

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
OCTOBER 26, 2020  
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS  
HDP-2020-0340  
4714 ROWENA STREET**

**PROPOSAL**

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Demolish a ca. 1932 house.

**ARCHITECTURE**

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One-story, wing-and-gable plan stuccoed frame house with a partial-width inset porch featuring a segmental arched arcaded front wall; single 1:1 fenestration; second-story belvedere at the back of the house; metal roof.

**RESEARCH**

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The house is associated with Jay J. and Elisabeth Hegman, who lived here from the time of its construction around 1932 until 1948, when they moved to a historic landmark house at 720 E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. Jay J. Hegman was born in 1883 in Galveston, and arrived in Austin in 1915 after operating a theater in Temple, Texas. He opened the “old” Queen Theater on Congress Avenue in 1916, then persuaded Major George W. Littlefield to build a new, larger theater in 1920, the “new” Queen, also on Congress Avenue. The Queen was the first theater in Austin solely dedicated to showing motion pictures; all the other theaters also featured stage shows. Hegman ran afoul of local authorities in the early 1920s for showing movies at the Queen on Sundays, in violation of Texas blue laws, which prohibited many businesses from operation on the Sabbath. He was fined for his violations, and in 1924, sold the Queen Theater. He then went to Galveston to operate the Grand Opera House there, before returning to Austin. There are indications that Hegman split his time between Galveston and Austin in the mid-1920s; the city directory of 1924 shows the Hegman family living on Crockett Street, and operating the Star and Crescent theaters. The 1927 directory is the first showing the Hegmans in this neighborhood. They opened the Ritz Theater on E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street in 1929, and revamped the theater to its current configuration in 1937. His son, Elmo W. Hegman, who grew up in this house on Rowena, started off as a projectionist in his parents’ theaters, and later became the manager of the family’s theater business.

Besides the theater businesses in Austin, which included the Queen, Crescent, and Star theaters in the 1920s, Jay J. Hegman was also a real estate man, developing the J.J. Hegman Subdivision in north Austin in the mid-1920s, consisting of Rowena Street and Avenue F between 47<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>st</sup> Streets. The 1930 U.S. Census shows the Hegman family living in a house worth \$10,000 with an address of 4805 Avenue F, which may be the house currently known as 108 E. 48<sup>th</sup> Street, built in 1926, the year after the Hegman Subdivision was platted. If it was not that house, it was another house of similar size and value that has since been demolished. The house currently at 4805 Avenue F was built in 1937.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

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The house is beyond the bounds of any City survey to date. The applicant has provided a structural engineer’s report citing substandard conditions at the house with a recommendation for demolition. The City also recommended demolition of the house in 1995, but the house was repaired instead.

Staff has evaluated this house for designation as a historic landmark and has determined that the house meets the criteria for landmark designation as set forth in City Code:

- a. **Architecture.** The house is an anomaly in some ways – its form is much older than its 1932 construction date might suggest – the wing-and-gable

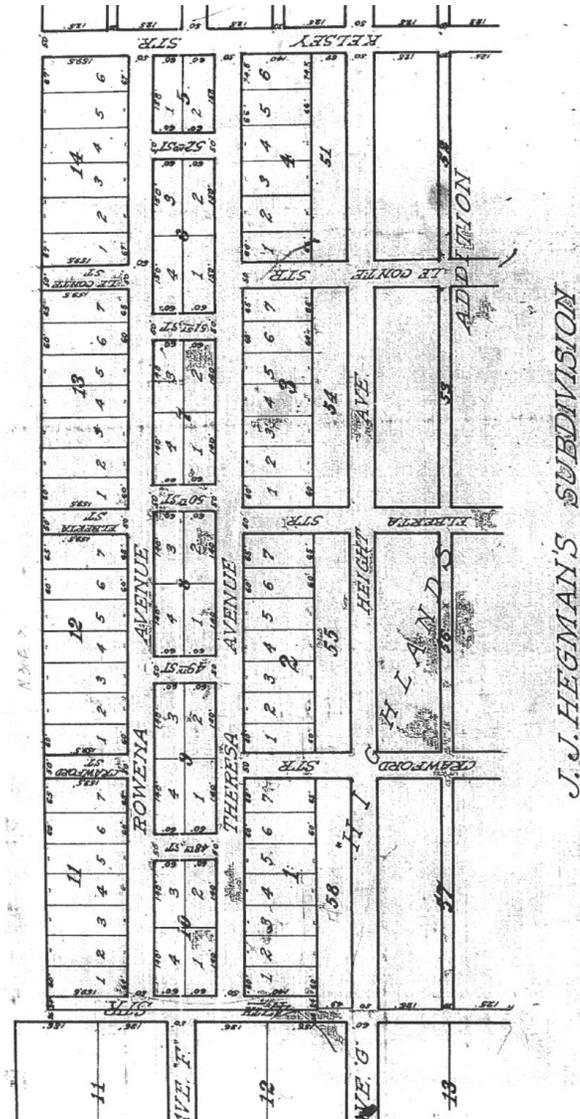
configuration of this house appears to be more related to late 19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular architecture than 1930s construction. At some point before 1961, according to the legend on the Sanborn map of that year, the old frame house shown on the 1935 map was stuccoed over, an addition was constructed to the rear, and the second-story belvedere was added to the house. The metal roof dates from 1995. The house is significant for its architecture.

- b. **Historical association.** The house is believed to have been built in 1932 by Jay J. Hegman and his wife, Elisabeth, who platted this subdivision in 1925 and lived in a much grander house in the neighborhood before this. Hegman was a theater magnate, known for opening the first theater in Austin solely devoted to showing motion pictures, as well as his defiance to Texas' blue laws which prohibited him from operating his movie theaters on Sundays. That defiance cost him several fines, and he later sold the Queen Theater, but never left the theater business in Austin, opening the Ritz on Sixth Street in 1929. The Hegman family ran the Ritz for many years.
- 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, the neighborhood, 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**

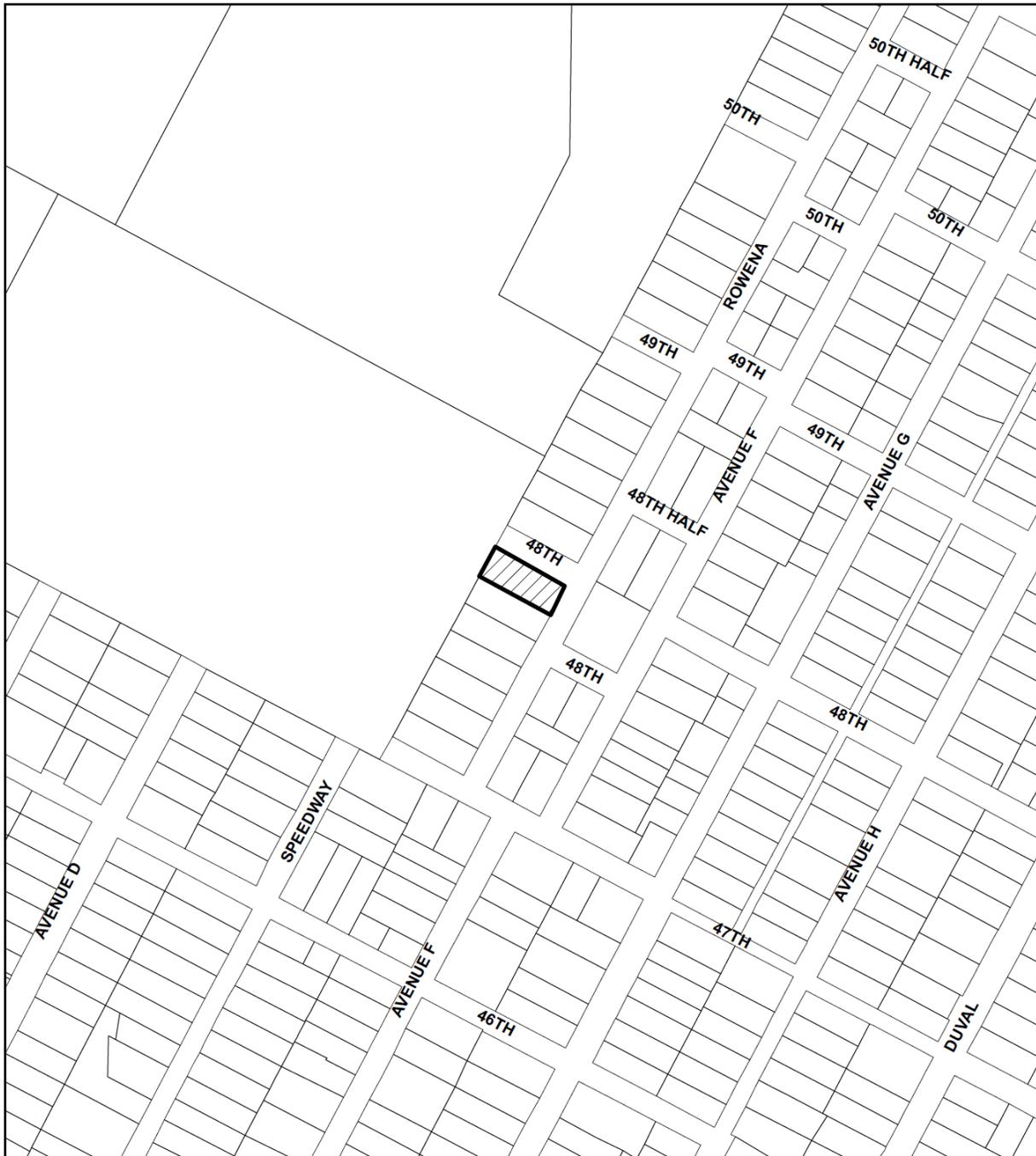
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Initiate historic zoning if the Commission believes that the house meets the criteria for designation for architectural and historical significance, as well as the applicant's reports concerning the condition of the house. If the Commission does not initiate historic zoning and releases the permit, then staff recommends 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.



The J.J. Hegman Subdivision (1925). The street labeled as Theresa Avenue (named for the Hegmans' daughter, who later married Larry Craddock) is now Avenue F.

LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

**NOTIFICATIONS**

CASE#: HDP-2020-0340  
LOCATION: 4714 ROWENA ST

1" = 250'

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.



4714 Rowena Street  
ca. 1932



## OCCUPANCY HISTORY 4714 Rowena Street

City Directory Research, Austin History Center  
By City Historic Preservation Office  
April, 2013

- 1959 Joe R. Fleet, renter  
Mechanic, Capitol Truck and Trailer, 4822 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street.
- 1957 John A. and Ella Mae Mullin, renters  
No occupation listed
- 1954 William R. and Annie Frazier, renters  
No occupation listed  
Also listed are Lorene Frazier, a telephone operator, and Rex Frazier, an office worker.
- 1952 W.R. and Annie B. Frazier, renters  
No occupation listed  
Also listed are Lorene Frazier, no occupation shown, and Rex Frazier, a driver for the Kerrville Bus Lines.
- 1949 Vacant  
NOTE: W.R. and Annie B. Frazier are not listed in the directory. Lorene Frazier is listed as an attendant at Austin State Hospital, 4100 Guadalupe Street.

NOTE: Jay J. and Elizabeth Hegman are listed at 720 E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street; he was the proprietor of the Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Elmo W. and Virginia Hegman are listed at 903 Neches Street; he was listed as a proprietor of the Ritz Theater.

- 1947 Jay J. and Lizzie M. Hegman, owners  
Proprietor, Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.  
NOTE: Elmo W. and Virginia C. Hegman are listed at 903 Neches Street; he was the manager of the Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1944-45 Jay J. and Elizabeth Hegman, owners  
No occupation listed  
NOTE: Elmo W. and Virginia C. Hegman are listed at 903 Neches Street. He was the manager of the Ritz Theater; Virginia was the cashier of the Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1941 Jay J. and Elizabeth Hegman, owners  
Jay J.: No occupation listed  
Elizabeth: Cashier, Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.  
NOTE: Elmo W. and Virginia Hegman are listed at 206 Trinity Street. He was the manager of the Ritz Theater; she was a cashier at the Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1939 Jay J. and Elizabeth Hegman, owners  
Jay J.: No occupation listed  
Elizabeth: Cashier, Ritz Theater, 302 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.  
NOTE: Elmo W. and Virginia Hegman are listed at 602 E. 25<sup>th</sup> Street. He was the manager of the Ritz Theater; she was a cashier at the Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1937 Jay J. and Elizabeth Hegman, owners  
Jay J.: Proprietor, Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.  
Elizabeth: Cashier, Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1935 Jay J. and Elizabeth Hegman, owners  
Jay J.: Manager, Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.  
Elizabeth: Cashier, Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.  
Also listed is Elmo W. Hegman, an operator at the Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.  
NOTE: The house is listed as 4710 Rowena Street.
- 1932-33 Jay J. and Elizabeth Hegman, owners  
No occupation listed  
Also listed is Elmo W. Hegman, a projectionist.  
NOTE: The house is listed as 4710 Rowena Street.  
NOTE: Elmo W. and Virginia Hegman are listed at 2206-A Longfellow. He was the manager of the Ritz Theater; she was a cashier at the Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1930-31 No houses are listed on Rowena Street.  
NOTE: Jay J. and Elizabeth Hegman, as well as Elmo W. Hegman, are listed at 4805 Avenue F, which may be the house now known as 108 E. 48<sup>th</sup> Street, or one similar. Jay J. Hegman is listed as the proprietor of the Ritz Theater; Elmo W. Hegman was the projectionist at the Ritz Theater, 320 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

#### **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:**

**Jay J. and Elizabeth Hegman (ca. 1932 – ca. 1948)**

His 1918 World War I draft registration card shows that Jay Jacob Hegman was living at 802 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street in Austin at that time. He was born on Christmas Day, 1882, and was the owner and manager of theaters in Temple and Austin, Texas. He was married to Elisabeth Hegman. He was of medium height and build, and had light brown hair and gray eyes.

The 1930 U.S. Census shows Jay J. and Elisabeth Hegman as the owners of a house worth \$10,000 in the Highland Subdivision, which later became the Hegman Addition, consisting of Rowena Street and Avenue F between 47<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>st</sup> Streets. This reference in the census report may relate to their former home known as 4805 Avenue F in the city directories but possibly the house at 108 E. 48<sup>th</sup> Street today, a two-story brick house, as the value of the house at 4714 Rowena Street was significantly less in the 1940 U.S. Census report that the house now known as 108 E. 48<sup>th</sup> Street, the only two-story house in the neighborhood at the time. Jay J. Hegman was 45, had been born in Texas to German-born parents, and was in the amusement business, particularly moving pictures. Elisabeth M. Hegman was 44, had been born in Texas to German-born parents, and had no occupation listed. They had a son, Elmo W. Hegman, 23, an operator in a moving pictures theater; and a daughter, Theresa C. Hegman, 21, both of whom had been born in Texas. Also in the household was Elisabeth M. Hegman's father, Christ J. Plath, a 74-year old widower who had been born in Germany and had no occupation listed.

The 1940 U.S. Census shows Jay J. and Elizabeth Hegman as the owners of this house, which was worth \$2,500. Jay J. Hegman was 55, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. Elizabeth M. Hegman was 54, had been born in Texas, and was the cashier for a theater. They had no children listed with them.

J.J. Hegman was living at 3213 Lafayette Street at the time of his death in 1953. According to his death certificate, he was born December 25, 1883 in Galveston, Texas, and was a theater owner.

## HEGMAN ANNOUNCES HE WILL RUN SUNDAY SHOW

That he will have his theater open for business on Sunday and will continue to operate the establishment every Sunday until the Sunday closing law is given a final test, was the announcement Friday morning of J. J. Hegman, owner of the Queen Theater, in discussing the filing of charges himself and C. W. A. MacCormack, owner of the Crescent Theater, for operating their theaters last Sunday. That he convinced that the majority of the citizens of Austin favor Sunday movies was his statement.

"To enforce the Sunday law against theater owners is discrimination," said Manager Hegman, "when it is possible to buy in Austin on Sunday anything from a cigar or a deck of playing cards to a sack of flour."

Jay J. Hegman announces he will violate the Texas Sunday closing laws to show movies at the Queen Theater on Congress Avenue.  
Austin Statesman, February 23, 1923

# QUEEN

## CORINE GRIFFITH

Texas Society Girl Actress in

### 'A WOMAN'S SACRIFICE'



A DRAMA OF CANADIAN SNOWS.

ALSO NEW LARRY SEMON COMEDY—"GOLF"

Advertisement for Hegman's Queen Theater  
Austin Statesman, February 23, 1923

# **JURY FINES HEGMAN \$50.00 AND COSTS**

A jury in Justice Tannehill's court Tuesday, assessed J. J. Hegman \$50 fine for violating the Sunday closing law, in that he operated the Queen moving picture theatre, of which he is proprietor, on Sunday.

The costs of the trial added to the fine made a total of \$64.75.

Jay J. Hegman is fined for violating the Sunday closing law by showing movies on a Sunday  
Austin Statesman, October 30, 1923

# PURCHASE OF QUEEN THEATER BY AUSTIN WOMAN ANNOUNCED

Miss Mary Hamilton Buys Interests of J. J. Hegman In Local Picture House.

Purchase of the Queen Theatre from J. J. Hegman by Miss Mary Hamilton of Austin was announced late Tuesday. Actual consideration involved was not announced by the contracting parties.

Announcement has been made that Miss Hamilton has assumed management of the property and that the new owner will issue a statement within the next few days concerning the future policy of the Queen.

Miss Hamilton is well known in Austin, having been a student of the University of Texas, as well as the University of Southern California at Berkeley, Cal. She formerly taught in Woodridge School and later took up newspaper work here. She is president of the Business and Professional Woman's Club and is a member of other well known organizations.

Mr. Hegman, the retiring owner of the Queen, announced today that he has not formulated plans for the future. He stated that the fight against the operation of his theatre on Sunday had nothing to do with the sale.

Jay J. Hegman sells the "old" Queen Theater  
Austin Statesman, November 21, 1923

# CRESCENT THEATRE TO BE OPENED THURSDAY BY MRS. J. J. HEGMAN

Will Show First-Class Pictures  
on Second Run at Popu-  
lar Prices.

After being redecorated and improved, the Crescent Theater will be re-opened as a first class picture house tomorrow, Thanksgiving Day, it was announced this morning by Mrs. J. J. Hegman, who has leased the property. Mrs. Hegman is the wife of J. J. Hegman who operated the Queen Theater here for a number of years.

The opening picture will be "Our Hospitality," starring Buster Keaton, a picture that critics have pronounced the biggest and funniest production ever made by this popular comedian and should prove a popular attraction for the opening bill.

Mrs. Hegman announced that she has obtained a long-time lease on the property and will show only first class pictures. Admission prices will be 10 and 20 cents, regardless of the quality or expense of the picture shown.

While many first-run pictures have been booked for the theater, the programs will be made up mostly of first class pictures shown for their second time. This type of theater has proven highly successful in other cities and Mrs. Hegman expressed assurance that it would prove popular here.

Some of the attractions booked for the near future are: "Miami," with Betty Compson; "The Hoosier Schoolmaster," "The Yankee Consul," with Douglas McLean; "The Extra Girl," with Mabel Normand and "The Courtship of Miles Standish."

Elisabeth Hegman announces the re-opening of the Crescent Theater under her management.  
Austin Statesman, November 26, 1924

# AUSTIN'S NEWEST THEATRE ENJOYS BUSINESS

Declaring that Austin is now ready and willing to support a first-class business located east of Congress avenue, J. J. Hegman, Austin theatre owner, is operating the Ritz theatre on East Sixth street under a new policy of presenting second-run talking pictures within 30 to 60 days of the time they originally appear here. The theatre is to be operated for white customers only, Mr. Hegman has announced.

The Ritz, Austin's newest theatre, was opened for business three weeks ago. Since its opening it has been equipped with talkie apparatus and improved accoustics in order to follow out the management's new policy. It is now the only popular priced theatre in Austin running talking pictures, Mr. Hegman declared.

Mr. Hegman is a well-known Texas theatre man and has been located in Austin for the past 10 or 12 years. Coming here from Temple, he took over the old Queen theatre and later built the present

Queen. Until recently he was owner and manager of the Crescent theatre, and he has also been connected with show houses in Galveston and other Texas cities.

Elmo Hegman, former university student, is advertising manager for the new theatre.

Among pictures booked are Universal's singing-talking production, "College Love," now playing; Clara Bow in "Dangerous Curves," scheduled for Sunday and Monday; and "The Dance of Life," featuring Nancy Carroll and Hal Skelly, which will appear here soon.

"Special efforts to draw matinee crowds of women and children will be made by the management," Mr. Hegman announced.

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News story on Hegman's opening the Ritz Theater  
Austin Statesman, November 7, 1929

## Hegman Rites Are Held Here

Funeral services were held Tuesday afternoon at the Cook Funeral Home for J. J. Hegman, 69, retired motion picture theater owner, who died Monday at his home, 3213 Lafayette Avenue.

Hegman had been in ill health for the past 20 years.

The Rev. Edward V. Long, pastor of St. Martin's Lutheran Church, officiated at the services. Burial was in Memorial Park.

Pallbearers were William Helms, George W. Foster, Joe Jacks, Cecil Kelso, Johannes Bohn and Fred Mueller.

Hegman is survived by his widow; a son, Elmo Hegman of Austin; one daughter, Mrs. Larry Craddock of Austin; a sister, Mrs. Charles Engelke of Comfort; two brothers, Ben D. Hegman and William Hegman, both of Galveston, and two grandchildren.

Hegman came to Austin in 1915 when he opened the old Queen Theater. He opened the present Queen Theater at Seventh and Congress in 1921.

Hegman sold his interest in the Queen theater operation to Charles E. Marsh and went to Galveston to operate the Grand Opera House.

He returned to Austin in 1929 to open the Ritz Theater on East Sixth Street and had remained in ownership of that theater since that time as well as maintaining his residence here.

Hegman was born in Galveston on Christmas day, 1883, the son of Diedrich Hegman and Margaret Pauls Hegman, who settled on Galveston Island in 1848.

News story on the career of Jay J. Hegman upon his death  
Austin Statesman, February 17, 1953

**QUEEN CLOSES NOV. 6**

# Theater Will Bow From City Scene

By LORRAINE BARNES

The Queen Theater, in which the talking pictures first talked in Austin, will say its curtain speech Nov. 6.

The movie house at the corner of Seventh and Congress, a landmark in the local entertainment field since World War I, will close its doors with the final screening of the bill that night, Harold Novy, city manager of Trans-Texas Theaters, announced Saturday.

The closing does not affect other Austin properties of the theater chain headed by Louis Novy. Future use of the building was not announced.

Appropriately, the old Queen will go out with a bang. Its final attraction will be "The Gun That Won the West"—the same kind of action drama that has been packing them in since "The Great Train Robbery" burst on a receptive American public.

In its long history, the Queen has scored a series of notable "firsts." It was the first house built in Austin specifically for the showing of motion pictures. It was the first theater to operate on Sundays, a victory scored after a long war against the "blue laws." And it did its part to revolutionize the cinema industry when, in 1928, it screened "The Jazz Singer"—the Al Jolson epic that TALKED.

When the screen goes dark Nov. 6, workmen will start removing the Trans-Texas equipment—seats, screen, air-conditioning and projection room equipment. The two projectors (installed in the Queen during Austin's big flood in 1935) and the sound amplifiers, along with the recently replaced screen from the Texas Theater, will go to the Texas School for the Deaf—a gift to its children. The equipment, all in good condition, will be installed in the school's auditorium.

The Queen location has been under lease by various theater operators over a period of 40 years and perhaps longer, a small movie house having been in operation there before 1916. Elmo Hegman recalls that his father, the late J. J. Hegman, who operated the "old" Queen in 1916, persuaded Major George W. Littlefield to build the "new" Queen about 1920. This was done by acquiring a narrow building on the north side and merging the two into a handsome cinema palace.

Hegman then held the franchise for First National pictures, now a part of Warner Brothers, and such stars as Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin and Norma and Constance Talmadge—the great names of the era—flashed across the Queen screen. The production of "The Birth of a Nation" outdated the Queen's opening, but this epic has played at the theater as a reissue.

Hegman sold to Southern Enterprises, a branch of Paramount-Publix, and the Queen later became a property of Interstate Theaters. It has been operated by Trans-Texas since 1952. Hegman went to Galveston to operate the Opera House there but returned to the Austin entertainment field and operated the old Ritz, replaced in 1937 by a new theater. The veteran theater man died in 1953.

News story on the closing of the Queen Theater with reference to Jay J. Hegman's theater career in Austin

Austin American-Statesman, October 30, 1955

## Mrs. Hegman Succumbs At Her Home

Mrs. Elizabeth Marie Hegman, 77, widow of the prominent Austin businessman who built the city's first theater designed exclusively for motion pictures, the old Queen Theater, died at her home here Tuesday night.

Her husband, J. J. Hegman, died about 10 years ago. He had gone into the motion picture business in 1911.

Mrs. Hegman was a native of New Braunfels, born there May 11, 1885, the daughter of the late Chris and Wilhelmina Plath of Dallas. She had been a resident of Austin for 45 years, was a life-long member of the Lutheran Church, and a member of Violet Crown Lodge No. 8, Sons of Hermann.

Survivors are a son, Elmo W. Hegman of Austin; a daughter, Mrs. Theresa Hegman Craddock of Austin; a brother, Herbert Plath of Dallas; a sister, Mrs. Agnes Rust of Dallas; two grandchildren, Mrs. Bette Pressler and Larry Jay Craddock; and two great-grandchildren.

Funeral services for Mrs. Hegman will be held at 2 p. m. Thursday at Hytin-Manor Funeral Home, with the Rev. Harold Pennington officiating. Burial will be in Austin Memorial Park.

Obituary of Elisabeth Hegman  
Austin Statesman, March 21, 1962

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

# PERMIT FOR WATER SERVICE

AUSTIN, TEXAS

No. 1042

M. J. J. Hegman

Address 4712 Rowena

Plumber A. Schutze

Size of Tap 1/2

Date 2-15-32

CHANGE TO 6" MAIN  
SERVICE WITH COPPER ON E243.5

Foreman's Report

Date of Connection 2/16/32

Size of Tap Made 3/4

Size Service Made 3/4

Size Main Tapped 6" 2 1/2

From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 7' 1/2"

From S. Prop. Line to Curb Cock 11' 8"

Location of Meter at curb

Type of Box lock

Depth of Main in St. 14"

Depth of Service Line 14"

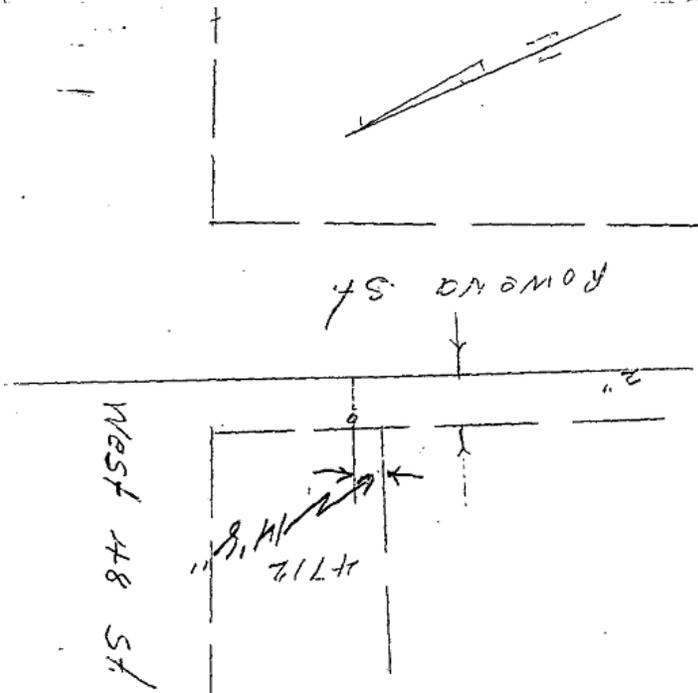
From Curb Cock to Tap on Main 9' 6"

No. Fittings	Size	Description
1	3/4"	Curb Cock
1	3/4"	Elbow
1	3/4"	St. Elbow
1	3/4"	Bushing
1	3/4"	Reducer
1	3/4"	Pipe
1	3/4"	Lead Comp.
1	3/4"	Nipples
1	3/4"	Plug
1	3/4"	Tee
1	3/4"	Stop
1	3/4"	Box
1	3/4"	Lid
1	3/4"	Valves

Checked by Engr. Dept. 3-1-32 307

Foreman's Signature [Signature]

**INDEXED**



Water service permit to J.J. Hegman for this house (1932). The address on the permit reads 4712 Rowena, but the accompanying map shows the location as this house.

OWNER Hegeman Ests. ADDRESS 4714 Rowena Ave.

PLAT 210 LOT 7 BLK 11

SUBDIVISION J. J. Hegeman

OCCUPANCY Residence

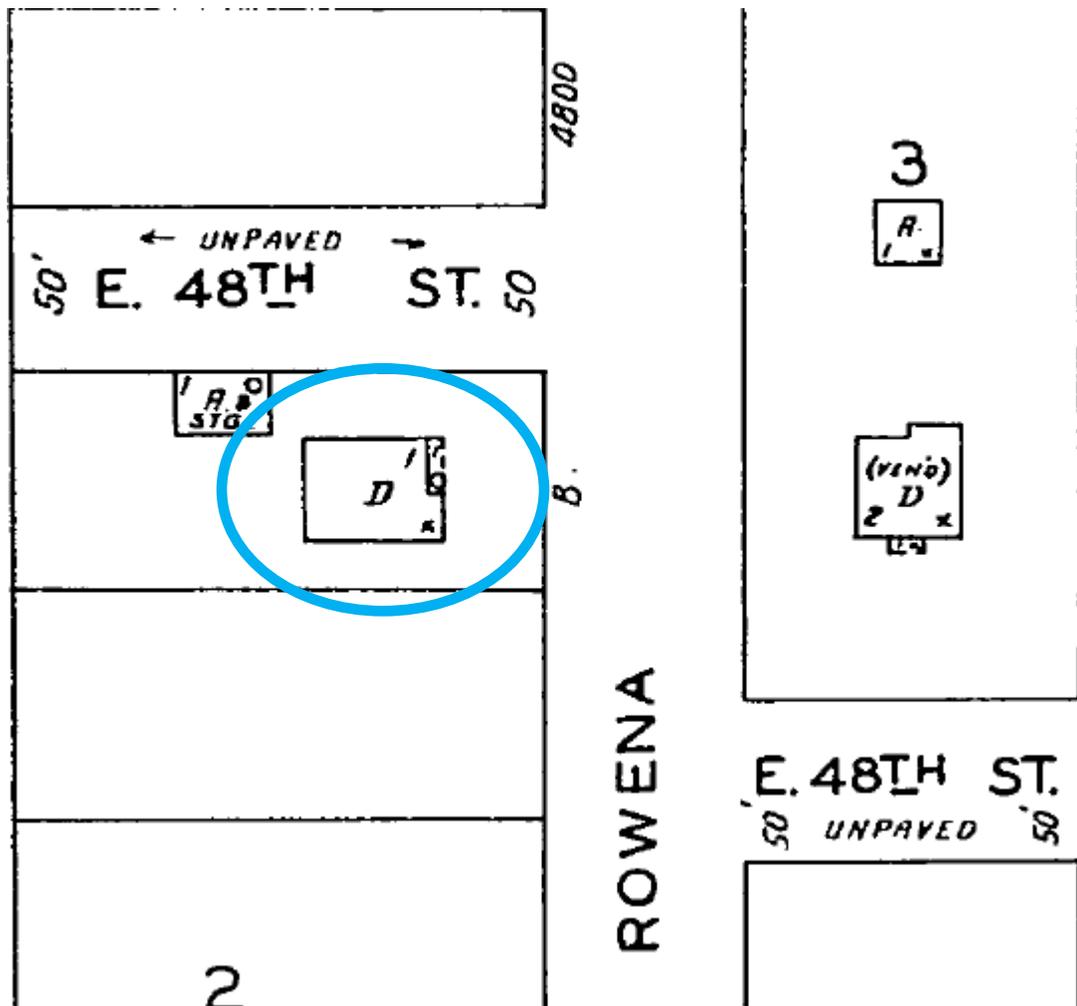
BLD PERMIT # 137430 DATE 7-26-73 OWNERS ESTIMATE \$900.00

CONTRACTOR Elroy Griffin NO. OF FIXTURES several

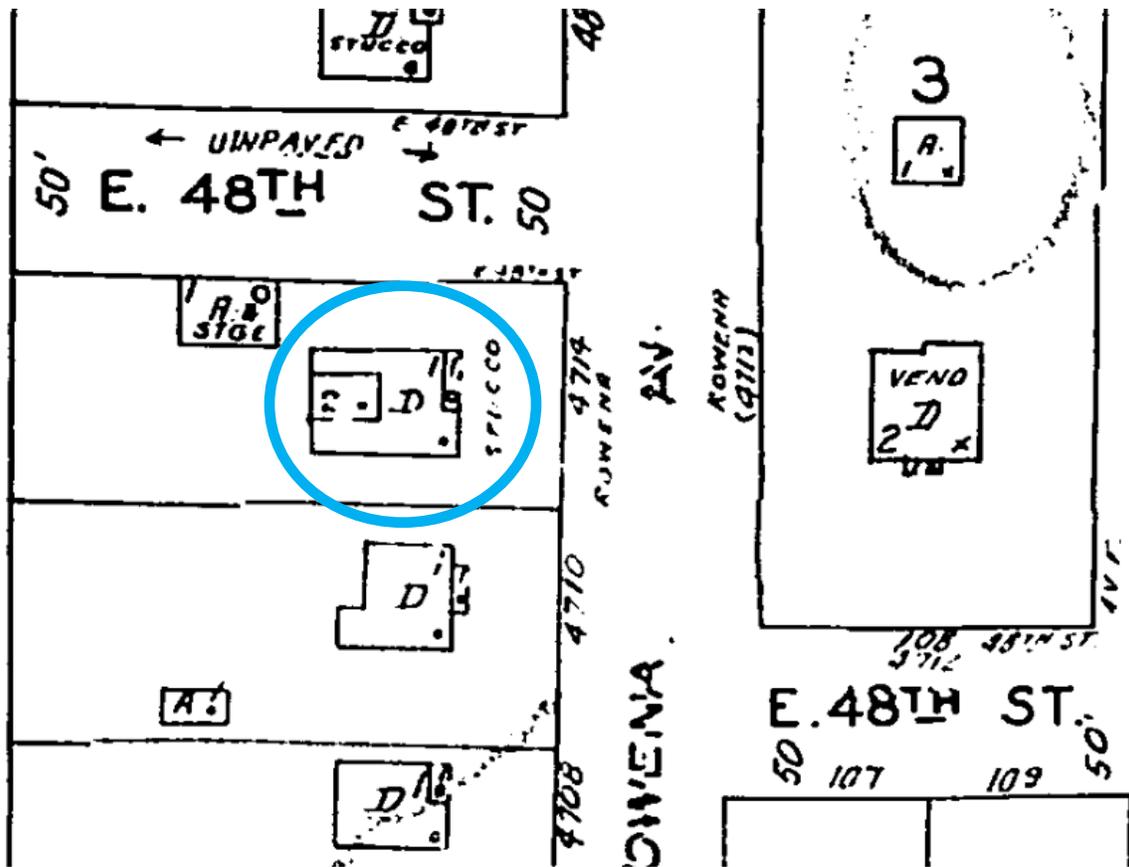
WATER TAP REC # exist SEWER TAP REC # exist

Repair and remodel res. and bring to min. stds.

Building permit to the Hegman Estate to repair and remodel the house (1973)



The house appears as a one-story house with a partial-width front porch on the 1935 Sanborn map.



The 1961 Sanborn map shows the house with its current configuration, including the notation that it has a stucco exterior and a second-story addition to the rear.