

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
JANUARY 25, 2016  
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS  
HDP-2015-1111  
1906 DAVID STREET**

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**PROPOSAL**

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Demolish a ca. 1948 house.

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**ARCHITECTURE**

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One-story, rectangular-plan, mid-century Modern-style brick and frame house with ribbon sets of multi-light metal-framed casement windows across the front of the house. Mid-century modern architecture has as its defining features a long, horizontal layout with abundant glass and the use of new technology to allow for modern construction methods. One of the philosophies behind mid-century Modern design was to blend the outside and the inside environments, so these houses generally had large expanses of glass to achieve that goal. This house, while a very modest example of mid-century Modern design, represents the style with the ribbons of windows and horizontal configuration.

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**RESEARCH**

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The house was built in 1948 for Dr. E. Bagby Atwood of the University of Texas, who lived here for the rest of his life. Dr. Atwood was born in Yoakum, but raised in El Paso and New Mexico, where his father was a Baptist minister. He studied at Hardin-Simmons College, and earned his Ph.D. from the University of Virginia. He post-doctoral work in Europe, then after an adventure as a gold miner, returned to teaching. He taught at Stanford, Texas Western, and became a faculty member at the University of Texas at Austin in 1937. In 1953, he became a full professor. His interests included linguistics, medieval literature, and dialectology, and he distinguished himself as the leading dialectologist of the Southwest.

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**STAFF COMMENTS**

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The house does not appear in any City survey.

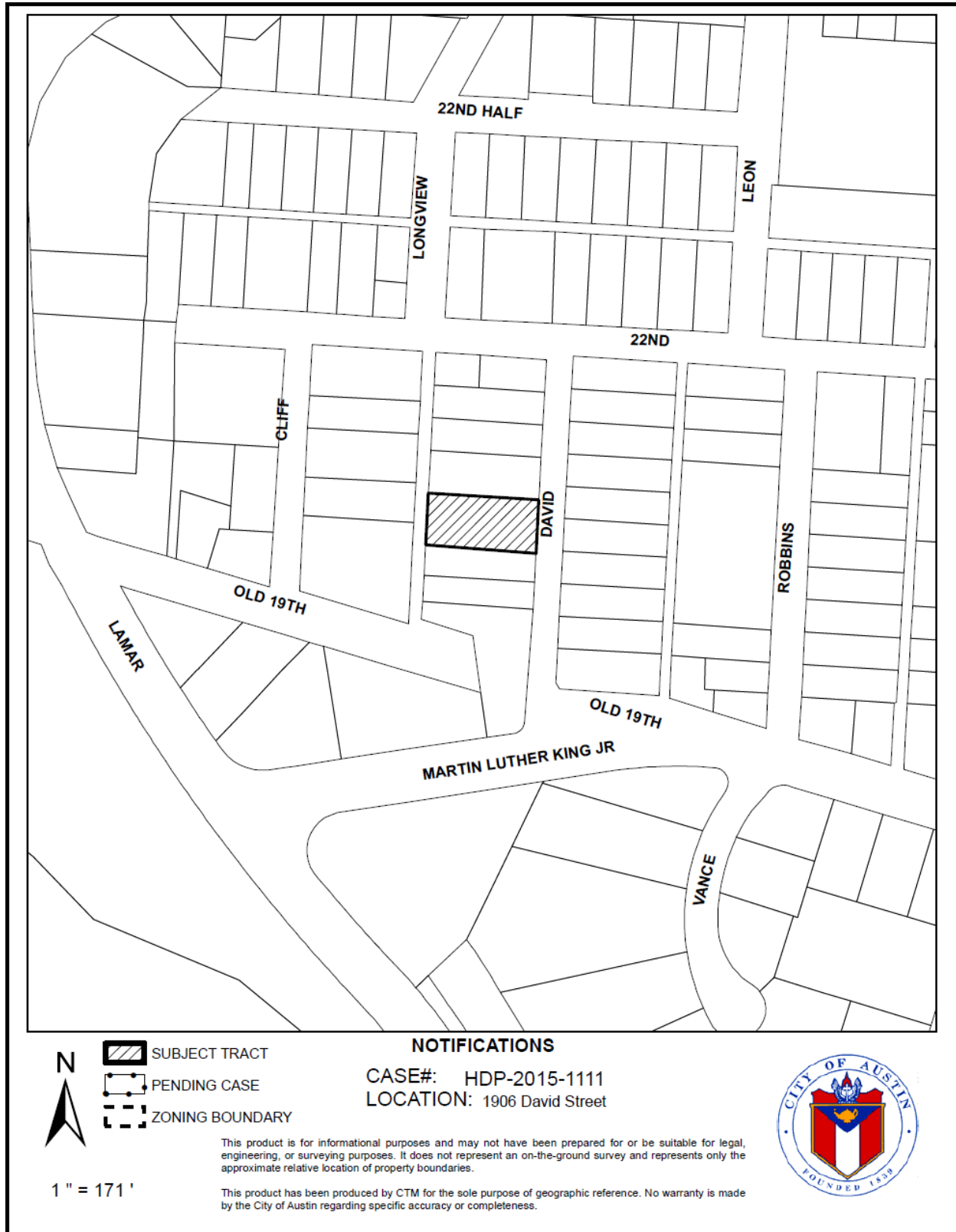
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Staff has met with the applicants, who have exhausted the possibilities for rehabilitation and re-use of this house, so while staff believes that the house has historical and architectural significance, staff must reluctantly 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.

## LOCATION MAP



January 18, 2016  
Re: 1906 David Street

Steve Sadowsky  
Historic Preservation Officer  
City of Austin Texas

www.alterstudio.net

Dear Steve Sadowsky,

Thanks for your time yesterday to review our concerns with respect to 1906 David Street. Per your suggestion I wanted to summarize our rationale so that you can include this in the backup package for next Monday's hearing.

We are long time residents of this west campus neighborhood. Krista and I moved to 1911 Cliff Street in 2003 when a friend of ours let us know that an apartment had become available at the triplex that was designed by the famous mid-century architect Harwell Hamilton Harris. We quickly realized that the landlord had no sense of the architectural and historic value of this great building. We sought out partners to buy, restore and obtain landmark status for the building. Nirav Patel joined us in that effort and after ten years of hard work and monetary investment the building obtained landmark status at the local, state and national level. It was included in the Preservation Austin's 2014 tour 'Austin 1964!' (<https://texasarchitects.org/v/article-detail/Austin-1964-Preservation-Austin-Homes-Tour/id/>) and our effort was documented in an article by Meghan Drueding for National Trust for Historic Places (<https://savingplaces.org/stories/life-midcentury-modern-oasis-cranfill-apartments-austin-texas#.Vp2YoTZH2i4>). I do not think anyone can question our credentials in preserving and protecting Austin's modernist legacy.

Krista and I have a family of five and Nirav, and his wife Carla Lanas, have a growing family as well. Our respect for the integrity of the Harris triplex precluded making additions or radical alterations to the building in order to make it amenable to our changing lives. We did want to stay in this neighborhood that has a very limited supply of housing that is financially viable and appropriate for families. One of our neighbors let us know that Allison Dieter, Professor E. Bagby Atwood's daughter, was selling her house at 1906 David. With the encouragement of our neighborhood association, we purchased this large property with the intention of creating two single family homes for ourselves.

At first we considered the possibility of preserving the house. We had always been intrigued, by what looked like a house with modern bones that had been corrupted by later aggregations. It became clear after touring the property and studying the original drawings that the house lacked the DNA of mid century modern home, and was instead a fairly conventional house with modernist idioms and visual quotations. Instead of an integral connection between interior and exterior a back room blocked the connection from the living space to the mature oaks in the backyard. The rooms were cellular and divided as opposed to flowing and connected. The large bands of casement windows at the front, the homes most modern quotation, were deployed with



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little concern to the way they might expand the interior space of the home through continuity in the surface between interior ceiling and exterior soffit. What at first seemed like an addition of a sloped roof to a flat roof structure was in fact the original design that creates odd gabled ends above a flat fascia.

Above and beyond the homes lack of authentic modernist aspirations and details, the structure is sited in such a manner that effectively eliminates the possibility of any kind of sympathetic addition. The large 40' setback limits the amount of space behind the house before entering the critical root zone of a 32" heritage oak and a 22" protected oak. Steep topography that creates a large drainage feature beyond the oaks with mature elm trees makes the remainder of the lot unusable. After exploring options for a back unit duplex or a flag lot subdivision we realized that the best option was in fact the demolition of the house and the creation of two equal parcels that replicated the scale of other lots in the neighborhood.

The house at 1906 David will be replaced by two homes that are respectful of the scale and street presence of the neighboring houses, but that embody the modern sensibilities that the current structure simply references. My wife Krista Whitson is an Associate at Mell Lawrence Architects (<http://www.melllawrencearchitects.com>) and I am a partner at alterstudio architecture, LLP (<http://www.alterstudio.net>). Nirav and Carla have hired Murray Legge, FAIA (<http://www.murraylegge.com>) to design their home. These are three of the most respected architecture firms in Austin, recognized for design excellence at the local, state and national level with numerous design awards and publications.

Per our previous e-mail to the members of the Historic Landmark Commission, we would like to invite you and the full membership of the committee to tour the property at 1906 David. We are available to meet at anyone's convenience throughout the week and the weekend. We look forward to discussing these issues in depth on Monday night and appreciate your hard work, and the efforts of the Historic Landmark Commission, to protect the heritage of Austin.

Sincerely,



Ernesto Cagnolino, AIA



January 14, 2016

Members of the City of Austin Historic Landmark Commission

**Re: Support for the demolition of 1906 David Street**

Dear Chair Galindo, Vice-Chair Whitworth, and members of the Historic Landmark Commission:

I am writing as president of the Original West University Neighborhood Association (OWUNA) to express our support for the demolition of the structure at 1906 David Street.

There have been several demolitions, with and without permits, in our small neighborhood over the last few years. We have testified in front of your board to argue against a couple of those demolitions. As an association, we fight tirelessly to try to preserve the character and the history of the West University Area- no easy feat with the strong development pressures. In our quest, we rely on the good work of the Historic Preservation Office and on the Historic Landmark Commission.

In this instance, however, the Neighborhood Association voted unanimously to support a variance from the Board of Adjustments and a sub-division of the site, with the goal of demolishing the present structure to allow for the construction of two single-family dwellings. We do not believe the home merits individual designation. Further, in our considerations of a Historic Preservation District, we never thought 1906 David would be considered a contributing structure.

On behalf of our association, I thank you all for your hard work to preserve the history and character of Austin.

Sincerely,  
Nuria Zaragoza  
President/OWUNA

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Steering Committee: Nuria Zaragoza | Ron Sawey | Karrie League  
Muriel Wright | Karl Richichi | Matt Mowat

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1906 David Street  
ca. 1948







## OCCUPANCY HISTORY

### 1906 David Street

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

1992	John and Mitzi Reistroffer, renters Geologist
1985-86	Thomas A. and Jennifer Dietar, renters Rental manager, Gallagher Equipment, 11011 Research Boulevard.
1981	Mary B. Atwood, owner Retired
1977	Mary B. Atwood, owner Widow, E. Bagby Atwood Retired
1973	Mary B. Atwood, owner Widow, E. Bagby Atwood No occupation listed
1968	Mary B. Atwood, owner Widow, E. Bagby Atwood No occupation listed
1962	E. Bagby and Mary Atwood, owners

	Professor, University of Texas
1959	E. Bagby and Mary Atwood, owners Professor, University of Texas
1955	E. Bagby and Mary B. Atwood, owners Professor, University of Texas
1952	Elmer B. and Mary B. Atwood, owners Associate professor, University of Texas
1949	Elmer B. and Mary B. Atwood, owners Associate professor, University of Texas
1947	The address is not listed in the directory. NOTE: E. Bagby and Mary Atwood are listed at 3208½ Grandview Street; he was a teacher at the University of Texas.

### **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES**

#### **E. Bagby and Mary B. Atwood (ca. 1948 – ca. 1983)**

E. Bagby and Mary B. Atwood appear in the 1940 U.S. Census as the renters of the house at 307 E. 31 Street in Austin. E. Bagby Atwood was 39, had been born in Texas, and was an instructor at the state university. Mary B. Atwood was 41, had been born in Virginia, and was a substitute teacher in the public schools. They had a daughter, Alison Lee, 4, who had been born in California. The family had lived in Palo Alto, California in 1935.



# Dr. Atwood Funeral Is Wednesday

Funeral services for Dr. E. Bagby Atwood, 57, professor of English at The University of Texas and renowned scholar of medieval literature and modern linguistics, will be held Wednesday at 3 p.m. at All Saints Episcopal Church.

The widely known professor and author died Sunday night of cancer at M. D. Anderson Hospital in Houston. The body will remain at Weed-Corley Funeral Home until shortly before the church services.

Rev. Wayne W. Mahan will officiate. The body then will be taken to Abilene for graveside services Thursday at 10 a.m. at Elmwood Cemetery.

Dr. Atwood, who resided at 1906 David Street, is survived by his widow, daughter, Mrs. Alison Lee Dieter; brother, Lee Atwood, president and chairman of the board of North American Aviation; and two grandchildren.

Dr. Atwood, born in Yoakum, was reared in West Texas and New Mexico. He was educated at Wayland College in London, Philip University in Marburg, Germany, and the University of Virginia. In 1954-55, he was a Fulbright scholar at the University of Louvain in Belgium.

His career included gold mining in California, working as an American Red Cross field director with an infant division during World War II and teaching in Hawaii, British Columbia, California, Michigan and Texas.

His classes, favorites at the University since 1937, included phonetics, history of the English language, Old English, American English and dialectology.

Dr. Atwood's latest book, "The Regional Vocabulary of Texas," has been selected by the Austin chapter of Theta Sigma Phi as one of the best books written by a Texan this year. The book will be honored Oct. 19 at the annual Writers Roundup in Austin.

Obituary of E. Bagby Atwood  
Austin American, October 8, 1963

IN MEMORIAMELMER BAGBY ATWOOD

In the death of Elmer Bagby Atwood on October 6, 1963, the University and the community experienced the kind of loss which is felt not only locally among family and friends, colleagues and students, but also among scholars throughout America and the world. During the career cut short last fall, Professor Atwood had distinguished himself first as a Mediaevalist, the discoverer of a neglected Latin account of the Trojan War, and then as the leading dialectologist of the Southwest. His interest in Texas speech did not, however, prevent him from contributing significantly to the dialectology of other regions such as Virginia, Belgium, and though his death prevented completion of the studies he had begun, Hawaii.

Professor Atwood was born in Yoakum, Texas, in 1906. While he was still quite young, his parents moved to El Paso, where he spent his boyhood. He never lost his feeling of intimate connection with the West Texas countryside. His father, Dr. E. B. Atwood, Sr., to whom he was deeply devoted, was a distinguished clergyman who founded the Baptist church of New Mexico and served for a time as president of Wayland College. The son received his B.A. from Hardin-Simmons at the age of twenty. He was married in 1933 to Mary Hamill Bell of Roanoke, Virginia, who survives him, together with a daughter, Mrs. John Dieter, of Houston, and two grandchildren.



Professor Atwood's graduate study was carried out primarily at the University of Virginia, where he held a DuPont Fellowship, and received his Ph.D. His dissertation on the Troy Story eventually reached publication as "The Rawlinson Excidium Troiae," edited jointly with Virgil Whitaker of Stanford. His study at Virginia was supplemented by study at the University of London and, after the Ph.D., Phillips-Universität in Marburg. It was at these universities that his interest in dialectology was awakened. He was highly skilled at languages, not only as a student and scholar but as a writer and speaker. He read far beyond the range of his special interests and had a copious and exceptionally accurate memory of what he read. His career outside the several institutions at which he studied and taught was varied and personally gratifying to him. At one time during the depression he lived for some months in the high Sierras of California and worked at gold mining--an experience he was fond of recalling, partly at least for a love of nature that those who did not know him well were not always aware of. After he and his family acquired their own home on David Street he became highly skilled at gardening, producing a variety of flowers, including prize specimens of hemerocallis. During World War II he volunteered for overseas service with the American Red Cross and spent considerable time in the European theatre as Field Director, seeing action and no little hardship during the "Battle of the Bulge" in the Ardennes section.

His teaching career began in Texas, continued in Hawaii, and after his doctorate included Stanford, The University of British Columbia, Texas Western, and The University of Texas, where he began as an instructor in 1937 and became a full professor in 1953. Among his noteworthy honors were a Fulbright Fellowship in Belgium in 1954-55, and an honorary degree

of Doctor of Letters from Hardin-Simmons. His published works included two books besides the Excidium Troiae already mentioned, A Survey of Verb Forms in the Eastern United States (1952) and The Regional Vocabulary of Texas (1962). Among his articles are the following:

- "Two Alterations of Virgil in Chaucer's Dido," Speculum XIII, 454-57.
- "Robert Mannyng's Version of the Troy Story," (Texas) Studies in English, 1938, 5-13.
- "The Youth of Paris in the Seige of Troye," (Texas) Studies in English, 1951, 7-23.
- "The Judgment of Paris in the Seige of Troye," PAMLA, LVII, 1942, 343-53.
- "The Pronunciation of 'Mrs.'," American Speech, 25, 1950.
- "Grease and Greasy, a Study of Geographical Variation," Studies in English, 1950, 29.
- "Some Eastern Virginia Pronunciation Features," English Studies in Honor of James Southall Wilson, Charlottesville, Va., 1951.
- "A Survey of English Since 1900," American Speech, 27, 1952.
- "A Preliminary Report on Texas Word Geography," Orbis, II, 1953, 61-66.
- "The Phonological Divisions of Belgo-Romance," Orbis, IV, 1955.
- "Le Problème Dialectal aux Etats-Unis," Bulletin de la Faculté des Lettres de Strasbourg, 1956.
- "Linguistic Geography in the United States," Proceedings and Transactions of the Fifth International Congress of Onomastic Sciences, I, 1958.

"Lexical Usage in Southern Louisiana," (with Mima Babington), PADS,  
36, 1961.

"The Methods of American Dialectology," (University of Marburg)  
Journal of Dialectology, Wiesbaden, 30, 1963.

In preparing his studies of dialectology he developed a very successful machine-technique for the assembling, sorting, and printing of linguistic data, thus demonstrating his remarkable ability at keeping abreast of the most recent tendency in his chosen science, linguistics. In fact, the active and growing program in linguistics at Texas is, in large measure, a monument to his pioneering efforts in teaching and scholarship in this field.

His fellow members of the English budget council universally respected his hard sense and good judgment, displayed on numerous occasions; he was never reluctant to say, forcefully, what he felt was needed. He had a sharp wit that merged into the epigrammatic, and he deeply appreciated the humor others, especially his prime favorite James Thurber. His conversation was stimulating in its breadth and rewarding in its depth. With students he was unfailingly kind and courteous; graduate students worked especially hard for him not only through interest in what he taught but through a realization that he was working much harder than they. No one who served with him on a dissertation committee will forget the standard of excellence he set by his careful corrections and suggestions. Long after graduation his doctoral candidates continued to concern him and he undoubtedly had a decisive influence upon the careers of several.



As the concluding sentence to "The Methods of American Dialectology," published a few weeks after his death, Professor Atwood wrote: "The history of scholarship is to a considerable degree a history of patience, and of this quality the dialect scholar has need of more than his share." More than his share of patience, as a very distinguished dialect scholar, he had; but also a more than generous share of much else that will continue to be remembered and cherished by all who knew him.

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Norman Hackerman  
Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs

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Eugene W. Nelson  
Secretary of the General Faculty

The resolutions were prepared by a Special Committee consisting of Professors A. A. Hill, Chairman, Joseph J. Jones, Winfred P. Lehmann, and Joe West Neal.

Masonry residence and garage.

**\$11,700.00**

8

Building permit to E. Bagby Atwood for the construction of this house (1948)

NW II

**WATER SERVICE PERMIT**

Austin, Texas

No. 1565  
**INDEXED**

Received of PLANCON INC. Date 7-30-98

Address 1906 DAVID ST.

Amount TWENTY AND 19.00 \$20.00

Plumber PORTER PLBG. CO. Size of Tap 3/4"

Date of Connection 8-4-48

Size of Tap Made 3/4"

Size Service Made 3/4"

Size Main Tapped 2"

From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 7.5'

From S - Prop. Line to Curb Cock 34'

Location of Meter CURB

Type of Box LOCK

Depth of Main in St. 30"

Depth of Service Line 2.5'

From Curb Cock to Tap on Main 13'

Checked by Engr. Dept. 9-3-48 RB

**INDEXED**

No. Fittings	Size
1 Curb Cock	3/4" Cop.
1 Elbow	3/4" Elbow
1 St. Elbow	3/4" Elbow
1 Bushing	2" x 3/4" Tap
1 Reducer	2" x 3/4" Cop.
1 Pipe	2" x 3/4" Cop.
Lead Comp.	
Nipples	
Union	
Plug	1 1/2"
Tee	1 1/2"
Stop	1 1/2"
Box	1 1/2"
Lid	1 1/2"
Valves	
Job No.	W-323
Req. No.	U-123

Water service permit to Plancon, Inc., the builder of this house (1948)