Dallas Landmark Commission Landmark Nomination Form

1. Name			
Historic:	W. G. Underwood Residence		
and/or common:	n/a		
Date:	1939 -1940		
2. Location			
Address:	5310 Park Lane		
Location/neighborhood:	Dallas, 75220		
Block and lot: Block 5595 Lot 5	land survey: 1999 survey tract size: 1.435 Acres		
3. Current Zoning			
current zoning:	1-AC(A)		
4. Classification			
Category Ownership districtpublicx_building(s)x_privatestructurebothx_site Publicobject Acquisitionin progressbeing consider'	Status Present Use museum x occupied agricultural park unoccupied commercial x residence work in progress educational religious Accessibility entertainment scientific x yes: restricted government transportation yes: unrestricted industrial other, specify d no military		
5. Ownership			
•	kins Shutt		
	rkins Shutt Ph: 214 363-1123		
Address: 5310 Park	Lane City: Dallas State: TX Zip: 75220		
4. Form Preparation			
Date: August, 20	015		
Name & Title: Nancy Mo	Coy, FAIA, FAPT		
	AcCoy Preservation Architecture, LLP		
Contact: Nancy Mo	Coy: 214/977-9118		
7. Representation on Existing	Surveys		
Alexander Survey (citywide):	local state national		
National Register no			
H.P.L. Survey (CBD) A	B C D Recorded TX Historic Ldmk		
Oak Cliff	TX Archaeological Ldmk		
Victorian Survey	ry Dlagge bigh modium law		
Danas historic Resources Surve	y, Phase high medium low		
	For Office Use Only		
	by: Field Check by: Petitions Needed: Y N		
Nomination: Archaeological	Site Structure(s) Structure & Site District		

8. Historic Ownership			
Original owner:	Mr. and M 1949)	rs. William George	(W. G.) Underwood (1939c-
Significant later owner(s):	,	rs. Howell E. Smith	(1949 – 1970)
	Mr. and M	rs. George Austin Sl	nutt (1970 – 2014)
	Ms. Nancy	Perkins Shutt (2014	- present)
9. Construction Dates			
Original:	1939-1940		
Alterations/additions:	Before 197	0: Closet addition at	t balcony of Master Bedroom
		Replacement of s	elective windows
		Glass-enclosed so	creened porches at rear
		Infill at window : Bedroom	in Living Room and Master
	After 1970	: Addition to servar	nts quarters off Garage
10. Architect			
Original construction:	1939-1940	Charles Stevens D	Pilbeck, Architect
		Joe Lambert Jr., L Site Design	ambert Landscape Company,
Alterations/additions:	Before 197	0: Unknown	
	After 1970	: Unknown	
11. Site Features			
Natural: Urban Design:	ban Design: Landscape design by Joe Lambert of		
	Company.		
12. Physical Description			
Condition, check one:			Check one:
good ru	eteriorated vins	unaltered _x_ altered	<u>X</u> original site Moved (date)
	nexposed	<u> </u>	

Neighborhood and site

The residence sits within the Preston Hollow neighborhood north of Northwest Highway and west of the Dallas North Tollway at the southeast corner of Park Lane and Meadowbrook Drive. Prior to its development, the site was part of the Wright Farm. Meadowbrook Drive was once a dirt road called Greenway Street on which Peter Wright built a stable and tenant houses. In the 1930s, Wright cut streets through the property and subdivided it for development purposes. In 1938 when the subject property was developed, the community of Preston Hollow was in the midst of establishing itself as an incorporated town. Soon after, in 1945, Preston Hollow voted for annexation with the city of Dallas.

The lot is approximately 250 feet square and is bounded by a low stone wall along the street edges. The main entrance on Park Lane is accentuated by a wood portal with what was originally a wood (now metal) gate leading to a curved drive that exits onto Meadowbrook. There is another gate near the corner of Park Lane on Meadowbrook Drive and a service gate on Meadowbrook Drive.

The house sits roughly in the middle of the site leaving an ample front and back yard for Joe Lambert Jr.'s landscape design. The front yard includes a softly curving driveway bounded by lawn and mass plantings and trees. The back yard, which consists of a broad lawn bordered by a naturalistic massing of plants and trees and a swimming pool. The overall landscape design has been preserved and several of the trees on the site are believed to be original. On the east side of the property is a rectangular swimming pool set on axis with a curve-shaped pool house building. The original site plan drawings for the house site do not show the pool or driveway in its current configuration, thus it appears that the house was designed before the site was designed. Drawings that are undated do exist for the "Swimming Pool House" and the project number suggests this was designed within a year or two of the house, and possibly immediately after the house was designed. The project number for the house is R361 and for the Swimming Pool House, it is 374.

The neighborhood contains many notable homes by architects such as Foshee and Cheek, Mark Lemmon, Anton Korn, O'Neil Ford and George Dahl; twelve houses designed by Dilbeck were documented by Eva Potter Morgan in 2001. Neighbors included Joseph K. and Pauline Bywaters of the Bywaters Insurance Agencye, Eugene and Ruth McDermott of Geophysical Service Inc., Joseph F. Balisteri of the J. Desco & Son Tile Company, John N. and Lena Desco, also of the J. Desco & Son Tile Company and Henry Cornwell and Eva D. Potter of the Potter Art Iron Studio.

House and accessory building

The two-story residence is characteristic of Dilbeck's self described "Texas Ranch House" style of residence, with a little extra French farmhouse influence. The main body of the house is rectangular with a slight bend and with a one story rear wing that extends into the backyard and another for a service wing. A porte-cochere is attached to the western edge of the main body and connected to a one- story servant's wing and garage. The overall form of the house is irregular, casual and asymmetrical, as is typical for this style. At odds with this form, but very "Dilbeckian," is the perfectly centered and very formal entrance. Materials include common brick, white-washed with a cement-based slurry. Windows are of wood and include a variety of types and styles including multiple-light double hung, leaded glass, octagonal-light, and diamond-light windows. A variety of wood window shutters, wood screen elements and other details typical of Dilbeck's Texas Ranch

House style abound. Roofs are of wood shakes with exposed rounded-end rafters. The roof has a low slope and ample overhangs. The style of the house is a Dilbeck-modified version of Modern Ranch, with a Side Gabled Roof or the Eclectic Monterey style. ²

The front of the house faces Park Lane, but is not visible from the street due to vegetation. Upon passing through the gated portal is a curved driveway that exits onto Meadowbrook and leads to the porte-cochere, through which is reached the garage and a service drive that also exits onto Meadowbrook. A semi-circular low stone wall encloses a small terrace that leads to the front entrance. The entrance consists of a wood door and screen door set within a Chippendale-style wood surround within a large brick arched opening. Symmetrically placed small windows with a brick grill occupy the second floor to each side of the entrance. To the left of the entrance is a large bay window and above that is a cantilevered covered balcony that wraps around the corner of the house, supported visually by long wood poles that appear to brace the balcony from the wall. The balcony railing is of wood lattice and two shuttered French doors lead out to it. A portion of the porch was converted to interior space and clad in wood siding prior to 1970, encompassing the wrap-around side and a small portion of the front. To the right of the entrance is a smaller bay window and two small windows at the first floor level with three small windows on the second level.

At a subtle angle to the southwest is the one-story porte-cochere to which is attached the servant's wing. Originally consisting of the garage and a maid's room and bath, this wing now includes a small addition north of the garage wall. On the west façade of the main body of the house is a Juliette balcony perched above the porte-cochere.

Each elevation of the residence is different but uses the same materials and details. The facades of the rear of the house incorporate multiple covered and screened porches, all of which have been enclosed with wood and glass partitions. All of the spaces on the backyard side of the house feature either porches or windows, to take in views of the garden.



Front entrance portal on Park Lane. Photographer: Nancy McCoy



Perimeter masonry fence, at left, is covered with vines at right. Photographer: Nancy McCoy



Front elevation with balcony at left. Photographer: Nancy McCoy



Front door. Photographer: Nancy McCoy



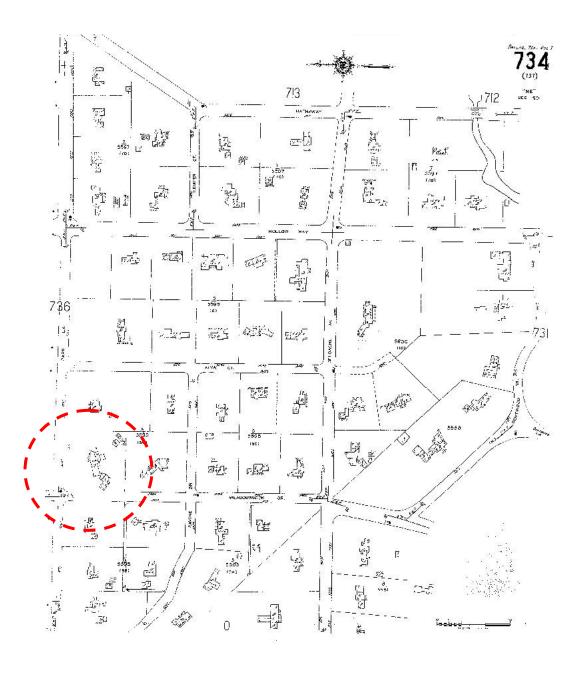
Porte-cochere and house looking east. Photographer: Carolyn Brown

The one-story pool house is designed in the same style as the house and with the same materials. The form of the building includes a subtle curve which relates to the curved ends of the rectangular swimming pool. At the center of the pool house is a covered porch area off of which are two doors, each leading to dressing and bathroom facilities. The asymmetrical arrangement features a low turret element on the east end and Dilbeck's characteristic round masonry openings in the rear facing wall of the covered porch area. On the west side of this structure is a large outdoor fireplace and a raised terrace overlooking the backyard.

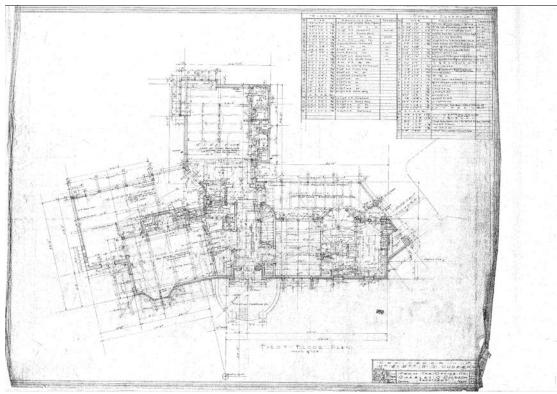


Pool and pool house looking south. Photographer: Carolyn Brown

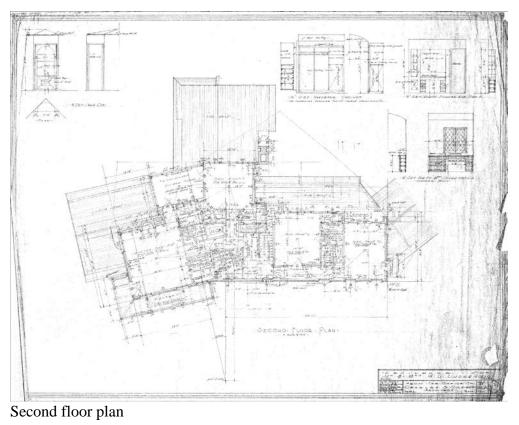
The landscape design at the front of the house includes large planting areas against the fence and in front of the house itself, leaving open lawn area around the driveway. The rear yard is an "L" shape with the area on the east devoted to the swimming pool and the area to the south devoted to a large open lawn. The swimming pool has a more formal character bounded by a low boxwood hedge with brick posts flanking the entrance on axis with the pool and pool house. A narrow Mexican tile paved area surrounds the pool. The rear yard lawn is bordered by planting beds with mature trees in a variety of species. The western edge of the property is designed as a service drive with access to the garage and a service yard. The service yard is bounded by a low brick wall extending from the service wing and ending with a circular post, a signature Dilbeck feature.

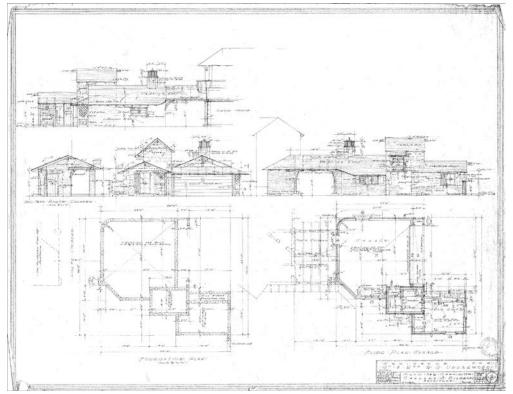


Sanborn Insurance Map, Volume 7, Sheet 734, December, 1951 Courtesy of Dallas Public Library.

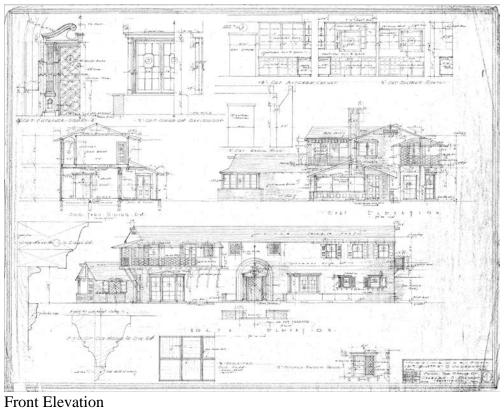


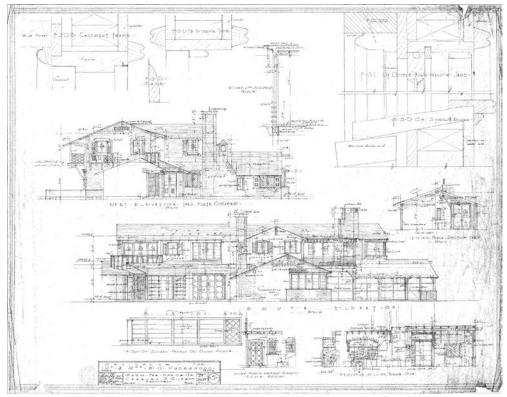
First floor plan



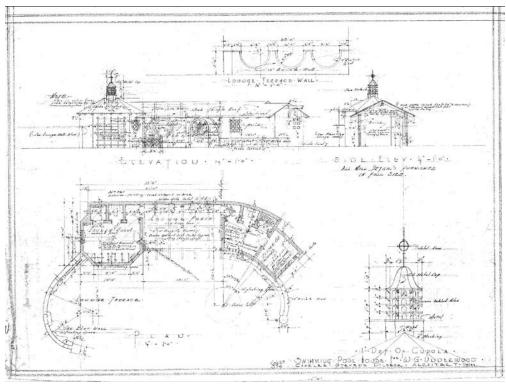


Garage and servant's wing plans and elevations Charles Stevens Dilbeck drawings





Rear Elevation



Pool House

The original drawings reproduced here are courtesy of The Alexander Architectural Archive, The University of Texas Libraries, The University of Texas at Austin.

13. Historical Significance

Charles Stevens Dilbeck

Charles Stevens Dilbeck (1907-1990), was born in Fort Smith, Arkansas. He attended Oklahoma A&M, now Oklahoma State, for a few years and took courses at Tulsa University but did not graduate with a degree. He opened his first office in Tulsa in 1929, the same year he took a trip to the Texas State Fair and was impressed by Dallas' prosperous and forward-looking attitude. Dilbeck moved to Dallas in 1932 where he continued his practice, specializing in residential architecture. In addition to houses for builder Harry McQueen with whom he shared office space, he established himself as an architect of note by winning a design competition for Highland Park Properties that resulted in one of the first houses built in Preston Hollow, near the intersection of present-day Northwest Highway and Preston Road. Dilbeck credits this design with kicking off his career in Dallas. Thus began a prolific practice that included in 2010 an inventoried list of 747 houses in Dallas alone. Architectural historian and critic David Dillon described Dilbeck's French farmhouse for P. N. Wiggins on Preston Road as "still one of the best traditional houses in Dallas."

Dilbeck designed, in his own words "hundreds" of homes throughout Texas, Oklahoma, California and as far away as Mexico City. He also designed several large hotel/motels in Texas, New Mexico, Las Vegas (where only his iconic Chapel remains) and elsewhere. He also designed apartment buildings, restaurants and shopping centers. Documentation on Dilbeck's work is uneven as he was not careful to maintain records and he occasionally worked as a designer with other architects and was not always officially credited.⁷

Dilbeck considered himself the originator of the "Texas Ranch House," a style which he defined as a ranch house that was built with local and salvaged materials, big windows, lean-to porches, wide overhangs and low-sloped roofs, designed as though it were built over time. A very large fireplace was always included. Influenced by Irish, French and English farm houses, Dilbeck combined some of the attributes of the then popular California Ranch house, including the Storybook Style, with local materials and techniques for building. The success of this idea is evidenced by the popularity of his work during his career and today. His houses have been the subject of exhibits, tours, articles and a book. Despite the popularity of these houses, known simply as "Dilbecks," many of them have been demolished for redevelopment with larger homes. In Preston Hollow alone, nearly half of the Dilbeck-designed houses in that neighborhood have been lost within the last 7 years. 8

In the architect's own words, during a discussion of his "Texas Ranch House" style in an oral interview, Dilbeck said:

"They built onto this house after they left the log house. After they left the log house, it either became a hog pen or a chicken house or something...Then finally, when they made enough money and had enough wings added on... sometimes a wing would be added on in brick or sometimes in stone. Or they would make a shingle-walled wing. Anyway, they would re-group and these rooms were not always square with the building. They would go off in angles in order to catch a Southeast breeze. So when the money turned up, they'd go up on the top of the hill and build kind

of a colonial, gingerbread house – what I call a "Gay Nineties house" – this was the second house they built. It finally became the chicken house itself. They kept the feed stored in it - the corn and feed. But I've seen it happen time and again. If you look at a ranch – you'll see the old log house, then the intermediate house, which can be the bunch house, and then the Big House."

On the topic of the Underwood's house specifically, Dilbeck said:

"A house I did for W. G. Underwood is not really a Ranch house and yet it is a very interesting Ranch house. It has a handmade tile roof on it – very beautiful – different from anything in Dallas. But it wouldn't go as the same type of Ranch house as the Clark house. But I've done literally hundreds of them." ¹⁰

The original drawings indicate the roof to be "Tile Shingle." The owner reports that the roof was wood shingle by 1970.

Lambert Landscape Company, Inc.

The landscape designer for this property is Joe Lambert Jr. (1910-1970) who grew up in Shreveport, Louisiana. His father, Joe Lambert, Sr. (1882-1965) founded Lambert's Gardens in 1919. Joe Jr. attended Columbia University, where he majored in art and urban planning, and in 1935 opened a branch of his father's business as the Lambert Landscape Company, a design/build practice which would be the first of its kind in Dallas. He was a strong believer in working with architects from the start of a project and was an avid arts supporter, traveler and civic leader in addition to being credited by his mother with introducing azaleas to Dallas. Significant work includes the Texas Governor's Mansion in Austin, the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, CA, TresVidas Golf Club in Acapulco, Mexico, the residence known as the Cox Mansion on the corner of Beverly Drive and Preston Road, and perhaps the invention of the "Lambert Green" paint color. Dilbeck worked with Lambert on a number of projects, joked about Lambert stealing his idea for using old salvaged bricks and served as a pallbearer at Lambert's funeral.

The garden is listed in the Smithsonian Institution Research Information System as the Shutt Garden, where features of the garden are documented.¹³ Several trees remain that could be original including:

2 pecans (definitely original)

2 Bois D'Arc (probably original)

2 Cedar Elm

Magnolia in front

Magnolia at corner (probably original)

W. G. Underwood

The residence was built for Mr. and Mrs. William George (W. G.) Underwood (1876-1948), a partner in Underwood and Ezell, one of several companies the two men were involved with. Claude C. Ezell (1882-1961) was a friend and Underwood's business partner and the two men operated theaters throughout Texas including some of the earliest drive-in theaters in Texas and the first two of its kind in Dallas – one at Northwest Highway and Hillcrest named the "Northwest Hi-Way Drive-In" and one at the Fort Worth Pike (Interstate 30) and Chalk Hill, named the "Chalk Hill Drive-In," both of which opened in July of 1941 and have since been demolished. These two and other drive-in Theaters in

the Dallas area later became known for their neon lighting and graphic paintings, particularly for the face of a clown that adorned the back-side of the screen. The partnership held the rights to the "Drive-In Theater" franchise in Texas. Underwood was also known nationally for his invention of a sound system for outdoor theaters that was used for a short time. ¹⁵ Underwood was a leader in the theater operations and film exchange industry in Dallas, was a founder of the Variety Club of Dallas, owned various theaters and served as the Manager of the Liberty Film Company and the Republic Pictures Corporation of Texas with Ezell, among other business associations. Underwood was a developer, with the Robb and Rowley Theater Company, of the Texas Theater in Dallas, a local landmark and National Register listed property. ¹⁶



Contributed by Billy Holcomb / Billy Smith / Don Lewis
Image obtained from www.cinematreasures.org

The property owner recalls hearing that Underwood and his business partner decided to build their homes next door to one another upon returning from a trip to California. In April of 1938, Underwood and Ezell did take such a trip together to Hollywood with other Republic Pictures executives. ¹⁷ Upon their return, each acquired a 1 ½ acre lot side-by-side (Ezell's property address was 9506 Meadowbrook, south of the subject property, and the house remains) in a then undeveloped area of Preston Hollow. Both men hired Dilbeck to design their houses. Dilbeck had recently won the design competition from which had been built a model home by the developer Highland Park Properties near the intersection of Northwest Highway and Preston, in a new development known as "Preston Downs." The model home was intended by the developer to show people what could be built on the large lots of this new development. The Underwood house was completed first, with the Ezell house completed approximately a year later. While the back yards of both properties abut, the design relationship between the two houses, if there was one, is no longer evident and the two properties are now separated by a fence. The owner recalls that there was no fence in 1970.



9506 Meadowbrook Drive Photograph courtesy of the Texas/Dallas History and Archives Division, Dallas Public Library

Subsequent owners and alterations

Underwood died in 1948, leaving his widow and daughter behind. Mrs. Underwood sold the house soon after that, in 1949, to Mr. and Mrs. Howell E. Smith. Howell Smith was in the oil business and the couple entertained at the house often. Mrs. Howell was the sister of Sid W. Richardson, an oil "tycoon" and partner in Richardson and Bass Oil Producers of Fort Worth. The Smiths undertook alterations which included the replacement of selective windows, the removal of two windows on the east side of the house and infill with brick, the enclosure of a portion of the second floor balcony for a closet, and the enclosure of both rear porches with wood and glass partitions.

Current owner and alterations

In 1970, Mr. and Mrs. George Shutt purchased the house from the Smiths. George Shutt was one of the first partners of the Trammel Crow Company before he retired in the 1970s to manage his own real estate interests. He was born in Bronxville, New York and was a Yale graduate. The Shutts raised their family in the house and lived there for 45 years. When Mr. Shutt died, his widow, Ms. Nancy Perkins Shutt, remained in the home. Ms. Shutt is a fifth generation Texan, a graduate of the Hockaday School and the University of Texas at Austin, and an active volunteer in the community. The Shutts made a small addition to the servant's quarters near the garage in a similar style to the house, but with lapped wood siding. The wood gate at the entry portal and other entrances was replaced with a metal gate and the concrete pool deck was resurfaced with Mexican tile pavers The remainder of the house and landscape maintains the appearance it had when it was purchased in 1970.

Summary

The house located at 5310 Park Lane is an excellent example of the residential work of Charles Stevens Dilbeck, complete with an intact landscape design by Joe Lambert, Jr. A two-story version of his Texas Ranch Style, this residence would be the first "Dilbeck" designated in Dallas. The property was designed for the highly accomplished theater industry executive and Drive-In Theater franchise owner W. G. Underwood. Underwood and his long-time business associate C. C. Ezell, who owned

the lot next door, both hired Dilbeck to design their homes. Both houses remain amid a dwindling count of Dilbeck-designed homes in the Preston Hollow neighborhood.

14. Bibliography

BOOKS:

Dillon, David, Dallas Architecture 1936 - 1986. Austin: Texas Monthly Press, Inc., 1985.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

Morgan, Eva Potter. *Preston Hollow: A Documentary History* 1850-1950. Dallas: Great Impressions Printing & Graphics, 2001.

Sanders, Don and Susan, *The American Drive-In Movie Theater*. New York: Crestline, a division of Book Sales, Inc., 2013.

Seagrave, Kerry, *Drive-In Theaters*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1992.

Sherrod D. Troy, *Historic Dallas Theaters*. Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2014.

Walton, John Brooks, *The Architecture of Charles Stevens Dilbeck*. Tulsa: JBW Publications, 2006.

NEWSPAPERS:

Dallas Morning News Archives, online.

PERIODICALS:

Mulford Perot, Nancy, "Architecture Pastiche Charles Dilbeck's Vernacular Style." *Veranda* Volume XIII, No. 4 September/October, 1999.

INTERVIEWS:

Shutt, Nancy, property owner, in the home on August 4, 2015, Dallas, Texas.

Dilbeck, Doris (Pat) and McIntire, Elaine, wife and daughter of Charles Dilbeck, on August 8, 2015, Hot Springs, AR.

District or Site Map Site Plan	Additional descriptive material Footnotes
15. Attachments	
The Cultural Landscape Foundation: http://tclf.or	g/pioneer/joe-lambert-jr
Ancestry: http://home.ancestry.com/	
WEBSITES:	
Dallas Public Library.	

Dilbeck, Charles, Stevens, "Interview of Charles Dilbeck" transcript from recording by Alan

16. Designation Criteria

<u>X</u> History, heritage and culture: Represents the historical development, ethnic heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, state, or country.

____ Historic event: Location of or association with the site of a significant historic event.

X Significant persons:

Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city, state, or country.

<u>X</u> Architecture: Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, landscape design, method of construction, exceptional craftsmanship, architectural innovation, or contains details which represent folk or ethnic art.

X Architect or master builder: Represents the work of an architect, designer or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, state or country.

X Historic context: Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites, or areas which are eligible for preservation based on historic, cultural, or architectural characteristics.

<u>X</u> <u>Unique visual feature:</u> Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the city that is a source of pride or cultural significance.

_____Archeological: Archeological or paleontological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories of historic or prehistoric interest.

<u>X</u> National and state recognition:
Eligible of or designated as a National
Historic Landmark, Recorded Texas Historic
Landmark, State Archeological Landmark,
American Civil Engineering Landmark, or
eligible for inclusion in the National Register
of Historic Places.

X Historic education: Represents as era of architectural, social, or economic history that allows an understanding of how the place or area was used by past generations.

Recommendation

The Designation Committee 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 Committee endorses the Preservation Criteria, policy recommendations and landmark boundary as presented by the Department of Development Services.

Date:	
Daron Tapscott - Chair	
Designation Committee	
Mark Doty Historic Preservation Planner	

⁴ Ibid; p 7.

⁶ Dillon, David, *Dallas Architecture 1936-1986*, Austin, Texas Monthly Press, 1985; p. 409.

⁹ Dilbeck; p. 8.

¹⁰ Ibid; p. 10.

¹² The Cultural Landscape Foundation database at www.twtelf.org/pioneer/joe-lambert-jr.

¹⁴ "Twenty Five Years Ago Today" <u>Dallas Morning News</u>, 12/8/1965.

¹ Interview with Nancy Shutt, property owner, Dallas; August 4, 2015.

² McAlester, Virginia Savage, A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013; p. 537; 597.

³ Dilbeck, Charles, Stevens, "Interview of Charles Dilbeck" transcript from recording by Alan Mason in the architect's home on 09/20/1979; p. 4. Available in audio and written form at the Dallas Public Library.

⁵ Winters, Willis Cecil, Survey of Domestic Architecture in Dallas, unpublished list dated 11/12/2010.

⁷ Interview with Doris (Pat) Dilbeck, widow of Charles Dilbeck, on 08/08/2015 in Hot Springs, AR. The catalogue of Dilbeck's drawings at the Alexander Architectural Archives confirm this.

⁸ A survey was conducted by Nancy McCoy in August of 2015 using the inventory of Dilbeck-designed homes identified in Eva Potter Morgan's book *Preston Hollow* for six contiguous additions: 5 out of the 12 houses listed are no longer extant.

¹¹ Bowden, Jeff. "The Man Who Brought Azaleas to Dallas," at www.dmagazine.com/publications.d-home/2000/holiday/the-man-who-brought-azaleas-to-dallas. Note: according to The Cultural Landscape Foundation, the credit goes to his father's company, not Lambert personally.

¹³ Smithsonian Institution Research Information System Archives at www.siris-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp.

¹⁵ Sanders, Don and Susan, *The American Drive-In Movie Theater*, Minneapolis, MN: Motorbooks International, 1997; p.39.

¹⁶ McCoy, Nancy, National Register Nomination Form for the Texas Theater, Dallas, Texas. 2002.

¹⁷. "Film Officials Will Pay Dallas Visit" Dallas Morning News, 4/21/1938,