

Brummett, Elizabeth

From: John Tate [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, January 30, 2022 5:37 PM
To: Ramirez, Nadia - BC; Smith, Hank - BC; Kiolbassa, Jolene - BC; King, David - BC; Bray, Timothy - BC; Greenberg, Betsy - BC; Denkler, Ann - BC; Acosta, Cesar - BC; Woody, Roy - BC; Thompson, Carrie - BC; Boone, Scott - BC
Cc: Brummett, Elizabeth; Rivera, Andrew
Subject: Case C14H-2021-0164, 2502 Park View Drive, favoring preservation

*** External Email - Exercise Caution ***

To the members of the Zoning and Platting Commission:

I'm a member of the Board of Directors of the Allandale Neighborhood Association, writing today on my own behalf and not for the Association. However, I will also take this opportunity to inform you of a recent action of the Board. I support preservation of 2502 Park View Avenue, on the grounds of its historic value.

My wife and I have long enjoyed seeing the house on walks around the neighborhood, and we appreciated the tour of the Air Conditioned Village organized by MidTexMod a few years ago. It's rewarding to know something of the history of one's neighborhood.

Construction of the Air Conditioned Village began in 1953. All 22 homes had central air conditioning equipment furnished by a variety of manufacturers. Rather than being named for their original owners like the Scarborough House and similar grand mansions, these houses were named for their air conditioners. 2502 Park View Avenue was called the Chrysler Air-Temp House. In addition to central air, the houses had ventilation in attics, kitchens, and bathrooms, windows positioned to avoid strong sun, insulated walls, and roofs with overhangs and carports to create more shade.

Energy-efficient features specific to this house include its south-facing orientation, the low-pitched roof with four-foot overhangs, clerestory windows with heat-absorbing glass to reduce heat load, and a large carport to the southwest. Even back then, Austin was a leader in green building!

Starting in 1954, the homes and the families living in them were part of a year-long study of the technical, economic, and social aspects of air conditioning in smaller homes. This study encouraged the adoption of air conditioning in such homes, and it influenced the loan policies of FHA and other lenders to make it easier for people of modest means to purchase a home with air conditioning.

Many in Allandale appreciate the history of the neighborhood, and hope some of its material aspects will be preserved. This past December, the Board of Directors of the Allandale Neighborhood Association passed a resolution recognizing 2502 Park View Avenue as an asset to the neighborhood because of its history, and encouraging the owner not to demolish it, but to renovate it in a way that will preserve its historical value. We sent the resolution to the owner with a letter offering to facilitate a solution that meets everyone's objectives.

The neighborhood association has not taken a position on the historic zoning request before the city, nor has it taken a position on the previous application for a national historic district for the Air Conditioned Village, or on any of the other houses that would have been included in the district.

Thanks very much for considering the historic value of this house.

John Tate
2502 Albata Avenue
Council District 7

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Brummett, Elizabeth

From: Robert E Mace [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, January 30, 2022 9:14 PM
To: Robert Mace
Cc: Rivera, Andrew; Brummett, Elizabeth
Subject: 2502 Park View

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Dear Commissioners (I bcc'd y'all since there may be rules against me including you all in the To: line):

I am writing in support of preserving the house at 2502 Park View. This house is part of the Austin Air-Conditioned Village but is also, in my opinion, one the best examples of Mid-Century Modern architecture in Allandale. The low-slanting roof, de Stijl facade, Miesian brickwork, and the peek-a-boo, mid-volume roof window, and clerestory windows all scream Atomic Age architecture at its best. The house is nearly in its original condition and is still as far-sighted and progressive today as it was back in the 1950s.

Allandale is more and more coming under the bulldozer blade, losing the original character of the neighborhood. Many places, arguably, need to be (and will be) scraped, but 2502 Park View is inspired MCM architecture, something that is in high demand these days, especially by the culturally aware that more and more occupy our streets.

Please help us protect and save this house.

-Robert Mace
6909 Daugherty Street

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Brummett, Elizabeth

From: Kevin Smith [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 31, 2022 11:07 AM
To: Ramirez, Nadia - BC; Smith, Hank - BC; Kiolbassa, Jolene - BC; King, David - BC; Bray, Timothy - BC; Greenberg, Betsy - BC; Denkler, Ann - BC; Acosta, Cesar - BC; Woody, Roy - BC; Thompson, Carrie - BC; Boone, Scott - BC
Cc: Rivera, Andrew; Brummett, Elizabeth
Subject: 2502 Park View Dr

*** External Email - Exercise Caution ***

My name is Kevin Smith, and I live adjacent to 2502 Park View Dr.

I favor and agree with the broad coalition of academic, governmental, non-profit, and preservation institutions (such as UT-Austin, The Texas Historical Commission, the City of Austin's Historic Preservation Office, the Allandale Neighborhood Association, Preservation Austin, and Mid Tex Mod). In addition, over 520 Austinites and approximately 180 of my Allandale neighbors (residents of the Allandale's zip codes) agree with the home's historical nature. Indeed, I am not alone in believing that 2502 Park View Dr is a landmark home worth saving.

To me, without a doubt, the architecture of this home is an excellent example of mid-century modern architecture. In addition, knowing that the house was designed by local Austin architect Fred Day (who designed other notable local commercial and civic buildings), with unique architectural features to 2502 Park View Dr, further informs me of its architectural significance.

Lastly, as others have spoken about, this home is the best-preserved example of Austin's Air Conditioned Village. With the technical data provided by Austin's Air Conditioned Village experiment, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) amended its home loan requirements to allow for homebuyers of modest means to qualify for a loan on a home that contained central air-conditioning. For it is my understanding that at this time, the requirements to purchase a home with central air-conditioning precluded most middle-income homebuyers!

As is continuously mentioned in public testimony, I would like to address the misconception that I am the only homeowner of an Air Conditioned Village home that supported the effort to list Austin's Air Conditioned Village on the National Register of Historic Places. In reality, I am only one of the approximately 30% who supported the nomination. Even if the nomination had passed, as the National Park Service clearly stated, it would not have prevented a potential demolition of this home.

As I realize there is a potential increased monetary cost in partially versus completely demolishing the home, I have been a constant advocate for the partial-demolition strategy. The Historic Landmark Commission's Architectural Review Committee worked with a previous owner on such a strategy. As a result, the previous owner agreed to preserve the existing home's front, right, and roofline while allowing for a rather substantial addition. Also, I would encourage the applicant and his agents to work with City staff to maximize the addition size as the development code allows City staff to grant greater entitlements than those found in the code.

I view this as an excellent compromise and one that allows the property owner's developer to create a unique one-of-a-kind showcase home that preserves and highlights the pre-existing architectural qualities and allows for a substantial addition to deliver the greater square footage.

Kindest Regards,

Kevin