

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
MAY 3, 2023
PR-2023-030839; GF-2023-043166
4601 EDMONT DRIVE

PROPOSAL

Partially demolish and construct a second-floor addition to a ca. 1955 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story Ranch house with front-facing garage, cross-gabled roof with deep eaves, vertical wood siding with brick water table, and replacement windows and roof.

RESEARCH

4601 Edgemont Drive was constructed by prolific Austin builder Walter Carrington in 1955, who made it his family home until around 1963. A 2019 summary of Carrington's career by Steve Sadowsky describes his impact on Austin's built fabric at midcentury:

Walter Carrington, a prolific homebuilder in central Texas, began his career in Austin in the early 1950s. [...] Many of his homes...are located in the Northwest Hills neighborhoods of Austin, but he was also responsible for most of the houses in University Hills, east of IH-35 during the same period. Carrington was a very open-minded builder: he did not engage in the still-then prevalent process of red-lining to keep African-American buyers out of neighborhoods [...] Carrington was known for his architectural and construction innovations, using architectural features...to create individualized projects [and] also following the tenets of mid-century Modern design to diminish the contrast between the exterior and setting of the house through the use of large expanses of glass to atmospherically blend the outdoors with the interior design and living spaces. [...] He served as president of the Austin Home Builders Association in the late 1950s and as a life director for the National Association of Home Builders. He was in business in Austin until the mid-1990s.¹

By 1964, Carrington had sold the home to the Crowley family. Dan J. Crowley was the vice president of the Southern Union Gas Company and chairman of the board of directors for the Austin Red Cross and Goodwill Industries. He also served as chair of the Greater Austin Association and the Chamber of Commerce during his tenure in the home.

PROPERTY EVALUATION

Designation Criteria—Historic Landmark

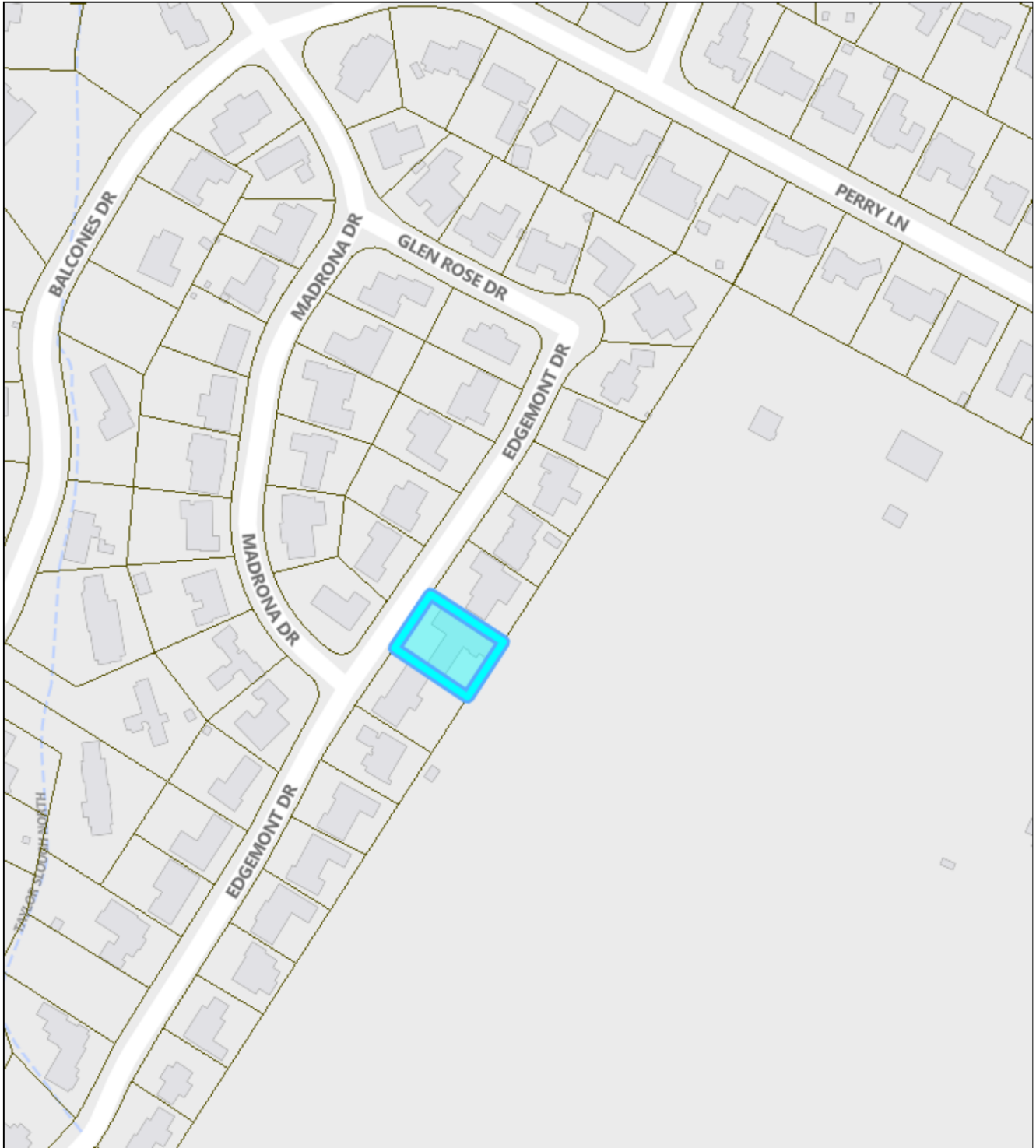
- 1) The building is more than 50 years old.
- 2) The building appears to retain moderate integrity. Windows, roofing, and siding have been replaced. The accessory dwelling unit at the rear was added in 2019 with minimal impact to the existing building.
- 3) Properties must meet two criteria for landmark designation (LDC §25-2-352). Staff has evaluated the property and determined that it may meet two criteria:
 - a. Architecture. The building is constructed in the Ranch style.
 - b. Historical association. The property is associated with builder Walter Carrington, who built and lived in the home from 1955 to around 1963.
 - c. Archaeology. The property was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.
 - d. Community value. The property does not appear to possess a unique location, physical characteristic, or significant feature that contributes to the character, image, or cultural identity of the city, the neighborhood, or a particular demographic group.
 - e. Landscape feature. The property is not a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Encourage the applicant to set the addition back at least 15' or beyond the ridgeline of the house, whichever is greater, then release the partial demolition application upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package.

¹ Zoning Change Review Sheet, 2019: <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=373773>

LOCATION MAP



1: 2400

Lot Lines

Lot Line



GF 23-043166

4601 EDGEMONT DRIVE



4/14/2023

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. This product has been produced by the City of Austin for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.

PROPERTY INFORMATION*Photos*



Source: <http://www.4601edgemont.com/>

Occupancy History

City Directory Research, March 2023

- 1959 Walter R. & Betty C. Carrington, owner – owner of Carrington Built Homes
- 1957 Walter R. & Betty C. Carrington, owner – owner of Carrington Built Homes
- 1955 Walter R. & Betty C. Carrington, owner – owner of Carrington Built Homes
- 1954 Address not listed.

Historical information

Carrington's Civic Work Now Career

A spare-time civic project led Walter R. Carrington into a full-time career as a home builder.

Carrington was chairman of the Junior Chamber of Commerce committee that sponsored the construction of a classroom at the Austin Cerebral Palsy Center in 1949.

At that time, Carrington had no thought of entering the construction field. But he became so interested in the building of the classroom for crippled children that he "couldn't forget" it. He began to study plans, specifications, materials and costs so thoroughly that he found he had a new background to work from.

He decided to try his hand at home-building. Now, as president of Carrington Built Houses, Inc., Carrington is constructing homes at the rate of 100 per year—starting two new ones each week as two are finished. He specializes in custom-built houses in all price ranges—from \$7,000 to \$40,000—and has erected homes in all sections of Austin.

Carrington is co-chairman of the 1955 Parade of Homes and has three houses in the parade—two in Gaston Park and one in Barton Hills.

Associated with him in Carrington Built Houses are John Harrison Sr., vice president; Claude Wilson, secretary, and Forrest Pearson, treasurer.

A resident of Austin since 1943, Carrington received his B.A. degree (in psychology) from the University of Texas in 1946.

"I won't say I threw psychology out the window when I switched to home-building. The builder thinks of every house in terms of the people who'll live in it—their needs, their likes and their hobbies."

Mr. and Mrs. Carrington and their children, Catherine, 6, and Trey, 2, live at 4601 Edgemont.



WALTER R. CARRINGTON

Carrington's Civic Work Now Career. The Austin American (1914-1973); 18 Sep 1955: E9.



Walter Carrington, president of Carrington Fine Homes, took the leadership in the construction of low cost homes for the urban renewal program known as Donna Gardens in East Austin after spending many years constructing homes in the luxury class.

Builder Is Proud Of Donna Project

Determination, adherence to a principle and courage to walk unmarked trails—these sum up the reasons behind the present position of Carrington Fine Homes, builder-creator of Donna Gardens.

The determination to be a builder of homes started in Walter Carrington more than 10 years ago shortly after his graduation from the University of Texas. The principal which he followed through the years was to build homes that were fine. Courage and daring was required when the task of building Donna Gardens was faced.

It was the challenge of something that had never been done before in Austin — to build an \$8,250 three-bedroom house with the fine Carrington features of

more expensive homes.

Carrington Fine Homes numbers hundreds of happy home owners in the \$15,000 to \$40,000 range. Highest on the list of "musts" in every home has been concentration on the kitchen and family room — areas where most family time is consumed. Today, Carrington kitchens with built-in appliances are common, and "famous for their family rooms" has become a second by-word.

Contributing vitally to the success of Carrington Fine Homes is Bettie Carrington, whom Carrington met and married in New York in 1948. She is an accomplished decorator, having studied at the American Academy of Art in Chicago. She has attained prominent recognition as a decorator under the name of Bettie Crane.

"In the construction of every

home there are the major considerations, such as floor space and structural materials," she says, "but to a woman, little things mean the difference between a home and a fine home." She then adds, before any house is completed, the feminine touch, based on professional training.

Carrington, president of the organization, is past president of Austin Association of Home Builders, an active member of the Austin Real Estate Board and the Junior Chamber of Commerce, and has been chairman of the Parade of Homes often.

The Carringtons reside at 4601 Edgemont, with their two children, in a model Carrington Fine Home.

Of Donna Gardens, both agree, "It's an achievement we'll long remember."

Builder Is Proud Of Donna Project. The Austin American (1914-1973); 19 Oct 1958: D2.

DE. 23

Police Watch House After Bomb Threat

Austin police kept close watch over the Northwest Austin residence of home-builder Walter Carrington through the wee hours of Wednesday following a midnight anonymous bomb threat.

Mrs. Carrington told police she was awakened at 12:15 a.m. Wednesday by a caller who hung up the phone when she answered. A minute later, she said, the phone rang again and a voice declared:

"We are going to get all of you tonight with a bomb."

Mrs. Carrington told Patrolman Dillard Keirsey she could not dismiss the call as prank because of previous telephone threats last January followed by a siege of property destruction at the Balcones Park home. She said their mailbox had been blown up and a window broken in vandal strikes at the house.

Monday night, before the family retired, all the lights in the house went out. Investigation showed that an outside switch had been thrown manually cutting off all electricity.

Monday night, before the family retired, all the lights in the house went out. Investigation showed that an outside switch had been thrown manually cutting off all electricity.

Mrs. Carrington said she had no idea why the family is being plagued with threats and acts of vandalism.

She said the caller's voice was disguised and she could not tell whether it was a man disguising his voice as a woman or vice versa. She said the caller used obscene language before she slammed down the telephone receiver.

Police kept a close watch on the house, at 4601 Edgemont, throughout the early morning hours Wednesday. No further incident was reported during the night.

Police Watch House After Bomb Threat. The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); 28 Sep 1960: 23.

Red Cross Planning A Building

The year 1964 is one of decision for the Centex chapter, American Red Cross, and a man helping make the decisions and conduct a \$50,000 building campaign is Dan J. Crowley.

Crowley, chairman of the board of directors, also is building campaign drive chairman.

At stake is a new home for the Red Cross chapter, which has seen its residence in "temporary" war surplus hutments from World War II. The present quarters have completely worn out.

The building drive, to be conducted on a personal contact basis, will give the Red Cross facilities to carry out its far-reaching program in the Central Texas area, said Crowley.

Crowley has served on the board since 1962 and as its chairman since May of last year.

He is district manager of Southern Union Gas Company, immediate past president of the Community Council of Austin and Travis County and director of Goodwill Industries.

Crowley's civic interests extend to the Chamber of Commerce, where he was elevated to the presidency in January. He has served on the Chamber's economic development council for three years.

A native of Massachusetts and a graduate of Bentley College in Boston, Crowley came to Texas 16 years ago. He and his wife, Ruth, and sons, Mike, 12, and Tim, 5, live at 4601 Edgemont.

The Red Cross building drive has the approval of United Fund of Austin. The Red Cross is a working member of the United Fund here.

Crowley District Gas Chief

Dan J. Crowley, 44, has been named vice president for the Austin district of Southern Union Gas Co.

Crowley's appointment by the board followed the Southern Union annual stockholders meeting in Dallas this week.

Crowley first joined Southern Union in 1954 in Dallas, and two years later became office manager of the company's Galveston office. In 1957 he accepted a similar position in El Paso, and two years later transferred to Austin and became district manager in 1959.

He has been active in Austin civic affairs, and is presently on the executive committee of the Greater Austin Association and is president of the Downtown Rotary Club. He has worked with the United Fund, American Red Cross, and was 1964 president of the chamber of commerce.

Crowley, his wife and two sons live at 4601 Edgemont.

Red Cross Planning A Building. The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); 12 Mar 1964: A25.

Crowley District Gas Chief. The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex. [Austin, Tex]. 15 Apr 1967: 44.

Walter Carrington Honored

Walter Carrington-BUILDER has scored again.

The award winning Austin home builder is featured on the cover of the March issue of American Builder, the bible of the national housing industry.

On an inside page, the editors of the magazine, in naming Carrington one of the nation's leading home builders, said:

Walter Carrington/BUILDER has scored again.

The award winning Austin home builder is featured on the inside cover of the March issue of the "American Builder", the bible of the American home building industry, and on an inside page the editors nominate him for the "Innovator of the Month"

In their nomination, the editors said:

"Walter Carrington is a

dominate force in Austin's housing market, and his position as one of the two biggest builders in the city is no accident.

"Carrington is constantly searching for ideas that will help him build a better and more saleable product — and for ways to build an organization that will produce that product efficiently. He frequently will pile his staff into a private plane and fly to another city for an inspection tour of other jobs. He's not averse to importing the source of new ideas, either. Recently, he retained architect John Anderson of Bellevue, Wash., to design a model.

"Before putting a model into production, Carrington builds a pilot or research house. The house is analyzed during construction and after it is completed."

The magazine also devotes

two full pages to Carrington's innovations in the New Garden idea house in his Fairview community development and to the stately two-story Yorktown house atop the Summit in Carrington's custom-home development in Northwest Hills.

Shortly after the arrival of the magazine in Austin, Steve Majko, president, and T. R. Barwick, vice president of Alcan Design Homes, Toronto based subsidiary of the Aluminum Company of Canada, came to Austin for an inspection tour of Carrington's idea houses in Fairview, University Hills, the Oakbrook section of University Hills and Northwest Hills.

"We have been hearing so much about your model homes," Majko told Carrington, "that we just had to come to Austin and see for ourselves."

Walter Carrington Honored. The Austin American (1914-1973); 26 Mar 1967: C13.

Walter R. Carrington, 82, passed away peacefully on April 30, 2007, after an extended illness and a lengthy period of Alzheimer's. Walter was preceded in death by his daughter Cathy Carrington. Walter is survived by his sons, Trey Carrington, Charles Carrington and Tim Carrington, all of Austin; ex-wife Raye Carrington of Llano, grandchildren Houston, Christopher, Kimberly, Callie and Miles Carrington, and great granddaughter Madison Carrington. Walter Carrington, born in San Angelo, was a long time Austinite. After his graduation from the University of Texas in 1945 Walter entered the real estate and construction business. He was active in Austin business and civic endeavors for 50 years, building homes for tens of thousands of Austin residents, in the city he loved. Walter was president of the Austin Association of Home Builders in 1957 and became a Life Director of the National Association of Home Builders. Walter was an active member of the Austin Association of Realtors and in 1972 was recognized by that association and given the Most Worthy Citizen honor. Walter was enthusiastic about life, and especially enjoyed the outdoors. He was an avid hunter, fisherman and pilot. A memorial service will be held at River Bend Church, Smith Chapel, Friday May 4th, at 10 a.m. The family request memorial donations to Habitat for Humanity in lieu of flowers. Obituary and guestbook online at wcfish.com

Obituary. <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/austin-tx/walter-carrington-8211443>

... Walter Carrington, a prolific homebuilder in central Texas, began his career in Austin in the early 1950s. Carrington was born in San Angelo, Texas in 1924 and passed away in Austin in 2007. He was a graduate of the University of Texas and first went to work with Nelson Puett, a local real estate agent and developer, before starting his own home building company. Many of his homes...are located in the Northwest Hills neighborhoods of Austin, but he was also responsible for most of the houses in University Hills, east of IH-35 during the same period. Carrington was a very open-minded builder: he did not engage in the still-then prevalent process of red-lining to keep African-American buyers out of neighborhoods. University Hills was a prime example of his business practice; the houses were comparable to those that he built in

Northwest Hills, but at a slightly lower price point, which allowed greater diversity in the neighborhood. His University Hills neighborhood was designed, without regard to race, for university professors, IBM engineers, and other middle-class homebuyers that may have not been able to afford Northwest Hills, which was built for upper middle class professionals. It is notable that Carrington also did not discriminate by race in his Northwest Hills neighborhood; the house he built for Dr. Sidney and Helen White did not differ from the homes he built for his Anglo clients and featured many of the same innovations and architectural flourishes that he provided for his white buyers... Carrington was known for his architectural and construction innovations, using architectural features... to create individualized projects. He was the first to build "garden" kitchens, which allowed for natural light to flood into the kitchen, also following the tenets of mid-century Modern design to diminish the contrast between the exterior and setting of the house through the use of large expanses of glass to atmospherically blend the outdoors with the interior design and living spaces. As further evidence of his dedication to innovation, he also participated in the construction of homes in Austin's Air-Conditioned Village, a very important study and experiment in providing central air conditioning to homes designed and built for middle-class families in the early 1950s, and without which, would have delayed if not stopped the rapid development of Sunbelt cities like Austin. He served as president of the Austin Home Builders Association in the late 1950s and as a life director for the National Association of Home Builders. He was in business in Austin until the mid-1990s.

Zoning Change Review Sheet, 2019: <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=373773>

Permits

W Carrington 4601 Edgemont
 map 13 K
 277 Balcones 5
 brk ven res & att gar
 59483 2-18-55 15000/
 self 9

13 K NUB II Balcones 5

277 277

WATER SERVICE PERMIT
 Austin, Texas
E N° 2983
INDEXED

Received of Walter R. Carrington Date 2-18-55
 Address 4601 Edgemont Drive
 Amount Twenty and 1/100 (Addt on larger tap)
 Plumber Wayne Dayton (see E-2867) Size of Tap 1 1/2"

Date of Connection 4-6-55
 Size of Tap Made 2" x 1 1/2"
 Size Service Made 2" x 1 1/2"
 Size Main Tapped 2" C.I.
 From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 7.5'
 From 50' Prop. Line to Curb Cock 2'
 Location of Meter C.O.P.B.
 Type of Box 2" C.I.
 Depth of Main in St. 3'
 Depth of Service Line 2'
 From Curb Cock to Tap on Main 2'
 Checked by Engr. Dept. H.K. 1-5-18-55

| No. | Fittings | Size |
|-----|-----------|-----------------|
| 1 | Curb Cock | 2" |
| 1 | Elbow | 2" |
| 1 | St. Elbow | 2" |
| 1 | Bushing | 2" |
| 1 | Reducer | 2" x 1 1/2" |
| 1 | Pipe | 1 1/2" C.I. |
| 1 | Lead Comp | 1 1/2" x 3" |
| 1 | Nipples | 1 1/2" x 3" |
| 1 | Union | 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" |
| 1 | Plug | 2" x 1 1/2" |
| 1 | Tee | 2" x 1 1/2" |
| 1 | Stop | 1" C.I. |
| 1 | Box | 1" x 1" |
| 1 | Lid | 1 1/2" |
| 1 | Valves | 1 1/2" |
| 1 | Job No. | 23323-502 |
| 1 | Req. No. | 23323-502 |

Used 1/2" stub E-5893

Water service permit - 1955