

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
MARCH 6, 2024
DA-2024-001855; GF-2024-018655
503 WALSH STREET

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1894 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-and-a-half-story cross-gabled house with partial width porch, traditional cornice returns at gable ends, 2:2 wood windows, and stucco cladding.

RESEARCH

The house at 503 Walsh Street, originally addressed as 503 Blanco Street, was constructed around 1894. Its first residents were Frank and Emma Casper and their daughter, Byrdie. Dr. Frank Casper worked as a dentist, with office space on Congress Avenue and Colorado Street. Frank Casper claimed to be the heir to Abel Casper, whose Mississippi plantation was requisitioned by the Union Army during the Civil War; Dr. Casper attempted to solicit restitution money from the federal government forty years later, though it did not appear that he was successful.

After Casper's death around 1916, the house passed to his widow, Emma. Its primary tenants were James A. Warren and his family. James Warren was the bookkeeper and cashier for the City's Street and Public Improvement division, and served a brief stint as City Clerk.

During the 1920s, the house became a rental property, home to several short-term occupants. Occupants during the thirties, forties, and fifties included a widow, an engineer, and City Electric Department employees.

PROPERTY EVALUATION

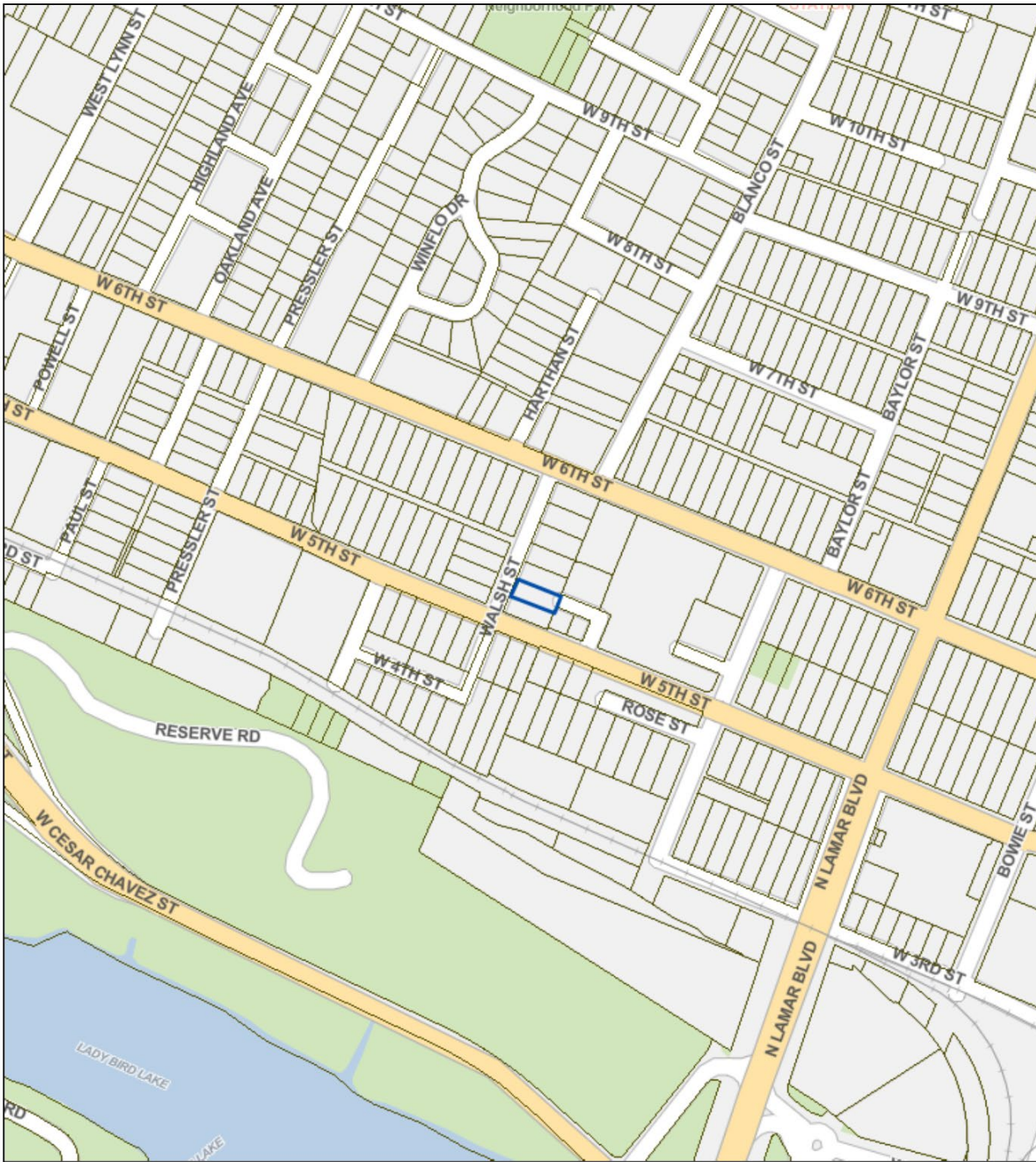
Designation Criteria—Historic Landmark


- 1) The building is more than 50 years old.
- 2) The building appears to retain moderate integrity. Gables have been altered and the building has been clad in stucco, though modifications may have taken place during the historic period.
- 3) Properties must meet two criteria for landmark designation (LDC §25-2-352). Staff has evaluated the property and determined that it does not meet two criteria for landmark designation:
 - a. Architecture. The building is constructed with Folk Victorian influences, but character-defining features have been removed or altered over the years.
 - b. Historical association. The property does not appear to have significant historical associations.
 - 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 rehabilitation and adaptive reuse but release the demolition permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package.

LOCATION MAP






1: 4800

2/20/2024

GF 24-018655

503 WALSH STREET



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*







Site plan exemption application, 2024

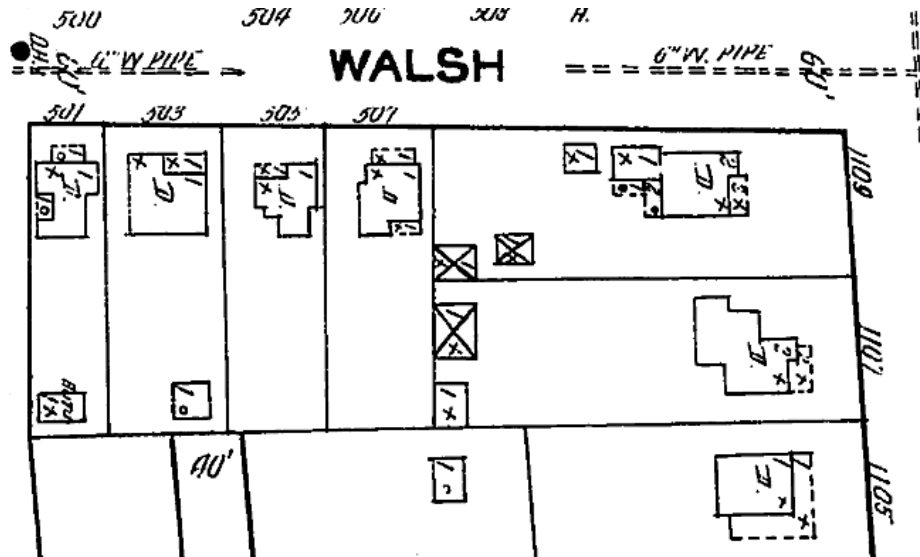
Occupancy History

City Directory Research, February 2024

1959	Vacant
1955	Eddie and Dolores Slack, renters – employee at Electric Dept.
1952	Warren H. and Beatrice Smith, owners – engineer
1949	Warren H. and Beatrice Smith, owners – engineer
1944	Fred and Adelle Rockendolf, owners
1941	Lyman C. Moriss, renter
1939	Mrs. Adele G. Weatherford, owner
1935	Mrs. Adele G. Weatherford, owner
1932	W. A. Bryant, renter
1929	E. N. Powell, renter E. L. Kimmons, renter
1927	Clay Reed, renter
1924	Walsh Street is listed as part of Blanco Street. James A. Warren, owner
1922	J. A. and Mabel Warren, renters – cashier, City Streets and Public Improvements Aileen Warren, renter Mrs. Emma L. Casper, owner (widow of F. S. Casper)
1918	James and Mabel Warren, owners – bookkeeper, City Engineer's Office; secretary, Moose Club Emma Casper Thomas and Rennie Dailey, renters – salesman
1916	James A. Warren – chief clerk, City Superintendent of Streets and Bridges
1912	Mrs. Sarah Escamilla George Vasquez Miss Amelia Vasquez Miss Cecilia Vasquez

- 1909 Frank S. Casper, renter – dentist, 200 W. 7th St.
James A. Warren – yard clerk, IG&N
Benjamin F. Kendall – retired
- 1906 Dr. Frank S. Casper – dentist
Earl M. Andrews, renter – employee at Bosche Laundry
- 1903 Dr. Frank S. Casper – dentist, office McDonald Building, 700 Colorado St.
- 1895 Dr. Frank S. Casper, owner – dentist, office 704 Congress Ave.
Miss Byrdie Casper – teacher, Texas Deaf and Dumb Asylum
Note: Caspers listed at “east side of Blanco between W. 5th and 6th.”
- 1893 Casper listed at 1005 San Jacinto.

Historical Information



1922 Sanborn map

A STATESMAN reporter yesterday had the pleasure of witnessing the operation of an electric motor at the dental rooms of Dr. F. S. Casper, over DeCordova and Son's, on the Avenue. The motor takes the place of, and even does more, than the dental engine, so commonly used. The doctor thoroughly understands his business, and having seen his workmanship, it can be safely predicted a large share of public patronage, when he becomes known, will be extended him. He has a card in THE STATESMAN, to which attention is directed.

DR. F. S. CASPER DENTIST,

DENTAL ROOMS over DeCordova & Son's, 704
Congress Avenue.

I have permanently located in Austin
and solicit a share of public patronage.

The Austin Daily Statesman (1880-1889); Austin, Tex.. 22 Feb 1884: 4.

The Austin Daily Statesman (1880-1889); Austin, Tex.. 19 Apr 1884: 4.

TESTIMONY TAKEN IN AN OLD
CLAIM AGAINST FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT.

DR. F. S. CASPER HAS
A CASE FOR DAMAGES

Grant's Army Took That Which Belonged to His Father in Mississippi During the Civil War.

United States Commissioner J. R. Little heard depositions yesterday in a most interesting case which dates back to the civil war.

It is the case F. S. Casper, a dentist of Austin, administrator of the estate of the deceased father of Abel Casper, against the United States government. This case is now pending before the United States courts of claims at Washington. United States District Attorney Henry Terrell was here representing the government, while Major W. M. Walton represents Mr. Casper.

Abel Casper was one of the wealthiest citizens of Mississippi in the early 60's, and when Grant's army invaded Jackson, Miss., they appropriated, according to the allegations of the plaintiff, molasses, shoes, whisky and provisions of all kinds to their own use which belonged to the elder Casper. This was on May 14, 1863, and after the war came to an end the matter was taken up by Dr. Casper and the claim is still pending. The case involves many thousands of dollars and may yet take sometime before it is finally adjusted.

Both of the district courts adjourned yesterday for the term. It was after 10 o'clock last night when the Fifty-third district court completed its business, while the Twenty-sixth district court finished earlier in the evening.

The Austin Statesman (1902-1915); Austin, Tex.. 28 June 1903: 5.

Warren Will Remain Clerk A Week More

J. A. Warren, who is city clerk, will be retained in that capacity for about a week longer, but will go back to his old duties of chief clerk and paymaster of the street department. V. E. Martin will be the nominal city clerk. This was decided upon following the suggestion of Judge T. S. Johnson, special assistant city attorney in charge of the school bonds.

According to Judge Johnson, the William R. Compton Company, St. Louis, bond brokers, who are selling the school bonds, have a rule against selling bonds after the Mayor who signed the bonds had relinquished his office. The attorney feared the same rule might apply in regard to the city clerk who attested the bonds. He suggested that Warren go back to the street department but continue the city's legal city clerk until the bonds are disposed of, which city officials declare will take about a week. Martin, however, was to continue as nominal city clerk until the bond affair is closed and the city has the money. This will take a week, said the Mayor.

The commissioners voted \$1160 as commission and brokerage to the bond company for the disposal of the bonds. The Mayor already has received a voucher from the school board reimbursing the city government for this outlay.

Upon the nomination of Commissioner Haynes, Ed R. Huck and R. H. Felter were named special assistant assessors to aid Fred Sterzing, the tax collector, with the assessments that soon will be made.

Council's Advice In Collecting Bills For Streets Asked

A request for instructions on further courses of action against residents of Austin who offered to pay for street improvements if the city would do the work, but later refused to make the payments was filed with the city council by J. A. Warren, cashier of the street department, in a report made Thursday.

Mr. Warren cited specific examples of residents on East 12th street who had refused to pay bills rendered by the city after they had agreed to pay for street improvements, and said that they offered as a defense that East 11th street had been similarly improved without cost to the property owners. Mr. Warren also reported that former Commissioner George P. Seagriff had instructed him to bill the East 11th street residents, and that many who had received the bills had refused to pay on the grounds that the work was done without their knowledge or consent.

The report also stated that the city attorney had filed suit against some of the signers of the offer to pay for the East 12th street improvements, but that no results had been obtained so far.

Mr. Warren also criticized the maintenance of a special street fund, which had a 6 cent balance on June 30, 1926. Into this fund all monies collected for the improvement of specific streets are placed. The fund is "unsatisfactory for the reason that some streets are improved and charged to property owners while others receive a similar improvement at the city's expense," the report says.

The report was referred to the city manager for action.

*The Statesman (1916-1921); Austin, Tex.. 20 Feb 1918: 4.
The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex.. 15 July 1926: 1.*

CAGE - WARREN WEDDING IS ANNOUNCED

Announcing the engagement and approaching marriage of her daughter, Aileen, to Owen Cage, Mrs. James A. Warren entertained with an attractive bridge party and trousseau tea at her home Wednesday afternoon.

The Cage-Warren wedding will take place Saturday at noon at the home of the bride's parents with only members of the families of the couple and a few close friends in attendance. The bride-to-be is a former student of the University of Texas and for several years has been secretary of the University Co-Op. Mr. Cage is the son of Oscar Cage and at present connected with the Texas Book Store.

Zinnias and daisies were used in the decoration of the Warren home Wednesday afternoon with games of bridge being played during the afternoon. Miss Grace Cother played high in the games with Miss Marian Fomby winning the consolation and Miss Josephine Stewart winning low score favor.

With the refreshment course came announcement of the approaching wedding, for on the angelfood squares were embossed in white and pink the message of "Owen and Aileen, 7-20-29."

Guests for the affair included Misses Marian Fomby, Alice Costley, Josephine Stewart, Grace Chunn, Mary Evers, Irene Wittman, Gladys McCarty, Grace Cofer, Ruth Chunn, Nona Johnson, Mabel Warren, Aline Warren; Mesdames J. D. Copeland Jr., Helen Hoemlr, Edgar Tyson, Florence Riddink, Alice Costley and Emma Casper.

SCOTT—Mrs. Birdie Casper Scott, wife of W. A. Scott, died at the home of her son, Frank Scott in Tulsa, Okla., at 2:30 a. m. Tuesday. Besides her husband and son, she is survived by another son Cecil Scott of Council Bluff, Iowa; a daughter, Mrs. Marshall Hester of Berkley, Calif.; two sisters, Mrs. Earl Andrews of Tyler and Mrs. James A. Warren of Austin.

Mr. and Mrs. Scott formerly lived in Austin and for many years both taught in the State School for the Deaf.

Funeral services will be held at the Thurlow Weed Funeral home at 5:30 p. m. Thursday with Dr. Virgil M. Fisher officiating and burial will be in Oakwood cemetery.

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex.. 18 July 1929: 7.

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex.. 04 Aug 1937: 3.

FOUR MEN GRANTED CITY TAXI LICENSES

Four more aspiring taxi cab drivers were licensed Friday as a result of city council action upholding the recommendation of the police traffic bureau.

Drivers' permits were given Leo Weaver of 700 West avenue, L. J. Hagan of 2901 Speedway, Lyman Calvin Morris, Jr., of 503 Walsh and David Rex Osteen of 104 West 16th.

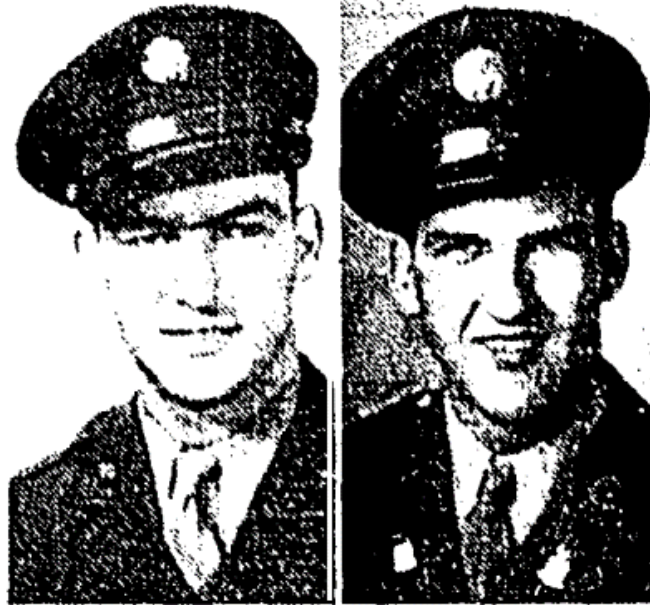
Those seeking drivers' permits are recommended to the council if they pass the routine police examination and have a good traffic record.

DUFRAIN—Margaret Lillian DuFrain, the 9 year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence DuFrain of 503 Walsh street, died at a local hospital Tuesday night. Besides her parents she is survived by one brother, Lawrence DuFrain Jr., and her grandmother, Mrs. Ella Jacobson all of Austin. The body is at the Hyllin Funeral home pending completion of funeral arrangements.

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex.. 10 June 1938: 7.

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex.. 19 May 1943: 11.

Corp. Clyde Martin Ward, 23, is in a hospital in New Caledonia, but not as a war casualty. He was sent from his base in the New Hebrides to New Caledonia to undergo an appendectomy. Corp. Ward, son of Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Ward, 505 Walsh, is an aerial engineer and mechanic attached to the ground crew of the air force. He has been overseas since May. Inducted with the national guard, he transferred to the air corps in July, 1941.



J. W. WARD

C. M. WARD

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex., 17 Feb 1944: 2.

Sewer and Drain Cleaning Firm Opens

The Baker Brothers Electric Sewer and Drain Cleaning Company has opened an Austin branch at 503 Walsh Street. The firm uses the patented electric Roto-Rooter.

The electric Roto-Rooter sewer cleaning service is nationwide in scope. It is the only sewer cleaning service which has the combined expert knowledge, cooperation, and advice of hundreds of trained Roto-Rooter service men throughout the United States in improving sewer and drain cleaning service.

The firm specializes in electric sewer and drain cleaning, and will remain open 24 hours every day. C. H. Kersten is the manager in Austin.

The Austin American (1914-1973); Austin, Tex., 01 Sep 1946: 10.

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