

# ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

**CASE NUMBER:** C14H-2019-0112

**HLC DATE:**

July 22, 2019

**PC DATE:**

August 13, 2019 (postponed)

September 24, 2019

**APPLICANT:** Historic Landmark Commission

**HISTORIC NAME:** Herrera House

**WATERSHED:** Lady Bird Lake

**ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE:** 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** 3

**ZONING FROM:** SF-3-NP to SF-3-NP-H

**SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the proposed zoning change for the property's significance in architecture, historical association, and community value.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:** Architecture, historical association, community value

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:** Recommend the proposed zoning change for the property's significance in architecture, its historical association, and its community value. Vote: 9-0.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** Recommend the proposed zoning change for the property's significance in architecture, its historical association, and its community value. Vote: 11-0-1.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The property meets the criteria for designation as a City of Austin historic landmark. It is more than 50 years old and retains a high degree of integrity. It is listed as a potential historic landmark in the East Austin Historic Resources Survey (2016).

The property meets the criteria for landmark designation as set forth in City Code:

- a. **Architecture.** The house embodies the distinguishing characteristics of the gable-front-and-wing form of the National Folk style, including an L-plan, cross-gabled roof, and corner porch. The property meets this criterion.
- b. **Historical association.** The Herrera family occupied the house for 105 years: Valentine and Josefa Herrera and other family members first lived there (around 1911 until 1963); followed by their daughter Mary Grace Herrera, with other family members (until 1992); followed by Diana Herrera Castañeda (until 2016). Consuelo Herrera is listed as a renter from 1924 until around 1941, from the time she finished high school until she married Patricio Méndez. Valentine Herrera ran a Spanish school, while Josefa owned El Fenix Bakery, a confectionery shop. Consuelo Herrera Méndez was the first Mexican American teacher in AISD, beginning while she lived in the house; she taught in the district for 45 years. Mary Grace Herrera was AISD's second Mexican American teacher, and taught at Palm School for at least 35 years. Diana Herrera Castañeda was a prominent East Austin activist and the first Latina elected to the AISD School Board. The property meets this criterion.

- c. **Archaeology.** The property was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.
- d. **Community value.** The property contributes to cultural identity of the city due to its associations with trailblazing Mexican American educators and advocates.
- e. **Landscape feature.** The property is not a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.

**CITY COUNCIL DATE:** November 14, 2019 (post-  
poned); January 23, 2020

**ACTION:**

**ORDINANCE READINGS:** 1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

**ORDINANCE NUMBER:**

**CASE MANAGER:** Cara Bertron

**PHONE:** 974-1446

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS:**

Austin Independent School District  
Austin Lost and Found Pets  
Austin Neighborhoods Council  
Barrido Unido Neighborhood Assn.  
Bike Austin  
Black Improvement Association  
Capital Metro  
Claim Your Destiny Foundation  
Del Valle Community Coalition  
East Austin Conservancy  
East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood  
Association  
East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood Plan  
Contact Team  
El Concilio Mexican-American  
Neighborhoods

Friends of Austin Neighborhoods  
Greater East Austin Neighborhood  
Association  
Guadalupe Neighborhood Development  
Corporation  
Hill Country Conservancy  
Homeless Neighborhood Association  
Neighborhood Empowerment Foundation  
Neighbors United for Progress  
Preservation Austin  
SELTexas  
Sierra Club, Austin Regional Group  
Tejana Biligual Community  
Tejano Town  
United East Austin Coalition

**BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

**Architecture:**

The house is a significant example of the National Folk Style popular at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in vernacular residential design. The wing-and-gable configuration was very popular in southern climates, as it provided an ample front porch that cooled the house and provided a sheltered outside living area in the days before the introduction of electric fans and air conditioning. Wing-and-gable style houses such as the Herrera house are vanishing resources in Austin.

**Historical Association:**

Valentin and Josefa Herrera were the longest-term occupants of 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street; they lived in the house from 1911 until their deaths in 1942 (Valentin) and 1963 (Josefa). Their seven children lived with them at various times, as well as various grandchildren. Their daughter Consuela Herrera lived at 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street from at least 1924 until around 1941. Another daughter, Mary Grace Herrera, lived at 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street all her life, until at least 1986.

Valentin (or Valentine, or Valentino) Alcalé Herrera was born in Mexico in 1856 or 1859. He and his family immigrated to the United States in 1899. In 1910 he lived in Comal, Texas, and was farming rented land. The following year, the Herreras had moved to 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in Austin, where Valentin operated and taught at a Spanish school until at least 1920. In 1935, he worked as a salesman in El Fenix, his wife's bakery. Valentin Herrera died in Austin in 1942.

Josefa (or Josefina or Josephine) Duran Herrera was born in Mexico in 1871. She married Valentin Herrera in 1887 in El Saltillo, in Mexico's Coahuila state. As noted earlier, the couple had seven children, all of whom lived with them at 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street for some period. Josefa's occupation is not listed in most city directories, as is typical for women, but the 1924 directory does list her as the owner of a confectionery at 518 Chicon Street. By 1935, she and her daughter Florinda were the proprietors of El Fenix Bakery at 1907 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, which was located on the same property as the house (street numbering has changed). No other information about El Fenix Bakery could be found. Josefa also worked as a seamstress. She was a member of the El Buen Pastor Presbyterian Church. Josefa Herrera died in Austin in 1963. She spent 49 of her 50 years as an Austin resident in the house at 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Her death certificate lists her as a housewife.

Consuelo Herrera Méndez was born in 1904 in San Marcos. She attended school at Palm Elementary and Allan Junior High before graduating from Austin High School in 1923, a notable accomplishment at the time for a Mexican American woman. Though she passed the exam for elementary teachers after finishing high school, the Austin Independent School District refused to hire her because of her ethnicity, insisting that there were no vacancies. For the next few years, Consuelo taught in Bay City and then Taft, Texas. In 1927, she returned to Austin and was hired as the first Mexican American teacher in AISD, following lobbying by the City Council of Parent-Teacher Associations. At the time, she was also one of the first Tejanas to teach in a major school system in Texas. She taught Mexican American children at the segregated Comal Street School, also called *la escolita*. She later taught at Zavala School (ca. 1936-56) and Brooke Elementary (1956-72). Thirty-three years after finishing high school, Consuelo earned her B.A. from the University of Texas following years of summer school.

Consuelo married Patricio J. Méndez, an attorney, in 1943, and moved out of 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street at that time. Accounts of her life stress that she married with the understanding that she would continue to teach. The Méndezes did not have children, but they founded and led the Zavala Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) to increase parental involvement. Consuelo also wrote articles for the state PTA newsletter and translated it into Spanish. The Méndezes were active in local politics, participating in poll tax drives and voter registration initiatives for Hispanic residents. Patricio was the first Latino to run for Austin City Council in 1951, while Consuelo was the president of Ladies LULAC Council No. 202 in 1962 and chaired the state LULAC convention that year. Some sources state that she founded the No. 202 chapter. Consuelo Herrera Méndez retired from teaching in 1972 and died in 1985. In 1987, the new Mendez Middle School was named after her.

Mary Grace Herrera was born in 1912 in McQueeney, Texas. She was the second Mexican American teacher in AISD, after her sister Consuelo. Mary Grace worked as a teacher in Fulmore Junior High School, then at Palm School beginning in 1938. In 1973, she was a featured witness in a trial where the federal government brought suit against Austin. At issue, as framed by *The American Statesman*, was designing a plan to desegregate elementary schools and "eliminating discrimination—if it exists—in mostly Mexican-American schools." Herrera testified about instructions to only speak to students in English, and agreed with other witnesses that no special programs existed "to meet the special needs of the Mexican-American student." Mary Grace Herrera lived in 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street from her childhood until her death in 1992.

Diana Herrera Castañeda lived in 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street from 1992 until her death in 2016. Ms. Castañeda attended Travis High School and Texas State University and worked for the Girl Scouts Council. Following the family tradition of trailblazing in local education, she was the

first Latina elected to the AISD School Board in 1992 and served in the PTAs for Metz Elementary, Brook Elementary, Sanchez Elementary, and Austin High. Ms. Castañeda was a well-known activist in East Austin, with strong involvement with LULAC, the local chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW), and the Mexican American Democrats. Though Ms. Castañeda lived in the house after the historic period (50+ years ago), her association with the property is notable and will become a part of the house's historic significance in the future.

**PARCEL NO.:** 0204080616

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** LOT 3 BLK 2 OLT 22 DIV O CYPHER RESUB

**ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT:**

Homestead: \$3,666; City portion: \$803

Non-homestead: \$1,968; City portion: \$1,350 (no cap)

**APPRAISED VALUE:** \$413,340

**PRESENT USE:** Vacant

**CONDITION:** Fair

**PRESENT OWNERS:**

Rex Bowers

P.O. Box 92077

Austin, TX 78709-2077

**DATE BUILT:** ca. 1911

**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** No substantial alterations. Doors have been replaced.

**ORIGINAL OWNER(S):** Unknown. Silas Wright rented the house in 1912; Betsy Woodson also lived there and may have owned the property at that time. Valentine and Josefa Herrera occupied the house by 1914 and are listed as owners by 1916.

**OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS:**

None

## PHOTOGRAPHS

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### *Property*



*Primary (north) façade of 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.*

### *Herrera Family*



*Mary Grace Herrera*



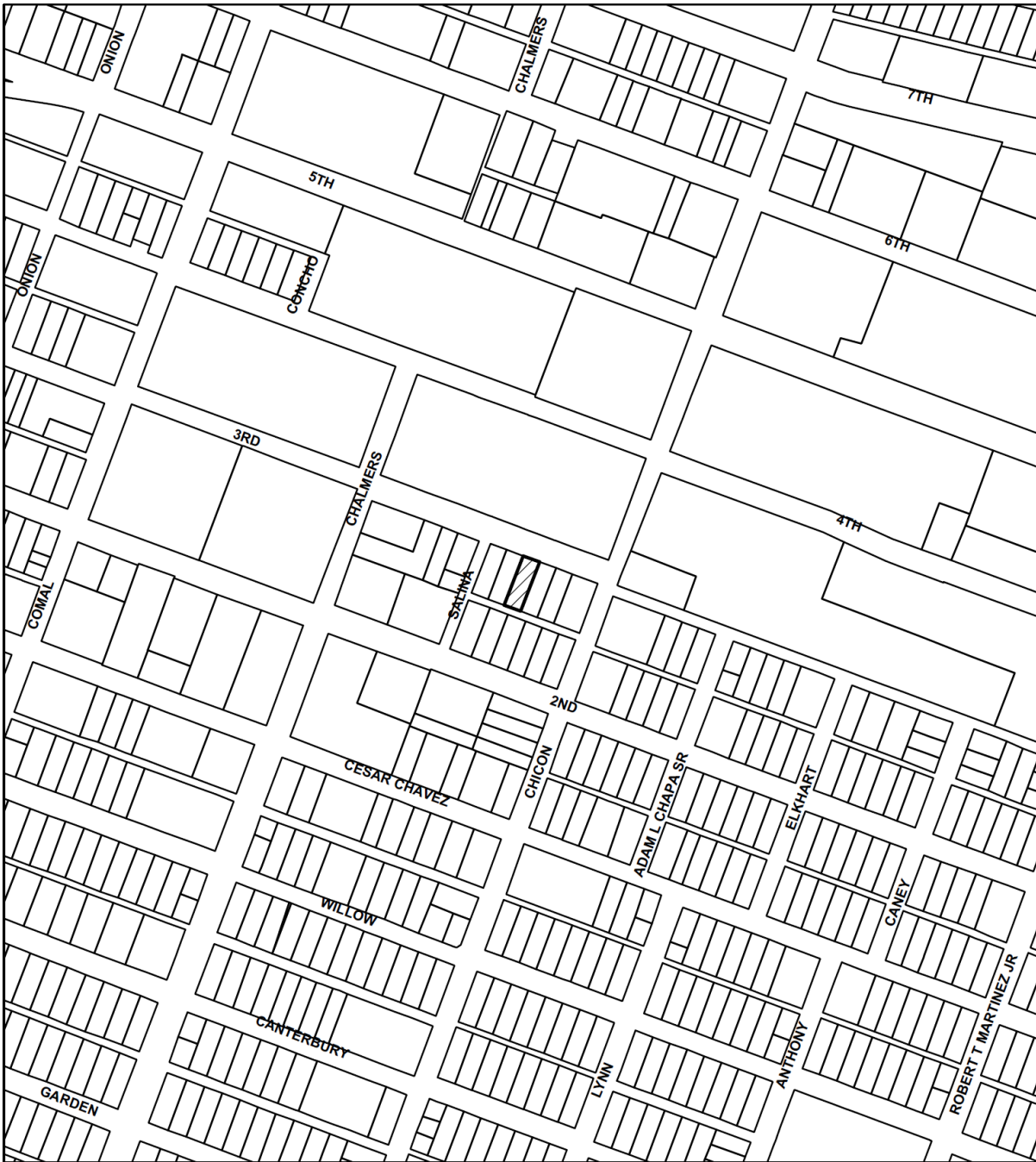
*Patricio Mendez and Consuelo Herrera Mendez*






*Mary Grace and Consuelo Herrera*

Family photos provided by Rosanna Cervantes.

## LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 333'

### NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HDP-2019-0192  
LOCATION: 1805 E 3RD ST



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.

This product has been produced by CTM for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.

# ¿Quién fué Consuela Herrera Mendez? Who was Consuelo Herrera Mendez?

by Alfredo Santos c/s

Many of us have passed by **Mendez Middle School** in the **Dove Springs** neighborhood. We know it is located in the heart of **Dove Springs**. We know that **Mendez Middle School** is close to the **Dove Springs Recreation Center** and **Fire Station # 24**. But how many of us know who **Mendez Middle School** is named after? Not many . . . including me, . . . until now.

**Consuelo Herrera Mendez** was the first Mexican American teacher in the **Austin Independent School District**. She was born in **San Marcos, Texas** in 1904 and move to **Austin** in time to start the first grade at **Palm Elementary School** which is located at the corner of **IH-35** and **Cesar Chavez Street**. She also attended **Allan Junior High** and graduated from **Austin High School** in 1923.

In the summer of 1923 she took the **Second Grade Certificate Teachers Exam** and received a temporary teaching certificate and then moved to **Bay City, Texas** where she taught 2nd, 4th, and 5th grade for two years at the **Mexican School**. After moving on to teach in **Taft, Texas** for one year, she returned to **Austin** and began what would be a 45 year career with the **Austin Independent School District**.

According to the *Austin American Statesman* in a November 13th, 1936 article, Mrs. **Mendez** was among the first teachers at **Zavala Elementary School** when it opened. "Zavala, the new Mexican school between Third and Fourth on Canadian street, has an enrollment already of 361. It is the first and only Mexican school in the city where Mexican children have been segregated. From Bickler, Comal, Palm and Mex, children came in September and made themselves at home in the new building completed during the summer under the school building program."

Mrs. **Mendez** own education after high school consisted of attending **The University of Texas at Austin** during the evening and summers until she earned her bachelors degree in education in 1955. In an *Austin American Statesman* column called *Vicinos* which was written by **Hortensia Palomares**, **Consuela Herrera** married **Patricio J. Mendez** in 1943 with the understanding that she could continue being a teacher. Mrs. **Mendez** was active in the community with **Girl Scouts** and **LULAC** (League of United Latin American Citizens) and was recognized for "Outstanding Community Service" in 1961 for helping to establish a scholarship fund for Hispanic high school students.

After a lifetime of being involved in education as a teacher, PTA officer at **Brooke** and **Zavala Elementary Schools**, and even her husband **Patricio J. Mendez** campaign for a seat on the **Austin City Council** in 1951, Mrs. **Mendez** finally retired from teaching in 1972. **Consuelo Herrera Mendez** passed away at the age of 81 on March 7th, 1985.



ABOVE: **Consuelo Herrera Mendez**, the namesake of **Mendez Middle School** in the **Austin Independent School District**.

A special thanks to **Jessica Victoria**, the **Parent Support Specialist** at **Mendez** for help in putting together this story on **Consuelo Herrera Mendez**.

“¿Quien Fue Consuelo Herrera Mendez?” La Voz, September 2018.



### Mary Grace Herrera

Miss Mary Grace Herrera passed on to be with her Heavenly Father on Sunday, September 6, 1992.

Miss Herrera was born on December 31, 1912, in McQueeney, Texas, to Valentin and Josefa D. Herrera.

Seven brothers and sisters preceded her in death.

Mary was the second Mexican-American teacher in the Austin Independent School District; her sister Consuelo H. Mendez was the first. Miss Herrera taught at Fulmore Junior High School and at Palm Elementary School, where she retired in 1974. She was also active in The First Mexican Baptist Church as Superintendent of the Youth Department in Sunday School.

Miss Herrera is survived by Edward Herrera and his wife, Ninfa, Edelmira H. Saenz and husband, Enrique Saenz, and Regoberto M. Herrera of San Diego, California. Also surviving are great nieces and nephews, AISD Trustee Diana Castaneda, Virginia Garcia, Sylvia Garza, Edward Herrera II, and Consuelo Grace H. Quinonez. Also, Alexandra Saenz, Enrique (Henry) Saenz, Pedro Saenz, Maria Elena Saenz, and Thomas Saenz, and 11 great-great-grand nieces and nephews.

Pallbearers are Jimmy Castaneda, Robert Garcia, Ray Quinonez, Edward Herrera, II, Thomas Saenz, and County Commissioner Marcos DeLeon. Honorary pallbearers are Enrique Saenz, Jr., Jimmy, Jr., Rico Castaneda, Robert Joseph Garcia, and Eugene Gaona.

Tonight, at 7:00 PM, a short prayer service will be held in the viewing room at the funeral home by the Reverend Frank Rodriguez. The fu-

neral service will be at 2:00 PM, Tuesday, at the First Mexican Baptist Church, 1110 Medina Street. The body will lie in state from 1:00 PM until 2:00 PM at the church. Burial: Austin Memorial Park.

Services under the direction of Amey-Hyllin-Manor Funeral Home, 2620 S. Congress Avenue.



## The Senate of The State of Texas

### SENATE PROCLAMATION NO. 481

#### In Memory of Diana Jeanette Herrera Castañeda

**WHEREAS**, The Senate of the State of Texas honors and commemorates the life of Diana Jeanette Herrera Castañeda, who died May 21, 2016, at the age of 64; and

**WHEREAS**, Diana Castañeda was an exemplary citizen whose sincere concern for the least fortunate among us and activism on their behalf was an inspiration to all who knew her; and

**WHEREAS**, She grew up in a family that had long been influential in the East Austin community, and she continued that tradition by her own efforts to provide meals and support to the neighborhood children; she and her husband established a track club so that young people in the community could participate in a sport that was often financially out of reach for their families; and

**WHEREAS**, In 1992, Mrs. Castañeda became the first Latina to be elected to the Austin school board; over the course of her tenure in public office, she was noted for championing the needs of low-income minority communities and for her willingness to be a leader and raise issues that were not always popular; and

**WHEREAS**, She was active in a wide range of civic and professional organizations, including the National Organization for Women, the Mexican American Women's Business Association, and the Hispanic Women's Network of Texas; she served as president of the Mexican American School Board Association and as vice chair of the Mexican American Cultural Center Task Force; and

**WHEREAS**, She and her beloved husband, Jimmy, raised five children, Jimmy Castañeda Jr., Rigo Castañeda, Dianna Castañeda,

### S.P. No. 481

Lauralei Kufirin, and Rosanna Cervantes, and were blessed with nine grandchildren; and

**WHEREAS**, A woman of courage, strength, and compassion, she gave generously to others, and her wisdom, her perseverance, and her enthusiasm for living each day to the fullest will not be forgotten by those who were privileged to share in her life; and

**WHEREAS**, Diana Castañeda was a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother, and she leaves behind memories that will be cherished forever by her family and countless friends; now, therefore, be it

**PROCLAIMED**, That the Senate of the State of Texas hereby extend sincere condolences to the bereaved family of Diana Jeanette Herrera Castañeda; and, be it further

**PROCLAIMED**, That a copy of this Proclamation be prepared for her family as an expression of deepest sympathy from the Texas Senate.

Watson



Amber Watson  
Member, Texas Senate

I hereby certify that the above Proclamation was adopted. —

Latey Spaw  
Secretary of the Senate

# PHOTOGRAPHS AND ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND

**CASE NUMBER:** C14H-2019-0112

**HISTORIC NAME:** Herrera House

*Property*



*Primary (north) façade of 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.*



*Non-historic-age rear addition (can be removed).*

*Herrera Family*



*Mary Grace Herrera*



*Patricio Mendez and Consuelo Herrera Mendez*



*Mary Grace and Consuelo Herrera*

Family photos provided by Rosanna Cervantes.

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In the summer of 1923 she took the **Second Grade Certificate Teachers Exam** and received a temporary teaching certificate and then moved to **Bay City, Texas** where she taught 2nd, 4th, and 5th grade for two years at the **Mexican School**. After moving on to teach in **Taft, Texas** for one year, she returned to **Austin** and began what would be a 45 year career with the **Austin Independent School District**.

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After a lifetime of being involved in education as a teacher, PTA officer at **Brooke and Zavala Elementary Schools**, and even her husband **Patricio J. Mendez** campaign for a seat on the **Austin City Council** in 1951, **Mrs. Mendez** finally retired from teaching in 1972. **Consuelo Herrera Mendez** passed away at the age of 81 on March 7th, 1985.



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“¿Quien Fue Consuelo Herrera Mendez?” *La Voz*, September 2018.

# Teacher Heard In School Case

By NELL SHEFFIELD  
Staff Writer

Miss Mary Grace Herrera, a teacher at Palm Elementary School since 1938, took the stand when the second day of Austin school desegregation trial began Tuesday.

Miss Herrera taught most of the other four witnesses who were on the stand Monday.

She was being questioned by Ed Idar, attorney representing the

Mexican-American Legal Defense fund.

Monday's other witnesses were Bill Dinsmore of 6003 Thames; Alex Martinez of 3311 Bengston; Joe Carmona of 2205 Canterbury; Maftalie Garcia of 7516 St. Phillip.

With the exception of Miss Herrera, each witness described his early years at Metz, Palm, Zavala, Comal Elementary Schools, Allan Junior High and Austin High — unless they dropped out before completing their public school education.

Joe Rich, the same attorney who represented the federal government in the June, 1971, trial in U.S. Dist. Judge Jack Roberts' court, is again representing the government.

Donald Thomas, who represented the district in the 1971 appeal before the Fifth Circuit Court in New Orleans, is the trial lawyer in the trial this week.

Judge Roberts has granted permission to the intervenors in the trial to participate in examination in the current trial. Ms. Sylvia Drew is representing the NAACP Legal Defense Fund; Ed Idar represents the Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund.

Rich, in his opening statement Monday, gave a brief

history of the first trial and appeal and said the government does not feel the local school district has done what the Aug. 2, 1972, ruling from the Fifth Circuit Court called for.

The basic issue is desegregation of blacks primarily on the elementary school level, and eliminating discrimination — if it exists — in mostly Mexican-American schools in the city.

Schools he mentioned by name as discriminating are Johnston High School, Allan and Martin Junior Highs and Zavala Elementary.

Rich said there is "a lack of equal opportunity in some minority schools because of the low achievement shown in testing, a higher drop-out rate, less experienced faculties and older school facilities on smaller sites."

He said proof of these claims would be shown in documents placed on exhibit with the court.

Exhibits include: enrollment of non-black schools; maps of elementary school zone; faculty assignment; charts showing promotion of Spanish surname students; school plants and building programs; selected school sites, their acquisition, school construction additions and ca-

(See SCHOOL, Page 6)

# ● SCHOOL CASE

(Continued From Page 1)

capacity; salary and experience listing.

The examination of each witness was extensive, with the four attorneys participating in the questioning.

Miss Herrera said when she first began teaching at Palm she had only Mexican - American students who could not speak English. She said she spoke only English to them but sometimes used a student to help interpret.

She said she spoke English because, "if you were going to teach the child English, you were not supposed to speak to him in Spanish — if you wanted him to learn English."

Miss Herrera said teachers were told not to use any other language but English, but did not remember who told her.

She said the bilingual program at Palm now is the only program designed to meet the need of Mexican children. She added it "Works beautifully" with children who speak both languages, but not so well with only English-speaking students.

Answering questions by Idar about what effect the program had on school students back in the late 1930s, Miss Herrera said she couldn't answer, because the results of the program still are not known even now. "I can't say what it would have done 'way back in 1938," she said.

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schools they attended which were designed to meet the special needs of the Mexican - American student.

They — except Dinsmore, who is Anglo — testified that there was a rule at Zavala that Spanish could not be spoken on the campus, but they personally had not been punished for doing so.

Each witness said he had made good enough grades at the schools attended, but that there were times when a grade had to be repeated. Each testified they were about the same age as other youngsters in their classes in junior high school.

Garcia, a maintenance man with the Texas National Guard, said he had trouble understanding instructions in the first grade at Palm. The teacher spoke only in English. He said under cross - examination by Thomas, however, that he has a better than average command of the English language now.

Judge Roberts, at the end of the first trial, ruled on June 28, 1971, that no discrimination against Mexican - Americans — by school board policy — existed in Austin schools.

The appellate court, however, ordered that each school must be examined and that if discrimination did exist, the court should fashion a remedy for discrimination.

This is the basic issue of the trial, along with designing a plan to desegregate the more than 50 elementary schools in the city — only a few of which teacher spoke only in English. He said under cross - examination by Thomas, however, that he has a better than average command of the English language now.

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Testimony of the four witnesses who attended the East Austin schools showed they were taught in the English language and were reassigned to different schools when their family moved from one address to another.

Dinsmore, Garcia, Martinez and Carmona all attended elementary school in the late 1930's. Two of the witnesses — Carmona and Garcia — said they dropped out of school before graduating because they "needed to go to work."

Each of the witnesses said they could recall no special programs available at the

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Judge Roberts, on June 19, 1971, ordered the district's mixing plan implemented. The plan, which included elementary schools, would cluster the schools, and, periodically, minority schools would meet with Anglo schools in cultural exchange, visits to learning centers and field trips. This would occur about 25 per cent of the school year.

Opponents of the plan, however, called the policy "part-time desegregation" and it was not accepted by the appellate court.

*Teacher heard in school case," The Austin Statesman, 5/8/1973.*



### Mary Grace Herrera

Miss Mary Grace Herrera passed on to be with her Heavenly Father on Sunday, September 6, 1992.

Miss Herrera was born on December 31, 1912, in McQueeney, Texas, to Valentin and Josefa D. Herrera.

Seven brothers and sisters preceded her in death.

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Miss Herrera is survived by Edward Herrera and his wife, Ninfa, Edelmira H. Saenz and husband, Enrique Saenz, and Regoberto M. Herrera of San Diego, California. Also surviving are great nieces and nephews, AISD Trustee Diana Castaneda, Virginia Garcia, Sylvia Garza, Edward Herrera II, and Consuelo Grace H. Quinonez. Also, Alexandra Saenz, Enrique (Henry) Saenz, Pedro Saenz, Maria Elena Saenz, and Thomas Saenz, and 11 great-great-grand nieces and nephews.

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## The Senate of The State of Texas

### SENATE PROCLAMATION NO. 481

#### In Memory of Diana Jeanette Herrera Castañeda

**WHEREAS**, The Senate of the State of Texas honors and commemorates the life of Diana Jeanette Herrera Castañeda, who died May 21, 2016, at the age of 64; and

**WHEREAS**, Diana Castañeda was an exemplary citizen whose sincere concern for the least fortunate among us and activism on their behalf was an inspiration to all who knew her; and

**WHEREAS**, She grew up in a family that had long been influential in the East Austin community, and she continued that tradition by her own efforts to provide meals and support to the neighborhood children; she and her husband established a track club so that young people in the community could participate in a sport that was often financially out of reach for their families; and

**WHEREAS**, In 1992, Mrs. Castañeda became the first Latina to be elected to the Austin school board; over the course of her tenure in public office, she was noted for championing the needs of low-income minority communities and for her willingness to be a leader and raise issues that were not always popular; and

**WHEREAS**, She was active in a wide range of civic and professional organizations, including the National Organization for Women, the Mexican American Women's Business Association, and the Hispanic Women's Network of Texas; she served as president of the Mexican American School Board Association and as vice chair of the Mexican American Cultural Center Task Force; and

**WHEREAS**, She and her beloved husband, Jimmy, raised five children, Jimmy Castañeda Jr., Rigo Castañeda, Dianna Castañeda,

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Lauralei Kufirin, and Rosanna Cervantes, and were blessed with nine grandchildren; and

**WHEREAS**, A woman of courage, strength, and compassion, she gave generously to others, and her wisdom, her perseverance, and her enthusiasm for living each day to the fullest will not be forgotten by those who were privileged to share in her life; and

**WHEREAS**, Diana Castañeda was a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother, and she leaves behind memories that will be cherished forever by her family and countless friends; now, therefore, be it

**PROCLAIMED**, That the Senate of the State of Texas hereby extend sincere condolences to the bereaved family of Diana Jeanette Herrera Castañeda; and, be it further

**PROCLAIMED**, That a copy of this Proclamation be prepared for her family as an expression of deepest sympathy from the Texas Senate.

Watson



Amber Watson  
Member, Texas Senate

I hereby certify that the above Proclamation was adopted.

Latey Spaw  
Secretary of the Senate



Austin Raza Round Table  
August 20, 2019

Mayor Adler and Members, Austin City Council  
P.O. Box 1088  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Mayor Adler and Members, Austin City Council:

This letter is to inform you of the historical importance of the Herrera house, located at 1805 E. Third Street, to the Mexican American community of Austin, and recommend that you take action to preserve this historic residence.

The house was built in \_\_\_\_by\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Valentin Herrera, and his wife, Josefa Herrera moved into the house in 1911. Mr. Herrera taught in and operated a local Spanish-language school, and he and his wife raised their seven children in that house. An industrious family, Mrs. Herrera was also a business woman; for a period of time she owned and operated a bakery out of the house. Consuelo and Mary Grace Herrera were two of the couple's seven children. As noted in the August 1 article published in the Austin American-Statesman, both sisters became teachers in the Austin Independent School District (AISD). Consuelo's education consisted of attending evening and weekend classes at the University of Texas. She received her bachelor's degree in education in 1955, a rare occurrence for Mexican American women of the time. Because Consuelo and Grace were Mexican American and schools were still segregated, they could not be hired by AISD to teach Anglo children. Instead they were hired to teach at Zavala Elementary School, a segregated school for Mexican American children. Consuelo Herrera Mendez became the district's first Mexican American teacher. She taught for 45 years and has a middle school named for her. Her sister Mary Grace became the second Mexican American teacher at AISD, and taught there for over 35 years.

Later, the house became the home of Diana Herrera Castaneda, niece of Consuelo and Mary Grace Herrera, and her family. Diana Herrera Castaneda's aunt Consuelo Herrera Mendez and her husband Patricio J. Mendez, an attorney and first Mexican American to run for Austin City Council, were her role models. Diana Herrera Castaneda was elected to the AISD Board of Trustees in 1992, and worked to improve public schools in East Austin, prevent the privatization of schools, and ensure that AISD was providing equitable educational opportunities. Diana was

also a long term member of the National Organization for Women (NOW), serving as the Texas NOW chapter Vice President for Diversity and Vice President for Membership, and was elected to the National Board of NOW in 2008.

Given the long and important history of residents of 1805 E. Third Street, particularly the three trail blazing Herrera women we highlighted above, we the members of Austin Raza Round Table believe that the house must be preserved as a historic landmark in Austin's history. Therefore, we request that you approve historic designation for the house. In addition, we request that you purchase the house and make it a museum much like the Ney, celebrating the lives of these important Austin women who called the house their home.

If you need to contact us, you may contact Dr. Jane Rivera, our facilitator, at 512-971-8304 or via email at [janehrivera@austin.rr.com](mailto:janehrivera@austin.rr.com).

Sincerely,

Raza Round Table of Austin:

Susana Almanza	Dora Hernandez	Gilbert Rivera
Larry Amaro	Lydia Hernandez	Dr. Jane Rivera
Edward Arevalo	Tom Herrera	Pete Rivera
Daniel Baladez	David King	Vera Rivera
Miguel Barbosa-	Marina Islas	Justin Rodriguez
Martinez	Daniel Llanes	Celeste Ruiz
Rebecca Birch	Griselda Lopez	Dionisio Salazar
Skylar T. Bonilla	Liz Lopez	Roen Salinas
Ernesto Calderon	Dr. Patricia Lopez	Eli Santiago
Ruby Calderon	Rosalinda Lopez	Alfredo Santos
Mario Cantu	Tim Mahoney	Clotilde Softikitis
Remi Carbajal	Anna Maciel	Marcelo Tafoya
Marylou Castillo	Valerie Menard	Teofilo Tijerina
Viola Cobos	Brigido Mireles	Rachel Torres
Marta Cotera	Eliza Montoya	Juan Antonio Tovar, Jr.
Dave Cortez	Gloria Moreno	Vince Tovar
Bertha Delgado	Amaru Necuametl	Cynthia Valadez
Noe Elias	Ernesto Nieto	Cynthia Valadez-Mata
Gloria Espitia	Julian Oliveres	Dr. Angela Valenzuela
Caly Fernandez	Geneva Olivia	Peggy Vasquez
Mike Flores	Robert R. Ojeda	Anita Villalobos
Irma Flores	Bessie Orta	Carl Webb
Gabriela Fullin	Juan Oyervides	Roy Woody
Alberto Garcia	Brandon Perez	Susanna Woody
Arturo Garcia	Alicia Perez-Hodge	Manuel Zamarripa
Manuel Ray Garcia	Delia Perez Meyer	Jessica Zamarripa
Daniel Gomez	Teresa Perez-Wisely	Dr. Emilio Zamora
Dr. Alfonso Gonzales	Gregory B. Pulte	
Ester Gonzales	Anita Quintanilla	
Gloria Guzman	Antonio Ramos	
Monica Guzman	Charles Rand	
Austin Hernandez	Rene Renteria	





**Serving East Austin Since 1972**

November 1, 2019

Dear Council Members,

We ask that you designate the Herrera Home at 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street as an historic landmark. The City of Austin's own Preservation Office enthusiastically recommends and endorses this honor. Likewise, the community is very excited about venerating the Mexican-American women who lived at this humble home and who did so much for their community. What more could you want in a landmark?

Visible evidence of the accomplishments of important Mexican-American community members' impact on Austin is vanishing before our eyes. Moreover, East Austin is woefully underrepresented in historic landmarks compared to West Austin.

To consider all sides, we understand the owner's antipathy as he planned to demolish the home and build anew. However there is a solution to this as there is plenty of room for two structures on the lot. Naturally work must be done to further preserve the structure. A Planning Commission member went on record saying it was a simple thing to renovate such a frame house. Let's face it, where there's a will, there's a way.

Ultimately we hope the owner respects the area history and the extant community enough to work with the city. There is plenty of room at 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street for both preservation and growth to co-exist—the best of both worlds.

For the future, let your actions reflect your respect for history, the Mexican-American Community and a culture threatened by gentrification.

And finally, let this chapter of Austin's story live on and ideally become a symbol of inspiration and strength for generations yet unborn.

Sincerely,

Bertha Delgado  
Carol Stall  
Phillip Thomas  
Elisa Montoya  
Reuben Montoya  
Ricardo Luna  
Hilario Delgado

cc: Steve Sedowski, Bertha Marie Delgado