

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: C14H-2009-0043

HLC DATE:

October 26, 2009

PC DATE:

November 10, 2009

APPLICANTS: Bennett and Jane Schotz, owners

HISTORIC NAME: Oscar and Floy Robinson House

WATERSHED: Shoal Creek

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 1711 San Gabriel Street

ZONING FROM: SF-3 to SF-3-H

SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from family residence (SF-3) district to family residence – Historic Landmark (SF-3-H) combining district zoning.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: Recommended the proposed zoning change from family residence (SF-3) district to family residence – Historic Landmark (SF-3-H) combining district zoning. Vote: 5-0 (Limbacher ill; Hansen absent).

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: Recommended the proposed zoning change from family residence (SF-3) district to family residence – Historic Landmark (SF-3-H) combining district zoning. Vote: 8-0.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The house is listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984), but without a priority for research.

CITY COUNCIL DATE: December 10, 2009

ACTION:

ORDINANCE READINGS: 1ST 2ND 3RD

ORDINANCE NUMBER:

CASE MANAGER: Steve Sadowsky

PHONE: 974-6454

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION: Judge's Hill Neighborhood Association

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The house is a good example of Colonial Revival residential architecture and is associated with Oscar Robinson, a prominent cottonseed oil producer who operated several mills in Austin in the early 20th century.

Architecture:

One-story rectangular-plan hipped-roof Colonial Revival-styled stucco house with a two-story frame addition to the right of the principal block. The symmetrical facade features a central double-leaf entry under a segmental-arched hood on carved brackets; 8:1 fenestration with wooden shutters.

Historical Associations:

The house was built in 1923 for Oscar and Floy Robinson, who had moved to Austin from Hearne, where Oscar was the superintendent of a cotton oil mill. Born on his mother's family's farm in Louisiana, Oscar was the son of Alonzo Robinson, a pioneer Austin merchant, and grew up in Austin. The family had a cattle business near Johnson City in Blanco County, but Oscar decided to open a clothing store on Congress Avenue in 1906 rather than continue in the family business. He married Floy Morrison Beckham in 1907, and thereafter embarked on a career in the cottonseed oil business. He moved the family to Hearne in 1913, where he purchased and was the superintendent of a cottonseed oil mill, then moved back to Austin in 1923, where he opened the Travis Cotton Seed Products Company at 304 E. 5th Street. He had four mills in the 1920s and ten mills by 1930. Upon his arrival in Austin in 1923, he purchased this property and built this house.

Robinson's business continued to grow – by 1935, he was in business with E.H. Perry and Dave Reed in the South Texas Cotton Oil Company, with mills in Hearne, Taylor, San Antonio, Corpus Christi, and Austin. They sold the business to Wesson Oil and Snowdrift Company during the Depression of the 1930s, but Robinson maintained his position as general manager and vice-president of South Texas Cotton Oil Company until his retirement in the mid-1960s. His office was on the 4th floor of the Scarbrough Building.

In addition to the cottonseed oil business, Oscar Robinson continued to operate the family's cattle interests at their ranch near Johnson City. He and Floy had two children: Louis Carr Robinson, who eventually moved to Dallas to become a partner in a vegetable oil business; and Floy Ross Robinson, a reporter for the Austin Statesman, who eventually married Charles E. Green, the publisher of the American and Statesman. Oscar Robinson died in Austin in 1965; Floy Robinson died in Austin in 1970.

After the deaths of Oscar and Floy Robinson, the house was sold to William and Norma Lynch. William Lynch was an attorney with an office at 1005 Nueces Street. They lived here until the late 1970s. Kirby H. Cannon, a structural engineer, and his wife Susanne, purchased the house in 1979. The current owners, Jane Lilly and Ben Schotz, purchased the house in 1991. Ben Schotz is the president of the Judge's Hill Neighborhood Association and was the owner of Ben's Workshop, the largest independent Mercedes-Benz maintenance and repair center in the area. Jane Lilly Schotz operated Lilly & Company, a take-out and catering business in the 1980s and 1990s in Clarksville.

PARCEL NO.: 02110104010000

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: The West 50 feet of the West 160 feet of the North 136 feet of Outlot 16, Division E.

ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT: \$6,933 (owner-occupied); city portion: \$1,686.

APPRAISED VALUE: \$516,582

PRESENT USE: Single-family residence.

CONDITION: Excellent

PRESENT OWNERS:

Ben and Jane Lilly Schotz
1711 San Gabriel Street
Austin, Texas 78701

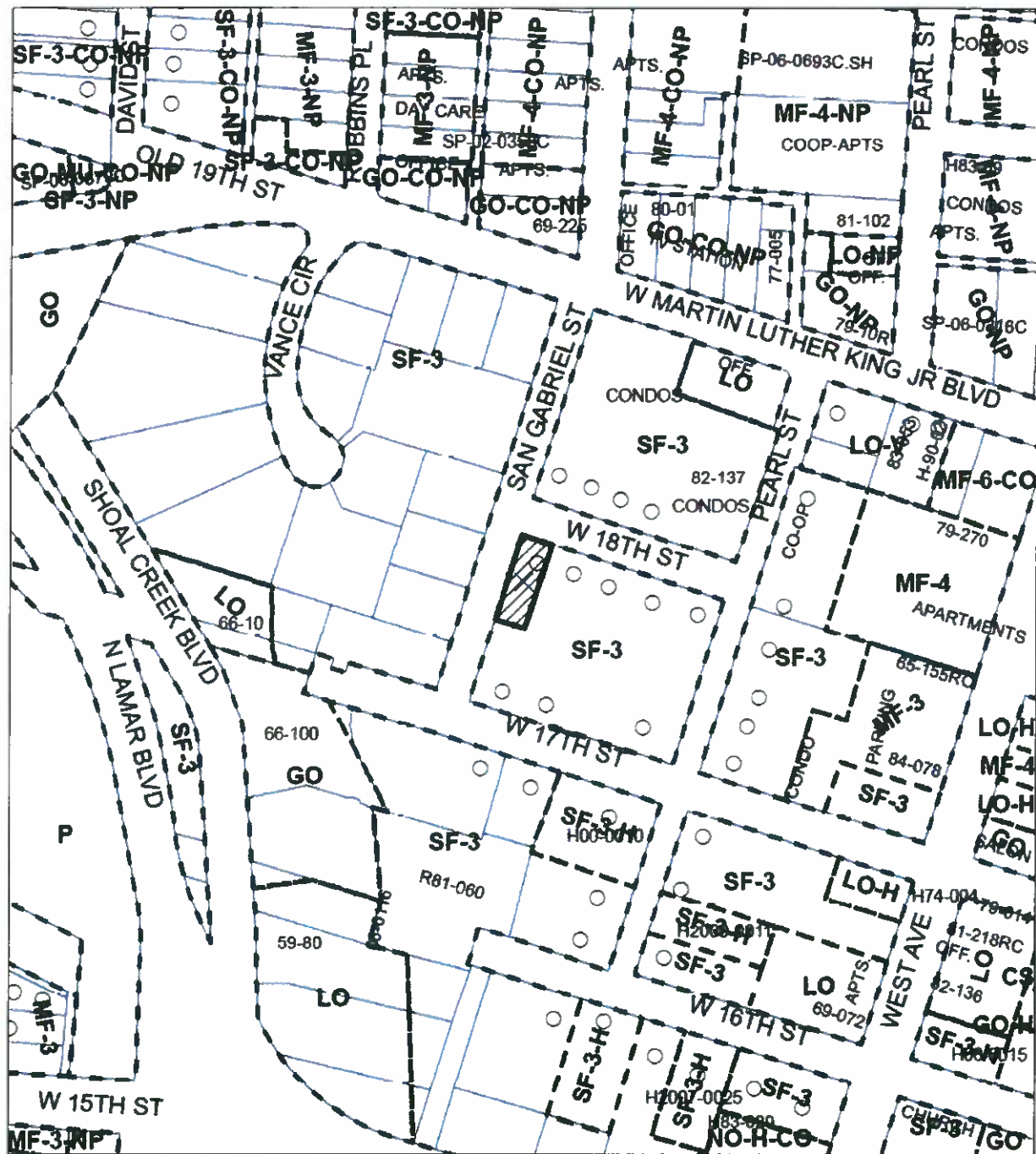
DATE BUILT: ca. 1923

ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS: Oscar Robinson made a stuccoed frame addition to the rear of the house in 1950; the two-story porches on the right side of the principal block of the house are believed to have been enclosed, but at an unknown date. The current owners are restoring matching windows to the porch addition to replace the 1950s aluminum casement windows. A metal roof was added by the current owners in 2008 to replace a composition shingle roof damaged by the hailstorm.

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): Oscar and Floy Robinson (1923)

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: None.

LOCATION MAP



1" = 200'

- SUBJECT TRACT
- ZONING BOUNDARY
- PENDING CASE

OPERATOR: S. MEEKS

HISTORIC ZONING

ZONING CASE#: C14H-2009-0043
 ADDRESS: 1711 SAN GABRIEL ST
 SUBJECT AREA: 0.000 ACRES
 GRID: J23
 MANAGER: S. SADOWSKY



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 No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.

**1711 San Gabriel Street
ca. 1923**



**OCCUPANCY HISTORY
1711 San Gabriel Street**

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
By City Historic Preservation Office
October, 2009

2000	Bennett M. Schotz and Jane Lilly, owners NOTE: The 2000 directory does not list occupations.
1992	Ben M. Schotz (not listed as owner) No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that Ben M. Schotz was a new resident at this address.
1987	Kirby H. and Susanne E. Cannon, renters Proprietor K.H. Cannon Home (not listed in the main directory)
1981	Kirby H. and Susanne E. Cannon, renters Structural engineer, Datum Structures, 1201 W. 24 th Street.
1976	William D. and Norma A. Lynch, owners Lawyer

1972	William D. and Norma A. Lynch, owners Lawyer, 1005 Nueces Street
1969	Floy Robinson, owner Widow, Oscar Robinson Retired
1965	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners Office, 408 Scarbrough Building
1961	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners Office, 408 Scarbrough Building
1957	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners Office, 408 Scarbrough Building
1953	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners Office, 407 Scarbrough Building
1949	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners Office, 407 Scarbrough Building
1947	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners Office, 408 Scarbrough Building
1944-45	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners Office, 408 Scarbrough Building
1942	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners General manager, South Texas Cotton Oil Company, 415-16 Scarbrough Building and 2010 E. 6 th Street.
1940	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners General manager, South Texas Cotton Oil Company, 2010 E. 6 th Street and 411 Chicon Street.
1937	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners General manager, South Texas Cotton Oil Company, 415-16 Scarbrough Building.
1935	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners General manager, South Texas Cotton Oil Company, 415-16 Scarbrough Building.
1932-33	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners General manager, South Texas Cotton Oil Company, 415-16 Scarbrough Building.
1930-31	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners General manager, Travis Oil Mills, 304 E. 5 th Street
1929	Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners Manager, Travis Cotton Seed Products Company, 304 E. 5 th Street.

- 1927 Oscar and Floy Robinson, owners
Manager, Travis Cotton Seed Products Company, 304 E. 5th Street.
- 1924 Oscar and Floy Robinson (not listed as owners)
No occupation listed
- 1922 The address is not listed in the directory.
NOTE: Oscar and Floy Robinson are not listed in the directory.

Oscar Robinson 1711 San Gabriel St.
89 (0) 16 - -
-
Frame (stucco) addition to rear of
46201 9-15-50 residence.
\$1000.00
J. F. Johnson
2

Building permit to Oscar Robinson for the construction of an addition (1950)

NOTES:

The 1880 U.S. Census shows Oscar Robinson as the 1-year old son of Alonzo and Laura Robinson, residing in Austin, where Alonzo Robinson was a merchant. Alonzo had been born in Arkansas to a father born in Ireland and a mother born in France. Laura Robinson had been born in Louisiana to a father born in Alabama and a mother born in Texas. Laura's 16-year old sister, Kate Watrous lived with them, as well as a cook, Adeline Johnson, a 35-year old African-American born in Texas.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Oscar and Floy Robinson living in Hearne, Texas with their two children, son Carr, 10, and daughter Floy, 7. Both children had been born in Texas. Oscar Robinson is shown as the superintendent of an oil mill.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Oscar and Floy Robinson at this address, along with their daughter Floy, and a servant, Alma Riske. Oscar was then 51 years old, and had been born in Louisiana; Floy was then 46 and had been born in Texas. Their daughter Floy was then 17. Oscar Robinson listed his occupation as a manufacturer of cottonseed oil.

Death Comes at 86 To Oscar Robinson

Oscar Robinson, for 40 or 50 years a leading figure in the Texas cotton seed milling industry, died Thursday evening in Seton Hospital. He was 86.

Robinson, a man of quiet Southern speech and courtly mannerism, entered the hospital a mid-day Thursday. He had been feeling bad since Monday.

Funeral arrangements are pending at Weed-Corley Funeral Home.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Floy Robinson, 1211 San Gabriel; a daughter, Mrs. Charles E. Green, Austin; a son, Carl Robinson, Dallas; and a brother, Ralph Robinson, Johnson City.

Robinson left the green hills of his boyhood on a ranch near Johnson City in 1889 to attend The University of Texas. More than half a century later he recalled that he made the decision in "the coldest winter I ever lived through."

"I was punching cattle in Llano and Blanco counties that winter. It was so cold all the creeks froze over nearly all winter," he wrote.

At the time his family was living in an "old box-and-batten house" made of 12-inch planks with one-by-three battens nailed over the chinks. "Some of the battens had fallen off, and you



OSCAR ROBINSON

(See OSCAR, Page 4A)

Industry Reader Don

**L
F
S**

and Dave Reed, run as many

Of the cotton seed available

"A fellow told me that in this business I'd work four months, hang around three, and hunt and fish the rest of the time. That fellow was the biggest liar in all history."

Robinson remained with the new "South Texas Cotton Oil Company" as vice president and general manager of all the

Managing this empire was no small job. Robinson cruised the market by telephone daily as he had to pack a year's work into a few months of hectic activity.

The best part of the cotton oil business for Robinson was selling livestock feed because it kept him in working contact with Texas cattlemen.

"It's the last phase of man-to-man dating," the office said. "It's the last field of business in which a man's word is all that's needed."

During two decades with South Texas Cotton Oil, Robinson distinguished himself on a national scale as a genius in market analysis and product distribution.

Known in the industry by op-
erators from coast to coast as
"Mr. Oscar," Robinson spurns
holding offices of honor for him-
or's sake. Bettering the indus-
try at every opportunity, Robin-
son became known as the
"peace-maker" of the business.

It was also during these years that Robinson took up active ranch interests in his beloved Hill Country near Johnson City. He also dealt in real estate.

His retirement from South Texas Cotton Oil in 1954 brought an end of an era in the industry in exposing the regret felt in the industry. Swift's general manager R. B. Hulsey of Dallas wrote that Robinson had "been one of the few that everyone felt they could go to and get an honest answer."

Not only were his success and personality missed by the industry, but by the townspeople who knew him outside the town. In Taylor, Kearns, San Antonio, Austin, Corpus Christi and a dozen other towns.

—Following his retirement in 1964, Robinson maintained an office in the Scarborough Building at Sixth and Congress. After visiting his office, Robinson would make daily visits to stock broker houses and financial institutions in the downtown area where he was always a favorite with all personnel.

By Legion

The Department of Texas Executive Committee will meet Friday to discuss plans for the new department headquarters building. Groundbreaking ceremonies are scheduled Sunday.

The leadership college will cover all phases of American Legion work and instruct Legionnaires on how to run a post successfully, how to raise money, operation of legion programs, ways to get members and how to conduct a post meeting. Youth programs also will be discussed.

Wrecks in Austin and the Central Texas region Thursday left at least five persons hospitalized.

Robinson beat the common cost in health suffered by so many businessmen — ulcers. Nearly every winter since 1935, except during the war years, he and Mrs. Robinson made cruises to Central and South America.

Recently he suffered about a month's sickness, but seemed to recover well from that. He was back up and about and had been in his office as late as last Monday before becoming ill again.

Obituary of Oscar Robinson
Austin American, February 12, 1965

MRS. OSCAR ROBINSON

Mrs. Oscar Robinson died at her home at 1711 San Gabriel Tuesday afternoon after a long illness.

Funeral will be Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. at Wood-Corley Funeral Home. Rev. Charles A. Sponers will officiate and burial will be in Oakwood Cemetery.

The former Floy Morrison Beckham, was born in Hearne. She has lived in Austin since her marriage to Oscar Robinson, who preceded her in death.

She is survived by her daughter, Mrs. Charles E. Green of Austin; her son, Carr Robinson of Dallas; three grandchildren all of Dallas; and five great-grandchildren.

The family requests that those who desire to send memorials do so in the name of their favorite charity.

Obituary of Floy Robinson
Austin Statesman, November 11, 1970

A. APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC ZONING

OK to go
SS
9-21-09

PROJECT INFORMATION:

#

43

DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY	
APPLICATION DATE: <u>9/22/09</u>	FILE NUMBER(S): <u>CMH-2009-0043</u>
TENTATIVE H/LC DATE: _____	
TENTATIVE PC or ZAP DATE: _____	
TENTATIVE CC DATE: _____	
CASE MANAGER: <u>Steve Sadorsky</u>	CITY INITIATED: YES <input checked="" type="radio"/> NO <input type="radio"/>
APPLICATION ACCEPTED BY: <u>M. Cervantes</u>	ROLLBACK: YES/NO _____

BASIC PROJECT DATA:

1. OWNER'S NAME: Jane L. & Bennett Schotz 470-2885
2. PROJECT NAME: OSCAR ROBINSON HOUSE
3. PROJECT STREET ADDRESS (or Range): 1711 San Gabriel St, Austin TX 78701
COUNTY: Travis

AREA TO BE REZONED:

4. ACRES : less than one (OR) <u>0.1561</u> SQ.FT. _____					
5. ZONING AND LAND USE INFORMATION:					
EXISTING ZONING	EXISTING USE	TRACT# (IF MORE THAN 1)	ACRES / SQ. FT.	PROPOSED USE	PROPOSED ZONING
SF-3	Residence			Residence	SF3-H

RELATED CURRENT CASES:

6. ACTIVE ZONING CASE?	(YES / NO)	FILE NUMBER:	_____
7. RESTRICTIVE COVENANT?	(YES / NO)	FILE NUMBER:	_____
8. SUBDIVISION?	(YES / NO)	FILE NUMBER:	_____
9. SITE PLAN?	(YES / NO)	FILE NUMBER:	_____

Shoal Creek
J23

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION (SUBDIVISION REFERENCE OR METES AND BOUNDS):

10a. SUBDIVISION REFERENCE: Name: Division E

W 50 FT OF W160 FT OF N136 FT OF OLT 16 DIVISION E

Plat Book: _____ Page

Number: _____

10b. METES AND BOUNDS (Attach two copies of certified field notes if subdivision reference is not available or zoning includes partial lots)

DEED REFERENCE CONVEYING PROPERTY TO PRESENT OWNER AND TAX PARCEL I.D.:

11. VOLUME: 11491 **PAGE:** 1337 **TAX PARCEL I.D. NO.** 02110104010000

OTHER PROVISIONS:

12. IS PROPERTY IN A ZONING COMBINING DISTRICT / OVERLAY ZONE? YES / NO

TYPE OF COMBINING DIST/OVERLAY ZONE (NCCD, NP, etc) _____

13. LOCATED IN A LOCAL OR NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES / NO

14. IS A TIA REQUIRED? YES / NO (NOT REQUIRED IF BASE ZONING IS NOT CHANGING)

TRIPS PER DAY: _____

TRAFFIC SERIAL ZONE(S): _____

OWNERSHIP TYPE:

15. ☒ SOLE ☐ COMMUNITY PROPERTY ☐ PARTNERSHIP ☐ CORPORATION ☐ TRUST

If ownership is other than sole or community property, list individuals/partners/principals below or attach separate sheet.

OWNER INFORMATION:

16. OWNER CONTACT INFORMATION

SIGNATURE:  NAME: Jane L. & Bennett Schotz

FIRM NAME: _____ TELEPHONE NUMBER: 512-470-2885

STREET ADDRESS: 1711 San Gabriel

CITY: Austin STATE: TX ZIP CODE: 78701

EMAIL ADDRESS: schotz@bga.com

AGENT INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE):

17. AGENT CONTACT INFORMATION

SIGNATURE:  NAME: Phoebe Allen

FIRM NAME: _____ TELEPHONE NUMBER: 444-1326 or 627-8170c

STREET ADDRESS: 2510 Cedarview Drive

CITY: Austin STATE: TX ZIP CODE: 78704

CONTACT PERSON: Phoebe Allen TELEPHONE NUMBER: same

EMAIL ADDRESS: phoebezink@gmail.com

DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY: _____

C. SUBMITTAL VERIFICATION AND INSPECTION AUTHORIZATION

SUBMITTAL VERIFICATION

My signature attests to the fact that the attached application package is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that proper City staff review of this application is dependent upon the accuracy of the information provided and that any inaccurate or inadequate information provided by me/my firm/etc., may delay the proper review of this application.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT NAME BELOW SIGNATURE AND
INDICATE FIRM REPRESENTED, IF APPLICABLE.

 ; JANE SCHOTZ 9/15/09
Signature Date


BEN SCHOTZ ; JANE SCHOTZ
Name (Typed or Printed)

Firm (If applicable)

INSPECTION AUTHORIZATION

As owner or authorized agent, my signature authorizes staff to visit and inspect the property for which this application is being submitted.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT NAME BELOW SIGNATURE AND
INDICATE FIRM REPRESENTED, IF APPLICABLE.

 ; JANE SCHOTZ 9/15/09
Signature Date

BEN SCHOTZ ; JANE SCHOTZ
Name (Typed or Printed)

Firm (If applicable)

E. ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

concerning
Subdivision Plat Notes, Deed Restrictions,
Restrictive Covenants
and / or
Zoning Conditional Overlays

I, BEN SCHOTZ; JANE SCHOTZ have checked for subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions,
(Print name of applicant)

restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlays prohibiting certain uses and/or requiring certain development restrictions i.e. height, access, screening etc. on this property, located at

1711 SAN GABRIEL ST
(Address or Legal Description)

If a conflict should result with the request I am submitting to the City of Austin due to subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions, restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlays it will be my responsibility to resolve it. I also acknowledge that I understand the implications of use and/or development restrictions that are a result of a subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions, restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlays.

I understand that if requested, I must provide copies of any and all subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions, restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlay information which may apply to this property.


(Applicant's signature)

9/15/09
(Date)

F. 1: Historical Documentation - Deed Chronology

DEED & OCCUPANCY RESEARCH 1711 San Gabriel, Austin TX 78701

Legal Description: W 50 FT OF W160 FT OF N136 FT OF OLT 16 DIVISION E

DEEDS

Patent **J. Buchman** (Sandusky map, 1840/63) Patent #199, Vol. 2
Mar. 16, 1852 **Jacob Buchman** to Johann Fruth E/478
Mar. 25, 1870 **John Fruth & wife Kuniguntia Fruth** to **Fr. Bernd** \$800 U/440
W ½ of Lot 16, 2 acres "being the part of our homestead acquired from
Jacob Buchman, Letter Patent #199 Vol. 2
May 11, 1910 **Fred Bernd** (unmarried, Hays County) to **Chas. Bollmann** 241/26, W
½ of 16E

*Note: Charles Bollman was executor of F.A. Bernd's estate (wife Friederlicke C. Bernd d1879) according to
Amanda Bollmann in an affidavit filed 15 Feb. 1923 345/443*

June 1, 1910 **Charles Bollman** and wife **Amanda** to **Ireland Graves** 240/393

*[April 17, 1913 J.W. Graves to Carl & Maria Luetcke, \$2800, all of NW ¼ of Outlot 16 except a tract or
lot 120' wide @ the north line 256/491]*

Mar 12, 1914 **J.W. Graves** to **Florence H. Collins** \$1,495 266/32 (Robinson lot)

*Mar 12, 1914 J.W. Graves executed deed of trust conveying to Sam Sparks, trustee for Tx. Trust Co of
Austin, the N ½ of W ½ of 16E for note executed by Ireland Graves 260/234-237*

Jan 4, 1921 **Florence M. Collins** to **Lily Burleson MacDonnell & Ema K.
Burleson** \$2000 327/305

Feb 19, 1923 **Emma K. Burleson & Lily Burleson MacDonnell** to **Floy B.
Robinson**, \$2,500 345/443; FBR is resident of Robertson
County, from her separate funds and as her separate property. Signed
Jan. 25, 1923.

1970 *Robinson estate to Bank?*

May 19, 1971 **Capital National Bank** to **Wm. D. Lynch** 4053/1011

Jan. 3, 1979 **Wm. D. Lynch** to **Kirby H. Cannon** 6429/834

July 25, 1991 **Cannon** to **Jane Lilly & Ben Schotz** 11491/1337

F. 2: Historical Documentation - Occupancy History

CITY DIRECTORY for 1711 San Gabriel

1922	No O. Robinson; no houses in 1700 block of San Gabriel
1924	Oscar & Floy Robinson (only listing in 1700 block)
	1801 San Gabriel – C.W. Kluge
	1802 San Gabriel – Julia E. Vance
1970	Floy Robinson (wid. Oscar)
1971	Lynch, Wm. D. lawyer (Norma A.)
1978	Vacant
1979	Vacant
1980	Kirby H. & Suzanne E. Cannon, structural eng. Datum Structure;
1990	Cannon, K. H. Cannon Home
1992	Schotz

TAX CERTIFICATE
Nelda Wells Spears
Travis County Tax Assessor-Collector
P.O. Box 1748
Austin, Texas 78767
(512) 854-9473

NO 1041919

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 02-1101-0401-0000

PROPERTY OWNER:

SCHOTZ BENNETT & JANE L
1711 SAN GABRIEL ST
AUSTIN, TX 78701-1028

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

W50FT OF W160FT OF N136FT OF OLT 1
6 DIVISION E

ACRES 0.000 MIN* .00000 TYPE

SITUS INFORMATION: 1711 SAN GABRIEL ST AUSTIN

This is to certify that after a careful check of tax records of this office, the following taxes, delinquent taxes, penalties and interests are due on the described property of the following tax unit(s):

YEAR	ENTITY	TOTAL
2008	AUSTIN ISD	*ALL PAID*
	CITY OF AUSTIN (TRAV)	*ALL PAID*
	TRAVIS COUNTY	*ALL PAID*
	TRAVIS COUNTY HEALTHCARE DISTRICT	*ALL PAID*
	ACC (TRAVIS)	*ALL PAID*

TOTAL SEQUENCE 0

ALL PAID

TOTAL TAX:
UNPAID FEES:
INTEREST ON FEES:
COMMISSION:
TOTAL DUE ==>

ALL PAID
* NONE *
* NONE *
* NONE *
ALL PAID

TAXES PAID FOR YEAR 2008 \$10,573.53

ALL TAXES PAID IN FULL PRIOR TO AND INCLUDING THE YEAR 2008 EXCEPT FOR UNPAID YEARS LISTED ABOVE.

The above described property may be subject to special valuation based on its use, and additional rollback taxes may become due. (Section 23.55, State Property Tax Code).

Pursuant to Section 31.08 of the State Property Tax Code, there is a fee of \$10.00 for all Tax Certificates.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE ON THIS DATE OF 09/10/2009

Fee Paid: \$10.00

Nelda Wells Spears
Tax Assessor-Collector

By: Lima DeLeon

Oscar Robinson House
1711 San Gabriel Street (1923)

Summary

The Oscar Robinson House is a two-story residence in the Judges' Hill Neighborhood, built in the Colonial Revival style in 1923 by the grandson of pioneer Austin merchant John H. Robinson. A prominent Austin businessman, Oscar Robinson spent 41 years in the cotton oil business as vice president and general manager of the South Texas Cotton Oil Company. Noted as a genius in market analysis and product distribution, Oscar was associated in the 1930s with well-known Austin businessmen E.H. Perry and David Reed.

The integrity of the home's exterior, as well as much of its interior, has been maintained and deserves preservation with status as a City of Austin Historic Landmark. A nomination will also be submitted with the state for status as a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark.

Architectural Description

Two sets of stairs and a short walkway lead from the street to the double entry door, which features glazed 3 over 5 lights and an elliptical hood surround supported by ornamental brackets. Windows are double-hung, eight over one, with shutters on the main portion of the front façade. The rectangular plan of the two-story house has a partial basement and is of wood construction on pier and beam. The exterior is solid clapboard under stucco with a hipped metal roof with gable-eyebrow vents at each end. There is one interior brick chimney. The small, one-story north entry projects from the main house and has a flat roof.

A separate two-story garage apartment, stucco with hipped metal roof, is a non-contributing, recent replacement of the original garage.

Architect: Uncertain. No records have been found to verify the specific architect.

According to architectural historian Peter Maxson, "The elliptical cantilevered bracketed porch was a signature element of architect **Raymond Everett**, and the Robinson House reminds me of the Stanley & Emily Finch House at 3312 Duval St. and another house at the NE corner of 32nd & West Ave. He also used it on the Patterson House at 1908 Cliff St. and the Okewell (the Batts Mansion) at Enfield & Windsor." Everett (1885-1948) was a painter, architect and professor who taught at the University of Texas at Austin from 1915 until his death. He received a degree in fine art from Drexel Institute and in both fine arts and architecture from Harvard.

There are also similarities to houses built by **Roy Thomas** (1886-1968), an architect who designed a variety of building types (homes, schools, churches, commercial buildings, apartments) in Austin and Central Texas from 1919 through the 1950s.

List and Date of Architectural Modifications

The Robinsons added the small, north side entry porch and created a butler's pantry from existing space. The Lynch family combined the pantry with the kitchen to make one large room that incorporated the old butler's pantry cabinets (1971). The Cannons added air conditioning in the late 1980s or 1990.

The Schotz family replaced the composition roof with a metal roof in 2008 following a hail storm. The roof is not a strong visual feature of the house.

The Robinsons may have added, enclosed or altered the two-story porch on the south in the late 1940s; their granddaughter Ann Musgrave believes it to be original. The windows on the side porch were originally jalousied (i.e. with horizontal slats), not the later aluminum casement. The Schotzes have replaced the aluminum casement windows on the front façade of the porch to match the original windows on the front of the house, and intend to eventually replace the south casement windows as well.

Neighborhood Context

Shoal Creek was the natural western boundary of Austin when Edwin Waller laid out the city's original one-square-mile grid in 1839. In order to found the City of Austin, the Congress of the Republic of Texas condemned the land in and surrounding the village of Waterloo in 1839, offering the former headright owners either money or land elsewhere in Texas as compensation. The lots inside the 1839 city plan, as well as "Outlots" beyond the "Original City" grid Waller laid out, were sold to the highest bidders. Those who purchased outlots in the future Judge's Hill neighborhood included **Dr. Samuel G. Hayne**, a four-time mayor of Austin, who arrived in Austin in 1839 to practice medicine and by 1950 had purchased Outlots 10, 11 and 19.

The Robinson House is on the southeast corner of the intersection of San Gabriel and Seventeenth Streets in the **Judges' Hill neighborhood**, a few blocks northwest of the Texas State Capitol and southwest of The University of Texas campus. The neighborhood takes its name from the many judges and attorneys who built homes in the area, beginning in 1851, just after Austin was selected as the state capitol, by **Elijah Sterling Clack Robertson** (1820-1879), son of the empresario of Robertson Colony. Robertson's home, built on a bluff overlooking Shoal Creek, was followed by several more along West Avenue, the western boundary of the 1839 Original City of Austin.

Adjacent to the downtown business district, the homes near this street are some of the oldest in Austin and are in easy walking distance to the Capitol. Spanning a period from the 1850s through the turn of the century, the structures provide insight into the transitioning architectural styles and building materials of the time.

The **Glasscock Mansion** (razed 1923) was built in the 1400 block of West Avenue in 1853. The circa 1855 Chandler-Shelley House, also known as **Westhill**, 1703 West Avenue, was likely built by **Abner Cook** about the same time Cook was building the nearby Governor's Mansion. Many elegant, historic homes still line both sides of West Avenue including the landmark 1870 **Denny-Hollday House** at 1803 West Avenue.

There are at least three periods of activity in the Judges' Hill area. First is that beginning during the Republic and running through World War I, roughly 1840 to 1914. The style is reflected in Abner Cook homes and other early buildings. With the Victorian era came a more formal regimen of manners and social style, reflected in homes of the time. A number of these have been lost. The second phase of development includes the period between the two world wars, 1914 to 1945. It includes primarily Italianate, Colonial and Classical Revival, and Arts and Crafts Bungalow styles. The third phase, following WWII, saw the addition of a few homes in the post-war Ranch and Mid Century Modern styles.

The Judges' Hill neighborhood continues to experience controversial revitalization and conversion of some single family residences to professional offices. On West Avenue, for example, is a series of three modern apartment and condominium buildings that replaced exceptional historic homes, including two in the 1700 and 1800 blocks: the Richardsonian Romanesque **Edward Mandell House** home at 1704 West Avenue, built in 1891 and demolished in 1967, and the **Angeline Townsend-Thad Thomson** home at 1802 West Avenue, built in 1868 and demolished in 1962.

The Judges' Hill Neighborhood Association is in the process of nominating the neighborhood as a City of Austin Historic District and National Register Historic District.

History of Outlot #16

The block, Outlot 16 in Division E, was originally patented to **Jacob Buchman**, who sold the block to **Johann Fruth** in 1852. **Frederick (Fritz) A. Bernd**, a carpenter and wagon maker, bought the west half of the block from the homestead of Johann/John and Kuniguntia Fruth in 1870 for \$800.¹ Bernd retained the land until 1910, when he sold the north half of the west half of the block for \$2000 to **Carl Bollmann**, later the executor of Bernd's estate, who two weeks later sold the property to **Ireland Graves** (1885-1969), an attorney and district judge as well as the grandson of former governor John Ireland. Graves built his first house at the southwest corner of the block, facing 16th Street, circa 1912.

Following a series of short-term property owners that included J.W. Graves (1913), Florence Collins (1914), and Lily Burleson MacDonnell and Emma K. Burleson² (1921), the northwest corner lot of Outlot 16 was purchased by **Floy Beckham Robinson**, wife of Oscar Robinson, on **January 25, 1923**, presumably the year the house was built, since the Robinsons are listed at this address in the 1924 City Directory. The house was purchased with her separate funds and the deed indicates that the property is to remain her separate property.

In 1924, there were no other houses in the 1700 block of San Gabriel other than that of Ireland Graves. Neighbors **C.W. Kluge** lived across the street at 1801 San Gabriel, and **Julia Vance** lived cater-corner from the Robinsons at 1802 San Gabriel, in the old **Robertson-Lucy House**, built circa 1851 by Elijah Sterling Clack Robertson.

William and Anna Kluge, originally from Germany, owned all of Outlot 15 (just north of 16) and built their brick home facing Pearl Street about 1880. Their sons **Henry T.** and **Charles W. Kluge** established a saddle and harness business on East Sixth Street in 1886. In the 1890s Charles built a charming one-story Victorian house with a wraparound porch and gabled attic at 1801 San Gabriel; it has since been moved to Heritage Square on Bee Caves Road.

Outlot 16 also included illustrious neighbors on the east half of the block, facing Pearl Street. **John Wesley Robertson** (1841-1892) had purchased the east half of Outlot 16 in June of 1872 from Jacob Chandler. This Robertson moved to Texas from Tennessee in the 1860s. After the Civil War, J.W. went to Missouri, and in March of 1866 married

¹ City of Austin Lot Registers for 1879 and 1884; occupation from Austin City Directory for 1872 and 1884.

² Emma Kyle Burleson was the mother of Mattie Kyle who married Austin Robinson Swancoat. Austin Robinson Swancoat was the first cousin of Oscar Robinson.

Sophronia M. Austin (-1921), a relative of Moses and Stephen F. Austin. They returned to Tennessee, and in October of 1867 emigrated to Bryan, Texas, where he was soon elected to the 14th State Legislature. Following his legislative term, Colonel Robertson made his home in Austin by 1881 in a two-story frame house at the southwest corner of the block (900 West 17th). Robertson was elected **Mayor of Austin** for three terms (1884-87), returning to his law practice until his death at the age of 52 in 1892.

Sophronia Robertson sold their home in 1906 and moved next door to 1710 Pearl, remaining on the same block until her death in Austin in 1921. The 1906 Georgian Colonial Revival home that replaced the Robertson's house was designed for cattleman **Horace Alexander Thomson** (1846-1940) by his nephew, architect **Henry Bowers 'Hal' Thomson** (1882-1974), a native Austinite, the son of Horace's brother Rector Thomson (the elder) and one of the leading society architects in Dallas and Texas during the first half of the Twentieth Century.

The Oscar Robinson House

Built in 1923 for Oscar and Floy Robinson and occupied by the Robinsons until their deaths in 1965 and 1970, the house at 1711 San Gabriel was purchased by **William D. and Norma Lynch** in 1971, and by **Suzanne and Kirby H. Cannon**, commercial real estate broker and home builder, respectively, in 1979 before the current owners, **Jane Lilly and Ben Schotz**, bought the property in July of 1991.

Oscar & Floy Robinson³

Oscar Alonzo Robinson (1878-1965), born in Montgomery, Louisiana (his mother's home), was one of three children of **Alonzo Robinson** (1852-1936) and **Laura Watson Robinson**, and a grandson of **John H. Robinson Sr.** (1815-1897), who began his pioneer mercantile business in Austin in 1852. John H., Alonzo, and Oscar were involved in cattle ranching at a family ranch in Blanco County near Johnson City. Oscar's siblings were Ethel and Ralph Robinson.

Oscar first lived at the Robinson family home in Austin on the northwest corner of Sixth and San Antonio Streets. He attended grade school in Austin at Pease School and the Texas German and English Academy (1893-94), and attended law school at The University of Texas at Austin circa 1899 to 1901, quitting just one exam short of a law degree and admitting that he "majored in football as general manager and general factotum for the teams."

When cattle prices soared to \$15 a head, Oscar decided that such fantastic prices could never last, so he quit the family cattle business and began his business career by establishing and operating a clothing store on Congress Avenue from 1906 to 1914. He married **Floy Morrison Beckham** (1883-1970) at the home of her parents in Hearne, Texas in 1907.

After closing the clothing business, he diverted his interest to the cotton oil mill business for the next 41 years. In 1913, the family moved to Hearne, where Oscar bought

³ Interview with Oscar Robinson, January 14, 1959, Austin History Center; "Robinson Clan Gets an Oscar" from Green, Charles, ed. *Fellow Texans in Profile*, 1948, Steck, Austin, pg. 88. Austin History Center vertical files: Robinson. Anne Dolce, Robinson family history manuscript.

a cotton oil mill together with associates Pat Grogan, Ben Cash and Irvin Astin; he owned four mills by the 1920s under Travis Cotton Seed Products, which escalated into ten mills by 1930. The family moved back to Austin by 1924, when they are first listed in the Austin City Directory at 1711 San Gabriel.

After working for two decades with South Texas Cotton Oil, Robinson was noted as a genius in market analysis and product distribution. In the 1930s Oscar was associated with **E.H. Perry** and **Dave Reed**, operating mills in Hearne, Taylor, San Antonio, Corpus Christi and Austin. In 1930, during the Depression, they sold their mills to Wesson Oil and Snowdrift Company. Robinson remained the vice president and general manager of the **South Texas Cotton Oil Company**, under the Southern Cotton Oil Company, for almost 25 years, until his retirement in 1954. His office was #408 in the Scarbrough Building in Austin.

Oscar continued to own and operate the family ranch, 52 miles from Austin near Johnson City in the Texas Hill Country. Oscar and Floy Robinson raised two children in their San Gabriel home, a son **Louis Carr Robinson** (1909-1990), who became a partner in Robinson-Adams of Dallas, a vegetable oil products business [Louis' children were Ann Musgrave⁴ (1938-), Oscar Alonzo II (1940-2006) and Carla (1944-2007)], and a daughter, **Floy Ross Robinson** (1913-1993), a reporter for the Austin Statesman who married **Charles E. Green** (1901-1967), the editor of Austin's two newspapers (the Green's only daughter, Beverly, died in 1968).

Oscar's wife, Floy Robinson, had a fabulous flower garden with roses and caladiums. During one cantankerous rose period, Oscar spent three hours wiring hothouse roses to bushes in the rose garden to surprise his wife.

Oscar's sister **Ethel Robinson Brown** (1882-1959), life-long friend of **Ima Hogg**, built a house just around the corner from the Oscar Robinsons, at 907 West 18th Street, by 1941, where she lived until her death. Her first husband was **Clint Brown**, a prominent San Antonio attorney and mayor of San Antonio from 1913 to 1917. Ethel and their two sons lived in Austin while Brown served in WWII; she organized the Servicemen's Center in Austin during that time and later took an active interest in the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health. The Browns divorced in 1926. She moved to Austin permanently following her 1933 divorce from Dr. Charles Scott Venable, a San Antonio physician.

The Robinson-Bremond Connection

The family of Oscar's grandfather, **John Henry Robinson** (1819-1897), is closely connected to the Bremond family, whose patriarch established the **John Bremond & Company** mercantile store in Austin in 1849. The Robinson and Bremond families were good friends, and three of J.H. Robinson's children married three of John Bremond's children. The Robinson homestead at Bois d'Arc (7th) and Rio Grande was a block from the Bremond homestead at Pecan (6th) and Nueces Streets.⁵

Born in London, England, the elder Robinson, in his younger days, was a seaman on a merchant vessel that traveled between Liverpool and New Orleans. His ship was wrecked off the Virginia coast on his last voyage. In 1836 he married Elizabeth Sheridan

⁴ Ann Musgrave lives in Dallas. She does not have a historical photo of the house.

⁵ The 1876 Robinson home still stands at 702 Rio Grande and is recognized as a landmark by the Texas Historical Commission.

in New Orleans. His Irish wife preferred to stay in the United States, so Robinson started a bakery in New Orleans as the door-to-door salesman/hawker of bread, pies and cookies baked by his partner, who would become the father of Judges' Hill's most illustrious resident, **Col. E.M. House**. Soon Robinson moved to Little Rock, Arkansas, where he opened a store. His first son was born there in 1839.

In the mid-1850s Robinson loaded his family into a covered wagon and brought them to Austin. He opened a general merchandise store on the west side of Congress Avenue just north of Fifth Street in 1856. The twenty-inch-thick, stone, load-bearing walls built in 1856 are incorporated in the oldest documented structure in Austin, the **Robinson-Rosner Building**, which was enlarged in 1886.

John H. Robinson was in partnership for a time with **Eugene Bremond**, who married Robinson's daughter, **Mary Amella Robinson**, in 1861. When Eugene went back to work for his father at John Bremond & Company, Robinson partnered with his own son, John Robinson Jr., as **J.H. Robinson & Son**. In 1868, **John Robinson Jr.** married **Madeline Bremond**. When John Jr. decided to join John Bremond & Company as a partner, his younger brother **Alfred Robinson**, who married **Pauline Bremond** in 1869, replaced him as the 'Son' in the Robinson firm. Alfred died in 1885, leaving the store to his younger brother **Alonzo**, **Oscar's father**. The Robinson family founded the Austin White Lime Company, which is still in operation today in northwest Austin. A number of descendants of both the Bremonds and Robinsons still live in Austin.⁶

Jane & Ben Schotz, current owners

Jane and Ben were drawn to the Oscar Robinson house for its simplicity of design, its hearty and quality construction, including the original long leaf pine flooring, and to the Judges Hill neighborhood for its location and character. Their future renovation plans include landscape improvements and cosmetic interior changes.

Jane Lilly Schotz came to Austin from Houston in 1977. After completing a B.A. at the University of Texas in Austin, she lived in London, England for four months and completed a certificate program at the Cordon Bleu in London. She returned to Austin and opened a take-out and catering business, **Lilly & Company**, in the historic Clarksville section of Austin, which she operated from 1984-1998. She has served on the boards of **Women & Their Work** and **All Saints' Episcopal Day School** and currently sits on the vestry of **All Saints' Episcopal Church**.

Ben Schotz currently serves as the president of the **Judges Hill Neighborhood Association**, the only remaining residential neighborhood in downtown Austin. He received a B.A. magna cum laude in philosophy from Haverford College in Pennsylvania, and was a doctoral candidate in the University of Texas philosophy department from 1971-73. Ben was the founder/owner/operator of **Ben's Workshop**, the largest independent Mercedes-Benz maintenance and repair center in the region, from 1979 to 2007. He has a strong interest in the preservation, restoration, ownership, and enjoyment of Italian automobiles and is a member of the **Hill Country Region of the Alfa Romeo Owners Club of America**.

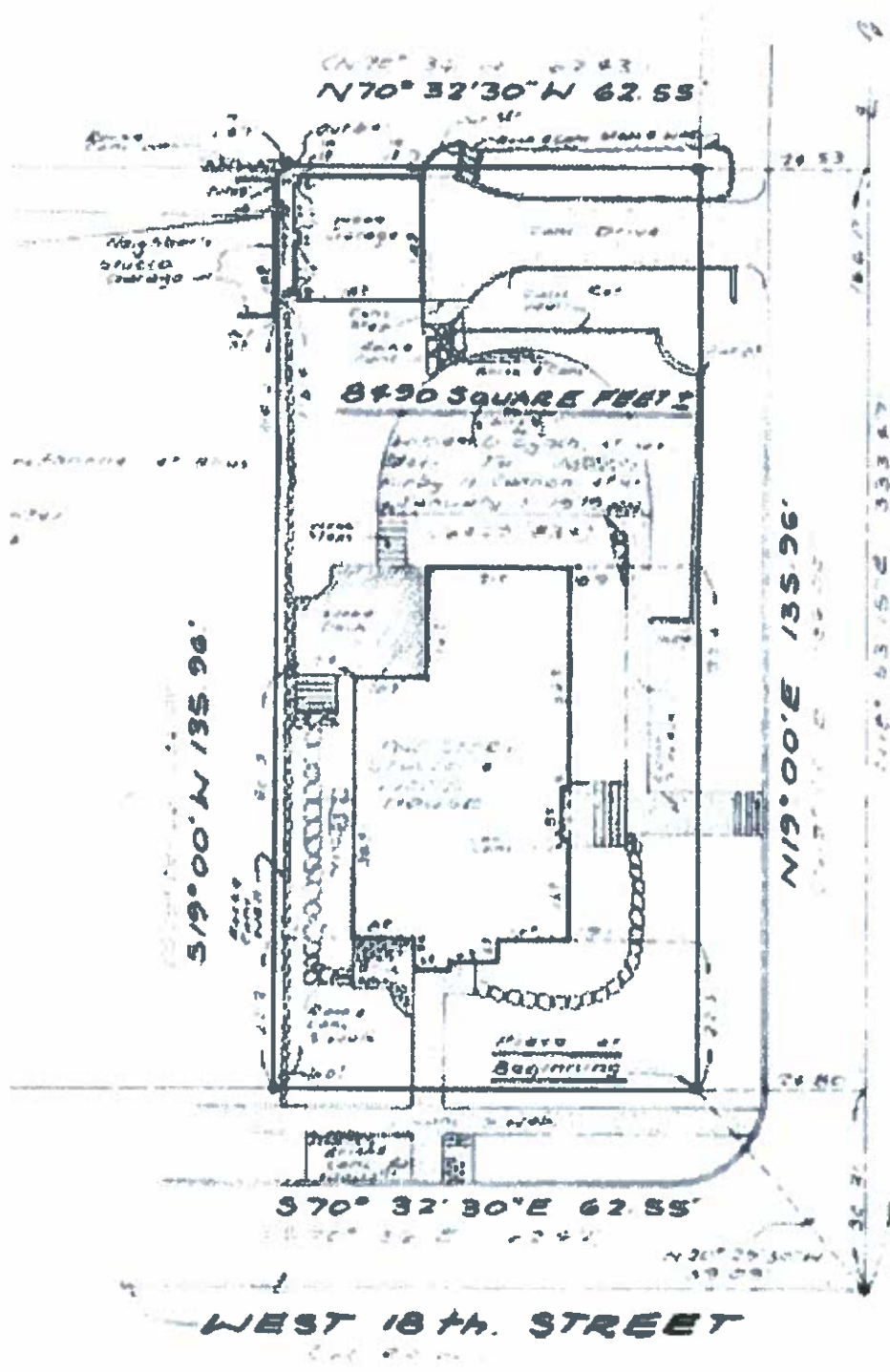
⁶ Robinson biographical files, Austin History Center, and Robinson descendants: Ann Dolce, Aubrey Smith Jr. and Jean Umstead.

Both Ben and Jane are committed to preserving the historic character of the Judges' Hill Neighborhood *and* the Oscar Robinson House.

CONCLUSION

The 1923 Oscar Robinson House merits historic landmark status for its architectural design as a representative of the Colonial Revival style and for its importance to the City of Austin as the home of prominent citizen and cotton oil businessman Oscar Robinson.

The home continues to serve as a residence in a neighborhood where homes are increasingly utilized as businesses. The Judges' Hill Neighborhood Association supports the inclusion of this home into future City of Austin and National Register Historic Districts.



17th SAN GABRIEL STREET