



Elisabet Ney Museum CIP Project

CITY OF AUSTIN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT #7551.002 Elisabet Ney Museum Building ADA Accessibility and Landscape Improvements

Project Management

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Project Goals

- Stabilize historic structure
- Improve ADA accessibility
- Increase relevance of Elisabet Ney Museum grounds to Elisabet Ney



Elisabet Ney, 1897



Card from Elisabet Ney featuring
her studio, Formosa, 1894



Elisabet Ney (on left) entertaining
the Jacob Bickler Family at
Formosa, 1893

... shall not our surroundings thereby become transformed into scenes beautiful to behold and ennobling to move among? Shall not our dwellings, our public buildings, our factories, our gardens, our parks reflect in reality the loveliness of our artistic dreams? . . . It remains with us to bring about this higher, this truly vital renaissance.

ELISABET NEY (1833-1907)

Noted sculptor of European statesmen, kings, artists and intellectuals 1857-1871; Texas heroes, governors, senators, judges and dear friends 1892-1907. Texas cultural advocate 1872-1907.

ELISABET NEY MUSEUM

Landmark former studio of noted European portrait sculptor Elisabet Ney; one of only five 19th-century professional sculptors' studios in the country, and the only studio of a 19th-century professional woman sculptor, preserved for the public today. Elisabet Ney Museum holds landmark designations on the national, state and local levels on the basis of its significance as the former American studio of Elisabet Ney (1833-1907). Likewise, the museum is a charter member of Historic Artists' Homes and Studios of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and an Official Project of the Save America's Treasures program, an initiative of the Office of the United States President administered by the Department of the Interior National Parks Service, that is supporting the restoration and preservation of Elisabet Ney's former studio,

Elisabet Ney Museum Building

- Subgrade waterproofing and improved drainage to address water infiltration issues into historic structure
- Redesign and relocation of entrance ramp for Americans with Disabilities to increase accessibility

Elisabet Ney Museum Landscape (Work applies only to the Elisabet Ney Museum property south of Waller Creek)

The Ney CIP landscape program is a restoration of the landscape design of Elisabet Ney. It is also a restoration of a natural heritage landscape of Central Texas. The landscape program is based on extensive research and documentation including Ney's personal photographs, letters and descriptions. Elisabet Ney's native Texas landscape was an integral part of her studio, Formosa, (1892-1907), both in personal design and use. In addition to restoring Ney's studio landscape, functional aspects of the historic site to include access, sustainability and maintainability are also addressed. The landscape program complies with the city, state and national public land codes as required. Only one protected size tree will be removed from the Ney property due to the tree's severely damaged and untreatable state. The stone wall remains in the Ney CIP.

Restoration of Elisabet Ney's native Texas landscape.

- Re-vegetation with native Texas prairie grasses and wildflowers
- Removal of invasive species
- Transplanting when possible of ornamental crape myrtles and replacement with trees identified in Ney's photographs. Replacement trees include 5 post oaks, 1 pecan and 3 eastern redbuds.
- Removal of 3 live oaks that are damaging the historic building and, possibly, 1 live oak in the project staging area. Replacement of 1 extremely damaged post oak with same. The post oak presents a public safety hazard.
- Restoration of Ney's carriage drive. Drive will serve as entry to building and will meet ADA code requirements for pathways
- Replacement of 7 ashe junipers with same (3 are dead). Addition of 6 ashe junipers to complete the carriage drive designed by Elisabet Ney
- Re-planting of yucca and agave that appeared in Ney's photographs
- Re-creation of Elisabet Ney's vegetable garden
- Establishment of Elisabet Ney and Edmund Montgomery's tent site
- Removal and salvaging of east stone terrace and replanting with native grasses and wildflowers
- Removal and salvaging of paving stone pathway on west grounds
- Reconstruction of Ney's historic cedar post fence on east property line to support expanded educational programming and protect schoolchildren from running into street after school tours. A gate identified in Ney photographs will provide public access.

In order to bring the museum's present landscape into greater relevance to the landscape of prairie grasses and wildflowers of Elisabet Ney's studio, it will be necessary to replace ornamental plantings and landscaping that were added to the grounds during the decade of 1930-40 when the Elisabet Ney Museum was repurposed as a contemporary arts center. To honor the people and organizations and their considerable contributions from this period, the Elisabet Ney Museum will thank the organizations and individuals publicly. The museum will continue working with these organizations to determine a manner of appreciation most acceptable to honor the individuals and their contributions to the Elisabet Ney Museum.

The Elisabet Ney Museum CIP has been extensively documented and planned in accordance with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties required of the City of Austin by the landmark designations adopted by the Austin City Council for the Ney. The Elisabet Ney Museum CIP has been approved on the state and federal levels for compliance with the Standards. The Ney CIP has also been approved by the Austin Landmark Commission and the Austin City Council.

BUDGET: Planning \$110,926; Construction \$285,553; Project Management \$68,000. Total: \$464,479

FUNDING: U.S. Department of Interior Save America's Treasures Grant (with deadline); City Bond

APPROVALS AND PERMITS:

- Austin Historic Landmark Commission
- Texas Historical Commission
- U.S. Department of Interior *Save America's Treasures* Program
- Watershed Protection Site Plan Exemption
- Austin City Council **START DATE:** October, 2008

START DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: To be advised

END DATE: 180 days from commencement of construction

COMMUNITY BENEFITS: The Elisabet Ney Museum Capital Improvement Project provides the Austin public:

- Preservation of the Elisabet Ney Museum for current and future generations
- Increased accessibility to the Elisabet Ney Museum building and grounds
- Expanded programming made possible through the restoration of historical accuracy to the Elisabet Ney Museum grounds
- Opportunities for more authentic, historically accurate experiences of Elisabet Ney, her former studio and Austin, Texas, at the turn of the 19th-century. This is of particular significance for the museum's many visiting schoolchildren, students, and historians as well as Austin's out-of-town visitors to the museum.
- Opportunities to experience late 19th-century Texas and the earliest years of Hyde Park, one of Austin's first neighborhoods established in 1892
- *Save America's Treasures* site of local, state, national and international significance
- Historically significant model of an early ecologically sustainable, native Texas landscape

