



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Susan Walker, Senior Planner  
Planning and Development Review Department

**FROM:** Alyson McGee, Deputy Historic Preservation Officer  
Planning and Development Review Department

**DATE:** June 28, 2012

**SUBJECT:** Variance Requests for 1710 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Street

*CS-2012-0075*

The Historic Preservation Office staff are in support of Tom Blackwell's request for variances from sections 25-2-774 (C) (7) and (C) (2) to allow for a 940 square foot second dwelling unit at 1710 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, and to locate the second dwelling unit in front of the proposed primary structure of a Two-Family Residential Use in an "SF-3-NP" Family Residence – Neighborhood Plan zoning district.

The existing houses on the parcel were constructed along with four other identical houses on 1710 W. 10th Street and 1711 W. 11th Street around 1938-1940. The houses were likely all constructed to be residential rental units for the working class, African-American population of the Clarksville neighborhood. Two units faced W. 10th and W. 11th Streets and the remaining four faced the side property line. Both addresses were divided into units A, B, and C. The remaining two units at 1710 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, B & C, both retain a high level of historical architectural integrity. Unit A, which originally faced the street, was demolished sometime after 2000. This enclave of tenant housing represents both the architectural style and demographics characteristic of the history of the Clarksville neighborhood.

Mr. Blackwell's proposal is to move the two units toward the front of the parcel facing the street, and construct a small connector to create one residential unit of approximately 940 square feet. He also proposes to construct a new approximately 2,850 sq. ft., two-story house at the rear of the property.

Because the project is located in the Clarksville National Register Historic District it required review by the Historic Landmark Commission (HLC) to determine if it warranted initiation of historic zoning, and to allow the HLC to provide comments on the proposed design. The case was presented at the May 21, 2012 HLC meeting and the recommendation to release the permit per the proposed plan was supported unanimously by the Commission. Both staff and the Commission members feel that the reconfiguration of the two units to create one dwelling at the front of the property is a creative way to maintain the structures in productive use that is compatible with the historic character of the National Register District. The concept as planned maintains the streetscape as well as the historic character of the site and District to the greatest extent possible. For these reasons we support the variances being requested by Mr. Blackwell.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or need further information from our office.

**Distribution:**

Steve Sadowsky, COA Historic Preservation Officer  
Tom Blackwell

June 27, 2012

Re: C15-2012-0075

Dear Ms Walker:

Old West Austin Neighborhood Association supports the variances being requested by Tom Blackwell for 1710 West 10th Street. We believe the approach and effort Mr. Blackwell is proposing will save the two small historic houses existing on the property, both of which contribute to the Clarksville National Register Historic District.

The OWANA Steering Committee voted to support Mr. Blackwell's variance requests before the Board of Adjustment for several reasons:

1. By combining the two existing structures to create the "secondary unit" and locating it at the front of the lot will help preserve the traditional Clarksville visual character and make Clarksville's historic architecture more visible to residents and passersby.
2. The variance request relating to maximum area of the "secondary unit" is necessary to allow the two small houses on the lot to be combined in a way that will allow them to retain their original historic character yet remain functional and viable in a modern real-estate market . The increase in building area will have negligible impact on adjacent properties or our neighborhood.

If you have any questions please contact me at [lhalford@yahoo.com](mailto:lhalford@yahoo.com) or at 797-5917

Thank You,



Larry Halford

Chair – OWANA Zoning Committee