

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: C14H-2023-0079

HLC DATE: August 2, 2023

PC DATE: September 12, 2023

CC Date: October 19, 2023 (1st reading) and November 2, 2023 (2nd and 3rd readings, tentative)

APPLICANT: Kristina Kupferschmid, H-H-M & Associates, Inc.

ADDRESS: 2502 Jarratt Avenue

HISTORIC NAME: Meade and Dorothy Griffin House

WATERSHED: Shoal Creek, Johnson Creek

ZONING CHANGE: SF-3-NP to SF-3-H-NP

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 10

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from single-family--neighborhood plan (SF-3-NP) to single-family--neighborhood plan--historic landmark (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION: Architecture and historical associations

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: Recommend approval of the proposed zoning change from single-family--neighborhood plan (SF-3-NP) to single-family--neighborhood plan--historic landmark (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning (9-1).

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: Do not recommend approval of the proposed zoning change from single-family--neighborhood plan (SF-3-NP) to single-family--neighborhood plan--historic landmark (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning (5-6-1).

CITY COUNCIL ACTION:

CASE MANAGER: Kalan Contreras, 512-974-2727

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS: Austin Independent School District, Austin Lost and Found Pets, Austin Neighborhoods Council, Central West Austin Neighborhood Plan Contact Team, Friends of Austin Neighborhoods, Homeless Neighborhood Association, Neighborhood Empowerment Foundation, Pemberton Heights Neighborhood Association, Preservation Austin, SELTexas, Save Barton Creek Assn., Save Historic Munny District, Shoal Creek Conservancy, Sierra Club, Austin Regional Group, West Austin Neighborhood Group

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The building was determined eligible as a historic landmark in 2016 per archived correspondence with City Historic Preservation Officer Steve Sadowsky; however, no application was filed at that time.

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 application for historic zoning describes the building's architectural significance as follows:

The house at 2502 Jarratt Avenue stands as an excellent example of the Colonial Revival style—in form and design—from the 1930s.... In the 1930s and throughout the 1940s, a simplified version of the style grew dominant. Asymmetrical façades became more common, and Colonial Revival houses in general were characteristically refrained in ornamentation and simpler in outline. Changes and fluctuations in the economy, caused by the Great Depression and the lead-up to World War II, contributed to these changes, as construction became more austere... This is evident in the Old West Austin Historic District [where] individuality was achieved through subtle stylistic detailing, such as window grouping and porch design rather than elaborate applied ornamentation.... The restrained Colonial Revival style of 2502 Jarratt Avenue is an excellent example of this trend, reflecting this period of time in the evolution of the style. The two-story house has a simple asymmetrical cross-gable plan with two prominent front-facing gables that feature eave returns and bed molding... Windows on the front façade are arranged asymmetrically and feature triple windows on the second story and a prominent one-story bay window—a popular Colonial Revival feature in the 1930s—on the first floor. The front entryway’s door surround also subtly conveys the Colonial Revival style with its flat pediment and fluted pilasters.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 application for historic zoning identifies the house’s association with community planning and development trends of the 1930s, as well as its association with Judge Meade F. and Dorothy Griffin. It describes the Griffins’ contributions to Texas:

Meade F. Griffin was a significant figure in the Texas judicial landscape in the mid-twentieth century, serving on both the Texas Supreme Court and the Court of Criminal Appeals... In 1949, Griffin moved to Austin upon appointment to the Texas Supreme Court by Governor Beaufort Jester... Following his appointment to the Supreme Court, Griffin won all three of his elections and served as an associate justice until 1968... Griffin wrote the court’s opinion for over 200 cases, as well as the occasional dissenting opinion... During his last 10 years on the Supreme Court, Griffin served as “senior judge,” presiding over the court during the absence of the chief justice. After retiring from the Supreme Court, Griffin was appointed to the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, where he served a year [before serving] as the Texas Assistant Attorney General until 1971. While on the Supreme Court, Griffin was a member and chairman of various committees... It was his role as Chairman of the State Bar Committee on State Courts Housing, though, where he was influential in the construction of the Supreme Court Building in Austin in 1959, as well as the other state buildings constructed in the 1950s and 1960s. After the courts moved to the new building, Griffin helped ensure that the old courtroom in the Capitol was preserved [by the Texas Historical Society]. In recognition for his efforts, the committee hung a portrait of Griffin in the old courtroom, an honor [typically] reserved only for Chief Justices.

Over his long tenure at Texas’ highest judicial level, Griffin not only influenced considerable legislation but also frequently worked with law schools around the state, [and] gave many talks to graduates, community groups, veterans, and active military. [...] He believed in a strong judicial system, hard work, democracy, and the importance of public education... He addressed the racial strife of the period in his speeches, including [commencement addresses] for Huston-Tillotson College in 1958 and Odessa College in 1960... Acknowledging that the rights of Black Americans were being denied, Griffin emphasized that the country was “founded upon the principles of equality and justice to all citizens regardless of color or creed,” and tasked [graduates] with bringing about “a just, fair and lasting solution” to the country’s racial tensions.

Born in Austin, Dorothy Griffin received degrees from both Northwestern University and New York University. A significant figure in the child welfare movement, Griffin was active in the nonprofit organization Save the Children. By 1947 Griffin was state director of the organization and responsible for its relocation from Dallas to Austin. With the organization, Griffin organized events and fundraisers for rural schools in Texas, impoverished children in the southwest, and children impacted by natural disasters around the world.²

¹ Kupferschmid, Kristina. Application for Historic Zoning, 2502 Jarratt Avenue, C14H-2023-0079, 2023.

² Ibid.

PARCEL NO.: 0115010102

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: ABS 697 SUR 7 SPEAR G W ACR .233

APPRAISED VALUE: \$2,973,582 (\$1,150,000 land; \$1,823,582 improvement)

ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX EXEMPTION (homestead, capped):

AISD (\$3,500 cap)	COA (\$2,500 cap)	TC (\$2, 500 cap)	TC Health (\$2, 500 cap)	ACC	Exemption amount
\$3,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$1,958.11	\$0.00	\$10,458.11

PRESENT USE: Residence

DATE BUILT/PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: ca. 1938

INTEGRITY/ALTERATIONS: The application outlines the building's alterations as follows:

Despite several alterations, the house continues to convey the Colonial Revival style of the 1930s. Built during the historic period, the 1973 [rear-wing] addition is set back from the plane of the front façade...Built by the Griffins, it is historic in age and has thus achieved significance. Other additions are not visible from the right of way and have minimal impact on overall integrity. A 1975 two-story rear addition added 190 square feet...in 2016, the current owners added a rear one-story addition to the 1973 addition. [Historic Preservation Officer] Steve Sadowsky approved the work, [clarifying that] the proposed changes were solely to the rear or separate from the house and would not affect its overall feeling and essential form [...] In 2016, the current owners built the two-story garage apartment in the same location as the demolished original garage...Other alterations include siding and window replacement (ca. 2010), railing removal from the one-story front addition (ca. 2015), chimney painting (ca. 2020), and front door replacement (2022). These alterations are compatible in design. The size of the window and door openings remain unchanged, and the new siding matches the original. Overall, the house retains its Colonial Revival style character-defining features.³

PRESENT OWNERS: Katherine Nash Goering
Thornton

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): W. M. and Minnie Lee

OTHER DESIGNATIONS: The property contributes to the Old West Austin National Register Historic District.

³ Ibid.

LOCATION MAP



HISTORIC ZONING

ZONING CASE#: C14H-2023-0079



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 200'

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