

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 22, 2016
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
HDP-2016-0021
1903 S.L. DAVIS AVENUE**

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1931 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story, rectangular-plan, front-gabled, frame house with a full-width front-gabled and shed-roofed independent porch on ornamental metal supports; double front doors in the Cumberland style; replacement windows on the front façade, including a tri-partite window to the left of the double front doors; other windows are single 1:1.

RESEARCH

This house appears to date from around 1931, when Alex and Ida Thomas moved into it. Alex Davis had been married before, and lived at an earlier house on this same site before building this house, but there are no building or utility permits to confirm the date of construction. However, the Sanborn map of 1922 shows a different house on this site, and the maps of 1935 and 1962 show this house.

Alex Thomas was born in Travis County and worked as a laborer for the City Street and Bridge Department until his death in 1945. His widow, Ida, continued to live in this house until around 1960. Ida Thomas converted the house to a duplex in the mid-1950s, and it remains a duplex rental unit today. Tenants include laborers, a nurse, and people who worked at Travis State School.

STAFF COMMENTS




The house is not listed in any City survey.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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. The house has neither the architectural nor the historical significance to warrant individual designation as a historic landmark.

LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 208'

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HDP-2016-0021
1903 SL DAVIS

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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1903 S.L. Davis Avenue
ca. 1931



OCCUPANCY HISTORY
1903 S.L. Davis Avenue

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
By City Historic Preservation Office
February, 2016

1992	A:	Beatrice Tapia, renter Maid, Travis State School
	B:	Susana Tobias, renter No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that Susana Tobias was a new resident at this address. NOTE: The address is listed in city directories as 1903 Washington Avenue, the former name for S.L. Davis Avenue.
1985-86	A:	No return
	B:	No return
1981	A:	Felix and Mary Hernandez, renters Employed by the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation. NOTE: The directory indicates that Felix and Mary Hernandez were new residents at this address.
	B:	Delores Harris, renter Employed by Travis State School

1977	<p>A: Ethal Marshall, renter No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that Ethal Marshall was a new resident at this address.</p> <p>B: Delores Harris, renter Employed by Travis State School</p>
1973	<p>A: Willie Moore, renter No occupation listed</p> <p>B: Vacant</p>
1968	<p>A: Mildred Alexander, renter Nurse, Seton Hospital</p> <p>B: James and Aubrey Perkins, renters Laborer, Jackson Tire Company, 201 W. 2nd Street.</p>
1962	<p>A: Vacant</p> <p>B: Raymond and Loretta Miller, owners No occupation listed</p>
1959	<p>A: Ida B. Thomas, renter No occupation listed</p> <p>B: Raymond and Loretta Miller, owners No occupation listed</p>
1955	<p>Ida B. Thomas, owner Widow, Alex Thomas No occupation listed</p> <p>A: Mittie Young, renter Maid, Clarence and Henrietta Cline, 1401 Hardouin Avenue. NOTE: Clarence Cline was a professor at the University of Texas.</p> <p>B: Forest and Evangeline Barns, renters Porter, City Water Department</p>
1952	<p>Ida Thomas, owner Maid</p>
1949	<p>Ida Thomas, owner No occupation listed</p>
1947	<p>Alex Thomas, owner No occupation listed NOTE: Ida Thomas is not listed in the directory.</p>
1944-45	<p>Alex and Ida Thomas, owners Laborer</p>
1941	<p>Alex and Ida Thomas, owners Laborer, City Street and Bridge Department</p>
1939	<p>Alex and Ida Thomas, owners No occupation listed</p>

- 1937 Alex and Ida Thomas, owners
Laborer, City Street and Bridge Department
- 1935 Alex and Ida Thomas, owners
Laborer, City Street and Bridge Department
- 1932-33 Alex and Ida Thomas, owners
Laborer, City Street and Bridge Department

NOTE: It is believed that this house dates from around 1931, as the Sanborn map of 1922 shows a different, earlier house on this site. It may be that when Alex and Ida Thomas first appear in the city directories, that this was the house that they built. However, there are no building or utility permits to confirm this construction date. The following city directory listings are believed to relate to the earlier house.

- 1930-31 Edward and Gertrude Thomas (colored), renters
No occupation listed
NOTE: Alex and Ida Thomas are not listed in the directory.
- 1929 Alex and Gertrude Thomas (colored), renters
No occupation listed
NOTE: Edward Thomas is not listed in the directory.
- 1927 Madison and Cordie Brown (colored), renters
No occupation listed
NOTE: Alex Thomas is not listed in the directory.
- 1924 Jerome and Ida Hill (colored), owners
Helper, Southern Pacific Railroad Shops
NOTE: There is an Alec E. Thomas listed at 1612 Washington Avenue; he was married to a woman named Eliza and was a laborer for the City Street Department.
- 1922 Jerome and Ida Hill (colored), owners
Laborer, Houston and Texas Central Railway shops.
NOTE: Alex and Eliza Thomas are listed at 1612 Washington Avenue; he was a laborer for the city.
- 1920 Louis M. Cofield (colored), renter
Laborer
- 1918 Lewis M. Cofield (colored), renter
Driver
- 1916 Minnie Mason (colored)
Laundress
NOTE: Lewis M. Cofield is listed at 1901 E. 16th Street; he was a driver.
- 1914 Alexander Thomas (colored)
Laborer
]
- 1912-13 James Parker (colored)
Laborer

1910-11 Virgil Oliver (colored)
Driver

1909-10 The address is not listed in the directory.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Alex and Ida Thomas (ca. 1931 – ca. 1960)

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Alex and Ida Thomas as the owners of this house, which was worth \$900. Alex Thomas was 54, had been born in Texas, and was a laborer for the City Street and Bridge Department. Ida Thomas was 39, had been born in Texas, and was a maid for a private family. With them lived a niece, Addie M. Jones, 27, a maid for a private family, and Addie's 2 children: Bobbie, 7; and Raymond, 3; as well as another grand-niece, Willie L. Hannibal, 9; and a grand-nephew, Ernest Hannibal, 5. All of the children had been born in Texas.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Alex and Gertrude Thomas as the renters of this house. Alex Thomas was 23, had been born in Texas, and was a laborer in the gas plant. Gertrude Thomas was 26, had been born in Texas, and was a cook for a private family. Also in the house were Gertrude's siblings: James Stewart, Jr., 21, a laborer in the gas plant; Helen M. Stewart, 16; Rosie A. Stewart, 14; Charles Stewart, 13; and Grace Stewart, 11. Gertrude's father, James Stewart, 51, was also living in the house. He was also a laborer at the gas plant. A cousin, John Algard, 21, also worked at the gas plant.

Alex Thomas died August 7, 1945 in Austin. There was no obituary in the Austin newspapers. According to his death certificate, he was living at this house at the time of his death. He was born in Travis County in 1894, and worked as a laborer in city pavements.

Ida Thomas died in 1964 in Austin. She was born in 1895 in Travis County, and was a widow at the time of her death. She was a domestic in private homes, and listed this address as her permanent address.

MRS. IDA THOMAS
Mrs. Ida Thomas passed away in a local nursing home Saturday. Funeral for Mrs. Thomas will be Tuesday at 4 p.m. at Grant Chapel A.M.E. Church with Rev. L. C. Young officiating. Burial will be in Evergreen Cemetery under direction of King - Tears Mortuary.

Obituary of Ida Thomas
Austin American, December 28, 1964

MRS. IDA B. THOMAS

Funeral for Mrs. Ida B. Thomas, life-long Travis County resident, will be Tuesday at 4 p.m. at Grant Chapel A.M.E. Church with Rev. L. C. Young officiating. Burial will be in Evergreen Cemetery under direction of King-Tears Mortuary.

Survivors include a daughter, Mrs. Alta B. Collins; brother, George Bunton, and stepson, Alex Thomas Jr., all of Austin.

Pallbearers will be S. J. Jamison, Allen Harrold, A. B. Purcell, Allen Lee, L. W. White and Leroy Martin.

Funeral notice for Ida Thomas
Austin American, December 29, 1964



The 1922 Sanborn map shows the earlier house on this site.



The 1935 Sanborn map shows the current house. The 1962 Sanborn map shows the same configuration.