

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: C14H-2009-0056

HLC DATE:

November 9, 2009

PC DATE:

November 10, 2009

APPLICANTS Tina Contros and Robert Kearl, owners

HISTORIC NAME: Bull House

WATERSHED: Shoal Creek

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 2213 Windsor Road, East

ZONING FROM: SF-3

TO: SF-3-H

SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from single family residence (SF-3) district to single family residence – Historic Landmark (SF-3-H) combining district zoning.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: Recommended the proposed zoning change from family residence (SF-3) district to family residence – Historic Landmark (SF-3-H) combining district zoning. Vote: 6-0 (Myers absent).

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: Recommended the proposed zoning change from family residence (SF-3) district to family residence – Historic Landmark (SF-3-H) combining district zoning. Vote: 8-0.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The Bull House is listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984) but without a priority for research. The house is contributing to the Old West Austin National Register Historic District.

CITY COUNCIL DATE: December 10, 2009

ORDINANCE READINGS: 1ST 2ND 3RD

ORDINANCE NUMBER:

CASE MANAGER: Steve Sadowsky

PHONE: 974-6454

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION: Old Enfield Homeowners Association

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The ca. 1934 Bull House is an excellent example of Italian Renaissance Revival-styled architecture, facing Pease Park, and is associated with Alfred C. Bull, a prominent banker, and with Howard Bull, a prominent insurance man in Austin for many years.

Architecture:

One-story with a raised basement wing-and-gable plan stone- and brick-veneered residence with a composition shingle roof, metal-framed casement windows, and round-arched arcaded wall at the raised basement. Howard Bull obtained a building permit in 1965 to construct a frame addition to the side of the residence and extend the garage.

Historical Associations:

The house was built by Howard Westfall for E.B and Annie Louise Snead in 1934, according to a mechanic's lien filed August 29, 1934 for a 10-room stone dwelling house for \$4,500. Architectural details on the house may have come from UT's Old Main Building, but this cannot be proven. The Sneads purchased the property from the Westenfield Development Company on August 8, 1934, although it is not clear if they ever lived in the house. The first known resident was Adolph Goldmann, who moved here from the Alamo Hotel around 1936. Goldmann was the manager of Nelson Davis and Son, a large wholesale produce company (now the Spaghetti Warehouse building at 4th and Colorado Streets). Goldmann lived here only for a short time; by 1940, the house was owned and occupied by Alfred C. and Edna H. Bull. Alfred Bull was the vice-president of American National Bank, having joined the bank in 1936. According to the 1930 U.S. Census, Alfred and Edna Bull were living on W. 23rd Street; he listed his occupation as a bank vice-president. By 1945, the house was rented to Mrs. Sophia R. Lockart, a widow with two children. Howard W. and Sue Bull purchased the house before 1947 and remained residents until 2004, when Mr. Bull passed away at the age of 104. Howard Bull was an insurance agent who also was a member and chaired the City Board of Equalization in the mid-1950s. The 1930 U.S. Census shows Howard and Sue Bull renting (an un-numbered) house on Northwood Road; he listed his occupation as an insurance agent.

PARCEL NO.: 01130104040000

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Lot 25, and the Southwest Triangle of Lot 24, less the Northeast triangle of Lot 25, Enfield D.

ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT: \$12,627 (owner-occupied); city portion: \$2,250.

APPRAISED VALUE: \$1,015,930

PRESENT USE: Vacant

CONDITION: Fair; under renovation.

PRESENT OWNER

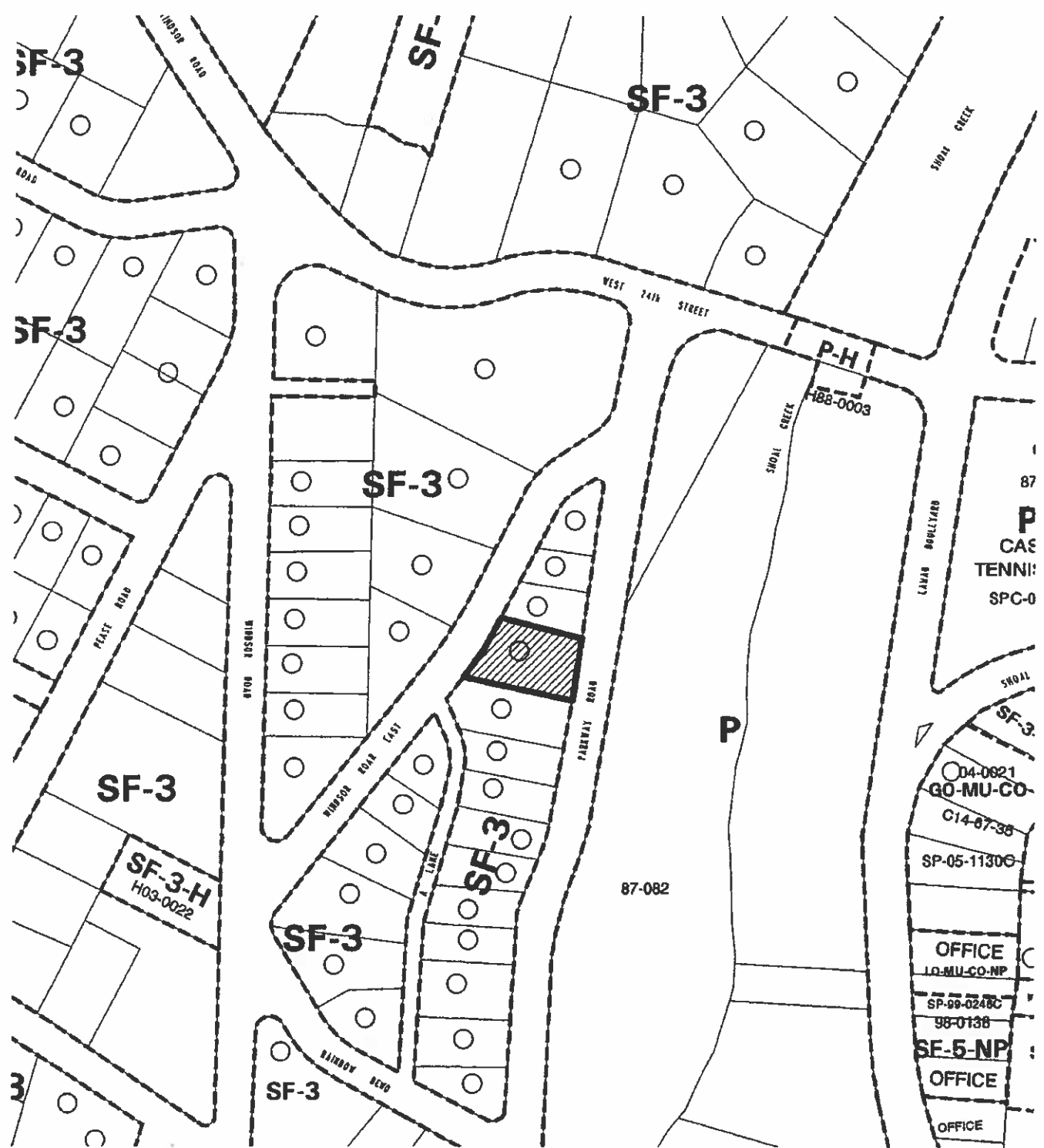
Tina Contros and Robert Kearl
1710 Cromwell Hill
Austin, Texas 78703

DATE BUILT: ca. 1934

ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS: Garage built 1965.

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): E.B. Snead (1934)

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: Contributing to the Old West Austin National Register Historic District.



2213 WINDSOR ROAD EAST



West façade



North façade showing garage and arcaded raised basement



West and south facades



East façade (Parkway)



East façade (Parkway) showing round-arched arcaded raised basement, tile work and casement windows

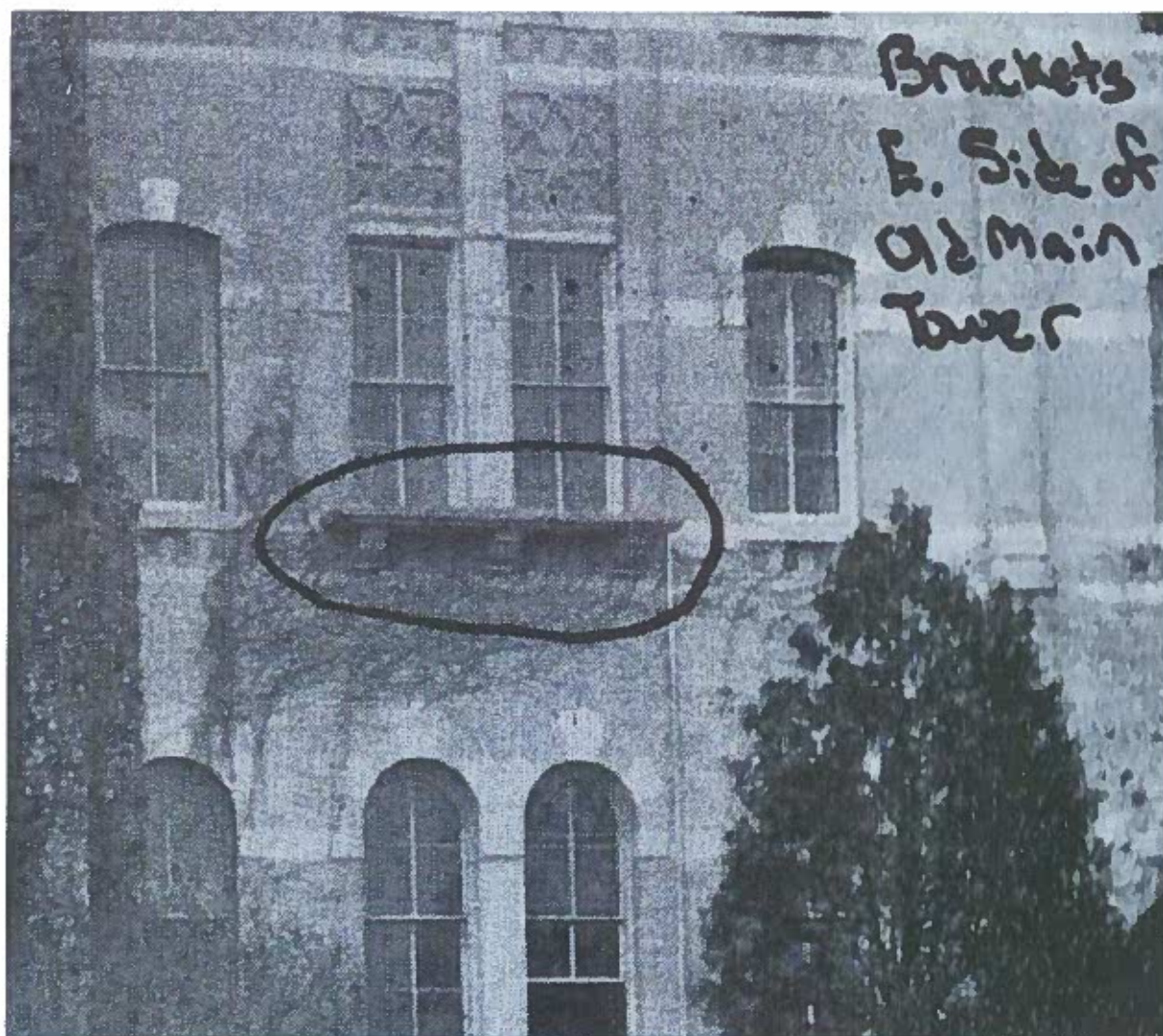


Detail of stone veneer and brackets, west façade



Window Brackets - W. side of
Old Main Tower; Compare to
West-facing Dining
Room Window Bracket
of 2213 Windsor Rd.
East









View of underside of glass-brick paving in garage built ca. 1965, showing deterioration of steel beams



View of excavation under house for the ca. 1965 installation of central heat and air.

Summary of Interviews with Professor Blake Alexander

I. Highlights

- The house at 2213 Windsor Road East very likely incorporates materials from UT's Old Main Building
- While using materials from the Old Main Building, the house's architect appears to have intentionally designed the residence to echo the new Main Building
- Much of the materials of the house at 2213 Windsor Road East, including the carved stone brackets and decorative ironwork, are of the style of the Old Main Building
- The metalwork and carved stone details are 19th-century Victorian pieces
- Much of the carved stonework shows signs of being salvaged from an earlier building
- The design of the exterior of the house at 2213 Windsor Road East is definitely the work of an architect and its quality indicates that it was the work of one of the major Austin architects of the day
- The design for the new Main Building was enthusiastically received by Austin architects of the mid-1930s and many tried to incorporate its styling and sophisticated proportions into their own designs
- The architect appears to have seen the design for the main façade of the new Main Building and has echoed its use of a Renaissance arcade on the Parkway façade of the house, which is a very rare feature in Texas domestic architecture
- The proportions of the Parkway façade are very sophisticated and very much like the proportions of the arcade on the new Main Building
- The Parkway façade of the house bears an remarkable resemblance to the main, south-facing façade of the new Main Building, especially if you imagine the middle story of the Main Building removed
- This house is worth preserving

Below is a summary of the interviews that Jason Nichols and David Cleaves conducted of Professor Blake Alexander, retired UT architectural history professor and expert on the history of Texas domestic architecture. Wherever possible, Nichols and Cleaves attempted to use Professor Alexander's exact words. Professor Alexander has been shown our summary of his notes and has approved them.

OCCUPANCY HISTORY
2213 Windsor Road, East

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
 By City Historic Preservation Office
 February, 2007

1987	Howard W. and Sue A. Bull, owners Retired
1981	Howard W. and Sue A. Bull, owners Retired
1975	Howard W. and Sue A. Bull, owners Retired
1969	Howard W. and Sue A. Bull, owners Retired
1963	Howard W. and Sue A. Bull, owners No occupation listed
1958	Howard W. and Sue A. Bull, owners Chairman, City Board of Equalization
1954	Howard W. and Sue A. Bull, owners No occupation listed
1952	Howard W. and Sue A. Bull, owners Member, City Board of Equalization
1949	Howard W. and Sue A. Bull, owners Member, City Board of Equalization
1947	Howard W. and Sue A. Bull, owners No occupation listed
1944-45	Mrs. Sophia R. Lockart, renter Widow, Robert Lockart No occupation listed Also listed are Bob R. Lockart, U.S. Army, and Live W. Lockart, a student.
NOTE: Howard and Sue Bull are listed as living at 1415 Preston Avenue; he was the proprietor of an insurance and mortgage loan firm located at 203 Capitol National Bank Building.	
1942	Alfred C. and Edna H. Bull, owners Vice-President, American National Bank
1940	Alfred C. and Edna H. Bull (not listed as owners) Vice-President, American National Bank, and proprietor, with Howard W. Bull of an insurance and mortgage loan firm located at 203 Norwood Building.
1937	Adolph Goldmann, owner

Manager, Nelson Davis and Son, wholesale grocers, 117 W. 4th Street.

1935

No houses are listed on Windsor Road, East.

NOTE: Adolph Goldmann is listed as residing at the Alamo Hotel. He was the manager of Nelson Davis.

I. Historic Significance of the Residents:

The house at 2213 Windsor Road East was built for and occupied by significant players in Austin's late 19th- and 20th-century economic development. Significantly, the house's original owner rose to prominence in his field beyond Austin and beyond Texas. The history of the house's past owners helps tell the story of Austin's gradual economic rise during this period.

A. Adolph Goldmann

Our research reveals that the house was built for Adolph Goldmann.

Goldmann, born in Houston in 1869, arrived in Austin at age 2. By the age of 15 he was working for the Nelson Davis & Son firm, a wholesale grocery vendor for whom he would continue to work until his death at age 72 in the Pemberton Heights neighborhood. In his 1942 Austin-American-Statesman obituary, Goldmann was called "one of the best known grocery merchants in the Southwest" and "the oldest member of the wholesale grocery business in Texas." Additionally, Goldmann owned and managed a retail grocery store with his brother Paul Hermann Goldmann at 918 Congress Avenue at the beginning of the 19th century until some point in the early 20th century. Further details of Mr. Goldmann's life may be found in the biography, attached hereto.

B. The Bulls

Not long after the house was built in the late-1930s, Goldmann sold the house to Alfred Bull, a prominent local banker and President of the Chamber of Commerce. Alfred Bull was born in 1893 to RP Bull, an accountant and former Confederate captain and Margaret Castleman Bull, a member of a pioneering Austin merchant family. Alfred Bull graduated from Texas A&M in 1916 and was later an infantry captain in WWI. After the war he was in the insurance business in Austin until 1925. Then he was the Vice President of Texas Bank & Trust Co. until 1932. Texas Bank & Trust Co. later merged with Republic Bank & Trust and then changed names to Capital Bank, which still exists today as Texas Capital Bank. After 1936, about the time the house at 2213 Windsor Road East was built, Alfred Bull switched back to insurance and also got involved in the mortgage loan business. By 1940 to 1942, Bull was back in banking as the Vice President of American National Bank. Alfred Bull married Edna Hazlewood in 1924.

Alfred Bull was the president of the Austin Chamber of Commerce in 1934. He was also a member of the Austin School Board; Chairman of the Travis County Chapter of the Red Cross as well as a member of the Texas Library and Historical Commissions.

Alfred Bull then conveyed the house at 2213 Windsor Road East to his brother Howard W. Bull and his wife Sue. Howard Bull was a longtime Austin "insurance man," according to the Austin American Statesman obituary of Howard and Alfred's mother, Margaret Castleman Bull. Howard W. Bull lived in the house at 2213 Windsor Road until his death in December 2004 at the age of 104.

II. Historic/Architectural Significance of the Structure — the Old Main Building Connection and Emulation of the “New” Main Building

A. Preserving 2213 Windsor Road East is Vital to Preserving the Architectural Integrity of Its Immediate Surroundings

As Steve Sadowski pointed out at the February 27, 2007 hearing, the house at 2213 Windsor Road East is a unique and sophisticated example of the Mediterranean Style executed in limestone. The house also fronts onto Parkway, a street running along the west side of Pease Park between Windsor Road/24th Street and Enfield Road. Its Parkway facade sits perched on a ridge of other houses of medium size dating from the 1920s and 1930s. The house’s styling fits in with the other historicist or picturesque styles seen on the other houses on this block of Parkway, stretching from Windsor Road on the north to Rainbow Bend on the south. Along with its Tudor-styled neighbor on the adjacent lot immediately north of it, the house is also rare among its neighbors in likely being the work of an architect as opposed to coming from an architectural pattern book.

B. Access to Original Drawings for the House Is Likely to Further the Investigative Process

The identity of the architect may be significant for historic-zoning purposes. At present, we have not identified the architect and we believe that Staff has not had luck in this respect, either. Our research has revealed, however, that the present owners have received original copies of the blueprints, which very likely bear the name of the architect or architectural firm. Alternatively, even if these plans do not bear the signature or name of the architect or architectural firm that designed the house, examination of the plans by Staff or other local-architecture experts, such as retired UT architecture professor Blake Alexander, may assist in identifying the architect’s identity. We therefore suggest that you request that the blueprints be produced.

C. 2213 Windsor Road East Appears to Incorporate Architectural Materials from UT’s Old Main Building

Perhaps even more important than the sophistication and rarity of its design are the house’s materials themselves. The house is clad in a combination of brick and smooth-cut limestone. Its windows are accented with decorative ironwork. The series of arches on the East facade facing Parkway are also accented by iron gates. The Parkway facade is particularly sophisticated, echoing a Mediterranean country villa with a series of gated arches on the lower level surmounted by a window-enclosed gallery above.

1. Demolition of the Old Main Building Occurred Not Long Before 2213 Windsor Road East Was Built

Aside from the quality and craftsmanship seen in the materials themselves is the likely origin of these materials — University of Texas’ Old Main Building. The Old Main Building was begun in the 1880s and erected in stages as the university acquired funds to expand and as additional space was needed. For half a century, the building was the hub of campus, housing the administration of the early university, as well as playing host to the full array of

academic and student-life functions at UT. However, by the 1930s, the building had become difficult to maintain and was too small to play the role of command center for the growing university. The building was consequently deconstructed in 1934/35 and the remains stacked underneath Memorial Stadium awaiting possible reconstruction by a group of prominent, preservation-minded alumni. The reconstruction effort failed, however, and the materials were swept up by local builders and sentimental Austinites seeking to incorporate part of Old Main into their local residences and businesses.

The evidence described below indicates that the house at 2213 Windsor Road East, built in the late 1930s, was a part of this trend.

2. The Prior Owners of 2213 Windsor Road East Understood the House to Be Built From Old Main Building Materials

Since the last hearing, we have spoken with George Krueger, a descendent of the Howard Bull who lived in the house at 2213 Windsor Road East for the majority of its existence until his death in December 2004. Mr. Krueger has told us that it was the understanding of the family that materials used to build and finish out the house came from Old Main. These include stonework, ironwork, and interior woodwork, including mesquite door surrounds.

3. The Materials Themselves Are Consistent With Our Understanding of Architectural Details Used in Old Main and Show Signs of Salvage from an Earlier Use

Corroborating the family history are the materials themselves. We have also spoken with Professor Blake Alexander, a retired UT architectural historian and specialist in historic Texas architecture. Professor Alexander has taught at the UT School of Architecture for nearly 40 years and is the author of numerous publications relating to Texas architecture, including *Texas Homes of the Nineteenth Century* (1966). Professor Alexander's personal collection of Texas-focused architectural drawings forms the basis of the UT General Libraries' architectural archives, renamed in his honor in 1997 as the Alexander Architectural Archive. We visited Professor Alexander and showed him photographs of the house. Specifically, we showed him assorted long shots of the house as well as close-up shots of various architectural details that we took with zoom photography from the street and from a neighbor's property. A summary of our two interviews with Professor Alexander is attached to this letter.

Professor Alexander believes that at least some of the stonework, particularly the decoratively carved or incised stonework surrounding some of the windows and door openings, has been salvaged from an earlier, 19th-century structure. He also believes that these details are in the style of the Old Main Building. He believes that they came from a Victorian Gothic building and are "of the type" of details that would have been found on Old Main.

Of particular note are the stone brackets to be found supporting the roof over the porch of the lower-level doorway on the south facade and also supporting the exterior stone trim of the dining-room windows on the West facade. These brackets all bear typical 19th-century decorative carving. The brackets near the lower-level porch on the South side are particularly interesting because they bear a combination of Masonic symbols and a gothic flower. Professor

Alexander notes that these decorative devices are representative of the sort of masonry detail that would have been carved by local masons into the Old Main decorative stonework.

Additionally, Professor Alexander believes that most of the ironwork on the house is 19th-century wrought iron made by hand and is very likely from the same period as Old Main. This metalwork is the same sort of ironwork that would have been found on Old Main. Professor Alexander notes that there is also a lesser amount of 20th-century cast iron that was probably incorporated when the 19th-century ironwork was built into the house. The Weigel workshop may have been involved in crafting the newer ironwork and in incorporating the older metalwork.

There is forensic evidence of salvage, as well. Professor Alexander points out that the decorative brackets described above are all chipped in visible areas, some very badly. He stated that no mason would put such chipped blocks in such prominent places on a house unless the blocks themselves were architectural salvage. Additionally, the stonework around the main door, facing west onto Windsor Road East, is also much larger than needed to accommodate the house's much smaller door. Consequently, the builder had to "step in" several courses of brick to fill in the opening in the stonework. While it is possible that the "stepped-in" brickwork featured in the doorway was a design choice (i.e., was done on purpose), it is also a likely result of using stonework from an earlier door or window opening that was much larger than the doorway needed for 2213 Windsor Road East.

4. Photographic Evidence Supports the Case for an Old Main Link

While there is little documentation of the exact appearance of the architectural detail of the Old Main Building,³ we have found historical visual evidence further corroborating the Bull family's understanding of the material's origins. We have researched the original architectural drawings for the Old Main Building, located at the Alexander Architectural Archives, as well as photographs and drawings of the Old Main Building taken or made during its lifetime. These drawings and photographs may be found at the Center for American History (the general archive of UT) and in *UT Cactus* yearbooks.

The original architectural drawings for the building depict the repeated use of a gothic rose detail very similar to the gothic rose seen on the stone brackets supporting the porch for the lower-level door on the south facade of the 2213 Windsor Road East house. Of course, the original drawings are large in scale and do not depict the level of detail to be seen on individual window brackets. Nevertheless, the similarity is significant as architects, both in the 19th century and today, often use repetition of the same or similar stylistic elements as a design technique.

In the *UT Cactus* yearbook, we have found at least two photographs to date that appear to show the stone window brackets discussed above. Again, these are brackets that are

³ The Alexander Architectural Archive at UT's Battle Hall maintains original 1880s drawings for the Old Main Building, on linen. These depict some detail, such as the gothic flower or rose detail that is also found on some of the brackets on 2213 Windsor Road East. The original drawings are on linen, and as flash photography is not allowed at the archive, the images we took on digital camera are less-than-crystal clear. We can, however, supply you with copies of the photographs of these drawings upon request.

used on the South facade of 2213 Windsor Road East to support a porch overhanging a lower-level, below-street-grade door and on the west facade by the dining room as supports for a large masonry window ledge. Both of the *Cactus* photographs depict an identical (or very similar) series of brackets once located on the front, or south-facing facade of the Old Main Building. Specifically, our specimen photos capture a series of three brackets that supported a second-story window ledge on the front of Old Main. From the photographs, it appears that there were two, symmetrical sets of these window-ledge brackets on the south-facing, principal facade of Old Main. These two sets of bracketed window ledges were separated by Old Main's gothic entrance tower. The earlier, 1928 view depicts the brackets on the west side of the tower entrance. While the original photograph (depicting a series of students dressed in white and lined up for the Junior Swing Out ceremony) is taken from afar, a blow-up of the brackets reveals an identical (or near identical) relationship with the dining-room-window brackets on the west facade of 2213 Windsor Road East. The same can be said of the 1930 view, which shows the window brackets on the east side of the entrance tower. The original photograph is a humorous shot of "Joe College" touring his family in front of the Old Main Building. The blow-up again shows brackets identical (or remarkably similar) to the dining-room window brackets on the west facade of 2213 Windsor Road East. For your convenience, we are enclosing copies of the *Cactus* photographs, as well as recent photographs taken of the brackets on 2213 Windsor Road East.

D. Not Only Does 2213 Windsor Road East Incorporate Elements of Old Main, its Parkway-facing Facade also was Specifically Designed to Emulate the Then-Brand-New Present Main Building

Professor Alexander is struck by the sophistication of the Parkway-facing façade on the house at 2213 Windsor Road East. Use of a repeating-arch arcade made of brick and stone is rare in early-20th-century Texas domestic architecture and is clearly the work of a sophisticated architect, Professor Alexander believes. Moreover, the Parkway façade appears to be a near-exact facsimile of the main façade of the then-new Main Building designed by Paul Cret, albeit translated into use for a house. Professor Alexander believes that the architect of the house at 2213 Windsor Road East was obviously inspired by the south-facing, principal façade of Cret's new Main Building. It is not only the use of a ground-level arcade, a rare feature in an Austin house of the period, which caused Professor Alexander to notice the similarity. The sophisticated proportion of the arches and their piers (vertical supports) is nearly identical in both designs. Professor Alexander is of the opinion that the architect of the house at 2213 Windsor Road East saw either Paul Cret's design for the new Main Building or saw the building itself under construction at the same time that he was working on the design for the house. There was a great deal of enthusiasm surrounding the Paul Cret design for the new Main Building among Austin architects of the mid-1930s. It does not surprise Professor Alexander that a local architect working on a residential design sometime between 1935 and 1936 (who would have seen the design by 1934 and would have actually seen the façade rising up during the year 1935) would attempt to translate the Main Building façade to domestic use.

Professor Alexander believes that the way in which the house at 2213 Windsor Road East bridges the two UT Main Buildings – by using design elements of the older building while evoking the design of the new Main Building – makes the house worthy of preservation. We agree.

IV. Conclusion

The historic-zoning process for 2213 Windsor Road East should be continued and the demolition permit denied. Given the historical significance of the house's occupants and the rarity and quality of the house's design, the case for continuing the historic-designation process is strong. When the evidence establishing a probable link to UT's Old Main Building is also considered, however, we believe that the historic-designation process takes on new importance. Not only is historic designation for this property important to maintain the character and integrity of the immediate neighborhood, it is necessary to maintain a link to a city-wide preservation experience — recycling and reuse of the Old Main Building materials throughout Austin. We believe that preservation of this house will help to tell that story from Austin's history.

We thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Regards,

Jason Nichols and David Cleaves

Enclosures

cc: Steve Sadowski

Executive Summary

Nichols/Cleaves Comments on NRD-07-0011, 2213 Windsor Road East

We support Staff's recommendation for historic zoning, as do others in the immediate neighborhood. This house is worth preserving due to the historical significance of its previous occupants and due to its extreme architectural merit and historical significance. The house's previous occupants help tell the story of Austin's gradual rise in commercial importance.

The house itself is a fine, architect-designed example of the Mediterranean style and is the only example of this style in the neighborhood. A retired UT architectural history professor and prominent Texas architectural historian, Blake Alexander, believes the house is worth preserving for two reasons. The house very likely incorporates stone and ironwork features from the UT Old Main Building. Features on the house are in the style of a significant 19th-century gothic-revival building such as Old Main. Surviving photographs of details from Old Main appear to be identical to stonework found on the 2213 Windsor Road East house. Not only does the house incorporate materials from Old Main, however, in the expert opinion of Professor Alexander, the house was designed by an architect who wished to translate the design of the then-new Paul Cret into use for a residence. Professor Alexander is struck by the sophistication of the house's east-façade ground-level arcade. Such an arcade is extremely rare in Austin residential architecture of the time. Moreover, Professor Alexander notes that the spacing and proportion of the arcades arches themselves mimic those of the present Main Building. There was a great deal of enthusiasm for Cret's Main Building design among Austin architects of the time and Professor Alexander is not surprised that a local architect would want to translate that design into residential use.

Due to its incorporation of materials from Old Main and its emulation of the Paul Cret Main Building design, the house at 2213 Windsor Road East is a tangible bridge between the Old Main Building and present Main Building at UT.

The Tames have the only copy of the original blueprints. These should be examined to identify the architect and evaluate if further research is necessary.
