

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
MAY 23, 2016
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
HDP-2016-0279
109 E. 31ST STREET

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1907 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-and-a-half story, wing-and-gable plan Queen Anne-styled frame house with a partial-width independent porch on turned wood posts with a spindlework frieze and ornamental brackets; single 1:1 fenestration; canted front bay with decorative brackets at the canted eaves; gabled side dormers.

RESEARCH

The house appears to have been built around 1907 by Charles B.D. Wickes and his wife Edna, who lived here until around 1953. Charles B.D. Wickes was a native of New Jersey, and engaged in several businesses, as a water meter reader for the city, a collector for the city water department, a carrier pigeon breeder and dealer, a farmer, a collector for a retail store, and a deputy tax assessor for the county.

After Charles' death in 1943, Edna continued to live in this house. She sold the house to Ray and Ruth Damron around 1953; Ray Damron was a carpenter. He and Ruth lived here until around 1957, when the house was sold to Andrew and Mabel McNeely, who lived here until around 1980. Andrew McNeely was retired while he lived in this house, but he had been a car inspector for railroads in New York State prior to moving to Austin. After Mabel's death in 1977, Andrew continued to live here, and converted the house into a duplex. The house has been largely occupied by students since that time.

STAFF COMMENTS

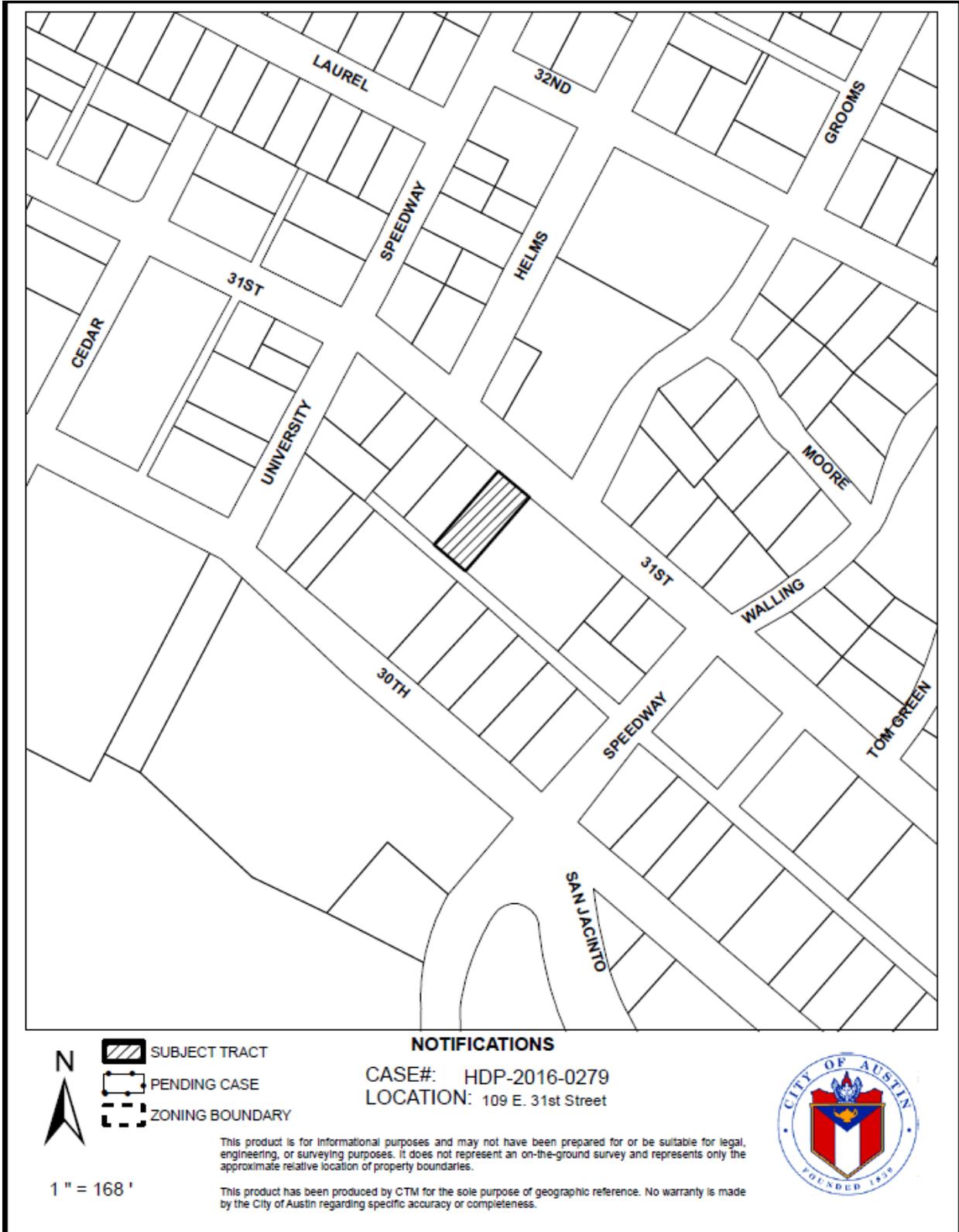
The house is listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984) but without a priority for research.

There have been complaints filed on this address in 2015 and 2016 about loose chickens on this property and unsanitary conditions. There have been reports of chickens living in the house.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

This is a 100+ year old house, and staff is loathe to recommend release of the permit, but it does not appear that the house can meet the required two criteria for designation. The architectural significance of the house is substantial, but staff cannot make a good case for the historical significance of the house based upon its occupancy and ownership history. **Staff strongly encourages the applicants to reconsider demolition**, and to pursue rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of this house, as it is a very good example of a modest Queen Anne residence in the north campus area. If the Commission votes to release the permit, then staff recommends 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



109 E. 31st Street
ca. 1907



OCCUPANCY HISTORY 107 E. 31st Street

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

1992	Carrie L. Pickett, renter No occupation listed
1985-86	A: Dorr Scherz, renter Student B: Maro Michels, renter Student
1981	A: Dorr Scherz, renter No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that Dorr Scherz was a new resident at this address. B: Rick and Anna Navarro, renters No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that Rick and Anna Navarro were new residents at this address.
1977	A: Andrew J. McNeely, owner Retired B: David J. and Jane Berteau, renters

Employed by the public schools.

1973	Andrew J. and Mabel C. McNeely, owners Retired
1968	Andrew J. and Mabel C. McNeely, owners Retired
1962	Andrew J. and Mabel C. McNeely, owners No occupation listed
1959	Andrew J. and Mabel C. McNeely (not listed as owners) No occupation listed
1955	Ray W. and Ruth Damron, owners Carpenter NOTE: Andrew J. and Mabel C. McNeely are not listed in the directory.
1952	Edna Wickes, owner Widow, Charlie Wickes No occupation listed
1949	Edna Wickes, owner Widow, Charles Wickes No occupation listed
1947	Edna Wickes, owner Widow, Charles Wickes No occupation listed
1944-45	Mrs. Charles D. Wickes, owner No occupation listed
1941	Charles B. and Edna Wickes, owners Collector
1939	Charles B. and Edna Wickes, owners Collector
1937	Charles B. and Edna Wickes, owners Collector
1935	Charles B. and Edna Wickes, owners Collector
1932-33	Charles B. and Edna Wickes, owners Collector NOTE: The house is listed as 111 W. 31 st Street.
1930-31	Charles B.D. and Edna Wickes, owners Salesman NOTE: The house is listed as 111 W. 31 st Street.
1929	Charles B.D. and Edna M. Wickes, owners

- Farmer
NOTE: The house is listed as 111 W. 31st Street.
- 1927 Charles B.D. and Edna M. Wickes, owners
No occupation listed
NOTE: The house is listed as 111 W. 31st Street.
- 1924 Charles B.D. and Edna M. Wickes, owners
No occupation listed
NOTE: The house is listed as 111 W. 31st Street.
- 1922 Charles B.D. and Edna Wickes, owners
No occupation listed
NOTE: W. Bert and Adine Haston are listed at 90 Waller Street. He was a proprietor of Freeman & Haston Battery Company.
NOTE: The house is listed as 111 W. 31st Street.
- 1920 Charles B.D. and Edna Wickes, owners
Deputy, County Tax Assessor's Office
NOTE: The house is listed as 111 W. 31st Street.
- 1918 Charles B.D. and Edna Wickes, owners
Clerk
NOTE: The house is listed as 111 W. 31st Street.
- 1916 Charles B.D. Wickes
Collector
NOTE: The house is listed as 111 W. 31st Street.
- 1914 Charles B.D. Wickes
Collector
NOTE: The house is listed as 111 W. 31st Street.
- 1912-13 Charles B.D. Wickes
Collector
NOTE: The house is listed as 111 W. 31st Street.
- 1910-11 Charles B.D. Wickes
Collector
NOTE: The house is listed as 111 W. 31st Street.
- 1909-10 Charles B.D. Wickes
Carrier pigeon breeder and dealer
NOTE: The house is listed as 111 W. 31st Street.
- 1907-08 The address is not listed in the directory.
NOTE: Charles B.D. Wickes is not listed in the directory; however, the 1906-07 city directory shows Charles Wickes as a water meter reader living at 1309 San Jacinto..

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Charles B. and Edna Wickes (ca. 1907 –ca. 1953)

The 1900 U.S. Census shows Charles B. Wickes living with his first wife, Olive, at 504 W. 17th Street in Austin. Charles B. Wickes was 35, had been born in New Jersey, and was a collector

for the water company. He rented the house on 17th Street. His wife, Olive, was 30, had been born in Pennsylvania, and had no occupation listed. With them lived Charles' brother, Delacy, 40, who had been born in New Jersey, and was a book-keeper for the water department.

The 1910 U.S. Census shows Charlie and Edna Wickes at this address. Charlie Wickes was 40, had been born in New Jersey, and was a collector for the city. Edna Wickes was 30, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had no children listed with them.

Charles B. and Edna Wickes appear as the owners of this house in the 1920 U.S. Census. The address is listed as 111 W. 31st Street. Charles B. Wickes was a 52-year old New Jersey-born tax assessor in the County Tax Assessor's Office. Edna Wickes was 32, had been born in Texas to Mississippi-born parents, and had no occupation listed. They had no children listed with them.

The 1940 U.S. census shows Charlie B.D. and Edna Wickes as the owners of this house, which was worth \$2,500. Charlie B. D. Wickes was 76, had been born in New Jersey, and was a collector for a retail store. Edna Wickes was 60, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had no children listed with them.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Charles B.D. Wickes and his wife, Edna Wickes as the owners of this house, which is listed as 111 W. 31st Street in Austin. Charles B.D. Wickes was 65, had been born in New Jersey, and was a salesman for puncture proof liquid. Edna Wickes was 45, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had no children listed with them.

According to her 1959 death certificate, Edna Merle Wickes was born in 1876 in Karnes County, Texas. She was living at this house at the time of her death. She was a widowed housewife. The 1900 U.S. Census shows Edna (Wickes) Elder as the daughter of J.V. Elder of Karnes County, Texas. He was a Mississippi-born planter, who owned his own farm.

CHARLES B. D. WICKERS

Charles B. D. Wickers, 78, former employee of the city water department, died suddenly at his home, 109 East 31st street, Thursday. He is survived by his widow.

Funeral services will be held from the Hyltin Funeral home Friday at 5:30 p. m. with the Rev. Charles Sumners officiating. Burial will be in the Oakwood cemetery. Pallbearers will be H. E. Robinson, Jacob Bleymaier, L. B. Burnette, J. H. Evetts, N. C. Forrester and Steve Heffington.

Obituary of Charles Wickes
Austin American, April 16, 1943

MRS. EDNA M. WICKES

Mrs. Edna Merle Wickes, 82, of 109 East 31st Street, died in a local hospital Sunday morning. A resident of Austin 60 years, she was the widow of the late Charley B. D. Wickes, for many years associated with the Travis County assessor's office. She was a member of the Church of Christ, Scientist. She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Pearl I. Elder, Eagle Pass, and four nieces and one nephew.

Funeral services will be held from Wilke-Clay Funeral Home with Franklin E. Walker officiating Monday at 11 a. m. Pallbearers will be Jack Disch, W. R. Fristoe, George Sigler, H. E. Robinson, George G. Price and Harry Garner. Burial will be in Oakwood Cemetery.

Obituary of Edna Wickes
Austin American, January 5, 1959

Andrew and Mabel McNeely (ca. 1958 – ca. 1979)

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Andrew John and Mabel C. McNeely living in a house they owned in Mamakating, Sullivan County, New York. Andrew John McNeely was 58, had been born in Ireland, and was a car inspector for the railroad. Mabel C. McNeely was 55, had been born in Illinois, and had no occupation listed. With them lived Mabel's mother, Angie Barrett, a 75-year old Massachusetts-born widow with no occupation listed. The McNeely's also had a boarder, Siegfried V. Gorge, 59, who had been born in Austria, and was an electrical contractor.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Andrew J. and Mabel McNeely living in a house they owned in Middletown, Orange County, New York. Andrew J. McNeely was a 48-year old Irish-born car inspector for the steam railroad. Mabel McNeely was 45, had been born in Illinois, and had no occupation listed. They had a son, Robert, 19, who had been born in New Jersey and had no occupation listed.

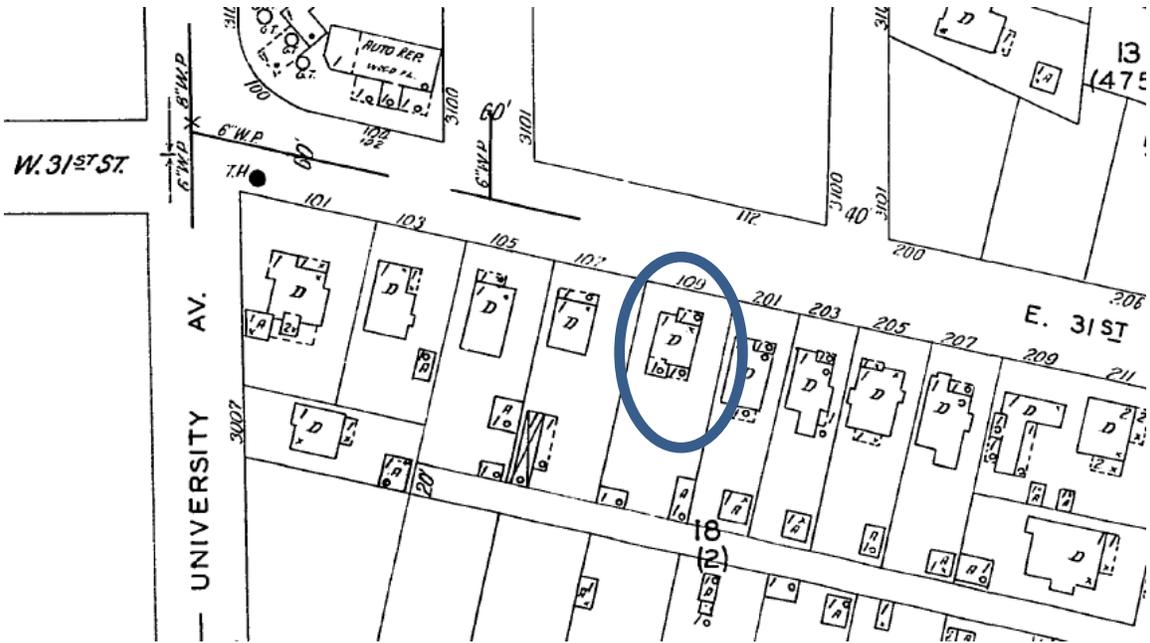
Her 1977 death certificate shows Mabel Claire McNeely was living in this house at the time of her death. She was born in Oak Park, Illinois, and was a housewife.

McNEELY, Mrs. Mabel C., 92, 109 E. 31st St., died Wednesday. Memorial services Sunday at the Congregational Church. (Hyltin-Manor)

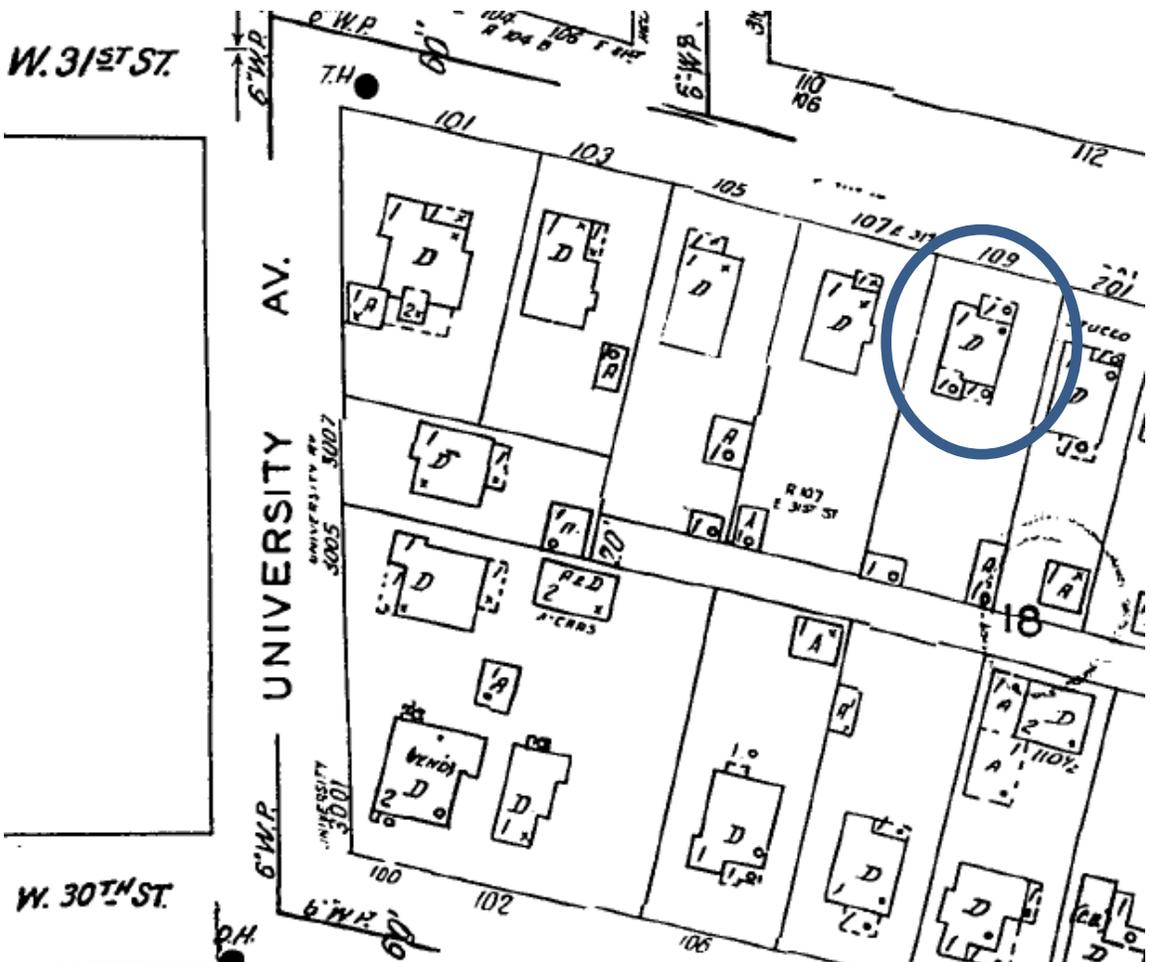
Obituary of Mabel C. McNeely
Austin American-Statesman, May 27, 1977



The house appears on the 1922 Sanborn map with an address of 111 W. Center (31st) Street. This is the first map to show this section of the city.



The 1935 Sanborn map shows the house with a flattened projecting bay rather than the canted bay shown on the 1922 map and on the house today. The map shows the current address of 109 E. 31st Street.



The 1962 Sanborn map shows the same configuration as the 1935 map above, along with the address of 109 E. 31st Street.