### ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

**CASE NUMBER:** C14H-2008-0018

HLC DATE:
PC DATE:

June 23, 2008 July 22, 2008 August 12, 2008

**APPLICANT:** City of Austin/Steve Wertheimer, owner

**HISTORIC NAME:** The Continental Club

**WATERSHED:** East Bouldin Creek

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 1315 S. Congress Avenue

ZONING FROM: CS-1-V-CO-NCCD-NP to CS-1-H-V-CO-NCCD-NP

<u>SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION</u>: Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from commercial services – liquor sales, vertical mixed use, conditional overlay, neighborhood conservation, neighborhood plan combining district zoning (CS-1-V-CO-NCCD-NP) to commercial services, liquor sales, Historic Landmark, vertical mixed use, conditional overlay, neighborhood conservation, neighborhood plan combining district zoning (CS-1-H-V-CO-NCCD-NP).

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: Recommended the proposed zoning change from commercial services, vertical mixed use, neighborhood conservation, neighborhood plan combining district zoning (CS-V-NCCD-NP) to commercial services, liquor sales, Historic Landmark, vertical mixed use, conditional overlay, neighborhood conservation, neighborhood plan combining district zoning (CS-1-H-V-CO-NCCD-NP). Vote: 5-0 (Arriaga, Leary, and Rosato absent). NOTE: The Historic Landmark Commission heard this case before the base zoning change case went before Council on July 24, 2008 to change the base zoning.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**: Pending.

**<u>DEPARTMENT COMMENTS</u>**: The building is not listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984).

CITY COUNCIL DATE: August 21, 2008 ACTION:

ORDINANCE READINGS: 1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup> ORDINANCE NUMBER:

**CASE MANAGER:** Steve Sadowsky **PHONE:** 974-6454

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION: South River City Neighborhood Association

### **BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

The ca. 1947 building has housed the Continental Club, a supper club, burlesque house, and live music venue, since 1955. It possesses significance in the areas of historical associations and community value.

#### Architecture:

One-story rectangular-plan flat-roofed masonry commercial building with a flat parapet, 4-light fixed-sash fenestration with glass brick wainscoting and a central double-leaf entry.

#### **Historical Associations**:

There is a city building permit to a Mr. L.M. McWhorter for the construction of a masonry store building on this lot, but it is undated. However, it falls between building permits in the same block from the mid-1940s. The 1935 Sanborn map does not show a building on this site, but it does appear in the 1961 update. The building is believed to have been built in mid-1947. The 1947 city directory does not show an entry for this address, although addresses for older buildings on either side of the present Continental Club are listed. The 1946 Southwestern Bell telephone book does not show a listing for the first known business on this site, the Laundromat Half-Hour Laundry, which was run by Selig Ginsburg. (There was another Laundromat Half-Hour Laundry at 1504 West Lynn Street). Telephone books for 1947, 1948 and 1949 show the Laundromat at this address, but by 1950, it had moved its operations to the West Lynn location. The occupant of the building is unknown for 1950, but by the time of the publication of the 1951 telephone book in December of that year, the Paul Wright Electrical Company is listed at this address; the electrical contractors maintained their location here through 1953; the city directory and phone book of 1952 show them here. The building was listed as vacant in the 1954 city directory, but in 1955, the Continental Club first appears at this address, with Clair E. Evans listed as the manager. The Continental Club is not listed in the December, 1954 telephone book, but appears in 1955. The first known newspaper ad for a dance at the Continental Club appears in the Austin American of February 26, 1955 – the club was open to members and their guests.

Originally a posh supper club with live musical entertainment, the Continental Club was located adjacent to the Terrace Motor Hotel, which was a reputable establishment in its heyday, unlike other lodging establishments on South Congress. The Continental Club had a house band, the Bill Taylor combo, but also booked major touring bands of the era. The club is also believed to be the first bar in Travis County to sell liquor by the drink. City directories for 1955 through 1963 read: "Continental Club - beer" indicating that the club, like most in Texas at the time, allowed patrons (usually members of the private club) to bring in their own liquor, but could only sell them set-ups. The 1956 telephone book ad advertises the Continental Club as having dining, dancing and entertainment, offering "Austin's Finest Combo Music" and charcoal-broiled steaks. The ad describes "the Club with the Purple Doors" as catering to the college crowd and private parties. The 1957 telephone book leaves out the "catering to the college crowd" reference. The 1958 telephone book advertises "dancing to the latest hi-fi recordings, with the Bill Taylor Combo "Austin's finest" playing Fridays and Saturdays and a jam session every Sunday afternoon. The 1959 phone book ad invites patrons to dine and dance at "Austin's most beautiful night club", noting that the club opened every day at 5 p.m., but was now closed on Sundays. The Bill Turner Combo was the headliner in the 1960 telephone book ad – "Music for easy listening, nice to remember – for a wonderful evening of entertainment" at "Austin's finest" night club. The club did not advertise in the phone books from 1961 through 1968, but the 1969 phone book

did not have the display ad of previous years, noting only in the listing under "Night Clubs" "Band & Go-Go Girls Nightly" and the 1970 telephone book makes no mention of exotic entertainment. Newspaper ads from 1955 through 1965 advertise live music dances at the club. An ad in the Austin American, June 1, 1967 advertises a live band with exotic dancers. An ad in the American of August 3, 1968 advertises "Dance to the Entertainers – also Go-Go Dancers." Local legend has it that the Continental Club was the first topless bar in Austin, and the first to be shut down.

When the One Knite Tavern, a venerable Austin live music venue at 8th and Red River (where Stubb's is today) closed in 1978, the proprietors formed a new association to lease the Continental Club and transformed it into the successor to the One Knite, where Stevie Ray Vaughn and others had played. Bands playing the Continental included Stevie Ray Vaughn, Lou Ann Barton, Joe Ely, Kinky Friedman, and W.C. Clark, with local boys Charlie and Will Sexton occasionally sitting in with the big names. Roosevelt "Grey Ghost" Williams was a fixture at the piano at the Continental in his last years. Mark Pratz and J-Net operated the club from 1983 to 1987, transformed the club into a cutting edge venue of the new wave and alternative music scene, booking bands such as The Replacements and Social Distortion. Pratz and J-Net went on to own and operate the Liberty Lunch, and the Continental Club was on the verge of closing in 1987 when it was purchased by current owner Steve Wertheimer. Wertheimer refurbished the interior of the club. restoring the original murals meant to invoke fanciful scenes of Europe dating from the time it was a supper club. He has continued the club's long tradition of providing a venue for Austin musicians as well as traveling shows, and special events ranging from annual birthday parties for Elvis Presley, Wanda Jackson, and Buck Owens to car shows. In the 1990s and 2000s, the Continental Club has become known as Austin's premier venue for country, swing, blues, and rockabilly bands, with well-loved local favorites Alejandro Escovedo, Junior Brown, Toni Price, Casper Rawls, and the Mother Truckers maintaining a regular presence in the club. The Continental continues to attract major touring bands to Austin, with appearances by Link Wray, Kris Kristofferson, Candye Kane, Raul Malo and the Mavericks, BR-549, Southern Culture on the Skids, and many others. There is no doubt that the Continental Club is one of Austin's most famous and enduring night spots.

PARCEL NO.: 03000103070000

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION**: The center 30 feet of Lot 2, Block 9, Fairview Park

ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT: \$1,710 (income-producing); city portion: \$414.

**APPRAISED VALUE**: \$224,425

PRESENT USE: Night club

**CONDITION**: Excellent

### PRESENT OWNER:

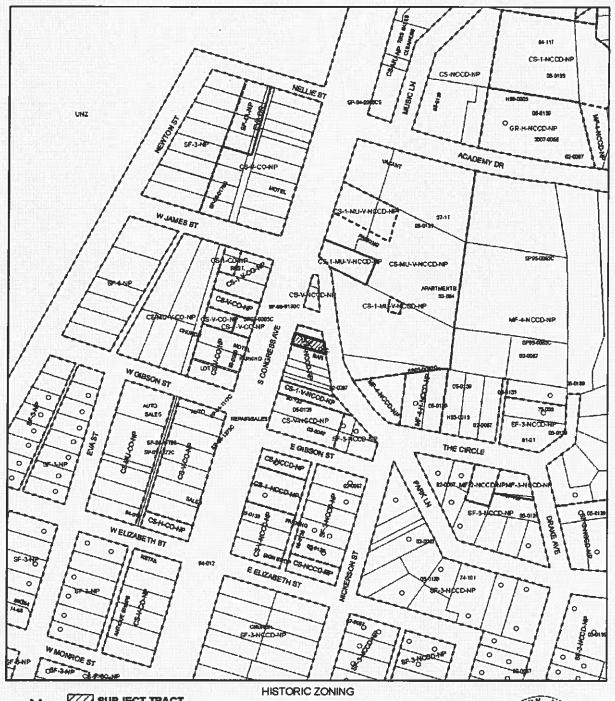
Steve Wertheimer 1315 S. Congress Avenue Austin, Texas 78704

DATE BUILT: ca. 1947

**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** None apparent

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): L.W. McWhorter (1947)

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: None.



SUBJECT TRACT

ZONING BOUNDARY

PENDING CASE

ZONING CASE#: C14H-2008-0018
ADDRESS: 1315 S CONGRESS AVE
SUBJECT AREA: 0.000 ACRES

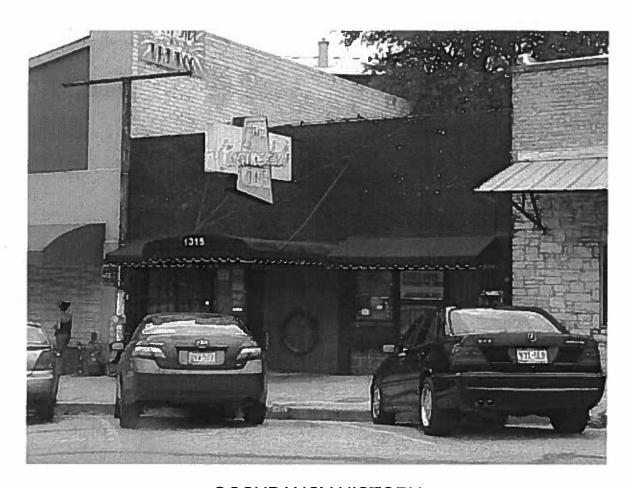
GRID: J21

MANAGER: S. SADOWSKY



1" = 200"

OPERATOR: S. MEEKS
This imap has been producted by G.1.6. Services for the sets purpose of geographic reference to value of the sets purpose of geographic reference to value of the sets of the sets



## OCCUPANCY HISTORY 1315 South Congress Avenue The Continental Club

City Directory Research, Austin History Center By City Historic Preservation Office June, 2008

1987	Continental Club
1981	Continental Night Club Roger Collins, manager
1975	Continental Night Club Martin Schuler, proprietor
1969	Continental Night Club No proprietor or manager listed
1963	Continental Club Beer Joe Malear, proprietor

1957 Continental Club

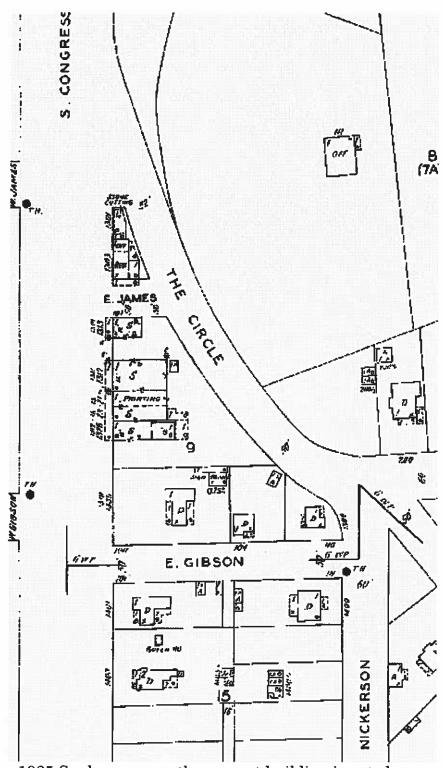
Beer

Morris J. McCandless, proprietor

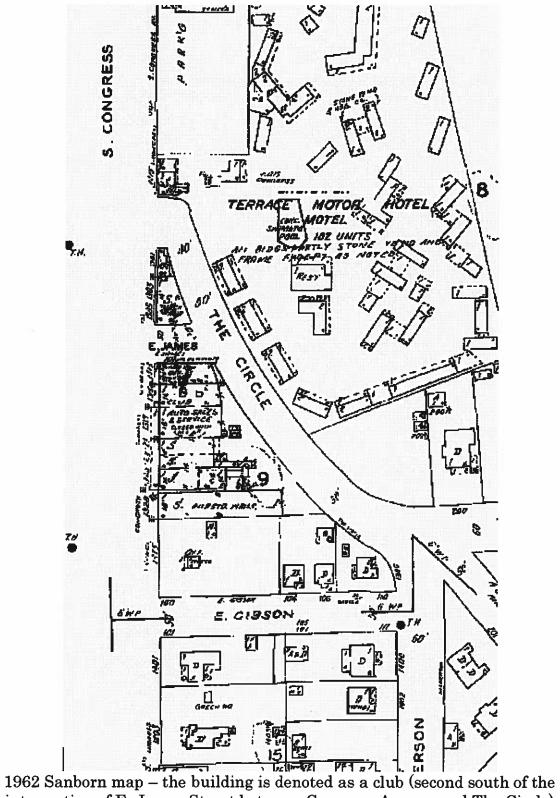
2211 Post Road. 1955 Continental Club Beer Clair E. Evans, manager 1954 Vacant 1953 Paul Wright Electrical Company, Inc. Electrical contractors Louis B. Hardeman, vice-president; Harold K. Smith, secretary/treasurer 1952 Paul Wright Electrical Company, Inc. Electrical contractors Louis Hardeman and Harold K. Smith, managers 1949 Laundromat Half-Hour Laundry Selig Ginsburg, proprietor NOTE: There was another location of the Laundromat Half-Hour Laundry at 1204 West Lynn Street.

NOTE: Morris J. McCandless was also the proprietor of the Wonder Trailer Park,

1947 The address is not listed.



1935 Sanborn map - the current building is not shown



intersection of E. James Street between Congress Avenue and The Circle)

Undated building permit to L.M. McWhorter for the construction of a masonry store building at 1315 S. Congress Avenue (believed to be 1947)



First known ad for the Continental Club Austin American, February 26, 1955



Austin American June 8, 1956



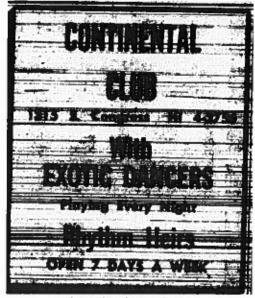
Austin American July 19, 1957



Austin American April 16, 1960



Austin American October 1, 1965



Austin American June 1, 1967

# CONTINENTAL

1315 S. Congress HI 4-2754

DANCE

TO THE

ENTERTAINERS

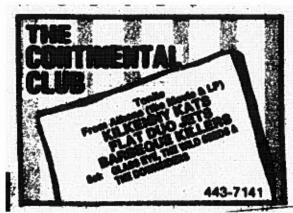
- ALSO -

GO-GO DANCERS

Austin American August 3, 1968



Austin <u>American-Statesman</u> November 20, 1981



Austin American-Statesman July 31, 1987



Southwestern Bell Telephone Directory December, 1956

This is the first ad in a telephone book. The club is listed in the December, 1955 telephone book, but with no ad.



Southwestern Bell Telephone Directory July, 1957



Southwestern Bell Telephone Directory December, 1958



Southwestern Bell Telephone Directory December, 1959



Southwestern Bell Telephone Directory December, 1960

Continental Club The
Band & Go-Go Girls Nightly
1315 5 Congress

Continental Night Club 1315 S Congress

A44-2754
Continental Night Club 1315 S Congress

A42-9202

Southwestern Bell Telephone Directory

December, 1969



Southwestern Bell Telephone Directory December, 1970

Priday, July 91, 19

CIT A SAR SHALL SELV CHEEP BEER SELVER BEER SELVER SELVER

### Continental Club faces dark days

### Rock stands to suffer if Congress Avenue volcano roars no more

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"I tellised to the lamellood (Migreta Manker of Expla) Twocker, not be gave me a bettern-line price, and in gave me a bettern-line price, and collision to weak out any least of artespenses with me, said Frest Wechnesbey. "I teld him in two weaks I would give him a designification. So after the 19th, there will be two options; He silver own the biglifiting and accesses also will be returned E. or the owner-neighbors, the consense when to run as a circle. He size well be might; turn it best into an add-obje lensby-tond with pool tables and hear and he

If the letter promisitily comes to pose, it will threaten the end of a receival tradition we fourth Congipe. There was a time, not as long age, what can could make a night of it, waiting (or searcing) item the Are-Tree Lounge to the Continetial (with a stop for take tour out [Birth, and on to Seasy Creat. It the Continental changes formats, just will leave the Austin Open House as the sain proveyer of live mosts on the stell (at least upth Stove Changey's By Manner re-

"The third of the day-to-day reacrowed," said Freit, "But mostly." In just timed." No wonder, Bartlag cut as messager of Lifterty Lanch, Pyake' vient on to first i production company, Lanch Monity, with Lenie Mayere. Four years age, while continuing to book Liftorly Lunch with Meyers, in asmined control of the Continuing with Jensentin Ward. Byings not a decident valuelated to purpy at the

"Whatever I made at the Lunci



Music

sings best to support the Cost martial," he said. "It have pulsed in one weight. Besteally, it was a pa-"a" rell joint as a picklin service. At ter all this time, after all the thrill and all the puritying and all the fit — which was a left — you have t go. Left's put real." If I poid all the distance ("Right ages, and best all the lessess, where would I be? About

God, but it could be loved in they. The Coheren, Even Jobbes and the Hagen Bearwer Bayes were among these that turned the small product of a mether too also. Posts recalled that the Tree Bellowers had tended streetly date in the tree Bellowers had tended to streetly date in the tree bellowers and the tree treetly date to the treetly date to th

But that was all part of the fun And where a little heaging lost when there were complementer when there were complementer in the former was forced by the former forced by the former forced by the former forced forced by the force forced fo

Prain' funded memories investo the three years of accustle Christman performances. Thehesh S opining a show for eight people the first Leffed Breethers partimances (which helped put the room on its financial fast), and enother shatteringly load night with Little Chardie, the Big Boyn and oard for you). "I think the man people I over our in these was it. Selliginative 'nsture' slope," he so called. "We put 500 people in these and hed all the dron open, it thereasy plant I we have in these as

Pints will, he says, continue tooking assets Liberty Lunch Billians, has be included a lunch girthatigh Lunch Billians, but he had needy talking in the past tenses. "The Christment Chie was away, winner, because I didn't put have liquer in I invest really pushed the boots, I never really pushed much down amyone's theses. I tried to of the pasted assets the says as a light was a surprise of the I have a surprise of the I have a surprise of the I have a surprise down a I have a surprise down a light, but I have a surprise of the I have a surp

Messis, of course will continue through August, buginning tweight with the Kilhestony Rade (rem Athony, Gr. Kilhestony Rade (rem Athony, Gr. Thun, Aop. 8, the System Inchiners returns to the Continuents) where they continue the second course of the cours

Later, on Aug. 16, Tuffer and the Tail Tupe will peache over rock's version of La Dis do in Marcios; the 10th analoussay of Elvier death. One gas he forgives for hoping the occasion will not precode the demiss of the Centinosis (Cab as well.)

I Want Your Senton Dayle: Wheeps it's hard to get you'd help then dayn? Charife Senton is teking a disite working venetion in teking a disite working venetion in Anothe in addition to joining the Kill at the Continental Cloth, he will all in with the bund at its Aqua Fust set or Thursday philds also main's the hast appearance of gallarist Duvid Christona, who has been placely they with the heard for absent they with the heard for absent a year). Then, Aug. 9, he will act as host for a resmice of the Eagus hours for a resmice of the Eagus

he Back Reten.

Cheffer some As Done, will be the next single from the Revery HIM Cas II commitment. Heavileging the accompanying video will factors move of the single than the Shahedoon, in which Bublager anded up generating in EAS Manager works.

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Setunder, Chris Hillmen and the Desert Suse Band, the Thirte Dance and the Wagnasees will be at Liberty Lynch

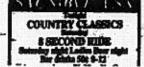












### Continental Club packs a punch into its farewell

As the days dwindle down to a precious few, the Continental Club refuses to go gently into that good night. The South Congress watering hole, which shuts its doors this weekend, is going down swinging. This evening, the club presents its last Hoot Nite, with the Wild Seeds (now signed to Passport Records), Michael Maye and Joe, and Seven Samurai. Wednesday, the show features Ballad Shambles, Do Dat and Javelin Boot. Thursday's bill includes the Wagoneers, Two Hoots and A Holler, and Zydeco Ranch, while Friday funks out with Skank, Do Dat and Jamtron. Saturday, the Continental rings down the curtain with three perennial favorites, Zeitgeist, the Wild Seeds and Glass Eye.

Rhise Critica Dent.: The problem



Music

John T. Davis

years ago Ayres compiled an album for his Glitch Records label of young, unsigned local bands. The effort proved so successful that Ayres followed up with a second album. And then, tapes pouring into his office, a third. Now, glutton for punishment that he is, Ayres is soliciting contributions for a fourth Glitch Sampler. Interested parties should submit a cassette of two or three songs to Ayres at P.O. Box 4429, Austin 78765, in the next few weeks. Copyright information, ad-

Austin American Statesman

August 25, 1987 (Left column only)

artist H.R. Giger.

Go West, Young Singer/Songwriter, Folk-Rock, Guitar/Vocalist Dept.: The last female musician to make the trek from Austin to the Left Coast, Eliza Gilkyson, returned from Los Angeles with a five-record album deal. Now, Mandy Mercier is hoping lightning will strike twice. Mercier is taking a sabbatical from the local scene to try her luck on the Golden Shore. Mercier hopes the trip will help consolidate her image in the minds of local listeners. A little absence making the heart grow fonder and all that . . .

Like a lot of Austin musicians Mercier has gone through a series of incarnations in search of her own sound. Some of her fans recal her from folk-singing days at Kerr ville, some from her sojourn with