

# ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

**CASE NUMBER:** HDP-2019-0138

**HLC DATE:**

April 22, 2019

May 20, 2019

June 24, 2019

**PC DATE:**

**APPLICANT:** Historic Landmark Commission

**HISTORIC NAME:** Burditt-Becks-Scales House

**WATERSHED:** Boggy Creek

**ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE:** 1903 New York Avenue

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** 1

**ZONING FROM:** SF-3-NP to SF-3-H-NP

**SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff does not recommend the proposed zoning change from single family residence, neighborhood plan (SF-3-NP) combining district to single family residence – Historic Landmark – neighborhood plan (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning due to the discovery of alterations to the house which impinge the integrity of material and design.

- a. **Historical association.** The house has been the home of three long-term African-American families who were engaged in typical work for African-Americans in segregated Austin. Each family owned this, a significant achievement in and of itself, given the size and ornamentation of the structure. While none of the owners of this house stands out independently as significant, it is the context and continued history of the families associated with this house as representative of the African-American experience and demographic in Austin that is important.
- b. **Archaeology.** The house was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.
- c. **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, the neighborhood, or a particular demographic group.
- d. **Landscape feature.** The property is not a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:**

Architecture and historical associations.

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:** April 22, 2019: Postponed the case at the staff's request on the consent agenda. May 20, 2019: Initiated historic zoning. Vote: 6-0 (Reed, Featherston, Heimsath, and Hibbs absent; Little off-dais).

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:**

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The house is recommended for local landmark designation in the East Austin Historic Resources Survey (2016).

**CITY COUNCIL DATE:**

**ACTION:**

**ORDINANCE READINGS:** 1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

**ORDINANCE NUMBER:**

**CASE MANAGER:** Steve Sadowsky

**PHONE:** 974-6454

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION:** Foster Heights Neighborhood Association

**BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

**Architecture:**

One-story, wing-and-gable plan frame house with a partial-width inset porch on turned wood posts; fenestration consists of single 4:4 units with a fixed-sash window in the projecting gable and in the main flank of the façade, each with a diamond-paned transom. These diamond-paned transoms are unusual in their placement and detail, and a distinguishing architectural feature of the house, but the applicant has provided information that the transoms are not original. The house was remodeled in 1980, and it may be that the fixed-sash windows with the diamond-paned transoms were installed at that time. They are historic materials, but it appears that they may not be original to this house.

**Historical Associations:**

The house appears to have been built around 1895. The first occupants of the house were Hal James, a porter at Nelson Davis and Company, a wholesale grocery firm, and Anthony Burditt, a porter for John Orr, a competing wholesale grocery firm. Hal James soon moved to another house on Leona Street, and Anthony Burditt owned and lived in this house until his death in 1928. He was a porter for wholesale grocery businesses for many years before going to work for the Austin Country Club, where he is listed as a helper and a groundskeeper in city directories of the 1910s and 1920s. His widow, Jannetta, does not appear to have stayed in this house after Anthony died. She passed away in 1936.

Henrietta Becks, a widow, bought the house in the early 1930s, and lived here until around 1936. The 1930 census report shows her as a laundress, and with adult daughters who were also engaged in domestic work – cooks for private families, a laundress, and a servant. From here, Henrietta Becks moved to Pennsylvania Avenue, where she passed away in 1943.

Embry J. and Jessie Scales purchased the house around 1936, and lived here for the rest of their lives. Embry Scales first lived in an African-American settlement in South Austin, where he built a house in 1917 on W. Johanna Street. He worked as a janitor at the First Baptist Church until his death in 1942. Jessie Scales was a laundress; she continued to live in this house until her death in 1982.

The house has been the home of three long-term African-American families who were engaged in typical work for African-Americans in segregated Austin. Each family owned this house, an achievement in and of itself; however, none of the owners stand out independently as significant. While the house represents the historic context of African-American life in the city in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, it does not appear that the house warrants individual designation over any others of the same vintage with the same general history.

**PARCEL NO.:** 0208091302

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** LOT 9 BLK 9 OLT 58 DIV B FOSTER SUBD

**ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT:** \$3,859 (owner-occupied); city portion: \$1,151.

**APPRAISED VALUE:** \$375,864

**PRESENT USE:** Vacant residential

**CONDITION:** Fair

**PRESENT OWNERS:**

Kim Miyong  
911 Keith Lane, #3  
Austin, Texas 78705

**DATE BUILT:** ca. 1895

**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** A ca. 1980 remodeling involved the addition of new siding, replacement of windows, and most importantly, the possible replacement of front windows with the fixed-sash windows with their diamond-paned transoms on the front of the house.

**ORIGINAL OWNER(S):** Anthony Burditt (ca. 1895)

**OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS:** None.

## LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT



PENDING CASE



ZONING BOUNDARY

## NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HDP-2019-0138

LOCATION: 1903 NEW YORK AVE

1" = 333'

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.

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1903 New York Avenue  
ca. 1895





## OCCUPANCY HISTORY

### 1903 New York Avenue

City Directory Research, Austin History Center  
By City Historic Preservation Office  
April, 2019

1893-94	No listing for known occupants of this house. NOTE: Harrell James is listed at 1309 Comal Street. NOTE: Anthony Burditt is not listed in the directory.
1895-96	Hal James (colored) Porter, Nelson Davis & Company, wholesale groceries, 117 W. 4 <sup>th</sup> Street.  Anthony Burditt (colored) Porter, John Orr, wholesale groceries, 401 Congress Avenue.
1897-98	Anthony Burditt (colored) Porter, John Orr, wholesale groceries, 401 Congress Avenue. NOTE: Hal James is listed as living on the west side of Leona Street, 2 blocks east of Comal Street; he was a porter for Nelson Davis, wholesale groceries, 117 W. 4 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1898-99	Anthony Burditt (colored) Porter, John Orr, wholesale groceries, 401 Congress Avenue.
1900-01	Anthony Burditt (colored) Porter, John Orr, wholesale groceries, 401 Congress Avenue.
1903	Unknown

NOTE: Anthony Burditt is not listed in the directory.

NOTE: Hal James (colored) is listed at the rear of 1313 Chincapin (later Rosewood Avenue); he was a driver for Bell and Randolph, wholesale fruits, produce and commission merchants, 500 Colorado Street.

1905	Unknown Anthony Burditt is not listed in the directory.
1906-07	Anthony Burditt (colored) Employed by Mrs. John Bremond  Lindsay Willis (colored) No occupation listed
1909-10	Anthony Burditt (colored) Porter, John Bremond, wholesale groceries and coffee roaster, 109-13 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1910-11	Anthony Burditt (colored) Porter, John Bremond, wholesale groceries and coffee roaster, 109-13 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> Street.
1912-13	Leon Keys (colored) Porter, Van Smith Drug Company, 600 Congress Avenue. NOTE: Anthony Burditt is not listed in the directory.
1914	Anthony Burditt (colored) Porter
1916	Anthony Burditt (colored), owner Helper, Austin Country Club
1918	Anthony and Jeanetta Burditt (colored), owners Groundskeeper, Austin Country Club
1920	Anthony and Jeanetta Burditt (colored), owners No occupation listed
1922	Anthony Burditt (colored), owner Greenskeeper, Country Club NOTE: Jeanetta Burditt is not listed in the directory.
1924	Anthony and Jeanette Burditt (colored), owners Laborer, Country Club
1927	Anthony and Jeanetta Burditt (colored), owners No occupation listed
1929	Anthony and Jeanette Burditt (colored), owners No occupation listed Also listed is Emmett Burditt (colored), a porter at Sherwin Williams Paint Company, 817 Congress Avenue.
1930-31	Curry and Gladys Ramey (colored), renters Porter, Kinser Barber Shop, 113 W. 6 <sup>th</sup> Street.

NOTE: Anthony Burditt died in 1928; Jeanetta Burditt is not listed in the directory.

NOTE: Henrietta Beck (colored) is listed at 606 E. 17<sup>th</sup> Street; she had no occupation shown.

1932-33	Henrietta Becks, renter No occupation listed
1935	Henrietta Becks, owner No occupation listed
1937	E.J. and Jessie Scales, owners Janitor, First Baptist Church Also listed is Cetus Scales, no occupation shown. NOTE: Henrietta Beck is listed at 1810 Pennsylvania Avenue. She had no occupation shown.
1939	E.J. and Jessie Scales, owners Janitor, First Baptist Church Also listed is Wilmer Scales, a porter.
1941	Embry J. and Jessie Scales, owners Janitor, First Baptist Church Also listed is Cletis V. Scales, a porter for James T. Tillman. NOTE: Embry J. Scales died in 1942.
1944-45	Mrs. Jessie M. Scales, owner Widow, Embry Scales No occupation listed Also listed are Cletis V. Scales, a porter, and Wilma [sic] M. and Ethel Scales, no occupation shown.
1947	Mrs. Jessie M. Scales, owner No occupation listed
1949	Jessie M. Scales, owner Widow, Embry Scales Janitor, First Baptist Church
1952	Jessie M. Scales, owner Maid
1955	Mrs. Jessie M. Scales, owner No occupation listed
1959	Mrs. Jessie M. Scales, owner Widow, Embry Scales Cook, First Baptist Church
1962	Jessie M. Scales, owner No occupation listed
1965	Mrs. Jessie M Scales, owner Widow, Embry Scales Cook, First Baptist Church



1968	Mrs. Jessie M. Scales, owner Widow, Embry Scales Cook, First Baptist Church
1973	Mrs. Jessie M. Scales, owner Widow, Embry Scales Retired
1977	Mrs. Jessie M. Scales, owner Widow, Embry Scales Retired
1981	Mrs. Jessie M. Scales, owner No occupation listed
1985-86	Jessie M. Scales, owner Retired NOTE: Jessie M. Scales died in 1982.
1992	Vacant

#### **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:**

##### **Anthony and Jeanetta Burditt (ca. 1895 – ca.1928)**

The 1900 U.S. Census shows Anthony and Janetta Burditt as the owners of this house. Anthony Burditt was 37, having been born in Texas in 1863. He was a day laborer. Janetta Burditt was 32, having been born in Texas in 1868. She had no occupation listed. They had a son, Willie E., born in Texas in 1887.

Anthony and Janetta Burditt appear at this address in the 1910 U.S. Census. Anthony Burditt was 47, had been born in Texas, and was a porter at a wholesale grocery. Janetta Burditt was 42, had been born in Texas to Kentucky-born parents, and had no occupation listed. With them lived Janetta's father, Willis Lindsay, an 84-year old Kentucky-born widower with no occupation listed.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Anthony and Jannetta Burditt as the owners of this house. Anthony Burditt was 57, had been born in Texas to Kentucky-born parents, and was a porter at the Country Club. Janetta Burditt was 51, had been born in Texas to a Kentucky-born father and an Alabama-born mother, and had no occupation listed. They had no children listed with them.

Anthony Burditt was born in 1860 and died October 23, 1928. Jannetta Lindsay Burditt was born in 1868 and died November 14, 1936 in Los Angeles, California. Both are buried in Plummers' Cemetery in northeast Austin. Neither had an obituary in the Austin newspapers.

The funeral of Anthony Eugene Burdett, the 17-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Burdett, who died Wednesday night, will be held this morning at 11 o'clock from the residence of his parents, No. 1903 New York avenue. Interment will be in the Rogers' cemetery, several miles east of the city.

Funeral notice for Anthony E. Burditt, the son of Anthony and Janetta Burditt  
Austin Statesman, November 3, 1905

### **Henrietta Becks (ca. 1931 – ca. 1936)**

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Henrietta Becks as the renter of the house at 606 W. 17<sup>th</sup> Street [?]. She was a 65-year old Texas-born widow who worked as a laundress at home. Her parents had both been born in Alabama. With her lived her son, Leroy Nunn, 30, a Texas-born truck driver for a grain store, and his wife, Robbie, 25, a Texas-born cook for a private family, and 3 daughters: Lucy Nunn, 26, a cook for a private family; Frances Nunn, 19, a laundress at home; and Alice Nunn, 17, a servant for a private family.

Henrietta Beck was living with her daughter, Frances Nunn, in rented quarters at 1908 Pennsylvania Avenue at the time of the 1940 U.S. Census. Henrietta Beck was a 73-year old Texas-born widow with no occupation listed. Her daughter, Frances Nunn, 31, was born in Texas, and was a laundress for a private family. Also in the household was a nephew, Willie B. Nunn, 18, who had been born in Texas and was a caddie at the golf course.

According to her 1943 death certificate, Henrietta Beck was living at 1908 Pennsylvania Avenue at the time of her death. She was born on Christmas Day, 1881 in La Grange, Texas, and was a housewife. She did not have an obituary in the Austin newspapers.

### **Embry J. and Jessie Scales (ca. 1936 – ca. 1990)**

Embry Scales received a building permit to construct a dwelling at 608 W. Johanna Street in January, 1917.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Embry and Jessie Scales as the owners of this house, which was worth \$1,200. Embry Scales was 49, had been born in Texas, and was the janitor at a church. Jessie Scales was 47, had been born in Texas, and was a laundress in a private home. They had 4 children: Wilmer, 26, a porter for a fraternity; Cletis, 21, a porter for a barber shop; Thelma, 16; and John, 13. All the children had been born in Texas.

Embry J. Scales was born in 1890 and died April 12, 1942. He did not have an obituary in the Austin newspapers. Jessie M. Scales was born in 1892 and died January 6, 1982. Both are buried in Evergreen Cemetery. Cletis Scales was living at this address at the time of his death in 1979. He was born in Austin in 1918 and was a porter at a motel. He never married.

**SCALES, Cletis V., 61, 1903 New York Ave., died Saturday. Services 3 p.m. Wednesday at Ebenezer Baptist Church. Burial, Evergreen Cemetery. Survivors: mother, Mrs. Jessie M. Scales of Austin; sisters, Mrs. Ura Lee Overton, Mrs. Thelma Foster, both of Austin; brother, Wilmer M. Scales of Detroit, Mich. (Fuller-Sheffield)**

Obituary of Cletis Scales  
Austin American-Statesman, December 4, 1979

Emory [sic] Scales' 1942 death certificate shows that he died of tuberculosis in 1942 at the Travis County Tuberculosis Hospital. He was living at this address at the time of his death. He was a married porter who had been born in Austin in 1892. Jessie M. Scales' death certificate shows that she was born in Texas in 1892 and was living in this house at the time of her death. She was a widowed homemaker.

**SCALES, Jessie, 89, 1903 New York Avenue, died Wednesday. Services 4 p.m. Monday at Ebenezer Baptist Church. Burial, Evergreen Cemetery. Survivors: daughters, Ura Lee Overton, Thelma L. Foster, both of Austin; son, Wilmer M. Scales of Detroit; sisters, Ruth Hill of Austin, Eva Barnes of Fort Worth; seven grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. (Fuller-Sheffield)**

Obituary of Jessie Scales  
Austin American-Statesman, January 10, 1982