

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: C14H-2013-0005

HLC DATE:

October 28, 2013

PC DATE:

November 12, 2013

APPLICANT: Mark Seeger

HISTORIC NAME: Old Judges Hill Local Historic District

WATERSHED: Shoal Creek

LOCATION OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: Generally between West 15th Street and West 18th Street; West Avenue and San Gabriel Street. Refer to attachments for a map and specific detailed list of addresses included in this project).

ZONING CHANGE:

| From: | To: |
|--------------|------------|
| SF-3 | SF-3-HD |
| SF-3-H | SF-3-H-HD |
| MF-3 | MF-3-HD |
| MF-4 | MF-4-HD |
| LO | LO-HD |
| LO-H | LO-H-HD |
| GO | GO-HD |
| GO-H | GO-H-HD |
| NO-H-CO | NO-H-CO-HD |

SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the proposed Historic District Combining District Overlay for the subject area with the following revisions to the Local Historic District Design Standards:

1. Section 2 Design Review Process – Delete the section titled “Good Neighbor Governance of Design Standards” that references establishing an Old Judges Hill Local Historic District Advocacy Board.
2. Section 4.A.6 Compatibility Standards – Replace items a, b and c with the following:
 - a. All properties in the LHD are subject to applicable Compatibility Standards. When these conflict with the LHD Design Standards, the more restrictive shall apply.
3. Section 4.A.9 Trees – Replace items a, b with the following:
 - a. Austin’s Heritage Tree Ordinance (Chapter 25-8 Environment, Subchapter B) shall apply in its entirety within the LHD.
4. Section E. New Construction - Add the following new item:
 13. New construction on a larger than average lot must respect and relate to the surrounding context of contributing buildings and employ design techniques that reduce its visual presence with respect to that context. In addition to complying with the other standards for new construction, the following techniques may be applied where necessary and appropriate:
 - a. Divide a single large volume into smaller components.

- b. Vary the surface planes so that the design is consistent with that of smaller-scaled historic structures in the surrounding area.
- c. Configure the roofline so that it is consistent with the form and pitch of roofs on smaller-scaled historic structures.
- d. Create bay divisions on the facade to allow the building to reflect the massing of smaller-scaled historic structures.
- e. Vary materials, textures, patterns, colors, and details to reduce the visual impact of the mass.

This includes zoning changes from:

Family residence (SF-3)
 Family residence – historic (SF-3-H)
 Multi-family residence (moderate density) (MF-3)
 Multi-family residence (moderate-high density) (MF-4)
 Limited office (LO)
 Limited office – historic (LO-H)
 General office (GO)
 General office – historic (GO-H)
 Neighborhood office – historic (NO-H-CO)

to:

Family residence – historic district (SF-3-HD)
 Family residence – historic – historic district (SF-3-H-HD)
 Multi-family residence (moderate density) – historic district (MF-3-HD)
 Multi-family residence (moderate-high density) – historic district (MF-4-HD)
 Limited office – historic district (LO-HD)
 Limited office – historic – historic district (LO-H-HD)
 General office – historic district (GO-HD)
 General office – historic – historic district (GO-H-HD)
 Neighborhood office – historic – historic district (NO-H-CO-HD)

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION:

60% of the principal structures within the proposed district are contributing structures. A contributing structure is one that contributes to the historic and architectural character of a historic district, was built during the period of significance, and which retains its appearance from that time.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:

Background: The Old Judges Hill Local Historic District is the city's fourth local historic district nomination. Within the area of the proposed Old Judges Hill Historic District boundaries there are 66 properties. The owners of 52.60% of the land area within the district signed a petition in support of this application (either 51% of the owners, or owners of 51% of the land is required by the Land Development Code for consideration of the historic district (HD) zoning overlay by the Historic Landmark Commission).

Of the properties located within the proposed boundaries 40, or 60%, are contributing to the district, meaning they were built during the period of significance and retain their historic appearance. This meets the Code requirement that at least 51% of the structures be contributing.

History

The Judges Hill Neighborhood takes its name from the many judges and attorneys who built homes in the area, beginning in 1851 with Elijah Sterling Clack Robertson (1820-1879), former Bell County Judge and son of the Empresario of Robertson Colony. E.S.C. Robertson and Nathaniel Townsend were the first residents to construct homes in the neighborhood. Those were followed by several more along West Avenue, which paralleled Shoal Creek and was the city's most westerly street for many years.

Northwest of the downtown business district, and located on a bluff on the east side of Shoal Creek, giving the neighborhood its name, the homes in this area are some of the oldest in Austin and were, and still are, in easy walking distance to the Courthouse and the State Capitol. Prominent judges and attorneys whose former homes were located in the neighborhood include attorney and Austin Mayor J. Wesley Robertson, Texas Supreme Court Justice James P. Alexander, Texas Supreme Court Associate Judges Few Brewster and James McClendon, Texas Supreme Court Judges W. St. John Garwood, Thomas B. Greenwood and John Edward Hickman, Commissioner of the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals and Austin County Judge Charles G. Krueger, Second Judicial District Judge and Texas legislator A.S. Walker Sr., Travis County Judge A. S. Walker Jr., James County Judge Alfred Smith, Associate Judge of the Court of Criminal Appeals Wright C. Morrow, Associate Judge of the Commission of Appeals William McLaughlin Taylor, U.S. District Judge Sam Sparks, and Hayes County Judge Edward R. Kone.

See attachments for more detailed history of the neighborhood provided by the applicant.

Architecture of the District

Spanning a period from the 1850s through 1960, the residences in the neighborhood provide insight into the transitioning architectural styles and building materials of the time. There are three fairly distinct periods of construction activity in the area. The first phase began during the Republic era and continued until the start of World War I, roughly 1850 to 1914. The primary styles during this time are reflected the homes designed and/or built by prominent architects such as Abner Cook and Hugo Kuehne. Many of these historic homes still line both sides of West Avenue, including the landmark 1870 Denny-Holliday House at 1803 West Avenue, and the circa 1855 Chandler-Shelley House, also known as Westhill, at 1703 West Avenue, a Greek Revival likely built by Cook about the same time he was building the nearby Governor's Mansion. At least eight major homes built before 1914 have been demolished, and one moved, but more than two dozen built by 1914 still stand as a record of that era. The styles from this period include Classical Revival, Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Italianate, Neoclassical, Prairie, Craftsman, and Edwardian. Noted properties include the West Hill Carriage House at 707 W. 18th Street built by Abner Cook, the Max Bickler House at 901 W. 16th Street designed by Hugo Kuehne, the William Caswell House at 1502 West Avenue designed by A.O. Watson, and St. David's Rectory at 1603 Pearl Street.

The second phase of development includes the period between the beginning of World War I and the start of World War II, 1914 to 1940. This phase is distinctive for a range of architectural styles including Craftsman, Italian Renaissance, Tudor, Colonial Revival, Classical Revival, Spanish Eclectic, Monterey, and an early International building designed by Charles Granger. Noted homes include Judge John Brady's home at 1601 Pearl Street, the Wolfe-Pendexter house at 909 W. 18th Street designed by Hugo Kuehne, the Italian Renaissance Revival J.W. Scarborough house at 1801 West Avenue designed by Edwin Kreisle, and the Dozier-Beal house at 1503, a Tudor Revival home designed by Roy Thomas.

The third phase, following WWII, saw the addition of a few homes in the post-war Ranch, Minimal Traditional and Mid-Century Modern styles. These Twentieth Century homes are of a smaller scale and simpler architectural styles than previous homes, and reflect a more casual, informal way of life than prior to the war. There is also the beginning of multi-family housing in the neighborhood in the form of two duplexes built in 1948 and 1955. The last single-family residence built within the district, the modern Zapalac House at 1604 Pearl, was constructed in 1960.

No additional single-family homes were built within the proposed boundaries until the 1990s. Beginning in 1962 through 1991, construction was exclusively apartments and condominiums, many of those replacing original residences. There was one commercial office building constructed within the boundaries, in 1962, at 1701 West Avenue, and some of the former residences along West Avenue were converted to commercial use.

Due to the dramatic change in the scale, style and type of construction after World War II the proposed period of significance for the district dates from 1850 up to 1940. Within the Historic District boundaries, 19 properties are City of Austin Landmarks, 7 are also Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks, and two are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Forty of the buildings located within the proposed boundaries are considered contributing to the District because they retain their historic appearance and were built during the period of significance. Four properties within the boundaries that are City of Austin Landmarks are considered non-contributing, one because it was relocated to the District from E. 7th Street in 1979, and three others because they were built after 1940.

Boundaries of the District

The Judges Hill Neighborhood Association boundaries include the area between Shoal Creek/Lamar Avenue to the east, West Avenue to the west, 15th Street to the south, and Martin Luther King Boulevard to the north. The boundaries proposed for the Old Judges Hill Local Historic District represent the core of this neighborhood area; generally between West 15th Street and West 18th Street, and West Avenue and San Gabriel Street. The boundaries exclude properties on Martin Luther King Boulevard zoned VMU, which do not face into the District, as well as homes on Vance Circle and those overlooking Lamar Boulevard as they are not physically connected to, nor accessible from within the District.

CITY COUNCIL DATE: November 21, 2013

ACTION:

ORDINANCE READINGS: 1ST 2ND 3RD

ORDINANCE NUMBER:

CASE MANAGER: Alyson McGee

PHONE: 974-7801

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION: Judges Hill Neighborhood Association

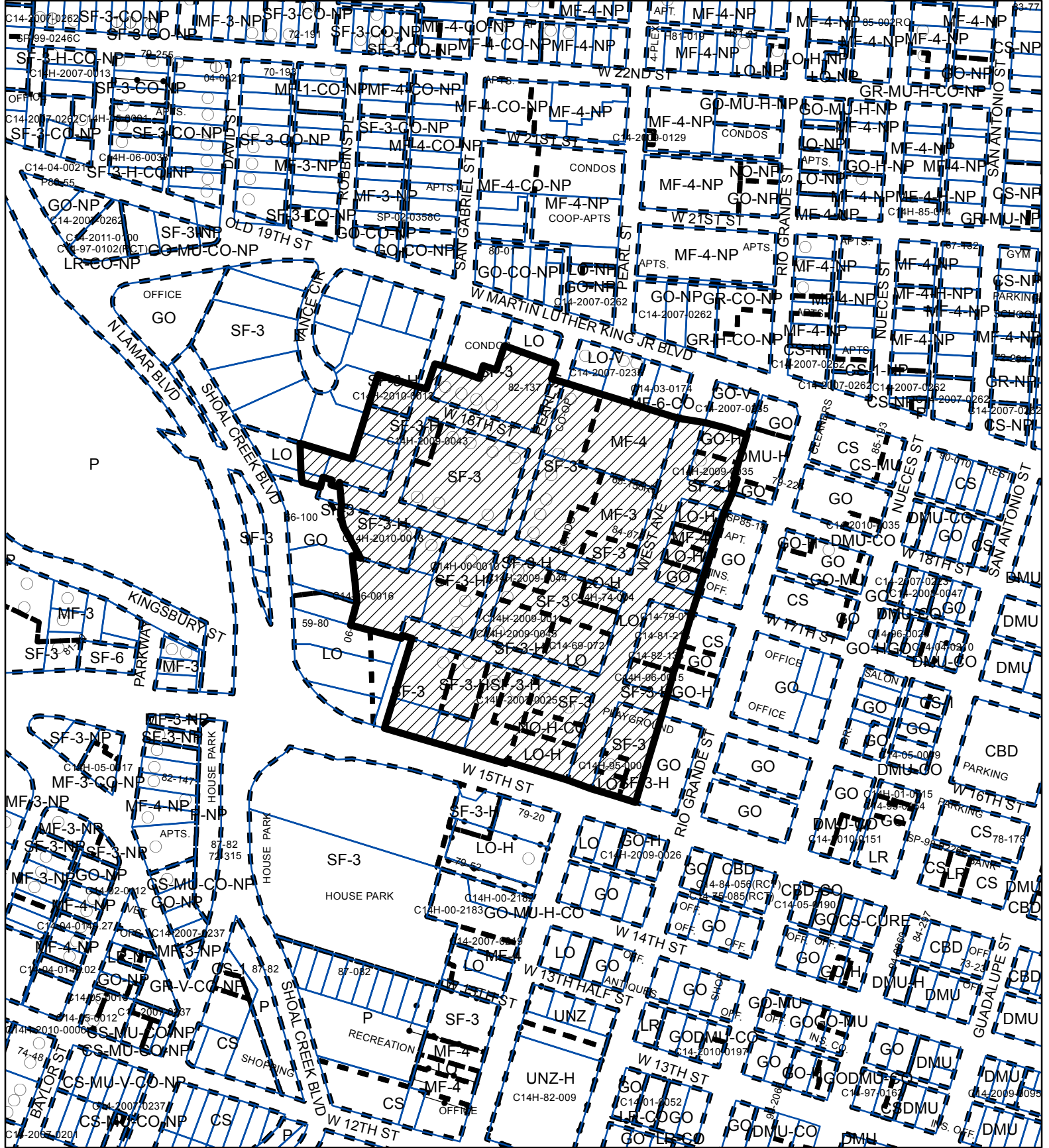
BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The proposed Old Judges Hill Historic District nomination is complete and meets or exceeds all ordinance requirements. Please see attached nomination form.

PARCEL NOS.: See attached list of properties.





LEGAL DESCRIPTION: See attached list of properties.

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: See attached list of properties.



HISTORIC ZONING

ZONING CASE#: C14H-2013-0005

-  N
-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 400'

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 CTM for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.

