

## ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: C14H-2024-0011

HLC DATE: March 6, 2024      PC DATE: TBD      CC Date: TBD

APPLICANT: Historic Landmark Commission (owner-initiated)

HISTORIC NAME: Fashionette Beauty Shop/Elmer and Ethel McDonald Jackson Home

WATERSHED: Waller Creek

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 1206 East 13<sup>th</sup> Street/1209 Bob Harrison Street

ZONING CHANGE: SF-3-NP to SF-3-H-NP (Central East Austin NP)

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 1

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

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION: Historical associations, community value

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, Del Valle Community Coalition, East Austin Conservancy, Friends of Austin Neighborhoods, Homeless Neighborhood Association, Neighborhood Empowerment Foundation, Neighbors United for Progress, Organization of Central East Austin Neighborhoods, Preservation Austin, Residents of E 12th St, SELTexas, Sierra Club, Austin Regional Group, Swede Hill Neighborhood Association

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The 2016 East Austin Historic Resource Survey recommends the property as contributing to potential local and National Register historic districts.

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

***§ 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 that contributed significantly to the history of the city, state, or nation; or represent a significant portrayal of the cultural practices or the way of life of a definable group of people in a historic time.*

The buildings at 1206 East 13<sup>th</sup> Street and 1209 Bob Harrison Street are associated with African American businesswoman and cosmetologist Ethel McDonald Jackson, who ran a successful home-based business from 1944 to 1974 and whose family served their community as civic leaders throughout the twentieth century.

According to Ms. Belinda Davis, daughter of Elmer and Ethel McDonald Jackson, her mother's ambitious spirit was sparked as soon as she finished high school in Bastrop, Texas. "My Mama often spoke of why she did not attend a four-year college after high school," writes Davis. "As a child of The Great Depression, she wanted to enter the workforce as soon as possible to assist her family." Ethel McDonald finished beauty college and immediately became both an instructor at the school and a working hairdresser at the Triple Mirror Beauty Shop at 605 San Jacinto. Davis describes her mother's rise to entrepreneurship after she purchased the property at 1206 E. 13<sup>th</sup> Street:

"The property...has been in our family for at least eighty years. My Mama, Ethel McDonald Jackson, purchased the family homestead [as a single woman] from Maud McDonald Collins and W.D. Collins, her sister and brother-in-law, on July 20, 1944...the property was [likely] built by Mr. Greene, [Ethel's aunt's husband]. Elmer Jackson married Ethel McDonald on June 26, 1946, and 1206 East 13th Street became his primary residence as well. [...]"

Once she purchased the 13th Street property in 1944, a small addition to the home was built for [her own] Fashionette Beauty Shop, open until July of 1974. [...] Fashionette Beauty Shop was a vital part of our community. Generations of families patronized Mama's business. She was a licensed cosmetologist for over thirty years and regularly received new clients from references from the close-knit Robertson Hill neighborhood business community. Mama even had a

few male clients who would come after normal business hours to have their hair pressed and curled [...] Daddy and Mama were concerned about the welfare of others. Mama eagerly shared words of wisdom and encouragement with her clients, family, and friends. She was kind and approachable. She was sought out to confide in and trusted to give wise advice. She compassionately ‘walked the talk.’ She put her faith into action.”<sup>1</sup>

Elmer Jackson, like his wife, was a civic leader and worked hard to provide for his family and enrich his community through service. “Daddy was well known in our community as he drove throughout East Austin [for] his job as a taxi driver,” recounts Davis. “He worked part-time for Phillips and Upshaw Mortuary as a funeral director and an ambulance driver.” Jackson also became a notary, and Davis recalls his clients stopping by their home to have documents notarized. In segregation-era Austin, these services were invaluable to African American residents, and Jackson’s many occupations directly contributed to his neighborhood’s resilience. “His cab was parked in the driveway at our home when he died at home on December 24, 1971,” she remembers. “Ethel lived on the property until her death on November 30, 1974. They both lived, worked, and died in their beloved home.”<sup>2</sup>

**§ 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.*

The Fashionette Beauty Shop is a significant reminder of the resilience, creativity, and business acumen of African American women entrepreneurs in segregation-era Austin. Home-based businesses were an important part of life in East Austin. Though few residents had the capital to construct brand-new commercial buildings, many East Austin business owners used their homes to provide professional services that customers of color could not access elsewhere. Beauty and barber shops were particularly important, as they both provided a gathering space for people of color and an essential service tailored to African American beauty and style. In her 2024 historic landmark designation application, Ms. Belinda Davis describes the impact that her mother’s business had on the surrounding community:

“Our residence was significant and unique because it was not only our home but was also Mama’s place of business [...] Our neighborhood in the Robertson Hill Freedom Colony was once filled with many African American pioneers and businesses. Those businesses included King Tears Mortuary, Owens Garage, Phillips and Upshaw Mortuary, Phillips Humble/Exxon Service Station, Angelina Motel, Katie’s Kitchen, Caldwell Barber Shop, Madison Florist Shop, Gilbert Business School, and Pease Signs. Those businesses were all within a three-block radius of our 13th Street home....

[...] Ethel and Elmer Jackson were influential members of the Historic East Austin Community,” writes daughter Belinda Davis in her 2024 nomination for historic designation. “They consistently put the needs of others over their personal needs. Our Mama was always collecting clothing for the less fortunate and money to purchase flowers for bereaved neighbors. The Fashionette Beauty Shop was a hub of activity for neighbors and friends. A place of refuge, counseling, to receive a word of encouragement, even a place to receive prayer.”<sup>3</sup>

In an era where African American women were struggling against all odds to break professional barriers, salons owned and operated by Black cosmetologists gave others the chance to look and feel their best. Their successes were not only important to their customers but also to the future successes of Black entrepreneurs in Robertson Hill and beyond.

In addition to the shop serving as a nexus for those in need of cosmetology services and commiseration, the Jacksons also opened their home to those in need, including those who could not find accommodations elsewhere because of Austin’s segregation laws. They housed their extended families from rural areas, including Ethel McDonald Jackson’s younger brothers, so that they could have access to Austin schools and colleges. “They both fed the hungry, housed the homeless, cared for the sick,” writes Davis of her parents. “They strived to make sure the needs of others were met...They sacrificed to provide for [those] who needed education, housing, food, and love. Our neighbors knew compassionate assistance was available at our home, 1206 East 13th Street.”<sup>4</sup>

**§ 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*

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<sup>1</sup> Davis, Belinda. *Historic Zoning Application: Fashionette Beauty Shop, 1206 E. 13<sup>th</sup> Street/1209 Bob Harrison Street*. 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

*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.*

According to the East Austin Historic Resource Survey, the building at 1206 East 13<sup>th</sup> Street is a Craftsman bungalow. It also retains the built elements that define it not only as a residential property but also as a home-based business, with double entrances and a side addition. The survey defines the rear building at 1209 Bob Harrison Street, historically used as either a rental property or Jackson family residence, as a good example of a center-passage National Folk-style building. Both structures are in the process of being restored after fire damage, with Certificates of Appropriateness issued by the Historic Landmark Commission in February 2024.

PARCEL NO.: 0209070104

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: E 46' OF LOT 3 \*& W 23'OF LOT 4 BLK 6 OLT 38 DIV B OREILLY JAMES

ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT: (non-homestead, no cap)

AISSD	COA	TC	TC Health	Total
\$897.08	\$930.59	\$635.95	\$210.19	\$2,673.81

APPRAISED VALUE: \$642,490 (land: \$450,000; improvement: \$192,490)

PRESENT USE: Rental property

DATE BUILT/PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: Though residents are listed in City directories as early as 1905, the earliest tap permit for the property is from 1931.

INTEGRITY/ALTERATIONS: Moderate to high. The building at 1206 E. 13<sup>th</sup> is missing original piers and columns, and the rear building has lost its exposed rafter tails over the years, though alterations may have taken place during the historic period. Both buildings are in the process of being restored after fire damage: windows were replaced immediately after the fire; the Historic Landmark Commission issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for the remaining work in February 2024.

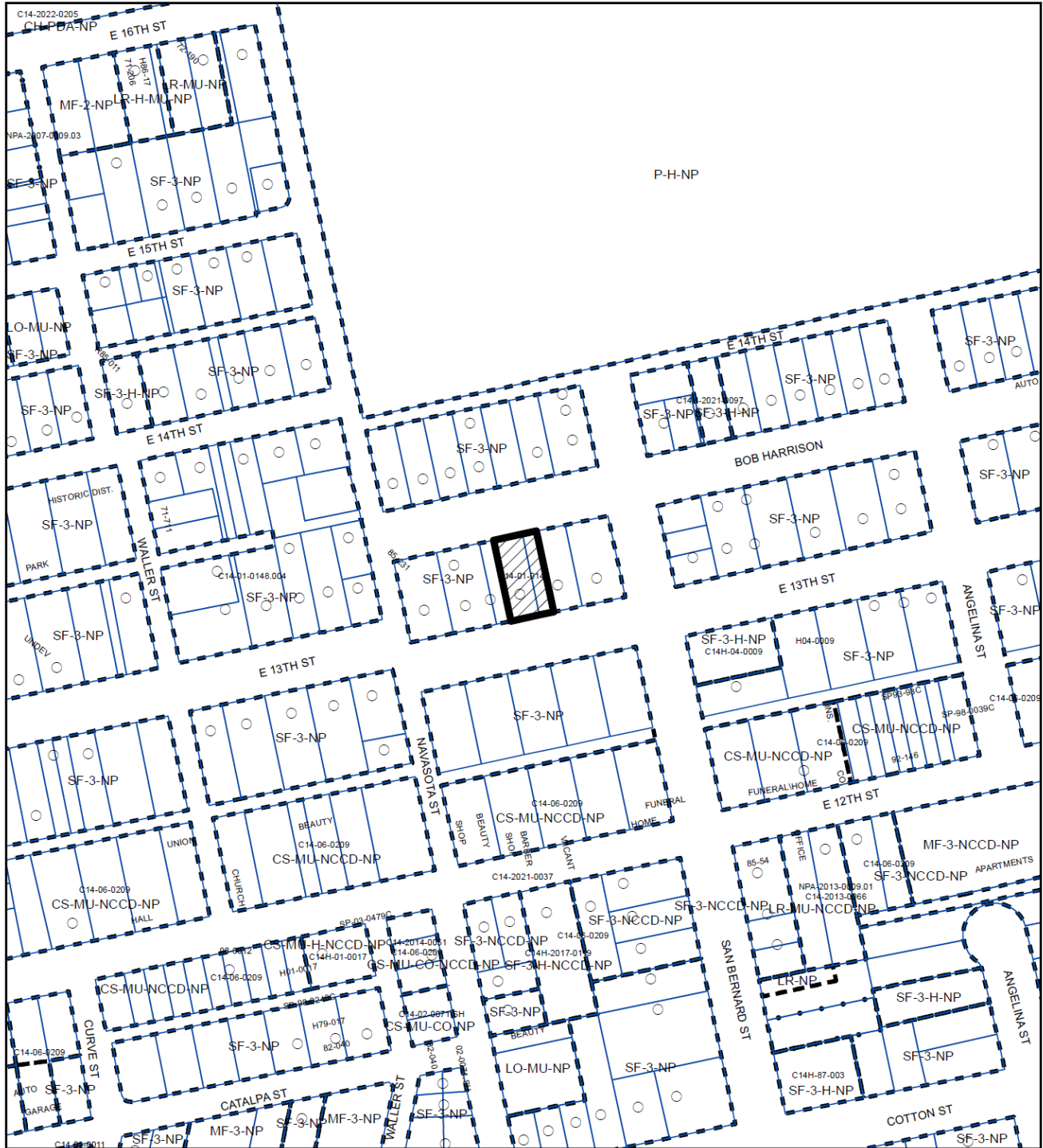
PRESENT OWNERS: NINE B PROPERTIES LLC, 20505 AUK RD PFLUGERVILLE TX 78660-7836

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): Sophia McDonald Greene

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: None



# LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT



PENDING CASE



ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 200'

## HISTORIC ZONING

ZONING CASE#: C14H-2024-0011

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