

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION**  
**PERMITS IN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS**  
**SEPTEMBER 26, 2016**  
**NRD-2016-0072**  
**1808 Niles Road**  
**Old West Austin**

**PROPOSAL**

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Demolish a ca. 1936 house and construct a new house.

**ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORY OF THE EXISTING HOUSE**

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The existing house is a one-story, rectangular-plan, front-gabled frame house which had limestone veneer prior to 2011, when it was removed. The house has a partial-width, inset porch under the projecting front gable, and single and paired 6:6 Colonial Revival-style windows. City building permits indicate that an addition was made to the front of the house in 1974. The house retains little of its architectural integrity.

The house was built in 1936; the first owners and occupants were Ernest and May Dell Rosner, who lived here until around 1943. Ernest Rosner was the son of Charles and Edith Rosner, who had a department store specializing in women's clothing on Congress Avenue for many years. However, Ernest did not go into the family business, and instead became an investigator for the Texas Old Age Assistance Commission, and later an insurance agent for the Southland Life Insurance Company. Through the 1940s, the house was the home of Lawrence and Elizabeth Worthington. Lawrence Worthington was a public school teacher from Nebraska who was working for the University of Texas while he and Elizabeth lived in this house. From the late 1940s through the early 1950s, the house was owned and occupied by James and Della Mae Leonard. James Leonard was a painter. He and Della Mae were from Dallas, and eventually moved back there. The house was rented, then owned by a pair of high school teacher in the late 1950s through the late 1960s. In the early 1970s, the house was owned and occupied by a savings and loan executive, who built the front addition onto the house. The house has been occupied by the current owner since the early 1990s.

**PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS**

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The applicant proposes the demolition of the existing house and construction of a new one-story house with a front-facing two-story garage. The proposed house will have stucco siding and a flat roof. Fenestration in the house will be metal-framed, with frosted glass in the front windows.

**STANDARDS FOR REVIEW**

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The Old West Austin National Register Historic District has no design guidelines for new construction. General design principles for historic districts encourage compatibility with the scale, massing, materials, and fenestration patterns of contributing houses.

The proposed house, while compatible in terms of size and height, does not conform to the general design principles for historic districts in that it has a flat roof, stucco siding (with is not typical of this section of the historic district, and has a two-car garage on the front of the house, which also does not comport with general design guidelines for street appeal. Staff recognizes the limitations of the narrowness of this lot, but believes that there could be an alternative to a projecting two-car garage on the street. The frosted glass in the only front-facing windows also does not comport with general design principles in that it projects an opaque "face" to the street rather than clear glass fenestration which is typical of the contributing houses within the district.

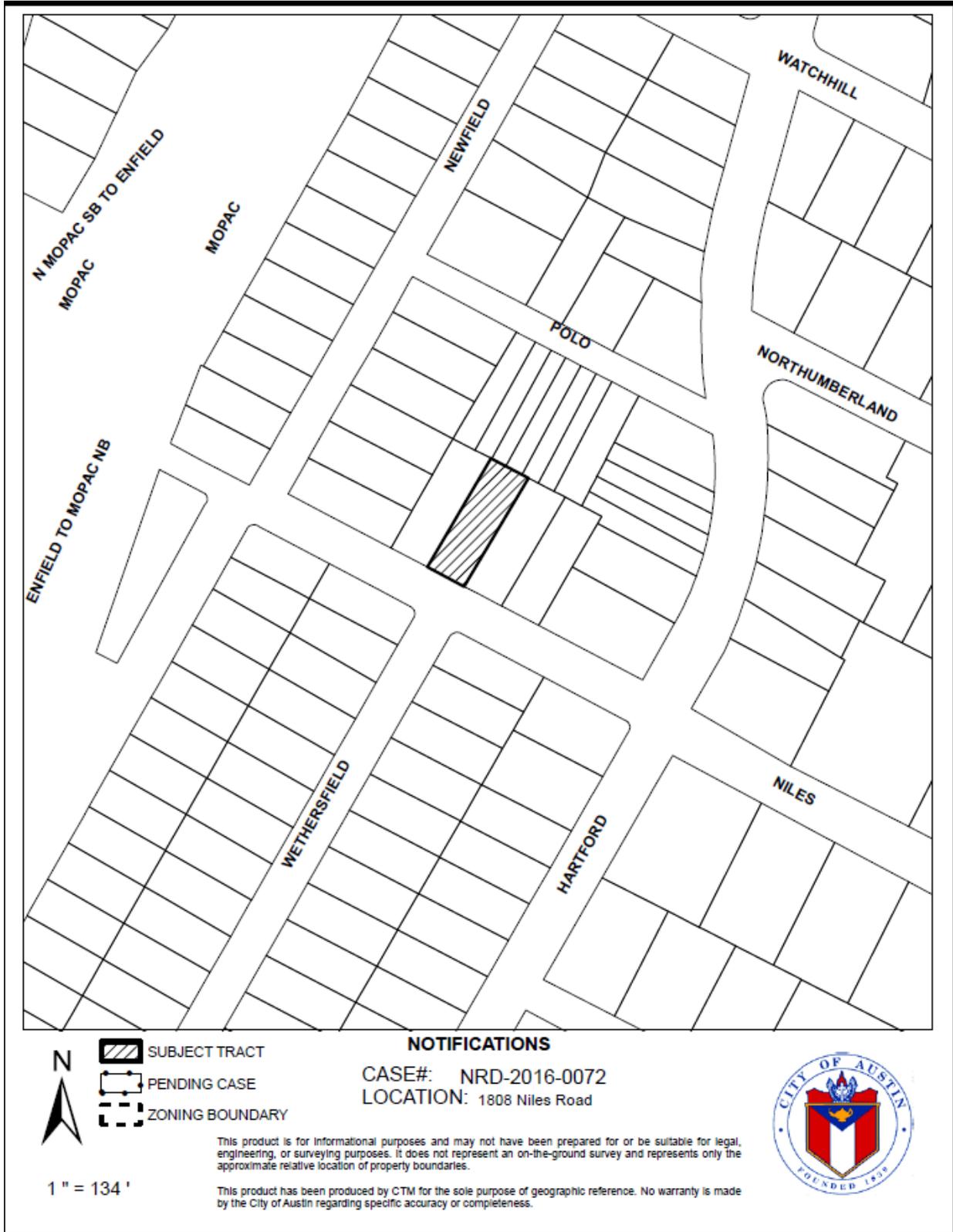
**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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The existing house is not contributing to the historic district.

Because this review is only advisory, staff must recommend release of the permit, but recommends that the applicant re-consider the placement of the two-car garage from projecting from the front of the house and the frosted glass in the only front-facing window in favor of a more compatible or traditional fenestration treatment. This house will appear more fortress-like than welcoming in a historic district that is characterized by open front facades and large areas of clear glass windows.

LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

**NOTIFICATIONS**

CASE#: NRD-2016-0072  
LOCATION: 1808 Niles Road



1" = 134'

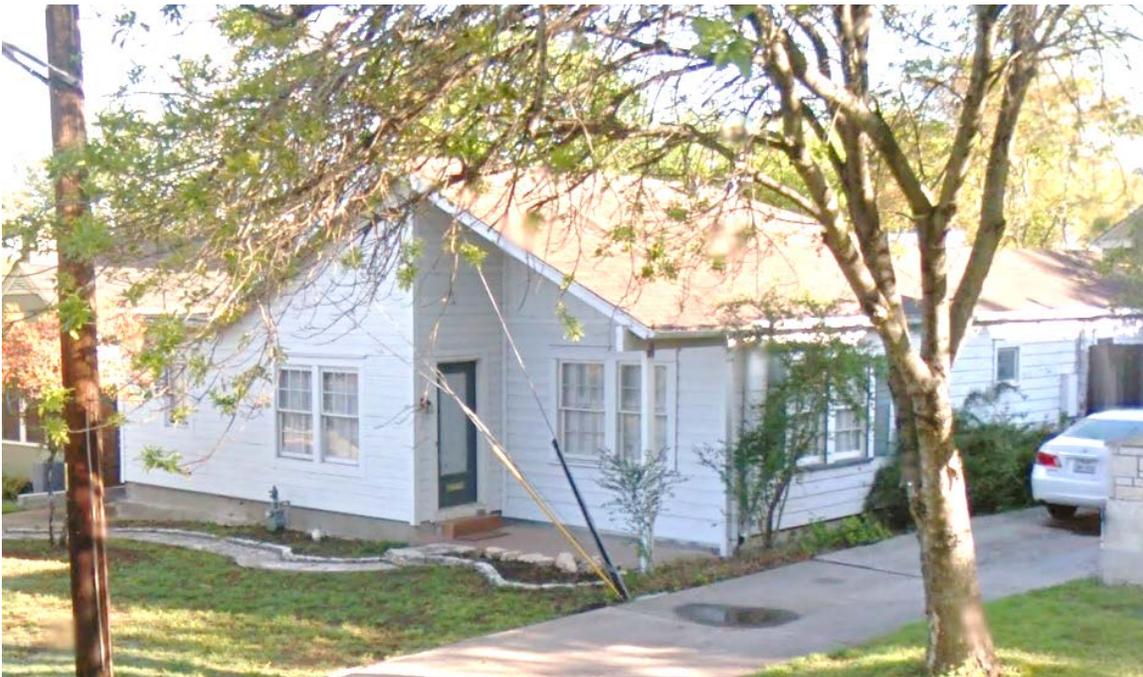
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1808 Niles Road  
ca. 1936



View of the house in May, 2011 before the limestone veneer was removed



More current view of the house with the limestone veneer removed

## OCCUPANCY HISTORY 1808 Niles Road

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

- 1992            Love Nance, renter  
Proprietor, Apple Annie's, café, MBank Tower.
- 1985-86        Steven M. Hodges, renter  
Real estate
- 1981            Joseph W. Berend, renter  
No occupation listed  
NOTE: The directory indicates that Joseph W. Berend was a new resident at this address.
- 1977            Alex, III and Janie MacDougall, owners  
Vice-president, Lamar Savings Association (multiple locations)
- 1973            Alex, III and Janie MacDougall, owners  
Assistant vice-president, 1<sup>st</sup> Federal Savings and Loan Association, 11<sup>th</sup> and San Jacinto Streets.  
NOTE: The directory indicates that Alex and Janie MacDougall were new residents at this address.
- 1968            Guinn and Norine Caruthers, owners  
Teacher, public schools
- 1965            Guinn and Norine Caruthers, owners  
Guinn:            Teacher public schools  
Norine:            Employed by the public schools
- 1962            Guinn N. and Norine Caruthers, owners  
Guinn:            Teacher, public schools  
Norine:            Employed by the public schools
- 1959            Guinn N. and Norine Caruthers, renters  
Guinn:            Teacher, Travis High School  
Norine:            Teacher, Austin High School
- 1954            Ruby Perkins, renter  
No occupation listed  
NOTE: Guinn and Norine Caruthers are listed at 1810 Niles Road. He was a teacher at Travis High School; she was a teacher at Austin High School.
- 1952            James and Della Mae Leonard, owners  
Painter (office at the house)
- 1949            James and Della M. Leonard, owners  
Painter (office at the house)

- 1947            Lawrence G. and Elizabeth Worthington, owners  
Student, University of Texas
- 1944-45        Lawrence G. and Elizabeth Worthington, owners  
Employed by the University of Texas
- 1941            Ernest and Mae D. Rosner, owners  
Agent, Southland Life Insurance Company, 721 Brown Building, 708 Colorado  
Street.
- 1939            Ernest and Mary D. Rosner, owners  
Investigator, Texas Old Age Commission
- 1937            Ernest and May Dell Rosner, owners  
Investigator, Texas Old Age Assistance Commission
- 1935            The address is not listed in the directory.  
NOTE: Ernest Rosner (no wife listed) lived at 28 Enfield Road. He was with  
Charles Rosner, the proprietor of a department store at 504-08 Congress  
Avenue.

#### **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:**

##### **Ernest and May Dell Rosner (ca. 1936 – ca. 1943)**

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Ernest and May D. Rosner as the owners of this house, which was worth \$4,200. Ernest Rosner was 30, had been born in New York, and was a life insurance salesman for the Southland Life Insurance Company. May D. Rosner was 32, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed.. They had a daughter, May E., 1, who had been born in Texas.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Ernest Rosner as the 19-year old son of Charles and Edith Rosner, who owned their home worth \$15,000 at 28 Enfield Road. Ernest Rosner was born in New York and was an apprentice in retail dry goods. His father, Charles Rosner, 53, had been born in Krakow, Poland to Austrian parents, and was a retail dry goods merchant. His mother, Edith Rosner, 40, had been born in Missouri to a French father and an Ohio-born mother. She had no occupation listed. Charles and Edith Rosner had no other children listed with them.

Ernest Rosner's 1978 death certificate shows that he shot himself in the head on July 21, 1978. He was living at 6111-B Bullard Drive in Austin. He was born in 1910 in New York City and was a life insurance agent.

##### **Lawrence G. and Elizabeth Worthington (ca. 1943 – ca. 1948)**

The 1940 U.S. Census shows L.G. and Elizabeth Worthington renting a house in Mineral Wells, Texas. L.G. Worthington was 32, had been born in Nebraska, and was a public school teacher. Elizabeth Worthington was 34, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had no children listed with them. They had lived in Chadron, Nebraska in 1935.

Lawrence G. Worthington died in February, 1988 in Fort Worth.

##### **James and Della Mae Leonard (ca. 1948 – ca. 1953)**

The 1940 U.S. Census shows James and Della Mae Leonard living in a house they owned in Dallas, Texas. James Leonard was 52, had been born in Texas, and was a cabinet maker with his shop at his house. Della Mae Leonard was 50, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had a son, James R., 25, who had been born in Texas, and was a bottler at a whiskey distillery.

Della Mae Leonard died in 1972 in Dallas. She was a widow who had been born in 1888 in Texas and was a housewife. She was buried in Dallas.

**Guinn N. and Norine Caruthers (ca. 1957 – ca. 1970)**

Norine Caruthers died in 1994 in Paradise, Wise County, Texas. She was one day past her 86<sup>th</sup> birthday. Guinn Caruthers died in 1995 in Paradise, Wise County, Texas. He was 90 years old. Both are buried in the Paradise Cemetery.

Unless the Plumbing is done in strict accordance with City Ordinances, do not turn on the water.

See

**PERMIT FOR WATER SERVICE**      AUSTIN, TEXAS      No. 4430/53

M. S. G. Bryant      Address 1808 Miles Road

Plumber Plumber      Size of Tap 1/2"      Date 8-27-36

changed to 6" main and renewed with 3" cap. on 6922

Foreman's Report

Date of Connection	<u>8/29/36</u>
Size of Tap Made	<u>1/2"</u>
Size Service Made	<u>3/4"</u>
Size Main Tapped	<u>2"</u>
From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock	<u>9'</u>
From W. Prop. Line to Curb Cock	<u>29'</u>
Location of Meter	<u>out curb</u>
Type of Box	<u>cast</u>
Depth of Main in St.	<u>8 1/2"</u>
Depth of Service Line	<u>2"</u>
From Curb Cock to Tap on Main	<u>29'</u>
Checked by Engr. Dept.	<u>9-2-36</u>

No. Fittings	Size
2	3/4" Curb Cock
1	Elbow
1	St. Elbow
1	Bushing
20	1/2" Reducer
1	3/4" Pipe
1	Lead Comp.
1	2 1/2" Nipples
	Union
	Plug
	Tee
1	Stop
1	Box
1	Lid
	Valves
	Req. No. <u>11954</u>

Foreman's Signature BRYANT

**INDEXED**

Water service permit for this address (1936)

Connection Charge \$ 12.00 No 12887 ✓  
Application for Sewer Connection.

Austin, Texas, Oct. 7, 1936  
To the Superintendent of Sewer and Public Improvements,  
City of Austin, Texas

Sir:—  
I hereby make application for sewer connection and instructions on premises owned by S.S. Bryant at 1808 Niles Rd. Street, further described as lot 41, block \_\_\_\_\_, outlot \_\_\_\_\_, subdivision Enfield G., division \_\_\_\_\_, plat 90f, which is to be used as a res.

In this place there are to be installed 4 fixtures.

I agree to pay the City Sewer Department the regular ordinance charge.

Respectfully, Francis Kemmer

Stub Out \_\_\_\_\_  
Connected 12-4 1936 21 W. OF E. Pl.  
Size of Main 6" inches.  
Size of Service 4" inches. 2x 3/4"  
4' Feet Deep  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Feet from Property Line  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Feet from Curb Line

Inspected by A. Harrison  
Connection made by Covington ✓  
A-1173

Sewer connection application for this address (1936)

OWNER	Alexander MacDougall	ADDRESS	1808 Niles Rd.
PLAT	148	LOT	41
SUBDIVISION	Enfield G	BLK	
OCCUPANCY	extendin living room & bath		
BLD PERMIT #	142760	DATE	5-28-74
CONTRACTOR	owner	OWNERS ESTIMATE	\$5,000
WATER TAP REC #		NO. OF FIXTURES	
SEWER TAP REC #			
frm addn to front of res & remodel		- Board of Adjustments	

Building permit to Alexander MacDougall for the construction of a frame addition to the front of the house (1974)

A bedroom addition was permitted in 1984. The exterior limestone veneer was removed from the house in 2011.