

Allen, Amber

From: Barbara Epstein [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, January 21, 2022 12:48 PM
To: PAZ Preservation
Cc: HNA; e
Subject: Case No. GF 22-001028 607 E. 38th St.

*** External Email - Exercise Caution ***

This email serves as my protest to the demolition permit application for Case No. GF 22-001028 607 E. 38th St. I live within 500 feet of the property.

Although this 1935 duplex is not a grand structure, it is representative of the modest multi-family housing built in the area at the time that continues to provide (badly needed) relatively affordable housing in our city core. When I looked online to search for photos (since I had never been inside), I was surprised to see what looks like remarkably well-preserved living space---

<https://www.apartments.com/607-e-38th-st-austin-tx-unit-a/dv3k8rj/>

The current owner is in San Antonio and according to his website

<https://habitathaus.com>

builds modern homes. When I spoke to the owner, Mr. Jorge Alzaga, he refused to commit in writing that any new structure he builds would blend in with the neighborhood's historic architecture—or to put anything in writing at all before the demolition permit hearing. But anyone who looks at and purchases property in this neighborhood would see that it is predominately made up of historic architecture, so they either are interested in preserving it or only interested in making the most profit no matter what.

If this demolition permit is granted, it will create a clear precedent to build much larger, incompatible housing to the lot line without adequate parking. (Mr. Alzaga has a permit on file to build a 4,004 sq. ft. two-story duplex, while the current one-story duplex is listed as having 1,582 sq. ft.) I am unaware of any duplex like the ones on the owner's company website that have been proposed or built in this vicinity. This demolition permit would have a domino effect because the pressures are too great now to raze entire historic neighborhoods in the name of densification, while at the same time, our city has made it almost impossible for a homeowner to legally increase density by creating an affordable ADU in an existing detached structure.. (For example, by ordinance, [25-2-1463 (2)(b)] a detached garage cannot qualify as an ADU unless it is a second story unit, and is allowed only the one current driveway curb cut, even though an ADU requires an additional paved parking space.)

This neighborhood is at a tipping point between preservation and destruction. If historic preservation has merit or significance today, the Commission should deny this permit.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Epstein
701 Texas Ave
Austin TX 78705

CAUTION: This email was received at the City of Austin, from an EXTERNAL source. Please use caution when clicking links or opening attachments. If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to cybersecurity@austintexas.gov.