



CITY OF McKINNEY, TEXAS

Legislation Text

File #: 20-036HTM, **Version:** 1

Conduct a Public Hearing to Consider/Discuss/Act on the Request by Elizabeth Beck for Approval of a Historic Marker for the House Located at 505 West Lamar Street

COUNCIL GOAL: Enhance the Quality of Life in McKinney

MEETING DATE: September 3, 2020

DEPARTMENT: Planning

CONTACT: Guy R. Giersch, Historic Preservation Officer
Mark Doty, Assistant Director of Planning

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff is recommending approval of a historic marker for 505 West Lamar Street.

PRIORITY RATING: The property is listed as a high priority building according to the 2015 Update of the Historic Resource Survey. A high priority building contributes significantly to local history or broader historical patterns; is an outstanding or unique example of architecture, engineering or crafted design; retains a significant portion of its original character and contextual integrity; meets in some cases, criteria for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and/or is eligible for a Texas Historical Marker.

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 505 West Lamar Street and the role they played in McKinney's history. On July 22, 2020 the applicant submitted the necessary documentation to apply for a historic marker for the house located at 505 West Lamar Street known as the Ed Browne House.

The Ed Browne House was built in 1915. It is an example of a Craftsman style home which was popular between 1905 and 1925. The house is a two-story wood frame house constructed on a pier and beam foundation and covered in cedar shingles that were painted before 1985. The house has a gable roof extending across the front of the house and another gable that parallels the gable on the front of the house. A cross gable connects these two gables while another gable covers the second story located at the rear of the house. The front gable forms a temple front motif created by the cross gable. The gables and eaves of the house are deep and supported with knee-braces. There is a Chicago "style" window located on the front of the house. The Chicago "style" window was invented by Charles B. Atwood in 1895 and used in the Reliance Building in Chicago. The window is a large

pane of plate glass with vertical double-hung sash windows with nine dividing muntions. These windows have nine-over-one sashes and a transom window that runs the entire length of the window. The Chicago window was made famous by the Chicago School of architects. The design offered both abundant light and practical ventilation. In 1923 the Dowell Hardware building in downtown McKinney was remodeled and Chicago "style" windows replace the original windows.

The front porch is in the northeast corner of the house. It is supported with river rock columns and is screened in. The house is fenestrated using a combination nine-over-over one and twelve-over-one double-hung windows.

The house was remodeled in 1926 resulting in creating the current plan of the house. Doors and hardware are original along with lighting fixtures and push button lights.

The house has experienced minimal alterations since it was built in 1915. A small utility room has been added to the rear of the house. The current owner has no plans to expand. She is committed to maintaining the Craftsman aesthetic of the house.

HISTORICAL FIGURES ASSOCIATED WITH THE HOUSE:

Edward Preston Browne (1886 - 1919)

Edward Preston Browne was born in Chester County, South Carolina in 1886. He moved to North Texas around Collin County in 1889. Ed and his parents settled in White's Grove which is about five miles southwest of the McKinney Square in what is now Eldorado Parkway and Hardin Boulevard.

Ed Browne owned and operated one of the largest grain companies in North Texas from 1907 until his untimely death in 1919.

In 1910 Ed Browne married Mary Abernathy. Abernathy was from a family of successful lawyers. Mary's father, William M. Abernathy was a confederate soldier who is credited with conveying the final dispatch between General Grant and General Lee setting the terms of Lee's surrender. In 1877, William and two brothers moved to McKinney and opened law offices on the Square. Their office was located where Spoon's is today.

Ed and Mary Browne were married at St. Peter's Episcopal Church. Only family and close friends participated with Rev. L.C. Birch officiating.

In 1915, Ed purchased the western portion of a lot located on West Lamar from Mary's cousin Harvey Abernathy. Ed and Harvey built homes that were situated next door to each other. The Jones Academy was located across the street from their homes. The Jones academy was originally home to the McKinney Collegiate Institute, later purchase by the City of McKinney who turned it into J.H. Hill High School aka (Central Ward School).

In 1963 the land was sold to build Lamar Street Apartments.

Ed Browne was an active citizen. He was a Rotarian, a mason, elk, and member of St. Peter's Episcopal Church. Mary was a member of the Pierian Club, a club established in 1908 for the purpose of promoting charity and education.

Ed Browne in 1915, was riding on the Celina Pike at a high rate of speed with Frank W. Emerson. Ed was thrown from Fred's car and killed. Browne's funeral was conducted by Episcopal Bishop H.B. Jamison and attended by many close friends and business owners.

Ed's widow, Mary, gave birth to a baby boy in October. She sold the house to Harvey J. Harris and moved in with her mother Ozella Abernathy on West Virginia. Mary served as church organist at St. Peters. She died in 1971 at the age of 85.

Both Mary and Ed are buried at Pecan Grove Cemetery.

Harvey Julius Harris (1888-1961)

Harvey came to McKinney from Waxahachie in 1918 to start an automobile dealership selling Ford cars and trucks. During the eight years he lived in McKinney he built a business that became one of the largest dealerships in Texas.

In 1920 one of Browne's partners died and that same year Harvey bought the Browne house.

In 1926 Harvey put the second story on the house on Lamar while growing his engagement with the community.

Harvey was a Rotary Club president, Hospital Board, Pres., Boy Scout Pres, Businessman's Class of First Baptist Church, Pres., Knights of Pythias, Vice Chancellor, Building and Loan Association, Officer, McKinney Chamber of Commerce, Dir, Central State Bank, Dir. Mystic Shrine, Membership chair, Retail Merchant Association, director, 32nd Degree Mason.

December of 1926 Harvey sells out and moves to Dallas and sells the Browne house to Andrew Hardy Eubanks.

Andrew Hardy Eubanks (1886-1940)

Eubanks worked in banking and oil in Collin County for over a decade.

Eubanks worked for Central State Bank in McKinney as an Active Vice President for over 14 years. Eubanks was much like Harris in that he was actively involved in McKinney while he was alive.

Hardy was one of three lifetime members in Rotary International. He was active as a Mason and a Shriner.

Member of the First Baptist Church. Served in the Bankers' Association and Chamber of Commerce.

In 1936, Texas Governor James Allred appointed Hardy to the State Board of Regents overseeing seven colleges. In 1938, he was made director of the Texas Good Roads Association and his work was directed at widening and improving Highway 75.

He was appointed as the Chairman of the Fourth congressional District to raise funds and prepare for fall elections. He died in 1938.

ASSESSMENT: Staff believes that the applicant has met all 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 505 West Lamar 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.