

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
JANUARY 25, 2021  
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS  
HDP-2020-0474  
1402 DRAKE AVENUE

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**PROPOSAL**

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Demolish a ca. 1937 house.

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**ARCHITECTURE**

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One-story, rectangular-plan, side-gabled frame house with a front-gabled independent porch on battered posts and square piers; single and paired 1:1 fenestration.

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**RESEARCH**

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The house was built in 1937 by Paul Kirschner, a local contractor and financier, who also built the house next door at 1400 Drake Avenue. The first owners were Michael R. and Gladys E. Mason, who lived here in the late 1930s and again in the early 1940s, when they are listed as renters; they lived at other addresses in between their two tenancies in this house. Michael R. Mason is listed variously as an assistant attorney and stenographer for the State Board of Insurance Commissioners. Gladys Mason worked as a telephone operator for a dry cleaning establishment. She went on to work as a clerk in the State Board of Insurance Commissioners after moving to a house on W. 30<sup>th</sup> Street.

Verner and Doris Magnuson purchased the house around 1943 and lived here until around 1955. Verner Magnuson was a railroad man, working as the city freight agent for the Southern Pacific Lines. He and Doris had lived in Houston before moving to Austin for his work, and after leaving this house, moved back to Houston.

From the early 1960s through the mid-1970s, the house was owned and occupied by Cleo and Beulah Beshears; he ran a Texaco service station on South Congress Avenue before his retirement.

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**STAFF COMMENTS**

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The house was listed with no priority for research in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984), but is contributing to the pending Travis Heights National Register Historic District.

Staff has evaluated this house for designation as a historic landmark and has determined that the house does not meet the criteria for landmark designation as set forth in City Code:

- a. **Architecture.** The house is represents a very intact example of 1930s residential design, which typifies many neighborhoods in greater Travis Heights. The house has been noted as contributing to the pending Travis Heights National Register Historic District, but by itself, reflects a common style with no architectural distinction.
- b. **Historical association.** The house was the home of several families, including that of a city railroad freight agent and the operator of a service station; apart from representing a style and size of residential architecture corresponding to a middle-class demographic, there do not appear to be significant historical associations.
- 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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Encourage rehabilitation and adaptive re-use, then relocation over demolition, but release the permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package, consisting of photographs of all elevations, a dimensioned sketch plan, and a narrative history, for archiving at the Austin History Center. While this house would be contributing to the Travis Heights National Register Historic District if left intact on-site, it does not meet the criteria for individual designation as a historic landmark.

## LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT



PENDING CASE



ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 124'

## NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: PR-20-159677  
 LOCATION: 1402 Drake Ave.

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.



1402 Drake Avenue  
ca. 1937



OCCUPANCY HISTORY  
1402 Drake Avenue

City Directory Research, Austin History Center  
By City Historic Preservation Office  
February, 2012

1992	Jack D. Schulze, renter No occupation listed
1985-86	Mrs. Pat H. Thornton, owner Computer programmer
1981	Pat H. Thornton, owner Computer programmer
1977	Pat H. Thornton, renter Computer programmer NOTE: The directory indicates that Pat H. Thornton was a new resident at this address.
1973	Cleo A. and Beulah Beshears, owners Retired
1969	Cleo A. and Beulah Beshears, owners Proprietor, Beshears Texaco, 344 South Congress Avenue.

- 1965 Cleo and Beulah Beshears, renters  
Attendant, Austin State School  
Also listed is Cleo Beshears, Jr., an attendant at the N.M. Jackson Texaco Station, 2533 Guadalupe Street.
- 1962 Montie A. and Deanna Wallace, owners  
Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- 1958 Rev. Louis W. and Bertha Wickham, renters  
Pastor, Christ Lutheran Church, 300 E. Monroe Street.
- 1953 Verner and Doris Magnuson, owners  
Freight agent, Southern Pacific Lines
- 1949 Verner H. and Doris Magnuson, owners  
City freight agent, Texas and New Orleans Railroad
- 1947 Verner H. and Doris Magnuson, owners  
City freight agent, Southern Pacific Lines
- 1944-45 Verner H. and Doris Magnuson, owners  
City freight agent, Southern Pacific Lines  
NOTE: Mike R. and Gladys E. Mason are listed at 1514 W. 30<sup>th</sup> Street. He had no occupation shown; she was a clerk at the State Board of Insurance Commissioners.
- 1942 Michael R. and Gladys Mason, renters  
No occupation listed  
NOTE: Verner H. and Doris Magnuson are listed at 208 Park Lane. He was the city freight agent for Southern Pacific Lines.
- 1941 Michael R. and Gladys E. Mason, renters  
Michael: Stenographer, State Board of Insurance Commissioners  
Gladys: Telephone operator, Kelly Smith Cleaners, 209-13 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1940 Mrs. Roxie Crausbay, renter  
No occupation listed  
Also listed is Elsie P. Crausbay, a clerk for the State Highway Department.  
NOTE: Mike R. and Gladys E. Mason are listed at 207½ W. 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Apartment 3; he was a lawyer for the State Board of Insurance Commissioners.
- 1939 Michael R. and Gladys E. Mason, owners  
Assistant attorney  
Also listed is Michael Mason, a student at the University of Texas.
- 1937 The address is not listed in the directory.  
NOTE: Michael and Gladys Mason are listed at 1200 San Antonio Street; neither had an occupation shown.  
NOTE: There are also two listings that may correspond to Michael Robert Mason or a family member – the first is for M. Robert Mason, a student at the University of Texas, who lived at 106 W. 16<sup>th</sup> Street, and the second for Mike Mason, a stenographer in the Attorney General's Department, who lived at 205 W. 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Apartment J.

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:****Michael R. and Gladys Mason (ca. 1937 – ca. 1943)**

His October, 1940 World War II draft registration card shows that Mike Robert Mason was living at this address on Drake Avenue. He was born in LeCompte, Louisiana in 1911 and was married to Gladys Elaine Mason. He did part time work for the State Life Insurance Department in the General Land Office Building. He was 5'-6" tall, weighed 122 pounds and had a light complexion with brown hair and brown eyes.

Mike R. and Gladys Mason appear in the 1940 U.S. Census (April, 1940) at 1404½ Lavaca Street in a rented apartment (although city directories show them living at other addresses during the same period, and at this house on Drake in the 1941 and 1942 editions). Mike R. Mason was 28, had been born in Louisiana, and was an attorney with the State Life Insurance Department. Gladys Mason was 32, had been born in Louisiana, and was a telephone operator for a dry cleaner. She lived in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1935. With them lived Gladys' mother, Nelia Wear, a 58-year old Mississippi-born widow who was a real estate agent. It appears that both Mike R. and Gladys E. Mason had subsequent spouses. Mike R. Mason died in Jefferson, Texas in February, 2006.

**Verner H. and Doris Magnuson (ca. 1943 – ca. 1955)**

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Verner and Doris Magnuson living in a rented house in Houston, Texas. Verner Magnuson was 28, had been born in Texas, and was the secretary to the manager of a railroad. Doris Magnuson was 21, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had an infant son, Verner Magnuson, Jr. Verner and Doris Magnuson lived in Austin in 1935 according to the census report.

## **Verner H. Magnuson**

Verner H. Magnuson, 82, died July 10, 1994.

Born April 1, 1912, in New Sweden, Texas, one of nine sons to Sven and Lilly Magnuson, who immigrated from Sweden to Texas in 1907. After completing high school, he moved to Austin to begin a 45-year career with the Southern Pacific Railroad. He retired in Houston as assistant general freight agent in 1975. At the time of his death, he was an active member of the Transportation Club of Houston. He was also an active, longtime member of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church.

He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Doris; two children, Verner H. Magnuson, Jr. and Donna Lee Smith; six grandchildren, Hill, Suzanne, Alexandra and Catherine Magnuson, Amanda and Jessica Smith; and brothers Rudolph, Edwin and Hartwin.

Memorial services will be held Wednesday, 11:00 AM, at Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4930 W. Bellfort, Houston Texas 77035. Memorial contributions may be sent to the church.

Obituary of Verner H. Magnuson  
Austin American-Statesman, July 12, 1994

Doris Magnuson died in Houston, Texas in 1997. There does not appear to have been an obituary in the Austin newspapers.

## **Cleo and Beulah Beshears (ca. 1963 – ca. 1975)**

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Cleo Beshears as the 18-year old son of William and Millie Beshears of Bryan County, Oklahoma. Cleo Beshears was the middle of the 3 children listed for William and Millie Beshears. Cleo was born in Arkansas and was a farm laborer. His father, William, rented their farm, and is listed as a 51-year old Arkansas-born farmer. His mother, Millie, 49, had been born in Arkansas and had no occupation listed.

His 1940 World War II draft registration card shows that Cleo Abner Beshears was living on a rural route out of McKinney, Texas. He was born in 1911 in Little Rock, Arkansas and was married to Beulah Hazel Beshears. He was employed by a J.D. White. Cleo Beshears was 5'-7" tall, weighed 135 pounds and had a dark complexion with brown hair and brown eyes.

Cleo Abner Beshears' 1974 death certificate shows that he was living at this address at the time of his death. He was born in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1911 and was a retired service station



operator. He was married to Beulah Hazel Beshears. Beulah Beshears was born in 1912 and died in 1998. They are buried in Pflugerville, Texas.

**CLEO ABNER BESHEARS**  
 Cleo Abner Beshears, 62, of 1402 Drake Avenue, died Tuesday in a local hospital. Formerly of Denison, he had lived in Austin for the past 22 years. Prior to retirement he operated the Texaco Station at Riverside and Congress Avenue.  
 Funeral will be 2 p.m. Thursday from the Chapel of Wilke-Clay Funeral Home. Rev. James Abington, pastor of Bannockburn Baptist Church, officiating.  
 Burial will be in Capital Memorial Gardens.

Obituary of Cleo Beshears  
 Austin American-Statesman, February 6, 1974

**BESHEARS**, Beulah Hazel, 86, of Austin died Tuesday. Services 10 a.m. Friday, Cook-Walden/Capital Parks Cemetery. Arrangements by Cook-Walden, Lamar location.

Death notice for Beulah Beshears  
 Austin American-Statesman, November 26, 1998



Paul Kirschner

1402 Drake Ave.

126

10

8

Fairview Park

frame res. &amp; box gar.

200n - 8-28-37

4

Building permit to Paul Kirschner, builder, for the construction of this house (1937)

Unless the Plumbing is done in strict accordance with City Ordinances, do not turn on the water.

**PERMIT FOR WATER SERVICE** AUSTIN, TEXAS No. 61088

M. Paul Kirschner Address 1402 Drake Ave.

Plumber: M. S. Alpine Size of Tap 1 1/2" Date 10-21-37

**Foreman's Report**

Date of Connection 10/22/37

Size of Tap Made 3/4"

Size Service Made 3/4"

Size Main Tapped 1"

From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 10'

From S. Prop. Line to Curb Cock 50'

Location of Meter AT CURB

Type of Box LOCK

Depth of Main in St. 15"

Depth of Service Line 2'6"

From Curb Cock to Tap on Main 9'

Checked by Engr. Dept. 11-2-37

**INDEXED**

No.	Fittings	Size
1	Curb Cock	3/4"
1	Elbow	1"
1	St. Elbow	1"
1	Bushing	1/2 SLEEVE
1	Reducer	1"
1	Pipe	10'
1	Lead Comp.	1"
1	Nipples	1"
1	Union	1"
1	Tap	1 1/2"
1	Stop	1 1/2"
1	Box	1"
1	Lid	1"
1	Valves	1"

Foreman's Signature BENSON

Req. No. 90376

Charged to 6" main on 10/22/37

Water service permit for this address (1937)

V. H. Magnuson

1402 Drake Avenue

126 8 & So. part of 9 & S.W.  
part of 10  
Fairview Park Resub.

- - -

Addition to rear of residence.

55611 12-8-53

\$1500.00

Monroe Linder

3

Building permit to Verner Magnuson for the construction of a rear addition (1953)