
PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1946 apartment house that has served as the Guadalupe Hotel and the YWCA.

ARCHITECTURE

Three-story brick Colonial Revival-styled brick building with a symmetrical façade. The corners are articulated with brick quoins; third floor windows have round arches in the top pane, the front entry is flanked by pilasters and a broken pediment; the central portion of the façade features a Palladian-styled window.

RESEARCH

The site was formerly occupied by the Southwestern Bell garage. The Travis House was built in 1945 as a 30 unit multi-family structure. In 1947, 14 of the apartments were rented to various individuals and couples. Apparently the multi-family apartment building soon converted to the Hotel Guadalupe, as shown by half page advertisements in the City Directory of 1949.

It was purchased by the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) ten years later, and began operating as a dormitory and center for the organization on January 1, 1956. The 50 Year Report in 1965 reports that 249 women were housed that year at the Travis House, 1,638 transients, and 56,649 represented total class attendance (not just Travis House).

As the organization changed from 1955 to 1995, it moved away from providing residences and physical education and no longer needed the type of building represented by the structure at 405 East 18th Street. The YWCA moved its headquarters in the mid-1990s and is now located on South IH 35.

The Travis County Justice System briefly opened a halfway house for ex-offenders at the site in the 1990s, but there was a large public outcry about the proximity of the location to the University of Texas campus and so the halfway house was also closed. Several other tenants occupied the building following the closure of the halfway house; however, the building has been vacant several years. On January 24, a report in the American Statesman said a Division chief for the Fire Department reported that there had been fires on each floor of the building and that it had not happened by accident. She also said homeless individuals had been seeking shelter in the building overnight.

STAFF COMMENTS

This building demonstrates the return of commercial architecture in Austin and the country as a whole to more simplified forms after the more experimental designs of the earlier part of the century. The historical associations with the building also indicate the period of Austin's history before, during and immediately after the second World War.

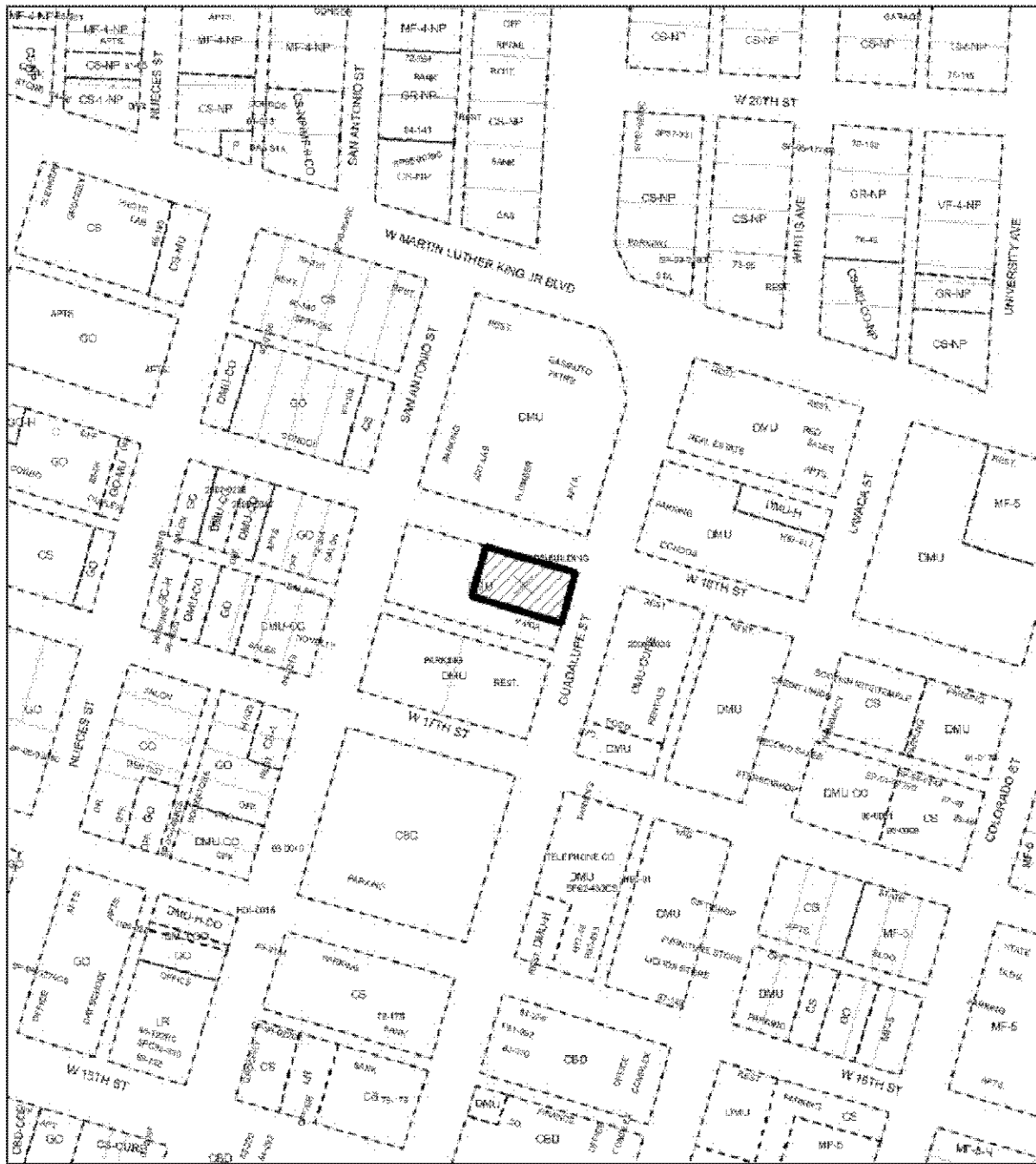
It is interesting to surmise from the tenant list of the building after it opened Austin was a more egalitarian society (at least for the Anglo population) in 1947 than it is now. Among the 14 occupants renting rooms in the Travis House there were a lawyer, a dentist, a young private secretary to L.B. Johnson (that is, Congressman Lyndon B. Johnson), as well as a dishwasher, several students, and at least one individual with no occupation listed.




A page from the minutes of August, 1969 discusses a proposed rate increase from \$32 a month for a two girl room to \$40.00, illustrating another quantum shift from then to now. There are probably no buildings left in Austin from this period that had this kind of multi-family use to show generations of future Austinites how their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents used to live.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Initiate a historic zoning case. The building is an excellent example of Colonial Revival design applied to a commercial structure with extensive decorative ornamentation. It also represents the history of an important community institution, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), which was located in Austin for over thirty years at this location and has strong cultural significance for women, as well as for many in the community who were provided important life skills such as language lessons, swimming lessons, or self-defense.

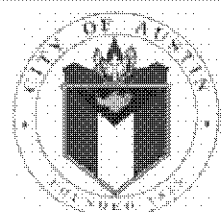
LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  ZONING BOUNDARY
-  PENDING CASE

OPERATOR: S. MEEKS

HISTORIC DEMOLITION PERMIT
 ZONING CASE#: **HDP-2009-0097**
 ADDRESS: **405 W 18TH ST**
 SUBJECT AREA: **0.000 ACRES**
 GRID: **J23**
 MANAGER: **S. SADOWSKY**



1" = 200'

This map has been prepared by G | S Services for the sole purpose of providing information. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding speed of accuracy or completeness.

ORIGINAL BUILDING PERMIT

United Fidelity Life Insurance Company " " 1710 Guadalupe Street

1 33 36x99 (9) E

Original City

3 sty. fireproof apt. house (30 units)

27173 - 6/8/45

\$65,000.00

Cedric Burgher

171 (?)

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Austin History Center



REILY BLASS (LEFT), JASS JIMINEZ, CARPENTER R. W. GAVIT
YWCA residents supervise renovation. (Staff Photo by Jim Bandy)

\$30,000 Project Taken in Stages

YWCA Building Undergoes Complete Refurbishing

Newly refurbished YWCA are at work on first job to be given through reference point of summer, especially for one still involved in school in the largest instance, the one when they make a permanent residence for such jobs, and then girls' bedrooms with new furniture for the needs to be done.

When the women who make repairs and renovations. The month will be raised to \$25 per month. YWCA, a member of the board's property committee, is actually very small for such agency as the United Fund, Mrs. Rex Kirkham, with the YWCA's funds Perry said, being that contractor E. H. Hibbels was the one who accompanied immediate repairs and labor.

With the American Shipman photographer visited wide age, they needed the help of the big job. About one-third of the first-floor project, he found that the with full awareness of the first residence is being worked on. Hibbels said that an 18-months could be used some time, with the girls who live in the building. Hibbels said that interest tubes were on the floor.

First off, the board of Maxwell, dormitory resident, is a volunteer, headed by the YWCA Building of 98 W. 13th. Mrs. Jeff Thompson, Jr., arranged for a loan of \$30,000 well before the most members were quick to accept interest rate increases. Hibbels said that they had received from the YWCA advisory panel — John G. Adams, Lewis E. Hays, Mrs. C. E. Hays, Mrs. M. E. Jordan, J. O. Gorman, Jass Jass, William J. Boon, Philip Bluss of Texas City, came in the planning stage and then gave permission approval in the new work.

W. H. Hays explains that

of an approved United Fund Central Texas company about 14 years ago. Mrs. Kirkham mentioned, "Now, we are getting in new flooring, refinishing the walls and adding newly-colored sheet metal, and will have new cooking ranges in each kitchen when the work is completed."

The YWCA residence houses young women in two and three-bed rooms which include private baths, lockers and dining areas. There are also single bedrooms with private baths, and the occupants of these single rooms sharing kitchen privileges with the girls in other specified suites. The residence, like the rest of the YWCA building, is completely air-conditioned. The residence has, named in memory of the late Mrs. E. H. Perry, is not operated for profit but rather for service, with only nominal costs required. The advisory panel has approved a 1963 rent increase, scheduled to start on Sept. 1, when the ten-month period is due to be completed. On that date, too, the board members plan to start will submit a plan to be established the furnishings in each suite through contributions from individuals and organizations. An example of the board's original rental increase, can

When the American Shipman photographer visited YWCA's present work project, he found that the approval of the new girls' room for a picture with the contractor Hibbels and carpenter W. M. Gavit, a good example of two things: first that Miss Reily Bluss is, and Miss Jass Jiminez, 13, will represent the enthusiasm of all the residents for the work being done, and secondly, that even though financial difficulties have that assembly several furnished items to the workers just now in its their side. Mrs. Bluss, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Bluss of Texas City, came in the planning stage and then gave permission approval in the new work.

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Man injured in fire on Guadalupe St.

Firefighters battled several blazes Friday afternoon at the former Travis House at 18th and Guadalupe streets, said Dawn Clopton, division chief for the Austin Fire Department.

Firefighters said a man in his 20s was taken to a hospital to be evaluated for smoke inhalation.

Clopton said there were multiple fires on each floor of the three-story building. "That doesn't happen by accident," she said.

The fires were put out quickly.

She said homeless people have used the building overnight. It had been used by the YWCA and by a halfway house but has been vacant for a few years.

Saturday, January 24, 2009

From Statesman.com