

# OLD WEST AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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Ms. Mary Jo Galindo, Chair  
Historic Landmark Commission  
City of Austin  
Post Office Box 1088  
Austin, TX 78767

October 17, 2018

RE: NRD-2018-062 & NRD-2018-061 demolitions of 1204 & 1206 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street

Dear Chair Galindo and HLC Commissioners,

The Steering Committee of the Old West Austin Neighborhood Association is requesting that you delay issuing demolition permits for the above bungalows, which are contributing properties to our West Line National Register District. We would like to have a longer opportunity to work with the owners and see whether we can find other ways of saving these houses with your support.

These homes retain a high degree of integrity and embody the distinguishing characteristics of the classic Austin architectural style, which is quickly being erased as more and more homes are demolished. They have served as homes for working class members of our neighborhood for over 100 years, including stonemasons and firefighters that worked at the landmark fire station next door. Built before cars redefined our landscape, these homes represent the cultural practices and the way of life of people in Austin at a time when people engaged with their neighbors instead of driving from one air-conditioned box to another.

If these homes are demolished and the lots are combined, we will lose the unique physical characteristic of a neighborhood designed for people instead of cars, which is a main component that contributes to Old West Austin's character, image, and cultural identity.

The properties are zoned SF3, which allows greater possibilities than demolition of the two livable houses in order to build one large structure. OWANA strongly supports infill and density, but demoing these houses will reduce density and contribute to the suburbification of our neighborhood.

OWANA would like to start the discussion with the following suggestions:

- 1) Add on to one or both of the houses making it fit the needs of the family while maintaining the streetscape and neighborhood fabric
- 2) Build a new house in the combined back yards of the existing houses and use the existing houses as rentals or ADUs

OWANA is under a lot of pressure by developers to tear down contributing bungalows and cottages in order to build houses that do not fit within the historical façade of the street. We would like more opportunity to explore these and other possibilities that would allow our neighborhood to retain its feeling of community and its history.

We hope that the Commissioners will support OWANA and urge the city staff to work with the owners to see whether we can reach an agreeable outcome for all concerned.

Sincerely yours,

DocuSigned by:



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Shawn Shillington

President