

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
PERMITS IN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS
JANUARY 25, 2021
GF-2020-171512
1517 MURRAY LANE
OLD WEST AUSTIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1928 contributing house and construct a new residence, pool, and shed.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

- 1) Demolish existing contributing house.
- 2) Construct a new two-story building. The proposed new house will be clad in stucco with decorative galvanized metal screens, galvanized metal downspouts and gutters, fixed-pane undivided windows, and a compound roof clad in composition shingles.
- 3) Construct a swimming pool at the rear of the lot.
- 4) Construct a new shed. The shed will be clad in stucco.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story house with horizontal wood siding, side-gabled roof, wood windows with decorative screens, eyebrow dormers, and a partial-width covered porch with curved pediment and Classical columns.

RESEARCH

The house at 1517 Murray Lane was constructed in 1927-28 by William H. and Delle M. Morley. Morley was the son of W.J. Morley, proprietor of Morley Brothers Druggists, the oldest continuously operating pharmacy and wholesale drug manufacturer in Austin at the time. W.J. Morley and his brother famously employed author Sidney Porter (pseudonym O. Henry), in the latter half of the 19th century.

The Morley Brothers Building at 209 East 6th Street is a City of Austin Landmark. S.K. Morley's house at 510 Baylor Street is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is also an Austin landmark. S.K. Morley, William H. Morley's uncle, does not appear to be associated with the Morley drug manufacturing business after the sale of the 6th Street drugstore in the early 1930s. However, William H. Morley continued to run the drug manufacturing and wholesale business from his home at 1517 Murray Lane.

Morley's products were sold under multiple manufacturer names, including Cactus Line Products, Morley Drug Company, and W.H. Morley Wholesale. After his death in 1948, William Morley's widow Delle Mayne Morley continued to live in the home, adding on to the main structure and renting out the former manufacturing facility to tenants. Delle Morley sold the house in 1961, and it was occupied by a series of short-term owners and renters until at least 1992.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW

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 existing contributing building will be demolished and replaced with a noncontributing building.

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 new house is differentiated from the surrounding historic buildings by its two-story scale, modern materials, and fixed undivided fenestration. Its setback and regular fenestration pattern is compatible with the surrounding historic district. The front-facing garage, “row house” massing, stucco cladding, and decorative metal accents and projecting gutters are less compatible.

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 new building were removed in the future, the historic district would be unimpaired.

The proposed projects meets some of the standards.

STAFF COMMENTS

The house contributes to the Old West Austin National Register Historic District. The HLC approved a rear addition and remodel in February 2020.

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 historic designation criteria for landmark designation (LDC §25-2-352). The property may demonstrate significance according to City Code:
 - a. *Architecture.* The house displays Colonial Revival and Craftsman influences.
 - b. *Historical association.* The house is associated with William H. Morley, long-term Austin drug manufacturer and business owner. While S.K. Morley’s house is landmarked and individually listed on the National Register, there is no landmarked house associated with either W.J. or W.H. Morley.
 - 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.

COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

Take design cues from Austin neighborhood rather than other places, reworking the “row house” aesthetic of the proposed building to be more compatible with the historic district. Redesign gutters in consideration of neighboring properties.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

If the Commission feels that the home is an essential part of the Morleys’ family business legacy, consider initiation of historic zoning. Otherwise, comment on plans for new construction and release the demolition permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package. The Commission may also consider a 180-day demolition delay for the contributing house.

LOCATION MAP



-  N
-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

NOTIFICATIONS
CASE#: NRD-2020-0006
LOCATION: 1517 MURRAY LN



1" = 333'

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.

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Photos





Source: Historic review application, February 2020

Occupancy History

City Directory Research, Austin History Center, March 2020

- 1992 Laurie T. Miesch, renter
Interior decorator
- 1985- Laurie T. Miesch, renter
86 Interior decorator
- 1981 No return
- 1977 Richard D. Harris, renter
Trucker
The directory indicates that Harris is a new resident.
- 1973 Tom Fairey, renter
Employee, John Deere
- 1968 Leah B. Andrews, owner
Retired
- 1965 Leah B. Andrews, owner
Retired
Rear: James H. Andrews, renter
Retired
- 1962 Leah B. Andrews, owner
Rear: James W. Hall, renter
- 1959 Mrs. Delle M. Morley, owner (wid. W.H.)
Rear: Mrs. Eloise Weatherford, renter
Employee, State Employment Bureau
- 1955 Mrs. Delle M. Morley, owner (wid. W.H.)
- 1952 Mrs. Delle M. Morley, owner (wid. W.H.)
- 1949 Mrs. Delle M. Morley, owner (wid. W.H.)
- 1947 William H. and Delle Morley, owners
Morley Drug Company
Rear: Morley Drug Company, medicine manufacturers
- 1944- William H. and Delle Morley, owners
45 Morley Drug Company
Rear: Morley Drug Company, medicine manufacturers
- 1941 William H. and Delle Morley, owners
Morley Drug Company

Rear: Morley Drug Company, medicine manufacturers

Note: The house is listed as 1317 Murray Lane in 1941 and earlier directories.

- 1939 William H. and Delle Morley, owners
Medicine manufacturers
- 1937 William H. and Delle Morley, owners
Proprietor; Morley Drug Company, 1717-19 East 6th Street; Cactus Line Product Company
and W.H. Morley Wholesale Drugs, 1815-19 East 6th Street
- 1935 William H. and Delle Morley, owners
Proprietor, Cactus Line Product Company
- 1932-33 William H. and Delle Morley, owners
Proprietor, Morley Drug Company; President, Austin Wholesale Drug Company
- 1929 William H. and Delle Morley, owners
Proprietor; Morley Drug Company, 209 East 6th Street
- 1927 Address not listed. Morley family listed at 304 West 9th Street.

Biographical Information

W. H. Morley Rites Held Here Monday

Funeral services for William Hansbrough Morley, life-time resident in Austin and well known wholesale druggist, who died Sunday afternoon at his residence, 1517 Murray Lane, will be held Monday at 5 p. m. at the Cook Funeral Home with the Rev. Harry Moffett, pastor of the University Presbyterian Church, officiating. Burial will be in Oakwood Cemetery.

Morley for many years was owner of the Morley Drug Company which manufactured and distributed wholesale the well known Cactus brand of products throughout the Southwest. The firm has been in operation by the Morley family for 74 years.

As a member of the Rotary Club and various other organizations, Morley was active in civic affairs and was particularly interested in Boy Scout work. He was a member of the University Presbyterian Church.

Surviving are his widow, Mrs. Belle Mayne Morley of Austin; one brother, Guilford Morley of Mascoutah, Ill., and one sister, Mrs. S. C. Woolley of Hollywood, Calif.

Pallbearers will be R. W. Pettway, J. W. Pritchard, John C. Ross, Russell T. Hank, Dennis Macken and Arno Nowotny.

MRS. SALLIE CAVETT MAYNE

Mrs. Sallie Cavett Mayne, a resident of Austin for 43 years, died at her home, 1517 Murray Lane, Sunday.

She was the widow of the late W. A. Mayne.

She is survived by three daughters, Mrs. W. H. Morley and Mrs. J. T. Parker of Austin, and Mrs. Willetta Warner of Los Angeles, Calif.; one son, R. C. Mayne of Austin; and one brother, M. C. Cavett of Austin.

Funeral services will be held Tuesday at 10 a. m. at the Cook Funeral Home with Dr. Carlyle Marney officiating.

Pallbearers will be W. T. Mayne, W. R. Mayne, J. T. Parker Jr., R. J. Lewallen, Harry Mayne, and Jack Shelton. Burial will be in Oakwood Cemetery.

The Austin Statesman: Apr 5, 1948 and Oct 1, 1951

Morley's, Austin's Oldest Drug Store, Celebrating Its Fiftieth Anniversary

Morley's, Austin's oldest retail drug store and its first and only wholesale drug firm, today celebrates its fiftieth anniversary with the opening of the Texas Pharmaceutical Association's annual convention at the Stephen F. Austin Hotel.

It was in 1874 that W. J. Morley and his brother, S. K. Morley, established a drug business and proprietary manufacturing plant on East Sixth Street, a block off the Avenue. Today the firm is owned by W. H. Morley, son of W. J. Morley, one of the founders.

In 1885 the proprietary plant for the manufacture of patent medicines was moved to St. Louis, where, in 1912, the business was sold to William R. Warner. While the laboratories of the Morley Company were located in Austin some sixteen patent medicines were manufactured for the druggist trade, many of which are still produced by the Warner Company of St. Louis, under the same name, according to Mr. Morley.

Austin's first soda fountain was located in the Morley Drug Company on East Sixth Street, and it was here that the elite of the town gathered in the early days, before Congress Avenue became the center of business activities.

"All the silk stocking trade," said Mr. Morley, "patronized our fountain and store in the old days, but today we run only a pure drug store."

There is no soda fountain in the Morley store now, no stamps are sold, no deliveries are made, and nothing is charged, said Mr. Morley.

"We figure how much we can give the customer for the money," said the proprietor of Austin's first drug firm, "not how much we can get, in figuring our prices."

Up until 1920 the wholesale business of the firm was not pushed, Mr. Morley said, but in that year this phase of the trade received an impetus and since then the wholesale business has grown rapidly. In 1923 the sales of the wholesale department of the firm showed a 35 per cent increase over the business of 1922, while the retail trade has remained about the same all along, according to the present proprietor.

Three of the floors of the Morley house are devoted to the wholesale drug business today, while the first floor houses the retail firm. At present 125 different items for the druggist trade are sold under the "Cactus" brand of the Morley wholesale company. The English and Spanish names of every article are printed on the label of the drug. The "Cactus" products, Mr. Morley explained, are chiefly composed of household drugs commonly used everywhere. All medicines are put up in uniform packages containing the highest quality of ingredients, he said.

Entering the retail drug store on the first floor of the Morley Building on East Sixth Street, one is impressed with the fixtures and atmosphere of this father of Austin's drug firms. All the front fixtures of the place are of black walnut, which today cannot be duplicated, and the store has the air of a firm of the last century.

The Austin Statesman: Jun 10, 1924

3-IN-1 BUSINESS IS OPERATED BY W. H. MORLEY

It's a three-in-one business which has been closely identified with Austin's progress for 57 years.

For W. H. Morley occupies the peculiar position of being head of three distinct business firms, all located in the same building. As a retail establishment he operates the Morley Drug company; as a wholesale, the Austin Wholesale Drug company, and as a manufacturing firm, the Cactus Line Products company.

Founded by his father in 1874, the business has been located within the same block for its entire history. The first store was located at the corner of East Sixth and Brazos streets, and the present firm occupies a three-story building at 209 East Sixth street.

Modern Drug Store

Two years after the drug company was established by W. J. Morley, the present owner's father, S. K. Morley, a brother, became a member of the firm. In 1885 the laboratory was moved to St. Louis while S. K. Morley remained here to operate the retail firm, but later the entire business was again united in Austin. Since 1920, Will Morley has been in charge of the business, but his father, who now lives in California, still keeps a watchful eye on the firm, and during a recent visit in Austin he enjoyed many a reminiscence story over the "early days" of his business.

It was in the "early days," moreover, that a customer meandered into the store, asked for a dime's worth of copperas or some other commodity—and then loafed with the "boys" around the stove while the druggist spent a valuable half-hour weighing and measuring and labeling the order from his stock supply.

But step into any modern drug store, make the same request, and the order is in the customer's hands within five minutes!

It is to this modern time-saving instinct that the wholesale druggist now makes the greatest appeal, Mr. Morley explained. Practically all stock drugs now reach the retailer's shelves already prepared, bottled and labeled—and this is the work of the wholesale druggist.

Manufacturing Plant

The top floor of the building at 209 East Sixth is devoted to the manufacturing part of the business, and great barrels and other containers are filled with the ingredients, which, when put together ac-

ording to formula, result in everything from chloroform to household ammonia. Along the shelves the prepared articles are arranged in alphabetical form, so that any order may be filled within a few minutes.

The Cactus Line Products com-

pany has 187 different items on the market. All labels carry the Spanish equivalent to the English term, since the firm has a large Mexican trade.

Approximately a million labels go out from this firm's doors yearly, all bearing the name of Austin

and marking this city as one of the drug manufacturing centers of the state.

The manufacturing and wholesale divisions, however, do not overshadow the retail store, which carries a complete line of drug store commodities.

The Austin Statesman: Aug 12, 1931

MORLEY DRUG IS ACQUIRED BY 2

Announcement that the Morley Drug company has changed hands but will continue to operate for the present under the same name was made today.

S. H. King, 3103 Wheeler, and V. E. Grove, 1508½ South Congress, are the new managers and owners. Mr. King came to Austin seven years ago from Vaughn, N. M., having sold his drug store there and accepted a position with the Norwich Pharmaceutical company. While traveling for this firm he contacted the Morley Drug company and, deciding to make Austin his home, took a position there for four years.

Later he was connected with Eldridge Moore store No. 1.

Mr. Grove came to Texas in 1929 from Rolla, Mo., where he was a partner in the Fellowill Grove Drug company. After selling out there he was employed at the Morley store for two years and then went to Taylor to take charge of the prescription department of the Taylor Drug company.

On Jan. 1 Mr. King and Mr. Grove founded the K. G. Chemical company at 1540 South Congress, handling crude drugs and chemicals on a wholesale basis and packing household drugs. By July 1 the plant had grown so much that the firm moved to larger quarters, the old Carpenter Drug location at 219 East Sixth, and opened the Grove Drug company in connection with the K. G. Chemical company. Three new employees were added.

Later more space was required and the Morley Drug company, a landmark in Austin for 60 years, was acquired. New stock and fixtures of the Grove Drug company have been moved to the new location and repainting and redecorating were in progress during the past week.

O. Henry worked as a registered pharmacist at the Morley location, and his old prescription case is still there.

Both Mr. King and Mr. Grove are registered pharmacists.

The Austin Statesman: Dec 16, 1933

C14h-76-012, Morley Brothers Building, 209 East 6th Street

STAFF REPORT

This is a three story structure with a full basement which was built in c. 1874. The actual style is Victorian and the bay window frames were made of copper.

According to old photographs the structure was originally two stories and it is unknown when and by whom the third story was added and the bay windows installed.

Information on Morley Drug Company indicates they did in fact, operate a wholesale and retail drug outlet on Pecan Street as early as 1874.

In 1877 they were in business at 203 Pecan Street where they continued in operation until 1893. From 1893 until 1906 their drug business was located at 206 Pecan Street on the north side of the street. The Morley Brothers purchased the structure in 1906 and from that date until 1930 operated their drug business at this location.

In 1930 it became the Grove Drug Store which is still in operation. Its present owner is Eugene Wukasch, who acquired the property in September, 1973.

C14h-76-012, Morley Brothers Drug Building, 209 East 6th Street

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Dr. John E. Elgin received the original patent on this land in February 1851 from Governor Bell. Dr. Elgin arrived in Austin c. 1840. According to information, he served as City Alderman from 1850 to 1852. Further, he signed a petition in opposition of secession in 1861. Cemetery records indicate his date of death as June 1, 1851. (Date of death cannot be verified and is in conflict with other data).

Volume D/ 476; Dr. Elgin conveyed this property to his daughter, Betty Ann Elgin, who was two years and ten months old on June 7, 1851. Volume U/ 445 shows that W. F. Ford, Betty Ford and M. E. Elgin conveyed this property to S. Loomis on March 25, 1871. Jakob Koppel owned the property for an unknown period of time until his death 8/16/1904. The executors of his estate sold the property 6/30/1906 to the Morley Brothers. (See File No. C14h-75-008, Raymond Morley House). The Morley Brothers occupied this structure from 1906 until 1930 at which time it became Grove Drug Store. The present owner Eugene Wukasch purchased this structure in September of 1973.

Research indicates this structure was built c. 1874, however, it is not known at this time who actually built the structure. Simon Loomis died in August of 1883, and this structure is evident on maps as early as 1877. The early maps do not indicate or show the bay windows. Their installation date is unknown and the information at the top of the structure which indicates that the Morley Brothers built it in 1874 is incorrect.

City directories indicate that the Morley Brothers did in fact operate a wholesale and retail drug outlet at 203 Pecan as early as 1877. From 1893 until 1906 their drug business was located on the north side of Pecan at 206.

This building is very unique architecturally. It is a three-story brick commercial building with originally only two stories. Its style is Victorian and the bay windows are copper.

Drugstore 1874-1933

Q. I have an old brown medicine bottle marked "Morley Bros. Druggists, Austin, Texas." What years were they in business? — Karen Thompson

A. Morley Bros. is now Grove Drugstore at 206 E. 6th. Morley Bros. was established in 1874, operated under that name until 1933 when Vernon Grove took it over and it became Grove Drugstore, according to sources in Austin's "attic" — Travis County Collection, Austin Public Library.

Morley's manufactured 187 different Cactus Line products, including Prickly Pear Salve, Lemon Chill Cure and Universal Blackberry Balsam, and sold 17 flavors of sodas at a nickel a glass, according to *Austin, the Past Still Present*.

The Austin American Statesman: Oct 29, 1977

The famous Texas Ranger, Bigfoot Wallace, after a battle with the Comanches in 1874 reportedly applied a cactus remedy, which he said was the best wound medicine he had ever tried. The preparation he used was made by the Morley Brothers Drug Company in Austin. The company guaranteed their cactus line products with a money-back guarantee. Their miraculous salves were recommended for everything from boils, burns, bites, and bruises, to colds, molds, and sore tail holes. (39—p. 15; 83—accessed November 3, 2002)

Lotions, Potions, and Deadly Elixirs: Frontier Medicine in the American West
by Wayne Bethard, p. 197

Permits

Mrs. W. H. Morley

1517 Murray Lane

146 33

Enfield "B"

Convert bldg. into efficiency apt.

40094 1/27/49

1400.00

Calcasieu

7

12-22-71-126765-Tom Fairey-frm addn to residence and remodel 837 sq. ft.

Building permit for apartment (1-27-49) and addition/remodel (12-22-71)