

1501 NICKERSON

AUSTIN TX 78704

DECEMBER 14, 2020

CITY OF AUSTIN

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

F.A.R. VARIANCE REQUEST

Existing 1-story Main House
1,431 SF; pre 1921



F.A.R. Variance Request

Additional 85 SF to expand existing House (+/- 0.1 F.A.R.)

Background/Scope of Work:

The Primary House where work will occur is a 1,431 SF, single story residence.
The House was constructed before 1921.

There is an existing Guest House (ADU) of 622 SF on the property.

The current Owners purchased and have occupied the property since 2007.

The request is to enable the Owners to:

1. Expand & update the existing kitchen;
2. Add additional area to an existing bedroom to create a flex space;
3. Add a porch for outdoor living & children's play area;
4. Add a second bedroom/bath on a new second floor.

F.A.R. Variance Request

Additional 85 SF to expand existing House (+/- .1 F.A.R.)

Use, Hardship, and Character:

The desire is to add to the Existing House, not to demolish either it or the Guest House.

The Guest House is an asset to the property, to the Neighborhood, and to the City.

The Configuration and Construction of the Existing House
limits the feasible design options for adding additional space.

The Property is in a Transition Zone, in direct proximity to heavy Commercial activity
and to large adjacent structures.

The Variance request for 85 square feet is modest in context.

Property consists of a Main House and a Guest House (ADU)

Main House 1,431 SF, pre-1921

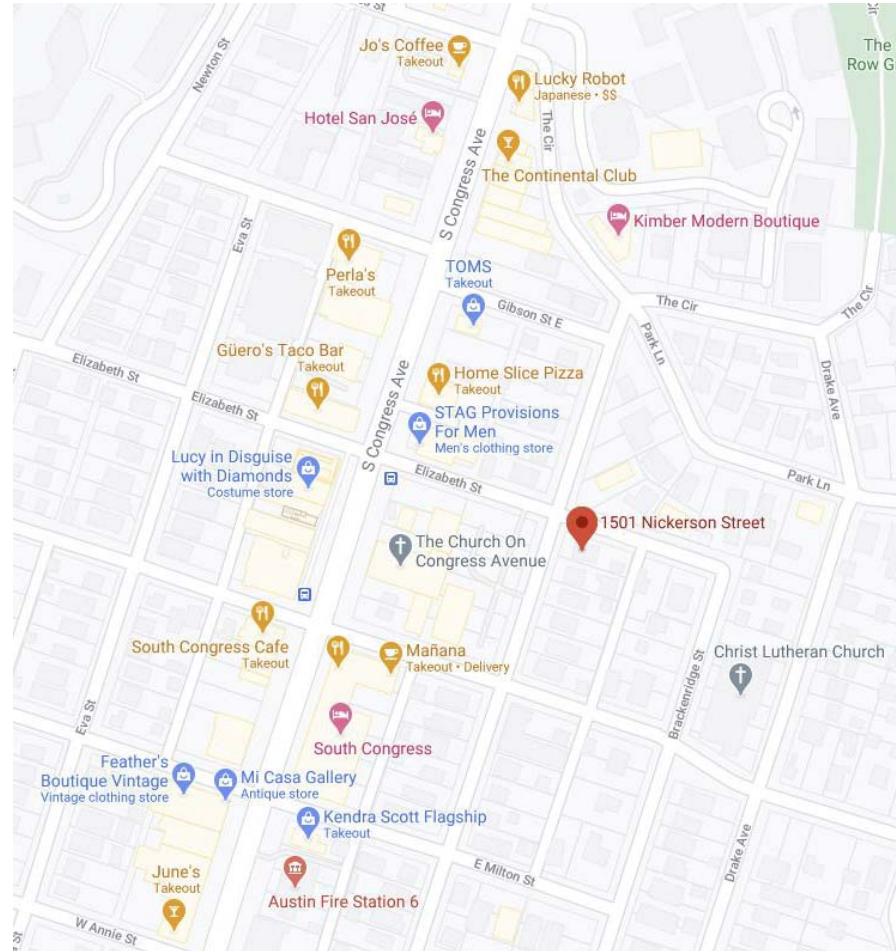
Guest House 622 SF pre-1950



An aerial photograph of a neighborhood in East Austin, Texas. The map shows a grid of streets including S Congress Ave, Elizabeth St, E Monroe St, Nickerson St, and Drake Ave. Various commercial and residential buildings are visible, along with green spaces and trees. A red pin is placed on the property at 1501 Nickerson St, Austin, TX 78704. Other labels on the map include 'Blue Cross Blue Shield', 'Home Slice Pizza', 'Austin Independent School District', and 'Central Station'. The map also shows the 'University of Texas at Austin' and the 'Austin Convention Center' in the background.

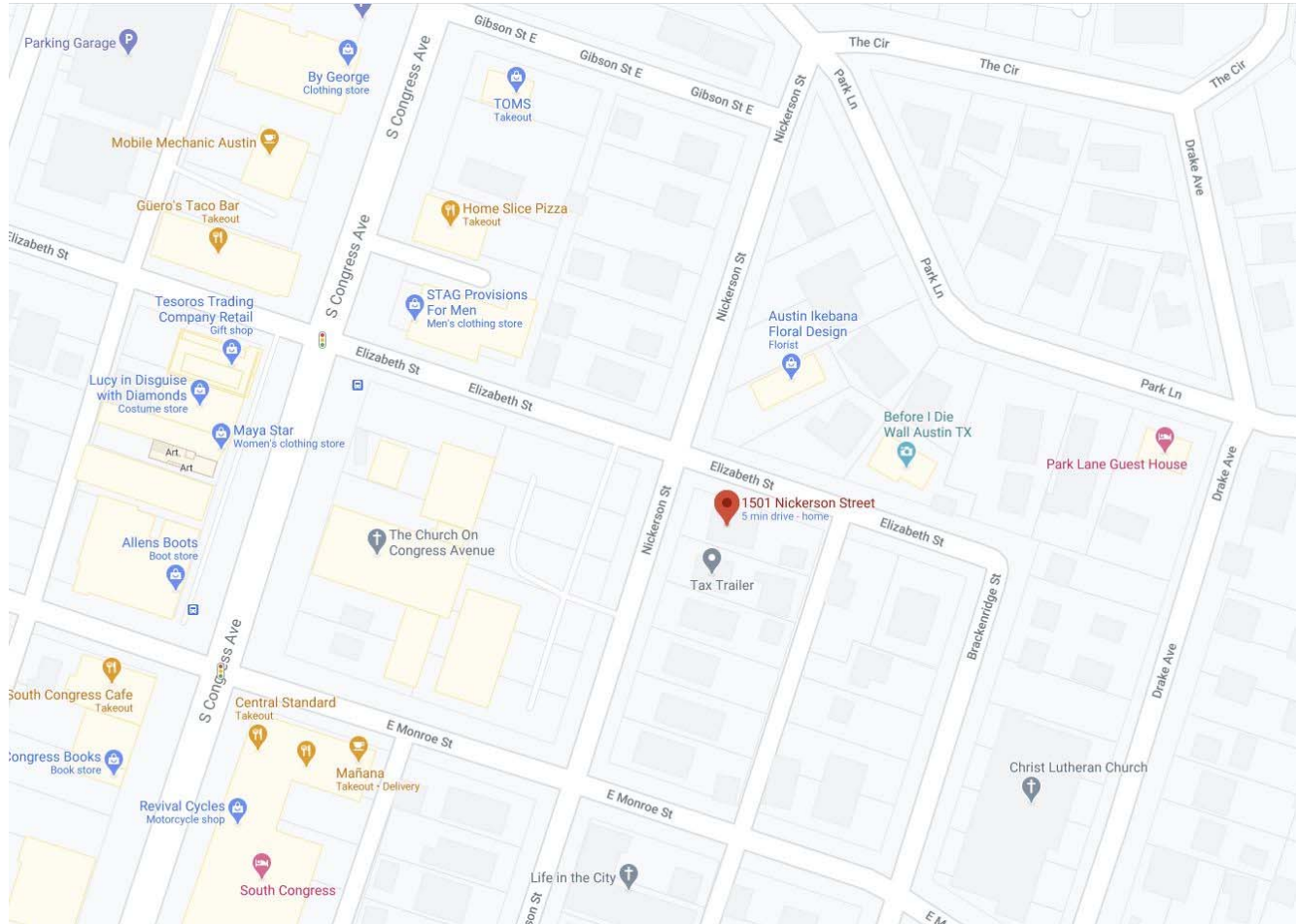
Commercial Transition Zone

Proximity to Commercial activity on S. Congress Ave.



Commercial Transition Zone

Additional Commercial Activity in direct proximity to 1501 Nickerson



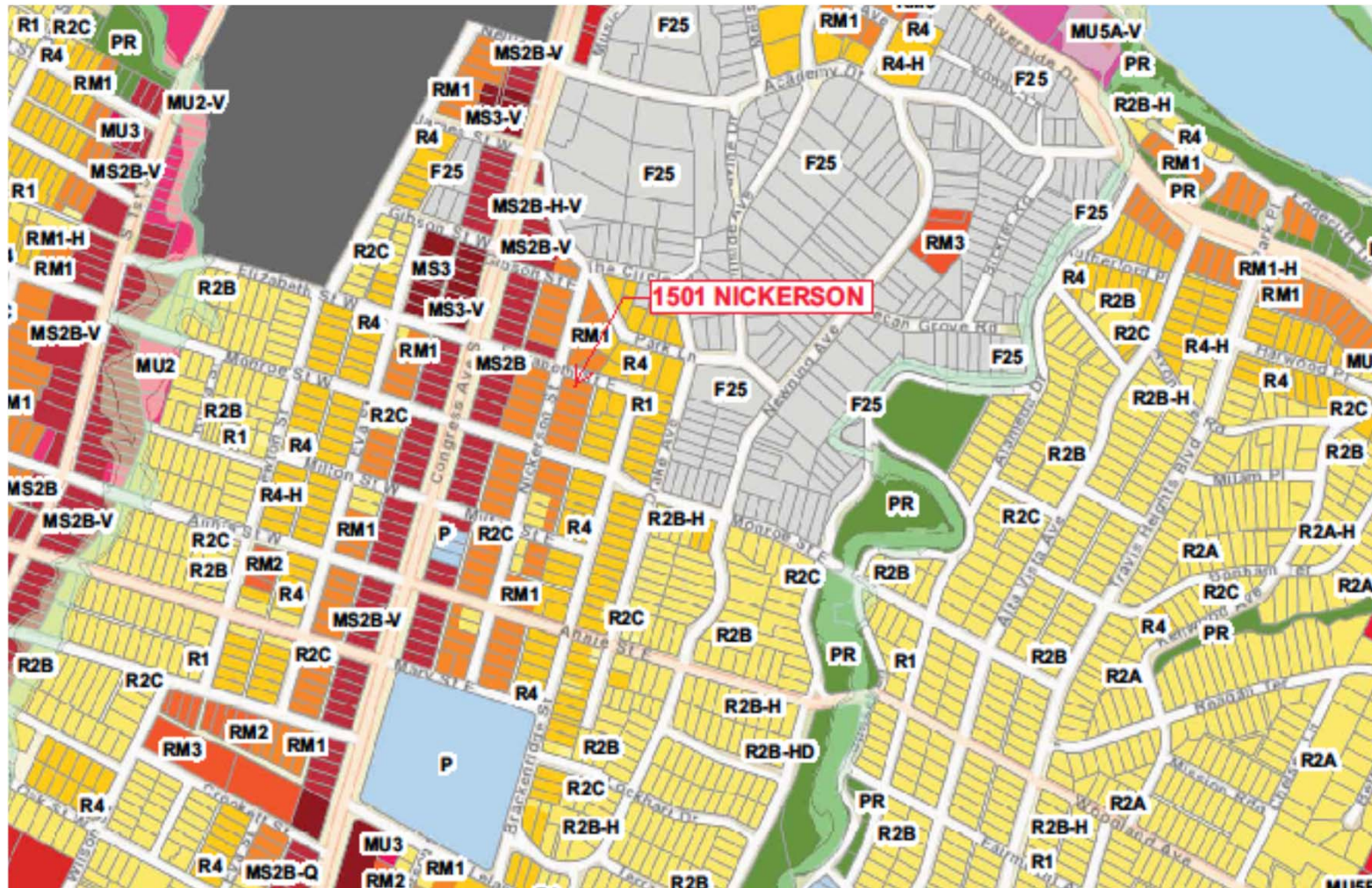
Aerial View

1501 Nickerson in relation to South Congress Ave.



Property is in New Code Transition Zone

Proposed Re-Zoning will be RM1 with CodeNext



Property is in New Code Transition Zone

Multi-Unit Structures will be allowed in RM1

23-3C-4070 Residential Multi-Unit 1 (RM1) Zone

- (A) **Purpose.** Residential Multi-Unit 1 (RM1) zone is intended to provide a transition between low-intensity residential zones and medium to higher-intensity zones. This zone allows house-scale, multi-unit structures and townhouses with required frontages.
- (B) **Requirements.** A lot zoned Residential Multi-Unit 1 shall comply with the requirements of this subsection, which are established in the following tables:
 - (1) Table (A) (Lot Size and Intensity);
 - (2) Table (B) (Building Placement);
 - (3) Table (C) (Building Form);
 - (4) Table (D) (Height);
 - (5) Table (E) (Encroachments);
 - (6) Table (F) (Parking);
 - (7) Table (G) (Private Frontages); and
 - (8) Table (H) (Impervious Cover).
- (C) **Number of Dwelling Units Permitted.** A lot zoned RM1 allows:
 - (1) A minimum of two units per lot.
 - (a) **Exception.** A minimum of one unit per lot is permitted for complying uses per Section 23-2H-3020 (Compliant Residential Use).
 - (2) A maximum of ten units per lot.
 - (a) **Exception.** If utilizing the Preservation Incentive, per Section 23-3C-4060 (House-Scale Preservation Incentive), a lot zoned RM1 is allowed 11 units per lot.



RM1

Property is in New Code Transition Zone

Significantly larger buildings will be allowed in RM1

23-3C-4070
Residential Multi-Unit 1 (RM1) Zone

Residential Multi-Unit Zones

Table 23-3C-4070(A) Lot Size and Intensity						
(1) Allowed Use	Dwelling Units per Lot		Lot		Building	
			Width (min.)	Area (min.)	FAR Maximum	
	Base Standard	Bonus ¹			Base Standard	Bonus ¹
Duplex, Cottage Court, Multi-Family	2	+0	45'	5,000 sf	0.4 FAR	+0 FAR
	3 to 4	+0	45'	5,000 sf	0.6 FAR	+0 FAR
	5 to 6	+4	45'	5,000 sf	0.8 FAR	+1.0 FAR
Live/Work	1	+0	18'	1,800 sf	0.8 FAR	+0 FAR
Townhouse	1	+0	18'	1,800 sf	0.8 FAR	+0 FAR
Other Allowed Uses	—	+0	50'	5,000 sf	0.8 FAR	+0 FAR

¹ To receive affordable housing bonus, a project must comply with Article 23-4E (Affordable Housing).

Table 23-3C-4070(B) Building Placement					
(1) Setback (Distance from ROW / Lot Line)	Front	Side St.	Side	Rear	
Minimum	10'	10'	5'	10'	

(a) Setback exceptions are provided in Section 23-3D-10070 (Setback Exceptions).

(b) The rear setback is 5 feet for an accessory structure with a maximum height of 15 feet.

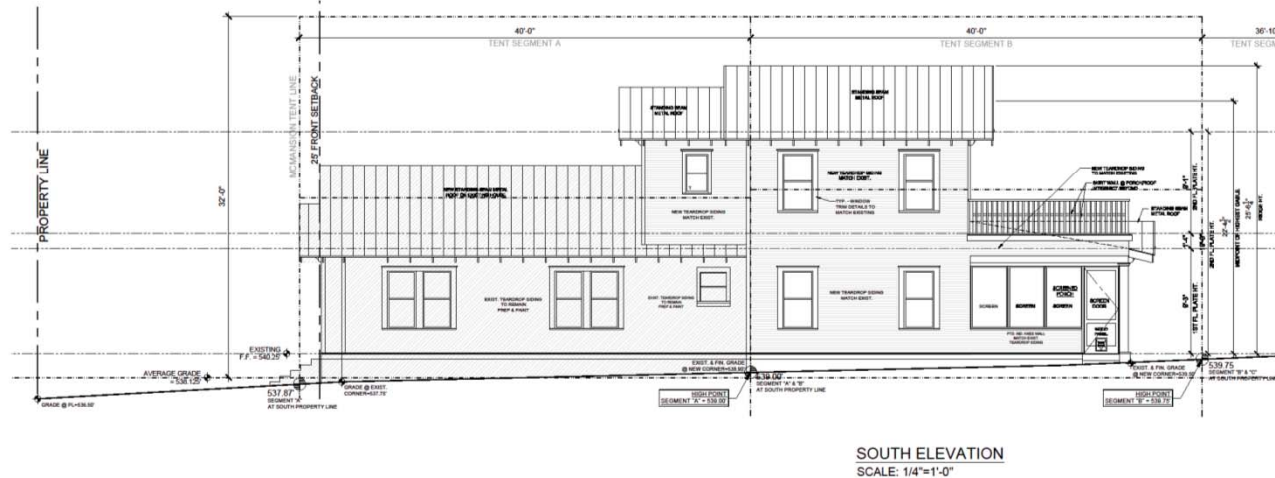
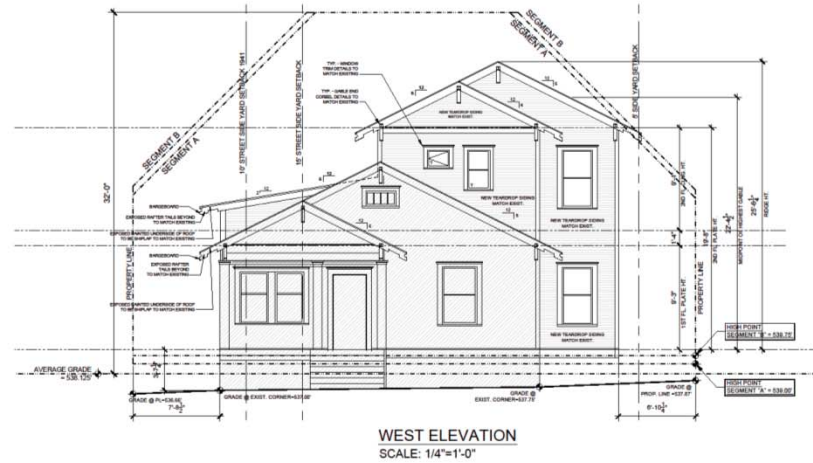
Table 23-3C-4070(C) Building Form	
(1) Overall Building Envelope	
Width (maximum)	100'

Table 23-3C-4070(D) Height		
(1) All Buildings	Base Standard	Bonus ¹
Overall (maximum)	40'	+5'

¹ To receive affordable housing bonus, a project must comply with Article 23-4E (Affordable Housing).

Architectural Drawings

Elevations showing New Addition



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CONNORS - BANK RESIDENCE
1501 NICKERSON
AUSTIN TX 78704

REVISION	DATE

Sheet Name:
SOUTH
&
WEST
ELEVATIONS

Project: CONNORS
Date: OCT. 28, 2020
Phase: CONSTRUCTION
Drawn by: WB
Date: OCT. 28, 2020
Scale:

A3.2



CONNORS - BANK RESIDENCE
1501 NICKERSON
AUSTIN TX 78704

REVISIONS	
	DATE

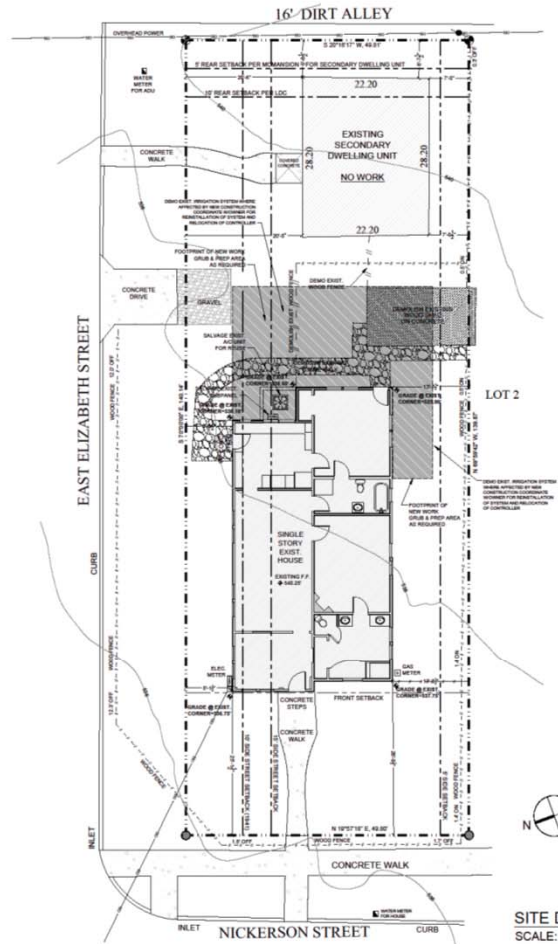
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**NORTH
&
EAST
ELEVATIONS**

Project:	CONNORS
Issue Date:	OCT. 28, 2020
Phase:	CONSTRUCTION
Drawn By:	WB
Date:	OCT. 28, 2020

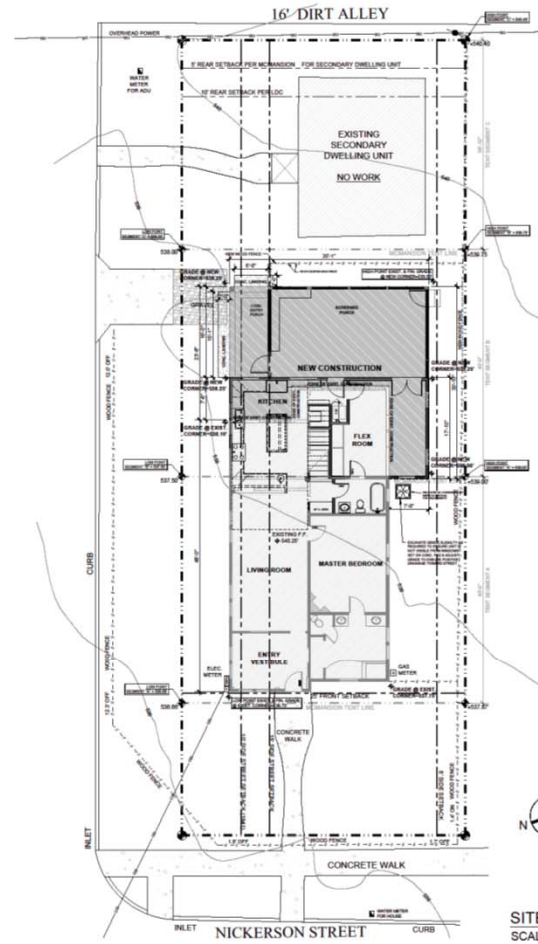
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Architectural Drawings

Existing and New Site Plan



SITE DEMOLITION
SCALE: 1/8"=1'-0"



SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1/8"=1'-0"

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CONNORS - BANK RESIDENCE
1501 NICKERSON
AUSTIN TX 78704

REVISIONS	DATE

Sheet Name:
SITE
PLAN

Project: CONNORS
Issue Date: OCT. 28, 2020
Phase: CONSTRUCTION
Drawn By: WB
Date: OCT. 28, 2020
Scale:

A1.2





ADDRESS:
1501 NICKERSON STREET
AUSTIN, TX 78704

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:
LOT 1, BLOCK 17, OF SWISHER ADDITION, AN
ADDITION IN TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS,
ACCORDING TO THE MAP OR MAPS THEREOF
RECORDED IN BOOK 1, PAGE 2, OF THE PLAT
RECORDS OF TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS,
TOGETHER WITH THE MAP OR PLAT RECORDED
IN INDEED VOLUME 276, PAGE 151 OF THE DEED
RECORDS OF TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS.

THIS PROPERTY DOES NOT LIE WITHIN THE
100 YEAR FLOOD PLAIN, AND HAS A ZONE
RATING AS SHOWN ON THE FLOOD
INSURANCE RATE MAPS
F.I.R.M. MAP NO 48362C020
FLOOD PANEL 6205 E
DATED: JUNE 16, 1993

ZONING:
SF-3-MICRO MAP
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN:
SOUTH RIVER CITY
GREATER SOUTH RIVER CITY COMBINED NPA

FRONT YARD IMPERVIOUS COVER:
NOT APPLICABLE - NO WORK TO OCCUR IN FRONT YARD

F.A.R. CALCULATIONS				
TOTAL SITE AREA: 6,973 SF				
40% OF TOTAL SITE AREA: 2,789 SF				
AREA DESCRIPTION	EXISTING SF	NEW SF	EXEMPTION	TOTAL SF
1ST FLOOR CONDITIONED AREA:				
MAIN HOUSE:	1,431 SF	286 SF		1,687 SF
SECONDARY HOUSE:	623 SF			623 SF
2ND FLOOR CONDITIONED AREA:	0 SF	657 SF		657 SF
3RD FLOOR CONDITIONED AREA:	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF
BASEMENT:	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF
ATTIC:	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF
GARAGE (DETACHED):	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF
CARPORT (ATTACHED):	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF
DETACHED:	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF
ACCESSORY BUILDINGS:	183 SF	< 183 SF	0 SF	0 SF
COVERED (GROUND-FLOOR) PORCH:				
FRONT:	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF
REAR:	0 SF	465 SF (exempt)	465 SF (exempt)	0 SF (exempt)
OTHER:	28 SF (exempt)	0 SF	28 SF	0 SF (exempt)
TOTALS:	2,238 SF	653 SF		2,891 SF
TOTAL SF = 2,894 SF < 41 F.A.R. (EXCEEDS BY 85 SF)				
2,894 SF				

CONNORS - BANK RESIDENCE
1501 NICKERSON
AUSTIN TX 78704

REVISIONS	
	DATE

Sheet Name:
**EXISTING
SITE
&
CALCS.**

Project:	CONNORS
Issue Date:	OCT. 28, 2020
Phase:	CONSTRUCTION
Drawn By:	WB
Date:	OCT. 28, 2020
Sheet:	

A1.1

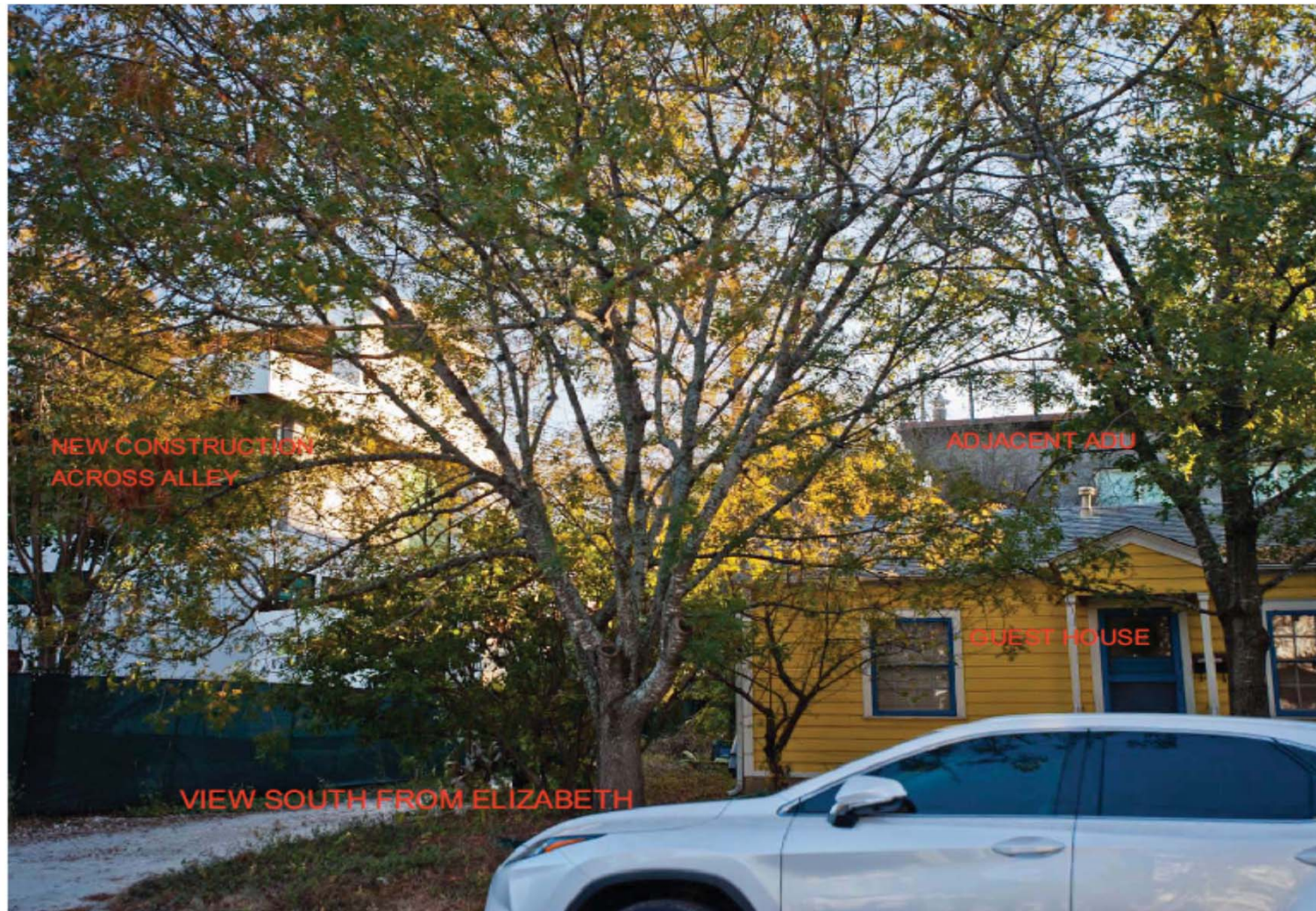
Adjacent Structures



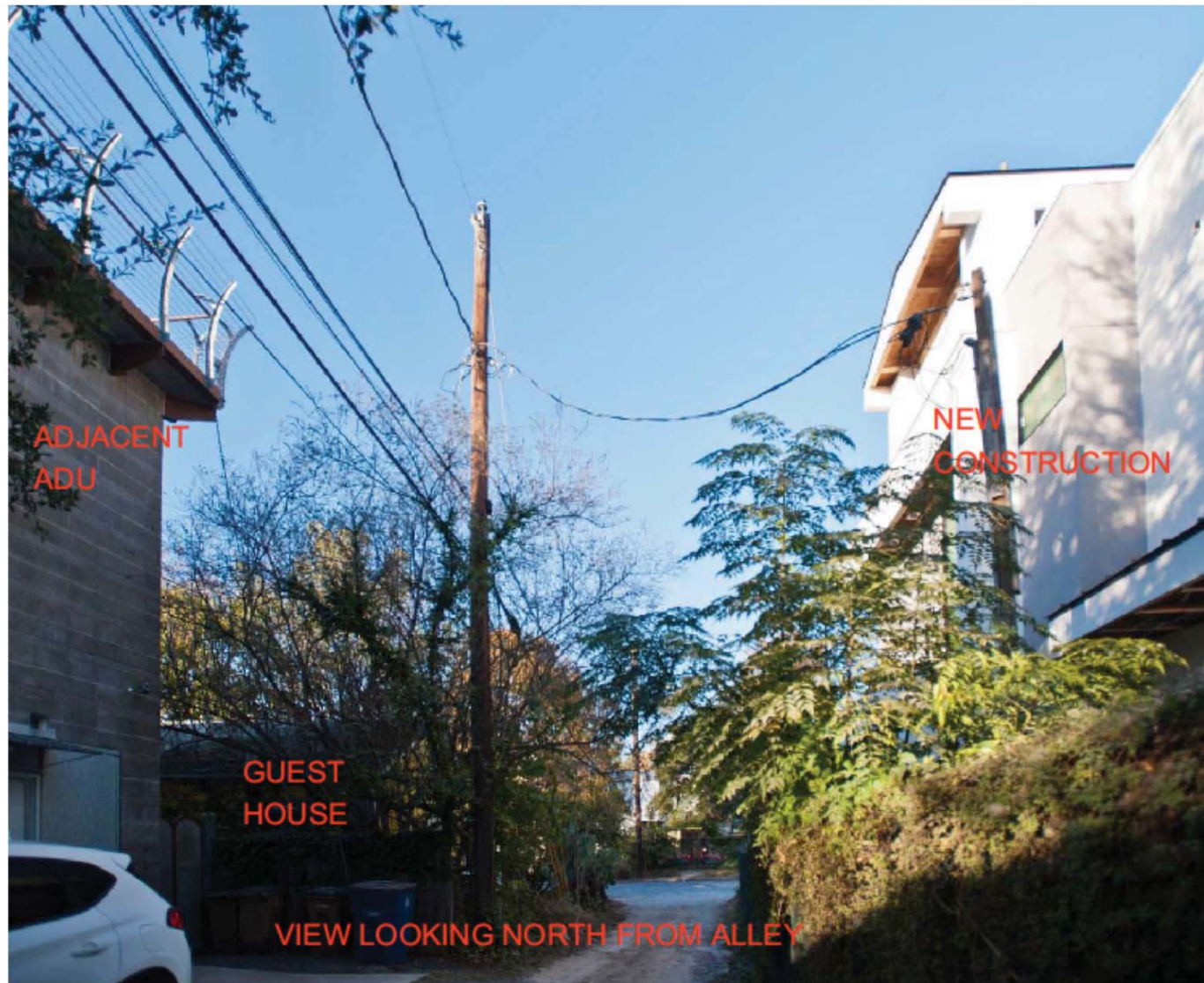
Adjacent Structures



Adjacent Structures



Adjacent Structures



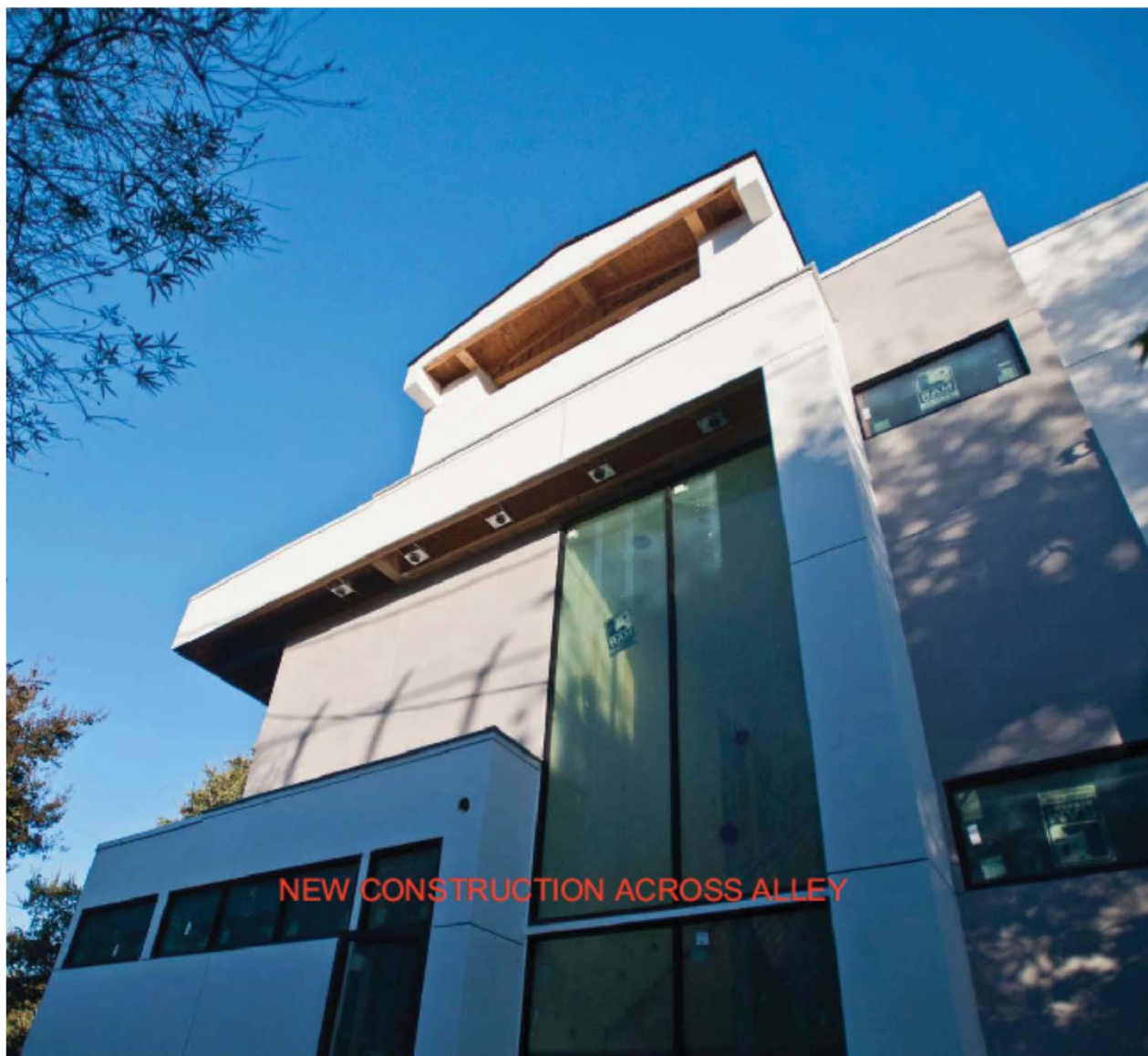
Adjacent Structures



Adjacent Structures



Adjacent Structures





Final Thoughts

- The Residential Design Commission (RDCC) was created by the McMansion Ordinance (Subchapter F) as a 'Safety Valve' to allow projects over .4 FAR to be built.
- If the project were designed from scratch, compliance with Subchapter F could be achieved.
- One intent of Subchapter F had been to preserve existing houses like 1501 Nickerson.
- Subchapter F acknowledges the difficulty of adding to or remodeling existing houses like 1501 Nickerson; there are several exceptions in the ordinance.
- The McMansion Task Force acknowledged and the RDCC was willing to accommodate minor Waiver requests adjacent to outsized structures.

Owner Statement

- Seth and I bought this house in 2007 – shortly after we got married. We fell in love with its character and charm – despite of its foundation issues – and it was our first home. We’ve been told that it was already standing when the City of Austin started keeping records in the early 1920s and that the reason why the primary bathroom is larger than most for its era is because it used to house a barbershop. We love that our house has a sense of history and that this neighborhood really has its own unique personality – there are no cookie-cutter developments here. We love the literal colorful nature of the old Craftsman-style homes - even though there are a lot more stark white and modern houses that are going up around us now.
- The location was, and continues to be, perfect for our family. It’s close enough to downtown for work and culture – but we appreciate the yard for our dog. Our daughter was born in 2009 – and we must have gone to the swings in Little Stacy Park every day for years. Now, we’re more likely to cool off at the pool at Big Stacy but we still love to explore around the neighborhood – either leisurely strolling with our dog or running through the greenbelt as our daughter trains for cross-country.
- Our neighborhood is rambunctious – you can hear the live music from the buskers on the corner and from Guero’s garden and there’s a din of hustle bustle all the time (even during the pandemic; and that trombone’s sound really carries!). We support our local merchants – with food from old favorites like Jo’s, Homeslice, and Guero’s. But we’ve welcomed the addition of Sweetgreens and Café No Se. We have really welcomed the continued excitement and commercial development of the area – or, at least once we got residential permit parking on our street (before that, parking was a nightmare!).
- Most of our neighbors have been pretty stable over the years – we can understand why so many people never leave the area. As the popularity of the neighborhood grew, however, there were more and more short-term rentals and remodels. Vans and scooters of tourists regularly come down our street – stopping at the Hey Cupcake mural, taking selfies at the Willie for President mural – and adding their personal note to the Before I Die wall of the art barn. In fact, a surprising number of folks have stopped to take a picture in front of our little yellow house – I think it’s the bright color (SW6911 Confident Yellow) that makes it so inviting; it just makes you feel like the sun is smiling.
- We’re really interested in preserving the look and feel of the house. Our little yellow house provided the perfect spot for my parents to live when my daughter was born (and may provide the perfect spot for them to retire) and it’s a great office during the pandemic. We’ve had long-term renters several times because it’s the perfect size for one to two people. We just need a little bit more room to provide for our daughter’s independence and growth.
- We cannot imagine living in a different neighborhood – even if it would be more convenient. And, we’ve looked at other homes – but they just don’t have the same character (or, frankly, the construction quality for a lot of the new builds). We’re really hoping that we can preserve our little yellow house and as much of the character of our home as possible so that we can continue to grow and thrive here.