

## Flex Viewer

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Printed: Jun 18, 2018

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Submitted by Applicant | June 15, 2015

REAR, RIGHT





Submitted by Applicant / June 15, 2015

REAR





REAR, LEFT



























Submitted by Applicant | June 15, 2015

REAR, RIGHT





Submitted by Applicant / June 15, 2015

REAR



REAR, LEFT





Submitted by Applicant | June 15, 2015

LEFT



Submitted by Applicant | June 15, 2015

RIGHT





FRONT









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CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

## Statement of Significance

**Date: June 21, 2018**

**Tier: 2**

**Property Address: 1603 S Hackberry**

**Known Name: Crystal Ice Factory**

### *1. Application Details*

Applicant: Erika Hizel

Type: Landmark Designation

Date Received: June 15, 2018

### *2. Findings*

The property at 1603 S Hackberry is a two story brick ice house built c. 1929. It is currently owned by We No Tell Lounge, LLC.

The Barnes Terrace Addition No. 2 was subdivided between 1927 and 1928 by Thomas Edison Barnes.<sup>i</sup> Today this area is included in the Denver Heights Neighborhood Association, but prior to the construction of Interstate 10 it was more closely connected with Highland Park. The blocks subdivided by Barnes were bound between Aberdeen Street and South Hackberry. Just east of Aberdeen Street, the Thomas Nelson Page School was built in 1925 to serve this rapidly growing neighborhood.<sup>ii</sup> Commercial development along South Hackberry by 1929 included two grocery stores, two filling stations, a department store, cleaners, and plumbing store between just the 1600 and 1800 blocks, underscoring the importance of this retail cluster for Highland Park residents.<sup>iii</sup>

Joe X. Newcomb purchased this property in 1928 from Thomas Edison Barnes, and contracted with Barnes (who also operated a lumber company) to construct the icehouse.<sup>iv</sup> Newcomb was an experienced ice manufacturer from Ennis, Texas.<sup>v</sup> Several members of the Newcomb family were involved with the business – Bessie and Gerald were in sales, and Waldo was the secretary-treasure for the company, and they all lived on West Drexel, in the block just west of the factory.<sup>vi</sup> The Crystal Ice Company remained in operation at this location through 1943, after which it changed hands several times while still producing ice. After a brief vacancy in the late 1950s, the structure became a bar/lounge through the 1960s and 1970s.

### *3. Architectural Description*

The two-part commercial block factory sits on a corner triple lot facing South Hackberry. The structure stands two-stories tall along the South Hackberry commercial corridor, and relatively larger massing than its neighboring structures. It's adjacent to a one-and-a-half story historic filing station and to two-story four-plex. Across the street are one-story mid-century





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commercial structures. The factory's setback, 10 to 15 feet, is consistent with its filing station neighbor while the four-plex sits on the front property line. The factory has a parking area in front and to the side of the building.

The factory is a two-part commercial block with a parapet and a decorative cornice. It has plaster siding with its first floor entrances and bays enclosed and boarded up. There are 3 bays on the two-story portion, and another bay on the one-story north wing. One of the bays has been opened up with no fenestration, altering the original window fenestration. The second story has two steel windows in each bay, each with 3-by-3 dividing lights. The one-story wing also has parapet and a matching cornice. On this wing there are awning anchors with the awning missing. The factory has a rear addition, creating a L-plan shape. Originally it was a linear plan.

#### *4. Landmark Criteria*

The structure meets landmark criteria 5, 7, and 11, which are outlined in the Unified Development Code (UDC Section 35-607).

5. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials; as an intact example of a 1920s ice house, a well-insulated structure with few windows to minimize heat gain with a small retail outlet attached.

7. Its unique location or singular physical characteristics that make it an established or familiar visual feature; as a highly visible two-story commercial structure located on a prominent corner on South Hackberry with shallow setback of approximately 10 feet.

11. It is distinctive in character, interest or value; strongly exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, ethnic or historical heritage of San Antonio, Texas or the United States; as an excellent example of the ice manufacturing industry which flourished in San Antonio. This was likely one of the last icehouses constructed, as electric refrigerators became more ubiquitous in local households.

#### *5. Outcome of Review*

Based on this assessment, 1603 S Hackberry meets three of the sixteen criteria listed in UDC Section 35-607(b). In order to be eligible for landmark designation, a property must meet at least three of these criteria; thus 1603 S Hackberry is eligible for designation as a local landmark. Additional research may uncover more information about the significance of this property. As noted above, some modifications have been made to the structure over time,



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including some changes to the first floor entrances and removal of the canopy. These alterations are largely reversible.



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<sup>i</sup> Bexar County Property Records 1928 Deed V. 1025 p. 432 and Deed V. 1023 p. 494.

<sup>ii</sup> Sessions, T. Irwin. 2015. *San Antonio's Historic Architecture*. Arcadia Publishing: Charleston, SC.

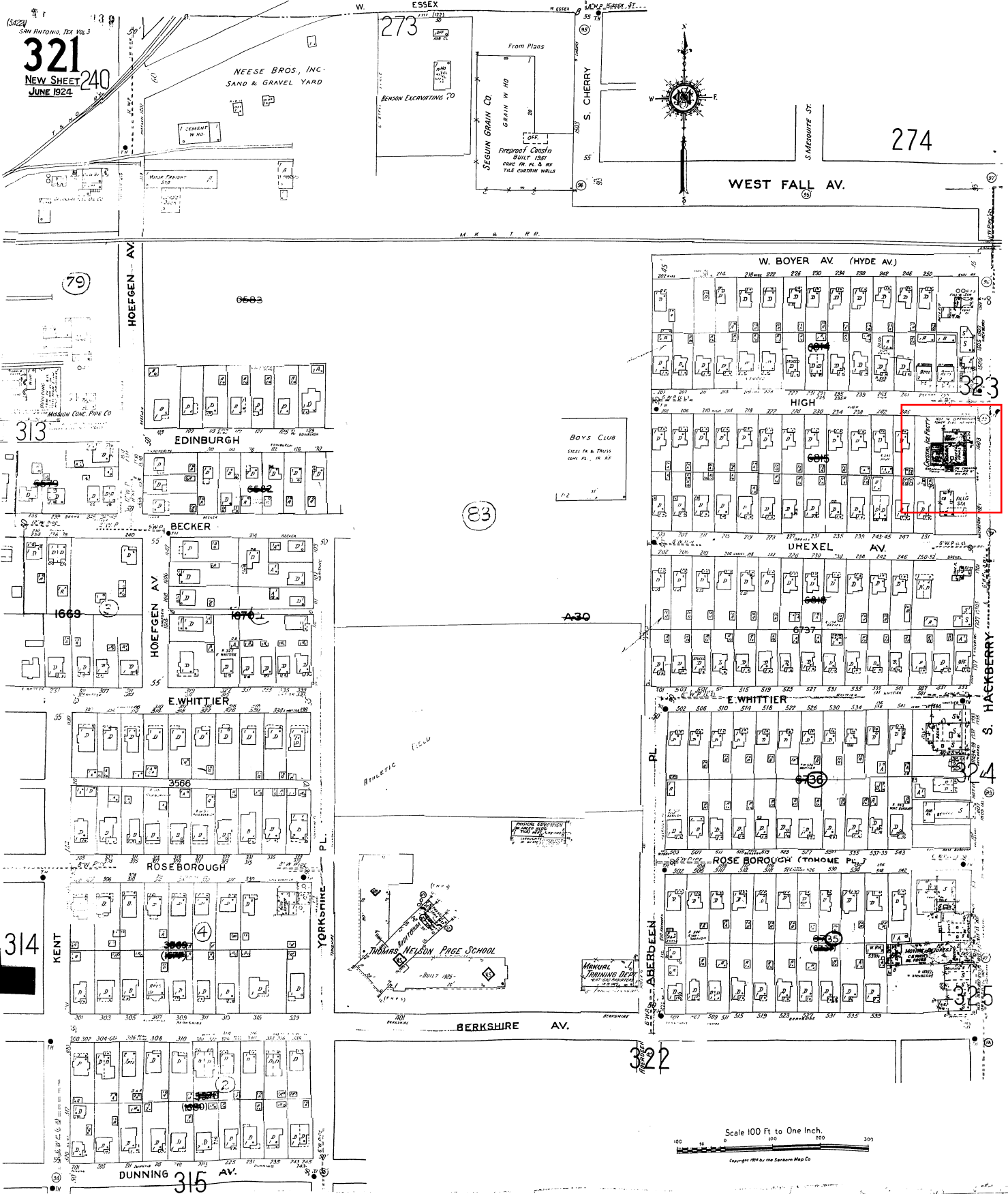
<sup>iii</sup> San Antonio City Directory, 1929.

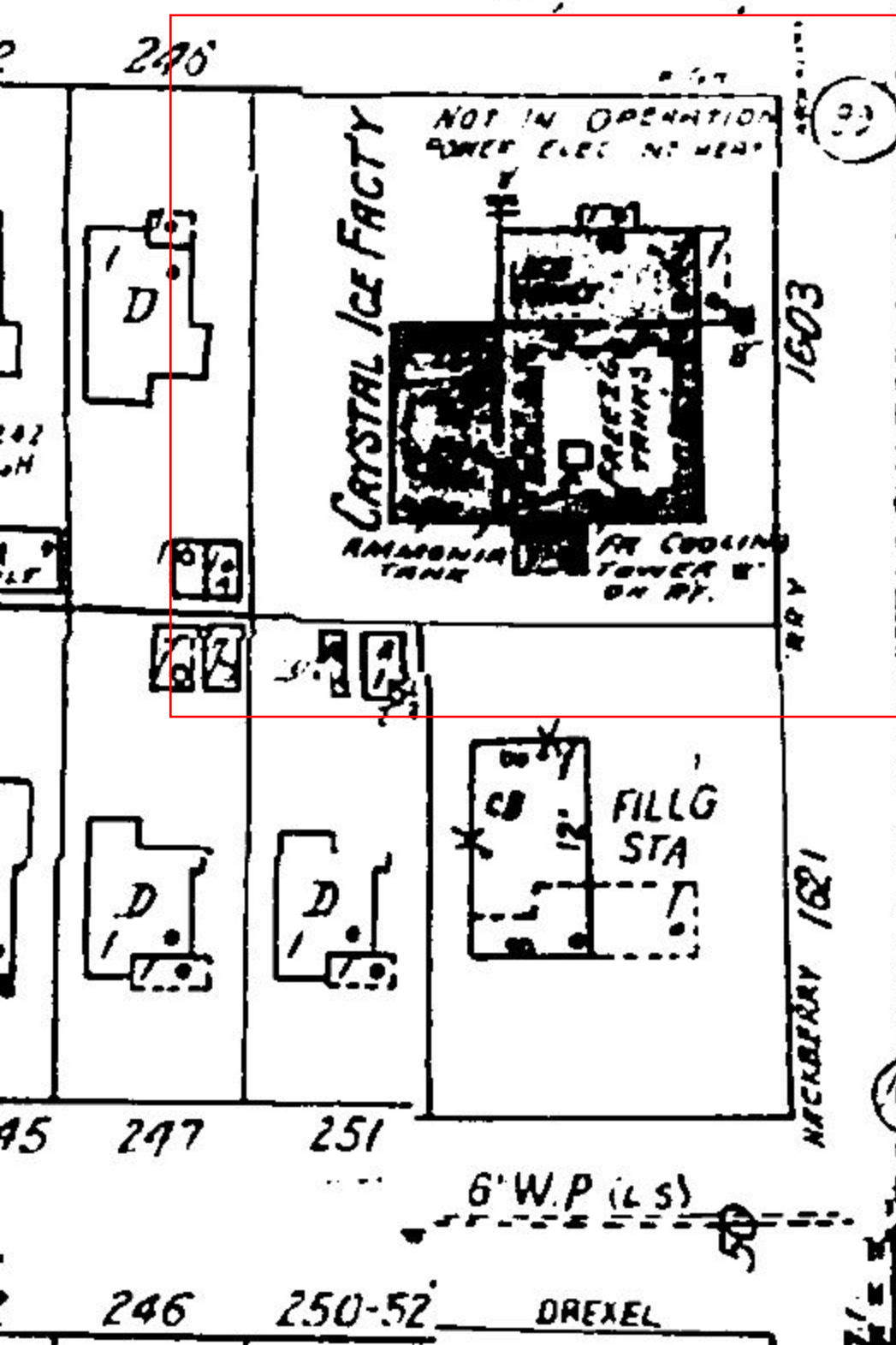
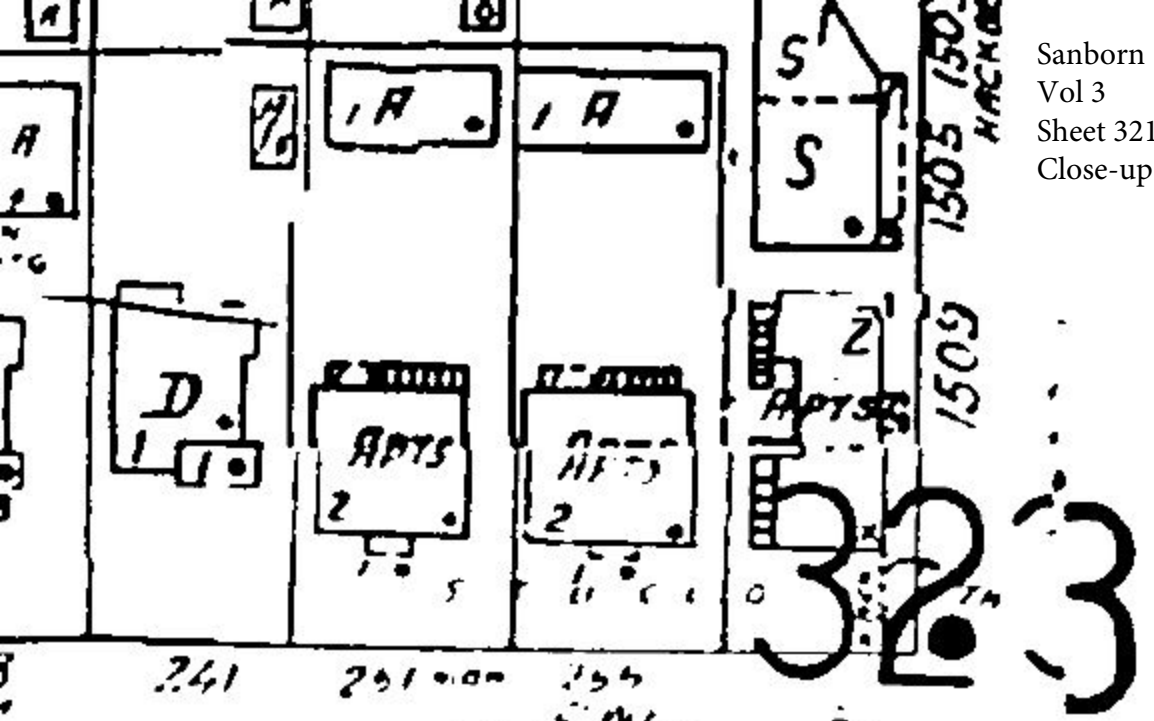
<sup>iv</sup> Bexar County Property Records 1928 Mechanic's Lien V. 122 p. 442.

<sup>v</sup> "Crystal Ice Factory To Have Up-To-Date Production Plant." P. 12A, *San Antonio Light*, 1 Sept. 1928.

<sup>vi</sup> San Antonio City Directory, 1929.









# NEW SOUTH SIDE PLANT

The Crystal Ice Factory, Hackberry and High avenue, is one of newest additions to the Highland Park community center. No expense has been spared in making this one of the finest ice manufacturing plants in the city.



## CRYSTAL ICE FACTORY TO HAVE UP-TO-DATE PRODUCTION PLANT

An important addition to the community center at Highland Park on South Hackberry street is the new "Crystal Ice Factory," corner of Hackberry and High avenue. It is a model of beauty and sanitation, being constructed throughout of concrete, tile and steel and finished in "sparklewhite." The power is furnished by electricity and is especially devised so that it is unusually silent.

The New York Machinery company, the largest exclusive ice machinery company in the world, is employing the best of engineering practice and are furnishing this plant with the latest word in equipment.

The quality of the manufactured product of the Crystal Ice Factory

will be among the best obtainable in the city. It will be pure and "crystal," as the name implies. The blocks will be of uniform shape, weight and size because the Arctic-Pawall stationary can tank is used, this being one of the best freezing tanks the market affords.

"While this plant will not be large, the first unit only fifteen tons per day, yet there will not be a finer or better equipped plant in Texas," says Joe Newcomb, owner and general manager of the Crystal Ice Factory.

Mr. Newcomb is familiar with all phases of the ice industry, having served as secretary-treasurer and director of the Ennis Ice company at Ennis for the past fourteen years. He will give the new plant his personal attention.

Details of the new plant will be given in the next issue.