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January 19, 2017

Ms. Mary Jo Galindo and Historic Landmark Commissioners
City of Austin
Post Office Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-8865
Sent via E-mail

Re: 405 W. 14th Street

Dear Chair Galindo and Commissioners:

Preservation Austin respectfully urges the Historic Landmarks Commission to follow City staff recommendation and postpone the demolition case for 405 W. 14th Street until the February 27 meeting of the Historic Landmark Commission. A postponement of this case will allow the City staff and the neighborhood to further research the significance and history of the house and its context in the development of the neighborhood as well as an opportunity for staff to work with the property owner on other options.

According to the Staff Report, the house, constructed in 1910, was owned by Ida Tobin and she lived here with her five sons. Mrs. Tobin was the widow of locally prominent businessman Dr. J. J. Tobin. Dr. Tobin owned a drug store and later a stationery store as well as many other business ventures and real estate holdings in Austin and Round Rock including the railway system in Austin. Mrs. Tobin was a celebrated member of Austin society who often entertained at this house. After her death in 1921, her son R. Wallace Tobin continued to live in the house. Wallace Tobin owned a prominent local insurance agency. Additionally, the house is a good example of the American Foursquare style, a subtype of the Prairie Style.

For 60 years, Preservation Austin has been the leading protector of Austin's diverse cultural heritage through the preservation of historic treasures and places. As such, we believe that preservation of this unique resource celebrates our past, enhances livability and a sense of identity for our city.

Sincerely,



John Donisi
President, Preservation Austin