

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
JANUARY 28, 2013
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
2906 RIO GRANDE STREET
HDP-2012-0428**

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1929 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story, rectangular-plan, front-gabled frame bungalow-style house with an enclosed, partial-width, projecting inset front porch, now with modern replacement windows; single and paired 1:1 fenestration.

RESEARCH

City utility permits and Sanborn maps reveal that the house was built in 1929 by Benjamin F. Lensing, who lived at 2914 Rio Grande Street, as a rental unit. Benjamin F. Lensing never occupied this house, and he died in 1929. The house was rented to a wide variety of tenants, the first being John McCoy, a laborer at Lone Star Ice Company, and his wife, Lucinda. The McCoy's lived here for about a year. There were frequent changes in the tenants of this property; in the early 1930s, the house was rented by UT instructor Melvin Thomas, Helmer and Bertha Rydberg (he worked in the display department at Scarbrough's department store), and William Butler, an engineer at the Austin Ice Company. The first time that there was a tenancy of more than a year or two in this house was in the 1940s, when the house was rented by C. Alfred and Elfreida Anderson. He was a mechanic. Winnie Allen, who had been a teacher in the Austin public schools, and later an archivist at the University of Texas, rented this house in the 1950s.

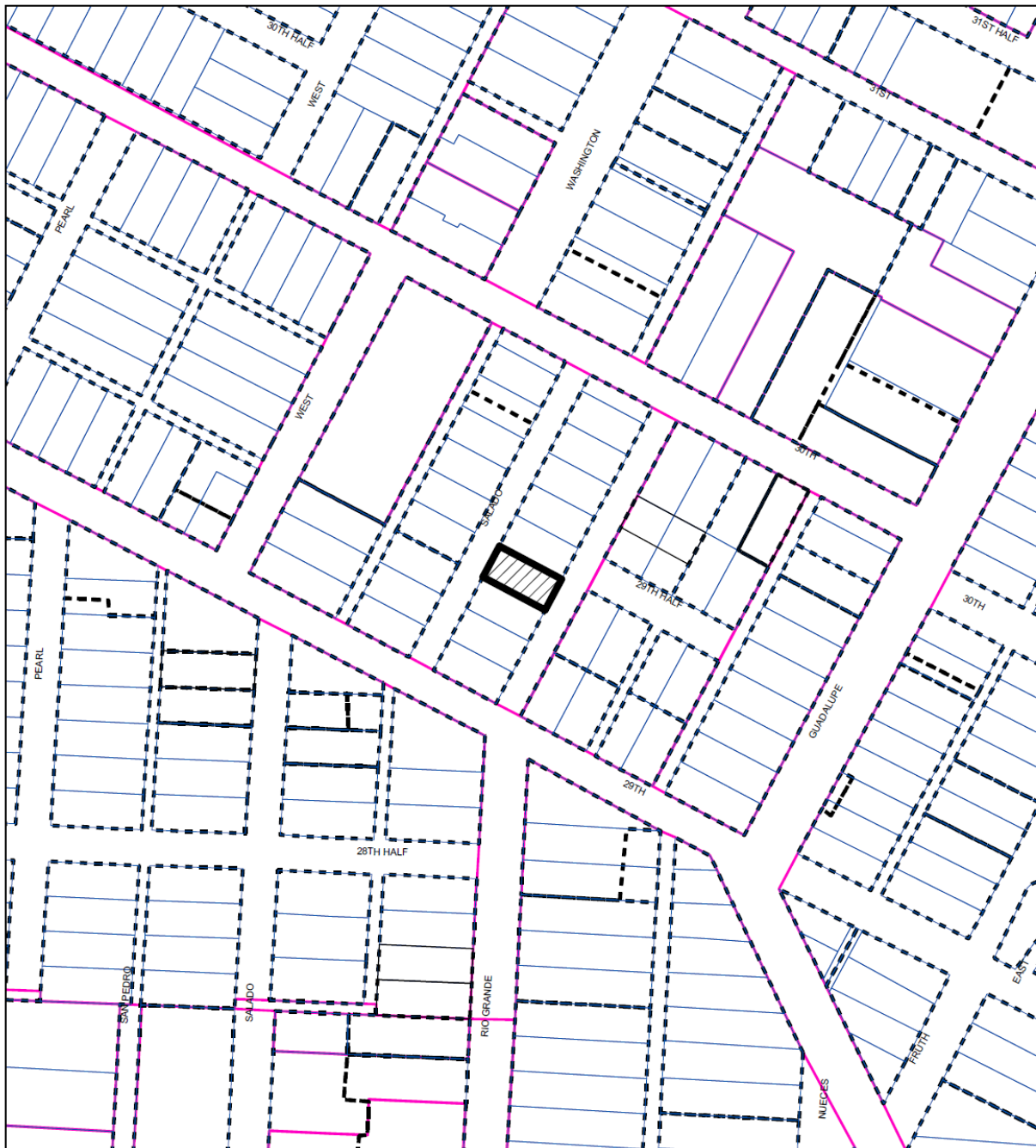
STAFF COMMENTS

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Release the demolition permit. The house has been modified, and has neither the architectural nor the historical significance to warrant individual designation as a historic landmark.

LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT



ZONING BOUNDARY

CASE#: HDP-2012-0428
LOCATION: 2906 Rio Grande



This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

This product has been produced by the Planning and Development Review Department for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.

2906 Rio Grande Street
ca. 1929



OCCUPANCY HISTORY
2906 Rio Grande Street

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
By City Historic Preservation Office
February, 2007

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1992 | Richard H. Chetham, owner
Retired |
| 1987 | Richard H. Chetham, owner
Chief radio tech, University of Texas
Also listed is Mrs. Marguerite E. Chetham, retired. |
| 1981 | Richard H. Chetham, owner
Chief radiology technician, U.T. Student Health Services
Also listed is Marguerite Chetham, retired. |
| 1975 | Richard Chetham, renter
Chief radiology tech, U.T. Student Health Services |

1969	Richard H. Chetham, owner Chief X-ray technician, University of Texas
1963	William C. and Dorothy L. Haydon, renters William: Student Dorothy: Receptionist, Pacific Finance
1959	Winnie Allen, owner Archivist, University of Texas
1955	Winnie Allen, owner Archivist, University of Texas
1952	Winnie Allen, owner Librarian
1949	Wayne I. and Frances L. Miller, owners Wayne: Student, University of Texas Frances: Student, University of Texas
1947	Byron E. and Myra L. Summers, owners Clerk, State Department of Health
1944-45	C. Alfred and Elfreida Anderson, renters Mechanic
1942	C. Alfred and Elfreida Anderson, renters Mechanic
1940	Wilson M. and Lila M. Young, renters Meat cutter, D.A. Shipwash Grocery, 2900 Rio Grande Street
1937	Frank S. Perry, renter No occupation listed Also listed are Frances V. Perry, Frank C. Perry, and Mary L. Perry, all students at the University of Texas.
1935	William A. and Theo P. Butler, renters Engineer, Austin Ice Company
1932-33	P. Helmer and Bertha Rydberg, renters Display department, E.M. Scarbrough & Sons
1930-31	Melvin A. and Myrtle Thomas, renters Instructor, University of Texas
1929	John and Lucinda McCoy, renters Laborer, Lone Star Ice Company

NOTE: There are earlier listings for the address of 2906 Rio Grande Street, but these are for the house immediately to the north, now known as 2908 Rio Grande Street. The house was built in 1929 by Benjamin F. Lensing, who lived at 2914 Rio Grande Street with his wife, Elizabeth F. Lensing. The 1929 city directory does not list an occupation for Lensing, and he is

not listed in the 1927 city directory – his brother-in-law, N.A. Baker is listed as the owner of that house. The 1930-31 city directory shows Elizabeth F. Lensing, the widow of Benjamin F. Lensing, living at 2914 Rio Grande. She had no occupation listed.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

Benjamin F. and Elizabeth Lensing, the builders of the house

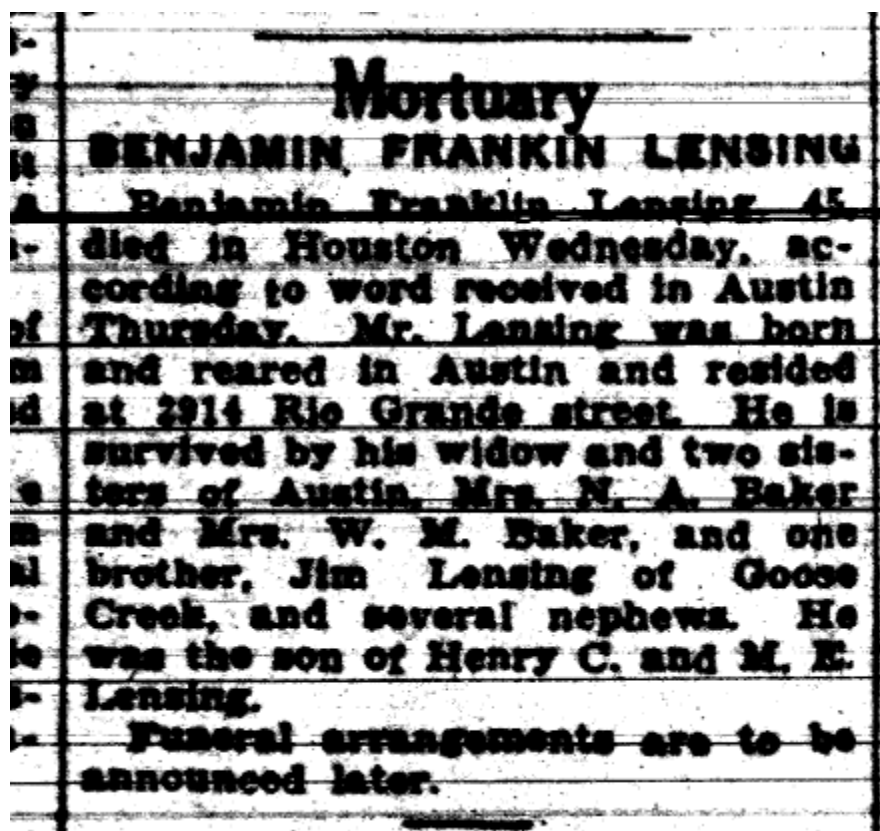
The 1900 U.S. Census shows Benjamin F. Lensing as the 15-year old son of Henry and Mary Lensing, who lived at 3006 Rio Grande Street. Benjamin Lensing had no occupation listed; his father, Henry, was a teamster. The 1930 U.S. Census shows Elizabeth F. Lensing as a 41-year old widow living in the home of her sister and brother-in-law, Noble and Helena Baker, at 2914 Rio Grande Street. Elizabeth Lensing had been born in New York and was a nurse in a private home. Noble A. Baker was a 55-year old Texas-born meat cutter. Helena Baker was 47 years old and had been born in Texas.

Melvin and Myrtle Thomas (ca. 1930- ca. 1932)

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Melvin and Myrtle Thomas as the renters of this house. Melvin Thomas was a 27-year old university teacher who had been born in Nebraska. Myrtle Thomas was also 27, and had been born in South Dakota to Danish-born parents. They had a young son, Stanley, who had been born in Utah.

Wilson and Lila Young (ca. 1940- ca. 1941)

Wilson and Lila Young appear as the renters of this house in the 1940 U.S. Census report. Wilson Young was then 33, had been born in Texas, and was a butcher in a retail grocery store. Lila Young was then 31 and had been born in Texas. They had a young son, Robert, who had been born in Texas.



Obituary of Benjamin F. Lensing, the builder of this house as a rental unit
Austin American, December 20, 1929

Winnie A. Allen

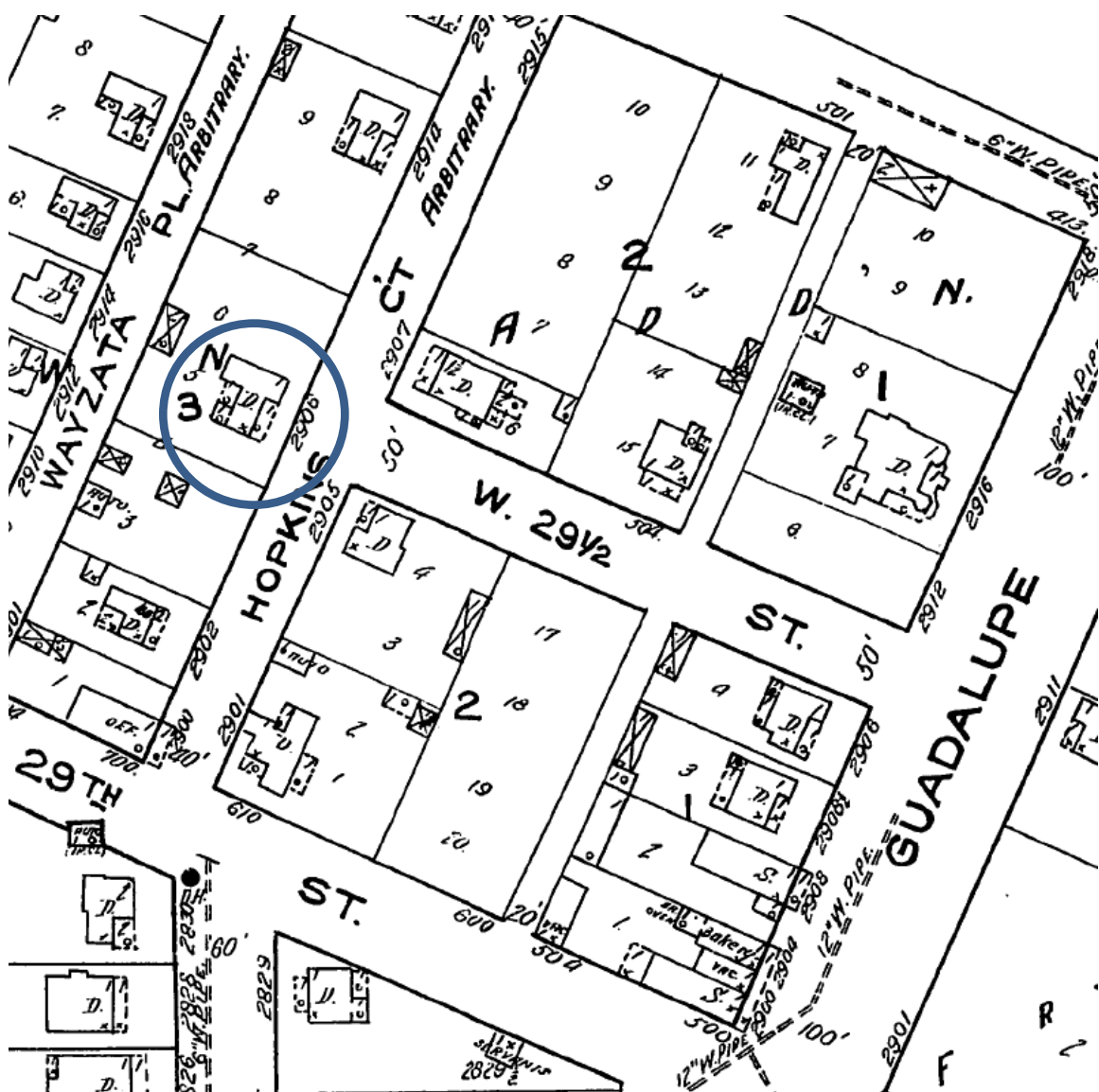
Winnie A. Allen, age 86, of Austin, formerly of Bertram, died Friday, July 26, 1996.

A retired Austin school teacher, she taught first grade at Riley Elementary School for 20 years. She was a lifelong member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and a lifetime member of the Order of the Eastern Star.

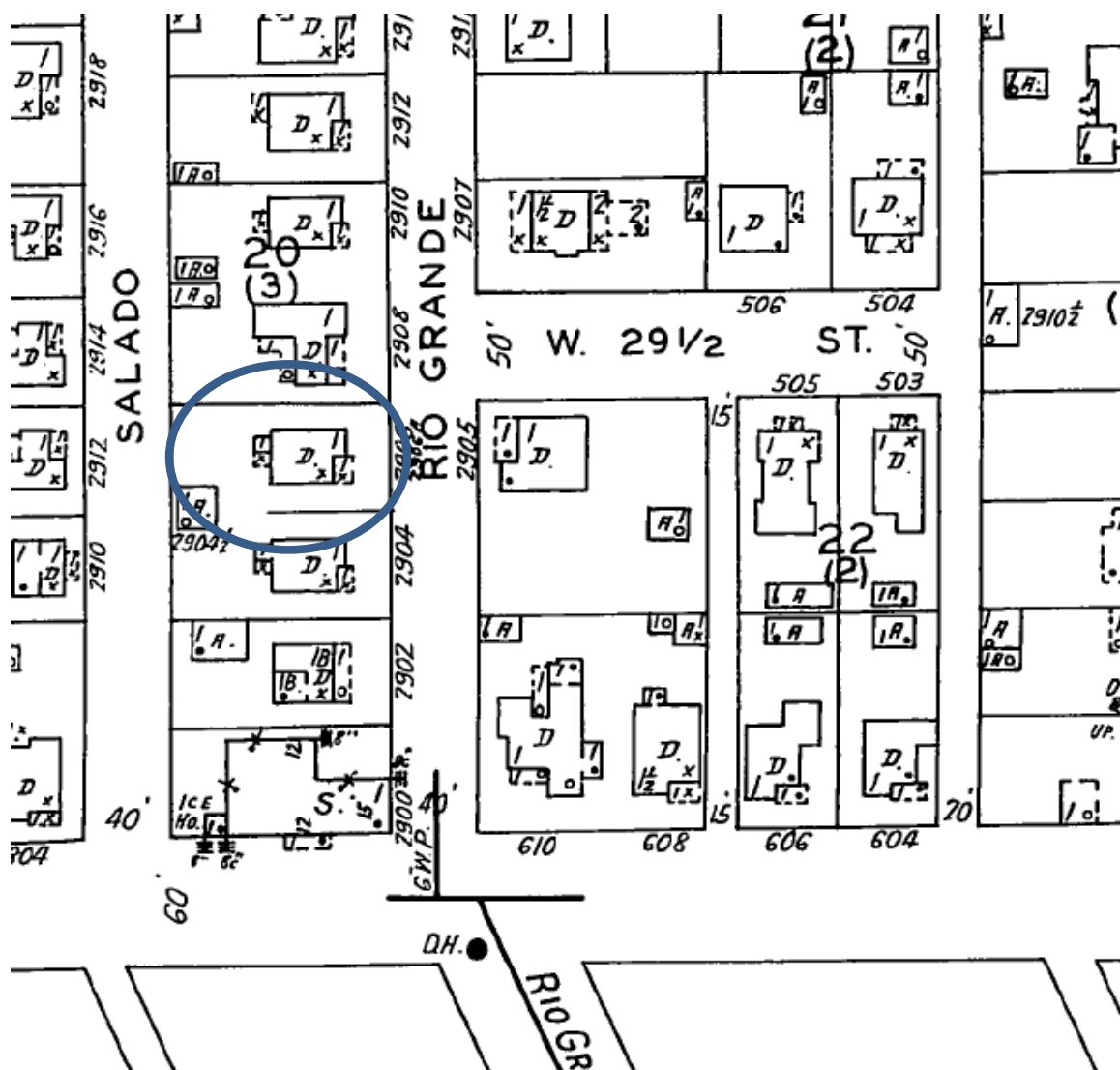
Survivors include her husband, Wilbur B. Allen; son and daughter-in-law, George and Peggy Allen of Austin; granddaughter, Shayna D. Otting and husband Chris of Austin; grandsons, Robert A. Allen and wife Cindy of Arlington, Tommy W. Allen and wife, Missy of Spring, and Sean E. Lamphere of Lubbock; great-grandsons, Seth Allen of Austin, Blake and Justin Allen of Spring and Zachary Otting of Austin; and nephew, Bob Insall of Austin.

Funeral services will be held at 10:00 a.m. Monday in the Weed-Corley-Fish Chapel with Reverend Allen Grant officiating. Graveside services will be held at 12:00 p.m. Monday in the Bagdad Cemetery, Leander, Texas.

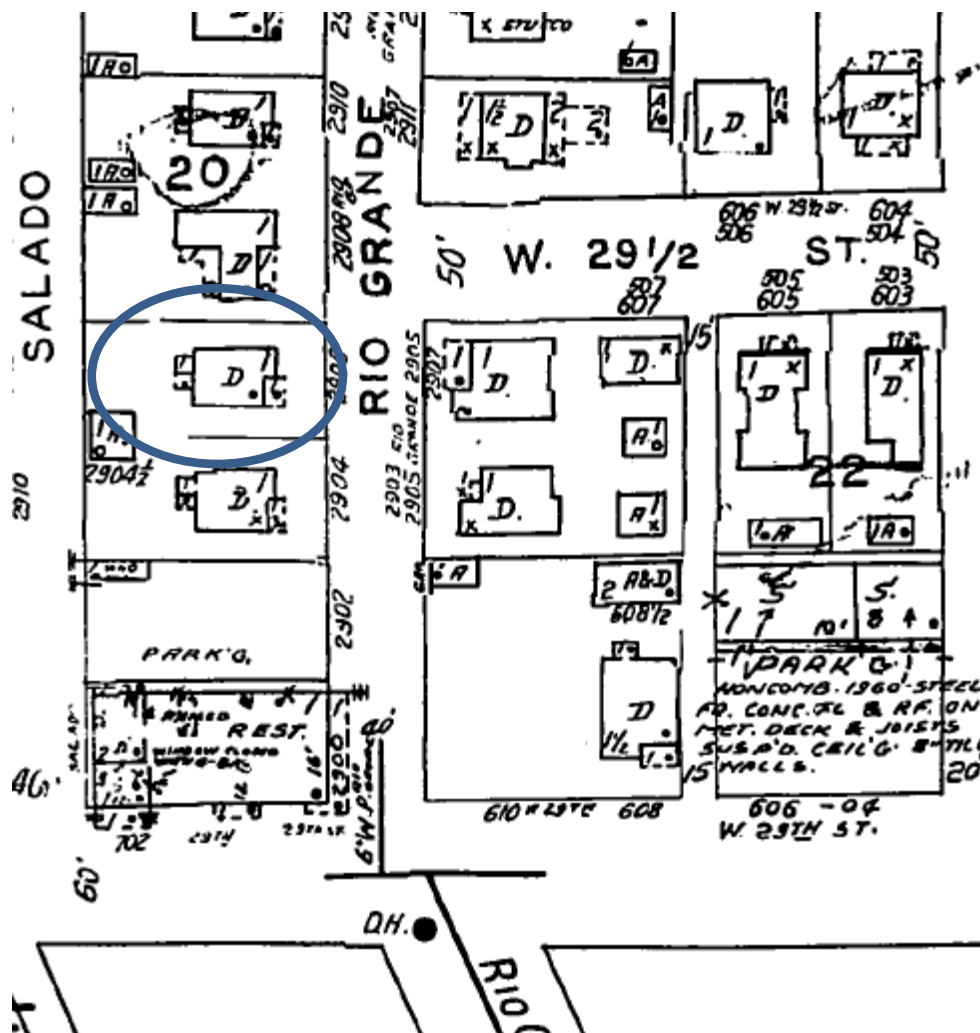
Arrangements by Weed-Corley-Fish Funeral Home, 3125 N. Lamar, 452-8811.



The 1922 Sanborn map shows a house with the address of 2906 Rio Grande Street, but this house is a little to the north of the current house, which was built in 1929. The same house appears on the 1935 Sanborn map below with an address of 2908 Rio Grande Street. City directories reveal that the house now at 2908 Rio Grande Street was built ca. 1910. Note that this section of Rio Grande Street was called Hopkins Court in 1922, but the name Hopkins Court never appeared in city directories.



The 1935 Sanborn map shows the house as well as the house shown on the 1922 map above, now with an address of 2908 Rio Grande Street.



The 1962 Sanborn map shows the same configuration and location of the house as was shown on the 1935 map above.

On sec. map. 1200
CONNECTING CHARGE \$ 12.00
APPLICATION FOR SEWER CONNECTION. No. 18063
10/8 - 1928
Austin, Texas.

To the Superintendent of Sewer and Public Improvements,
City of Austin, Texas.

Sir:—

I hereby make application for sewer connection and instructions on
premises owned by B. S. Lensing
at 2906 Rio Grande Street
Lot 4-Block 3 residence
which place is to be used as a _____

In this place there are to be installed _____ fixtures.

I agree to pay the City Sewer Department the regular ordinance
charge.

Respectfully, B. S. Lensing

Location of Public Sewer: by alley - 1/4 mi. S. of 10th St.
Sewer on alley - 1/4 mi. S. of 10th St.

Connected 10-25 1928

Size of Main 6 inches

Size of Service 4 inches

3 Feet Deep in ft.

22 Feet from Property Line

_____ Feet from Curb Line

Connection made by Spence
not ready
10-25-28

DIAGRAM
B-82

49/10/28

Application for a sewer connection for this address by Benjamin Lensing (1928)

Unless the Plumbing is done in strict accordance with City Ordinances, do not turn on the water.

No. A 2330

PERMIT FOR WATER SERVICE Austin, Texas

M. B.F. Lensing Address 2906 120th Street
 Plumber Barber L. Macauley Size of Tap 1/2 Date 4/8/29

INDEXED

Foreman's Report:

Date of Connection	<u>4/9/29</u>	No. Fittings	<u>1</u>	Size	<u>1/2"</u>
Size of Tap Made	<u>3/4"</u>	1 Curb Cock	<u>1</u>	<u>3/4"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
Size Service Made	<u>3/4"</u>	1 Elbow	<u>1</u>	<u>3/4"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
Size Main Tapped	<u>6"</u>	1 St. Elbow	<u>1</u>	<u>3/4"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock	<u>8'</u>	1 Bushing	<u>1</u>	<u>1/2"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
" " " " " "	<u>12'</u>	1 Reducer	<u>1</u>	<u>1/2"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
Location of Meter	<u>at curb</u>	3" Pipe	<u>1</u>	<u>3"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
Type of Box	<u>lock</u>	1 Lead Comp.	<u>1</u>	<u>3/4"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
Depth of Main in St.	<u>3'</u>	1 Nipples	<u>1</u>	<u>3/4"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
" " Service Line	<u>20"</u>	1 Union	<u>1</u>	<u>1/2"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
From Curb Cock to Tap on Main	<u>8.6"</u>	1 Plug	<u>1</u>	<u>1/2"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
Checked by Engr. Dept.	<u>6-22-29</u>	1 Tee	<u>1</u>	<u>1/2"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
INDEXED	<u>Tim</u>	1 Stop	<u>1</u>	<u>1/2"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
		1 Box	<u>1</u>	<u>1/2"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
		1 Lid	<u>1</u>	<u>1/2"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
		1 Valves	<u>1</u>	<u>1/2"</u>	<u>1/2"</u>
		Req. No.	<u>3414</u>		

Foreman's Signature Bernard

Water service permit to B.F. Lensing for this address (1929)