

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
MAY 23, 2016
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
HDP-2016-0307
2102 FORD STREET**

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1950 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story, rectangular-plan, shallow-pitched side-gabled roofed, frame house with a partial-width, flat-roofed independent porch on ornamental metal supports; multi-light, metal-framed casement windows.

RESEARCH

The house was built in 1950 by the Cole Construction Company. The first owner and occupant was Irene Downing, who lived here until around 1965. Irene Downing was a stenographer, then an inspector for the Late Liquor Control Board. In the early 1960s, she went to work as an office secretary for the Wholesale Beer Distributors of Texas.

The house was a rental unit in the late 1960s, then purchased by Jack and Molly Adair in the early 1970s. The Adairs made modifications to the carport in 1975. Jack Adair was the supervisor of attendants at Austin State Hospital. They lived here through the mid-1970s.

The house then had a series of owner-occupants through the early 1990s. Many of the owners did not list an occupation in the city directories.

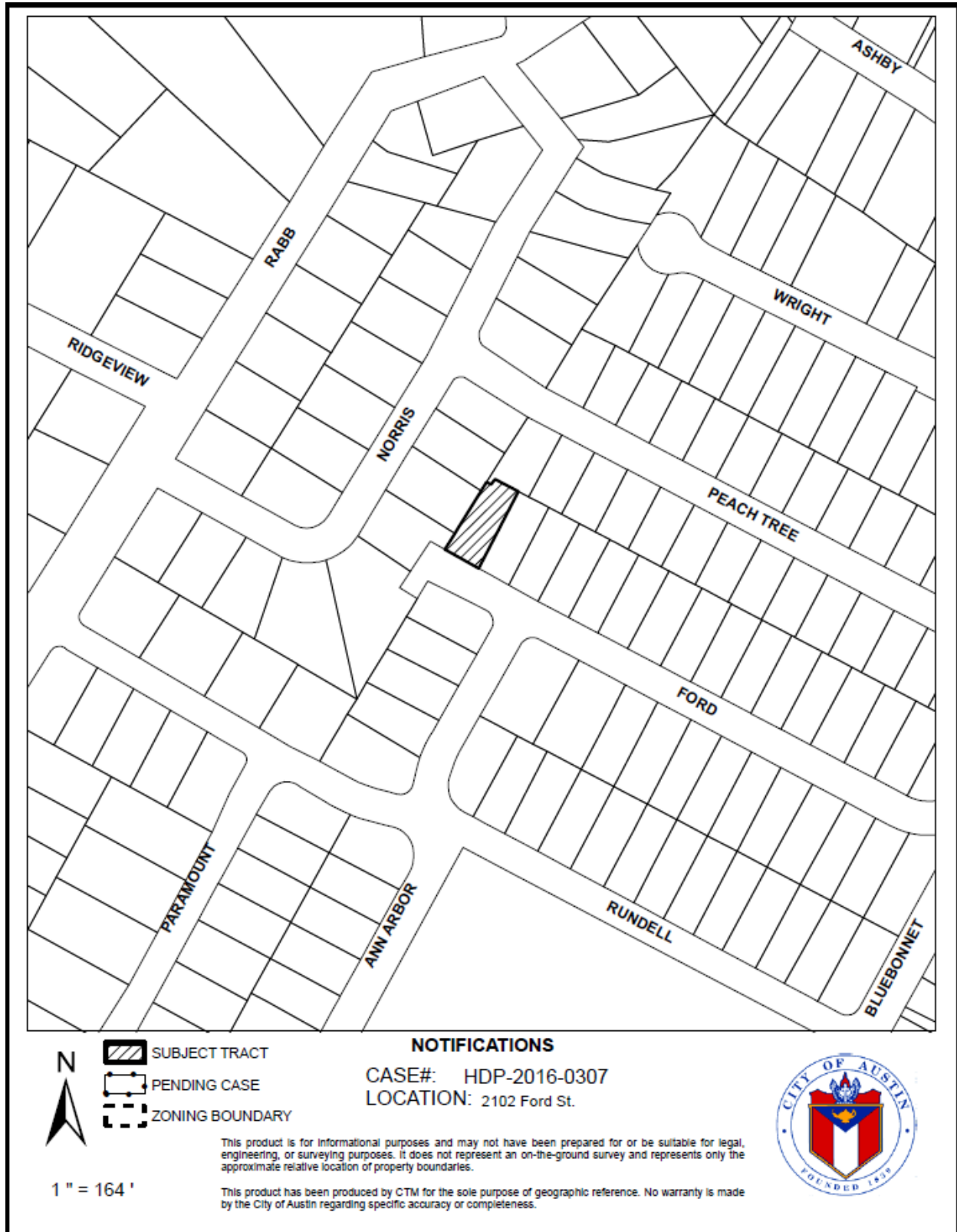
STAFF COMMENTS

The house does not appear in any City survey.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Encourage rehabilitation and adaptive re-use, 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. This house represents a style of housing popular after World War II, with a number of examples throughout the city, but especially in areas of the Zilker neighborhood of South Austin, where there are a number of modest examples; the house next door to this one is of similar style and scale. South Austin is losing much of its character in terms of the scale of the houses, and applicants for demolition of these houses should give serious consideration towards whether they can use the existing housing stock, or perhaps thinking about another area of the city to build in.

LOCATION MAP



2102 Ford Street
ca. 1950



OCCUPANCY HISTORY 2102 Ford Street

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
By City Historic Preservation Office
May, 2016

1992	Carol S. Stall, owner Accounting clerk, University of Texas
1985-86	Ken and Candy Mann, owners No occupation listed
1981	Terry and Mary Durst, owners Terry: No occupation listed Mary: Employed by Denny's, restaurant (multiple locations)
1977	Mary Kinslow, owner No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that Mary Kinslow was a new resident at this address.
1973	Jack and Molly Adair, owners Attendant supervisor, Austin State Hospital
1968	Jeff and Nita Crow, renters Laborer, Travis County Sheriff's Office

- 1962 Irene W. Downing, owner
Office secretary, Wholesale Beer Distributors of Texas, 502 Perry-Brooks Building, 121 E. 8th Street.
- 1959 Irene W. Downing, owner
Examiner, State Liquor Control Board
- 1955 Irene W. Downing, owner
Inspector, State Liquor Control Board
- 1952 Irene W. Downing, owner
Inspector, State Liquor Control Board
- 1949 The address is not listed in the directory.
NOTE: Irene W. Downing is listed at 3704 Grooms Street; she was an inspector for the State Liquor Control Board.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Irene W. Downing (ca. 1950 – ca. 1965)

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Irene Downing as the owner of the house at 1002 W. 44th Street in Austin; that house was worth \$1,700. She was a 27-year old divorcee who had been born in Missouri and worked as a stenographer for the State Liquor Control Board. She had a son, Donald, 5, who had been born in Texas.

Irene Downing died in 1978 in Santa Barbara, California. She had been born in Joplin, Missouri, and was living in Santa Monica, California at the time of her death.

Cole Const. Co.	2102 Ford Street
202 16	- - -
Sun Terrace	
Frame residence and carport attached.	
45469 7-19-50	\$6000.00
Owner	
5-6-75-149225-Jack Adair Sr. -femodel exist carport	5
\$200.00	

Building permit to Cole Construction Company for the construction of this house (1950) and to Jack Adair, Sr. for work to the carport (1975)

Rept No. 15568

Application for Sewer Connection

Nº 27135AAustin, Texas, 10-20-1950

To the Superintendent of Sanitary Sewer Division, City of Austin, Texas.

Sir:—

I hereby make application for sewer connection and instructions on premises owned by Morse at 2102 Ford Street,
 further described as Lot 16 Block — Outlot — Division —
 subdivision San Antonio Plate 207 which is to be used as a residence
 In this place there are to be installed 5 fixtures. Plumbing Permit No. 39626
 I agree to pay the City of Austin, the regular ordinance charge.

Depth at Prop. Line 2'

Respectfully,

Stub out } 6' W OF ELL
 Connected (Location)

Date 10-25-50By James Baldwin

NOTE: Connection Instruction

6" Dimension Street
6" Stub 5' W of ELL 25 H9 A2264

Sewer connection application for this address (1950)

From: Phillip Thomas and Carol Stall**Sent:** Monday, May 16, 2016 2:35 PM**To:** Contreras, Kalan

Cc: Aaron Shneidman; Tami Hart; Lynn Robbins; Brandie Baker; Adam Butler; Julie Butler; Maraba Diraddo; Lou Schmidt; Russ & Cindy Ham Yates; Aimee Kandl; Liz Kweller; Luke & Traci Bibby; Matt & Nicole Gaulden; Stephen Meyers; Krista & Russ Jordan; Ruth B. Kaplan; Martin Tower; Sarah Tower; Mark Gracie; Eric Martin; Rene Renteria; Eileen Nehme; Chris Dirrado; Julie Lachance; Jonathan Lachance; Camilla Hsieh; Ben Kweller

Subject: 2102 Ford Street, 78704

Hello Kalan, Here are a few tidbits regarding the property at 2102 Ford Street in Zilker which is up for demolition.

First an overview of the neighborhood (which you likely already know). Back in the day, the area was farmed for cotton. After the civil war, groups of Black freedmen farmers settled in what is now Zilker. The area was eventually gentrified after WWII when returning soldiers sought suburban life-- and little housing developments sprang up. Sadly all that was left by the 80s was a small church and a graveyard and an elderly Deacon who lived on Treadwell.

Ford Street appeared at the end of the 40s. and was populated with many veterans including Joe Jacobs, Mr. Ralph Kaplan and others who spent much of their lives on the street.

My husband, Phil Thomas and I lived at 2102 Ford Street for many years. I moved there in 1990 and Phil in 1997. (I had lived in Zilker since 1981.) During this time

we got to know our neighbors and while we were there the street formed a group that exists to this day.

7870-4rd or (originally 7870-Ford) was created to celebrate and encourage the village-like ambiance on the street (and surrounding areas). It began of a need to form a sort of community. The group did that and helped to cement deep friendships as well. Because of the strong relationships, abundance of creativity, mutual assistance and general *Joie de vivre*, Ford Street has become something of a phenomenon throughout the area. People want to live there and raise their kids in its remarkably nurturing environment.

7870-4rd turned out to be inspiring and in the Austin Neighborhood issue of *Tribeza* Ford Street was featured to represent Zilker. (Please see links after message)

An important component of 7870-4rd was a special list serve so all who were online could all easily communicate both important and mundane matters. But those who were not tech savvy were not forgotten either. This helped to knit even tighter bonds and continues to keep people in touch.

Over the years, Halloween has become a complete Ford Street phenomenon due to the tradition of scary houses and people who offer adult treats (tequila shots). Hundreds of people come from all over Austin to join the fun.

The idea for 7870-4RD came up in several homes-- 2102 being one--and spread throughout the street. The first meeting to plan the first gathering was at 2102 Ford and it was the site of many subsequent annual parties and gatherings.

Sadly one of our jobs left town and the taxes became so high we made the very tough decision to leave. Now we live in the 02-- and you see us often before the HLC as we try to save the character & existing sense of community in our new neighborhood.

While we do not expect this home to be saved due to it's fame as part of a creative and close-knit community, we do hope that at least part of this era will be preserved as an inspiration for others seeking an alternative to urban anonymity.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Stall & Phil Thomas

Ford Street



Author:

[Ford Street Residents](#)

Images by:

[Rene Renteria](#)

Issue:

[July 2011](#)

Topic:

[Feature](#)

Date:

Wednesday, June 15, 2011

1) Ben Kweller

Ford Street Resident + Musician

2) “Our street-wide e-mail group is pretty unreal. Post if you need an egg, if you need to borrow a car for 20 minutes or if you have extra cans of paint after a project. We even have a street-wide DVD library! Just walk to your neighbors and borrow the latest Harry Potter for your kids.”

3) Carol Stall

Ford Street Resident

4) In the early 1950s, each house on Ford Street received a Sycamore sapling as it was built. Many saplings are now dying off, but the one in our yard is at least 35 feet tall. I’ve been here for over 20 years and in the ‘hood for 30. We are moving, and it is really sad for us because we know everyone on Ford Street and love them all! It’s the greatest group of the most creative and loving

folks I've ever met. It's really hard to leave and miss watching the kids grow up. But, I'm so happy the kids have a sense of identity and community to take with them. They truly have a village. It's really a Camelot — a shining moment that could disappear or endure — but I know we've made an impact on some of those around us. They now see it's possible for a mere urban street to become a real village. I think it gives others confidence that they can create a special community too. It's been a true privilege to live here."

5) **Adam Butler's Ford Street**

6) Ford Street, like the automaker, I always tell the pizza delivery dispatch.

7) But I'll tell you this, it's home to the 78704 list serv, 20 kids, one rock star, a chef, three photographers, educators, academics, state employees, a builder, a BBQ magnate, a civil war reenactor, a European auto mechanic, a doctor, a psychologist, the engineer for Austin City Limits, power moms, the Crazy Aaron, some advertising types and very frequent block parties.

8) Need some homegrown cilantro? Drop a transmission? Want a sprinkler system? Ping the list serv; there's a neighbor who can handle it.

9) Hungry? Hit [Luke's Inside Out](#) next to Gibson. We buy local, as in people-that-live-on-ourstreet- local.

10) Friday Night? Shabbat shalom. Interfaith couples light the candles, tear the challah and drink the fruit of the vine. Others just crack the Lone of the Star.

11) Saturday night? Walk to South Lamar or just lobby the neighbors to open their secret saloons.

12) Sunday morning? Soccer at [Little Zilker](#). We have our own league. No uniforms. Barefoot vs. Shoes. Love of the game.

13) Fifty years ago there wasn't a tree on our street. We were the edge of Travis county. But the American dream got built and saplings got assigned yards.

14) We lost our two WWII vets not too long ago, but we memorialize them with Carol's new poems and Ruth's old photos at most gatherings. Our trees are real tall now. Roots. Area midwives have caught over a half dozen babies in the last nine years on this street. There's something in the water, we say. Time marches on, we know.

15) Lately we've rallied to save our schools. We've shared nannies and recipes. We've appreciated each other and watched the kids race up and down the street. Faster and faster.

16) Fences make good neighbors. But gates cut into fences, connect backyards and make **Ford Street**.

17) *Long-time Ford Street residents Adam and Julie Butler and their three boys had their family photo taken at Zilker Elementary School. Julie says: "We love the school and neighboring Little Zilker Park. It's a community meeting place. The school has quite an Austin theme running through it, and music and art are big parts of it with an amazing parent community. Parents organized to have the portable buildings painted, and we are standing in front of one in this photo."*