

January 22, 2022

Historic Landmark Commission
301 W. 2nd Street
Austin, TX 78701

Subject: Opposing initiating historic zoning at 3621 Windsor Rd. (Item D.5 / PR-2021-191341)

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to you today to oppose initiating an historic zoning case for 3621 Windsor Rd. and to ask that you release the demolition permit.

Alma Thomas, the woman at the center of this case, was my grandmother – and 3621 Windsor Rd. was my family's home. While my family no longer owns 3621 Windsor Rd., I nevertheless strongly feel that my grandmother's life and accomplishments should not be used to impact the property's utilization

My grandmother led a full and vibrant life, filled with impressive achievements that she accomplished despite the many barriers she faced as a woman leader in the early and mid-20th century. And while she did live at 3621 Windsor Rd., her life was spent out in the world.

She was an avid traveler who visited over 100 different countries and delighted in learning more about different cultures and peoples. She was also a civic leader and philanthropist who worked to strengthen her local community and the cause of arts education, including serving as the first female member of Southwestern University's board of trustees.

I am proud of my grandmother and everything she accomplished. And these accomplishments have not gone unrecognized. She was the proud recipient of many honors in her life, including being memorialized as the namesake for Southwestern University's Alma Thomas Fine Arts Center.

The Fine Arts Center, especially, appropriately connects my grandmother's memory with two of the causes she worked so hard to support during her life: arts and education. This review case, in contrast, would connect my grandmother to a house rather than to the world she explored and the trailblazing work that she did.

When I initially submitted the demolition permit for this case, I did not imagine that the City of Austin would seek to impose historic status based on my grandmother. Additionally, I subsequently sold 3621 Windsor Rd., prior to learning that the City was seeking to initiate historic zoning.

As a result, my family has no financial interest whatsoever in the outcome of your deliberations. Still, when I learned of this historic review, I felt compelled to write to you directly to ask that you do not initiate or approve historic zoning for this case. Please do not use my grandmother as a justification for doing so.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Dorothy Thomas Boykin