

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION**  
**OCTOBER 24, 2011**  
**DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS**  
**HDP-2011-0172**  
**1164 CURVE STREET**

**PROPOSAL**

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Demolish a ca. 1897 house.

**ARCHITECTURE**

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One-story rectangular-plan side-gabled Cumberland-style board-and-batten house with a full-width, shed-roofed independent porch on turned wood posts; windows have been boarded over, but are believed to have been 4:4.

**RESEARCH**

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The earliest known occupant of the house was Julius Wright, an African-American printer for the Herald, a turn-of-the-century African-American newspaper. After 1900, Wright was a porter for Emil Seelig, who had a cigar and tobacco shop at 615 Congress Avenue. Wright lived in this house from around 1897 to 1905, when city directories indicate that the house was occupied by Ambrose Simmons, who had previously boarded with Julius Wright. Simmons was a waiter at the Avenue and Driskill Hotels, and around 1911, he had his own restaurant at 400 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Later directories show that Simmons then went to work as a waiter at the Driskill, and lived in this house until around 1914. Hugh Norwood, a porter for the Nalley Grocery Company, a wholesale grocery and coffee business, lived here in 1916; the house was then vacant until around 1921, when Taylor and Sylvia Thompson moved in; Taylor Thompson was a porter for the State Highway Department. He does not appear in city directories after 1924, and Sylvia Thompson continued to live in this house until around 1948. The house was listed as vacant in the 1949 city directory; a Chester Thompson lived here in the early 1950s; the house then had a series of renters, or was vacant from the 1960s through the 1990s. The house was moved from its original location at 1009 Juniper Street to its current location in 2003.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

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The house is listed as a medium priority for preservation in the Historic Resources Survey of East Austin (2000). At that time, it had synthetic siding, metal porch posts, and a brick veneer wainscoting.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Release the demolition permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package. Staff and NHCD staff have discussed the option of deconstructing the house and using whatever salvage materials survive, reconstructing the house.

While the synthetic siding and brick veneer have been removed from the exterior of the house, the wood that remained underneath had deteriorated significantly, and continues to deteriorate.

1164 Curve Street  
ca. 1897



Photograph taken 2009



Photograph taken 2011

## OCCUPANCY HISTORY

1164 Curve Street

(This house was formerly at 1009 Juniper Street and moved to this location  
in 2003)

City Directory Research, Austin History Center  
By City Historic Preservation Office  
April, 2009

1990	No return
1984	Vacant
1978	Cecil G. Jones, owner No occupation listed
1972	Vacant
1967	Elbert and Beula Perkins, renters Tire builder, Bill Hamlett Tire Shop, 101 Congress Avenue
1962	George and Minnie Phillips, renters Laborer
1957	Chester Thompson, renter No occupation listed
1953	Chester Thompson, owner NOTE: Chester Thompson is not listed in the main directory.
1949	Vacant
1947	Sylvia Thompson, owner No occupation listed
1944-45	Sylvia Thompson, owner Widow, Taylor Thompson No occupation listed
1942	Sylvia Thompson, owner No occupation listed
1940	Sylvia Thompson, owner No occupation listed
1937	Sylvia Thompson, owner No occupation listed
1935	Sylvia Thompson, owner No occupation listed

1932-33	Sylvia Thompson, owner No occupation listed
1930-31	Sylvia Thompson (colored), owner No occupation listed
1929	Sylvia Thompson (colored), owner No occupation listed
	Leo and Mollie M. Thompson (colored) No occupation listed
1927	Sylvia Thompson (colored), owner No occupation listed
	Leo Thompson (colored) No occupation listed
1924	Taylor and Sylvia Thompson (colored), owners Porter, State Highway Department
	Leo Thompson (colored) No occupation listed
1922	Taylor and Sylvia Thompson (colored), owners Porter, State Highway Department
	Leo Thompson (colored) No occupation listed
1920	Vacant NOTE: Taylor and Sylvia Thompson are listed as living at 915 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street. He listed his occupation as a janitor.
1918	Vacant
1916	Hugh Norwood (colored) Porter, Nalley Grocery Company, wholesale groceries and coffee roasters, 301-03 San Jacinto Boulevard
1914	Ambrose B. Simmons (colored) Waiter
1912-13	Ambrose B. Simmons (colored) Waiter, Driskill Hotel
1910-11	Ambrose B. Simmons (colored) Proprietor of a restaurant at 400 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> Street
1909-10	Ambrose B. Simmons (colored) Waiter, Avenue Hotel, 721 Congress Avenue
1906-07	Ambrose B. Simmons

Waiter, Avenue Hotel

NOTE: The directory indicates that Ambrose B. Simmons boarded at the home of Julius Wright at 1007 Juniper Street, which is this house; the address of 1009 Juniper Street is not listed in the directory. Julius Wright was a porter for Emil Seelig, news depot, cigars, and tobacco, 615 Congress Avenue.

- 1905 Julius Wright (colored)  
Porter, Emil Seelig, news depot, cigars and tobacco, 615 Congress Avenue.  
NOTE: The address is listed as 1009 Juniper Street.
- 1903-04 Julius Wright (colored)  
Porter, Emil Seelig, news depot, cigars and tobacco, 615 Congress Avenue.  
NOTE: The address is listed as 1011 Juniper Street.
- 1900-01 Julius Wright (colored)  
Porter, Emil Seelig, news depot, cigars and tobacco, 615 Congress Avenue.  
NOTE: The address is listed as 1009 Juniper Street.
- 1898-99 Julius Wright (colored)  
Printer, Herald, 910 E. 10<sup>th</sup> Street.  
NOTE: The Herald was an African-American newspaper, issued every Saturday, and edited by Rev. L.L. Campbell.  
NOTE: The address is listed as 1009 Juniper Street.
- 1897-98 Julius Wright (colored)  
Printer, Herald, 910 E. 10<sup>th</sup> Street.  
NOTE: The Herald was an African-American newspaper, issued every Saturday, and edited by Rev. L.L. Campbell.  
NOTE: The address is listed as 1009 Juniper Street.
- 1895-96 Julius Wright (colored) is listed as boarding in the home of Sarah Henderson, 2408 San Gabriel Street. He worked as a printer for the Herald.

#### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

##### **Julius Wright (ca. 1897-ca. 1906)**

The 1900 U.S. Census report shows siblings Julius Wright and Sallie Wright living in the home of their grandmother, Sarah Henderson, at 1107 Curve Street, although city directories show that Julius Wright was living in this house from around 1897 to around 1906. Sarah Henderson was born in 1820 in Tennessee, and had no occupation listed in the census report. Sallie Wright, was listed as the grand-daughter of Sarah Henderson, and had been born in Texas to Tennessee-born parents in 1875 – she was then 25 years old and single. She worked as a cook. Julius Wright was also born in Texas in 1879 – making him 21 at the time of the census report. He was single, and worked as a porter.

The 1910 U.S. Census shows Julius Wright as a 31-year old lodger in the home of Ambrose Simmons, at what appears to be 1009 E. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, but is most likely this house, as reflected by city directory listings. Julius Wright was listed as a barber with his own shop. Ambrose Simmons is listed as an Alabama-born 30-year old hotel waiter. His wife was named Sallie, which may be Sallie Wright, Julius Wright's sister listed in the 1900 census report, although she is listed as a couple of years younger than she had been in the earlier report – here she is shown as 30 years old, a native of Texas with Tennessee-born parents (consistent with the 1900 census report), and with no occupation listed.

Julius Cornelius Wright registered for the draft in World War I. His draft registration card indicates that he was born in January, 1879, consistent with prior census reports, lived at 1211 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street in Austin, worked in real estate, with an office at 424 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, and was married to a woman named Zula.

Julius C. Wright appears in the 1920 U.S. Census, living at 1211 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street with his wife, Z.C. [Zula, from the 1918 draft registration card], who was 14 years his junior. The census report shows that both Julius and Z.C. were born in Texas, but this report notes that Julius' parents had been born in Mississippi, rather than in Tennessee as shown in earlier reports. Julius Wright was a retail grocer with his own store. Z.C. did not have an occupation listed in the report. They had no children listed. NOTE: J.C. and Zula C. Wright appear in the 1920 U.S. Census report twice – they are shown both times as living at 1211 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, and J.C. is shown as a grocery merchant, but in the second entry, J.C.'s parents are shown as having been born in the United States rather than in Mississippi.

Julius and Zula C. Wright do not appear in the 1930 U.S. Census report; there is no confirmable record of Julius C. Wright's death; Zula C. Wright died in 1959 in Los Angeles, California.

The image shows two pages of a World War I draft registration card for Julius C. Wright. The left page is the 'REGISTRATION CARD' and the right page is the 'REGISTRAR'S REPORT'.

**REGISTRATION CARD:**

- Name: Julius Cornelius Wright
- Address: 1211 East 11th St, Austin, Tex
- Age: 39
- Month of Birth: January
- Year of Birth: 1879
- Race: White
- U.S. Citizen: ALFIM
- Present Occupation: Real Estate
- Employer's Name: ALFIM
- Place of Employment: 424 E. 6th St, Austin, Tex
- Marital Status: Married (Zula Wright wife)

**REGISTRAR'S REPORT:**

- Registration Number: 43-1-3-C
- Description of Registrant:
 

HEIGHT	WEIGHT	HAIR	EYES	COMPLEXION	SCARS	MARKS	REMARKS
5'7"	140	Dark	Blue	Clear			None
- Signature: Leo Newell J.
- Date: Sept 12, 1918
- City: Austin, Texas
- State: TEXAS

Julius C. Wright's World War I draft registration card

**Ambrose Simmons (ca. 1906-ca. 1915)**

Ambrose Simmons was born in January, 1881, according to his World War I draft registration card. He was married to a woman named Sallie, which may have been Sallie Wright, Julius Wright's sister, and lived at 2007 E. 14<sup>th</sup> Street in Austin at that time. He listed his occupation as a minister for the St. John Land Mark Association of Fort Worth, Texas.

The 1900 U.S. Census shows Ambrose Simmons living in the home of his mother and step-father in Elgin, Texas, where he worked as a farm laborer. Ambrose was listed as having been born in Alabama. His older brother, Alexander, worked as a hotel waiter, which may have been the way that Ambrose broke into the business. City directories show Ambrose Simmons as a hotel waiter for all of the time that he lived in this house.

Ambrose Simmons also appears twice in the 1920 U.S. Census. He appears in Austin, living at 1009 E. 13<sup>th</sup> Street with his wife Sallie, and working as a hotel waiter. He and Sallie are also listed in the 1920 U.S. Census report for Brown Township, Seminole County, Oklahoma, where is listed as a minister. Both Ambrose and Sallie are the right age to be the same people as listed in the Texas census report, and Ambrose is listed as having been born in Alabama, while Sallie is listed as having been born in Texas to Tennessee-born parents. They have a son, named Julius, which leads to further speculation that Sallie Simmons was born Sallie Wright, the sister of Julius Wright, and the first known occupant of this house.

The image shows two documents side-by-side. The left document is a 'REGISTRATION CARD' for Ambrose Simmons, dated January 4, 1881. It lists his address as 2007 E. 14th Austin, Texas, and his occupation as a minister at St. John Land Mark A.M.E. Church. His next of kin is listed as Sallie Simmons at 2007 E. 14, Austin, Texas. The right document is a 'REGISTRAR'S REPORT' from the City Board of Austin, Texas, dated September 17, 1918. It describes the registrant as a Black male, 22 years old, with a height of 5 feet 7 inches. The registrar, W. H. Morley, certifies that the information is true.

Ambrose Simmons' World War I draft registration card

### Taylor, Sylvia, and Chester Thompson (ca. 1921-ca. 1960)

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Sylvia Thompson and her son Chester living at 1009 Juniper Street. Sylvia Thompson is listed as a 62-year old native of Mississippi who worked as a boarding-house cook. Chester Thompson is listed as 39 years old, born in Texas, and working as a laborer for a contractor. Sylvia Thompson is again listed in the 1930 Census report as a boarding house cook, and a servant in the home of Ruby Butler, a white 45-year old widow who lived at 2011 Whitis Avenue. Ruby Butler was a public school teacher with a grown daughter, a grown son, and a lodger living in her house. The second listing for Sylvia Thompson confirms that she was then 62 years old (born in 1868 in Mississippi).

Sylvia Thompson may also appear in earlier census reports, along with her husband Taylor. A Taylor and Silva Thompson appear in the 1880 U.S. Census in Fitz Williams Mill, Bastrop County, Texas. Taylor Thompson was then 30 years old, had been born in Texas, and was a farm laborer. Silva Thompson was then 25 years old, had been born in Texas, and is listed as keeping house. They had two young sons, Charley and William, but no Chester, who was listed as Sylvia's son in the 1930 census report. Further complicating the association between this listing and the 1930 census report listing for Sylvia Thompson above is the notation that this

Silva Thompson was born in Texas, and would have been a couple of years older than the Sylvia Thompson shown in the 1930 census. Texas death records indicate that Taylor Thompson died in Travis County in May, 1926, which would correspond to the 1927 city directory listing showing only Sylvia Thompson.

The Thompson family may also appear in the 1910 U.S. Census, which shows Taylor and [Sarah] Thompson in Bastrop County, where he is listed as a farmer. He had been born in 1859; she had been born in 1861. Their two sons, Charley and William, both still lived at home and are listed as farm laborers. All had been born in Texas. Chester Thompson, who was 39 years old in 1930, should have appeared in this listing as well, but does not.

Sylvia Thompson appears to have died in Travis County in 1949. There was no obituary in the Austin newspapers.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Leo and Mollie Thompson living in San Antonio at the home of Mollie's parents, Alex and Lizzie Warner. Leo Thompson was born in Texas in 1905. He worked as a laborer for a roofing company in San Antonio. He is shown as an occupant of this house with Taylor and Sylvia Thompson in city directories from 1922 to 1929, with later listings showing his wife Mollie living here as well.

on See Map & Survey  
CONNECTING TO RGE S 1/2 20  
No. 7838

**APPLICATION FOR SEWER CONNECTION.**

Austin, Texas. 4-27-1928

To the Superintendent of Sewer and Public Improvements,  
City of Austin, Texas.

Sir:—

I hereby make application for sewer connection and instructions on premises owned by Sylvia Thompson at 1009 Juniper Street Lot (C) which place is to be used as a residence

In this place there are to be installed 3 fixtures.

I agree to pay the City Sewer Department the regular ordinance charge.

Respectfully,  
W. G. Anderson

Location of Public Sewer BT Downing

Connected 5-8 1928  
Size of Main 8 inches  
Size of Service 4 inches  
2 Feet Deep in A.R.  
20 Feet from Property Line  
Feet from Curb Line

Connection made by  
H. H. H. H.

Ne. 5' W. 1/2 Sec. 10  
22 1/2' E. 1/2 Sec. 10  
2' D.  
DIAGRAM  
B-941

Sewer service permit to Sylvia Thompson for the house at its 1009 Juniper Street location (1928)

**Historic Resources Inventory Form for City of Austin, Texas - East Austin Survey, September 2000**

<b>Address</b>	<u>1009 Juniper</u>	<b>Roof Type</b>	<u>gabled</u>																			
<b>Historic Name</b>	<u></u>	<b>Priority</b>	<i>High</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Medium</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Low</i> <input type="checkbox"/>																			
<b>Current Name</b>	<u></u>	<b>Alterations</b>																				
<b>Resource Type</b>	<u>building</u>	<i>Windows</i>	<u></u>																			
<b>Property Type</b>	<u>domestic: single-family</u>	<i>Doors</i>	<u></u>																			
<b>Property Subtype</b>	<u>two-room</u>	<i>Porch</i>	<u>minor</u>																			
<b>Stylistic Influence</b>	<u></u>	<i>Materials</i>	<u>major</u>																			
<b>Date Constructed</b>	<u>Estimated 1885</u> <i>Factual</i>	<i>Additions</i>	<u>major</u>																			
<b>Date Altered</b>	<u></u>	<i>Roof</i>	<u></u>																			
<b>Current Function</b>	<u>residential</u>	<b>Photo References</b>																				
<b>Historic Function</b>	<u>residential</u>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Roll</th> <th>Frame</th> <th>Roll</th> <th>Frame</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>53</td> <td>5</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>53</td> <td>6</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>53</td> <td>7</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Roll	Frame	Roll	Frame	53	5			53	6			53	7						
Roll	Frame	Roll	Frame																			
53	5																					
53	6																					
53	7																					
<b>Number of Stories</b>	<u>one</u>																					
<b>Structural System</b>	<u>wood frame</u>																					
<b>Exterior Materials</b>	<u>synthetic siding</u>																					
	<u>brick</u>																					

**Description** Early 2-room house with numerous unsympathetic alterations. Original exterior cladding has been replaced with synthetic siding and brick veneer, original porch posts have been replaced with metal columns, and a shed roof rear wing has been added. Additionally, the porch roof is likely not original to the dwelling's date of construction. Despite these alterations, the building does retain some original decorative features such as turned wood pilasters, decorative brackets, and eave returns. It is a surviving, moderately intact example of an early 2-room.

**Historic Resources Inventory -- Historical Information Profile**

**1009 Juniper                      ca. 1885                      Taylor and Sylvia Thompson House**

Individually Eligible for NR listing under both Criterion A, historic associations, and Criterion C, architectural merit. This side-gabled dwelling was probably built as a 2-room house and may be one of the earlier buildings in the Robertson Hill area. Built as early as 1885, the house has been altered by the application of synthetic siding as well as changes in the porch posts and roof. In fair condition, the house nevertheless retains many of its early architectural features and is a High preservation priority due to its early date of construction and association with the earliest period of African American settlement in East Austin.

- 1909 Ambrose B. Simmons "colored"
- 1924 Taylor Thompson "colored", owner
- 1935 Sylvia Thompson, owner
- 1940 Sylvia Thompson, owner
- 1952 vacant



Photos of 1009 Juniper Street (now 1164 Curve Street\_ from the 2000 East Austin Survey