

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
AUGUST 26, 2013  
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS  
HDP-2013-0528  
1501 RICHCREEK ROAD**

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**PROPOSAL**

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Demolish a ca. 1951 house.

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**ARCHITECTURE**

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One-story, irregular-plan, hipped-roof brick-veneered frame house with a central, partial-width front-gabled independent porch on square, brick piers; ornamental gables on the left (east) side of the house at each corner; one-story-rectangular-plan, side gabled addition to the rear and right (west) of the main house; detached, one-story, rectangular-plan front-gabled frame garage (faces west). The main house has a combination of metal-framed combination picture and casement windows and 1:1 wood-frame windows in paired and triple configurations; the central, front door has a paneled surround.

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**RESEARCH**

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According to city building and utility records, the house was built in the fall/winter of 1951-1952 by R.J. and Thelma McKown, who had previously lived at 4910 Shoal Creek Boulevard. R.J. McKown was a highway contractor, but started as a house carpenter in Frisco, Texas, and later in Stephenville with his three sons after his wife, Susie, passed away. By 1940, the McKown family was living in Austin, where R.J. was listed as a highway contractor; his sons, Obert, Austin, and Arthur, were part of the family's business, which was known as R.J. McKown and Sons Construction Company, with headquarters on 49<sup>th</sup> Street in Austin. R.J. McKown and Sons was the contractor for the construction of the Austin Expressway. R.J. McKown married Thelma Roberts by the time they built this house in 1951. He and Thelma lived here until his death in 1957; she continued to live here until her death in 1968. The house remained in the McKown family until the mid-1970s, when it was sold to Hollie and Bertha James. Hollie James owned a truck supply business on Kramer Lane known as Donco, Inc.; he and Bertha lived here until recently. Hollie James died in 2009.

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**STAFF COMMENTS**

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The house is beyond the bounds of any City survey.

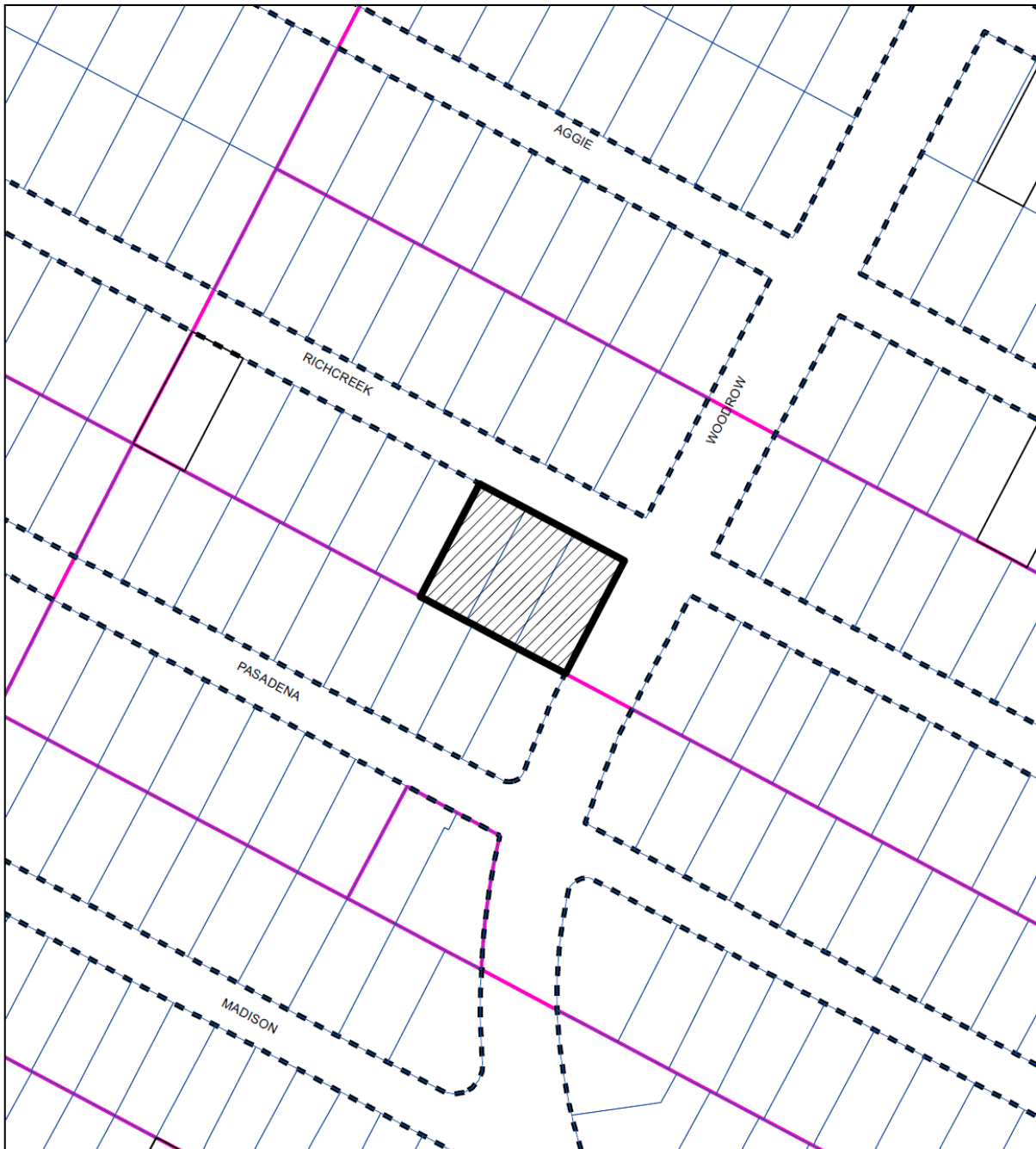
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Encourage relocation over demolition, but release the permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package consisting of photographs of all elevations, a dimensioned sketch plan, and a narrative history for archiving at the Austin History Center. While the house is one of the largest in the neighborhood, it does not have sufficient historical or architectural significance to warrant individual landmark designation.

# LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT



ZONING BOUNDARY

CASE#: HDP-2013-0528  
LOCATION: 1501 Richcreek Road



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.

1501 Richcreek Road  
ca. 1951







## OCCUPANCY HISTORY

### 1501 Richcreek Road

City Directory Research, Austin History Center  
By City Historic Preservation Office  
August, 2013

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| 1992    | Hollie D. and Bertha James, owners<br>Proprietor, Donco Truck and Automotive Service, 826-A Kramer Lane.  |
| 1985-86 | Hollie D. and Bertha James, owners<br>Proprietor, Donco Truck and Automotive Service, 826 Kramer Lane.  |
| 1981    | Hollie D. and Bertha James, owners<br>President, Donco Truck and Automotive Service, 826 Kramer Lane.   |
| 1977    | Hollie D. and Bertha James, owners<br>President, Donco Truck and Automotive Service, truck, heavy equipment, and diesel service, 826 Kramer Lane.   |
| 1973    | Dale R. McKown, owner<br>Student<br>NOTE: Hollie D. and Bertha James are not listed in the directory.   |
| 1968    | Robert McKown, owner<br>Student   |
| 1962    | Thelma M. McKown, owner<br>Widow, Robert J. McKown<br>No occupation listed  |
| 1959    | Thelma M. McKown, owner<br>Widow, Robert J. McKown<br>No occupation listed  |
| 1955    | Robert J. and Thelma McKown, owners<br>Proprietor (with Obert B. McKown, Arthur L. McKown, and Austin S. McKown),<br>R.J. McKown & Sons Construction Company, contractors, 2110 W. 49 <sup>th</sup> Street.                       |
| 1952    | Under construction<br>NOTE: R.J. and Thelma McKown are listed as living at 4911 Shoal Creek<br>Boulevard; he was the head of R.J. McKown & Sons Construction Company<br>(with Austin S. McKown), 2110 W. 49 <sup>th</sup> Street. |

#### **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:**

##### **Robert J. and Thelma McKown (ca. 1951 – ca. 1968)**

Robert J. and Thelma McKown appear in the 1940 U.S. Census as the renters of a house at 1812 Kenwood Avenue. Robert J. McKown was then 56, had been born in Georgia, and was a highway construction contractor. Thelma McKown was then 32, and had been born in Texas. She had no occupation listed. They had lived in Lubbock in 1935, and had no children listed with them. The 1930 U.S. Census shows Robert McKown, a widower, living in Stephenville, Texas with his three sons, Obert, 26, Austin, 23, and Arthur, 21, and their families. Robert J. McKown and all of the boys are listed as building contractors. All the boys had been born in

Texas. The 1920 U.S. Census shows Robert J. and Susie McKown living in a rented house in Frisco, Texas, where Robert J. McKown was house carpenter.

## McKown's Burial Set Tomorrow

Funeral services will be held Monday for R. J. McKown, well-known Austin contractor, who died here early Saturday morning. He was 74.

Until his retirement two years ago ending 50 years in the contracting business, he was senior partner of the R. J. McKown and Sons Construction Company. The firm built the Austin Expressway.

For the past 20 years he had been a resident of Austin. He was a member of Crestview Baptist Church and the Austin chapter of the Associated General Contractors.

Funeral services will be held Monday at 10 a.m. from the Weed-Corley Funeral Home on North Lamar Boulevard. Rev. Robert Holt, pastor of Crestview Baptist Church, officiating. Burial will be at Austin Memorial Park.

Survivors are his wife; three sons, O. B. McKown, A. S. McKown and A. L. McKown, all of Austin; one sister, Mrs. Nina Stevens of Lubbock; five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Pallbearers are Ted Myatt, Ted

Green, Bryan Butler, Lloyd Moreland, Johnny Clark and M. P. Pinkerton.

Honorary pallbearers are: R. E. James Sr., Wilson Raven, Roy George, B. P. Clark, Roy Yates, Forest Forch and Kenneth Strange.

Obituary of R.J. McKown  
Austin American-Statesman, March 3, 1957

**MRS. R. J. MCKOWN**

Mrs. R. J. McKown, 1501 Richcreek, died at her residence Saturday. She had been a resident of Austin 25 years, a member of the Crestview Baptist Church and the Violet Crown Garden Club, and a graduate of Tarleton State College.

Survivors include a son, Dale McKown, Austin; three step-sons, O. B. McKown, Dripping Springs, Austin McKown, and Arthur McKown, Austin; five sisters, Miss Ethel Roberts, Miss Alice Roberts, Mrs. Hattie Wallace, Sweetwater, Mrs. Fred Haggard, Stephenville, and Mrs. Mary Mirike, Burnet; brother, Bill Roberts, Stephenville.

Funeral will be 2 p.m. Monday at Wood-Corley Funeral Home with Dr. Joe E. Trull officiating. Burial will be in Austin Memorial Park.

Obituary of Thelma McKown  
Austin American-Statesman, April 7, 1968

**Hollie D. and Bertha James (ca. 1975 – ca. 2009)**



**H. Don James, Sr.** Don James, Sr., beloved husband, father, and grandfather, passed away on June 21, 2009. Don was born on September 9, 1927 in Alfred, Texas to parents, Ethan and Valley James. He is survived by his wife of sixty-three years, Bertha James; daughter, Ginger Hill; son and daughter in-law, Donnie and Melissa James; grandchildren, Michelle and Jim Teggeman, Crystal Hill, Brittany Hill and Heather James; great-grandchildren, Madison Teggeman and Hollie Simpson all of Austin, Texas; sister and brother-in-law, Bettie and Robert Barnett of Pflugerville, Texas and Alene Meyers of Montgomery, Texas, along with many additional special family members and friends. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II and the Korean Conflict. He later co-founded Donco Truck and Automotive in 1971. Don was a special man who touched the lives of many people and was cherished by his family. Visitation will be held on Tuesday, June 23, 2009 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. A funeral service celebrating his life will be held on Wednesday, June 24, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. All services will be held at Cook-Walden/ Capital Parks Funeral Home in Pflugerville, TX. Please join us in celebrating Don' memory by visiting our website at MeM.com with spoken and written messages. Memorials may be made in Don' honor to the Dell Children's Medical Center, Meals on Wheels, or a charity of the donor's choice.

Obituary of Hollie D. James  
Austin American-Statesman, June 23, 2009

R.J. Mc/Kown

1501 Richcreek

317

35 &amp; 37

M

Crestview # 7

Brick Venr Res &amp; Garage Attached

48894

13,000.

Owner

8

Building permit to Robert J. McKown for the construction of the house (undated)

**WATER SERVICE PERMIT**  
Austin, Texas

**C No 9775**

Received of R. J. McKown Date 9-11-51

Address 1501 RICH CREEK RD.

Amount 30.00

Plumber ST. 10.00 additional paid for TAP Size of Tap 1"

Date of Connection 10-19-51

Size of Tap Made 1"

Size Service Made 1"

Size Main Tapped 8" C.I.

From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 7.5'

From E Prop. Line to Curb Cock 40.5'

Location of Meter CURB

Type of Box LOW

Depth of Main in St. 3'

Depth of Service Line 2'

From Curb Cock to Tap on Main 30'

Check INDEXED Dept. 11-19-51 PC

No. Fittings	Size	Lead Comp	Nipples	Union	Plug	Tap	Stop	Box	Lid	Valves	Job No.	P. No.
1	Curb Cock 1"					1	1	1	1		W-323-502	W-102K
1	Elbow 1" COP											
1	St. Elbow 1" COP											
1	Bushing 1" COP											
1	Reducer 1" COP to 1/2" COP											
1	Pipe 1/2" COP											

See Tap c9994 for increase in size

Water service permit to R.J. McKown for this house (1951)

<b>OWNER</b>	H.D. James	<b>ADDRESS</b>	1501 Richcreek Road
<b>PLAT</b>	317	<b>LOT</b>	35 & 37
<b>SUBDIVISION</b>	Crestview		
<b>OCCUPANCY</b>	Residence		
<b>BLD PERMIT #</b>	140782	<b>DATE</b>	2-19-74
		<b>OWNERS ESTIMATE</b>	\$2,400.00
<b>CONTRACTOR</b>	John Mang	<b>NO. OF FIXTURES</b>	
<b>WATER TAP REC #</b>	XXXXXX Exist	<b>SEWER TAP REC #</b>	Exist
Remodel exist residence			
3-28-77 163175 addn to existing res 724 sq.ft.			

Building permit to Hollie D. James to remodel the house (1974) and to construct an addition (1977)