



December 16, 2016

City of Austin Historic Landmark Commission  
PO Box 1088  
Austin, TX 78767

Re: 2506 Great Oaks Parkway

Dear Commissioners,

Mid Tex Mod, the nonprofit voice for the preservation of Central Texas' mid-century heritage, supports the initiation of historic zoning for the house at 2506 Great Oaks Parkway. Constructed in 1953 as part of the Great Oaks subdivision, it is an excellent example of a postwar, architect-designed and developer-built home. It is well over 50 years old and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association as outlined by the National Register of Historic Places and required by city code.

2506 Great Oaks Parkway meets the criteria for historic zoning in the following areas:

**Architecture:** The house exhibits classic characteristics of postwar ranch style housing in Austin. Built by prominent contractor Andrew S. Patton and designed by architect Douglas W. Sandberg, owner of Sandberg Lumber Company, its asymmetrical façade features a low-pitched hipped roof, wide eaves, and an elongated and horizontally-oriented footprint. The interior features exposed brick; exposed wooden roof joists and ceilings throughout; original blue and pink enamel tiles in its original bathroom; and natural light pouring in from abundant windows, including clerestories, and especially those facing the privacy of the back yard to enhance the feeling of indoor-outdoor space. All of these are hallmarks of postwar design for a burgeoning American middle class. The house is an excellent, and intact, example of this style of architecture.

**Historical Associations:** Builder Andrew S. Patton and architect/lumber yard owner Douglas W. Sandberg built most of the homes in the Great Oaks subdivision. Patton was a prominent North Central Austin builder and a leader in developing a new standard of housing in Austin at a time of unprecedented postwar growth. The two produced high-quality housing which drew from leading mid-century design trends developing nationwide.

This home is a stand-out example of this type of midcentury, middle-class vernacular housing which defines so many of Austin's neighborhoods and constitutes the core of so much of our city's character. The postwar building boom, and its impact on Austin, can be felt throughout all parts of this city, including Barton Hills and Zilker (District 5); Allandale, Brentwood, and Crestview (District 7); Windsor Park (Districts 1 and 4); Ridgewood Village (District 8); Balcones and Highland Park West (District 10); and Delwood/Wilshire Wood (District 9), to name just a few. However, none of our mid-century neighborhoods have achieved local historic district designation, and only a few homes, including the A. D. Stenger-designed John Henry Faulk House in Barton Hills and the Barton Riley-designed house at 3941

Balcones, have been designated as individual landmarks. The vast majority of Austin's midcentury resources have yet to even be surveyed, since the last citywide historic resource survey in 1984 only considered buildings constructed prior to 1935. As demolitions continue to roll through these neighborhoods, it is time for Austin to recognize this incredibly important architectural era at both the landmark and historic district level.

2605 Great Oaks Parkway is an excellent example of a classic American, and classically Austin, building type, with intact midcentury design features. Mid Tex Mod supports historic zoning for this property and, beyond that, for its entire neighborhood as a means of preserving this postwar suburban housing type.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a final flourish.

Lindsey Derrington  
President, Mid Tex Mod