

**Zoning Public Hearing
CITY OF AUSTIN
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION**



**AGENDA ITEM NO.: Z-2
AGENDA DATE: Thu 06/23/2005
PAGE: 1 of 1**

SUBJECT: C14H-05-0002 – Nelson and Texanna Davis House - Conduct a public hearing and approve an ordinance amending Chapter 25-2 of the Austin City Code by zoning property locally known as 1621 West 12th Street from family residence, neighborhood plan (SF-3-NP) combining district zoning to family residence, historic, neighborhood plan (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning. Historic Landmark Commission recommendation: To grant family residence, historic, neighborhood plan (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning. Planning Commission recommendation: To grant family residence, historic, neighborhood plan (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning. Applicant: Historic Landmark Commission. Owner: Jon D. Armstrong. City Staff: Steve Sadowsky, Historic Preservation Office, Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department, 974-6454.

REQUESTING Neighborhood Planning
DEPARTMENT: and Zoning

DIRECTOR'S
AUTHORIZATION: Alice Glasco

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: C14H-05-0002

HLC DATE:

January 24, 2005

February 28, 2005

PC DATE:

March 22, 2005

AREA: 6,992 square feet

APPLICANT: Historic Landmark Commission

HISTORIC NAME: Nelson and Texanna Davis House

WATERSHED: Town Lake

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 1621 W. 12th Street

ZONING FROM: SF-3-NP

ZONING TO: SF-3-H-NP

SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from family residence, neighborhood plan (SF-3-NP) district to family residence, neighborhood plan - Historic (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning for the property's significance in the areas of architecture and historical associations.

The number of intact early 20th century houses in Clarksville has dwindled to a handful; the Davis House represents the history of the neighborhood through its architecture and occupants, who typify African-American life in the early 20th century. Farm laborers in Fayette County, they typify the late 19th and early 20th century movement of rural African-Americans to cities such as Austin. They purchased a property in Clarksville, established by freedmen for African-American citizens, and engaged in the typical occupations open to the race at the time.

The property owner has agreed to donate the house to the Clarksville Community Development Corporation, who will relocate it to a site at 10th and Theresa, rehabilitate it, and rent it as affordable housing. Staff fully supports this plan. The CCDC was granted a variance for the 10th and Theresa site on June 13, 2005 by the Board of Adjustment.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: January 24, 2005: Initiated a historic zoning case. February 28, 2005: Recommended the proposed zoning change from family residence, neighborhood plan (SF-3-NP) district to family residence, neighborhood plan - Historic (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning for the property's significance in the areas of architecture and historical associations. Vote: 5-0 (Leary and Limbacher ill).

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: Recommended the proposed zoning change from family residence, neighborhood plan (SF-3-NP) district to family residence, neighborhood plan - Historic (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning for the property's significance in the areas of architecture and historical associations. The Commission endorsed a plan to relocate the house within Clarksville to preserve it. Vote: 7-0-1 (Jackson absent).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The house is listed as a Priority 2 in the Clarksville Historic Resources Survey (2000), and is contributing to the Clarksville National Register Historic District. The house is listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984), but has no preservation priority.

The case will need to return to Council for 2nd and 3rd readings for historic zoning at the new location at 10th and Theresa once the house is relocated.

CITY COUNCIL DATE: April 14, 2005

ACTION: Postponed to June 23, 2005 at staff's request.

June 23, 2005

ORDINANCE READINGS: 1st 2nd 3rd

ORDINANCE NUMBER:

CASE MANAGER: Steve Sadowsky

PHONE: 974-6454

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION: Old West Austin Neighborhood Association; Clarksville Community Development Corporation

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The ca. 1909 house is over 50 years old, retains a high degree of architectural integrity, and is significant for its architecture and historical associations:

ARCHITECTURE

The ca. 1909 house is a good example of a Cumberland house, noted for its double front doors, frame construction, and modest one-story size. The house may have been transformed into a bungalow around 1914 – it has a full-width front porch and a clipped front gable, all hallmarks of bungalow construction. With its board and batten siding and Cumberland house configuration, it is typical of houses built in Clarksville around the turn of the 20th century, and a rare surviving example of an intact Clarksville house.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

The Nelson and Texanna Davis House is located in Clarksville, originally developed as a freedmen's town in the 1870s. The vast majority of the residents of Clarksville were African-Americans, who labored at unskilled occupations in Austin's segregated society. Early residents of Clarksville owned their own homes, which set them apart from many of Austin's African-American families, who lived in alley houses or rented quarters throughout the city. Until the turn of the 20th century, whites and blacks generally lived in close proximity to each other, with the exception of African-American enclaves like Clarksville. In the early decades of the 20th century, the pattern of segregation in Austin became much more apparent, as African-Americans were increasingly clustered in separate districts, culminating in the 1928 city plan, which designated a "Negro district" on the east side of town to house all African-American families, businesses, and institutions.

The house was occupied by the Nelson and Texanna Davis family from around 1915 to the present. Nelson Davis, an African-American farm laborer, moved from Fayette County, Texas to this house in Austin, and became a laborer for the streetcar line. His wife Texanna, earned money as a laundress for private families. Travis County deed records reveal that the Davises bought the property from E.J.

Hofheinz on February 3, 1920, although the city directories for 1916 and 1918 show the Davises as owners of the property. The discrepancy may be accounted for by the fact that many African-Americans purchasing property did not have their deed recorded until a certain percentage of the purchase price had been paid.

The Davis House, built in a traditional Southern style, represents the lifestyle and standard of living for African-Americans in Clarksville in the early 20th century. Nelson Davis represents the flight of African-Americans from rural areas to cities in the early 20th century; he was employed as a laborer and trackman for the streetcar line, a typical occupation for African-American men of his generation. Texanna Davis worked as a farm laborer in Fayette County then took in washing for private families when she moved to Austin, a typical employment for African-American women.

While the house does not have specific associations with any one person of historical significance to the history of the city, it does represent the broader theme of African-American history in Austin. It was the home of the Davis family, who epitomized many of the city's African-American residents in the early 20th century through their residency in Clarksville and their occupations.

PARCEL NO.: 01110305060000

DEED RECORD: Vol. 316, p. 451

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: 46 x 170 feet of Block 15, George W. Spear League, Abstract 697, Survey 7.

ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT: \$1,929 (owner-occupied rate). City tax abatement: \$508.

APPRAISED VALUE: \$170,572

PRESENT USE: Residence

CONSTRUCTION/DESCRIPTION: One-story rectangular-plan clipped front gabled Cumberland-style frame bungalow.

CONDITION: Poor.

PRESENT OWNER

Jon D. Armstrong
2104 Elton Lane
Austin, Texas 78703

DATE BUILT: ca. 1909

ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS: The original house was modified into a bungalow, perhaps as early as 1914, although the clipped front gable of the house indicates a date closer to 1925.

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): Nelson and Texanna Davis (1920)

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS:

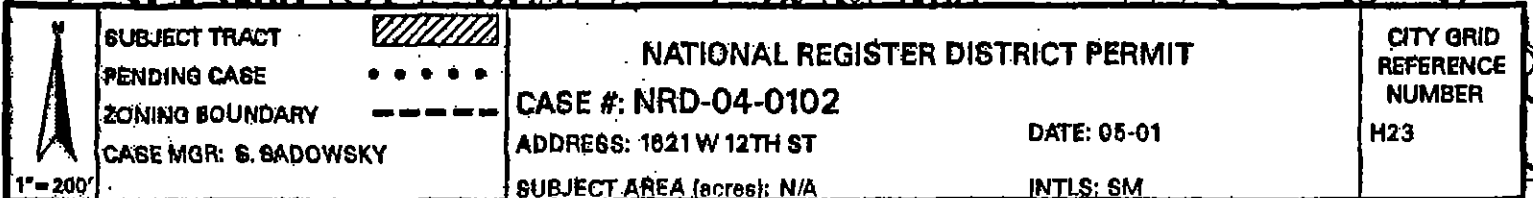
The house is contributing to the Clarksville National Register Historic District, and is listed as a Priority 2 in the Clarksville Survey (2000). It is listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984), but with no preservation priority.

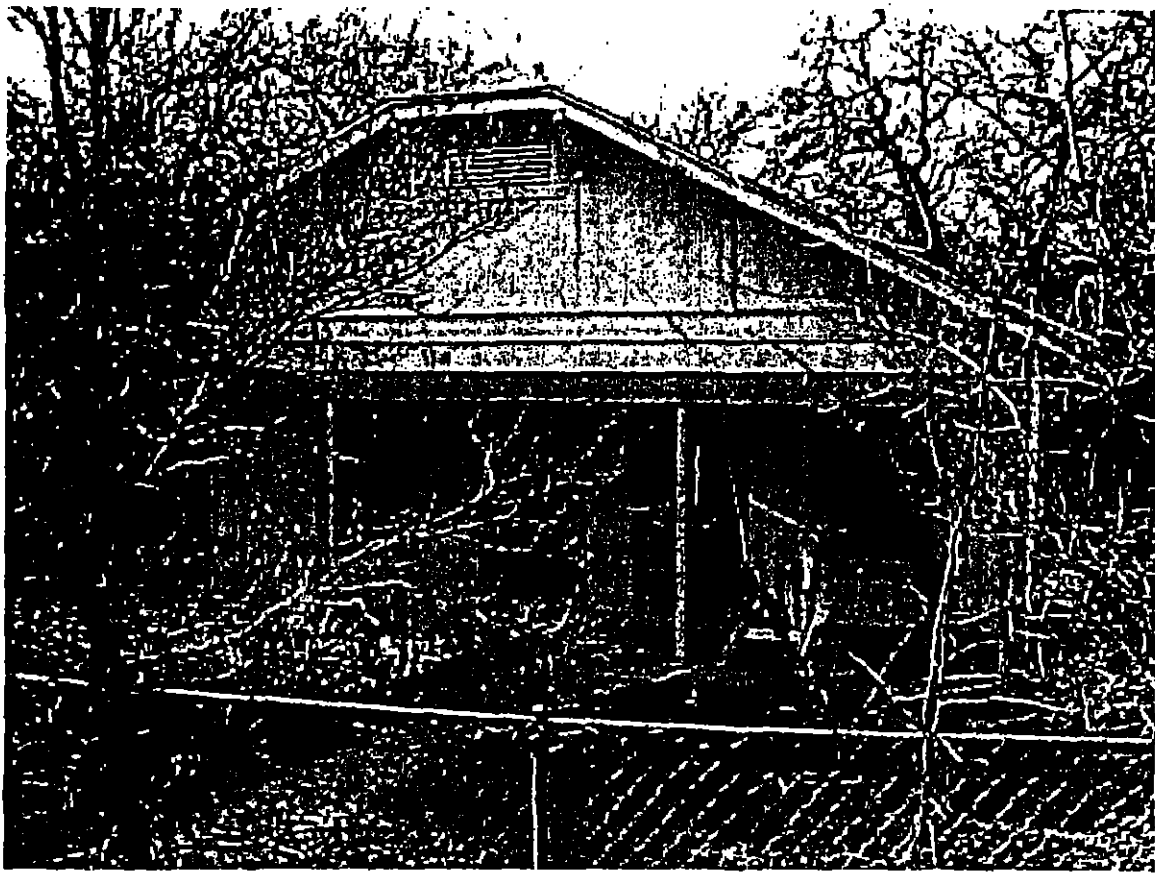


CITY OF AUSTIN HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION CRITERIA

To be designated a City of Austin Historic Landmark, a property must:

1. Be at least 50 years old, unless it possesses exceptional importance as defined by National Register Bulletin 22, National Park Service (1996); and
2. Retain sufficient integrity of materials and design to convey its historic appearance; and
3. Be individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places, designated a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, State Archeological Landmark, or National Historic Landmark, OR
4. Be significant in at least two of the following categories:
 - A. **ARCHITECTURE**
The property:
 - ★ Embodies the distinguishing characteristics of a recognized architectural style, type, or method of construction; or
 - ★ Represents technological innovation in design and/or construction; or
 - ★ Contains features representing ethnic or folk art, architecture or construction; or
 - ★ Represents a rare example of an architectural style; or
 - ★ Serves as a representative example of the work of an architect, builder, or artisan who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state, or nation.
 - B. **HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS**
The property:
 - ★ Has significant associations with persons, groups, institutions, businesses, or events of historical importance which contributed to the history of the city, state or nation; or
 - ★ Represents a significant portrayal of the environment of a group of people in a historic time.
 - C. **ARCHEOLOGY**
The property has, or is expected to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.
 - D. **COMMUNITY VALUE**
The property has a unique location or physical characteristic that represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood or the city, and contributes to the character or image of the city.
 - E. **LANDSCAPE FEATURE**
The property is a significant natural or designed landscape or landscape feature with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.





Davis House

1621 W. 12th Street



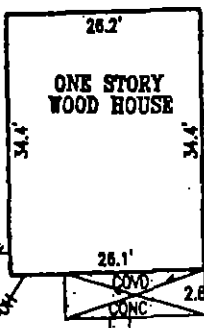
SEE DETAIL "A"

1404 WEST NORTH LOOP BLVD
AUSTIN, TX 78758
2004/04/05

S 29°04'39" W 170.00' (170.00')
BEARING BASIS

PORTION OF
LOT 15
46' x 170'
(10.18 AC.)

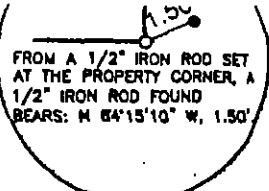
METAL
NAIL
BY CONC



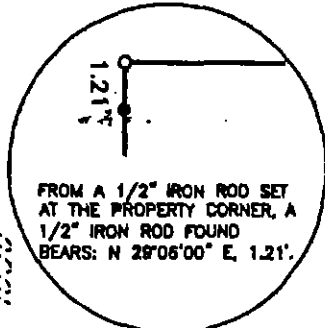
LINE OF OLD CEDAR FENCE POSTS

N 29°04'39" E 169.92' (170.00')

ROBERT L. COOPER
N. 0325 P. 1050



DETAIL "A"



DETAIL "B"

P.O.B.

CAPPED
IRF

S 60°50'14" E 46.00' (46.00')

DETAIL "A"

OWNERS COPY

WEST 12th STREET

YOUR DEDICATED TEAM OF REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS

Bank Of Texas
Phone-(512) 485-7600



Gracy Title Company
Susie McCreary
524 N. Lamar Blvd. #200
Austin, Texas 78703
Phone-(512) 472-8421 Fax-(512) 478-6038

SUBJECT TO A BLANKET-TYPE
WATER LINE ESMT. AS STATED
IN VOL.316, PG.451.

BEING ALL THAT CERTAIN TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND, MORE OR LESS, BEING OUT LOT 15 OF
HOFHEINZ SUBDIVISION, BEING OUT OF AND A PART OF THE GEORGE W. SPEAR LEAGUE, IN
TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS, AND BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN EXHIBIT "A", ATTACHED
HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF

COUNTY: TRAVIS STATE OF TEXAS STREET ADDRESS: 1621 W. 12th STREET
CITY: AUSTIN REFERENCE NAME: ION D. ARMSTRONG

LEGEND

- 1/2" IRON PIPE FOUND
- 1/2" REBAR FOUND
- 1/2" REBAR SET
- 800 NAIL FOUND
- 800 NAIL SET
- SPINDLE FOUND

B&G Surveying, Inc.
Victor M. Garza R.P.L.S.

Office 512*458-6969
Fax 512*458-9845

1404 West North Loop Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78758



THIS AREA IS NOT DEPICTED AS BEING IN A SPECIAL
FLOOD HAZARD AREA PER FEMA'S FLOOD INSURANCE
RATE MAP 480624 0205 E DATED 8-16-83. IT IS
REPRESENTED AS IN ZONE "X". HOWEVER AT
PRESENT TIME, NO ELEVATIONS, DRAINAGE, OR FLOOD
STUDIES HAVE BEEN PERFORMED AND INFORMATION
BASED SOLELY UPON SAID MAP. THE SURVEYOR
DOES NOT ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY AS TO ANY
INFORMATION PROVIDED BY SAID MAP AND DOES NOT
WARRANT THAT THE PROPERTY AND/OR THE
STRUCTURES THEREON WILL BE FREE OF FLOOD
DAMAGE. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT YOUR
LOCAL FLOOD HAZARD ADMINISTRATOR

OCCUPANCY HISTORY

1621 W. 12th Street

From City Directories, Austin History Center

City Historic Preservation Office

January, 2005

- 1972** **Perry E. and Minnie L. Davis, owners**
Retired
- 1968** **Perry E. and Minnie L. Davis, owners**
Retired
- 1964** **Perry E. and Minnie L. Davis, owners**
Retired
- 1960** **Perry E. and Minnie L. Davis, owners**
Janitor, City Water Department
- 1957** **Vacant**
NOTE: Perry E. Davis is listed as residing at 1821 Waterston;
he lists his occupation as a janitor at the City Water
Department
- 1954** **Perry E. and Minnie Davis, owners**
Janitor, City Electric Department
- 1952** **Perry E. and Minnie Davis, owners**
Laborer, City Light and Power Department
- 1949** **Perry E. and Minnie Davis, owners**
Laborer, City Electric Department
- 1947** **Mrs. Texanna Davis, owner**
Widow, Nelson Davis
NOTE: Perry and Minnie Davis are listed as residing at this
address; neither lists an occupation.
- 1944-45** **Mrs. Nelson Davis, owner**
No occupation given
NOTE: Perry and Minnie Davis are listed as living at 1107 E.
6th Street alley; neither lists an occupation.

1942	Nelson and Texanna Davis, owners Laborer, Austin Transit Company NOTE: Perry Davis is not listed in the directory.
1940	Nelson and Texanna Davis, owners Laborer, Austin Street Railway Company
1937	Nelson and Texanna Davis, owners Laborer, Austin Street Railway Company
1935	Nelson and Texanna Davis, owners Trackman, Austin Street Railway Company
1932-33	Nelson and Texanna Davis, owners Trackman, Austin Street Railway Company
1930-31	Nelson and Texanna Davis, owners Trackman, Austin Street Railway Company
1929	Nelson and Texanna Davis (colored), owners No occupation listed
1927	Nelson and Texanna Davis (colored), owners No occupation listed NOTE: House is listed as 1421 W. 12 th
1924	Nelson and Texanna Davis (colored), owners No occupation listed
1922	Nelson and Texanna Davis (colored), owners Employee, Street Railway Company
1920	Nelson and Texanna Davis (colored), owners Laborer, no place of employment given
1918	Nelson and Texanna Davis (colored), owners Laborer, no place of employment given
1916	Nelson and Texanna Davis (colored), owners Laborer, no place of employment given Texanna: laundress
1914	Vacant NOTE: Nelson Davis is not listed in the directory

- 1912-13 Handy Williamson (colored)
Laborer, Miss Julie M. Pease
NOTE: Williamson had a telephone
- 1910-11 Freeman Haswell (colored)
Laborer, Tips Foundry and Machine Company
- 1909-10 Lou Roberts (colored)
No occupation listed
- 1906-07 Address not listed; Lou Roberts is not listed
NOTE: The directory does not list any addresses on 12th Street
west of West Lynn Street.

CENSUS INFORMATION:

1930 Census

Nelson Davis, born about 1881, aged 49 years; listed as a laborer for the streetcar company. Texana is listed as a laundress at home. Perry, age 28, is listed with his parents, and gives his occupation as a plumber. All three were listed as literate; the house was worth \$1,200. (In comparison, the January House next door, was listed as being worth \$700).

1920 Census

Nelson Davis, born in Texas around 1880, is listed as a trackman for the streetcar company. Texana, born in Texas around 1879, is listed as a washerwoman for a private family. Perry, their son, aged 20, is listed as a delivery man for a grocery store.

1910 Census

Nelson, Texana, and Perry Davis are listed as living in Fayette County, Texas. Nelson is listed as a laborer on a general farm, while Texana and Perry are listed as farm laborers on the home farm.

1900 Census

Nelson Davis is listed as the son of Dora Davis, born in Virginia in 1861 and listed as a farmer. There is no male head of Dora Davis' household in Fayette County, Texas. Nelson is listed as having been born in April, 1881, and working as a farm laborer in Fayette County.

C144-05-0002

March 5, 2005

City of Austin
Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department
Historic Preservation Office
Steve Sadowsky
One Texas Center, 505 Barton Springs Road
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, Texas 78767

RE: Historic Zoning Recommendation
1621 West 12th Street
NRD-04-0102

Dear Mr. Sadowsky,

I am the property owner for the above referenced property. On Monday February 28th, the Historic Landmark Commission recommended historic zoning for the property I own at 1621 West 12th Street in Austin. I hereby object to historic zoning of my property. Moreover, I again request that the City of Austin approve the Demolition Permit that I submitted to the Historic Landmark Commission at the January 24th, 2005 meeting. Based upon our phone conversation, my understanding is that you will be scheduling a hearing with this item on the agenda for the Planning Commission meeting on March 22nd. Please notify me in writing of such action and any further actions at 2104 Elton Lane, Austin, 78703.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 512.658.9739.

Sincerely,



Jon D. Armstrong
Owner - 1621 W. 12th Street

Cc: Gordon Bohmfalk
Rick Perry