

STEVENS COURTS HOUSING PROJECT, BUILDING 7
(Stevens Courts Housing Project, Plan Type 5)
(USHA Housing Project Tex. 14-2, Building 7)
2220 West 15th Street
Texarkana
Bowie County
Texas

HABS No. TX-3550-D

Black and White Photographs
Written Historical and Descriptive Data

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Southwest System Support Office
National Park Service
P.O. Box 728
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

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Location: 2220 West 15th Street
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Bowie County
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Building 7 was located at latitude: -94.068946, longitude: 33.432063. The coordinate was taken at the northeast corner of the building on November 12, 2010, using a GPS mapping grade unit accurate to +/- 3 meters after differential correction. The coordinate's datum is NAD 1983. Building 7's location has no restriction on its release to the public. The location of Building 7 is shown in Figure 1.

Present Owner: City of Texarkana, Texas
Housing Authority of Texarkana Texas

Present Occupant: N/A

Present Use: Demolished December 2010

Significance: Stevens Courts was one of two housing projects built for the Housing Authority of the City of Texarkana, Texas in 1941. These were the first public housing constructed in Texarkana using funding provided by the United States Housing Act of 1937. Building 7 was one of two Plan Type 5 buildings at the complex.

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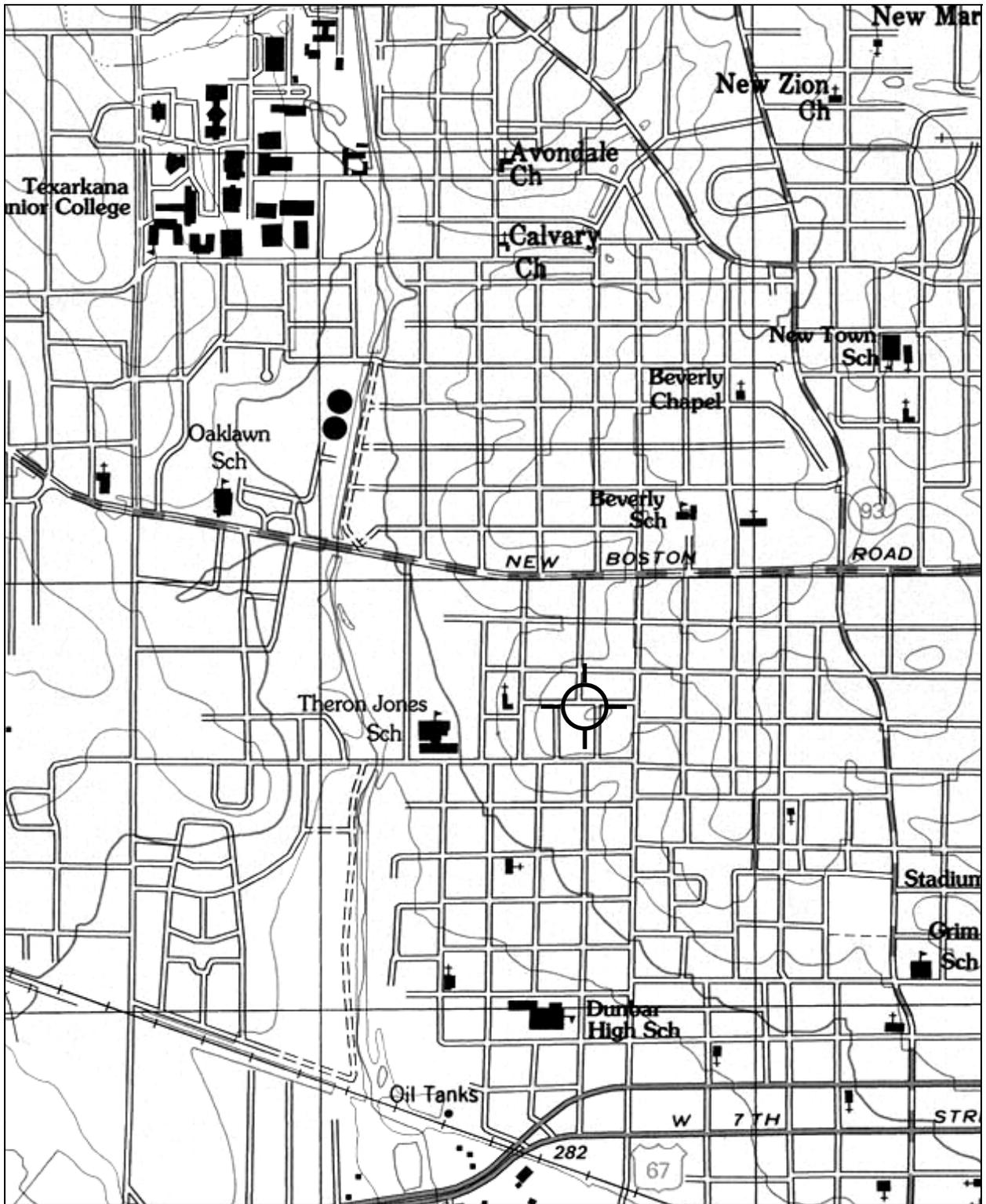


Figure 1. Location Map. Source: USGS Texarkana, TX-AR 7.5' Series Quadrangle Map, 2001.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date(s) of erection: 1941
2. Architect(s): J. N. McCammon-Bayard Witt, Associated Architects; Zumwalt and Vinther, Mechanical Engineers; Morrison & Carter, Landscape Architects; Frank Chappell, Structural Engineer.
3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses:
 - a. USHA Housing Project Tex. 14-2 (later designated Stevens Courts Housing Project) was constructed for the Housing Authority of the City of Texarkana, Texas (now the Housing Authority of Texarkana Texas).
 - b. The Stevens Courts Housing Project was used as public housing from 1941-2010.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Hardy Brothers Construction Company (General Contractor).
5. Original plans and construction: (Note: Original architectural plans for Plan Type 5 were not located.) Building 7 was one of two Plan Type 5 housing units constructed at Stevens Courts in 1941. The other Plan Type 5 unit was Building 8. The 4,965-square-foot, two-story building contained six apartments numbered 197 through 202. Apartments 197, 198, 201, and 202 had three bedrooms each, while apartments 199 and 200 had two bedrooms. Each apartment was two stories in height, with a single flight of interior stairs connecting the two floors. Each apartment had a kitchen/dining area and living room on the first floor and bedrooms and a single bathroom on the second floor. The main entrance to each apartment, on the north side of the building, opened into the living room and a secondary entry accessed the kitchen on the south side of the building.
6. Alterations and additions: Building 7 retained its original layout prior to demolition. Alterations included:
 - a. Roof: At an unknown date, HATT replaced the original clay tile roofing with composition shingles.
 - b. Windows: The original steel casement windows were replaced by mill finish, aluminum single-hung window units in the mid-1980s.

- c. Entries: The original paneled wood doors were replaced several times over the life of the building. In 2010, exterior doors were solid core wood flush units set in hollow metal frames.

B. Historical Context

Building 7 was built as component of USHA Housing Project Tex. 14-2 in 1941. See HABS No. TX-3550 for a historical context of the housing project.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: Plan Type 5 of the Stevens Courts Housing Project was a two-story, multiple dwelling with a rectangular massed plan. The building expressed its Colonial Revival influence in its brick facade with dentilled cornice, shallow-pitched hipped roof, and pedimented porticos at the main entry for each unit. Two monolithic roof ventilators mimicking chimneys were symmetrically set on the main roof ridge line.
2. Condition of fabric: The building fabric was well maintained and was in good condition prior to demolition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions: Building 7 was rectangular in plan and measured 96'-3" east-west x 25'-9 1/2" north-south.
2. Foundations: The foundation, floor framing, and roof framing were not observed due to access and asbestos contamination issues. Furthermore, structural plans for this plan type were not located. The following description is based on structural details common to all buildings in the housing complex.

The foundation consisted of a continuous concrete perimeter grade beam, with an intermediate grade beam running east-west at approximately the mid-point between the northern and southern perimeter beams.
3. Walls: Exterior walls were masonry and consisted of a single wythe of red face brick laid in a running bond, backed by structural clay tile.
4. Structural System, framing: The first floor structural system consisted of concrete joists running north-south, typically spaced at 2'-8" on center (o.c) resting on a concrete grade beam foundation. The second floor structural system was comprised of open web steel bar joists, typically

spaced at 2'-8" o.c., running north-south, resting on the load-bearing exterior masonry walls. Roof framing was 2x6 wood truss rafters placed at approximately 2'-0" o.c., running north south.

5. Porches, stoops: Building 7 had four raised concrete porches on the north side and four concrete porch stoops on the rear. The front porches were protected by small gable-roofed porticos with wood pediments, and supported by steel pipe columns. The rear stoops were concrete slabs on grade and are sheltered by cantilevered shed roofs.
6. Chimneys: The building did not have chimneys, but it did have two wood frame roof ventilators designed to mimic chimneys in appearance. The light colored stucco body contrasted with the dark colored decorative stucco band and cap. Each ventilator was 7'-0" in depth, 3'-0" in width, and extends 5'-6" above the ridge line.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Each of Building 7's six apartments had a front and rear exterior door. Main (north) entry doors were single 3'-0" x 6'-10½" x 1¾" solid-core wood flush units, set into metal frames. Rear (south) entry doors were 2'-8" wide but were otherwise identical to the main entry doors. Each entry had a two-panel aluminum door with insect screen. The current doors replaced the original wood stile-and-rail doors with half-lights.
 - b. Windows: Typical windows are two-over-two-light aluminum, single-hung units, which were installed in the mid-1980s. Other windows were one-over-one-light aluminum, single hung units which were used in bathrooms. Architectural plans called for six-over-six-light double-hung, hollow metal windows, which were more in keeping with the Colonial Revival design, but historic photographs show that steel casement windows were actually installed.
8. Roof:
 - a. Roof shape, covering: Building 7 had a hipped roof with 5/12-pitch, covered with composition shingles.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Building 7 had a simple brick cornice with brick dentils and a wood fascia board. The building did not have eaves.

C. Description of Interior

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1. Floor plans: Building Type 7 contained six two-story living units. Four apartments (197, 198, 201, and 202) had three bedrooms each, while the remaining two apartments (199 and 200) had two bedrooms. A single flight of interior stairs connected the two floors in each apartment. Each apartment had a kitchen/dining area and living room on the first floor and bedrooms and a single bathroom on the second floor. The main entrance to each apartment, on the north side of the building, opened into the living room and a secondary entrance opened into the kitchen on the south side of the building.
2. Stairways: Each apartment had a straight run of closed-riser interior stairs.
3. Elevator: None
4. Flooring: Flooring throughout the units was 12" x 12" vinyl composition tile over concrete.
5. Wall and ceiling finish: Interior walls in all areas except the bathrooms had a plaster finish. Bathrooms had glazed ceramic tile on the lower walls. Ceilings were plaster on metal lath. The typical ceiling height was 8'-2".
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Interior doors were typically two panel, wood stile-and-rail with metal frames. Some closet doors were replaced with flush, hollow-core wood units.
 - b. Windows: Interior windows had no decorative molding, surrounds, or sills.
7. Decorative interior features: None.
8. Mechanical equipment:

- a. HVAC: The building originally had built-in natural gas space heaters. Each apartment was later retrofitted with a central air conditioning and heating system.
- b. Plumbing: The building was connected to the City of Texarkana water and waste water system. Each apartment had a two-basin, stainless steel kitchen sink; water heater; wall-hung lavatory; built-in, cast iron recessed bathtub with shower; and tank-type, floor-mounted water closet.
- c. Electric: The building had electricity. The main panel for each apartment was located in the kitchen.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: Building 7 sat at the northeastern corner of the central section of Stevens Courts, facing north toward West 16th Street. The western Service Dive was immediately to the east and Building 8, also a Plan Type 5 unit, sat approximately 70 feet to the east. The terrain sloped gently downward from north to south. The building's main entries on the north facade connected via walkways to a concrete sidewalk that runs along the south side of West 16th Street. Concrete walkways led from Building 7's rear entryways on the south facade to a formal pattern of interior walkways connecting to other units in the complex.
2. Historic landscape design: Little information, aside from a few photographs, was discovered that provides information about the historic landscape of Stevens Courts. The Site Improvement Plan, prepared by Morrison & Carter, was not found. The landscape plan for Stevens Courts' sister project, Bowie Courts, called for retaining existing trees where possible, but for no new tree plantings, and it is assumed that Stevens Courts would have had the same arrangement. The most-recent landscape was comprised of a grass lawn on the north, east, and south sides of the building.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Early Views: No early views of Building 7 were located.
- B. Current Views: All 4"x 5" photos were taken by Ecological Communications Corporation in November 2010.
- C. Original Architectural Drawings: All original architectural drawings are held

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by the Housing Authority of Texarkana Texas, 1611 N. Robison Rd.,
Texarkana, Texas 75501.

D. Bibliography

Please see HABS No. TX-3550 for a complete bibliography.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

- A. Federal Agency: United States Department of Housing and Urban
Development
- B. Names and Affiliations of Those Preparing Documentation:
Ecological Communications Corporation, Austin, Texas.
Thomas Eisenhour, Project Manager, Historical Architect, and
Photographer
Kurt Korfmacher, Architectural Historian
Lara Newcomer, Historian
Kathryn St. Clair, Architectural Historian
- C. Date Documentation Prepared: December 2010