

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION**  
**AUGUST 26, 2013**  
**DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS**  
**HDP-2013-0573, -0574, AND -0575**  
**90 N. IH-35**

## **PROPOSAL**

---

Demolish a ca. 1915 house and two outbuildings.

## **ARCHITECTURE**

---

The principal house is a two-story, rectangular-plan, hipped-roof frame house with a full-height, full-width porch on plain, square, wood posts and a railing consisting of plain, rectangular, wood balusters; 20:1 wood-framed, wood-sash fenestration on the front of the first floor elevation; 1:1 fenestration on the remainder of the house; several windows have been enclosed and covered by wood siding; the front door has glazed sidelights and a transom; the original porch to the house historically wrapped around the south side of the house – it has been partially enclosed on the south elevation, with a screened porch on the second floor.

One outbuilding is a two-story, rectangular-plan, hipped roof, stuccoed frame house with metal-framed non-historic replacement windows; it is believed to have been built around 1948 and housed the East Avenue Washateria, a Laundromat. The other outbuilding is a one-story, end-gabled frame building likely originally used as a shed; its date of construction is unknown.

## **RESEARCH**

---

The house appears to have been built around 1915; the address first appears in the 1916 city directory, and the Sanborn map of 1900 shows the site of the house as vacant. The first residents of the house were David W. and May Schmitt, who moved from the house next door, at 92 East Avenue. David W. Schmitt was the proprietor of the Dixie Saloon, a beer saloon and pool hall at 110 Congress Avenue. During Prohibition in the 1920s, he is listed as the purveyor of soft drinks from the same address; the business then became known as the Dixie Café in the mid-1930s, and the Dixie Bar thereafter. The Schmitts lived in this house until around 1946. Simon and Margaret Lewis owned and occupied the house from around 1948 to around 1956. They had moved from a house on Oxford Avenue in South Austin, when Simon Lewis had worked as an auto mechanic. By the time he and Margaret lived in this house, he was the proprietor of the East Avenue Washateria, a laundromat just south of this house, at 88 East Avenue. In the mid-1950s, Roy M. Velasquez owned and occupied the house; he was the proprietor of Roy's Taxi, one of the most long-standing taxi companies in the city, which he founded in 1931. Roy's Taxi was made famous in Richard Linklater's movie, *Slacker*, and was distinguished by its service to and employment of African-American and Hispanic customers and drivers at a time when no other taxi company in the city would offer them service or employment. Roy Velasquez moved his taxi operations to this house in the mid-1950s, and remained here until he passed away in 1986. His sons continued the Roy's Taxi operation from this location, but the company was bought out by Yellow Cab in 2006.

There are no entries in the city directories, nor in city building or utility records to date the construction or the occupancy or use of the outbuildings.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

---

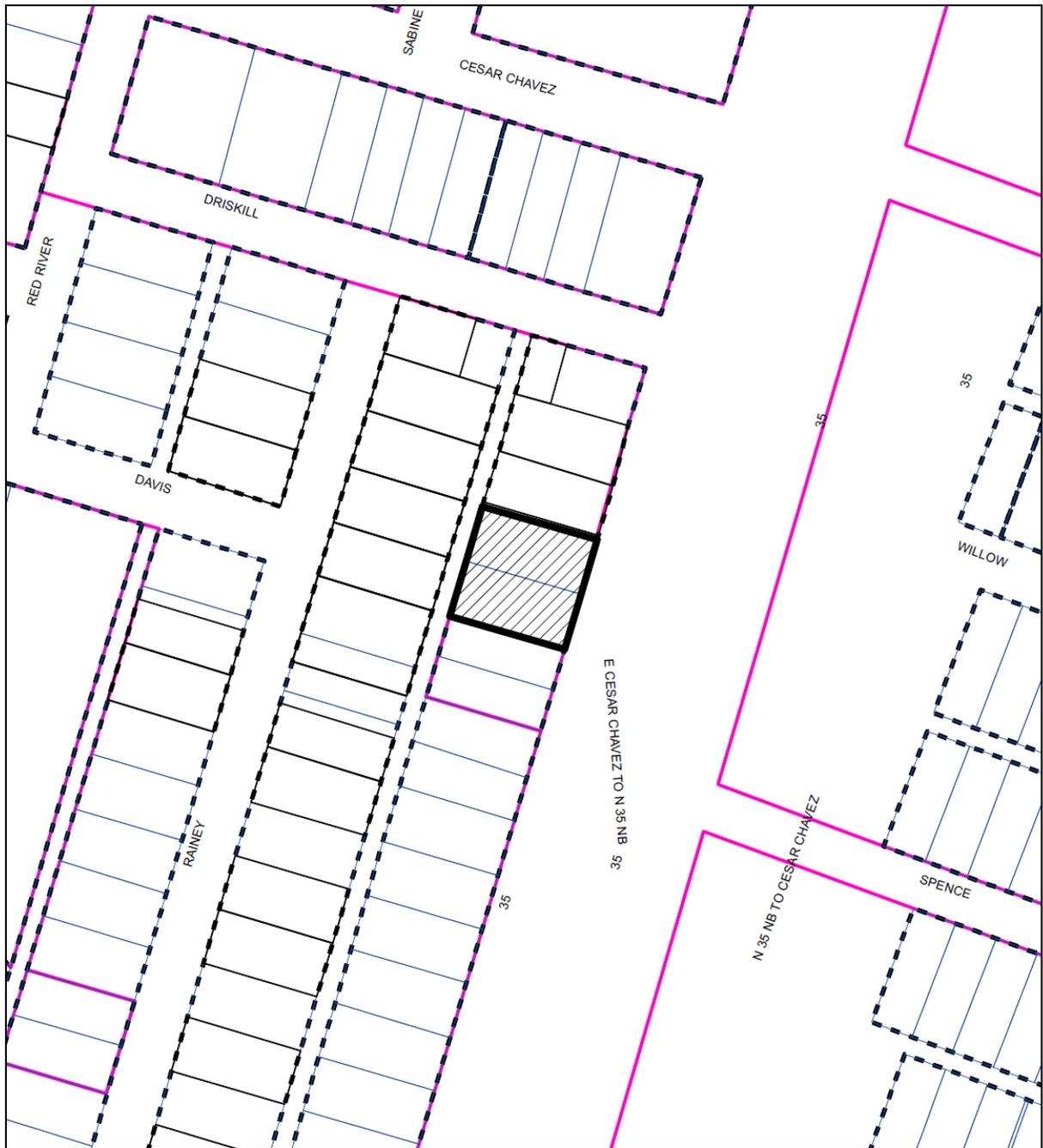
The house is listed as a Priority 2 for research in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984). The other buildings are not listed in any city survey.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

---

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.

LOCATION MAP



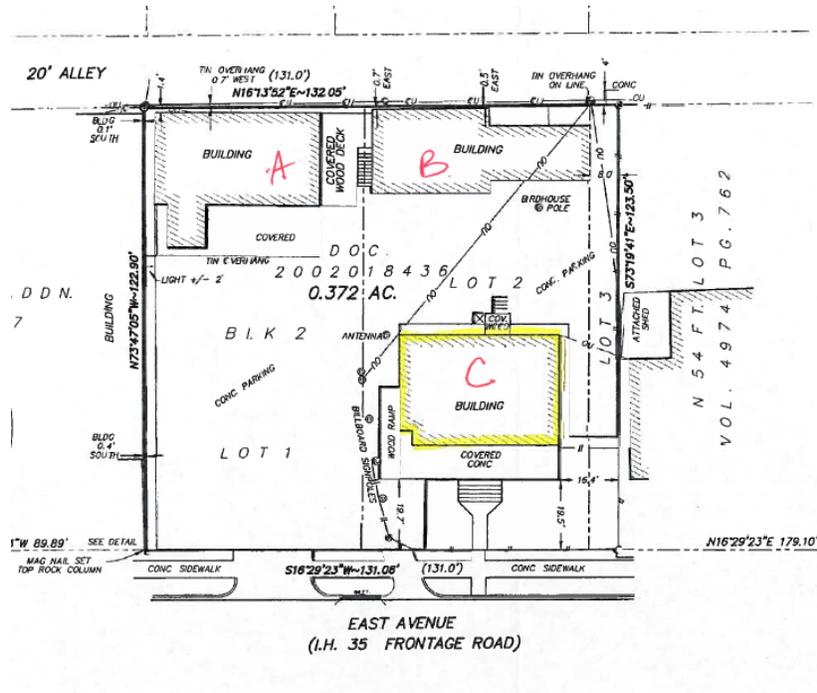
-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

CASE#: HDP-2013-0575  
LOCATION: 90 North IH 35, Bldg C



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.



90 East Avenue  
ca. 1915





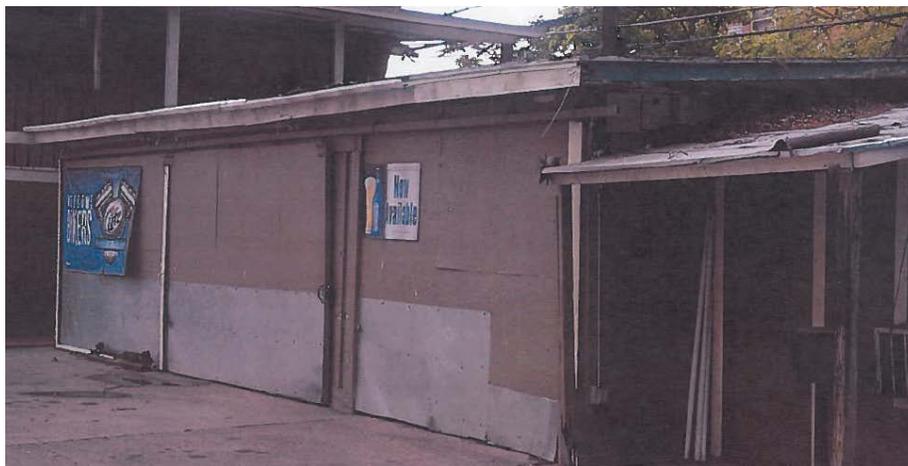
South elevation, showing the portions of the historic wraparound porch that have been enclosed.



Rear elevation



The former 88 East Avenue, the East Avenue Washateria, owned and operated by Simon D. and Margaret Lewis, who lived in the main house on this property from 1948 to 1955.



Rear shed building (date of construction unknown)

## OCCUPANCY HISTORY 90 East Avenue

City Directory Research, Austin History Center  
By City Historic Preservation Office  
February, 2011

1992	Roy's Taxi Robert Velasquez, proprietor
1985-86	Roy's Taxi Roy Velasquez, Jr, proprietor

- 1981 Roy's Taxi  
Richard Velasquez, proprietor
- 1977 Roy's Taxi  
Richard Velasquez, proprietor  
NOTE: Roy Velasquez, Jr. is listed as the owner and resident of the house; he was retired.
- 1973 Roy's Taxi  
Richard Velasquez, proprietor
- 1968 Roy's Taxi  
Roy Velasquez, proprietor  
NOTE: Roy Velasquez is also listed as the owner and resident of the house. Also listed are Joy and Jean Velasquez, Jr; he was a driver for Roy's Taxi; and Richard Velasquez, U.S. Marine Corps
- 1962 Roy's Taxi  
Roy Velasquez, proprietor  
NOTE: Roy Velasquez is also listed as the owner and resident of the house.
- 1957 Vacant  
NOTE: None of the Velasquez family members are listed in the directory.  
NOTE: In the 1955 directory, Roy and Alice Velasquez are listed as living at 704 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street; he was the proprietor of Roy's Taxi, with offices at that address.
- 1954 Simon D. and Margaret Lewis, owners  
Rancher
- 1952 Simon D. and Margaret Lewis, owners  
Proprietor, East Avenue Washateria, 88 East Avenue.
- 1949 Simon D. and Margaret Lewis, owners  
Proprietor, East Avenue Washateria, 88 East Avenue.
- 1947 Fred and Ophelia Adams, owners  
Driver  
NOTE: Simon and Margaret Lewis are listed as living at 2016 Oxford Avenue; he had an auto repair shop at 502 Red River Street.  
NOTE: David and May Schmitt are listed as living at 901 Edgecliff Terrace; He was the proprietor of the Dixie Bar, beer, 110 Congress Avenue. By 1952, he and May were living at 1004 East Riverside Drive; he was the proprietor of the Dixie Bar.
- 1944-45 David W. and May Schmitt, owners  
Proprietor, Dixie Bar, beer, 110 Congress Avenue.
- 1941 David W. and May Schmitt, owners  
Proprietor, Dixie Bar, beer, 110 Congress Avenue.
- 1939 David W. and May Schmitt (not listed as owners)

- Proprietor, Dixie Bar, 110 Congress Avenue.
- 1937 David W. and May Schmitt, owners  
Proprietor, Dixie Café, 110 Congress Avenue.
- 1935 David W. and May Schmitt, owners  
Proprietor, Dixie Café, 110 Congress Avenue.
- 1932-33 David W. and May Schmitt, owners  
Soft drinks, 110 Congress Avenue.
- 1930-31 David W. and May Schmitt, owners  
Soft drinks, 110 Congress Avenue.
- 1929 David W. and May Schmitt, owners  
Soft drinks, 110 Congress Avenue.
- 1927 David W. and May Schmitt, owners  
Soft drinks, 110 Congress Avenue.
- 1924 David W. and May Schmitt, owners  
Soft drinks, 110 Congress Avenue.  
Also listed are David W. Schmitt, Jr., and Harold W. Schmitt; neither had an occupation listed.
- 1922 David W. and May Schmitt, owners  
Soft drinks, 110 Congress Avenue.  
Also listed is Harold W. Schmitt, a clerk for his father.
- 1920 David W. and May Schmitt, owners  
Soft drinks and pool hall, 110 Congress Avenue.
- 1918 David W. and May Schmitt, owners  
Saloon, 110 Congress Avenue, and billiards, 112 Congress Avenue.
- 1916 David W. Schmitt  
Proprietor, Dixie Saloon and Pool Hall, 110-12 Congress Avenue.
- 1914 The address is not listed in the directory. David W. Schmitt is listed with James R. Sexton as the proprietors of Schmitt & Sexton, who ran a pool hall at 112 Congress Avenue; David W. Schmitt was also the proprietor of the Dixie Bar at 110 Congress Avenue. He lived at 92 East Avenue.
- 1912-13 The address is not listed in the directory. David W. Schmitt is listed with James R. Sexton as the proprietors of Schmitt & Sexton, who ran a pool hall at 112 Congress Avenue; David W. Schmitt was also the proprietor of the Dixie Bar at 110 Congress Avenue. He lived at 92 East Avenue.

In 1905, David Schmitt is listed as a bartender in the Sutor Hotel Bar; he lived at 92 East Avenue. Peter Schmitt is also listed at that address. In the 1909-10 directory as well as the

1910-11 directory, he is listed as the operator of the Dixie Bar at 110 Congress Avenue; he lived at 92 East Avenue.

### **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES**

#### **David W. and May Schmitt (ca. 1910 – ca. 1946)**

David and May Schmitt appear at 92 East Avenue, the house next door to the north, in the 1910 U.S. Census; there is no listing for a house at 90 East Avenue in the census report. David and May Schmitt had a son, Hiram, 6, and a son, David, 4. David Schmitt is listed as a saloon keeper.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Dave and Maud Schmitt at this address; they had two sons: Harold, 15, and David, 13, and a cousin, Selma Goodman. They owned the house. Dave Schmitt was then 47, had been born in Texas, and was the proprietor of a soft drink shop. Maud Schmitt was 38 and had also been born in Texas. The cousin, Selma Goodman, was 26 and was an office stenographer.

David W. and May Schmitt are listed as the owners of this house in the 1930 U.S. Census. The house was worth \$8,000. David Schmitt was then 58, and is listed as a merchant with a soft drinks parlor. May Schmitt was then 48. Also in the house were their son, Harold, 26, a tailor; daughter Tinnie, also 26, and with no occupation listed; and Harold's son, Harold, Jr., 1.

**DAVID WILSON SCHMITT**

David Wilson Schmitt, 86, 1004 Riverside Drive, died in a local hospital Thursday afternoon. He had been a long-time resident of Austin and was a retired merchant. His former place of residence was in Hays County, Texas.

Survivors besides his wife are two sons, Harold W. Schmitt and David S. Schmitt, Austin; one granddaughter, Mrs. Mary Ellen Bouchard and one great grandchild, Terri Lyn Bouchard, Austin.

Funeral services will be held Friday at 4 p. m. at the Weed-Coffey Funeral Home. Dr. Marvin Vance will officiate with burial in Austin Memorial Park.

Those friends desiring to do so may make a memorial contribution in the name of the Harold Schmitt Jr. memorial scholarship fund of the First Methodist Church.

Obituary of Dave Schmitt  
Austin American, October 17, 1958

**MRS. MAY S. SCHMITT**

Mrs. May Speegle Schmitt, 89, of 1601 Kramer Ln., died Tuesday in a local hospital.

Mrs. Schmitt was the widow of the late David Wilson Schmitt, and had been a resident of Austin and Travis County 75 years. She was a member of East Avenue Baptist Church.

Survivors include two sons, Harold W. Schmitt, of Austin, and David S. Schmitt, of Spicewood; three sisters, Mrs. Erle Henry of Austin, Mrs. Leonard Baker of Austin and Mrs. Hugh Spence of Galveston; a grandchild, Mrs. Mary Ellen Bouchard of Austin; and one great-grandchild, Teri Lyn Bouchard of Austin.

Funeral will be at 11 a.m. Wednesday at Austin Memorial Park, with the Rev. A. D. Eberhart, pastor of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, officiating. Burial will be in Austin Memorial Park under direction of Wilke-Clay Funeral Home.

Obituary of May Schmitt  
Austin American, April 14, 1971

**Simon D. and Margaret Lewis (ca. 1948 - ca. 1955)**

Simon D. and Margaret Lewis appear in the 1940 U.S. Census as renting a house at 303 Fannin Street. Simon Lewis was then 43, had been born in Texas, and was an auto mechanic. Margaret Lewis was then 35, and had been born in Texas. They had three children: Jack, 15,

who was a clerk in a baking company; Jerry, 7, and Charles, 1. The 1930 U.S. Census shows Simon and Margaret Lewis living with his father, S. Pete Lewis, at 2000 Neches Street, a house they rented. Simon was a car mechanic; his father, S. Pete Lewis, was a real estate salesman.

**LEWIS, Simon David, 81, of Johnson City, died Wednesday. Services 11 a.m. Saturday at Crofts Funeral Home in Johnson City. Burial, Masonic Cemetery in Johnson City. Survivors: sons, Jack Lewis of Spicewood, Jerry Lewis of Amarillo, Charles Lewis of San Angelo; brothers, A.B. Lewis of Los Angeles, Calif., Oliver O. Lewis of Marble Falls, J.C. Lewis of Belaire; eight grandchildren.**

Obituary of Simon D. Lewis  
Austin American-Statesman, May 25, 1978

Roy Velasquez (ca. 1960 – ca. 1981)

**VELASQUEZ, Roy M., Sr., 71, 90 East Avenue, died Saturday. Memorial mass noon Wednesday at Guadalupe Catholic Church. Memorial contributions requested. Survivors: sons, Roy Velasquez Jr., Gilbert Valesquez, Carlos Valesquez, Richard Velasquez, Robert Velasquez, all of Austin; daughters, Mary Louise Estrada, Esther Torres, Rosa Gonzales, Carmen Campos, Amparo Vallejo, all of Austin; brothers, Pedro Valesquez, Matias Valesquez, both of Austin; 27 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. (Hyltin-Manor)**

Obituary of Roy M. Velasquez, Sr.  
Austin American-Statesman, November 15, 1981

Founded by Roy Velasquez Sr. in 1931, Roy's Taxi is the oldest cab company still servicing Austin. According to a company history posted online, Mr. Velasquez created the company to service Austin's black and Latino citizens, who were denied taxi service due to discrimination. The company's open-arms approach extended to its drivers. "In 1967, Roy's hired its first hippie driver, and the complaints rolled in," reads the site. "But as the years went by, Roy's continued to hire people who were of different races and different beliefs, without having to sacrifice business." The company has always had a relatively rough-hewn, freewheeling image among both drivers and the Austin public, as being somewhat less polished but simultaneously more easygoing than larger companies. (The company reputation took a darker turn in recent years, after the 2000 murder of two passengers by a Roy's driver.)

So the pending sale carries with it some flavor of an older, funkier Austin stepping reluctantly aside to give way to a newer, shinier, perhaps more efficient, but less homegrown corporate veneer. A bit of that cultural transition is also coloring the public debate.

Upon Roy's death in 1981, ownership was passed to his five sons: Carlos, Gilbert, Richard, Robert, and Roy Jr. There have been persistent murmurs that some of the Velasquez brothers have been less interested in the company than their father; Jim Connolly told the *Statesman* that the Velasquez family approached Yellow about the sale, not vice-versa. However, several sources familiar with the discussion say that the large family isn't completely in agreement on selling the business. The company's asking price is unknown, but the deal, consuming Roy's attorneys for more than a year, is rumored to cost between \$4 and \$5 million.

Roy's can't reveal the asking price – or much else, for that matter – as part of a nondisclosure agreement with Yellow; on attorney Chip Evans' advice, the family has rejected media requests for comment, for fear of compromising the deal. However, brother Robert Velasquez consented to a brief interview to dispel rumors. "Whatever happens in our organization, I believe that's nobody's business," Velasquez says, but he maintains the decision required a "supermajority" of all five brothers. Evans says, "At this point, they're all in agreement." Velasquez also disagrees with the *Statesman's* reporting on the sale. "We were approached by Yellow about a year ago ... [and] we thought about it for about six months. Yellow approached us."

Velasquez says the reason for the sale is simple: "We've gotten old." Indeed, the oldest of the brothers are over 70. Passing the company to their progeny is also problematic; among the five brothers there are nearly 20 children. "Austin's not the same, like it used to be," he continues. "The industry has gotten too big. Twenty years ago, you could buy a car for \$1,500; \$2,000. Now you can't buy a car for less than \$15,000." He admits "there's some sentimentality" working against the sale, "but we have to lay out all the pros and cons. Everything was placed on the table."

"How can they deny us the sale after so many years in the business?" Velasquez asks. "We paid our dues in the community. ... My oldest brother, Roy, he's been involved in the cab community for 50 years. I've been involved about 30 years." He's sympathetic to his drivers' concerns but lays their future failure or success at their own wheels. "In this industry, if you're a cab operator and you have any kind of experience, you can make money. ... [You can] gather your own private clientele."

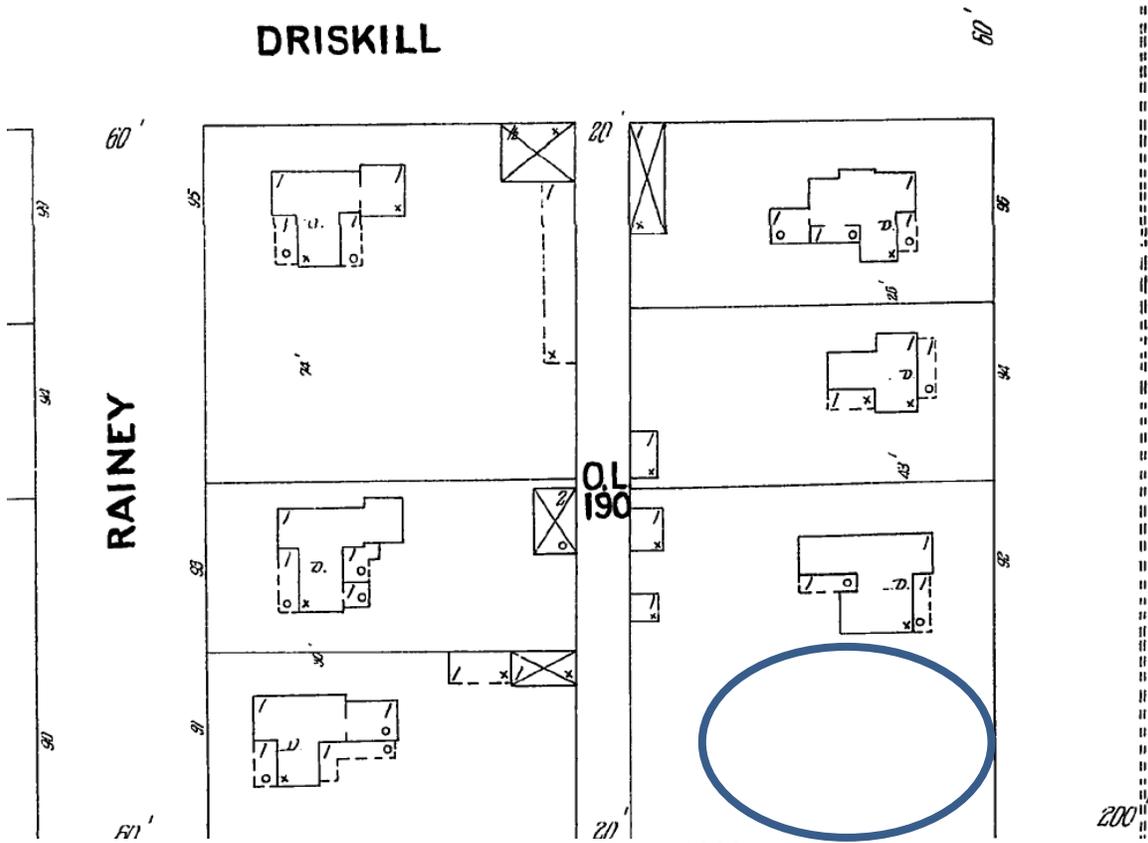
Ironically, he allows that Roy's comparatively easy management style may have left some drivers ill-equipped for the transfer. "Some of the problem we've had is that we've been too lenient. But we're from the old school." Comparatively, he says, drivers may find Yellow "a bit more strict than we have been."

(excerpt from article by Wells Dunbar, Austin *Chronicle*, June 9, 2006)

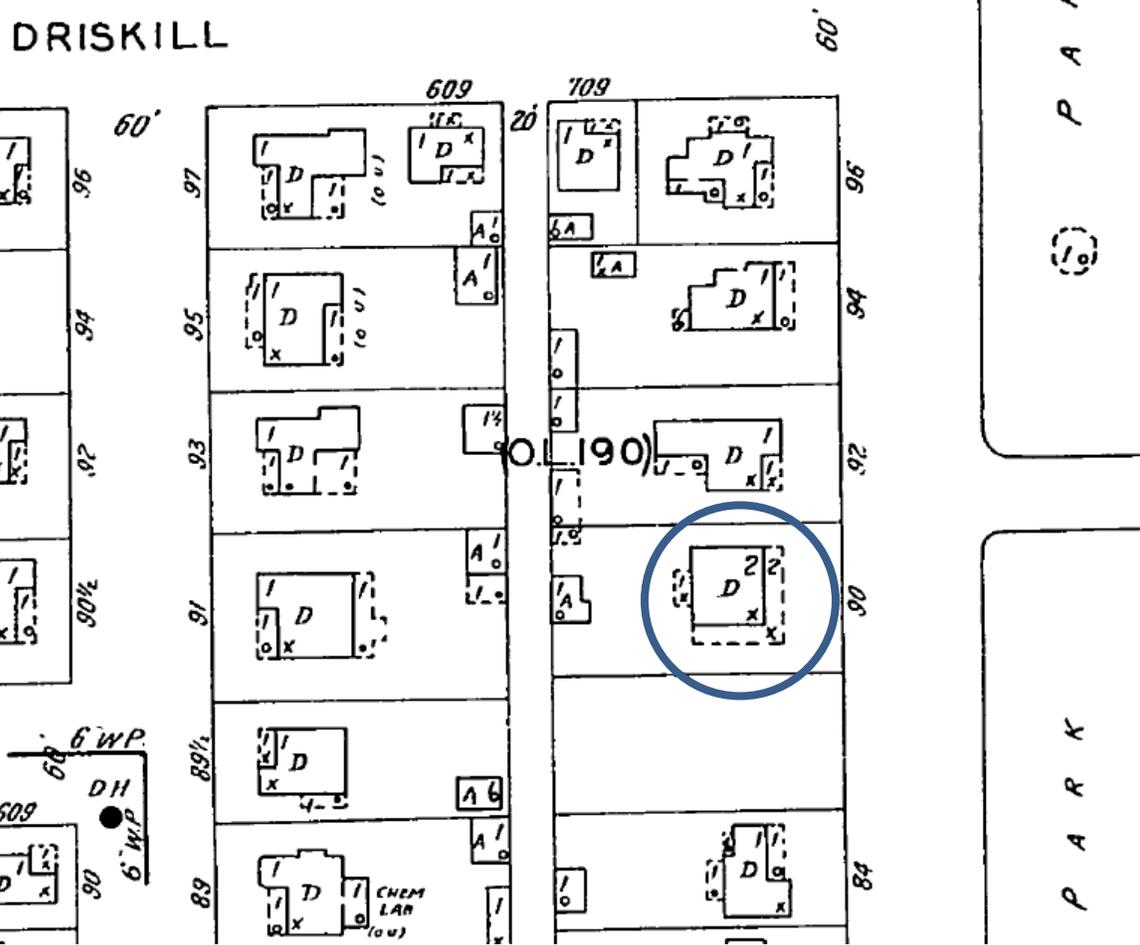
Roy's Taxi celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in April 2006. Roy Velasquez established the company in 1931 using a borrowed \$5 as capital. During a time when many companies determined service boundaries along racial lines, Roy's Taxi broke ground by welcoming riders and drivers of all ethnicities.

"We look forward to combining the rich history of Roy's Taxi with the state of the art technology offered by Yellow Cab," said Bobby Velasquez, one of five brothers who operated Roy's Taxi in recent years. "Riders all over Greater Austin will have access to one of the best taxi fleets in the nation."

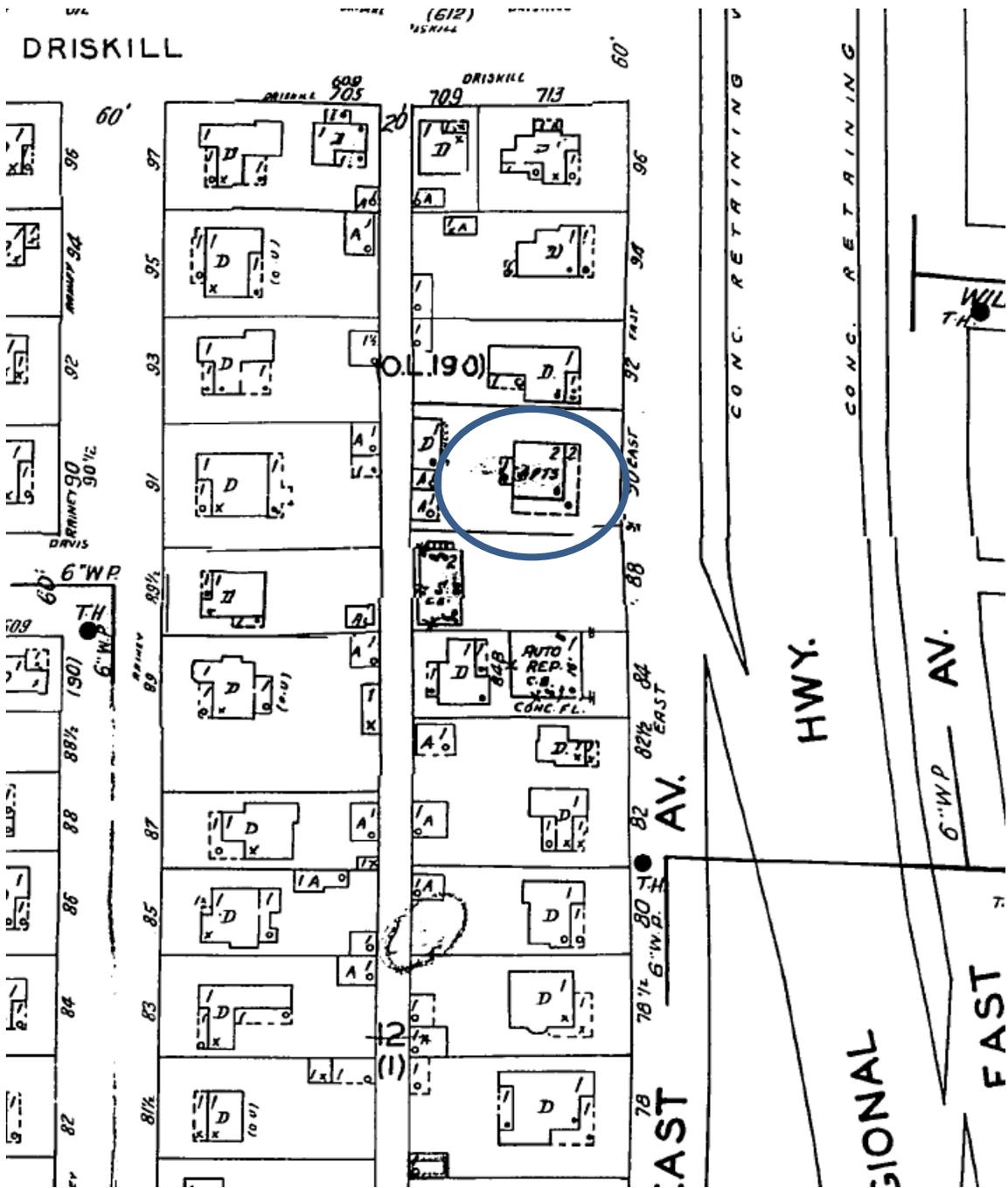
(Press release by Yellow Cab Company, August 8, 2006)



The house does not appear on the 1900 Sanborn map.



The 1935 Sanborn map shows the house with a two-story porch that wrapped around the south side.



The 1961 Sanborn map shows the same configuration, with the notation that the building housed apartments.