

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
PERMITS IN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS
DECEMBER 17, 2021
HR-2021-190012
TRAVIS HEIGHTS - FAIRVIEW PARK NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT
1811 ALTA VISTA AVENUE

PROPOSAL

Construct a second-floor addition to a one-story house. Demolish existing non-contributing ADU. Repair windows. Replace roof with standing-seam metal or composition shingles. Modify dormers and roofline at main façade, removing chimney and replacing dormers.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

- 1) Demolish non-contributing ADU at rear of property.
- 2) Partially demolish existing house, including existing chimney, and construct a two-story addition at rear. The proposed addition is clad in brick to match the historic portion of the house. The addition will have a compound gabled roofline, clad to match the existing building. Fenestration is varied throughout, including fixed-pane, casement, and single-hung windows. The roofline at the main elevation is slightly modified to accommodate the addition. A carport extends to the rear of the property.
- 3) Replace dormers at main elevation with single large dormer. The proposed dormer has a shed roof and three multilight windows.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story Colonial Revival-inspired house with brick cladding, a side-gabled roof with gabled dormers, and 8:8 and 6:6 wood windows. The front stoop includes turned columns and an open pediment above a decorative arch, as well as multi-paned sidelights atop decorative wainscoting. A dentillated cornice and simple frieze are visible below the shallow eaves, and side elevations feature traditional cornice returns.

RESEARCH

The house at 1811 Alta Vista was built between 1931 and 1935 for Robert E., Jr. and Willard Nitschke. Robert Nitschke, who went by Ed, worked as a salesman for the John Bremond Company; his wife, Willard, was a schoolteacher. Nitschke was well-known in Austin as a member of an early pioneer family in Central Texas, as well as for his horticultural and landscaping knowledge. Nitschke was a charter member of both the Men's Garden Club and Audubon Society chapter in Austin, and shared his expertise—and his yard at 1811 Alta Vista—with the city's aspiring gardeners.

DESIGN STANDARDS

The City of Austin's [Historic Design Standards](#) (March 2021) are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and are used to evaluate projects in National Register districts.

Repair and alterations

1. General standards

The proposed project removes some intact historic-age material from the building.

5. Windows, doors, and screens

The proposed project removes original dormers and replaces them with a single central dormer, significantly altering the primary elevation.

7. Chimneys

The proposed project removes the original chimney to make room for the addition.

Residential additions

1. Location

The proposed addition is located to the rear of the property, and appears to have minimal visual impact from the street. However, it is not stepped back from the sides of the house, and the addition appears to be located immediately behind the roof ridge line.

2. Scale, massing, and height

The proposed addition is one story in height. Though it appears outsized at secondary elevations, drawings suggest it will be minimally visible from the main elevation.

3. Design and style

The proposed addition appears to be somewhat compatible, though its irregular fenestration pattern and varied window style is less compatible with the more formal stylistic elements of the historic house.

4. Roofs

The proposed compound roofline is somewhat complex, and significantly alters the existing side-gabled detail at the south elevation; however, the roofline is minimally visible from the street. The elimination of the existing gable at the south elevation may make the addition difficult to differentiate from the historic fabric of the house.

5. Exterior walls

The proposed addition will be clad in brick to match the existing house.

6. Windows, screens, and doors

See 3.

9. Attached garages and carports

The proposed carport is set back on the lot; though this is not common among contributing buildings in the neighborhood, it will not be visible from the street.

Summary

The project meets some of the applicable standards.

PROPERTY EVALUATION

The property contributes to the Travis Heights-Fairview Park National Register district.

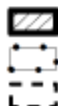
Designation Criteria—Historic Landmark

- 1) The building is more than 50 years old.
- 2) The building appears to retain high integrity.
- 3) Properties must meet two criteria for landmark designation (LDC §25-2-352). Staff has evaluated the property and determined that it does not meet two criteria:
 - a. Architecture. The building displays Colonial Revival influences.
 - b. Historical association. The property does not appear to have significant historical associations; however, the Commission may wish to consider Robert Nitschke's civic contributions to Austin's Garden Club and Audubon Society chapter.
 - c. Archaeology. The property was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.
 - d. Community value. The property 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 does not possess a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city, as it appears that most of Nitschke's landscaping is no longer extant.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Comment on and release the plans.

LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT
PENDING CASE
ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 292'

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HR 21-190012

LOCATION: 1811 ALTA VISTA AVENUE

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*





Applicant, 2021

Occupancy History

City Directory Research, November 2021

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1959 | Robert E. Jr. and Willard D. Nitschke, owners
Salesman, John Bremond Co. |
| 1957 | Robert E. Jr. and Willard D. Nitschke, owners
Salesman, John Bremond Co.
Teacher |
| 1955 | Robert E. Jr. and Willard D. Nitschke, owners
Salesman, John Bremond Co. |
| 1952 | Robert E. Jr. and Willard D. Nitschke, owners
Salesman, John Bremond Co.
Teacher, Austin High School |

- 1949 Robert E. and Willard D. Nitschke, owners
Assistant sales manager, John Bremond Co.
Teacher, Austin High School
- 1947 Robert E. and Willard D. Nitschke, owners
Assistant buyer, John Bremond Co.
Teacher, Austin High School
- 1944 Robert E. and Willard D. Nitschke, owners
Assistant sales manager, John Bremond Co.
Teacher, public school
- 1941 Robert E. and Willard G. Nitschke, owners
Assistant sales manager, John Bremond Co.
Teacher, public school
- 1939 Della Houssels, renter
Teacher, public School
- Robert E. and Willard G. Nitschke, owners
Assistant sales manager, John Bremond Co.
Teacher, public school
- 1937 Della Houssels, renter
Teacher, Austin High School
- Robert E. and Willard G. Nitschke, owners
Assistant sales manager, John Bremond Co.
Teacher, Austin High School

Biographical Information

E. Nitschkes Party Hosts

Husbands of members of the Readers' Guild were guests of honor at the group's traditional Christmas party Tuesday evening in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Nitschke, 1811 Alta Vista.

Co-hostesses for the occasion were Mrs. Frank Spiller and Mrs. Neil Allen.

The Christmas motif was carried out in the house decorations. Refreshments were served by Mrs. W. E. McCaleb and Mrs. O. P. Lockhart.

Mrs. Allen read a Christmas story entitled "The Little Mixer," and the group joined in singing carols. Mrs. A. M. Felts accompanied the group on the melodeon.

Those attending included Messrs. and Mesdames Grover Selders, D. T. Harkrider, Starr Kealhofer, Willis Sauer, Frank Dial, C. M. Miller, Jay D. Howell, Truman O'Quinn, H. Carr Pritchett.

Also Messrs. and Mesdames John Crockett, A. P. Dooley, Lockhart, Allen, Spiller, Nitschke and McCaleb.

GARDENERS TO GATHER

The Austin Mens Garden Club will meet Sunday at 3 p.m. in the garden of R. E. Nitschke, 1811 Alta Vista Street.

The members will hear a talk by Professor J. W. MacQueen, professor of floriculture and landscape architecture at Texas A&M College at Bryan.

Prof. MacQueen will discuss fall plantings, bulbs and annuals for spring blooming and shrubbery that should be started in the fall. He will also discuss preparation of soil before planting.

Members and friends are invited.

W. D. Blachly has charge of the program. There will be a general discussion of flowers and plants in Nitschke's garden.

The Austin Statesman, Dec 21, 1950; The Austin American, Jul 10, 1955

Ed Nitschke Dies at His Home at 69

R. E. (Ed) Nitschke Jr., 69, a member of one of the city's pioneer families, died at his home, 1811 Alta Vista, Thursday night.

Four generations of the Nitschke family had been born and reared at the house at 16th and Sabine, still standing, that was a familiar place to old-time Austinites. The Nitschke family lived here when it fronted on a cattle trail.

Nitschke was a lifelong member of St. David's Episcopal Church, having served as a choir boy in his youth, been married there and served in many capacities in the church organization.

A graduate of Austin High School and veteran of World War I, Nitschke was born Feb. 17, 1896. He was a salesman for the John Bremond Company, and later went into the administrative department of Nelson Davis and Sons.

Nitschke was known as organizer of the Travis County Audubon Society. He was a charter member and past president of the Men's Garden Club.

One of the best horticulturists in this area and a great lover of the outdoors, Nitschke developed gardens at his home which were on scenic tours for many Austin groups and individuals.

In earlier years, Nitschke served with the volunteer fire department.

His wife, the former Miss Willard Griffith of Austin, has taught in the Austin Public Schools for many years. She now is on the teaching staff of William B. Travis High School.

Nitschke also has one brother, Herbert Nitschke of Austin, who survives him.

Funeral services are scheduled for Saturday at 4 p.m. from St. David's Church. Burial will be in Austin Memorial Park under direction of Cook Funeral Home.



ROBERT (ED) NITSCHKE

Nitschke Rites Set At 4 pm

Funeral for Robert (Ed) Nitschke, organizer of the Travis County Audubon Society, will be Saturday at 4 p.m. at St. David's Episcopal Church with Rev. Charles Sumners officiating.

Burial will be in Austin Memorial Park under direction of Cook Funeral Home. Pallbearers will be Frank Spillar, Willis Sauer, Emil Anderson, George A. Montz, Alfred Noack, Jesse Fox, Larry Malay and Walter Bohn.

Nitschke, 69, member of pioneer Austin families, died at his home, 1811 Alta Vista, Thursday night.

Formerly employed at Nelson Davis & Son, Nitschke was one of the best-known horticulturists in this area and a great lover of the outdoors. He developed gardens at his home which were on scenic tours for many Austin groups and individuals.

Four generations of the Nitschke family have lived in the residence at 16th and Sabine. The family first moved there when it was fronted by a cattle trail.

He was a graduate of Austin High School and a veteran of World War I.

Survivors include his widow, the former Miss Willard Griffith, who is a teacher at William B. Travis High School, and a brother, Herbert Nitschke of Austin.

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); May 21, 1965 and May 22, 1965

Hardy Plants Suggested With Arrival of Winter

GARDEN TALK

By MEN'S GARDEN CLUB
OF AUSTIN

The hard freeze here this week has settled the issue. From now on any outdoor gardening must revolve around plants that are hardy in Central Texas.

Among the several flowers and vegetables that may be started at this time we are partial to peas, both the sweet-smelling, blooming kind and the so-called "English" peas that are a popular item on the American table.

While all peas can be expected to thrive during most winters here, there can be a few out-of-the-ordinary cold spells that will damage them.

We may plant both the edible and inedible varieties of peas from November through January. We still have fond memories of the garden of the late Ed Nitschke who always had sweet peas "blooming their heads off" in late winter in his Travis Heights yard on Alta Vista. We also remember his planting rule: "When goblins fly it's time to put the peas in the ground." He got a head start by planting sweet pea seeds on Halloween Day.

listed as Improved Early Spencers. The Cuthbertson Floribundas bloom when the days get longer and continue to bloom well into spring. They are more heat resistant than other varieties. Both these popular groups are vine-types so they must have a trellis or fence to climb on.

For those who have no room for climbing varieties, the Bijou, only a foot high, will make a beautiful splash of mixed color. Knee-Hi is another good selection in the bush type of sweet pea. This strain comes in mixtures or in one of seven separate colors.

Those who want to enjoy both blooms and, later, an edible harvest for the table will find English peas satisfy both counts, despite a rather more modest floral show. Little Marvel and Laxton's Progress are two varieties that do well for us. To extend the harvest season into spring, plant Wando, a good heat-resistant variety.

Some seed packets still instruct the gardener to plant pea seeds in a trench, then gradually add soil as the plant grows. We don't know where or why this idea originated, but we do know that many successful gardeners simply

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Nov 22, 1969

Permits

SANITARY SEWER SERVICE PERMIT		No. 10181
Austin, Texas		
Received of	R. E. Mitrehle	Date 6-10-31
Address	1811 Alta Vista Ave.	
Amount	\$	
Builder or Owner	R. E. Nitschke	Plumber
Lot	21 & 20	Block 21
Subdivision	Plat No.	
Date of Connection	6-24-31	
By City		
By Plumber	Boatright	
Checked By		
Size Main	6"	Depth 3'
Main Assign.	34' from PL	
Stub Depth	Prop. Line	
Stub Location		
Book No.	B-6	
Paving Cut	No.	

No. Fittings	Size	Price
64' Pipe	4"	
2' Pipe	6"	
1 Wyes	4x4	
1 Bends	4" 45	
Reducers		
Plugs		
Sand		
Gravel		
Reinix		
Stoppers		
Castings		
Other		
Labor:		

Sewer service permit, 1931

LOT 21
BCK. 21
SEC. 132

SW II 132

WATER SERVICE PERMIT

Austin, Texas

No. 26174
INDEXED

Received of R. E. NITSCHKE Date 5-10-80

Address 1811 ALTA VISTA AVE

Amount NINETY \$ 90.00

Plumber GORDET Size of Tap 1 1/2"

Date of Connection 5-10-80

Size of Tap Made 1 1/2"

Size Service Made 1 1/2"

Size Main Tapped 2"

From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 7.5'

From NO. Prop. Line to Curb Cock 21'

Location of Meter CURB

Type of Box SQUARE

Depth of Main in St. 4'

Depth of Service Line 4'

From Curb Cock to Tap on Main 22'

Checked by Engr. Dept. 5-28-80

No. Fittings	Size
24	1 1/2" C.O.P.
1	Corp. Cock
1	Cop. to Iron ell. 1 1/2"
1	Cop. to Cop. ell.
1	Cop. to Iron Coupling 1 1/2"
1	Cop. to Cop. Coupling
1	Angle Stop
1	Stop
2	Bushing 1 1/2" X 8 (B)
2	Nipples 1 1/2" X 8 (B)
2	Service Clamp 2" X 1"
1	Valve 1 1/2"
1	Meter Box SQUARE
1	Lock Lid
2	Drain Tile
2	Drain Tile Lid
1	Stop & Drain
1	Job No. <u>W-323-200-502</u>
1	Foreman <u>V. DICK</u>

REPLACES TAP # 212

INDEXED

Water service permit, 1960