HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 23, 2013
NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT
NRD-2013-0047
West Line
507 Oakland Avenue

PROPOSAL
Demolish a c. 1917 contributing house and garage.

RESEARCH
The existing house was constructed c. 1917. The first resident, a tenant, was James C. Hill, a Wells Fargo agent. Around 1920 Marcus H. and Hazel Goldsmith purchased the house and lived there until 1931. Mr. Hale was an attorney who practiced with Brownlee & Goldsmith, which became Garrett, Brownlee & Goldsmith. He died of a sudden and short illness at the early age of 54 in 1940.

After the Goldsmith's, a number of tenants and owners lived in the house including Joseph I. Dixon, a traveling salesman and his wife Zeffie, a widow Mrs. Anna N. Ewalt, Lawrence and Corrie Brasher, Roy and Lois Morris, and another widow Ada Virginia Davis.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS
The existing c. 1917 house is an approximately 2,000 sq. ft., one-story bungalow form with simple Craftsman features. The front facing gabled main roof, with exposed rafter ends, extends over the offset, projecting front porch, and is supported by double square, wood columns set on wood piers at the corners. The porch also has low piers without columns to either side of the front steps, and a wood railing with square balusters. The cladding includes narrow, horizontal lap siding on the walls and squared, irregular width shingles in the gable end. The verge board on the front gable end and fascia around the porch has decorative shapes. The double-hung, wood windows are 9:1. The additions to the rear-side of the house were constructed prior to 1935, as indicated on Sanborn maps.

There is a detached, c. 1922, two-story garage at the rear of the property that is accessed from Pressler Street. It has a gabled roof with decorative, exposed rafter ends and wide, horizontal wood siding. Sanborn maps indicate that the garage was originally one story, but that the second story was added prior to 1935.

The applicant proposes to demolish both the house and garage to allow for redevelopment of the lot.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW
The existing property is contributing to the West Line National Register Historic District. Applicable general design review guidelines state:

- The distinguishing original qualities or character of a property and its environment shall not be destroyed. Removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided.

- All properties shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations which have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.

- Changes which have taken place in the course of time may have acquired significance in their own right, and shall be recognized and respected.

- Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a property shall be treated with sensitivity.

- Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historical, physical, or pictorial evidence.

- Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties are appropriate when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historic, architectural, or cultural material and are compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environment.

- Whenever, possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would not be impaired.

- The installation of protective or code-required mechanical systems shall be concealed whenever possible so as not to intrude upon or detract from the property's aesthetic and historical qualities except where concealment would result in the alteration or destruction of historically significant materials or spaces.

The house and garage are good examples of simple Craftsman-style buildings and both retain a high level of historic architectural integrity. Therefore, demolition does not meet the guidelines. Additionally, with nearly all the houses that were present by 1935 still standing and retaining their historic appearance, this block of the West Line National Register District retains a very high level of integrity and would be eligible for Local Historic District zoning. Loss of this house, and the one at 505 Oakland, being located in the middle of the block, would adversely impact this area of the District.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Continue to consider options that allow for adaptive reuse of the existing buildings. If new construction is pursued, design a building, or buildings, that are compatible with the scale, patterns and character of the district.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Postpone releasing the permit and encourage the applicant to consider alternatives to demolition.

PHOTOS





507 Oakland Avenue







Other contributing houses on 500 block of Oakland Avenue

OCCUPANCY HISTORY
507 Oakland Avenue

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
By City Historic Preservation Office
January, 2013

2002 The address is not listed in the directory.

1992 Coffee, Crier & Schenck, Architects, additional space
Robert F. Coffee and Jack S. Crier, proprietors
NOTE: The main office for Coffee, Crier & Schenck was at 509 Oakland Avenue.

1987 Vacant

1981 A: Jones L. and Ada V. Davis, owners
No occupation listed
B: Nancy Byrd, renter
No occupation listed
NOTE: The directory indicates that Nancy Byrd was a new resident at this address.

1977 A: Ada V. Davis, owner
Widow, Ross Davis
Retired
B: John McCracken, renter
Retired

1973 A: Ada V. Davis, owner
Widow, Ross Davis
Retired
B: John McCracken, renter
Retired

1968 A: Ada V. Davis, owner
Widow, Ross Davis
Retired
B: Lupe and Wilma Cantu, renters
Employed at the Federal Building

1962 Ada V. Davis, owner
Widow, Ross Davis
No occupation listed
½: Charles Whitley, renter
Driver, Post Office

1957 Ada V. Davis, owner
Apartment manager

Ed and Nelda Bowles, renters
Technician

1953 Ada V. Davis, owner

Widow, Ross Davis
No occupation listed

1949 Ada V. Davis, owner
Widow, Ross Davis
No occupation listed
A: Vacant

1947 Ada V. Davis, owner
Widow, Ross Davis
No occupation listed
A: Joseph A. and Mary L. Jackoskie, renters
Auto trimmer

1944-45 Virginia Davis, owner
No occupation listed
Rear: Leslie Lynch, renter
Mechanic

1941 Roy E. and Lois Morris, renters
Accountant
Rear: Alfred A. and Opal A. Turland, renters
Driver

1939 Lawrence H. and Corrie Brasher, owners
No occupation listed
Also listed are Clifford Brasher, a salesman for Ray Tire and Auto Supplies, 308-10 E. 6th Street; and Modelle Brasher, a book-keeper for Heep Dairy Products, 3500 Guadalupe Street.

1937 Mrs. Anna N. Ewalt, renter
Widow, Robert M. Ewalt
No occupation listed

1935 Mrs. Anna N. Ewalt, renter
Widow, Robert Ewalt
No occupation listed

1932-33 Joseph I. and Zeffie Dixon, owners
Traveling salesman
NOTE: Marcus Hale and Hazel Goldsmith are listed as living at 415 W. 32nd Street. He was a partner (with E.F. Smith and J. Houghton Brownlee), of Smith, Brownlee & Goldsmith, attorneys, 206-09 Littlefield Building.

1930-31 Marcus Hale and Hazel Goldsmith, owners
Partner, (with William B. Garrett and J. Houghton Brownlee), Garrett, Brownlee & Goldsmith, attorneys, 206-09 Littlefield Building.

1929 Marcus Hale and Hazel Goldsmith, owners
Partner, (with William B. Garrett and J. Houghton Brownlee), Garrett, Brownlee & Goldsmith, attorneys, 206-09 Littlefield Building.

1927 Marcus Hale and Hazel Goldsmith, owners

Partner (with William B. Garrett and J. Houghton Brownlee), Garrett, Brownlee & Goldsmith, lawyers, 206-09 Littlefield Building.

1924 Marcus Hale and Hazel Goldsmith, owners
Partner (with William B. Garrett and J. Houghton Brownlee), Garrett, Brownlee & Goldsmith, lawyers, 206-09 Littlefield Building.

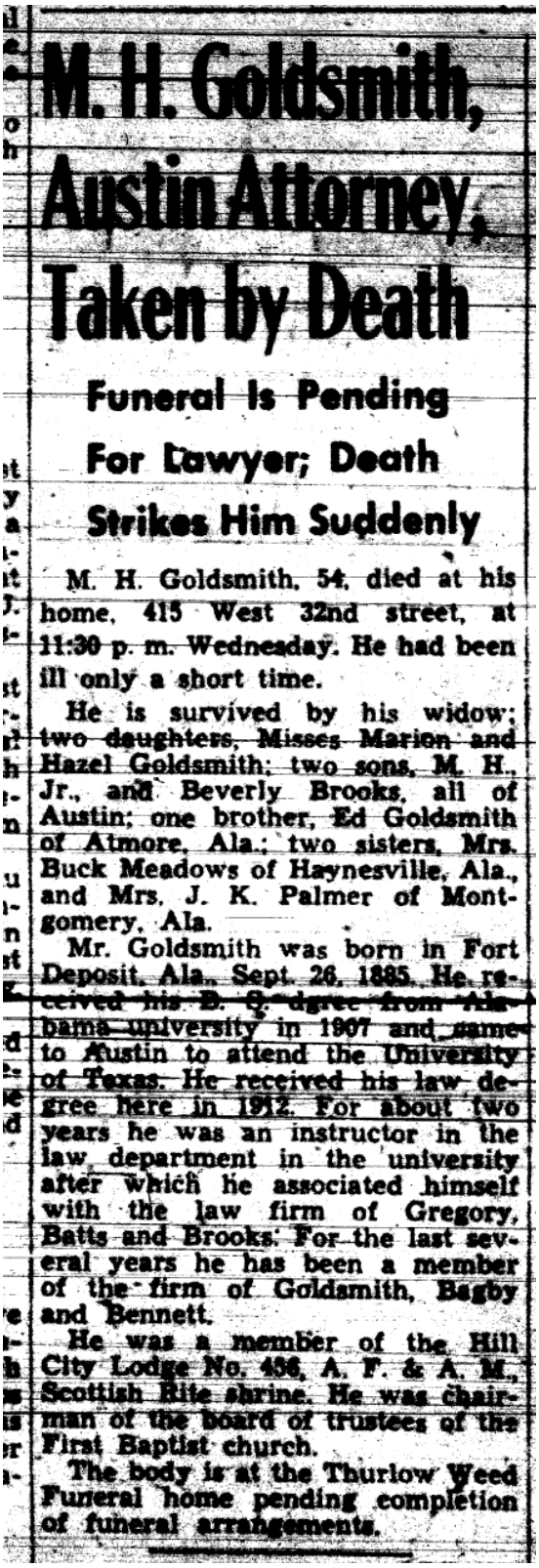
1922 Marcus Hale and Hazel Goldsmith, owners
Partner (with William B. Garrett and J. Houghton Brownlee), Garrett, Brownlee & Goldsmith, lawyers, 206-09 Littlefield Building.

1920 Marcus Hale and Hazel Goldsmith, owners
Partner (with John H. Brownlee), Brownlee & Goldsmith, lawyers, 206-08 Littlefield Building.
NOTE: James C. Hill is not listed in the directory.

1918 James C. Hill, renter
Agent, Wells Fargo & Company, 121 W. 6th Street.
NOTE: Marcus Hale Goldsmith is listed as boarding at 310 W. 6th Street. He was an attorney (with John H. Brownlee) with Brownlee and Goldsmith, 206-08 Littlefield Building.

1916 The address is not listed in the directory.
NOTE: James C. Hill is listed as an agent for Wells Fargo & Company, express service, 121 W. 6th Street. He lived at 706 Ruiz Street.

MARCUS HALE and HAZEL GOLDSMITH (ca. 1919 – ca. 1931)
The 1920 U.S. Census shows Markus and Hazel Goldsmith as the owners of this house. Markus Goldsmith was then 34, had been born in Alabama, and was a lawyer in a general practice. Hazel Goldsmith was then 23, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had a 6-month old daughter, Mariane.



M. H. Goldsmith, Austin Attorney, Taken by Death

Funeral Is Pending For Lawyer; Death Strikes Him Suddenly

M. H. Goldsmith, 54, died at his home, 415 West 32nd street, at 11:30 p. m. Wednesday. He had been ill only a short time.

He is survived by his widow; two daughters, Misses Marion and Hazel Goldsmith; two sons, M. H., Jr., and Beverly Brooks, all of Austin; one brother, Ed Goldsmith of Atmore, Ala.; two sisters, Mrs. Buck Meadows of Haynesville, Ala., and Mrs. J. K. Palmer of Montgomery, Ala.

Mr. Goldsmith was born in Fort Deposit, Ala., Sept. 26, 1885. He received his B. S. degree from Alabama university in 1907 and came to Austin to attend the University of Texas. He received his law degree here in 1912. For about two years he was an instructor in the law department in the university after which he associated himself with the law firm of Gregory, Batts and Brooks. For the last several years he has been a member of the firm of Goldsmith, Bagby and Bennett.

He was a member of the Hill City Lodge No. 486, A. F. & A. M., Scottish Rite shrine. He was chairman of the board of trustees of the First Baptist church.

The body is at the Thurlow Weed Funeral home pending completion of funeral arrangements.

Obituary of Marcus Hale Goldsmith
Austin American, September 19, 1940

ROY and LOIS MORRIS (ca. 1940 – ca. 1943)
The 1940 U.S. Census shows Roy E. and Lois Morris as the renters of this house. Roy E. Morris was then 27, had been born in Texas, and was a book-keeper for the Texas

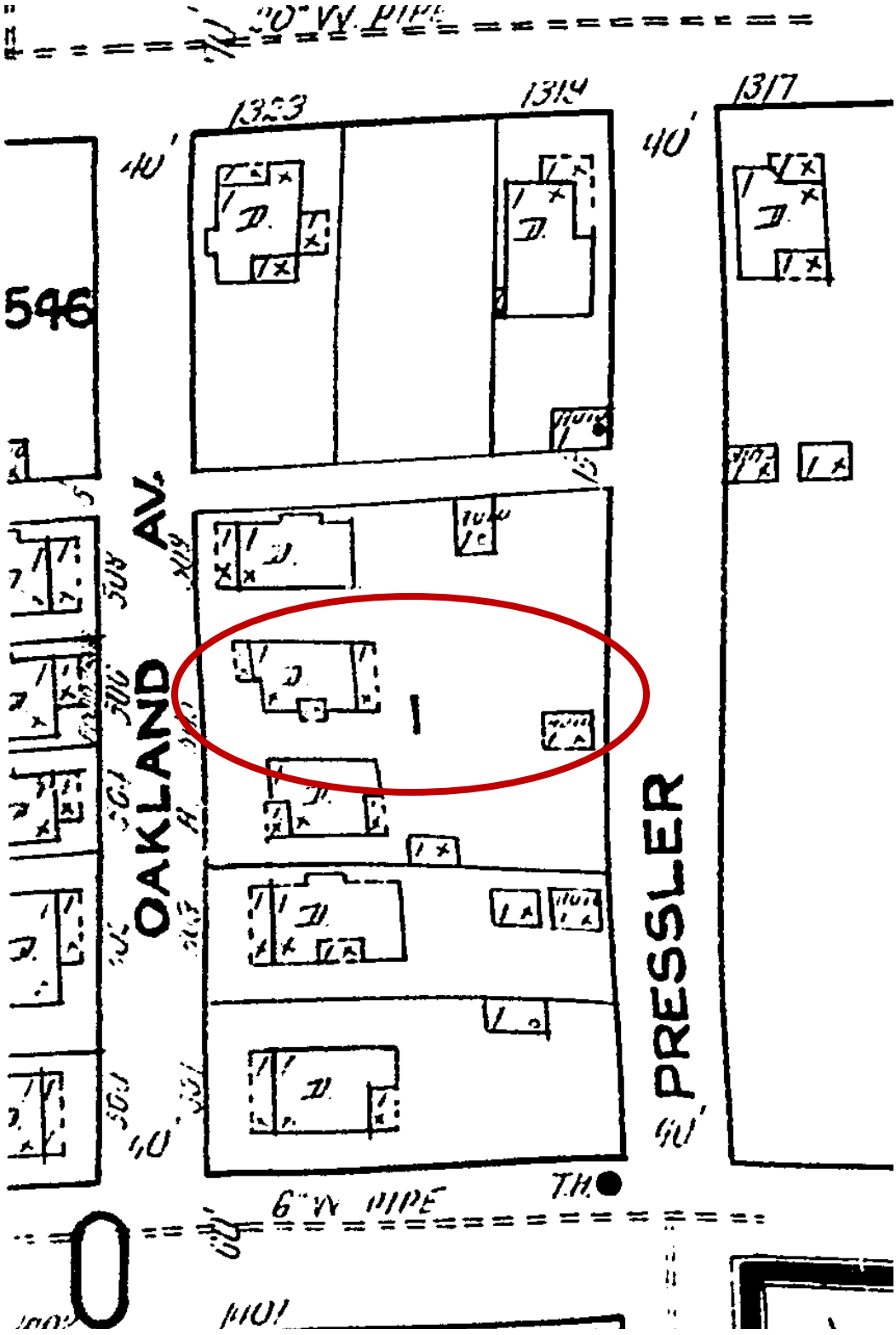
Unemployment Commission. Lois Morris was then 25, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. The couple had two children, daughter Shannon, 3, and son, Roy G., 2. With the couple lived another couple, Paul and Evelyn Walters. Paul Walters was a 26-year old Colorado-born operator at the power plant. Evelyn Walters was then 24 and had been born in Texas. She had no occupation listed. In 1935, Paul Walters had been living in Eagle Pass, Texas; Evelyn Walters had been living in New Braunfels, Texas. In the rear lived Charles A. and Zula Mae Lacy. Charles A. Lacy was a 47-year old Texas-born foreman for a gravel company. He had lived in Abilene, Texas in 1935. Zula Mae Lacy was 33, had been born in Texas, and had lived in Shreveport, Louisiana in 1935. She had no occupation listed.

ADA (Mrs. Ross) DAVIS (ca. 1943 – ca. 1981)
Ross and Ada Davis appear in the 1940 U.S. Census as the renters of 509 Oakland Avenue, the house next door to the north. Ross Davis was then 42 years old, had been born in Texas, and was a life insurance salesman. Ada Davis was then 39, and had been born in Tennessee. She had no occupation listed. They had a son, Charles, 17, who had been born in Texas. The census report indicates that they had lived in the same house in 1935.

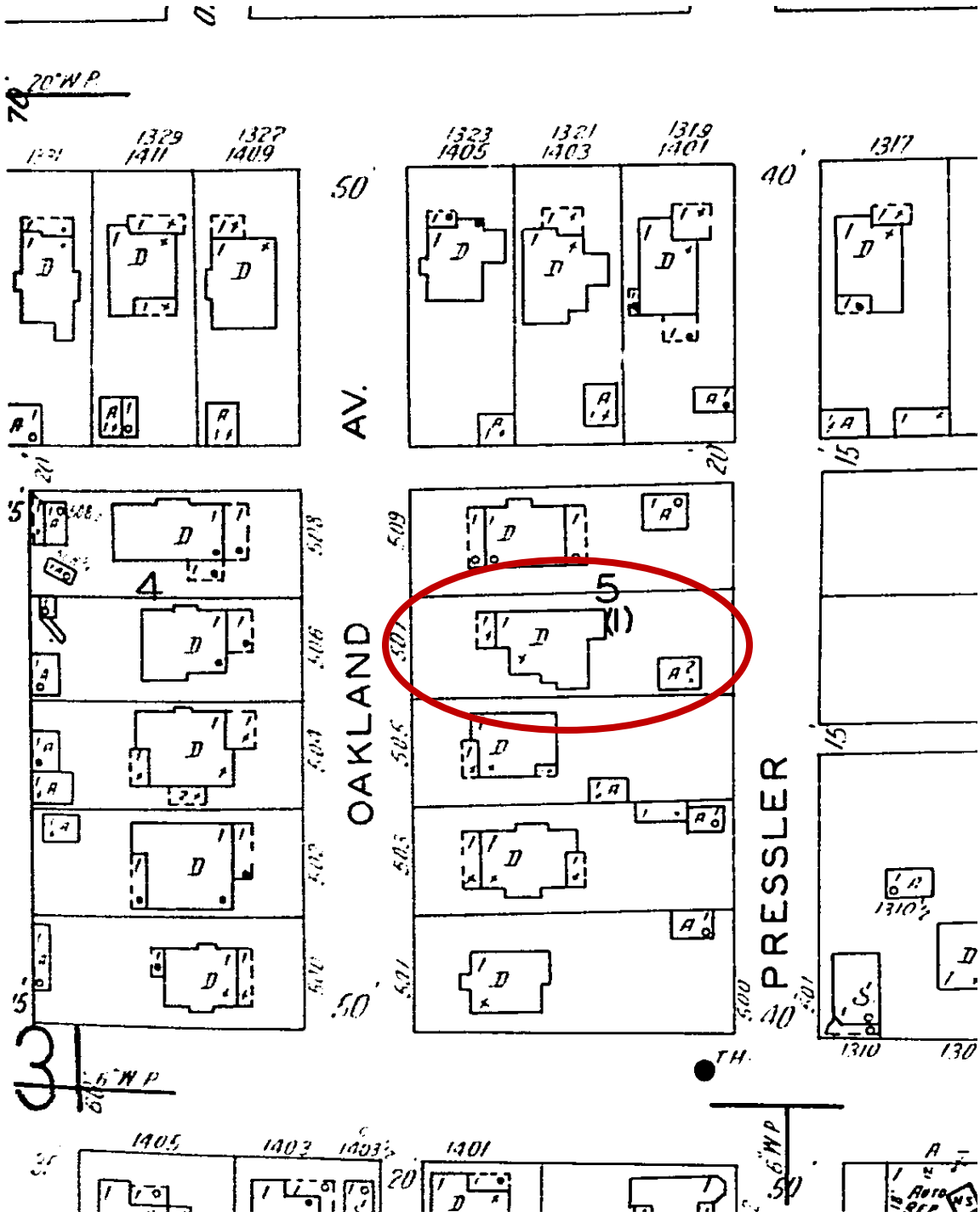
The 1930 U.S. Census shows Ross and Ada V. Davis living in a rented house in Grand Prairie, Texas. Ross Davis was an automobile salesman. Neither Ada nor their son, Charles, 7, had an occupation listed. The 1920 U.S. Census shows Ross Davis as the 22-year old son of Charley and Dora Davis, who lived in a rented house on Main Street in Glen Rose, Texas. Charley Davis was a Texas-born carpenter. Ross Davis was an auto mechanic.

DAVIS, Ada Virginia, 81, of Austin, died Friday. Services 3 p.m. Sunday at Weed-Corley Funeral Home. Burial, Austin Memorial Park. Survivors: son, Jim Davis of Austin; two grandchildren.

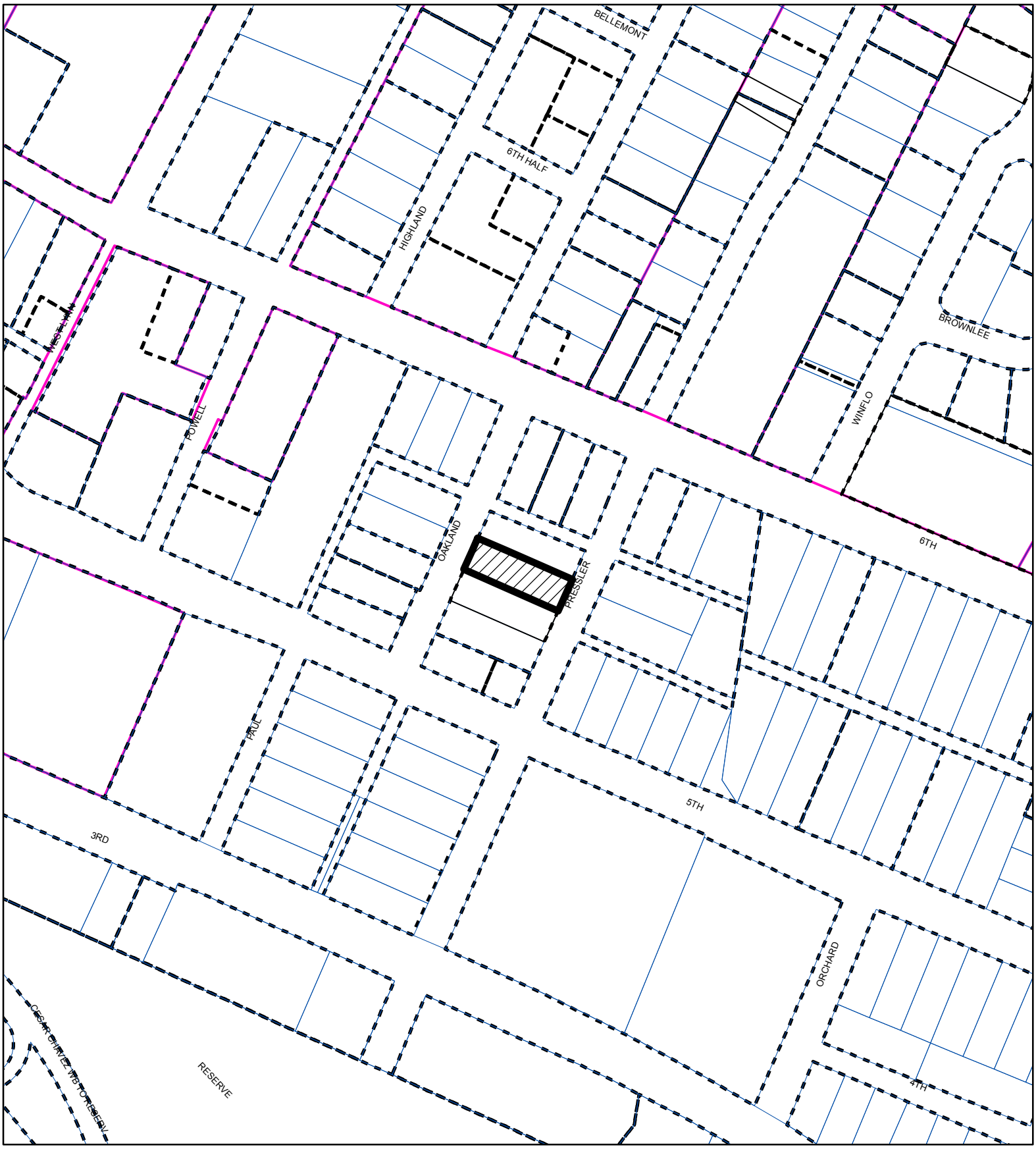
Obituary of Ada V. Davis
Austin American-Statesman, December 5, 1981



1922 Sanborn Map



1935 Sanborn Map



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SUBJECT TRACT

ZONING BOUNDARY

CASE#: NRD-2013-0047
LOCATION: 507 Oakland Ave

CITY OF AUSTIN FOUNDED 1839

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