

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Inspiration Point Shelter House
Other name/site number:
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & number: Roughly 250 yards south of 2400 block of Roberts Cut Off Road in Marion Sansom Park
City or town: Fort Worth State: Texas County: Tarrant
Not for publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
 national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer Date 1/29/14
Signature of certifying official / Title
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register
- other, explain: _____

John Edson H. Ball Date of Action 3.31.14
Signature of the Keeper

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

	Private
X	Public - Local
	Public - State
	Public - Federal

Category of Property

X	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: RECREATION: Outdoor recreation facility

Current Functions: RECREATION: Outdoor recreation facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification: Other: Rustic

Principal Exterior Materials: Concrete, limestone, painted wood, painted metal

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-6 through 7-8)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance: 1927-1963

Significant Dates: 1927

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): N/A

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): N/A

Architect/Builder: E.W. Van Slyke & Co., Architect; Thomas S. Bryne, contractor

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 8-9 through 8-15)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheets 9-16 through 9-17)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property: Less than 1 acre

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 32.794690 Longitude: -97.409944

Verbal Boundary Description: The property is a square parcel measuring 100 x 100 feet directly centered around the shelter house and its associated observation patio. The northernmost boundary line of the rectangular boundary runs parallel to the north elevation of the shelter house, which is skewed roughly 22-1/2 degrees east of north. See map on 20.

Boundary Justification: The boundary encompasses the extant historic resource Marion Sansom Park's Inspiration Point location.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Arthur Weinman, AIA
Organization: Arthur Weinman Architects
Address: 6300 Ridglea Plaza, Suite 105
City or Town: Fort Worth State: Texas Zip Code: 76116
Email: art_wa@swbell.net
Telephone: 817-737-0977
Date: June 18, 2013

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheet Map-18 through Map-21)

Additional items (see continuation sheets Figure-22 through Figure-29)

Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photographs

Name of Property: Inspiration Point Shelter House
City or Vicinity: Fort Worth
County, State: Tarrant County, Texas
Photographer: Arthur Weinman, AIA
Date Photographed: October 25, 2013
Number of Photos: 8

TX_Tarrant County_Inspiration_Point Shelter House_0001.tif
Inspiration Point Shelter House as seen from Roberts Cut-Off approaching the access drive
Camera facing southwest

TX_Tarrant County_Inspiration Point Shelter House_0002.tif
Inspiration Point Shelter House as viewed from parking area
Camera facing southwest

TX_Tarrant County_Inspiration Point Shelter House_0003.tif
Nominated property as seen from below, along the bluff line
Camera facing north

TX_Tarrant County_Inspiration Point Shelter House_0004.tif
Southeast end of building, looking through to view beyond
Camera facing southwest

TX_Tarrant County_Inspiration Point Shelter House_0005.tif
Looking across the semi-circular patio to the west
Camera facing west

TX_Tarrant County_Inspiration Point Shelter House_0006.tif
Looking northwest, showing curve of patio and ramps
Camera facing northwest

TX_Tarrant County_Inspiration Point Shelter House_0007.tif
Looking through east side of shelter house towards parking
Camera facing north

TX_Tarrant County_Inspiration Point Shelter House_0008.tif
New foundation at base of wall, west end of building
Camera facing southwest

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Narrative Description

The Inspiration Point Shelter House, originally constructed in 1927, is an open-air, rectangular, limestone pavilion topped by a hip-gable roof. A limestone, double-sided fireplace stands in the center; its large chimney pierces the ridge at center. The concrete floor is partially lined with a low stone wall, defining the building's footprint. The concrete floor and low stone wall extend from beyond the shelter house to create a semi-circular observation patio. That patio is ringed by a concrete sidewalk—framed by another low, stone retaining wall—which leads to a set of concrete stairs that provides access to the hike and bike trails and rugged parkland below the bluff. The facility sits on the edge of a precipice above a rocky bluff facing southwest to Lake Worth dam.

The building's roof succumbed to fire in the mid-1980s leaving the shelter house roofless. Over the next two decades, the support columns and fireplace remained remarkably intact and in relatively good condition, though the patio's perimeter walls and walks began to exhibit signs of deterioration and suffered from vandalism. It was named to Historic Fort Worth, Inc.'s annual Most Endangered Places List in 2008, spurring a restoration project. Led by Arthur Weinman Architects of Fort Worth, the project was complete in 2011 and earned a prestigious Preservation Project Award from Historic Fort Worth, Inc. in 2012.

Setting

Inspiration Point is located in Marion Sansom Park, a municipal park along the shore of Lake Worth in northwest Fort Worth, Texas. A paved park access drive, approximately 1/3 miles in length, leads roughly southwest from the 2400 block of Roberts Cut-Off Road through rolling, grass-covered parkland to a combination asphalt and gravel parking lot. The nominated building sits a short distance south of the lot.

The Inspiration Point Shelter House is located on a high limestone bluff, overlooking the Lake Worth dam to the southwest, in a clearing of indigenous, scrubby undergrowth and trees common to the area. This vegetation defines the site on the east, west, and south. The shelter is oriented at 22-1/2 degrees east of north, with the entry to the north-northeast (towards the parking lot) and the patio/overlook to the south-southwest. The south to southwest vistas look over the sharply sloping bluff to the dam and the lake, as well as the remnants of a former federal fish hatchery (c. 1925) and the Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base (established as Tarrant Field in 1932).

The Inspiration Point facility is a site-specific design. The building, observation patio and surrounding sloped walkways are all defined by topography and take maximum advantage of the commanding view.

Detailed Description

The building's original foundation consisted of shallow, unreinforced concrete spread footings about 16 inches wide and about 4 to 6 inches deep directly into the surface caliche. There were no steel dowels or reinforcement to tie masonry to the foundation or to reinforce masonry and columns. New massive, reinforced concrete spread footing foundations with reinforced concrete grade beams have been placed two to four feet below current grade and doweled into existing walls and footings. The original, unreinforced concrete slab floor was badly cracked

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and spreading. It was replaced with a new reinforced concrete floor doveled into the side walls and columns of the shelter.

The roof of the shelter house is supported by 14 square columns composed of fieldstone limestone, randomly and rustically stacked and mortared. Low side walls, constructed of the same materials, span the columns on short ends of the rectangular building. All of these original masonry components were predominantly intact prior to restoration. A small amount of stone masonry had to be replaced on only two columns. The existing broken grout cap over the low side walls was removed and replaced with a new hard mortar grout cap.

The original roof was destroyed by fire on December 22, 1973¹ and a second time in late 1985 or early 1986.² After the second fire the roof was not replaced and the structure was left open. Therefore, none of the historic roof materials remain. The current hip gable roof and interior ceiling are reconstructions. The restoration team utilized historic photographs and a close inspection of similar shelters in Trinity Park to determine the design and materials of the original. They concluded that the interior had a painted wood car siding ceiling and that the perimeter support beam was clad in wood siding. While the historic design is retained, Hardy plank in proper thickness has been substituted for the original wood siding. Exposed 2x6 rafter tails are about two feet on center, replicating the original.

Large wood brackets seen in period photos on both sides of each post met the clad perimeter beams. From limited photographic evidence, restoration architects concluded that the brackets may have been obtained from demolition of another building. They appear to have been carved in a more elaborate design than would have ever been prepared for a rustic shelter. Non-functional, they were attached to blocking embedded in the masonry jambs and to the covered beams above. Unfortunately, the extant photographs were not sufficiently complete for exact replication. Restoration architects substituted brackets in a similar profile in non-combustible treated wood to illustrate the original design intent.

The building's original roof was clad in wood shingles with a stamped metal ridge with gable eave decoration, characteristic of residential construction at the time. The gable eave ridges had sheet metal volutes, extending from the ridge at each gable. The original wood shingle hip gable roof also had horizontal sheet metal vents at each raised gable above the hip at each end. New roofing is non-combustible metal shingle over butyl rubber underlayment on fire retardant treated deck. Metal shingles have a wood shingle design pressed into the strips to imitate the original wood shingles. Ridge gable end volutes and sheet metal ridge design are duplicated in the restoration.

One of the most distinctive elements of the shelter house is the large, centrally-placed, double-sided, rough stone fireplace, which allowed separate families or groups of visitors to cook picnic meals on each side. The rough stone chimney penetrates the center of the roof and has a rise of about a foot over the ridge. The fireplaces and chimney needed only minor restoration of the limestone around the two fireplace openings and at the top of the chimney. Both fireplace interiors of softer firebrick required replacement. To render the fireplaces nonfunctional, they were reduced to an eight-inch depth, with projecting white fire brick hearths to match the historic construction. The chimney has a concealed, permanent cap installed over the flue.

¹ Interoffice Correspondence from John Lampe to David Nivens, January 8, 1974.

² Exact date not recorded in either Parks Department or newspaper (Fort Worth Star Telegram) records.

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A semi-circular concrete patio on the southwest of the shelter is rimmed by a low, limestone wall. Based on site evidence and on photographic records, the restoration team concluded that the original patio floor was unreinforced concrete. The patio floor was re-paved at a later date with washed aggregate, likely after the 1973 fire. A new reinforced concrete floor was installed during the recent restoration project.

The perimeter retaining wall extends down below the patio providing foundation support. This is surrounded by a lower ramped concrete walkway with an exterior fieldstone limestone retaining wall. Access to the ramped walkway is provided by three concrete steps located on either side of the patio, adjacent to the shelter house. At the bottom of the semi-circular ramped walkway, a central set of concrete stairs provides access to the rugged parkland below. The three steps between the patio level and the top of the sloping ramps were not restorable and were replaced using reinforced concrete, as were those at the lower end of the ramped walkway.

Some sections of the lower outside wall and walkway had badly degraded, lost stability and tipped over; they were demolished as part of the project. After removal of the severely distressed, 12" thick outer walls and the concrete walkways, new spread footings were placed for reconstruction of the outer walls. These support a new 8" inch thick retaining wall, cast integrally with a new 6"-thick concrete walkway. The original limestone from the demolished walls was salvaged and used for all reconstruction as a veneer over the new concrete work. Visually, the retaining walls and walkway retain their historic identity and yet are more structurally sound than they were in the past. All stone and concrete structures are tied together as one integrated reinforced structure.

Summary of Integrity

The Inspiration Point Picnic Shelter retains a high degree of integrity. The shelter is located on its original site in Marion Samson Park. Its current setting in the park is generally reflective of its historic setting, making maximal use of the projecting point on the bluff and its extraordinary view to the south-southwest. The site-specific design of the building and associated observation patio has a perfect feeling and fit for its location. Original construction method was typical of residential workmanship at the time. The unreinforced concrete floor slabs and footings and lack of reinforcement in the limestone masonry walls reflect this. The rough, primitive nature of the extant masonry is typical of what should be expected in a rustic rural picnic shelter. The limestone portions of the property retain their integrity of materials to a very high degree. All shelter and patio limestone masonry has been restored; limestone on the outer perimeter wall was reused to replicate the historic design. During the restoration project, every effort was made to provide as much structural durability as possible. The construction design, materials and methods selected focused on closest adherence to the historicity of the building, maximum public use and minimal maintenance. Though the shelter no longer contains its original concrete picnic tables, those elements were of minor significance and the property still easily conveys its historic identity without them.

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Statement of Significance

Located in Marion Sansom Park on top of a rock bluff facing southwest with an outstanding inspirational view of Lake Worth dam and West Texas prairies, the Inspiration Point Shelter House has been a favorite location for four generations of Fort Worth citizens for picnics, family gatherings, and lovers' retreats. Constructed in 1927, it represents an important phase of development in the recreational experiences and facilities the city offered at Lake Worth. At Inspiration Point, visitors could enjoy an unspoiled, natural setting with the added convenience of the shelter's shade, fireplace ovens, and picnic tables—and they could do so for free. The experience was like no other on Lake Worth at the time and city officials and park planners felt that providing such a place was important for residents. Designed in the Rustic Style so commonly used for park facilities in the late 1920s, the nominated property is the only one of four such structures built at Inspiration Point still standing. It is a good example of the style and is a rare intact example from the pre-Depression era in Fort Worth. The Inspiration Point Shelter House is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Recreation/Entertainment and Criterion C in the area of architecture.

#

Early Park Development in Fort Worth

The evolution of park development in the City of Fort Worth can be directly related to a municipal desire to provide a system of parks and recreational opportunities within the city limits. The very first park was a gift from Sarah Jay Jennings in honor of her parents in 1873, the same year as the City of Fort Worth incorporation.³ Hyde Park, located downtown, is both the city's first and oldest public park.

Fort Worth's second public park didn't follow until 1892 when the city purchased 50 acres straddling the Clear Fork of the Trinity River from K.M. Van Zandt. First known as City Park, it later became Trinity Park.⁴ Management fell to the City Federation of Women's Clubs. Through their efforts a Park League was formed in 1908, and the services of George E. Kessler, a landscape architect of national renown, were secured.⁵ His first visit was in November 1908. Following, the city commission voted to pay him \$1,500 to develop a park plan. Kessler was a well-known and highly respected landscape architect whose work included park systems in Memphis, Tennessee (1900), Indianapolis (1905), Syracuse, New York (1906) Cincinnati, Ohio (1906), Denver, Colorado (1907), Oklahoma City (with W. H. Dunn, 1910) and Dallas, Texas (1910) as well as the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904.⁶

Kessler's recommendations for Fort Worth included creation of a comprehensive system of parks and connecting boulevards. He also advocated creation of a Park Board, realized in 1909.⁷ About this time George Kessler observed:

³ Kline, Susan Allen, and the Fort Worth Parks and Community Services Department, *Fort Worth Parks*. Arcadia Publishing, Chicago, Ill., 2010, p. 9.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9, 10.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ National Register of Historic Places, Fort Worth Botanic Garden, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas, National Register # 08001400.

⁷ *Ibid.*

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“In the competition of cities for new and desirable population, no other element of advertisement is worth so much as an ample and attractive park system, making a pleasant city in which to live comfortably.”⁸

Under Kessler’s guidance, the Board purchased land for park use, including more acreage for Trinity Park, and securing land for Sycamore, Capps, Hillside, Paddock and Burnett Parks.⁹ (Burnett is located downtown and was deeded to the City by Samuel Burk Burnett, founder of the 6666 Ranch.) The Burk Burnett inscription on the dedication wall (taken from the deed) gave the over-riding purpose for development of city parks:

“I, S. B. Burnett, do hereby give unto the City of Fort Worth, this land for the purpose of creating a place of recreation in the very heart of the City, as a public park and particularly for relief against the heat of our summers, and as a resting spot for tired mothers and their children...”¹⁰

Other new and acquired parks followed including Marine Park (with City of North Fort Worth annexation by City of Fort Worth), Al Haynes Park (the small location for the Al Haynes monument and horse fountain acquired in 1910 from Texas & Pacific Railroad), Grant Park (later Rotary Park and sold in 1955), Douglas Park for African Americans (prone to flooding, it was sold later to the electric utility company), and development of recreational facilities at Lake Worth (such as the City Bath House).

After WWI, the City of Fort Worth entered a decade of tremendous growth – from 106,000 in 1920 to 154,000 population in 1930. Numerous new parks were acquired during this decade. By 1926 there were six swimming pools, one beach (Lake Worth), a municipal golf course (Z. Boaz) and 15 supervised playgrounds.¹¹ This was supplementary to the regular public school programs. The city also hired other public school staff during the summer for their park programs.

George Kessler’s 1909 master plan for the parks system was continually updated throughout his work with the city over the next 17 years.¹² Kessler died on March 20, 1923.¹³ The Park Board hired the father-son landscape architecture firm of Hare and Hare from Kansas City, Missouri, to replace him in 1925.¹⁴ The firm had a successful and prolific practice, some of it in partnership with Kessler. Upon Kessler’s death, the firm took over his commissions. The elder Hare had established his career based upon his experience in cemetery design, and the younger Hare was one of the very first students in the U.S. to be formally trained as a landscape architect.¹⁵

⁸ Ibid., p. 7.

⁹ Kline, p. 9.

¹⁰ Dedication wall at Burnett Park, taken from 1919 deed, <http://www.dfwi.org/what-we-offer/attractions/parks/124-Burnett-Park>, reviewed July 31, 2013.

¹¹ Kline, p. 25.

¹² Ibid., p. 9.

¹³ George Kessler, Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Kessler; reviewed June 20, 2013.

¹⁴ Kline, p. 25.

¹⁵ National Register of Historic Places, Fort Worth Botanic Garden, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas, National Register #08001400.

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Hare and Hare commenced their work for the city by updating the master plan prepared by Kessler, with their re-design completed by 1930.¹⁶ Little of the Hare and Hare plan was implemented until the New Deal programs instituted by the Federal government commencing in 1933.¹⁷ Following this date, new and redeveloped City parks included supervised playgrounds, athletic competitions, public swimming pools, and golf courses.¹⁸ The 1930 master plan update by Hare and Hare is noteworthy for its broad expansion of the park system and inclusion of a variety of outdoor recreational pursuits.¹⁹

Marion Sansom Park and the Inspiration Point Shelter House

The City of Fort Worth purchased the land that would become Marion Samson Park in 1911.²⁰ Situated high above the bluffs of the West Fork of the Trinity River, the land was among that to be developed in association with the creation of the new Lake Worth. Prompted by the increasing demands on the municipal water supply, the city constructed the lake by damming the West Fork of the Trinity River. The reservoir was the second municipal water supply built in Texas, constructed shortly after Dallas' White Rock Lake. The lake was constructed for \$1.6 million and was first filled in August 1914.²¹

In addition to providing much-needed water to the growing city, the lake also proved a popular recreational asset. The city purchased tracts of land in a variety of locations around the new lake, and quickly began to capitalize on the recreational value the lake. Among the improvements were a municipal beach and bathhouse, which drew thousands to the lake on hot summer days. In addition, the city sold or leased land to citizens for summer cottages and camps.²² By 1926, more than 800 individual leases were recorded around Lake Worth.²³ Private investment included organizational camp retreats, small family-run resorts, ballrooms, boating clubs, commercial pleasure boats, and a large amusement park. One of the most popular developments was the Meandering Road around the lake's perimeter. Work began in 1916 and eventually encircled the lake with 50 miles of roadway. With automobile ownership on the rise, Sunday drives along the road, with leisurely stops to enjoy the view or a picnic, quickly became a preferred family activity.²⁴

Marion Sansom Park stood in contrast to the busy, increasingly commercialized development on other parts of the lake. As plans were laid for the park, great emphasis was made to preserve "some of the prettiest natural scenery to be found in the entire lake area."²⁵ Plans called for doing little more to the park than clearing some underbrush and cactus and opening up roads to provide access to the park. Apparently city officials felt that there were plenty of other municipal properties from which they could derive a profit and desired for Marion

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 37.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 25.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Sale of 663.72 acre land to City of Fort Worth by D.H. Lucas et al; Deed of Record, Book 350, p. 461-465, Recorded November 27, 1911.

²¹ City of Fort Worth website, <http://fortworthtexas.gov/water/info/default.aspx?id=4616>; reviewed June 20, 2013.

²² Kline, p. 23.

²³ McGowen, Quinten. "Lake Worth History," an appendix to the 2011 Lake Worth Vision Plan, City of Fort Worth.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ "Fort Worth Will Have Game Preserve in New Park." Illustrated article, no date, no source. Copy provided to the Texas Historical Commission by Susan Allen Kline.

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Sansom Park a naturalistic character, a complimentary component to the more highly developed properties along the lakeshore. Parks Board member T.J Slack explained the board's view:

“There is no place in Tarrant County that is richer in scenic beauty than Marion Sansom Park. Unfortunately, the general public is not familiar with the spot and it may take some time to educate them to its use, but ultimately it will come into its own. We have had it in view for some time because we felt it was eminently fitted for what we desired. With it our park system is practically complete, as far as land is concerned. We have always felt, however, that some such place was needed to round it out.”²⁶

Slack also discussed the role that the park was to play in the lives of Fort Worth's residents, particularly the less affluent families.

“That is why we were especially anxious to get this park set aside now. The time will surely come when all the district immediately surrounding the lake will be taken up by Summer homes and cottages. There will be many, however, who will be unable to afford these and it is those particularly who need the fresh air and the sunshine and other advantages of the great outdoors which the place has to offer. This park will be theirs. To it they can come for a Sunday or a holiday, sure to find there plenty of grass and shade, a place where they can enjoy themselves as much as their more fortunate neighbors.”²⁷

The front page of the January 14, 1927 edition of the *Fort Worth Record-Telegram* carried the headline “Inspiration Point Made More Inspiring.” The article states that the Parks Board had erected four shelter houses, open-air stoves, and concrete benches “to make the picnickers' paradise even more attractive.”²⁸ Park superintendent George Clarke stated that even though it was winter, many people were already making use of the facilities:

“Even though we haven't had any bad weather, and even though it is Midwinter, many pleasure seekers have used the fireplaces and other facilities. One man even tried to drive his car into one of the shelter houses. We have provided fuel so that families may cook their dinner in the open and enjoy the city's largest park to the greatest extent.”

What goes unsaid in the newspaper account is that the only white families could take advantage of recreational opportunities at Inspiration Point under the city's de facto segregation policies for park facilities. African Americans first gained access to Lake Worth parks in 1951 when the city granted them access to the Broadview picnic area (constructed by the CCC in 1936) on the other side of Lake Worth.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ “Fort Worth Will Have Game Preserve in New Park.”

²⁸ Sources differ over whether there were three or four shelter houses actually constructed. The nominated shelter house is the only one that still survives. Locations for two others can be identified by foundations and ruins.

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Original design and construction documents have not yet been found for the four shelter houses at Inspiration Point. There is speculation as to whether the design can be attributed to George Kessler or to Hare and Hare. The only evidence regarding the architect and builder is in correspondence between Parks Board President Morris Berney and city officials. That correspondence identifies Thomas S. Byrne as the contractor for the shelters and states that he will be working from the plans and specifications drawn up by E. W. Van Slyke & Company and approved by S. Herbert Hare.²⁹ Van Slyke & Co. was a prominent local architectural firm that worked on several other parks projects during this same time period, including bath houses at Marine and Sycamore parks, as well as the combination gymnasium/auditorium at the recreation department's headquarters. Inspiration Point Shelter House is representative of similar picnic shelters erected in other City of Fort Worth parks during the 1920's and through the 1930's. Marion Sansom Park wasn't acquired until 1921. At the time, Kessler does not appear to have been working on Fort Worth projects except for those at Burnett Park, and he may have been working directly with Mr. Burnett and not the parks department. Therefore, it is most likely that the planning for the Inspiration Point is the work of Hare and Hare. The highly regarded landscape architects were instrumental in the development of Fort Worth's parks system during its most important period of growth.

The shelter house is an excellent early example of the Rustic Style, sometimes called "parkitecture" for its frequent use in park facilities. It is a style that developed during the earliest years of the National Park Service's landscape architecture program. Driven by a desire to design and build visitor facilities without visually interrupting the natural or historic surroundings, NPS' earliest designs were characterized by an intensive use of hand labor, reflecting connections with the Arts and Crafts movement and American Picturesque architecture. The Rustic Style was heavily influenced by the Craftsman Style, which was developed in California in the earliest decade of the twentieth century by the Greene brothers who had an interest in Asian wooden architecture, manual arts, and the English Arts and Crafts movement. Early NPS architects were based out of California, and their designs reflect a Craftsman influence. By the early 1920s, NPS had developed a cohesive policy for design throughout the national parks. The idea was to maintain a sense of rusticity in construction, and to allow a connection to nature and a minimally-facilitated engagement with the natural surroundings. This design philosophy quickly trickled down to state and local parks programs, as well, and visitors encountered park facilities designed in the Rustic Style in national, state, and local parks across the United States.

The city's goal of retaining the natural beauty and serene character of Marion Sansom Park, while providing to its citizens sufficient infrastructure to enjoy it, was realized. Indeed, Hare and Hare, in their 1930 report to the Board of Park Commissioners "A Comprehensive Park System for Fort Worth, Texas" specifically praised the Inspiration Point picnic shelters for proving that "good architecture can add to, rather than detract from, a natural landscape." This praise stands in stark contrast to the criticism the duo had for other development around Lake Worth. Among the "interesting problems" they cite was the "haphazard development of camps and stores [which] has resulted in ruining the natural beauty along a great deal of the circuit drive." They go on to recommend design standards for such properties and limiting them to certain geographical areas. As for other recommendations related to city land along Lake Worth, the Hares advocated for preserving as much of the

²⁹ Letter from Morris E. Berney to mayor and city council, dated July 19, 1926, on Board of Park Commissioners letterhead. Copy provided to Texas Historical Commission staff by Susan Allen Kline.

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native vegetation as possible while selectively clearing areas for picnics and vistas, particularly along the circuit road.³⁰

Inspiration Point and other locations in Marion Samson Park are particularly noteworthy for the dramatic views from the top of the bluff. These look over artificial Lake Worth to miles of prairie land beyond and have a crow's eye view of the lake, the former Carswell AFB (now Joint Services Air Base) and the conjoined Lockheed Aircraft manufacturing facility, as well as the remnants of the 1925 Federal Fish Hatchery. Locations of all original picnic shelters were carefully chosen for the views.

Inspiration Point proved to be a favorite location for the public. It was particularly popular during Texas summers. Because of the precipice location, there is always a light breeze at Inspiration Point. The shelter found its most intense use during the Great Depression and WWII, according to local social history and word of mouth. There are very few residents of Fort Worth during that period who don't have fond memories of picnics, family gatherings, and lovers' retreats at this inspiring location.

Over time, the steep slopes and rugged trails, formerly attractive to hikers and walkers, became a primary attraction for mountain bikers and four wheel drive enthusiasts. Four wheelers have been banned from the park after extensive landscape and trail damage, but mountain biking remains a popular activity. However, thanks in part to the recent restoration of the shelter house, Inspiration Point has become a newly popular location for families once again.

Summary of Significance

The Inspiration Point Shelter House is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Recreation/Entertainment for its association with the development of Fort Worth's recreational facilities at Lake Worth. The shelter house represents an important phase of development in the area as it was intended to provide residents with an alternative, more serene outdoor experience than was available at other Lake Worth sites. Set in a minimally managed landscaped, and with its inspirational and commanding views of the lake, the facility soon proved to be popular for family outings. Unlike other Lake Worth facilities which cost money to visit, use, or own, Inspiration Point was free, allowing visitors of any means access to the unspoiled parkland and lake beyond.

The shelter house is also nominated under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a good example of Rustic Style architecture in Fort Worth parks. Its characteristic features include the use of indigenous materials, unsophisticated finishes, and relative harmony with its surroundings. The limestone construction is composed almost exclusively of fieldstone, almost rubble-like in quality, reflecting the ruggedness of the surrounding landscape and lending a handmade character to the building. Like many early examples of the Rustic Style, the shelter house references residential architecture, as well. This is primarily seen in the roof form with its exposed rafter ends and wide, bracketed eaves, but the massive rough stone fireplace also recalls a Craftsman or bungalow influence, which was common in the early development years of the Rustic Style. During the Depression, a number of similarly styled park facilities were constructed around Lake Worth by federal relief

³⁰ Hare and Hare, "A Comprehensive Park System for Fort Worth, Texas." Report to the Board of Park Commissioners, 1930, p. 30-32.

Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

programs like the CCC. The Inspiration Point facility pre-dates these others and is a rare intact survivor of the pre-Depression style and type in the city's parks system.

Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

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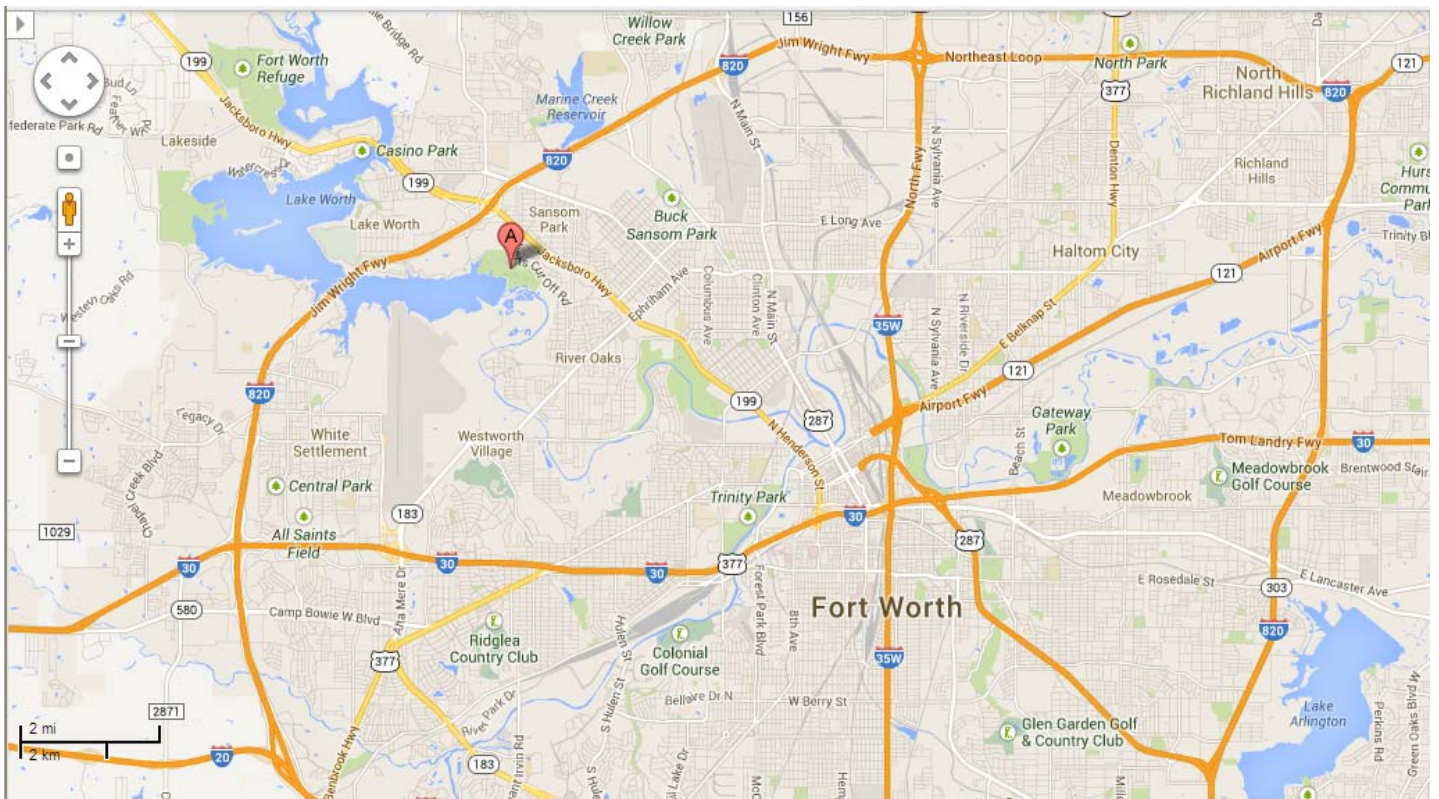
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Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Map 1: Tarrant County (shaded) is located in central north Texas.

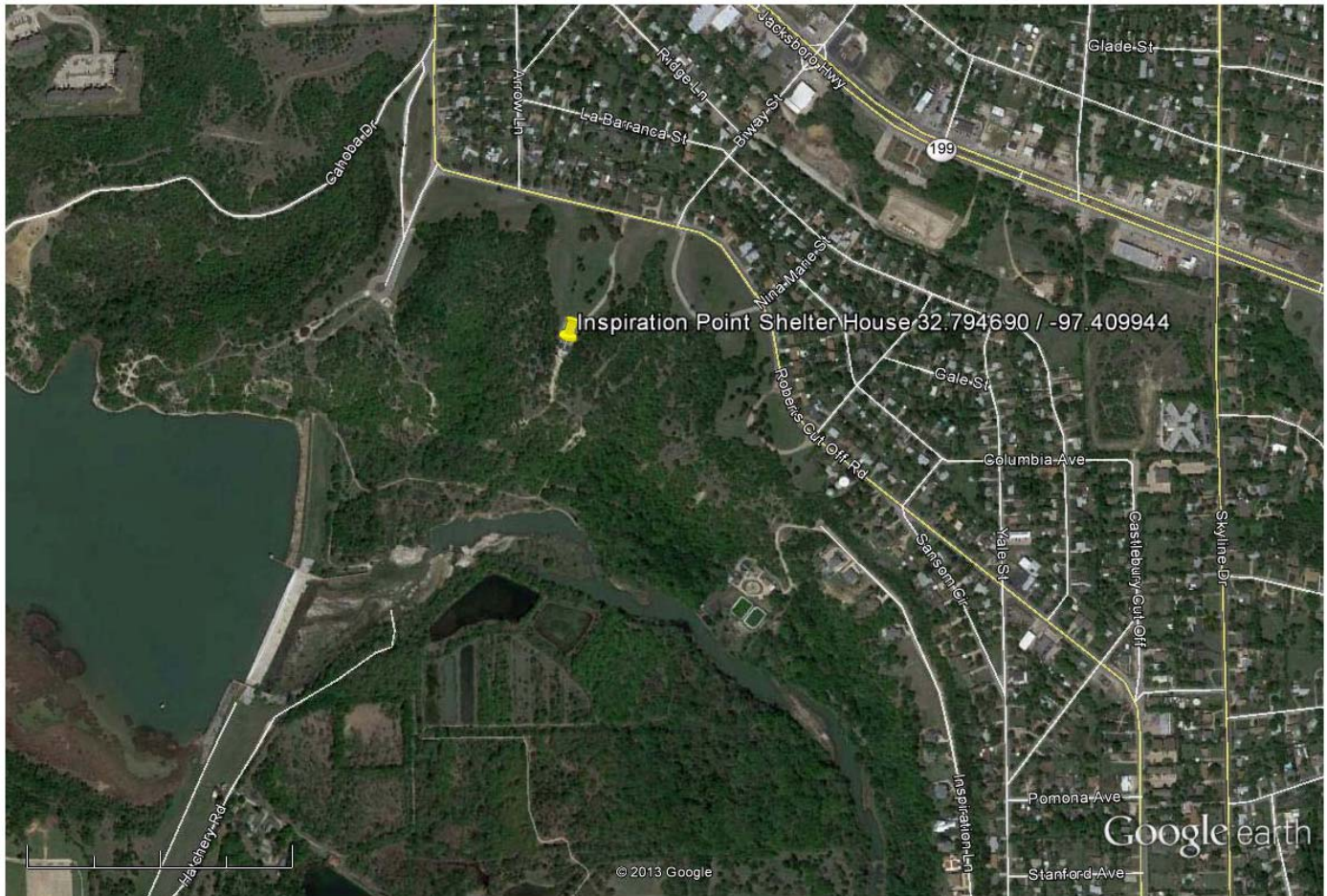


Map 2: The Inspiration Point Shelter House (Pin A) is located in northwest Fort Worth in Marion Sansom Park. Top edge of image is north. (Google Maps, July 2013.)



Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Map 3: Scaled Google Earth map depicts Inspiration Point Shelter House locational data. (Google Earth, July 2013.)



Google earth



Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Map 4: Scaled Google Earth map depicting boundary for the nominated property. (Google Earth, July 2013.)



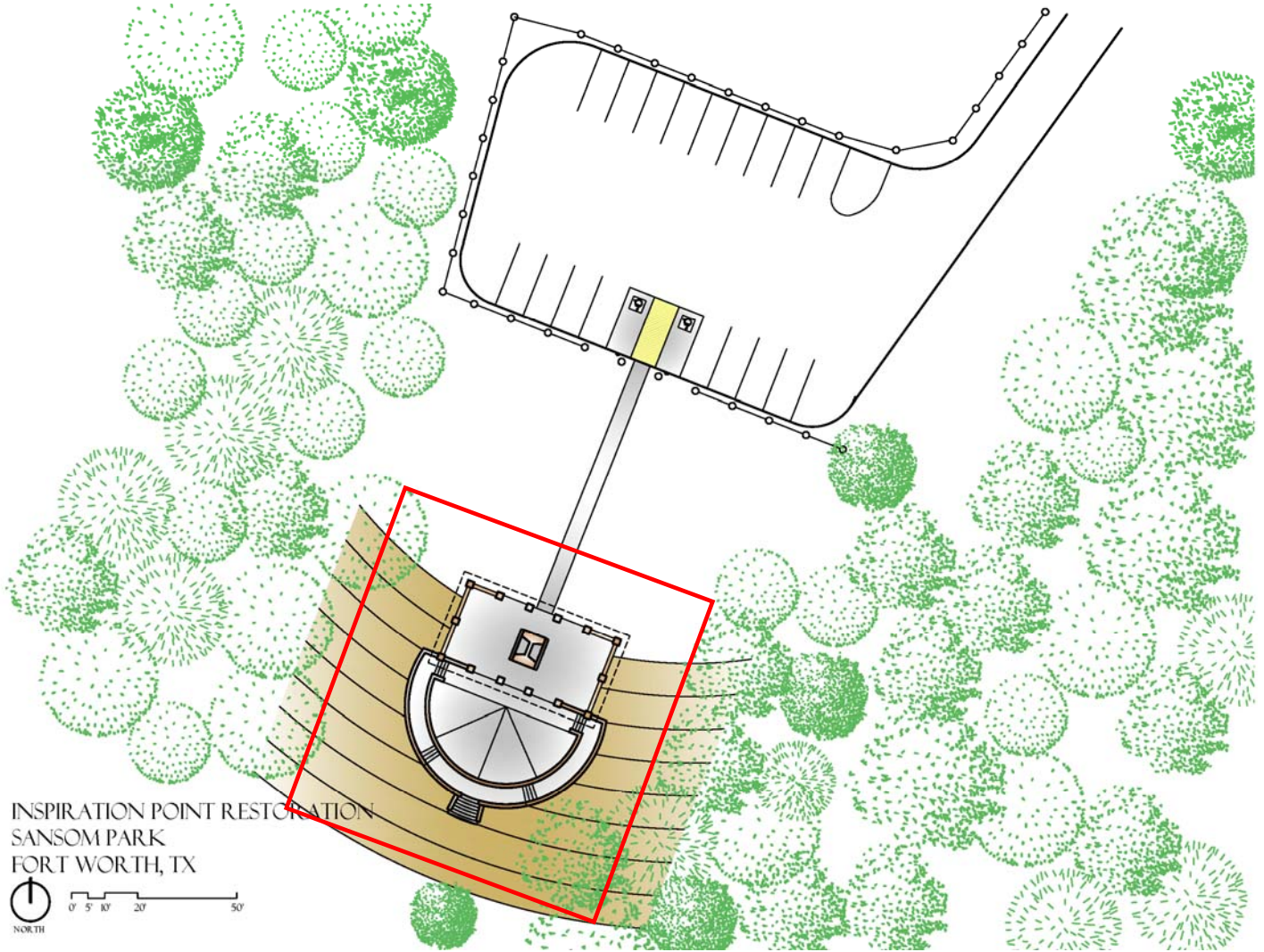
Google earth

feet 400
meters 100



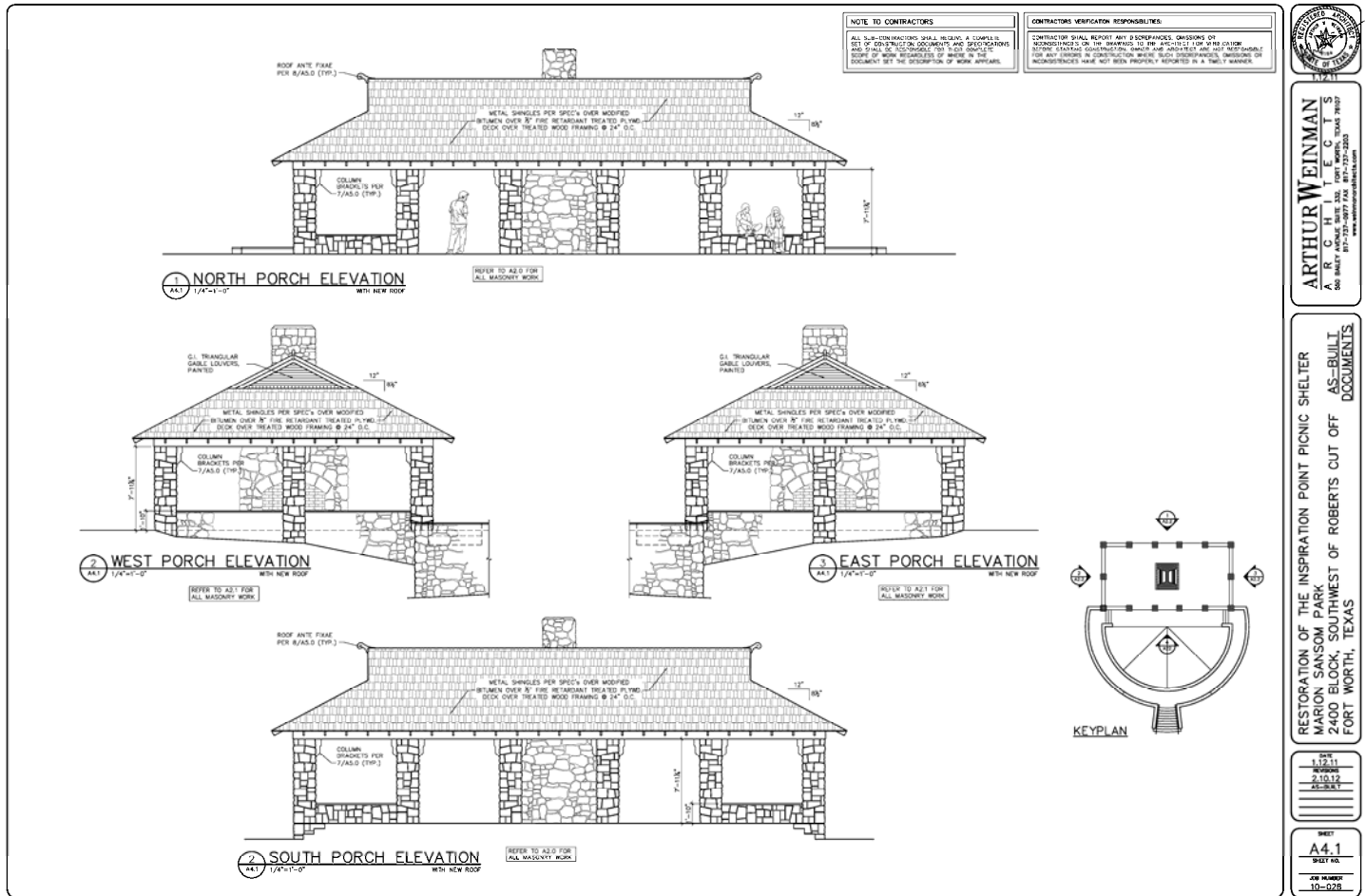
Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Map 5: Site plan of nominated property. Red rectangle marks approximate nomination boundary, a 100 ft by 100 ft. square.



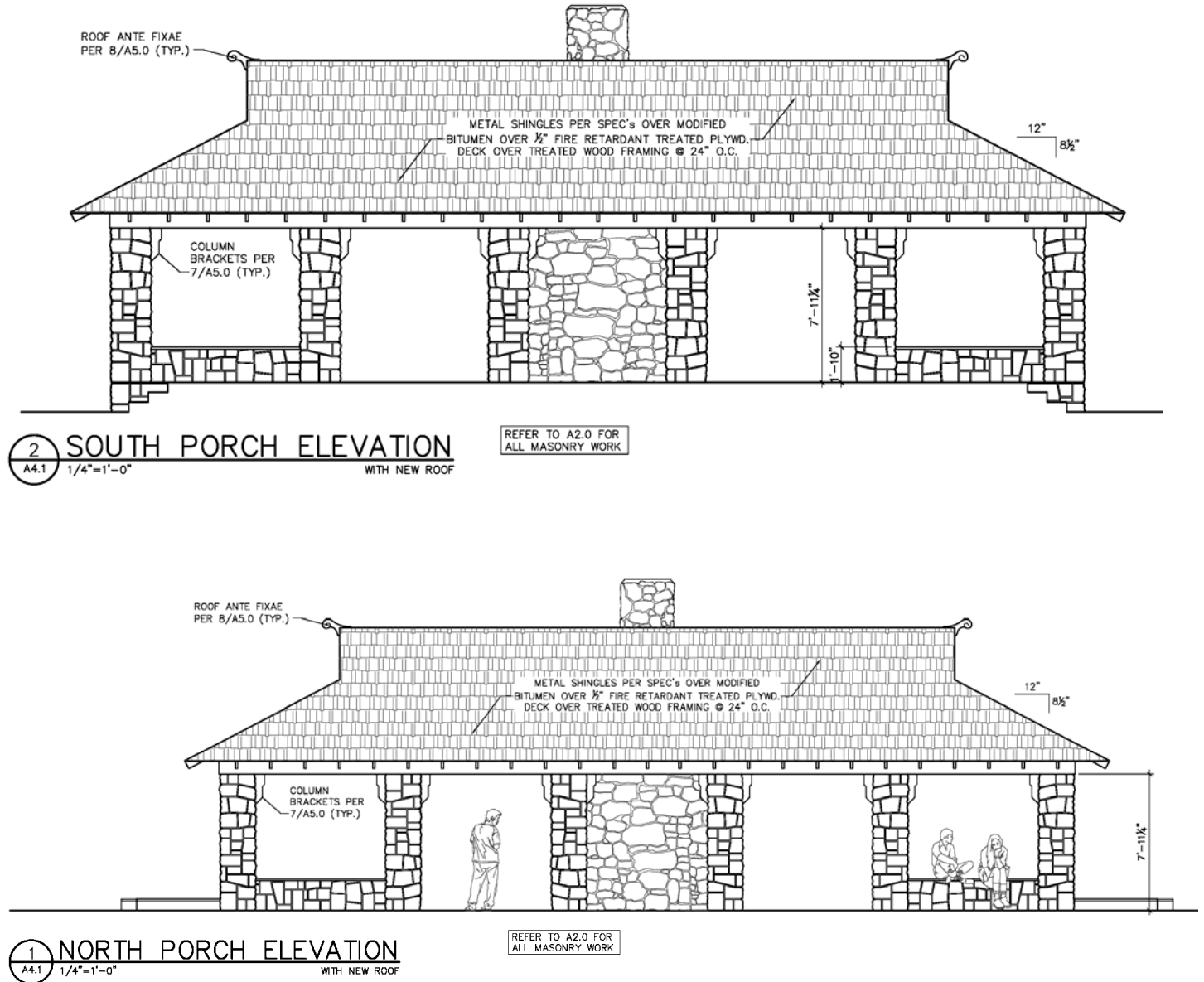
Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 1: Elevations created for the 2011 restoration of Inspiration Point Shelter House. See following pages for enlargements.



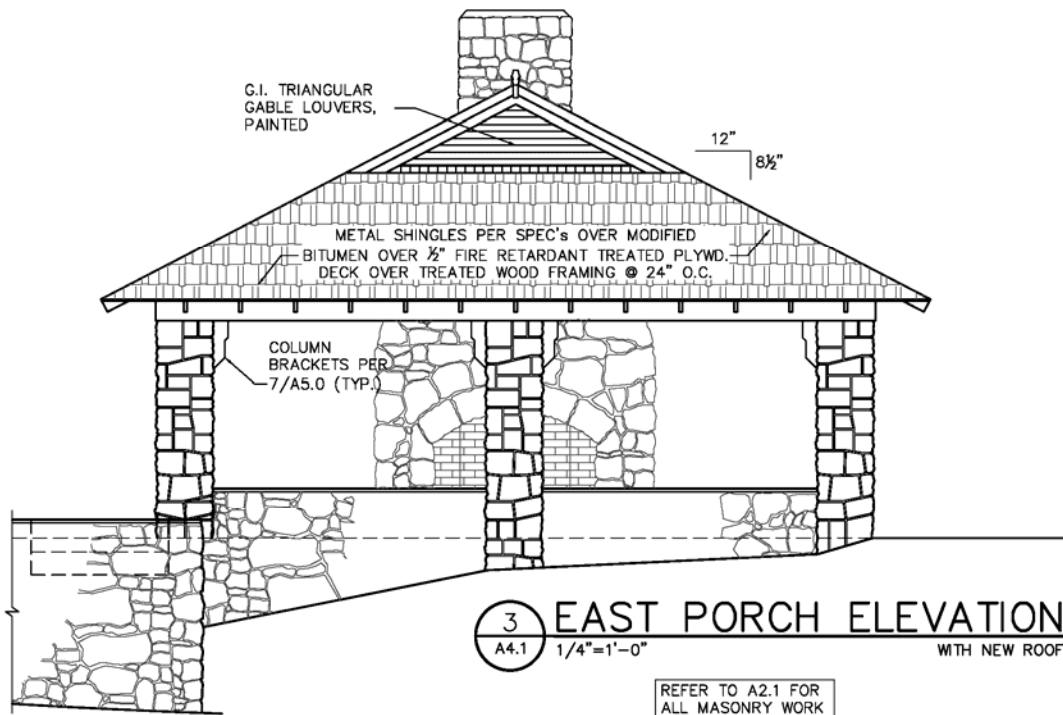
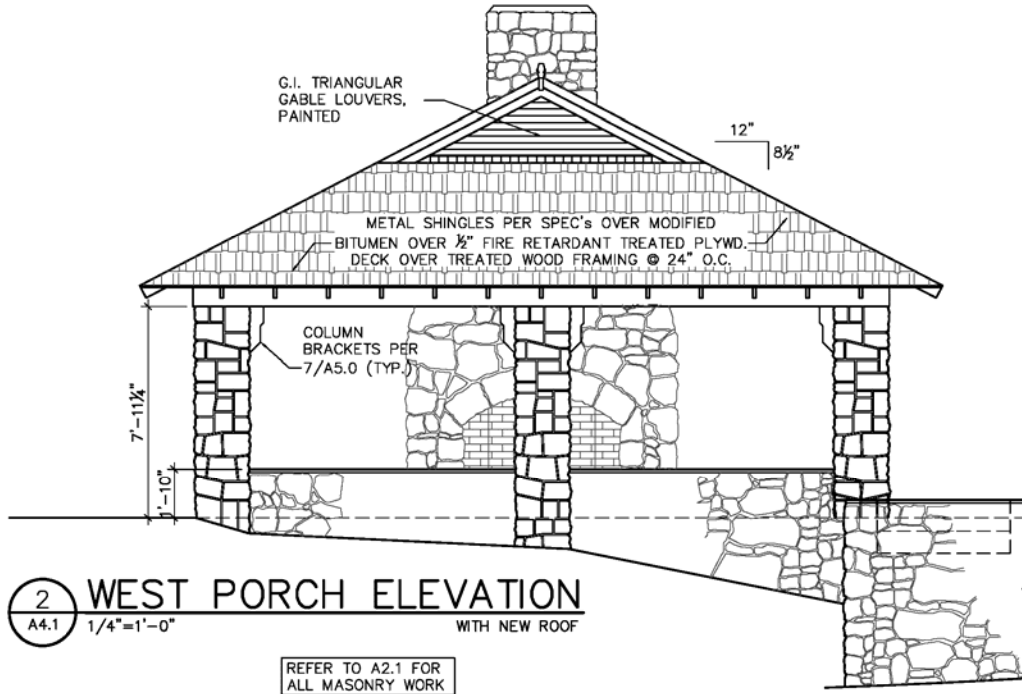
Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 2: North and south elevations, enlarged from Figure 1 drawings.



Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 3: West and east elevations, enlarged from Figure 1 drawings.



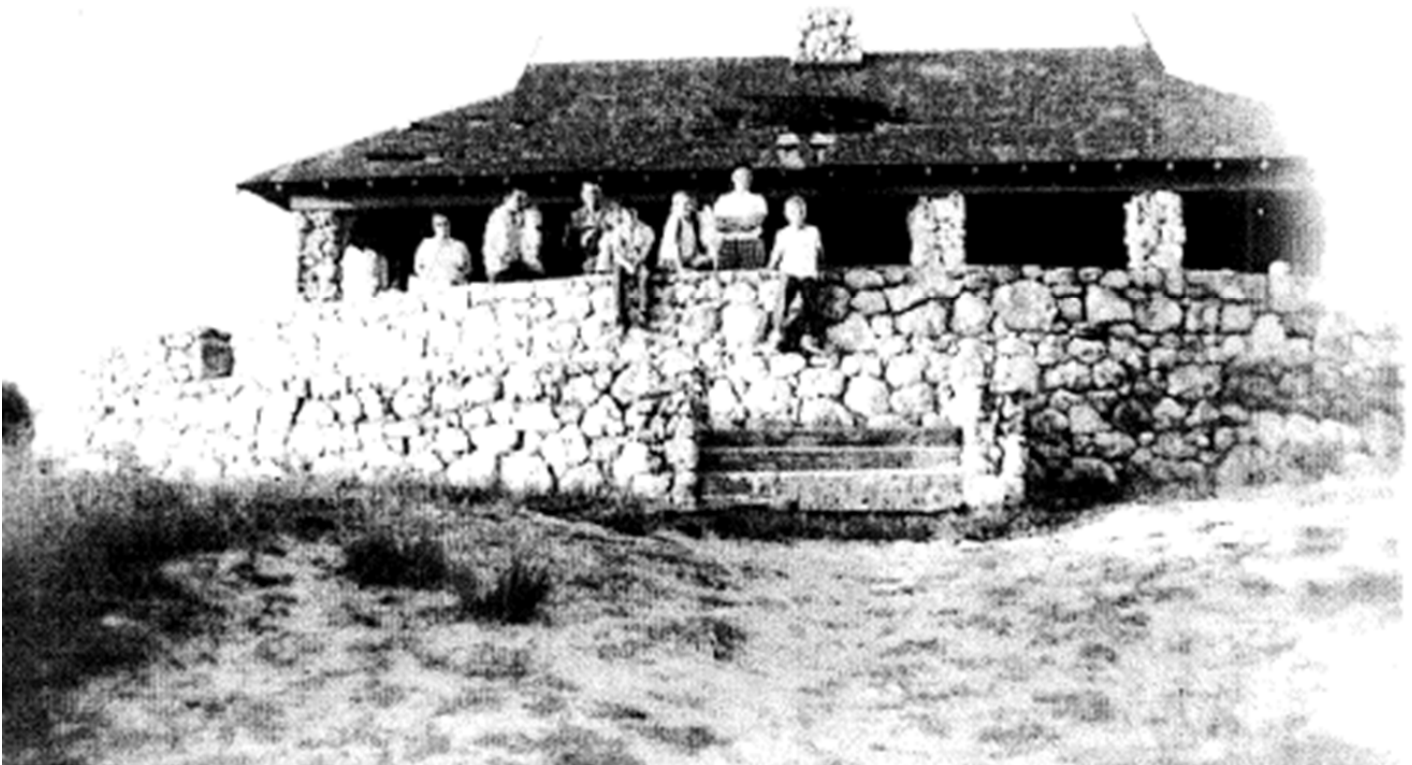
Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 4: Inspiration Point Shelter House, as viewed from the northwest, shortly after construction, c. 1927.



Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 5: Inspiration Point Shelter House, as viewed from the south, 1963. From the collection of Bridgett Stevens.



Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 6: Undated historic photo, taken prior to the 1986 fire which left the shelter house without its roof.



Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 7: Katherine Boykin and Raymond Tullous at the Inspiration Point Shelter House, c. 1954.



Inspiration Point Shelter House, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 8: The Fort Worth Record-Telegram announced the completion of the Inspiration Point shelters on January 14, 1927. The pyramidal roofed shelter house, pictured, is no longer extant.

Record-Telegram

Texas Owned Newspaper

SECOND SECTION

The West Begins *** FRIDAY MORNING, JANUARY 14, 1927.

PRICE 5 CENTS

Inspiration Point Made More Inspiring




To make the picnicers' paradise even more attractive, the Board of Park Commissioners has erected a number of open air shelters, concrete tables and shelter houses on Inspiration Point, overlooking Lake Worth. One of the three shelter houses is shown in the bottom picture. Above is shown two of the picnic tables with the open stove in the center.

HEALTH HEAD WILL HANDLE RELIEF WORK

Welfare Association Turns Activities Over to City; Baker Resigns Position.

The Health and Welfare Department of the City of Fort Worth has taken over the work of the Fort Worth Welfare Association and in future all activities of the association will be conducted at the city hall under the direction of Dr. L. M. Merrill, director of the department.

W. M. Baker, who for the past two years acted the Welfare Association as secretary manager, but who recently was appointed by the city to take charge of the social service and relief work of the city welfare branch and also to act as secretary of the welfare board, has resigned. He said recently he has accepted a position in San Antonio and would leave for that city about Feb. 1.

No Successor Named.

It was announced at the health department yesterday that no successor would be named for the position until the position is filled by Baker. Miss Cledys Pittenger, who handled the social service and relief work for the Fort Worth Welfare Association, will be associated with the city and handle the work done by Baker. She will have four women workers in her department. Miss Pittenger will be supervisor of social service and relief and also will act as secretary of the welfare board.

The city will take over the social service and relief work of the association, which includes girls' protection work, child welfare, colored work, field nursing, the day nursery and Health Ladies League. The city also will take over the finances and records of the association, now at its office at 422 Monroe Street. The association owns the building and will either lease or sell same, according to Baker.

Camp Lullia Is Located at Lake Worth. Thousands of children are given college at the camp each summer. The Lullia Club has plans to erect a new building for the children, but this will be held in abeyance until the town see whether or not the city will continue to conduct the camp. As the summer session will not be opened for several months, Dr. Merrill and the welfare board will take the matter under advisement.

Deacons Later.

The Child Protective Home is located at 617 North Henderson Street, the City Nursery is at 1704 Tenth, near Seventh Street and the Negro Home House is at 1019 West Peter Street.

The sum of \$20,000 was set aside in the budget for welfare work. The department will reorganize and cut down its activities at an early date, at which time it will be known whether Camp Lullia and other work of the association will be continued by the city.

The association held its annual meeting and election of officers yesterday morning, selecting officers and directors. Adama B. Voss, its president, Mrs. Parker, vice president and J. N. Whitehurst, secretary.

The organization will keep its identity as long as the city declines to carry on all the work of the association or may return to active participation in the charitable work.

The taking over of the work of the Welfare Association by the city will cover all changes of jurisdiction of welfare work, according to Baker.

\$150,000 DRIVE HOSPITAL'S AIM

A public appeal for \$150,000 to build a new hospital at All Saints, thought to be the largest ever completed in the history of the city, was launched today by the board of directors of the hospital, which will be ready for occupancy about March 1. The building, which will be about 250,000 square feet in area, will be the largest ever built in the city.

FIRST DRIVE OUT TO LAKE AND COOK SUPPER; IT'S ALL FIXED UP NOW.

The first drive out to Inspiration Point, overlooking Lake Worth, was held today. The picnic tables and open stoves in the center of the tables were set up and the picnic tables were ready for use.

3 NEW HOMES FOR WEST SIDE

The Home Property Company yesterday took out permits to erect three new homes in Arlington Heights at a total cost of \$40,000. Two of the structures are to be at 1247 Thacker Place and the other at 1417 Thacker Place. The homes are to be built on lots of 10,000 square feet each and will be ready for occupancy in about 180 days.

















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Inspiration Point Shelter House

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Tarrant

DATE RECEIVED: 2/12/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/12/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/27/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/31/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000105

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 3.31.14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____


DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories




TO: Edson Beall
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)
Washington, DC 20005

FROM:  Carlyn Hammons
Texas Historical Commission

RE: New Submission, National Register Nomination
Inspiration Point Shelter House, Tarrant County, TX

DATE: January 24, 2014

The following materials are submitted:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original National Register of Historic Places form and electronic locational data (in .kmz format) on CD.  The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the <u>Inspiration Point Shelter House</u> to the National Register of Historic Places.
	Resubmitted nomination.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
	Multiple Property Documentation form on disk.
	Resubmitted form.
	Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CD with eight (8) TIFF photograph files.
	Correspondence

COMMENTS:

- SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)
- The enclosed owner objections (do) (do not) constitute a majority of property owners
- Other:

