

PUBLIC HEARING INFORMATION

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**Case Number: C14H-2020-0069 – Rogers Washington Holy Cross
Historic District**
Contact: Cara Bertron, (512) 974-1446
Public Hearing: Historic Landmark Commission, July 27, 2020

I am in favor
 I object

whole heartily

Ms. Debra Houston 1905 Maple Ave
Your Name (please print) Your address(es) affected by this application

[Signature] 17 July 2020
Signature Date

Comments: The NA has done amazing job getting this application together. It is an opportunity for the City of Austin to walk the talk and preserve one of the few historic homes built to house citizens of African Ancestry.

If you use this form to comment, it may be returned to:
City of Austin Planning and Zoning Department
Historic Preservation Office, ATTN: Cara Bertron
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-8810
E-mail: cara.bertron@austintexas.gov

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Contact: Cara Bertron, (512) 974-1446
Public Hearing: Historic Landmark Commission, July 27, 2020

I am in favor
 I object

V. Sandra Kirk 1908 Maple Avenue
Your Name (please print) Your address(es) affected by this application

V. Sandra Kirk July 17, 2020
Signature Date

Comments: I fully support this historic district re-zoning and designation. I applaud the diligent work of Brenda Malik in leading the effort.

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Contact: Cara Bertron, (512) 974-1446
Public Hearing: Historic Landmark Commission, July 27, 2020

I am in favor
 I object

Norman Scates Jr 2509 Wehler Ave 78722
Your Name (please print) Your address(es) affected by this application

Norman Scates Jr 7/17/2020
Signature Date

Comments: My Dad (Capt Norman W. Scates) was Austin, Tx
First Black Fighter Pilot (WWII) was living at this address
until death 1981 That is Historic.

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Dear Members of the Historic Landmark Commission

I thank you for your service and making time to listen to public input regarding the application for the Historic District Application for the Rogers Washington Holy Cross neighborhood.

My wife and I own and lease a contributing property associated with the application. We collectively spent 15 years in Austin. We moved away from Austin to support extended family in 2014. However, we loved living in Austin and kept our home so that we can retire there. We look forward to spending more time with our Austin friends and the broader community.

We treat our lessees like we would want to be treated and invest in the home as if we lived there. In the last decade, we have invested in over \$30,000 in maintenance and improvements, including approximately \$6,000 in above-code energy efficiency improvements. I cannot think of a time when we denied a tenant a request, from paying for smart thermostats to indoor air quality tests. As recently as July of this year, we upgraded the HVAC equipment at our property in Rogers Washington to meet current Energy Star standards. In March of this year, we offered rent forgiveness to our tenants - no strings attached - to alleviate the stress of COVID19. I'd be happy to share with you other anecdotes that demonstrate how we care for our tenants and property.

We know it is stressful to live in an ever changing and growing Austin. While we support the Rogers Washington community in their stated objectives, we ultimately voted against the design standards because: (1) the processes used to develop the design standards excluded us; (2) some original features are required to be preserved where replacements may perform better; (3) there appear to be conflicts within the standards, particularly when combined with existing and future development requirements; and (4) we see no institutional mechanisms in place at the City to deal with these conflicts and democratize voices when preservation requires trade-offs.

We found the processes used to develop the standards to be exclusive and opaque. We asked to join the design committee and neighborhood association and/or connect with the design committee by phone. We paid for a Basecamp account to share information online, as there is no online presence for the neighborhood association, the design committee, or draft documents submitted to the City. None of these efforts were successful. Twice the design committee scheduled a time to call us but did not call at the scheduled time.

In contrast, Preservation Austin, a group that has no physical presence in the neighborhood, had an elevated influence in the development of the standards, providing monetary and technical support. We have no negative feeling towards Preservation Austin but struggle to contrast their leading role in developing standards against our being excluded. I would hope our experience would concern public decision makers that value transparency and equity.

Writing was the only means were we able to communicate with the design committee. We provided 41 written comments on an early draft of the standards to the design committee and

the City. These comments took extensive time to generate and reflect our experience owning, improving, and maintaining residential property. These comments sought clarification, highlighted inaccuracies, and identified design conflicts, particularly when combined with other development requirements. Both City staff and design committee members responded to many of these comments. We appreciate their time and feel that subsequent revisions strengthen the current standards. Some questions, however, remain unaddressed. While we understand that not all questions could be addressed and don't expect them to be, I'll highlight three particular remaining concerns. First, we had asked the association to consider using language from standards approved for other Austin historic districts for windows and doors that allows these features to be replaced if the replacements "match the scale, profile, appearance, and configuration of existing." This is partly due to our interest in a more energy efficient home but also out of concern for safety. We don't understand how aesthetically conforming replacement windows and doors are not better - or at least equal - alternatives than preserving original amenities. (Also, we suspect none of the exterior doors are original to the property. How will this be handled?) Second, we are also still concerned about conflicts between codes and standards that may inadvertently restrict rear additions. Many, perhaps most, contributing properties have roof lines that drain to the rear. Thus, a single-story rear addition could not meet both minimum ceiling height (per residential construction code) and roof slope requirements (per the design standards) absent a very awkward roof drainage system. Third, we had asked the design committee to increase the 21-foot height restriction for accessory dwelling units to provide more flexibility and efficiency in site layout and structure design. We would welcome the opportunity to verbally discuss these issues with the design committee.

Finally, we are concerned about how ad hoc decisions will be made when difficult siting, design, and construction issues arise from the application of the historic district standards. Here, we're looking to the City to bring balance. While staff at the Historic Preservation Office have been very professional, polite, and are skilled in their own discipline, they place undo weight on preservation over and above other property related attributes. For example, their website lists as a benefit of historic districts "retaining an existing house... saves energy." This statement is untrue. If it were true, there would be no need to have or update building energy codes, as older buildings would outperform new ones. (There is also extensive evidence that the energy and emissions production footprints of materials used to meet new code are significantly outweighed by their operating benefits.) This is only one of many observations signaling how the Office makes judgement. I am not looking to find fault with the Historic Preservation Office in any way. However, their Office serves as gatekeepers of what will be acceptable property changes and has very powerful tools that serve preservation. Recognizing that real estate decisions involve trading off many performance attributes beyond preservation, we would be more comfortable supporting the proposed standards if there were institutional mechanisms at the City that bring balance when conflicts arise. Examples might include asking staff from Austin Energy, permit review, inspections, etc. to review design standards for balance and to avoid conflicts. These functions are needed at the City given the City allows historic district applicants to exclude contributing property owners from developing design standards. Absent a more inclusive process, we fear being further marginalized from future decisions related to our property.

I want to emphasize that we are not trying to disparage any stakeholder or individual. We loved our neighbors when we lived in Rogers Washington. We have a lot of personal and professional respect for City of Austin staff. I'd also be remiss if I did not recognize that one member of the design committee has been very sympathetic to our concerns. However, this has been an emotionally challenging process for us. We thrive on fostering positive relationships with others but have not been given the means to connect with individuals in ways that build trust and seek common goals. I think we all share an interest in being good public stewards of property maintenance and development. That requires balance and collaboration and could serve as a great foundation to seek healthy compromise and build trusting relationships.

We are not asking that you oppose the application. Instead, we are hoping you can use our experience to strengthen the historic district process. We ask that you delay this decision and, in the interim, request that the design committee and the City give us and any other dissenting views equal voice so that we can resolve outstanding issues in collaboration with and respect for each other. If all stakeholders engage with an open mind and mutual respect, I trust that a few brief but meaningful conversations between us, the design committee, and City staff would benefit all of us. This would be consistent with the Austin that we have grown to know, love, and respect.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Michael Blackhurst
Elizabeth Hurley Blackhurst

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**Case Number: C14H-2020-0069 – Rogers Washington Holy Cross
Historic District
Contact: Cara Bertron, (512) 974-1446
Public Hearing: Historic Landmark Commission, July 27, 2020**

I am in favor
 I object

STUART H KING

2400 GIVENS AVE

Your Name (please print)

Your address(es) affected by this application



7/22/20

Signature

Date

Comments: WOULD LOVE OUR NEIGHBORHOOD TO BE HISTORICAL !!!

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Subject: Support for C14H-2020-0069 – Rogers Washington Holy Cross Historic District
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 at 12:02:32 PM Central Daylight Time
From: Jen Margulies
To: Bertron, Cara, PAZ Preservation

*** External Email - Exercise Caution ***

Hello,

I am writing in advance of the July 27 Historic Landmark Commission meeting to register my support for Case Number C14H-2020-0069, the proposed historic district in Rogers Washington Holy Cross. I would like to speak at the meeting on Monday.

I am a resident of the Rogers Washington Holy Cross neighborhood. I live at 1906 Cedar Avenue, ZIP code 78722. I moved here in 2013 and have been honored to learn from my neighbors about the history of this community and its significance to Austin, especially East Austin and the vibrant Black community that grew up here in the face of segregation and discrimination. At the same time, I have been disturbed to see the rapid erasure of this history, both in the built environment, as old homes in good repair have been bulldozed all around me to make way for expensive new builds -- and in the increasing unaffordability of our once middle-class neighborhood, which is losing Black residents as families are unable to pass on their homes to the next generations due to the rising property values caused, in part, by the demolition of modest housing replaced by exceedingly expensive homes.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective as a neighborhood resident.

Best wishes,

Jen Margulies

--

If you need an immediate response, please call me at 512.417.0893

CAUTION: This email was received at the City of Austin, from an EXTERNAL source. Please use caution when clicking links or opening attachments. If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to CSIRT@austintexas.gov.

Subject: Case # C14H-2020-0069-Rogers-Washington-Holy Cross Historic District
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 at 12:49:28 PM Central Daylight Time
From: brenda malik
To: Bertron, Cara

*** External Email - Exercise Caution ***

Case Number: C14H-2020-0069- Rogers Washington Holy Cross Historic District
Contact: Cara Bertron, (512) 974-1446
Public Hearing: Historic Landmark Commission, July 27, 2020

Brenda Malik
2502 Weber Ave., Austin, TX. 78722

I am **IN FAVOR** of the application

Comments:

We have a wonderful neighborhood, rich with compelling history and brimming with the prospect of future growth!
Please help us preserve it for future generations!

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Subject: Support for Rogers Washington Holy Cross Historic District (Case No C14H-2020-0069)
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 9:20:47 PM Central Daylight Time
From: Bridget Gayle Ground
To: Bertron, Cara

*** External Email - Exercise Caution ***

Hi Cara,

I received a notice of the proposed Rogers Washington Holy Cross Historic District (Case No C14H-2020-0069), as I am a homeowner living within 500 feet of the proposed development (1806 Cedar Avenue, 78702).

I want to express that **I am in favor** of the proposed district in advance of the Historic Landmark Commission's July 27 public hearing.

Preserving the architectural character of this historic suburb--both as a cohesive neighborhood and also at the level of individual homes like the highly significant and iconic Phillips House designed by John S. Chase-- is so essential to maintaining the unique and authentic character of Austin, not to mention preserving part of the heritage of a long underserved community. I only wish the proposed historic district were larger to include more properties in the area!

If any additional information is needed to share my support for this rezoning please let me know.

Thank you!
Bridget Gayle Ground
1806 Cedar Avenue

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Historic District
Contact: Cara Bertron, (512) 974-1446
Public Hearing: Historic Landmark Commission, July 27, 2020**

I am in favor
 I object

PAULA JEAN Willis-Simpson 2109 Maple Avenue
Your Name (please print) Your address(es) affected by this application

Paula Jean Willis-Simpson
Signature

7-16-2020
Date

Comments: I am the owner of the property located at 2109 Maple Avenue. I would like the property located at 2109 Maple be included in this Historic zoning application. I would also like to participate in the meeting.
Thank You

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Public Hearing: Historic Landmark Commission, July 27, 2020**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I am in favor
<input type="checkbox"/>	I object

JORDAN SMITH

1808 MAPLE AVE.

Your Name (please print)

Your address(es) affected by this application

Signature

Jordan Smith

Date

7/14/20

Comments:

The neighbors have long sought to secure the unique nature of their area and a rapidly gentrifying east side & I wholeheartedly support their efforts to do so.

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I am in favor
 I object

ERIK HUERNER

Your Name (please print)

2600A OAKLAWN AVE 78722

Your address(es) affected by this application



Signature

7/14/2020

Date

Comments: I AM IN FAVOR OF THE HISTORIC ZONING. HOPEFULLY
THIS WILL HELP RETAIN UNIQUE CHARACTER OF NEIGHBORHOOD
THAT IS THREATENED BY NEW DEVELOPMENT/TEARDOWNS.

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A board or commission's decision may be appealed by a person with standing to appeal, or an interested party that is identified as a person who can appeal the decision. The body holding a public hearing on an appeal will determine whether a person has standing to appeal the decision.

An interested party is defined as a person who is the applicant or record owner of the subject property, or who communicates an interest to a board or commission by:

- delivering a written statement to the board or commission before or during the public hearing that generally identifies the issues of concern (*it may be delivered to the contact person listed on a notice*); or
- appearing and speaking for the record at the public hearing; and
- occupies a primary residence that is within 500 feet of the subject property or proposed development;
- is the record owner of property within 500 feet of the subject property or proposed development; or
- is an officer of an environmental or neighborhood organization that has an interest in or whose declared boundaries are within 500 feet of the subject property or proposed development.

A notice of appeal must be filed with the director of the responsible department no later than 14 days after the decision. An appeal form may be available from the responsible department.

For additional information on the City of Austin's land development process, please visit our website: www.austintexas.gov/abc

Written comments must be submitted to the board or commission (or the contact person listed on the notice) before the public hearing. Your comments should include the board or commission's name, the scheduled date of the public hearing, the Case Number and the contact person listed on the notice.

**Case Number: C14H-2020-0069 – Rogers Washington Holy Cross
Historic District**
Contact: Cara Bertron, (512) 974-1446
Public Hearing: Historic Landmark Commission, July 27, 2020

I am in favor
 I object

Tommy R. Vascon 2203 E. 21st St.
Your Name (please print) Your address(es) affected by this application
[Signature] 7/15/2020
Signature Date

Comments: _____

If you use this form to comment, it may be returned to:
City of Austin Planning and Zoning Department
Historic Preservation Office, ATTN: Cara Bertron
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-8810
E-mail: cara.bertron@austintexas.gov