

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
MARCH 23, 2015
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
HDP-2015-0047
609 ELMWOOD PLACE**

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1923 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story, rectangular-plan, side-gabled frame house with a central, partial-width entry hood on ornamental metal supports; single 1:1 and paired 6:6 fenestration; exterior chimney.

RESEARCH

The house appears to have been built in 1923; the first owners and occupants were DeWitt Clinton McGee and his wife, Evelyn, who lived here until around 1925. DeWitt McGee was the general manager of Walter Wilcox, a prominent men's clothing store on Congress Avenue. From around 1926 to around 1938, the house was owned and occupied by Willis J. and Anita Gaedcke. Willis J. Gaedcke had several business ventures, including a proprietorship of the Lavaca Street Garage (later Austin Brake Service); he later worked for the City Water, Light, and Power Department. Anita Gaedcke was a music teacher who was a co-proprietor of both the Associated Studio (a music school) and the Texas School for Fine Arts. She and Willis later moved to Corpus Christi. The house was then a rental property for many years. Allen B. Griffen, who taught at the University of Texas, and his sister, Annette (later Annette Mears) rented the house for many years in the 1940s; following Annette's marriage to Alex Mears, she and Alex rented the house through the late 1950s. Students made up the majority of the renters from then on.

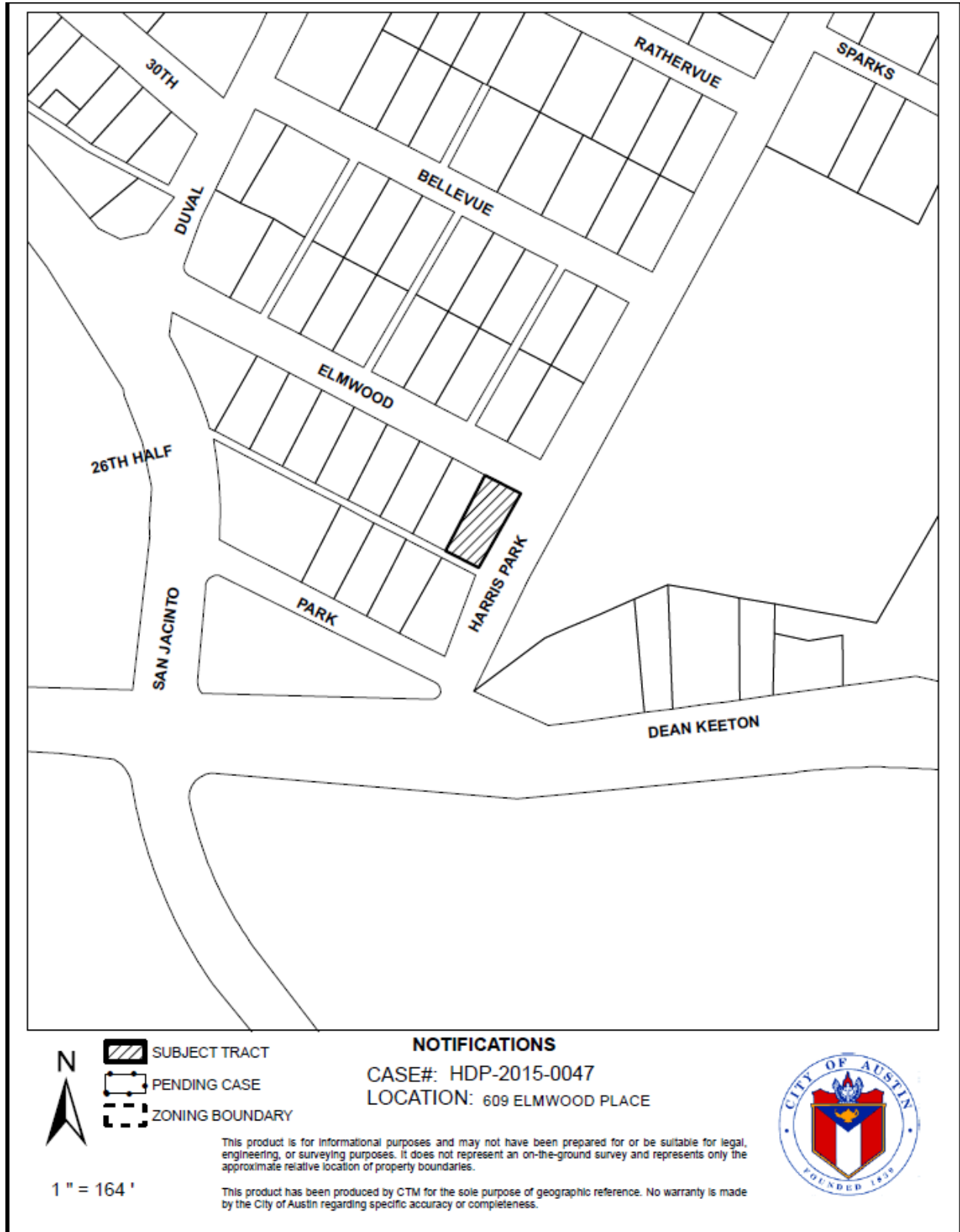
STAFF COMMENTS

The house is listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984) but without a priority for research.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

While this house, like the house next door at 607 Elmwood Place (also proposed for demolition this month) does not qualify as a historic landmark, every effort should be made to retain, rehabilitate, and re-use it as it is typical of the residential character of the neighborhood, and represents the history of the neighborhood with its succession of professionals, teachers, and professors. Staff recommends rehabilitation of the house if feasible, then relocation over demolition, but to 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



609 Elmwood Place
ca. 1923



OCCUPANCY HISTORY
609 Elmwood Place

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
By City Historic Preservation Office
February, 2015

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 1992 | Lloyd Johnson, renter
No occupation listed
NOTE: The directory indicates that Lloyd Johnson was a new resident at this address. |
| 1985-86 | Carol Norman, renter
Student
NOTE: The directory indicates that Carol Norman was a new resident at this address. |
| 1981 | The address is not listed in the directory. |
| 1977 | John F. Berry, renter
Student
NOTE: The directory indicates that John F. Berry was a new resident at this address. |
| 1973 | Henry G. Taliaferro, renter
Employed by Tejas Galleries (not listed in the directory) |
| 1968 | Francis A. Schmerbeck, renter
Student |

1962	Vacant
1959	Annette Mears, renter Teacher, public schools
1955	Alex O. and Annette Mears, renters Salesman
1952	Alex O. and Annette Mears, renters No occupation listed
1949	Vacant
1947	Allen B. Griffen, renter Teacher, University of Texas Also listed is Annette Griffen, a teacher in the public schools.
1944-45	Allen B. Griffen, renter Professor, University of Texas Also listed is Annette Griffen, a technician. NOTE: The house is listed as 219 Elmwood Place.
1941	Michael C. and Elizabeth Robinson, renters Lawyer, 508-9 Littlefield Building NOTE: The house is listed as 219 Elmwood Place.
1939	Vaughan B. and Martha Graham, renters Clerk NOTE: The house is listed as 219 Elmwood Place.
1937	W.J. Gaedcke, owner There is no listing for a W.J. Gaedcke in the directory. NOTE: The house is listed as 219 Elmwood Place.
1935	Willis J. and Anita Gaedcke, owners Willis: Employed by the City Water, Light, and Power Department Anita: Proprietor (with Miriam Landrum, J. Campbell Wray, and Minnie Blundell), Texas School of Fine Arts, 2010 Wichita Street. NOTE: The house is listed as 219 Elmwood Place.
1932-33	Willis J. and Anita Goedcke, owners Willis: No occupation listed Anita: Proprietor (with Miriam G. Landrum and Hilda C. Widen), Texas School of Fine Arts, 2010 Wichita Street. NOTE: The house is listed as 219 Elmwood Place.
1930-31	Willis J. and Anita Gaedecke, owners Willis: Proprietor (with Henry J. Bouchard), Austin Brake Service, 1409-11 Lavaca Street. Anita: Proprietor (with Miriam G. Landrum and Hilda C. Widen), Texas School of Fine Arts, 2010 Wichita Street. NOTE: The house is listed as 219 Elmwood Place.
1929	Willis J. and Anita Gaedcke, owners

Willis: Proprietor (with Henry J. Bouchard), Lavaca Street Garage, 1409-11 Lavaca Street.

Anita: Music teacher, 13 Woolworth Building, 802½ Congress Avenue.

NOTE: The house is listed as 219 Elmwood Place.

1927

Willis J. and Anita Gaedecke, owners

Willis: Student, University of Texas

Anita: Proprietor (with Lester C. Brenizer, Bert M. Trottnow, and Miriam Landrum), Associated Studio, music teachers, 2204½ Guadalupe Street; and music teacher, 12-13 Woolworth Building, 802½ Congress Avenue.

NOTE: The house is listed as 219 Elmwood Place.

1924

DeWitt C. and Evelyn McGee, owners

General manager, Walter Wilcox, men's and boys' clothing, hats, furnishings, and shoes, 616 Congress Avenue.

NOTE: Willis J. and Annetta Gaedecke are listed at 1107½ Nueces Street; neither had an occupation stated.

NOTE: The house is listed as 219 Elmwood Place.

1922

The address is not listed in the directory.

NOTE: DeWitt C. McGee is listed on Walsh Place near the Austin Dam; he was the office manager for Walter Wilcox, men's and boys' furnishings, 616 Congress Avenue.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

DeWitt C. and Evelyn McGee (ca. 1923 – ca. 1925)

DeWitt Clinton McGee's 1917 World War I draft registration card shows that he was born in 1892 in San Marcos, Texas, and that he was a book-keeper for E.M. Scarbrough & Sons department store. He lived at 1506 Congress Avenue, was single, was of medium height and a slender build. He had blue eyes and brown hair. The 1910 U.S. Census shows that he was the oldest son of Marion C. and Mary M. McGee of San Marcos. He was 18 years old, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. His father was a teacher in the business college; his mother was a teacher of stenography.

Willis J. and Anita Gaedecke (ca. 1925 – ca. 1938)

Willis J. Gaedcke appears in the 1920 U.S. Census for Beaumont, Texas, where he is listed as the stepson of Bruns P. and Lula Holland. He was 21, . Walter McNeill was 51, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. His stepfather was a medical physician in general practice.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows William J. and Anita S. Gaedecke as the owners of this house, which was worth \$4,500. William Gaedecke was 32, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. Anita S. Gaedecke was 31, had been born in Texas, and was a teacher in a music school.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Willis J. and Anita Storrs Gaedcke as the owners of the house at 1514 Northwood Road in Austin. Willis Gaedcke was 45, and had no occupation listed. Anita Gaedcke was 43, and was a music teacher giving private lessons. With them lived Anita's father, Alonzo William Storrs, an 81-year old Michigan-born widower with no occupation listed. The family had a live-in African-American maid, Rosie Shields, 42, who had been born in Texas. Rosie Shields and Alonzo Storrs had lived in Granger, Texas in 1935. Willis Gaedcke died in Corpus Christi November 11, 1967; Anita Gaedcke died in Corpus Christi April 13, 1976.

Michael and Elizabeth Robinson (ca. 1940 – ca. 1943)

Michael C. and Elizabeth Robinson appear in the 1940 U.S. Census as the renters of the house at 3205 Guadalupe Street. Michael C. Robinson was 30, had been born in Texas, and was a lawyer in private practice. Elizabeth Robinson was 29, had been born in Cuba, and had no occupation listed. They had 3 children: Patricia, 8; Michael, Jr., 6; and William, 4. All the children had been born in Texas.

Allen B. Griffen and Annette Griffen Mears (ca. 1943 – ca. 1960)

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Allen B. and Annette Griffen as the children of Allen W. and Theodore Griffen of Corsicana, Texas, where the elder Allen Griffen was a druggist. Allen B. Griffen was 5; Annette Griffen was 2. Both had been born in Texas. Annette Mears' 1978 death certificate shows that she was the daughter of Allen W. and Theo Griffen of Corsicana.