

## **ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET**

**CASE NUMBER:** C14H-2009-0016

**HLC DATE:**

April 27, 2009

May 18, 2009

June 22, 2009

July 27, 2009

**PC DATE:** August 25, 2009 Postpone to October 13 2009 by the request of the owner; 8-0;  
Commissioner Gerardo Castillo was absent.

October 13, 2009 Motion made to forward to City Council without any action from  
Planning Commission for "H" zoning. (To deny staff's recommendation for DMU-H zoning failed, 4-2);  
Commissioners Danette Chimenti and Kathryne Tovo voted against the motion nay); Commissioners  
Saundra Kirk and Dave Anderson were absent. Commissioner Kathryne Tovo made a motion to  
recommend to City Council that if the building is demolished, applicant to work with city staff to  
preserve some significant architectural features from the original building, harvest the reusable artifacts &  
materials, and produce a permanent record on-site of the occupants' history. Commissioner Mandy  
Dealey seconded the motion on a vote of 6-0; Commissioners Saundra Kirk and Dave Anderson were  
absent.

**APPLICANT:** Historic Landmark Commission

**HISTORIC NAMES:** Guadalupe Hotel, Travis House, YWCA

**WATERSHED:** Shoal Creek

**ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE:** 405 West 18<sup>th</sup> Street

**ZONING FROM:** DMU to DMU-H

**SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends DMU-H, Downtown  
Mixed Use – Historic Overlay Combining District, zoning for the original building  
only.

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:**

April 27, 2009: Initiated the historic zoning case.

May 18, 2009: Postponed the case until June 22, 2009 at the property owner's request.

June 22, 2009: Postponed the case until July 27, 2009 at the property owner's request.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:**

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The house is beyond the bounds of the  
Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984).

**CITY COUNCIL DATE:**

**ACTION:**

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

**ORDINANCE NUMBER:**

**CASE MANAGER:** Susan Villarreal

**PHONE:** 974-3524

## **NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS:**

438--Downtown Austin Alliance  
511--Austin Neighborhoods Council  
744--Sentral Plus East Austin Koalition (SPEAK)  
142--Five Rivers Neighborhood Assn.  
159--North Capitol Area Neighborhood Assn.  
603--Mueller Neighborhoods Coalition

623--City of Austin Downtown Commission  
767--Downtown Austin Neighborhood Coalition  
786--Home Builders Association of Greater Austin  
1075--League of Bicycling Voters  
1113--Austin Parks Foundation  
402--Downtown Austin Neighborhood Assn.  
(DANA)  
1037--Homeless Neighborhood Assn.

## **BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

### **Architecture:**

Three-story brick Colonial Revival-styled brick building with a symmetrical façade. The corners are articulated with brick quoins; third floor windows have round arches in the top pane, the front entry is flanked by pilasters and a broken pediment; the central portion of the façade features a Palladian-styled window.

### **Historical Associations:**

The Travis House was built in 1945 as a 30 unit multi-family structure. In 1947, 14 of the apartments were rented to various individuals and couples. Among the 14 occupants renting rooms in the Travis House there was a lawyer, a dentist, a young private secretary to L.B. Johnson (that is, Congressman Lyndon B. Johnson), as well as a dishwasher, several students, and at least one individual with no occupation listed. Apparently the multi-family apartment building soon converted to the Hotel Guadalupe, as shown by half page advertisements in the City Directory of 1949.

It was purchased by the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) ten years later, with the financial assistance of Commodore E.H. Perry, and began operating as a dormitory and center for the organization on January 1, 1956. The Residence was named after Lutie Perry, and following her death, a portrait of her by Ava Atkinson was hung in the main hall lobby. The 50 Year Report, issued in 1965, states 249 women were housed that year at the Travis House.

E.H. Perry and his wife, the former Lutie Pryor, were just two of the many prominent Austinites who helped build and operate the YWCA over the years. Mr. Perry was born in 1876 in Caldwell, Texas and graduated from Baylor University. He started buying cotton in Taylor Texas and made a fortune in Europe and was quoted to say "....am going to spend it in Austin to make this city a nicer place to live." Mr. Perry quit the cotton business in 1929 and went on to head the Austin Housing Authority. He also built other structures as the Commodore Perry Hotel, Perry-Brooks Office Building and helped developed the Highland Park Neighborhood. Another Historic Landmark, the 1928 Commodore Perry Home, designed by architect Henry Bowers Thomson, with details by Peter Mansbendel, was their home.

At the April 27, 2009 meeting of the Historic Landmark Commission, an Austin resident, Ms. Ora Houston, testified that the YWCA was one of the few places in Austin that Black women were permitted to rent housing while attending the University of Texas, as this was prior to desegregation in the country in general and prior to the desegregation of student housing on the U.T. campus.

As the YWCA organization changed from 1955 to 1995, it moved away from providing residences and traditional physical education and no longer needed the type of building represented by the structure at 405 East 18th Street. After attempting to merge with the University YWCA in 1993, the Austin YWCA went bankrupt in 1994. In 1998, the University YWCA officially changed its name to the YWCA of Greater Austin and is now located on South IH 35.

The Travis County Justice System briefly opened a halfway house for ex-offenders at the site in the 1990s, but there was a large public outcry about the proximity of the location to the University of Texas campus and so the halfway house was also closed. Several other tenants occupied the building following the closure of the halfway house; however, the building has been vacant several years. On January 24, a report in the American Statesman said a Division chief for the Fire Department reported that there had been fires on each floor of the building and that it had not happened by accident. She also said homeless individuals had been seeking shelter in the building overnight.

**PARCEL NO.** 02-1002-1712

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** North 86 feet of East 138 feet of Outlot 33 Division E of the Original City of Austin

**ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT:** \$7,003.84

**APPRAISED VALUE:** \$1,031,233

**PRESENT USE:** Vacant

**CONDITION:** Exterior Facade: Good, Interior: Poor.

**PRESENT OWNER:**

Travis Hotel Group, LLC  
c/o Michael Tregoning  
7557 Rambler Rd Suite 1100  
Dallas Texas 75231-2310

**DATE BUILT:** ca. 1945

**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** A large addition was made to the rear of the original structure in 1956. The addition was designed by well-known Austin architect J. Roy White. There have also been numerous minor repairs and additions since that time, including the installation of a swimming pool in the basement of the original facility, and then the filling in of the amenity in the early 1990s.

**ORIGINAL OWNER(S):** United Fidelity Life Insurance Company

**OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS:** None.



**Man injured in fire on Guadalupe St.**

Firefighters battled several blazes Friday afternoon at the former Travis House at 18th and Guadalupe streets, said Dawn Clopton, division chief for the Austin Fire Department.

Firefighters said a man in his 20s was taken to a hospital to be evaluated for smoke inhalation.

Clopton said there were multiple fires on each floor of the three-story building. "That doesn't happen by accident," she said.

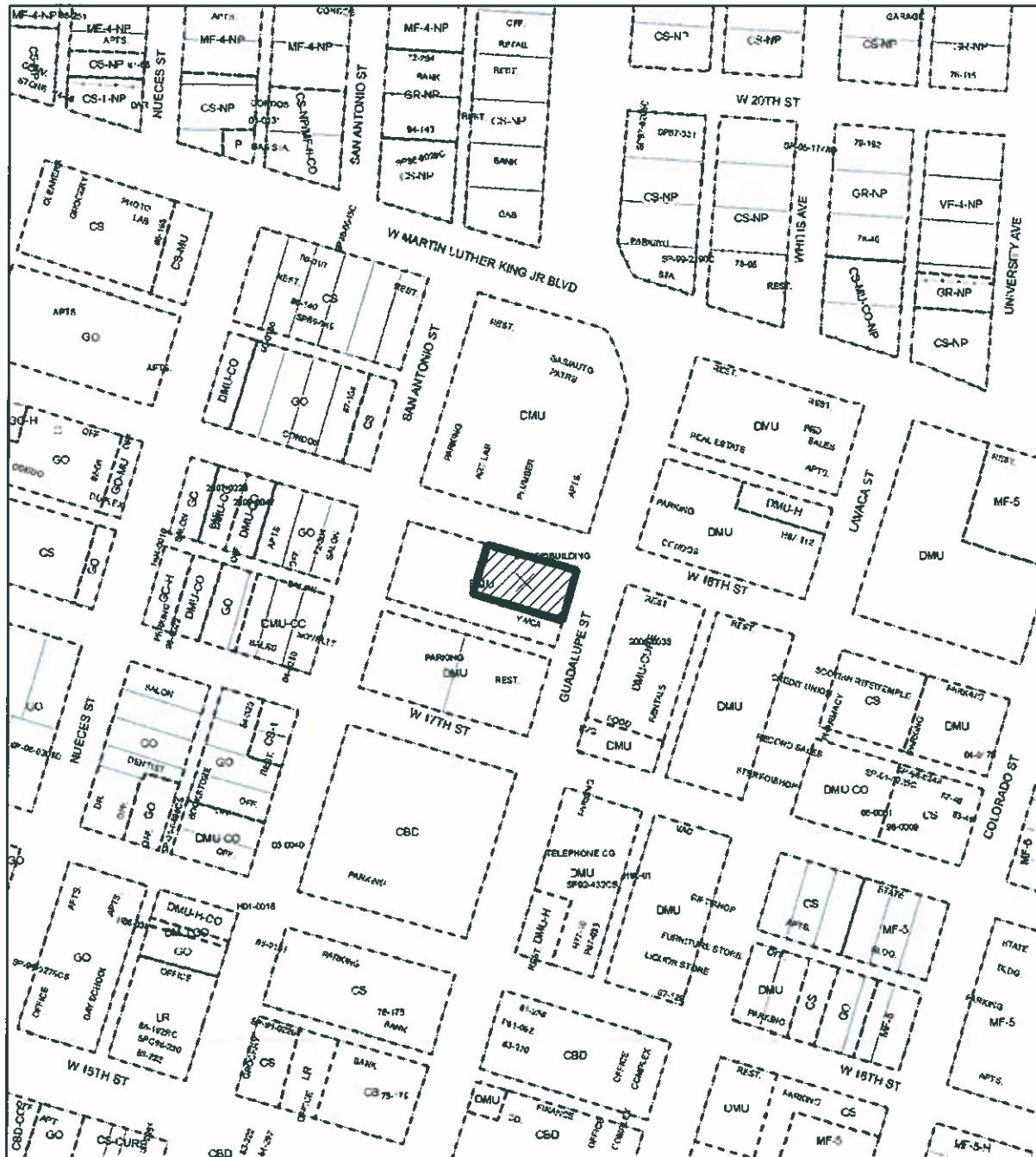
The fires were put out quickly.




She said homeless people have used the building overnight. It had been used by the YWCA and by a halfway house but has been vacant for a few years.

Saturday, January 24, 2009

From Statesmen.com

# LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  ZONING BOUNDARY
-  PENDING CASE

OPERATOR: S. MEEKS

## HISTORIC DEMOLITION PERMIT

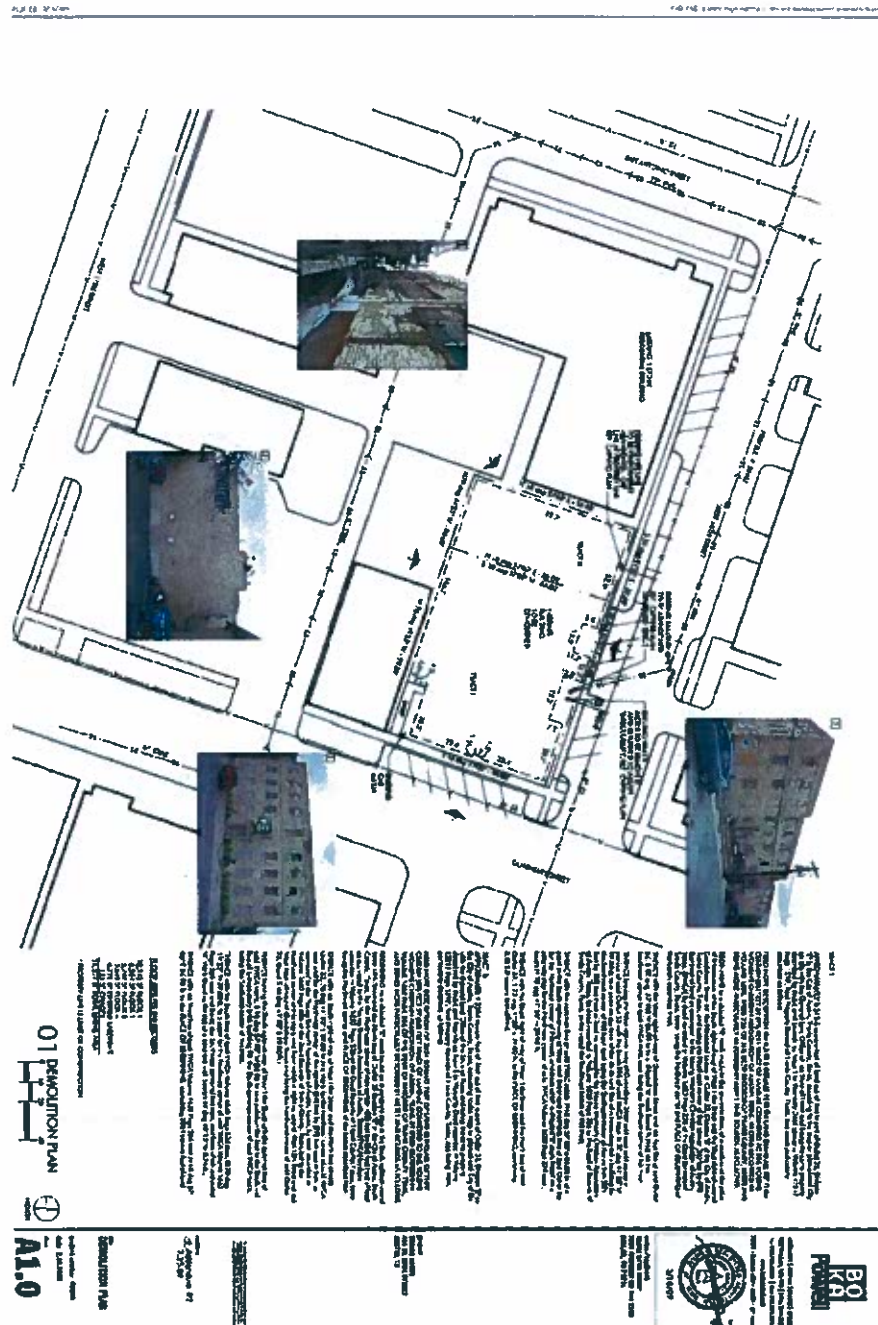
ZONING CASE#: HDP-2009-0097  
 ADDRESS: 405 W 18TH ST  
 SUBJECT AREA: 0.000 ACRES  
 GRID: J23  
 MANAGER: S. SADOWSKY



1" = 200'

This map has been produced by GIS Services for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.

# DEMOLITION PLAN



BUILDING PERMITS FOR 1710 GUADALUPE AND 405 W 18<sup>TH</sup> ST

United Fidelity Life  
Insurance Company ""

1710 Guadalupe Street

1 33 36x99 (9) E

Original City

3 sty. fireproof apt. house (30 units)

27173 - 6/8/45 \$65,000.00

Cedric Burgher

171 (?)

YMCA

1710 Guadalupe

1 9 & 10

33

Mas. Addn. & Repairs to YMCA Bldg.

63834 5-29-56 \$169,958

J. M. Odom 9

Lot coverage OK by Bd. of Adj. 12-19-55

Off Street Parking variation OK by City Mgr.



Y.W.C.A.

403 West 18th Street

1 NE 86'0" X 99'0"

- 33 E

Masonry third floor addition to Young Women's  
Christain Association.

85802

10-26-62

57,592.19

W. D. Anderson

10

W -

S -

Y.W.C.A.

Parking requirements waived by City Council 10-26-62

OWNER		YWCA Inc		ADDRESS		405 W. 18th St.	
PLAT	1	LOT	7	BLK.			
SUBDIVISION		Original City					
OCCUPANCY		YWCA Re Roof					
BLDG. PERMIT #		186673		DATE		10-18-79	
				OWNERS ESTIMATE		15,000.00	
CONTRACTOR		Central Texas Roofing				NO. OF FIXTURES	
WATER TAP REC#		SEWER TAP REC#					
Re Roofing existing 4 stry mas comm bldg.							

BID 2004

In Austin . . .

# Hotel Guadalupe



COMPLETE YEAR-AROUND  
G-E AIR-CONDITIONING

• NEW . . . CONVENIENT  
. . . PARKING SPACE

*The Most for Your Money!*

1710 Guadalupe

Phone 7-9461

AUSTIN, TEXAS

AUSTIN CITY DIRECTORY



KELLY BLASS (LEFT), JAMES JIMENEZ, CARPENTER H. W. GAVIT  
YWCA residents supervise renovation. (Staff Photo by Jim Bundy)

### \$30,000 Project Taken in Stages

## YWCA Building Undergoes Complete Refurbishing

Never made residents. Residents are at work on their own best to give through reference power of women, especially when they decide to community. When the women who make repairs and renovation. The month will be raised to \$33 per month. The board's property chairman, Mrs. Bess Kitchens, with the air-conditioned, privacy, for the residents. When the American-Unionman photographer visited the YWCA's recent work project, he found that the existing approval of the two girls the ground for a picture which of Contractor Kitchens' carpenters, W. H. Gavit, a good example of two things: first, that Miss Kelly Blass, 18, and Miss Jane Jimenez, 15, well represent the enthusiasm of all the residents for the work being done, and secondly, that even youthful girls have that desire to tell the workmen just how to do their jobs. Miss Blass, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Blass of Texas City, came to the University of Texas in September. Miss Jimenez is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Elizabeth Jimenez of Seguin, and

Just week, Kitchens' workshop began the big job. About one-half floor of the three-story residence is being worked on at one time, with the girls who live in those worked-on residences assigned temporarily to dormitory fashion in another portion of the large YWCA Building at 496 W. 12th. This week the busy board members were quick to acknowledge the help that they had received from the YWCA Advisory Panel — John J. Adams, Lewis K. Bracy Jr., Mrs. C. H. Gray, Mrs. M. E. Durden, J. O. Garret, Jesse Garza, William J. Heen, Philip

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of an approved United Bond Capital Funds campaign about 14 years ago. Mrs. Kitchens continued, "Now, we are putting furniture, flooring, re-fitting the walls and adding much needed closet space, and will place new cooking ranges in each kitchen when the work is completed."

The YWCA residence houses young women in two and three girl suites which include private baths, kitchens and dining areas. There are also single bedrooms with private baths, with the occupants of these one-girl rooms sharing kitchen privileges with the girls in other specified suites. The residence, like the rest of the YWCA building, is completely air-conditioned. The residence hall, named in memory of the late Mrs. E. H. Perry, is not operated for profit but rather for service, with only nominal rents required. The advisory panel has approved a small rental increase, scheduled to start on Sept. 1, when the renovation contract is due to be completed. On that date, too, the board members plan to start another project — to refurbish the furnishings in each suite through contributions from individuals and organizations. (An example of the continuing minimal rental increase, can

## Austin History Center

The YWCA of Greater Austin celebrates 100 years of commitment to a more humane environment and greater social, racial and economic justice. The exhibit highlights The Young Women's Christian Association's accomplishments through materials from the Austin History Center collections, including the archival records of the YWCA of Greater Austin.

### History of the YWCA of Greater Austin

Began in 1885 and chartered in 1893, the University of Texas Young Women's Christian Association (later known as the University Y) provided social opportunities for students, consisting of Bible study, prayer groups, gospel singing and support of overseas missionary efforts.

In 1907 members of the YWCA incorporated under the name Young Women's Christian Association of the University of Texas. The Austin YWCA, a separate organization with a rich history of its own, was incorporated in 1914 supporting a Central Facility and an East Austin Branch. Samuel Hudson College joined a YWCA group in 1931.

The University Y enjoyed a close working relationship with the Young Men's Christian Association for over forty years. The two groups shared a building, a confidential box and then in 1970 moved to 2200 Oklahoma Avenue to move as Y-Women, Inc. The University YWCA separated in 1978. Over the years the YWCA of Greater Austin had jurisdiction over the YWCA, overseeing financial and operational decisions during these periods of change.

The Young Men's of the University Y was organized in the 1880s as students became active in the end-war movement. The YWCA provided the support of a confidential box. During the 1930s the YWCA began to investigate the University Y as a model of cooperation.



Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the Y partnered with the City of Austin Recreation Department to work with the youth organizations and playground groups. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, Y students were active at the neighborhood center in the west Austin community of Centerville.



Through the 1950s and early 1960s, the Y participated in desegregation efforts, with Y students taking part in the March on the River Drug Store in the building owned by the YWCA, located on The Drag on Guadalupe Street.

During the 1960s, interest and activity shifted to the St. John's community. A very active lobbying program, partnered with the Austin Independent School District, involved over 300 women.

The Y's long-standing interest in civil rights and social action led to increased controversy in the late 1960s as the Vietnam War heightened tensions and divisions in society. In the fall of 1969, opposition to the Y's "Open Door" policy allowing the use of the Y-owned Varsity building by groups such as the Austin Draft Information Center, the Student Mobilization Committee and The Rag, resulted in the YWCA losing tax exempt status.

Middle East Drug Crisis Center and Women's Awareness Group were among the most active of the Y programs in the 1970s, but there were other innovative programs.

Throughout the 1970s, the YWCA partnered with others to create such programs as co-operative day-care facilities, the American Institute for Learning, the Austin Community Gardens, Gay Community Services, Job Arts and Education Program, and Womenpower. The Y also established the Community which provided new classes such as yoga, ballet, modern dance, photography, oil painting, preparing healthy foods, and many more community activities.

The YWCA's activities continued into the 1980s with the formation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) and incorporated women leaders in the community. In 1983 the University YWCA and Austin YWCA agreed to merge to form the YWCA of Austin, but the merger failed in 1984, with the creation of the Austin YWCA.

Today, the YWCA of Greater Austin continues to provide important programs that empower, support, affirm, protect and create justice, inclusion, and dignity for all people.

### About the Exhibit

The exhibit features a sampling of programs and partnerships led by the YWCA Women over the last 100 years. As in years past, the YWCA of Greater Austin provides comprehensive services for women and their families through mental health counseling, prevention/intervention services to ethnic girls, therapeutic supervised visitation for non-abused parents, as well as many other service programs.

The Austin History Center and the YWCA of Greater Austin together invite you to enjoy the history and ongoing work of the organization showcasing materials from the growing archives of the YWCA of Greater Austin.



Exhibit Opening Reception:  
Saturday, March 24, 2007  
11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

eliminating racism  
empowering women  
**YWCA**



## Travis House

July 27, 2009

Austin , Texas



### Article 25-11-244 Action on a Certificate of Demolition or Removal

THE (LANDMARK) COMMISSION SHALL CONSIDER:

- 1) the state of repair of the building;
- 2) the reasonableness of the cost of restoration or repair;
- 3) the existing or potential usefulness, including economic usefulness, of the building
- 4) the purpose of preserving the structure as a historic landmark;
- 5) the character of the neighborhood; and
- 6) other factors the commission determines to be appropriate.



## Existing Conditions



Entry with no ADA accessibility or elevator



No enclosed stairwells



7'-0" ceiling height not code compliant



## Existing Conditions



Windows require replacement



Lead and Asbestos



Basement flooded



## Existing Conditions

Mold remediation



## Existing Conditions







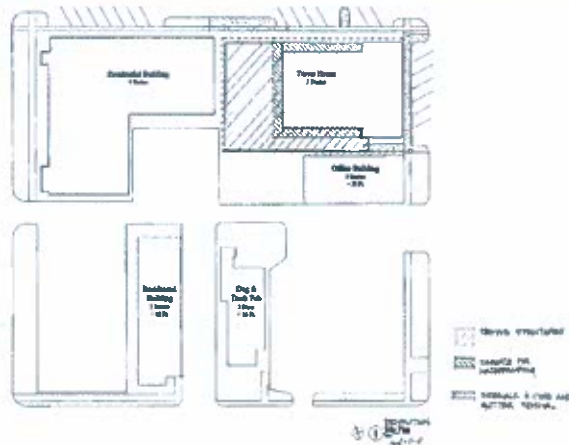
## Adaptive Use of Building

- Apartment housing is designated use
- 18 units plus private storage units (6 units @ approx. 750 s.f./unit x 3 floors)
- 18 secured parking stalls
- ADA and Building Code upgrades and improvement
  - Elevator
  - Enclosed stairways
  - Fire suppression system
  - Fire alarm and detection system
  - Emergency lighting
  - Exit signage



## Adaptive Use of Building

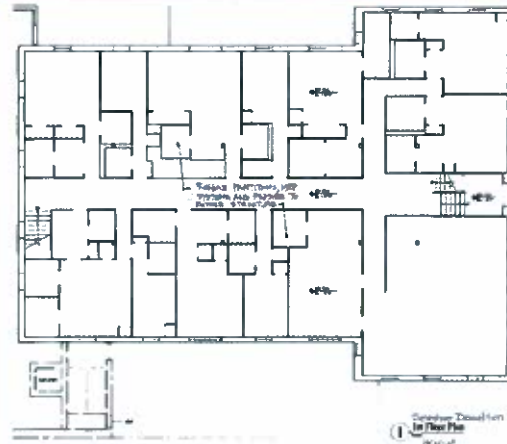
- Abatement of environmental hazards
- Demolition of addition to allow for secured parking
- Replace sidewalks for ADA compliance





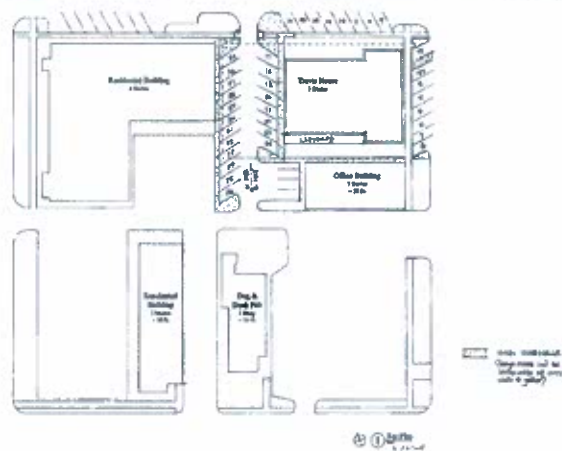
## Adaptive Use of Building

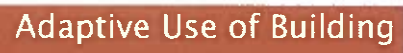
- Asbestos/lead/mold remediation
- Remove MEP systems and debris
- Remove partitions and finishes to expose structure



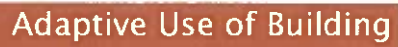
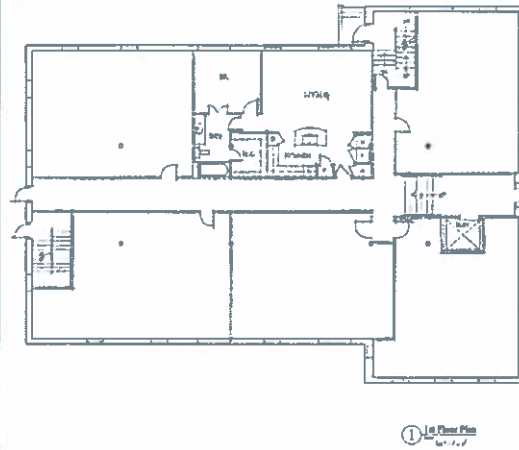
## Adaptive Use of Building

- Infill swimming pool and compact soil
- Secured parking
- Below grade waterproofing
- ADA compliant sidewalks
- New Utility Service

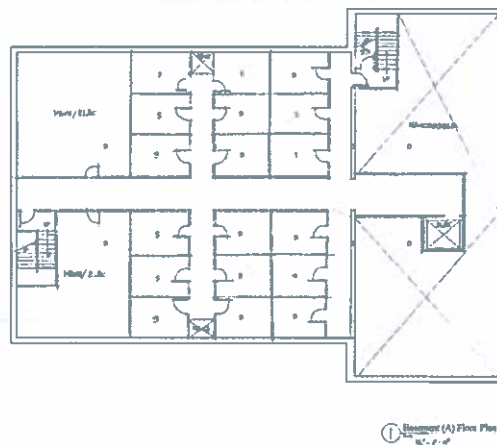




- Elevator
- Egress stairs
- Integration of MEP Systems
- Finish-out of units to marketable finishes
- Lower level rent on south facing units that have no views, only light well



- Mechanical/Electrical
- Unit storage





## Adaptive Use of Building



### EXTERIOR RESTORATION:

- New roof
- Restore masonry (clean/repoint/replace damaged)
- Restore entire sign
- Replace windows
- Insulation
- Reconstruct entry door
- Lightning protection system
- Security lighting



## Historic Ellis County Courthouse Restoration Waxahachie, Texas

**Architect:**  
ArchiTexas, Inc.

**Awards:**  
2002 Excellence in Construction National & Regional Award - Historical Restoration \$2 - \$99 Million  
2002 "Best of Texas Award" - Best Renovation/Restoration Project in the State



- Interior and exterior restoration to the original 1895 condition
- Designated as a Texas Historical Preservation Project, project involved collaboration with the state preservation authority
- Incorporating innovative methods of restoring aged materials
- Integration of updated HVAC and electrical systems in a circa 1895 building while preserving the integrity of the original structure
- Restoration specifically included:
  - Complete restoration of exterior granite, sandstone, and terra cotta masonry façade
  - Custom restoration and replacement of wood windows
  - Marble flooring and ceramic tile restoration
  - Ornamental iron restoration and replication
  - Custom millwork wood railing replication at courtroom balcony
  - Interior ornamental plaster restoration



**BYRNE**  
CONSTRUCTION SERVICES



## Economic Viability

### Development Cost for Proposed Use - 18 Units

<b>Current Investment</b>	<b>\$ 1,173,314</b>
<b>Renovation Costs</b>	
Demo, Remediation and Construction	\$ 6,108,457
FFE	\$ 100,000
Architecture & Engineering (15%)	\$ 916,269
Developer Costs	\$ 200,000
<b>Total Renovation</b>	<b>\$ 7,324,726</b>
Estimate Tax Credit (20%)	\$ (1,464,945)
<b>Total Renovation (Net of tax Credit)</b>	<b>\$ 5,859,780</b>
<b>Total Development Costs</b>	<b>\$ 7,033,095</b>



## Investment Analysis

### Property Pro Forma - Stabilized

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of Units	18	18	18	18	18
Square Footage per Unit	720	720	720	720	720
Total Rental Square Footage	12,967	12,967	12,967	12,967	12,967
Occupancy	85%	90%	92%	92%	92%
Total Rented Footage	11,022	11,670	11,930	11,930	11,930
\$ / SQFT	1.69	1.74	1.80	1.85	1.91
Est Monthly Revenue	\$ 18,660	\$ 20,351	\$ 21,427	\$ 22,070	\$ 22,732
<b>Est Annual Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 223,925</b>	<b>\$ 244,210</b>	<b>\$ 257,126</b>	<b>\$ 264,840</b>	<b>\$ 272,785</b>
<b>Est Total Operating Costs</b>	<b>\$ 49,196</b>	<b>\$ 51,387</b>	<b>\$ 52,503</b>	<b>\$ 52,889</b>	<b>\$ 53,286</b>
Est Property Tax - Land	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500
Est Property Tax - BLDG + Improvements	\$ 134,591	\$ 134,591	\$ 134,591	\$ 134,591	\$ 134,591
<b>Est Annual Profit (Before Tax Abatement)</b>	<b>\$ 27,637</b>	<b>\$ 45,732</b>	<b>\$ 57,531</b>	<b>\$ 64,859</b>	<b>\$ 72,407</b>
Tax Abatement - Land (25%)	\$ (3,125)	\$ (3,125)	\$ (3,125)	\$ (3,125)	\$ (3,125)
Tax Abatement - BLDG + Improvements (50%)	\$ (67,296)	\$ (67,296)	\$ (67,296)	\$ (67,296)	\$ (67,296)
<b>Est Annual Profit (Net of Tax Abatement)</b>	<b>\$ 98,058</b>	<b>\$ 116,152</b>	<b>\$ 127,952</b>	<b>\$ 135,280</b>	<b>\$ 142,828</b>
Annual ROI	1.39%	1.65%	1.82%	1.92%	2.03%



## Rental Rates Do Not Achieve Financial Return

- Assuming 5 Year Cash Flow
- 7.25% Cap Rate on Terminal Year Cash Flow

### Monthly Price per Square Foot Required to Achieve:

	Unlevered	Levered (65%)
0% IRR	\$ 3.79	\$ 4.65
5% IRR	\$ 4.56	\$ 5.02
10% IRR	\$ 5.46	\$ 5.46

Current Competitive Set Price per Square Foot: \$1.69

Resulting IRR:	
Unlevered	-22%
Levered	N/A



## Renovation Costs Needed to Achieve Financial Return is Unachievable

- Assuming 5 Year Cash Flow
- 7.25% Cap Rate on Terminal Year Cash Flow
- Based on \$1.69 per Square Foot (Competitive Set)

### Total Renovation Cost to Achieve:

	Unlevered	Levered
0% IRR	\$ 1,417,323	\$ 846,282
5% IRR	\$ 844,337	\$ 667,484
10% IRR	\$ 395,160	\$ 488,619

Current Estimated Total Renovation Cost: \$7,324,726

## Previous Projects



Joule Hotel



Lumen Hotel





Ms. Villarreal,  
Thank you so much for your prompt response! Just a minor correction:

As the YWCA organization changed from 1955 to 1995, it moved away from providing residences and traditional physical education and no longer needed the type of building represented by the structure at 405 East 18<sup>th</sup> Street. After attempting to merge with the University YWCA in 1993, the Austin YWCA *went bankrupt* in 1994. *In 1998, the University YWCA officially changed its name to* the YWCA of Greater Austin and is now located on South IH 35.

Attached is are letters from the Secretary of State and the IRS acknowledging our official name change.  
Contact us with any further questions.  
Diana

>>> On 6/16/2009 at 1:54 PM, in message  
<4E804D5DF4A6EB498936724F7747E4BF0275403F@COAEVS1.coacd.org>, "Villarreal, Susan"  
<susan.villarreal@ci.austin.tx.us> wrote:

Dear Ms. Gorham,

Thank you for your message regarding the Travis House. Though I am the case manager for this particular application, I believe Steve has had some discussions with the building owners and their representatives to which I have not been privy, so I would like the opportunity to discuss your idea with him before I give you a call. I have attached my latest copy of the staff report for your review. The information in the report was culled from the records at the Austin History Center. I was a bit confused about the history of the organization after the attempted merger in my first report, but I believe this to be an accurate version. Please let me know if this is correct, and if there is anything I should add.

Thanks again for this gracious offer.

**Susan Villarreal**

Senior Planner, Historic Preservation

Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department

(512) 974-3524

[susan.villarreal@ci.austin.tx.us](mailto:susan.villarreal@ci.austin.tx.us)

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**From:** Diana Gorham [mailto:gorham@ywcaAustin.org]

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 16, 2009 12:07 PM

**To:** Sadowsky, Steve

**Cc:** Gwen Greene; Morrison, Laura; Leffingwell, Lee; mack.martinez@ci.austin.tx.us; Shade, Randi; Cole, Sheryl; Villarreal, Susan

**Subject:** Follow up on Commission Demolition Proposal

Dear Steve,

Just following up on the email I sent to you regarding corrected information on the history of TRAVIS HOUSE – 415 W. 18TH STREET. Despite the fact that we, the YWCA Greater Austin (TID#74-6053497), have never owned the property, we are very interested in its welfare and would like to stay abreast of the Commission's recommendations for its preservation. We also dare to request that we be considered as potential caretakers of the property on behalf of the citizens of Austin. If this is remotely possible, please contact me at the YWCA Greater Austin, 512-326-1222.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon,  
Diana Gorham  
Executive Director  
YWCA Greater Austin  
2015 S. IH35 #110  
Austin, TX 78741  
[www.YWCAaustin.org](http://www.YWCAaustin.org)



## Cambridge Tower

CONDOMINIUMS

1801 Lavaca Street • Austin, TX 78701 • Tel: (512) 478-7218  
Fax: (512) 478-2678 • cambridgetower@sbeglobal.net

September 22, 2009

Mayor Lee Leffingwell  
Mayor Pro Tem Mike Martinez  
Council Member Sheryl Cole  
Council Member Laura Morrison  
Council Member Chris Riley  
Council Member Randi Shade  
Council Member Bill Spelman

City of Austin  
P. O. Box 1088  
Austin, TX 78767

Re: Support for Demolition of the Travis House and Opposition to Historical Preservation of the Structure (City of Austin Zoning Case C14h-20090-0016)

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

The Board of Directors of Cambridge Tower respectfully convey our support for the demolition of the Travis House and our opposition to any historical designation that would have as a consequence the preservation of the actual structure itself. As downtown residents in very close proximity to the Travis House, we would like to share with you our concerns about the matter.

The continuing deterioration of the structure for the past several years has adversely impacted the quality of life for residents and businesses in the area. Since its vacancy, it has become a place for recurring crimes, including vandalism and graffiti. The problems associated with these crimes have spilled over into the surrounding businesses and residences. Further, it is now evident that it is neither practical or viable economically for remediation, nor feasible for its owners to pursue any economically-realistic renovation of the existing structure. The property poses a serious health and safety concern to the public, given the hazardous materials within the structure and the fact that unauthorized and likely criminal individuals frequently trespass inside the building.

We are aware of the historical significance of the residency associated with the building and in that regard strongly support a historical marker or other appropriate civic actions to honor and give tribute to that legacy.

Cambridge Tower is home to approximately two hundred city of Austin residents. We are very concerned that the well-intentioned but inappropriate recommendation to preserve the structure itself is wrong from the standpoint of a proper legacy for the building's former historical

*M. Wayne Bell*

1801 Lavaca #14M  
Austin, TX 78701  
12 October 2009

Larry Ersik, Principal  
Architexas, Inc.  
2900 South Congress, Su. 200  
Austin, Texas 78704

Dear Larry,

As a property owner and resident at Cambridge Tower Condominiums I was present at a meeting at which a verbal presentation was made by representatives of the developer for the block bounded by 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> streets and Guadalupe and San Antonio streets. The building known as the Travis House (the old YWCA building) was the primary concern of the planners for the development. We were advised that a mixed-use development was being explored and that the Travis House was being considered for historic designation. At that meeting I expressed my concern about the building's qualifications to meet criteria set out in the Landmark Ordinance. I

am of the opinion that the architectural significance rests solely on its scale, with perhaps some recognition of the main entry design, although the design is not singularly architecturally unique. I would be hesitant to say that it is an outstanding example of a style or period of architecture. I would also have difficulty in determining that the building was representative of a person of historic importance, although I understand that there was a resident who is being singled out for her significance in racial segregation reversals, which is itself significant but does not relate directly to the building.

As a resident of the neighborhood I have witnessed the building being converted from YWCA to a halfway house to a vacant property that was used on occasion for fireman training. The uses to which the property has been put have been a concern to some of us in the neighborhood, and the prospect of a well scaled, new mixed use development at that location is supported. Figures that have been estimated for the reuse and/or incorporation of that building into the project appear to be beyond the economic parameters for such a project. Further, I would again be hard pressed to support any preservation grant funding based on historic significance of the building.

While I consider myself a steadfast preservationist and one who supports historic building retention and reuse, I am of the opinion that neither this nor any other building at this site, warrants preservation based on historic context. It is my opinion that the Travis House does not meet the City of Austin criteria for historic landmark designation. In light of urban planning tenets it appears that the proposed development will contribute significantly to the neighborhood and support the ideals of "new urbanism". I look forward to following the progress and your involvement in the project.

Sincerely,



Wayne Bell, FAIA

residents. We believe such action will instead only assure that the building will remain vacant and deteriorate even further. We therefore ask that the City Council take into consideration our views and furthermore bear in mind that delay on this matter exacerbates the problem.

We appreciate your consideration of our views and thank you for your courtesy in moving forward promptly and favorably on the owner's request for demolition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Janice Galloway".

Janice Galloway, President  
Board of Directors  
Cambridge Condominiums Homeowners Association



## Cambridge Tower

C O N D O M I N I U M S

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## Requiem for Resuscitation



*405 W. 18th Street, Guadalupe entrance.*

Let me begin by saying that rehabilitating 405 W. 18th Street will not turn hay into gold, much less save the city in one fell swoop. However, I have grown some fondness—in part due to the seemingly unnecessary neglect—for the building located at the address and feel like I should make some defense of it.

It is not the most stunning building in the Austin. Three stories tall, little decoration, and a mildly peculiar addition on the 18th Street side. But the building is solid and stoic; giving a glimpse of the past and some heft as to what it once held. After years of going past it and never seeing a sign for its sale or redevelopment I decided to try and find out more.

Originally built as the Guadalupe Hotel in the mid 1940s, it was the first hotel in the city to have air conditioning. In 1955, cotton entrepreneur and local benefactor E.H. Perry

bought the building for the Young Women' s Christian Association (YWCA) so they could expand their facilities and programs. An extension was built to the back (west) of the building by the prominent architecture firm of Kuehne (H.F.), Brooks (R. Max), and Barr (Howard) that included an indoor swimming pool in the newly constructed basement. The facility was officially named the Lutie (in honor of E.H.' s wife) Perry Residence of the YWCA.

Over 100 " young business girls" were able to live cheaply at the residence and, along with people from the community, take continuing education and cultural classes. Over the years, members participated in desegregation sit-ins, learned about everything from typing to yoga, and congregated in a secular sense.



AP-Y.W.C.A. 40500

# The American-Statesman

Austin, Texas, Sunday, April 20, 1958—Page B-1

VERM-FIL



NO MATTER THE WEATHER, THE AUSTIN Y.W.C.A.'S LARGE INDOOR POOL IS JUST RIGHT FOR YEAR-ROUND SWIMMING. These pretty residents are Vivian Baldwin, Kerrville; Virginia Wagner, Hunt, and LaDean Summers, Siloam Springs, Ark.

Austin American-Closed Photo

## AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY YWCA Planning For Space Age

By J. HANEL CHASE

A new frontier has been opened: a vast new world, the universe, is here, is near, is here, and man has taken his first physical step to the stars, ahead of him lies the biggest adventure of all—entering Space Age.

Space, is sure that the universe of the United States and origin. Everywhere it works, it is helping women and girls achieve the most of their lives as individuals and as contributors to the good of society. It is aware always of the needs of others; of the importance of having better understanding among all people of the common efforts necessary for achieving a peaceful world.

to the great need are asked to call the YWCA, GR 5-5716 for pickup delivery, or such contributions may be taken to the association's building, 18th and Cambridge.

For close to 25 years, the YWCA has been a steady source of inspiration in Austin. In its mission, it offers housing facilities for nearly 100 young women.



*Indoor pools? Totally Space Age.*

More than three decades later, the YWCA moved and the building briefly became a halfway house in 2000. Travis Hotel Group, an ancillary business of Dallas based Headington Oil, [purchased the building in 2003](#). Since then, it has fallen into disrepair (though its front landscaping seems remarkably self sufficient), serving to mainly house squatters.

Headington president Timothy Headington renovated the SPG Building in Dallas to become the lauded and striking [The Joule](#) hotel. Excited that as sweeping of a renovation might come to us in Austin, I called Headington offices three times about the building in the Fall of 2008 but never received any word back.

Now—laying at the whims of the wind on the ground by the building—is a single notice that the owners of the building would like to demolish it. The hearing to decide its fate is in front of the Historic Landmark Commission on Monday, April 27th at 7pm, 301 W. 2nd.

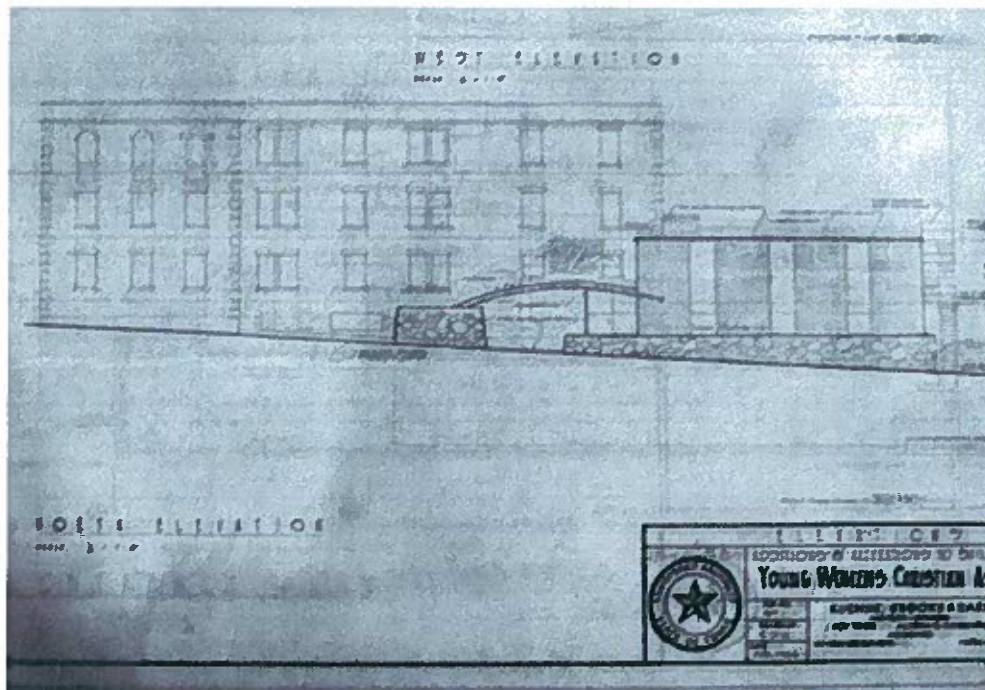


*Notice for the demolition hearing.*

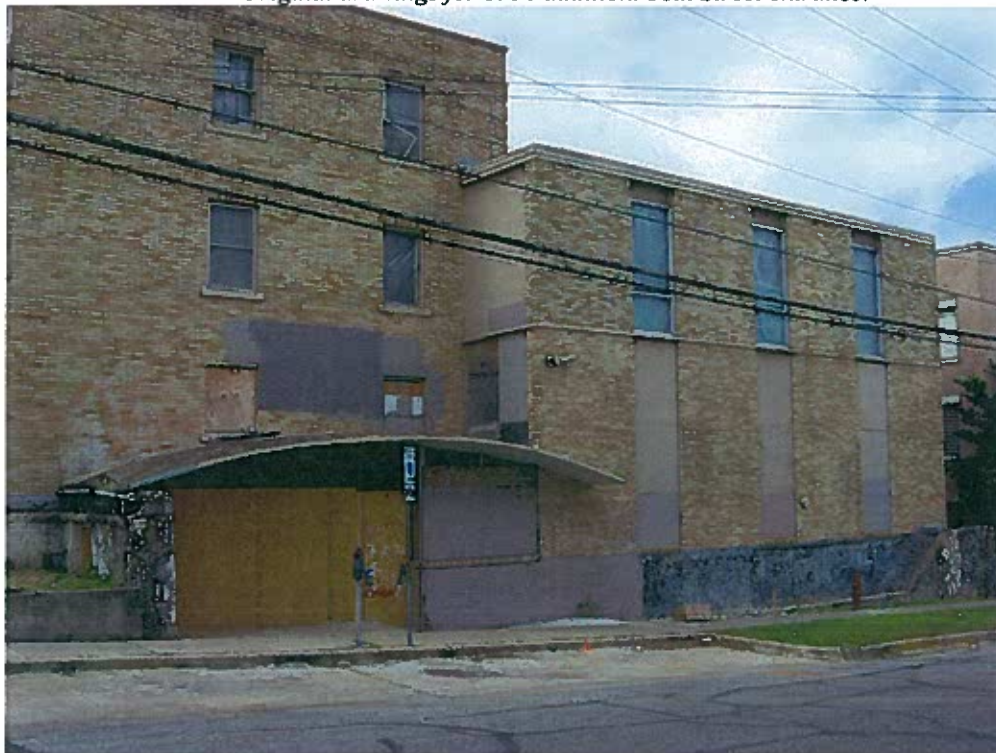
I have no idea what might be built in its place. If the recent spat of teardowns is any indication, though, it' ll more than likely involve condos and won' t be terribly interesting. And in that case, I am personally in favor of keeping, renovating, and finding a positive use for this building.

At [Next American City' s URBANEXUS](#) salon in February, arts leaders kept reiterating how beneficial it would be to have a center where creators could gather and hone their skills, similar to [The Loft Literary Center](#) in Minneapolis. Because of its prior use for similar intentions, this building would be perfect.





*Original drawings for 1956 addition. 18th Street entrance.*



*1956 addition as it appears today. 18th Street entrance.*

Or it could be converted to condos/apartments.

Or it could be made in to some mixed-use development.

I just don' t see much use in trashing it wholesale.

It' s been said that Americans are losing confidence in the future because they are losing sight of the past. To disregard the entirety of this building and all the things, men,

and women that built it to be more than just a building would be to do such a thing. If we continue to hoe the ground—in addition to this discordance of history—we will allow few roots to grow for ourselves. Not all the time, but sometimes, the best way to start new is to start with what you have.

If you feel one way or another about the building, it' d be awesome if you came out to this hearing. I suspect your voice has a high probability of being heard.

April 27, 2009

7pm

301 W. 2nd

Originally posted on 23 April 2009

**THANKS** for reading. For reals.

All comments/letters should be sent to **mew [at] maufrais.us**.

They will be collected and posted in the **LETTERS** (pending actual feedback) section.

**About**

**MEW** is an oft-neglected site made by Mike. I guess it's a blog, reluctantly.

© MEW. A secret place; a hideaway.