

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
JULY 24, 2017
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
HDP-2017-0185
912 W. JAMES STREET

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1932 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story, rectangular-plan, front-gabled frame bungalow with a partial-width, front-gabled independent porch on battered wood posts and stone-veneered piers; single and paired 1:1 fenestration with 6:1 wood screens.

RESEARCH

The house appears to have been built around 1932 by Nicholas A. Dawson, a member of the Dawson family of South Austin, and a principal developer in the area. The house was listed as vacant in the 1935 city directory, then as a rental to a carpenter and his wife in 1937, then vacant again in the 1939 city directory. Ellen Grumbles, a widow, rented the house in the early 1940s; the house was then purchased by John H. and Bessie White, who lived here until around 1949, when they moved to another house in the 700 block of James Street. John H. White was born in northeast Texas, but was living in Brownwood at the time of the 1930 U.S. Census. He was a painter doing odd jobs. He and Bessie had lived in Houston in 1935, and by 1940, they moved into Travis County, where John H. White was a contract painter in the construction business. He went on to serve as a Travis County Constable in Precinct 5 for many years, and his death certificate shows that he was active in the Travis County Sheriff's Posse.

The house was a rental property after John and Bessie White moved out, but it was purchased by Bobbie L. and Mary Wiley in the mid-1950s. B.L. Wiley constructed an addition to the northeast corner of the house in 1959. Around 1960, Walter L. and Dorothy Cox bought the house, and lived here until around 1980. Walter L. Cox was a driver for Brown Express. The house then had a series of short-term owners in the 1980s, and was a rental property again in the early 1990s.

STAFF COMMENTS

The house is beyond the bounds of any City survey to date.

The house does not fully meet the criteria for landmark designation as set forth in City Code:

- a. **Architecture.** The house is an excellent example of a late bungalow with architectural distinction.
- b. **Historical association.** The house was built by the Dawson family, who developed large sections of South Austin, but has no other significant historical associations through its inhabitants.
- c. **Archaeology.** The house was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.
- d. **Community value.** The house does not possess a unique location, physical characteristic, or significant feature that contributes to the character, image, or cultural identity of the city, South Austin, or a particular demographic group.
- e. **Landscape feature.** The property is not a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.




STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Every effort should be made to rehabilitate this house on-site, as it is a good, intact example of a classic bungalow built by the Dawson family in South Austin, and possesses several aspects of architectural distinction in a relatively modest structure. If, however, the Commission votes to release the permit, then staff recommends relocation over demolition, and the 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.

LOCATION MAP



1" = 132'

-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HDP-2017-0185
LOCATION: 912 W. James Street



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.

From: [REDACTED]
To: Sadowsky, Steve
Cc:
Subject: 912 James St hearing tonight

Sent: Mon 5/22/2017 3:31

I am attempting to give you information re the significance of people who have lived in this house. One of the most contributing members to Austin Tx is my father and law Dr A.Q da Silva who came to Brackenridge Hospital in the 1950s as and opened the first laboratory in the City Hospital at the time as the Chief Pathologist. He was on the deed of 912 w. James st. for a significant period of time and frequented the house to visit his grandchildren. I personally am a 40year graduate of the School of Nursing Austin Tx and worked at Brackenridge, and Austin EMS, City of Austin numerous times as a swim instructor and later as an RN and public health nurse. My father graduated from Univversity of Texas Austin and graduated with 2 of the judges who the Travis Co court house is named after Blackwell and Thornberg. As a child I went to summer camp with the children of John Henry Faulk and spent time with the family on their houseboat. At one time I held and may still hold the pee wee diving championship for the City of Austin and my diving coach was Bill Crenshaw who was the coach of Skippy Browning the Olympian diver whom the UT diving Center is named after. I went to grade school with Sidney Cox who grew up in 912 James st . At a very young age Sidney became a successful plumber and Cox Plumbing and his 3 sons took over and did plumbing for the University of Texas using glass pipes in the chemisty labs and as far as I know the plumbing co and supplies is still a very successful company for 50 years. Sidneys brother Tommy Cox was the football coach at Travis High for many years.I will check on that for verification.. These are some of the things that come to mind . When I bought the house 40y ago Mr Cox handed me the original deed which I still have and is handwritten and the land was in Mexico. This house as is is Austin to me. The only reason I signed the demolition permit was because I was told it was the quickest way to move it in one piece. Six different house movers said it could not be done. My phone # is 510 693 9423 please call if you have any questions. There is more about my family and maybe more re Cox family also about the original owner before Cox,s about a city of Austin electrician. Sincerely Joanne Young ps my father used to frequent the house to stay with his grandson he was a swimmer with Ester Williams in Miami at a famous hotel . Can you use that.He was also a night watchman at the Capital while in law school and was robbed for his wedding ring.

912 W. James Street
ca. 1932



OCCUPANCY HISTORY 912 W. James Street

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
By City Historic Preservation Office
May, 2014

1992	Bayley D. Herrin, renter No occupation listed NOTE: The directory indicates that Bayley D. Herrin was a new resident at this address.
1985-86	James Gatewood, owner Employed by Basil's Restaurant, 900 W. 10 th Street.
1981	J. Young, owner Nurse
1977	Walter and Dorothy Cox, renters Driver, Brown Express, 2900 Oak Springs Drive.
1973	Walter and Dorothy Cox, renters No occupation listed
1968	Walter L. and Dorothy Cox, owners Driver, Brown Express, 2900 Oak Springs Drive.

1965	Walter L. and Dorothy Cox, owners Driver, Brown Express, 2900 Oak Springs Drive.
1961	Walter L. and Dorothy Cox, owners Driver, Brown Express, 209 E. 1 st Street.
1957	Bobbie L. and Mary Wiley, owners No occupation listed NOTE: Walter L. and Dorothy Cox are not listed in the directory.
1953	Fred M. and Juanita Henry, renters Student
1949	John H. and Bessie White, owners Constable, Travis County
1947	John H. and Bessie White, owners Constable, Travis County Precinct 5.
1944-45	John H. and Bessie White, owners Constable
1941	Ellen Grumbles, renter Widow, Asa L. Grumbles No occupation listed NOTE: John H. and Bessie White are not listed in the directory.
1939	Vacant
1937	John A. and Dona Thompson, renters Carpenter
1935	Vacant
1932-33	The address is not listed in the directory.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:**Ellen Grumbles (ca. 1940 – ca. 1943)**

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Mrs. Ellen Grumbles as the renter of a house in Precinct 5 of Travis County. She was a 29-year old New Mexico-born widow with no occupation listed. With her lived her 2 children: Laurine, 6; and Dayton, 1, both of whom had been born in Texas, as well as her mother, Mrs. Belle Verner, 53, who had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. Mrs. Verner had lived in rural Concho County, Texas in 1935.

Her 1947 death certificate shows that Ellen Alameda Bell died in pneumonia. She was born in 1911 in Alamogordo, New Mexico to Thomas Verner and Belle Herridge. She was living on an Austin rural route and was a homemaker.

John H. and Bessie White (ca. 1943 – ca. 1949)

John H. and Bessie E. White appear in the 1940 U.S. Census as the owners of a house in Precinct 5 of Travis County which was worth \$2,100. John H. White was 54, had been born in Texas, and was a contract painter in building construction. Bessie E. White was 51, had been

born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had no children listed with them. They had lived in Houston, Texas in 1935.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows John H. and Bessie E. White living in a rented house in Brownwood, Texas. John H. White was 44, had been born in Texas, and was a painter doing odd jobs. Bessie E. White was 41, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had a daughter, Bowers, 12, who had been born in Texas.

His 1968 death certificate shows that John Henderson White was born in 1885 in Cooper, Texas, and was living at 1805 S. 3rd Street in Austin at the time of his death. He was a member of the sheriff's posse.

Wife of Constable Succumbs Here

~~Mrs. Bessie Ellen White died~~
~~Thursday morning at her home~~
710 West James Street.

The wife of Constable John White, Precinct 5, she was a member of Oak Hill Baptist Church. Besides her husband, she is survived by one son, Elery E. White of Austin, and one daughter, Mrs. W. T. Roy of La Porte.

Funeral services will be held at the Wilke Funeral Home Friday at 3 p.m. with the Rev. U. S. Lackey, pastor of Oak Hill Baptist Church, officiating, assisted by the Rev. Kirby McGuire of Waco.

Patibearers will be Roy Grumbles, Cloister Miles, A. D. Krause, Sam Alfred, Elmo Pearson and Ellis Wier. Burial will be in Memorial Park.

Obituary of Bessie White
Austin American, April 14, 1950

JOHN WHITE

John White, 81, 1805 S. 3rd, died Monday in a local hospital. He was a member of the Oak Hill Baptist Church.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Lorraine White, Austin; a daughter, Mrs. Chester Coburn, LaPorte; a son, E. E. White, Austin; three sisters, Mrs. Perry Stovall, Mrs. Ross Russell and Mrs. Josephine Cooper, Coleman; seven grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

Funeral is pending at Wilke-Clay Funeral Home.

Obituary of John White
Austin American, March 12, 1968

JOHN H. WHITE

Funeral for John H. White, 82, 1805 S. 3rd, will be Wednesday at 2 p.m. at the chapel of Wilke-Clay Funeral Home with Rev. A. D. Eberhart officiating.

Pallbearers will be Hillery Canon Sr., Sam Allred, Elmo Pearson, Wilbur Klingemann, Marvin Fowkes and Lex Ott.

Burial will be in Austin Memorial Park.

Funeral notice for John H. White
Austin American, March 13, 1968

Walter L. and Dorothy Cox (ca. 1960 – ca. 1980)

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Walter Cox as the 13-year old nephew of George W. Cox, Jr., and his wife, Ettre, who owned their home at 2506 E. 4th Street in Austin. Walter Cox had been born in Texas and had no occupation listed. His uncle, George, 46, was a Texas-born cemetery attendant. His aunt was a 42-year old Texas-born mender in a laundry.

COX, Walter L., 75, of Del Valle died Monday. Services 10 a.m. today, First Baptist Church of Elroy. Burial High Grove Cemetery, Red Rock. Arrangements by Wilke-Clay-Fish.

Death notice for Walter L. Cox
Austin American-Statesman, September 6, 2001

COX, Dorothy Nell Pittsford

Dorothy Nell Pittsford Cox, in the presence of those she loved and cherished, passed peacefully into glory March 28, 2015. Her name is carved in the hearts of the ones who loved her and whose lives she touched. "Dotty" was rich toward God, family and friends. "Mother/Granny/Great Granny" never forgot a birthday. She lived for her family and loved them unconditionally. She was a born again Christian who loved and served her Lord.



She was born in Austin, TX on December 31, 1930 to James H. Pittsford and Evelyn Stiefer Pittsford.

She was an active member of the First Baptist Church in Elroy TX. She retired after 30 years of service to the state of Texas (Department of Public Safety, Industrial Accident Board). She was preceded in death by her husband, Walter L. Cox, both parents, sister (Viola Pittsford), granddaughter (Lauren Sanders Wesson) great grandson (Luke Wesson) and nephew (Wade Pittsford).

She is survived by: Six Children: Tommy Cox (Brenda), Sidney Cox, Nancy Cox Halfmann (Mark), Larry Cox, George Cox (Susan), and Juliana Cox Stout (Don Sr.) Fourteen Grandchildren: Stephen Cox, Scott Cox, Sidney Cox Jr, Todd Wesson, Christi Dault, George Cox Jr, Jennifer Lockmiller, Garrett Cox, Sarah Montgomery, Christopher Cox, Travis Cox, Kevin Halfmann, Don Stout Jr, and Greg Stout. Thirty-three Great Grandchildren: Kelly, Cody, Justin, Stewart, Jake, Curtis, Rachel, Jordan, Blake, Brady, Lila, Ian, Ashley, Ally, Morgan, Ashtyn, Thomas, Jackson, Camryn, Marley, Jonah, Rylen, Dylan, Keegan, Ruby, Tucker, Emma, William, Madison, Rylan, Shelby, Katelyn, and Claire. Siblings: Terry Pittsford, Jimmy Pittsford, Emma Frazer, Cheryl Melancon, and Cathy Goodman. Stepmother Madge Pittsford and many nieces and nephews.

Visitation will be from 6:00 to 8:00 PM Tuesday at Weed-Corley-Fish Funeral Home, 2620 S. Congress Ave. Funeral Services will be held at 10:00 AM Wednesday, April 1, 2015 at Weed-Corley-Fish Chapel with Reverend Ronnie Dyer officiating. Interment will follow at High Grove Cemetery, with grandsons serving as pallbearers.

In lieu of flowers gifts may be made to First Baptist Church of Elroy, 13705 FM812, Del Valle, TX 78617.

Obituary of Dorothy L. Cox
Austin American-Statesman, March 30, 2015

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

PERMIT FOR WATER SERVICE

AUSTIN, TEXAS No. 1287 114

M. N. A. Dawson Address 912 W. James

Plumber Wiley Size of Tap 1/2 Date 7-14-32

CHANGED TO 2" MAIN SERVICE WITH COPPER ON B-5131

Date of Connection 7/18/32 Foreman's Report

No. Fittings	Size	No. Fittings	Size	No. Fittings	Size	No. Fittings	Size
2	1/2" Curb Cock	1	1/2" Elbow	1	1/2" St. Elbow	1	1/2" Bushing
1	1/2" Elbow	1	1/2" St. Elbow	1	1/2" Bushing	1	1/2" Reducer
1	1/2" St. Elbow	1	1/2" Bushing	1	1/2" Reducer	1	1/2" Pipe
1	1/2" Reducer	1	1/2" Pipe	1	1/2" Lead Comp.	1	1/2" Nipples
1	1/2" Pipe	1	1/2" Lead Comp.	1	1/2" Nipples	1	1/2" Union
1	1/2" Lead Comp.	1	1/2" Nipples	1	1/2" Union	1	1/2" Plug
1	1/2" Nipples	1	1/2" Union	1	1/2" Plug	1	1/2" Tee
1	1/2" Union	1	1/2" Plug	1	1/2" Tee	1	1/2" Stop
1	1/2" Plug	1	1/2" Tee	1	1/2" Stop	1	1/2" Box
1	1/2" Tee	1	1/2" Stop	1	1/2" Box	1	1/2" Lid
1	1/2" Stop	1	1/2" Box	1	1/2" Lid	1	1/2" Valves
1	1/2" Box	1	1/2" Lid	1	1/2" Valves	1	1/2" Req. No.
1	1/2" Lid	1	1/2" Valves	1	1/2" Req. No.	1	1/2" Req. No.
1	1/2" Valves	1	1/2" Req. No.	1	1/2" Req. No.	1	1/2" Req. No.
1	1/2" Req. No.	1	1/2" Req. No.	1	1/2" Req. No.	1	1/2" Req. No.

Checked by Engr. Dept. 8-2-32

INDEXED

Foreman's Signature Bearman

Water service permit to Nicholas A. Dawson for this address (1932)

B. L. Wiley

912 West James St.

114

8

7

South Heights

Frame Addition N. E. corner of residence.

71855

2/16/59

700.00

B. D. Frierson

BEDROOM

Building permit to B.L. Wiley for a frame addition (1959)