

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
OCTOBER 24, 2016  
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS  
HDP-2016-0637  
1142 GUNTER STREET**

**PROPOSAL**

---

Demolish a ca. 1940 house.

**ARCHITECTURE**

---

One-story, rectangular-plan, side-gabled frame house with a central, partial-width, front-gabled independent porch on plain, square wood posts; single and paired 6:6 modern replacement windows; Craftsman-style front door.

**RESEARCH**

---

The house appears to have been built in 1940 by W. Howard and Ruth Kitchens, who lived here for the rest of their lives. W. Howard Kitchens was a native of Mississippi; Ruth Kitchens was a member of the pioneer Robertson family of eastern Travis County. W. Howard Kitchens worked as a carpenter when he and Ruth built this house; he then went to work as a watchman for E.M. Scarbrough & Sons, a department store at 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Congress Avenue. After W. Howard Kitchens' death in 1955, Ruth Kitchens continued to live in this house until her death in 1963.

Ruth Kitchens' sister and brother, Ernest and Irma Robertson, both unmarried, lived here after Ruth Kitchens passed away. Ernest Robertson is listed as a farmer. After he passed away in 1966, Irma Robertson continued to live here until her death in 1976. The Robertson siblings were the children of Walter and Margaret Hornsby Robertson; Margaret Hornsby Robertson was a descendant of the founders of Hornsby's Bend, one of the earliest settlements in Travis County.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

---

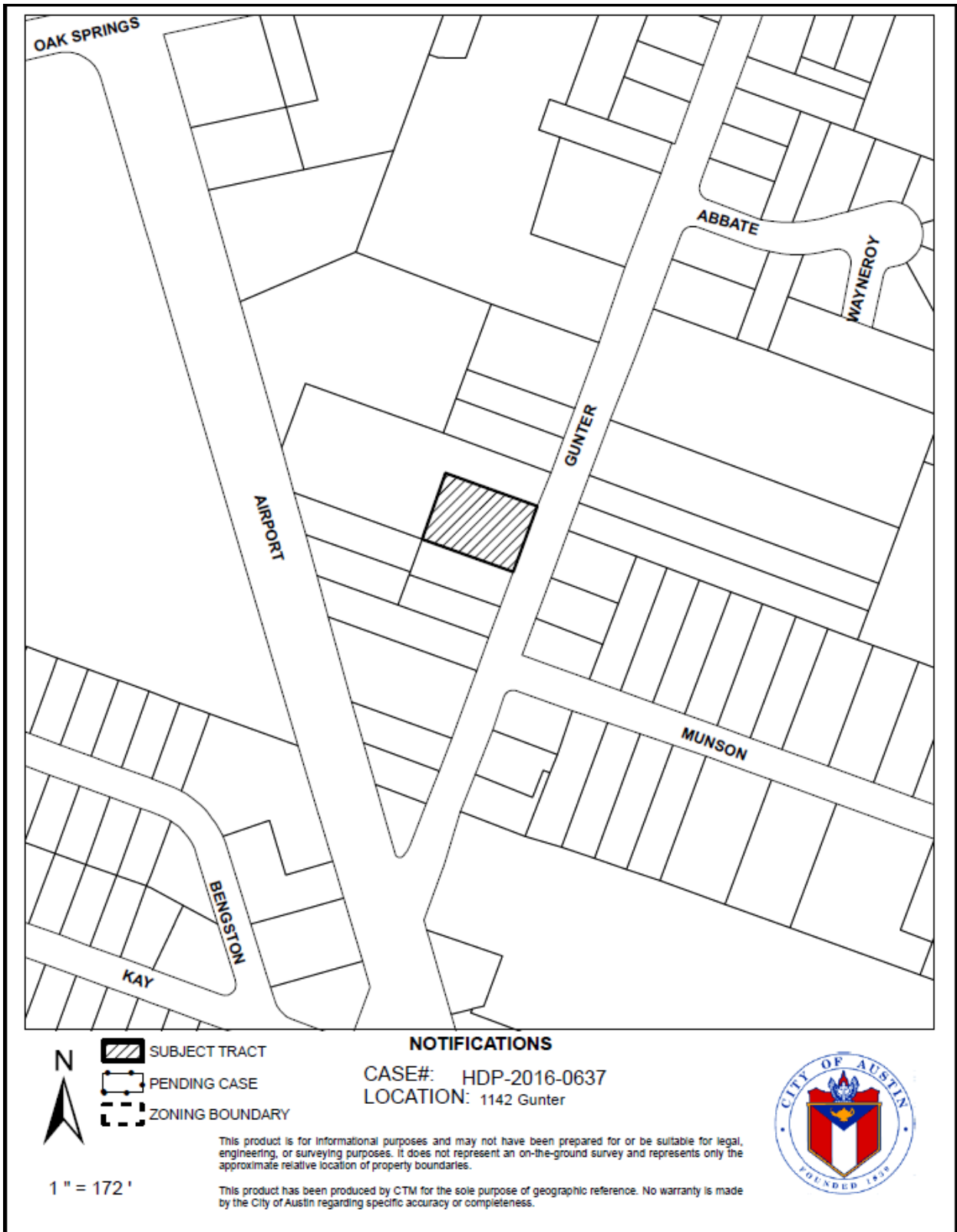
The house is not listed in any City survey to date.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

---

Encourage adaptive re-use, then 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. The house appears to have been recently rehabbed and should make an excellent candidate for relocation if adaptive-reuse is not feasible on this site.

LOCATION MAP



**NOTIFICATIONS**

CASE#: HDP-2016-0637  
LOCATION: 1142 Gunter



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.

1142 Gunter Street  
ca. 1940



OCCUPANCY HISTORY  
1142 Gunter Street

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

1992	Vacant
1985-86	Chester and Mary Duprey, renters Chester: Employed by Buda Foreign Car Service Mary: Vet tech, Austin Cat and Dog Hospital, 506 E. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1981	Chester and Mary Duprey, renters Chester: Employed by Buda Foreign Car Service Mary: Vet tech, Austin Cat and Dog Hospital, 506 E. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street. NOTE: Mary Duprey is listed in an apartment at 2200 Willow Creek Drive.
1977	Vacant
1973	Irma Robertson, owner Retired

- 1968 Irma Robertson, owner  
Retired
- 1965 Ernest L Robertson, owner  
Retired  
Also listed is Irma Robertson, retired.
- 1962 Ruth Kitchens, owner  
No occupation listed  
NOTE: Neither Ernest L. nor Irma Robertson are listed in the directory.
- 1959 Ruth Kitchens, owner  
No occupation listed
- 1955 William H. and Ruth H. Kitchens, owners  
No occupation listed
- 1952 William H. and Ruth Kitchens, owners  
Watchman, Scarbrough's, department store, 6<sup>th</sup> SStreet and Congress Avenue.
- 1949 William H. and Ruth Kitchens, owners  
Watchman, E.M. Scarbrough & Sons, department store, 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Congress Avenue.
- 1947 William H. and Ruth Kitchens, owners  
Watchman, E.M. Scarbrough & Sons, department store, 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Congress Avenue.
- 1944-45 William H. and Ruth Kitchens, owners  
Watchman, E.M. Scarbrough & Sons, department store, 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Congress Avenue.
- 1941 W. Howard and Ruth Kitchens, owners  
Carpenter  
NOTE: The house is listed as being on the west side of the street, 3 houses north of Munson Street.
- 1940 W. Howard and Ruth Kitchens, owners  
Carpenter  
NOTE: The house is listed as being on the west side of Gunter Street, 3 houses north of Munson Street.
- 1939 The house does not appear to be listed in the directory. There is a listing for a house that is on the west side of the street, 3 houses north of Munson Street, but it was owned by Clyde T. and Ora M. Ellison, who are listed in later directories as the owners and occupants of the house that became addressed as 1142 ½ Gunter Street.  
NOTE: W.H. and Ruth Kitchens are listed at 904 W. Gibson Street; he was a carpenter.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

**William H. and Ruth Kitchens (ca. 1940 – ca. 1963)**

His 1918 World War I draft registration card shows that William Howard Kitchens was living at Burnsville, Kemper County, Mississippi. He was born in 1884, and was a farmer for S.S. Neville at Scooba, Mississippi. He was tall, had a medium build, and had brown hair and eyes.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows William H. and Ruth Kitchens living in a rented house on the Austin and Fredericksburg Road in Hays County, Texas. William H. Kitchens was 45, had been born in Mississippi, and was the proprietor of a retail grocery store. Ruth Kitchens was 45, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had no children listed with them.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows W. Howard and Ruth Kitchens living in this house (which is unnumbered), on Gunter Street. They owned the house, which was worth \$1,800. W. Howard Kitchens was 55, had been born in Mississippi, and was a carpenter in building construction. Ruth Kitchens was 60, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed.

William Howard Kitchens' 1955 death certificate listed this address as his final residence. He had lived in Austin for 35 years and was a retired employee of E.M. Scarbrough & Sons. He had been born in Burnsville, Mississippi in 1884.

**WILLIAM HOWARD KITCHENS**  
 William Howard Kitchens, 71,  
 1142 Gunter, died in a local hos-  
 pital Monday. He had been a resi-  
 dent of Austin for the past 35 years.  
 He was a longtime employee of  
 E. M. Scarbrough & Sons, having  
 been retired this past June.  
 Survivors are his wife, one son,  
 John Howard Kitchens, Lubbock,  
 three brothers, H. W. Kitchens,  
 Austin; J. F. Kitchens, Vicksburg,  
 Miss., and E. G. Kitchens, Macon,  
 Miss.; one sister, Mrs. E. E.  
 Callahan, Meridian, Miss.  
 The body is at the Wood-Corley  
 Funeral Home pending funeral ar-  
 rangements.

Obituary of William Howard Kitchens  
 Austin American, September 13, 1955

**MRS. RUTH R. KITCHENS**

Mrs. Ruth R. Kitchens, 83, 1142 Gunter Street, died at her home Tuesday evening. Mrs. Kitchens had been a resident of Austin for the past 20 years and was a member of the Presbyterian Church and the Daughters of the Republic.

Survivors are a stepson, John Howard Kitchens of Lubbock; two sisters, Miss Irma Robertson and Mrs. Lydia R. McCullough, both of Austin and two brothers, Ernest L. Robertson of Austin and Duke H. Robertson of Hornsby Bend.

Funeral services are pending at the Weed-Corley Funeral Home.

Obituary of Ruth Kitchens  
Austin American, January 2, 1963

**MRS. RUTH R. KITCHENS**

Funeral services for Mrs. Ruth R. Kitchens, 83, of 1142 Gunter, will be held at Weed-Corley Funeral Home Thursday at 4 p.m. Rev. William A. Crosland Jr. will officiate and burial will be in Austin Memorial Park.

Pallbearers will be Claud McCullough, Joe L. Douglas, Clyde Kitchens, Carroll Kitchens, James Platt and Will Platt.

Funeral notice for Ruth Kitchens  
Austin American, January 3, 1963

**Ernest L. Robertson; Irma Robertson (ca. 1963 – ca. 1976)**

Ernest L. Robertson's 1917 World War I draft registration card shows that was born in Austin and was living on Rural Route 5 in Manor at the time of his registration. He was a self-employed farmer. He was of medium height and medium build, and had blue eyes and brown hair.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Ernest and Irma Robertson living with their parents, W.. and Margaret Robertson on the Austin and Bastrop Road in Travis County. Ernest Robertson was 32. Irma Robertson was 30. They had an older sister, Ruth (later Ruth Kitchens), and a younger brother, Duke. W.M. and Margaret Robertson owned their home; W.M. Robertson is listed as a farmer. Ernest Robertson is also listed as a farmer. All of the family members had been born in Texas.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows E.L. and Irma Robertson living in Justice Precinct 1 of Travis County in a house they owned, which was worth \$1,200. E.L. Robertson was 53, had been born in Texas, and was a farmer. Irma Robertson was 50, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed.

Ernest Robertson's 1966 death certificate shows that he was born in 1887 in Austin to Walter M. Robertson and Margaret A. Hornsby Robertson. He was living in this house at the time of his death. He was a retired farmer who had never married.

## **ERNEST L. ROBERTSON**

**Ernest L. Robertson, 79, of 1142 Gunter Street, died at the family residence Wednesday. He had been a lifetime resident of Travis County and was a retired farmer.**

**Survivors include two sisters, Mrs. Irma Robertson and Mrs. Claud McCullough, both of Austin; one brother, Duke Hornsby Robertson of Hornsby Bend; and two neices.**

**Funeral arrangements are pending at Weed-Corley Funeral Home.**

**ERNEST L. ROBERTSON**

Funeral services for Ernest L. Robertson will be held at 2 p.m. Friday at Weed-Corley Funeral Home. Rev. Cleve C. Wheelus will officiate and burial will be in Hornsby Bend Cemetery.

Pallbearers will be Joe L Douglas, Wayne Dyer, Carrol Kitchens, Emzy Barker, Will Platt and James Platt.

Funeral notice for Ernest L. Robertson  
Austin American, April 15, 1966

**ROBERTSON, Miss Irma, 87, of Austin, died Monday. Services 1:30 p.m. Wednesday at Weed-Corley Funeral Home. Survivors: sister, Mrs. Lydia McCullough of Austin; nieces, Mrs. Gerald W. (Leanora) Dyer of Austin, Mrs. Joe L. (Lois) Douglas of Houston.**

Obituary of Irma Robertson  
Austin American-Statesman, September 15, 1976



**WATER SERVICE PERMIT**

Serial 8-3-4 No. 21132

Austin, Texas

Received of MRS. RUTH KITCHENS Date 7-16-45

Address 1142 GUNTER

**INDEXED**

Amount SEE SPECIAL BILLING

Plumber		Size of Tap	
Date of Connection	<u>7-19-45</u>		
Size of Tap Made	<u>3/4"</u>		
Size Service Made	<u>3/4"</u>		
Size Main Tapped	<u>6"</u>		
From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock	<u>6'</u>		
From <del>Front</del> Prop. Line to Curb Cock	<u>18'</u>		
Location of Meter	<u>outside P.L.</u>		
Type of Box	<u>Lock</u>		
Depth of Main in St.	<u>5'</u>		
Depth of Service Line	<u>20"</u>		
From Curb Cock to Tap on Main	<u>7'</u>		
Checked by Engr. Dept.	<u>M.B. E. P-20-42</u>		
No. Fittings	Size		
1	Curb Cock <u>3/4"</u>		
1	Elbow <u>3/4"</u>		
1	St. Elbow <u>3/4" COP-16 170215</u>		
1	Bushing <u>3/4" 3/4" B-055 V</u>		
1	Reducer <u>1/2" 3/4" 1/2" V</u>		
2	Pipe <u>3/4" copper V</u>		
	Lead Comp.		
1	Nipples <u>5" 3/4" V</u>		
1	Union <u>3/4" cop. B 110216</u>		
1	Flag <u>3/4" COP. V</u>		
1	tee <u>1 1/4"</u>		
1	Stop <u>1 1/2" COP. V</u>		
1	Box <u>Lock</u>		
1	Lid <u>Lock</u>		
	Valves <u>W320-5P2</u>		
	Job No.		
	Req. No.		

INDEXED

Water service permit to Ruth Kitchens for this address (1945)

There was a demolition permit approved for this house in 1988.

Information provided by the agent for the applicant:

**1142 Gunter Street**

Gunter become a named street in 1940, possibly named for or by a state highway engineer Erin Gunter. (wife Jewel). The homes north of Munson Road were struck from the Robertson-McCulloch addition, Plat # 339 around that time. In the 40s, the address was shown "WS (West Side) 3 N. Gunter.

The house has enjoyed long term occupancy by only a few tenants during it's possible historic period.

1142 Gunter was purchased, and possibly constructed in 1940 by W. Howard Kitchens, a carpenter and long time employee of E.M. Scarbrough & Sons, a caucasian male, who lived in the house until his death in 1955. The house was left to his wife Ruth, who lived in the house until 1963.

In 1964 the home was purchased by Ernest Robertson, retired, and who was still shown living in the house as late as 1975.

**Timeline**

**1939** - Gunter Street under construction

**1940** - Home at 1142 Gunter Street constructed

**1941** - William Kitchens, a carpenter, and his wife Ruth, move into 1142 Gunter Street. Address initially listed as WS 3 N Gunter Street, signifying the 3rd lot north of Munson St on the west side of Gunter

**1955** - William Kitchens dies, leaving 1142 Gunter to Ruth Kitchens

**1963** - Home is vacant

**1964** - Ernest Robertson, retired, moves into 1142 Gunter

**1976** - Ernest Robertson still listed as sole occupant of 1142 Gunter

**1977** - Vacant

**1979** - Duprey Chester listed as sole occupant, later moves to Bastrop