

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION**  
**PERMITS IN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS**  
**APRIL 27, 2020**  
**NRD-2020-0015**  
**1616 NORTHUMBERLAND ROAD**  
**OLD WEST AUSTIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT**

**PROPOSAL**

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Construct a new rear addition, garage, and greenhouse.

**PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS**

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- 1) Demolish existing 1-story rear additions; replace with new 1-story addition and attached garage. The addition's wing and garage will have a low-slope membrane roof, while its western gable will have a composition shingle roof with exposed rafter tails. The proposed new addition is clad in fiber cement lap siding with a parged foundation and stepped frieze board. Window types include 6:6 double-hung, multi-lite fixed, and 6- and 12-lite casement.
- 2) Demolish and replace existing front porch flatwork.
- 3) Widen and rebuild first-floor bay window.
- 4) Add new 4:4 double-hung window at west elevation.
- 5) Replace second-floor wood siding with fiber cement lap siding to match addition.
- 6) Replace composition shingle roof.
- 7) Restore and repaint wood trim, windows, doors, and shutters at main façade.
- 8) Build new detached greenhouse. The green house will be clad in fiber cement lap siding to match addition. It is capped with a gabled standing-seam metal roof atop exposed rafter tails. Decorative trim includes a frieze board and wraparound sill. It features casement windows at the north and east elevations and steel French doors at the south.

**RESEARCH**

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The house at 1616 Northumberland Road was constructed in 1940 for Francis J. and Jane Johson Amsler. Francis Amsler was employed by the E.M. Scarbrough Company for almost 50 years, beginning his career as a teenager in 1923 before advancing to credit manager, treasurer, and vice-president of the company. Amsler was active in Austin's business and retail community throughout his long career, serving as head of the Better Business Bureau, president of the Texas State Retail Merchants' Association, chairman of the Austin Advertising Review Board, chairman of Downtown Austin Unlimited, and president of the Retail Credit Executives of Texas. The Amslers contributed to Austin in other ways as well; Jane Amsler was active in the Red Cross and Francis Amsler served the Austin Community War Chest, Child and Family Services, and the United Fund. The Amslers lived at 1616 Northumberland until at least 1974.

**STANDARDS FOR REVIEW**

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The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are used to evaluate new construction projects in National Register historic districts. Applicable standards include:

*2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.* The proposed project removes mostly non-historic material that is not visible from the street, with the exception of the enlarged bay window; the rebuilt window retains the original design.

*9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.* The proposed addition is differentiated from the old in its one-story design, shallow-pitched membrane roof, and articulated transition between original brick and new fiber cement siding. It is compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features of the historic building.

*10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its*

*environment would be unimpaired.* If the proposed addition and garage were removed in the future, most of the existing historic fabric would remain intact.

#### **STAFF COMMENTS**

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The house contributes to the Old West Austin National Register Historic District.

##### *Designation Criteria—Historic Landmark*

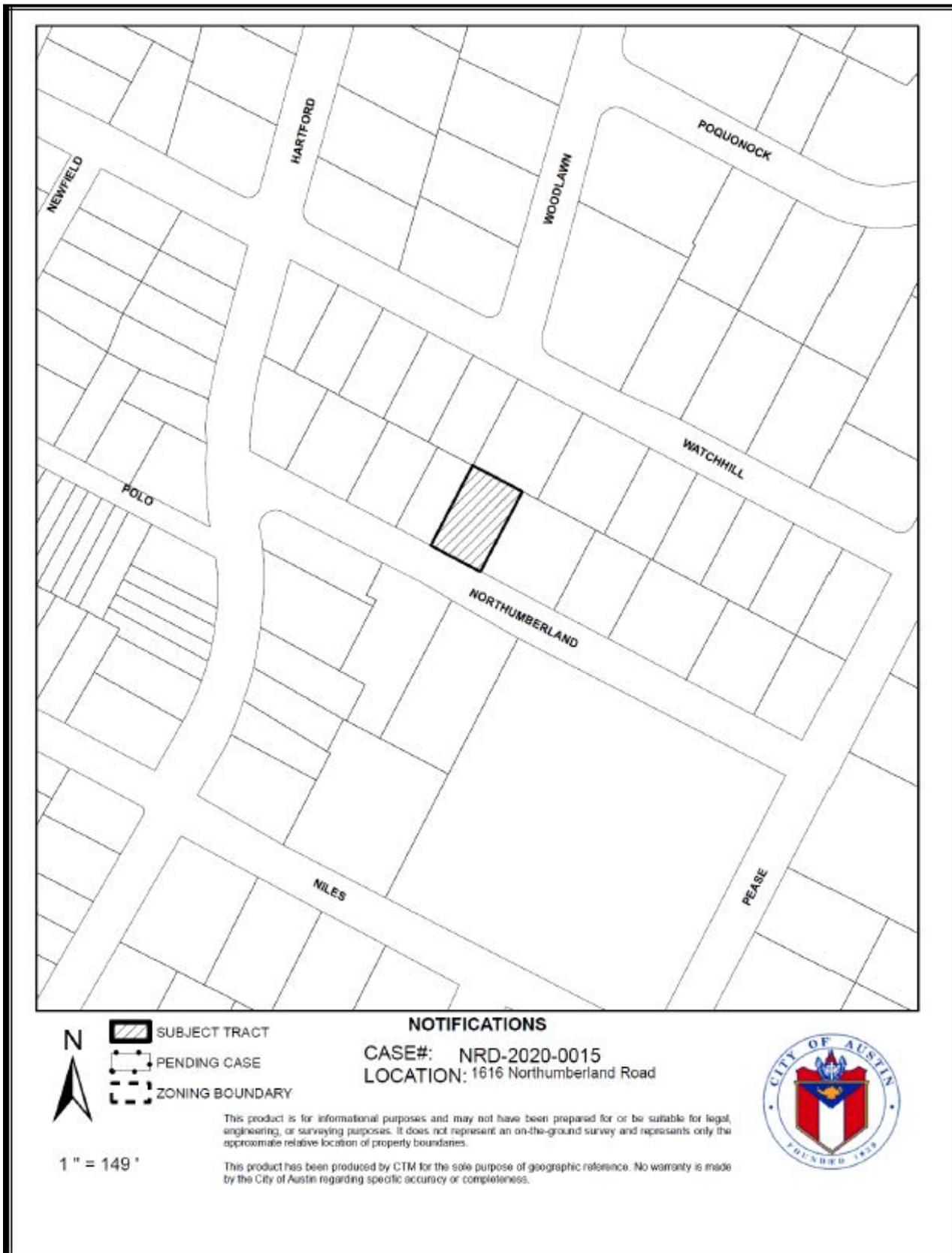
- 1) The building is more than 50 years old.
- 2) The building appears to retain high integrity.
- 3) Properties must meet two criteria for landmark designation (LDC §25-2-352). The property may demonstrate significance according to City Code:
  - a. *Architecture.* The house is constructed in an eclectic style, featuring Colonial Revival- and Monterrey-style influences.
  - b. *Historical association.* There do not appear to be historical associations; however, the Commission may consider the contributions of retail executive Francis Amsler to Austin business and advertising.
  - 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**

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Comment on and release the permit.

LOCATION MAP



## PROPERTY INFORMATION

### *Photos*



*Source: Google Street View, 2019*

### *Occupancy History*

City Directory Research, March 2020

Note: Directory information available through 1959 only due to library closure.

1959	Francis J. Amsler, owner
1955	Francis J. and Jane J. Amsler, owners Treasurer, E.M. Scarborough Company
1952	Francis J. and Jane J. Amsler, owners Credit manager, E.M. Scarborough and Sons
1949	Francis J. and Jane J. Amsler, owners Credit manager, E.M. Scarborough and Sons
1947	Francis J. and Jane J. Amsler, owners Credit manager, E.M. Scarborough and Sons
1944-45	Francis J. and Jane J. Amsler, owners Credit manager, E.M. Scarborough and Sons
1941	Address not listed.

## Jane Johnson Will Marry At Noon Today

The marriage of Mrs. Jane Johnson and Francis Amsler will be quietly solemnized today at high noon, at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Jones, of 504 West Tenth street.

Only the two families will be present and the bridal couple will be unattended. The Rev. Virgil Fisher, pastor of the First Methodist church, will read the ceremony before an altar, built in the bay window of the living room, with a grouping of palms and touches of ivory and gold in the floral decoration to harmonize with the bride's gown of green waffle crepe worn with brown accessories and with corsage of Tallasman roses tied with gold ribbon.

Mrs. Jones, mother of the bride, and Mrs. John Amsler, mother of the groom, will wear corsages of pink sweetheart roses, tied with silver ribbons.

After the ceremony a buffet luncheon with bridal appointments will be served to the bridal couple and the wedding guests, before Mr. Amsler and his bride leave for a brief wedding trip. They will visit San Antonio and spend several days with friends in the hill country of West Texas.

Returning to Austin they will be at home at 203 West 33rd street, where their home is completely furnished and awaiting their coming.

Mr. and Mrs. John Amsler, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Amsler and Mr. and Mrs. Lamar Amsler of Hempstead, will attend the wedding.

### FRANCIS AMSLER MADE RETAIL CREDIT OFFICER

TEMPLE, May 23.—(AP)—Alvah Conner of Wichita Falls today was elected president of the Associated Retail Credit Men of Texas in the final session here of the group's annual convention. Conner succeeded G. Balley Peyton of San Antonio.

New directors named were: M. L. Buelow, Hillsboro; E. E. Reynolds, Abilene; R. A. Ross, Dallas; Francis Amsler, Austin; and G. B. Peyton, San Antonio.

## Merger of Four Family And Children's Social Work Agencies Effective Monday

The merger of four Austin family and children's social work agencies into the Child and Family Service, Inc., for a better coordinated program will be effective Monday, Harold Braun, executive secretary of the Community Chest, has announced.

The new combined agency will begin its work Monday at 610 Guadalupe, where it will share space with the Community Chest which has moved from its offices in the Driskill hotel to its new permanent home.

At the same time the four agencies which will close their services are the Family Service society, the Children's Bureau, the PTA School Lunch fund and the Milk fund.

The work of all four of these agencies will be carried on by the Child and Family Service under the supervision of Miss Margaret Watt. For the past several years, Miss Watt has been a supervisor in the Brooklyn Bureau of Charities of Brooklyn, N. Y. During part of that period she was on the faculty of the school of social work of Fordham university.

### Mrs. Weeks President

Officers of the agency will be Mrs. O. D. Weeks, president; Art Sprinkle, vice president; Francis Amsler, treasurer, and Miss Watt, executive director.

On the board of directors are Amsler, Mrs. C. P. Arrowwood, the Rev. John Barkley, Mrs. Charles M. Bustin, Jr., R. W. Byram, Joe Carrington, Mrs. J. M. Coleman, Dr. H. J. Eitlinger, Mrs. Newton J. Friedman, Taylor Glass, Rex Hopper, Miss Mona Jarrell, Mrs. Lloyd Jeffress, Mrs. William Kay Miller, Sprinkle, Mrs. R. M. Thomson, Jr., Mrs. Weeks and Lee Wilborn.

The new agency was created as the result of the recommendation made by Paul Beisser last August following a study of the family and children's field in Austin. Beisser, executive director of the St. Louis Provident association and Children's Aid society, came to Austin last year at the request of the Community Chest then headed by W. T. Caswell and the Council of Social agencies.

the Family Service society, and Mrs. Harry Akin, executive of the Children's Bureau have retired from active service as of Saturday. Miss Hall has served as the executive of her organization since 1918.

The Family Service society, one of the oldest social work agencies in Austin, operated for a lengthy period on a volunteer basis before the 1910 when then Mayor A. P. Woolridge decided that the time had come to put this work on a firmer basis. As Austin was then too small to maintain a public welfare department and a private society, there was formed the United Charities association. The city was to pay the expenses of the public department work and funds for the private society work were to be raised by a board of directors from the citizens of Austin.

### Divided in 1926

The offices remained at the city hall until 1926, when the city manager form of government was set up. It was then deemed time for the work to be divided. The private society work was incorporated as the Family Service society. The agency has had only three executives, Mrs. Nellie Holden, Mrs. M. Z. King and Miss Hall.

The Children's Bureau, sponsored by the Junior league and supplemented by the Community Chest, was established July 1, 1940, as a specialized agency serving Austin and Travis county children from infancy to 18 years of age.

Mrs. Weeks was first president of the board of directors. Other officers were Mrs. Ben Gebhardt, vice president; Miss Ione Spears, secretary, and Jack Sparks, treasurer.

A total of 2,118 children have been referred to the Children's Bureau since it was established.

## Amsler Heads Chest Division

Francis J. Amsler has accepted chairmanship of the employe solicitation division in Austin's united Community and War Chest campaign, Mayor Tom Miller, director of campaign forces, announced Saturday.

Amsler is credit manager of E. M. Scarbrough & Sons and has been president of the Austin Credit Men's association. The mayor said he was pleased that "a young man of his initiative and ability" had taken the chairmanship of the important employe division in the greater part of 329 Austin business firms have already pledged themselves to double their former Community Chest totals.

Chairmen of other campaign divisions, including the women's division, state departments, and the University of Texas, will be announced the early part of this week, the mayor indicated.

Austin will seek to raise \$161,599 between Oct. 14 and 21 to take care of Community Chest needs, the Boy Scout budget and all war-time appeals with exception of the Red Cross, which will hold its campaign next spring. War appeals include the USO's 1943 request of \$21,480.

*The Austin American: Sep 27, 1942 and Jul 1, 1945*

## Amsler Elected BBB President

Francis J. Amsler, credit manager for E. M. Scarbrough and Sons Department Store, will head the Better Business Bureau of Austin during 1952.

He was elected head of the bureau Monday to succeed J. C. Kellam. Last year he served as vice president and chairman of the membership committee.

George T. Atkins was named vice president; Alden Davis was re-elected treasurer and Howard A. Bergquist was re-elected secretary-manager.

The officers were elected by the board of directors which is composed of Amsler and E. J. St. John, re-elected; Ted Buttrey, A. P. Donley, Howard Kuhlman, Carl Edward Bock and C. A. Rundell. Kellam became an ex officio director.

*The Austin Statesman: Jan 29, 1952*

## Scarbrough Treasurer Honored

CORPUS CHRISTI—Francis J. Amsler, credit manager and treasurer of E. M. Scarbrough and Sons of Austin, is the new president of the Retail Merchants Association of Texas.

He was elected by the board of directors during the organization's 60th annual convention here Tuesday.

Amsler has been associated with Scarbrough's for 37 years, the last 31 as credit manager. He was given the additional duty of treasurer in 1949.

He has been active in credit affairs for many years and is currently serving as president of the Retail Merchants Association in Austin. He is a past president of the Retail Credit Executives of Austin and Texas and the Bet-



FRANCIS J. AMSLER

ter Business Bureau of Austin. Amsler has participated in many civic affairs in his home town, among them the United Fund, Red Cross and Boy Scouts. He is a native of Hempstead.

*The Austin Statesman: May 25, 1960*

**APPOINTED** — Scarbrough's Department Store Saturday announced the appointment of Francis J. Amsler as assistant to the president to aid in the development of various areas of the business. He has served for many years as credit manager and treasurer of the firm. The credit department will remain under his supervision.

*The Austin American: Nov 5, 1961*

## Downtown Merchants Pick Francis Amsler

Francis Amsler of Scarbrough's is the new chairman of Downtown Austin Unlimited, an organization of merchants set up to promote shopping in the heart of the city.

Morton Plotsky of Jack Morton's is the new vice chairman. Joe K. Wells, Austin National

Bank vice president, was re-elected treasurer.

New directors are W. H. Trippensee of S. H. Kress and Company, Loyd Hawthorne of J. C. Penney Company, Jack Minor of Levine's, Larry Craddock of Craddock Furniture Company, Jerry Maddox of Ler-

ner Shops, Irving Mellitz of Zale's Jewelers and Verno Blomquist of Blomquist-Clark.

Most stores will remain open for Christmas shopping to 9 p.m., beginning Monday and extending to Christmas Eve. All merchants were asked at the meeting to advertise their store hours for the benefit of Christmas shoppers.

Dr. William Brown, professor of marketing at The University of Texas, presented ideas for promoting interest in the area's stores. He suggested that store owners sponsor special events

in the heart of the city, including a parade similar to those holiday events held in New York and other major cities, or singing of Christmas carols by a choir moving through the streets on a float.

The UT marketing expert also suggested a survey of shoppers' opinions on downtown versus suburban stores.

*The Austin Statesman: Nov 21, 1963*

# Congress Avenue To Get New Lights

A new \$33,000 lighting program to give Congress Avenue a beaming "color-corrected" look won the unanimous vote of the City Council Thursday.

Target date for installation of 88 new mercury vapor lights from the Congress Avenue bridge north to 11th Street is mid-September.

The vote on the brighter look for Austin's business and shopping area followed the appearance of an eight-man delegation from

Downtown Austin Unlimited.

Francis Amsler, a Scarbrough's executive and chairman of the businessmen's lighting committee, asked for the new system to replace the present lights which were installed about 1930.

"We believe the new lights will cut present hazards to both traffic and pedestrians on the avenue and discourage law violators," Amsler told the council. "It also seems that Congress Avenue lead-

ing up to the Texas Capitol should be made as attractive as possible at night."

One test light has already been installed at Sixth and Congress. "Color - corrected" lamps will not change the appearance of store window displays on the avenue, Amsler added.

The new system will be financed by a \$40,000 fund already set aside for street lighting, but unallocated until Thursday.

The new 1,000-watt lights will replace the present 1,500-watt types which use more electricity but produce less light.

City Electrical Department Chief Dexter Kinney said he will try to have the lights installed by the time University of Texas students return to the city in September. However, he said that "would be pushing it a little. We'll definitely have them up by Christmas."

*The Austin Statesman: Aug 1, 1963*



FRANCIS AMSLER

## Executive Appointed At Store

Mrs. Margaret Scarbrough Wilson, Scarbrough's president, announced this week the appointment of Francis J. Amsler as vice president, store manager.

Amsler, a native of Hempstead, joined the staff of Scarbrough's as a teenager in 1923, and literally "grew up in the store." He served for many years as credit manager, and more recently as store manager.

Amsler, who lives with his wife at 1616 Northumberland, is well-known in Austin civic circles. He has been active in the United Fund, has served on the Board of Child and Family Service Society and on the Board of the Capitol Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America. He is past president of the Better Business Bureau and past chairman of the Downtown Association. During his tenure as credit manager, he served as president of both local and state credit organizations.

He is a member of the Austin Country Club and an elder of the First Southern Presbyterian Church. The Amslers have one daughter, Mrs. J. P. Godleski of Lake Jackson.

# Advertising Review Board To Be Headed by Amsler

Francis Amsler, vice-president emeritus of Scarbroughs, has been appointed chairman of the Austin Advertising Review Board.

The board is a joint project of the Austin Better Business Bureau and the Austin Advertising Club. Its purpose is to sustain high standards of truth and accuracy in advertising in the Austin area. Review boards are already established in many cities throughout the nation.

The review board will function as a working arm of the Better Business Bureau. Its membership of 30 will consist of a broad cross-section of advertisers, advertising agencies and consumer representation. The board will operate in panels which will review advertising terms and practices about which there is question concerning content or accuracy. The point in question will already have been reviewed with the advertiser by the advertising department of the Better Business Bureau. It is referred to the AARB only when there is an impasse and the questioned advertising is neither altered nor withdrawn, with arbitration as a possible

resolution before further action is required.

Amsler retired Jan. 1, after serving 49 years at Scarbroughs. He now serves the store on special projects. He has served as past president of

both the local and state Retail Merchants Associations and Retail Credit Executives. He is a past president of the Austin Better Business Bureau and Downtown Austin Merchants Association.



ADVERTISING REVIEW — Checking newspaper advertisements are, from left, Don Rogers, president of Austin Advertising Club, Francis Amsler, chairman of the Austin Ad-

vertising Review Board, and George Spaulding, president of the Austin Better Business Bureau. The review board is a joint project of the advertising club and the BBB.

*The Austin Statesman: Feb 4, 1973*



**APPLICATION FOR SEWER CONNECTION.**  
 Austin, Texas, 8-12- 1948  
 To the Superintendent of Sewer and Public Improvements,  
 City of Austin, Texas  
 Sir:—  
 I hereby make application for sewer connection and instructions  
 on premises owned by F. J. Amsler  
 at 1616 Northumberland (912d) Street,  
 further described as lot 27 & E 1/2 of 26, block \_\_\_\_\_, outlot \_\_\_\_\_  
 subdivision Pecan Estates, division \_\_\_\_\_, plat 147  
 which is to be used as a Res

Sewer tap permit, 8-12-40  
**WATER SERVICE PERMIT** E No. 19921  
 Austin, Texas

Received of FRANCIS J. AMSLER Date 5-25-57  
 Address 1616 NORTHUMBERLAND  
 Amount FIFTY \$50.00  
 Plumber GORBET Size of Tap 2"

Date of Connection	<u>6-7-59</u>
Size of Tap Made	<u>2"</u>
Size Service Made	<u>2"</u>
Size Main Tapped	<u>6" CP</u>
From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock	<u>25'</u>
From <u>E</u> Prop. Line to Curb Cock	<u>35'</u>
Location of Meter	<u>CURB</u>
Type of Box	<u>2'2" X 24"</u>
Depth of Main in St.	<u>2'</u>
Depth of Service Line	<u>2'</u>
From Curb Cock to Tap on Main	<u>34'</u>
Checked by Engr. Dept.	

No. Fittings	Size
<u>36</u> Pipe	<u>2" CP</u>
<u>1</u> Corp. Cock	<u>2"</u>
<u>1</u> Cop. to Iron ell	<u>2"</u>
<u>1</u> Cop. to Cop. ell	
<u>1</u> Cop. to Iron Coupling	
<u>1</u> Cop. to Cop. Coupling	
<u>1</u> Angle Stop	
<u>1</u> Stop	
<u>1</u> Bushing	
<u>1</u> Nipples	
<u>1</u> Service Clamp	<u>6" X 24"</u>
<u>1</u> Valve	<u>2"</u>
<u>1</u> Meter Box	<u>2'2" X 24"</u>
<u>1</u> Lock Lid	<u>18" X 20"</u>
<u>1</u> Drain Tile	
<u>1</u> Drain Tile Lid	
<u>1</u> Stop & Drain	
Job No.	<u>21323704502</u>
Foreman	<u>[Signature]</u>

Water tap permit, 5-25-57

**Francis Amsler** **1616 Northumberland Road**  
**147 27 & E. 25' of lot 26**  
**Pecan Estates**  
**Frame addition to rear of residence.**  
**74613 11/13/59 1800.00**  
**Ed Willenberg none**

**To enlarge family room**  
*Building permit for addition, 11-12-59*