

# ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

**CASE NUMBER:** C14H-2019-0112

**HLC DATE:**

July 22, 2019

**PC DATE:**

August 13, 2019 (postponed)

September 24, 2019

**APPLICANT:** Historic Landmark Commission

**HISTORIC NAME:** Herrera House

**WATERSHED:** Lady Bird Lake

**ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE:** 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** 3

**ZONING FROM:** SF-3-NP to SF-3-NP-H

**SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the proposed zoning change for the property's significance in architecture, historical association, and community value.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:** Architecture, historical association, community value

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:** Recommend the proposed zoning change for the property's significance in architecture, its historical association, and its community value.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:**

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The property meets the criteria for designation as a City of Austin historic landmark. It is more than 50 years old and retains a high degree of integrity. It is listed as a potential historic landmark in the East Austin Historic Resources Survey (2016).

The property meets the criteria for landmark designation as set forth in City Code:

- a. **Architecture.** The house embodies the distinguishing characteristics of the gable-front-and-wing form of the National Folk style, including an L-plan, cross-gabled roof, and corner porch. The property meets this criterion.
- b. **Historical association.** The Herrera family occupied the house for 105 years: Valentine and Josefa Herrera and other family members first lived there (around 1911 until 1963); followed by their daughter Mary Grace Herrera, with other family members (until 1992); followed by Diana Herrera Castañeda (until 2016). Consuelo Herrera is listed as a renter from 1924 until around 1941, from the time she finished high school until she married Patricio Méndez. Valentine Herrera ran a Spanish school, while Josefa owned El Fenix Bakery, a confectionery shop. Consuelo Herrera Méndez was the first Mexican American teacher in AISD, beginning while she lived in the house; she taught in the district for 45 years. Mary Grace Herrera was AISD's second Mexican American teacher, and taught at Palm School for at least 35 years. Diana Herrera Castañeda was a prominent East Austin activist and the first Latina elected to the AISD School Board. The property meets this criterion.
- c. **Archaeology.** The property was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.

- d. **Community value.** The property contributes to cultural identity of the city due to its associations with trailblazing Mexican American educators and advocates.
- e. **Landscape feature.** The property is not a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.

**CITY COUNCIL DATE:**

**ACTION:**

**ORDINANCE READINGS:** 1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

**ORDINANCE NUMBER:**

**CASE MANAGER:** Cara Bertron

**PHONE:** 974-1446

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS:**

Austin Independent School District  
Austin Lost and Found Pets  
Austin Neighborhoods Council  
Barrido Unido Neighborhood Assn.  
Bike Austin  
Black Improvement Association  
Capital Metro  
Claim Your Destiny Foundation  
Del Valle Community Coalition  
East Austin Conservancy  
East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood Association  
East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood Plan  
Contact Team  
El Concilio Mexican-American Neighborhoods

Friends of Austin Neighborhoods  
Greater East Austin Neighborhood Association  
Guadalupe Neighborhood Development Corporation  
Hill Country Conservancy  
Homeless Neighborhood Association  
Neighborhood Empowerment Foundation  
Neighbors United for Progress  
Preservation Austin  
SELTexas  
Sierra Club, Austin Regional Group  
Tejana Biligual Community  
Tejano Town  
United East Austin Coalition

**BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

**Architecture:**

The house is a significant example of the National Folk Style popular at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in vernacular residential design. The wing-and-gable configuration was very popular in southern climates as it provided an ample front porch to cool the house and provide a sheltered outside living area in the days before the introduction of electric fans and air conditioning. Wing-and-gable style houses such as the Herrera house are vanishing resources in Austin.

**Historical Association:**

Valentin and Josefa Herrera were the longest-term occupants of 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street; they lived in the house from 1911 until their deaths in 1942 (Valentin) and 1963 (Josefa). Their seven children lived with them at various times, as well as various grandchildren. Their daughter Consuela Herrera lived at 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street from at least 1924 until around 1941. Another daughter, Mary Grace Herrera, lived at 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street all her life, until at least 1986.

Valentin (or Valentine, or Valentino) Alcalé Herrera was born in Mexico in 1856 or 1859. He and his family immigrated to the United States in 1899. In 1910 he lived in Comal, Texas, and was farming rented land. The following year, the Herreras had moved to 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in Austin, where Valentin operated and taught at a Spanish school until at least 1920. In 1935, he worked as a salesman in El Fenix, his wife's bakery. Valentin Herrera died in Austin in 1942.

Josefa (or Josefina or Josephine) Duran Herrera was born in Mexico in 1871. She married Valentin Herrera in 1887 in El Saltillo, in Mexico's Coahuila state. The couple had at least

seven children, all of whom lived with them at 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street for some period. Josefa's occupation is not listed in most city directories, as is typical for women, but the 1924 directory does list her as the owner of a confectionery at 518 Chicon Street. By 1935, she and her daughter Florinda were the proprietors of El Fenix Bakery at 1907 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, which was located on the same property as the house (street numbering has changed). No other information about El Fenix Bakery could be found. Josefa also worked as a seamstress. She was a member of the El Buen Pastor Presbyterian Church. Josefa Herrera died in Austin in 1963, after 50 years living in Austin, 49 of which she spent in the house at 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Her death certificate lists her as a housewife.

Consuelo Herrera Méndez was born in 1904 in San Marcos. She attended school at Palm Elementary and Allan Junior High before graduating from Austin High School in 1923, a notable accomplishment at the time for a Mexican American woman. Thirty-three years later, she would earn her B.A. from the University of Texas following years of summer school. Though she passed the exam for elementary teachers after finishing high school, the Austin Independent School District refused to hire her because of her ethnicity, insisting that there were no vacancies. For the next few years, Consuelo taught in Bay City and then Taft, Texas. In 1927, she returned to Austin and was hired as the first Mexican American teacher in AISD, following lobbying by the City Council of Parent-Teacher Associations. At the time, she was also one of the first Tejanas to teach in a major school system in Texas. She taught Mexican American children at the segregated Comal Street School, also called *la escuelita*. She later taught at Zavala School (ca. 1936-56) and Brooke Elementary (1956-72).

Consuelo married Patricio J. Méndez, an attorney, in 1943, and likely moved out of 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street at that time. Accounts of her life stress that she married with the understanding that she would continue to teach. The Méndezes did not have children, but they founded and led the Zavala Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) to increase parental involvement. Consuelo also wrote articles for the state PTA newsletter and translated it into Spanish. The Méndezes were active in local politics, participating in poll tax drives and voter registration initiatives for Hispanic residents. Patricio was the first Latino to run for Austin City Council in 1951, while Consuelo was the president of Ladies LULAC Council No. 202 in 1962 and chaired the state LULAC convention that year. Some sources state that she founded the No. 202 chapter. Consuelo Herrera Méndez retired from teaching in 1972. She died in 1985. In 1987, the new Mendez Middle School was named after her.

Mary Grace Herrera was born in 1912 in McQueeney, Texas. She was the second Mexican American teacher in AISD, after her sister Consuelo. Mary Grace worked as a teacher in Fulmore Junior High School, then at Palm School beginning in 1938. In 1973, she was a featured witness in a trial where the federal government brought suit against Austin. At issue, as framed by *The American Statesman*, was designing a plan to desegregate elementary schools and “eliminating discrimination—if it exists—in mostly Mexican-American schools.” Herrera testified about instructions to only speak to students in English, and agreed with other witnesses that no special programs existed “to meet the special needs of the Mexican-American student.” Mary Grace Herrera lived in 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street from her childhood until her death in 1992.

Diana Herrera Castañeda lived in 1805 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street from 1992 until her death in 2016. Ms. Castañeda attended Travis High School and Texas State University and worked for the Girl Scouts Council. Following family tradition, she was the first Latina elected to the AISD School Board in 1992 and served in the PTAs for Metz Elementary, Brook Elementary, Sanchez Elementary, and Austin High. Ms. Castañeda was a well-known activist in East Austin, with strong involvement with LULAC, the local chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW), and the Mexican American Democrats. Though Ms. Castañeda lived in

the house after the historic period (50+ years ago), her association with the property is notable and will become a part of the house's historic significance in the future.

**PARCEL NO.:** 0204080616

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** LOT 3 BLK 2 OLT 22 DIV O CYPHER RESUB

**ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT:**

Homestead: \$3,666; City portion: \$803

Non-homestead: \$1,968; City portion: \$1,350 (no cap)

**APPRAISED VALUE:** \$413,340

**PRESENT USE:** Vacant

**CONDITION:** Fair

**PRESENT OWNERS:**

Rex Bowers

P.O. Box 92077

Austin, TX 78709-2077

**DATE BUILT:** ca. 1911

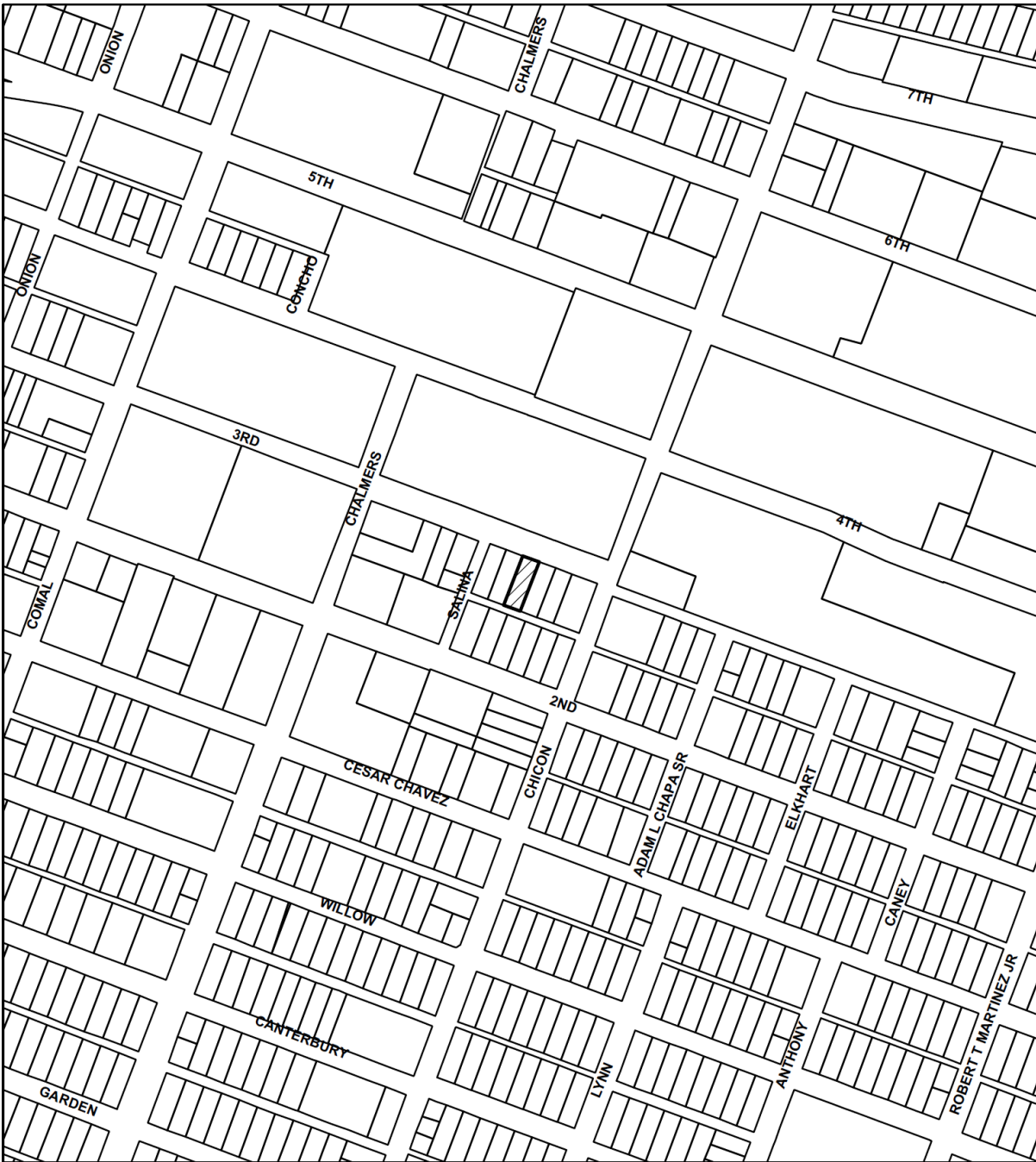
**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** No substantial alterations. Doors have been replaced.




**ORIGINAL OWNER(S):** Unknown. Silas Wright rented the house in 1912; Betsy Woodson also lived there and may have owned the property at that time. Valentine and Josefa Herrera occupied the house by 1914 and are listed as owners by 1916.

**OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS:**

None

## LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 333'

### NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HDP-2019-0192

LOCATION: 1805 E 3RD ST

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.

