

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: C14H-2002-0010

HLC DATE:

September 23, 2002

August 24, 2020

PC DATE:

September 8, 2020

APPLICANT: City of Austin

HISTORIC NAME: Schieffer House – Negro Agricultural Extension Office

WATERSHED: Lady Bird Lake

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 1154 Lydia Street

ZONING FROM: CS-1-NCCD-NP to CS-1-H-NCCD-NP

SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the proposed zoning change to designate the house as a historic landmark.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:

Architecture, historical associations, and community value.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: Recommended the proposed zoning change from CS-1-NCCD-NP to CS-1-H-NCCD-NP. Vote: 9-0 (Tollett and Little absent).

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The Schieffer House was the subject of a 2002 historic zoning case, which was reviewed and recommended by the Historic Landmark Commission and the Planning Commission. The City Council approved the zoning change on first and second readings, but delayed action on the third reading to allow for the Austin Revitalization Authority to relocate the house on the same site and construct an addition to the rear of the house. The addition has been completed and the house relocated, so the case is ready to proceed through the commissions once again (due to the expiration of the original case) and proceed to all three readings of an ordinance designating the house as a historic landmark by the City Council. The house has been well-maintained in the interim, and the Historic Landmark Commission has reviewed and approved changes to the house since the case was initiated.

CITY COUNCIL DATE: October 1, 2020

ACTION:

ORDINANCE READINGS: 1ST 2ND 3RD

ORDINANCE NUMBER:

CASE MANAGER: Steve Sadowsky

PHONE: 974-6454

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION: Robertson Hill Neighborhood Association;
Organization of East Austin Neighborhoods (OCEAN).

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

Architecture:

The house is a one-story vernacular Victorian house in a wing-and-gable configuration. It is a stuccoed wood-frame house with a partial-width front porch on turned wood posts and with turned wood rails. The Schieffer house represents middle-class residential housing at the turn of the century, with a vernacular Victorian form and design elements.



Historic photo of the Schieffer house showing the square porch columns that were either wood or stuccoed wood, and have since been replaced.



Pre-restoration photo of the Schieffer house.



Photographs taken August, 2020



Photographs taken August, 2020



Photograph taken August, 2020

Historical Associations:

This house was built around 1903 by Herman Schieffer, a butcher and the owner of an adjacent meat market. Herman Schieffer was born in Travis County in 1868, the son of German immigrants. He began working as a butcher at least by 1889, when he is shown in the city directory as a butcher in the meat market of Brantley and Vincent at 6th and Colorado Streets. He also lived on the meat market premises. The 1891-92 Austin city directory shows him living on the west side of Shoal Creek, and without an occupation listed. He moved to Waco about that time, marrying his first wife, Clara Haig, in Waco in May, 1892. Herman Schieffer is listed in the Waco city directories of 1892 and 1893 as a butcher. It is not entirely clear when Herman and Clara Schieffer returned to Austin, but they were living in Austin by the time of the 1900 U.S. Census, which shows them living at 2500 San Antonio Street. Clara Schieffer was 8 years younger than her husband, and had a Scottish-born father. They had two daughters, Moselle, born in 1895, and Lucille, born in 1897. The 1900 census report also shows that they had a boarder, Walter Schriber, a university student.

The 1903 Austin city directory shows Herman Schieffer living in this house, which was identified with an address of 1105 Attoyac Street. The street address of the house changed to 1105 Lydia Street by 1906, and to 1106 Lydia Street between 1924 and 1927. The current house address of 1154 Lydia Street appears for the first time in the 1944-45 city directory.

Clara Schieffer died of kidney disease in 1904 at the age of 28 and is buried in Austin's Oakwood Cemetery.

DEATHS IN AUSTIN.

Mrs. Clara Schieffer.

Mrs. Clara Schieffer, wife of Herman Schieffer, died suddenly from kidney trouble, at 10 o'clock last night at her home at 1105 Lydia street. She was 28 years of age and leaves her husband and two children to mourn her death. The funeral will be held from the residence at 4:30 o'clock this afternoon.

Funeral Notice.

The funeral of Mrs. Clara Schieffer, wife of Herman Schieffer, who died at 10 o'clock last night, will take place from the family residence, 1105 Lydia street, at 4:30 o'clock this afternoon. Friends and acquaintances respectfully invited to attend.

News of the death and funeral of Clara Schieffer
Austin Statesman, July 25, 1904

In 1907, Herman Schieffer married Annie Schafer in Bell County, Texas; they moved into this house. The 1910 U.S. Census shows Herman and Annie Schieffer as the owners of this house, listed as 1105 Lydia Street. Herman Schieffer was 42, had been born in Texas to German-born parents, and was a butcher with his own shop. Annie Schieffer was 32, had been born in Texas to German-born parents, and had no occupation listed. The census report lists Herman Schieffer's daughters by his first marriage – Moselle, 14, and Lucille, 12, as well as Annie Schieffer's son, Walter Schafer (it appears that Walter also used the last name of Schieffer), 9, and Herman and Annie's daughter, Odeal, 2. The family also had a lodger, Joseph W. Calhoun, 34, a Louisiana-born driver for the meat market.

Herman Schieffer's meat market was located on the south end of his lot, facing 11th Street; it had varying addresses through the years in the 1100 block of E. 11th Street. The building is no longer standing. Around 1923, Thomas Cuneo joined Herman Schieffer in his meat market business. The two remained partners in Schieffer and Cuneo until around 1936. Thomas Cuneo also went into business with Herman Schieffer's son, Walter (W. Anthony) Schieffer, operating Schieffer's Self-Serve Grocery and Market, adjacent to Herman's meat market on E. 11th Street. In the mid-1930s, Walter Schieffer was also the proprietor of Pike's Place Bar, at 1111 E. 11th Street, advertised as Austin's oldest original bar, and serving Falstaff, Pearl, and Grand Prize beer, and had "good eats," a beer garden, and music. Walter Schieffer was in business in the grocery store with Thomas Cuneo until around 1938, after which Walter is listed as the sole proprietor. It appears that Herman Schieffer retired from business around the same time. The 1939 city directory does not show him having an occupation, and by the early 1940s, he was listed as a farmer. Walter Schieffer continued to operate a grocery store on E. 11th Street until the late 1940s. Walter Schieffer is not listed in the 1949 Austin city directory, and there is nothing listed in the 1100 block of E. 11th Street that would have corresponded to a commercial use like his old grocery.



Advertisement for Schieffer & Cuneo meat market and produce
Austin Statesman, December 26, 1924

Herman and Annie Schieffer appear in the 1920 U.S. Census as the owners of this house, identified as 1105 Lydia Street. Herman Schieffer was 51, had been born in Texas, and was a butcher in his meat market. Annie Schieffer was 43, had been born in Texas and had no occupation listed. They had several children in the house: daughter Moselle, 24, a musician in a piano house, daughter Lucille Hovis, 22, and her husband, William, 24, an automobile mechanic; stepson Walter Schieffer [sic – Walter's last name was Schafer], 19, daughter Odeal, 12, son Herman, Jr., 3, and son Hunter, 3 months.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Herman and Annie Schieffer as the owners of this house, which is listed as 1106 Lydia Street, and worth \$2,000. Herman Schieffer was 61, had been born in Texas to German-born parents, and was a butcher in a meat market. Annie Schieffer was 53, had been born in Texas to German-born parents, and had no occupation listed. They had 3 children listed with them: daughter, Odeal, 22, son Herman, 13, and son Hunter, 10. All the children had been born in Texas.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Herman and Annie Schieffer living in this house, which they owned, and which was worth \$2,000; the address is shown as 1106 Lydia Street. Herman Schieffer was 72, and been born in Texas. Annie Schieffer was 63 had been born in Texas. They had a son, Hunter, 20, who had been born in Texas. Nobody in the family had an occupation shown in the census report.

Herman Schieffer's 1946 death certificate showed him at this address. He had been born in 1868 in Travis County and was retired from the meat and grocery business. Annie Schieffer died in 1950.

HERMAN SCHIEFFER
Funeral services for Herman Schieffer, 74, will be conducted by Rev. F. G. Roesener at the Weed-Corley Funeral home at 4 p. m. Sunday. Burial will be in Oakwood cemetery.

Funeral notice for Herman Schieffer
 Austin American-Statesman, January 6, 1946

After the deaths of Herman and Annie Schieffer, the house became the offices of the Travis County Negro Agricultural Extension Service, which operated at this location until around 1960. The Travis County Negro Agricultural Extension Office was a program developed and administered by Prairie View A&M, the African-American agricultural college in East Texas. Agricultural extension services for both white and African-American citizens focused on providing assistance and information on agricultural pursuits, including better, scientific methods of crop and livestock production, as well as home life improvements and the establishment of 4-H Clubs for young people. Mrs. Opal Washington, a home economics graduate of Prairie View, became the African-American home demonstration extension agent for Travis County, officing out of this house. The office was disbanded in 1965 with the end of segregation, but Mrs. Washington continued to work in the field, publishing helpful articles until her retirement in the early 1980s. Her home, at 1214 E. 7th Street, is a city historic landmark.

After the dissolution of the Agricultural Extension Service offices, the house became the home of La Petite, a restaurant known as a gathering place for African-American political and social activism leaders, which operated in the 1960s. However, the surrounding neighborhood began to decline rapidly in the late 1960s, leading to the closure of La Petite, and the reputation of the neighborhood suffered with a rise in criminal activity. The East Room, an "after-hours" nightclub, operated out of the house in the 1990s. In 1998, the property was purchased by the Austin Revitalization Authority. The house was mothballed and an increased police presence in the area reduced the crime. In the early 2000s, the Austin Revitalization Authority began its work to restore the house to bring much-needed office space to the neighborhood. With approvals from the Historic Landmark Commission, the house has been rehabilitated and restored, and a two-story office addition was appended to the back of the house.

Community Value:

The community value criterion for designation is reflected by the identity of this house as the office of the Travis County Negro Agricultural Extension Service, deep in the heart of the African-American community of East Austin. The extension agents, including Mrs. Opal Washington, were invaluable in providing information to both urban and rural citizens regarding food preparation, canning, vegetable gardening, and other pursuits beneficial to the well-being of the community.

PARCEL NO.: 02080618060000

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: LOT 58 & E20.88FT AV LOT 59 OLT 55 DIVISION B

ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT: \$11,955 if exemption is applied to entire property. The property is owned by the Austin Revitalization Authority.

APPRAISED VALUE: \$2,023,227

PRESENT USE: Offices

CONDITION: Excellent

PRESENT OWNERS: Austin Revitalization Authority

DATE BUILT: ca. 1903

ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS: Original porch posts were square posts, either stuccoed or plain wood. The porch railings and frieze have been replaced; two-story office addition to the rear of the house.

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): Herman Schieffer (ca. 1903).

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: None.

LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: C14H-02-0010
 LOCATION: 1154 LYDIA STREET



1" = 125'

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