

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: C14H-2023-0024

HLC DATE: April 5, 2023 PC DATE: TBD CC Date: TBD

APPLICANT: Tere O'Connell

HISTORIC NAME: Lewallen House

WATERSHED: Johnson Creek

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 1700 Hartford Road

ZONING CHANGE: Rezone 0.14 acres from SF-3 to SF-3-H

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 10

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from SF-3 to SF-3-H.

DESIGNATION QUALIFICATIONS: §25-2-352(3)(c)(i), architecture and §25-2-352(3)(c)(ii), historical associations

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

CITY COUNCIL ACTION:

CASE MANAGER: Kalan Contreras, 512-974-2727

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS: Austin Independent School District, Austin Lost and Found Pets, Austin Neighborhoods Council, Friends of Austin Neighborhoods, Homeless Neighborhood Association, Neighborhood Empowerment Foundation, Old Enfield Homeowners Assn., Pease Neighborhood Association, Preservation Austin, SELTexas, Save Barton Creek Assn., Save Historic Mundy District, Shoal Creek Conservancy, Sierra Club, Austin Regional Group

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: This property is located in the Old Enfield Neighborhood Planning Area and will be reviewed by the Planning Commission per LDC 25-1-46 (E)(4).

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 Lewallen House represents one of the few remaining examples of French Eclectic architecture from the 1930s in Austin. It is an excellent example of the style, popular from 1915-1945. Built c. 1933 by noted Austin architect Edwin Kreisle, the home is a distinct subtype of the French Eclectic style known as Towered, demonstrated by its prominent round tower with a high, conical roof. Its "storybook" design elements are striking and uncommon in Austin, particularly its memorable tower entrance and whimsical asymmetrical gable.

The application describes the house in detail:

The home was designed by Edwin C. Kreisle for RJ "Red" Lewallen and Dorothy Parker Lewallen. Kreisle was a [prolific] architect for almost 60 years ... Built c. 1933, the home is a distinct subtype of the French Eclectic style known as Towered, demonstrated by its prominent round tower with a high, conical roof. The arched wooden door, located in the tower, has a half-tilted arched window and faces southeast. Three rounded steps with two curved handrails lead to the arched front door with surrounding stonework reminiscent of a storybook cottage... The house has buff-colored brick veneer with weeping or extruded

mortar and a stuccoed front gable with wood accents. The wing of the front facing gable is also decorated with stone to suggest an old-world element...The house is asymmetrical...A lightning rod gracefully rises from the tip of the tower...A chimney is prominently located on a side elevation near the midpoint of the house. A pair of double-hung windows with 12-lite wooden screens appear to the left of the door. The dominant front gable is graced with three casement windows with transoms and a large wood lintel above...These windows also have multi-lite screens. The north elevation has two sets of three double hung windows...and a pair at the west end...The west (back) elevation reflects the most changes, revealing an enclosed porch that dates to 1941 and a dormer that dates to about 1991. A small painted deck with steps leads to the addition and into the main house...A five-foot fence encircles the perimeter of the property. A gate, rounded at the top, with an opening that mimics the front door, leads the visitor along the driveway.¹

§ 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 house was built in 1933 by architect Edwin Kreisle for R.J. and Dorothy Lewallen. Dorothy Lewallen was a University of Texas graduate who taught home economics at Austin High School. R.J. Lewallen, known as “Red,” worked as vice president of the John Bremond Company and taught business courses at the University of Texas. Lauded for his business acumen and salesmanship, Lewallen was elected present of the Chamber of Commerce in 1959 and executive director of the Texas Wholesale Grocers Association in 1960. His mentorship cultivated a generation of Texas businesspeople, including billionaire and former Astros owner Drayton McLane, and his influence impacted the grocery, wholesale, and food packaging industries during Texas’ midcentury economic boom.

Lewallen was also a prominent figure in civic life, managing former U.S. Representative Jake Pickle’s campaign for Congress in 1963. Pickle, who hoped that Lewallen’s popularity in Austin would generate campaign support, went on to serve in the House for more than thirty years. “Red was just born to do good,” said Pickle in a 1997 American-Statesman retrospective after Lewallen’s death. “He was born to be a thoughtful and caring civic worker. I always felt privileged just to be in his presence.”²³

PARCEL NO.: 0113040506

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: LOT 13 ENFIELD F

ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX EXEMPTION:

<i>AISD (capped)</i>	<i>COA (capped)</i>	<i>TC (capped)</i>	<i>TC Health (capped)</i>	<i>ACC</i>	<i>Total</i>
\$3,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$873.13	\$0.00	\$9,373.13

APPRAISED VALUE: \$1,443,469

PRESENT USE: Residence

DATE BUILT/PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: ca. 1933, 1933-1949

INTEGRITY/ALTERATIONS: High. The rear porch was completed in 1941, during the historic period. The fireplace may have been moved prior to 1977. Modern alterations include a 1991 like-for-like window replacement and a rear addition hidden from street view.

PRESENT OWNERS: Kenneth G. Koch and Nancy Bowles

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): Dorothy and R. J. Lewallen

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: Contributes to National Register district

¹ O’Connell, Tere and Lori Martin. “Historic Zoning Application: Lewallen House, 1700 Hartford Road.”

² Austin American-Statesman (Austin, Texas). Jan 31, 1997

³ O’Connell, Tere and Lori Martin.

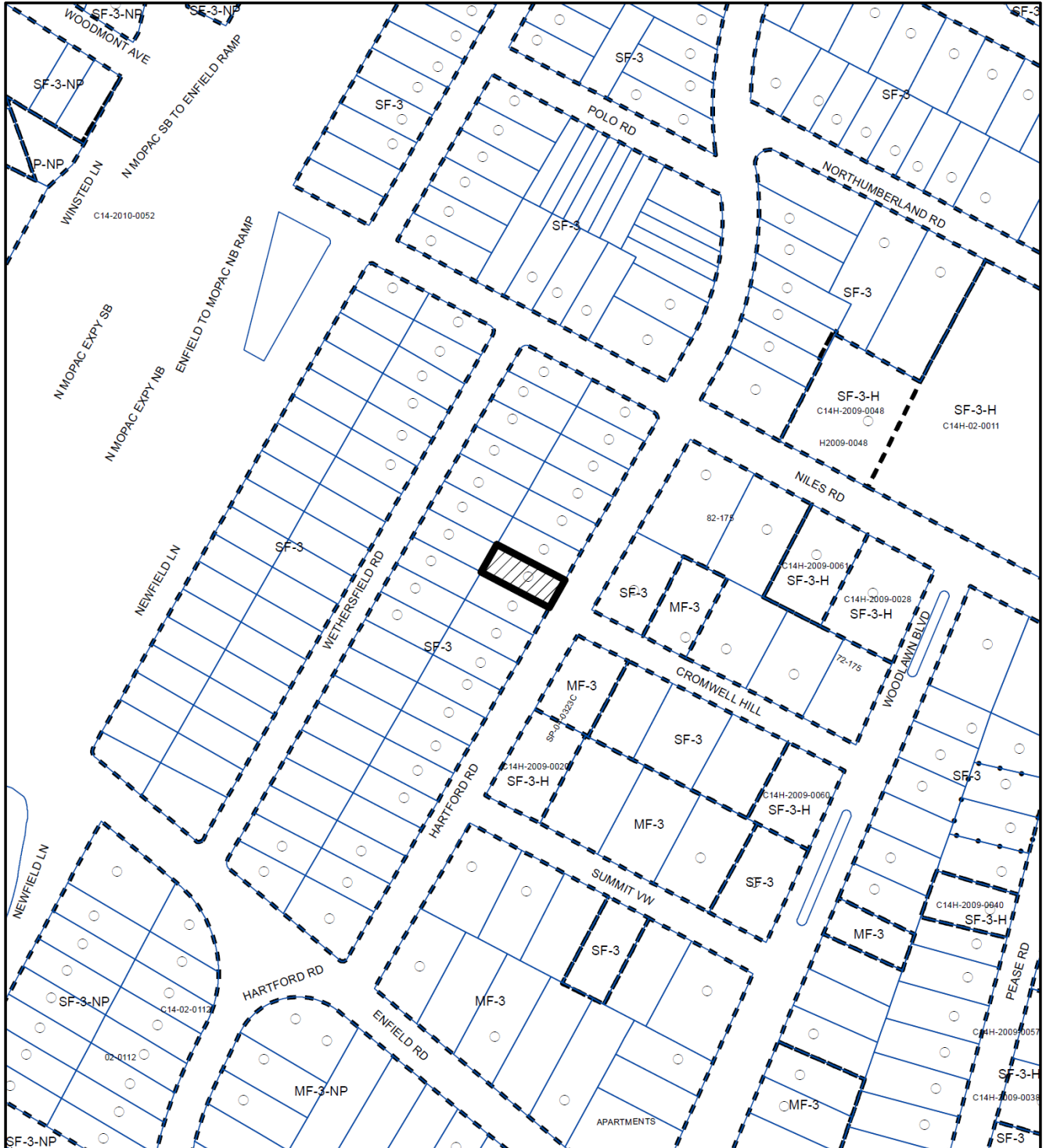


Source: Austin History Center



Source: Tere O'Connell, 2023

LOCATION MAP



1" = 200'



SUBJECT TRACT



PENDING CASE



ZONING BOUNDARY

HISTORIC ZONING

ZONING CASE#: C14H-2023-0024

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