

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
JULY 28, 2014
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
HDP-2014-0569
1902 NEW YORK AVENUE

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1915 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story, hipped-roof, wing-and-gable plan frame house with the projecting bay having a hipped roof; stone veneer has been applied to the front of the projecting bay; partial-width independent porch on turned wood posts; single 1:1 fenestration.

RESEARCH

The house appears to have been built in 1915. The first occupant of the house was Thomas Bunton, an African-American barber who worked for John H. Brewer, an African-American barber who had his shop at 505 Brazos Street. Thomas Bunton lived here until around 1917, when he and his wife, Alice, moved to 421 E. 6th Street, the location of Bunton's own barber shop. Oscar Green, a laborer, and his wife, Millie, are listed in the 1918 city directory as the occupants of the house. From around 1919 to around 1954, the house was owned and occupied by Douglas and Bettie Reed. Douglas Reed was born near Smithville, Texas, and was a farm laborer in Bastrop County before moving to Austin. He is listed as a farmer in the 1920 city directory, and the 1920 U.S. Census shows that he and Bettie owned this house. He was listed as a farm laborer. He died in 1922; there was no obituary in the Austin newspapers. Bettie Reed continued to live in this house until the mid-1950s with several of her children, including a daughter named Magnolia, who eventually married Sam Watkins, a concrete and masonry worker. Sam and Magnolia Watkins lived here until their deaths in the 1970s. The house then became a rental unit for a number of years, and then was occupied by Margie Butler, a daughter of Sam and Magnolia Watkins. The house has been in the same family since 1919.

STAFF COMMENTS

The house is listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984) but without a priority for research. There is no indication of when the stone veneer was applied to the front of the house.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Encourage the applicant to consider alternatives to demolition – especially adaptive re-use and rehabilitation of the existing structure. This house dates from 1915, and has a long association with a single family in East Austin. The house is also stylistically integral to the context of this area of East Austin. Unless the house is structurally unsound, staff strongly recommends preservation of the house and adaptive re-use. Otherwise, recommend relocation over demolition, but release the permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package consisting of photographs of all elevations, a dimensioned sketch plan, and a narrative history, for archiving at the Austin History Center.

LOCATION MAP



-  N
-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

CASE#: HDP-2014-0569
Address: 1902 NEW YORK AVENUE



1" = 200'

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.

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1902 New York Avenue
ca. 1915



OCCUPANCY HISTORY
1902 New York Avenue

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
By City Historic Preservation Office
July, 2014

1992	Margie Butler, renter Employed by the IRS
1985-86	Margarite Jaimes, renter Laborer, Fidelity Construction (not listed in the directory)
1981	No return
1977	Magnolia Watkins, owner Widow, Sam H. Watkins No occupation listed
1973	Sam H. and Magnolia Watkins, owners Construction worker
1968	Sam H. and Magnolia Watkins, owners Construction worker
1962	Sam H. and Magnolia Watkins, owners Mason

1959	Sam H. and Magnolia Watkins, owners Mason
1955	Sam H. and Magnolia Watkins, owners Laborer
1952	Betty Reed, owner No occupation listed NOTE: Sam H. and Magnolia Watkins are not listed in the directory.
1949	Betty Reed, owner No occupation listed
1947	Bettie Reed, owner No occupation listed
1944-45	Bettie Reed, owner No occupation listed
1941	Bettie Reed, owner Domestic
1939	Bettie Reed, owner Domestic Also listed is Rosalie Reed; no occupation stated.
1937	Bettie Reed, owner Domestic, Kate Baldwin, 401 W. 39 th Street. NOTE: Kate Baldwin had no occupation listed in the directory.
1935	Bettie Reed, owner No occupation listed
1932-33	Bettie Reed, owner No occupation listed
1930-31	Bettie Reed (colored), owner No occupation listed
1929	Bettie Reed (colored), owner No occupation listed
1927	Bettie Reed (colored), owner No occupation listed
1924	Bettie Reed (colored), owner No occupation listed
1922	Douglas and Bettie Reed (colored), owners No occupation listed Also listed is Douglas Reed, Jr., no occupation stated.
1920	Douglas and Bettie Reed (colored), owners

Farmer
Also listed is Douglas Reed, Jr., a laborer.

- 1918 Oscar and Millie Green (colored)
Laborer
NOTE: Douglas and Bettie Reed are not listed in the directory.
NOTE: Thomas and Alice Bunton are listed at 421 E. 6th Street, where he had his barber shop.
- 1916 Thomas Bunton (colored)
Barber, John H. Brewer (colored), 505 Brazos Street.
- 1914 The address is not listed in the directory.
NOTE: Thomas Bunton lived at 1811 San Jacinto Boulevard; he was a barber for John H. Brewer, 505 Brazos Street.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

Douglas and Bettie Reed (ca. 1919 – ca. 1922)

Bettie Reed (ca. 1919 – ca. 1954)

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Bettie Reed as the owner of this house, which was worth \$800. Bettie Reed was a 73-year old Texas-born widow with no occupation listed. With her lived her son, Douglas, 35, a construction laborer, her grand-daughter, Gertrude Reed, 19, a lunch room helper at the NYA Project, and another grand-daughter, Margie Barton, 7. According to his 1966 death certificate, Douglas Reed, Jr. had been born in Smithville, Texas, and his mother's name was Bettie Barfield Reed. He had been a janitor at the University of Texas.

Douglas and Bettie Reed, Sr. appear in the 1920 U.S. Census as the owners of this house. Both were listed as African-American, and both were 53 years old. Both had been born in Texas to Mississippi-born parents. Douglas Reed was listed as a farm laborer. Bettie Reed had no occupation listed. Both could read and write. They had 5 children: Lee, 22; Bennie, 20; Douglas, 18; Littie, 15; and Magnolia, 7. All the children had been born in Texas; none had an occupation listed.

Douglas and Bettie Reed appear in the 1900 U.S. Census for Bastrop County, Texas, where they lived in a rural area near Smithville. Douglas Reed was a farmer living on a rented farm.

Douglas Reed died in Travis County on October 9, 1922; there was no obituary in the Austin newspapers.

DOUGLAS REED

Funeral for Douglas Reed will be Friday at 11 a.m. at King-Tears Mortuary Chapel. Burial will be in Evergreen Cemetery.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Maxie Reed; five daughters, Mrs. Ruth Overton, Miss Marvin Reed, Miss Lettie Reed, Miss Sophia Reed, and Miss Sophelia Reed; five sons, James A. Reed, Franklin Reed, Mack E. Reed, Douglas Reed Jr. and Tommie Joe Reed; two brothers, Lee Reed and Benjamin Reed; three sisters, Mrs. Nora Flemings, Mrs. Lillie Mae Falls, and Mrs. Magnolia Watkins; mother, Mrs. Bettie Reed; and six grandchildren.

Obituary of Douglas Reed, Jr.
Austin American, April 8, 1966

MRS. BETTIE REED

Funeral for Mrs. Bettie Reed, 1902 New York Avenue, will be Sunday at 3 p.m., at Church of God In Christ, with Pastor B. J. Wood officiating. Burial will be in Evergreen Cemetery under direction of Fuller Sheffield Funeral Service.

Survivors include three daughters, Mrs. Elmore Flippin, Austin, Mrs. Lillie Mae Henry, San Bernardino, Calif.; Mrs. Magnolia Watkins, Austin; two sons, Lee Reed, and Bennie Reed, Austin; 14 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren; three sisters, Mrs. Rosetta Deary, Los Angeles, Mrs. Amanda Miller, Smithville, and Mrs. Ida Leonard, Port Lavaca; and brother, Curtis Barefield, Smithville.

Pallbearers will be Albert Walker, Bobbie J. Loving, Douglas W. Dillard, Sherman Patton and Frank West.

Obituary of Bettie Reed
Austin American-Statesman, May 25, 1968

Samuel H. and Magnolia Watkins (ca. 1954 – ca. 1978)

Magnolia Watkins was the daughter of Douglas and Bettie Reed. Her husband, Sam Watkins, died in 1976. His death certificate indicates that he was the son of Alexander Watkins and Metra Bremond, and that he had been born in Travis County. He was in the concrete and masonry trade. Sam and Magnolia Watkins' daughter was Margie Butler, who is listed as the occupant of this house in the 1992 city directory.

WATKINS, Samuel H., 75,
1902 New York, died Monday.
Services 10 a.m. Wednesday
at King-Tears Mortuary.
Survivors: wife, Mrs. Magnolia
Watkins of Austin; daughter,
Mrs. Margie B. Butler of Austin;
sisters, Mrs. Alice Nickerson,
Mrs. Bennie V. Jenkins, both
of Los Angeles, Calif.; brother,
Elbert Watkins of Houston;
three grandchildren.

Obituary of Samuel H. Watkins
Austin American-Statesman, June 30, 1976

WATKINS, Magnolia, 65, 1902 New
York St., died Saturday. Services
3 p.m. Monday at King-Tears
Mortuary. Burial, Evergreen
Cemetery. Survivors: daughter,
Mrs. Margie Butler of Austin;
sisters, Mrs. Elnora Flippins
of San Antonio, Mrs. Lillie Henry
of San Bernardino, Calif.; brother,
Lee Reed of Austin; three
grandchildren.

Obituary of Magnolia Watkins
Austin American-Statesman, November 12, 1978

Betty Reed *Lot* 1902 New York Ave.
36 *2* *Blk* 1 58 B
10

Box addition to rear of residence.

42462-11-17-49

\$75.00

S. H. Watkins