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March 23, 2026

RE: Nitschke-Versea-Goins House - 907 E 13th Street

Dear Chair Woods, Vice Chair Hainey, and Members of the Austin Planning Commission,

[Preservation Austin](#) exists to empower Austinites to shape a more inclusive, resilient, and meaningful community culture through preservation. We write today to express our support for the designation of 907 E 13th Street, also known as the Nitschke-Versea-Goins House, as a City of Austin Landmark for its architecture and historic associations.

Built between 1873 and 1884, the house at 913 E. 13th Street stands today as one of the oldest houses in the Swede Hill area. Its National Folk style speaks to its humble, working-class history. The Nitschke family, German cabinetmakers, built the home using construction techniques reminiscent of those in the nearby Swede Hill neighborhood. Anna Eliza Goins, a widow and mother of six children, purchased the home around 1924 and lived there until her passing in 1956. As a Black woman living in segregated Austin, she made a living working as a cook and a laundress, renting out rooms in her modest home to drivers, porters, cooks, and the like.

The 2016 East Austin Historic Survey recommended this property for every possible designation, including as a City of Austin landmark. Its distinctive style and high integrity convey a sense of Austin history that is rare and quickly vanishing. The working-class people who lived here embody the stories of so many Austinites who, despite inequity and segregation, nurtured lives and communities of their own making.

The Historic Landmark Commission fairly recommended that only the front two rooms, the oldest parts of the building, be zoned historic. This would leave more than half of the lot available for infill development, including through the Preservation Bonus created by City Council as part of the HOME ordinance. Preservation does not have to be a zero-sum game, and we believe that this property holds immense potential for both preservation and future development.

Designating the Nitschke-Versea-Goins House affirms our values as a city—that these people are worth remembering, and these stories are worth preserving. Thank you for your consideration and your service to the City of Austin.

Sincerely,

Miriam Conner, President