

## HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

September 06, 2017

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2016-477  
**ADDRESS:** 502 - 508 E GUENTHER ST  
508 E GUENTHER ST  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB 938 BLK 1 LOT 17 N 25 FT OF 16  
NCB 938 BLK 1 E 74 FT OF 18  
**ZONING:** RM-4,HS  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 1  
**DISTRICT:** King William Historic District  
**LANDMARK:** Raba Studio / Goldbeck House, Raba House  
**APPLICANT:** David Armendariz  
**OWNER:** David Armendariz  
**TYPE OF WORK:** Removal of front yard turf and installation of gravel, xeriscaping  
**REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to remove the existing front yard grass and install gravel and plant materials to include Ajuga, Dahlbert Daisy, Frogfruit and Winecups.

### APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

*Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 6, Guidelines for Site Elements*

### 3. Landscape Design

#### A. PLANTINGS

- i. Historic Gardens*—Maintain front yard gardens when appropriate within a specific historic district.
- ii. Historic Lawns*—Do not fully remove and replace traditional lawn areas with impervious hardscape. Limit the removal of lawn areas to mulched planting beds or pervious hardscapes in locations where they would historically be found, such as along fences, walkways, or drives. Low-growing plantings should be used in historic lawn areas; invasive or large-scale species should be avoided. Historic lawn areas should never be reduced by more than 50%.
- iii. Native xeric plant materials*—Select native and/or xeric plants that thrive in local conditions and reduce watering usage. See UDC Appendix E: San Antonio Recommended Plant List—All Suited to Xeriscape Planting Methods, for a list of appropriate materials and planting methods. Select plant materials with a similar character, growth habit, and light requirements as those being replaced.
- iv. Plant palettes*—If a varied plant palette is used, incorporate species of taller heights, such informal elements should be restrained to small areas of the front yard or to the rear or side yard so as not to obstruct views of or otherwise distract from the historic structure.
- v. Maintenance*—Maintain existing landscape features. Do not introduce landscape elements that will obscure the historic structure or are located as to retain moisture on walls or foundations (e.g., dense foundation plantings or vines) or as to cause damage.

#### B. ROCKS OR HARDSCAPE

- i. Impervious surfaces*—Do not introduce large pavers, asphalt, or other impervious surfaces where they were not historically located.
- ii. Pervious and semi-pervious surfaces*—New pervious hardscapes should be limited to areas that are not highly visible, and should not be used as wholesale replacement for plantings. If used, small plantings should be incorporated into the design.
- iii. Rock mulch and gravel* - Do not use rock mulch or gravel as a wholesale replacement for lawn area. If used, plantings should be incorporated into the design.

### 4. Residential Streetscapes

## **A. PLANTING STRIPS**

- i. Street trees*—Protect and encourage healthy street trees in planting strips. Replace damaged or dead trees with trees of a similar species, size, and growth habit as recommended by the City Arborist.
- ii. Lawns*—Maintain the use of traditional lawn in planting strips or low plantings where a consistent pattern has been retained along the block frontage. If mulch or gravel beds are used, low-growing plantings should be incorporated into the design.
- iii. Alternative materials*—Do not introduce impervious hardscape, raised planting beds, or other materials into planting strips where they were not historically found.

## **B. PARKWAYS AND PLANTED MEDIANS**

- i. Historic plantings*—Maintain the park-like character of historic parkways and planted medians by preserving mature vegetation and retaining historic design elements. Replace damaged or dead plant materials with species of a like size, growth habit, and ornamental characteristics.
- ii. Hardscape*—Do not introduce new pavers, concrete, or other hardscape materials into parkways and planted medians where they were not historically found.

## **FINDINGS:**

- a. The structures addressed as 502-504 and 506-508 E Guenther are located on the same parcel immediately north of the E Guenther/Crofton split in the King William Historic District. The structure addressed as 502-504 E Guenther was constructed circa 1900 and first appears on a Sanborn map in 1904. This structure is located toward the rear (east) of the lot. The structure addressed as 506-508 E Guenther was constructed circa 1930 and is shown on the 1951 Sanborn map. This structure is located toward the public right of way at E Guenther.
- b. On April 6, 2016, the applicant received an Administrative Certificate of Appropriateness to install gravel on a dirt area at the rear of the site. Since that time, the applicant has removed the existing turf from the planting strip at the public right of way, has removed turf from the front and side yards of the lot and has installed gravel. Per the Guidelines for Site Elements 3.A.ii., traditional lawns should not be fully removed or replaced and that historic lawn areas should never be reduced by more than fifty (50) percent. Additionally, the Guidelines for Site Elements 3.B.iii. notes that rock mulch and gravel should not act as a wholesale replacement for lawn area. The applicant has modified the historic lawn area on this parcel in a manner that is not consistent with the Guidelines. An official notice was left on site on October 26, 2016, and another delivered via mail on August 11, 2017.
- c. At this time, the applicant has proposed to install plant materials including Ajuga, Dahlbert Daisy, Frogfruit and Winecups in the planting strip between the street and sidewalk and immediately in front of the primary historic structure, noted as areas 2 and 3 on the site plan. The applicant has proposed to maintain the existing, unapproved gravel between the concrete driveway strips and on the west side of the property, areas 1 and 4 on the site plan.
- d. Staff finds the installation of the proposed plant materials in the front yard, areas 2 and 3 to be appropriate. Materials in the planting strips vary along E Guenther. Additionally, staff finds the installation of gravel between the ribbon strips of the driveway to be appropriate. Staff does not find the installation of the gravel in area 1 to be appropriate. Staff finds the applicant should return this location to grass to adhere to the fifty percent of front yard grass requirement noted in the Guidelines for Site Elements, 3.A.ii.
- e. The approval of gravel at this location would allow for the use of the area for automobile parking. Parking would not be allowed in grass or landscaped areas that are not maintained with a hardscape such as gravel, concrete, brick, or asphalt.

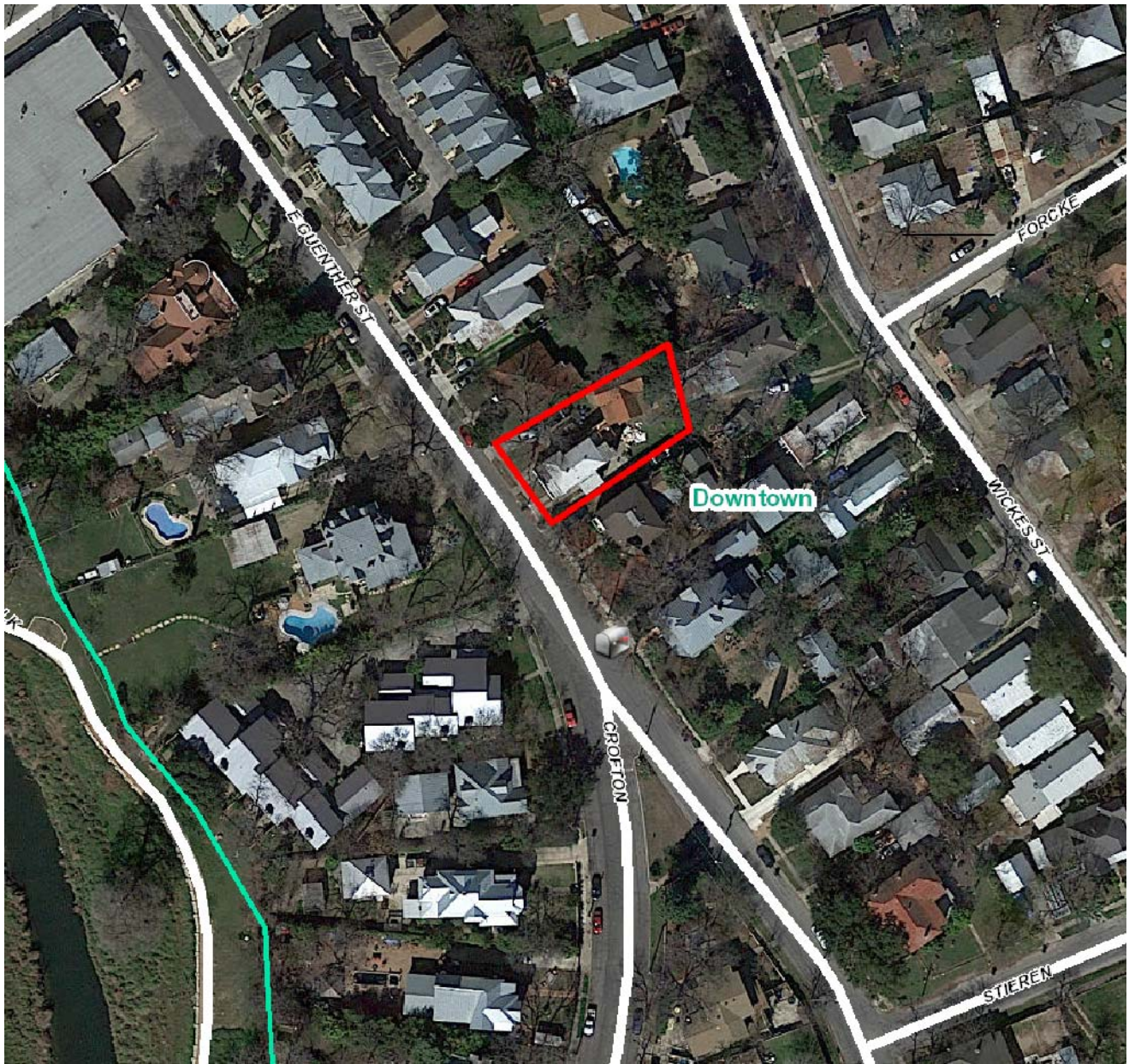
## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval based on findings a through d with the following stipulation:

- i. That the applicant return area 1, the western most portion of the site to natural grass or green landscaped area.

## **CASE MANAGER:**

Edward Hall



## Flex Viewer

Powered by ArcGIS Server

Printed: Nov 21, 2016

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**FOR LEASE**  
K B ROSE, LLC  
210-364-2721



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S. ALAMO

River

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GUENTHER

937

FORCKE ST.

WICKES

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STIEREN

GUENTHER

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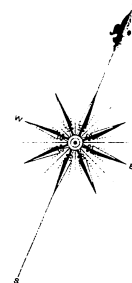
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CROFTON

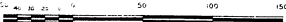
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SAN ANTONIO



Scale of Feet.



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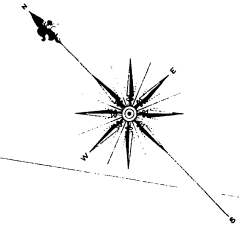
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ADAMS

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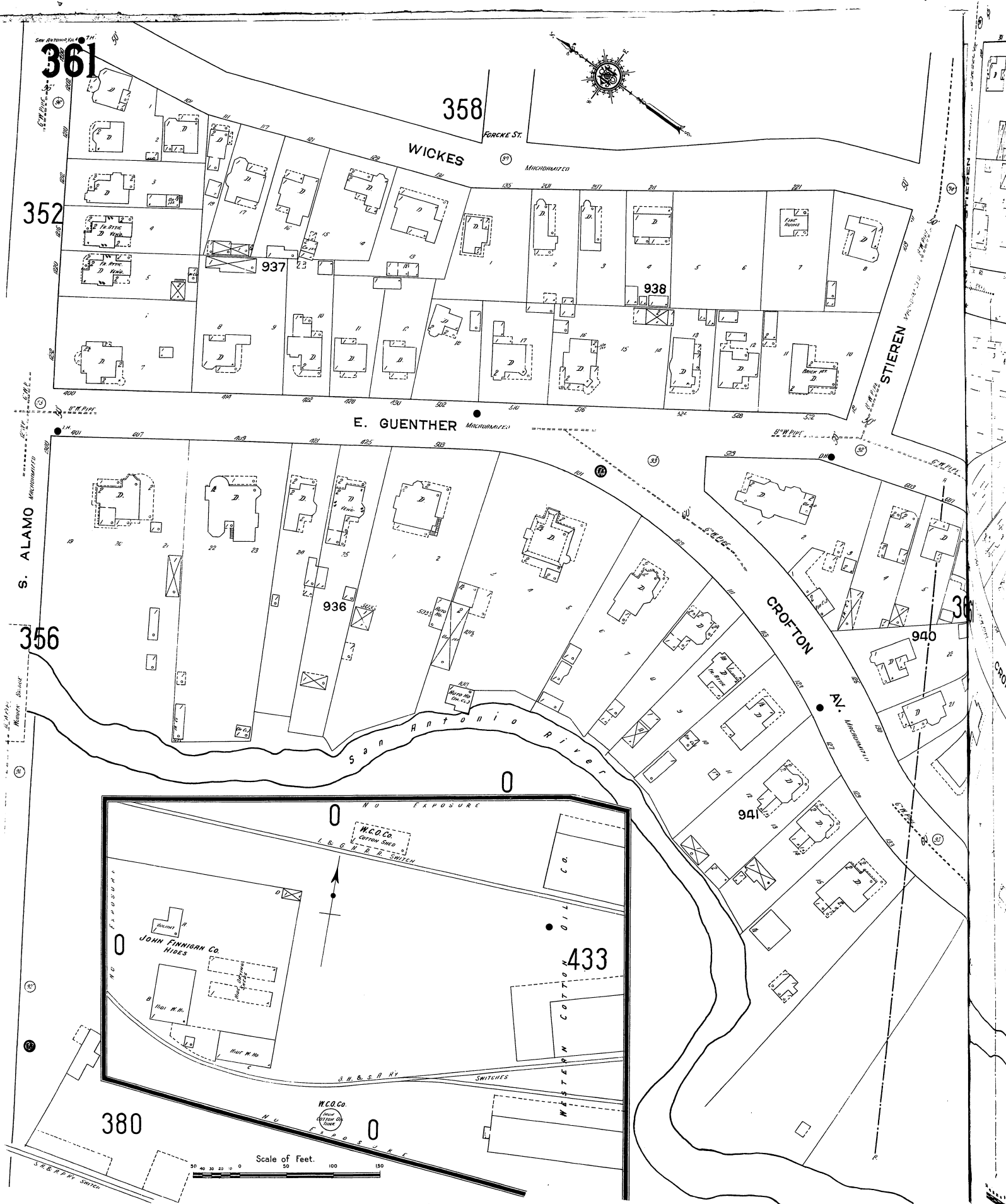
San Antonio River

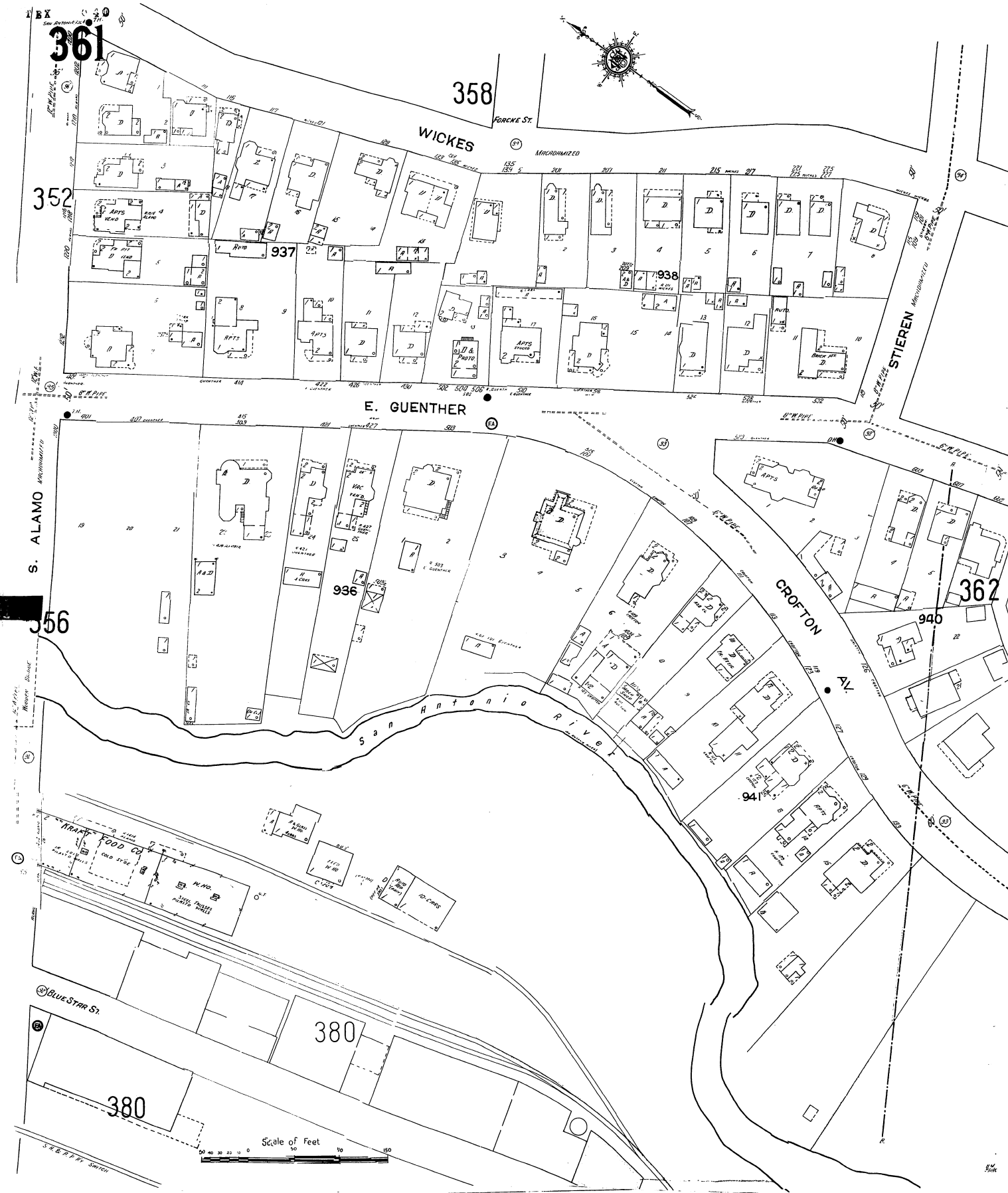
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Scale of Feet.

50 40 30 20 10 0 50 100 150





David Antón Armendáriz

120 Cedar Street,  
San Antonio, Texas 78210

Ph. (210) 396-8468  
[davida@dmcausa.com](mailto:davida@dmcausa.com)

August 19, 2017

Re: 502 – 508 E Guenther St.,  
San Antonio, Texas, 78210

To Whom It May Concern,

Please accept the attached Historic Design Review Commission Application Form and accompanying index as a request to modify an approximately 900 square foot portion of the landscaping in the front area of the above-referenced property. The property is a multi-family rental and the affected area receives a lot of foot traffic both from tenants and from pedestrians and even vehicle traffic so any landscaping must withstand that traffic.

The current landscaping consists of a mixture of small gray stones, approximately ½ inch in diameter, weeds, and crabgrass. Index, pgs. 2 – 5.

There are four main areas affected by this request, each of which is identified by number on the attached survey, Index, pg. 1:

1. Area 1 is approximately 400 square feet. It is directly under the canopy of a large pecan tree, resulting in only partial sun exposure. Currently it is principally covered by the gray stones. Index., pg. 4. It receives daily foot and vehicle traffic from tenants. In light of the minimum sun and regular traffic, I request that the gray stones be allowed to stay on this portion.
2. Area 2 consists of the two separate rectangular strips between the sidewalk and the street. This area gets full sun, facing south. The total area is about 100 square feet. It is currently covered by a mixture of the gray stones, weeds, and crabgrass. Index., pgs. 2 – 4. It receives daily foot traffic from tenants and pedestrians. I request that I be allowed to ring these areas with brown metal lawn edging, Index, pg. 6, to discourage foot traffic, and then to plant Aguja,

which is a short ground cover that can tolerate full sun. Index, pgs. 7 – 8. Aguja is on the SAWS water conservation plant list.<sup>1</sup>

3. Area 3 includes two pieces of land. The first, a square of about 100 square feet, is located between the two front entrance doors, facing south towards the street, immediately in front of the foremost residential building. Index, pg. 5. The second, a very narrow rectangular area (visible at Index, pg. 2), is located at the southeast corner of the building, right next a front entrance door. It borders the driveway to the rear. Currently these two areas are principally covered by the gray stones. They receive daily foot traffic from tenants, the mailman and anyone entering that building. I request that I be allowed to ring these areas with brown metal lawn edging, Index, pg. 6, to discourage foot traffic, and then to plant a mixture of Aguja (previously mentioned), Dahlberg Daisy, Frogfruit, and Winecups. These low-growing flowering ground cover plants are all on the SAWS water conservation plant list. See Index, pgs. 7 – 14.
4. This long rectangular strip is located between the two strips of driveway concrete. It is visible in the foreground of the picture at Index, pg. 2. It receives daily foot and vehicle traffic, in light of which, I request that the gray stones be allowed to stay on this portion.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Antón Armendáriz', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Antón Armendáriz

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<sup>1</sup> Available at

[http://www.saws.org/conservation/outdoor/plants/plantlistdrill.cfm?Plant\\_G\\_ID=7](http://www.saws.org/conservation/outdoor/plants/plantlistdrill.cfm?Plant_G_ID=7)

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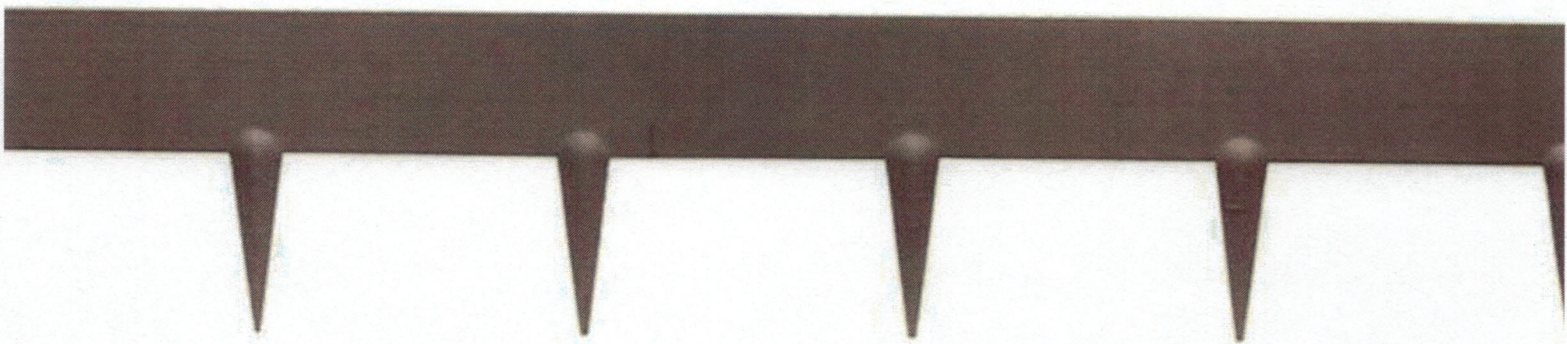








005



AGUJA



AGUJA



DAHLBERG DAISY



DAHLBERG DAISY



FROGFRUIT



FROGFRUIT



WINECUPS



013

WINECUPS

