

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 23, 2015
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
HDP-2014-1083
1611 WALNUT AVENUE**

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1925 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story, rectangular-plan, pyramidal-roofed frame Cumberland-style house with a full-width inset porch on ornamental metal supports; double front doors; single 1:1 fenestration.

RESEARCH

The house appears to have been built in 1925 by an African-American couple, Lonnie C. and Senia Coleman. Lonnie C. Coleman grew up in Austin and was involved in the concrete paving business for his entire working life. He was a cement finisher or a concrete worker for the City Street and Bridge Department for many years. After his death in 1948, his widow, Senia, continued to live in this house until her death in 1983. Senia Coleman was a cook for a private family in the late 1920s, and in her later years, she was a maid and domestic worker. According to neighborhood sources, “Aunt Senie” was a grandmotherly type who opened her house and yard to the children of the neighborhood, providing them with a safe place to play after school until their parents got home from work.

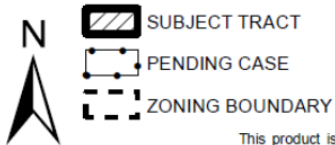
STAFF COMMENTS

The house is listed as a medium priority for preservation in the Chestnut Neighborhood Historic Resources Survey (2001) with the notation that the priority could be upgraded with additional historical information about the house.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Either postpone to February 23, 2015 or initiate a historic zoning case to enable the applicant to consider alternatives to demolition. This house is very typical of vernacular housing in the neighborhood and has a 60-year history with the family who built the house – the head of the household was a concrete worker for the City Street and Bridge Department and his wife did domestic work – both typical occupations for African-American families in the early 20th century. The house has architectural and historical value and should be preserved and rehabilitated, if feasible.

LOCATION MAP



CASE#: HDP-2014-1083
Address: 1611 WALNUT AVENUE



1" = 200'

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1611 Walnut Avenue
ca. 1925



OCCUPANCY HISTORY 1611 Walnut Avenue

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
By City Historic Preservation Office
January, 2015

1992	Bertha M. Thomas, renter No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that Bertha M. Thomas was a new resident at this address.
1985-86	L.J. Queen, renter No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that L.J. Queen was a new resident at this address.
1981	Senia M. Coleman, owner Retired
1977	Senia M. Coleman, owner Widow, L.C. Coleman Retired
1973	Senia M. Coleman, owner Widow, L.C. Coleman Retired
1968	Senia M. Coleman, owner Widow, L.C. Coleman No occupation listed
1962	Senia M. Coleman, owner Widow, L.C. Coleman No occupation listed
1959	Senia M. Coleman, owner Widow, L.C. Coleman No occupation listed
1955	Senia M. Coleman (not listed as the owner) No occupation listed
1952	Senia M. Coleman, owner Maid
1949	Senia M Coleman, owner Domestic worker
1947	Lonnie C. and Senia Coleman, owners Cement finisher
1944-45	Lonnie C. and Senia Coleman, owners No occupation listed

1941	Lonnie C. and Senia Coleman, owners Concrete finisher, City Street and Bridge Department
1939	Lonnie C. and Senia Coleman, owners Cement worker
1937	Lonnie C. and Senia Coleman, owners Cement worker
1935	Lonnie C. and Senia Coleman, owners Concrete worker, City Street and Bridge Department
1932-33	Lonnie C. and Senia Coleman, owners Laborer, City Street and Bridge Department
1930-31	Lonnie C. and Senia Coleman (colored), owners Concrete worker
1929	Lonnie C. and Senia Coleman (colored), owners Lonnie: Cement finisher Senia: Cook, Mrs. Jennie R. Granberry, 910 W. 6 th Street. NOTE: Mrs. Granberry was a stenographer for the State Fire Insurance Department.
1927	Lonnie C. and Senia Coleman (colored), owners No occupation listed
1924	The address is not listed in the directory. Lonnie and Senia Coleman are listed at 1811 San Jacinto Boulevard; he had no occupation listed.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

Lonnie and Senia Coleman (ca. 1925 – ca. 1983)

Lonnie Coleman appears in the 1900 U.S. Census for Austin as the 14-year old son of Joe and Bettie Coleman who lived at 1238 Alamo Street. Lonnie was listed as being in school and could read and write. His father had been born in Virginia, and was a day laborer who could read but could not write. His mother had been born in Arkansas, and was a washerwoman. She could not read nor write. The 1910 U.S. Census shows Lonnie and a woman named Emma Coleman living at 1608 Washington Avenue in Austin. He was 24; she was 23. He was a laborer in a paving business. She had no occupation listed.

Lonnie Coleman's World War I draft registration card shows that he was born January 6, 1886, and was living at 1615 Hackberry Street with his mother, Lizzie Coleman. He was a laborer.

Lonnie and Senia Coleman appear as the owners of this house (which is listed as 1609 Walnut Avenue) in the 1930 U.S. Census. The house was worth \$800, and thus more than any of the surrounding houses. Lonnie Coleman was 42, had been born in Texas, and was a cement finisher in building construction. Senia Coleman was 37, had been born in Texas, and was a cook for a private family. They had a son, James, 12, who had been born in Texas and had no occupation listed.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Lonnie and Senia Coleman as the owners of this house, which is now listed as 1611 Walnut Avenue. The house was worth \$1,800, again more than any of the

surrounding houses. Lonnie Coleman is listed as a laborer for the city; Senia Coleman had no occupation listed. James Coleman is not listed with them.

Lonnie C. Coleman died July 20, 1948 in Austin. There was no obituary in the Austin newspapers.

**COLEMAN, Senia Mae,
97, of Austin, died Thurs-
day. Services 2 p.m. Mon-
day at Grant Chapel A.M.E.
Church. Burial, Evergreen
Cemetery. (King-Tears)**

Obituary of Senia Coleman
Austin American-Statesman, March 6, 1983

	Lonnie Coleman	1611 Walnut Ave.
38	32	4 1 -

frame addn. to rear of res.

19844 - 6-24-40

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Building permit to Lonnie Coleman for a frame addition to the rear of the house (1940)