

rises in old neighborhood

By **KATHERINE FESER**
Houston Chronicle

HYDE Park Main resident Cay Dickson helped start a civic club a few years ago because it bothered her to see so many townhomes popping up only inches away from the community's vintage cottages.

"We all thought it was going to ruin the look of the neighborhood if they were built on top of these little homes," she says.

But, like many others enamored by the close-in Montrose-area location and eclectic mix of antiques stores, cafes, and old and new homes, she has warmed to the idea.

"The irony is I've built three townhomes," Dickson says.

Two of the goals of the Vermont Commons Civic Association are to restrict the number of units that can be built on a lot and to control commercial activity.

To accomplish this, the association is trying to get written approval from a majority of residents for proposed deed restrictions. So far, only about half of the needed responses are in.

"Because it's unrestricted, you can pack them on," says Landy Bauman, owner of Neartown Realtors. "As long as you can get the waste water (permits), you can build as many as you want to."

The construction has helped revitalize the area, but the high density has posed parking problems, Bauman says.

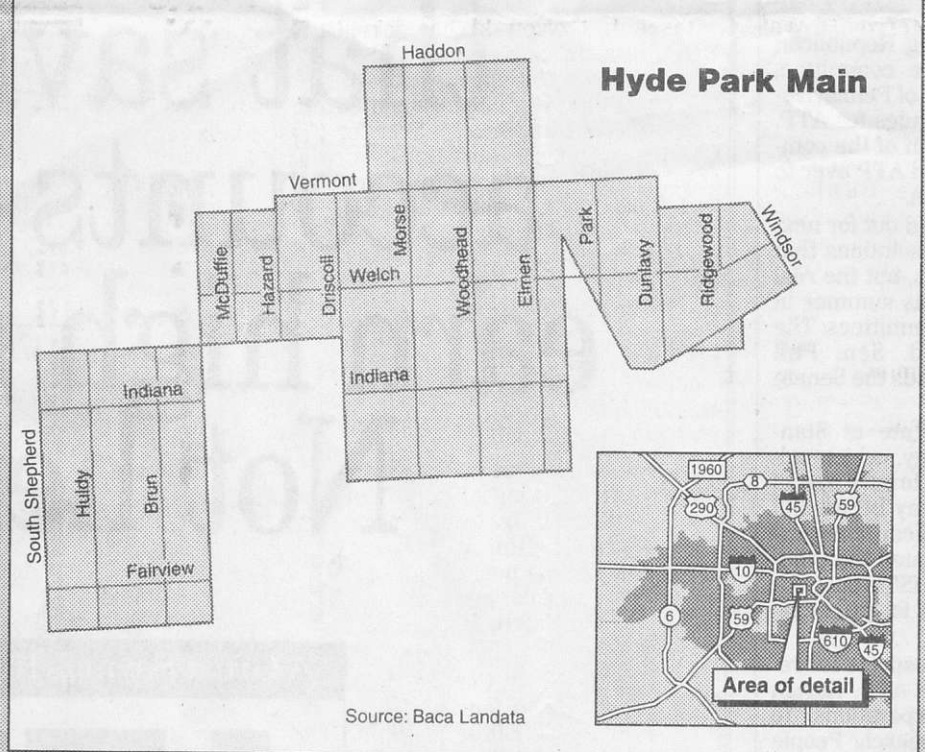
Perry Homes has come in from the suburbs to get in on the action. The company markets to single professionals who don't want a long commute, says Marketing Director Cheryl Boe.

"The whole area will not end up just being townhouses," says Dennie Hodge, an agent with Swilley-Hudson & Associates. "Some of the older houses are just too expensive to tear down."

Bungalows and cottages, built mostly in the 1930s and 1940s, generally cost between \$80,000 and \$200,000. Townhomes start around \$200,000.

As the neighborhood has gotten more upscale, the crime rate has fallen.

From 1991 to 1993, overall crime was down 26 percent in Hyde Park Main compared with the city's decrease of 17 percent, reported CTI Information Services, a company that compiles crime data.

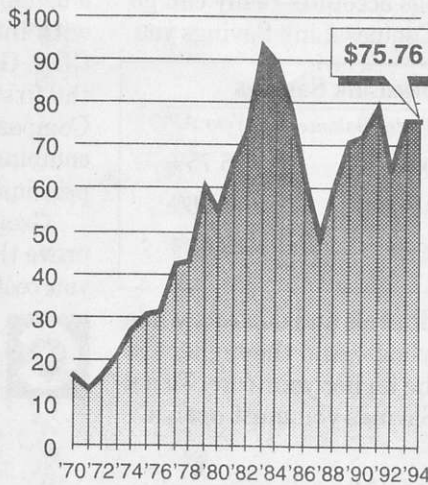


Chronicle

Living in Hyde Park Main

Price trend

Median price per square foot



For more information

- Map was provided by Baca Landata, a realty information firm located at 1980 Post Oak Blvd., Suite 600, Houston 77056, phone 965-0011.
- Home prices and neighborhood facts by Sage Realty Advisors, a realty consulting firm at 6608 FM 1960 West, Suite F, Houston 77069, phone 893-5840.
- Mortgage quotations and average produced by the Mortgage Index, a home lending publication: P.O. Box 130632, Houston 77219, phone 529-9990.



Home facts

- Number of homes: 328
- Median price: \$81,000
- Median price per square foot: \$75.76
- Median size: 1,432 square feet
- Median lot size: 5,000 square feet
- Median year built: 1938
- Average number of bedrooms: 2.4
- Average number of baths: 1.5
- Median estimated tax: \$1,950
- School district: Houston Independent School District
- Schools: Wilson Elementary, Lanier Middle and Lamar High

Source: Home prices and neighborhood facts by Sage Realty

NorthWest
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Fax: 688-412

19601

211K2 FV

Tel:

1349

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Development rises in old neighborhood

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Houston Chronicle

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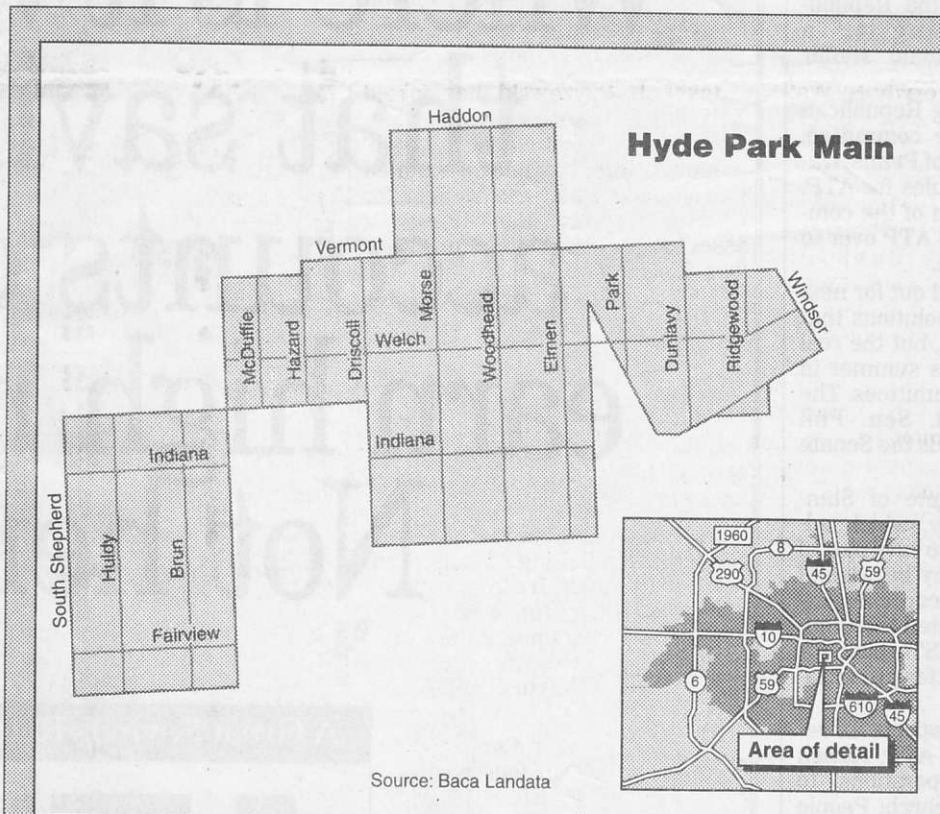
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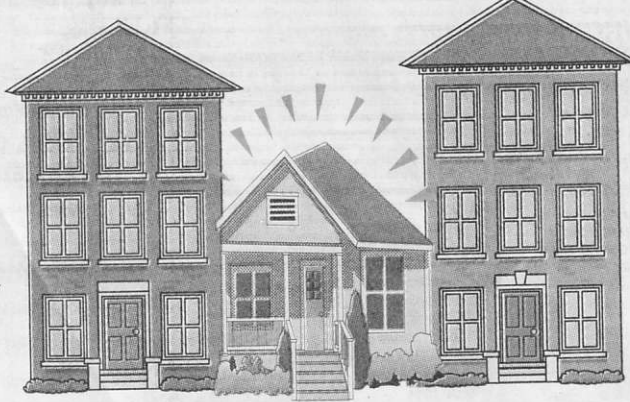
Source: Home prices and neighborhood facts by Sage Realty

4D Houston Chronicle Sunday

Real estate

Hide Park

Residents of Houston's Hyde Park Main worried that new townhomes going up around them were blocking out the cottages that make the historic neighborhood distinct. So they formed a civic club designed to blend the old and new harmoniously. Find out how they're doing in Katherine Feser's *Home Front* column, Page 4D.



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rd., Suite
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960 West,
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?O. Box