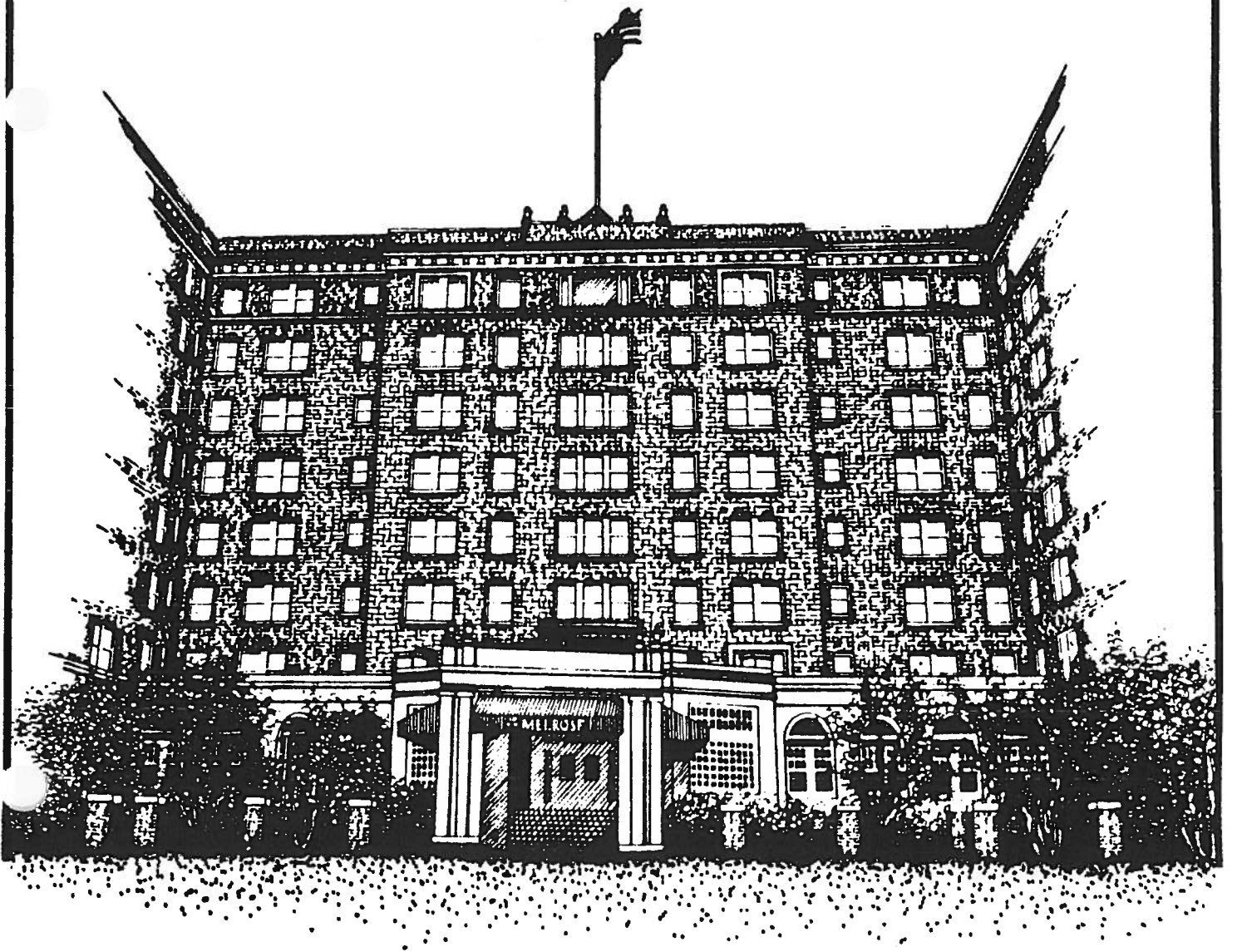


MELROSE HOTEL
DESIGNATION REPORT
CITY of DALLAS



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Cultural Significance

Situated at the corner of Oak Lawn Avenue and Cedar Springs Road in the heart of the Oak Lawn neighborhood, the Melrose Court Apartment and Hotel was constructed in 1924. The site was originally the Mellersh farm; Colonel George Mellersh, a Civil War veteran from Memphis built his home at this corner in 1876 and named it "Oak Lawn" after the magnificent trees on the lot. Mellersh abandoned the home after the depression, but it was bought and restored in 1904 by Ballard M. Burgher, a prominent banker and real estate promoter. The home stayed in the Burgher family until 1924 when it was demolished to build the Melrose Hotel.

The Melrose was financed by the S.W. Strauss Company of Chicago and the Hamilton Investment Company, whose principals were Edward and Pear Hamilton. Designed by the noted Dallas architect C.D. Hill, the hotel is an adaptation of the Chicago or Sullivan-esque style.

Architect C.D. Hill came to Texas in 1903 from Chicago where he had studied at the Chicago Art Institute. He worked in Ft. Worth as a draftsman for the prominent firm of Sanquinet and Staats until 1907. At this time Hill formed his own firm, C.D. Hill and Company, in Dallas. His firm quickly rose to prominence in Dallas. His other works include such buildings as the Municipal Building, the second Dallas Country Club, the home of Edward Tenison, Edgar Flippen's Mt. Vernon, Austin College, First Presbyterian Church, and his home in Munger Place.

The Melrose has functioned as a hotel and apartments ever since its opening in 1924. The building changed hands in 1933 to the Melrose Company and was remodeled in the 1950's. Like the Stoneleigh Hotel and the Maple Terrace, the Melrose is a social and visual focal point for the Oak Lawn area. It has provided a class of living that is now associated with the Turtle Creek area. In more recent years the Melrose has been the temporary home for many musicians and opera greats. Pearl Bailey and the cast of "Hello, Dolly" have stayed there as well as the likes of Luciano Pavarotti and James McCrackin. The hotel was closed and carefully renovated in 1981-82 by the new owners, Banyan Realty Corporation. It was reopened in December of 1982 and contains 185 guest rooms and suites.

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Architectural Significance

The Melrose Hotel, a visual landmark of the Oak Lawn community, is an eight story structure that has 185 guest rooms. Designed by Dallas architect C.D. Hill, the hotel was constructed in 1924 by the Gilsonite Contracting Company. The structure is an adaptation of the commercial Chicago (Sullivan-esque) style of architecture and composed of red brick with a terra cotta base and trim.

Although the Chicago or Sullivan-esque style was not used after 1920 in many parts of the U.S., Dallas architects such as C.D. Hill favored the versatility of this style. The Melrose is an excellent example of this style in its later stages. This style is characterized by minimal ornamentation, three stages: the base, the main "shaft", and an elaborate cornice. The Melrose has a terracotta base with "Chicago" windows, a large fixed pane flanked by narrow casements to provide ventilation. Equally spaced on this first floor are modified palladian windows with hooded mouldings. There is an extended entry way for cars. The main part of the building is red brick with Chicago style windows on the other sides and a column of two smaller casement type windows between the larger windows. The cornice displays dentalling and above that an ornamented frieze-band urn ornamenture. The building, unlike the typical Chicago style, is U-shaped. The roof is flat-another characteristic of the Chicago style.

Architect C.D. Hill came to Texas in 1903 after studying architecture at the Chicago Art Institute. He worked as a draftsman in the firm of Sanquinet and Staats until 1907 when he founded C.D. Hill and Company, a firm which quickly rose to a position of prominence in Dallas. Hill designed such structures as the French Renaissance-inspired Municipal Building, the First Presbyterian Church with its classical Roman dome and Corinthian portico, the City Temple, the second Dallas Country Club, the Oak Lawn Methodist Church, and several beautiful homes including those of Edward Tenison, Dr. John McReynolds, and Edgar Flippen's Mount Vernon. The Melrose Hotel is a visual landmark that has been carefully renovated to its former elegance. It represents a style and size of hotel that has rapidly vanished from the Dallas area.

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Designation Merit

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| <p>A. Character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Dallas, State of Texas, or the United States. _____</p> <p>B. Location as the site of a significant historical event. _____</p> <p>C. Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city. <u> X </u></p> <p>D. Exemplification of the cultural, economic, social, or historical heritage of the city. _____</p> <p>E. Portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style. _____</p> <p>F. Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen. <u> X </u></p> <p>G. Identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city. <u> X </u></p> | <p>H. Embodiments of elements of architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation. _____</p> <p>I. Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites, or areas which are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on historic, cultural, or architectural motif. <u> X </u></p> <p>J. Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city. <u> X </u></p> <p>K. Archeological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories of historic or prehistoric value. _____</p> <p>L. Value as an aspect of community sentiment or public pride. <u> X </u></p> |
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Recommendation

The Landmark Survey Task Force requests the Historic Landmark Preservation Committee to deem this proposed landmark meritorious of historic recognition as outlined in city ordinance 19-A.

Date:

Further, this task force endorses the preservation criteria, policy recommendations, and landmark boundary as presented by the Dept. of Urban Planning staff.

Chairman, Landmark Survey Task Force

Michael Stivers

Program Coordinator
Historic Preservation Program

..... Preservation Analysis

STRUCTURE

- 1. Surface Materials
- 2. Fenestration and Portals
 - a. style,type
 - b. o/w ratio
 - c. rhythms
 - d. placement
- 3. Trim and Detailing
 - a. style
 - b. unique trim or detailing
 - c. structural members
- 4. Roof
 - a. style,form
 - b. slope
 - c. materials
- 5. Design Concepts
 - a. stylistic demands
 - b. functional concepts
- 6. Utilities
 - a. design
 - b. placement
- 7. Signs
 - a. style,design
 - b. placement
- 8. Exterior Connections
 - a. design
 - b. penetration points

SITE

- X 1. Prohibited Structure Areas
 - a. approach
 - b. view corridors X
 - c. site feature protection
 - d. vertical additions X
- 2. Access/Egress
- 3. Adjacent R.O.W.'s
 - a. existing treatment X
 - b. proposed changes X
- 4. Landscaping
 - a. existing plant removal X
 - b. new plant selection X
 - c. site design X
- 5. Site Fixtures
 - a. furniture X
 - b. sculpture,art
 - c. paths X
 - d. utility units
 - e. signs
- 6. Lighting
 - a. exteriors X
 - b. grounds

COLOR

- X 1. Surface Materials X
- 2. Trim and Details X
- 3. Roof
- 4. Utilities
- 5. Signs
- 6. Site Fixtures
- 7. Accent Color X

..... Land Use Analysis

Proposed zoning change:

from: No Change

to: _____

Recommended use variances:

None

