

Supporting Documents for Architectural Review Committee
for discussion November 30, 2020

To: Committee Members, Architectural Review Committee

From: Robin and Taylor Bruce – owners of 1406 Ethridge Ave, and Sam Burch, architect for 1406 Ethridge Ave

Date: Provided to the Committee on November 25, 2020

Subject: Proposed Renovation of 1406 Ethridge Ave, Austin TX 78703

Response

We are submitting this statement in support of granting permit to move forward with updates and renovations at 1406 Ethridge Ave (“1406”), Austin, TX 78703 in order to extend the life of the home and update its premises to allow for comfortable occupancy for a family of five.

As we shared in our original meeting with the HLC on November 16, 2020, we (owners, Robin and Taylor Bruce) are incredibly grateful to the HLC for highlighting the pioneering legacy of the original occupants of 1406, Reverend Edmund Heinsohn and his family. We feel honored to be the stewards of this home’s legacy of inclusion and warmth and to be raising our children amidst such shared values.

Our aim in this proposed renovation is to preserve the defining qualities of 1406 while updating the space to accommodate our family of five and plant firm roots in the surrounding neighborhood.

We also wanted to reiterate here the expert opinion of Sam Burch, architect, in response to the specific elements detailed in the HLC’s review:

- The garage is in fact not a new addition as is stated on C.3-2. The garage was added in 2004 and currently has a composition shingle roof and fiber lap siding. Our plans account for recladding the exterior, replacing the composition shingle and adding living space in the existing attic which will not change the overall roofline. We are adding a dormer that is visible from the driveway. These updates will improve the look and feel of the garage from the street.
- The new addition detailed in submitted plans at the rear of the house is replacing an existing addition that was constructed in 1994. It is poorly built and contributes nothing to the existing home. When this addition was built all of the existing stone on the rear of the original house was removed.

- While the proposed front porch will somewhat alter the front of the house, the intent is for the owner to be able to enjoy the neighborhood and engage with their neighbors. That is currently not possible with the entry porch that exists today.
- It is my opinion that the original home is not an outstanding example of Colonial Revival architecture. The red standing seam metal roof is not consistent with the Colonial Revival style nor is the existing stonework on the original home. Our proposed addition and remodel of the existing garage will only improve what currently exists and extend the life of the home for many years to come. The owners' goal, and our architectural intent, is to preserve and improve upon the character of the home while enhancing its appeal and comfort for the occupants.
- Additionally, I agree with the HLC's opinion stated in C.3-2 that nothing about the property design, architecture, community value, or landscape features merits historic designation.

Finally, neighborliness is a value emphasized in the Central West Austin Neighborhood Plan adopted by the City. The homes of Old West Austin are notable for their contribution to the fabric of the neighborhood as a whole more than for their stylistic or architectural distinction. According to an architectural review of the neighborhoods included in Old West Austin, exemplar homes display the qualities of being modest scale of home, with inviting front porches, open front yards (no privacy fencing/walls), garages placed in back of the home and large mature trees. We are confident that the renovations we are seeking to complete at 1406 honor the intent of the Department of the Interior in setting up historic districts, follow the defining qualities of Old West Austin homes and further the neighborliness, walkability and livability of the neighborhood as desired by the City of Austin's Central West Austin Neighborhood Plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

We look forward to speaking with you on Monday, November 30, 2020.

Sincerely,

Robin and Taylor Bruce
Owners, 1406 Ethridge Ave.