NPS Form 10-900

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Tucker Apartment House
Other name/site number: Tucker-Winfield Apartment House
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 1105 Nueces Street
City or town: Austin State: Texas County: Travis
Not for publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☑ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☑ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
☐ national ☐ statewide ☑ local

Applicable National Register Criteria: ☑ A ☐ B ☑ C ☐ D

State Historic Preservation Officer

Signature of certifying official / Title

6/1/17
Date

Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register.
___ removed from the National Register
___ other, explain: _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property

X	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling (Apartment Building)

Current Functions: DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling (Apartment Building)

7. Description

Architectural Classification: LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival, Italian Renaissance

Principal Exterior Materials: Brick, Wood, Concrete

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 6-9)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: Community Planning and Development, Architecture

Period of Significance: 1939-1967

Significant Dates: 1939

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Harry Hargrave, builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 10-25)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheet 26)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
- _ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- _ previously listed in the National Register
- _ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- _ designated a National Historic Landmark
- _ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- _ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:
- **x** State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission*, Austin)
- _ Other state agency
- _ Federal agency
- _ Local government
- _ University
- _ Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Less than one acre

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 30.274677 ° Longitude: -97.746311 °

Verbal Boundary Description: North 53 feet of Lot 1 and the North 53 feet of West 48 feet of Lot 2, Block 132 in the City of Austin, Travis County, Texas.

Boundary Justification: This property description defines the original, and only, boundaries historically associated with the nominated resource, the Tucker Apartment House.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Terri Myers, Historian
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Date: July 20, 2016

Additional Documentation

M**aps** (see continuation sheets 27-28)

Additional items (see continuation sheets 29-41)

Photographs (see continuation sheets 5, 42-55)

PHOTO LOG
Property: Tucker Apartment House, 1105 Nueces Street, Austin, Texas
All photographs taken by Terri Myers, February 17, 2017 except as noted

Photo 1
View of West (primary) Elevation
Camera facing East
March, 2016

Photo 2
Detail of Entry Bay (West Elevation)
Camera facing East
February 17, 2017

Photo 3
View of West and South Elevations
Camera facing NE
February 17, 2017

Photo 4
View of North Elevation
Camera facing SW
February 17, 2017

Photo 5
View of East (rear) and North Elevations
Camera facing SW
February 17, 2017

Photo 6
Streetscape – East side of 1100 Block of Nueces St.
Camera facing NE
February 17, 2017

Photo 7
View of Interior Hall and Door
From staircase looking down
February 17, 2017

Photo 8
Interior staircase to second floor
February 17, 2017

Photo 9
Arched multi-light casement windows
From stairwell facing second floor landing
February 17, 2017

Photo 10
Apartment B – View from Dining Room to Living Room through Archway
Camera facing NW
February 17, 2017

Photo 11
Apartment B – Fireplace Mantel, Tiles, and Gas Heater
Camera facing North
February 17, 2017

Photo 12
Apartment B – Kitchen
Camera facing NE
February 17, 2017

Photo 13
Apartment C -- Bathroom with original built-in laundry cabinet and swivel mirror
February 17, 2017

Photo 14
Original Mailboxes – Exterior Entry Wall
February 17, 2017

Section 7: Narrative Description

Introduction

The Tucker Apartment House is a two-story, four-unit apartment building set in a once-residential neighborhood composed of early- to mid-20th century dwellings that have been converted for commercial office use in central Austin, Texas. The apartment house lies at the edge of Austin's central business district, within a few blocks of the Texas state capital complex and the Travis County Courthouse. Since its construction in 1939, it has been used as efficient, affordable housing for civil servants, office workers, and college students. Built by insurance agent Jim Tucker, the building reflects the city's changing urban landscape in the 1930s when the University of Texas and state and local government agencies embarked on major expansion campaigns that warranted the construction of numerous apartment "houses" to accommodate the flood of new employees to the state capital. The building footprint measures roughly 32 feet across by 64 feet long. Its symmetrical front façade is divided into three bays. The central, gabled entrance bay is flanked by two identical side bays with paired 1/1 double-hung wood sash windows. The building's eclectic blend of popular Period Revival style elements, including Colonial Revival and Italian Renaissance, is reflected in its central bay with a front-gabled roof, arched multi-pane window, diamond-shaped decorative panels of diagonal brick, and diamond-shaped glazed tiles. Below the gabled roof is an arched brick recessed entrance that leads to a small common lobby and central staircase. The side elevations are nearly identical to one another with gabled projecting volumes and secondary entrances to the first-floor kitchens. With its mix of Period Revival design elements and remarkable architectural integrity, the Tucker Apartment House is an excellent, now rare, example of the multi-family building type that once prevailed in downtown Austin during the 1920s and 1930s.

Architectural Description

General Configuration

The Tucker Apartment House is a cube-like two-story apartment with two nearly identical apartment units on the first floor and two more on the second floor. Most of the building is covered by a hipped roof, but an intersecting side-gabled volume spans the entire front elevation. The building is of wood frame construction set on a concrete perimeter wall and sheathed in a light yellow/buff-colored brick veneer laid in a running bond. All apartment windows are single or paired, wood-framed, 1/1 double-hung wood sash, and all window openings feature brick sills composed of a row of rowlock bricks. Many windows have simple wooden window screens without decorative muntins or other trimwork. Most windows, other than those on the second floor that sit just below the cornice of the hipped roof section, have lintels created by a row of soldier course brick. The roof has almost no eave overhang. A wide cornice band consisting of two simple, lapped pieces of wood wraps the building just below the roof, and gable ends have a course of rowlock bricks trimming the top of the wall plane below the tympanum. The building sits on a concrete perimeter wall foundation and is further supported by 10" square concrete piers. The building's compact, central massing, symmetrical façade, nearly identical interior apartments, and subtle mix of Colonial Revival and Italian Renaissance stylistic detail, in addition to its remarkable integrity, make it an excellent example of the Four-Unit Apartment House building type in Austin.

Front Elevation

The front façade faces west, and is located on the side-gabled front volume that spans the width of the building. The symmetrical façade has three bays of equal width – a central entrance bay flanked by identical bays containing paired windows. Due to the slightly sloped lot, the first floor is situated several feet above grade on the front elevation.

The central bay has a concrete staircase with five steps that lead to a small inset porch at the entrance. The bottom stair tread is a curved concrete apron that is slightly wider than the staircase. Wrought iron handrails run along the edge of the porch, down the staircase, and terminate in a subtle spiral at the curved apron. The handrails feature both twisted iron balusters and straight balusters with affixed curlicue details. A short concrete walkway ties the apron to the city sidewalk in front of the building.

The central bay has projecting brick pilasters that frame a monumental, two-story arched portico. The projecting volume has a dormer-like, intersecting front gable and thick brick pilasters that reach from the porch floor to the roof. The arched opening within the volume is deeply inset, set further back than the wall plane of the adjacent bays. The side walls of the recessed portico are stepped in slightly from the width of the accentuating pilasters, creating a telescoped appearance. At the top of the portico, at the spring line of the arch, a portion of the stepped wall recedes and becomes a smooth barrel vault, and another portion becomes a thin arched rib.

On the first floor of the inset portico is a single, multi-light entry door. The door is flanked by sidelights, each composed of a vertical column of five lights above a wood panel base. A row of soldier course brick forms a lintel above the door and sidelights. Two original wrought iron light sconces are mounted high on either side of the entrance. The second floor of the inset portico features a large arched window opening comprised of multi-light wood casement windows topped with an oversized fanlight. Rowlock bricks trim the curve around the top of the window and create a sill below it. Set between the upper window and the door is a rectangular stuccoed panel trimmed on all sides by rowlock and header bricks. Blue glazed tiles form the letter "T" – for Tucker – at the center of the panel. The "T" is flanked by two red, unglazed, diamond-shaped tiles. An inset brass mailbox with openings for each apartment is situated near the entrance on a side wall of the inset portico.

The two flanking bays are identical to one another. Both outside bays have paired 1/1 wood sash windows on each floor that open to the living rooms of the apartments inside. As in other locations around the building, the first-floor windows have rowlock sills and soldier course lintels, while the second floor windows have rowlock sills but cornice trim boards instead of brick lintels. Between the upper and lower sets of windows on each bay is a small diamond-shaped decorative panel consisting of three diagonally-set bricks.

The composition and decorative details of the front elevation represent an eclectic mix of Period Revival influences. For example, the building's symmetrical façade, framing pilasters, arched recessed entry, and masonry construction show Italian Renaissance influences that may be viewed as vernacular interpretations—Virginia McAlester notes that the style's "vernacular interpretations spread widely with the perfection of masonry veneering techniques after World War I" (McAlester 2000: 398). The Colonial Revival style is also evident, particularly in the accentuated, centered front door with sidelights, balanced façade composition, simplicity of detail, double-hung windows, the central casement window with a fanlight, and centered front gable attached to a front side-gabled building volume—all qualities noted by McAlester as being Colonial Revival motifs (McAlester 2000: 321-322, 334-335).

Side Elevations

The north and south side elevations are almost identical, save for differences in the integrity of their side porches. Approximately the westernmost third of the side elevations are under the gable of the building's front volume, whereas the rear two-thirds are under the main hipped roof. Near the center of each side elevation is a two-story, projecting volume with a dormer-like gabled roof that intersects with the main hip.

On each side elevation, the section nearest the front of the building (the westernmost third) has four 1/1 windows on each floor: two single windows near the front corner that open into the living room of the corresponding

apartment, and one set of paired windows that open into the apartment's dining room. This section also has a large louvered vent that spans the width of the gable end.

East of this gabled volume in the remaining two-thirds of the wall span, the fenestration of each elevation consists of regularly-spaced, single 1/1 widows. Immediately east of the gabled front volume is a short section of wall that corresponds to the kitchens of the apartments within. On the first floor of this section is a single side entrance door with a tiny rectangular window beside it, and on the second floor is a small 1/1 window. East of this short section is the projecting gabled volume, which on each elevation has two single 1/1 windows on each floor and a triangular louvered vent in the gable end. The projecting volume, which contains the front bedroom of each apartment, extends approximately one foot beyond the plane of the façade and adds detail to the otherwise long expanses of brick wall and identical windows. While smaller in size, this gabled projection mimics the form and roof pitch of the side-gabled front building volume. Toward the rear of each side elevation, east of the gabled projection, there are three windows on each floor: one small 1/1 window corresponding to the bathroom of each apartment, and two single 1/1 windows corresponding to the rear bedrooms.

The only difference between the two side façades is in their first-floor kitchen porches. On the south façade, three concrete steps lead to a small concrete stoop and single wood panel door with glazing in its upper portion. Above the door is a front-gabled stoop roof with carved wood brackets and exposed rafter tails. The porch and its roof appear to be original to the building. The steps have simple wood handrails that do not appear original. Adjacent to this south side entry is a small wood-framed rectangular side window. On the north façade, two steps lead to a small concrete stoop, a windowless wood panel door, and small side window, and no railings line the steps. The gabled porch roof is missing from the north side entry, though ghost lines remain.

Rear Elevation

The rear façade has a symmetrical fenestration pattern, with four windows and a door on each floor. At the center of each floor is a single wood panel door with glazing in its upper portion. Simple screen doors are located at each entry. The rear entrances are each flanked with single 1/1 windows. Near the outside corner of each floor is another 1/1 window. The upper entrance is accessed by a wood staircase, that while not historic, is likely similar to the building's original staircase. It is supported by 4x4 posts and has a simple railing made of 2x4s; at the top stair landing the railing has a flat top rail. Wire mesh has been added to the railing. Above the door on the second floor is a nearly-flat stoop roof supported by simple triangular brackets.

Foundation

The building rests on a concrete perimeter wall foundation that is set apart from the wall planes by a continuous band of soldier-course brick. Openwork concrete blocks vent the crawl space at regular intervals within the brick ribbon. The site slopes uphill somewhat to the rear, so the foundation has greater exposure on the front façade where it rises several feet above the ground. At the rear of the building, the foundation lies entirely below ground and the back door opens at grade. Where exposed, the foundation is smooth concrete. A small wooden panel near the front of the south elevation provides access to the crawlspace.

Interior

The building's floor plan is typical of the Four Unit Apartment House building type. Each floor has two almost identical, mirror-image units, accessed from a central hall. The building's front entrance leads into a short foyer with two paneled interior doors, each of which opens into a first-floor unit. A short distance into the foyer is an open, half-landing staircase. Its balustrade features square balusters and a polished wood handrail that terminates in a scroll. At the top of the staircase is a rectangular landing that leads to the doors accessing the upper floor units. Above the landing is the large, round-arched multi-pane window which lights the hall and stairwell.

Each apartment unit has a front living room with a small fireplace. Three of the four units have their original gas heaters. Hearths and fireplace surrounds are tiled with square brown tiles, and each mantle is trimmed with molding and decorated with a delicate carved swag. Between each living room and dining room is an arched opening. The dining rooms feature built-in shelves and cabinets in two of the corners. From each dining room, one door opens into a small kitchen with tiled counters and backsplash, small built-in cabinets, and original shallow basins. A second door leads from the kitchen to a short hallway containing an arched phone niche and space for a small desk. Each hall leads to two small bedrooms with a bathroom between them. All have their original cast iron bathtubs, vented laundry chutes, and some have original swivel mirrors and wall-mounted sinks. The apartments, entrance foyer, and staircase all have wood floors. All door and window openings have subtly molded trim and sills. Walls have plain baseboards and crown molding.

Integrity

The Tucker Apartment House has remarkable integrity. Each unit retains its original 1939 floorplan. No walls have been removed or openings altered and no rooms have been enlarged or reduced in size. Its original wood double-hung windows are intact, as are most of its doors. All brickwork and exterior trim is intact, and the apartment interiors retain their original fireplace mantels and tiles, archways, built-in cabinets, telephone nooks, and other character-defining features including historic finishes. The building's alterations are limited to the following: the north side entrance has a replacement door and is missing its stoop roof; the south side elevation has a non-historic stair rail; the rear staircase is appropriate but not original; several of the window screens are missing and others may have replacement screening or other parts; several windows have window air conditioning units installed; the decorative tiled "T" on the front façade is missing one of its blue tiles; and modern gutters and downspouts are found on all elevations of the building.

Parcel

The apartment house sits on a rectangular lot with its narrow front side along Nueces Street. The lot slopes gently uphill toward the rear. The building is set back approximately 30 feet from the street, and a concrete city sidewalk runs in front of the building. Between the sidewalk and street is a flat grassy strip. Along the south side of the lot is a narrow concrete driveway that leads to the rear of the property where a garage was once located. A small grassy lawn is in front of the building wraps along both sides in narrow strips. A short concrete walkway runs from the city sidewalk to the building's front porch, and another narrow walkway runs along a portion of the north side of the building, connecting the sidewalk to the north side entry porch. The rear of the lot is currently a dirt and gravel parking area. The lot's north side is bordered by an alley. To the south is a lot containing a one-story residential building that has been converted for use as an office. The surrounding streetscape still conveys a sense of its historic residential character; though most of the surrounding buildings have been converted from single-family houses or duplexes to office use, their historic design, materials, fenestration, and site improvements are largely intact.

Section 8: Statement of Significance

Built in 1939, the Tucker Apartment House is a rare, exceptionally intact example of the once common four-unit apartment house type that defined modern multi-family housing in downtown Austin from the 1920s through the 1930s. Offering a level of autonomy, affordability, contemporary design, the efficient four-unit apartment "house" appealed to a rising salaried class of young urbanites who flocked to the Texas capital during that period for white-collar jobs as civil servants, legal assistants, sales representatives, and office workers. Scores of apartment houses of this type designed in various Period Revival styles rose in the downtown business district to meet the demand, among them the Tucker Apartment House. The Tucker Apartment House was immediately successful, especially with single career women many of whom worked within easy walking distance to the new Travis County Courthouse or the Texas State Capitol complex. Though the property continued to attract this type of resident into the 1950s, the postwar era marked the end of the downtown four-unit apartment house as a dominant downtown housing option. Land values in the central business district sky-rocketed in the latter half of the 20th century and many of the older buildings were replaced by high-rise offices and hotels and multi-level parking garages, especially around the growing State Capitol complex. As a result of extensive redevelopment in the area, the Tucker Apartment House is one of the few remaining four-unit apartment houses in Austin's downtown core. The building is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a rare, exceptionally intact example of a locally significant building type that helped define downtown Austin's built environment in the early 20th century. The building retains its Period Revival design elements and architectural integrity and is an outstanding reflection of the four-unit apartment house type that dominated multi-family development in that period. The building is also nominated under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development for its association with the rise and growth of Austin as the center of state government and higher education. Its style, form, and amenities convey a tangible response to the changing demands of the urban workforce that needed modern, efficient housing options to fit their lifestyle. The period of significance spans between 1939 and 1967 to adhere to the 50 year cut off.

Historic Context: Early 20th Century Modern Apartment Houses in Austin

The Tucker Apartment House can best be understood within the context of Austin's downtown business district development in the early 20th century. The city of Austin is both the Travis County seat and the capital of Texas, with the state capitol building, the Governor's mansion, legislative and staff offices, the county courthouse and jail, and numerous government offices and agencies all located within the original 1839 townsite boundaries. From its inception, the city's main streets filled with commercial buildings whose proprietors pitched their wares and services to a "captive" clientele of legislators, civil servants, lawyers, clerks, and associated officials and staff whose work kept them in downtown Austin. Nearby housing, preferably within walking distance of one's office or senate chambers, was a top priority for downtown residents. Some were permanent Austinites with families who rented or bought houses in streetcar suburbs or residential enclaves around the commercial district, but many were temporary or part-time residents, or single persons with very basic housing needs. At first, these more transient residents found rooms in hotels, boarding houses, above downtown businesses, or with local families.

In the early 20th century, some Austin property owners carved their large old downtown houses into several small "apartments", often consisting of only one or two rooms, a shared bath, and communal dining facilities. By the 1920s, however, downtown and university area property owners began building two- to ten-unit compact "apartment houses" specifically geared to a modern urban rental market. Typically, these houses were compact, two-story brick or stucco buildings with an equal number of apartment units stacked on each floor. Most adhere to the popular architectural fashions of the day, with Tudor Revival, Mission Revival, and Spanish Eclectic (Spanish

Colonial) Revival styles predominating. In nearby suburbs, these stylish "apartment houses" fit nicely into residential neighborhoods where they housed single professionals and academics associated with the University of Texas.

In Austin's central business district, where land values were higher, they often replaced older homes because they commanded greater rent per square foot and appealed to a modern, relatively sophisticated generation of downtown resident. It is within this context that the Tucker Apartment House should be studied. A product of its time and place, it represents the trend toward redevelopment for denser, more profitable uses in the central city during the 1920s and 1930s. Subsequent redevelopment for state office and parking expansion in the 1960s and 1970s, ultimately replaced many of its contemporaries, in turn. Today, the building survives as rare example of a once-common response to the need for efficient, modern housing for urban lifestyles in downtown Austin.

Historical Overview of Austin: 1839-1920

The choice of Austin as the permanent capital of the Texas Republic was an unlikely one in 1839, as it lay at the rim of the western frontier and was virtually unsettled, with only a handful of hard-scrabble pioneers scattered along the north bank of the Colorado River. Nevertheless, then-president Mirabeau B. Lamar, who had visited the site a year earlier, was greatly impressed with its beauty, natural resources, and "healthful" location above the river. He convinced other members of the congressional capital-selection commission that the site had considerable economic and strategic potential near the physical center of the new republic and at the leading edge of its western territory.

Lamar prevailed and appointed Edwin Waller to plan and build the new capital city, named in honor of Stephen F. Austin, widely proclaimed to be the "father of Texas." Waller supervised the surveyors who laid out the 640-acre townsite on a grid plan following the cardinal directions. The townsite consisted of 14 blocks set between Waller Creek on the east and Shoal Creek on the west, with the main street – Congress Avenue – laid down the center connecting the Colorado River on the south to a block identified as "Capitol Square" on the north. The Texas legislature convened in a temporary capitol in November, 1840.

Owing to its potential as the seat of Texas government, the city initially thrived but then struggled even to exist as detractors sought – and nearly succeeded – to move the capital elsewhere. From 1842-1845, the fate of the fledgling capital city lay in doubt as President Sam Houston and others managed to temporarily move the capital to Houston and then Washington-on-the-Brazos. When Texas was admitted to the Union in 1845, Austin was designated as the state capital, a duty it has served ever since.

With statehood, Austin's government-related growth increased steadily until the outbreak of the Civil War. During the period between 1845 and 1861, Austin was the political, diplomatic, and social nexus of the new state of Texas. Permanent government buildings, including a State Capitol, the Governor's Mansion, and various state asylums, led construction activities in the new city. Numerous religious congregations formed and churches were built to serve their growing numbers in the antebellum era. Likewise, domestic and commercial properties proliferated throughout the city, but especially in the central blocks. On Austin's periphery, particularly along Shoal Creek, Indians continued to raid homesteads and those areas remained only sparsely settled into the 1870s.

Austin's growth stalled during the Civil War but in its aftermath, the city was flooded with newly-emancipated former slaves who sought safety and jobs in the capital city. Federal occupation troops also added to the population growth in the postwar period. These factors, however, paled in comparison to the effect of the railroad on Austin's growth and development. In 1871, the Houston and Texas Central Railway laid track into

Austin for the first time, making it the state's westernmost railroad terminus and establishing its career as a regional trade center for much of Central Texas. Austin's population exploded in the short five years between 1870, when the census reported 4,428 residents within its boundaries, and 1875, when 10,363 persons were counted in the city, more than doubling its size in that span. Almost as quickly as Austin's railroad-related economy grew in the first half of the decade, it began to evaporate in the second half, as rail lines increased in Central Texas, diluting the city's early lead in regional trade.

During the 1880s, however, Austin began taking steps to becoming a state leader in education, as well as government. The year 1881 was an auspicious one for education in Austin, as the city won a hard-fought battle to host the newly-organized University of Texas. That same year, Austin launched its public school system and Tillotson Collegiate and Normal Institute for African American students opened its classrooms for students in East Austin. About the same time, the Holy Cross Fathers and Brothers founded St. Edward's School, later chartered as St. Edward's College in South Austin.

Positive advances in education were followed by considerable civic achievement in the 1880s and 1890s. Efforts increased to replace the county's unreliable ferry service to South Austin and build a dam across the Colorado River. In 1893, the Austin Dam was completed to power a municipal water and electric system and light an array of "moonlight towers" across the city. Despite these advancements, Austin lagged in population behind other Texas cities whose economies were greatly enriched by nearby oil discoveries or other large industries. Though home to state government and prominent educational institutions, Austin was a less-than-desirable place in which to live. At the turn of the 20th century, Austin lacked some of the most basic necessities of modern life, such as sanitary sewers, paved streets, and city parks. Disease-plagued slums hugged the banks of Austin's many creeks and drainages where most of its poor and minority population lived without clean water or minimal sanitation.

Progressive ideals of the early 20th century inspired leaders to remedy some of Austin's municipal ills, starting with establishing a more efficient and responsible council-manager form of city government. Their purchase of Barton Springs in 1918 was a landmark achievement that became a model for subsequent public park acquisition in the city. In the 1920s, Austin embarked on city planning and beautification efforts that culminated in its 1928 Austin City Plan. A prescription for improving and enhancing Austin's residential quality, the plan recommended the establishment of scenic drives, neighborhood parks, and other "aesthetic" programs, in addition to health and safety issues such as "slum clearance" and draining pools of standing water. The city enthusiastically embraced the plan and citizens passed a bond issue to fund many of its tenets such as park development, a scenic drive along Shoal Creek (present Lamar Blvd.), and the construction of a city hospital, a public library, and a municipal airport. The plan also recommended that the city "entice" minorities to move to the east side of town by denying them construction permits for buildings on the west side and central downtown core. The city adopted that recommendation, as well.

Downtown Housing Options in Early 20th Century America

American cities experienced tremendous growth in the first decades of the 20th century. Eastern and Southern European immigrants flocked to America in droves between 1900 and 1915, a period in which an estimated one million persons per year entered the country. Some moved to the American Heartland where they bought farms or established businesses in small towns, but most were drawn to the country's large industrial cities where their great numbers added to an already burdened housing shortage. Returning World War I veterans joined in the surge as many thousands of them abandoned family farms for greater opportunities in the city in the late 1910s and early 1920s. Apartment buildings filled the need to house large numbers of city-dwellers in the smallest

available spaces, and thousands of multi-family tenements and apartment houses were built in cities across the country during this time.

Though they served a larger purpose, a stigma attached to apartment buildings which were almost universally viewed as inferior to single-family homes. Home ownership was widely promoted as the American ideal. To most, it represented upward mobility, financial responsibility and stable, law-abiding communities of like-minded citizens. In contrast, apartment dwellers were viewed as transient, uneducated, low-wage earners who sometimes resorted to crime to pay their rent. Large apartment buildings were often depicted in newsreels and movies of the day as overcrowded, noisome tenements teaming with foreigners and riddled with crime, poverty, and illiteracy. Sociologists even associated the increase in apartment living with a decline in American morals, equating the absence of "community", fresh air, and healthy lawns with adultery, divorce, juvenile delinquency, and criminal behavior.

Apartment Buildings in Texas

Multi-family apartment houses like the Tucker Apartments that were specifically planned and designed with two or more discrete units began appearing in Texas' larger cities like Dallas, San Antonio, and Houston by the late 1910s. Typically, these early 20th century apartment houses were two-story brick or stucco-clad buildings with two to six separate units per building. Fenestration was similar to that found in contemporaneous single-family dwellings, with single, paired, or bands of double hung sash or multi-light casement windows. They followed the architectural fashions popular for residential construction of their period; early apartment houses sometimes displayed Mission Revival or Craftsman features, while later examples adopted Period Revival styles incorporating Tudor, Spanish Eclectic, Italian Renaissance, and American Colonial Revival elements in their designs. In fact, apartment houses of this period looked very much like large houses massed compactly under a single roof. And, because they shared the same architectural palettes, decorative details, building materials, and fenestration patterns as their single-family contemporaries, they did not appear out of character in their close-in suburban neighborhoods.

As in the rest of the country, apartments in Texas were built, in large part, to house the many single professionals, office workers, and service industry employees who flocked to the cities for good jobs after World War I. Modern apartment houses attracted tenants who desired the basic amenities of a home but with greater privacy and anonymity than could be found in a rooming or boarding situation. New apartments in these "houses" generally featured private baths, separate rooms for living and sleeping, and small but efficient "kitchenettes." They were a great departure from the shared baths, cramped quarters, and communal meals of typical boarding houses and they were generally less expensive than residential hotels that catered to an upper-income clientele.

Because they were geared largely to downtown workers, they were often built as infill in the central business districts or in neighborhoods with access to streetcars or within walking distance of the central business district. In university towns, they appeared in adjacent neighborhoods where students and teachers could walk to classes. Most were cube-like, two-story buildings massed under a single roof. They generally followed a simple, streamlined plan with two mirror-image apartments on the first floor and another two on the second, with rooms arranged in-tandem, with the living room at the front and the bedroom at the back. They appealed to a younger clientele by providing modern amenities such as integrated plumbing and electrical systems, overhead electrical fixtures and outlets in every room. Most featured "efficiency" rather than full kitchens, and had tiled "shower baths", instead of cast iron tubs. Gone were the buggy barns – many apartment houses featured matching auto garages positioned at the rear of the lot. Of course, such "efficiency" kept costs down for the builder while

appealing to the prospective tenants' self-image as "young moderns." Apartment dwellers had more time to engage in the joys of modern life since they didn't have the chores and upkeep suffered by homeowners.

Interior simplicity was overshadowed by the sometimes flamboyant exterior stylistic embellishment. Some of the earliest such apartment complexes, dating to the pre-war years, adopted a Mission Revival motif with dark red-brick or stucco siding, flat roof, clay tile accents and shaped parapet walls. Following World War I, soldiers returning from Europe brought with them a taste for English or Continental architectural styles that were copied and replicated across the country in both single-family and modern apartment designs. Among the most popular of the interwar styles were the Period Revivals, including Tudor, Spanish Colonial (Spanish Eclectic) and American Colonial revivals, and Italian Renaissance.

Austin Rental Property Types in the 1920s and 1930s

As Austin and its economic opportunities grew in the early 20th century, the city faced a housing shortage for its substantial population of state legislators, law clerks, traveling salesmen, visiting scholars, and other semi-permanent and part-time residents who spent considerable time in the capital city, but who did not necessarily want to own or maintain a second home there. Some lived in residential hotels while others found lodging in faded old Victorians that had been broken up into boarding or rooming houses. In fact, the earliest ads for "apartments" generally meant a couple of cobbled-together rooms in one of Austin's once-grand 19th century homes. The word did not evoke an image of stylish modern efficiency for sophisticated urbanites, which was how new apartments were promoted in cities elsewhere in the country. Thus, the city offered little middle-ground between single-family dwellings and rooming houses or hotels in the first decades of the new century.

Austin's housing shortage grew particularly acute in the years just after World War I, when a new wave of office workers, businessmen, and government employees flocked to the city for employment and found little in the way of modern, affordable housing. Downtown property owners typically responded to their demands by enlarging and improving their existing *ad hoc* apartment buildings, rather than investing in new construction. They gutted interiors, reconfigured floorplans, installed new plumbing fixtures, and replaced old electrical equipment. *The Austin Statesman* reported on some of the more ambitious efforts, revealing decorative details and cost estimates. One front-page article heralded R. H. Kirby's renovation of his downtown properties with the headline "Austin Capitalist Takes Out Seven Building Permits." Kirby reportedly spent $15,000 – a princely sum at the time – to convert a 12-room house at 307 W. Fifteenth Street (demolished) into eight modern apartments with 56 "elegantly furnished" rooms. At the same time, he updated and added rooms to his properties at 1402 and 1404 Congress (both demolished); he remodeled the Travis Hotel at 207 Congress (demolished); he painted and installed new plumbing fixtures at 102 W. Fourteenth Street (demolished); and he replaced the roof on his 26-room "apartment house" at 305 W. Fifteenth Street (demolished).

New rental units were in short supply in Austin in the early 1920s. Residential hotels offered suites with "well-appointed" apartments and single rooms for both short- and long-term rental but they typically catered to a transient clientele of well-to-do businessmen, politicians, or university luminaries who could afford their full-service housekeeping and dining amenities. They were out of reach to the average civil servant or downtown office worker. In Austin, these upscale residential hotels were almost all located on Congress Avenue or in other parts of downtown. In size, scale, massing, design, and materials, they more closely resembled high-rise downtown commercial buildings than neighborhood dwellings and offered little in the way of "hominess."

At the other end of the spectrum were the scattered clusters of identical or mirror-image cottages with only two or three rooms apiece. They followed popular trends in residential design, sometimes adopting Craftsman or

Spanish Colonial (Eclectic) Revival stylistic elements. Some, dubbed "bungalow" or "tourist" courts, were often arranged around a central commons and located on highways at the edge of town. These courts generally catered to short-term renters such as tourists or traveling salesmen. Examples include the San Jose Motel (altered), on S. Congress Avenue, and Bluebonnet Courts, on N. Guadalupe Street (the old Georgetown Road). Other options included groupings of two- to-four free-standing cottages arranged side-by-side or in rows on large lots in single-family neighborhoods. Most were pre-cut kit or pattern-book houses erected by local lumber companies as rental units. Because the Calcasieu Lumber Company built a number of modest Tudor Revival style compounds of this type throughout the city, these little houses are known as "Calcasieu Cottages" in Austin. Clusters of these tiny Tudor Revival style dwellings with their high-pitched roofs, faux half-timbering, exposed rafter tails, and false bevel wood siding, survive in Hyde Park, Travis Heights, the Hancock neighborhood, and other central neighborhoods throughout the city. Some still display their original metal scuppers, pierced wood shutters, and brass or copper light fixtures.

Starting in the early 1920s, however, a few local developers began to build the type of apartment "houses" that had gained popularity in Dallas and other larger Texas cities after World War I. Most were cube-like two-story, brick veneer or stucco-clad apartment "houses" arranged under a single, overarching hipped or combination hipped-with-gable roof that covered the entire mass. Some were simple duplexes with side-by-side or upstairs-downstairs units. Others contained three to six apartments under a single roof, depending on the size of the lot and, after 1931, the zoning district. While some had common, central entrances, most had individual doorways and porches or entry stoops. In either case, these buildings somewhat resembled large, single-family houses of similar size, scale, materials, and design. Such apartment houses began to appear in Austin starting in the 1920s and they remained the most popular multi-family model in the city through the 1930s and into the early 1940s, before America entered World War II.

One of the first apartment houses was an ambitious project undertaken by C. A. Kamrath in 1923. It was a three-story multi-family complex at the corner of Fifteenth Street and Congress Avenue (demolished), at the edge of the capitol grounds. Kamrath hired the Hurst Contracting Company to construct the building which featured ten separate apartments, five each on the first and second floors, with a dozen single rooms with shared baths and "an extra toilet" on the third floor. All of the apartments were "modern throughout" with hot and cold water and gas heat. Kamrath proudly announced that his "Capital Unit Apartments" would be the "most pretentious of its kind in the city of Austin" (The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); April 8, 1923; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Austin American Statesman* pg. 1).

One of the most publicized apartment projects of the 1920s was that of Mrs. M. H. Bradfield, who, in 1926 announced their intention to build a chic new apartment house at the corner of 14th and Colorado streets (demolished), immediately north of the state capitol. The proposed building would contain twelve apartments, each with four rooms, "equipped in an ultra-modern manner" and have "the latest built-in affairs and the best heating and plumbing available" (August 22, 1926; pg. 4). Numerous *Austin American Statesman* articles ran that year about the planning, construction, and promotion of Bradford's project. Its appeal may have been with the plucky developer, herself. A widow, Mrs. Bradfield had strong ideas as to the type and style of the building and she planned and executed the project largely on her own. In a newspaper interview, Mrs. Bradfield revealed that she had been looking for a "solid investment for her money" and found that Austin seemed to offer the best opportunity for a "really modern apartment house." Mrs. Bradfield chose the north capitol site to attract both state employees and "University people." She took her own council as to the form and design of the building and served as the interior decorator, hand-selecting the wall papers, furnishings, china, dinnerware, and other amenities of the fully-furnished apartments (*Austin American Statesman*, Feb. 1, 1926; pg. 8). When the building was complete, in fall of 1926, all of the apartments were already taken.

While the Kamrath and Bradfield projects were noteworthy for their modern concept and design, a more typical multi-family apartment building began appearing in Austin in the 1920s. The two-story, four-unit apartment house became the standard in central neighborhoods throughout the city. Among the earliest was the Bacon Apartment House, heralded as the city's "first . . . thoroughly modern apartment house" by the *Austin American Statesman*. Built in 1921 at 505 W. 10th Street (demolished, parking garage on site), the Bacon Apartment House was a prototype for numerous four-unit multi-family dwellings to follow in the 1920s and 1930s (*The Austin American Statesman* (1921-1973); November 6, 1921; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Austin American Statesman*, pg. 3). The Bacon apartment house was judged to be "stylish" with Tudor Revival influences including a stucco finish and "dark wood trim." Each of the four apartment units contained four rooms, including a living room, a bedroom, a bath, and a breakfast nook. Apparently the city-dwelling tenants were expected to take their main meals in area restaurants. The interiors were "strictly modern and finished in an artistic manner" with wall papers and wood finishes. Modern amenities included overhead electrical fixtures and wall outlets, gas and electrical connections, and large built-in closets. Each apartment had dedicated basement storage space. A concrete walkway encircled the entire building and sidewalks led to doorways flanked by concrete planter boxes. Concrete driveways led from the street to individual garages at the rear of the complex (*The Austin American Statesman* (1921-1973); November 6, 1921; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Austin American Statesman*, pg. 3).

The Four-Unit Apartment House

As the 1920s progressed, apartment houses like the Bacon project proliferated in blocks around the capital complex and in university area neighborhoods. Most were two-story brick veneer or stucco-clad buildings with the individual apartments massed under a single overarching roof. Some featured a central entrance into a ground-floor lobby, much like the entrance to a traditional house with a foyer or center hall. Others diverged somewhat from the single-family model with separate entrances for the individual units. Some early apartment houses adopted the Mission Revival style with stucco sheathing, arched entries, and shaped parapets, but most were designed in the Tudor Revival, Spanish Eclectic, Georgian Revival, Colonial Revival and Italian Renaissance styles that were so popular for high-end single-family homes of that period.

Early apartment houses of this type proliferated at the edges of the central business district and in the university area, especially in West Campus where they replaced older Victorian and Classical Revival houses in the 1920s. Some were architect-designed, like George Nalle's project at the corner of Rio Grande and W. 22 1/2 Street (demolished). Nalle hired architect Eugene Deals to design a "well-appointed" two-story apartment house of "cream-colored brick with stone trim." It had two "commodious" units downstairs and two similar ones upstairs (*The Austin Statesman (1921-1973)*; September 18, 1921; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The *Austin American Statesman*, pg. 3). These projects were ideal for small investors like sisters Maggie, Clara, and Ida Gillespie who built a two-story brick veneer apartment at 705 W. 11th Street in 1929 (*Austin American Statesman*, October 20, 1929: 3) and widow, Mrs. L. C. Banks, who built a similar brick apartment house at 19th and Colorado (demolished) in 1930 (*Austin American Statesman*, March 7, 1930: 16). A variation on the theme was builder-owner Edmund K. Moody's project at 1807 and 1809 Rio Grande Street (demolished). Moody built two identical Spanish Eclectic style duplexes with arched entries linked by a common terrace (*Austin American Statesman*, September 30, 1928: 4). Similar apartment construction continued in West Campus well into the 1930s.

As the university expanded from its original 40 acres in the 1930s, builders planned to erect similar small-scale multi-family dwellings in still-developing neighborhoods north of campus, including Aldridge Place, Hancock, and Hyde Park. Their plans were quashed somewhat when, in 1931, the city of Austin established its first

zoning districts and adopted a code that prohibited buildings with more than two units in predominantly single-family suburban neighborhoods. As a result, most multi-family dwellings in these neighborhoods were built as duplexes rather than the standard four-unit apartment house. In general, these duplexes followed the same form, function, and design but with only two units instead of four. They also tended to respect existing neighborhood characteristics and architectural styles, with most designed after one of the then-popular Period Revivals. Numerous Spanish Eclectic, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and Italian Renaissance duplexes built in Austin suburbs during the 1930s survive to the present.

Developers put up considerable opposition to the unit restrictions and attempted to ignore or skirt the new zoning ordinance. Soon after the code went into effect, developers tested its mettle by unveiling a plan to build a 6-story "Palatial" Spanish Renaissance style apartment complex overlooking Pease Park in an exclusive West Austin neighborhood. They enlisted well-known architects to design the project and launched a massive advertising campaign to promote its merits to the public. They met with strong resistance from property owners in Enfield and Westfield who argued that multi-family dwellings detracted from the original single-family character of the subdivisions and diminished property values – the very reasoning behind the new zoning districts.

The residents ultimately prevailed and blocked the project but developers continued to challenge the ordinance throughout the early 1930s. Ultimately, the newly-formed Austin Zoning Board amended the code to allow relatively small-scale apartment houses along high-traffic streets at the edges of these neighborhoods. As a result, several 4-and 6-unit Period Revival style apartment houses cropped up along boundary streets and arterials such as Enfield Road and West Lynn through West Austin. Several designed by Austin architect, Roy L. Thomas, survive to the present, including the four-unit brick veneer buildings at 1517 Enfield Road (altered) and 1415 West Lynn (*Austin American Statesman* November 17, 1932: 1; December 2, 1932: 12), and yet another at 1706 Enfield Road (*Austin American Statesman*, Feb. 26, 1935: 2). Like suburban duplexes, most blended in with their surroundings, displaying the same Period Revival styles found within their neighborhoods.

The ban on multi-family construction did not extend to captive residential enclaves that still existed in the downtown core, however. Encroached upon by commercial development, these older areas had lost much of their appeal as fashionable family neighborhoods. Instead, they were ripe for development as housing for a new, more fluid class of career-minded resident that valued modern efficiency, affordability and proximity to downtown entertainments over a single-family home in a quiet neighborhood. Recognizing this fact, the city zoned most of these scattered central city communities for greater, more intensive residential development to house a new, more transient class of downtown occupant. By enacting these new zoning laws, the city helped channel and encourage a new surge in apartment construction in the central city, including the university area, in the 1930s.

Though the economy of the Great Depression halted development elsewhere in the country, the Austin housing market remained vibrant during the 1930s and apartment houses proliferated in the central city. In 1933, during what some economists have judged to be the worst year of the Depression, as many as 26 homes and apartment houses were built in the city in the single month of August (*Austin American Statesman*, September 3, 1933: 10). The following year, four new apartment "hotels" were built near the university, with a six-story building at the northwest corner of 19th and University Avenue. The 100-room masonry structure was designed by Dallas architect, Ralph Bryan (*Austin American Statesman*, October 7, 1934: 4).

Most, though, were of the small-scale, apartment "house" variety, a form that the *Austin American Statesman* touted in a news article headlined "Popularity of Four-unit Apartment Houses" (*Austin American Statesman*, April 9, 1935: 1). Mid-1930s apartment houses were typically modest; a stone veneer duplex at 504 Elmwood cost $4,200 to build while John T. Smith's frame and stucco building at 1017 Riverside Drive was

expected to cost $6,500 (*Austin American Statesman*, March 13, 1935: 1). By September, 1935, residential construction again increased with 544 new homes and apartments either completed or on the drawing boards since the first of the year (*Austin American Statesman*, Sept 18, 1935: A7).

The local newspaper saw the construction boom as a visible indicator of Austin's growth since the start of the Depression with new housing expected to accommodate between 2000 and 2500 residents. "Austin is building in all directions with even the suburban areas getting their share of the residential construction." "With the depression beginning to show some fadeout last spring and the homeowners loan corporation and the federal housing act coming to the rescue of property of property owners have begun to show – many brick veneer and stucco apartments and residences began springing up in various parts of the city. More recently, the trend has shifted toward the erection of larger apartment houses, more particularly four-unit apartments" (*Austin American Statesman*, Sept 18, 1935: A7).

Towards the end of the decade, larger and more ambitious projects in the capitol and university area were planned. In 1938, James P. Nash hired local architect Charles H. Page to design a five-story apartment hotel at 15th and Colorado streets. The apartment building consisted of sixteen apartments on four main floors and a penthouse, and was projected to cost more than $100,000 (*Austin American Statesman*, Feb. 9, 1938). Most, however, were built from standard plans that had been developed and replicated throughout the central city since the 1920s.

The Tucker Apartment House, 1939

Such was the downtown housing *milieu* in 1939 when Jim and Lorena Tucker decided to build a four-unit apartment house at 1105 Nueces Street. Tucker and his wife had moved to Austin about 1930 and made their home at 1012 W. 30th Street (*Austin American Statesman*, December 11, 1933; April 28, 1935: 10). Tucker quickly established himself as an independent insurance agent specializing in automobile coverage and was known as "The Insurance Man" (The Austin American: March 25, 1934: 4). Tucker had an office at 614 Colorado Street and advertised his business regularly in the *Austin American Statesman* newspaper from 1933 through the early 1940s. The Tucker family settled into a middle-class lifestyle whose activities occasionally found their way to the newspaper's "Society" pages. The couple gave small dinner parties at their home, played cards with friends, and bowled in a league. Lorena served as a department chairman for the First Methodist Church's Young Women's Missionary Society and Jim hunted for ducks and deer during the season (*Austin American Statesman*, various dates).

As a testament to their financial stability and ambition, the Tuckers were approved for a loan to build an apartment house as an investment property, despite the lingering Depression. On February 20, 1939, the Tuckers bought property at 1105 Nueces Street from Austin resident Felix Cherico (N. 53 feet of No No. One (1) and the N. 53 feet of the West 48 feet of Lot No. Two (2) in Block No. 132 of the original Austin townsite). The long, narrow city lot measured 53' wide by 117' deep, with the short side fronting onto Nueces Street. Comprising an area of just over 6,200 square feet, the tract was smaller than most building lots for single-family homes which typically ranged between 6,000-7,500 square feet, at that time.

When the Tuckers purchased the lot, it contained an old frame house built in the 1890s. Until that time, a branch of Shoal Creek ran down the middle of Nueces Street, discouraging development in the 1000 and 1100 blocks of that and adjacent Rio Grande and San Antonio streets. By 1890, the city successfully channeled the creek into underground pipes, opening those blocks to subsequent development. Once the water was diverted, late Victorian-era houses, including the one at 1105 Nueces Street, began to appear on previously undeveloped lots along Nueces, San Antonio, and Rio Grande streets, and on the W. 10th and 11th cross streets . Pease Elementary

School and Austin High were built nearby to serve the burgeoning school population in the growing residential section. The school presence attracted yet more residential development in the area until the city's northwest quadrant was entirely built out with hundreds of Victorian, Classical Revival, and early Craftsman style houses lining its streets by the late 1910s and early 1920s.

By the time the Tuckers bought their land, however, the residential enclave had begun to experience strong development pressures from the ever-expanding government and commercial district centered along Congress Avenue. Some of the larger old Victorian homes had already been carved into office space and *ad hoc* apartments by the 1920s, and by the 1930s, smaller houses were being torn down for new construction, including office buildings and multi-family apartment houses for downtown workers. At the same time, suburban additions with stylish modern dwellings and deed restrictions against commercial and multi-family use drew the new generation of home buyers further from the central core. As the trend continued into the 1930s, the increase in business and multi-family use rendered the northwest quadrant less desirable to young families with children, though more attractive to single professionals and office workers.

The Tucker Apartment House is an excellent example of this development trend in downtown Austin during the 1930s. As investors, Jim and Lorena Tucker had little use for the small frame house on their recently-purchased city lot. At that time and in that location, the site was underutilized as a single-family residence but presented a great opportunity as income-producing property. The Tuckers sought to develop the lot to its "highest and best" use as four modern apartments within walking distance of the new Travis County Courthouse and downtown amenities, rather than as an aging, old-fashioned single-family house that was too small to divide into feasible rental units.

In February of 1939, Jim and Lorena Tucker entered into a contract with Austin builder Harry Hargrave for the "construction, completion and delivery within 120 working dates from the date of [the] contract, according to plans and specifications" for a "two-story four-apartment brick veneer house and a four-car box and batten garage" on the site (Travis County deed record, 592:573). No architect was named for the project. The couple granted Hargrave a mechanic's lien for $16,100 and he, in turn, signed a promissory note to Calcasieu Lumber Company to supply the necessary materials to complete the work (Travis County deed record, February 25, 1939).

On March 5, 1939, an article in the *Austin American Statesman* reported that Jim Tucker had been issued a permit to build a two-story, brick veneer apartment house near the new Travis County Courthouse complex. The 20-room building would consist of four individual apartments, each with private baths. A separate four-car frame garage was also planned for the site. Harry Hargrave was named as the general contractor for the estimated $15,442 project (*Austin American Statesman*, March 5, 1939: 14). The cost was somewhat higher than other four-unit apartment houses of the period, an indication that the building was to be of quality materials and design. Its location, near both the county courthouse and the state capital complex, was ideal for attracting tenants who could afford its greater value. The Tucker Apartment House offered more amenities than many others of its type; each apartment had two bedrooms instead of the usual one, a full kitchen, a formal dining room with built-in cabinets, hardwood floors, and a gas fireplace. The private bathrooms featured tiled floors and were equipped with showers in addition to tubs.

The two-story yellow-brick veneer apartment house was ideally located for residents who worked in the central business district. It lay within a short walking distance of major Austin institutions, just two blocks west of the new Travis County Courthouse (1931) and only four blocks west of the state capitol and its associated office complex (See Map 1). Austin High and Pease Elementary School lay just a few blocks to the west. Tenants had easy access to busy Congress Avenue, with its many restaurants, hotels, retail stores, and personal services. In

short, the new apartment building was the perfect address for modern young urbanites in the Austin of the late 1930s.

Like much of the area in the vicinity of the state capitol and county courthouse, this former single-family neighborhood in the northwest quadrant of the original Austin townsite, was undergoing considerable change in the 1930s. As a result of these downtown redevelopment pressures, the area gradually changed from a single-family residential neighborhood to a mixed-use zone of offices and multi-family use starting in the 1930s and continuing in the post-World War II era. By 1939, when the Tucker Apartment House was built, some single-family houses could still be found in the neighborhood but many others had been demolished for new construction or cut-up for adaptive use. The apartment house was an example of the former; it replaced a small 1894 frame dwelling in lot 132 of the original townsite plat. Another small frame house lay behind the first and a small barn occupied the site, as well.

Tucker Apartment House Residents

As expected, the early residents of the Tucker Apartment House were largely downtown office workers, some in state or local government, and others in private business ventures. The first two tenants listed in the 1940 Austin city directory were Gaylor Doughty, a salesman, and his widowed mother Ollie in one unit, and Charles E. Mullen in another. By the following year, the apartments were fully occupied; the majority of renters were young single women in the workforce. Miss Mary E. Bost lived in one unit; Larue Martin, a secretary in the Office of the State Comptroller, occupied a second apartment; Jo Woods, a stenographer for the State Highway Department, lived in a third unit; and Charles Wendlandt, Jr. and his wife, Marjorie, resided the fourth one. Wendlandt was a real estate broker and developer employed in his family business, Carl Wendlandt and Sons Real Estate, Insurance, and Loans (Austin City Directory, 1940).

As World War II raged on in 1944 and 1945, the house remained a haven for young, single women who worked in government service occupations. Leland F. Everett and his wife, Estalyne, lived in apartment A, on the ground floor, while Frances E. Goff and her sister Frieda occupied apartment B. Frances was an auditor for the State Board of Control and Frieda was an office manager in the Secretary of State Board of Insurance Commissioners. Larue Martin still lived upstairs in apartment C and continued to work in the State Comptroller's office (Austin City Directory, 1944-1945).

Sophie Sidder Winfield

The reason is unknown, but toward the end of the war, the Tuckers sold their apartment house and it changed hands several times between 1944 and 1945 (Travis County Deed Record 755: 29). On December 29, 1945, just months after the end of World War II, Karl and Eula Ratliff sold the Tucker Apartment House to Sophie Sidder Winfield, a widow who had only recently moved to Austin from Cameron, Texas, after the death of her husband, Ben. Mrs. Winfield and her descendants, son, Samuel Winfield, and granddaughter, Elayne Lansford, have owned and maintained the property from 1945 to the present, more than 70 years.

Because of the family's long tenure with the building, it is appropriate to know something about their history. Sophie Sidder Winfield was born Shifri Sedaris, but her name was anglicized upon emigrating to America from Poland with her mother, Minnie (Masha), brothers Bennie and Sol, and sister, Esther, in 1910. Her father, Sam (Schmuel) Sidder (aka Cedar, Cider, Sider) had emigrated five years earlier. Sam was from Lazdai, a Russian town near the Polish border. Minnie was from Suvalki, a Polish town only six miles away from Lazdai. The couple settled in Suvalki where all of their children were born and raised and where Ben and Sophie received an

education; Sophie learned to speak Polish, Russian, Yiddish, and Hebrew, and she could both read and write. The family lived in a large house with their maternal grandmother and several other relatives. They were quite poor and Sam likely came to America in search of better opportunities for himself and his family (Lansford correspondence, June 29, 2016).

In 1905, Sam left his wife and children in Poland and immigrated to the United States, likely to secure work before sending for them. In 1910, Minnie and the children joined Sam in St. Louis, Missouri, where they lived in a community of Russian-speaking Russian immigrants. The 1910 census identified all members of family as Russian natives who spoke Yiddish as their primary language. Although a stonemason by trade, the census record listed Sam's occupation as a self-employed "house whitener." The record indicated that the Sidder children were not in school but they had just recently arrived in the country. It was a young family; Sam and Minnie were both thirty-nine, their oldest son, Bennie, was twelve, Sophie was eight, Sol was seven, and Esther was six years old in 1910 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1910).

Tragedy soon struck the family. Only three months after his family arrived, Sam fell from a roof and died. Relatives established the family in a tiny grocery but Masha suffered from high blood pressure and soon grew so ill that three of the children had to be sent to live with other family members. Esther, the baby, went to live with her mother's sister in Sheldon, Illinois, a village south of Chicago. Jacob and Anna Cohen discontinued the boys' educations and put them to work in their St. Louis hardware stores. A few years later, when World War I broke out, Ben went into the army. Little Sophie was left to look after mother and help run the store. When Sophie was only twelve, Masha died of an aneurism, and the girl joined her sister in Illinois. Shortly after her arrival, the aunt died, too, and the girls' cousins, Charles and Sadie Cassell, raised them until they graduated high school and left the house (Lansford correspondence, June 29, 2016).

By 1920, the Sidder children were scattered between Illinois and Texas. Ben, the oldest, was twenty-three, out of the service, and living with his employers, Sam H. and Gertrude Fane, in Fort Worth. The Fane's owned a fruit business where Ben worked as a clerk. Sol was still in St. Louis where he worked in an office as a stenographer. He later married and had a daughter, Francine. The girls were still living with their cousins in Illinois in 1920. Sophie spent a year at a business college and then helped her sister attend a four-year university. Esther eventually married a man named Bernstein and made her home in Chicago. Sophie went to stay with her uncle, Ed Weinstein, in Fort Worth. There she met Bennie Winfield (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1920; Lansford correspondence, June 29, 2016).

Though identified as Hungarian (from Austria-Hungary) in later U.S. census records, Ben was born in Mezalabritz, in Czech Bohemia, in 1891. He was part of a prosperous Jewish family who reportedly owned a local factory until the Russians came and burned their village to the ground. Forced to flee with only the clothes on their backs, the family suffered near-starvation. Ben later recalled to his children how he was forced to steal potatoes from farmers' fields to feed his brothers and sisters and how badly he felt doing so (Lansford correspondence, June 29, 2016).

In 1912, Ben emigrated from Europe to the United States (Bureau of the Census, 1920). The twenty-one year old may have come with his younger brother, Adolph, who also arrived in the U.S. that year. At first, Ben lived in Fort Worth, where he worked in the stockyards. In 1916, however, he relocated to the small central Texas town of Cameron, Milam County, where he lived with his cousin, Simon (Shamu) Kestenbaum – also identified as from Austria-Hungary by the census – his wife Sallie, and their daughter Flora. Ben's brother lived nearby (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1920; Lansford correspondence, June 29, 2016). Soon, the cousins joined together in several profitable business ventures from their home base in Cameron. By 1920, the three were partners in a wholesale

fruit business called the Cameron Fruit Company. Bennie traveled throughout Central Texas on behalf of the company and helped grow the business into one of the leading wholesale firms in the territory. In the 1930s, Bennie and Adolph established the Winfield Bros. Dry Goods Co., also in Cameron. Adolph's wife managed the store for the family (The Cameron Daily Herald, November 20, 1941: 1).

Bennie Winfield and Sophie Sidder met in Fort Worth, possibly through her brother, Ben, who lived in Fort Worth and also worked in the fruit business in the early 1920s. According to family lore, Bennie was very fair, with blonde hair and blue eyes, but he told Sophie, that he preferred brunettes. Since Sophie had black hair, she may have been flattered by the comment. At any rate, the couple married in 1926; Sophie was twenty-four and Ben was ten years her senior. They made their home in Cameron where they had two children, Myra and Sammie, who attended local schools. Sometime after they married, the couple acquired a "women's, children's, and infants' ready-to-wear" clothing store, in nearby Granger, a small town about 50 miles northeast of Austin ((*Austin American*, September 22, 1946: 28). The store would prove a valuable asset to Sophie in the future.

In the months and years preceding World War II, Sophie and Bennie became increasingly anxious about the plight of Jews in Europe. As war loomed closer, Sophie received a letter from her paternal uncle in Lazdai asking the Winfields to adopt their four children and bring them to safety in America. Bennie and Sophie readily agreed to the plan but their last letter was never answered. It had come too late to save the children and the family was lost to the Holocaust, a fact that weighed heavily on the Winfields (Lansford communication, 2016).

More heartache came to the Winfield family when Bennie died just before the United States entered World War II. Bennie Winfield was only 50 years old when he suffered two heart attacks and died in a Temple hospital on November 13, 1941. The news made the front page of the *The Cameron Daily Herald*, with a banner headline reading "Bennie Winfield Dies in Temple." The news of his death was shocking to his wife Sophie and indeed, the entire Cameron community where he had many friends and was considered one of the town's leading businessmen. Waco Rabbi Mocht, assisted by Rabbi Blumenthal, officiated at his memorial service, held in Cameron on November 20, 1941. Bennie Winfield was buried in the Jewish Cemetery in Waco (*The Cameron Daily Herald*, November 20, 1941: 1).

Sophie and her children remained in Cameron for several years after Bennie's death, but in 1944, the family moved to Austin so that Myra and Sam could attend the University of Texas. Still a young woman with college-aged children to support, Sophie followed the respectable widow's path of becoming a landlady. She took her share of Ben's business and invested it in Austin real estate, acquiring several rental properties to ensure adequate, reliable income into the future. She purchased a house at 1909 Rio Grande Street, where she and the children lived. Even there, she had income from an upstairs tenant and a garage apartment. She then bought an old Victorian house at 1607 West Avenue that had been broken up into dwelling units and a 10-unit apartment complex on Sabine Street (demolished) (Lansford correspondence, June 29, 2016). On December 29, 1945, she purchased the Tucker Apartment House and all of its contents, including appliances and furniture (Notarized deed amendment, January 5, 1946). Ultimately, Sophie sold the old Victorian house and the Sabine Apartments were demolished, but the family retained ownership of the Tucker Apartment House.

With a steady income from her rental properties, Sophie was able to support herself and give her children an education. Myra graduated from the University of Texas with a degree in Organic Chemistry. Sam finished only one semester before he was drafted. Although he never returned to school, Sam was bright and mechanically gifted. In the early 1950s, he and his Uncle Sol ran a business that installed coin-operated radios in hotels. When Sol passed away in 1953, Sam taught himself how to repair everything from gadgets and contraptions to cars and

televisions. In the early postwar TV and automobile culture, his found his skills to be in high demand though he rarely charged enough for them (Lansford correspondence, June 29, 2016).

Soon after purchasing the Tucker Apartment House, Sophie asked her brother, Sol, to live in one of the units and manage it, and her other properties, for her. He made her mortgage payments of $151.67 to the Amicable Life Insurance Company and kept a detailed payment log of the principal, interest, and taxes paid each month. He was in charge of maintenance on her various rentals, repairing whatever he could fix and hiring contractors to do the rest (Sophie Winfield papers, various dates).

Sol was also in charge of "advertising" for her properties. In the late 1940s or early 1950s, he penned a newspaper ad reading "If your friends, customers, or guests are looking for a nice furnished apartment, please direct them to us! One and Two Bedroom Furnished Apartments." Sophie and Sol rented furnished, one-bedroom apartments in their new 2108 Sabine Street complex for $75/month. It had the added benefit of a carport with a concrete floor and was promoted as "Ideal for Couples" and "For Gracious Living." An ad for the Tucker Apartment House let everyone know that it was "Ready to Move Into Today!!!" Sol went into considerable detail to promote the building's amenities. The notice advertised the units as large, modern furnished apartments with two bedrooms, each with two beds, hardwood floors, three cedar-lined closets, a tile kitchen drain, and a tile bath with tub and shower. Other amenities included a built-in ironing board, a large attic fan, large living and dining rooms. Couples with children were welcome and the price was just $90 per month. Finally, it was "Close to Everything!"

In 1960, Sophie deeded the apartment house and associated property to her son, Sam, for the sum of $10. In the deed, she stated that she had been holding the title in trust for him "according to the wishes of my deceased husband" and that this property constituted his share of his father's estate. She further stated that Sam would not be responsible for any lien or other payments on the property, indicating that she had paid off her mortgage but that he would have to pay the taxes on it (May 16, 1960). When Sam died, he left the building to his niece, Elayne Lansford, Myra's daughter.

Sophie Winfield's Life of Service

When Mrs. Winfield moved to Austin, her children were nearly grown and in college, allowing her more time to follow other pursuits. While she joined several social organizations, including the University of Texas Dames, Sophie's life remained centered on her family and her Jewish faith. She had an opportunity to serve both after the war, when she and her brother-in-law learned that one of Ben and Adolph's half-brothers, Ladislo, had survived the concentration camps. Sophie and Adolph sent endless care packages to Ladislo and his family through the Red Cross and then sponsored their emigration to America. After their arrival, Sophie assisted in caring for the family's young daughter Agnes while her parents were hospitalized for tuberculosis, contracted while in the camps (Lansford correspondence, June 29, 2016).

Sophie Winfield continued to serve the Jewish community throughout her life. She was an active member of her synagogue, Temple Beth Israel, and served in its women's auxiliary, the Temple Sisterhood. During the 1940s and 1950s, in particular, she spent countless hours on behalf of B'nai B'rith and Hadassah, serving on various committees and volunteering for community outreach programs. On one occasion, she co-hosted a major USO event at Fort Hood in Killeen (*Austin American Statesman*, July 4, 1954: n.p.). One year, she volunteered with the B'nai B'rith to entertain more than 500 patients at the Austin State Hospital on Christmas day. The group substituted for the hospital's Christian staff so that they could celebrate the holiday with their own families (*Austin American Statesman*, Dec. 28, 1954: 6)

When Sophie Winfield passed away at the age of eighty-nine, in 1990, she was remembered by her family, friends, and rabbi for her great generosity and compassion for those in need. In a tribute, Rabbi Louis Firestein recalled her granddaughter's reflection that Sophie Winfield's life was one of spiritual dignity, service, and unconditional love (Rabbi Louis Firestein typescript, August 14, 1990).

Blend of Period Revival Styles

Most Austin apartment houses and duplexes in the 1920s and 1930s adopted the fashionable architectural styles of their time, with the various Period Revivals among the most popular. Newspaper ads and articles touted their European or Early American lineage with detailed descriptions of their historic or romantic attributes. Some of the earliest post-World War I apartment houses built in downtown Austin displayed Mission Revival style elements such as stucco cladding, shaped or crenelated parapets, arcades, and clay tile roofs or accents. The style was short-lived, however, and no surviving examples remain in Austin.

Other Period Revivals such as the Tudor Revival, American Colonial Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival (Spanish Eclectic), and Italian Renaissance styles, enjoyed greater popularity over a longer period of time and many local high-end single-family homes were designed in those fashions during the 1920s and 1930s. Their appeal carried over to apartment house and duplex design, and scores of Period Revival style multi-family dwellings, from duplexes to 6-unit apartment houses, appeared throughout the city. While most in downtown were demolished, good examples of Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, Spanish Eclectic and Italian Renaissance duplexes, and the occasional apartment house, still exist in university area neighborhoods including Hyde Park, Aldridge Place, Grooms Addition, and Hancock, and in parts of West Austin (See Figures 14 & 15).

The Tucker Apartment House does not represent a single definitive style but rather, incorporates design elements of several different Period Revivals to create a unique, eclectic effect. Like many Colonial Revival houses of the 1930s, the two-story brick veneer building features an accentuated center front door with flanking sidelights, roof overhangs, and symmetrically balanced pairs of double-hung sash windows. Within its prominent arched surround and gabled frame, the multi-pane entry door is the focal point of the building's primary façade. More specifically, the building resembles the Centered Gable subtype of the Colonial Revival style (centered front gable attached to hipped or side-gabled roof) with its full height, slightly projecting front-gabled entry bay and symmetrical composition (McAlester, 2000: 320-325; 334).

Italian Renaissance influences are also evident in the building's prominent use of the round-arch in its entry portal and upper story multi-light casement window and fanlight arrangement. The Italian Renaissance style was a locally popular design for single-family houses and duplexes in upscale neighborhoods like Aldridge Place and Enfield during the 1920s and 1930s (See Figure 15). Typically, these houses were of masonry construction and defined largely by their deep, bracketed roof overhangs and use of round-arch in front façade arcades and porticos. Though the Tucker Apartment House has virtually no overhang, its pronounced use of the round arch motif reflects the style's influence during this period.

Small-scale elements common to Period Revivals built in Austin during the 1930s are also found in the wrought handrails, exterior light fixtures, brick sills and lintels, and concrete steps and porch floors of the Tucker Apartment House.

Conclusion

Today, the Tucker Apartment House stands as an excellent, exceptionally intact, example of the early 20th century four-unit "apartment house" model for multi-family living in Austin's central business district. Though most of its contemporaries in and around the present state capital complex have been replaced by multi-story government office buildings, parking garages, and luxury hotels catering to politicians, University of Texas alumni, and visiting dignitaries, the Tucker Apartment House is representative of the once common multi-family housing type. Since it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a significant Austin property type and Period Revival design elements, it is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, at the local level of significance. Furthermore, the Tucker Apartment House is a testament to Austin's continued growth and prosperity during the Great Depression, when new construction slowed in cities across the country. It reflects the city's urban growth and transformation from a sleepy Southern capital into a modern metropolitan hub as a result of ambitious expansion programs undertaken by the University of Texas and all levels of government. For this reason, the Tucker Apartment House is also eligible under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development at the local level of significance. The period of significance spans between 1939 and 1967.

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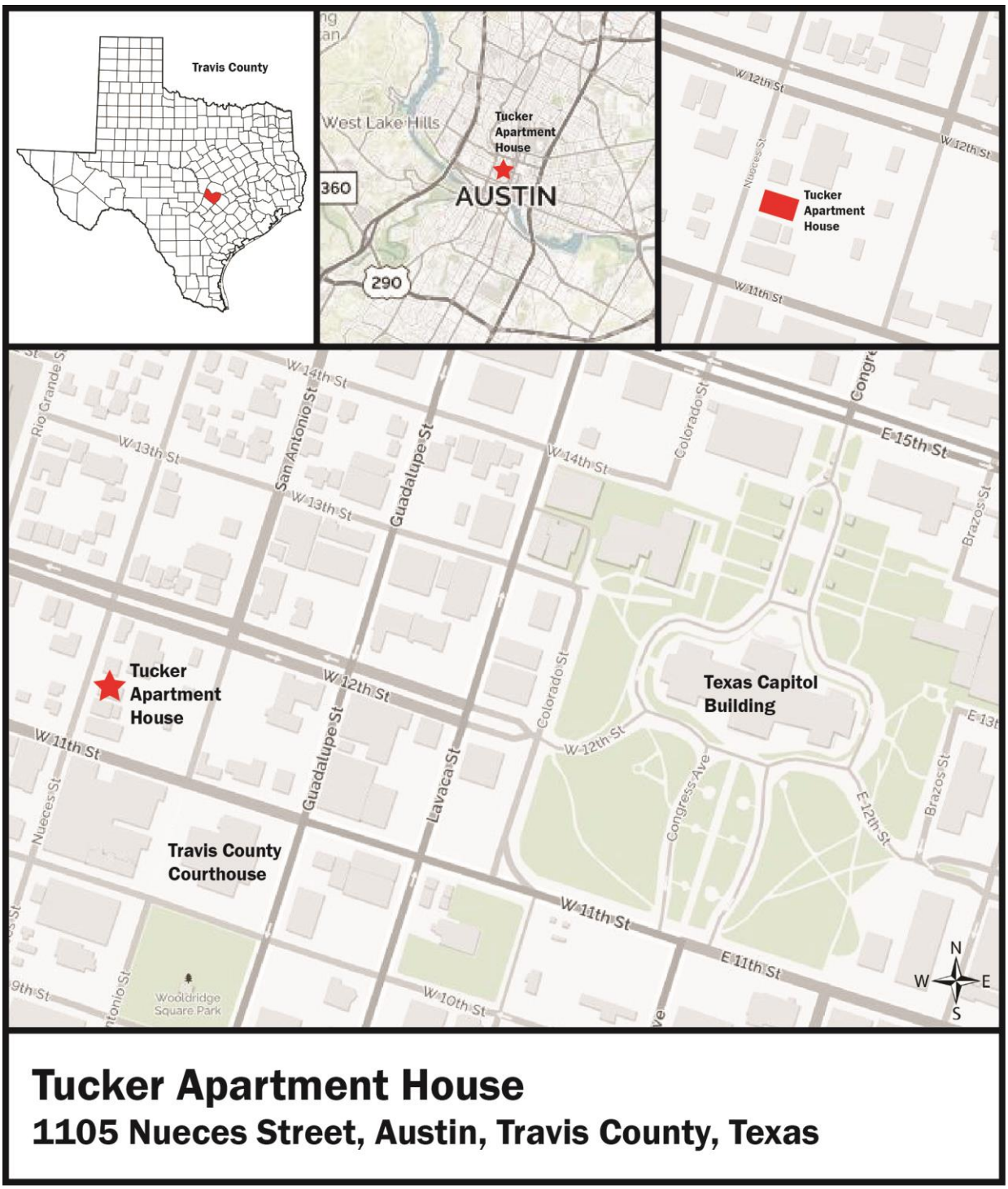
MAP 1: Location of the Tucker Apartment House *(map imagery from Mapquest.com)*



MAP 2: Google Earth Map
Accessed January 24, 2017

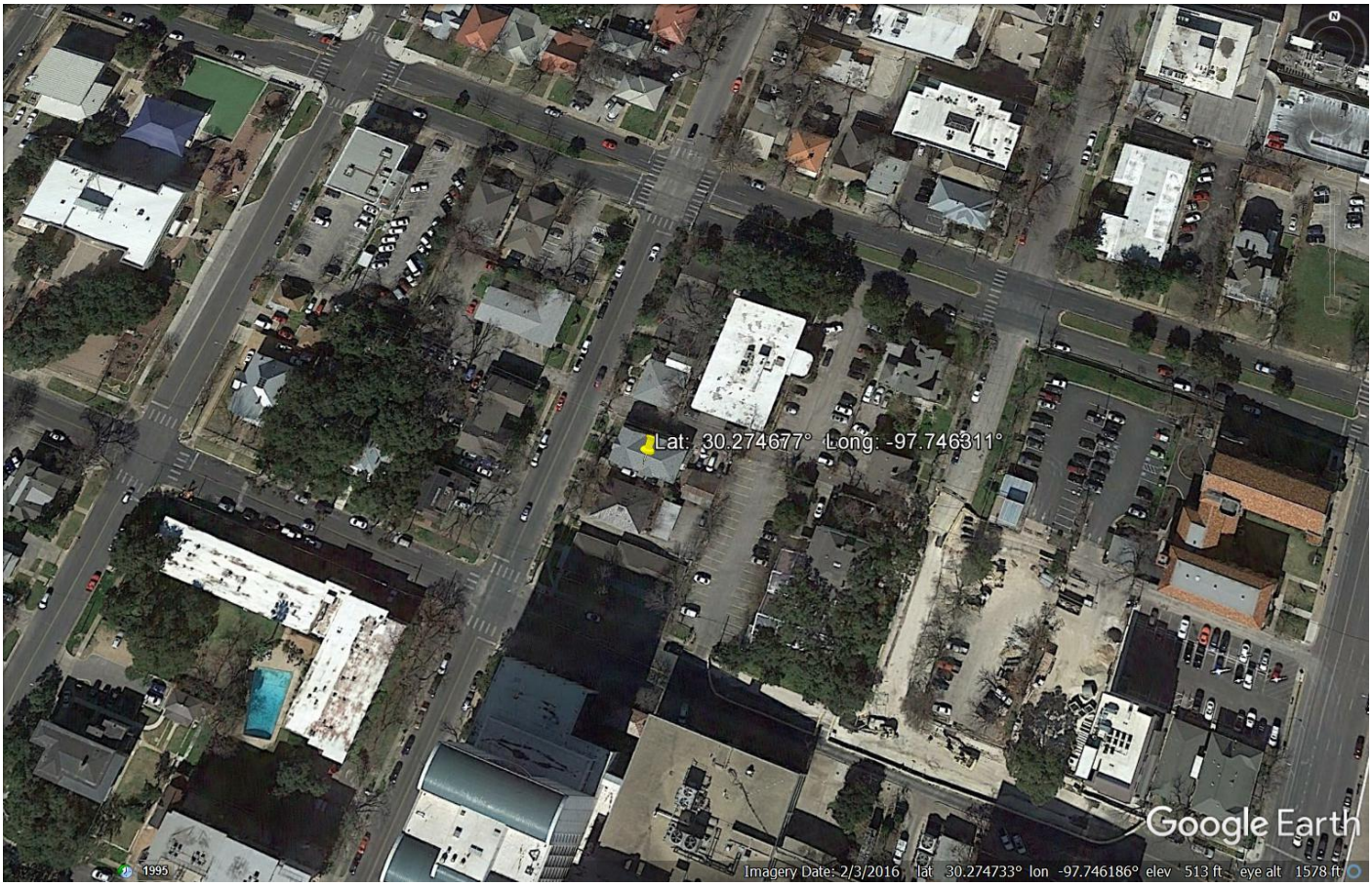


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FIGURE 1: Site Plan: Tucker Apartment House

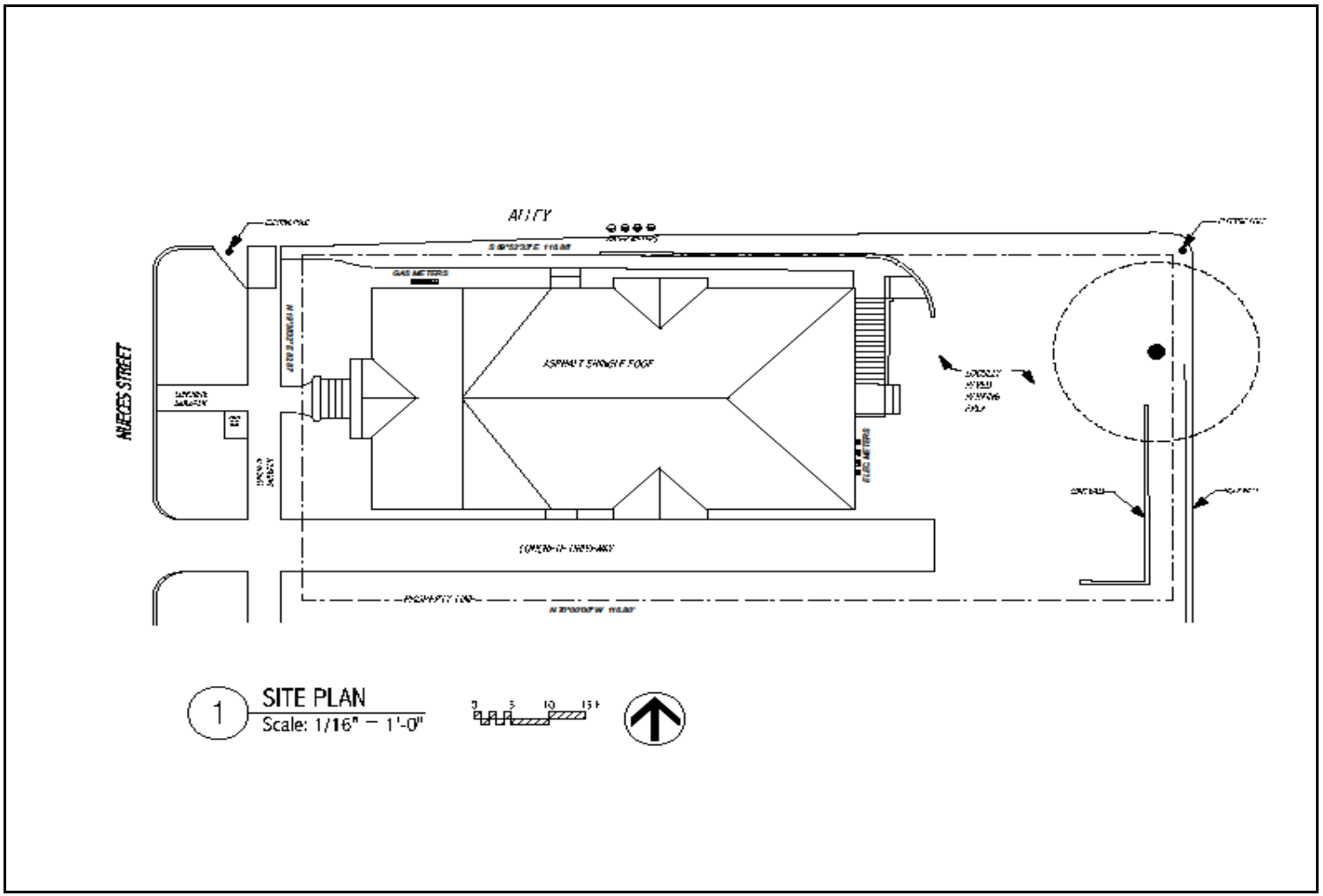


FIGURE 2: Floor Plans: First Floor, Tucker Apartment House

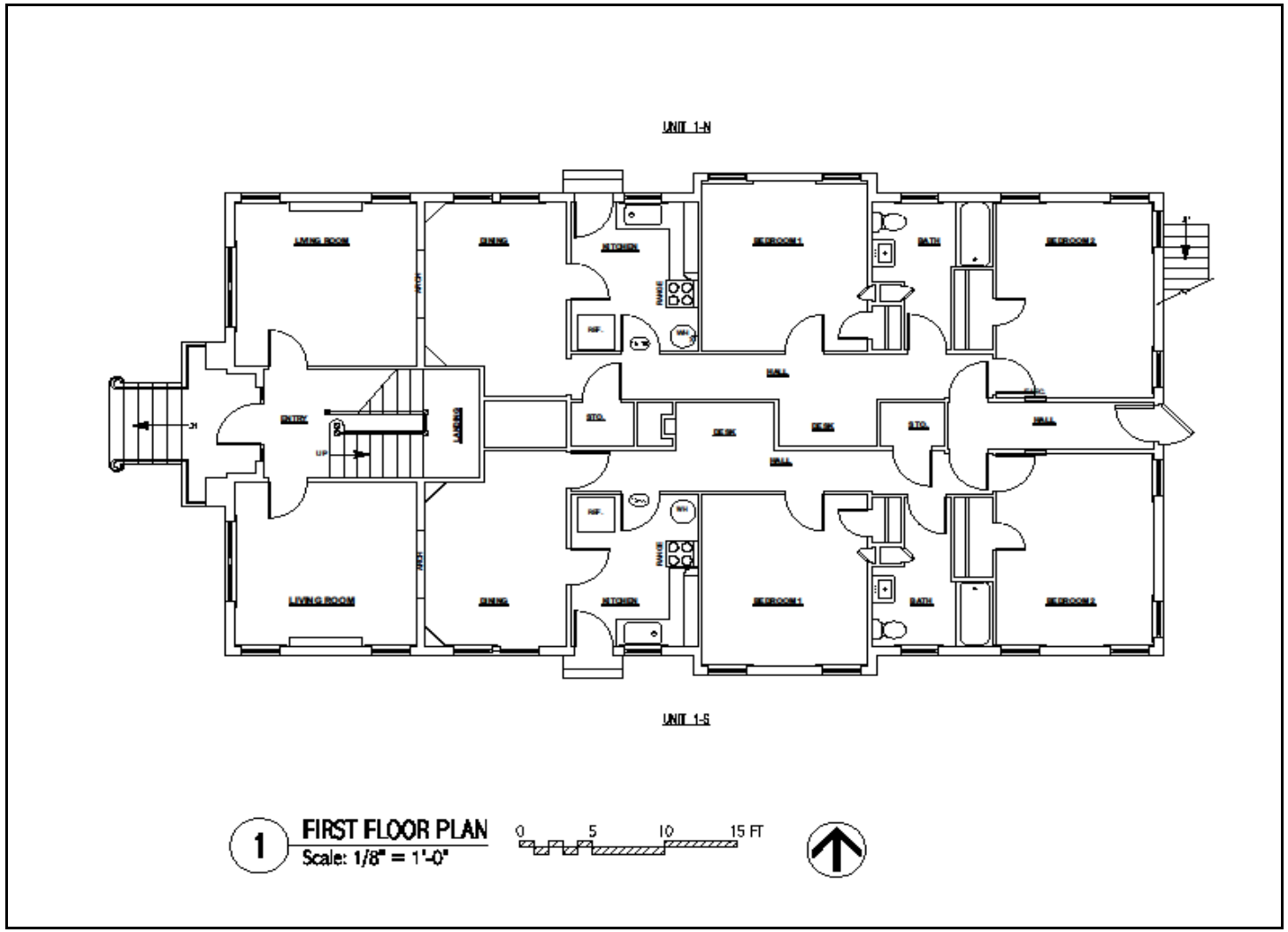


FIGURE 3: Floor Plans: Second Floor, Tucker Apartment House

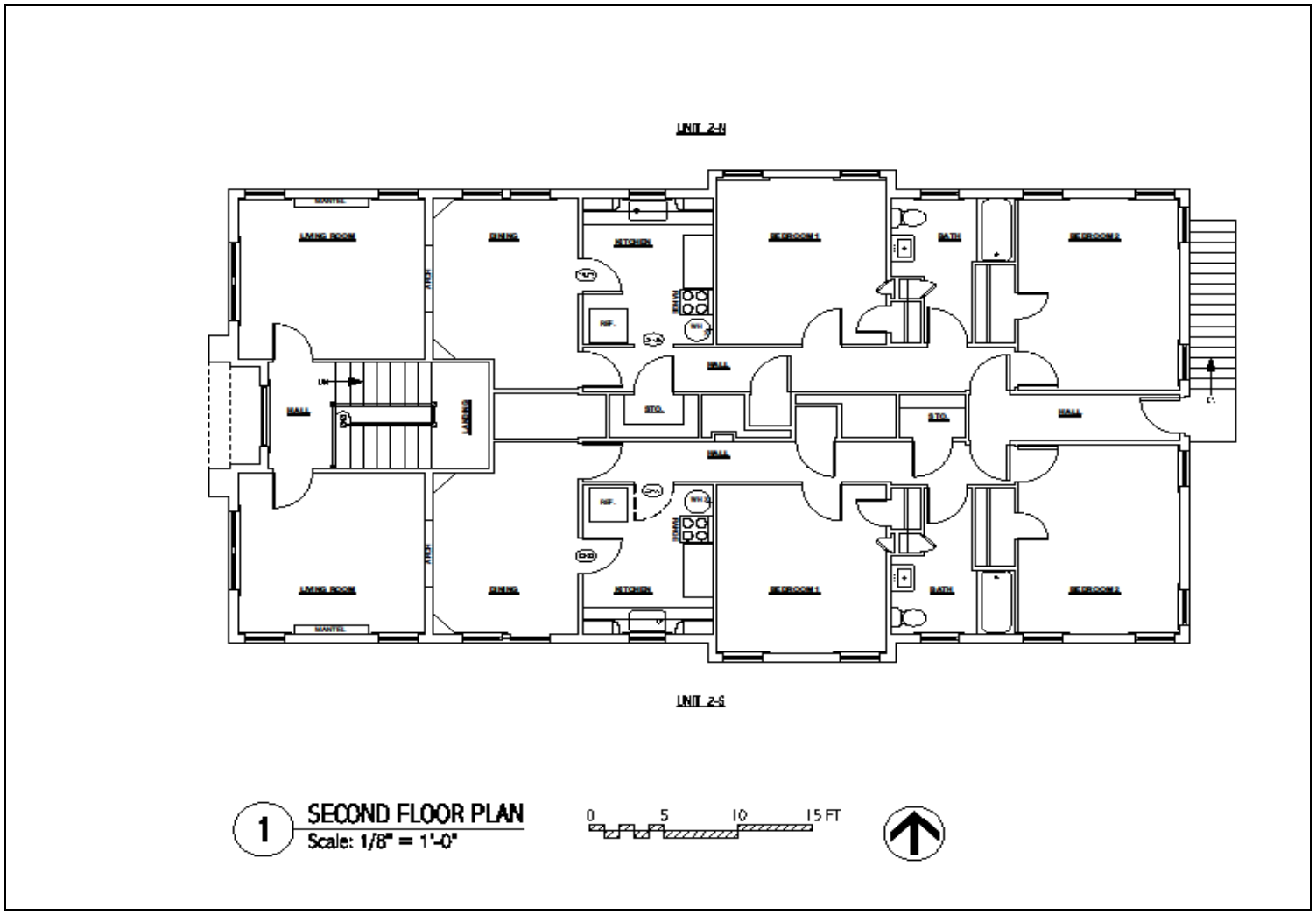


FIGURE 4: West (Primary) Elevation, Tucker Apartment House

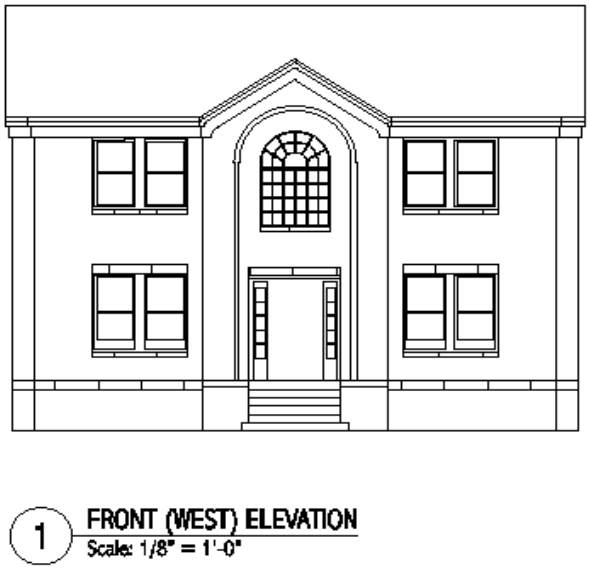


FIGURE 5: East (Rear) Elevation, Tucker Apartment House

1 REAR (EAST) ELEVATION
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

FIGURE 6: North Elevation, Tucker Apartment House

FIGURE 7: South Elevation, Tucker Apartment House

FIGURE 8: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Austin, Texas 1961: Tucker Apartment House

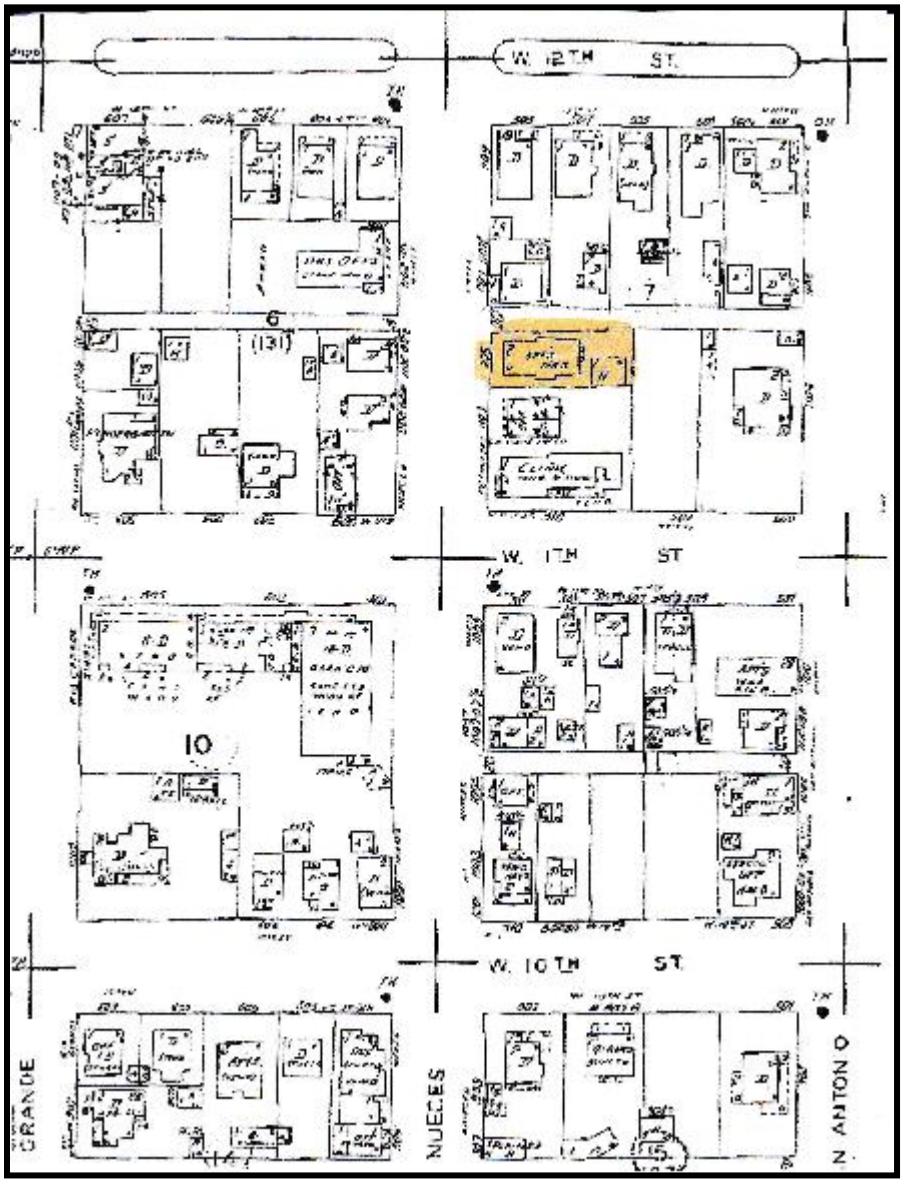


FIGURE 9: Jim Tucker "The Insurance Man" newspaper advertisement (*Austin Statesman*, September 5, 1937: 3). Tucker hired contractor Harry Hargrave to build the Tucker Apartment House in 1939.

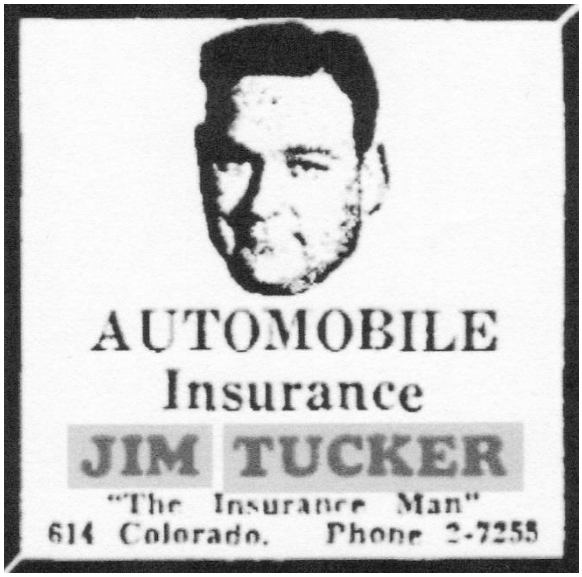
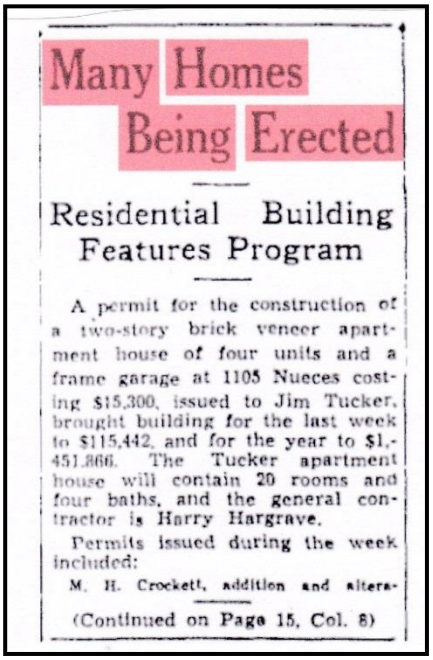


FIGURE 10: Newspaper article announcing construction of the Tucker Apartment House (*Austin Statesman*, March 5, 1939: 14).



Many Homes Being Erected

Residential Building Features Program

A permit for the construction of a two-story brick veneer apartment house of four units and a frame garage at 1105 Nueces costing $15,300, issued to Jim Tucker, brought building for the last week to $115,442, and for the year to $1,451,866. The Tucker apartment house will contain 20 rooms and four baths, and the general contractor is Harry Hargrave.

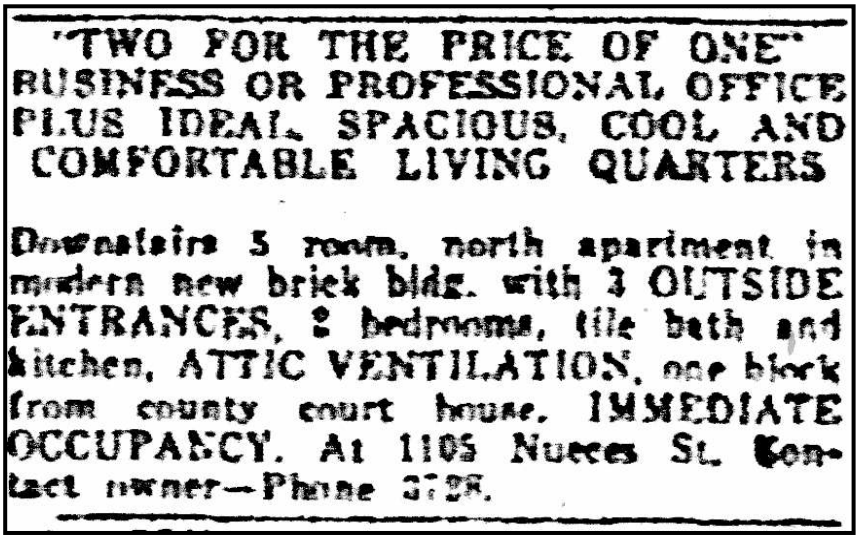
Permits issued during the week included:

M. H. Crockett, addition and altera-

(Continued on Page 15, Col. 8)

FIGURE 11: Sophie Sidder Winfield as a young woman in Texas, c. 1930.

FIGURE 12: "Two for the Price of One" – Newspaper ad for home and office space in the Tucker Apartment House (*Austin Statesman*, July 3, 1948: 8).



"TWO FOR THE PRICE OF ONE"
BUSINESS OR PROFESSIONAL OFFICE
PLUS IDEAL SPACIOUS, COOL AND
COMFORTABLE LIVING QUARTERS

Downstairs 5 room, north apartment in modern new brick bldg. with 3 OUTSIDE ENTRANCES, 2 bedrooms, tile bath and kitchen, ATTIC VENTILATION, one block from county court house. IMMEDIATE OCCUPANCY. At 1105 Nueces St. Contact owner—Phone 3728.

FIGURE 13: "For Rent" – Sign advertised vacancies in the Tucker Apartment House in the 1950s.

FIGURE 14: Colonial Revival Duplex, built 1935
3210 Hemphill Park Drive (Aldridge Place neighborhood)
Camera facing NW

FIGURE 15: Italian Renaissance Tri-plex, built 1938
3306 Harris Park Avenue (Hancock Neighborhood)
Camera facing S/SW

PHOTO 1
View of West (primary) Elevation
Camera facing East

PHOTO 2
Detail of Entry Bay (West Elevation)
Camera facing East

PHOTO 3
View of West and South Elevation
Camera facing NE

PHOTO 4
View of North Elevation
Camera facing SW

PHOTO 5
View of East (rear) and North Elevations
Camera facing SW

PHOTO 6
Streetscape – East side of 1100 Block of Nueces St.
Camera facing NE

PHOTO 7
View of Interior Hall and Door
From staircase looking down

PHOTO 8
Interior staircase to second floor

PHOTO 9
Arched multi-light casement windows
From stairwell facing second floor landing

PHOTO 10
Apartment B – View from Dining Room to Living Room through Archway
Camera facing NW

PHOTO 11
Apartment B – Fireplace Mantel, Tiles, and Gas Heater
Camera facing North

PHOTO 12
Apartment B – Kitchen
Camera facing NE

PHOTO 13
Apartment C -- Bathroom with original built-in laundry cabinet and swivel mirror

PHOTO 14
Original Mailboxes – Exterior Entry Wall