

STAFF REPORT

TO: Historic Preservation Advisory Board

FROM: Guy R. Giersch, Historic Preservation Officer

THROUGH: Jennifer Arnold, AICP, Director of Planning

SUBJECT: Conduct a Public Hearing to Consider/Discuss/Act on the Request by Chris & Kristen Tovar for Approval of a Historic Marker for the House Located at 603 North Kentucky Street.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff is recommending approval of a historic marker for 603 North Kentucky Street.

PRIORITY RATING: The property is listed as a medium priority building according to the 2015 Update of the Historic Resource Survey. A medium priority building contributes to local history or broader historical patterns, however, reversible alterations have diminished the buildings integrity. These might include the loss or clear replacement with modern materials some of the historic windows, portions of the porch, roof materials or an addition that noticeably changes the perception of the building. For this priority rating these changes would need to be generally believed to be readily reversible without further loss of historic material. Any alterations should blend and not distract such that the building remains a typical example of architecture, engineering, or crafted design of the period it represents.

ITEM SUMMARY: The purpose of the Historic Marker Program is to encourage owners of historic properties to become actively involved in the preservation of McKinney's historic past through the recognition of historic events, people, and architecture. The applicant has submitted a written narrative relating the history of the various families that have owned the property or resided at 603 North Kentucky Street and the role they played in McKinney's history.

On January 31, 2019 the applicant submitted the necessary documentation to apply for a historic marker for the house located at 603 North Kentucky Street known as the W.E Ditto House.

The W.E. Ditto House is a circa 1910 vernacular architectural style house. Vernacular architecture is an architectural style that is built on local needs and availability of construction materials and reflects local tradition. The house is a single story house constructed on a square plan using a pier and beam foundation. The house is a wood-frame house covered with wood lap siding. The porch is located beneath the main roof of the house and runs the entire front of

the house. The roof forms a large pyramid over the top of the house. The front door, though not original, is still in its original location and opens to form a center-hall passage. Original, large, single-pane, double-hung windows are located on the front of the house. The front door has sidelights on either side of the door. The eaves are wide and enclosed which is a typical stylistic detail found in Prairie Style homes. The hipped roof on a square plan along with the hipped dormer, centered on the roof is a typical craftsman detailing element. Appropriate additions have been added to the rear elevation.

HISTORICAL FIGURES ASSOCIATED WITH THE HOUSE:

- S.J.B Plemmons owned the plat of land that 603 North Kentucky and a companion building 601 North Kentucky sit on. Mr. Plemmons sold the land to George B. Adams and his wife Jennie in 1883 and they in turn sold the land to W.E. Ditto in 1894. Based on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps there is evidence that the 1908 map indicates only one lot with a house on it. The map for 1914 shows two houses on the same lot.
- Ditto married Lula Wiley. Unfortunately, Lula died in a house fire. Mr. Ditto married Mamie Dowell, daughter of Captain J.S. Dowell. He worked in the grocery business and in 1909 formed a real estate partnership with R.L. Hight.
- Ditto sold the 603 North Kentucky house to his partner's brother L.G. in 1916. L.G. was a prominent figure in the community since he was a linotype operator and later the publisher of the Courier-Gazette.
- L.G. sold the property to Eva M. Rowe in 1918. She lived at 603 North Kentucky until her death in 1937.
- Dr. R.L. Davis, a prominent physician and member of the Collin County Medical Association, Texas Medical Association, and American Medical Association. He served as the City of McKinney Health Officer. Dr. Davis practiced medicine for 65 years and was a member of the First Baptist Church. He lived in the house from 1938 until 1943 when he sold the house to Laura B. Mayor (Spurgin). She sold the property to Clyde B. Boone in 1948.
- Clyde and Lorene Boone lived in the house with their sons Jim and Joe Boone for 55 years. Clyde worked for Tinsley Pontiac-Cadillac. Lorene worked in the cafeterias at J.L. Freer Elementary School and at the Wysong Clinic. They were members of the First Methodist Church.
- Since the Boones there have been numerous owners each with rich stories about their time spent at 603 North Kentucky. Today Chris and Kirsten Tovar are the stewards to the property located at 603 North Kentucky.

ASSESSMENT: Staff believes that the applicant has met all of the requirements to obtain a Historic Marker under the Historic Neighborhood Improvement Zone Program (Ordinance 2015-12-105). Therefore, Staff is recommending approval of a Historic Marker for 603 North Kentucky Street.

Under Ordinance 2015-12-105, if the HPAB approves the Marker, the applicant will be responsible for purchasing and displaying the Historic Marker.

Also, under Ordinance 2015-12-105, if the Historic Preservation Advisory Board approves the Marker, the applicant may make application for a Level 1 tax exemption (100% exemption of the City's ad valorem taxes for a period of 7 years) providing the building has architectural integrity and has been properly rehabilitated/restored and maintained. The building must have a residential use in order to qualify for the tax exemption.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Historic Marker Application
- Supporting Documents