

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 25, 2013
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
1907 RIO GRANDE STREET
HDP-2013-0026**

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1917 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-and-a-half story, rectangular-plan side-gabled stuccoed frame bungalow with a partial-width, front-gabled independent porch on plain, square, stuccoed wood posts; single, paired, and triple 1:1 fenestration; false-timbering in the tympanum of the front porch gable; front-gabled dormer to the left of the front porch; gabled dormer in the center of the rear slope of the roof. There is also a two-story, rectangular-plan, side-gabled frame garage apartment to the rear of the house with a central, front-gabled, independent porch on wood posts and wooden false-timbering details in the tympanum of the porch gable; 6:6 fenestration.

RESEARCH

The house appears to have been built in 1917 – a city sewer connection application was made for this address in that year. The first occupants were Paul W. and Brazzie Jeffrey, who rented this house until around 1926, when they moved to Houston. Paul W. Jeffrey was an attorney with a general practice; his office was in the Scarbrough Building. The next occupants of the house were John L. and Sue Fomby, who are listed as the owners in city directories and census reports. John L. Fomby was a former traveling salesman for a sewing machine company; by the time he and Sue moved into this house, he was a traveling salesman for the Continental Gin Company, which manufactured cotton gin machinery. John L. Fomby died of an accidentally-self-inflicted gunshot wound in 1933; Sue Fomby continued to live in the house until the mid-1980s with her daughter, Marion, a schoolteacher. Sue Fomby died in 1984 at the age of 101. After Mrs. Fomby's passing, the house became a rental unit.

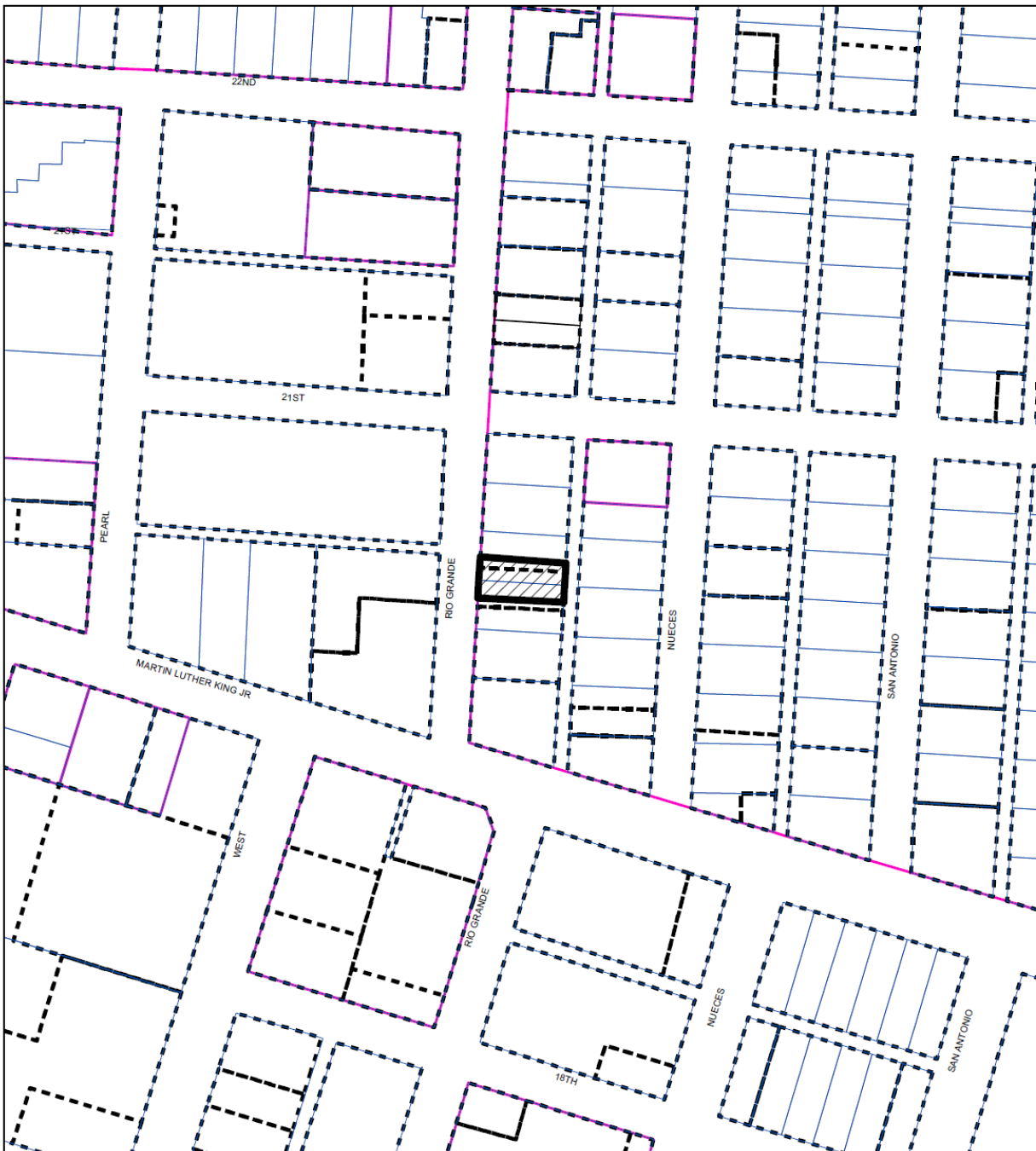
STAFF COMMENTS



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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Release the demolition permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package, consisting of photographs of all elevations, a dimensioned sketch plan, and a narrative history of the house for archiving at the Austin History Center.

LOCATION MAP



 SUBJECT TRACT
 ZONING BOUNDARY

CASE#: HDP-2013-0026
 LOCATION: 1907 Rio Grande Street



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.

1907 Rio Grande Street
ca. 1917





Detail of front porch



Detail of front porch brackets and fascia ends



Detail of front porch



Front-gabled dormer to the left of the front porch



Rear of the house with a screened porch on the gabled rear dormer in the middle of the roof slope



Garage apartment in the rear of the house



Garage apartment entrance and porch

OCCUPANCY HISTORY 1907 Rio Grande Street

From City Directories
Austin History Center
Prepared by City Historic Preservation Office
February, 2013

1992	Jeff Jennell, renter No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that Jeff Jennell was a new resident at this address.
1984	Sue Fomby, owner Widow, John L. Fomby Retired
1977	Sue Fomby, owner Widow, John L. Fomby Retired
1970	Mrs. Sue Fomby, owner Widow, John L. Fomby Retired
1965	Mrs. Sue Fomby, owner Widow, John L. Fomby Retired
1960	Mrs. Sue Fomby, owner Widow, John L. Fomby Retired
1955	Mrs. Sue Fomby, owner Widow, John L. Fomby Retired
1952	Mrs. Sue Fomby, owner Widow, John L. Fomby No occupation listed
1949	Mrs. Sue Fomby, owner Widow, John L. Fomby No occupation listed
1944-45	Mrs. Sue Fomby, owner Widow, John L. Fomby No occupation listed
1940	Mrs. Sue Fomby, owner Widow, John L. Fomby No occupation listed

1935	Mrs. Sue Fomby, owner Widow, John L. Fomby No occupation listed
1930-31	John L. and Sue Fomby, owners Representative, Continental Gin Company
1929	John L. and Sue Fomby, owners Representative, Continental Gin Company
1927	John L. and Sue Fomby, owners Representative, Continental Gin Company
1924	Paul W. and Brazzie Jeffrey, owners Lawyer
1922	Paul W. and Brazzie Jeffrey, owners Loans, lawyer, and notary, 811-12 Scarbrough Building
1920	Paul W. and Brazzie Jeffrey, owners Loans, lawyer, and notary, 811-12 Scarbrough Building
1918	Paul W. and Brazzie Jeffrey, renters Loans, lawyer, and notary, 821 Scarbrough Building NOTE: The only houses listed on this side of the 1900 block of Rio Grande are 1905 and 1907.
1916	The address is not listed in the directory.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

Paul W. and Brazzie Jeffrey (ca. 1917 – ca. 1926)

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Paul W. and Mrs. Paul W. Jeffrey as the renters of this house. Paul W. Jeffrey was then 36, had been born in Texas to Arkansas-born parents, and was an attorney. Mrs. Jeffrey was then 34, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. The couple had a son, Billy, 7, who had been born in Texas.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Paul and Brassie Jeffrey living in a rented house on Fanning Street in Houston with their son, William, who was then 16. Paul W. Jeffrey is listed as a lawyer in general practice. Paul and Brassie Jeffrey remained in Houston until their deaths; Brassie Jeffrey died November 22, 1951 in Harris County, Paul Jeffrey died April 30, 1966 in Harris County.

REGISTRATION CARD	
1. NAME Paul Wayland Jeffrey	2. AGE 27
3. BIRTH DATE 1918	4. BIRTH PLACE Austin, Texas
5. RACE White	6. COLOR Blue
7. HEIGHT 5' 10"	8. WEIGHT 175
9. BUILD Medium	10. EYES Blue
11. HAIR Dark	12. MOUTH Small
13. TEETH Good	14. NOSE Small
15. EARS Small	16. FEET Small
17. HANDS Small	18. FINGERS Small
19. TOES Small	20. SKIN Good
21. TENDONS Good	22. BONES Good
23. NAILS Good	24. SCARS None
25. TATTOOS None	26. DISABILITIES None
27. IDENTIFY THAT NO DOCUMENTS ARE KEPT THAT THE PERSON REGISTERED HAS READ OR HAS READ TO HIM HIS OWN SUMMARY THAT HE HAS RECEIVED AND HIS SIGNATURE AND ADDRESS AND THAT ALL OF HIS AGENCIES OF WHICH HE HAS KNOWLEDGE ARE TRUE, EXCEPT AS FOLLOWS:	
Date of Registration 12 Sept 1918	
City Board Austin City Austin, Texas (STAMP OF LOCAL BOARD)	
(The stamp of the City and Board having jurisdiction of the area in which the registrant has his permanent home shall be placed at this time.)	

Paul Wayland Jeffrey's World War I (1918) draft registration card shows that he was living in this house in Austin; he was a self-employed attorney with an office in the Scarbrough Building. He was married to Brazzie Jeffrey.

John L. and Sue Willie Fomby (ca. 1926 – ca. 1990)

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Sue Willie Fomby as the owner of this house, which was worth \$8,000. Sue Fomby was a 57-year old widow with no occupation listed. She lived with her daughter, Marion, a private school teacher.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows John L. and Sue W. Fomby as the owners of this house, which was worth \$10,000. John L. Fomby was then a 50-year old native of Louisiana who was a traveling salesman for a gin machinery company. Sue Fomby was then a 47-year old native of Louisiana with no occupation listed. They had two children: Marion, 25, was a public school teacher, and James, 22, had no occupation listed. Marion had been born in Louisiana; James had been born in Arkansas.

The family appears in the 1920 U.S. Census as the renters of a house at 600 Henderson Street in Austin. Lovett J. Fomby (James L.) was a traveling salesman for a sewing machine company. Sue Willie Fomby had no occupation listed. The two children were teenagers; neither had an occupation listed in the census report.

The 1900 U.S. Census shows John L. Fomby as a boarder on the farm of Edd Ryan in Claiborne Parish, Louisiana, along with his three brothers, Henry, Richard, and Volney. All of the Fomby boys were in their 20s, and all listed farming as their occupation. The 1900 U.S. Census also shows Sue Willie Knightson as the 17-year old daughter of William and Ludie Knightson, farmers in Claiborne Parish, Louisiana.

John L. Fomby died on July 14, 1933 of an accidentally self-inflicted gunshot wound, in the garage of this house. He is buried in Homer, Claiborne Parish, Louisiana,

Fomby Services Set In Louisiana

Austin Resident Dies Of Gunshot Wound

Federal services for John L. Fomby, 54, Austin business man and father of James Fomby, former University of Texas basketball star, who was accidentally shot to death shortly before 10 a. m. Friday at his home, 1907 Rio Grande street, will be held at 6 p. m. in Homer, La., the old home of the Fomby family.

The body of Mr. Fomby was sent to Homer at 1:20 a. m. Saturday over the Katy by the Thurlow B. Weed Funeral home. Members of the bereaved family left early Friday afternoon by automobile for Homer to attend the funeral.

Survivors Named

Mr. Fomby is survived by his widow, Mrs. Sue W. Fomby; one son, James Fomby, and a daughter, Miss Marion Fomby, all of Austin; two brothers, E. S. Fomby of San Antonio and Walter Fomby of Homer, La.; and two sisters, Mrs. John Coleman of Homer, La., and Mrs. Pace of Monroe, La.

Mr. Fomby was shot to death in the garage at his home. His body was found by Mrs. Fomby who went to the garage after hearing the shot. A shotgun was found in the garage near Fomby's body.

Accidental Death

Justice J. M. Griffith, who conducted the inquest, said Fomby's death "was due to accidental gunshot wound inflicted by decedent himself."

Justice Griffith said Fomby had planned to go hunting earlier Friday with his son and had put the shotgun in the car, but that when his son, James, failed to return home, Mr. Fomby decided against going hunting on account of the heat and presumably went to the garage to get the gun from the car. The gun evidently was discharged as Mr. Fomby was removing it from the vehicle, Justice Griffith stated.

Gin Company Representative

The charge entered the front portion of Mr. Fomby's neck, severed a jugular vein, and emerged from the back of his neck, Justice Griffith said.

At the time of his death, Mr. Fomby was representative of the Continental Gin company. He was well known here and had been active in the affairs of the First Methodist church for a number of years. He had served as member of the board of stewards and as its head usher for several years. He and his family had been residents of Austin for about 12 years, coming here from Homer, La.

Story on the death of John L. Fomby
Austin American, July 15, 1933

Sue Fomby

Mrs. J.L. Fomby, age 101, died November 5, 1984.

She was born March 14, 1883, in Minden, Louisiana.

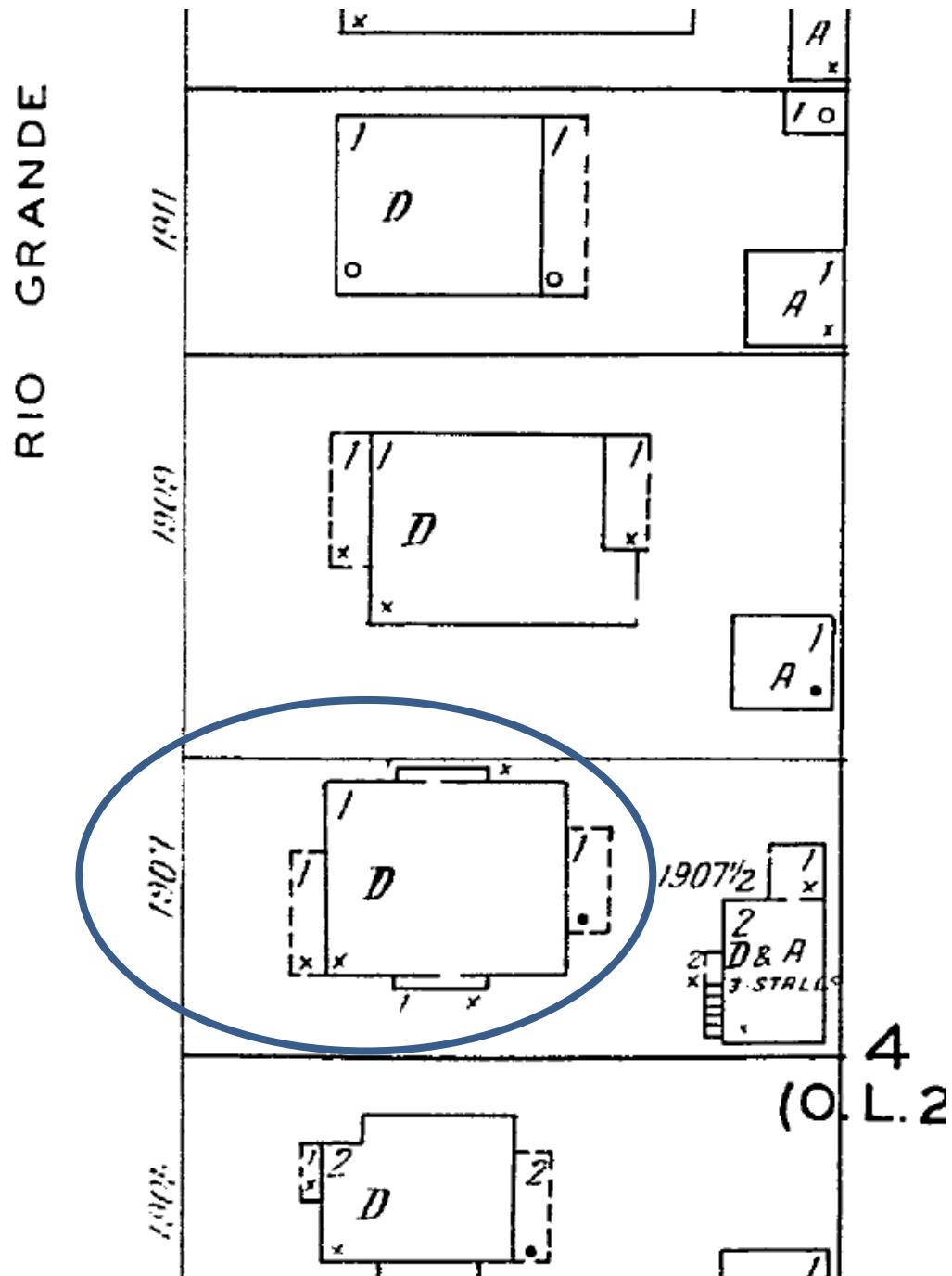
Survivors include a son, James L. Fomby, Austin; grandson, Dr. Ed L. Fomby, Austin; two great-grandchildren, Sarah Jill Fomby and Michael Frazier Fomby; two sisters, Mrs. Abi K. Hall, Homer, Louisiana, and Mrs. Elsa Middlebrook, Athens, Louisiana; two nieces, Mrs. Charles Mansfield, Austin and Mrs. Murray Bailey, San Antonio; several great nieces and nephews.

Graveside services 10:00 AM, Wednesday, November 7, 1984, Homer, Louisiana.

Local arrangements by Weed-Corley Funeral Home, 3125 N. Lamar. 452-8811.

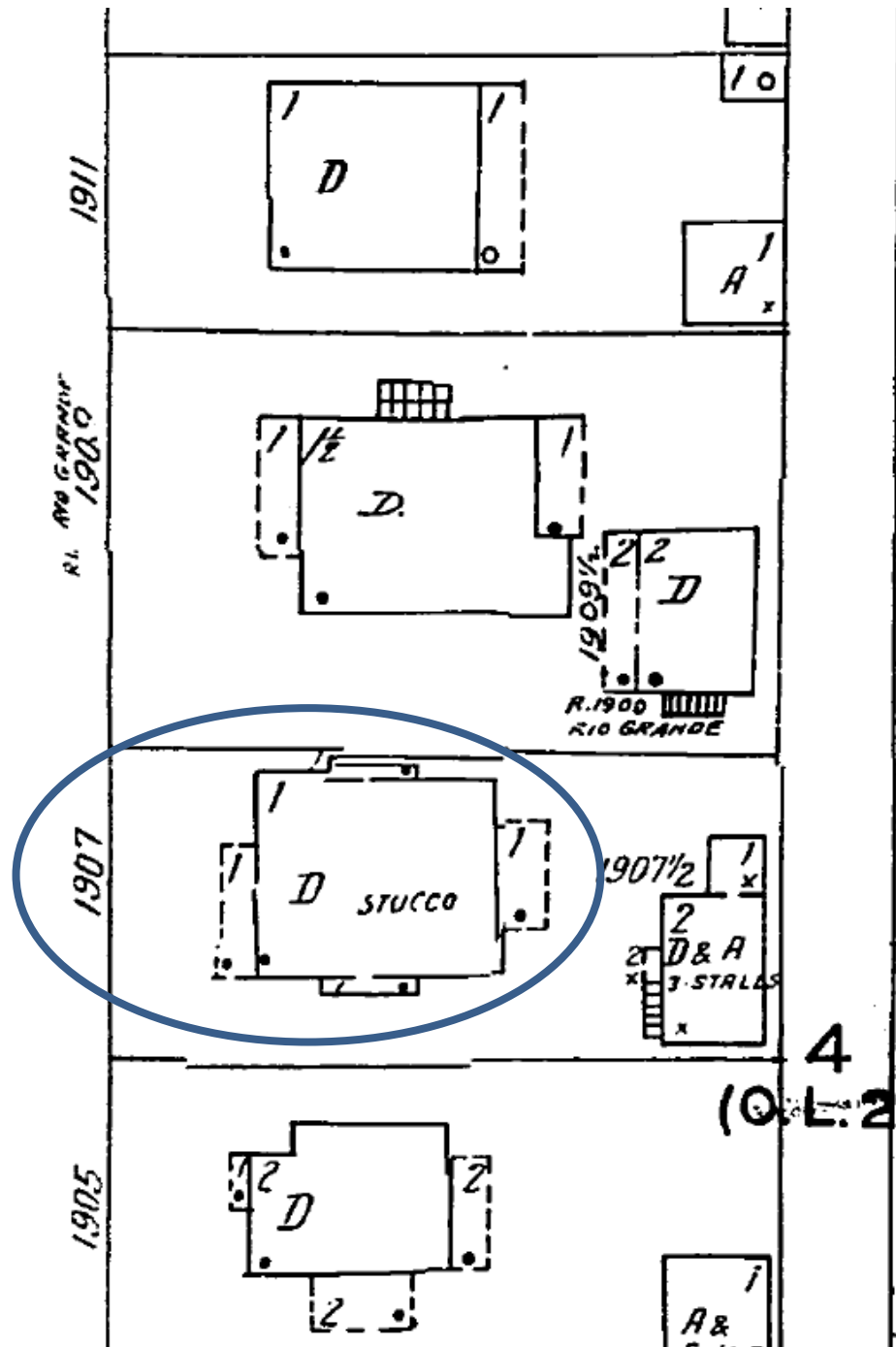
C E Y L

Obituary of Sue Fomby
Austin American-Statesman, November 6, 1984



The 1935 Sanborn map shows the house in its current configuration, but gives no indication that the frame house was stuccoed. The map also shows the two-story garage apartment to the rear of the house. The map shows that the building originally had a one-story addition to the north (top of the map), which is no longer standing.

RIO GRANDE



The 1961 Sanborn map shows the house with the same configuration as shown on the 1935 map above, but with the notation that it was a stucco house. The garage apartment with its one-story addition is shown – there is no indication that it was stuccoed, and remains a frame building to this day.

Receipt No.

Application for Sewer Connection

Nº ~~37996~~ 4174

Austin, Texas, 5-11

1917

To the Superintendent of Sanitary Sewer Division, City of Austin, Texas.

Sir:—

I hereby make application for sewer connection and instructions on premises owned by

at

1907 Rio Grande Street,

further described as Lot 20 1/4 E 35 73 Block Outlot Division

subdivision 7 Plat, which is to be used as a

In this place there are to be installed fixtures. Plumbing Permit No.

I agree to pay the City of Austin, the regular ordinance charge.

Depth at Prop. Line

Respectfully,

Stub Out }

Connected }

(Location)

Date

By

NOTE: Connection Instruction

8" Sewer in Alley

A654

10" Sewer in E 35 73

A675

Sewer connection application for this address (1917)

Mrs. J. L. Fomby

1907 Rio Grande St.

46

23

Pt. of 3 & 4

D

Install louvres in gable ends of res.

23808 - 7/3/42

\$30.00

Floyd Johns

Building permit to Mrs. John L. Fomby to install louvers in the gable ends of the house (1942)