

HDP-2011-0541
1903 E. 17th Street

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1913 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story wing-and-gable plan vernacular Victorian frame house with 1:1 windows, a transom over the front door, and partial-width shed-roofed independent porch with Doric pilasters and ornamental metal supports and railing.

RESEARCH

The ca. 1913 house was one of the first in this subdivision platted by E.J. Hofheinz, a principal developer of African-American sections of the city in the early 20th century. The first known occupant of the house was George Henry, an African-American cook. By 1916, according to city directories, the house was occupied by Frank Bryant, a farmer who had moved into town from Precinct 6 in the county. The 1916 directory lists Bryant as an African-American laborer. The 1910 U.S. Census shows Bryant as a 27-year old farm day laborer, married to Lillie Bryant, who was 24 years old. The 1918 directory lists Frank and Lillie Bryant as the owners of the property; he listed his occupation as a farmer, but by 1920, the Bryants had moved back to a rented house in Precinct 6, where Frank was farming; the 1920 directory shows the house at 1903 E. 17th Street rented by William E. and Savannah Gates. Gates was a laborer who had lived at 1909 E. 17th Street in 1918. The Bryants continued to rent this house out until around 1924, when they are again listed as the owners and occupants. Frank Bryant lists his occupation in the 1924 city directory as a farmer, in 1929 as a concrete worker, and does not list an occupation again until 1949, when he was employed as a yardman. The 1952 directory shows Frank working as a gardener, and Lillie working as a maid at 2005 Hamilton Avenue. Frank is listed as a yardman again in the 1955 directory, and died in 1959. Lillie Bryant continued to live at this house until her death in 1976. The 1981 directory shows the house owned by Cliff William, an employee of the City of Austin, but rented in 1987 by Eunice Overton, a maid.

The house exemplifies the standard of living for African-American families in East Austin during the early 20th century, but is noteworthy for both its architecture, being the sole example of a wing-and-gable vernacular Victorian house on a block otherwise representing pyramid-roofed workers' cottages, as well as the fact that Frank and Lillie Bryant purchased this property when the majority of the houses on the block were rentals. They rented this house out while they lived on a farm in the early 1920s, and returned here by 1924 to remain the rest of their lives.

The house is an integral part of a potential historic district along the south side of the 1900 block of E. 17th Street. The south side of this block is the E.J. Hofheinz resubdivision, platted in November, 1911. There were no houses listed east of Chicon Street in the 1910-11 city directory; the 1912-13 directory lists only one house at 1919 E. 17th Street, which does not now exist as an address, but may be 1911 E. 17th, based upon the assumption that Carrie Douglass, who is listed as the occupant of 1919 E. 17th in the 1912-13 directory, is listed as living at 1809 (probably 1911) E. 17th Street in the 1914 directory, and working as a cook for Mrs. J.W. Gathright, who operated a boarding house at 304 W. 10th Street. The 1922 directory lists Carrie Daniels living at 1911 E. 17th Street, and working as a cook for Mrs. J.W. Gathright in her boarding house at 304 W. 10th. Carrie Douglass likely married Andrew Daniels – he is listed in the 1918 and 1920 directories with a wife named Carrie living at 1911 E. 17th Street.

The block grew quickly – from one house by 1913 to three houses by 1914, and six houses by 1916, and all remain, with only minor architectural changes. The house at 1905 E. 17th is the only in-fill on this side of the block, constructed in 1939. Otherwise, the block retains much of its 1916 appearance.

The majority of the houses on the south side of the 1900 block of E. 17th Street were occupied by African-American tenants who worked in typical “race” occupations of the times – porters, laborers, drivers, and gardeners. The women of the block worked as maids and laundresses, also typical “race” occupations in Austin in the early 20th century. The entire block represents a relatively untouched historical relic of East Austin life, and would qualify as a local or National Register historic district. All of the houses (with the exception of 1905 – built in 1939) were rated high priorities for preservation in the Chestnut Neighborhood Cultural Resources Survey.

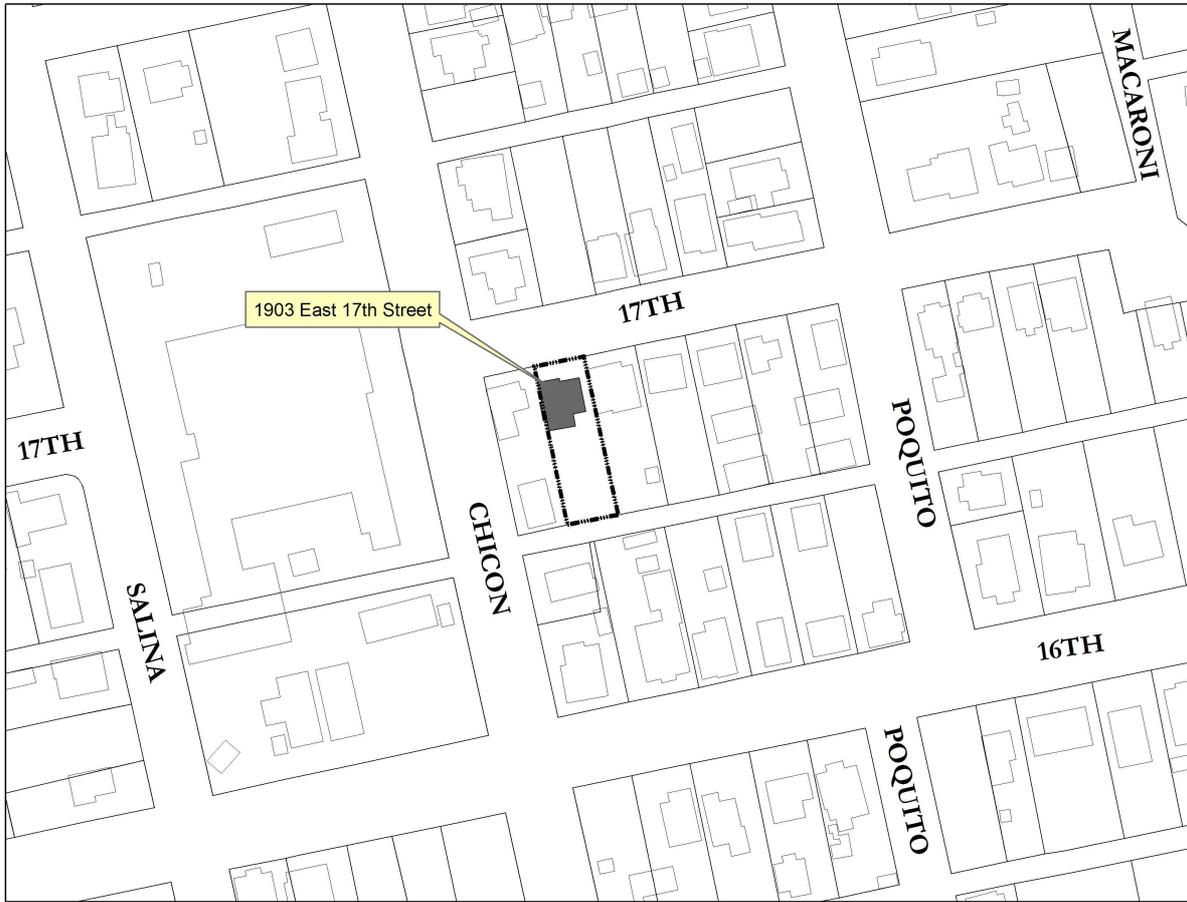
STAFF COMMENTS

The house at 1903 E. 17th Street was rated as a high priority for preservation in the Chestnut Neighborhood Cultural Resources Survey.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that the applicant reconsider demolition of the house. The house is part of a potential historic district and will become eligible for rehabilitation property tax credits upon the creation of the local historic district. The house has architectural significance in its wing-and-gable plan and vernacular Victorian ornamentation, as well as significant historical associations with African-American life in East Austin in the 20th century.

LOCATION MAP





1903 E. 17th Street
ca. 1913



OCCUPANCY HISTORY

 OCCUPANCY HISTORY
 1903 E. 17th Street

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
 By City Historic Preservation Office
 April, 2007

1987	Eunice J. Overton, renter Maid
1981	Cliff William, owner Employed by the City of Austin NOTE: The directory indicates that Mr. William was a new resident at this address.
1975	Mrs. Lillie Bryant, owner Widow, Frank Bryant Retired
1971	Mrs. Lillie Bryant, owner Widow, Frank Bryant Retired
1967	Mrs. Lillie Bryant, owner Widow, Frank Bryant Retired
1963	Mrs. Lillie Bryant, owner Widow, Frank Bryant No occupation listed
1959	Frank and Lillie Bryant, owners No occupation listed
1955	Frank and Lillie Bryant, owners Yardman
1952	Frank and Lillie Bryant, owners Frank: Gardener Lillie: Maid, 2005 Hamilton Street
1949	Frank and Lillie Bryant, owners Yardman
1947	Frank and Lillie Bryant, owners No occupation listed
1944-45	Frank and Lillie Bryant, owners No occupation listed
1942	Frank and Lillie Bryant, owners No occupation listed

1941	Frank and Lillie Bryant, owners No occupation listed
1940	Frank and Lillie Bryant, owners No occupation listed
1937	Frank and Lillie Bryant, owners No occupation listed
1935	Frank and Lillie Bryant, owners No occupation listed
1932-33	Frank and Lillie Bryant, owners No occupation listed
1930-31	Frank and Lillie Bryant (colored), owners No occupation listed
1929	Frank and Lillie Bryant (colored), owners Concrete worker
1927	Frank and Bettie (?) Bryant (colored), owners No occupation listed
1924	Frank and Lillie Bryant (colored), owners Farmer
1922	John Banks (colored), renter Porter, Walter Wilcox, men's and boys' clothing, hats, furnishings, and shoes, 616 Congress Avenue NOTE: Frank Bryant does not appear to be listed in the directory. There is a Frank Bryant, but he is not listed as African-American, has no wife, worked as a driver for Joe St. John, and roomed at 1112 E. 3 rd Street.
1920	W.E. and Savannah Gates (colored), renters W.E.: Laborer Savanah: Laundress
1918	Frank and Lillie Bryant (colored), owners Farmer
1916	Frank Bryant (colored) Laborer
1914	George Henry (colored) Cook NOTE: The only houses listed in the 1900 block are 1903, 1919, and 1921. Frank Bryant is not listed in the directory.
1912-13	1919 E. 17 th Street is the only house in the block east of Chicon Street.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The 1910 U.S. Census shows Frank and Lillie Bryant renting a house in Precinct 6 of Travis County. He was 27; she was 24. Frank worked as a day laborer on his home farm; Lillie did not list an occupation.

According to the 1920 U.S. Census, Frank and Lillie (spelled Lellie in the Census) were renting a house in Precinct 6 of Travis County. Both were born in Texas. He listed his occupation as a farmer on a general farm. Lillie did not list an occupation.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Frank and Lillie Bryant owning the house at 1903 E> 17th Street, which was worth \$1,000. He was 46 years old and working as a laborer for a building contractor, which conforms to the 1929 city directory listing as a concrete worker as Frank's occupation. Lillie is listed as a laundress for a private family.

Frank Bryant died March 15, 1959, but there is no obituary in the Austin American or Statesman. Lillie Bryant died June 9, 1976 at the age of 90. Her brief obituary stated that the funeral was at Emanuel Baptist Church, and that she left two sisters, Mrs. Mattie Harrison, and Mrs. Susie Thomas, both of Austin.

East 17th Street Occupancy Histories

1987

- 1901 Dorris L. May (renter) – maid
- 1903 Eunice J. Overton (renter) – maid
- 1905 Barbara Freeman (owner) – no occupation listed
- 1907 Penda and Victoria O. Ernesto (renters) – no occupation listed
- 1909 Vacant
- 1911 Vacant
- 1913 Robert and Patricia Clark (renters) – cook

1979

- 1901 Mary Woolridge (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1903 Vacant
- 1905 Rev. M.A. and Barbara Freeman (owners) – no occupation listed
- 1907 Vacant
- 1909 Maurice C. and Mattie Sauls (renters) – janitor, State House of Representatives
- 1911 No return
- 1913 James W. and Linda M. Hewitt (renters) James: employed by Capitol Brick; Linda: teacher, Cherrywood Child Care Center

1973

- 1901 J.W. and Mary Bookman (renters) – retired
- 1903 Lillie Bryant (owner) widow, Frank – retired
- 1905 Myrtle A. Johnson (owner) – teacher, public schools
- 1907 Henry and Dorothy Alexander (owners) – U.S. Army
- 1909 Maurice C. and Mattie Sauls (renters) – cook, Lakeway Inn
- 1911 Otis Thompson (renter) – laborer, City Street and Bridge Division
- 1913 Vacant

1967

- 1901 Ella Jerry (renter) widow, Howard – no occupation listed
- 1903 Lillie Bryant (owner) widow, Frank – retired
- 1905 Myrtle A. Johnson (owner) – employed by Austin Public Schools
- 1907 Beulah Hill (renter) – retired
- 1909 Carrie L. Washington (renter) widow, Lloyd – no occupation listed
- 1911 Essie L. Agent (renter) – maid, 2003 Lake Austin Boulevard
- 1913 Annie Crump (owner) widow, Bennie L. – no occupation listed

1962

- 1901 Annie Hess (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1903 Lillie Bryant (owner) widow, Frank – no occupation listed
- 1905 Myrtle A. Johnson (owner) – teacher, Anderson High School
- 1907 Beulah Hill (renter) – maid
- 1909 Vacant
- 1911 Jimmy and Essie L. Agent (renters) Jimmy: laborer; Essie: maid, 2801 Gilbert
- 1913 Arvan and Elizabeth Washington (renters) – warehouseman, Pig Stand Restaurant

1957

- 1901 Elsie Campbell (renter) – waitress, Soldiers Inn
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – laborer
- 1905 Ernest and Annie L. Schuler (owners) – roofer, Scheumack Bros. Roofing Contractors
- 1907 Beulah Hill (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1909 Jesse J. and Ida Marshall (renters) – driver, Kuntz-Sternenberg Lumber Company
- 1911 Willie B. and Geneva Griffin (renters) – U.S. Air Force
- 1913 Arvan and Elizabeth Washington (renters) – cook, Pig Stand Restaurant

1952

- 1901 Bernice Campbell (renter) – waitress
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – gardener
- 1905 Ernest and Annie L. Schuler (renters) – roofer
- 1907 Beulah Hill (renter) – laundress
- 1909 Jesse and Ida Marshall (renters) – driver, Kuntz-Sternenberg Lumber Company; also Jessie M Marshall – maid
- 1911 Vernie and Blanche Sparks (renters) – porter, Texas Federation of Women's Clubs
- 1913 Arvan and Elizabeth Washington (renters) – cook Pig Stand No 14 (2801 Guadalupe)

1949

- 1901 Arvon Washington (renter) – cook
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – yardman
- 1905 Ernest and Annie L. Schuler (owners) – roofer
- 1907 Beulah Hill (renter) – laundry worker
- 1909 Jesse J. and Ida Marshall (renters) – driver
- 1911 Vernie and Florence Sparks (renters) – porter
- 1913 Richard and Elizabeth C. Powell (renters) – mechanic, East End Used Cars

1947

- 1901 Jaycie and Scenia M. Washington (renters) – porter, Hoffbrau Café
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – no occupation listed
- 1905 Ernest and Annie L. Schuler (renters) – driver, William Cameron & Company, wholesale lumber and building materials
- 1907 Beulah Strong (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1909 Jesse and Ida Marshall (renters) – driver, Capital City Lumber
- 1911 Vernie and Florence Sparks (renters) – porter, Texas Federation of Women's Clubs
- 1913 Thane and Dorothy Marshall (renters) – no occupation listed

1944-45

- 1901 Beatrice Goodman (renter) – maid
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – no occupation listed
- 1905 Ernest and Annie L. Shuler (renters) – roofer
- 1907 Beulah Strong (renter) – laundress
- 1909 Annie M. Spears (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1911 Florence Sparks (renter) – laundress
- 1913 Minnie Myers (renter) – no occupation listed

1942

- 1901 Beatrice Goodman (renter) – maid, 408 W. 14th Street
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – no occupation listed
- 1905 Ernest and Annie L. Shuler (renters) – no occupation listed
- 1907 Edward and Beulah Strong (renters) – warehouseman, Dittlinger Roller Mills; also, Mary Gibson – no occupation listed
- 1909 Amanda Maxwell (renter) – maid, 1617 Northwood Road
- 1911 Vernice and Florence Sparks (renters) – porter
- 1913 Mark and Minnie Myers (renters) – wrecker Bernard C. Smith auto accessories

1940

- 1901 Novella Sneed (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – no occupation listed
- 1905 Luther and D. Etta Winn (renters) – no occupation listed
- 1907 Edward and Beulah Strong (renters) – warehouseman, Dittlinger Roller Mills; also, Mary Gibson – no occupation listed
- 1909 John D. and Sallie Houston (renters) – porter
- 1911 Vernice and Florence Sparks (renters) – porter, Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity
- 1913 Sylvester Hill (renter) – cook

1937

- 1901 Novella Sneed (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – no occupation listed
- 1907 Edward and Beulah Strong (renters) – helper, Dittlinger Roller Mills; also, Mary Gibson – no occupation listed
- 1909 John Fairchild (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1911 Vacant
- 1913 James and Zula M. Mitchell (renters) – laborer, Frank R. Rundell, Rundell Home Builders, Inc.

1935

- 1901 Willie Sneed (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – no occupation listed
- 1907 Mary Gibson (renter) – no occupation listed; also Edward and Beulah Strong – no occupation listed
- 1909 Maggie Scott (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1911 George and Erma Richardson (renters) – laborer, Tom Miller – wholesale produce
- 1913 George Borner (renter) – not listed in the main directory

1932-33

- 1901 Annie Gooden (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – no occupation listed
- 1907 Edward and Beulah Strong (renters) – no occupation listed; also Annias and Mary Strong – warehouseman, Dittlinger Roller Mills
- 1909 Mary Davis (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1911 Julius C. and Amanda Jackson (renters) – no occupation listed
- 1913 John and Mattie Lemon (renters) – helper Gage Brothers, general tin and sheet metal work, furnace work, roof repairing, and painting

1930-31

- 1901 Arthur and Annie Gooden (renters) – no occupation listed
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – no occupation listed
- 1907 Vacant
- 1909 Julius and Amanda Jackson (renters) – no occupation listed
- 1911 George and Dora Atchison (renters) – plumber
- 1913 Fannie Felder (renter) – no occupation listed

NOTE: All residents of the block are listed as colored.

1929

- 1901 Arthur Gooden (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – no occupation listed
- 1907 Vacant
- 1909 Julius and Amanda Jackson (renters) – no occupation listed
- 1911 George and Dora Atkinson (renters) – no occupation listed
- 1913 George and Mattie Baker (renters) – painter

1927

- 1901 Aaron King (renter) – farmer
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – no occupation listed
- 1907 Alice King (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1909 Vacant
- 1911 George and Dora Atkinson (renters) – no occupation listed
- 1913 George Bell (renter) – no occupation listed

1924

- 1901 Elizabeth B. Payne (renter) – no occupation listed
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – farmer
- 1907 Joseph and Tennessee Carpenter (renters) – blacksmith
- 1909 Wesley and Minnie Powell (renters) – teamster, Oakwood Cemetery
- 1911 John and Mattie Hughes (renters) – no occupation listed
- 1913 George Bell (owner) – teamster, Nalle and Company

1922

- 1901 Aaron K. and Alice King (owners) – no occupation listed
- 1903 John Banks (renter) – porter, Walter Wilcox, men's and boy's clothing, hats and shoes
- 1907 John and Annie Williams (renters) – no occupation listed
- 1909 Wesley and Minnie Powell (renters) – laborer, Beth Israel Cemetery
- 1911 Carrie Daniels (owner) – cook, Mrs. J.W. Gathright boarding house, 302-04 E. 10th
- 1913 George Bell (owner) – laborer, Nalle and Company

1920

- 1901 Rev. Sidney E. and Nannie Jones (renters) – no occupation listed
- 1903 William E. and Savannah Gates (renters) – William – laborer; Savannah: laundress
- 1907 Vacant
- 1909 Vacant
- 1911 Andrew and Carrie Daniels (owners) – expressman
- 1913 George Bell (owner) – laborer; also George, Jr., - laborer

1918

- 1901 Rev. Sidney E. and Nannie Jones (owners) – no occupation listed
- 1903 Frank and Lillie Bryant (owners) – farmer
- 1907 Davie and Martha Lott (renters) – laborer
- 1909 William E. and Savannah Gates (renters) – laborer
- 1911 Andrew and Carrie Daniels (owners) – laborer
- 1913 George Bell (owner) – teamster, Nalle and Company; also Cicily – no occupation listed; Lena – laundress; and Marion – laborer

1916

- 1901 Rev Sidney E. Jones – no occupation listed
- 1903 Frank Bryant – laborer
- 1905 William Jackson – carpenter
- 1907 Vacant
- 1909 Andrew Daniels – laborer
- 1913 George Bell – teamster, Nalle and Company

1914

- 1903 George Henry – cook
- 1919 Ollie Douglass – no occupation listed
- 1921 Vacant

1912-13

- 1919 Carrie Douglas – no occupation listed

1910-11

No houses are listed east of Chicon Street on 17th.



1901 E. 17th Street
ca. 1915



1907 E. 17th Street
ca. 1915



1903 E. 17th Street
ca. 1913



1909 E. 17th Street
ca. 1915



1905 E. 17th Street
ca. 1939



1911 E. 17th Street
ca. 1912



1913 E. 17th Street
ca. 1913

WATER SERVICE PERMIT
Austin, Texas

No 12874 39

Received of _____ Date 5-8-39

Address 1903-EAST-17TH ST.

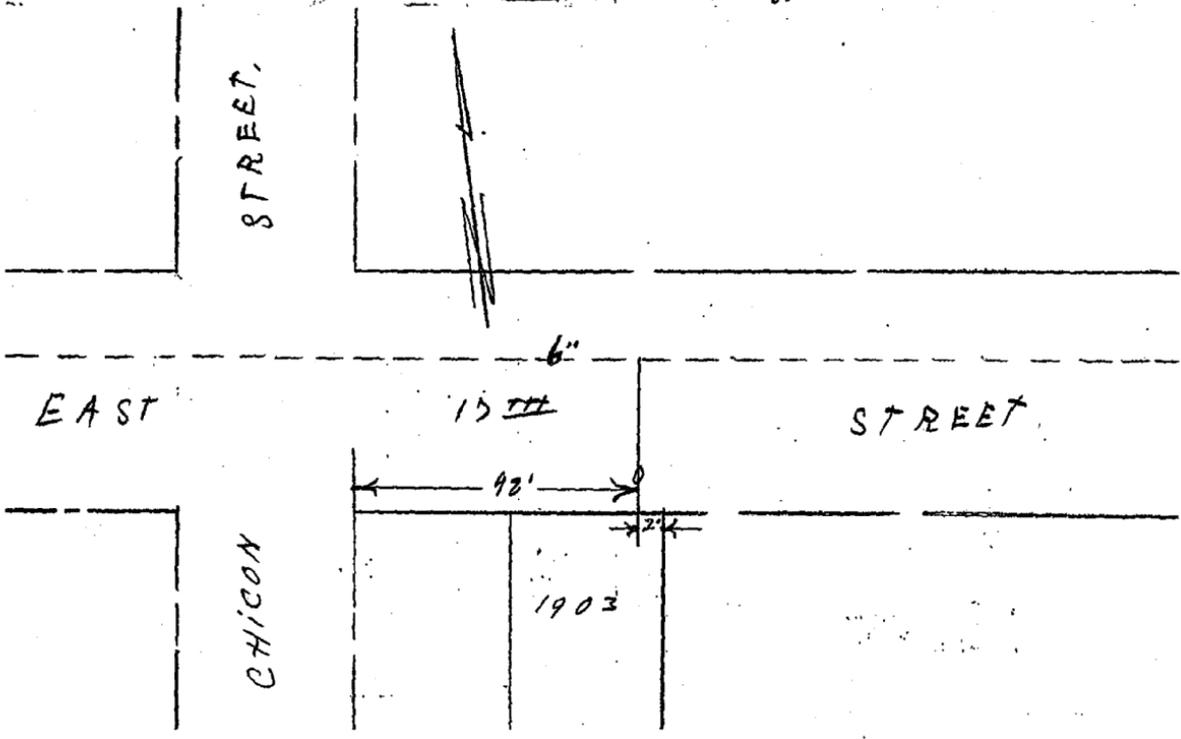
Amount _____ \$ *Ad Tap*

Plumber BROWN-ROOT-JOB _____ Size of Tap _____

Date of Connection _____	No. Fittings Curb Cock Elbow St. Elbow Bushing Reducer Pipe Lead Comp. Nipples Union Plug Tee Stop Box Lid Valves Job No. Req. No.
Size of Tap Made 3/4	
Size Service Made 3/4	
Size Main Tapped 6"	
From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 9'	
From E Prop. Line to Curb Cock 2'	
Location of Meter CURB	
Type of Box LOCK	
Depth of Main in St. _____	
Depth of Service Line _____	
From Curb Cock to Tap on Main 27'	
Checked by Engr. Dept. 6-16-39	

INDEXED

SYLVESTER.



SANITARY SEWER SERVICE PERMIT

No. 13013 *A*

Austin, Texas

Received of owner Date Dec. 7, 1936
 Address 1903 E. 17th.
 Amount \$
 Builder or Owner Frank Bryant Plumber
 Lot 2 Block 3 O.L. 34 Subdivision Plat No. 39
 Date of Connection 12/15/1936
 By City 14 1/2' W/ELL
 By Plumber
 Checked By
 Size Main 6" Depth 8'
 Main Assgn. in alley 9' from EL
 Stub Depth Prop. Line 1'
 Stub Location
 Book No. R-236
 Paving Cut No.

No. Fittings	Size	Price
12' Pipe	4"	1.20
Pipe		
1 Wyes	6x4	.63
2 Bends	4" 1/8	.80
Reducers		
Plugs		
Sand		
Gravel		
Remix		
Stoppers		
Castings		
Other	laying pipe	.24
Labor:	1 1/2 day	4.50

OWNER Mrs. Lillie Bryant ADDRESS 1903 E. 17th St.

PLAT 39 LOT 2 BLK. 3 DIV

SUBDIVISION Crows-Hofheing Resub of lots 1 to 5

OCCUPANCY Remodel & repair Res

BLD PERMIT # 90248 DATE 12-4-63 OWNERS ESTIMATE 300.00

CONTRACTOR W. H. Carrington NO. OF FIXTURES

WATER TAP REC # SEWER TAP REC #

RESIDENCE

Repairing underpinning with concrete blocks & wire.

Replacing screen windows. Replace porch studs

OWNER Mrs. Ada Simonds ADDRESS 1903 E. 17th St.

PLAT 39 LOT 2 BLK. 3

SUBDIVISION Crows Hofheing Resub of Lot 1-5

OCCUPANCY Res.

BLDG. PERMIT # 183348 ~~XXXXXXXX~~ DATE 6-28-79 OWNERS ESTIMATE 3,500.00

CONTRACTOR Willie Mc Kinney' NO. OF FIXTURES

WATER TAP REC# SEWER TAP REC#

Remodel & repair to min standrs.