

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
JUNE 28, 2021
GF-2021-086008
THREADGILL'S
6416 NORTH LAMAR BOULEVARD**

PROPOSAL

Demolition of non-historic additions to Kenneth Threadgill's service station on North Lamar Boulevard and restoration/reincorporation of much of the original building into a new development.

ARCHITECTURE

The original part of this building is a ca. 1933 Gulf Oil service station, which was large for its time and followed a predilection for Southwestern-influenced service stations in Texas and the southwest. Threadgill's service station has a Mission Revival form with stuccoed corner posts and a segmental-arched open service canopy across the front. W. Dwayne Jones, in his "A Field Guide to Gas Stations in Texas" (2003) notes that many national service stations began to adopt an identifiable appearance in the late 1920s and early 1930s; Gulf, founded in Texas, built many service stations in Texas following a Southwestern motif, as reflected in the original section of Threadgills.

In the late 1970s, owner Eddie Wilson, purchased the property and transformed it into a café, adding additions flanking the original service canopy, giving it more of a "diner" flair. Wilson also added on to the rear of the building for his restaurant and kitchen. However, despite the additions, the original footprint of the building is still very evident, even if the original walls have been lost.



Undated business card for Threadgill's shows the configuration of the building and the Southwestern style of the old service station. Note the open front service canopy and the footprint of the office and supply rooms which later became the location of Threadgill's Tavern and home of his Hootenany open mic sessions, drawing local musicians in the 1950s and 1960.

RESEARCH

Kenneth Threadgill, who had operated the Gulf station at 6416 N. Lamar for a short time, obtained the first beer license issued in Travis County after the end of Prohibition in 1933. He opened a tavern and beer hall at his service station, and the place became renowned in Austin for hosting musicians, who would plan for beer money and food, as well as some of the biggest acts in country music. Threadgill, a renowned blues yodeler and musician in his own right, began hosting open-mic nights at his service station, which after World War II, began attracting UT students, including the young Janis Joplin, who began her career of performing in public here. Although Threadgill and his wife served beer and food here, the establishment was more widely recognized as a music venue, and remained so until Threadgill passed away.

STAFF COMMENTS

The building has never been listed in any City survey, but staff believes that the original portion of the building can be restored and considered for landmark designation. Staff supports the applicant's current plan to restore the original part of the building, removing ca. 1980 additions to the front, opening up the front service bay, and returning the building to its appearance when Kenneth Threadgill operated his beer hall and music venue there. The building definitely meets the historical associations criterion for its identification with Kenneth Threadgill, a luminary in Austin's music history, and the applicant's plans show a restoration plan that addresses issues of integrity in returning the building to its historic appearance as would be recognized by Threadgill and the musicians who played there.

The applicant is not now seeking landmark designation for the property, although consideration is a possibility, but that the proposed site plan, which includes restoration of a large extent of the old service station, does justice to this Austin institution. The significance of Threadgill's stems from its identification as a music venue, especially after World War II, when singers like Janis Joplin were attracted to the venue; its identification as a restaurant was a much later association and never as important as Kenneth Threadgill's music venue.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Give preliminary approval to the applicant's plan to restore this building and develop the site in accordance with the proposed renderings which do the old service station justice and commemorate the rich history of this site.

Steve –

Enclosed please find a plan and perspective view of the proposed renovation and new construction at the former Threadgills site. Additionally, the Threadgill's Existing Model was produced through exploratory research and are verified parts of the building that are original. The proposal is to open the porte-cochere up as it was originally built and we have verified that the painted name on the front of the building would be able to remain as it is well above the bottom of the old beam.

The plan shows a glass link that finishes the building footprint where there is less original building remaining and creates a clear separation of old and new. The 5 story construction starts behind that and roughly aligns with the existing 2 story building to the North. As the street view shows there is new construction one site over to our South and the Lamar elevation roughly aligns with the Threadgills front façade. This massing would nicely expose the one story original Threadgills building and the porte-cochere would stand out along the streetscape. The landowners are engaging in discussion with the Janis Joplin estate about adding a memorial to her music contribution on the site. We hope to have a letter of their support by next Monday's HLC hearing.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I will have the architect on the line for Monday's hearing as well.

Thank you Steve,

Victoria Haase

Thrower Design



June 23, 2021

Austin Historical Society

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Jeff Jampol, and I manage the Janis Joplin Estate. As you are well aware, Janis Joplin's contribution to the Texas music scene can be traced back to the early days of live performance at Threadgills on Lamar Blvd. While we are disappointed in the state of the current venue, I speak for the Joplin family in our enthusiastic support for the Journeyman Group's current plan. This plan, as we have discussed with the Journeyman Group, will include a statue of Janis Joplin, potentially in the open porte-cochere. The Janis Joplin estate would welcome a fitting memorialization in Austin and supports the Journeyman efforts as presented to this board.

We look forward to the day we can unveil a collaborative effort to honor Janis on this site.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Jampol", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jeffrey Jampol
CEO
JAM, Inc.

LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT



PENDING CASE



ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 214'

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: DA 20-182629
 LOCATION: 6416 N LAMAR BLVD

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.

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