

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: C14H-2023-0136

HLC DATE: November 1, 2023; December 13, 2023

PC DATE: TBD

CC Date: TBD

APPLICANT: Historic Landmark Commission (owner-supported)

HISTORIC NAME: Green & White Grocery

WATERSHED: Waller Creek

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 1201 East 7th Street/607 Waller Street

ZONING CHANGE: TOD-NP to TOD-H-NP

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 3

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from transit-oriented development-neighborhood plan (TOD-NP) to transit-oriented development-neighborhood plan-historic landmark (TOD-H-NP) combining district zoning.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION: The 2016 East Austin Historic Resource Survey recommends the primary building as eligible for designation as a local landmark for architecture, community value, and historical associations.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: November 1, 2023—initiate historic zoning (10-0).

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, Capital Metro, Del Valle Community Coalition, East Austin Conservancy, El Concilio Mexican-American Neighborhoods, Friends of Austin Neighborhoods, Greater East Austin Neighborhood Association, Guadalupe Association for an Improved Neighborhood, Guadalupe Neighborhood Development Corporation, Homeless Neighborhood Association, Neighborhood Empowerment Foundation, Neighbors United for Progress, Organization of Central East Austin Neighborhoods, Plaza Saltillo TOD Staff Liaison, Preservation Austin, SELTexas, Sierra Club, Austin Regional Group, Tejano Town

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The 2016 East Austin Historic Resource Survey recommends the store building as eligible for designation as a local landmark and individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It does not recommend the house for designation.

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 Green & White grocery is an intact example of a neighborhood grocery store, a rapidly disappearing property type in Austin. Its vernacular construction, eye-catching sign, and distinctive clipped gable are iconic symbols of East Austin commerce. As is typical for small businesses in the early- to mid-twentieth century in Austin, the proprietors' home was built behind the store; it is still in use as a family residence today and is a rare surviving example of this historic development pattern. In a 2023 writeup for Preservation Austin, Catalina Cheriñavvsky Sequeira describes the property:

In 1936, Norverto Lopez and his wife Susie purchased land to build a neighborhood grocery across Waller Street from their other business, the Green & White Courts motel. Much of the grocery building is likely made from recycled wood from the downtown lumberyard where Norverto worked part-time, and for the decor he stuck to his brand and favored color scheme. The family lived in an apartment at the back of the store until building a home across the street by their motel. Once the motel and grocery started to gain traction, the Green & White enterprise became Norverto's

full-time job...

The back space, formerly the Lopez’s family home when they started the business, served as a place where community members conducted cleansings, rituals, and blessings for several years... Today, the building looks much like it did in 1936. Its massive jerkinhead gable is reminiscent of Craftsman style houses and the storefront still includes the same distinct signage.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.*

According to the East Austin Historic Resource Survey, the property is significant for its historical association with East Austin’s transportation history, namely the shift from streetcars to automobiles and buses, as well as with the segregation-era necessity of residents of color to open their own businesses. The survey describes how the Green and White Grocery was a symbol of entrepreneurship and resilience in a rapidly changing but still segregated Austin:

With the divisions that existed between the East Austin community and the rest of the city as well as the shortage of jobs during the Depression Era, many residents in the area resorted to opening their own businesses during the 1930s and 1940s. This trend reflects the self-reliance, industriousness, and ambition that members of the East Austin community developed and drew upon amidst the segregated environment. Within two decades after the adoption of Koch and Fowler’s 1928 plan, over 100 businesses operated throughout East Austin, many of which lined East 1st (Cesar Chavez), East 6th, East 11th, and East 12th Streets, and Manor Road... They included restaurants, bakeries, a beauty school, grocery stores, and offices for professionals such as doctors and attorneys.

Beginning in the 1930s, the locations of businesses were determined not only by the locations of streetcar lines and paved roads, but also by the locations of bus routes as seen in figure I-39. As shown in this 1933 map, the bus routes supplemented the earlier streetcar lines along East 1st (Cesar Chavez) and East 7th Street bus line... By 1940, the streetcar lines fell out of service, and bus lines provided the only form of public transportation in East Austin. The routes primarily functioned to transport the residents of East Austin to jobs downtown and in West Austin, but the additional traffic that they generated also encouraged the development of new businesses like the Green and White Grocery, which opened around 1940 at 1201 East 7th Street – right at the terminus of the new line...

1201 East 7th Street, established ca. 1940 by Noberto Lopez and his wife Susie, who both lived and worked in the building. The grocery is sited along the bus route on East 7th Street, which started service around 1933. The building meets the criteria for local landmark and individual NRHP listing for its association with the significant trends of business development in East Austin along bus routes in the 1940s, as well as the role of small Mexican American groceries in the commercial and cultural development of East Austin.²

§ 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.*

Built before the days of chain grocery stores, small groceries served the neighborhoods of Austin. Neighborhood groceries declined quickly with the rise in popularity of household automobiles, as families were more able to travel outside of their neighborhood for shopping. However, during the twentieth century as East Austinites were subject to the systemic limitations of segregation, neighborhood groceries like the Green and White did more than provide groceries at a reasonable price within walking distance. It performed a good deal of heavy lifting as a Mexican American community asset and cultural touchstone: as one of the few places that would extend credit to customers of color, as a provider of ingredients for Mexican cooking and homemade tamales, as a place to obtain spiritual and healthcare needs when the racist trappings of twentieth-century medicine denied the cultural importance of *hierbas* and folk remedies, and as a meeting place for East Austin residents whose busy lives could often make neighborly socializing difficult.

PARCEL NO.: 0205070101

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: LOT 1 BLK 1 OLT 3 DIVISION A

ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX EXEMPTION (homestead, capped):

AISSD	COA	TC	TC Health	Total
\$3,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$1,804.92	\$559.70	\$8,364.62

¹ Sequeira, Catalina Chernaŋvsky for Preservation Austin. “Green & White Grocery.” 2023.

<https://www.preservationaustin.org/news/east-austin-barrio-landmarks-green-and-white-grocery>

² H-H-M, Inc. for City of Austin. “East Austin Historic Context.” Volume I.2., Section 6, pages I-83-87. 2016.

APPRAISED VALUE: Land: \$1,139,775; Improvement: \$139,062; Total: \$1,278,837

PRESENT USE: Store and residence

DATE BUILT/PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: ca. 1938 (store) and 1948 (house); 1938-1973

INTEGRITY/ALTERATIONS: High. Alterations and additions occurred during the period of significance.

PRESENT OWNERS: John Lopez Casarez, 1201 E 7th St, Austin, Tx 78702-3222

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): Susie and Noroberto Lopez

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: None

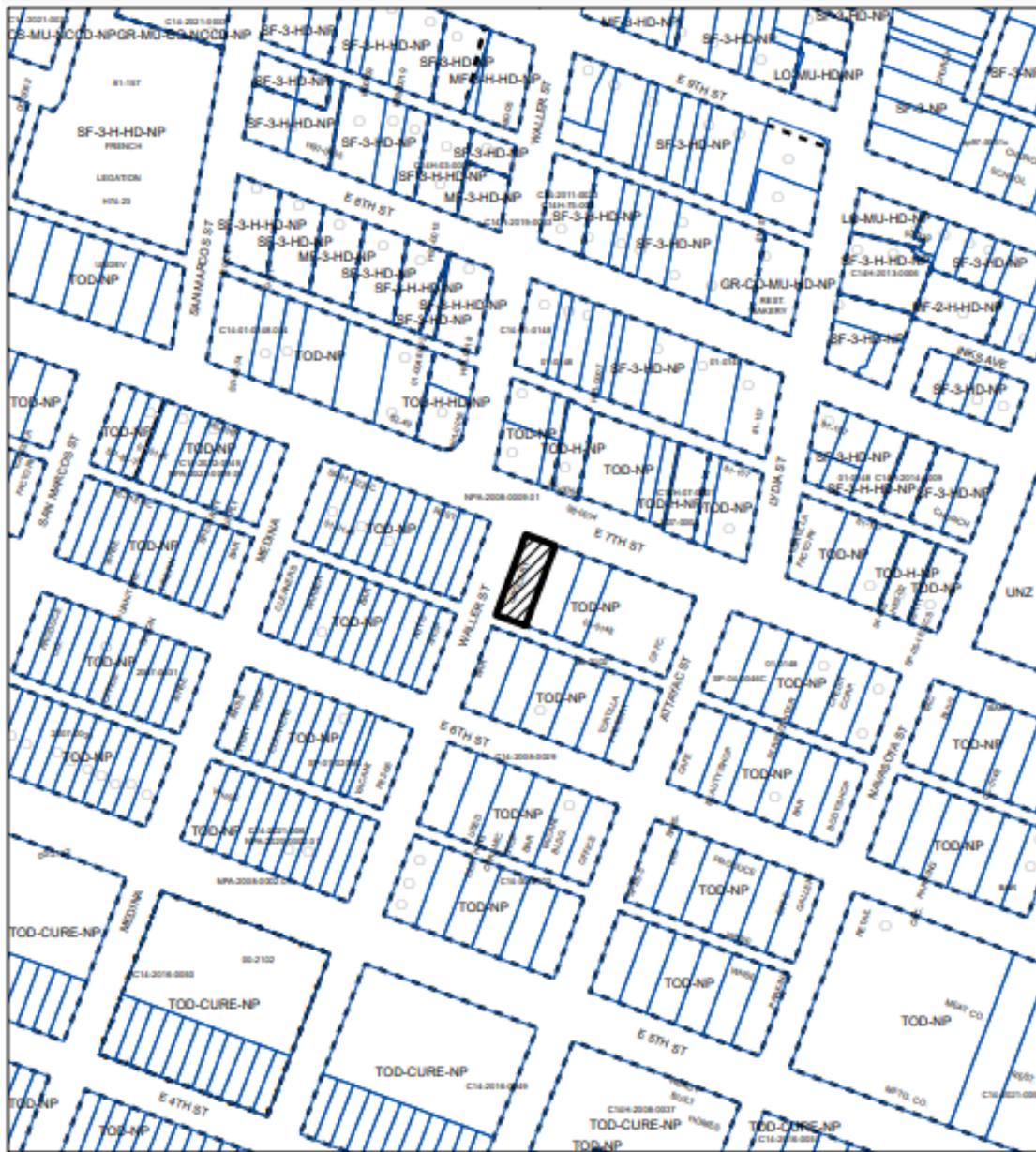


Photo: Preservation Austin, <https://www.preservationaustin.org/news/east-austin-barrío-landmarks-green-and-white-grocery>



July 15, 1958 (Austin History Center via Portal to Texas History)

LOCATION MAP



HISTORIC ZONING

ZONING CASE#: C14H-2023-0136

-  N
-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 200'

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 the Planning Department for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.



ADDITIONAL PROPERTY INFORMATION

"a Norvert V. Lopez 1201 E. 7th. St.
31 " 3 1 1 -

Frame store building

219n- 3/14/38

Building permit, 1938

Noberto Lopez 1201 E. 7th St.
31 3 1 1

addn. to store bldg.

26419 11-21-44 \$1500.00

owner

Addition permit, 1944

N. T. Lopez 607 Waller Street
31 1 1 - -

Duplex garage apartment (masonry and
frame)

37915 6-5-48 \$4000.00

Owner

Building permit, 1948

N. T. Lopez

1201 East 7th Street

31 1

1 2 A

Addition to store building.

44660 5-24-50

\$2000.00

Owner

Addition permit, 1950

OWNER N. T. Lopez ADDRESS 1201 East Seventh St.

PLAT 30 LOT 1 BLK 1

SUBDIVISION Outlot No. 3

OCCUPANCY Grocery store

BLD PERMIT # 94612 DATE 1-18-65 OWNERS ESTIMATE \$12,000.

CONTRACTOR owner NO. OF FIXTURES

WATER TAP REC # X SEWER TAP REC # X

Remodel & repair comm building/close up one corner

to create room; new shingles on exterior walls;

re-roof with comp shingles

Remodel permit, 1965