

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 16, 2015
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
HDP-2015-0903
1404 BOB HARRISON STREET**

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1915 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story, rectangular-plan, hipped-roof frame house with a partial-width inset porch with turned wood posts and ornamental brackets; single and paired 1:1 fenestration with a large, fixed-sash picture window in the front (obscured by solar screens); synthetic siding.

RESEARCH

The house appears to have been built in 1915, and has a continuous history as a home for African-American families in East Austin. The first known occupant was Ruth James, a young, divorced woman who worked as a laundress. She lived here from around 1915 to around 1917. The house was then owned and occupied by a woman and what appears to have been a succession of husbands: William and Lizzie Green are listed as the occupants of the house in the 1918 city directory. William Green worked as a laborer for John L. Martin, the proprietor of one of the largest plumbing, heating, and electrical supply contracting businesses in the city, while Lizzie Green worked as a cook. The 1920 city directory shows the house occupied by George and Lizzie Willis, and they are listed as the owners of the property. George Willis was a laborer; Lizzie Willis had no occupation listed. By 1922, the house was owned and occupied by Lizzie McDade, who had no occupation listed. Belief that Lizzie Green, Lizzie Willis, and Lizzie McDade were all the same person is corroborated by the 1920 U.S. Census which shows Lizzie Green as a widow; her step-son was Isaac McDade. The 1924 city directory shows the house owned by Lacy and Lizzie Price. Lacy Price had no occupation listed; Lizzie Price was a domestic for the Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Other documents note that neither Lacy nor Lizzie Price were literate – they had each made their “mark” on documents, indicating that they could not sign their own name. Lacy and Lizzie Price moved from this house around 1926 to another house on E. 9th Street. Comparing the estimated value of these two houses in the census reports, the house on 9th Street was worth considerably less than this house on Bob Harrison (then 14th Street). It may be inferred that this house was owned by Lizzie Green Willis McDade Price from around 1917 to around 1926, as each city directory listing shown a Lizzie and her husband as the owners of the house. It is more likely that the house was owned by Lizzie all that time during her series of marriages. However, further research may be necessary to determine the chain of title of this property and to determine if all of the women named Lizzie in the city directories of that period were the same person.

The house was rented in the late 1920s to a man who worked as a janitor at Gregory School, an African-American institution. Then, from around 1928 to 1942, the house was owned and occupied by Jesse and Meddie Amos. Both Jesse and Meddie Amos worked for hotels in downtown Austin – he as a bell boy and she as a maid. They worked for the Texan and Capitol hotels on W. 7th Street, both of which were owned by the same company. Meddie Amos went to work as a maid for the Alamo Hotel on Republic Square around 1940, while Jesse Amos went into yard work, according to the 1940 U.S. Census. They eventually moved to Abilene, Texas, where they lived for many years, but both were buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Austin at their deaths in the 1960s.

Daniel and Serena Bailey owned and occupied the house in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Daniel Bailey was a laborer, while Serena Bailey worked ironing clothes in a laundromat. Only Serena Bailey is listed at this address in the city directory of 1952; she was a maid.

From around 1957 until the early 2000s, the house was owned and occupied by George and Girlie Mae Wallace. At the time they moved into this house, George Wallace was working as a porter for Carr's Motor Sales, the local Lincoln and Mercury dealer. He went to work as a driver for the Austin National Bank around 1960, and then worked as a porter and parking lot attendant for American National Bank on W. 6th Street around 1970. He and Girlie Mae are listed as retired in city directories from the mid-1980s onward.

STAFF COMMENTS

The house is listed as a medium priority for preservation in the Historic Resources Survey of East Austin (2000).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff must recommend release of 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. The applicant has provided a statement of her reasons for seeking the application for a demolition permit, and staff agrees that she has fully evaluated the alternatives to demolition. This house has serious structural issues, and has had modifications over the years that have compromised its historic appearance and integrity of materials and design. Staff therefore recommends release of the permit with the above-referenced documentation package.

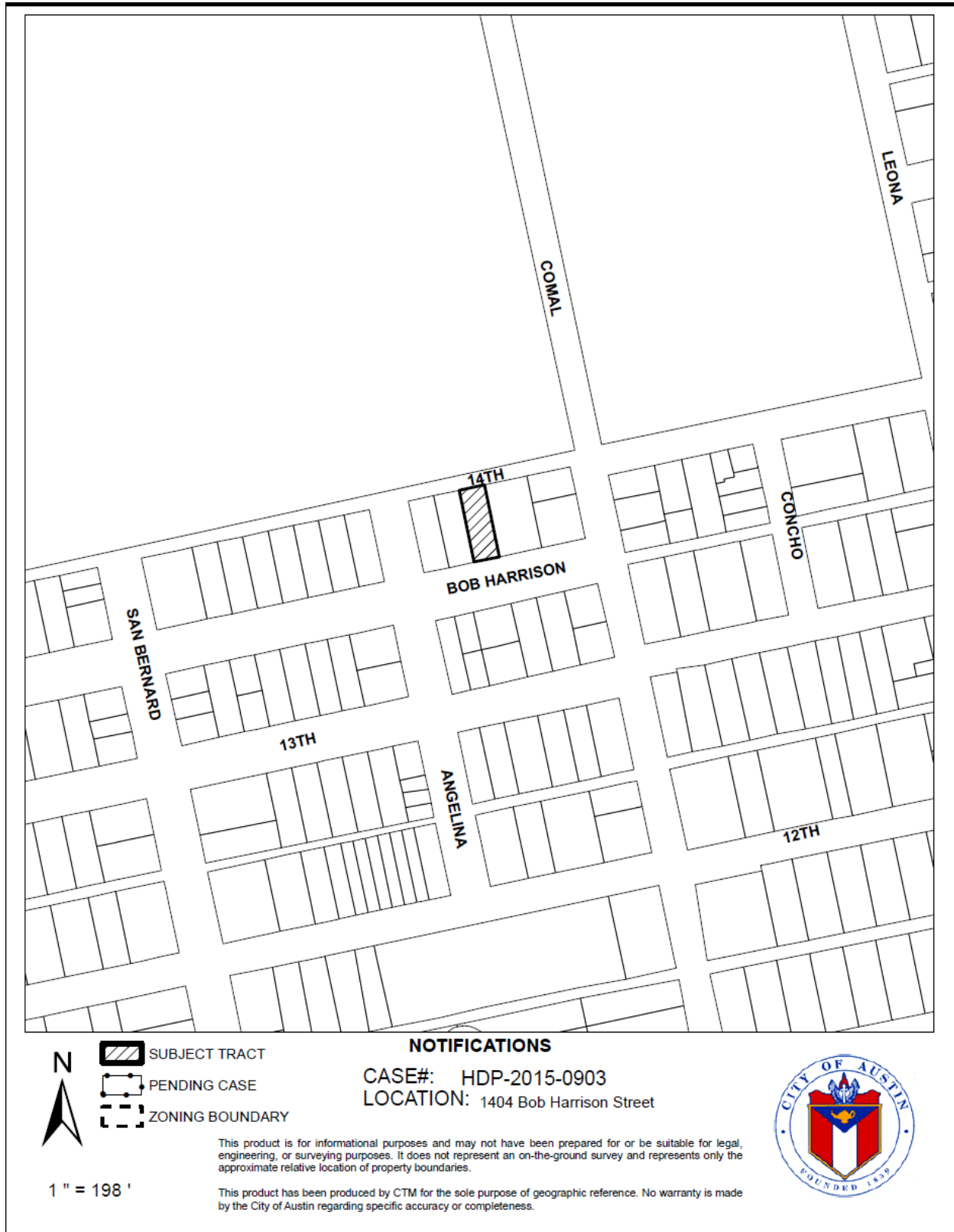
1404 BOB HARRISON STREET
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As the owners of 1404 Bob Harrison Street we have made a concerted effort to find alternatives to demolition, including renovating, adding on to and relocating the existing house within the current site. However, after thorough investigation we have discovered many serious structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing issues that make these alternatives untenable. The following is a list of some of the major issues we have identified:

- Walls lack structural framing. Exterior walls consist of a single layer of 1"x12" vertical boards affixed to the sides of floor joists. There is no stud framing and thus no wall cavity for insulation or routing utilities. This also makes the structure a poor candidate for relocating.
- Foundation lacks piers and would require major retrofit to bring up to current standards.
- Windows throughout are not original and have been replaced with single pane aluminum replacements with evidence of modifications to both sizes & head heights.
- Porch is cracked and failing in numerous locations. Repair is not possible so replacement is necessary.
- Addition in rear is poorly constructed and compromising original structure.
- Fiber cement replacement siding installed over entire structure is badly deteriorated.
- Cast iron drains and vent pipes are routed on exterior of house. They are badly deteriorated and do not meet current building standards.
- Existing sewer line exposed and incomplete. Permit expired.
- Outdated water service and plumbing throughout house.
- Outdated electrical service and wiring throughout house.
- No central air/heating. As noted previously, there are no wall cavities in which to install insulation. The house also lacks weatherproofing or an air barrier, which would need to be in place prior to HVAC in order to meet energy standards.

We would like to note that our academic and professional backgrounds are in architecture, including experience in historic preservation. We've lived in the East Austin neighborhood for the past eight years and during that time renovated several older homes. Preservation of historic homes in this area is something we are strongly in favor of. It is in this context that we have evaluated alternatives and reluctantly come to the conclusion that in this case demolition is our only viable option. Thank you very much for your thoughtful consideration of this property.

LOCATION MAP



1404 Bob Harrison Street
ca. 1915



OCCUPANCY HISTORY
1404 Bob Harrison Street

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

1992	George W. and Girlie M. Wallace, owners Retired
1985-86	George W. and Girlie M. Wallace, owners Retired
1981	George W. and Girlie M. Wallace, owners Porter, American National Bank, 221 W. 6 th Street.
1977	George W. and Shirley M. Wallace, owners Parking attendant, American National Bank, 221 W. 6 th Street.
1973	George W. and Girlie M. Wallace, owners Driver, American National Bank, 6 th and Colorado Streets.
1968	George W. and Girlie M. Wallace, owners Porter, Austin National Bank, 5 th Street and Congress Avenue.
1962	George W. and Girlie M. Wallace, owners Driver, Austin National Bank, 5 th Street and Congress Avenue.

- 1959 George W. and Girlie M. Wallace, owners
Porter, Carr's Motor Sales, 501 W. 6th Street; used cars, 604 W. 6th Street.
- 1955 George and Julia M. Wallace (not listed as owners)
No occupation listed
NOTE: George W. and Girlie Wallace are listed at 1804 Rosewood Avenue; he was a porter for Carr's Motor Sales, Lincoln and Mercury dealers, 501 W. 6th Street.
- 1952 Serena Bailey, owner
Maid
NOTE: There are no listings for George Wallace in the directory.
- 1949 Daniel and Serena Bailey, owners
Daniel: Laborer
Serena: Ironer, ABC Washateria, 1511 North Street.
NOTE: Leroy and Ella M. Hendricks are listed at 1172 Bedford Avenue; he was a porter.
- 1947 Leroy and Ella M. Hendricks, renters
Leroy: Porter, Kappa Alpha Fraternity, 2211 Red River Street.
Ella: Proprietor, Mae's Beauty Shop (at the house)
- 1944-45 Roy and Lula M. Landley, renters
No occupation listed
- 1941 Jesse and Meddie Amos, owners
Jesse: Laborer
Meddie: Maid, Alamo Hotel, 402 W. 6th Street.
- 1939 Jesse and Meddie Amos, owners
No occupation listed
- 1937 Jesse and Meddie Amos, owners
Bellman, Texan Hotel, 121 W. 7th Street.
- 1935 Jesse and Meddie Amos, owners
Bellman, Capitol Hotel, 103 W. 7th Street.
NOTE: The Capitol and Texan Hotels were under the same ownership.
- 1932-33 Jesse and Meddie Amos, owners
Jesse: Porter, Texan Hotel, 115 W. 7th Street.
Meddie: Maid, Texan Hotel, 115 W. 7th Street.
NOTE: The address is listed as 1304 Bob Harrison Street.
- 1930-31 Jesse and Meddie Amos (colored), owners
Jesse: Bellboy, Texan Hotel, 115 W. 7th Street.
Meddie: Maid, Texan Hotel, 115 W. 7th Street.
NOTE: The address is listed as 1304 E. 14th Street.
- 1929 Jesse and Meddie Amos (colored), owners
Bellboy, Texan Hotel, 115 W. 7th Street.

- 1927 Isaac and Bettie Craig (colored), renters
Janitor, Gregory School
NOTE: Jesse and Mettie Amos are listed at 1216 E. 14th Street; neither had an occupation listed in the directory.
NOTE: Lacy and Lizzie Price are listed at 2215 E. 9th Street; he was a porter; she had no occupation shown.
- 1924 Lacy and Lizzie Price (colored), owners
Lacy: No occupation listed
Lizzie: Domestic, Presbyterian Theological Seminary, 104 E. 27th Street.
- 1922 Lizzie McDade (colored), owner
No occupation listed
NOTE: Lacy Price is not listed in the directory.
- 1920 George and Lizzie Willis (colored), owners
Laborer
- 1918 William and Lizzie Green (colored)
William: Laborer, John L. Martin, plumbing, heating, and electrical supplies, 408 Congress Avenue.
Lizzie: Cook
- 1916 Ruth James (colored)
Laundress
NOTE: There are two William Greens listed in the directory and it is not clear which, if either is the William Green who lived in this house in 1918. One William Green was a laborer who lived at 1302 San Bernard Street; the other was a laborer for the City Sewer Department who lived at 2620 San Pedro Street.
- 1914 The address is not listed in the directory.
NOTE: Ruth James is listed as a laundress living at 609 East Avenue.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Ruth James (ca. 1915 – ca. 1917)

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Ruth James as a roomer in the home of Tom and Della Collins at 608 E. 1st Street in Austin. Ruth James was a 30-year old Texas-born divorcee who worked as a laundress for a laundry company.

(William and) Lizzie Green (ca. 1917 – ca. 1920)

Lizzie Green appears in the 1920 U.S. Census as the owner of this house, which is listed as 1304 E. 14th Street. She was a 42-year old widow who had been born in the United States and worked as a laundress. With her lived her step-son, Isaac McDade, 31, who had been born in the United States and was a farmer. They had 2 lodgers: Ethie Moore, a 28-year old U.S.-born widow with no occupation listed; and Jerry James, a 40-year old U.S.-born widower who worked as a fireman in a boiler.

Lacy and Lizzie Price (ca. 1923 – ca. 1926)

Lacy and Lizy Price are listed in the 1940 U.S. Census as the owners of the house at 2115 E. 9th Street in Austin. The house was worth \$800. Lacy Price was 56, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. Lizy Price was 67, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had an adopted son, Bobby Limis, 2, who had been born in Texas. They also had a family of roomers: Frank and Pearly May Canada, and their son, Frank, Jr.

Frank Canada was a 25-year old African American who had been born in Texas and worked as a janitor. He had lived in rural Travis County in 1935. Pearly May Canada was 21, had been born in Texas, and was a maid for a private family. She had lived in LaGrange, Texas in 1935.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Lacey and Lizzie Price as the owners of the house at 2233 [?] E. 9th Street in Austin. Lacey Price was a yardman for a private family; Lizzie Price was a servant for a private family. They owned their house.

According to his 1917 World War I draft registration card, Lacy Price was living at 417 W. Mary Street; he was born in 1890 at Bluff Springs, Texas. He worked as a laborer. He was not able to write, so made his mark on the registration card. He was of medium height and had a stout build.

Lacy Price died in Travis County on August 7, 1944. He was living at the house on E. 9th Street at the time of his death. He was a common laborer who worked at various jobs. He had been born in Travis County, and his wife was Lizzie Price. He is buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Austin. Lizzie Price applied for a U.S. military veteran's headstone for him in 1944. Lacy Price had served as a private in the 16th Company of the 165th Depot Branch in the summer of 1918. Apparently, Lizzie Price was also unable to read or write; she signed the headstone application with her mark, which was witnessed.

Jesse and Meddie Amos (ca. 1928 – ca. 1942)

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Jesse and Meddie Amos as the owners of this house, which was worth \$1,800. The house is listed as 1404 Bob Harrison Street. Jesse Amos was a 34-year old cedar chopper. Meddie Amos was a 34-year old hotel maid. Their 2 children, Jesse, Jr., 14; and Betty Joan, 11, had no occupations listed.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Jesse and Meddie Amos as the owners of this house, which was worth \$550. The house is listed as 1304 E. 14th Street. Jessie Amos was 23, had been born in Texas, and was a bell boy at a hotel. Meddie Amos was 24, had been born in Texas, and was a maid at a hotel. They had 2 children: Jesse, Jr., 4; and Bettie J., 1, both of whom had been born in Texas. With them lived Jesse's brother, Bennie Amos, 21, who had been born in Texas and had no occupation listed.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Jessie Amos as the 13-year old son of Joe and Billie Amos, who rented a farm in Williamson County, Texas. Joe Amos was listed as a Texas-born general farmer; Jessie Amos had no occupation listed. The 1910 U.S. Census shows Jessie Amos as the 4-year old son of Joe and Bettie Amos, who lived in Marble Falls, Texas, where Joe Amos was a laborer in a lumber yard. Bettie Amos was a washerwoman at home.

Meddie Hodge Amos died in Abilene, Texas August 9, 1966. According to her death certificate, she had lived in Abilene for 20 years. She was a married housewife who had been born in Austin, Texas. She was buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Austin. Jesse Amos died April 29, 1999 in Doddridge, Miller County, Arkansas.

Leroy and Ella May Hendricks (ca. 1946 – ca. 1948)

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Leroy and Ella Mae Hendricks as renters at 2211 Red River Street, which is the Kappa Alpha Fraternity House. Leroy Hendricks was 34, had been born in Texas, and was a porter for the fraternity; Ella May Hendricks was 26, had been born in Texas, and worked as a maid for a sorority. They had no children listed with them.

George W. and Girlie Mae Wallace (ca. 1957 – ca. 2003)

WALLACE, George Sr., 80, of Austin died Friday. Services 1 p.m. Thursday, Mount Zion Baptist Church. Burial Cook-Walden/Capital Parks Cemetery, Pflugerville. Arrangements by King-Tears.

Obituary of George Wallace
Austin American-Statesman, February 11, 2003

Girlie Mae Wallace Obituary

Girlie Mae Wallace Girlie Mae Wallace, 87, retired school district employee, of Austin died Tuesday. Visitation noon Friday, King-Tears Mortuary. Services 1 p.m. Saturday, Grant African Methodist Episcopal Worship Center. Burial Cook-Walden/ Capital Parks Cemetery, Pflugerville.
Austin American-Statesman, February 24, 2012