

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: TBD

HLC DATE: May 4, 2022; June 1, 2022

APPLICANT: Historic Landmark Commission (owner-opposed)

HISTORIC NAME: TBD

WATERSHED: Lady Bird Lake

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 316-318 Colorado St., 201-209 W. 4th St.

ZONING CHANGE: CBD to CBD-H

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 9

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Do not recommend the proposed zoning change from central business district (CBD) to central business district-historic landmark (CBD-H) combining district zoning. The applicant has amended the original proposal (see A.5-4 to A.5-5) to include partial demolition and façade retention at 209 W. 4th St. and a portion of 201 W. 4th St. to better comply with the Citywide Design Standards and implement Commission feedback.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION: Architecture, community value, and historical associations (see staff analysis below)

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: May 4, 2022: Leave the public hearing open and initiate historic zoning (Koch, Little; 8-0)

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

CITY COUNCIL ACTION:

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The *Historic Buildings in the Warehouse District Survey* (draft, ca. 2009) lists the property as medium priority for inclusion in a potential historic district and notes modifications.

CASE MANAGER: Kalan Contreras

PHONE: 512-974-2727

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS: Austin Independent School District, Austin Lost and Found Pets, Austin Neighborhoods Council, City of Austin, City of Austin Downtown Commission, Downtown Austin Alliance, Friends of Austin Neighborhoods, Homeless Neighborhood Association, Neighborhood Empowerment Foundation, Preservation Austin, SELTexas, Sierra Club, Austin Regional Group

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

§ 25-2-352(3)(c)(i) *Architecture*. *The property embodies the distinguishing characteristics of a recognized architectural style, type, or method of construction; exemplifies technological innovation in design or construction; displays high artistic value in representing ethnic or folk art, architecture, or construction; represents a rare example of an architectural style in the city; serves as an outstanding example of the work of an architect, builder, or artisan who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state, or nation; possesses cultural, historical, or architectural value as a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian or vernacular structure; or represents an architectural curiosity or one-of-a-kind building.*

The building at the corner of W. 4th and Colorado streets is a modest single-story brick warehouse with modifications. It has three bays of storefront windows and doors between brick piers on the Colorado Street elevation and five bays on the W. 4th Street elevation. Some of the piers along W. 4th St. are tiled and may not be at original locations. Windows and doors are inconsistent in their design and appear to have been replaced at different times. Wrapping the building is a rowlock course of bricks at the window headers, above which the brickwork is punctuated by regularly spaced vertical bands. Rooftop additions include a barrel-vaulted structure and a tent.

§ 25-2-352(3)(c)(ii) *Historical Associations*. *The property has long-standing significant associations with persons, groups, institutions, businesses, or events of historic importance which contributed significantly to the history of the city, state, or nation; or represents a significant portrayal of the cultural practices or the way of life of a definable group of people in a*

historic time.

The Jim's Café Building/Rainbo Bread Warehouse was constructed ca. 1936. The portion at 201 W. 4th/318 Colorado St. replaced an earlier two-story building shown on the 1935 Sanborn map, which housed saloons from the mid-1880s through the 1910s before use as an office and warehouse. Jim Pachalos, a Greek American restaurateur, had Jim's Café in the corner space of the present building from 1936 through the mid-1940s; he also had a restaurant in the preceding two-story building. Jim's Café was replaced by Pape's Grill by the late 1940s, and Stancel Hill opened J&J Café here in the late 1950s. Speranza's Italian Café opened in the space in the late 1970s, and the building was converted into a salon in the mid-1980s.

The portion at 316 Colorado St. was initially Samuel Robinson's auto repair shop. Fehr Baking Company, a San Antonio-based bread manufacturer, used this space as a warehouse beginning in the early 1940s. The company later became part of the Rainbo Baking Company. By the mid-1960s, the building became a warehouse for the adjacent automotive service business at 310-312 Colorado St. In 1984, the building was converted to office use and subsequently housed antique and folk-art shops.¹

The portion addressed at 209 W. 4th St. housed a variety of occupants, including a government property storeroom for the U.S. Bureau of Mines, the Home Service Delivery Company, Deen Signs, and additional storage for Fehr and Rainbo baking companies.

The property does not appear to have individually significant associations. It is not linked with the area's earlier red-light district or with Harold Eichenbaum and is not the primary location associated with Oilcan Harry's. While the property does possess a unique location and physical characteristic as part of the Warehouse District, this association in itself is not sufficient for the building to individually qualify for landmark designation.

§ 25-2-352(3)(c)(iv) Community Value. *The property has a unique location, physical characteristic, or significant feature that contributes to the character, image, or cultural identity of the city, a neighborhood, or a particular group.*

As a building within the Warehouse District—an area historically associated with Austin's LGBTQIA+ businesses, gathering spaces, and community nexus—that currently houses LGBTQIA+-centric businesses, it is important to recognize and examine any possible connections within the historic period under the Community Value criterion. However, this property's documented association with Austin's LGBTQIA+ community does not appear within the historic period. The property possesses a unique location and physical characteristics as a warehouse in the Warehouse District which retains a use consistent with the area's historic LGBTQIA+ spaces, but this association in itself is not sufficient for the building to individually qualify for landmark designation.

PARCEL NO.: 0206011605

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: LOT 7-9 BLOCK 028 ORIGINAL CITY (TOTAL SQ FT 17664)

ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT: \$47,828.32 total (non-homestead, no cap); city portion: \$16,790.81

APPRAISED VALUE: \$ 11,948,123

PRESENT USE: Cocktail lounge

DATE BUILT: ca. 1936

INTEGRITY: The building appears to retain a moderate degree of integrity. Modifications include changes to window and door patterns and rooftop additions.

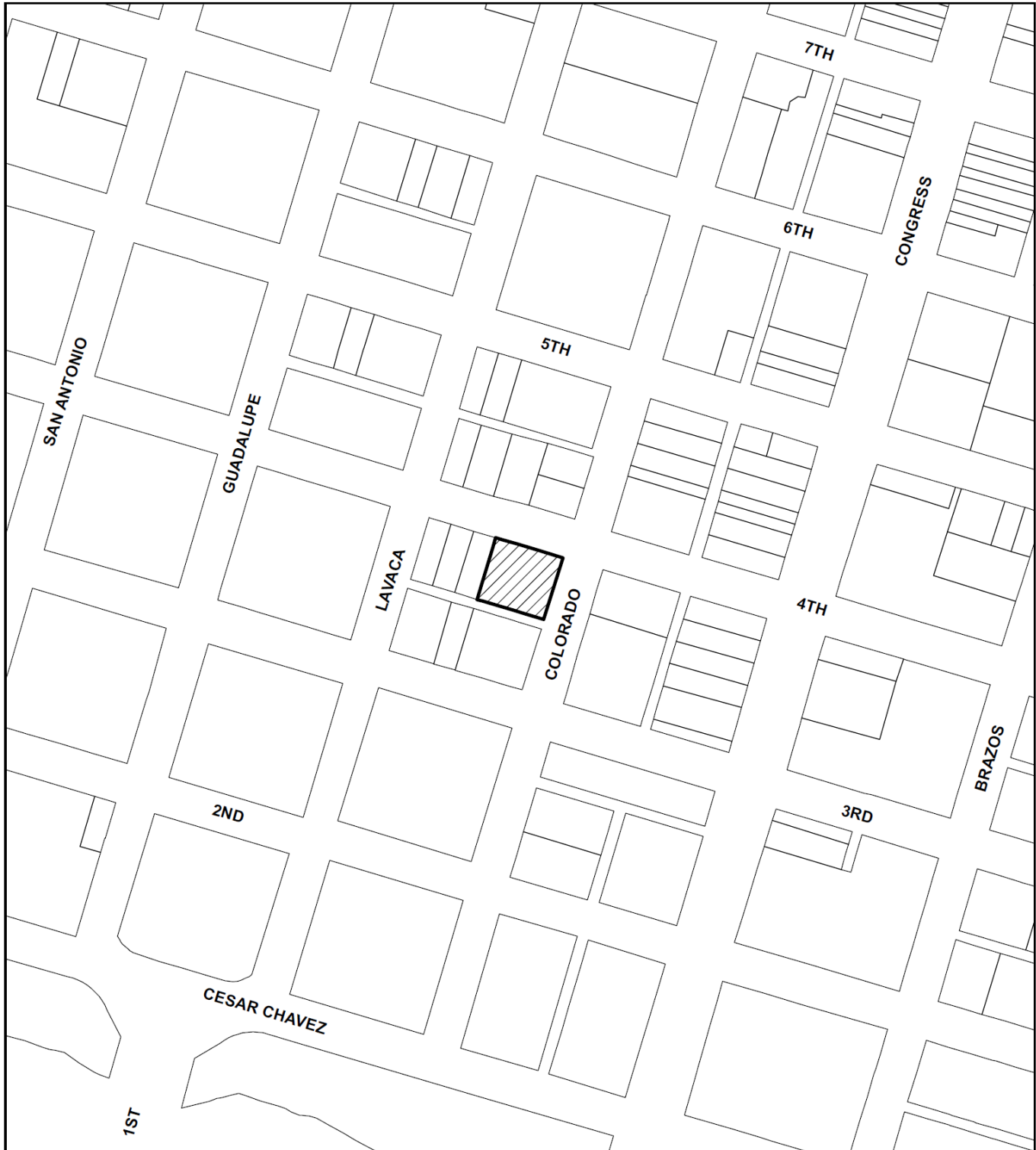
PRESENT OWNERS (TCAD): DORRELL RICHARD RLT, 15853 NESIKA BAY RD NE POULSBO WA 98370-8608

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): Jim Pachalos

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: None

¹ Adapted from Steve Sadowsky, *Narrative History of Buildings in Austin's Warehouse and Wholesale Districts*, undated (ca. 2009).

LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT



PENDING CASE



ZONING BOUNDARY

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: GF 22-047912

LOCATION: 201- 211 W 4TH STREET



1" = 250'

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.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
MAY 4, 2022
DA-2022-040962; GF-2022-047912
201-209 WEST 4TH STREET, 318 COLORADO STREET

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1936 commercial building and reconstruct a portion of the façade along W. 4th Street.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

- 1) Demolish the building. Reconstruct the portion of the building façade historically addressed as 207 and 209 W. 4th St., contiguous to reconstructed façades at 211 and 213 W. 4th St. (see separate staff reports). The character of the brickwork, particularly the banded pattern at the parapet, will be accurately reconstructed. Existing brick will be salvaged and reused in the reconstruction, with paint removed or the bricks turned to reveal the unpainted side. The pattern of openings in this section of façade may have been modified; the reconstruction will establish a more regular rhythm of openings.
- 2) Construct an open-air plaza and recessed glass lobby at the corner of W. 4th and Colorado streets, occupying the area historically addressed at 316-318 Colorado St./201 W. 4th St.
- 3) Construct a high-rise tower with more than a 5' setback from the building façade. Behind the parapet, the garage levels will be clad in a simple screen in a dark bronze color.

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 at historic landmarks and within historic districts. The Warehouse District was previously identified by Historic Preservation Office staff as a potential historic district. The following standards are applicable in considering the proposed project:

Repair and alterations

1. General standards

These standards do not explicitly address reconstruction, but emphasize retaining historic materials in place, planning for repair when needed due to deterioration, and replacing materials only when deteriorated beyond repair. For this project, reconstruction is not proposed based on the existing conditions of the buildings. Rather, it is a means of protecting original building materials from damage during construction of the proposed high-rise tower. A significant portion of the building will be demolished and not reconstructed.

4. Exterior walls and trim

These standards emphasize retaining historic masonry walls and using replacement mortar that matches the historic mortar in composition, joint profile, and color. For this project, the existing brick will be reused, with paint removed or the bricks turned to reveal the unpainted side. Care will be taken to match the masonry patterns and detailing in reconstruction.

5. Windows, doors, and screens

11. Commercial storefronts

Standards in these sections emphasize retention of historic materials, or where elements have been previously altered or replaced, using new designs and materials that are compatible with the scale and style of the building.

Existing fenestration in the section of façade to be reconstructed is inconsistent and has been replaced in at least two of the three bays. The project will involve changing the spacing of the piers and installing new glazing and doors reminiscent of what is currently present in the leftmost bay.

Commercial additions

2. Scale, massing, and height

These standards emphasize that additions should appear subordinate to a historic building. Within an urban setting surrounded by high-rise towers, the standards allow vertical additions that are set back at least 20' behind the building parapet, with a potential 5' cantilever forward at a greater height. The proposed tower is set back 5' behind the parapet. The material and color selection are intended to differentiate the addition and cause it to visually recede behind the parapet, such that it does not overwhelm the building despite the shallower setback.

Summary

The proposal to demolish and reconstruct a portion of the building façade, rather than retain it in its entirety, in place, does not meet the standards that would be applied in review of proposed work to a historic landmark. However, it represents a compromise solution intended to maintain the streetscape character of this block of the Warehouse District. Greater liberties are proposed for this building façade than those at 211 and 213 W. 4th St., which are each more architecturally distinguished and intact than this building.

COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

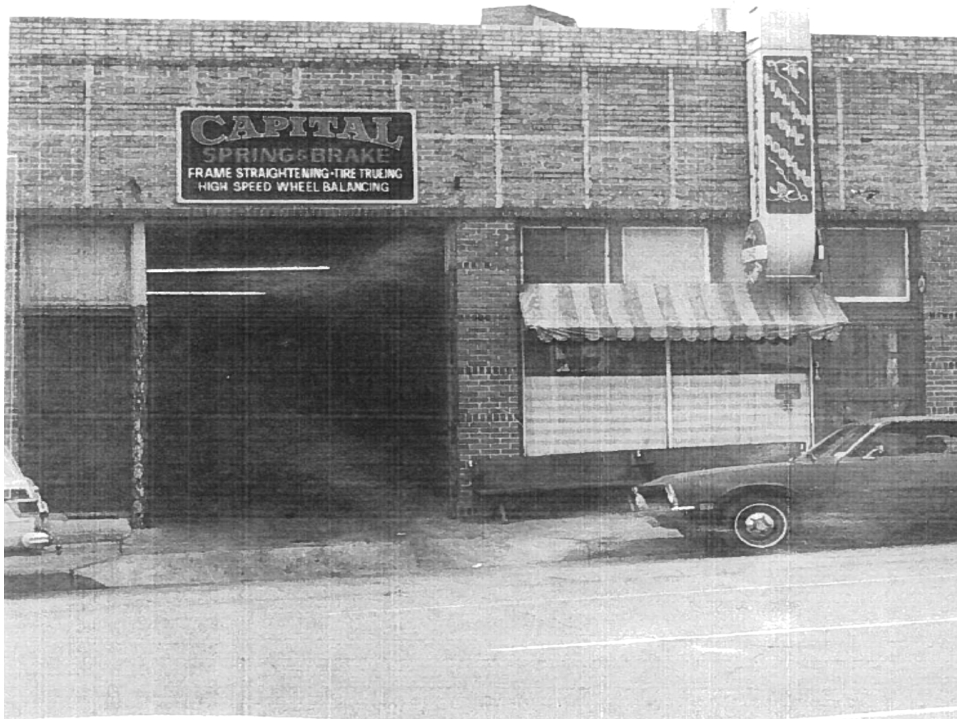
The Architectural Review Committee provided feedback on the proposed project on April 11, 2022. Committee members emphasized the importance of historical accuracy and retention of historic materials and patterns in treatment of the building façades. The building façades should be preserved in place during construction, or if reconstructed, involvement of a preservationist on the project team and rigor in field measurements is critical. Different brick treatments on the various façades gives each building a distinct character. Restoration of missing or altered features should be based on documentary or physical evidence of an earlier configuration. Transoms and fenestration patterns should be maintained.

The relationship between this block of warehouses and the landmark Nelson Davis Warehouse across Colorado should be considered. At the corner of 4th and Colorado, committee members recommended retaining the masonry of the corner building, with fenestration removed to create an open-air plaza, rather than removing the corner entirely.

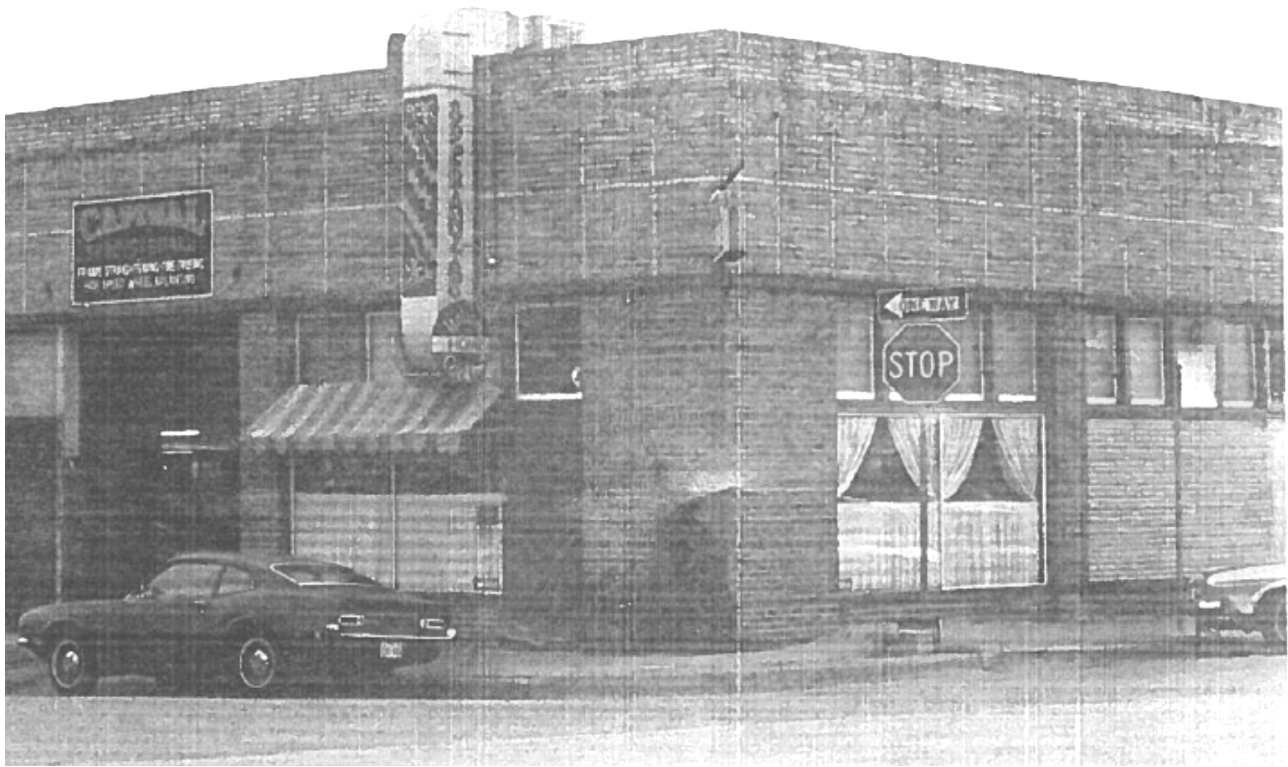
The setback of the new tower is critical to not overwhelming the warehouse façades. Committee members appreciated the neutral color and texture of the tower garage cladding at this level. Greenery at the parapet level would detract from the historic character of the warehouses.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Release the associated permits for demolition and reconstruction of a portion of the W. 4th St. façade upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package.

PROPERTY INFORMATION*Photos*

316-318 Colorado Street, 1979 photographs, source unknown.



318 Colorado Street/201 W. 4th Street, 1979 photograph, source unknown.



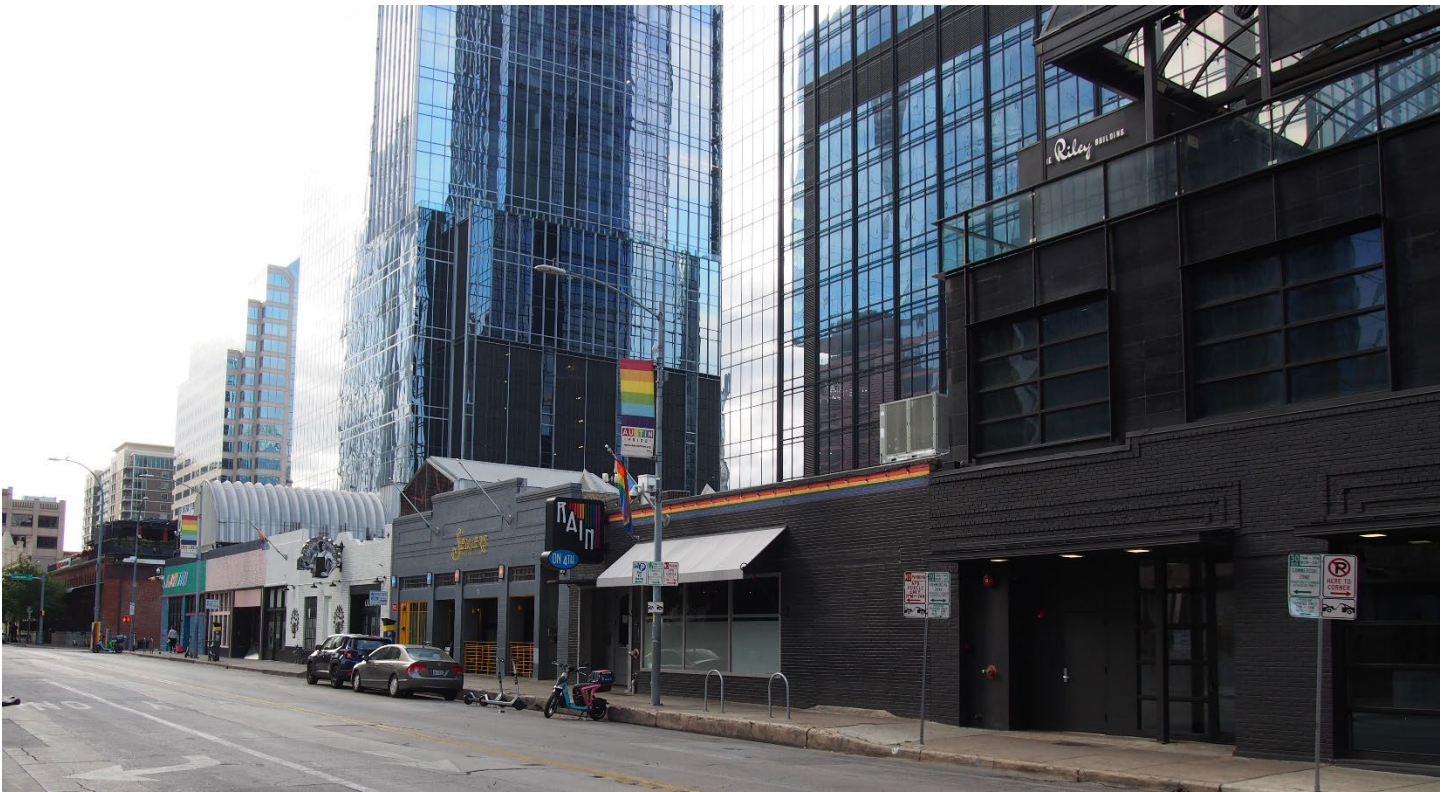
W. 4th Street elevation of building showing storefronts addressed at 201-209 W. 4th Street, Historic Preservation Office staff, April 2022.



W. 4th Street elevation of building showing storefronts addressed at 201-209 W. 4th Street.



*Colorado Street elevation of building showing storefronts addressed at 316-318 Colorado Street,
Historic Preservation Office staff, April 2022.*



200 block of W. 4th between Colorado and Lavaca streets. Note that buildings at 217 and 219 W. 4th Street (in foreground) are outside of the project area. Historic Preservation Office staff, April 2022.

Occupancy History

City Directory Research, November 2008 and April 2022

1992	207 W. 4 th St.	Cavanaugh Grimes Studio
	316 Colorado St.	Room with a View (antiques) Pamela Crochery-Ely, proprietor
	318 Colorado St.	Vacant
1987	201-209 W. 4 th St.	Address not listed
	316 Colorado St.	Richard Dorrell Interests (commercial real estate)
	318 Colorado St.	Michael Carey, Inc. (art gallery)
1985-86	209 W. 4 th St.	Back East Antiques
1981	207-209 W. 4 th St.	Address not listed
	316 Colorado St.	Address not listed
	318 Colorado St.	Speranza's Italian Home Cooking Hallie Gammon, proprietor
1977	201-209 W. 4 th St.	Address not listed
	316 Colorado St.	Capital Spring and Brake Company warehouse Greg Henderson and Lloyd Anthony, managers Note: Capital Spring and Brake's shop was located at 310 Colorado Street, just to the south of this building.
	318 Colorado St.	Speranza's Café Hallie Gammon, proprietor
1975	201-209 W. 4 th St.	Address not listed

	316 Colorado St.	Capital Spring and Brake Company warehouse Greg Henderson and Lloyd Anthony, managers Note: Capital Spring and Brake's shop was located at 310 Colorado Street, just to the south of this building.
	318 Colorado St.	J&J Café Stancel E. Hill, proprietor
1967-69	201-209 W. 4 th St.	Address not listed
	316 Colorado St.	Burkhalter Spring and Alignment Service warehouse Wayne Woodward, manager Note: Burkhalter Spring and Alignment Service shop was at 310 Colorado Street, just south of this building.
	318 Colorado St.	J&J Café Stancel E. Hill, proprietor
1963-64	207 W. 4 th St.	Rainbo Baking Co. (garage)
	316 Colorado St.	Rainbo Baking Company G. Melvin Beckham and Clarence H. Bose, supervisors
	318 Colorado St.	J&J Café Stancel E. Hill, proprietor
1959	209 W. 4 th St.	Rainbo Baking Co. (storage)
	316 Colorado St.	Rainbo Baking Co.
	318 Colorado St.	Vacant
1957	209 W. 4 th St.	Fehr Baking Co. (storage) Jerry Duman, sales manager
	316 Colorado St.	Fehr Baking Co. (wholesale bakery products) J. Porter Mayer, manager
	318 Colorado St.	Chef's Grill (restaurant) John R. Pena, proprietor
1955	209 W. 4 th St.	Fehr Baking Co. (storage)
	316 Colorado St.	Fehr Baking Co. (wholesale)
	318 Colorado St.	Pape's Grill (restaurant)
1953	209 W. 4 th St.	Fehr Baking Co. (storage)
	316 Colorado St.	Fehr Baking Company Melvin Beckham and Albert Bradshaw, managers
	318 Colorado St.	Pape's Grill (restaurant) Charlie and William Pape, proprietors
1952	209 W. 4 th St.	Deen Signs
	316 Colorado St.	Fehr Baking Co.
	318 Colorado St.	Pape's Grill restaurant
1949	209 W. 4 th St.	Home Service Delivery Co. Anthony Collonetta, proprietor
	316 Colorado St.	Fehr Baking Co. Curtis H. Barnett, supervisor
	318 Colorado St.	Pape's Grill (restaurant)

		William P. and Charles R. Pape, proprietors
1944-47	209 W. 4 th St.	U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Mines (Government Property storeroom)
	316 Colorado St.	Fehr Baking Co. Curtis H. Barnett, manager Note: Fehr Baking Company was headquartered in San Antonio.
	318 Colorado St.	Jim's Café restaurant Jim Pachalos, proprietor
1941	201-209 W. 4 th St.	Addresses not listed
	316 Colorado St.	Samuel Robinson (auto repair)
	318 Colorado St.	Jim's Café James Pachalos, proprietor
1939	201-209 W. 4 th St.	Addresses not listed
	316 Colorado St.	Samuel Robinson (auto repair) Note: Fehr Baking Company is listed as at 300 Colorado Street. Green & Uzzell (auto repair)
	318 Colorado St.	Jim's Café
1937	201 W. 4 th St. and 318 Colorado St.	Jim's Place Jim's Café James Pachalos, proprietor
	207-209 W. 4 th St.	Addresses not listed
	316 Colorado St.	Address not listed
1935	201 W. 4 th St.	James Pachalos (restaurant)
	207 ½ W. 4 th St.	Guy R. and Ida Ezelle, renters Attendant, Gulf Refrigerating Co. Station #1, 601 W. 6 th St. Note: The 1935 Sanborn map shows a small house at the rear of the lot.
	316-318 Colorado St.	Addresses not listed

Permits

Unless the Plumbing is done in strict accordance with City Ordinances, do not turn on the water.

PERMIT FOR WATER SERVICE

AUSTIN, TEXAS

No. 2835

M. Claude Lawan Address 203 W. 4thPlumber Hissell Size of Tap 1/2 Date 5-31-35

Foreman's Report

Date of Connection 5/31/35
 Size of Tap Made 3/4"
 Size Service Made 3/4"
 Size Main Tapped 6"
 From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 7'6"
 From E Prop. Line to Curb Cock 2'6"
 Location of Meter out. with
 Type of Box wood
 Depth of Main in St.
 Depth of Service Line
 From Curb Cock to Tap on Main
 Checked by Engr. Dept. 7-31-35 W.P.H.

No. Fittings

Curb Cock

Elbow

St. Elbow

Bushing

Reducer

Pipe

Lead Comp.

Nipples

Union

Plug

Tee

Stop

Box

Lid

Valves

Req. No.

Foreman's Signature

Reverie

Unless the Plumbing is done in strict accordance with City Ordinances, do not turn on the water.

PERMIT FOR WATER SERVICE

AUSTIN, TEXAS

No. 4069

M. B. H. Bloor Address 203 W. 4thPlumber Lamier Size of Tap 1/2 Date 5-5-36

Foreman's Report

Date of Connection
 Size of Tap Made
 Size Service Made
 Size Main Tapped
 From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock
 From Prop. Line to Curb Cock
 Location of Meter
 Type of Box
 Depth of Main in St.
 Depth of Service Line
 From Curb Cock to Tap on Main
 Checked by Engr. Dept. W.P.H. 5-25-36

No. Fittings

Curb Cock

Elbow

St. Elbow

Bushing

Reducer

Pipe

Lead Comp.

Nipples

Union

Plug

Tee

Stop

Box

Lid

Valves

Req. No.

Foreman's Signature

Daughan

INDEXED

Unless the Plumbing is done in strict accordance with City Ordinances, do not turn on the water.

PERMIT FOR WATER SERVICE

AUSTIN, TEXAS

No. 4068

INDEXED

M. B. H. Bloss

Address 318 Colorado Street

Plumber Lamer

Size of Tap 1/2 Date 5-5-36

New
II

Date of Connection 5-5-36
 Size of Tap Made 3/4
 Size Service Made 3/4
 Size Main Tapped.....
 From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 33
 From Prop. Line to Curb Cock 8
 Location of Meter curbline
 Type of Box lock
 Depth of Main in St. ✓
 Depth of Service Line 18
 From Curb Cock to Tap on Main ✓
 Checked by Engr. Dept. 5-25-36

INDEXED

Foreman's Report

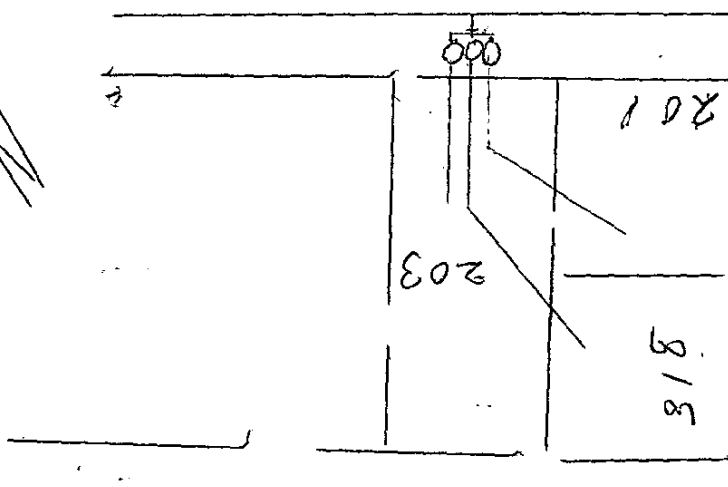
No. Fittings	Size
3 Curb Cock	5/8
2 Elbow	3/4
2 St. Elbow	3/4
2 Bushing	3/4 x 1/2
2 Reducer	3/4 x 1/2
Pipe	
Lead Comp.	3/4 close
4 Nipples	
Union	
1 Plug	5/8 meter 6388
7 Tee	3/4
Stop	
3 Box	
Lid	
Valves	

Foreman's Signature

Danlon

Req. No. 4332

West 4th



Address: 209 W. 4TH		Permit: 204635		Plat: 7	
Lot: 9		Block 28		Subdivision:	
		Outlot		ORIGINAL CITY	
Fire Zone: -		Use Dist. C-28/4th		Occupancy: Retail/Remodel	
10-31-80 Layout		Framing		12-16-80 Final	
Foundation		Floor joist size & o.c.		Bldg. Conn.	Parking
Front setback		ceiling joist size & o.c.		Room Vent.	Exits
Total & Min. side yard	✓	stud size & o.c.		Stairs	Exit lights
Side St. Yard				Rails	Fences
				Attic Vent.	Corridors
				Insulation	
Type Const.	✓	W. Insulation		Hood Vent.	
Spec. Permit #		Sheetrock		Glass	
BOA		Commercial Sheetrock		Deadbolts	
		Occup. Sep.		Fireplaces	
		Thru out			
Owner: MR. JORDEN			Contractor: Gary Buyer		

REMODEL

BID 2005 JUNE 77



City of Austin

Clerk SLW Date 2/16/80

Address: 209 W. 4TH

Building permit, 1980

Gas Company to Extend Mains

The Texas Public Service company was granted permission to extend gas mains on West Third from West Annie to West Monroe, and on West Monroe from South Third 365 feet east at the meeting of the city council today. Another line will be extended on East 30th from Robinson to Dancy streets, and on Dancy from East 30th 35 feet south.

Contractor A. A. Mundt was permitted to enclose a portion of the sidewalk during the construction of a new building at 318 Colorado, and Contractor Bill L. Taylor was granted the same permission for a building at 221 Congress.

Taxi driver permits were issued to Bert B. Linnam, 1903 Haskell, and A. Duran Donk, Little Campus dormitory.

The council also voted to accept the extension of two water mains to the city reservoir, constructed under PWA funds by Contractor F. C. Youmans.

"Gas Company to Extend Mains," Austin Statesman, Feb. 6, 1936, 12.



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209 West 4th Street
Austin, Texas
Phone 7-1246

Advertisement for Home Delivery Service, 209 West 4th Street, Austin Statesman, Apr. 1, 1949, 20.

green.

PACHLOS, Jim (Pappa),
86, 1603 Bouldin Ave., died
Tuesday. Services pending
at Cook-Walden Funeral
Home. Survivors: wife,
Mrs. Pauline Pachlos of
Austin; sons, Tommy Pach-
los, Pete Pachlos, both of
Austin; one sister, of
Greece; two grandsons; one
step-granddaughter.

THOMPSON, Mrs. J. J.

HILL, Stansel, 63, 2529 S. Lamar
Blvd., died Sunday. Services 1:30 p.m.
today at Cook-Walden Funeral Home.
Graveside services 4 p.m. today at Flor-
ida Chapel Cemetery in Round Top. Sur-
~~vivors include sister, Mrs. R.A. Huggins~~
of Temple.

Left, obituary of Jim Pachlos, who operated Jim's Café, the first business in the current building, Austin American-Statesman, Apr. 28, 1976. Right, death notice for Stansel Hill, who operated the J&J Café here in the 1960s, Austin American-Statesman, Aug. 22, 1978.

Personal touch — now that's Italian

By LINDA ANTHONY
American-Statesman Staff

"If there's one piece of advice I'd give to a cook, it's don't follow a recipe verbatim," growled the bushy redheaded busily feeding cloves of garlic, pepper corns, handfuls of basil and a seeming endless stream of olive oil into a blender.

"That's because any recipe you get from somebody is always going to have something left out. If you get grandma's favorite bread recipe, there's going to be something missing. If you weren't around to see grandma make it, then you're not going to get the same loaf of bread. It's that simple," he said, transferring the liquified contents of the blender into a plastic container.

The fellow pacing himself furiously in the kitchen is Michael Speranza, co-owner and chef of a tiny, but quaint restaurant, Speranza's Italian Home Cooking, 318 Colorado.

His expertise — and advice — comes from firsthand experience. Raised in New Jersey, he spent a good portion of his youth in relatives' restaurants or eateries.

"My father was in the restaurant business, so I learned a little from him. But not much. I was too young at the time. My mother worked in this lady's, Mrs. Tallia's restaurant, and she taught me a few tricks too," he said.

WHAT HE DIDN'T LEARN about cooking from his parents, he learned from his uncle who ran a delicatessen or by experimenting in the kitchen on his own.

Despite that background, Speranza considers himself a novice and is somewhat reluctant to dispense information. "There's still a lot I've got to learn about this business."

"It's a loose profession, but that's what makes it interesting. Everyone's got their own style. Somebody may not care for mine; I know I don't care for everybody's. But that's where research comes in. You do a little research and say 'well, that sounds good. Maybe I'll change it and do it this way,'" said Speranza while culling through a small mountain of parsley.

Though he may not be a source of definitive information, he clearly knows that pasta, tomato sauce and meatballs do not classic Italian cuisine make.

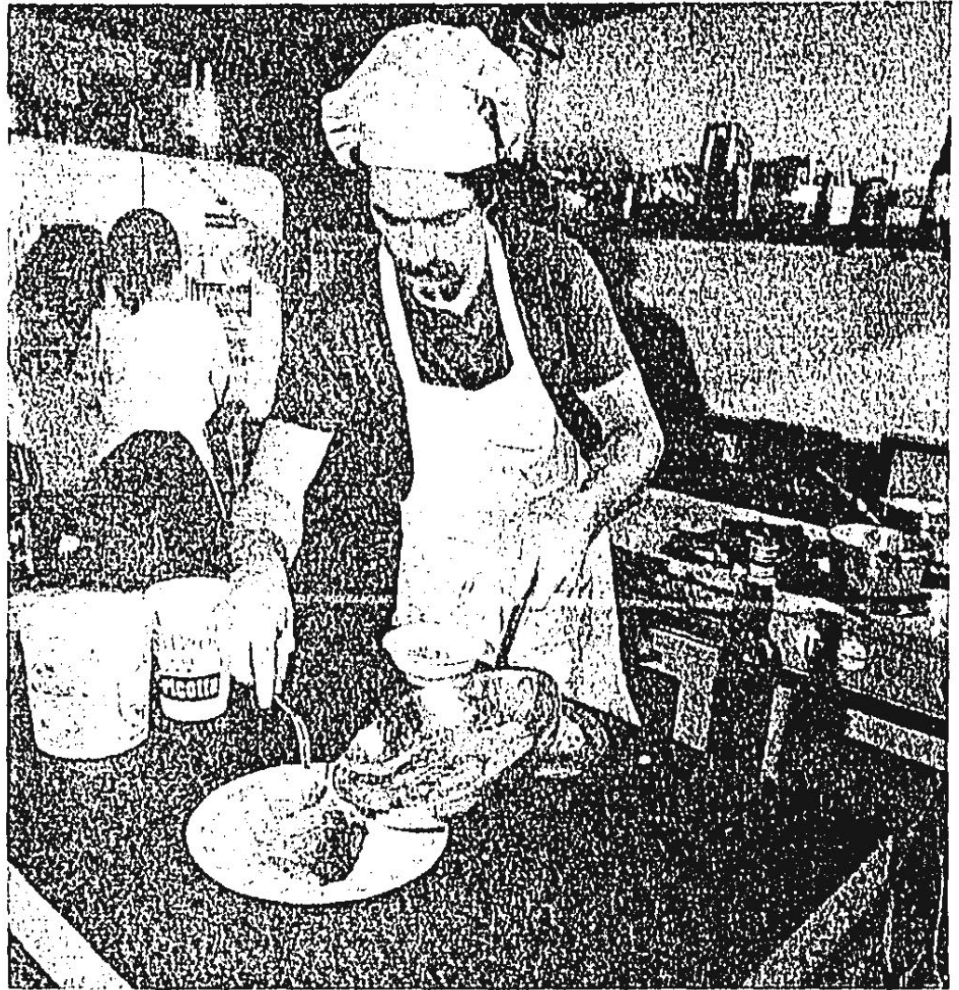
In fact, to speak of Italian cooking is itself a misnomer. Italy's cuisine, like that of many countries, is a compendium of regional culinary traditions and dishes. Until 1861 Italy existed as a handful of squabbling political states, whose boundaries shifted about as frequently as battles occurred.

BUT PERHAPS THE MOST decisive factor in assuring that Italy had no homogenous national cuisine is its geography. At its southern tip, Italy's rocky terrain reaches into the Mediterranean, affording natives of that area endless varieties of seafood. On those hillsides flourish olive groves, producing some of the world's most viscous, rich and golden oil.

Italy's only major plain lies at its center. Here it is heresy to sit down to a meal without homemade pasta topped with butter-laden sauces. Veal, in its finest milk-white forms, is plentiful and an Italian of this region would relish to see the pink slabs of meat purported to be veal sold in most domestic markets.

Indeed, it is ingredients and their freshness that give Italy's cooking its definitive stamp rather than time consuming techniques and fancy slights-of-hand in the kitchen.

"You gotta have access to ingredients," said Speranza emphatically. "I'd like to do business locally, but there's no way." Consequently, Speranza buys his veal in New York, his prosciutto in Minnesota, sausage in New Jersey and cheeses in Houston or San Antonio. As for herbs and spices that impart that mouth-watering aroma to Italian sauces, he grows his own.



Chef Michael Speranza makes Scaloppino di Vitello al Marsala in his restaurant kitchen

"A LOT OF OUR customers come in and they know something about the food they're eating. Some of them have been to cooking schools and ask for my recipes to try at home. (Don't bother asking, Speranza prefers not to divulge them.)

"Then some will walk out of the place if they don't see spaghetti and meatballs. Me, I'd like not to have to ever cook spaghetti and meatballs again. But it's gotten to where I can't."

"People come to a place like this because they know they'll get certain things here that they won't any place else. So you gotta keep giving it to them. There's enough room for variation — where we can try new things to keep

ourselves and the customers interested."

If you're interested in Italian cooking, here are recipes to try:

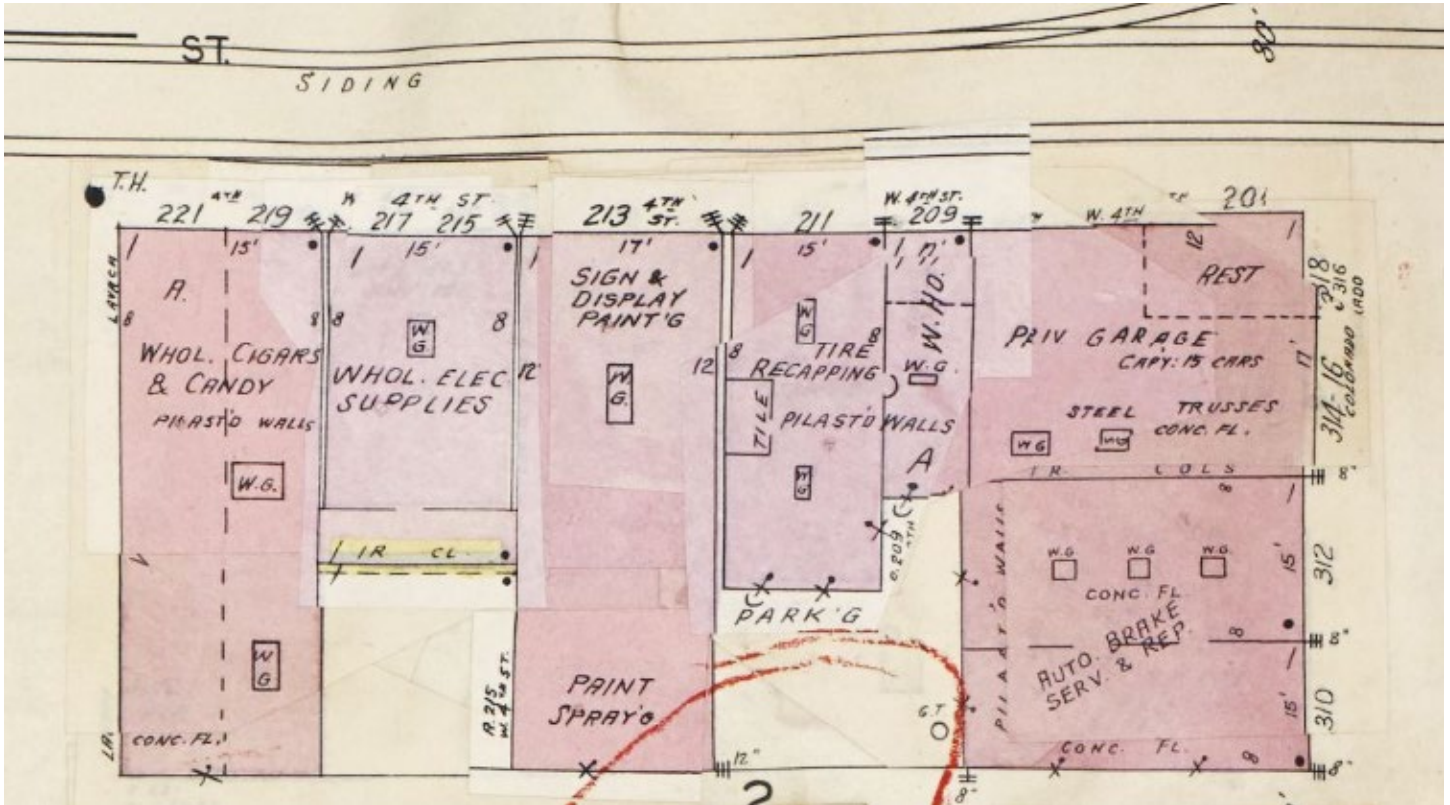
SCALOPPINE DI VITELLO AL MARSALA

3 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 pound veal scaloppine, very thinly sliced and pounded flat
3/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
freshly ground pepper, 5 or 6 twists of the mill
1/2 cup dry Marsala
3 tablespoons butter

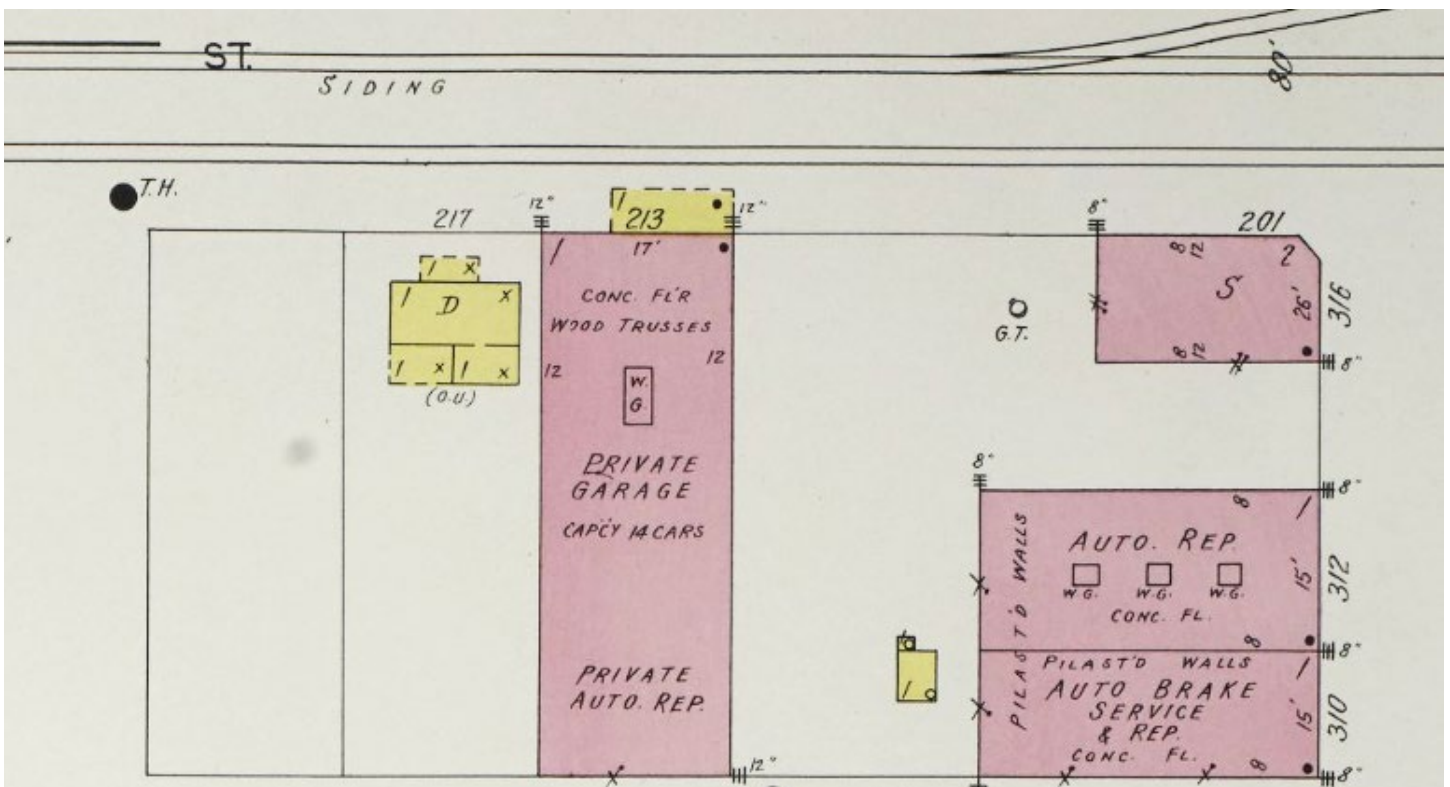
See Italian, G4

Article on Michael Speranza of Speranza's Italian Home Cooking,
"Personal Touch—Now That's Italian," Austin American-Statesman, Oct. 12, 1978, G1.

Sanborn Fire Insurance maps



The 1961 map shows the current one-story building on this site, shown as a private garage, warehouse, and restaurant. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1961, Vol. 1, Sheet 13, accessed via Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g4034am.g4034am_g08415196101?sp=18&st=image.



The 1935 map shows a two-story commercial building and an empty lot at the site of the current building, which was built ca. 1936. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1935, Sheet 13, accessed via Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g4034am.g4034am_g084151935?sp=18&st=image.