

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
 NOVEMBER 26, 2012  
 CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
 LHD-2012-0031  
 4406 Avenue F  
 Hyde Park Local Historic District

### **PROPOSAL**

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Demolish a c. 1945 contributing house to allow for construction of a new house.

### **PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS**

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The existing contributing house is a c. 1945, approximately 1,200 sq. ft. Minimal Traditional-style house with a front facing gable roof. The offset, partial-width front porch has a separate gabled roof supported by posts. The house is clad in wide, drop siding and has a composition shingle roof. A rear room and enclosed porch/mudroom appear to have been added after the original construction.

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing house to allow for construction of a new house. The applicant also proposes to demolish a 250 sq. ft. detached shed.

There are no plans for a replacement building at this time.

### **STANDARDS FOR REVIEW**

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The existing house is a contributing property in the Hyde Park Local Historic District. The Hyde Park Local Historic District Goals and Design Standards state:

#### ***3. The Specific Goals of the Hyde Park Preservation Plan***

The goals of the Hyde Park Local Historic District Preservation Plan are as follows:

- Preserve the historic fabric of Hyde Park.
- Prevent the demolition of contributing buildings in the neighborhood.
- Encourage the rehabilitation, maintenance, and retention of historic structures.
- Ensure that alterations to existing buildings are compatible with the historic character of the structure and the district.
- Assist property owners and designers in developing plans for historic properties and encourage the compatibility of new structures in the historic district.
- Encourage sustainable design and building practices in the neighborhood.

#### ***1. General Standards***

##### ***1.1: Prevention of Demolition***

Demolition of any contributing structure is strongly discouraged under all circumstances. No person shall demolish a contributing structure or any exterior part of any contributing structure within the local historic district without prior approval by the Historic Landmark Commission with a Certificate of Appropriateness. Demolition permits on primary structures within the district will not be released until the Historic Landmark Commission has granted a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement structure.

##### ***1.2: Retention of Historic Style***

Respect the historic style of existing structures and retain their historic features, including character-defining elements and building scale.

#### ***1.4: Appropriate Treatment Options for Contributing or Potentially Contributing Structures***

1. Preserve the historic fabric: Repair deteriorated historic features and architectural elements.
2. Reconstruct missing or un-repairable architectural features with the following:
  - a) Recycled historic materials that approximate the size and match the scale, profile, and appearance of the deteriorated or missing feature, if available.
  - b) New material that that approximates the size and matches the scale, profile, and appearance of the historic material.

Although the house is in poor condition, the exterior retains its historic appearance and exterior materials sufficiently to have been called out in the zoning ordinance as contributing to the Hyde Park Local Historic District; therefore, per the District's goals and Design Standards, "demolition of the house must be strongly discouraged under all circumstances."

The existing house is in poor condition with visible deficiencies such as sloping floors, evidence of moisture intrusion on the interior ceilings, floors boards that have deteriorated to the point of breaking, and openings in the wall that have required patching. The city cited the property for code violations in 2008 and again in 2011 due to the house being open and accessible, and there is evidence that vagrants may still be gaining access to the house. According to City permit records repairs were made in 2008 to meet minimum code standards including repairing siding, windows, roofing, and joists.

The case was presented at the October 22, 2012 Historic Landmark Commission meeting at which time a report was provided to the HLC that indicates the slab foundation is damaged to a degree as to be unrepairable in the opinion of the licensed Structural Engineer who performed the inspection. At that time the HLC voted to postpone the case to the November meeting to allow the applicant to obtain additional opinions from professionals regarding the condition of the foundation and potential for repair and rehabilitation, as well as to encourage additional communication between the applicant and concerned citizens from the neighborhood.

Since that time the original applicant has opted not to purchase the property; however the current owner(s) are continuing to pursue the request for demolition and are now acting as the applicant for this case. They have obtained the opinion of a foundation repair contractor, who has provided a statement that the foundation is not repairable (see attached). At the time of the writing of this report, the owner and agent have scheduled a site visit with another contractor to obtain a third opinion on the feasibility of repairing the foundation.

Given the unique conditions of this property including the substandard construction method of the foundation, its extremely poor condition and even failure, and the location of the property in the floodplain, it is the opinion of the Historic Preservation Office that repair of the foundation and rehabilitation of this property is not prudently feasible.

If a Certificate of Appropriateness is granted by the Historic Landmark Commission, the demolition permit cannot be released until a Certificate of Appropriateness is granted for a replacement building.

#### **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

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Not presented to Committee.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Approved the Certificate of Appropriateness; however delay release of the demolition permit until a Certificate of Appropriateness is approved for a replacement building.

PHOTOS

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Exterior front façade of 4406 Avenue F



Interior conditions



Interior conditions



Interior conditions





Crack in slab foundation under existing floor boards.



Foundation conditions of 4406 Avenue F

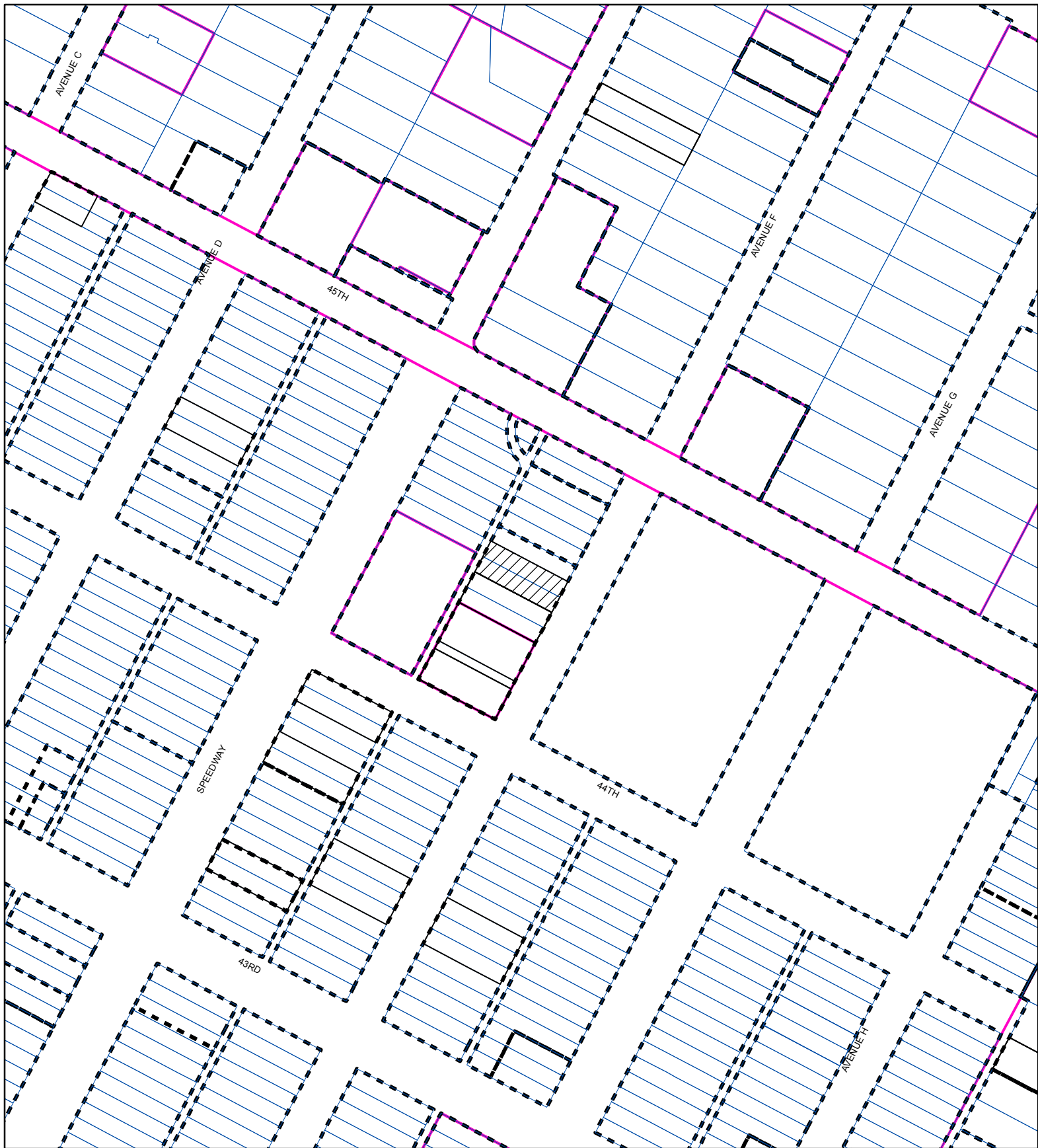


Foundation conditions of 4406 Avenue F



Foundation conditions of 4406 Avenue F





SUBJECT TRACT



ZONING BOUNDARY

CASE#: LHD-2012-0031  
LOCATION: 4406 Avenue F



This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

This product has been produced by the Planning and Development Review Department for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.



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**STRUCTURAL INSPECTION REPORT**

October 18, 2012

Reference No. 25289

Janell Ross

Estate of John David Peck

6130 Oliver Loving Trail

Austin, TX 787491835

Location of Property: 4406 Avenue F, Austin, TX

Inspection Date: October 17, 2012

**TYPE OF STRUCTURE**

This is a one-story, wood frame, single family house with horizontal lap siding around the exterior. The foundation is a combination concrete slab and pier and beam system. The roof structure is a conventionally framed in gable configurations and is covered with asphalt shingles. The lot is fairly level.

**OBSERVATIONS**

**Foundation:** The concrete slab was covered with hardwood flooring. A portion of this flooring was pulled up in the living room, revealing a two-inch wide crack in the concrete slab. The original slab was capped with 1-1/2 inches of concrete at that point. There was no steel reinforcing observed in the crack in the concrete.

The foundation sloped down at the right end about six inches and down at the left end about three inches.

The soil on this lot was rocky clay.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Foundation:** It is my opinion, based on experience, that an un-reinforced concrete slab is irreparable. I would not be involved in any attempt to repair this slab with piers. I recommend that the house, including the concrete slab, be torn down. I have only recommended that one other house be demolished and re-built in my twenty-five year career in the Austin area and that was because the slab was un-reinforced.

\* \* \* \* \*

I certify that I (or my representative) made this inspection and have no interest, present or prospective, in this property or anyone involved with this property. I warrant that I (or my representative) visually inspected the components of this property as addressed in this report in a diligent manner and have honestly reported the findings existing conditions and have made recommendations based on my experience and opinion. Neither Tucker Engineering nor I express or imply any guarantee of specific future structural performance with the limited scope of this inspection; rather, this is my best effort to interpret my observations and develop an opinion as to structural significance. There may be rotten or termite damaged wood that is not visible without destructive investigation. The conditions of the various components of this property described in this report are true as of the date of inspection. Changes may occur in this property after the inspection date, which could make null and void the contents of this report. No other warranty, either expressed or implied, is hereby made.

*Jeffrey L. Tucker*



**Jeffrey L. Tucker, P. E.**  
**Structural Engineer**



November 5, 2012

RE: 4406 Avenue F  
Austin, TX 78751

To Whom It May Concern,

The foundation at the above address was evaluated on 11/5/2012. The home has experienced significant foundation displacement and damage, most notably along the right side. The portions of the foundation that were visible, are constructed with non-traditional methods. There appear to be concrete slabs poured on top of each other, up to the height of the wooden beams and flooring. This type of construction is not repairable by any foundation repair techniques that we use. I cannot perceive how this home could be lifted and/or the foundation repaired.

Sincerely,  
Timothy Pope  
Foundation Specialist  
CenTex Foundation Repair  
1120 E. 52nd St. Austin, TX 78723  
512-444-5438