

## ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

**CASE NUMBER:** C14H-2013-0009

**HLC DATE:**

September 9, 2013

October 28, 2013

**PC DATE:**

**APPLICANT:** Historic Landmark Commission

**HISTORIC NAME:** McKown-James House

**WATERSHED:** Shoal Creek

**ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE:** 1501 Richcreek Road

**ZONING FROM:** SF-3-NP to SF-3-H-NP

**SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff **cannot** recommend the proposed zoning change from single family residence, neighborhood plan (SF-3-NP) combining district to single family residence – Historic Landmark – neighborhood plan (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:**

The ca. 1951 house was built by prominent highway contractor R.J. McKown, who lived here until his death in 1957.

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:** **September 9, 2013:** Initiated the historic zoning case upon an application for demolition. **Vote: 4-0. October 28, 2013:**

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:**

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The house is beyond the bounds of the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984).

**CITY COUNCIL DATE:**

**ACTION:**

**ORDINANCE READINGS:** 1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

**ORDINANCE NUMBER:**

**CASE MANAGER:** Steve Sadowsky

**PHONE:** 974-6454

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION:**

Crestview Neighborhood Association

**BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

**Architecture:**

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 both 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.

**Historical Associations:**

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, and the head of R.J. McKown and Sons Construction Company, with headquarters on W. 49<sup>th</sup> Street (the building is no longer there). R.J. McKown started as a house carpenter in Frisco, Texas, and later in Stephenville with his three sons. By 1940, R.J. McKown was living in a rented house at 1812 Kenwood Avenue in Travis Heights with his second wife, Thelma. According to the 1940 U.S. Census report, he was a 56-year old, Georgia-born, highway construction contractor. Thelma, 32, had been born in Texas, but had no occupation listed. The census report reveals that they had lived in Lubbock in 1935, and that R.J. had an 8<sup>th</sup>-grade education. City directory listings show that R.J.'s sons, Obert, Austin, and Arthur, were part of the family's business.

R.J. McKown and Sons was the contractor for the construction of the Austin Expressway, and was one of the most prolific construction firms in Texas, beginning in the Dallas and Texarkana area, but working on projects state-wide. In addition to building levees, private homes, and commercial buildings, the firm was principally known for its highway and street construction projects including the highway from Austin to Manor in 1927 and the conversion of East Avenue into the Interregional Highway (now I-35) in the 1950s. R.J.'s son, Arthur Lee McKown, whose home on Travis Heights Boulevard is a designated City historic landmark, also established the Austin Sand and Gravel Company and Capitol Ready Mix on Bolm Road to supply their business with the natural resources necessary for their road construction projects. After R.J. McKown's death in 1957, the family sold the company and began working principally in the installation of underground utilities.

By the time he moved to Austin in the late 1930s, R.J.'s first wife had passed away, and he had married Thelma (Roberts) of Lubbock; 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.

**PARCEL NO.:** 0235081115

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** Lots 33, 35, and 37, Block M Crestview Addition, Section 7.

**ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT:** \$8,667 (owner-occupied); city portion: \$2,429; \$4,352 (income-producing); city portion: \$1,214.

**APPRAISED VALUE:** \$681,261.

**PRESENT USE:** Vacant

**CONDITION:** Good

**PRESENT OWNER:** Lori Smyth

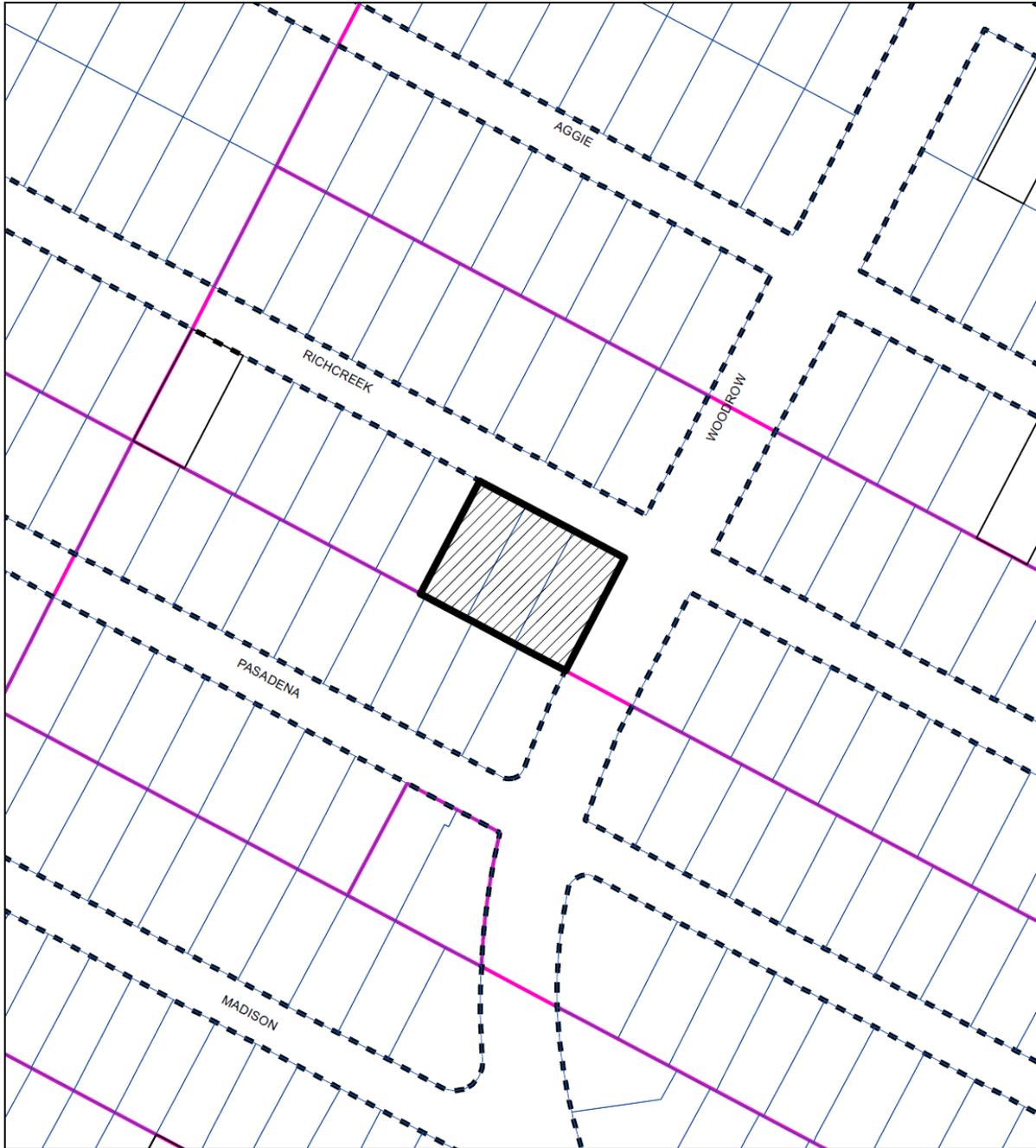
**DATE BUILT:** ca. 1951

**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** An addition was constructed in 1977.

**ORIGINAL OWNER(S):** R.J. and Thelma McKown (1951)

**OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS:** None.

**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.

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

Funeral will be 2 p.m. Monday at Weed-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 & 37 M  
 Crestview # 7  
 Brick Venr Res & Garage Attached  
 48894 13,000.  
 Owner

8

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

**WATER SERVICE PERMIT** C No. 9775  
 Austin, Texas

Received of R. J. McKown Date 9-11-51  
 Address 1501 RICH CREEK RD.  
 Amount 39.00  
 Plumber 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 2.5'  
 From E- Prop. Line to Curb Cock 40.5'  
 Location of Meter CURB  
 Type of Box COLW  
 Depth of Main in St. 3'  
 Depth of Service Line 2'  
 From Curb Cock to Tap on Main 30'  
 Check Dept. 11-19-51 PC

No. Fittings	Size
1	Curb Cock 1"
1	Elbow 1" 90°
1	St. Elbow 1" 50°
1	Branch 1" 90°
1	Reducer 1" 90°
1	3/4" Pipe 1" 90°
1	Lead Comp
1	Nipples
1	Union
1	Plug TUB
1	Stop 1" C.I.
1	Box 4" x 4"
1	Lid 1"
1	Valves
1	Job No. W-323-502
1	P. No. Nipole

See Tap 9994 for increase in size

INDEXED

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

**OWNER** H.D. James **ADDRESS** 1501 Richcreek Road

**PLAT** 317 **LOT** 35 & 37 **BLK** M

**SUBDIVISION** Crestview

**OCCUPANCY** Residence

**BLD PERMIT #** 140782 **DATE** 2-19-74 **OWNERS ESTIMATE** \$2,400.00

**CONTRACTOR** John Mang **NO. OF FIXTURES**

**WATER TAP REC #** ~~XXXX~~ Exist **SEWER TAP REC #** 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)