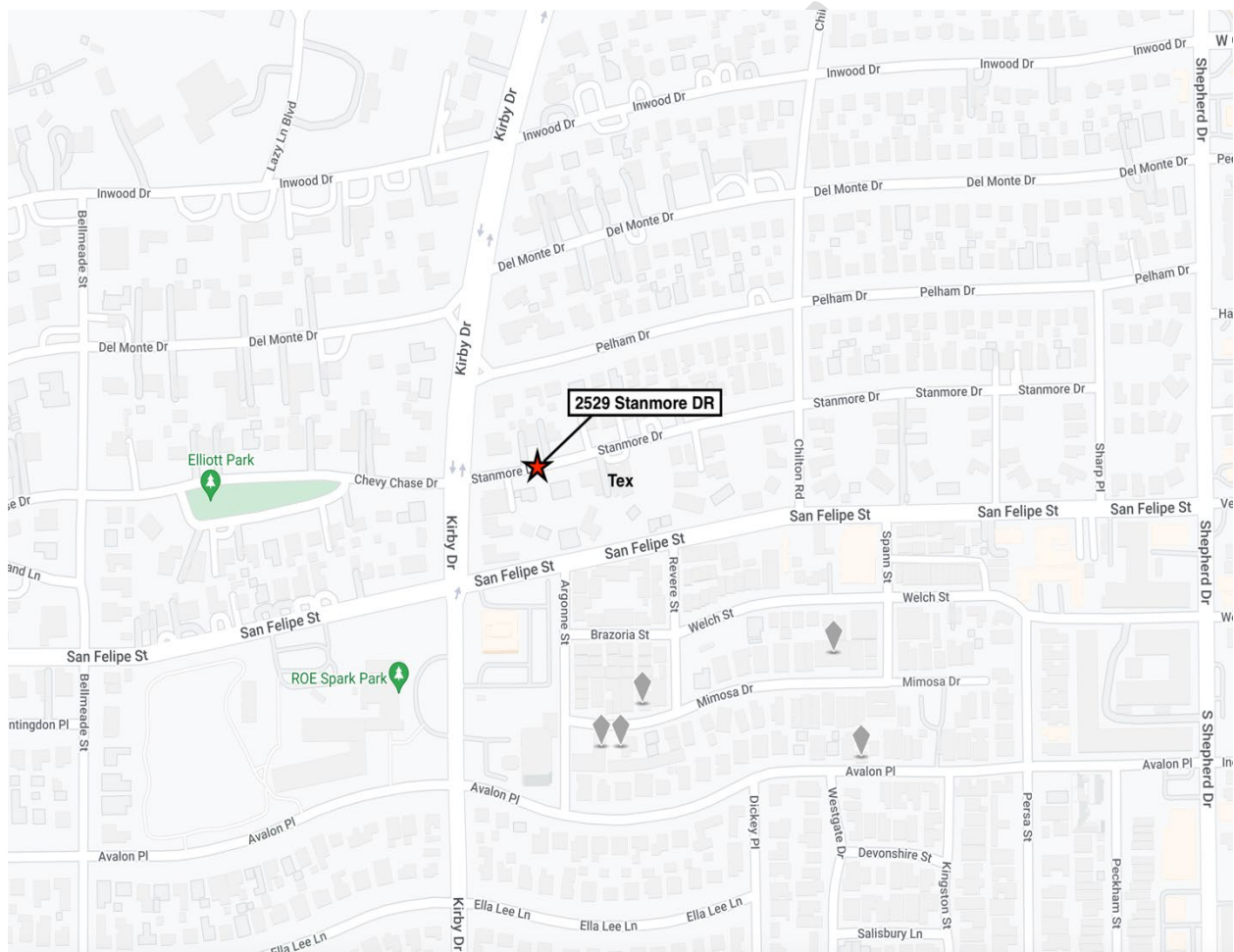


EXHIBIT B

MAPS

THE FRANK A. WATTS HOUSE 2529 STANMORE DRIVE

Map 1: Site map showing the location of the Frank A. Watts House along Stanmore Drive in River Oaks Court. Map provided by applicant, 2024.

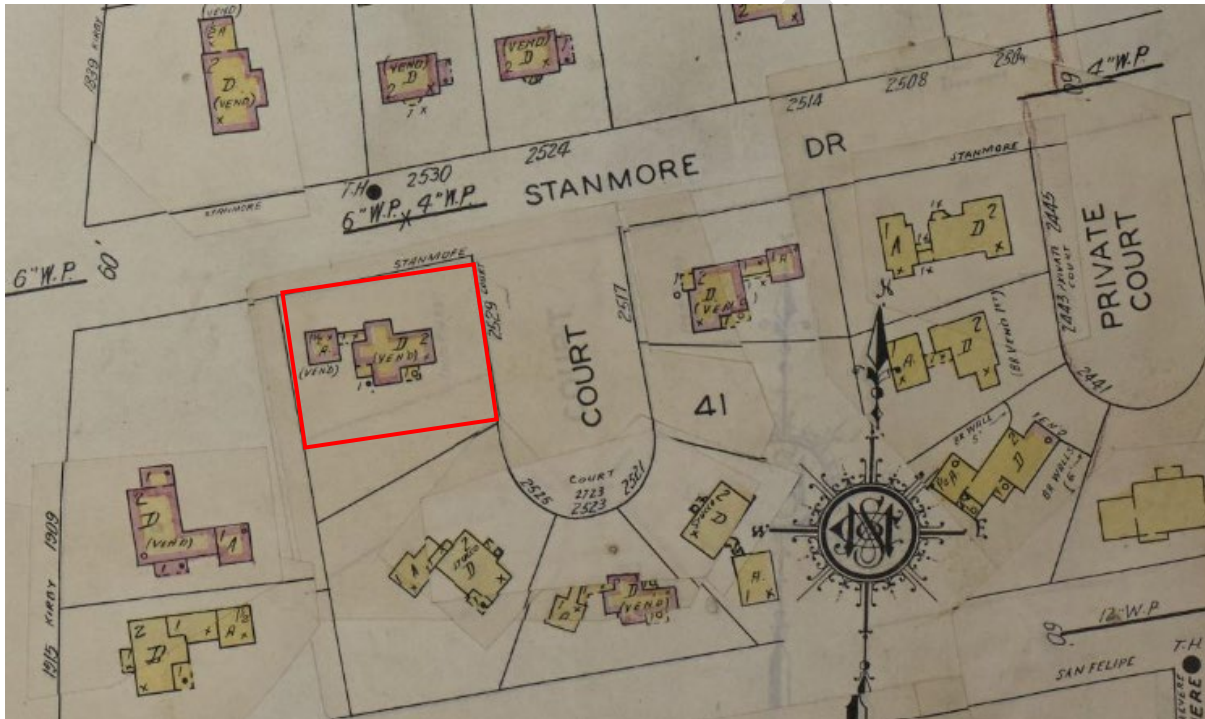


Map 2: Aerial View of the current site of 2529 Stanmore Drive. Accessed April 2024, Google Maps.



EXHIBIT C
HISTORIC DOCUMENTATION
THE FRANK A. WATTS HOUSE
2529 STANMORE DRIVE

Figure 1: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from 1934 (Vol. 11, Sheet 1104) showing the location of 2529 Stanmore Drive in the River Oaks Court. Accessed April 2024 from the Library of Congress Archives.



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Figure 2: Harris County Building Land Assessment documentation for 2529 Stanmore Drive. June 24, 1936. Accessed April 2024 by City of Houston.

Form 381

**Harris County
BUILDING ASSESSMENT
Houston, Texas**

Map No. _____ Permit No. 1019
Vol. 60 Page _____, 1936
Owner River Oaks Corp
No. 2529 Stanmore Street or Avenue
Addition River Oaks
Block 4 Lot 4
1-17 man 13/4 2486 sq ft

Size of Building
_____ wide _____ deep _____ stories
20 wide 10 deep 2 stories

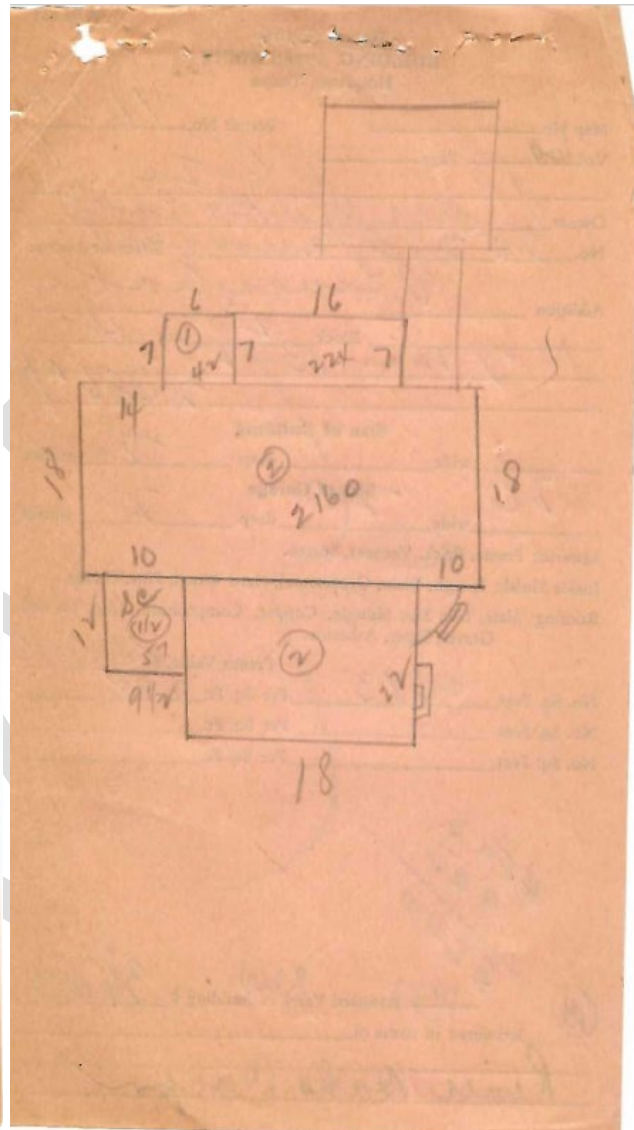
Size of Garage
_____ wide _____ deep _____ stories
20 wide 10 deep 2 stories

Material: Frame, Brick, Veeneer, Stucco.
Inside Finish: Rough, Plain, Ornamental, Hard Wood, Pine, Plaster.
Roofing: Slate, Tile, Tin, Shingle, Copper, Composition, Iron, Tar and Gravel, Paper, Asbestos.

No. Sq. Feet 2483 Permit Value, \$ 10000
Per Sq. Ft. 2.00
No. Sq. Feet _____ Per Sq. Ft. _____
No. Sq. Feet _____ Per Sq. Ft. _____

4500
9000
3600

Assessed Value of Building \$ 3600
Rendered in name of River Oaks Corp



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Figure 3: Harris County Building Land Assessment documentation for 2529 Stanmore Drive. February 28, 1940. Accessed April 2024 by City of Houston.

Form 590

INVESTIGATE

Map _____

Vol. 60

Page 154

FEB 28 1940 19

_____ Owner
Watts, Frank A

Lot 4-N $\frac{1}{2}$ -5 Block 41

_____ Addition
River Oaks

REMARKS:

County Value \$ 3600
~~3650~~

Owners Value \$ 3450

No. _____ Street _____

N

W E

S

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Figure 4: Harris County Building Land Assessment documentation for 2529 Stanmore Drive. February 23, 1943. Accessed April 2024 by City of Houston.

Form 590

INVESTIGATE

Map _____

Vol. 60

Page 154

Feb 23 . 1943

Frank A Watts Owner

Lot 4 N 1/2 5 Block 41

River Oaks Addition

No. 2529 Stanmore Street

Imp. Constructed 1934

Cost Price _____ ✓

Amt. of Fire Ins. -

Company Insured with Seaboard Life Ins.

Reduction requested by J E Neland

County Value \$ 3600

Owners Value \$ 3400

Reason of Reduction Request Dep

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Figure 5: Harris County Building Land Assessment documentation for 2529 Stanmore Drive. Date Unknown. Accessed April 2024 by City of Houston.

Map No. _____ Addition <u>RO</u>	IMPROVEMENTS		
Block <u>41</u> Lot <u>4-N$\frac{1}{2}$ 5</u>	No. Sq. Ft. <u>800</u>	Price Per Sq. Ft. <u>2.50</u>	
OWNER <u>Watts Frank A</u>		Percent Good <u>90</u>	
ADDRESS <u>2529 Stanmore</u>		Other Bldgs. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
TYPE OF PROPERTY <u>Occ</u> OCCUPIED VACANT		Total All Bldgs.	
BASEMENT, Whole Part _____	FLOORING, Pine, Hardwood, Cement, Tile, Marble, Dirt _____	LAND VALUE	
FOUNDATION, Concrete, Stone, Brick, Piers, Posts. _____	INTERIOR TRIM, Plaster, Hardwood, Marble, Metal, Built-in Features _____	Front x Depth	Unit Value
WALLS, Brick _____ Stone _____	HEATING, Furnace, Stoves, Fireplace, Chimneys, Gas _____	Factor	Front Ft. Value - - \$
Hollow Tile, Stucco, Metal, Concrete Blocks, Box Weatherboard _____	LIGHTING, Electricity _____		
ROOF CONS., Concrete, Steel, Wood Truss _____	PLUMBING, Sewer, Water, Baths _____		
ROOF, Hip, Gable, Mansard, Flat _____	ELEVATORS _____		
ROOFING, Composition, Metal, Slate, Wood, Shingles, Tile, Asbestos _____	CONDITION, Good, Fair, Bad, Obsolete _____		
EXTERIOR TRIM, Stone, Terra Cotta, Metal, Wood, Marble, Granite _____			
PERMIT DATE _____ NO. _____ AMT. _____			TOTAL

Map No. _____ Addition <u>Riviera</u>	IMPROVEMENTS		
Block <u>41</u> Lot <u>4-N$\frac{1}{2}$ 5</u>	No. Sq. Ft. <u>2060</u>	Price Per Sq. Ft. <u>4.50</u>	
OWNER <u>Watts, Frank A</u>		Percent Good <u>90</u>	
ADDRESS <u>2529 Stanmore</u>		Other Bldgs. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
TYPE OF PROPERTY <u>Res</u> OCCUPIED VACANT		Total All Bldgs.	
BASEMENT, Whole Part _____	FLOORING, Pine, Hardwood, Cement, Tile, Marble, Dirt _____	LAND VALUE	
FOUNDATION, Concrete, Stone, Brick, Piers, Posts. _____	INTERIOR TRIM, Plaster, Hardwood, Marble, Metal, Built-in Features _____	Front x Depth	Unit Value
WALLS, Brick _____ Stone _____	HEATING, Furnace, Stoves, Fireplace, Chimneys, Gas _____	Factor	Front Ft. Value - - \$
Hollow Tile, Stucco, Metal, Concrete Blocks, Box Weatherboard _____	LIGHTING, Electricity _____		
ROOF CONS., Concrete, Steel, Wood Truss _____	PLUMBING, Sewer, Water, Baths _____		
ROOF, Hip, Gable, Mansard, Flat _____	ELEVATORS _____		
ROOFING, Composition, Metal, Slate, Wood, Shingles, Tile, Asbestos _____	CONDITION, Good, Fair, Bad, Obsolete _____		
EXTERIOR TRIM, Stone, Terra Cotta, Metal, Wood, Marble, Granite _____			
PERMIT DATE _____ NO. _____ AMT. _____			TOTAL

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Figure 6: Harris County Building Land Assessment documentation for 2529 Stanmore Drive. April 4, 1956. Accessed April 2024 by City of Houston.

59-30-0-7

Harris County
BUILDING ASSESSMENT
Houston, Texas 29167700

Vol. 60 Page 154 Permit No. 2820
Inspector _____
Date 4-4-56

Owner _____
No. 2529 Stanmore Street
Survey or Addition River Oaks
Abst. _____ Lot or Tr. 4 + 1/2 Blk. 41
Type Residential Commercial _____
Industrial _____ Pre-Fab. _____

Exterior: PermaStone — Rock — Brick Veneer — Frame — Stucco — Concrete Tile — Claytile — Cedar Shakes — Composition — Shingle — Redwood.
Interior: Sheetrock — Plastered — Paneled — Cellotex — Plywood — None.
Floors: Oak — Plywood — Cement — Tile — Pine — Azrock — Higgins — Terrazzo — None.
Roofing: Shingle — Asbestos — Terra-Cotta — Tile — Composition — Slate — Copper — C-Iron, Tar and Gravel.
Foundation: Concrete Slab — Piers — Blocks, Beams — Brick — Piers-Wood.
Plumbing: 1 Tile — 2 Tile — 3 Tile — Other: None.
Climatizers: Dual Temp. Ac — Fans, Attic Ventilation — Central Heat Unit — Gas Stoves — None.
Electrical Equipment: Part — All — Sprinklers.
Condition: New — Good — Fair — Poor — Obsolete.

Permit Val. 2800
Year Built _____

Remarks: swim pool
approx 816 @ 200 = 1630
+660

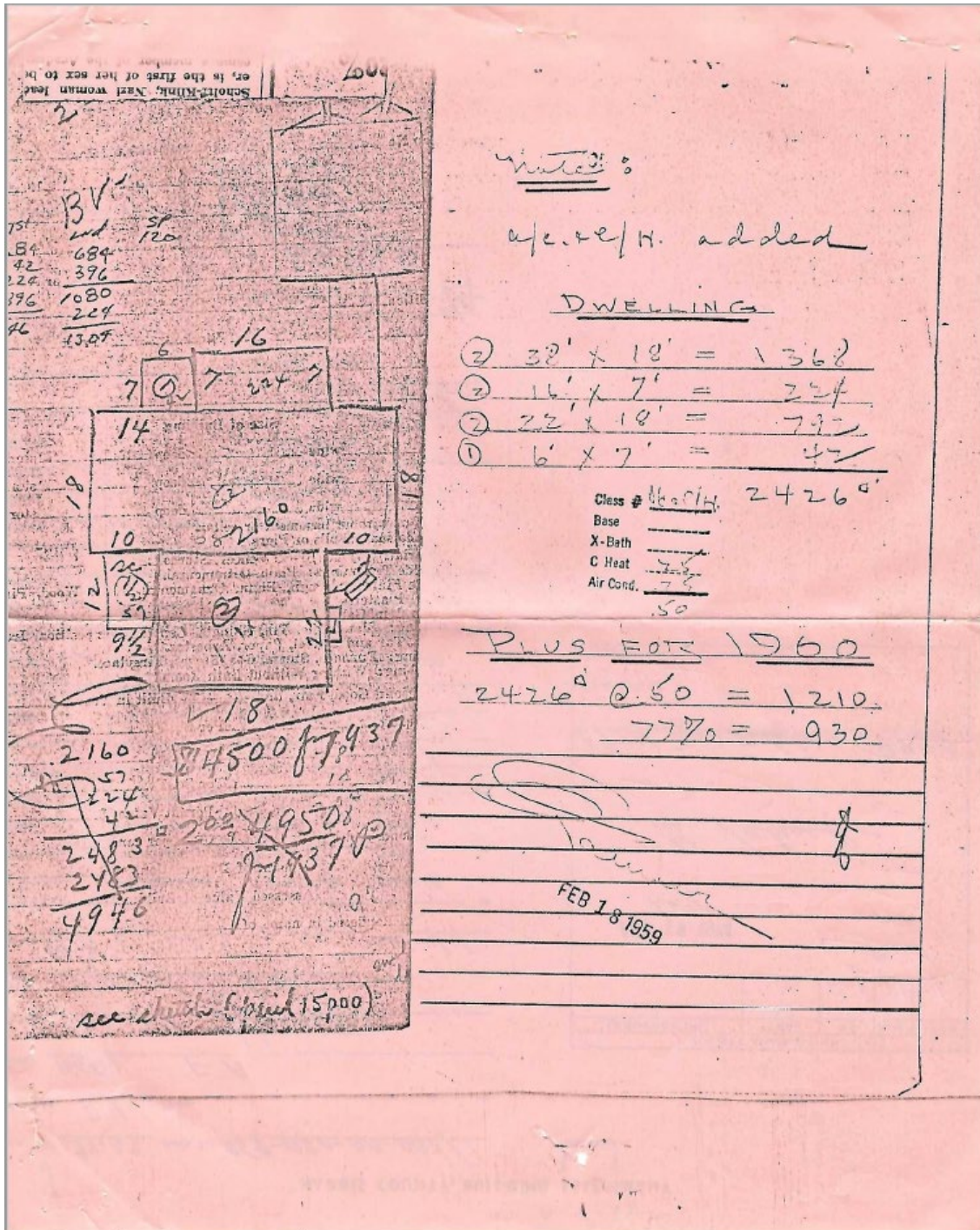
Moved here _____ From _____
No. Sq. Ft. 9-25-5-6 Per Sq. Ft. _____
No. Sq. Ft. 1957 plus Per Sq. Ft. _____
Assessed Value of Building 650
Watts Frank A

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Figure 7: Harris County Building Land Assessment documentation for 2529 Stanmore Drive. February 18, 1959. Accessed April 2024 by City of Houston.



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Figure 8: Harris County Building Land Assessment documentation for 2529 Stanmore Drive. 1974. Accessed April 2024 by City of Houston.

HARRIS COUNTY BUILDING ASSESSMENT

INVESTIGATE

Acct. No. 059-030-0004

Map No. 88 33

10-18 19 74

Owner Watts F.G.

Lot 4 1/2 5 Blk. 41

RIVER OAKS Addition

Remarks: File

Value \$ 18680

Our Value \$ 20750

No. _____ FOR 1974 Street

N
W
E
S

Dr. Papp

COURTY ACCOUNT NO.			
SEQUENCE NO.	VOL.	PG.	SUB. ITEM
60	154	4	155

dep. allowed.

DATE 11-27-74 VALUE 8810

NEW OWNER Watts Frank A.

CLASS _____ Yr. Built _____ Depn. _____ %

Base Unit @ \$ _____ A/C&H @ \$ _____ Total Unit @ \$ _____

15'	1346	SFes	20.005	26,920
2nd	1304		14.00	18,260
1st	2650		60	1,590
1st	120		10.00	1,200
1st	84		5.00	420
GRK	400		3.70	1,480
SG	400		6.00	2,400
1st	816		4.50	3,670
				55,740
30% Dep				16,780
				39,160

Appraiser's name & date
County
AUG 27 1973

Total 100% Value \$ 39,160
For 10 74 @ \$ 20,750

FOR 1974

Old 100% = 55,940
Less 30% = 20,700
100% = 35,240
1/2 Property 5.3% = 18,680
002506 = 8810

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Figure 9: Correspondence between Frank A. Watts and Gerry B. Webb about the appraisal of the property. Page 1 of 2. August 1, 1974. Accessed April 2024 City of Houston.

FRANK A. WATTS
2529 STANMORE DRIVE
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77019
August 1, 1974

Mr. Gerry B. Webb,
Houston, Texas.

Dear Mr. Webb:

Thank you for your informative letter of July 30, 1974 in which you offered me an opportunity to appear before the Board of Equalization if I did not agree with the City of Houston's appraisal that our home (2529 Stanmore Drive), for tax purposes, has a total market value of \$85,700.00. Since time is important to all of us these days I am going to offer a suggestion which, if accepted by you, can save time for all concerned. If my suggestion is unacceptable please let me know promptly so I can arrange to appear before the Board of Equalization.

The residence at 2529 Stanmore Drive has been our home — our homestead — for more than thirty seven years. We purchased it here in 1936 for \$16,000.00 and have proudly occupied, raised a family, and maintained it ever since. In spite of thirty seven ^{years} of wear and tear you suggest that its market value today is \$85,700.00. We have given no thought, and are giving no thought, to its sale. If some one came to us and offered \$85,700.00 I really believe that Mrs. White and I would retire to a corner and ask ourselves "Where in the world did they get that kind of money — did they rob a bank or something?"

Briefly related here is the record of prices realized for nearby residences sold recently. The home at 2517 Stanmore was sold under unusually favorable circumstances with which I am familiar for \$97,500.00. The home across the street at 2508 Stanmore was sold about the same time under less favorable conditions for \$36,000.00 while the residence at 2530 Stanmore was sold the other day for \$78,500.00. All three of these homes were built between 1935 and 1937 about the same time as ours. All these residences cost almost exactly the same with the exception of the one at 2530 Stanmore which cost \$2000.00 more than the others. To arrive at a fair market value for our residence at 2529 Stanmore Drive wouldn't it be logical to take the sum of prices of these three homes, divide by 3 — \$206,000.00 — and arrive at

Figure 10: Correspondence between Frank A. Watts and Gerry B. Webb about the appraisal of the property. Page 2 of 2. August 1, 1974. Accessed April 2024 City of Houston.

FRANK A. WATTS
252 STANNORE DRIVE
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77019

that amount by three to arrive at a more logical figure of \$68,650.00? Don't you agree that my suggestion makes sense? If you do not please let me know so I can arrange to appear before the Board of Equalization.

On January 11, January 19 and March 14, 1974 I wrote your office regarding the proposed appraisal value of our home-stead for tax purposes and received very courteous acknowledgments from Mr. Frank M. Krisher. In my letters I called attention to the fact that City an School taxes on our homestead had been increased by 43.5% between 1965 and 1972 from \$461.76 to \$673.03 and that it was proposed to increase those 108% more from \$673.03 to \$1412.00. Thereby the total increase from 1965 to 1974 would be more than 200%. Before now I'm sure that you have agreed that there is merit to the suggestion I made. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Frank A. Watts

CITY OF HOUSTON

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Planning and Development Department

Figure 11: Tax Equalization Notice for 2529 Stanmore Drive, Harris County. May 30, 1974. Accessed April 2024 City of Houston.

TAX EQUALIZATION NOTICE

HARRIS COUNTY

Houston, Texas,
MAY 30 1974

Frank A. Watts
2529 Stanmore Drive
Houston Texas 77019

60-154-41-4

Dear Sir:

The valuation placed by you on your property is lower than the valuation placed and fixed by the Tax Assessor. You are hereby notified to appear before the undersigned Board of Equalization meeting on the 1st floor, Courthouse and Jail Building, 301 San Jacinto Street, on _____ at JUN 12 1974 11-00 AM to show cause, if any you have, why your assessment should not be placed at the value fixed by the Assessor.

Description of Property: Lt 4 Nhlf 5 Blk 41 River Oaks

June 6, 1974

Dear Friends:

A 65.6% increase in the assessed value of a 37 1/2 year old home is difficult to understand when it is realized that the home cost less than \$9790 when built in 1936 and according to the Press the County has been considered lowering - not raising - taxes.

	OWNER'S 1974 VALUE	ASSESSOR'S 1974 VALUE	1973 ASSESSMENT
Land			
Buildings	5910	9790	5910
Personal			

IF THE ASSESSOR'S VALUATION IS ACCEPTABLE TO YOU, YOU NEED NOT APPEAR

HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF EQUALIZATION.
By *Robert G. Scudeler* Deputy Clerk
224-1919, EXT. 360

FOR INFORMATION, CALL _____

(PLEASE BRING THIS NOTICE WITH YOU)

CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

Figure 12: Tax Equalization Notice for 2529 Stanmore Drive, Harris County. June 18, 1974. Accessed April 2024 City of Houston.

TAX EQUALIZATION NOTICE

HARRIS COUNTY

Houston, Texas,
June 18, 1974

Mr. Frank A. Watts
2529 Stanmore Dr.
Houston, Texas 77019

60-154-41-4

Dear Sir:

The valuation placed by you on your property is lower than the valuation placed and fixed by the Tax Assessor. You are hereby notified to appear before the undersigned Board of Equalization meeting on the 1st floor, 7th floor, Family Law Center Bldg. 1115 Congress Ave. Courthouse and Jail Building, 301 San Jacinto Street, on

JUN 27 1974 8-00 AM to show cause, if any you have, why your assessment should not be placed at the value fixed by the Assessor.

June 21, 1974

Description of Property:
Lt 4 N Hlf 5 Blk 41
River Oaks

Dear Friends: Let's be reasonable, please. You proposed increasing the taxable value on our home (buildings) by 65% - Now you want to increase the taxable value of our land by 44%. Our home is 37 years old and lacks considerably at being modern. We paid \$16,000.00 for the house and lot and a half. You are trying to force us to give up our Homestead by raising our taxes beyond our ability to pay them - aren't you? Unfortunately, I will be out of the City June 27 and unable to appear

	OWNER'S 1974 VALUE	ASSESSOR'S 1974 VALUE	1973 ASSESSMENT
Land	5910	8510	5910
Buildings			
Personal			

Why not split the difference and make this \$7210

Frank Watts

IF THE ASSESSOR'S VALUATION IS ACCEPTABLE TO YOU, YOU NEED NOT APPEAR

HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF EQUALIZATION,
By *John Boudelon* Deputy Clerk
224-1919, EXT. *360* 360

FOR INFORMATION, CALL [REDACTED]

(PLEASE BRING THIS NOTICE WITH YOU)

CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

Figure 14: Harris County Building Land Assessment documentation for 2529 Stanmore Drive. April 19, 1974. Accessed April 2024 by City of Houston.

HARRIS COUNTY BUILDING ASSESSMENT

No. 188-33 Acct. No. 059-030-00-004/1
 Permit No. RV Date _____
 Owner Watts F.A.
 Address 2529 Stanmore
 Subdiv. River Oaks Section _____
 Lot No. 4 N 1/2 LTS Block 41

COUNTY ACCOUNT NO.			
SEQUENCE NO.	VOL.	PG.	SUB. ITEM
	60	154	41 4
APR 19 1974 RAF			
<i>Re-Valued</i> 3880 775 -1280 1974 New Total VALUE <u>9790</u>			
NEW OWNER <u>Watts Frank A.</u>			

No. Stories _____ Pl. Family _____ Complex _____ Tr. Apt. _____ Shd. Attic _____ Basement _____ Dining _____ Kitch V. _____ Dining V. _____ Restrooms _____ Closets _____ Stairways _____ Halls _____ Bedrooms _____ Baths _____ Other Places _____	FOUNDATION Concr. Slab _____ Beam & Piers _____ Concr. Blks. _____ FLOORING Pine _____ Hardwood _____ Terrazzo _____ Vinyl _____ WtoW Cpts. _____ HEATING & COOLING A/C, C/H, Dual _____	ROOF TYPE Gable _____ Hipped _____ Flat _____ ROOFING Wd. Shngls _____ Comp. Shgs. _____ Tar & Gravel _____ INTERIOR FNISH. S/L & Paper _____ Sheetrock _____ Wd. Panels _____ Plaster _____	GARAGE Walls _____ Roof _____ Floor _____ Ceiled _____ Doors _____ CARPORT Roof _____ Floor _____
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Submit Val. \$ _____
 Existing Assmnts.
 Land \$ 9130
 Impr. \$ 12060
 Rendered in name of _____
 Total Ass'd Val. Impro. for 19 74
 \$ 20750
 (from Reverse)

POSTED
 DATA PROC.
 SEP 28 1973