

**NOTICE OF MEETING
LANDMARK COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF GALVESTON
MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2026 - 4:00 PM
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 2ND FLOOR OF CITY HALL
823 ROSENBERG, GALVESTON, TEXAS
REGULAR MEETING**

**One or more members of the Landmark Commission may attend the meeting by
videoconference.**

**A quorum of the members of the Landmark Commission will be physically present at the
meeting location.**

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Attendance
3. Conflict of Interest
4. Approval of Minutes

4.A March 16, 2026

5. Public Comment
Request to Address Commission on Agenda Items Without Public Hearings and Non-Agenda Items (three-minute maximum per speaker. If speaking through a translator, six-minute maximum per speaker)
6. New Business and Associated Public Hearings

6.A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

1. **26LC-004 (1813 24th Street)** Request for designation as a Galveston Landmark. The property is legally described as Eanes Subdivison (2013), Lot 5, Acres 0.256, in the City and County of Galveston, Texas. Applicant: John Zempter Eanes
Property Owner: John Zempter Eanes

7. Discussion Item

7.A Discussion of electrical infrastructure in historic districts (Chastain/Click) - *Continued*

8. Adjournment

I certify that the above Notice of Meeting was posted in a place convenient to the public in compliance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code on 03/30/2026 at 3:30 PM

Karina Rosales, Planning Technician

Note: An aggrieved applicant must file a letter requesting an appeal to the Historic Preservation

Officer within 20 days of the rendition of the Commission's decision.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA), PERSONS IN NEED OF A SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROCEEDING SHALL, WITHIN THREE (3) DAYS PRIOR TO ANY PROCEEDING, CONTACT THE CITY SECRETARY'S OFFICE, SUITE 201, 823 ROSENBERG, GALVESTON, TEXAS 77550 (409 797-3510)

MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL MAY BE ATTENDING AND PARTICIPATING IN THIS MEETING



City of Galveston

MINUTES OF THE LANDMARK COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GALVESTON REGULAR MEETING – March 16, 2026

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Bourgeois, Chastain, Click, Langdale, Stetzel-Thompson, Ex Officio CM Lewis

Members Absent: Allen (Alternate), Fitz, Svendsen (Alternate), Thierry

Staff Present: Daniel Lunsford, Planning Manager; Donna Fairweather, Interim City Attorney; Karina Rosales, Planning Technician.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The March 2, 2026, regular meeting minutes were accepted as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

NEW BUSINESS AND ASSOCIATED PUBLIC HEARINGS

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

26LC-003 (1815 Broadway / Avenue J) Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to the structure including restoring historic front façade, changing window openings, removing an existing chimney, replacing front doors, and adding roof dormers. Property is legally described as M.B. Menard Survey, Lot 4, Block 138, in the City and County of Galveston, Texas.

Applicant: Michael Gaertner

Property Owner: Michael Douglas / Douglas Dreamscapes, LLC.

Staff presented the report and noted that five public hearing notices were sent, and none returned.

Chairperson Click opened the public hearing on the case. The applicant, Michael Gaertner, gave a presentation to the Commission. See the attached list of presentations made to the Commission. The public hearing was closed, and the Chairperson called for a motion.

Commissioner Chastain made a motion to approve the request with Staff's Recommendations.

Commissioner Stetzel-Thompson seconded.

The Chairperson called for questions or comments from the Commission. The following votes were cast:

In favor:	Bourgeois, Chastain, Click, Langdale, Stetzel-Thompson,
Opposed:	None
Absent:	Allen (Alternate), Fitz, Svendsen (Alternate), Thierry
Non-voting participants:	Ex Officio CM Lewis

The motion passed.

DISCUSSION ITEM

Staff opened the “Discussion of electrical infrastructure in historic districts (Chastain/Click)” item. The Commission requested the item be added to the next scheduled meeting.

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:37 PM





26LC-004

STAFF REPORT

ADDRESS:

1813 24th Street

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

The property is legally described as Eanes Subdivision (2013), Lot 5, Acres 0.256, in the City and County of Galveston, Texas

Applicant:

John Zempter Eanes

Property Owner:

John Zempter Eanes

ZONING DISTRICT:

Residential, Single-Family, Historic District (R-3-H)

HISTORIC DISTRICT:

Silk Stocking

REQUEST:

Request for designation as a Galveston Landmark

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval with Conditions

EXHIBITS:

A – Applicant's Submittal

STAFF:

Catherine Gorman, AICP
 Assistant Director/HPO
 409-797-3665
 cgorman@galvestontx.gov

Public Notice and Comment:

Sent	Returned	In Favor	Opposed	No Comment
25				



Executive Summary

The applicant is requesting designation of the above referenced address, as a Galveston Landmark.

Zoning

Location	Zoning	Land Use
Subject Site	Residential, Single-Family, Historic District (R-3-H)	Residential
North	Residential, Single-Family, Historic District (R-3-H)	Residential
South	Residential, Single-Family, Historic District (R-3-H)	Residential
East	Residential, Single-Family, Historic District (R-3-H)	Residential
West	Residential, Single-Family, Historic District (R-3-H)	Residential

Analysis

As per Article 10 of the Land Development Regulations, the following criteria should be considered during the Landmark Designation review process:

- 1. The character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City of Galveston, Galveston County, the State of Texas, or the United States.**

The James Walter and Agnes May Zempter House at 1813 24th Street is a rare example of a house that has remained in the same family that built it four generations ago.

The property derives primary significance from its direct association with the rebuilding of Galveston following the 1900 Storm, one of the most consequential events in the city’s history. Constructed in 1906, the house was built during the critical reconstruction and grade-raising period that reshaped Galveston’s physical and economic landscape.

James Walter Zempter, a skilled craftsman and contractor, arrived in Galveston in 1900 to participate in the rebuilding effort. By 1903, he had established a contracting partnership and later founded his own firm, J.W. Zempter Contracting & Co., which operated for over four decades. During this time, Zempter contributed significantly to the reconstruction and expansion of Galveston’s built environment, including the construction of public schools, infrastructure improvements, and commercial and institutional buildings. His work included projects associated with the seawall system, educational facilities, and municipal infrastructure essential to the city’s recovery and growth.

The subject residence was constructed by Zempter himself and served as his family home. As such, it represents a direct and tangible link to the labor, craftsmanship, and entrepreneurial activity that underpinned Galveston’s recovery in the early twentieth century.

2. Properties that are associated importantly with the lives of persons historically significant in the history of the United States, the State of Texas, or the City of Galveston.

The residence is strongly associated with the life and work of James Walter Zempter, a locally significant builder whose contributions to Galveston's development were substantial and long-lasting. Over the course of his career, Zempter constructed numerous buildings and infrastructure elements that contributed to the city's physical and civic framework.

In addition to his professional work, Zempter was deeply engaged in the community, maintaining long-term involvement in civic and professional organizations, including the Galveston Builder's Exchange, Rotary Club, and the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

The property also reflects the continued contributions of subsequent generations of the Zempter family, including educators, medical professionals, and civic leaders, reinforcing the residence's association with individuals who have played meaningful roles in the community over more than a century.

3. Retention of historic integrity, meaning that the property possesses several, and usually most, of the following aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling or association.

The James Walter and Agnes May Zempter House retains much of its historic integrity. Alterations made to the structure by Mr. Zempter in 1928 have become significant in their own right.

Financial Incentives for Historic Properties

The property is in a historic district and is ineligible for the Financial Incentive for Historic Properties for new Galveston Landmarks.

Other Reviews

The Planning Commission will hear this request at the April 7, 2026 meeting. City Council has the final decision regarding the request for a Landmark Designation. The request will be heard at the regular meeting of April 23, 2026.

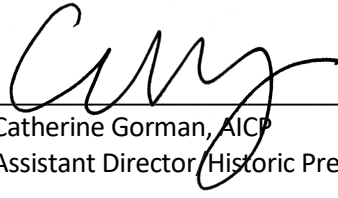
Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval with the following condition:

Standard Condition:

1. As with all properties containing a Historic Overlay Designation, including Landmark Designations, exterior alterations to the property will be subject to review and approval by the Landmark Commission and must conform to the Design Standards for Historic Properties of Galveston, Texas.

Respectfully Submitted:



Catherine Gorman, AICP
Assistant Director / Historic Preservation Officer

03/24/2026
Date

JAMES WALTER AND AGNES MARY ZEMPTER HOUSE

1813 24th Street, Galveston TX 77550

Galveston is a unique community known for its rich history, diverse economy, Victorian architecture, and coastal charm. What brings Galveston its historical prominence is its experience and recovery from the largest and deadliest natural disaster in the United States, the Great Hurricane of 1900. Striking on September 18, 1900, over six thousand people lost their lives and a community known as the “Wall Street of the South” was washed away by 145 MPH winds and rising flood waters. Although the Great Hurricane caused unbelievable death and destruction for Galveston, its road to recovery provided opportunities for employment and growth. James W. Zempter came to Galveston believing in that opportunity and, four generations later, the Zempter family is still contributing to the community of Galveston and living in the same home that Mr. Zempter built 120 years ago.

COMING TO GALVESTON

James Walter Zempter was born in Falmouth, KY in 1875. At 17 he left the family farm with \$50 in his pocket and traveled to Cincinnati where he began working with his brother as a stair builder. In 1900, the day before Thanksgiving, he came to Galveston as many young men did, to be part of the rebuilding after the Great Storm. He came to Galveston with his few tools, his two hands and his skills as a stair-maker to find the success of which he was dreaming. As a skilled craftsman, he found work quickly and by 1903 he joined W. H. Jassen in the contracting business, establishing Janssen & Zempter Contractors and Builders. They advertised as able to “furnish estimates and contract for buildings of all kinds complete in every detail...hardwood floors and stairs a specialty.” [1]

In 1905 Mr. Zempter met Agnes Mary Webb, who had emigrated from England. He met her on a blind date and romance ensued. [2] Jim completed building his home in 1906 and on November 23, he and Agnes were married. [3] Nine months later, on August 10, 1907, their only child, Shelby Ida Zempter was born.

Mr. Zempter continued to work with Janssen, building numerous homes and businesses until 1910, when the company dissolved and Jim formed his own business, J.W. Zempter Contracting & Co. This business would last over 40 years and undertook many projects critical to the rebuilding of Galveston.

BUILDING A FAMILY HOME

One day in 1906 he read an advertisement in the Galveston Daily News saying lots were for sale on 24th Street near the beach. The land had been filled in as part of the island grade raising. He bought the land and began to build his home on a double lot. [4a-d] The house was built in a simple Queen Anne style with twin porches, turned porch posts and lacy trim set under a high

cross-gabled roof. [5,6] Its southern windows would bring in the breezes from the Gulf. Built of cypress, the home was painted in traditional white with green window sashes and shutters. A color scheme that remains to this day. [7] Edge grain pine floors were installed on both floors and glass inset pocket doors were placed between the living room and dining room. These doors still retain their original hardware and glass. All the doors and windows had wood framing around them, which remain to this day. Most of the windows retain their original glass. In the center of the home a telephone was installed and the number assigned was 4118. As the years progressed, this telephone number expanded and is now (and still working) 409-763-4118. At the rear of the property Mr. Zempter built a shed for his horse and wagon. Over the years, this shed would be expanded into a full-scale garage and workshop. The current owner, Zempter's great grandson, John Zempter Eanes, has expanded the garage additionally to provide space for his four-vehicle antique Packard car collection.

In 1928 Mr. Zempter undertook a major renovation of the home, incorporating many of the Craftsman elements of style so popular at the time. [8a,b] The main front door was moved to the center of the home's front, and a vestibule entryway was added in front of the main door. The stairway was moved to the center of the house, and a fireplace was constructed in the living room, with a walnut mantel and matching walnut bookcases on either side, all built by Mr. Zempter. Because Mrs. Zempter complained frequently about the downstairs being cold during the Galveston winters, the downstairs pine floors were covered with new, cross-laid oak floors. Upstairs, the original pine floors remain unchanged.

SECOND and THIRD GENERATIONS

In 1931 Shelby Zempter met Robert Hills Eanes, of Austin Texas while they attended the University of Texas. They graduated together [9] and were married on August 27, 1931, and resided in the family home while Robert Hill Eanes attended the University of Texas Medical Branch pursuing his medical degree. In February of 1935, with his wife 8 months pregnant and him being only three months from graduating from medical school, Robert underwent surgery due to an illness contracted during his medical studies laboratory work, and, tragically died at age 28 on February 2, 1935.[10] Shelby gave birth to their son, Robert Zempter Eanes, three days later. She was unable to attend her husband's funeral. Robert Hill Eanes was awarded his medical degree, posthumously, with his graduating class of 1935.[11] Shelby and young Robert Eanes continued to live with Jim and Agnes Zempter, three generations together.

Shelby remained a widow for 15 years, finally remarrying on April 8, 1947, to Scottish ship Captain John Alick Mowat. Shelby and her new husband lived in a garage apartment located above the garage until her parents passed away and they moved into the main house. Shelby served many years as a biology teacher at Ball High School, which her father had helped to construct. Becoming a teacher in 1932 wasn't easy as there was considerable hiring discrimination against women. [12] With the assistance of her father, she fought against this discrimination, but it took several years before she was hired.

Young Robert Zempter Eanes followed in his late father's footsteps, graduating with his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical Branch in 1960. He continued his educational studies, receiving a PhD from the University of California, San Francisco in Biochemistry in 1971. Robert married Laura Holloway Becker on June 6, 1958, in Trinity Episcopal Church in Galveston. They went on to have three children. Robert died in February of 2024 in Galveston, and his widow Laura lives nearby to her son John (current owner of the home).

ZEMPTER GALVESTON BUILDINGS

Jim Zempter built many structures in Galveston [13] including Murdoch's Bathhouse [14], the West End extension of the Seawall and groins [15,16,17,18], Galveston's Recreation Pier[19], Galveston City Reservoir[20], William B. Travis School[21a,b], Alamo School[22,23], George W. Carver School, Goliad School [24], Booker T. Washington School, 2 wings of Ball High School[25], The 59th Street Pumping Station[26a,b], Power Plant and Hospital Building of the John Sealy Hospital[27], Trinity Church Parish House[28], Family Washing Company Plant[29], the Kahn-Zempter Building[30a,b] including the Women's Specialty Company Store[31], Galveston Housing Authority Low Income Housing[32a.b], Christian Science Church, Beissner Building, Wiley & Nicholls Warehouse, Ulman Stern Warehouse, the YWCA Building[33], Galveston Cotton Mill, Brewer W. Key Home, Daniel Kempner Home, Fellman Seinsheimer Home, many homes on Avenue O, many homes on 24th Street, 25th Street[34] and Avenue P plus hundreds of miles of highways and roads[35a-d] including the roadway between the city limits and the Galveston causeway. He also built roadways in New Mexico. Jim Zempter retired in 1954[36][37] and died, at home, October 24, 1964. He was always proud to be able to say that nothing he ever built in Galveston was destroyed by hurricanes or other acts of God.

In addition to running a vibrant business he was actively involved in the Galveston community through The Galveston Builder's Exchange, the Galveston Rotary Club[38], and the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in Galveston[39a,b], serving for over 50 years in each organization.

THE FOURTH GENERATION

His wife, Agnes Mary, continued to live in the home until her death in October 1969[40]. During her marriage and life in Galveston she was active civically. During World War I she was an active Red Cross Worker and served on the Board of Directors of the YWCA and the Lasker Home for Homeless Children.[41] Later she was a founding member of the Sam Houston Mothers Club (which became the PTA), and a member of the League of Women Voters and the Galveston Garden Club.

Captain Mowat died in 1972 and Shelby died, in the Zempter home, in 1983.

With the death of Shelby, Jim Zempter's great-grandson, John Zempter Eanes, became the fourth-generation owner. One month after his arrival in Galveston, Hurricane Alicia struck. As a testament to the skills of his great-grandfather, the house sustained little damage other than the roof.

When John took ownership of the home, he began extensive upgrades to the home's plumbing and electrical systems. Central air conditioning was added and in 1994, the kitchen was completely renovated and the rear deck installed. In 1998 renovations began in the dining room. Painstaking removal of multiple layers of wallpaper revealed wainscoting that is believed to be original to the home. Heavily damaged by wallpaper tacks, which took months to remove, the wainscoting was painted and a chair rail was added along with crown molding to complete the renovation.

In 2022 John undertook a complete renovation of the garage area, expanding it to accommodate his vintage cars. In 2024 the main home underwent additional renovations, with a completely new kitchen being installed, an upstairs bedroom being converted to a master bath/laundry room and all rooms in the home being painted with added crown molding installed, and the original bathroom to the home being modernized. The home was also completely rewired, with all the old knob and tube wiring removed. Before the 2024 renovation John could always say that every nail and board in the home had either been put in by himself or his Great-Grandfather Zempter. 2025 saw the installation of a pool and spa, which was only possible since the home sits on a double lot. Despite the many internal renovations over the years, the exterior of the home remains, largely, unchanged for over 120 years.

John and his wife, Lynn Louise Iredale, were married at Trinity Episcopal Church in Galveston on April 28, 2001, the fourth generation united there. They have cared for their family's historic home and decorated it with both modern and antique furniture. The home displays a bedroom suite that was given to John's maternal Great-Grandmother, Marie Becker, by her father, upon her marriage in 1885. It had been dismantled and laid forgotten in a corner of the garage until John had it refinished and restored in 2001. The restoration revealed a beautiful burled walnut tester bed set with marble dresser tops and wardrobe with its original hardware intact. As Lynn was born and raised in Pennsylvania, many Pennsylvania Amish/Mennonite quilts are found in the home.

John and Lynn, while living and working in Galveston have contributed to their community with John serving in Kiwanis for over 30 years and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the African Children's Haven. Lynn has served on the Board of Directors of the Galveston Island Humane Society, serving as both Treasurer and Chairwoman of the Capital Campaign (to rebuild the animal shelter after Hurricane Ike), the Board of Directors of Gleanings from the Harvest/Galveston County Food Bank, and the Board of Directors of the Galveston Island Tree Conservancy which in 2025 recognized her with their Deep Roots Award for her work in securing two million dollars to restore and replant the historic Broadway Esplanade after Hurricane Ike. She has also served as President and Treasurer of the Silk Stocking National Historic District Neighborhood Association and the Eanes are active supporting members of the Galveston Historic Foundation.

ZEMPTER FAMILY HOME IMPORTANCE

While there are many people who have worked to make Galveston the vibrant community that it is today, there are few families that can attest to four generations, living in a 120 year old family-built home, and continuing the dedication of community involvement begun back in 1900 with the arrival of a young, stair-maker, believing in the dream of a new life. Mr. Zempster's contribution to the rebuilding of Galveston is significant and his craftsmanship is evident through the many Zempster built structures that still stand, including the family home he built in 1906. Although many decades have passed since James Walter Zempster first came to Galveston to establish his family and his business, the Zempster bloodline proudly continues to claim Galveston as its home.

SOURCES:

1. Jassen & Zempter Advertisement, Galveston Daily News, 1906
2. Photographs of James Walter Zempter and Agnes Mary Webb Zempter, 1906
3. Marriage License for James Zempter & Agnes Webb, November 23, 1906
4. (a,b,c,d) Certificate of Guaranty, 0Purchase Agreement and Title Certificate for the purchase of SW Block of Outlot 67, Lots 10 & 11, February 3, 1906
5. 1813 24th Street, front view, James, Agnes and Baby Shelby pictures, 1907 (family photograph)
6. 1813 24th Street, Side view, 1907 (family photograph)
7. 1813 24th Street, front view, Current 2025 (family photograph)
8. (a,b) Insurance document for 1813 24th Street, beginning 1906, Rosenberg Library archives
9. Robert Hills Eanes and Shelby Zempter graduation announcement, Austin American Statesman News, September 1, 1931
10. Robert Hills Eanes Obituary (Galveston Daily News) and Photographs, February 2, 1935
11. Graduation Class Photograph, School of Medicine, Class of 1935
12. Galveston Daily News, May 1932
13. Galveston Tribune, May 18, 1954
14. Galveston Daily News, November 17, 1915
15. Galveston Daily News, January 6, 1927
16. Galveston Daily News, June 4, 1926
17. Family Photograph, Seawall Extension JW Zempter Construction, 1927
18. Family Photograph, (current) 61 Street Plaque commemorating West End Seawall & Boulevard Construction, 1926-1930; recognizing J.W. Zempter Co as one of the builders
19. Galveston Daily News, May 20, 1941
20. Galveston Daily News, September 24, 1942
21. (a,b): Galveston Daily News, September 15, 1946
22. Galveston Daily News, October 1, 1935
23. Photograph of (old) Alamo School, approximate date 1950
24. Galveston Daily News December 5, 1923
25. Galveston Daily News, December 19, 1915
26. (a,b): Galveston Daily News, January 16, 1943
27. Galveston Daily News, October 1, 1928
28. Galveston Daily News, October 1, 1931
29. Galveston Daily News, April 5, 1925

30. Galveston Daily News, October 1, 1928 and March 22, 1928
31. Galveston Daily News, November 27, 1928
32. Galveston Daily News, June 19, 1951
33. Galveston Daily News, July 26, 1951
34. Galveston Daily News, May 20, 1928
35. Galveston Daily News, December 1, 1926, August 7, 1927, August 29, 1933, November 21, 1933
36. (a): Galveston Daily News, January 22, 1950, (b): Falmouth Outlook News, February 10, 1950
37. Galveston Daily News, May 18, 1954
38. Family Photograph of Resolution given to James W. Zempter, posthumously for his 50 years of service to the Galveston Rotary Club, November 18, 1964
39. (a,b) Galveston Daily News, September 4, 1955 and April 26, 1959
40. Galveston Daily News, October 8, 1969
41. Galveston Daily News, January 30, 1924