

City of Austin - Historic Preservation Office
Historic Zoning Application Packet

A. APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC ZONING

PROJECT INFORMATION:

DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY	
APPLICATION DATE: _____	FILE NUMBER(S) _____
TENTATIVE HLC DATE: _____	
TENTATIVE PC or ZAP DATE: _____	
TENTATIVE CC DATE: _____	CITY INITIATED: YES / NO
CASE MANAGER _____	ROLLBACK: YES/NO
APPLICATION ACCEPTED BY: _____	

BASIC PROJECT DATA:

1. **OWNER'S NAME:** City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department

2. **PROJECT NAME:** Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo

3. **PROJECT STREET ADDRESS (or Range):** 9307 Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail
 ZIP 78704 COUNTY: Travis

IF PROJECT ADDRESS CANNOT BE DEFINED ABOVE:
 LOCATED _____ FRONTAGE FEET ALONG THE N. S. E. W. (CIRCLE ONE) SIDE OF
 _____ (ROAD NAME PROPERTY FRONTS ONTO), WHICH IS
 APPROXIMATELY _____ DISTANCE FROM ITS
 INTERSECTION WITH _____ CROSS STREET.

AREA TO BE REZONED:

4. **ACRES** 13.46 (OR) **SQ.FT.** _____

5. **ZONING AND LAND USE INFORMATION:**

EXISTING ZONING	EXISTING USE	TRACT# (IF MORE THAN 1)	ACRES / SQ. FT.	PROPOSED USE	PROPOSED ZONING
<u>P-NP</u>	<u>Recreational</u>	_____	<u>13.46/586,318</u>	<u>Recreational</u>	<u>P-H-NP</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

RELATED CURRENT CASES:

6. ACTIVE ZONING CASE? (YES / <input checked="" type="radio"/> NO)	FILE NUMBER: _____
7. RESTRICTIVE COVENANT? (YES / <input checked="" type="radio"/> NO)	FILE NUMBER: _____
8. SUBDIVISION? (YES / <input checked="" type="radio"/> NO)	FILE NUMBER: _____
9. SITE PLAN? (YES / <input checked="" type="radio"/> NO)	FILE NUMBER: _____

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PROPERTY DESCRIPTION (SUBDIVISION REFERENCE OR METES AND BOUNDS):

10a. SUBDIVISION REFERENCE: Name: James E Bouldin Estate
 Block(s) A Lot(s) _____ Outlot(s) _____
 Plat Book: _____ Page _____
 Number: _____

10b. METES AND BOUNDS (Attach two copies of certified field notes if subdivision reference is not available or zoning includes partial lots)

DEED REFERENCE CONVEYING PROPERTY TO PRESENT OWNER AND TAX PARCEL I.D.:

11. VOLUME: _____ **PAGE:** _____ **TAX PARCEL I.D. NO.** 0203000103

OTHER PROVISIONS:

12. IS PROPERTY IN A ZONING COMBINING DISTRICT / OVERLAY ZONE? YES / NO
 TYPE OF COMBINING DIST/OVERLAY ZONE (NCCD, NP, etc) _____ NP - Bouldin Creek

13. LOCATED IN A LOCAL OR NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES NO

14. IS A TIA REQUIRED? YES NO (NOT REQUIRED IF BASE ZONING IS NOT CHANGING)
 TRIPS PER DAY: _____
 TRAFFIC SERIAL ZONE(S): _____

OWNERSHIP TYPE: Property is owned by the City of Austin

15. SOLE COMMUNITY PROPERTY PARTNERSHIP CORPORATION TRUST Property is owned by the City of Austin

If ownership is other than sole or community property, list individuals/partners/principals below or attach separate sheet.

OWNER INFORMATION:

16. OWNER CONTACT INFORMATION
 SIGNATURE: _____ NAME: Kim McKnight, MSHP, AICP
 FIRM NAME: City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department TELEPHONE NUMBER: 512.974.9478
 STREET ADDRESS: 200 S. Lamar Blvd.
 CITY: Austin STATE: TX ZIP CODE: 78704
 EMAIL ADDRESS: kim.mcknight@austintexas.gov

AGENT INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE):

17. AGENT CONTACT INFORMATION
 SIGNATURE: Lori Martin NAME: Lori Martin, MSHP
 FIRM NAME: O'Connell Architecture TELEPHONE NUMBER: 512.423.6841
 STREET ADDRESS: 3908 Avenue B, Room 309
 CITY: Austin STATE: TX ZIP CODE: 78751
 CONTACT PERSON: Lori Martin, Architectural Historian TELEPHONE NUMBER: 512.423.6841

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**D. SUBMITTAL VERIFICATION
AND INSPECTION AUTHORIZATION**

SUBMITTAL VERIFICATION

My signature attests to the fact that the attached application package is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that proper City staff review of this application is dependent upon the accuracy of the information provided and that any inaccurate or inadequate information provided by me/my firm/etc., may delay the proper review of this application.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT NAME BELOW SIGNATURE AND INDICATE FIRM REPRESENTED, IF APPLICABLE.

Lori Martin

09/24/2024

Signature

Date

Lori Martin, MSHP

Name (Typed or Printed)

O'Connell Architecture

Firm (If applicable)

INSPECTION AUTHORIZATION

As owner or authorized agent, my signature authorizes staff to visit and inspect the property for which this application is being submitted.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT NAME BELOW SIGNATURE AND INDICATE FIRM REPRESENTED, IF APPLICABLE.

Signature

Date

Kim McKnight, MSHP, AICP

Name (Typed or Printed)

City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department

Firm (If applicable)

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E. ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

concerning
Subdivision Plat Notes, Deed Restrictions,
Restrictive Covenants
and / or
Zoning Conditional Overlays

I, Lori Martin have checked for subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions,
(Print name of applicant)

restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlays prohibiting certain uses and/or requiring certain development restrictions i.e. height, access, screening etc. on this property, located at

Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo, 9307 Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail, Austin, TX 78704
(Address or Legal Description)

If a conflict should result with the request I am submitting to the City of Austin due to subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions, restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlays it will be my responsibility to resolve it. I also acknowledge that I understand the implications of use and/or development restrictions that are a result of a subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions, restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlays.

I understand that if requested, I must provide copies of any and all subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions, restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlay information which may apply to this property.

Lori Martin

(Applicant's signature)

09/24/2024

(Date)

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F. 1: Historical Documentation - Deed Chronology

Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo
9307 Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail

Deed Research for (fill in address) Austin, TX 78704

List Deeds chronologically, beginning with earliest transaction first and proceeding through present ownership. The first transaction listed should date at least back to when the original builder of any historic structures on the site first acquired the property (i.e., should pre-date the construction of any buildings/structures on the site). Please use the format delineated below.

For each transaction please include: name of Grantor/Grantee, date of transaction, legal description involved, price, and volume/page number of deed records. If there is a mechanic's lien please copy the entire document.

In 1961, at the behest of the Austin Chamber of Commerce, the City Council formed the Town Lake Study Committee, charged with overseeing and guiding development on the city's public lands.

On November 9, 1965, the Austin City Council unanimously voted to approve plans presented by the Austin chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) to undertake a gazebo project on the shores of Town Lake.

In 1966, the Austin chapter of the NAWIC started raising money and support to build the gazebo as part of the beautification of Town Lake.

The Austin chapter of the NAWIC broke ground in 1969 and the dedication ceremony took place on June 8, 1970.

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F. 2: Historical Documentation - Occupancy History

Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo
9307 Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail
Austin, TX 78704

Occupancy Research for (fill in address) _____

Using City Directories available at the Austin History Center or other information available, please provide a chronology of all occupants of the property from its construction to the present. For commercial property, please provide residential information on business owner as well.

This structure is an open-air gazebo used for recreational purposes and has no occupancy history.

**Historic Landmark Designation
Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo
9307 Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail**

Summary

The Town Lake Gazebo is an octagonal, open air, modern structure with a funnel-shaped hyperbolic paraboloid roof. The gazebo sits on the south bank of Lady Bird Lake directly west of the South First Street Bridge, adjacent to a small pond to the south and was a gift to the City of Austin from the Austin Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction. The project brought together public and private interests who volunteered their time, expertise and civic pride to beautify Town Lake. Completed in 1970, the gazebo retains a high degree of integrity and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2019.

Statement of Significance

The 1969 Town Lake Gazebo in central Austin, Texas, was the first public structure built in the effort to beautify the south shore of Town Lake (now Lady Bird Lake), which was created after the construction of Longhorn Dam on the Colorado River in 1960. The Austin Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), established in the 1950s for women working in the construction industry, spearheaded and raised funds for the project. Inspired by Lady Bird Johnson, a national leader in environmental beautification and later the honorary co-chair of the Town Lake Beautification Committee, the Austin Chapter began planning and raising money for the structure in 1965. Over a dozen construction firms enthusiastically supported the gazebo project with donations of materials and labor. Construction commenced in 1969, and the gazebo was dedicated in June 1970. Project architect J. Sterry Nill (and husband of NAWIC Austin Chapter president Lori Nill) designed the gazebo in keeping with the Town Lake master plan and described it as a “structure with a view.” The gazebo features a striking hyperbolic paraboloid roof with folded plate ridges and valleys. The design reflects diverse architectural trends of the 1960s, and playfully references Frank Lloyd Wright’s geometric experimentation and combination of organic materials with modern forms, the thinshell innovations of Felix Candela, and the rustic park architecture found in central Texas. The gazebo’s Mid-Century Modern design and contributions to the beautification of Town Lake meet the City’s Architecture and Community Value criteria for local landmark designation. It is also eligible for its Historical Associations with the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), architect J. Sterry Nill and Lady Bird Johnson and her national beautification program. The period of significance is 1969-1970, the years during which the gazebo was built and dedicated.

Architectural Description

The Town Lake Gazebo in central Austin, Texas is an octagonal, open air, modern structure with a funnel-shaped hyperbolic paraboloid roof that resembles an inverted morning glory flower. The gazebo sits on the south bank of Lady Bird Lake directly west of the South First Street Bridge, adjacent to a small pond to the south. Stylistically eclectic, complex in its angularity, and finished in concrete, rough-hewn limestone, and painted wood, the gazebo defies simple categorization. It features an octagonal footprint, and is slightly elevated, with steps on the east and west sides. Tapered concrete piers finished with stone angle inward, supporting laminated wood roof joists that curve upward, covered by a folded plate plywood roof with a central tower that tapers into an octagonal oculus. The gazebo retains a high degree of integrity.

The Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo (originally “Town Lake Gazebo”) was the first structure built on the south shore of Lady Bird Lake and stands in its original location. The piers extending from the pebble-finish, reinforced concrete foundation to the laminated wood roof beams have a stone veneer. The beams are attached to a steel compression ring at the top and eight aluminum bars connect the ring to the exterior of the roof. The gazebo’s foundation is exposed reinforced concrete with a pebble finish. Piers extend from the foundation and are covered with a stone veneer. The 900-square foot floor is constructed of pebble-finish concrete. Four steps of the same material lead up to the west and east entrances of the gazebo. An accessibility ramp, a later addition, extends from the east side of the gazebo. A posterity box, or time capsule, is on the inside of the north support column and contains a Barbie doll, a Kennedy half-dollar, and a list of all contributors and members of the Austin chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), among other items. The interior houses precast concrete benches on the periphery. The interior of the roof is painted light blue. The gazebo is located on the south shore of Lady Bird Lake (formerly known as Town Lake), on the edge of the Auditorium Shores section of a public park, just west of the South First Street Bridge. The gazebo is surrounded by the lake water on the north and a reflection pool on the south. Gravel foot paths encircle the gazebo and connect it to the hike and bike trail and extend around the reflecting pool and the east and west sides. The gazebo is surrounded by native plants and large trees in a park setting next to Lady Bird Lake.

The “inverted funnel” roof of the structure rests on the piers and then extends upward to form a tower with an open octagonal oculus. The curved, glue-laminated beams that give the gazebo its characteristic form were shipped from the manufacturer, pre-shaped and ready to install. The benches that surround the interior octagonal outline of the gazebo are precast concrete, face inward and seat approximately 30 people. The original design included a center fountain of cascading waters but was removed in subsequent renovations.

Over time, plant maturity and improvements to area foot paths have served to enhance the overall setting. Reminiscent of Southern California’s Googie-style architecture, with its wave shapes, the dome outline was designed to complement nearby Municipal Auditorium (demolished 2002) and invokes a time of change in architectural styles and preferences as well as Austin’s growth and awakening to civic pride and community involvement. The gazebo is in good condition and includes moderate alterations since its construction in 1969 and dedication in 1970.

Architectural Significance

The Town Lake Gazebo stands as one of the most prominent examples of 1960s exuberant modernism in Austin, featuring a striking hyperbolic paraboloid roof with folded plate ridges and valleys, and a central spire. Architect J. Sterry Nill referred to his final design for the gazebo as an “inverted morning glory.”¹ Stylistically, the gazebo is difficult to categorize, but it reflects diverse architectural trends and influences, playfully referencing Frank Lloyd Wright’s geometric experimentation and combination of organic materials with modern forms, the aesthetics of Felix Candela’s thin-shell concrete roofs, and even the rustic park architecture found in central Texas. Many of these characteristics can also be found in mid-century commercial buildings, where eye-catching expressions of modern design were employed to bring attention to places of business through the use of bright colors, dramatic forms, and contrasting materials. This national phenomenon (sometimes categorized as “Gooogie” or “Populuxe” architecture) also took root in

¹ Author’s interview with Lori Nill, 2016.

Texas and was at its peak in 1965 when NAWIC introduced its concept of a gazebo to the City of Austin.² Architect J. Sterry Nill was a modernist, but no other work attributed to him is as expressive and whimsical as the Town Lake Gazebo, perhaps due the Austin Chapter of NAWIC's desire to construct a memorable landmark and set a standard for future lakeside improvements. Nill did not attribute the inspiration of his design to any particular buildings, but well-known examples of postwar architecture help illustrate the eclectic nature of design during the period in which he worked. The gazebo's striking angular plan and dramatic profile are tempered by the application of rough-cut native limestone in irregular courses on the piers that support the roof. Similar juxtapositions are seen in Frank Lloyd Wright's First Unitarian Society Meeting House in Madison (1951), the Neil House in Minneapolis (1950), and Taliesin West (1937-59). The gazebo's juxtaposition of an exotic roof structure with natural stone may be a tempered version of Bruce Goff's flamboyant aesthetic, as expressed in the Bavinger House in Bartlesville, Oklahoma (1950). The gazebo's octagonal roof set on stone piers carries on the tradition of exotic park structure design seen in the Japanese Sunken Garden (1917) in San Antonio's Breckenridge Park. The gazebo's plywood folded plate roof, supported by laminated wood (glulam) beams, is an angular variation of a true hyperbolic paraboloid form, reminiscent of the complex concrete shell undulating roof of Felix Candela's Los Manantiales restaurant (1958) in the Xochimilco borough of Mexico City.³ While Candela pioneered the design of increasingly complex forms in thin shell concrete, the Douglas Fir Plywood Association promoted the use of plywood in hyperbolic parabolic forms, and in 1956 began a cooperative research project with Department of Architecture and Architectural Engineering at the University of Kansas to test the practicality of such designs. This team built and tested the first hyperbolic parabolic roof constructed with a lattice of twisted plywood strips, demonstrating that such a roof could be built with simple materials without the need for heavy equipment. Prominent examples of plywood roofs of this type, such as the Pier 99 Totem Pole Marina Building near Portland, Oregon (1960) inspired other architects and engineers to apply the process to their own designs, achieving the look of thin shell concrete at a lower cost. Architects and engineers also employed repeating patterns of premade concrete formwork to achieve the modern look of thinshell design at a lower cost than large span roofs. In 1962, Candela presented the keynote address to the "World Conference on Shell Structures" in San Francisco, the proceedings of which were published by the National Academy of Science and National Research Council in 1964.⁴ The hyperbolic parabolic form – whether built of concrete or wood – appealed to a public desiring space-age forms. Following the example of Los Manantiales, Los Angeles architect Paul Williams designed a smaller yet equally expressive thin-shell concrete building for La Concha Motel (1961) on the Las Vegas Strip, which likely served as the model for Austin's Cross Country Inn motel (now Los Jaliscienses Restaurant), built in 1963 on East Highway 290. Texas experienced a small movement in vaulted roof structures in the early 1960s, particularly emanating from Corpus Christi and along the coastal bend. *Texas Architect* devoted much of its September 1963 issue to the movement, illustrated with photos of twenty-five recent projects. Two of the featured projects by

² The term "Googie" is derived from the name of a John Lautner-designed 1949 coffee shop on the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles. Lautner, who had apprenticed with Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin, often employed dramatically distinctive roof lines, integrated sign pylons, little distinction between indoors and out, and contrasting modern materials. Architecture critic Douglas Haskell first used the term "Googie" to describe an architectural style (somewhat pejoratively) in the February 1952 issue of *House & Home*.

³ The building was referred to locally as "La Flor." "Recent work of Mexico's Felix Candela." *Progressive Architecture* 40 (1959), 132-141. In 1954 Candela delivered papers about his application of thin shell technology to American Concrete Institute conference in Denver, and at the Thin Shell Conference at MIT. Tyler S. Sprague. "Beauty, Versatility, Practicality": the Rise of Hyperbolic Paraboloids in Post-war America (1950-1962)." *Construction History*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2013), 182. O'Neil Ford and Arch Swank collaborated with Candela in the design and construction of the Great Southwest Corporation industrial park in Arlington, Texas (1958).

⁴ Sprague, 179.

the firm Tanaguchi and Croft of Harlingen, Texas, were round: the Flato Pavilion in Kingsville, and the Casa de Sol tourist center in Harlingen.⁵

Historical Associations

Origins of the Town Lake Gazebo Project

The city of Austin is downstream from the Texas Highland Lakes, a chain of six freshwater reservoirs formed by dams on the lower Colorado River. The dams were built to control flooding, provide a stable supply of water, and generate hydroelectric power. Heading downstream, the last of these dams is the 1940 Tom Miller Dam, approximately 3.5 miles west of the gazebo. The 1960 completion of the Longhorn Dam on the Colorado River, approximately 2.5 miles downstream from the gazebo, created Town Lake (renamed Lady Bird Lake in 2007), which served as a reservoir for the Holly Power Plant. The Austin Chamber of Commerce promoted the public bond measure that financed the Longhorn Dam, as well as planning and development of the lakefront. In 1961, at the behest of the Chamber, the Austin City Council formed the Town Lake Study Committee (TLSC), charged with overseeing and guiding development on the city's public land.⁶

Town Lake beautification efforts were inspired in part by Claudia "Lady Bird" Johnson. From the beginning of her tenure as First Lady, Lady Bird Johnson expressed interest in environmental conservation issues, working to beautify the national highway system, which was then visually cluttered with billboards and junkyards. President Johnson advocated for national beautification in his first State of the Union address, when he called for additional support for parks, improved landscaping of public lands, and the "legal authority for the government to block air and water pollution."⁷ In a message on "natural beauty," President Johnson requested that beauty be "not just a holiday treat, but part of our daily life."⁸ Ladybird's efforts began with her formation of the Committee for a More Beautiful Capital, where she emphasized community participation, stressing that "It is in our own communities that we can best participate in creating an environment which has beauty, joyousness, liveliness, as well as dignity."⁹ Almost concurrent with the beginning of her campaign for a beautiful Washington D.C., Lady Bird gave an interview with *U.S. News and World Report*, which was published in an article entitled "Ways to Beautify America," in February 1964. The article ended with this remark from Lady Bird: "The time is ripe, the time is now, to take advantage of this yeasty, bubbling desire to beautify our cities and our countryside. I hope all Americans will join in this effort."¹⁰ Lady Bird's appeal to beautification inspired projects large and small, including the building of the Town Lake Gazebo.

National Association of Women in Construction

In 1953, sixteen women working in the construction industry in Fort Worth began the organization "Women in Construction of Fort Worth." Understanding that women had very limited participation in the construction industry, the group was formed as a support network for its members. To be open to as many women as possible, the only requirement established for membership was to be actively employed in the construction industry at least twenty hours per week. The success in Fort Worth led to a national charter in 1955, and the group became the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), with

⁵ "The Coastal Bend Revolution." *Texas Architect* September 1963.

⁶ Kristin Hotopp, "Fiesta Gardens, Austin, Travis County, Texas" National Register of Historic Places nomination, 2019. In 1966, the committee was disbanded.

⁷ Lewis Gould, *Lady Bird Johnson and the Environment*. (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1988), 54.

⁸ Gould, 54.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Gould, 57.

the core purpose to enhance the success of women in the construction industry.¹¹ In the fall of 1957, a member of the Dallas chapter contacted Miss Fannie Davis, executive secretary of the Austin Associated General Contractors, to gauge interest in starting an Austin chapter of NAWIC. Miss Davis passed along the information to Miss Maxine Studebaker of Frank Rundell Company, who reached out to other women working in the field of construction. The Austin chapter received its charter of February 15, 1958, the seventh issued from national headquarters, with approximately 35 members.¹² By 1966, the national organization had 5,000 members in 144 chapters.¹³

J. Sterry Nill and Loretta (Lori) Nill

Austin architect J. Sterry Nill, designer of the Town Lake Gazebo, was married to Austin Chapter president Loretta “Lori” Nill, who also served as the project coordinator for the gazebo.¹⁴ Born in 1928 in Chicago, John Nill came to Austin in 1953 to attend the University of Texas School of Architecture and study under Harwell Hamilton Harris, whose work he had admired. With an aversion to cold weather, the Nills decided to settle in the city after graduation. Mr. Nill worked for several architecture firms throughout his career, including Jessen, Jessen, Millhouse and Greeven, with whom he worked on major projects in Austin, including additions to the Texas Department of Public Safety Building, St. Martin’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, and Palmer Auditorium. After establishing his own practice, Nill worked on projects for Catholic parishes in Austin, Lago Vista, Rockdale, Granger, and Brenham. His Austin projects included St. Theresa’s Catholic Church, and additions to St. Louis King of France Catholic Church.¹⁵ Nill retired from the Texas Department of Health and Human Services, where he served as the chief architect for the Long Term Care Department.¹⁶ Lori Nill worked as a secretary and bookkeeper in the offices of several architecture firms in Austin, including her husband’s private practice and became a founding member of the Austin chapter of NAWIC.¹⁷ Lori began supporting John’s career shortly after they moved to Austin and even before he began practicing as a licensed architect. When John was still studying at the University of Texas, Lori and the wives of other students of architecture (and women architecture students) formed the Student Architects’ Wives’ Club. Lori served as historian for the club in 1955.¹⁸ In 1965, while serving as the chapter’s president, Lori persuaded John to design the Town Lake Gazebo on behalf of NAWIC. Lori retired from the Architecture division of the Texas Department of Transportation. Lori played a significant role in many organizations, raising money and serving on committees and organizing events to benefit the building and construction industry, including the Austin Association of Home Builders, the Women’s Architectural League and the Texas Society of Architects’ annual meeting.¹⁹

Community Value

¹¹ “About NAWIC,” http://www.nawic.org/nawic/About_NAWIC.asp. Accessed May 31, 2019.

¹² “Our History,” <http://austinnawic.org/about/our-history/>. Today, the Austin chapter continues to provide training and education opportunities for its members and participates in the community with outreach programs for youth, scholarships for students pursuing careers in the construction industry. The national organization has over 5,500 members and 160 chapters.

¹³ “Campaign Begun On Gazebo Fund,” *Austin American*, January 2, 1966.

¹⁴ Anne-Marie Evans. Staff Writer. “Gazebo – It’ll Open on Town Lake in Spring,” *Austin American-Statesman*, October 19, 1969; Christine Adame. *Stories from the Fannie Davis Gazebo*.

¹⁵ Lori Nill (former President, Austin Chapter, National Association of Women in Construction) in discussion with the author, November 2016.

¹⁶ “John Sterry Nill, Jr.” (obituary). *Austin American-Statesman*, August 18, 2002.

¹⁷ Author’s interview with Lori Nill, 2016.

¹⁸ “Architects Wives Form UT Club.” *Austin Statesman* November 1, 1955.

¹⁹ “Women Aid Parade of Homes.” *Austin Statesman* July 20, 1966; “Club Meetings This Week.” *Austin American* April 17, 1966; “Blueprint for Fun.” *Austin American* October 31, 1965.

Town Lake Gazebo Planning

Encouraged by the President Johnson and the First Lady, the Austin chapter of NAWIC approached Mr. Beverly Sheffield, director of Austin's Parks and Recreation Department, for suggestions on how they could contribute to the city. After this meeting, the group decided to build a gazebo as their beautification construction project.²⁰ On November 9, 1965, the Austin City Council unanimously voted to approve plans presented by the Austin Chapter to undertake a gazebo project on the shores of Town Lake.²¹ In January 1966, fundraising for the gazebo began with a Saturday morning breakfast attended by 75 persons at the Gondolier Hotel. Mayor Lester Palmer observed that "not a member of the Council knew what a gazebo was, but we all felt every city ought to have one."²² Covering the event, the *Austin Statesman* helpfully explained what a gazebo was:

Not a creature from outer space, as the name may suggest, the gazebo (pronounced ga-zee-bo) is a proposed small circular garden house to be built on an island now planned for creation immediately off the south shore of Town Lake...The purpose of the gazebo is to provide, as the as the dictionary definition of the French renaissance word says, "a structure with a view" – simply a place to stroll and gaze.²³

Austin Chapter Vice President Wilma Williams explained that the purpose of the gazebo was to provide a place for viewing downtown Austin, and Town Lake in particular, explaining that "the city provides the view, and we wish to provide the structure to enjoy that view."²⁴ The fundraising breakfast also provided an opportunity to reveal the plans, which proposed that the gazebo be placed on an island near the shore, with a footbridge for access. Architect J. Sterry Nill, husband of chapter President Lori Nill, presented a preliminary model of the gazebo, an austere neo-formalist composition with thin tapered columns, and topped with a fanciful mushroom-like dome designed to complement the nearby municipal auditorium. While the model bore little resemblance to the completed gazebo, the estimated size (1,000 square feet) was on target with the final plans.²⁵ In February, 1966, the chapter released a statement announcing their plans to construct the gazebo.²⁶ Joyce Burton and Dorothy Wallace served as co-chairpersons of the "Project Gazebo" committee, which would raise the estimated \$6,000 required to fund the project, while local construction companies, material suppliers, and workers contributed in-kind donations valued at \$30,000. The *Austin Statesman* published numerous articles promoting various fundraising events, which in 1966 included: cupcake sales by the Travis High "Y-Teens" (the girl reserves club of the YWCA); a NAWIC-sponsored "games night" at the North Austin Lions Club; and a spring sports wear show sponsored by the Y-Teens (with a diving exhibition by Austin Aquatic Club). NAWIC and Austin Civic Theater collaborated on a musical revue ("Zip Zap Zowie" by Ken Johnson), to jointly raise funds for the gazebo and the civic theater, while the NAWIC Hostess Committee received a cash donation from the Austin Home Builders Association for the group's assistance with the Parade of Homes. In 1966, the Austin Chapter estimated that the project would take two years to complete, but that timeline was soon

²⁰ Lori Nill to Miriam Tworek-Hofstetter, in preparation of "Women in Construction Town Lake Gazebo, Austin, Travis County, Texas" Draft National Register of Historic Places nomination, 2011. On file with the Texas Historical Commission. This was the chapter's first effort to beautify the Town Lake shore. Another high-profile effort was the 1978 restoration of the Austin Fire Drill Tower (NR 2016) on the north shore.

²¹ Glen Castlebury. "Gazebo Approved for Town Lake." *The Austin Statesman* p. 6. Wednesday, November 10, 1965.

²² "Gazebo Fund Bid is Launched Here." *Austin American-Statesman* January 9, 1966.

²³ "Gazebo Fund Bid is Launched Here." *Austin American-Statesman* January 9, 1966.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ "Gazebo Anyone?" *The Citizen*, February 18, 1966.

abandoned. The groundbreaking ceremony took place on July 1, 1968, with city council members, city officials and other dignitaries on hand.²⁷ Construction was expected to be completed by the end of the year, but progress was slow because all the work was provided pro bono. The Statesman offered an explanation:

It's a rare thing to see anyone at work on the gazebo, as the structure is called, and progress seems tantalizingly slow...It's a labor of love for all concerned. Probably any one of the builders could finish the job in a week if that's all he had to do, but he couldn't be expected to neglect his regular business. So when his workmen have a little spare time or are between other jobs, he sends them down to Town Lake and they put in a few hours on the gazebo.²⁸

The gazebo structure was completed in August 1969, but in February 1970 the Austin city manager's office ordered the parks department to fill in the partially excavated reflecting pool, citing projected construction and maintenance costs. In March, the city council voted to fill in the pool, over the objections of the Austin Chapter.²⁹ With plans for a June 1970 dedication ceremony underway, representatives of NAWIC urged the city to complete site work and objected to the covering of a cascading fountain in the center of the gazebo. The work had not been completed by May 1970, and likely remained unfinished at the time of the dedication.³⁰ The gazebo dedication took place on June 8, with national NAWIC president Margaret Borg in attendance. At the ceremony, Lori Nill summarized the efforts to build the gazebo, describing it as a "lasting tribute to the construction industry," and hoping that it would "spur other organizations to contribute to the beautification of Town Lake and of Austin."³¹ Austin chapter president C.L. Reeves presented the gazebo to the Mayor Travis LaRue, who accepted it on behalf of the city.³² The Town Lake Gazebo was the first of many Town Lake beautification and development projects. In 1968, Congressman Jake Pickle had assisted with federal approval of the \$98,500 development grant (to be matched by the Austin Parks and Recreation Department) to develop a hike and bike trail along a five-mile-long stretch of shoreline.³³ Although Lady Bird Johnson was not involved with the planning, fundraising, nor design of the gazebo, the project is associated with her national beautification initiative as First Lady. Upon the end of the Johnson Administration in early 1969, Lady Bird joined the community's efforts and focused much of her attention on Austin and the Town Lake Beautification Program.³⁴ In 1975, Lady Bird was photographed at the gazebo at two separate events promoting Town Lake beautification, an indication of the gazebo's symbolic connection to the overall program.

Subsequent Work at the Gazebo

In the years since the gazebo's construction, Ken Wendler, owner of Anken Construction, Lori Nill, and Austin Chapter members continued to support and protect the Town Lake Gazebo by raising funds and advocating for the maintenance of the structure, its reflecting pond, and landscaping, as set forth in the

²⁷ "Constructions Gets Underway on New Town Lake Gazebo." *Citizen Guide*, July 3, 1968

²⁸ "The Gazebo At Lakeside, *Austin Statesman*, June 4, 1968.

²⁹ "City Kills Reflection Pool Plan," *Austin Statesman*, March 5, 1970.

³⁰ "WIC Asks Gazebo Completion," *Austin Statesman*, May 16, 1970. No record of exactly when the pond was completed has been found, but aerial photos show that it was in place by 1973.

³¹ "\$35,000 Gazebo Dedicated To City During Ceremony." *Austin American*, June 9, 1970.

³² "Gazebo Dedication Set Today." *Austin Statesman (1921-1973)*, June 8, 1970.

³³ "Funds Awarded To Lake Project." *Austin Statesman*, July 9, 1968.

³⁴ *Handbook of Texas Online*, Neil Sapper, "Johnson, Claudia Alta Taylor [Lady Bird]," accessed November 27, 2016, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fjocd>. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Modified on June 9, 2016. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

original plans.³⁵ The design of the gazebo remains virtually unchanged since its original construction, but by 1984, the structure needed major repair. NAWIC leadership developed a plan to raise funds for the repairs. At that time, the gazebo was renamed the Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo by City Council resolution.³⁶ Mrs. Davis was a founding member of the Austin chapter of NAWIC, and no structure in Austin had been named after a living honoree before that time.³⁷ In 1992, the small opening at the tip of the roof was covered by an acrylic bubble, allowing light to filter through the opening, while preventing water and rain from flowing into the opening of the roof. In 1995, NAWIC members funded the construction of an accessibility ramp in celebration of the gazebo's 25th anniversary. In 2010, the city considered a project to fill in the reflecting pond and repurpose the gazebo. NAWIC again intervened and, with the support of the community, convinced the council to spend money for improvements to the gazebo and its surroundings. In 2011, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department awarded a \$2 million grant to the Austin Parks and Recreation Department to make improvements to Auditorium Shores, with a portion of the funds for the transformation of the pond into an environmental element used to treat parking lot runoff. In 2012, the city of Austin spent \$137,000 to improve the pond, fix some structural elements, update some electrical wiring and repaint the gazebo to match its original color palette.³⁸ Also in 2012, the gazebo was given its most recent facelift that retained the existing wooden frame and roof membrane while replacing the roof, painting of the structure to match original color scheme, and adding an anti-graffiti coating to the concrete benches. Additional site work related to the surrounding landscaping and pond will be coordinated with the Watershed Protection Department through future phases of work along Auditorium Shores.³⁹

³⁵ Minutes of the City Council, City of Austin, TX, March 5, 1970, <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=24640>

³⁶ June 4, 1984, Council Meeting

³⁷ "History of the Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo."

www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Parks/Planning_and_Development/History_of_the_Fannie_Davis_Town_Lake_Gazebo%20pdf.

³⁸ Michael Barnes, "Gazebo by Lake Back in Pristine Condition," *Austin American-Statesman*, November 3, 2012.

³⁹ Kim McKnight, email message to author, November 8, 2016.

Property Profile Report

Permitting and Development Center | 6310 Wilhelmina Delco Drive, Austin, TX 78752 | (512) 978-4000

General Information

Location: **700 W RIVERSIDE DR**
 Parcel ID: **0203000103**
 Grid: **MJ21**

Planning & Zoning

*Right click [hyperlinks](#) to open in a new window.

Future Land Use (FLUM): **Recreation & Open Space, Transportation**

Regulating Plan: **No Regulating Plan**

Zoning: **P-NP**

Zoning Cases: [C14-02-0031](#)
[C14-2017-0026](#)
[C14H-2024-0102](#)
[NPA-2017-0013.01](#)

Zoning Ordinances: **020523-33**
[19990225-070b](#)

Zoning Overlays: **ADU Approximate Area Reduced Parking**
Residential Design Standards: LDC/25-2-Subchapter F
Scenic Roadways Overlay: RIVERSIDE DRIVE
Selected Sign Ordinances
Waterfront Setbacks Overlay
Waterfront Overlay: AUDITORIUM SHORES

Neighborhood Plan: [BOULDIN CREEK](#)

Infill Options: --

Neighborhood Restricted Parking Areas: --

Mobile Food Vendors: --

Historic Landmark: --

Urban Roadways: **Yes**

Zoning Guide

The [Guide to Zoning](#) provides a quick explanation of the above Zoning codes, however, the [Land Development Information Services](#) provides general zoning assistance and can advise you on the type of development allowed on a property. Visit [Zoning](#) for the description of each Base Zoning District. For official verification of the zoning of a property, please order a [Zoning Verification Letter](#). General information on the [Neighborhood Planning Areas](#) is available from Neighborhood Planning.

Environmental

Fully Developed Floodplain: **City of Austin Fully Developed 100-Year Floodplain, City of Austin Fully Developed 25-Year Floodplain**

FEMA Floodplain: **.2 PCT ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD HAZARD, .2 PCT ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD HAZARD, AE, AE, AE**

Austin Watershed Regulation Areas: **URBAN**

Watershed Boundaries: **Lady Bird Lake**

Creek Buffers: **CWQZ**

Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone: **No**

Edwards Aquifer Recharge Verification Zone: **No**

Erosion Hazard Zone Review Buffer: **No**

Political Boundaries

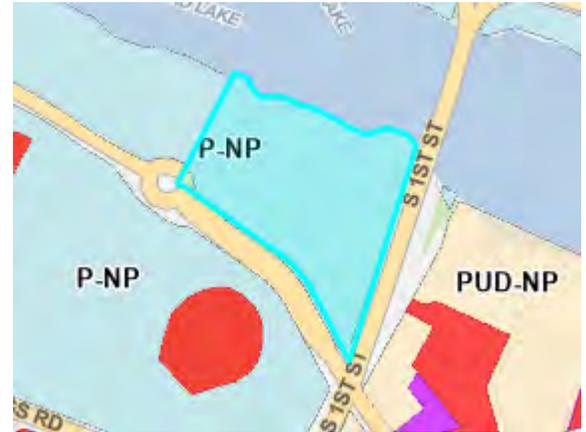
Jurisdiction: **AUSTIN FULL PURPOSE**

Council District: **9**

County: **TRAVIS**

School District: **Austin ISD**

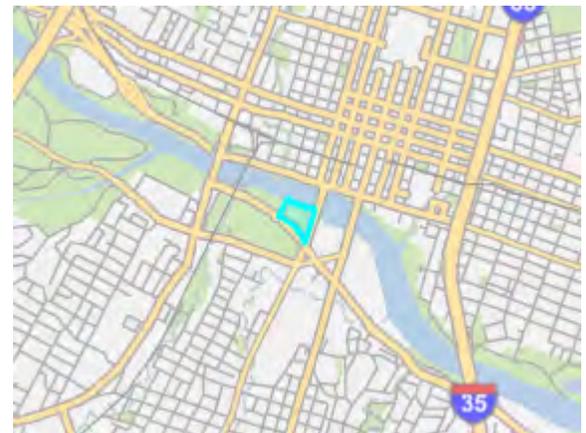
Community Registry: **Austin Independent School District, Austin Lost and Found Pets, Austin Neighborhoods Council, Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association, Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan Contact Team, Bouldin Creek Zoning Committee, Friends of Austin Neighborhoods, Homeless Neighborhood Association, Neighborhood Empowerment Foundation, Perry Grid 614, Preservation Austin, SELTexas, Sierra Club, Austin Regional Group, South Central Coalition**



Zoning Map



Imagery Map



Vicinity Map

TAX CERTIFICATE

Bruce Elfant
Travis County Tax Assessor-Collector
P.O. Box 1748
Austin, Texas 78767
(512) 854-9473

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 02-0300-0103-0000

PROPERTY OWNER:

CITY OF AUSTIN
PO BOX 1088 13TH FL
AUSTIN, TX 78767

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

13.46 ACR BLK A BOULDIN JAMES E ESTATE

ACRES 13.4600 MIN%

SITUS INFORMATION: W RIVERSIDE DR 78704

This is to certify that after a careful check of tax records of this office, the following taxes, delinquent taxes, penalties, and interest are due on the described property of the following tax unit(s):

YEAR	ENTITY	TOTAL
2023	AUSTIN ISD	* EXEMPT *
	CITY OF AUSTIN (TRAV)	* EXEMPT *
	TRAVIS COUNTY	* EXEMPT *
	TRAVIS CENTRAL HEALTH	* EXEMPT *
	ACC (TRAVIS)	* EXEMPT *
TOTAL SEQUENCE 0		* EXEMPT *
	TOTAL TAX:	* EXEMPT *
	UNPAID FEES:	* NONE *
	PENALTY/INTEREST:	* NONE *
	COMMISSION:	* NONE *
	TOTAL DUE:	* EXEMPT *

ALL TAXES ABOVE ARE EXEMPT FOR YEAR **2023**
ALL TAXES PAID IN FULL/EXEMPT PRIOR TO AND INCLUDING THE YEAR **2023** FOR UNPAID YEARS LISTED ABOVE.

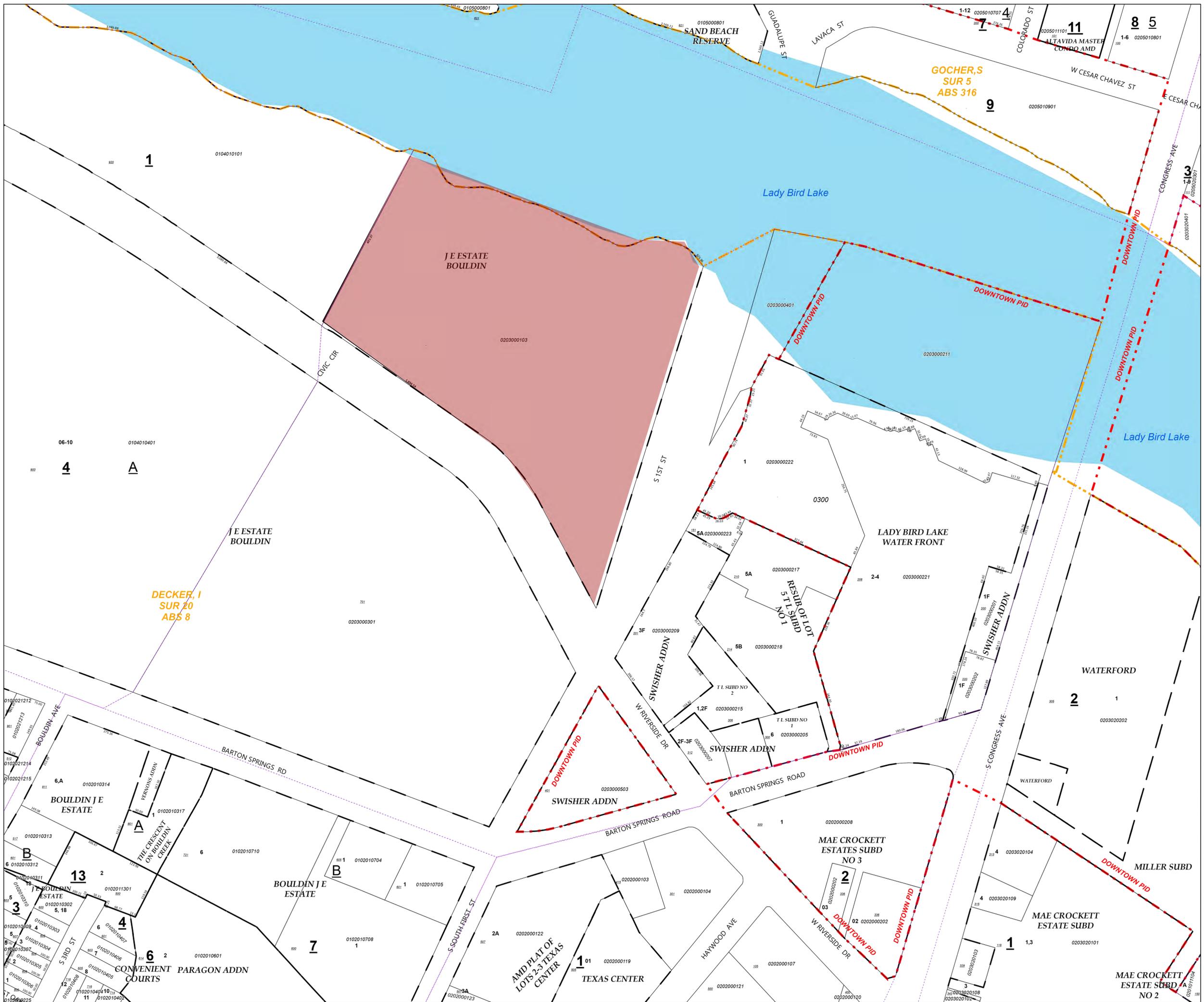
The above-described property may be subject to special valuation based on its use, and additional rollback taxes may become due. (Section 23.55, State Property Tax Code).
Pursuant to Section 31.08 of the State Property Tax Code, there is a fee of \$10.00 for all Tax Certificates.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE ON THIS DATE OF **SEPTEMBER 17, 2024**.

Fee Paid: \$10.00

Bruce Elfant
Tax Assessor-Collector

By: _____



Travis Central Appraisal District
 850 E Anderson Lane
 Austin, TX 78752
 P.O. Box 149012
 Austin, Texas 78714
 www.traviscad.org
 Main Telephone Number (512)-834-9317

This tax map was compiled solely for the use of TCAD. Areas depicted by these digital products are approximate, and are not necessarily accurate to mapping, surveying or engineering standards. Conclusions drawn from this information are the responsibility of the user. The TCAD makes no claims, promises or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness or adequacy of this information and expressly disclaims liability for any errors and omissions. The mapped data does not constitute a legal document.

NAD_1983_StatePlane_Texas_Central_FIPS_4203_Feet
 Projection: Lambert_Conformal_Conic

Italic = 120 scale map
 Thin = 100 scale map
 Bold = 400 scale map



Revision Date:
7/5/2024

20300

Sam Fahnestock
Historic Preservation Office
City of Austin
May 23, 2024

DRAFT

**Subject: Request to consider initiation of historic zoning, Fannie Davis Town Lake
Gazebo/Women in Construction Gazebo
(9037 Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail)**

Dear Mr. Fahnestock,

We would like to include the Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo/Women in Construction Gazebo, located at 9037 Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail, on the Historic Landmark Commission's June agenda for consideration of initiation of historic zoning. The owner, the City of Austin's Parks and Recreation Department (PARC), has been notified of this request. The gazebo was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2019.

Originally known as the Town Lake Gazebo, the Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo was the first public structure built in the effort to beautify the south shore of Town Lake (now Lady Bird Lake). The Austin Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), established in the 1950s for women working in the construction industry, spearheaded and raised funds for the project's completion. The structure was built from 1969-1970 and features a striking hyperbolic paraboloid roof with folded plate ridges and valleys. Architect J. Sterry Nill designed a community structure that reflected the architectural trends of the 1960s and brought an iconic piece of architecture to the shores of Lady Bird Lake. The gazebo was later named after Fannie Davis, a charter member of the Austin chapter of NAWIC.

The gazebo's Mid-Century Modern design and contributions to the beautification of Town Lake meet the City's Architecture and Community Value criteria for local landmark designation. It is also eligible for its Historical Associations with the development of the hike and bike trail, and women in construction. Thank you for your consideration and feel free to reach out regarding any questions or concerns.

Thank you,



JuanRaymon Rubio, Associate AIA
Historic Landmark Commissioner, District 2



Kevin Koch, AIA
Historic Landmark Commissioner, District 3

708.743.8148
BC-JuanRaymon.Rubio@AustinTexas.gov
Motioned By: Commissioner Rubio

BC-Kevin.Koch@AustinTexas.gov
Seconded By: Commissioner Koch

July 3, 2024

Historic Landmark Commission
City of Austin

Subject: Fannie Davis Gazebo

Dear Members of the Historic Landmark Commission:

Please accept this letter of support from the Austin Parks and Recreation Department for the designation of the Fannie Davis Gazebo as a City of Austin Historic Landmark.

The 1969 Town Lake Gazebo was the first public structure built in the effort to beautify the south shore of Town Lake (now Lady Bird Lake), which was created after the construction of Longhorn Dam on the Colorado River in 1960. The Austin Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), established in the 1950s for women working in the construction industry, spearheaded and raised funds for the project. Inspired by Lady Bird Johnson, a national leader in environmental beautification and later the honorary co-chair of the Town Lake Beautification Committee, the Austin chapter began planning and raising money for the structure in 1965. Nearly 100 contractors and suppliers enthusiastically supported the gazebo project with donations of materials and labor. The gazebo was dedicated in June 1970, and then in 1984, the structure was named for Fannie Davis, a founding member of the Austin chapter of NAWIC.

The gazebo was designed by architect, J. Sterry Nill, to resemble an inverted morning glory flower and its design reflects diverse architectural trends of the 1960s. The Fannie Davis Gazebo was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2020. Noted for its historical and architectural significance, the Fannie Davis Gazebo joined other properties under the stewardship of the Austin Parks and Recreation Department system with historic designation.

The Parks and Recreation Department Historic Preservation & Tourism Program appreciates the support of the Historic Landmark Commission and looks forward to collaborating on the historic designation process.

Best regards,



Kim McKnight, MSHP, AICP
Program Manager, Historic Preservation & Tourism Program

Cc: Alyssa Tharrett RA, NCARB, Division Manager, Architectural Development
Liana Kallivoka, PhD, PE, LEED Fellow, Assistant Director
Angela Means, MPA, Interim Director



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Sarah Anderson, Development Coordinator

July 2, 2024

RE: Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo

Dear Chair Heimsath, Vice Chair Featherston, and Members of the Historic Landmark Commission,

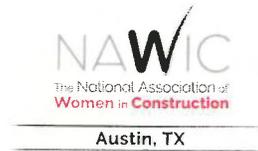
[Preservation Austin](#) exists to empower Austinites to shape a more inclusive, resilient, and meaningful community culture through preservation. We write today in support of designating the Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo as a City of Austin Historic Landmark for its historic associations with women in construction, its Mid-Century Modern architectural style, and its community value as a significant site in the beautification of Lady Bird Lake.

Built in 1969-70, the Austin Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) spearheaded the efforts to raise funds for what was originally known as the Town Lake Gazebo. The organization commissioned architect J. Sterry Nill to design the gazebo in a striking Mid-Century Modern style, featuring a dramatic geometric roofline with folded plate ridges and valleys. The gazebo was one of the first structures built to beautify the south shore of Town Lake (now Lady Bird Lake), and its design reflects the spirit of its age and its role as a community space. The gazebo was later named in honor of Fannie Davis, a charter member of the Austin Chapter of NAWIC. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2019.

In alignment with our Underrepresented Heritage [Advocacy Priority](#), we commend the Historic Landmark Commission for taking the initiative to honor this significant site of women's heritage. We wholeheartedly support the designation of the Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo as a City of Austin Landmark. Thank you for your consideration and your service to our city.

Sincerely,

Melissa Barry, President



Mrs. Cathy Schernik
Austin Chapter President
National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), Austin Chapter #07
P.O. Box 80361
Austin, TX 78708
[REDACTED]
512.757.7787

June 26, 2024
Historic Landmark Commission
Mr. Sam Fahnestock, Historic Preservation Officer
sam.fahnestock@austintexas.gov
Austin, TX

RE: Letter of Support for Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo

Dear Mr. Fahnestock,

We are writing to express our enthusiastic support for the historic zoning designation of the Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo, constructed by the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), as a historic landmark.

This unique structure, built in 1969, stands as a testament to the skill, dedication, and community spirit of the women involved in its construction and our association. NAWIC, established to support and advocate for women in the construction industry, has played a pivotal role in promoting gender equality and fostering professional development within the field. The gazebo not only exemplifies their determination but also symbolizes the progress and achievements of women in a traditionally male-dominated industry.

Motivated by President Johnson and the First Lady, the Austin chapter of NAWIC decided to build a gazebo as their beautification construction project after consulting with Mr. Beverly Sheffield, director of Austin's Parks and Recreation Department. On November 9, 1965, the Austin City Council unanimously approved the Austin Chapter's plans to construct the gazebo on the shores of Town Lake, with fundraising beginning in January 1966. Mayor Lester Palmer noted humorously that, while council members were initially unsure what a gazebo was, they all agreed that Austin should have one, a sentiment clarified by the Austin Statesman as a small circular garden house designed for leisurely strolling and gazing.



The gazebo holds significant historical value, representing a remarkable milestone in the local community's architectural and cultural heritage. Its construction was a groundbreaking project, showcasing innovation and creativity.

Furthermore, it has served as a communal gathering place for numerous events, celebrations, and civic activities over the decades, embedding itself into the social fabric of our community.

Preserving this gazebo as a historic landmark will honor the legacy of the women who built it and highlight the contributions of NAWIC to our local history. It will also serve as an inspiration for future generations, illustrating the importance of diversity and inclusion in the construction industry and beyond.

I firmly believe that the gazebo meets the criteria for landmark designation due to its architectural significance, historical importance, and cultural value. Its preservation will ensure that this exceptional piece of history remains a cherished landmark for years to come.

Thank you for considering this important designation. I am confident that recognizing the gazebo as a historic landmark will not only honor the past achievements of NAWIC but also inspire future generations to pursue excellence in the construction industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cathy Schernik".

Cathy Schernik
NAWIC Austin Chapter President 2023-2024

Cc: Juan Raymon Rubio, Associ. AIA - jrubio@architexas.com

June 124, 2024

Sam Fahnestock
Historic Preservation Office
City of Austin

Subject: Support for Austin Historic Zoning – Fannie Davis Gazebo

Dear Mr. Fahnestock,

The Friends of the Gazebo, who have continued to provide ongoing support for the continuance and maintenance of the Fannie Davis Gazebo, want to endorse Commissioner Rubio and Commissioner Koch's request for consideration of initiation of historic zoning.

Many of us were members of the Austin, Tx. Chapter, National Association of Women in Construction during those early days and as the chapter moved on to meet the changing needs of professional women in construction, we recognized that you just don't build something and walk away. We were the group that initiated and worked with Kim McKnight, Parks and Recreation to seek the National Register marker in the year 2019, marking 50 years, to protect and preserve this icon of architecture modernism which reflected the work of the beautification of Town Lake and the work of Ladybird Johnson.

The Austin Chapter recognized after a number of years that the structure needed care and we had an opportunity to work with Parks to help keep the preservation of the structure and the pond a place of solace and reflection. At one time this was the most photographed spot in the City of Austin.

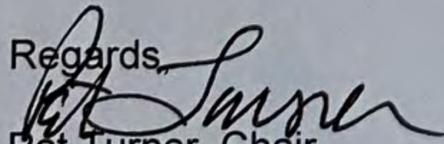
The Chapter commissioned a local artist to do a black and white rendering of the structure and along with Mayor Carol McClellan, we promoted and sold copies to raise funds for the upkeep. We had three consecutive Gazebo runs around the hike and bike trail and assisted Parks in putting in the much-needed handicap ramp.

San Antonio has its Daughters of the Republic to be guardians and supports of the Alamo. In 2001, Austin established its Friends of the Gazebo who serve that same function. Friends of the Gazebo over the years have included NAWIC members, women business and government leaders that supported its cause.

We now need the Landmark Commission to show its support by giving the Fannie Davis Gazebo the local historic designation it deserves and has earned for its historic and ongoing contribution.

Since the improvement of the hike and bike trail, the pond area around the structure, as well as the landscape needs maintenance and it is a concern to maintain its integrity.

Regards,


Pat Turner, Chair
Friends of the Gazebo

Friends of the Gazebo:
Mayor Carole Keeton McClellan
Lori Nill
Ken Wendler
Mayor Carole Keeto McClellan
Councilwoman Laura Morrison
Terry Wadsworth



June 26, 2024
City of Austin Historic Landmark Commission
PO Box 1088
Austin, Texas 78767

Re: Support for Austin Historic Zoning-Fannie Davis Gazebo

Commissioners,

Mid Tex Mod, the leading voice for the preservation of Modern architecture in our Central Texas region, submits this letter supporting the Landmark designation of the Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo, one of Austin's most historically significant works of small-scale architecture. It was one of the first structures built to beautify the shores of the new "Town Lake" crossings in Downtown, led by Lady Bird Johnson, after the completion of the Longhorn Dam in 1960. Future by the 1970s development created what became Austin's "Hike-and-Bike Trail.

The historic gazebo was created and funded by the philanthropic efforts of the Austin Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction, headed and designed on behalf of the organization by local architect J. Sterry Nill, the husband of NAWIC chapter president Lori Nill.

The structure was constructed using native limestone incorporating the dramatic geometric expression of a zig-zagging octagonal roofline, which has been referenced as resembling an inverted morning glory flower, truly one of the city's more significant public park facilities.

In 1984 the gazebo, was renamed in honor of NAWIC founding member Fannie Davis. The structure was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2019.

Our organization fully supports efforts to designate this architecturally and historically significant structure, honoring the contributions of women in the City of Austin, an Austin City Landmark.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles Peveto".

Charles Peveto, Interim President
Mid Tex Mod, Central Texas Chapter
DOCOMOMO US



Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo
9307 Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail
Austin, Texas



South Elevation



North Elevation



East Elevation



Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo
Austin Landmark designation



West Elevation



Time Capsule



Glulam roof structure

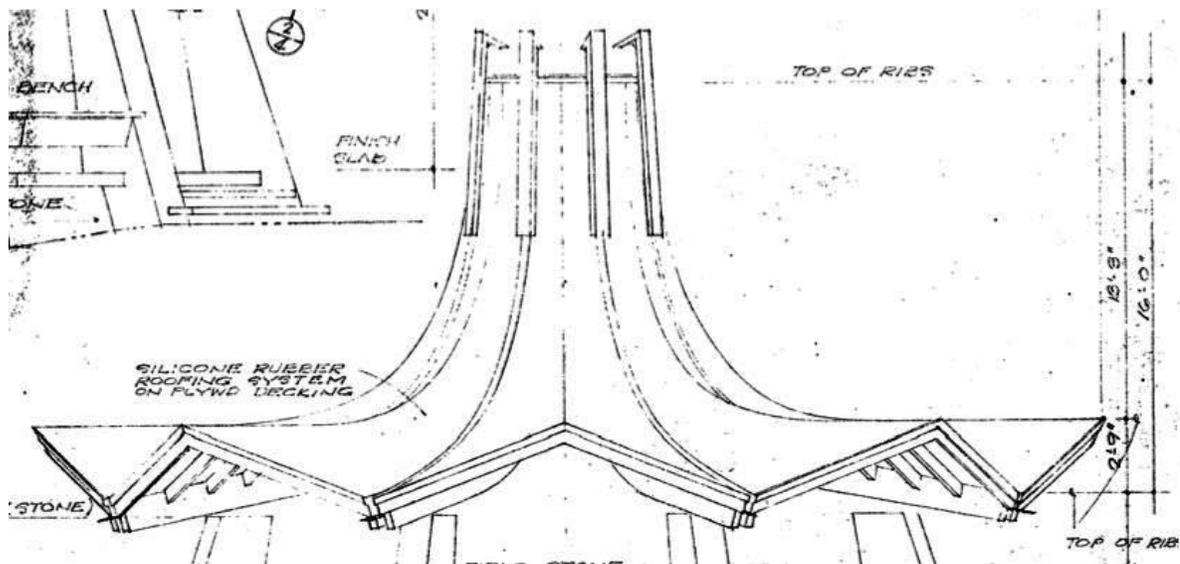
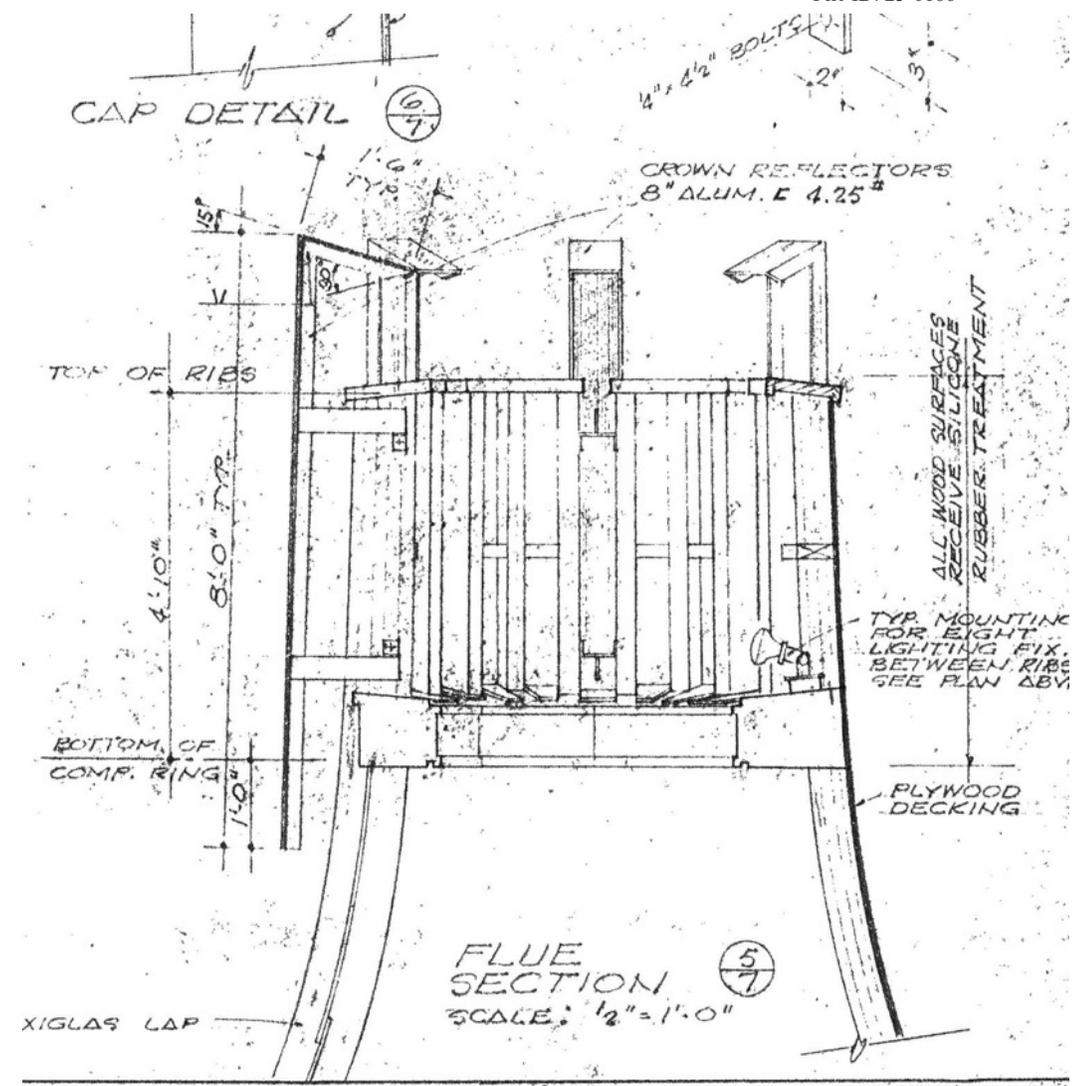
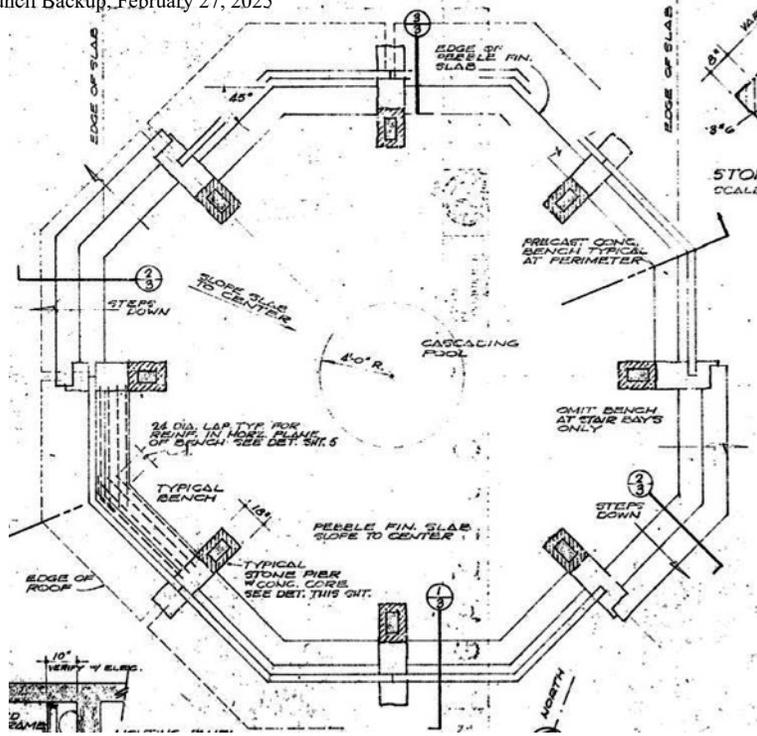
Southwest view with adjacent pond



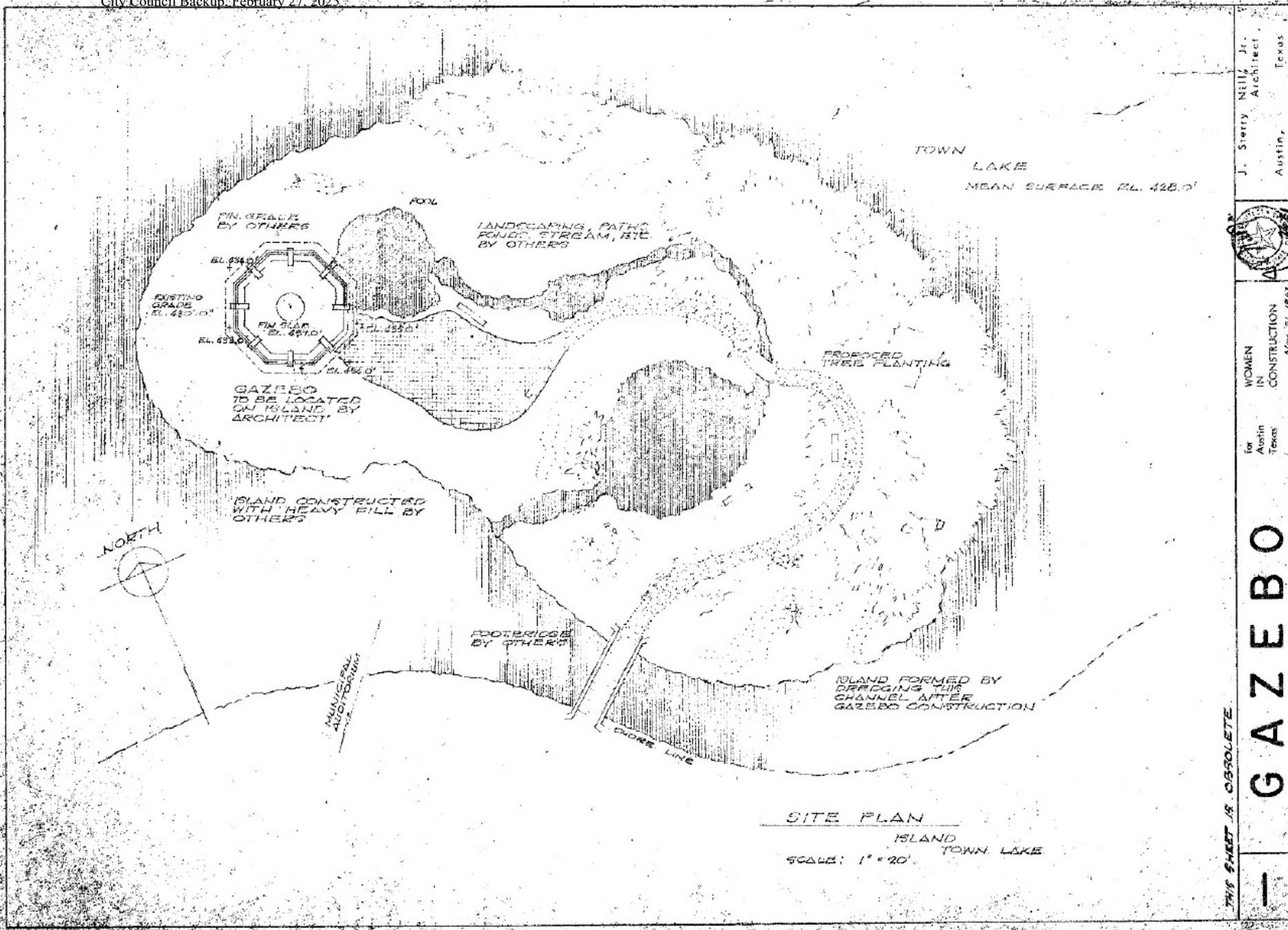
Roof oculus



Stone veneer piers



Gazebo details by J. Sterry Nill, 1967



Original Site Plan by J. Sterry Nill, 1967.
(with notation "This sheet is obsolete")



Parks Director Beverly Sheffield and NAWIC Austin chapter president Lori Nill admire model of gazebo. (Austin History Center).

Groundbreaking Ceremony, July 1, 1968.
From Left: Ken Wendler, Kathleen Rhea,
Councilwoman Emma Long, Anna Marie
Houston, Dottie Davis and Lori
Nill break ground for the Women in
Construction Gazebo. (Austin History Center).



Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo
Austin Landmark designation



Aerial View of Town Lake looking north. The gazebo site is to the left of the First Street Bridge.

Photograph by Neal Douglass, November 1968.

Original Source: Austin History Center, Austin Public Library.

Online source: The Portal to Texas History, University of North Texas Libraries.

<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph18890/>



Setting up the formwork for the octagonal slab.



A crane raises one of the glulam beams

Construction photos from the personal collection of Lori Nill, as published in "Stories from the Fannie Davis Gazebo" by Christine Adame.



The gazebo begins to take shape.



A total of 16 beams support the roof.

Construction photos from the personal collection of Lori Nill, as published in "Stories from the Fannie Davis Gazebo" by Christine Adame.



Lady Bird Johnson, Michael Frary, and unnamed man with a painting of the Town Lake Gazebo in front of the gazebo, 1975.

Original Source: Austin History Center, Austin Public Library.

Online source: The Portal to Texas History, University of North Texas Libraries

<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph124309/>

Fannie Davis Town Lake Gazebo
Austin Landmark designation