

Case Number: HDP-2017-0602 PR-2017-124413
CONTACT: CARA BERTRON: 512-974-1446
Public Hearing: November 27, 2017
Historic Landmark Commission

DEMOLITION APPLICATION FOR 1102 BLUEBONNET LANE

FAX NUMBER: 512-974-9104

Elizabeth Hodge Flack (Betsy)
1109 Bluebonnet Lane, Austin Texas (owned for 62 years)

OBJECT TO THE ISSUANCE OF A DEMOLITION PERMIT FOR THE PROPERTY AT
1102 BLUEBONNET LANE.

Signature:
Date: 11/27/17

Comments:

1102 Bluebonnet lane is the best AD Stenger house in South Lund Park. It was built in 1953 by Stenger and is a classic Stenger modernist house. William and Sylvia Lester commissioned it and owned it until about 17 years ago. William was an art professor at the University of Texas at Austin.

Also on the block in Stenger-built houses were Bob Folk (still at 1107), UT Geology professor; and my father Francis Hodge (1109), Department of Theater and Dance, UT.

1102 has had two owners since William died and Sylvia moved into a retirement community in the early 2000s. There have been modifications internally (removal of a beautiful fireplace wall and hand-painted wooden paneling in the halls), but the outside has remained essentially the same.

The Studio building is a remarkable addition to the house. As kids in the 50s and 60s, we all gathered around William in the house and his studio. We were interested in his art and his continuous story-telling! Laguna Gloria owns a collection of his paintings.

Not only is the house officially historic, but I think it represents an era of '50s – 60s Austin that was filled with talented young academics.

My family moved to 1109 Bluebonnet Lane in 1955 and sold it in March of 2017. While 1109 was a Stenger-built house, it is a New England style cottage, not a modernist house. My understanding is that the new owners of 1109 are renovating, adding an addition, but keeping the basic house.

The 1100 block of Bluebonnet (Dexter to Cul-de-Sac) is totally intact as originally built. The zoning prohibitions in South Lund Park and low ownership turn-over helped protect these classic houses. I understand that the neighborhood might consider applying for a local historic district.

The lower end (the Cul-de-Sac) was filled-in with duplexes much later than the original Stenger development.

Because of the double lot at 1102, I believe an addition could be added that would be in keeping with the original house (which becomes the guest house). Hopefully there would still be room to move the studio on the site.

I encourage the Commission to study carefully and reject the request for demolition of 1102 and give serious consideration to protecting this elegant little house and piece of Austin Heritage.

I am hoping that the applicant also understands that when she purchased the house 6 or 7 years ago, she took on some responsibility to the neighborhood for preserving it. While the house has been somewhat updated, it stands as a treasured landmark to the Dexter entrance to Bluebonnet Lane.

Please do not issue a demolition permit without further consideration. Thank you all for your effort and thought on this.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth (Betsy) Flack

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[REDACTED]
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