

## Dallas Landmark Commission Landmark Nomination Form

### 1. Name

historic: Fannin Elementary School and the Cranfill House  
and/or common: \_\_\_\_\_ date: 1915

### 2. Location

address: 4800 Ross Avenue

location/neighborhood: \_\_\_\_\_

block: 702

lot: \_\_\_\_\_

land survey: \_\_\_\_\_

tract size: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Current Zoning

### 4. Classification

#### Category

district  
 building(s)  
 structure  
 site  
 object

#### Ownership

public  
 private  
 both

#### Public Acquisition

in progress  
 being considered

#### Status

occupied  
 unoccupied  
 work in progress

#### Accessibility

yes: restricted  
 yes: unrestricted  
 no

#### Present Use

agricultural  
 commercial  
 educational  
 entertainment  
 government  
 industrial  
 military

museum  
 park  
 residence  
 religious  
 scientific  
 transportation  
 other, specify \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. Ownership

Current Owner: Dallas Independent School District

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: 3700 Ross Ave

City: Dallas

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

State: TX

Zip: 75204

### 6. Form Preparation

Date: 4-26-96

Name & Title: Carolyn C. Tames

Organization: City of Dallas Designation Task Force

Contact: Kate Singleton

Phone: 670-5200

### 7. Representation on Existing Surveys

Alexander Survey (citywide)  local  state  national

H.P.L. Survey (CBD)  A  B  C  D

Oak Cliff

Victorian Survey

Dallas Historic Resources Survey, Phase   high  medium  low

National Register

Recorded TX Historic Ldmk

TX Archaeological Ldmk

*For Office Use Only*

Date Rec'd: \_\_\_\_\_ Survey Verified: Y N by: \_\_\_\_\_ Field Check by: \_\_\_\_\_ Petitions Needed: Y N

Nomination:      Archaeological      Site      Structure(s)      Structure & Site      District

**8. Historic Ownership**

original owner: Dallas Independent School District (Fannin) / Alfred P. Tenison (Cranfill House)  
 significant later owner(s): Andrew F. Platter and J.B. Cranfill (Cranfill House)

**9. Construction Dates**

original: c. 1915 (Fannin) / 1912 (Cranfill House)  
 alterations/additions: 1988 (Fannin)

**10. Architect**

original construction: Lang & Witchell  
 alterations/additions: Weeter & Assoc. Architects

**11. Site Features**

natural:  
 urban design:

**12. Physical Description**

Condition, check one:

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

unaltered  
 altered

Check one:

original site  
 moved(date \_\_\_\_\_)

*Describe present and original (if known) physical appearance. Include style(s) of architecture, current condition and relationship to surrounding fabric (structures, objects, etc). elaborate on pertinent materials used and style(s) of architectural detailing, embellishments and site details.*

The James W. Fannin Elementary School is located at the corner of Ross and Prairie Avenues, east of downtown Dallas. The building's "U" shaped plan consists of a central section with two wings that project at the rear. The proportions of the plan roughly measure five parts by two parts with the long side fronting Ross Avenue. The school complex is made up of a 1915 building, a 1980's addition, the Cranfill House and several temporary classroom buildings. For ease of discussion, the physical description of the Fannin School will be divided into three parts: (1) the 1915 building; (2) the addition; (3) and the Cranfill House.

Fannin Elementary School was designed by the architecture firm of Lang & Witchell in 1915 in the Neo-Classical Revival style. The Neo-Classical Revival style includes works classified as American Renaissance, "... a movement back to the simplicity and order of the classical tradition, in reaction to the very different qualities admired in the High Victorian period." This style is best seen in buildings such as the National Gallery of Art designed by John Russell Pope. (McDonald, 92-95)

The architectural elements that classify Fannin Elementary as Neo-Classical Revival include the elaborate cast stone entrance, the tri-part design and the building's overall symmetry. This building possess a unique Americanness in the fact that an elaborate facade is pinned onto a rather plain brick building. (McDonald, 92-95) The key design features of this building are the brickwork, the cast stone and the fenestration that includes windows and doors. The brickwork is luxurious and gives a rich texture to all wall surfaces through the use of several tones of brick that include red, yellow, black, brown and orange. The individual bricks are set into a pattern consisting of a soldier course interspersing four stretcher courses. Cast stone also plays an important part in enriching the wall surfaces. The front facade has elaborate cast stonework while on the sides and rear the cast stone marks window lintels and sills as well as bases and string courses. The cast stonework effectively emphasizes the verticality of the building while balancing the vertical against the horizontal. Verticality is also emphasized in the treatment of the windows of which the majority have a proportion that is roughly four parts to one part. Each of the four facades of the building will be described beginning with the Ross Avenue elevation, next the Prairie Street elevation, the rear or San Jacinto Street elevation and the Fitzhugh Avenue elevation.

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The three-story elevation that faces Ross Avenue is an impressive entrance into the school. The front or north facade is a tri-part design composed of a central, elevated section, flanked by two identical wings that are set a few feet back from the plane of the central section. The central section is roughly square in proportion, and the three stories are marked by three rows of fenestration. The central one-half of the center section is embellished by elaborate cast stone that begins at the second floor and continues to the top of the building. At each edge the ground floor has two six-over-six light window that flank three recessed panels of cast stone. Cast stone panels decorated with a trefoil are above the three recessed panels. These recessed panels of cast stone were originally windows as seen in historic photographs. (Dallas Public Library) The two one-story entrances into the school extend from the central section and in front of the two wings. These identical entrances consist of a large, wooden door with a six light transom. Each entrance door is framed heavily by cast stone at the sides and top, and above each entrance, there is a cast stone panel embellished with the shape of an open book. A faux balcony with a cast stone rail marks the division between the ground and the second floors. Faux brackets support the balcony. The horizontal members of the railing are circular in section while the upright members occur at significant points along the facade that correspond with the ground floor fenestration. A string course of cast stone runs under the balcony. This string course is repeated on the wall of both wings. The second floor has four-over-four light windows that are in line with the openings in the ground floor. The fenestration of the third floor is the same as that of the second floor. Because the vertical space in between the windows is filled with cast stone adorned with shields, the windows of the second and third floors form a continuous strip from the ground floor to the top of the building. The parapet of the central section consists of a cast stone panel that displays a large shield. Two cast stone human figures frame the shield, and an owl sits atop the shield. Thin strips of cast stone emphasize the vertical, and the parapet is edged with a thin line of cast stone. The cast stone panels nearest the upper corners of the building are also decorated with large cast stone shields. Four vertical strips of raised cast stone frame each shield.

The two identical wings of the Ross Avenue facade are less elaborate than the central section. Each wing has the above mentioned entrance across its front. Two six-over-six windows are to the side of each entrance. The second floor has three six-over-six windows each with a tri-part transom. These three windows are spaced as if there were four windows. The fenestration of the third floor is identical to that of the second with the addition of a fourth window at the edge of the building. The cast stone on the wings consists of the base, a wide string course that acts as a continuous lintel above the first floor windows, a thin string course that acts a continuous sill for the second floor windows, the individual sills of the third floor windows and a string course that also is a continuous lintel for the third floor windows. Four vertical pieces of cast stone mark the four crenellation of the parapet wall. The parapet wall is also edged with a thin line of cast stone. A brick buttress strengthens the outside edge of each wing.

The Prairie Street or south facade of the 1915 building continues the design elements of the primary facade. A thick band of cast stone creates a base. The ground floor has five openings that line up with the openings above. The first two openings are six-over-six windows; the first window has been covered by a louvered blind. The last two openings are small six light windows set high into the wall. The ground floor is separated from the second by a wide string course that wraps the corner from the primary facade. A double four-over-four window with a double transom cuts into this string course and straddles the division between the first and second floors. The six windows of the second floor each have six-over-six lights with a three light transom. These windows line up with the fenestration pattern above and below. A

string course of cast stone acts as a continuous sill for all six windows. Six recessed brick panels sit above the six windows. The fenestration of the third floor matches that of the second floor. A vertically exaggerated double window of eight-over-eight lights with a double transom straddles the second and third floor division. A thin string course acts as a continuous lintel for the third floor windows. The parapet of the building is crenellated in the half nearest Ross Avenue. The three crenellations are emphasized by three vertical pieces of cast stone. The rear corner of the facade is also crenelated and emphasized by a thin vertical member. The parapet is topped by a thin line of cast stone. Four drain holes pierce the parapet. The projecting center bay of the Ross Avenue facade is also visible from Prairie Street. On the ground floor, a six-over-six window is accented by a cast stone pillar and string course. At the junction between the first and second floor, the faux balcony and cast stone panels with the trefoil design are visible. The second and third floors each have a six-over-six window with a three light transom. The windows are aligned vertically, and cast stone panels fill the vertical space between the windows. The third floor window is topped by a cast stone panel with a shield motif. Three vertical pieces of cast stone extend to the top edge of the parapet.

The south or San Jacinto Street facade of the historic building is covered to a great extent by the addition. Seen from the rear, the ground floor of the building has a row of seven four-over-four light windows each with a transom. There is a pair of narrow, vertical windows at the far end. A cast stone string course provides a continuous lintel for all the windows. Five similar windows are visible on the second floor as well as a pair of the thin windows. The elevation of this facade prior to the addition is preserved in photographs. There were six entrances on the ground floor along the length of the central section of the building. These entrances consisted of two French doors set into a white frame; each door had a twelve-light transom. The second and third floors each had eight four-over-four windows with three light transoms. Two pairs of thin vertical three light windows were at each end of the floor. The rear facade of each wing has a centered door flanked by windows. (Scholar Bird & Co., 17 / E-7) The rear walls of the two wings are blank above the ground floor. The Fitzhugh Avenue or east facade matches the facade on Prairie Street. The Cranfill House and the connecting walkway obscure much of the eastern facade.

The primary facade of the 1980's addition is on Prairie Street. The addition is compatible with the historic building and continues many of the lines of the old building. This building is two-stories with a one-story wing at the addition's southern edge. A white base stretches across this wing. The ground floor has an entrance near the junction with the historic building. Immediately above the door, the second floor is recessed. From this point, six twelve-light double windows and two six-light windows sit upon a thick base of white brick. The fenestration of the second floor matches that of the first. Two thin, continuous brick string courses form the second floor window sills and lintels. The four central windows are tied vertically by white brick panels between and above the windows. There is an entrance into the rear one-story wing. Four windows pierce the wall. The white base continues, and a thin string course divides the wall horizontally about two feet below the windows. Another string course visually divides the windows in half. The rear wall or San Jacinto Street facade of the two-story addition is broken by a string course and by eight windows. In front of the main addition is the facade of the one-story wing. The rear wall of the wing has the two string courses as well as the white brick base. This facade is marked by six windows and a service entrance. The second floor of the addition has a single window centered on a brick wall, white brick string courses and a ladder. The Fitzhugh Avenue facade is much like the Prairie Street facade. Nine windows are visible on the ground floor. These windows sit on a white brick base. A wide brick lintel runs along the entire wall. The second floor has eight windows.

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These windows have continuous sills and lintels of white brick. The center window is emphasized by white brick panels.

Adjacent to the main Fannin School building, the Cranfill House sits at the corner of Fitzhugh and Ross Avenues. The house is connected to the school building by a heavy-handed, one-story concrete addition and walkway. The Cranfill House is an imposing two-story, Prairie Style house known as an American Foursquare. The Prairie Style is identified by features that include a "low pitched roof, usually hipped, with overhanging eaves; two-stories with one-story wings or porches; eaves, cornices, and facade detailing emphasizing horizontal lines; often with massive, square porch supports". (McAlester, 439) The American Foursquare is a subtype of the Prairie Style and in addition to the above features often displays the following: a simple square or rectangular plan, a centered or off-centered entrance, hipped dormers and double-hung windows. The Prairie Style is an American derived architectural style that was begun in Chicago by a group of architects called the Prairie School. The style was spread throughout the country by building pattern books; however, the Prairie Style was relatively short-lived and was most prevalent from 1900 to 1920. (Ibid, 440) An example of the Prairie Style, the Cranfill House is embellished with Italian Renaissance detail that includes the tiled roof and cornice-line brackets. (Ibid, 439)

The two-story Cranfill House is built out of yellow brick and has a pyramidal, red tile roof. The house has three chimneys or flues, and a plan that is roughly square. The first floor of the Ross Avenue facade, or main facade, is distinguished by two projecting elements: a covered entrance porch on the northwest corner and an enclosed one-story sun porch that extends across most of the facade. The entrance porch consists of two piers that support a curved wooden lintel that is topped by a brick railing. The five steps that lead up to the porch are edged by low brick piers topped by cast stone. The rear wall of the porch gives evidence that an original opening was enclosed. The original ceiling of the porch has been lowered approximately two-and-a-half feet. The floor of the porch is covered in a red and white patterned tile. The enclosed porch has twelve twenty-light windows that are grouped in threes. The windows have a cast stone lintel and sill. These window groups are framed by four brick piers that sit upon a low brick wall with a cast stone base. The low brick wall is articulated by a row of brick piers and three ventilation vents. A red tile eave projects beyond the front plane of the porch. The second story facade is symmetrical. Two small one-over-two windows with decorative muntins are set toward the center of the facade while two large paned windows with transoms are at each end. A cast stone cornice runs on top of the windows. Four decorative brackets are placed evenly across the facade under the roof line.

The Fitzhugh Avenue facade begins with the one-story sun porch. This facade of the porch is similar to the Ross Avenue facade. The porch covers approximately the first quarter of the Fitzhugh Avenue facade as it wraps the corner from the Ross Avenue. Two quadruple window sets are separated by three piers. Directly above the porch is the projecting wall of the chimney. The chimney is framed by one-over-one windows that are embellished with decorative muntins, and white cast stone accentuates the point where the chimney narrows. The chimney pierces the tile roof approximately two feet from the roof edge. The remainder of the ground floor facade of the first bay of the Cranfill House consists of a small, rectangular window framed by two windows with transoms. A cast stone lintel rests on top of the three windows. The fenestration pattern of the second floor consists of two windows; however, their positioning is such that a third window could be inserted. These windows sit upon a thin cast stone sill. The rear bay has an enclosed one-story, frame addition that obscures the original facade. Next to this addition, there is a quadruple set of six-over-six windows encased

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by a heavy molding of white painted wood. Both windows are one-over-one in which the upper light has been subdivided by muntins into a pattern of small and large rectangles. According to a 1920's photograph of the house, leaded window glass was in the ground floor windows of the bay that adjoins the porch, and these photographs also show that there was possibly a screened-in sleeping porch on the second floor at the rear of the house. This rear porch has been enclosed with two windows. (Scholar Bird & Co., 17 / E-7) The porch directly beneath the sleeping porch remains open. Five decorative brackets are visible immediately under the eave line, a second chimney is visible as it emerges through the roof and a white cornice band is along the eave.

The rear or San Jacinto Street facade of the Cranfill House is somewhat obscured by portable buildings. The ground floor has a set of steps that lead to a closed-in opening while the second floor appears to have been a sleeping porch that is now enclosed. Six two-over-two windows that sit on a thin sill enclose the porch. There is a gutter down the outer edge of the house and brackets at the center and corner positions.

The Prairie Street facade of the Cranfill house is hidden by the main building of the Fannin School. Visible from the school yard is the single story entrance porch. A brick pier supports a curved lintel and a railing. The railing is topped by cast stone. This facade is simple in its design. The first floor has two windows embellished with muntins and topped by a wide cast stone lintel. The second floor has three windows. The first two are one-over-one with decorative muntins while the third is a smaller version of the first two. Three brackets occur at the eave, and a gutter runs down the front corner of the building.

### 13. Historical Significance

*Statement of historical and cultural significance. Include: cultural influences, special events and important personages, influences on neighborhood, on the city, etc.*

Fannin Elementary School is representative of architectural designs produced by Lang & Witchell, a noted Dallas architecture firm, and is a reminder of school life early in the Twentieth Century. The Fannin campus occupies an entire city block bounded by Ross and Fitzhugh Avenues and Prairie and San Jacinto Streets just within the northwest boundaries of the old Town of East Dallas. (Hazel / McDonald, 131) The historically valuable resources contained within the Fannin School campus include a 1915 school building and a Prairie style house. Both buildings hearken back to a time when Ross Avenue was a prominent residential avenue lined with stately homes, "the most elegant address in Town". (Ibid., 146) For ease of discussion, the history of the Fannin School campus will be divided into two parts: (1) the history of the Fannin School and (2) the history of the Cranfill House.

The history of Fannin Elementary School must begin with its name - James W. Fannin. James W. Fannin was one of the great individuals in Texas history. He was born on January 1, 1804, in Georgia. In 1834 he came with his family to Texas and settled at Velasco. During the Texas Revolution, Fannin was appointed a colonel in the regular army on December 7, 1835. His forces were imprisoned by the Mexican Army at Goliad where they were massacred by order of Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna on March 27, 1836. The massacre of Fannin and his men gave fire to the Texas fight for Independence with the battle cry "Remember Goliad ! Remember the Alamo!" (Webb, 582-583)

City of Dallas schools were first founded over 100 years ago to provide public education to children in the city. The first Dallas school board convened in 1861, but it was not until 1877 that General William L Cabell, the Dallas mayor, led the movement toward self-control of the schools by the city. In 1882, the first *ad valorem* school tax was passed, and three school buildings opened in three of the four wards of the city. The following year, the second ward, Cumberland Hill, received a school, and two black schools were built in the city. (DMN 8-5-54) By 1884, "the school system comprised four white elementary schools, one white high school, two black elementary schools and one black high school. Sixteen white teachers and six black teachers were assigned to the 522 white students and 118 black students who enrolled." (Rumbley) The Dallas Independent School District (DISD) was created in 1947, and at this time financial ties to the city council were severed. (Ibid.)

The first Fannin Elementary School faced San Jacinto Street and was built in 1908 for \$25,206.65. The two-story building and 1909 four room addition that costs \$10,386.50 were quickly outgrown. (DISD Minutes January 12, 1972) In order to address citizen concerns, the school board began to amass land for a new building, and on June 27, 1911 a lot measuring 175 feet along Ross Avenue from the southeast corner of Ross and Prairie and 209 feet on Prairie and adjoining the Fannin School was purchased for \$9,275. (DISD Minutes Vol. 8, 39) According to a memo of 1972, the campus has 2.58 acres with a capacity of 550 students. (DISD Minutes January 12, 1972) The 1915 Fannin School was built directly opposite the original Fannin School building, and for a time, the old and new schools were joined by a pathway. (Scholar Bird & Co., 15 - E-7)

The Fannin School building was designed by the architecture firm of Lang & Witchell. Lang & Witchell was founded by Otto Lang and Frank Witchell in 1890. Otto Lang was born in Freiburg, Germany in 1864 where he studied engineering. In 1888 he immigrated to the United States and settled in Dallas. Lang met Witchell in 1904 after Witchell moved to Dallas from San Antonio in 1898 to work for Sanguinet and Staats. Sanguinet and Staats was a Fort Worth based architecture firm that designed and built "the most modern, monumental, and classically 'correct' structures in the city." (McDonald, 91-92) Sanguinet and Staats, formed

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in 1897, was the most prestigious architectural firm in Texas with offices in Dallas, Houston and Wichita Falls. (Ibid., 92) Although Lang & Witchell's early work could be defined as American Renaissance, the designs of the firm evolved into a Sullivanesque style as seen in the Southwestern Life Building that was completed in 1913. Among the numerous Lang & Witchell designed buildings in Dallas are the Sears & Roebuck complex, the Dallas High School, now Crozier-Tech, the YMCA Building and the Lamar Street Sanger Brothers Department Store, now El Centro College. By the late 1920's, the firm was beginning to embrace Modernism. Modern style buildings include the Lone Star Gas Company building and the original twelve story Mercantile Bank Building. In later years the firm delved into the Spanish Colonial Style with the design of the Highland Park Town Hall. (Ibid., 92-95)

The Original of Bond for the 1915 Fannin School building was executed on March 23, 1915 and specified that the contractor, Hewitt & Milner, be paid \$41,387.00 from a special school fund with a \$50 per day late-charge penalty. Lang & Witchell were to provide architectural services for the design of the school that was to be ready by September 1, 1915. The plumbers for the job were the Sanguinet Brothers plumbers, the electricians were Dan J Underwood & Co, and the Hamilton Company handled the heating and vent work. A \$20,000 bond was taken out by Hewitt & Milner from Sidney Tillman of Lion Bonding and Safety Company of Omaha Nebraska. (DISD Minutes March 15, 1915 & March 20, 1915)

The building fees broke down as follows:

Hewitt & Milner	\$41,387.00
Wiring - Dan J. Underwood Company	\$ 589.00
Plumbing - Sanguine & Brothers	\$ 3,183.00
Heating - Hamilton & Company	\$ 7,550.00
Architectural Fees - Lang & Witchell	\$ 2,636.80
	\$55,345.80

(DISD Minutes March 15, 1915 / March 20, 1915)

The new building was ready for students in the fall of 1915. The lot and improvements were appraised at \$220,000 in 1924, and attendance from 1924-1925 was 761. (Scholar Bird & Co. 15)

R.S. Ransdell continued as principal of the Fannin School until 1916 at which time Julius Dorsey assumed the post for the next three years. Dorsey later became Superintendent of DISD. He was succeeded at Fannin by E.B. Comstock (1919-1921), J.F. Kelly (1921-1924) and S.E. Gideon (1924-1940). (Hazel / Scheibel, 181-183 & DISD Minutes Vol. 13, 141)

Since the original construction date of the Fannin School, the building has undergone repair, renovation and addition. In the fall of 1917, fire-damage to the heating plant was repaired by the Kinnison Brothers under the direction of Hubbell & Greene. (DISD Minutes Vol. 10, 213) In 1960, a two-story house (1617 N Fitzhugh) on the school campus was demolished by the South Dallas Wrecking Company according to a letter of September 14, 1960. (Letter dated 9-14-60 to J Horton - DISD Files) According to a Sanborn map and to a 1920's photograph of the campus, the house in question was most likely the servants quarters that stood along Fitzhugh behind the Cranfill House. (Scholar Bird & Co., photo.) This house was brick with a one-story porch across the front. In 1963, Prairie Avenue was paved. (DISD Files) The gymnasium was built from 1969 to 1971. (DISD Files) Window air-conditioning units were purchased in 1974 for \$12,375, and in 1978 a recommendation was made for awarding a

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contract for renovation to GROO Construction and Metroplan architects in the amount of \$645,081.00. (DISD Minutes, 1978) Begun in April of 1980, this renovation and addition to Fannin was completed on August 12, 1980. (DISD Minutes, 1980) The 1988 Bond program passed in 1985 authorized the construction of 20 new classrooms to be built for 1.9 million dollars by Weeler & Associates Architects. (DISD Minutes, 1988) The Board also approved a gymnasium for Fannin at a cost of \$198,500 in addition to the bond program. (DMN 4-4-89)

Fannin, in 1971, was chosen in an agreement between DISD and Southwest Educational Development Corporation to continue a pilot study and development activities to be carried out by the Laboratories Multicultural Social Education Program. Fannin received learning and training materials and consultant services for Grades 1, 2 and 3. The seven schools in the program field tested the lab's instructional system, collected data regarding the effects of the program and submitted the data to the lab. In 1972, a group of citizens, "ACTION" - Action Committee to Improve Our Neighborhood, worked with the school district to upgrade Fannin. (DISD Files)

Although the 1915 Lang & Witchell building is the most prominent building on the campus, the building known as the Cranfill House is an important historic resource. Three well-known Dallas families occupied this residence at 4830 Ross Avenue: the Tenison family, the Platter family and the Cranfill family. The first mention of 4830 Ross in the City Directory does not occur until the 1914-1915 edition; however, the 1912-1913 edition lists an unnumbered address at the southwest corner of Ross and Fitzhugh as the residence of A.P. Tenison, the president of Tenison Brothers Saddlery. A.P. Tenison took out a building permit # 614 on May 2, 1911, for a ten room brick veneer residence. (Building Permit Book 1910-1912, 67) The permit gives the lot measurements as 85'x208' and the house construction costs as \$15,000. (Ibid.) A building permit for a brick garage # 1057 on page 80 of the 1910-1912 Permit Book was obtained by Tenison on August 31, 1911.

In 1881 Alfred P. Tenison began the Tenison Brothers Saddlery Company, one of the best known saddleries in the Southwest. (DMN 3-15-13) The Tenison Brothers Saddlery Company "occupied a leading role in the wholesale and manufacture of leather goods in the South." (Davis, 808) An 1884-1885 advertisement for the saddlery firm mentions wholesale saddles, harnesses and saddlery hardware and a business address of 260 Commerce. By 1914 the company was located at 511 Elm Street and filled a six-story building of 90,000 square feet with over 150 employees. (Ibid.) The company "built up a thriving business and supplied saddles and other leather goods in a vast territory throughout the western range, as well as the prosperous farming districts of Texas." (Ibid.) Tenison was born in 1860 in Covington, Kentucky. (Ibid.) He was both a Mason and a Shriner and one of the first Directors of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce as well as of the Dallas Fair Association. (DMN 3-15-13) His son, Albert P. Tenison, Jr, as well as his brothers J.R. and E.O. Tenison were also prominent Dallasites. (Davis, 808) The Texas Death Records lists Albert P. Tenison's death on March 14, 1913. The Tenison name is well-known in present day Dallas because of family ties to Tenison Park. Mr. and Mrs Edward O. Tenison, the brother of Albert P. Tenison, gave 105 acres to the city as a memorial to their deceased son, Edward Hugh Tenison, for use as a golf course. (Jebsen, n.p.)

The next resident of 4830 Ross Avenue, Andrew Fox Platter, is mentioned in the 1914-1915 City Directory. Mr. Platter was born in Ohio but moved to Denison in 1872. (DMN 12-25-32) Shortly after arriving in Texas in 1872, Platter founded the wholesale grocery company, Waples-Platter Grocery Company, with his associates that included Colonel Paul Waples of

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Fort Worth. (Ibid.) A. F. Platter was the president of this business that by 1932 had 21 branches in Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico. (Ibid.) The advertisement for this company in the City Directory states that the company is in the wholesale grocery and coffee roasting trade with locations in Denison, Fort Worth and Dallas. The Dallas office was located at 2200-16 North Lamar. (Ibid.) Mr. Platter sold his interest in the grocery business in 1929. (DMN 12-25-32) Platter was a director and officer of the State National Bank of Denison for almost forty years. (Ibid.) He was also chairman of the Board of the the State National Bank where he served as president and vice-president. (DTH 12-24-32) Platter was a fancier of fine cattle and is credited with introducing Jerseys into North Texas. (DMN 12-25-32) A.F. Platter died on December 24, 1932, in Grayson County. (Texas Death Records) The Platter family lived on Ross Avenue until 1920 when the City Directory lists the resident of the house as J.B. Cranfill.

Dr. J.B. Cranfill was ordained a Baptist minister in 1890, and he was a "long-time prohibitionist leader in Texas, a writer, teacher and supporter of Trinity River canalization, a man who devoted his life to fighting for the causes he advocated." (DMN 12-29-42) The son of a country doctor, he was born in 1858 in Parker County and came to Dallas in 1898. He studied medicine under his father when he was 12 years old and passed the State Medical Board Examination at 21. He began his practice in Turnersville, Coryell County and in 1882 moved to Gatesville where he began the Gatesville Advance, a weekly paper. He used this paper as a "mouthpiece" in the prohibition fight. In 1886, the paper was moved to Waco and renamed the Waco Advance, but he sold the paper two years later and purchased the Western Baptist paper located in Dallas and moved it to Waco with a change of name to the Baptist Standard, the Texas Baptists' official paper. The paper was moved to Dallas, and Cranfill after serving as its editor for twelve years sold his interest. Cranfill authored five books and edited and published twenty more. He was once a candidate for vice-president on the Prohibition Party Ticket, and he was instrumental in driving saloons out of Texas. He died in 1942 at the age of 84. In a Warranty Deed dated August 4, 1924, Ollie and JB Cranfill sold their property at 4830 Ross Avenue to the city for \$28,000 cash. According to the 1924 City Directory, the house stood vacant for a year, but by 1925 the house's address was incorporated into the Fannin School Campus address. According to the Sanborn Maps, the Cranfill House was used as a Music Room and Library at the Fannin School. Currently, the Cranfill House holds the Fannin School office, classrooms and the library that is in the now enclosed sun porch.

The Fannin School also had a school for deaf children in a Victorian house at 3708 San Jacinto Street, several blocks west of the main school campus. The two-story house on the corner of Washington and San Jacinto had a large double parlor that held educational materials. Miss Edna Washington taught her 16 students lip reading. Brothers and sisters would bring the deaf children to this school from all over the city. The siblings would then attend Fannin Elementary. (Schiebel, 95) The property was used by the school from 1915-1919. (DISD Minutes Vol. 11, 282) The district rented the house for \$40.00 per month and was offered the right to purchase the house in may 1915 for \$16,000; however the offer was declined. (DISD Minutes Vol 1, 51)

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### Dallas Morning News

"Andrew Platter, Pioneer Grocer, Dies at Denison." The Dallas Morning News, 12-25-32.

"Board Approves Gym for Fannin." Dallas Morning News, 4-4-89.

"Cabell Fathered Dallas Schools." Dallas Morning News, 8-5-54.

"J.B. Cranfill, Prohibition Leader, Dies." The Dallas Morning News, 12-29-42.

"Leading Dallas Man Claimed by Death." The Dallas Morning News, 3-15-13.

**Continuation Sheet**

Item # 14

(Page 2 of 2)

Dallas Times Herald

"DISD Recalls Lessons Learned in its First 100 Years." The Dallas Times Herald, 6-17-84.

"Pioneer Denison Merchant and Banker is Dead." The Dallas Times Herald, 12-24-32.

## Designation Merit

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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>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>B. Location as the site of a significant historical event. _____</p>   | <p>H. Embodiment of elements of architectural design, detail, material or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation. _____</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>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. _____</p> |
| <p>D. Exemplification of the cultural, economic, social or historical heritage of the city. _____</p>   | <p>J. Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar feature of a neighborhood, community or 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>K. Archaeological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories or historic or prehistoric value. _____</p>                                    |
| <p>F. Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or specimen. <u>  x  </u></p>  | <p>L. Value as an aspect of community sentiment of public pride. <u>  x  </u></p>   |

## Recommendation

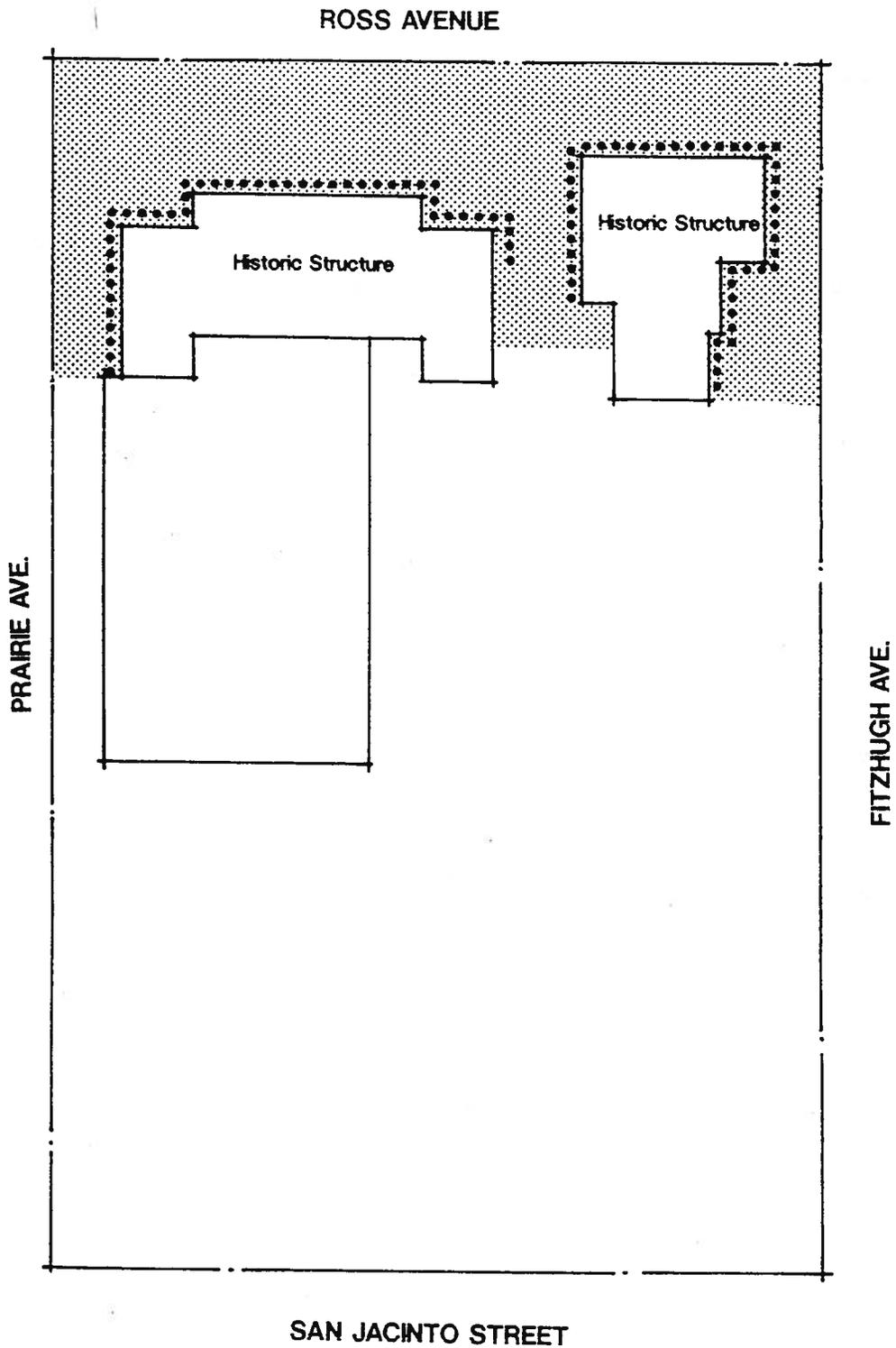
The Designation Task Force requests the Landmark Commission to deem this nominated landmark meritorious of designation as outlined in Chapter 51 and Chapter 51A, Dallas Development Code.

Further, the Designation Task Force endorses the Preservation Criteria, policy recommendations and landmark boundary as presented by the Department of Planning and Development.

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair  
Designation Task Force

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Anderson, Urban Planner  
Historic Preservation



**JAMES FANNIN ELEMENTARY  
HISTORIC DISTRICT  
EXHIBIT "B"**

Area of Designation  
No Build Zone  
Protected Facades

