



JUANITA J. CRAFT CIVIL RIGHTS HOUSE
RESTORATION PROJECT

CITY OF DALLAS ARTS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS
COMMISSION UPDATE

JUNE 20, 2019

INTRODUCTION

Juanita J. Craft was central to the civil rights movement in Dallas and her native state of Texas.

From 1950 until her death in 1985, Mrs. Craft's residence at 2618 Warren Avenue served as command central as she established a vast network across the state of Texas to promote equal rights for all Americans:

- Organizing 182 branches of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- Championing integration of the Texas State Fair in 1961.
- Working through the NAACP's Texas State Conference of Branches, Mrs. Craft fought for the right of African Americans to serve on a jury, vote in the Democratic primaries, and receive an education from professional and collegiate schools.
- She was the first African American woman in Dallas County to vote
- Craft was the first African American woman to serve on the Dallas City Council.

The Juanita Craft House is an important historic resource in the City of Dallas with local, state and national significance. The house, willed by Mrs. Craft for civic use, is now owned by the city.

CITY OF DALLAS, JUANITA J. CRAFT CIVIL RIGHTS HOUSE STEERING COMMITTEE

Mr. Cannon Flowers, Chair	Cultural Affairs Commissioner, at-large
Mr. Irungu Bakari	Community Leader & Musician
Ms. Willie Mae Coleman	Community Leader, Civil Rights Historian
Mr. Philip Collins	Cultural Affairs Commissioner, Vice-Chair, D7
Mr. Steven Downer	Event Organizer, Community Volunteer
Dr. Froswa' Booker-Drew, Ph.D.	State Fair of Texas
Hon. Kevin Felder	Dallas City Councilman, District 7
Rev. Clarence Glover	Civil Rights Educator and Leader
Ms. Joanna Hampton, AIA	Preservation Dallas
Mr. Jesse Hornbuckle	Cultural Affairs Commissioner, at-large
Ms. Gina Norris	State Fair of Texas Board of Directors, Chair
Mr. Donald Payton	Landmark Commissioner, D7
Mr. Rafiq Salleh-Flowers	Design Strategist, TEGNA Media (project creative)
Ms. Katherine Seale	Landmark Commissioner, Chair
Mr. John Spriggins	South Dallas Cultural Center Manager
Ms. Candace Thompson	Baylor Scott & White Outreach
Mr. Chandler Vaughan	Juanita J. Craft Foundation and Estate Executor
Ms. Sonya Woods	City of Dallas, Park Board Member, D7

CITY OF DALLAS, JUANITA J. CRAFT CIVIL RIGHTS HOUSE STEERING COMMITTEE

Building Technical Committee

Ms. Katherine Seale, Chair
Mr. William Batson, Prairie View A&M
Ms. Nikki Christmas, City of Dallas
Ms. Willie Mae Coleman
Ms. Joanna L. Hampton
Mr. Donald Payton
Mr. Nathan Magill, City of Dallas
Mr. Chandler Vaughan
Mr. Tayo A. Ayanlola, City of Dallas
Ex-officio, Mr. Cannon Flowers

Interpretative Planning Committee

Ms. Joanna L. Hampton, Chair
Ms. Dealey Campbell
Ms. Willie Mae Coleman
Dr. Deborah Hopes, Remembering Black Dallas
Dr. George Keaton, Remembering Black Dallas
Dr. Evelyn Montgomery
Mr. Donald Payton
Mr. Rafiq Salleh-Flowers
Ms. Candace Thompson
Mr. Chandler Vaughan
Ex-officio, Mr. Cannon Flowers

Historical Research Team

Ms. Dealey Campbell
Dr. Evelyn Montgomery
Mr. Chandler Vaughan

Advisory Committee

Dr. W. Marvin Dulaney
Mr. Robert Edison
Hon. Harryette Ehrhardt
Hon. Diane Ragsdale

CITY OF DALLAS, JUANITA J. CRAFT CIVIL RIGHTS HOUSE STEERING COMMITTEE

City of Dallas, Office of Cultural Affairs

Ms. Jennifer Scripps, Director of Cultural Affairs

Ms. Nikki D. Christmas, Manager, Facilities & Capital Projects

Mr. Nathan Magill, Cultural Facilities Supervisor

Consultant Team

McCoy Collaborative Preservation Architecture

Ms. Nancy McCoy, FAIA, FAPT

Mr. Greg Johnston, AIA, LEED AP BD+C

The Steering Committee acknowledges the following for their support :

Juanita J. Craft Foundation

State Fair of Texas Directors

State Fair of Texas Organization

NAACP Dallas

Baylor Scott & White Juanita J. Craft Recreation Center

City of Dallas Landmarks Commission

City of Dallas Building Services

City of Dallas Park and Recreation Department

TIMELINE

April 2018:

Recognizing an opportunity to bring broader awareness and recognition to the house, preliminary efforts began to address improvements of the house and activate programming.

May 2018:

Over Memorial Day weekend, a fire sprinkler system failure flooded the home.

Considered a catastrophic flooding event immediate efforts focused on :

- Removing Ms. Craft's personal items, furnishings, and other objects related to the history of the home
- Drying out the home so that further assessments could be performed



October 17, 1955
the morning of State Fair protest



NAACP South Dallas Youth Council,
Craft House living room early 1960's

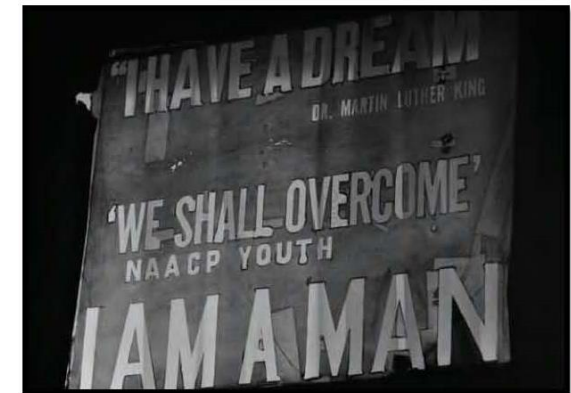
TIMELINE

Summer 2018

- **Eighteen-member Steering Committee meet monthly to galvanize community support, raise awareness of the project, direct Historic Structures Report, and organize fundraising**
- City performed environment assessments (including materials testing and air quality testing)
- City performed Existing Conditions Survey and Infrastructure Assessments
- Historic Structures Report work begins with ETA for completion in October 2018



NAACP Youth Council
backyard of Craft home , ca.1955



Silk Screening of posters at the Craft House
by NAACP South Dallas Youth Council

TIMELINE

October 2018

- \$150,000 from FY2018-19 budget committed by Office of Cultural Affairs to abatement and restoration work
- Steering Committee Members/Volunteers (primarily from the Building Technical sub-committee) identify, write and **submit an application for a grant for design and construction from the Department of Interior National Trust for Historic Preservation**, with initial expected response by January 2019
- Juanita Craft Humanitarian Award is created with three awards presented at the Main Stage of the State Fair of Texas
- **The Building Technical sub-committee directs and assists with the writing of a Historic Structures Report** for completion by year-end



*Mrs. Craft holding an official invitation to the inauguration of President Carter.
January 20, 1977*



*United Nations Association meeting,
guests from Africa Craft Backyard ca.1965*

TIMELINE

January 2019

- Draft Historical Structures Report is presented during the monthly Steering Committee meeting at the South Dallas Cultural Center with a copy provided to OCA staff; comments/questions are returned to the Steering Committee
- **City completes some interior work in the Little House, painting, and replacing buckled flooring and blinds**
- Federal Government ends a 35-day shutdown on January 25, temporarily reopening government offices. The grant decision originally expected in January is delayed.

February 2019

- **Steering Committee hosts formal project kick-off event, Juanita Craft's 117th Birthday anniversary and panel discussion at the South Dallas Cultural Center on February 9th**



Juanita Craft in kitchen
February 9, 1974

TIMELINE

April 2019

- Historical Elements are removed and categorized from the Big House
- **Asbestos Abatement and Mold Remediation is completed** by subcontractor engaged by the City
- Small working group meets to discuss conceptual construction cost estimates and phasing which are addressed in the Draft HSR; follow-up to include work to get additional anecdotal input from area contractors on estimates for foundation and systems infrastructure
- RFQ for project architect is drafted by City
- **Department of the Interior informs City that grant decision may not occur until Summer 2019**



Craft House
November 21, 1976
reversed photo taken from front door

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT - OVERVIEW

Juanita Craft devoted her life to equal rights for all people to fully participate in American society, using the United States Constitution as the basis of her belief in equality and justice for all.

Dallas has an opportunity to remember one of its brightest lights, Juanita J. Craft, and through preservation her house and grounds, and to use them as a vehicle to further Mrs. Craft's mission to improve civil and human rights through education, advocacy, government and civil discourse.

The property is:

- listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Wheatley Place Historic District,
- a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, and
- is a designated City of Dallas Landmark.

It has been operated through the South Dallas Cultural Center by appointment since 1994 until it was closed in May 2018 as the result of a burst pipe.



Talking Drum newsletter, South Dallas Cultural Center February 26, 1994



Juanita J. Craft Civil Rights House, ca.1994

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT - OVERVIEW

The Steering Committee recognized the need for a Historic Structures Report (HSR) to prepare a comprehensive document to :

- record the building's history,
- its physical description and conditions,
- recommendations for repair,
- future use of the property and associated improvements,
- estimate of probable costs and
- outline schedule for the long-term success of the property as a civil rights museum.



Craft House, 1974
garden and plantings

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT - OVERVIEW

What is an Historic Structures Report (HSR)? *From the National Park Service*

“A historic structure report provides documentary, graphic, and physical information about a property's history and existing condition. Broadly recognized as an effective part of preservation planning, a historic structure report also addresses management or owner goals for the use or re-use of the property. It provides a thoughtfully considered argument for selecting the most appropriate approach to treatment, prior to the commencement of work, and outlines a scope of recommended work. The report serves as an important guide for all changes made to a historic property during a project repair, rehabilitation, or restoration-and can also provide information for maintenance procedures. Finally, it records the findings of research and investigation, as well as the processes of physical work, for future researchers.”

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT - OVERVIEW

What this means...

- provides a developmental history of the property
- documents how the house was used by Juanita Craft over a thirty-five year period, the 'period of significance'
- provides a building summary & chronology
- establishes the site to include the house, the original garage (the "Little House"), the yard and gardens
- outlines which interior components of the house are character defining features

The goals established by the HSR are to address the preservation of the house for the purpose of inspiring and transforming lives through service.



Juanita J. Craft Civil Rights House
& Memorial Garden
December 2018

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT - OVERVIEW

The vision of the Juanita J. Craft Civil Rights House and Museum Steering Committee is rooted in Craft's own words:

"It is my hope that after I am gone, people of all backgrounds will visit my house and come to understand that individuals can make a difference, and to appreciate the importance of service to community and nation...you don't have to be rich to make an impact but you have to work and to care."

This quote from Mrs. Craft was recorded in March 1985



Juanita J. Craft portrait June 1968
Interview with author John Egerton

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT - OVERVIEW

In order to achieve the vision outlined in the HSR, proposed interpretive and mission-related programming addressing themes that were important to Mrs. Craft include:

- **Education**- stressed the importance of education for ALL, fought for access to education, provided educational experiences for youth
- **Equal rights**- voter registration, health care, (carried out through policy, legal reform, activism, and education)
- **Support of Youth**- Led NAACP Youth Council, her home was home to all neighborhood children and youth, provided educational and experiential opportunities for youth, all ages with particular support for people on the cusp of voting
- **Housing**- fought for clean and safe housing for everyone, strong supporter of historic preservation, worked to change local housing discrimination policies
- **Civic engagement**- anyone can make a difference, starts with civic engagement, strong belief in service to community, state and nation o Constitutional literacy- firm conviction that change comes through the legal system. The US Constitution is the foundation and guide for change
- **Voter registration**

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT - OVERVIEW

The recommendations provided in the HSR are meant to prolong the existence of the buildings and features by:

- retaining as much of the original materials as possible,
- preserving the historical value as Mrs. Craft's home, and
- by stabilizing or inhibiting deterioration of these materials through conservation efforts in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

The HSR also includes as-built drawings, in CAD format, of the house and initial Concept Plans for its future use.

- It is understood that through a community engagement process & detailed review that these plans will be refined to reflect community vision and interpretative planning goals.



Craft House, 1974
prior to driveway installation



Poster remnant @ wall board uncovered
with remediation, June 2018

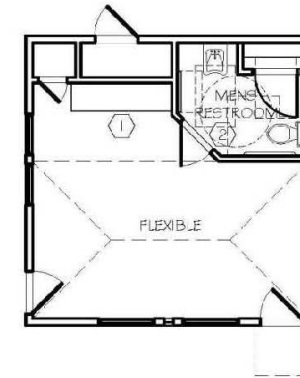
HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT - OVERVIEW



KEYNOTES

- ① RESTORE DOOR LOCATION; WIDEN FOR ACCESSIBILITY
- ② RELOCATE EXISTING FIRE SPRINKLER VALVE AND PIPES
- ③ FIX DOOR IN PLACE AND COVER FROM FAMILY RESTROOM SIDE
- ④ RESTORE DOOR
- ⑤ RESTORE KITCHEN APPLIANCES, INCLUDING STOVE AND REFRIGERATOR
- ⑥ REMOVE GLASS FRONTS FROM CABINETS

CONCEPTUAL FLOOR PLAN – HOUSE



KEYNOTES

- ① ADD PREFABRICATED KITCHEN UNIT WITH APPLIANCES
- ② REMOVE TJB AND MAKE BATHROOM ACCESSIBLE PER TAS STANDARDS

CONCEPTUAL FLOOR PLAN – LITTLE HOUSE

NEXT STEPS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Community meetings planned for Summer 2019 – 4 meetings planned
- Inclusive process community input

LONG-TERM GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

- Develop recommendations for 'Friends of..' or Advisory group working towards a non-profit for long-term governance
- Consider economic models to ensure sustainability as part of the planning process

FUNDING / RESOURCES

- National Parks Service Grant (decision expected late Summer 2019)
- Foundation / Public outreach program (supplement NPS Grant, or as stand-alone funding)



Craft House, June 2018
Mrs. Craft's bedroom



Craft House, June 2018
Kitchen

NEXT STEPS

Mrs. Craft's life as embodied in her home will be memorialized and formally recognized as an iconic representative of that remarkable generation of 20th-century African-American women who launched and sustained the largest social reform movement in the history of the U.S. from homes just like 2618 Warren Avenue all across the nation.

Just a precious handful of these sites recognizing those grassroots organizers and mobilizers will endure as interpreted sites.





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