

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 26, 2018
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
HDP-2018-0

PROPOSAL

Partial demolition of a ca. 1933 house to construct a second-story addition.

ARCHITECTURE AND PROPOSAL

One-story rectangular-plan, side-gabled brick veneered house with an ornamental front gable on the right side of the façade; single, double, and triple 1:1 sash windows and a large bank of multi-light casement windows on the left of the principal entry; partial-width roof overhang over the front door. Minimal Tudor Revival styling.

The applicant proposes to construct a 702-square foot second-story addition to the house, and a 532-square foot addition to the garage. The proposed addition will have fiber-cement siding, and a side-gabled roof. It will be placed over the ridgeline of the existing roof. The applicant also proposes to replace all the windows in the existing house. The addition to the garage will have fiber cement siding and a hipped roof with composition shingles.

RESEARCH

The house appears to have been built in 1933. The first occupants were Coleman H. and Willie Mae Cook, who rented the house from around 1934 to around 1940, when they purchased a house on Preston Avenue. Coleman Cook was a native Iowan and was a civil engineer for the Iowa Highway Commission before moving to Austin to work for the Texas State Highway Department, principally in bridge design. From 1940 to 1946, the house was rented by Robert and Alice Hungate – he was a professor at the University of Texas. From around 1946 to around 1950, the house was rented by Orville and Margaret Wyss; he was a professor at the University of Texas who was known for his work in microbiology, and was instrumental in the invention of Desenex. The house was a rental unit through the 1950s, and around 1961, it was purchased by John and Olivia Escobedo. John Escobedo was a clerk at the University Co-Op. After his death, Olivia Escobedo continued to live here – through the early 1990s.

STAFF COMMENTS

The house was before the Commission in 2014 for an application for total demolition, which was later withdrawn; no further action on designating the house was taken at that time.

Staff has evaluated this house for designation as a historic landmark and has determined that the house does not meet the criteria for landmark designation as set forth in City Code:

- a. **Architecture.** The house is a Tudor Revival-styled building, a relatively common style in Austin; while the front windows are distinctive in this house, there is little else to indicate distinction within its architectural style.
- b. **Historical association.** The house was principally a rental property; the most significant tenant was Orville Wyss, a professor at the University of Texas who was instrumental in the invention of Desenex. There do not appear to be significant historical associations.
- c. **Archaeology.** The house was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.

- d. **Community value.** The house does not possess a unique location, physical characteristic, or significant feature that contributes to the character, image, or cultural identity of the city, the neighborhood, or a particular demographic group.
- e. **Landscape feature.** The property is not a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Encourage the applicant to reconsider the design for the addition to the house, in order to retain more of the historic character of the structure, and to maintain a greater amount of historic fabric, but release the permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package. The house does not meet the criteria for individual designation as a historic landmark.

LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HDP-2018-0025
LOCATION: 902 W. 30th Street



1" = 116'

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

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902 W. 30th Street
ca. 1933



OCCUPANCY HISTORY 902 W. 30th Street

From City Directories, Austin History Center
Prepared by the City Historic Preservation Office
March, 2014

1992	Olivia Escobedo, owner Retired
1985-85	Olivia A. Escobedo, owner Retired
1981	Olivia A. Escobedo, owner Retired
1977	Olivia A. Escobedo, owner Employed by the University of Texas
1973	Olivia A. Escobedo, owner Widow, John O. Escobedo Employed by the University of Texas Health Center
1968	John O. and Olivia Escobedo, owners Clerk, University Co-Op Society

- 1962 John O. and Olivia Escobedo, owners
Clerk, University Co-Op Society
- 1959 Jack L and Kitty Thurber, renters
Student
NOTE: John (Juan) and Olivia Escobedo are listed at 1103 E> 9th Street; he was a stock clerk at the University Co-Op Society.
- 1955 Donald K. and Mary K. Sacken, renters
Chemical engineer, Jefferson Chemical, 7114 Lamar Boulevard.
- 1952 Alfred A. and Louise H. Hudson, renters
Store manager
- 1949 Orville and Margarette Wyss, renters
Professor, University of Texas
- 1947 Orville and Margaret B. Wyss, renters
Professor, University of Texas
- 1944-45 Robert and Alice Hungate, renters
Professor, University of Texas
- 1941 Robert and Alice Hungate, renters
Assistant professor, University of Texas
- 1939 Coleman H. and Willie M. Cook, renters
Engineer, State Highway Department
- 1937 Coleman H. and Mae Cook, renters
Engineer, State Highway Department
NOTE: The address is listed as 1008 W. 30th Street.
- 1935 Coleman H. and Mae Cook, renters
Assistant engineer, State Highway Department
NOTE: The address is listed as 1008 W. 30th Street.
- 1932-33 The address is not listed in the directory.
NOTE: Coleman H. and Mae Cook are listed at 3815 Avenue G; he was an assistant bridge engineer for the State Highway Department.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

Coleman H. and Mae Cook (ca. 1934 – ca. 1940)

Coleman H. and Mae Cook appear in the 1940 U.S. Census as the owners of a house at 1507 Preston Avenue in Austin. Coleman H. Cook was then 49, had been born in Iowa, and was a civil engineer for bridge construction. Mae Cook was then 44, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had a son, James, 20, who had been born in Iowa and had no occupation listed. The 1930 U.S. Census shows Coleman H. and Mae Cook as the renters of a house at 3220 Harris Park Avenue in Austin. Coleman Cook was a civil engineer for the State Highway Commission. Mae is listed as Willie M. Cook. The 1920 U.S. Census shows C.H. and May Cook living in Ames, Iowa, where C.H. Cook was a civil engineer for the State Highway Department.

Robert and Alice Hungate (ca. 1940 – ca. 1946)

Robert and Alice Hungate appear as the renters of this house in the 1940 U.S. Census. Robert Hungate was then 34, had been born in Washington, and was a science professor at the University of Texas. Alice Hungate was then 29, had been born in California, and had no occupation listed. They had 2 sons: Robert, 5; and Don, 2. Both boys had been born in California. The census reports notes that the Hungate family had lived in Santa Clara County, California in 1935.

Orville and Margaret Wyss (ca. 1946 – ca. 1950)

IN MEMORIAM ORVILLE WYSS

Dr. Orville Wyss, Professor Emeritus of Microbiology, died on November 11, 1993, in Brush, Colorado. He was born in Medford, Wisconsin, on September 10, 1912, and attained his early education there. In 1937, the University of Wisconsin at Madison awarded him the B.S. in Bacteriology and the M.S. and Ph.D. in 1938 and 1941, respectively, also in Bacteriology. His doctoral supervisor was Dr. Perry Wilson, a pioneer in research on nitrogen fixation and the bacteria of the genus *Azotobacter*. The interests he developed while under Dr. Wilson's tutelage brought Dr. Wyss national attention in the physiology of nitrogen fixation and the organisms concerned with this process in nature.

In 1941, Orville accepted a research position with Wallace Tiernan, Inc., a pharmaceutical concern, and in the same year married Margaret Bedell in Nutley, New Jersey. His work with antifungal substances at Tiernan led to the development of Desenex, a commercially successful product still widely marketed after 50 years. In 1945, Dr. Wyss joined the faculty at The University of Texas as Associate Professor of Bacteriology and in 1948 was promoted to Professor, the rank he held until his retirement and subsequent death. On the death of Professor and Chairman O. B. Williams in 1959, Wyss became Chairman of the Department, now renamed Microbiology, and served in that capacity until 1969. He returned to the chairmanship for the 1975-76 school year and afterwards served with full-time teaching duties until his retirement in 1983. During Orville's years as chairman, the department grew from a faculty of seven to fifteen; the expansion included nationally prominent individuals who were attracted to Texas by his presence.

Orville Wyss supervised the work of some 70 graduate students, ten of whom became chairmen of their own departments, five became deans, and one the provost of a major university. His students went from Austin to many of the great universities of the world, to important positions in industry, and to government laboratories. Wyss' total contribution to American science must include the influence that his teaching had not only on his students but also on the students of his students. The notion of intellectual progeny of a gifted teacher applies well to Professor Wyss.

Dr. Wyss published some 115 research articles, several monographs, and two textbooks entitled *Microorganisms and Man* and *Elementary Microbiology*. He served on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Bacteriology* and *Applied Microbiology* as well as reader for many other journals. He also served on the review panels of the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Research Corporation and other granting agencies. Wyss was a member of various scientific societies and held various offices including the presidency of the American Society for Microbiology (ASM) in 1964, Texas Chapters of Sigma Xi and Phi Kappa Phi, and the Board of Governors of the American Academy of Microbiology (AAM). He was a founding member of AAM and played a major role in the development of the Texas Branch of ASM, for which he received the Distinguished Service Award. He served as consultant to the NSF Antarctica Research Program, the Chemical-Biological-Radiological Agency and also to various industrial concerns. Perhaps his most cherished honor was the endowment made to The University of Texas by a group of his former students and friends for the creation of the Orville Wyss Scholarship.

Finally, Orville Wyss' effect on science must be viewed in personal terms. He taught his students

the place of microbiology in science and the difference between science and life. He nurtured the search for knowledge, for self-respect, and for personal honor. It is important to remember also that Orville's former students remember him as a friend and colleague. He was philosopher, teacher, mentor, and much more. Professor Wyss is survived by his wife, Dr. Margaret Wyss, three daughters, Ann, Jane, and Patti, and two granddaughters.

SANITARY SEWER SERVICE PERMIT

No. 1187

Austin, Texas

Received of Andrewartha Date 6/9/1933
 Address 902 W. 30th
 Amount twelve dollars \$ 12.00
 Builder or Owner J.W. Ray Plumber _____
 Lot 28 Block _____ Subdivision _____ Plat No. _____

Date of Connection	<u>6/15/1933</u>	
By City	<u>9 1/2' W/ELL</u>	
By Plumber	_____	
Checked By	<u>Robinson</u>	
Size Main	<u>6"</u>	Depth <u>2 1/2'</u>
Main Assign.	<u>1st St.</u>	<u>36' from PL</u>
Stub Depth	_____	Prop. Line _____
Stub Location	_____	
Book No.	_____	
Paving Cut.	<u>A-791</u>	No. _____

No.	Fittings	Size	Price
	10' Pipe	6"	1.50
	8' Pipe	4" tile	.72
1	Wyes	6x6	.66
1	Bends	6x4	.66
	Reducers		
	Plugs		
	Sand		
	Gravel		
	Remix		
	Stoppers		
	Castings		
	Other	laying pipe	.46
	Labor:	2 days	7.70

Sewer service permit for this house (1933)