

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: C14H-2009-0013

HLC DATE:

June 22, 2009

PC DATE:

July 14, 2009

APPLICANT: Kappa Kappa Gamma House Association

HISTORIC NAME: Kappa Kappa Gamma House

WATERSHED: Waller Creek

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 2001 University Avenue

ZONING FROM: MF-4-NP to MF-4-H-NP

SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from multi-family residence, neighborhood plan (MF-4-NP) district to multi-family residence – Historic Landmark – neighborhood plan (MF-4-H-NP) combining district zoning.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: Recommended the proposed zoning change from multi-family residence, neighborhood plan (MF-4-NP) district to multi-family residence – Historic Landmark – neighborhood plan (MF-4-H-NP) combining district zoning. Vote: 6-0.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: Recommended the proposed zoning change from multi-family residence, neighborhood plan (MF-4-NP) district to multi-family residence – Historic Landmark – neighborhood plan (MF-4-H-NP) combining district zoning. Vote: 7-0 (Hui and Castillo absent).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The house is not listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984), but is a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (1989).

CITY COUNCIL DATE: August 6, 2009

ACTION:

ORDINANCE READINGS: 1ST 2ND 3RD

ORDINANCE NUMBER:

CASE MANAGER: Steve Sadowsky

PHONE: 974-6454

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION: None

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The ca. 1939 Kappa Kappa Gamma House was designed by prominent Houston architect Birdsall E. Briscoe and is a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark.

Architecture:

Three-story rectangular-plan side-gabled Georgian Revival-styled brick dormitory building with a two-story central entry porch, Ionic columns and pilasters, various multi-light fenestration, and Greek flourishes in the cornice and entry surround.

Historical Associations:

The ca. 1939 Kappa Kappa Gamma House at the University of Texas was designed by noted Houston architect Birdsall E. Briscoe, who also built Bayou Bend, the home of Miss Ima Hogg, in Houston, as well as many other residences in the River Oaks and Cortlandt Place neighborhoods of Houston. Briscoe, the great-grandson of John R. Harris, for whom Harris County (Houston), Texas was named, was born in 1876, educated at Texas A&M University and the University of Texas, and associated with the most prominent architectural firms in Houston at that time. His friendship with the Hogg family resulted in numerous commissions for grand houses in the best sections of Houston. He also remodeled the Patton-Varner House in Brazoria County for Ima and William Clifford Hogg, which became the nucleus of the Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historic Park near West Columbia. Briscoe was known for his attention to detail, as well his exceptional sense of proportion and studies of historic architectural styles. The vast majority of his work was residential, and in Houston. He was commissioned in 1938 by the sorority board, which included Mrs. Walter E. Long of Austin, after they traveled to Houston to review his residential projects there. The bricks for the house were made specially for this project by Neill Boldrick of Fort Worth, whose wife was also a Kappa.

The current Kappa Kappa Gamma House was necessary due to the growth of the sorority at the University. The UT chapter of the sorority, Beta Xi, was founded in 1902. The original sorority house was at the corner of 24th and Rio Grande Streets, but with the growth of the sorority and the wish of the sorority sisters to be closer to campus, the sorority appointed a board to locate and purchase a new site for the sorority house. The house association was established in 1936 at the home of Lucile Fisher, one of the founders of Pemberton Heights. Two years later, they had purchased the site at 20th and University, and had contracted with Birdsall Briscoe to design the house. The house was completed in 1939.

The sorority has included many of Austin's and Texas' most prominent women within its ranks, including the wives of governors, judges, professors, and civic leaders. The sorority has always maintained a long tradition of philanthropy and civic responsibility, and has been active in numerous charitable activities.

The house was designated a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark in 1989.

PARCEL NO.: 02120307010000

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Lot 5 and the South 60 feet of Lot 4, Outlot 18, Division D, Louis Horst's Addition.

ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT: \$9,503 (income-producing); city portion: \$2,296

APPRAISED VALUE: \$1,415,657

PRESENT USE: Sorority house

CONDITION: Excellent

PRESENT OWNER:

Kappa Kappa Gamma House Association
2001 University Avenue
Austin, Texas 78705

DATE BUILT: ca. 1939


ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS: A "garden room" was added to the back of the house in 1972.

ORIGINAL OWNER(S):

Kappa Kappa Gamma House Association (1938)

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: Recorded Texas Historic Landmark

[illegible]

 **SUBJECT TRACT**
 **ZONING BOUNDARY**
 **PENDING CASE**

ZONING CASE#: C14H-2009-0013
ADDRESS: 2001 UNIVERSITY AVE
SUBJECT AREA: 0.000 ACRES
GRID: J23
MANAGER: S. SADOWSKY



This map has been produced by G.I.S. Services for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.



Kappa Kappa Gamma House, University of Texas
ca. 1939

A. APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC ZONING

OK to go
SS 4-27-0

PROJECT INFORMATION:

10272967

DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY	
APPLICATION DATE: <u>5/30/09</u>	FILE NUMBER(S): <u>C1442009-003</u>
TENTATIVE HLC DATE: _____	
TENTATIVE PC or ZAP DATE: _____	
TENTATIVE CC DATE: _____	
CASE MANAGER: <u>Steve S.</u>	CITY INITIATED: YES / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
APPLICATION ACCEPTED BY: <u>Carmen</u>	ROLLBACK: YES/NO

BASIC PROJECT DATA:

→ 1. OWNER'S NAME: Kappa Kappa Gamma Home Association
2. PROJECT NAME: Kappa Kappa Gamma House
3. PROJECT STREET ADDRESS (or Range): 2001 University Ave.
ZIP: 78705 COUNTY: Travis
IF PROJECT ADDRESS CANNOT BE DEFINED ABOVE:
LOCATED _____ FRONTAGE FEET ALONG THE N. S. E. W. (CIRCLE ONE) SIDE OF
APPROXIMATELY _____ (ROAD NAME PROPERTY FRONTS ONTO), WHICH IS
INTERSECTION WITH _____ DISTANCE FROM ITS
_____ CROSS STREET.

AREA TO BE REZONED:

4. ACRES _____	(OR)	SQ.FT. _____			
5. ZONING AND LAND USE INFORMATION:					
EXISTING ZONING	EXISTING USE	TRACT# (IF MORE THAN 1)	ACRES / SQ. FT.	PROPOSED USE	PROPOSED ZONING
<u>MF4-NP</u>	<u>Sorority House</u>	_____	_____	<u>Sorority House</u>	<u>MF4-NP-H</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

RELATED CURRENT CASES:

6. ACTIVE ZONING CASE? (YES / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO)	FILE NUMBER: _____
7. RESTRICTIVE COVENANT? (YES / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO)	FILE NUMBER: _____
8. SUBDIVISION? (YES / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO)	FILE NUMBER: _____
9. SITE PLAN? (YES / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO)	FILE NUMBER: _____

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION (SUBDIVISION REFERENCE OR METES AND BOUNDS):

10a. SUBDIVISION REFERENCE: Name: Horsts Louis Subdivision
 Block(s) _____ Lot(s) 5 + South 60' Outlot(s) 18
 Plat Book: _____ Page 2874 Div. D
 Number: _____
 10b. METES AND BOUNDS (Attach two copies of certified field notes if subdivision reference is not available or zoning includes partial lots)

DEED REFERENCE CONVEYING PROPERTY TO PRESENT OWNER AND TAX PARCEL I.D.:

11. VOLUME: 548 PAGE: 524-525 TAX PARCEL I.D. NO. 02-1203-0701-0000

OTHER PROVISIONS:

12. IS PROPERTY IN A ZONING COMBINING DISTRICT / OVERLAY ZONE? YES / NO
 TYPE OF COMBINING DIST/OVERLAY ZONE (NCCD, NP, etc) _____
 13. LOCATED IN A LOCAL OR NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES / NO
 14. IS A TIA REQUIRED? YES / NO (NOT REQUIRED IF BASE ZONING IS NOT CHANGING)
 TRIPS PER DAY: _____
 TRAFFIC SERIAL ZONE(S): _____

OWNERSHIP TYPE:

→ 15. SOLE COMMUNITY PROPERTY PARTNERSHIP ☒ CORPORATION TRUST
 If ownership is other than sole or community property, list individuals/partners/principals below or attach separate sheet.

OWNER INFORMATION:

→ 16. OWNER CONTACT INFORMATION
 SIGNATURE: Sara Gieb NAME: Sara Gieb
 FIRM NAME: Kappa Kappa Gamma House Assoc. TELEPHONE NUMBER: 512-263-4226
 STREET ADDRESS: 2001 University Ave.
 CITY: Austin STATE: TX ZIP CODE: 78705
 EMAIL ADDRESS: SaraGieb@gmail.com

AGENT INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE):

17. AGENT CONTACT INFORMATION
 SIGNATURE: Suzanne Deaderick NAME: Suzanne Deaderick
 FIRM NAME: Suzanne Deaderick TELEPHONE NUMBER: 477-2929
 STREET ADDRESS: 2502 Harris Blvd.
 CITY: Austin STATE: TX ZIP CODE: 78703
 CONTACT PERSON: _____ TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____
 EMAIL ADDRESS: Suzanne@Grande.com.net

DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY: _____

D. SUBMITTAL VERIFICATION AND INSPECTION AUTHORIZATION

SUBMITTAL VERIFICATION

My signature attests to the fact that the attached application package is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that proper City staff review of this application is dependent upon the accuracy of the information provided and that any inaccurate or inadequate information provided by me/my firm/etc., may delay the proper review of this application.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT NAME BELOW SIGNATURE AND
INDICATE FIRM REPRESENTED, IF APPLICABLE.

S Deaderick 4-21-09
Signature Date

Suzanne Deaderick
Name (Typed or Printed)

Firm (If applicable)

INSPECTION AUTHORIZATION

As owner or authorized agent, my signature authorizes staff to visit and inspect the property for which this application is being submitted.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT NAME BELOW SIGNATURE AND
INDICATE FIRM REPRESENTED, IF APPLICABLE.

S Deaderick 4-21-09
Signature Date

Suzanne Deaderick
Name (Typed or Printed)

Firm (If applicable)

E. ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

concerning
Subdivision Plat Notes, Deed Restrictions,
Restrictive Covenants
and / or
Zoning Conditional Overlays

I, Suzanne Deaderick have checked for subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions,
(Print name of applicant)

restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlays prohibiting certain uses and/or requiring certain development restrictions i.e. height, access, screening etc. on this property, located at

2001 University Ave.
(Address or Legal Description)
Austin, Texas 78705

If a conflict should result with the request I am submitting to the City of Austin due to subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions, restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlays it will be my responsibility to resolve it. I also acknowledge that I understand the implications of use and/or development restrictions that are a result of a subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions, restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlays.

I understand that if requested, I must provide copies of any and all subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions, restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlay information which may apply to this property.

S Deaderick
(Applicant's signature)

4-21-09
(Date)

TAX CERTIFICATE
Nelda Wells Spears
Travis County Tax Assessor-Collector
P.O. Box 1748
Austin, Texas 78767
(512) 854-9473

NO 1040526

JOINT NUMBER: 02-1203-0701-0000

PROPERTY OWNER:

KAP KAP GAM HOUSE ASSOCIATION
OF BETA XI CHAPT
2001 UNIVERSITY AVE
AUSTIN, TX 78705-5623

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

LOT 5 * & S60FT LOT 4 OLT 18 DIV D
HORSTS LOUIS SUBD

ACRES 0.000 MIN% .00000 TYPE

SITUS INFORMATION: 2001 UNIVERSITY AVE

This is to certify that after a careful check of tax records of this office, the following taxes, delinquent taxes, penalties and interests are due on the described property of the following tax unit(s):

YEAR	ENTITY	TOTAL
2008	AUSTIN ISD	*ALL PAID*
	CITY OF AUSTIN (TRAV)	*ALL PAID*
	TRAVIS COUNTY	*ALL PAID*
	TRAVIS COUNTY HEALTHCARE DISTRICT	*ALL PAID*
	ACC (TRAVIS)	*ALL PAID*

TOTAL SEQUENCE 0

ALL PAID

TOTAL TAX:
UNPAID FEES:
INTEREST ON FEES:
COMMISSION:
TOTAL DUE ==>

ALL PAID
* NONE *
* NONE *
* NONE *
ALL PAID

YES PAID FOR YEAR 2008 \$30,842.93

ALL TAXES PAID IN FULL PRIOR TO AND INCLUDING THE YEAR 2008 EXCEPT FOR UNPAID YEARS LISTED ABOVE.

The above described property may be subject to special valuation based on its use, and additional rollback taxes may become due. (Section 23.55, State Property Tax Code).

Pursuant to Section 31.08 of the State Property Tax Code, there is a fee of \$10.00 for all Tax Certificates.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE ON THIS DATE OF 04/03/2009

Fee Paid: \$10.00

Nelda Wells Spears
Tax Assessor-Collector

By: 

Beta Xi Chapter of Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity

The Beta Xi Chapter of Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity was chartered on the University of Texas campus in 1902. The first chapter house was at the northwest corner of 24th and Rio Grande, but as the sorority grew in membership, the house became very crowded. The girls also wished to be nearer the campus. With the economy improving after the depression, the Beta Xi House Association was formed on August 24, 1936 with the following mission:

“The object of this organization shall be to acquire by gift, devise, purchase or otherwise, real, personal and mixed property and to hold such property in trust for the use and benefit of the Beta Xi Chapter of Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity; to sell, convey, exchange or otherwise dispose of, lease, mortgage, pledge or otherwise encumber said property; and to build, equip, maintain, and manage said chapter house. Any member of Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity in good standing may be a member of this association by paying Twenty-five (\$25.00).”

After many sessions and consultations with Miss Margaret Read, Consulting Architect of the National Fraternity, the Board voted to purchase the lot on the northeast corner of 20th Street and University Avenue. The lot was known as the "Brown lot", having been the residence of Mrs. Mary E. Brown. Upon Mary's death, the property was sold to Mr. E. L. Steck for the sum of \$10,000 on September 6, 1935.

Mr. Steck and his wife, Mary Lena, sold the property to the Beta Xi House Association on September 30, 1936 for the sum of \$13,500. The Stecks had made a 35% return on their investment in one year!

After the purchase of the property in September 1936, it was almost two years before construction of the new house would begin. The House Board took a trip to Houston to view the work of prominent architect Birdsall Parmenas Briscoe. Among the many residences he had designed in Houston, "Bayou Bend", which he did with Mr. John Staub for Miss Ima Hogg in 1928, was among the most notable. Mr. Briscoe was hired to design the Greek Revival style house for the Kappas. The Moore Construction company was chosen as general contractor.

With loans secured, contracts signed, and architectural plans drawn, the August

21, 1938 edition of the American Statesman announced the following:

Start on New Sorority House Highlights Building

Kappa Home Put Under Way For Biggest of Permits

The new chapter house was estimated to cost \$70,000 and would be three stories plus a basement. It would be finished with pink Monticello brick made especially for the house by Mr. Neill Boldrick of Ft. Worth. Mr. Boldrick had a special interest in the house because his wife, Laura West, was a Kappa. The basement was to be the only air conditioned area, and would serve as the chapter room and large recreation room. The rest of the house would be equipped for air conditioning that could be added later. With 39 rooms and 7 baths, it was estimated that the house would accommodate 38 girls. The expected completion date was April 1, 1939, less than 8 months after construction began.

In 1972, a large room was added to the back of the house. It was referred to as "the new room" for several years by the girls living there before finally receiving it's official name, the "Garden Room":

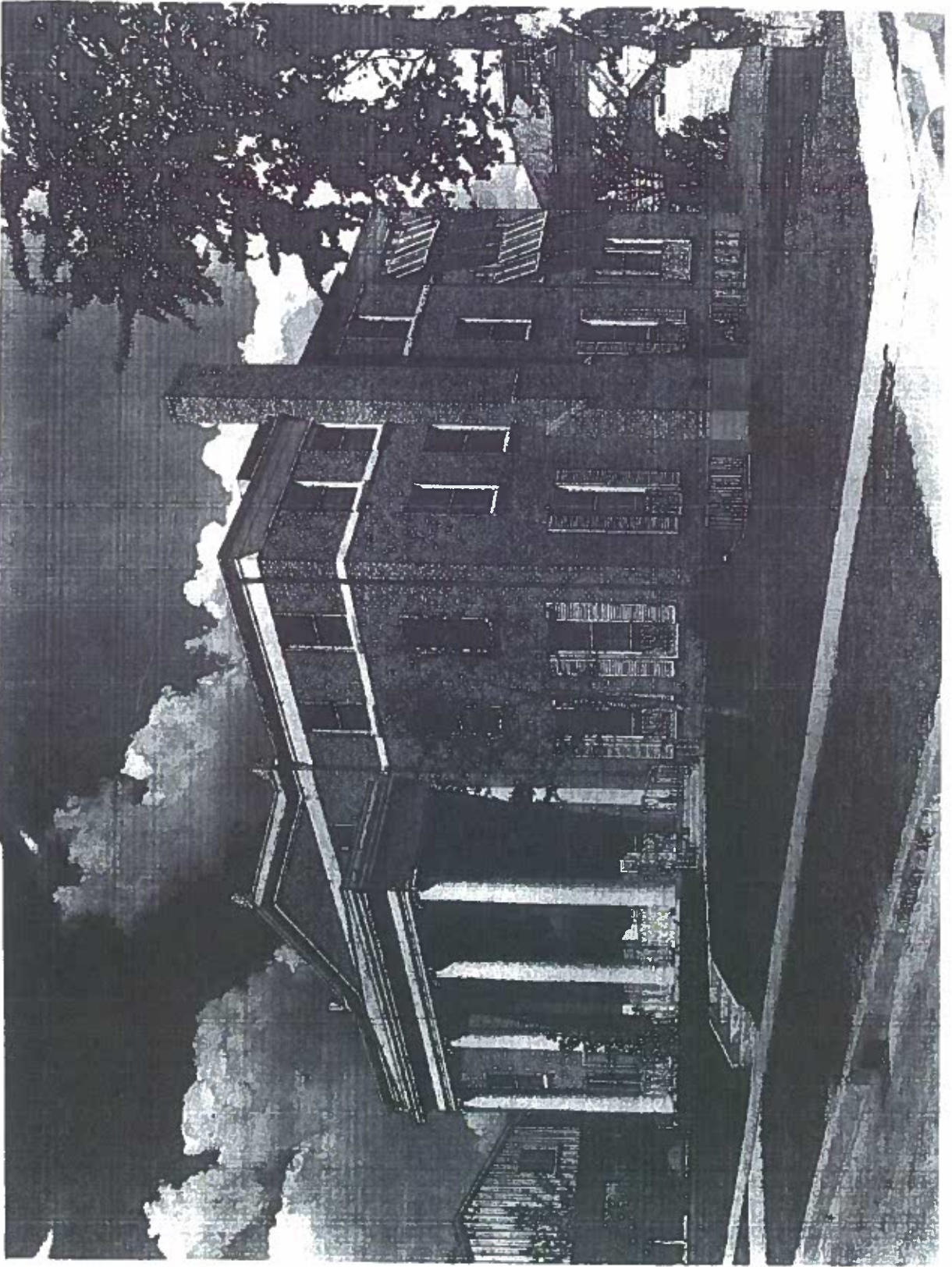
Beta Xi Kappas have ben active in all phases of U. T. life. There have been many Phi Beta Kappas, U. T. Sweethearts, and student leaders. Both the local and national fraternity have excellent scholarship funds of which Beta Xi Kappas have benefited.

Many prominent and famous Kappas have lived in this house over the past 70 years: former First Lady of Texas Mrs. Price Daniel (Jean Baldwin), Mrs. Joe Greenhill (Martha Shuford) whose husband was Chief Justice of the Texas Supreme Court, Mrs. Malcolm Milburn (Beryl Buckley) and Mrs. Roland K. Blumberg (Jane Weinert) who both served on the Board of Regents of the University of Texas. These ladies are outstanding examples of Beta Xi Kappas.

Kappas have always been actively involved in philanthropic work, both locally and nationally. This year the Beta Xi chapter has helped the Scottish Rite Children's Hospital, the Retirement and Nursing Center of Austin, Gensis

Women's Shelter, A Million Thanks (letters to soldiers), The Davis Moon Project, Book Spring/RIF of Austin, and Breakthrough Austin. In past years they have volunteered with the Austin Children's Shelter, the Children's Hospital of Austin, the Lance Armstrong Foundation, and RIF.

The Kappa Kappa Gamma House at 2001 University Avenue in Austin, Texas became a recorded Texas Historic Landmark in 1989. It is a house full of history and beauty...a fine example of Greek Revival architecture...and an important part of Austin's past and present.



Austin History Center

Texas Historical Commission Staff (CJB), 3/13/89

Official Texas Historical Building Marker without post, for
attachment to brick

Travis County (Job #12889)

Location: 2001 University, Austin

KAPPA KAPPA GAMMA HOUSE*

THE BETA XI CHAPTER OF THE KAPPA

KAPPA GAMMA FRATERNITY WAS

CHARTERED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF

TEXAS IN 1902, THE BETA XI HOUSE

ASSOCIATION WAS FORMED IN 1936,

AND CONSTRUCTION OF THIS THREE-

STORY GEORGIAN REVIVAL SORORITY

HOUSE BEGAN IN 1938, DESIGNED BY

NOTED HOUSTON ARCHITECT BIRDSALL P.

BRISCOE, THE HOUSE FEATURES A

TWO-STORY CENTRAL ENTRY PORCH,

IONIC COLUMNS AND PILASTERS, AND

GREEK DETAILS ON THE ROOF CORNICES,**

RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK - 1989***

*3/8 inch lettering to contrast with text

**3/8 inch lettering

***1/4 inch lettering

APPLICATION FORM FOR OFFICIAL TEXAS HISTORICAL MARKER
Texas Historical Commission
State Marker Program
P.O. Box 12276, Austin, Texas 78711

Kecid
12-28-88

Title of Marker (subject to revision by THC staff)		Beta Xi Chapter Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity House		County	Travis
Marker Location (street address and town, or specific directions from nearest town on state highway map)		2001 University Austin, Texas		12889	
Distance and direction of subject from marker site		If not on post, type of surface to which marker will be attached (wood, stone, etc.) Brick			
Owner of Marker Site	Beta Xi House Association Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity	Address	2001 University	City, Zip	Austin, Tex. 78705
Sponsor of Marker	Same	Address		City, Zip	
Signature of County Chairman	Address		City, Zip	Date	
	Sarah J. Harrison 19 N. Park Rd Austin		78746	12-28-88	
Person to whom marker is to be shipped*	Mrs. F. M. Covert, III	Address	4703 Crestway	City, Zip	Austin, Tx. 78731
				Telephone (required)	512 459557

*If marker is to be placed on highway right-of-way, it will be shipped to your district highway engineer.

Please consult the back of this page for specifications of the markers available. Check the items desired below. Approval of the application and narrative must be obtained from the county historical commission, as indicated by the county chairman's signature on this form, before forwarding the material to the Texas Historical Commission. Please do not send payment if ordering subject or building markers; funds will be requested once the application has been approved by the State Marker Committee. Sales tax must be added to the price, except if purchased by a tax exempt organization. Applicants may order a marker with a socket to attach to their own post; however, the cost is the same as a marker furnished with a boundary post.

SUBJECT MARKERS

- ☐ 16" x 12" grave marker (comes with mounting bar) \$225
- ☐ 27" x 42" subject marker with post \$650
- ☐ 27" x 42" subject marker without post \$600
- ☐ 18" x 28" subject marker with post \$375
- ☐ 18" x 28" subject marker without post \$300
- ☐ (We) request that RTHL designation be considered for this structure.
(Please see signature line below.)

BUILDING MARKERS

- ☐ 16" x 12" building marker with post \$350
- ☒ 16" x 12" building marker without post \$300

Applications for building markers will automatically be considered for the RTHL designation. Please read carefully Texas Marker Policies 13 through 18, and indicate that you have done so by signing below.

Wm. M. Covert, III
 Signature of owner
Wm. M. Covert, III

PAPERWEIGHTS

Please indicate quantity desired.

- ___ 3" x 4" plastic paperweight
mounted with replica of marker \$90
Allow two months from completion of marker
for receipt of paperweight.
- ___ Medallion paperweight \$40
Allows four lines of engraving; please indicate desired wording.

DIRECTIONAL SIGNS

Please indicate quantity desired and give location(s) on form above:

- 24" x 24" Historical Markers in City sign \$80
These will be shipped to and placed on your town's city
limits signs by the District Highway Engineer.
- ___ Black and White (for farm-to-market roads, state and U.S. highways)
- ___ Green and White (for interstate highways)
- 18" x 22" Historical Marker directional sign \$80
In black and white only. For city and county roads.
Applicant must supply post and be responsible for placement.
- ___ With arrow pointing straight ahead
- ___ With arrow pointing left
- ___ With arrow pointing right

OTHER

- ☐ National Register plaque \$ 50
- ☐ 12" x 6" supplemental plate \$110
- ☐ 16" x 12" building marker plate only
(see policy #15) \$100
- ☐ Replacement medallion (see policy #15) \$110
- ☐ Bronze stars (for replacement on 1936
granite markers) \$ 25
- ☐ Bronze wreaths (for replacement on
1936 granite markers) \$ 25
- ☐ Bronze seals (for replacement on
1936 granite markers) \$ 65
- ☐ Bronze plates (for replacement on
1936 granite markers) \$185
- ☐ Certificates of appreciation 50¢ each

Beta Xi Chapter of Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity was chartered on The University of Texas campus in 1902.¹ By 1936, the economy in Austin was improving following the depression. The chapter house at 24th and Rio Grande on the northwest corner was becoming very crowded, and the girls also wished to be nearer the campus.

The Beta Xi House Association was formed on August 24, 1936 at the home of Mrs. W. W. Fisher (Lucile Mather).²

"The object of this organization shall be to acquire by gift, devise, purchase or otherwise, real, personal and mixed property and to hold such property in trust for the use and benefit of the Beta Xi Chapter of Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity; to sell, convey, exchange or otherwise dispose of, lease, mortgage, pledge or otherwise encumber said property; and to build, equip, maintain, and manage said chapter house. Any member of Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity in good standing may be a member of this association by paying Twenty-Five (\$25.00)."³

The following members were present at this meeting and were elected to serve as officers; Mrs. Fisher--President, Mrs. R. A. Buford (Christine Littlefield)--Vice-President, Mrs. William Kay Miller (Evelyn Calhoun)--Secretary/Treasurer. The other members were Mrs. Ben H. Powell (Marion Rather) and Miss Augusta Boyle.⁴

After much discussion and informal sessions with Miss Margaret Read, Consulting Architect of the National Fraternity, the Board voted to purchase the lot on the northeast corner of University Avenue and West 20th Street known as the "Brown Lot". It was purchased from Mr. E. L. Steck for the sum of \$13,500.⁵ They also voted to ask Mr. Harris Brush to act as agent for the purchase of the "Brown Lot" and the sale of the property at 2400 Rio Grande.⁶

The Board immediately went to work appointing committees to work on plans, financing the new house, interior decorating, the campaign to raise money, and the grounds. The committee chairmen were:

Finance--Mrs. Ben H. Powell

Plans--Mrs. Walter Long

Interior Decorating--Miss Sue Campbell

Campaign to raise money--Miss Augusta Boyle⁷

Grounds--Mrs. J. W. Scarbrough⁸

After the Board's trip to Houston to view the work of Mr. Birdsell Parmenas Briscoe, he was hired to be the architect for a Greek Revival house.⁹ At this point, it is fitting to give some history of this very prominent architect.

Mr. Briscoe was born in Old Harrisburg, Texas on June 10, 1876. Harris County was named for his great-grandfather, John R. Harris. His grandmother was Mary Jane Harris Briscoe, who was one of the organizers of the Daughters of the Republic

of Texas. It's first meeting was held in her home in Houston on November 6, 1891.¹⁰

He attended San Antonio Academy, A&M College and the University of Texas (Class of 1898), studying math and engineering as neither A&M College nor the University of Texas offered a formal degree in architecture. He then settled in Houston.¹¹

Briscoe's nomination as a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1949 described his contribution to the field of Architecture:

"Although the quality of Mr. Briscoe's architectural work has been a pronounced influence throughout the Southwest, he has rendered his profession just as valuable a service in the example set by his high standard of professional practice. He was outstanding for his insistence that architecture should be practiced in a manner in keeping with its noble traditions. His splendid character has been recognized by architect and layman alike. He has been an example to his fellows and an honor to his profession.

His achievements have been in residential lines, not limited to any certain styles but including the several periods of English, French, and American domestic work. Though respectful of tradition, his work is only comparatively stylistic and none of it has the dryness which denotes the near-sighted archeologist. Although at his best in handling the formal types, his individuality is expressed in investing the informal styles with a graceful, an almost classic restraint which has at once elegance and warmth."¹²

He was advanced to the Fellowship of the American Institute of Architects in 1949 in Houston.¹³

The list of residences he did in Houston reads like a "Who's Who". Among them was "Bayou Bend" built in 1928--the house for Miss Ima Hogg which he did with Mr. John Staub.¹⁴

Mr. Briscoe died September 18, 1971.¹⁵

The House Board worked very hard letting the contract for the house and securing loans. An article from the Sunday Austin American Statesman dated August 21, 1938, was headlined "Start on new Sorority House Highlights Building." It was the biggest of the building permits--\$70,000.00. (See attachments which include the newspaper article and the architect's drawing and sketch of the floor plans.) April 1, 1939 was the expected completion date.¹⁶

Mr. Neill Boldrick of Ft. Worth made the brick especially for the house. Mr. Boldrick had a special interest in the house as his wife was a Kappa--the former Laura West of Austin.¹⁷

The house had an addition of a big room built in 1972.¹⁸ The room is an extension of the dining room to the wall at the back of the property--it is called the "Garden Room". A work room and storage room are below it. Some changes were made upstairs on the back of the house to convert sleeping porches to bedrooms to accommodate more girls in the house.¹⁹

This house is important to the history of Austin. It is so beautiful in the shadow of the Tower and Littlefield Fountain. It is interesting to note that Christine Littlefield served as the first Vice-President of the House Association.²⁰

Beta Xi Kappas have been active in all phases of U. T. life. There have been many Phi Beta Kappas, U. T. Sweethearts, and student leaders. Both the local and national fraternity have excellent scholarship funds of which Beta Xi Kappas have benefited.

Also many prominent Texans have lived in this house: A former First Lady of Texas, Mrs. Price Daniel (Jean Baldwin); Mrs. Joe Greenhill (Martha Shuford), whose husband was Chief Justice of the Texas Supreme Court; Mrs. Malcolm Milburn (Beryl Buckley) and Mrs. Roland K. Blumberg (Jane Weinert) who served on the Board of Regents of the University of Texas. These ladies are outstanding examples of our Beta Xi Kappas.

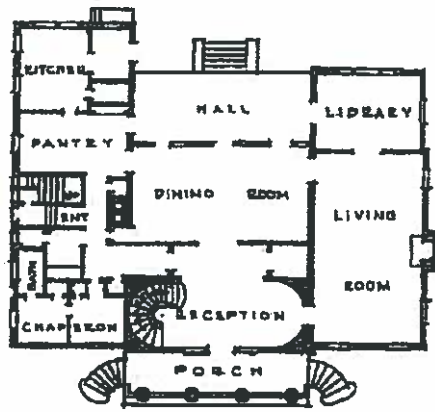
Beta Xi Kappas have strived through the years to pay proper homage to this pristine example of Greek Revival architecture through careful management and well-orchestrated fund drives. Our greatest desire is to secure this legacy for posterity through the attainment of this historical marker.

Mr. Arthur Pope Watson, Jr., who is a Fellow of American Society of Interior Designers and was the decorator of the house for many years, always said to the House Board and to the girls, "This is the finest sorority house in the South, and it is an excellent example of Greek Revival Architecture."²¹

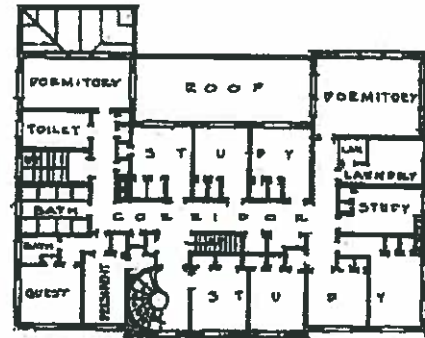
Researched and written by:

Martha Woods Covert (Mrs. F. M. Covert, III)
4703 Crestway Drive
Austin, Texas 78731
512-459-5576
November, 1988

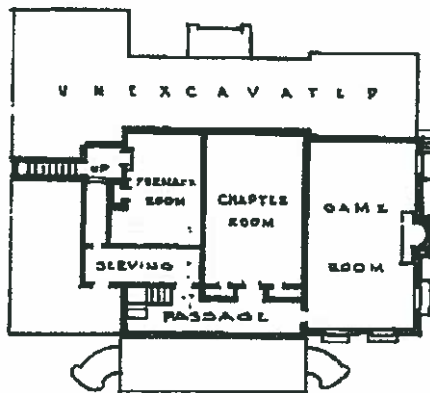
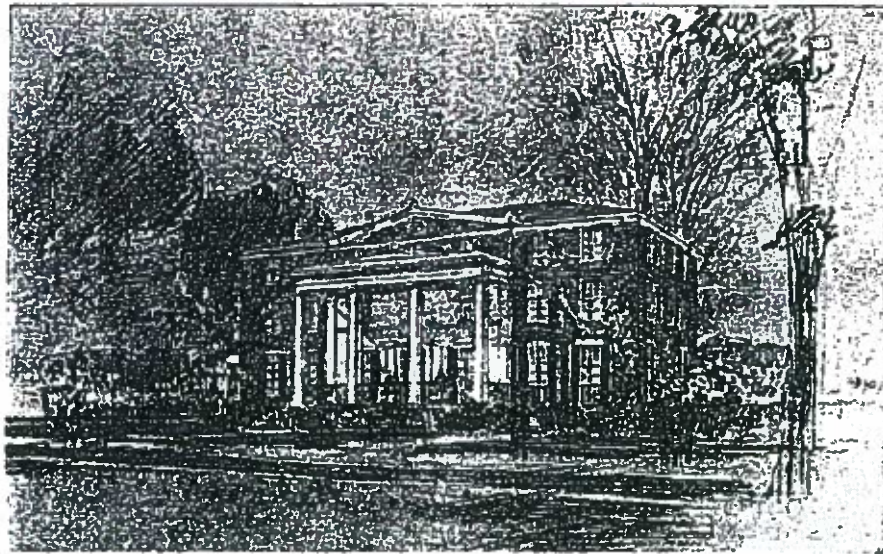
1. Original charter is framed at the Kappa House.
2. Beta Xi House Association Minutes, Vol. 1, Page 11, August 24, 1936.
3. Ibid., Vol. 1, Page 3, Constitution.
4. Ibid., Vol. 1, Page 11, August 24, 1936.
5. Ibid., Vol. 1, Page 12, August 24, 1936.
6. Ibid., Vol. 1, Page 12, August 24, 1936.
7. Ibid., Vol. 1, Pages 13 & 14, September 19, 1936.
8. Ibid., Vol. 1, Page 18, November 21, 1936.
9. Ibid., Vol. 1, Page 29, April 17, 1937, Page 32, May 15, 1937.
10. Susman, James Charles, The Architecture of Birdsall Parmenas Briscoe, Thesis for M. A. Degree, University of Texas at Austin, December 1979, Page 1.
11. Ibid., Page 2.
12. Ibid., Page 84.
13. Ibid., Page 84.
14. Ibid., Page 87.
15. Ibid., Page 82.
16. Beta Xi House Association Minutes, Vol. 1, Page 58, January 19, 1939.
17. Told to me by Mr. Boldrick in 1952 at the Kappa House.
18. Beta Xi House Association Minutes, Vol. 3, Page 49, November 18, 1971.
19. Pictures and a drawing are attached.
20. Beta Xi House Association Minutes, Vol. 1, Page 11, August 24, 1936.
21. Mr. Watson was the decorator for 26 years. I have heard him make this comment many times.



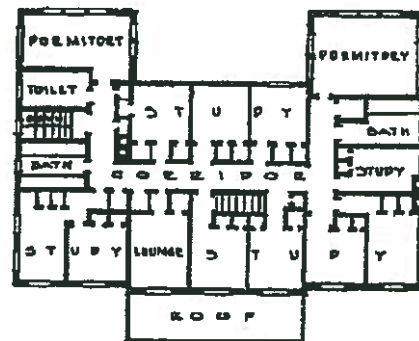
• FIRST FLOOR PLAN •



• SECOND FLOOR PLAN •



• BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN •



• THIRD FLOOR PLAN •

T.R. FERRENEACH, SAN ANTONIO
CHAIRMAN
MRS. H.L. LONG, WILCOXE
VICE-CHAIRMAN
DR. DAN A. WILLIS, FORT WORTH
SECRETARY

MRS. LUCILLE A. ANDERSON, SAN MARCOS
JOHN M. SEDWICK, SAN ANTONIO
CARBIELO B. CHRISTENSEN, AUSTIN
GEORGE CHRISTIAN, AUSTIN



RICHARD M. COLLINS, DALLAS
HAROLD D. COOPER, FERRYTON
MARTHA J. CROWLEY, RICHARDSON
MAXINE E. FLOURNOY, ALICE
BETTY E. HANNA, BRECKENRIDGE
SUSANNE W. HARRIS, SAN ANTONIO
KARL A. KOMATHI, FORT WORTH
JAMES S. NABORS, LAKE PARKER
MARY ANN PENRYMAN, AUSTIN
GAT BATLUF, AUSTIN
EVANGELINE L. WHORTON,
GALVESTON ISLAND

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

P.O. BOX 12276

AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711
March 7, 1989

(512)463-6100

Sarah J. Barriman
19 N. Peak Road
Austin, Texas 78746

RE: KAPPA KAPPA GAMMA HOUSE
2001 University, Austin
16 x 12 building marker without post (Job #12889)

Dear Sarah:

This letter is to notify you that the State Marker Committee has reviewed and approved the above-referenced structure for the Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) designation. This special status, awarded to properties deemed worthy of preservation for their architectural integrity and historical associations, conveys a measure of legal protection to the building. Notification of any modifications to the exterior of this structure should be made to the Texas Historical Commission at least 60 days prior to the commencement of work. Please refer to marker policies 13 through 18 of your application guidelines for further information on the RTHL designation.

At this time, payment for the marker is due. A check, in the amount of \$324.00 (\$300.00 if paid for by a tax-exempt organization) should be made payable to the Texas Historical Commission and sent to the letterhead address as soon as possible.

Once payment has been received, the application will be placed in line to have the marker inscription written. The inscription will not be prepared until after funds have been received. When the text is written, a copy will be sent to you and any parties listed below for review.

The Texas Historical Commission wishes to congratulate you on the preservation of this fine structure and appreciates your effort to record Texas history in this manner.

Sincerely,

Frances Rickard, Director
State Marker Program

cc: Beta Xi House Association
Mrs. F. M. Covert III

P.S. Payment must be made immediately if we are to try to meet the May dedication date. Thank you!

THE HANDBOOK OF TEXAS Online

[return to handbook view](#)

BRISCOE, BIRDSALL PARMENAS (1876-1971). Birdsall P. Briscoe, architect, was born on June 10, 1876, in Harrisburg, Texas, the son of Andrew Birdsall and Annie Frances (Paine) Briscoe. He was the grandson of Andrew Briscoe^{qv} and the great-grandson of John R. Harris,^{qv} founder of Harrisburg. He grew up on his parents' ranch near Goliad and attended San Antonio Academy, ^{qv} Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College (now Texas A&M University), and the University of Texas. During the Spanish-American War Briscoe served in the United States Army Infantry as a sergeant; he subsequently served as a major in the army during World War I. ^{qv}

He learned architecture through apprenticeships with the Houston architects C. Lewis Wilson and Lewis Sterling Green. After a brief partnership with Green (1909-11), Briscoe began independent practice in 1912. From 1922 until 1926 he was in partnership with Sam H. Dixon, Jr. From 1919 until his retirement in 1955, Briscoe shared an office with Maurice J. Sullivan.^{qv} Although from time to time he collaborated with both Dixon and Sullivan on nonresidential commissions, Briscoe was best known for his elegantly composed and detailed houses.

He established his reputation as an exceptional designer at the outset of his career. His aptitude for disciplined formal composition and correct, scholarly rendition of historic detail placed him at the forefront of the eclectic trend in Houston architecture during the second decade of the twentieth century. Briscoe's finest houses, designed between 1926 and 1940, exhibit the array of historical architectural styles characteristic of American eclectic architecture and are distinguished by the architect's gift for harmonious proportion and full-bodied ornamental detail.

He worked extensively in the Houston neighborhoods of Courtlandt Place, Shadyside, Broadacres, and River Oaks. Among his clients for houses were William Lockhart Clayton (1917), W. T. Carter (1920), R. Lee Blaffer^{qv} (1920), Walter H. Walne (1925), Burdine Clayton Anderson (1928), Robert W. Wier (1928), Milton R. Underwood (1934), Wirt A. Paddock (1936), I. H. Kempner, Jr. (1936), and Dillon Anderson^{qv} (1938). Outside Houston, Briscoe's best-known project was the remodeling of the Patton-Varner House near West Columbia (*see* varner-hogg plantation state historic park) for Ima and William Clifford Hogg^{qv} in 1920.

Briscoe married Ruth Dillman in 1927. He joined the American Institute of Architects in 1921 and was elected a fellow of the institute in 1949. From 1934 until 1941 he served as district officer for South Texas of the Historic American Buildings Survey. He was the author of two western adventure novels, *In the Face of the Sun* (1934) and *Spurs from San Isidro* (1951). He was a parishioner of Christ Church. He died in Houston on September 18, 1971, and is buried at Oak Hill Cemetery in Goliad.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: James Charles Susman, *The Architecture of Birdsall Parmenas Briscoe* (M.A. thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1979).

Stephen Fox

DEDICATION CEREMONIES

FOR AN

HISTORICAL MARKER

FOR THE

K A P P A K A P P A G A M M A H O U S E

o o o

2001 UNIVERSITY AVENUE

AUSTIN, TEXAS

o o o

SATURDAY, MAY 13, 1989

AT TWELVE O'CLOCK, NOON

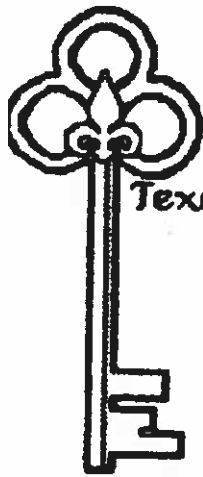
o o o

TAPED, PHOTOGRAPHED,
TRANSCRIBED AND BOUND

B Y

MULKEY OWENS, MEMBER
TRAVIS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

o o o



**The Beta Xi House Corporation of
Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity
invites you to the unveiling of a
Texas Historical Marker for their Sorority House**

May 13, 1989

2001 University Avenue

Twelve o'clock Noon

Brunch: 11-1:00 p.m. \$10.00 per person

**Make checks payable to KKG: c/o Martha Covert
4703 Crestway, Austin, 78731. Call 459-5576
for reservations. R.S.V.P. by April 28, 1989.**



KAPPA KAPPA GAMMA
HISTORICAL MARKER DEDICATION
(Transcript of tape)

I am Mulkey Owens, a member of the Travis County Historical Commission. This is Saturday, May 13, 1989, at twelve o'clock noon. We are at 2001 University Avenue, Austin, Texas, for the purpose of dedicating an Historical Marker for the Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity House.

Lynn Box, Chairperson of the Kappa Kappa Gamma Reunion: Good afternoon. We are glad that we are gathering here (Much talking in background. Mrs. Box had difficulty getting the crowd quiet.). O.K. Let's just go ahead.

Good afternoon. We welcome you on behalf of the House Board to the fifty-third meeting of the House Association of Beta Xi Chapter. I would like to introduce to you all at this time our Austin Alumna President, K. K. Rice. (Applause).

K. K. Rice, President Austin Alumna President: Can you hear me?

Its my pleasure to welcome you back to Austin and back to Kappa - back to Beta Xi where it all started. If you have any trouble this weekend, then please let me know. We are the host city and we have lots of alumna here to help out.

At this time I'd like to present Lynn and Martha - come over here - come here - with six hundred and thirty nine dollars for the - from the Austin Alumna Association from last year's proceeds from our bulb sales. (Applause).

Lynn Box: At this time I'd like to introduce to you the reason we are all here. We have an active Susan

Kramer who would like to do an invocation in setting the stage for our dedication of the Historical Marker.
Susan Kramer.

Susan Kramer, President Kappa Kappa Gamma: The walls of the house are not built of wood, brick or sand, but of truth and loyalty and pleasant sounds, the friction of living, the clash of personalities are not bidden rugs or polished floors but by conciliation, confession and self-control. The house is not a structure where bodies meet but a hearth to stand upon which friends mingle, separate flames of soul where more purposely they unite, the more clearly they sing and the more straighter they rise toward heaven. Your house is your fortress in a warring world and stands your fatigue and winds at night. The beauty of the house is harmony. The security of the house is loyalty. The joy of the house is love. The rule of the house is service. The comfort of the house is a contented spirit. The maker of the house, every human house, is God himself, the same who made the stars and built the world. Please bow your heads.

Father, thank You for bringing everyone here to reunite old friendships. Thank You for helping us to build our legacy and for all of the people who have given so much to make the days reunion possible. Please be with us this weekend and get us home safely. In Your name we pray.
Amen.

Lynn Box: At this time I would like to recognize an alum who spearheaded the campaign - my co-chair Martha Covert, who helped us acquire the Historical Marker.
Martha Woods Covert. (Applause).

Martha Covert, Co-chair of the Reunion Committee:

I don't like microphones.

I'm so glad all of you are here. And at this time I would like to recognize several members of the Travis County Historical Commission who are here: Sarah Harriman, the chairman - would you hold up your hand Sarah? (Applause). Avadne Montandon; (Applause). Lila Ann Parker (Applause); Mulkey Owens and Eugene Wukasch (Applause). If there are others here, we welcome you. I just haven't seen you, and I'm sorry.

At this time I'd like to introduce Evelyn Bennet - if she is out there - she is in charge of Panhellenic at the University, and she has been a wonderful, wonderful friend to Kappa through the years. Evelyn, would you hold up your hand if you are out here. She's here somewhere - maybe she's in the house. I'm sorry.

At this time we are privileged to have Dr. William Livingston who is Vice-President at the University and Dean of Graduate Studies. Bill is very special to us because he's married to the former Lana Sanor of Columbus, Ohio, and I might add that Lana's sister, Betty Cameron, was our Executive Director, and her other sister, Nancy Cannell, is Curator of our Heritage Museum in Columbus. And Bill is going to say a few words from the University of Texas. (Applause).

I want Lana to come up too. (More applause). Where are you Lana? Let's give our Kappa Lana a hand. (Applause).

Dr. William Livingston, Vice-President of U.T. at Austin:

The reason I'm here, as Martha explained, is to give you a word of welcome on behalf of the University of Texas. The excuse I have for being here is Lana, and I'm delighted with both responsibilities. I've lived and breathed

Kappa for many a long year. I married one - I used to hang out in the Kappa House, not unlike this one, in Columbus. After I married her, I found I had a Kappa mother-in-law and two Kappa sisters-in-law, but never until now did I ever really feel great in Kappas. (Laughter).

I have no speech to make. My function here is to merely add legitimacy to your proceedings. I am delighted to see you all - I'm delighted you are here - you are all part of the great tradition of the University of Texas. I congratulate you on this beautiful house - I congratulate you on this beautiful crowd - and I'm very pleased to be here. Good luck to you all. (Applause).

Martha Covert: Thank you, Bill. That was wonderful.

At this time - at this time our speaker - I'll introduce him. Mr. Peter Flagg Maxson who is our Architectural Historian for the Texas Historical Commission. Peter is a graduate of St. Marks School in Dallas. He's a graduate of Trinity University in Hartford, Connecticut, and has a Master's from the University of Virginia, and was such a help to me when I was writing my application for the marker. At this time its a real pleasure to introduce Mr. Maxson.

Peter Flagg Maxson, Architectural Historian for the Texas Historical Commission: Thank you, Mrs. Covert.

Ladies, I am delighted to be here today. I've heard bits and pieces about the Kappa House over the years. My sister-in-law, Margie Puggy Maxson did time here in the early sixties, and, of course, told wonderful things about it. It is, also, when I first moved to Austin, that I got the first impression of fraternity and sorority houses that was of architectural interest.

This is one that I was immediately struck by the first time I saw it, so its a pleasure to have an excuse to compliment you on it.

We are here, in part, to celebrate a middle-aged building of the sort that frequently suffers in Texas by being too old to be new and too new to be old. In my home town of Dallas there are thirty-nine buildings in Highland Park, or Preston Hollow that frequently are considered bulldozer bait and - O.K. (He was too close to the microphone and someone asked him to step back) - and written off as worthless buildings and subsequently demolished or altered beyond recognition. It is, therefore, refreshing to find so many people rejoicing in a 1939 building. It is very fine architecturally and its an interesting architectural hybrid - part Greek Revival, as the columns and so on will attest, and some nice art deco detailing too. The front door, for instance - its a wonderful art deco element. It is also the work of a - one of the most important Texas architects of his day - Birdsall E. Briscoe - a brilliant Houston architect who designed many of the River Oaks finest, and also Bayou Bend for another Texas Ex, Miss Ima Hogg. Then there are indeed some similarities architecturally between this and Bayou Bend.

But, anyway, treasure this building, continue to treasure this building as you have. Hopefully in the year 2039 those undergraduates that you see today will return as septigenerian matrons for the buildings one-hundredth anniversary, and, again, they will enjoy it in all in between. Thank you very much. (Applause).

Martha Covert: Peter and I are going over and unveil the marker, and I'm going to read what is on it.

(Martha Covert and Peter Flagg Maxim step over and unveil the Historical Marker). (Applause).

Its says: KAPPA KAPPA GAMMA HOUSE

THE BETA XI CHAPTER OF THE KAPPA
KAPPA GAMMA FRATERNITY WAS
CHARTERED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF
TEXAS IN 1902. THE BETA XI HOUSE
ASSOCIATION WAS FORMED IN 1936
AND CONSTRUCTION OF THIS THREE-
STOREY GEORGIAN REVIVAL SORORITY
HOUSE BEGAN IN 1938. DESIGNED BY
NOTED HOUSTON ARCHITECT BIRDSALL P.
BRISCOE, THE HOUSE FEATURES A
TWO-STOREY CENTRAL ENTRY PORCH,
IONIC COLUMNS, PILASTERS AND
GREEK DETAILS OF THE ROOF CORNICE.

RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK-1989

This concludes our part of this program and now Lynn is gonna continue with a little more of her House Association meeting. But I do feel that this is gonna be a memorable year for the history of our house, and we are so delighted that all of you could be a part of it, and I do appreciate all of you coming. (Applause).

Lynn Box: This will also be a record because it will be the shortest Association meeting you will ever attend for our House Board.

I would like, at this time - like to announce our financial status. Right now the House Board has

\$97,375.59. Building the legacy to this date has raised \$221,244.19. (Applause).

Well, its not what you have but what you share, and we thank you for sharing so generously.

At this time, and with great excitment, I would like to pass the gavel to the next President of the House Board. At this time, and I must admit this is with a great deal of delight. (Laughter). Susie and I used to run down the steps of the Kappa House with our tennis racquet in hand - not gavels. Also I would like to ask for you to give an "AYE" of affirmation to this slate of officers: Susie Thomas Jastro, President; Janice Johnston Williston, Vice-President; Kay Lynn Kriegel McNabb, Secretary; Cathy Willis Moseley, Treasurer; and two new Board members that will be coming on. Pam Jarvis Foster and Kitty McDonald Terry and Kay Lynn Kriegel McNabb. Would you please give a vote of affirmation by saying "AYE".

Audience: "AYE".

Lynn Box: Thank you. (Laughter). At this time the 53rd meeting of the House Association is called to closure.

Thank you for being here. (Applause).



KAPPA KAPPA GAMMA HOUSE

THE BETA XI CHAPTER OF THE KAPPA KAPPA GAMMA FRATERNITY WAS CHARTERED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS IN 1902. THE BETA XI HOUSE ASSOCIATION WAS FORMED IN 1936 AND CONSTRUCTION OF THIS THREE-STOREY GEORGIAN REVIVAL SORORITY HOUSE BEGAN IN 1938. DESIGNED BY NOTED HOUSTON ARCHITECT BIRDSALL P. BRISCOE, THE HOUSE FEATURES A TWO-STOREY CENTRAL ENTRY PORCH, IONIC CDLUMNS, PILASTERS AND GREEK DETAILS OF THE ROOF CORNICE.

RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK-1989

Note: The above Historical Marker is on the building located at 2001 University Avenue, Austin, Travis County, Texas.