

SBR Draft

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: The Hanako
Other name/site number: NA
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 4022 Greenhill Place
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Not for publication: Vicinity: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	_____ Date
Signature of certifying official / Title	
Texas Historical Commission State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> 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

The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

Category of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	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: single dwelling

Current Functions: Domestic: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification: Mid-Century Modern Residential: Ranch

Principal Exterior Materials: Wood, Stone

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-7 through 7-12)

The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: Community Planning and Development; Architecture (*local level of significance*)

Period of Significance: 1965

Significant Dates: 1965

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

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

Architect/Builder: Placek, John Walter (architect)

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 8-13 through 8-35)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheets 9-36 through 9-42)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. Part 1 approved on (date)
- 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:

- 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

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Less than 0.5 acres

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 30.379643° Longitude: -97.751428°

Verbal Boundary Description: The nominated boundary is the legal parcel: LOT 15 BLK O WESTOVER HILLS SEC 2 (Property #253873 Travis CAD) as shown on Map 4.

Boundary Justification: The boundary includes all property historically associated with the nominated building.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Karen Twer (current homeowner), Founder of
Organization: History Annotated
Street & number: 4022 Greenhill Place
City or Town: Austin State: Texas Zip Code: 78759
Email: historyannotated@gmail.com
Telephone: 678-849-2129
Date: December 19, 2019

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheets MAP-43 through MAP-45)

Additional items (see continuation sheets FIGURE-46 through FIGURE-53)

Photographs (see continuation sheets PHOTO-53 through PHOTO-61)

The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Photograph Log

Name of Property: The Hanako

City: Austin

County: Travis

State: Texas

Photographer: Karen Twer

Date Photographed: March 4, 2022

Photo 1: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0001

View: Primary dwelling, south elevation, camera facing north

Photo 2: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0002

View: Primary dwelling, south elevation, camera facing north

Photo 3: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0005

View: Primary dwelling, west elevation, camera facing east from across Mesa Drive

Photo 4: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0006

View: Primary dwelling, north elevation's breezeway with master bedroom façade (forward) and southern façade (right), camera facing east

Photo 5: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0007

View: Primary dwelling, north elevation's breezeway with garage faced (right) and southern façade (left) , camera facing west

Photo 6: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0008

View: Primary dwelling, north elevation's view of backyard, camera facing north toward Hyridge Drive

Photo 7: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0009

View: Primary dwelling, north elevation, camera facing south

Photo 8: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0011

View: Primary dwelling, north elevation, camera facing south-southwest

Photo 9: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0012

View: Primary dwelling, east elevation, camera facing south-southwest

Photo 10: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0013

View: Primary dwelling, interior of living room, camera facing south

Photo 11: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0014

View: Primary dwelling, interior of living and dining room, camera facing south-southwest

Photo 12: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0015

View: Primary dwelling, interior of foyer showing Terrazzo flooring, camera facing south

Photo 13: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0016

View: Primary dwelling, interior of family room and living room, camera facing south

Photo 14: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0017

View: Primary dwelling, interior of family room, camera facing north

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Photo 15: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0019

View: Primary dwelling, interior of kitchen, camera facing southwest

Photo 16: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0020

View: Primary dwelling, interior of “female side” of master bathroom, camera facing north

Photo 17: TX_Travis County_The Hanako_0022

View: Primary dwelling, interior of “male side” of master bathroom, camera facing north-northwest

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Narrative Description

The Hanako at 4022 Greenhill Place is one-story mid-20th century U-plan residence built for the 1965 Parade of Homes in Austin, Travis County. Sited on a large corner lot, it is in a postwar suburban neighborhood northwest of downtown. The Hanako's asymmetrical fenestration, rambling plan, limestone and wood exterior cladding, and window wall are common characteristics of the era's Ranch and Contemporary residential design. As its name suggests, the nominated home features exoticized Japanese architectural elements like horizontal wood exterior cladding, exposed ornamental roof beams, and references to screens in window glazing and interior wall paneling. It is frame construction on a concrete foundation with a low slung cross-hipped composition shingle roof that connects the house to a free-standing garage. The connection, original to its construction, renders the two buildings a single resource for nomination purposes. Overall, The Hanako retains good integrity to communicate its historical and architectural significance.

Setting

The Hanako is in suburb of Northwest Austin, Travis County called Westover Hills. **(Map 2)** The residential development is one of a dozen platted in the 1960s-1970s atop a ridge bounded by three highways—Loop 1/MoPac Expressway (Southeast), U.S. 183 (Northeast), and Loop 360/Capital of Texas Highway (Northwest)—and Steck Avenue (Southwest). Mesa Avenue, a commercial artery running northeast-southwest bisects this larger area (Northwest Hills). Meandering residential roads that branch off Mesa and Steck are characteristic of the era's suburban planning but also follow the topography, which becomes increasingly hilly further west.

The nominated building is at the corner of Greenhill Place and Mesa Avenue. **(Map 3)** It is one of 20 residences on Greenhill Place featured in the 1965 Parade of Homes, all of which are extant. These houses reflect the larger neighborhood's architectural character of one and two-story brick or stone Ranch houses with architectural details that reference a variety of styles: Neoclassical, Spanish Colonial Revival, Georgian, Colonial Revival, and Tudor. The Hanako, named by the builder because of its "Oriental Contemporary" style, was the only East Asian-influenced residence built for the event. Constructed for white middle-class homebuyers, the houses average 2,700 square feet in size with 2-5 bedrooms and 2-4 bathrooms each, have attached garages, and are sited on 0.5-acre lots with generous setbacks.

The Hanako, 4022 Greenhill Place

Built in 1965, The Hanako is a single-story residence 7.5 miles northwest of downtown Austin on a level 0.4-acre grassy corner lot with large, old growth trees.¹ It is positioned close to the eastern property line, which creates a spacious lawn on the south, west, and north (rear backyard) sides. A concrete driveway off Mesa Avenue leads to the rear, free-standing garage connected to the house by its continuous, hipped roof with a breezeway between the two buildings. This connection (original to its construction) renders the house and garage as a single resource for nominating purposes. The fenced entrance (west elevation) to the breezeway is a non-historic replacement for the original wooden fence. Landscaped beds surround the home's foundation, and a wood 8-foot-tall privacy fence lines the rear west, north, and east sides of the property. In 2021, the homeowners installed a swimming pool in the backyard.

General Appearance

The Hanako faces south to Greenhill Place. It has a modified rectangular plan (2,233 square-feet) on a concrete foundation with a cross-hipped composition shingle roof that extends over a breezeway to the rear, free-standing

¹ "Property Search." City of Austin. Travis Central Appraisal District: Austin, Texas. <https://www.traviscad.org/property-search/>.

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garage (facing the west elevation.) The roof has broad, over-hanging eaves with soffits finished in tongue and groove planks. Scallop cut rafters extend from each corner of the exterior, putting the carpenter's work on display and making the house's framework part of its design. Exterior walls are covered with rectangular ashlar cut limestone bricks laid in irregular courses, which is complimented by cedar siding installed in a horizontal board and batten style. Reminiscent of *shou sugi ban* siding, the siding and trim are presently painted black, which appears to be in keeping with the original "charcoal" color described in the Parade of Homes booklet.²

Austin architect John W. Placek dubbed his entry to the 1965 Parade of Homes "The Hanako," which is a Japanese female given name. Described then as "Oriental Contemporary-style," the nominated building's plan, fenestration, and details overlap Mid-century Modern Ranch with Contemporary, postwar-era types of suburban middle-class residential design popularized by California builders, like Cliff May and Joseph Eichler. Characteristic features present include its: low pitch roof, rambling/asymmetrical plan, outdoor patio, multiple wall cladding materials, broad chimney, and recessed entry. Integration of the interior-exterior, a characteristic feature of Contemporary-style, is limited to the primary elevation's window wall and gable end windows. The home's Japanese stylistic references—paneled wood, exposed ornamental roof beams, and interior screen-like wall paneling—were employed in the era's West Coast postwar Contemporary-style.

South (Primary) Elevation (Photo 2)

The south (primary) elevation is asymmetrically fenestrated with seven bays defined by engaged limestone square columns. An offset front-gabled projection is the elevation's main focal point, and under its eastern slope is recessed the home's single door entrance. Limestone walls form a small, enclosed porch leading to entry, a non-historic paneled door with a trapezoid fixed pane window above it. Left (west) of the front door is a window wall that extends to the gable. The projection has a shallow roofline with broad, overhanging eaves; a Japanese-inspired ornamental beam juts out at the gable's apex. There are two identical narrow bays on the south façade's west end. Each have an original metal casement window, vertically-set, with five horizontal panes set against the dark cedar siding. Right (east) of the front door are three bays: two feature horizontal metal windows set high under the gable; a bay of solid masonry is between them.

West Elevation (Photo 3)

An expanse of limestone cladding characterizes the west elevation (facing Mesa Avenue). The continuous roofline and wall cladding visually unite the house and free-standing, two-door garage. A gated wood-framed screen denotes the hyphen between the two buildings and gives access to the backyard. Originally, the screen had narrow, vertical wood slats and a metal gate with vertical bars. It is believed the design was reminiscent of traditional Japanese lattice (*koshi*), a privacy feature that allows ventilation and light to pass through. The original vertical slats are intact (**Photo X**), but horizontal wooden slats were added atop for additional privacy. Additionally, the original metal gate was replaced with one constructed of similar horizontal wooden slats. Right (south) of the hyphen is the house. In 2021, one of two original window openings (paired vertical-set windows with horizontal pane) on its west elevation was infilled with wood siding that matches the other elevations. Additionally, the historic small 1/1 metal frame kitchen window was enlarged to fit a non-historic frame 3-pane window.

The 550-square-foot two-door **garage** is at the north end of this façade, approximately sixteen feet from the house. Although it protrudes approximately four feet from the western façade of the house, the nominated building's limestone siding and continuous roofline provide visually continuity that obscures the difference in depth. The garage's northern and eastern are clad in horizontal board and batten siding.

² "1965 Parade of Homes," 2.

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North (Rear) Elevation (Photo 4-5, 7)

The north (rear) elevation's U-footprint is formed by the primary bedroom's extension and the covered breezeway and garage on the west side. Between is a concrete slab, the "lanai," generously shaded by the roof's wide eaves. It is a transitional space between the Hanako's interior and exterior spaces. The floor of the lanai is comprised of six rectangular concrete pads separated by black painted boards. The appearance is like tatami mats, where the linear grid formed by black bindings organize a space without restricting it. Black wood siding with regularly-space vertical narrow wood strips characterizes the rear façade and alludes to screens. From left (east) to right (west): the north elevation is fenestrated by a metal frame 5-pane window that lights the interior study, 5-light narrow double-doors with matching side lights flank the wide, low limestone chimney.

The primary bedroom's north elevation is fenestrated with one, offset narrow metal-framed window with five horizontal panes. An identical window is at the north corner of the bedroom's west elevation while a six-light wood door is at the south corner.

East Elevation (Photo 9)

The east elevation, clad in limestone blocks, is the least ornamented façade. A privacy fence and gate intersect the limestone-clad wall, which put part of this elevation (an interior bedroom) and its highly set aluminum frame horizontal window in the front yard. The remaining elevation has three openings: a small, high-set aluminum frame window and two, narrow 5-pane windows.

Interior (Figure 6)

The interior of the Hanako retains a high degree of integrity, with limited alterations largely confined to the primary bedroom suite and kitchen. On the interior, shared and public daytime spaces are positioned in the western wing of the house. Upon entering the house from the front door, a white based terrazzo floor with a mosaic of stone chips primarily in black, gray and tan extends from the foyer into the family room, kitchen, and utility room, creating a sense of continuity. The flooring is the original terrazzo installed in 1965. The durability of the floor makes it a practical choice. It also creates an organic feel that mimics pebbles in the paths of a Japanese garden. The terrazzo creates a sense of continuity and guides visitors towards the back of the house.

In the foyer, a rectangular border is inlaid into the floor with a contrasting black terrazzo material. **(Photo 12)** The design creates a subtle formality that organizes the centrally located space and is reminiscent of a Tatami floor mat. The foyer provides an indirect and gradual introduction to the living spaces and serves as a transition between the house's public and private spaces. The gypsum board walls of the foyer are covered in a black and gold metallic patterned wallpaper that appears to be original, as do two metal wall sconces. The ceiling of the foyer is smooth finished gypsum board. It rises from eight-feet to ten-feet as it mimics the slope of the gable above.

A large open doorway on the western wall of the foyer opens to the living room. **(Photos 10-11)** The living room enjoys an abundance of natural light from the wall of clerestory windows. A vaulted ceiling that reaches eleven-and-a-half feet at its maximum height mirrors the gable above. The ceiling is gypsum board with a smooth finish. An exposed central beam is at the center of the gable. It appears to have been painted black at one point in its life but is currently painted white. It is not known what its original finish was.

At the western end of the gable's slope, the living room opens to a dining area. **(Photo 13)** Similar to Japanese houses, where the same room is used for sitting and for dining, the two areas are not separated. The dining area is delineated, however, by its flat eight-foot ceiling. Plaster dentil crown moldings lends a formal and traditional atmosphere to the space that is not repeated anywhere else in the house.

The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

At the northern end of the foyer and living room is the family room. Double-louvered pocket doors between the living room and family room reflect a trend of zoned daytime use rooms, where the family room is a casual and active space but the living room and dining room are quiet and more formal.³ The walls are finished with ash paneling and a custom-built light fixture of the same wood highlights a sloped tray ceiling that rises to ten-feet high. The ceiling presently is covered in an acoustic “popcorn” finish, but it is not known if this is original. Between the vertically installed wall panels are narrow, recessed strips of black painted wall. The black lines between the panels and the pocket doors combine to create an effect similar to Japanese sliding panels, called *fusuma*, which act as partitions of spaces that can easily make a room more intimate or open.

A fireplace with the same square and rectangular cut natural-faced limestone bricks laid in irregular courses found on the house’s exterior is centered on the northern wall of the family room. Flanking the fireplace are non-historic aluminum frame sliding glass doors. Through one set, the garage’s southern façade is visible. It is clad in limestone bricks, which adds visual texture and a feeling of privacy to the interior. Through the other set of doors, the lanai and backyard are visible, inviting interaction with the outdoors and creating a unifying visual interest throughout the house’s public spaces. When the pocket doors are open, “there is little wall space between the living room and the enclosed lanai beyond the family room.”⁴

At the northwestern corner of the house is a galley kitchen. Although the cabinetry has since been updated and reconfigured, there was originally a dining area, “built-in cabinets and storage spaces in the modern Tappan gas kitchen.”⁵ The kitchen is accessible from both the family room and dining area. It is not known how the kitchen’s gypsum board ceiling was originally finished. Upon its most recent change in ownership, it was covered in an acoustic “popcorn” finish. The ceiling is now clad in white painted tongue-and-groove panels that replicate the overhangs and ceiling of the lanai on the exterior. The gypsum board walls of the kitchen had also been covered in faux bead board paneling at the time ownership was changed in 2018. The paneling has since been removed and the smooth finished gypsum board walls have been restored.

A utility room with space for laundry and a pantry is off the kitchen.⁶ It protrudes six feet from the main living area’s northern façade. By the time of its most recent change in ownership, the walls and ceiling of the utility room had been covered in faux bead board paneling. This paneling remains currently. They appear to have originally been clad in gypsum board, but the finish on the original surfaces is unknown. A door exits the utility room under the covered, roof arcade.

Except for the family room and living room, the ceilings throughout the house are eight feet tall. Most ceilings and all of the walls, including behind the family room’s paneling, are clad in smooth finished gypsum board. Much of the wooden baseboards and door casings in the house have been painted. However, it appears to have originally been stained to match the paneling in the family room and the kitchen cabinets. All the bedrooms and closets retain their original hollow-core doors. The surfaces of the doors are wood with a thin frame constructed from molding that mimic traditional raised panel doors. The doors were sanded smooth and stained the same as the family room paneling.

The eastern end of the house is a bedroom wing, accessed from a hallway off the foyer. The ceiling of the hallway has been covered in faux bead board paneling and its original surface is unknown. The hallway is lit by two metal wall

³ Jacobs, James A. *Detached America: Building Houses in Postwar Suburbia* (University of Virginia Press: Charlottesville, Virginia, 2015), 169-202.

⁴ “1965 Parade of Homes,” 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

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sconces that appear to be original. Reflecting another trend in residential design at the time, every member of the household had their own private space.⁷ From the foyer, a hallway leads past a coat closet and linen closet into two private secondary bedrooms. At the end of the hall, a bathroom features a vanity area separated from a tiled space with a toilet and combination shower and bathtub.

Ample storage throughout the house helps create an uncluttered space—a feature that answers desires of homebuyers and is in keeping with Japanese design philosophies. A total of nine closets are in the bedroom wing of the house. Built-in cabinetry is in each bathroom. One of Placek’s children has recalled that when she once asked why he built drawers in the closets of their house (a feature also found in one of the Hanako’s primary bedroom closets), he began to extensively and passionately talk about “how important it was to make the best use of every inch of space in a house without detracting from its elegance.”⁸

The entrance to the primary bedroom is recessed off the main hallway. Reflecting a trend in flexible-use interior spaces, a set of double pocket doors separated the sleeping area from a study large enough to function as a fourth bedroom and includes a full closet and separate door into the hallway.⁹ According to the Parade of Homes plan book, the pocket doors offer the option to be “closed off or opened to the owner’s wishes.” This flexible-use option is also keeping with Japanese architecture, where rooms serve many purposes.¹⁰

A walk-in closet and smaller cedar lined closet are positioned just off the hallway inside the door to the master suite. “His” and “Hers” bathrooms further reflect trends of the era with two separate bathrooms that lend a luxurious atmosphere to the private space. As the Parade of Homes plan book described it, the bathrooms are one of the “most unusual features” of the house.¹¹ (Photos 16-17) One bathroom intended for the mistress of the house includes a large walk-in closet with a built-in chest of drawers, a “mosaic tile enclosed sunken Roman tub,” private toilet, built-in cabinetry and expansive vanity. The bathroom intended for the master of the house included a dressing area with built-in cabinets and drawers, a large vanity, toilet and private shower stall with glass door. In the 1960s, builders were aware that the majority of women still enjoyed baths, but men tended to prefer showers and thus began installing shower stalls with private glass doors in addition to traditional bathtubs.¹²

A door opens from the master suite onto the lanai, offering a private connection to the outdoors. It is not known how the gypsum board ceiling of the master bedroom was originally finished. Upon its most recent change in ownership, it was covered in an acoustic “popcorn” finish. Four 2-inch by 2-inch wooden boards created a box-shaped frame that was centered in the room. The frame has since been removed and the ceiling is now clad in white painted tongue-and-groove panels that replicate the overhangs and ceiling of the lanai on the exterior.

Among its luxury innovations, the Hanako originally featured a Rangaire whole-house intercom system with AM/FM receivers. Considered a luxury house electronics device in the 1960s, the intercom portion enabled room-to-room communication with the added bonus of being able to play music through any or all of the intercom stations in the house. The main control panel, which was located in the kitchen, had been removed and covered up by the time the present owners purchased the house. However, the original wall units are still in place in the bedrooms and on the lanai.

⁷ Jacobs, *Detached America*.

⁸ Placek, George and Placek, Louise, email message.

⁹ Lane, Barbara Miller. *Houses for a New Modern World: Builders and Buyers in American Suburbs 1945-1965* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, New Jersey, 2015).

¹⁰ Gordon, Elizabeth, Editor. “How to be *shibui* with American things.” *House Beautiful*, September 1960.

¹¹ “1965 Parade of Homes,” 2.

¹² Jacobs, *Detached America*, 174-176.

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Alterations and Integrity

Most historic and non-historic age alterations were completed as regular maintenance or to fit the changing tastes of the home's owners. The dual garage doors, front door, and exterior doors of the garage and utility room have been replaced. Sometime between 1965 and 1967, a privacy fence was installed in the back of the property.¹³ The roof has been re-shingled twice in the house's lifetime, but its pitch is unaltered.¹⁴ In May 1968, a permit for a 384 square foot swimming pool was issued but it was infilled after 2013.¹⁵ In 2021-22, the current owners built a new swimming pool. In 2018, wooden slats were installed on the gate between the house and garage, but the original wood framework was retained. Aside from updated fixtures and appliances and cosmetic updates such as paint and wallpaper over the years, the house's interior details remain mostly authentic. The layout remains true to the model plan. Hardwood floors have replaced carpeting in the living room, dining room, hallways and bedrooms, but the original terrazzo floors in the foyer, family room, kitchen and laundry remain. In 2018, the primary bathroom was remodeled with non-historic vanities and a walk-in shower. It retains the original built-ins, walk-in closet, toilets, but the shower connects the two bathrooms in place of the separate shower and bathtub. Except for the removal of a portion of the wall that had separated the shower and bathtub, the original layout of the bathroom has not been altered. In 2019, a solid wall replaced pocket doors that originally separated the primary bedroom from the study.

The Hanako retains good integrity to convey its historic and architectural significance. It retains integrity of **location** and **setting** at its original site in, what is still, a northwest Austin suburban neighborhood with few modern intrusions. Since its construction in 1965, there have been no significant exterior alterations and the historic **design** remains intact. The house's low-slung roof, window wall, asymmetrical facades, broad chimney, generous yard, and interior plan are characteristic features of the era's Ranch and Contemporary style residential design. Modest-influenced by Japanese building traditions are evident in ornamental rafter tails, screen-like 5-pane windows, siding, interior pocket doors, and paneling. Intact original **materials** include exterior limestone and wood cladding, terrazzo flooring, wood-paneled walls, aluminum-frame windows, and wood-frame doors. These and the overall design evidence the **craftsmanship** of postwar middleclass suburban builders and that of the local architect, Placek. Because it retains a high degree of integrity of location setting, design, materials, and craftsmanship, The Hanako continues to demonstrate the feeling and association it shares with postwar middleclass suburban development and design as shaped by the Parade of Homes.

¹³ Classified Ad 10, No Title," *The Austin Statesman*, April 23, 1967, p. C11.

¹⁴ "Building permit number 171238," (Austin, Texas: City of Austin, March 15, 1978), and personal records of Clifton Wiles, 2013.

¹⁵ "Building permit number 108116," (Austin, Texas: City of Austin, May 17, 1968).

The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Statement of Significance

Built for the 1965 Parade of Homes, the Hanako in Austin, Travis County represents model home marketing methods used by builders, real estate agents, and developers to promote and sell property in the city's emerging Northwest Hills suburbs. In the 1960s, Austin became a center for research and development with one of the fastest growing economies in Texas. Northwest Austin was developed for a growing population of white, middle-class skilled professionals, and the Parade of Homes promoted the new neighborhoods. The parades showcased affordable architect-designed model homes, like the Hanako, with modern amenities, traditional layouts, and a contemporary aesthetic. The Hanako also exemplifies a top-down translation of contemporary architectural high-style as a middle-class suburban house influenced by Japanese design made popular by *House Beautiful* in 1960. Speculative model houses, like those in the Parade of Homes, were marketable and affordable versions of shelter magazine homes that catered to middle-class desires for privacy, spaciousness, and style. Named "the Hanako," a feminine Japanese given name, the nominated house offered homebuyers exoticized Japanese architectural elements with traditional features common to the era's suburban Ranch or Contemporary style houses. It is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development and Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level of significance. The period of significance is 1965, the year The Hanako was built which also represents a larger development trend at the time of construction.

CRITERION A: COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Postwar Suburban Development in Austin, Travis County

Austin's postwar suburban development occurred alongside the emergence of a new knowledge economy. In the 1940s and 1950s, political and business leaders leveraged Austin's traditional strengths—higher education and government—to evolve the small city into a center for scientific research and development. This "industry without smokestacks" produced human capital—a labor market of skilled workers from the University of Texas and recruited from out-of-state. Dozens of university-affiliated and premiere private research facilities and electronic manufacturing companies opened in north and northwest Austin by the mid-1960s, a trend that continued for decades and laid the foundation for today's tech-based economy.¹⁶ Research Boulevard, which runs along Highway 183, is named for the industry that came to dominate that part of Austin.

Growth-minded politicians, the business community, and real estate developers encouraged economic growth by promoting Austin as an attractive city in which to live. Nationally circulated articles extolled "the scenic countryside surrounding Austin; the cultural amenities such as plays, libraries, sports, and conferences; the recreational opportunities due to climate and geography and the advantages of raising a family in the area."¹⁷ These public and private interests were behind several decades of careful and concerted municipal planning that created Austin's pastoral environment, which was a privilege marketed exclusively to upper-middle class white people.¹⁸ For Downtown, West Austin, and later Northwest Austin to be nonurban and nonindustrial, East Austin became the area "to hide undesirable but necessary components of the city's fabric as well as racial minorities."¹⁹ These nonurban qualities led to *U.S News and World Report* listing Austin as the 14th most desirable cities in which to live in 1965.

¹⁶ Andrew Busch, "Building 'A City of Upper-Middle-Class Citizens': Labor Markets, Segregation, and Growth in Austin, Texas, 1950-1973," *Journal of Urban History* 39 (Vol. 5): 977-978.

¹⁷ Robbins, Paul, "The Town That Won the Pennant: A Short History of Austin's Economic Development," *Austin Environmental Directory*, 2003, <https://environmentaldirectory.info/a-short-history-of-austins-economic-development/>.

¹⁸ For further reading, see Eliot M. Tretter, "Austin Restricted: Progressivism, Zoning, Private Racial Covenants, and the Making of a Segregated City," Institute for Urban Policy Research and Analysis, and Andrew M. Busch, *City in a Garden: Environmental Transformations and Racial Justice in Twentieth-Century Austin, Texas* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

¹⁹ Busch, 981.

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Indeed, the city attracted thousands of skilled white-collar workers to the fast-growing knowledge industry. In 1950, the census recorded a population of 132,459. Fifteen years later 214,117 people were enumerated, a 62% increase. Furthermore, cultural geographer Andrew Busch noted more than half of Travis County residents in 1973 were recent transplants, having lived in the area for less than 10 years. Income rates also soared. Between 1959 and 1969, Austin's per capita income rose 41% and family income rose 46%.²⁰ Although more people were moving to Austin, the population density (persons per square mile) decreased from 3,386 in 1960 to 3,144 in 1970 as most moved to suburban areas in previously undeveloped parts of northwest Austin.²¹ Suburban development in the 1960s expanded city limits by roughly 70%, from 51 to 86 square miles.²² New neighborhoods, like Westover Hills, mushroomed overnight on Austin's west and northwest sides. Builders specialized in housing for mid-to-upper class incomes while there "was a virtual absence of new housing starts for low-to-moderate income families."²³

Although racial covenants limiting the sale or lease of real estate to Black and Hispanic people could not be enforced after 1948, Austin's segregated residential geography remained intact through the 20th century.²⁴ Municipal zoning, racist lending practices, and private racial covenants established, reinforced, and perpetuated the confinement of non-white Austinites to the eastside since the enactment of the 1928 City Plan. Forty years later, the Austin Fair Housing Ordinance was drafted to end racial discrimination in residential property transactions. However, the Austin Board of Realtors led a referendum vote against the ordinance, and voters handily defeated it in 1968. Suburban development marketed to African American and Hispanic homebuyers was limited to areas further east and northeast of East Austin. Examples of African American suburbs include the Cedar Valley, Rogers-Washington-Holy Cross, and St. John's. Westover Hills' deed restrictions did not mention race, but neighborhood homes were nevertheless sold to and resided in by white families.

Northwest Austin was isolated and sparsely settled through the mid-20th century. The area is geographically defined by the Jollyville Plateau to the east, the Bull Creek Valley in the south and the rugged escarpment-fault called Balcones Fault Line, which creates a western border (and roughly defined by MoPac Expressway).²⁵ Topographically, it is characterized as a hilly, rocky, and wooded terrain with natural springs from the Bull Creek watershed. Anglo-Americans from Appalachia settled in the hills as early as the 1870s. Referred to derisively as "cedar choppers," they established lumber mills to process Texas juniper (colloquially known as cedar) trees and quarried limestone to produce lime and charcoal. Some of the early settlers included the Boatright family, whose decedents still live in a cottage off Spicewood Springs Road. By the 1950s, however, locals observed, "town folks are moving into the hills, squeezing the choppers out."²⁶ **(Figure 4)**

Local developers David Barrow, Sr. and Wallace Mayfield were among the first to risk investment in the rocky, rolling terrain of northwest Austin.²⁷ Barrow anticipated the expansion of the city's affluent white community into greater West Austin (north of Colorado River and west of, what is now, Mopac) and, in a piecemeal fashion, began to purchase and develop upper and middle-class suburbs there in the early 1950s. He and his partners came to own 2,500 of 3,500 acres of Northwest Austin and developed it over the next 30 years.²⁸ Meanwhile, Mayfield began buying land

²⁰ Ibid., 980.

²¹ "City of Austin Community Inventory Report," 2-3.

²² Ibid, 128.

²³ Busch, 987.

²⁴ Bayou Brae Historic District, National Register of Historic Places.

²⁵ "Geological Wonders of Texas: Central Texas." Bureau of Economic Geology. The University of Texas at Austin.

<https://www.beg.utexas.edu/geowonders/centtex>.

²⁶ Sherrill, Bob. "Civilization Squeezing Out Texas Cedarbilly." *Texas Observer*, January 6, 1961, 6.

²⁷ Goleman, R. Kinnan. "David Brown Barrow Interview," transcript of an oral history conducted January 31, 1964, by R. Kinnan Goleman, Austin History Center, Austin, Texas.

²⁸ Orum, 318.

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in Northwest Hills, and what would become Westover Hills, in the late 1950s and early 1960s.²⁹

Northwest Austin's future residents would work downtown, and developers believed a highway was paramount to the area's growth and home sales.³⁰ Barrow, the City Planning Commission Chairman in the late 1950s, leveraged his influence and connections to secure funding for Mopac. Although it was a protracted effort that began in the 1940s, Barrow and fellow Northwest Austin developers campaigned for its construction through the mid-1960s. Concurrently, Austin gained a second north-south highway (Highway 360/Capital of Texas Highway) that ran roughly parallel to MoPac. In 1962, the Texas Department of Transportation had already outlined plans for building a stretch of State Highway Loop No. 360, also called "the Austin Loop," that would run from US 290 southwest of Austin, northeast to US 183/Research Boulevard, which connected to MoPac on the city's north side.

Westover Hills (Figures 1-3)

The Hanako was built as a model home for the 1965 Parade of Homes in Westover Hills Section II, a suburban neighborhood in Northwest Austin planned by Mayfield in the early 1960s. Promotions for Westover Hills touted its nonurban setting:³¹

Trees, trees, and more trees. Our pride and joy is the stately, age-old Live Oak trees of Westover Hills. We are, of course, proud of Westover Hills' convenient access to all parts of Austin, and nearby churches, schools and shopping centers, but mostly we like to talk about the trees . . . and the fine families that now own luxurious new houses in Westover Hills.³²

At its establishment, the neighborhood represented the furthest northern development in the area around Northwest Hills. Westover Hills consists of six contiguous and related phases of development. Development began in the east in 1963 with Section I along Balcones Drive (site of present-day MoPac Service Road) and progressed west. Development of Section II began in 1964 with Phases 3 through 6 developed between 1966 and 1973. A clubhouse with tennis and basketball courts, playground, wading and swimming pools opened in 1969. Smaller phases of development continued into the early 1980s.

Section II of Westover Hills was approved on July 28, 1964. Of interesting note and not perhaps incidentally, David Barrow, Sr. was the Chairman of the City Planning Commission at the time.³³ Application was made by Westover

²⁹ Orum, Anthony M. *Power, Money, and the People: The Making of Modern Austin* (Resource Publications: Eugene, Oregon, 2002), 316.

³⁰ Orum, 316-323.

³¹ Ames, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 138.

³² "Display Ad 146, No Title," *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. September 20, 1964, D14.

³³ Section II of Westover Hills was developed on land that had once been part of a 35,427.2-acre land grant for Thomas Jefferson Chambers in 1835. Chambers was a lawyer, land speculator, army general, and early Republic political figure. The land he was given was payment for his service as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Texas, but record of his possession was not returned to the Land Office until years later, after it had already been dispersed to veterans like James P. Wallace. James P. Wallace was an early Texas Ranger and soldier in the Republic of Texas army. In 1838, Wallace was rewarded for his service with two properties in Bastrop County (now Travis County). According to the county clerk, Wallace had been "Disabled by the top of an eye in an engagement with Indians under [Captain Robert Morris] Coleman on the Brazos". One of the parcels of land Wallace was awarded included 8 and one-third labors of land (the equivalent of around 1,474 acres). The property was "situated on the east side of the Colorado River in the County of Bastrop forty miles above Bastrop." It was later surveyed and in future records was referred to as 'Survey No. 18.' By the early twentieth century, the land around what became Westover Hills had been subdivided into parcels owned by multiple individuals. "Land Grant for Thomas Jefferson Chambers, File SC 000130:16." October 20, 1835. The Texas General Land Office. <http://www.glo.texas.gov/history/archives/land-grants/landgrants.cfm?intID=140097>; "Land Grant Applicants." May 1, 1838. Clerk Returns Bastrop County. File 000003. The Texas General Land Office. https://s3.glo.texas.gov/ncu/SCANDOCS/archives_webfiles/arcmaps/webfiles/landgrants/PDFs/1/0/6/0/1060382.pdf_Captain

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Hills, Limited, which was a limited partnership of Northwest Development Company. Mayfield was listed as general partner of Westover Hills, Ltd. and W.R. Reid acted as limited partner. Reid owned a 105-acre tract of the property.³⁴ Another 0.33 acres was on land still recorded as owned by James P. Wallace.³⁵ Little about Reid, his relationship with Wallace, and his ownership of the land is known. On August 13, 1965, when Section II of Westover Hills was annexed into the city of Austin, it was described as 47.97 acres of land from James P. Wallace Survey No. 18 and 0.77 acres of land out of the Thomas Jefferson Chambers grant.³⁶

In 1965, there was no development to the north, west or south of Section II. Mayfield's Northwest Development Co. also owned the undeveloped land to the north and west of Westover Hills Section II.³⁷ John Whatley owned the undeveloped parcel of land to the south of where Greenhill Place was as well as property on the southeast corner of the development. Between Whatley's properties, Austin Public Schools owned the parcel that later became Hill Elementary School and E. M. Jones owned the remainder of the undeveloped land along the southern boundary.

By 1968, houses had been built along Hyridge Drive where it paralleled Greenhill Place, but Greenhill Place remained the furthest western point of the development, with no development to the south.³⁸ Five years later, in 1973, roads had been developed north and west of Greenhill Place, but few houses had been constructed.³⁹ Property to the south of Greenhill Place remained undeveloped with the exception of Anderson High School one-quarter mile south at the intersection of Mesa Drive and Steck Avenue.

Today (2022), city of Austin boundaries extends over six miles west and north of the Hanako, with residential and light commercial development completely surrounding Westover Hills. As suburban growth expanded, the boundaries of developments have become blurred and local residents no longer refer to the neighborhood as Westover Hills specifically, but rather as "Upper Northwest Hills."

Marketing the Midcentury Home

The Model House Marketing Strategy

By 1955, professionals in the housing market realized homebuyers were more selective than they were in the immediate post-war years:⁴⁰

[This] new market of consumers, including those already housed in the first string of postwar houses but ready for an upgrade and those interested in the forms of modernism presented in the pages of housing magazines, motivated a heightened merchandising response from

Robert Morris Coleman led twenty-five mounted riflemen in a campaign against the Tawakonis near the village of Tehuacana Springs and Brazos River in July 1835; Travis County, Texas, Deed Records, 1360: 410 and EB09: 452, Travis County Clerk's Office, Austin, Texas; "Minutes of the City Council Regular Meeting August 13, 1964, 10:00 A.M." City of Austin, Texas. <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=44038>.

³⁴ "Westover Hills Section II," Plat Records. Volume 21, Page 3. July 28, 1964. Travis County Clerk's Office, Austin, Texas.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ "Property Profile Report: Annexation History." City of Austin. Travis Central Appraisal District: Austin, Texas. Accessed September 25, 2019. <https://www.austintexas.gov/gis/propertyprofile/>. Also "Minutes of the City Council Regular Meeting August 13, 1964, 10:00 A.M."

³⁷ "Westover Hills Section II," Plat Records.

³⁸ Austin News Agency. "Greater Austin Street Map "[map]. 1:16,500. Daytona Beach, Florida: Champion Map Corporation, 1985.

³⁹ United States Geological Survey. "Jollyville Quadrangle, Texas" [map]. Photorevised 1973. 1:24,000. 7.5 Minute Series. Reston, VA: United States Department of the Interior, USGS.

⁴⁰ Paxton, *What People Want*, 15.

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builders.”⁴¹

Builders consulted with architects to learn how to produce volume-built homes that appeared architect-designed. They wanted to offer the individualism and spaciousness homebuyers wanted from a custom-built house but at an attainable price point. Builders recognized that their products needed to be “appealing, livable, buildable and ultimately sellable, but most importantly, it had to provide psychological satisfaction.”⁴² The houses needed to match “the American version of ‘modern architecture’ with a hybrid of comfort and function, affordable by most buyers and prized by them.”⁴³

As a result of their collaborations with architects, a “type of modern and contemporary design emerged that builders adopted from various sources and then moderated and variegated through merchandising in order to appeal to a larger audience.”⁴⁴ For the builder of the mass market house, market studies had concluded that homebuyers were practical when it came to architectural styles and more interested in location, setting, size and arrangement of rooms. Nevertheless, builders understood that homebuyers had, “as a matter of fact, rather definite ideas concerning style, and builders planning to do well in a buyer’s market can turn a recognition of those ideas into an asset for his offerings.”⁴⁵ Builders began to “capitalize on the allure of ‘contemporary’ and ‘modern’ model houses, which was created through a top-down translation from architectural high-styles.”⁴⁶ The same styles that shelter magazines like *House Beautiful* filtered to consumers were filtered again to homebuyers through the architects and builders.

“After they developed the house product, builders turned their efforts to modeling it for the public.”⁴⁷ The housing boom had given rise to more competition between builders. A growing number of professional builders eager to meet the needs of homebuyers created a high level of competition. New methods of marketing and differentiating their products became necessary. Building model houses answered this merchandising need. They “embraced the model house as a publicity and merchandising device that created a sensory shopping experience for American consumers.”⁴⁸

As the purpose of the model house was to demonstrate to homebuyers how a builder’s house would look, feel, flow and function, sites were landscaped, and interiors decorated. Staged model houses helped homebuyers understand how spaces could work. Furniture could highlight features of the house and allow homebuyers to visualize their own furnishings in the space, creating a move-in-ready availability. The model house created a participatory consumer spectacle in which visitors were introduced to a variety of architectural ideas, materials, and styles, all presented as ways to bring about a better way of living.⁴⁹ When homebuyers toured a model house, they had the opportunity to witness the builder’s craftsmanship and their use of the latest techniques and products. Builders used the model house as a built form of mass advertising.

Parade of Homes

The heightened competition among builders in the post-war housing boom had led to a professionalizing of the industry with organizations like the National Association of House Builders. Affiliations with such organizations

⁴¹ Dodd, Samuel Tommy, “Merchandising the Postwar Model House at the Parade of Homes,” MA Thesis, University of Texas at Austin, August 2009.

⁴² Penick, *Pace Setter Houses*, 50.

⁴³ Lane, Barbara Miller, *Houses for a New Modern World: Builders and Buyers in American Suburbs 1945-1965* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, New Jersey, 2015), 221.

⁴⁴ Dodd, “Merchandising the Postwar Model House,” 44.

⁴⁵ Paxton, *What People Want*, 16.

⁴⁶ Dodd, “Merchandising the Postwar Model House,” 45.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 62.

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offered a unique merchandising opportunity for builders to display and publicize their model houses.

By building model houses for events like the Parade of Homes, builders and developers could highlight the attractive and livable qualities of their volume-built houses and market new suburban developments to masses of potential homebuyers. As a kind of conceptual show window, their model houses needed to be centrally located to “capitalize on the novelty of the growing highway system, the car, and the leisurely Sunday-afternoon drive.”⁵⁰ Less expensive, undeveloped land beyond traditional city boundaries provided the ideal location for the popular ranch houses with large private backyards that homebuyers wanted. Not bounded by the existing urban landscape, developers could create the kind of neighborhoods second-time middle-class homebuyers were seeking. By hosting Parade of Homes events in outlying areas of growing cities, developers and builders were influential in shaping the suburban development of expanding cities like Austin.

In 1948, the National Association of House Builders organized the first Parade of Homes, a novel form of sales merchandising and publicity. This branded showcase of the housing industry’s newest trends was so successful and popular that regional divisions of housing and building associations throughout the United States were soon hosting annual Parade of Homes events. In hundreds of cities, thousands of Americans visited the model houses displayed in Parade of Homes events. Builders and architects converted entire streets into showrooms, displaying the best construction technology, design, and neighborhood planning that the house-building industry had to offer.

The Parade of Homes was a collaborative experiential marketing method where everything was conveniently accessible, and everything was for sale. Homebuyers were exposed to the pre-selling of houses by mass advertising efforts. Model houses were advertised by the local industries that sponsored the specific model houses, by the retailers who furnished and decorated the specific houses, and then by the direct mailers, newspaper spreads, and other publicity that accompanied the Parade of Homes.

Parade of Homes events featured demonstrations of modern house-building methods and staged model houses. Builders presented furnished interiors and landscaped yards along with house construction to create an overall marketing presentation. Architectural styles, spatial planning, and interior design became promotional features that were presented to the public through a series of merchandising efforts that centered on the model house. “The model house, on display at the Parade of Homes, was a powerful advertising tool employed by postwar merchant-builders to sell modern design to a new market of informed consumers and second time homeowners. By extension, the Parade of Homes was a collection of model houses, exhibited on a model street—forming the beginning of a model subdivision.”⁵¹ Homebuyers wanted more than just a house. They were buying into a neighborhood and lifestyle that matched what magazines and television had influenced them into believing was modern. The Parade of House’s mix of real estate, architecture and spectacle was successful because it presented the level of domestic modernism sought after by homebuyers.

Builders and developers relied on architects to design the kind of distinctive houses that would rival custom-built houses. In addition to hiring architects, builders hired other specialists. Landscape architects help create a model street with perfect lawns. Interior designers carefully staged furniture to showcase a house’s functionality. Luxurious amenities and fixtures combined with stylish finishes to make the kind of modern domesticity featured in magazines seem attainable. Model houses built for the Parade of Homes were collaborative interpretations of the kind of modern domestic lifestyle homebuyers dreamt of.

Austin’s Parade of Homes

Parade of Homes events have been hosted in the city of Austin since at least 1952, when the Austin House Builders

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid, 32.

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Association presented twelve houses as part of a “National House Week.”⁵² By 1953, the House Builders Association of Greater Austin, a newly formed local professional organization was hosting the Parade of Homes. The Parade of Homes events of Austin in the 1950s focused on undeveloped areas to the north and south of downtown.

The houses of the 1952 event were scattered across Austin with the majority north of downtown near Allandale Road and Hancock Drive.⁵³ In 1953 and 1954, the events were located in Highland Park, a neighborhood “in northwest Austin’s Colorado foothills.”⁵⁴ In 1955, there were two sites: one in Gaston Park, northeast of Austin and south of the city in Barton Hills.⁵⁵ The 1956 Parade of Homes was again located in Barton Hills, which had been platted as a subdivision with six sections that eventually had 1,585 lots planned on its 535 acres.⁵⁶ Walter Carrington and Nelson Puett were among the developers and builders of Barton Hills, which, at the time, the area, just across the Colorado River and south of downtown, was largely undeveloped. “Today, what was once a developer’s dream on the outskirts of Austin is now a centrally located, mature, and cohesive neighborhood—a good place to live and raise a family.”⁵⁷ Carrington again built a house for the 1957 event, which was southwest of Austin in Park Forest.⁵⁸ By 1957, the event had established itself as an exciting spectacle. That year, the event was officially opened by Mrs. America and the mayor of Austin. It was in the Park Forest addition. The next year, it was north of downtown in Green Acres.

In the 1960s, the Parade of Homes events continued focusing on largely undeveloped areas south and northwest of the city. In 1961, it was in Highland Hills, a neighborhood nestled between what is today the Mopac Expressway and Northwest Hills. In 1962, the event was held in David Barrow Sr.’s Northwest Hills development. In 1963, there were three event sites. Two were in northeast Austin in developments that belonged to Carrington. Houses in Carrington’s University Hills neighborhood, which was featured that year, were quickly purchased by IBM employees relocating to Austin as well as educators—two of the industries the city had been consciously recruiting. The third 1963 site was again in Barrow’s Northwest Hills. In 1964, the Parade of Homes was southwest of the city. In 1965, it moved back to northwest Austin.

In addition to the spectacle the events provided Austinites, Austin builders and developers understood the mass-marketing opportunity the Parade of Homes offered. In 1963, one of the Parade of Homes “innovations” included a public opinion survey sponsored by the Austin Association of House Builders. According to parade committee chairman and a participating builder in the event, George MacDonald, “The purpose of the survey is to simply help us do a better job in supplying Austin residents with the kind of houses they most want, when and where they want them.”⁵⁹ While surveys of homebuyers were not a new tool, this localized survey indicates that subsequent Parade of Homes houses were specifically targeting their audience to produce houses that included desired features as completely as possible.

Ahead of the 1964 Parade of Homes, Jack Guillett, Parade of Homes committee chairman, explained that “one of the main purposes in having an annual Parade of Homes is to interest people in house ownership and to keep the general public up-to-date on new products, design, trends, and building techniques.”⁶⁰ In Austin, this understanding of homebuyers’ wants and needs went beyond just selling houses, it also directly influenced patterns of suburban growth in the city. The developers and builders who participated in the Parade of Homes events throughout the 1950s, 1960s

⁵² Lee, Peggy Harding, “Parade of Homes in Capital City,” *The Austin American*, Austin, Texas, September 14, 1952, D13.

⁵³ “Parade of Homes,” *The Austin American*, Austin, Texas, September 14, 1952, D16.

⁵⁴ “Parade of Homes Near With 12 New Offerings,” *The Austin American*, Austin, Texas, October 31, 1954, C15.

⁵⁵ “Two Sites of Parade Designated,” *The Austin American*, Austin, Texas, May 8, 1955, D13.

⁵⁶ Kallerman, Dick, “History of Barton Hills,” Barton Hills Neighborhood Association, 2020. <https://bartonhills.org/about/history/>.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ “Crowds Keep Coming to the Parade of Homes.” *The Austin Statesman*. Austin, Texas. August 23, 1957, 6.

⁵⁹ “Parade of Homes Closes Out Today.” *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. October 13, 1963, F13.

⁶⁰ “Parade’s Purpose is Given.” *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. July 19, 1964, C2.

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and into the 1970s figured prominently in the suburban growth and development of Austin.

The 1965 Austin Parade of Homes (Figures 7-9)

In July 1965, the Parade of Homes was held in northwest Austin on land owned by developer Wallace Mayfield and W.R. Reid. The event was held on newly developed Greenhill Place in Section II of Westover Hills. Greenhill Place is a curvilinear street with twenty houses all built specifically for the 1965 Parade of Homes. The doors of the Parade of Homes opened on July 11, 1965.

The event was scheduled to coincide with a state-wide board of directors meeting of the Texas House Builders Association and with a four-state regional conference of house builders from Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas.⁶¹ Texas House Builders Association board members, delegates of the conference, and an estimated 1,200 Austinites attended a Friday-night preview of the Parade of Homes prior to the event's opening.⁶² According to one report, the house builders from the conference, "stated that the Austin Parade was the finest they had ever visited."⁶³ By the time the Parade of Homes had opened to the public and ended on July 18, 1965, "more than 70,000 visitors from over Texas and six other states" had attended.⁶⁴

The site of the Parade of Homes was fenced off, but admission was free. A new feature of the 1965 Parade of Homes was a 195-foot red, white and blue tent positioned within the site at the corner of Mesa Drive and Greenhill Place. This was the first tent show the Austin Association House Builders had hosted. Inside the tent, was a refreshment stand and 24 exhibits,⁶⁵ as well as entertainment like the "World's Greatest Silhouette Artist."⁶⁶

There is a lot of repetition in the names of the developers and builders that participated in the Austin Parade of Homes events of the 1960s. All 20 of the houses in the 1965 Parade of Homes were built by different builders, but many were the same as those who had participated in early years. Walter Carrington, for example, was a successful builder who had started as in real estate in the 1940s. In 1957, he served at the president of the Austin House Builders Association and was a life director of the National Association of House Builders. Carrington's houses are found throughout Northwest Hills, and he would go on to be a popular builder in Westover Hills' subsequent development. David Barrow, Jr. (son of Northwest Hills developer David Barrow, Sr.) also built a house for the 1965 Parade of Homes. Developer of Westover Hills, Walter Mayfield, built one of the houses in 1965. Another was built by Karl White, who had served as president of the Austin Association House Builders in 1962. Jack Guillett, Parade of Homes committee chairman in 1964, was another.

Most of the 20 houses were professionally designed. According to the plan book, nine of the houses were designed by architects, with five designed by the firm of Danze & Davis (a local firm still in existence today) and three were designed by local architect, William J. Scudder. Five of the houses credit designers, but it is not clear if these designers were trained architects. Five of the houses appear to have been builder models. Four of these have no designer or architect given, while one credits its builder, David Barrow, Jr, as being the architect.

The chairman of the Parade of Homes committee in 1964 had explained, "There is no doubt that the foreign influence has come to be accepted as a major factor in present house design trends."⁶⁷ These same trends were displayed again in

⁶¹ "Barbeque Thrown for Housebuilders." *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. February 28, 1965, C16.

⁶² "Home Builders Open Busy Two Weeks." *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. July 4, 1965, C12.

⁶³ "New POH Now Open." *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. July 11, 1965, B12.

⁶⁴ "Parade Promotion." *The Austin Statesman*. Austin, Texas. March 13, 1966, C13.

⁶⁵ "New POH Now Open." *Austin American*.

⁶⁶ "Parade Work done by Silhouette Artist." *The Austin Statesman*. Austin, Texas. July 14, 1965, 2.

⁶⁷ "Parade's Purpose is Given." *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. July 19, 1964, C2.

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the 1965 event, but traditional style houses were most prevalent. In the 1965 Parade of Homes, eight of the houses had traditional design styles. Descriptors like “early Americana” were repeated in descriptions of these house, while one specified it was based on Cape Cod style houses and another does not describe itself beyond a “luxurious...country” style. Of four contemporary styles, only two self-describe as such. Five can broadly be considered Spanish, although three self-described as “Spanish Contemporary,” one specified it was “Mexican Colonial,” and only one self-identified as simply “Spanish.” Only three other houses broke with the apparent preference for traditional or Spanish styles and employed the same ‘foreign influence’ popular in 1964’s event. One described itself as “Mediterranean” and one as “French Provincial,” which arguably appeared more traditional than foreign or exotic. The Hanako was the only house with a Japanese influenced design.

The year before, the chairman of the Parade of Homes committee had noted that wood paneling, cedar lined and walk-in closets, more walled garden areas and larger master bedrooms were big trends in the Parade houses.⁶⁸ It appears such trends had become a kind of formula that was repeated in the 1965 houses as they shared many commonalities. All 20 houses included attached two-car garages, foyers, kitchens with breakfast areas, a living room and family room, a utility room, and a dining room. Seventeen of the 20 houses were one-story ranch style houses.

At least five other houses had terrazzo floors and all but four had spacious backyard patios. One of the houses without a backyard patio did include an interior garden space, however. Six of the houses (including two without backyard patios) have front courtyards with private garden spaces. Nine of the houses had three-bedrooms, ten had four-bedrooms, and one was a five-bedroom. Four of the houses had flexible spaces off the master bedrooms that were labeled as a “study” but could be easily converted to an additional bedroom and one featured an additional “playroom.”

All 20 of the houses were fully furnished and decorated. President of the Austin Association House Builders, C.L. Reeves boasted, “They said it couldn’t be done, but with the help of Austin furniture dealers and decorators, all 20 Parade of Homes models will look like something out of *Better Houses & Gardens* magazine.”⁶⁹ High-end retailer, Louis Shanks Furniture Company played a big role in furnishing six of the houses. Cabaniss-Brown, one of the largest furniture retailers in central Texas at one point, and Carriage House decorated multiple models as well. The houses and furnishing in the 1965 Parade of Homes was valued at “an aggregate value of three-quarter of a million dollars.”⁷⁰

The Hanako

Located at the entrance of the 1965 Parade of Homes event (at the intersection of Mesa Drive and Greenhill Place), “The Hanako” was designed by local architect, John Walter Placek and constructed by builder B.T. Webb in association with the Puett-Duncan Company of realtors. Puett and Duncan acted as the grantors when the Hanako’s first owners, Doug and Sandy Williams, purchased the house in August 1965.⁷¹ The transaction securing the property for Puett and Duncan through Lamar Savings Association was recorded in January 1965.⁷² Construction of the Hanako began in late April of 1965 and was completed by June 22 at an estimated cost of \$20,000.00.⁷³ For the Parade of Homes event, the Hanako was decorated and furnished by Karotkin’s Furniture, a San Antonio-based retailer that discontinued operation in 1985.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ “Furniture Outlets Furnish the POH.” *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. June 17, 1965, D16.

⁷⁰ “Home Builders Open Busy Two Weeks.” *Austin American*.

⁷¹ Travis County, Texas, Deed Records 3007: 716-717, Travis County Clerk’s Office, Austin, Texas. Nelson Puett, Jr. and A. S. Duncan sell 4022 Greenhill Place to Wayne D. Williams and wife Gladys S. Williams, August 26, 1965.

⁷² Travis County, Texas, Deed Records, 2882: 210, Travis County Clerk’s Office, Austin, Texas. Deed of Trust from J. Q. Edwards of Lamar Savings and Loan to Nelson Puett, Jr. and A. S. Duncan for 4022 Greenhill Place.

“Building permit number 95554.” City of Austin, Austin, Texas. April 20, 1965.

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Realtor/Associate Builder Nelson Puett, Jr. (1920-2006)

Austin native Nelson Puett, Jr. was a graduate of the University of Texas and a World War II veteran. He began working in real estate in the 1940s, collaborating with Walter Carrington, who would also become an influential Austin housebuilder.⁷⁴ In September 1949, he founded Nelson Puett & Associates, which is still operated by his son, Nelson Harwood Puett.⁷⁵ Puett was active in housebuilding throughout Texas. In Austin, he platted and built thousands of houses in the city's central and northwest neighborhoods. Puett served as president of the Austin Real Estate Board, which organized the referendum vote against the 1968 Fair Housing Ordinance. He and his wife, Ruth Barrow Puett (1923-2012) were also active philanthropists and created the Nelson Puett Foundation.⁷⁶

Realtor/Associate Builder Alexander Strachan "A.S." Duncan (1913-2003)

A.S. (Alexander Strachan) Duncan was a World War II veteran from North Carolina who moved to Austin shortly after the war and began his career in real estate with the firm of Harrison-Wilson-Pearson.⁷⁷ Later, he became sales manager for Nelson Puett and Associates, and then partnered with Mr. Puett in Puett-Duncan Realtors. In 1964, he was selected Sales Manager of the Year by the National Association of House Builders. In 1965, he launched his own real estate brokerage firm, A. S. Duncan Realtors, which would go on to list the Hanako for resale in 1967.⁷⁸ Later in life, Duncan was a Director of the Austin Real Estate Board and was awarded emeritus standing.

Associate Builder Beverly Thomas "B.T." Webb (1928-1989)

Little is known about the builder of the Hanako, Beverly Thomas "B.T." Webb. An Austin native, when B.T. married his wife, Dolores, in 1951, he had already begun a career as a housebuilder. By at least 1964, B.T. was an associate of real estate firm Puett-Duncan.⁷⁹ Dolores (1932-2015) had an early career as an interior decorator, decorating the houses and apartments her husband built.⁸⁰ The Parade of Homes plan book credits Dee Webb as having "color coordinated" the Hanako, but it is not certain whether this is a reference to Dolores.

History of The Hanako's Homeowners

The Williams Family

On August 26, 1965, just over one month after the Parade of Homes event, the Hanako was purchased by Wayne Douglas "Doug" Williams, Jr. and his wife, Gladys Sandra "Sandy" Williams for \$25,800.⁸¹

Wayne Douglas "Doug" Williams, Jr (1932-2006) was born in Williamson, Texas to Wayne Douglas Williams, Sr.

⁷⁴ "Housebuilding luminary remembered for his innovative style." *Austin Business Journal*. May 1, 2007. <https://www.bizjournals.com/austin/stories/2007/04/30/daily10.html>.

⁷⁵ "About Us." Nelsonpuettrealestate.com. Nelson Puett & Associates. 2012. <http://nelsonpuettrealestate.com/aboutus.html>. Also "Nelson Puett." *Austin American Statesman*, May 16, 2006. <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/statesman/obituary.aspx?n=nelson-puett&pid=>.

⁷⁶ "Obituary for Ruth Barrow Puett." Weed Corley Fish Funeral Houses and Cremation Services, 2012. <http://weedcorleyfishfh.frontrunnerpro.com/book-of-memories/1311390/puett-ruth/obituary.php>.

⁷⁷ "Alexander Duncan Obituary." Weed Corley Fish Funeral Houses and Cremation Services, 2003. <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/austin-tx/alexander-duncan-8212860>.

⁷⁸ "Duncan Opens Own Firm." *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. October 3, 1965, C16.

⁷⁹ "'Radcliffe' emphasizes English Manor Style." *The Austin Statesman*. Austin, Texas. July 19, 1964, C7.

⁸⁰ "Dolores Lynne Webb Obituary." Dignity Memorial. May 1, 2015. <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/austin-tx/dolores-webb-6426574>.

⁸¹ Travis County, Texas, Deed Records 3007: 716-717.

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(1910-1964) and Rosa Lea “Lea” Bulter Williams (1913-1974). By 1940, Wayne, Sr. and Lea had divorced. Lea and Doug were living alone in Austin until at least 1944. By 1952, Lea had remarried to Roy Cox (1911-1981).

Doug enlisted in the United States Navy in 1949 and was discharged in 1953.⁸² City directories show he had returned to Austin in 1954, where he lived with his mother and step-father, Roy Cox, and worked as a lineman for City Electric Distribution Division.⁸³ A year later, city directories show Doug still living with his mother and step-father, but his occupation is listed as “student.”⁸⁴

Doug had married and divorced three times already before marrying Gladys Sandra “Sandy” Smith (1939-2006) in February 1959. He was again in the navy, with a rating of CHB1 (Cargo Handling Battalion 1) and was stationed in Virginia.⁸⁵ Sandy was a Virginia native who had also been married and divorced already. Sandy’s daughter, Bonnie Sue Mcallister (1954-) lived with the couple after the couple wed on February 21, 1959.⁸⁶ In 1961, they welcomed a son, Glenn Wayne Williams.

In 1960, Doug was serving in the navy as a Commissaryman Third Class (CS3).⁸⁷ When Doug and Sandy purchased the Hanako in 1965, Doug was still in the navy and stationed in Corpus Christi, Texas. It is not known what his rank was in 1965, although by the time of his death in 2006, he was rated a CH1 and identified as a veteran of both Korea and Vietnam.⁸⁸ Had Doug maintained the same CS3 rating he had in 1960, according to 1965 pay rates, he would have made an annual salary of \$2,937.60 with an allowance of \$1,260 a year for his dependents.⁸⁹ With an annual pay of \$4,197.60, he would have been just below the median family income for the area. In 1960, median family income in the area was \$4,780.00, already higher than this conservative estimation of Doug’s salary.⁹⁰ The houses built for the 1965 Parade of Homes were “in the \$23,000 and up price ranges,” a range that placed the Hanako at the higher end of what an average middle-class family could afford in 1965.⁹¹

However, in 1964, Doug’s father, Wayne Douglas Williams, Sr., passed away. According to Doug and Sandy’s son, Glenn, Doug inherited a third of his father’s extensive ranch property in Georgetown, Texas.⁹² Doug sold his share of the property to his brother and used the proceeds to purchase the Hanako. Although Deed records indicate \$25,800 in financing from Lamar Savings Association was secured, records do not say what the actual purchase price of the home was.

The Williams family are typical of homebuyers for whom the 1965 Parade of Homes would have presented an ideal lifestyle. In 1960, the median age of homeowners was 33.⁹³ At 26, Sandy was slightly younger than average, but at 33, Doug was very typical. As a married couple with multiple children, the Williams likely found Westover Hills an ideal

⁸² National Cemetery Administration. “U.S. Veterans' Gravesites, Ca.1775-2019.” Ancestry.com. Provo, UT, 2006. <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8750/>.

⁸³ “Polk’s Austin [Travis County, Texas] City Directory 1954.” R.L. Polk and Company: Dallas, Texas, 1954, 864.

⁸⁴ “Polk’s Austin [Travis County, Texas] City Directory 1955.” R.L. Polk and Company: Dallas, Texas, 1955, 864.

⁸⁵ “Certificate of Marriage”. *Virginia, Marriages, 1936-2014*; Roll: 101167901. Virginia Department of Health; Richmond, Virginia.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ “W. D. Williams back to base.” *The Austin Statesman*. April 28, 1960, B11.

⁸⁸ National Cemetery Administration.

⁸⁹ “Monthly Basic Pay and Allowances.” Defense Finance and Accounting Service. September 1, 1965.

<https://www.dfas.mil/Portals/98/MilPayTable1965.pdf>.

⁹⁰ “Census Tracts: Austin, Tex.” *U.S. Censuses of Population and Housing: 1960*. Final Report PHC (1)-11. United States Bureau of the Census. U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1962, 16.

⁹¹ “Westover Hills Site,” Austin, Texas: *The Austin American*, February 7, 1965, B15.

⁹² Williams, Glenn, phone conversation with Karen Twer, September 4, 2021.

⁹³ “Census Tracts: Austin, Tex.” *U.S. Censuses of Population and Housing: 1960*.

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place to raise their children.

Glenn's recollections of the Hanako recount what maps of the period and advertisements for the Parade of Homes illustrate. He remembers being surprised how difficult it was to locate the house on trips to Austin in the 1990s and early 2000s as there was development all around. He recalls that in 1965, the house was "in the middle of nowhere" and that to get there, they would drive past a big red barn. Included images from Glenn of the Hanako in 1965-1966 show no development around Greenhill Place in the background.

As a young child, Glenn recalls falling and hitting his head on the hard terrazzo flooring. He remembers the family's Christmas tree was very tall and reached up to the living room's gable point. His recollection of the house is "very sixties". Everything was gold and black and white. In fact, included images from Glenn of the Hanako in 1965-1966 show that many of the original interior details, such as a black and gold wallpaper in the foyer, still exist intact in 2021.

Glenn was not able to recall much about the exterior of the Hanako or the neighbors. He believes that, at the time his family lived there, the only other family on Greenhill Place lived catty-corner from the Hanako. He does recall his father building a privacy fence around the back yard and, as of 2021, there is still a concrete gate threshold with "Doug, Sandy, Lea, Bonnie, Glenn" carved into it.

Not long after purchasing the Hanako, Doug was stationed in Charleston, South Carolina and his young family moved with him. Doug's mother, Lea Cox, then moved into the Hanako. City directories show Lea Cox (who had divorced Roy by then) was living in the Hanako in 1966. Throughout her marriage to Roy and until at least 1966, Lea was working as a bookkeeper and office manager at South Texas Lloyds. It is unknown how long she stayed in the Hanako.

The Wiles Family

By 1967, the Hanako was vacant.⁹⁴ In April of 1967, the Hanako was listed for sale at \$34,950.⁹⁵ In 1960, the average value of houses in the city of Austin was \$12,600.⁹⁶ Ten years later, the average value of houses in the city of Austin was still only \$19,000.⁹⁷ Despite the comparably high price tag, on May 15, 1967, Clifton Arthur Wiles (1919-2005) and his wife, Maxine A. Wiles (1920-2012), purchased the Hanako from Doug and Sandy Williams.⁹⁸

Although they did not purchase the Hanako when it was new, the Wiles purchased it just two years after its construction and were the longest residents of the house. The Wiles typify the kinds of homebuyers who were attracted to the Westover Hills and the broader Northwest Hills area in the mid-1960s. The Wiles were a middle-class married couple in their 40s with a child, who commuted by car into the city for work. They exemplify the pattern of social history that influenced suburban development and growth in the area.

World War II veteran Clifton met Maxine in 1944 while stationed in her hometown of Adelaide, Australia. At the time, Maxine worked in vaudeville and radio. The couple married in 1947 and originally settled in Clifton's home state of Kansas. By 1950, they had moved to Austin, Texas. Clifton worked for the University of Texas Printing Division for 39 years. Maxine worked as a secretary for the Defense Research Laboratory of UT and Chevron while continuing her

⁹⁴ "Polk's Austin [Travis County, Texas] City Directory 1967." R.L. Polk and Company: Dallas, Texas, 1967, Section II, 213.

⁹⁵ "Classified Ad 10, No Title" *The Austin American-Statesman*. Austin, Texas. April 23, 1967, C11.

⁹⁶ "U.S. Census of Housing 1960: City Blocks, Austin, Tex.," Vol. III, HC (3)-373, United States Bureau of the Census. U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1961, 1.

⁹⁷ "1970 Census of Housing: Block Statistics, Austin, Tex. Urbanized Area," HC (3)-225, United States Bureau of the Census. U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., September 1971.

⁹⁸ Travis County, Texas, Deed Records, 3296: 415-416, Travis County Clerk's Office, Austin, Texas. Wayne D. Williams and wife Gladys S. Williams sell 4022 Greenhill Place to Clifton A. Wiles and wife Maxine A. Wiles, May 15, 1967.

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entertainment career.

When they bought the Hanako, Clifton was 48 years old, and Maxine was 47. Although slightly older than the average homebuyers in the area in 1960, by 1970, the average age of most adults in the area was 49.⁹⁹ In both 1960 and 1970, the majority of homeowners were married couples. This indicates most homeowners in the area were established couples, like the Wiles, who were motivated to settle in an area where they expected to raise their families.

It is unknown what the Wiles' household income was in 1967, but Clifton had a professional position at the University of Texas and Maxine was a secretary. Throughout the decade, the majority of male residents in Westover Hills and the broader Northwest Hills were employed in the city of Austin as professionals (clerical workers, managers and administrators) or as craftsmen. Typical industries included manufacturing, education, retail, construction or public administration. There was a more noticeable shift in women who were employed. In 1960, only 24.5% worked outside the house, mostly in clerical positions, and only 15% of those employed had a child under the age of 6, suggesting the majority of women were housewives.¹⁰⁰ By 1970, the percentage of women working outside the house had risen to around 43% and around 45% of those women had a child under the age of 6.¹⁰¹ Most women still worked in clerical positions, but many had also found jobs as professional and technical workers.

Like the Wiles, who commuted to jobs at the University of Texas, many residents in Westover Hills and the broader Northwest Hills area commuted by car into the city. In 1960, only 49% of workers from the area worked in the city of Austin and 73% of workers drove private vehicles to get to work. By 1970, 89% of workers from the area worked in the city of Austin and 88% of workers drove private vehicles to get to their jobs.

The house remained in the Wiles family after Clifton and Maxine's deaths. Ownership passed to Quinton Wiles, Clifton and Maxine's only child, in 2013.¹⁰² For the next four years, Quinton and his long-time partner lived in the house.

The Twer Family

In the fall of 2018, Quinton Wiles sold the Hanako to its present owners, Andrew and Karen Twer.

⁹⁹ "Census Tracts: Austin, Tex." *1970 Census of Population and Housing*. Final Report PHC (1)-17. United States Bureau of the Census. U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., March 1972, 1.

¹⁰⁰ "Austin, Tex." United States Bureau of the Census. *U.S. Censuses of Population and Housing: 1960. Census Tracts*. Final Report PHC (1)-11. U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1962.

¹⁰¹ "Austin, Tex." United States Bureau of the Census, *1970 Census of Population and Housing. Census Tracts*. Final Report PHC (1)-17. U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., March 1972.

¹⁰² "Deed History: April 1, 2013." Travis County Appraisal Roll. Travis Central Appraisal District: Austin, Texas. http://propaccess.traviscad.org/clientdb/Property.aspx?prop_id=253873&year=2019.

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CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

National Events and Trends in Residential Housing

There was a dramatic shift in American dwellings between 1945 and 1965 as millions of Americans bought tract houses in new suburban rings outside cities. In the post-World War II housing boom, returning servicemen were eager to own their piece of the “American dream” and start a family. Improved highway systems coincided with a higher prevalence of cars and made life in the suburbs an affordable alternative. Young families were willing buyers of the architecturally generic tract housing that sprang up in the outskirts of cities all over the United States. “With nearly constant rumbling and clattering sounds of construction, much of American suburbia was transformed during the bustling postwar period. Vast acres of land were subdivided for a multitude of new housing tracts. Their varied patterns of streets, yards, and detached single-family houses rapidly changed the appearance of the semi-rural and rural landscape beyond most downtown areas. Residential building for much of the [post-war period] was characterized by a competitive sales market for such “tract” houses, since the demand for affordable housing remained relatively steady and public and private financing was offered at reasonable rates. By far the most predominant design, especially in California, was the one-story ranch house and the informal way of living that it sought to project.”¹⁰³

By the late 1950s and early 1960s, these same buyers were ready to upgrade and had the means to do so. In Austin, the per capita income rose by 41 percent between 1959 and 1969.¹⁰⁴ Family income saw an even greater increase of 46 percent, rising from \$5,795 in 1959 to \$8,459 a decade later.¹⁰⁵ Reflecting the booming economy, a dramatic increase in automobile ownership and usage also occurred across the country. The number of automobiles owned in Travis County doubled between 1960 and 1972.¹⁰⁶ Professionally employed middle-class homebuyers not only had more money to spend on housing, but they also had the ability to commute to suburban developments. Their circumstances coincided with their desire for an improved, more spacious and individualized standard of domestic life that would complement their increased incomes.

These homebuyers also wanted a higher level of design and quality—the kind of spaciousness and style presented in the glossy photos of shelter magazines like *House Beautiful* and *Better Homes & Gardens*. These widely read, popular magazines appealed to “an increasingly well-educated and prosperous audience” and “heralded innovations in contemporary house design.”¹⁰⁷ *House Beautiful* showcased what editor-in-chief Elizabeth Gordon (1906-2000) believed was the new American style of architecture, one that used modern design to achieve an unpretentious, organic, livable, distinctly American house for the suburban middle-class. Gordon believed a new kind of American style was the progression that had developed gradually with varying regional variations.

Throughout the 1950s, *House Beautiful* had “promoted [Frank Lloyd] Wright's designs as well as other upper-income houses in the modernistic styles,” while *Better Homes and Gardens* had “promoted designs to meet the incomes of a wider range of families and showcased successful owner-built designs.”¹⁰⁸ Shelter magazines became the educational tool by which American consumers learned about modern design and how it could reshape suburban lifestyles into the idealized. A 1955 and 1959 issue of *House Beautiful* that featured Wright’s organic designs as an antithesis to the more

¹⁰³ Bricker, David, “Ranch Houses are Not All the Same,” *Preserving the Recent Past 2*, edited by Deborah Slaton and William G. Foulks, Washington, DC: Historic Preservation Education Foundation, National Park Service, and Association for Preservation Technology International, 2000.

¹⁰⁴ Busch, Andrew M., *City in a Garden: Environmental Transformations and Racial Justice in Twentieth-Century Austin, Texas* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 129.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ames, David L. and McClelland, Linda Flint. *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places*. United States: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, 2002, 68-69.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

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austere International style' definitions of modern had sold out immediately.¹⁰⁹

By the 1950s and 1960s, middle-class homebuyers had developed definable preferences in housing. They were concerned with a level of functionality that contemporary houses lacked. They wanted well planned, usable spaces that tract housing did not offer. Homebuyers were looking for more storage space and larger rooms. Functional layouts should include separate living and dining spaces, kitchens with modern appliances and additional eating areas, and larger bathrooms.¹¹⁰ For the majority of homebuyers, the ideal house was a three-bedroom, two-bathroom house clad in brick, wood or stone and three-quarters of homebuyers preferred one-story houses.¹¹¹ Homebuyers were also “looking for houses that were well-located (preferably on large suburban lots adjacent to schools, stores, jobs, and public transportation), spacious, well-priced.”¹¹² Buyers wanted to live in the ambiguously defined “good” neighborhoods “away from the center of town.”¹¹³ A ranch house in the suburbs was the livable, flexible, and unpretentious answer homebuyers wanted.

Ranch House Design

The ranch style house was first introduced in the 1930s and 1940s in California. The first ranch houses were not designed by trained architects but created by designers and developers. Cliff May designed single story houses with open, relaxed layouts that emphasized informal outdoor living. Joseph Eichler developed beautifully landscaped neighborhoods that similarly encouraged an interaction with the outdoors and the community.¹¹⁴ What was distinctive about the ranch houses of May, Eichler and others was that they allowed ordinary, middle-class homeowners to engage with modern design while pursuing an idyllic leisurely lifestyle. If the “history of American architecture is the tale of a search for an architectural style to truly represent the new American culture,” the ranch house was an answer many middle-class consumers agreed with.¹¹⁵

Ranch style houses borrowed characteristics of both modern and traditional architecture and created a bridge between the two. As a result, ranch style houses tend to be somewhat eclectic—a quality that made the style broadly adaptable to regional variations in consumer desires. Ranch houses were “like a chameleon, adaptable to almost any condition of design, materials, and method of construction, while still maintaining its low horizontal scale and recognizable image.”¹¹⁶

Despite the blurred definition of what a ranch house should incorporate, they generally share specific features. “By using post-and-beam construction and an open floor plan, generous amounts of light and space are captured under a low-pitched gable roof.”¹¹⁷ Other typical features include asymmetrical facades, linear arrangements of rooms. Rear facing floor plans offered seclusion and comfort to families, merging interior and exterior spaces separated by glass walls and windows, with an outdoor living area that extends from the house.

¹⁰⁹ Penick, Monica, *Tastemaker: Elizabeth Gordon, House Beautiful, and the Postwar American Home* (Yale University Press. London, England: 2017).

¹¹⁰ Paxton, Edward T, *What People Want When They Buy a House: A Guide for Architects and Builders* (Housing and Home Finance Agency, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington D.C.: 1955), 44 and 46.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Penick, Monica Michelle, *The Pace Setter Houses: Livable Modernism in Postwar America*,” PhD diss, University of Texas at Austin, December 2007, 36.

¹¹³ Paxton, *What People Want*, 15.

¹¹⁴ Poore, Patricia, “The Eichler Effect and Legacy,” *Old House Journal Magazine Online*, April 12, 2019, <https://www.oldhouseonline.com/interiors-and-decor/eichler-effect>.

¹¹⁵ Tyler, Norman, *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles, and Practice* (W.W. Norton & Company: New York, 2000), 137.

¹¹⁶ Bricker, “Ranch Houses are Not All the Same.”

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

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“The expected context for a ranch house was its snug appearance on a landscaped parcel in the suburbs.”¹¹⁸ The ranch house “managed to roll the woolly western frontier concepts of informality, rugged individualism, democracy and sprawling, wide-open spaces together with modern high living standards into a most inviting package.”¹¹⁹ The ranch style house proved so popular that, by the 1950s, it had become one of the most ubiquitous styles of house constructed in suburbs across America.

As shelter magazines responded to the changing housing needs of post-war families, editors like Gordon of *House Beautiful*, “used their pages to influence taste and set a new direction for architecture in the country.”¹²⁰ One of the new directions Gordon favored was the ranch house. In 1948, Gordon had launched the Pace Setter House program. The Pace Setters Houses were a series of annual exhibition houses that exemplified the design ideas promoted by the magazine. Devoting entire issues of *House Beautiful* to the Pace Setter Houses, Gordon helped transform the aesthetic landscape of the postwar housing boom. Fittingly, the first Pace Setter House was a ranch house designed by Cliff May. *House Beautiful* thus helped to enforce the viability and popularity of the ranch house and effectively made it mainstream.

Japanese Esthetic in Postwar U.S. Residential Architecture

Gordon’s interest in Japan and adoption of *shibui* coincided with the U.S. government’s involvement and military occupation of Japan after World War II. Cultural diplomacy played a vital role in shaping U.S. postwar policy in Japan and was a foothold to improving East-West relations on the eve of the Cold War. In the 1950s, American popular opinion about Japan improved as citizens participated in cultural diplomacy as consumers of art, architecture, film, books, and housewares. Gordon shared with politicians and diplomats the belief that design had the power to communicate values and unite divergent cultures.¹²¹ Through her promotion of *shibui*, *House Beautiful* became a highly influential medium of American Japanese cultural exchange.

Shibui is a term for Japanese aesthetics that loosely translates to giving beauty to useful and practical objects. Its key components are simplicity, implicitness, modesty, silence, naturalness, everydayness, and imperfection. Through study and travel in the late 1950s, Gordon became an “expert” on *shibui*, which she vaguely described as:

a profound, unassuming, quiet feeling. It is unobtrusive and unostentatious. It may have hidden attainments, but they are not paraded or displayed. The form is simple and must have been arrived at with an economy of means. *Shibui* is never complicated or contrived.¹²²

Gordon opined that mass material accumulation from postwar prosperity diminished Americans’ good taste, and that they were searching for a way “to achieve a culture of our own in our own time and place.”¹²³ *Shibui*, she believed, was a framework to “find out own American way.”¹²⁴ By differentiating Americans from Japanese, Gordon reaffirmed a colonial Anglo-American discourse wherein whiteness (implicitly linked to Americanness) is a neutral/cultureless normative against which non-white others are compared.¹²⁵ Her editorials marked Japan as “unchanging” and exoticized their cultural practices. Her valorization of cultural difference upheld dominant Anglo American racial and

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Clouser, Roger A. “The Ranch House in America.” PhD diss. University of Kansas, 1984, 133.

¹²⁰ Penick, *Pace Setter Houses*, 54.

¹²¹ Penick, 197.

¹²² Gordon, Elizabeth, “Discover Shibui: The Word for the Highest Level in Beauty,” *House Beautiful*, August 1960.

¹²³ Gough, Marion, “The Difference Between Assimilation and Imitation,” *House Beautiful*, September 1960, 167.

¹²⁴ Gordon, Elizabeth, “What Japan can contribute to your way of life,” *House Beautiful*, August 1960.

¹²⁵ For further reading see Ruth Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993) and Mari Yoshihara, *Embracing the East: White Women and American Orientalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

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ethnic hierarchies intact. Often Gordon's complex translation of *shibui* was, through mass-marketing, reduced to "Oriental," a homogenizing and bounding pan-Asian marker.

In the fall of 1960, *House Beautiful* condensed the essence of *shibui* into two issues. The first issue was published in August 1960. Its front page encouraged readers to "Discover *Shibui*: The word for the highest level in beauty." The August issue sold out almost immediately and tens of thousands of special issues were reprinted. With a circulation of over 750,000, the public response was overwhelmingly positive. It was one of *House Beautiful* magazine's most popular issues of all time and has been called, "one of the most influential ever by a design magazine."¹²⁶ The second issue, mailed out September 1960, *House Beautiful* showed readers "How to be *Shibui* with American Things." It focused on utilizing non-Japanese objects and design to express the concept of *shibui*.

Like the first, the second issue was wildly popular. Due to the popularity of the issues, exhibits devoted to the concept of "shibui" travelled around to several American museums between 1961 and 1964. At the local level, *shibui* was introduced to Austin in March 1961 in an article that appeared in the Austin-American Statesman newspaper. The author imagines that "Austin could easily be a city of pacesetter homes," except that the norm of all the new homes was that they were a mix of "the beautiful and the unusual."¹²⁷ The only new trends the author believes is worth getting excited about is a new home built west of Austin in what is now referred to as Westlake. The author excitedly introduces the term, saying "A new word in America's vocabulary, *shibui* . . . is one of the most expressive we've adopted in many a moon."¹²⁸ Much like Gordon's issues on *shibui*, the article uses photos and detailed descriptions to illustrate how the aesthetic is achieved through materials, design choices and setting. That same year, the term seems to be so well understood and the aesthetic so desirable that another article instructs readers how to create a "*shibui* look" using layers of colored glaze and textured paint on interior walls.¹²⁹

While Gordon can be credited with introducing the American public to traditional Japanese design aesthetics like *shibui*, architects like Frank Lloyd Wright had already introduced an understanding of the Japanese aesthetic in his organic approach to architecture. Wright's Usonian houses of the 1930s were "forward looking with their horizontal emphasis, flat and sloping roofs, large windows, corner windows, and combination of natural wood and masonry materials."¹³⁰ Wright approached architecture as something that generated from within so that form and function act as one. For Wright, the building should be integrated into its environment so that it both enhances the environment and the lives of those who live in the building. This sense of environmental awareness stemmed from Wright's own longstanding interest in Japanese culture. Wright was a well-known fan of Japanese art, design and architecture.¹³¹ Borrowing from traditional Japanese design, Wright's architecture included clean, simple lines, used natural materials, and employed a disciplined use of ornamentation. His organic designs focused more on livability and nature.

The designs of Frank Lloyd Wright and other modernists inspired many architects to employ principles of organic design in creating livable houses that integrated indoor and outdoor living areas and open floor plans where spaces flowed together.¹³² Using modern materials of glass, steel, and concrete, "characteristics such as masonry hearth walls, patios and terraces, carports, and transparent walls in the form of sliding glass doors and floor-to-ceiling windows

¹²⁶ Elizabeth Gordon Papers, 1958-1987. FSA.A1988.03, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

¹²⁷ Galvin, Lois Hale, "R. E. Janes Home Reflects 'Shibui'," *The Austin American*, Austin, Texas, March 26, 1962, E1.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Schuller, Joyce, "Shibui Look Created with Paint," *The Austin Statesman*, Austin, Texas, August 17, 1961, A9.

¹³⁰ Ames, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 68.

¹³¹ Graham, Patricia J., *Japanese Design: Art, Aesthetics & Culture* (Tuttle Publishing: Rutland, Vermont, 2014), 130.

¹³² Ames, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 67.

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became hallmarks of the contemporary residential design.”¹³³ In their interpretations of modern design, midcentury architects built upon Wright’s organic designs. The ranch houses designed by midcentury architects across the country typically had clean, simple detailing. They were modest and uncomplicated, yet stylish. The low, horizontal lines of the ranch houses integrated the houses with their suburban environments.

Midcentury residential design also often incorporated the organic and Japanese design esthetics Wright and Gordon championed. Throughout the 1950s, Wright had been a vocal champion of Gordon’s design theories and *House Beautiful* had helped expand on Wright’s design theories. The reciprocity offered legitimacy to each and encouraged the popularity of Japanese design. Thus, midcentury ranch houses often incorporated Japanese concepts of architecture and design.

Like traditional Japanese architecture, there is a modularity in the post and beam construction of ranch houses. The heavy use of wood and other available regional materials matches Japanese concepts. Taking advantage of the spacious lots found in growing American suburbs, ranch houses typically extend around their gardens in a “U” or “L” shape. This creates a sense of shelter and protection as well as creating an outdoor living space, much like the courtyards and gardens of Japanese houses. It is also a common design for Japanese houses because, like ranch houses, Japanese houses typically do not have a fixed center. Rather, their form is derived from the lifestyle of its inhabitants as well as a consideration of its environment. Likewise, ranch houses mimic Japanese architecture in the subtle transitions between indoor and outdoor spaces provided by walls of windows or sliding doors underneath wide overhanging eaves that opens to decks and patios.

Japanese Aesthetic in Suburban Austin

In early 1962, the *Austin Statesman*’s Home Editor covered the Winter International Home Furnishings Market in Chicago.¹³⁴ Her coverage informs Austinites the “new” trend in home furnishings is a blend of “elegance” and “practicality” that “hark back to the long ago and far away.”¹³⁵ While *shibui* is not specifically mentioned in the article, its influence on national and local design preferences is apparent. The author describes what Tatami mats from Japan are and how one flooring company has created a more durable vinyl version appropriate for “western” lifestyles.¹³⁶ Accompanying the article is a photo of how one professional interior decorator utilized the floor covering as an “exotic” background.

The considerable influence of *shibui* can locally be seen in advertisements for flooring products in the *Austin-American Statesman*. A 1963 advertisement for Fashion Floors, which encourages viewers to tune into a CBS special with Princess Grace Kelley (often upheld as a standard of beauty, grace, and style), also advertises a carpet model called ‘*shibui*’.¹³⁷ In a 1964 advertisement for Modern Floors Interiors, a carpet model called ‘*shibui*’ is advertised as having “the quiet good taste of the Orient”.¹³⁸

The broad adaption of Japanese aesthetics into fashion is again seen locally in the annual style show of the Junior Helping Hand group, where members are seen taking “an imaginary flight” in 1962 to the “Far East” for planning inspiration.¹³⁹ The following year, the Officers Wives Club of nearby Bergstrom Air Force Base hosted a fashion

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Galvin, Lois Hale, “Under Note: Elegance and Practicality Blend,” *The Austin Statesman*, Austin, Texas, January 10, 1962, A9.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ “Display Ad 96, No Title,” *The Austin American*, Austin, Texas, February 17, 1963, 11.

¹³⁸ “Display Ad 16, No Title,” *The Austin Statesman*, Austin, Texas, April 13, 1965, 5.

¹³⁹ Galvin, Lois Hale, “Imaginations Busy ‘Touring’ Far East,” *The Austin American*, Austin, Texas, February 4, 1962, B6.

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show at a luncheon “following a *shibui* party with Oriental decorations.”¹⁴⁰

The Hanako’s architect, John Walter Placek, was an admirer of Frank Lloyd Wright¹⁴¹—so much so that Placek even met Wright while he was studying architecture.¹⁴² Placek’s children have described his style as “sleek, [with a] conservative but elegant use of space,” a style they also recall many of Placek’s architect friends in Austin shared. Indeed, another house designed by Placek in northwest Austin’s Highland Hills neighborhood was said to have “Achieved a sophisticated and unique style while, from a structural point of view, maintaining simplicity.”¹⁴³

The popularity of design trends made popular in *House Beautiful* magazine’s widely read issues on Japanese esthetics were evident in Austin’s Parade of Homes houses as early as 1961. It is unknown to what extent, if any, Placek followed the trends encouraged on the glossy pages of shelter magazines like *House Beautiful*. However, its *shibui* issues were flying off the shelves around the same time another “Oriental Contemporary” house was being built for a Parade of Homes event in northwest Austin.

In the 1961 Parade of Homes, a house called the “*Shibui*” showcased “the oriental influence in the Parade of Homes,” and a “rarified aesthetic taste.”¹⁴⁴ Located at 6005 Highlandale Drive (in northwest Austin, just 2.4 miles south of the Hanako), the *Shibui* is a one story house with an unassuming recessed entry and a low-pitched hipped cross gable roof with wide, overhanging eaves. It was hailed for its “keen awareness of the intimate relationship between the garden and the house.”¹⁴⁵ A vaulted family room with walnut paneled walls, for example, features a garden view.¹⁴⁶ The interior was described as having an “Oriental feeling” and included “sparkling white terrazzo floors.”¹⁴⁷ The “superb treatment” of the master bedroom, bath and study employ “the utmost use of space and beauty to make the greatest leisure for the adult members of the family.”¹⁴⁸ It is unclear who designed the *Shibui*, but its builder, George MacDonald, was a participant in the 1963 Parade of Homes and would again participate in the 1965 Parade of Homes.

Austin builders would repeatedly include “Oriental” designs in their Parade of Homes model houses throughout the early 1960s. In 1962, coverage of the Parade of Homes notes that, “The foreign influence seems to be gaining popularity.”¹⁴⁹ Several of the thirteen houses that year were “either Oriental or have Far Eastern motifs.”¹⁵⁰ Chairman of the Parade of Homes, Karl White, said “Nothing has ever been seen quite like it...this year the houses are even more unusual and luxurious.” White described the unusualness in designs by explaining that “nearly all the houses have departed from ordinary floor plans and elevations. These houses are custom designed for the site, with great care taken to preserve natural shrubs and trees, and many of them are very elaborate in the use of original design features.” A newspaper article noted that the “scenic setting of the Parade site, of course, has dictated more ‘openness’ in the designs.”¹⁵¹ The article observes that several houses have courtyards and use lots of doors and windows to feature indoor-outdoor living spaces.

One of the houses built for the 1962 Parade of Homes was “The Oriental.” Located at 6808 Mesa Drive (in northwest Austin, just 1.9 miles south of the Hanako), it was designed by Placek and Coleman’s firm and built by C.L. Reeves. It

¹⁴⁰ “BAFB Style show: ‘Two Weeks with Play:’ have High-Fashion Fun,” *The Austin Statesman*, Austin, Texas, May 10, 1963, 10.

¹⁴¹ Placek, Elmina, email message to Karen Twer, October 5, 2019.

¹⁴² Placek, George and Placek, Louise, email message.

¹⁴³ “For Individualistic Family.” *The Austin Statesman*. October 2, 1966. p. B10.

¹⁴⁴ “Display Ad 146, No Title.” *The Austin American*. October 22, 1961, F5.

¹⁴⁵ “‘*Shibui*’ the Keynote of McDonald’s House.” *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. October 22, 1961, F12.

¹⁴⁶ “Display Ad 146, No Title.” *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. October 22, 1961, F5.

¹⁴⁷ “‘*Shibui*’ the Keynote of McDonald’s House.” *Austin American*.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ “Paraders Employ Newest Materials.” *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. October 28, 1962, E9.

¹⁵⁰ “Parade’s Showing Newest.” *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. November 4, 1962, D14.

¹⁵¹ “Paraders Employ Newest Materials.” *Austin American*.

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is an asymmetrical one-story house with a recessed front entry approached by a stone-finished walkway. Interestingly, its front doors are described as Chinese rather than specifically Japanese, yet its name implies a broad borrowing of Asian design aesthetics and many of its features show up again in the Japanese described details of the Hanako. The front façade is approached by a curved stone pathway. It is clad in rectangular cut limestone bricks with natural faces, laid in irregular courses, which is complimented by wood siding. Its roofline is described as a “Pagoda roof line with traditional eave wings” and its exterior features vertical, “box framed windows, plus Chinese red, black and pearl trim.”¹⁵²

Much like the Hanako would later be described, the Oriental was said to combine “thoughtful planning” with “spaciousness and easy livability.”¹⁵³ As an advertisement for the house describes it, “The ageless beauty of the orient is combined with the modern house design to produce this masterpiece of comfortable living.”¹⁵⁴ The interior of the Oriental was designed with a separate bedroom wing which “emphasize the house’s spaciousness and easy living.”¹⁵⁵ It includes a large master suite and a wood-paneled flexible use space which could be a den, study or fourth bedroom. The master suite includes a private garden space, dressing area, walk-in closets, and a bath with a sunken tub. The living room shares its space with a dining room and has a vaulted, beamed ceiling. The family room is clad in ash wood paneling and has a brick fireplace. Glass doors open to the private backyard with a covered terrace and louvered shutters closed off a built-in bar. The kitchen is said to include all modern appliances, including a built-in coffee maker. Built-ins and storage closets are found throughout the house. The foyer has shoji panels and a Terrazzo floor.

Again in 1963, the Austin Parade of Homes featured two Japanese influenced designs at two of the event locations, both built by the firm of Nash Phillips-Copus, a collaboration of Clyde Copus and Nash Phillips. A house called “The Imperial East,” located at 6807 Millikin Cove (in north Austin, just 6.3 miles southeast of the Hanako). Like the Oriental, it is vaguely Japanese in its design. The single-story house is clad in irregularly coursed rectangular limestone bricks and has broad overhanging eaves with a decoratively sloped roof.¹⁵⁶ It features a “protected terrace,” entry courtyard with garden area, and family room with a stone fireplace.

Another house featured in the 1963 Parade of Homes was the “Mai Kia, a name that means the ‘Best’ in Japanese.”¹⁵⁷ It is located at 4002 Edgefield Court (in northwest Austin, just 1.8 miles south of the Hanako). The ranch home is clad in the same irregularly coursed rectangular limestone bricks as the Hanako and has “Oriental roof line appointments.”¹⁵⁸ Like the Hanako, the Mai Kia’s family spaces are positioned at the rear of the house. It also similarly features a “spacious” family room with “hand rubbed birch panel[ing],” a “native stone fireplace,” and “double glass sliding doors [that] open to the tree studded garden side of the home.”¹⁵⁹ Also similar to the Hanako, the Mai Kia has a “bedroom wing [with] a large master bedroom with vaulted ceilings, exposed beams, dressing room, and full ceramic and compartmented bath.”¹⁶⁰

By the time the Hanako was built in 1965, Japanese inspired designs were a tried-and-true winner for Parade of Homes builders. In many ways, the design of the Japanese inspired houses in Austin’s Parade of Homes in the early 1960s were formulaic. The choice of a Japanese aesthetic allowed the builders to present a “unique,” exotic,” “captivating,” and “intriguing,” product, while assuring potential house buyers they were also warm, comforting spaces. All were one story 3- or 4-bedroom ranch houses with attached garages, low pitched roofs, broad overhanging eaves, built from natural, local materials. They all had similar layouts with flexible public and private spaces arranged for optimal

¹⁵² “‘Oriental’ A House of Ideas,” *The Austin Statesman*.

¹⁵³ “Thoughtful Planning Shows Up.” *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. November 4, 1962, D10.

¹⁵⁴ “Display Ad 72, No Title.” *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. December 2, 1962, D10.

¹⁵⁵ “1965 Parade of Homes.” Austin, Texas: Austin Association of Builders, 1965.

¹⁵⁶ “Imperial East a Real Delight.” *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. October 6, 1963, E15.

¹⁵⁷ “An Oriental Touch Here.” *The Austin American*. Austin, Texas. October 6, 1963, E10.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*.

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privacy and enjoyment of the outdoors. The interiors all featured modern kitchens, ample storage, and built ins. They were all similarly described as being “spacious” and “luxurious.” But to differentiate themselves from other house designs, décor repeatedly used gold and white, and bathrooms featured sunken tubs or other “Grecian” details. Promotions repeatedly highlighted the mixing of “traditional” and “modern.” Midcentury home buyers were told these houses were different from other aesthetics because they “tastefully” blended the “aged traditions” and “ageless beauty of the Orient.”¹⁶¹

While Placek’s design merits respect as a successfully executed and thoughtful house created by a skilled architect, it seems likely that the choice to build the Hanako as a ranch house with Japanese design elements was very intentional. Builders were in the business of producing and selling what homebuyers wanted. Only through collaboration with an architect could a builder build the kind of high-style house suburban house middle-class homebuyers dreamt of. “Even in espousing their architectural philosophy, modern architects did so with commercial production in mind.”¹⁶² The Hanako, therefore, is significant not because of its uniqueness, but rather because, as an Oriental Contemporary ranch house, it so fully exemplifies trends in midcentury residential design.

Architect John Walter Placek (1923-2015)

The designer of the Hanako, John Placek, was born in Chicago, Illinois. After high school, he enlisted in the Army Air Corp and served in England during World War II. After the war, Placek briefly played minor league baseball before enrolling in the Layton School of Art in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1947. In 1949, Placek moved to Austin, Texas, continuing his education to be an architect at the University of Texas. He graduated with a degree in Architecture in 1955.

John worked with a number of architectural firms through 1959. Around 1960, Placek opened a firm with William Reed “W.R.” Coleman, a highly acclaimed building designer, along with engineer, David Engleman.¹⁶³ The offices of Coleman and Placek, or Coleman-Placek-Engleman Designers, were located in north Austin off Burnet Road. In addition to many single and multi-family residences in north and northwest Austin, the partners pursued commercial ventures including apartment buildings, a medical office center, a dramatically modern shopping center, and a boat manufacturing facility.

By the 1965 Parade of Homes, Placek was working independently, although he remained lifelong friends with Coleman. It is difficult to assess what projects Placek may have considered his best designs or to know what he would have considered the pinnacle of his career.

Other residential projects around Austin by Placek are ranch style houses and an occasional two-story that seem to incorporate both traditional and Japanese inspired design elements. All of his residential designs seem to include large overhangs and are typically clad in limestone bricks. For example, a house designed in 1963 (at 2713 Greenlawn Parkway) had a large bay window, large, tiled baths, built-ins, walk-in closets, sliding doors and beamed ceilings. It was clad in limestone brick, had large overhangs, a slight Asian appearance to its gables, vertical windows and a large patio. By this time, Placek was also the father of five children. His wife, Ruth, whom he had met at the Layton School of Art, was an avid painter. It is difficult not to speculate that his own bustling household encouraged the inclusion of flexible spaces, ample storage and well-appointed private areas in his residential designs.

While he still designed residential projects into the early 1970s, Placek began working on more commercial projects in

¹⁶¹ ‘Shibui’ the Keynote of McDonald’s House.” *Austin American*.

¹⁶² Dodd, “Merchandising the Postwar Model House,” 29-30.

¹⁶³ Brummett, A. Elizabeth. “Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District.” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form Draft, September 14, 2020, 68-70. <https://allandaleneighbor.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Demolition-2020-reduced.pdf>.

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the late 1960s. Projects Placek worked on independently include an addition to the residences at the Austin State School, a nursing house, and an elementary school. He was also involved in designing commercial buildings, including an iconic Austin steakhouse, The Barn.

In 1972, Placek accepted a position in the Architectural and Engineering Services Department of the University of Texas, where he remained until his retirement in 1993. Placek's children have posited that the slowing economy of the 1970s was the impetus for him to stop working independently.¹⁶⁴ As they also pointed out, by then there was a flood of architects eager to supply Austin's building boom with modern residential designs. As an independent architect, Placek may have struggled to establish enough of a niche to weather a changing economy. During his time at the University of Texas, Placek was involved in multiple projects, such as the rehabilitation of campus buildings and a fountain on the West Mall. One of his biggest projects at the University of Texas was designing a secure viewing and display area at the Harry Ransom Center for the Gutenberg Bible. Placek also took on some private projects during this period that, according to a son, were commercial, such as a 7-11 store.¹⁶⁵

In 1978, Placek built himself a small farmhouse on 100 acres of land in Caldwell County, Texas that became known by the family as "The Ranch" and continues to be enjoyed by his descendants today. With similar features to his other designs, it is predominantly clad in limestone, has a large bay window, and features covered porches on three sides.

It is unknown how Placek was chosen to design the Hanako, but it was not the first house Placek had designed for a Parade of Homes. In 1962, Placek and his then business partner, W.R. Coleman, designed "The Oriental," which was featured in Austin's 1962 Parade of Homes (which was also held in Northwest Hills).¹⁶⁶ While only Placek is credited with the design of the Hanako and was working independently by that time, it is possible his former partner influenced the design or at least factored into the relationships Placek had with its builders. Placek and Coleman likely still operated within the same professional circles. It is known Coleman had a long-standing relationship with one of the Hanako's builders, Nelson Puett, Jr. For example, Coleman had designed four of the houses in Austin's 1956 Parade of Homes, working with Puett on two of them.

Architectural Significance and Defining Characteristics

The Hanako exemplifies a top-down translation of contemporary architectural high-style as a middle-class suburban house influenced by Shibui residential design promoted by Elizabeth Gordon in *House Beautiful*. In many ways, it is a common ranch house. Its horizontal plane is topped by a low-pitched hipped cross gable roof with wide, overhanging eaves. The asymmetrical design's primary facade includes a recessed, unassuming entry, ribbon windows and a large picture window in the living area. An attached garage creates a "U" shape. A partially enclosed patio and private outdoor living area at the rear of the house open onto what, at the time of its construction, was an expansive landscape.

The house has a masonry fireplace. It is clad in a combination of cedar planks and limestone bricks, both common regional materials. Although common features of ranch houses, a further regional consideration can be seen in the inclusion of the covered patio and wide overhangs. Combined, these features offer shaded protection from the central Texas climate.

The Hanako's layout is also common to midcentury ranch houses. The interior is arranged so that there are both private and public spaces, which can be flexibly arranged for multiple uses. With the exception of secondary bedrooms, the interior spaces are focused on the backyard.

¹⁶⁴ Placek, George and Placek, Louise, email message to Karen Twer, June 13, 2020.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ "'Oriental' A House of Ideas," *The Austin Statesman*. Austin, Texas. November 4, 1962, D3.

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As its name implies, the Hanako also features a subtle nod to Japanese design. Its vaguely Japanese features were highly popular at the time of its construction. The choice of Japanese design both defines the Hanako as unique from its immediate neighbors—from a marketing point of view, each Parade of Homes builder wanted to present a unique, memorable product to homebuyers—but it is also a common trend for midcentury ranch houses, making its design in keeping with trends in residential housing nationally and at the local level.

Conclusion

Built for the 1965 Parade of Homes, the Hanako in Austin, Travis County represents model home marketing methods used by builders, real estate agents, and developers to promote and sell property in the city's emerging Northwest Hills suburbs. In the 1960s, Austin became a center for research and development with one of the fastest growing economies in Texas. Northwest Austin was developed for a growing population of white, middle-class skilled professionals, and the Parade of Homes promoted the new neighborhoods. The parades showcased affordable architect-designed model homes, like the Hanako, with modern amenities, traditional layouts, and a contemporary aesthetic. The Hanako also exemplifies a top-down translation of contemporary architectural high-style as a middle-class suburban house influenced by Japanese design made popular by House Beautiful in 1960. Speculative model houses, like those in the Parade of Homes, were marketable and affordable versions of shelter magazine homes that catered to middle-class desires for privacy, spaciousness, and style. Named "the Hanako," a feminine Japanese given name, the nominated house offered homebuyers exoticized Japanese architectural elements with traditional features common to the era's suburban Ranch or Contemporary style houses. It is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development and Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level of significance. The period of significance is 1965, the year The Hanako was built which also represents a larger development trend at the time of construction.

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The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Maps

Map 1: Travis County, Texas



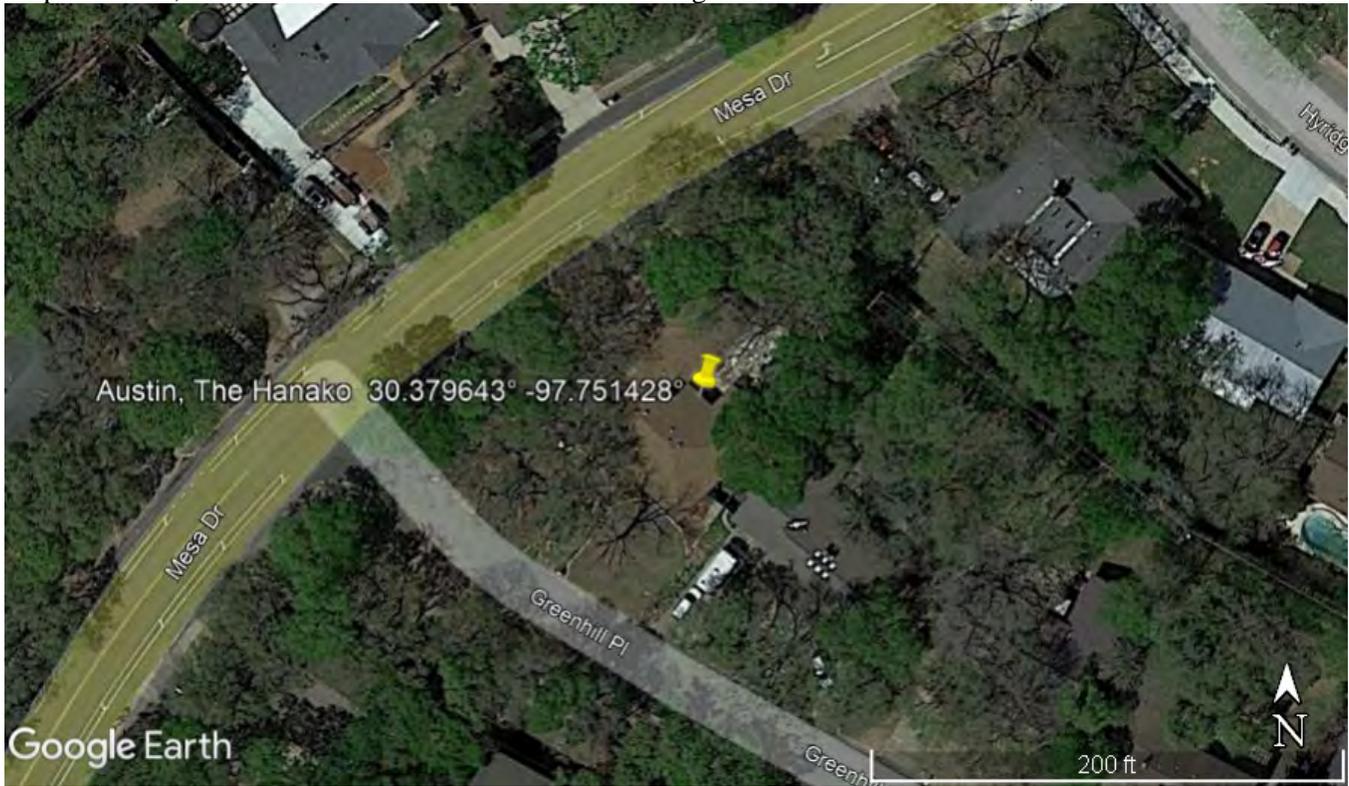
Map 2: 4022 Greenhill Place, Austin, Texas. Source: Google Maps, accessed February 9, 2020. The shaded area is Northwest Austin.



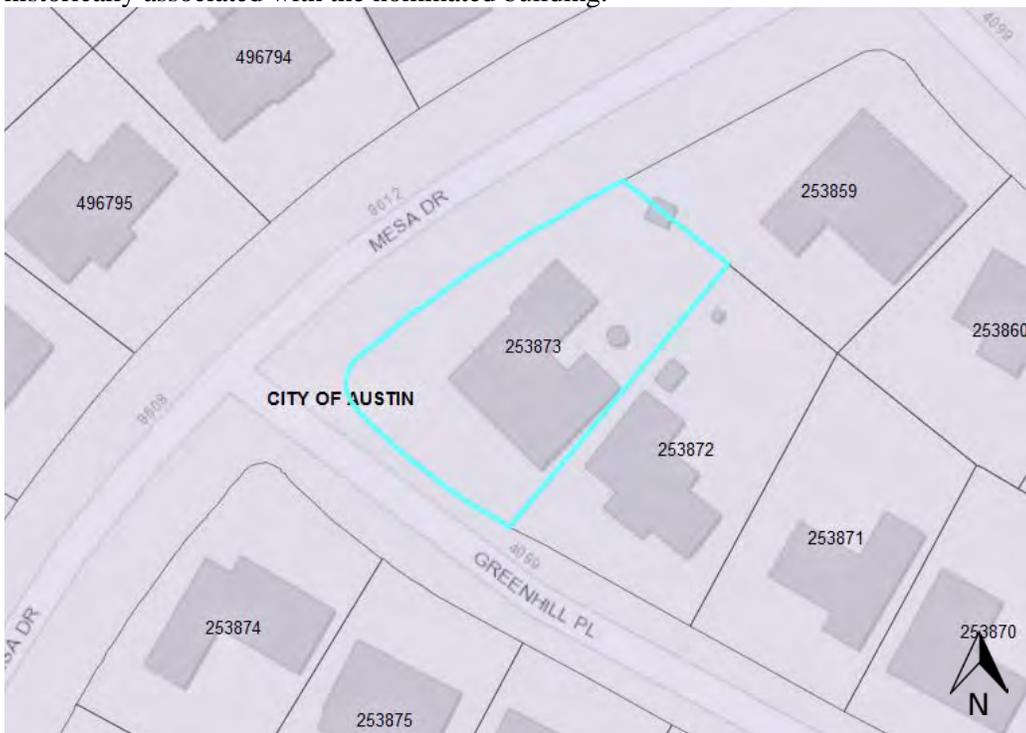
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The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Map 3: Austin, The Hanako 30.379643° -97.751428°. Google Earth accessed March 10, 2022.



Map 4: The nominated boundary is the current legal parcel (Travis CAD #253873), which includes all property historically associated with the nominated building.



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The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Map 5: 2018 Survey, 4022 Greenhill Place. Source: Rachel Lynn Hansen, RPLS.

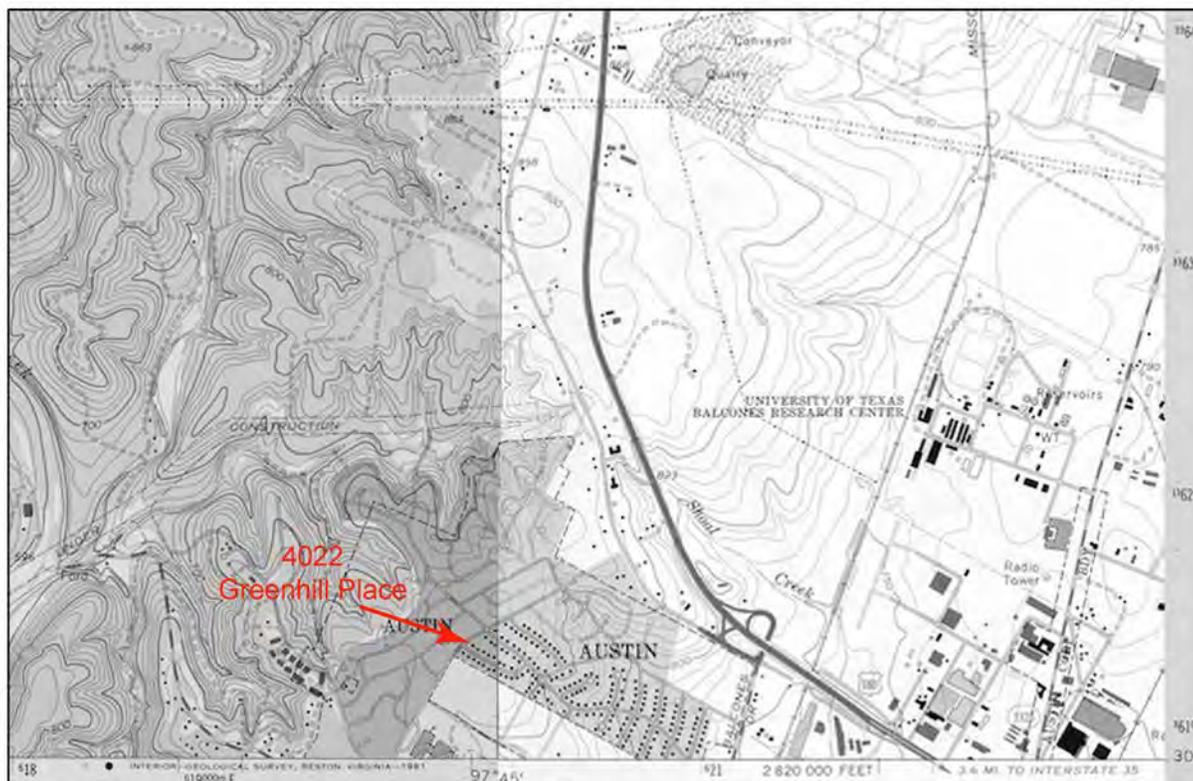


The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 2: 1966 Aerial image of Westover Hills, Section II.



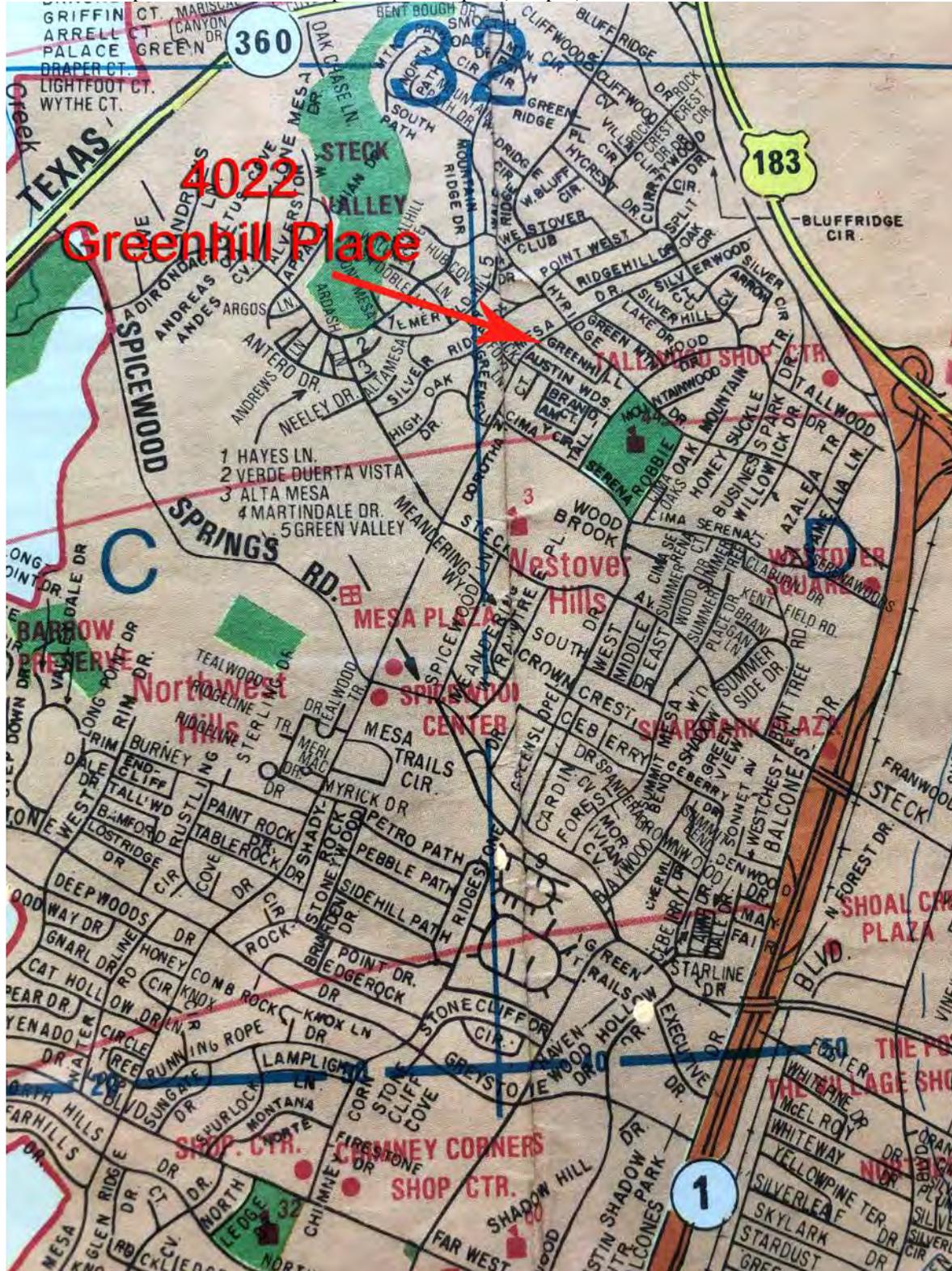
Figure 1: 1973 USGS Survey Map showing Westover Hills, Section II.



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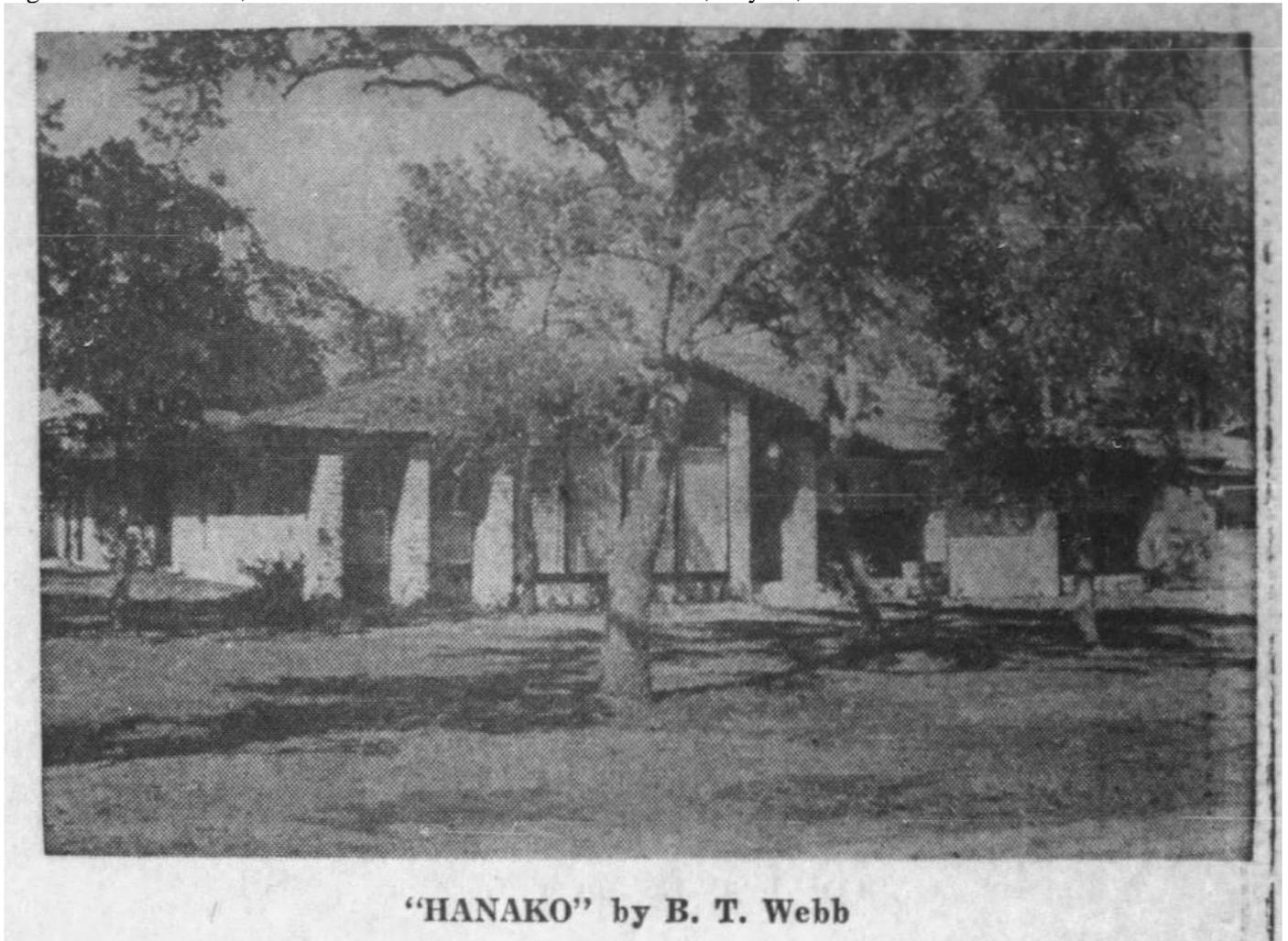
The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 4: 1985 Road Map showing Westover Hills, Section II and surrounding area. The development of Northwest Austin corresponded with the completion of Mopac (Loop 1) and U.S 183. Source:



The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

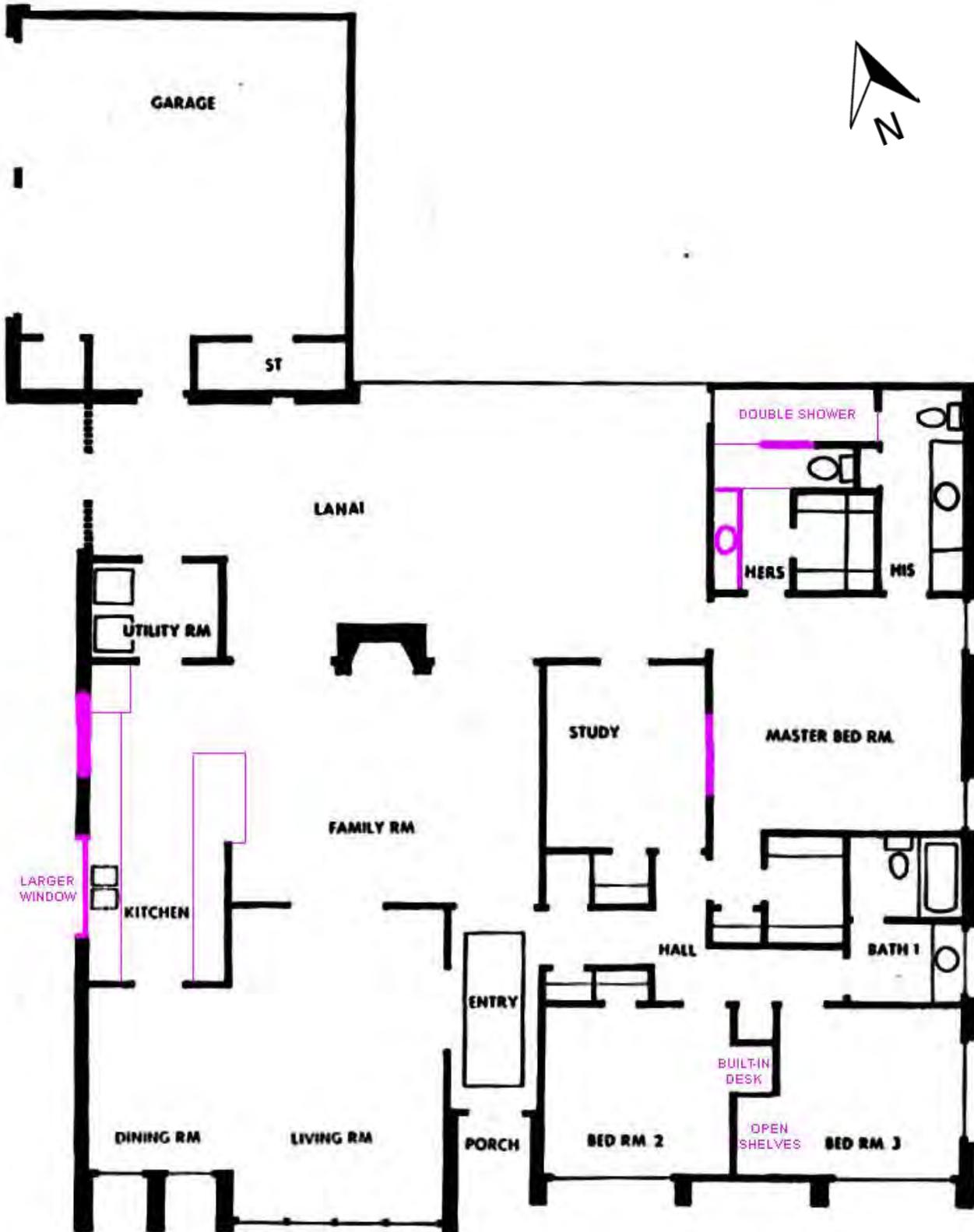
Figure 5: The Hanako, 1965. Source: *Austin American Statesman*, July 11, 1965.



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The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 6: Alterations to historic floorplan shown in pink below. Source: Homeowner.



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The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 7: Aerial of 1965 Parade of Homes site showing The Hanako. Source: *Austin American Statesman*, 7/11/65.



Figure 8: *Austin American Statesman* advertisement for 1965 Parade of Homes, July 11, 1965.

Austin American Statesman
Austin, Texas, Saturday, July 11, 1965
A Classified Feature

TO A BRIGHT NEW WORLD OF LIVING ENJOYMENT

AUSTIN'S 1965
Parade of Homes
AND
Home Show Tent
OPENS TODAY

In Northwest Austin's
Westover Hills
July 11-18

OPEN 10 A.M. to 9 P.M.

20 Furnished and Decorated Model Homes By:

John Banning Furnished by Lane Decorated by Austin	Day West Decorated by George	Thad Edwards Furnished by Lane, Inc. Decorated by Lane	William Rayfield Furnished by Lane Decorated by Austin	Walter Carringer Furnished by Lane, Inc. Decorated by Lane	W. G. Wainwright Furnished by Lane, Inc. Decorated by Lane	C. B. Hobbie Furnished by Lane Decorated by Lane	City Builders Furnished by Lane Decorated by Lane	B. J. Webb Furnished by Lane Decorated by Lane	Rich Phillips-Caplan Furnished by Lane Decorated by Lane	W. G. Wainwright Furnished by Lane, Inc. Decorated by Lane	Jack Sulliff Furnished by Lane Decorated by Lane	Ed Gillett Furnished by Lane Decorated by Lane	Walter Carringer Furnished by Lane Decorated by Lane	W. G. Wainwright Furnished by Lane, Inc. Decorated by Lane	Philip Company Furnished by Lane Decorated by Lane	V. G. Wainwright Furnished by Lane Decorated by Lane	V. G. Wainwright Furnished by Lane Decorated by Lane	A. C. Carter, Jr. Furnished by Lane Decorated by Lane	C. Daniel Rogers Furnished by Lane Decorated by Lane
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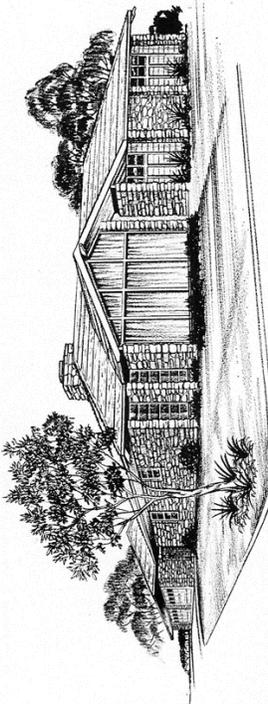
FREE ADMISSION * **FREE PARKING**

OPEN THE DOOR

AA HB

The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 9: The Hanako, p. 20-21 1965 Parade of Homes Plan Book.



"HANAKO"

Associate Builder: Puett-Duncan
 Architect: John Plasek
 Furnished: Karokkin's
 Decorator: Ralph Karokkin
 Color Coordinated: Dee Webb





B. T. Webb, Builder

The Oriental Contemporary style, both inside and out, of B. T. Webb's "Hanako" is unmistakable. Broad roof eaves, clean lines, native rock and concrete accents, and a central hallway through the profusely treeshaded grounds up to the entrance accented with Oriental overtones.

From the entry-foyer through the whole guest section of the home, the prevailing atmosphere is of openness and freedom in the simple, yet functional Oriental arrangement of rooms. The carpeted, vaulted living room faces south and is lighted by huge vertical glass window panels. There is little wall space between the living room and the enclosed Lanai beyond the family room.

The rich ash paneling of the centrally-positioned family room blends perfectly with the efficient built-in and storage spaces in the modern Japanese gas kitchen. Through the paneled breakfast room, we pass the conveniently-located utility room out under the covered, wood shingled arcade which serves as protection to and from the prefinished-paneled two-car garage. Besides rich paneling, the family room also boasts an impressive rock fireplace flanked on both sides by French doors leading to the partially-enclosed Lanai.

The hall carpet harmonizes artfully with the interior of the home's color shades and leads you into the three-bedroom wing. One of the most talked-about master bedrooms of the entire Parade will be the Hanako's, with a fully paneled cedar closet, you can be either closed off or opened to the owner's wishes. The most unusual features are the "His" and "Her" bathrooms. For him, a long, private dressing room leads to a full tile shower. For her, a vanity, deep walk-in closet and a mosaic tile enclosed sunken Roman tub.

B. T. Webb's Oriental Contemporary-style "Hanako" harmonizes Eastern motifs with modern construction and has much, much more to offer than can ever be described here.



THE HANAKO

"The Hanako" is another creative home of B. T. Webb and the Puett-Duncan firm. It will appeal to those who seek real dollar-for-dollar value and a taste of individualism with a flair of pertinent Oriental design.

The elegant design and decor of "The Hanako" is matched only by the fine craftsmanship and products that have gone into its construction. . . . and we're glad we can say we had an important role in its creation:

Capitol Aggregates Concrete Cameron-Bartlett Paint Company B & B Wholesale Supply Grimmer Electric Electrical Contractor Negley Paint Company Pounds Floor & Tile Company ABC Venetian Blind Co. Custom Draperies	Stark Roofing Co. E. Dickey & Son Concrete Contractor Mouldings by Eugene Gray Company 605 Franklin Starlight Supply Co. Longhorn Glass Company General Air Conditioning Company John R. Grist Trim Contractor
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The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Photographs

Name of Property: The Hanako

City: Austin

County: Travis

State: Texas

Photographer: Karen Twer

Dates: November 2019

Photo 1: Primary dwelling, south elevation, camera facing north



The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Photo 2: Primary dwelling, south elevation, camera facing north



Photo 3: Primary dwelling, west elevation, camera facing east from across Mesa Drive



The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Photo 4: Primary dwelling, north elevation's breezeway with master bedroom façade (forward) and southern façade (right), camera facing east

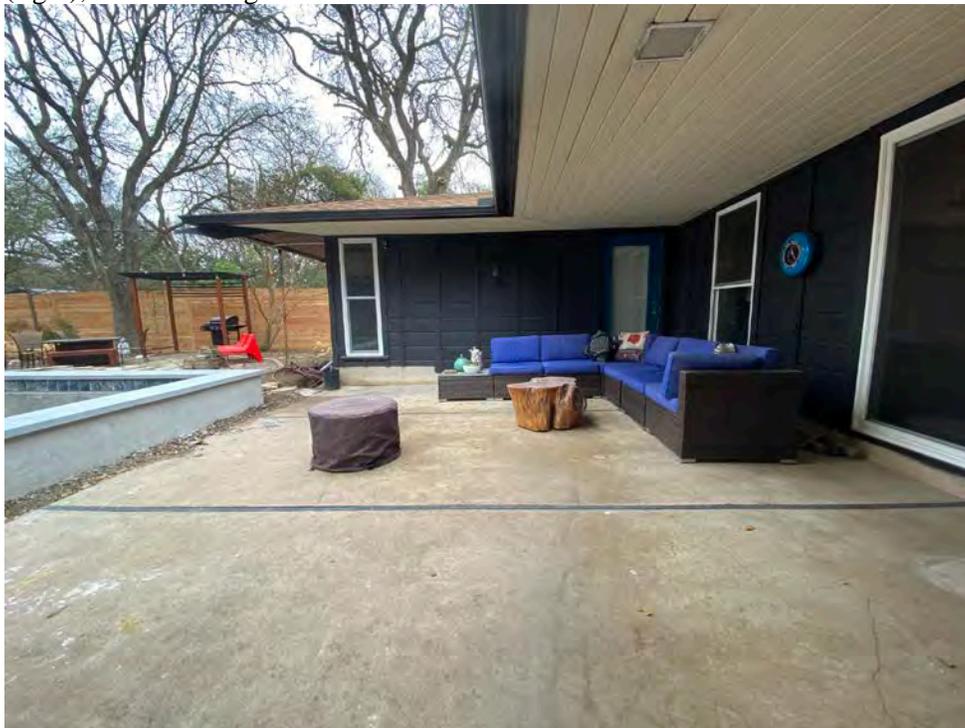


Photo 5: Primary dwelling, north elevation's breezeway with garage faced (right) and southern façade (left), camera facing west.



The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Photo 6: Primary dwelling, north elevation's view of backyard, camera facing north toward Hyridge Drive.



Photo 7: Primary dwelling, north elevation, camera facing south.



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The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Photo 8: Primary dwelling, north elevation, camera facing south-southwest



Photo 9: Primary dwelling, east elevation, camera facing south-southwest



The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Photo 10: Primary dwelling, interior of living room, camera facing south



Photo 11: Primary dwelling, interior of living and dining room, camera facing south-southwest



The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Photo 12: Primary dwelling, interior of foyer showing Terrazzo flooring, camera facing south



Photo 13: Primary dwelling, interior of family room and living room, camera facing south



The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Photo 14: Primary dwelling, interior of family room, camera facing north



Photo 15: Primary dwelling, interior of kitchen, camera facing southwest.



The Hanako, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Photo 16: Primary dwelling, interior of “female side” of master bathroom, camera facing north.



Photo 17: Primary dwelling, interior of “male side” of master bathroom, camera facing north-northwest.

