

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 17-379, **Version:** 2

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Presenter

*Christopher Looney, Director of Planning and Community Development*  
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**SUBJECT:**

Public hearing and consideration of the first reading of an ordinance regarding the proposed designation of approximately 0.241 acres, Lots 14 and 16 of City Block 1024, addressed as 564 Hill Avenue, as a local historic landmark to be known as the Kopplin-Leitch House.

**BACKGROUND / RATIONALE:**

**Case No.:** HLC-17-007

**Council District:** 6

**Owner/Applicant:** Bonnie Leitch  
548 Hill Avenue  
New Braunfels, TX 78130

**Staff Contact:** Amy McWhorter, Historic Preservation Officer  
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amcwhorter@nbtexas.org

The subject property, consisting of approximately 0.24 acre of land, is located on South Hill Avenue between Jahn and Butcher Streets and is zoned "SND-1" (Special Neighborhood District 1). It includes a single-family dwelling dating to circa 1890, and accessory structure.

In 1891, Albert Kopplin purchased Lots 13, 14, 15, and 16, of Block 2 of the Jahn Addition from Emma Jahn. The deed records specify Lot 13 and 15 fronted onto the "extension of Academy Street" and Lots 14 and 16 fronted onto Grand Avenue (now known as Hill Avenue.) The subject structure is located on Lots 14 and 16 and fronts onto Hill Avenue.

According to his obituary published in 1929, Albert Kopplin came to New Braunfels in 1892. Prior to that he resided in the Bulverde and Schoenthal areas where he was a successful rancher and stock farmer. According to the 1900 Census, Kopplin lived on "Union Hill" (also known as Hill Avenue) with his wife Marie, daughter Emma Pfeuffer and grand-daughter Etekla Pfeuffer. This document lists his occupation as capitalist, which referred to someone living off of income from stocks, land, or other similar investments. The year prior to his death, Kopplin sold the property to his daughter Emma, who deeded it to her children in 1929. It appears that the property was used as a rental property or part-time home following Kopplin's death as census records and anecdotal details provided by descendants show that it was not a homestead property between 1930-1945. In 1945 Pfeuffer's children sold the property to Tom C. Adare, whose heirs sold it to Ernesto and Christina Solis in 1971.

The dwelling is a t-plan with a cross-gabled roof clad in corrugated metal with a shed-roof entry porch. The exterior is clad in wooden siding and the original 4/4 wooden windows are intact. The front gable projection has a concave window canopy with saw-tooth millwork. The front porch is supported by chamfered wooden porch posts and has an intricately carved wooden gingerbread frieze and balustrade. The primary entry is located at the junction of the front gable and wing and consists of a single, hinged door with a fixed stained glass transom. Secondary entrances on the rear façade also have transom windows. There is one internal brick chimney. The accessory structure was constructed circa 1925.

The structure is an excellent local example of Folk Victorian architecture which was a popular residential building style in New Braunfels from circa 1885-1900. During this period, the advent of the railroad and advances in steam engine technology made the use of decorative wooden elements less expensive and more common. Character-defining features of the style include the gable front and wing form, exuberant wooden decorative elements.

**General Information:**

**Size:**

0.24 acres

**Surrounding Zoning and Land Use:**

North - SND-1 - Single-family residences

East - SND-1 - Single-family residences

South - SND-1 - Single-family residences

West - SND-1 - Single-family residences

**Comprehensive Plan / Future Land Use Designation:**

Residential - Low Density

**Floodplain:**

No portion of the property is within the 1% annual chance flood zone.

**Improvement(s):**

ca. 1891 wood house

ca. 1925 garage

**Determination Factors:**

In making a decision on zoning, the following factors are to be considered:

- Whether the permitted uses will be appropriate in the immediate area, and their relationship to the area and to the City as a whole (*The proposed historic landmark designation is a zoning overlay and does not change the base zoning of the property*).
- Whether the change is in accord with any existing or proposed public schools, streets, water supply, sanitary sewers, and other utilities to the area (*The proposed historic landmark designation is a zoning overlay which does not impact the existing conditions*).
- How other areas designated for similar development will be affected (*There should be no negative effect on other properties in the vicinity as historic preservation has been demonstrated to have a positive stabilizing impact on neighborhoods.*);
- Any other factors that will substantially affect the public health, safety, morals, or general

welfare (*The historic landmark designation of the property should contribute to retention of historically significant structures, which provides a community benefit.*); and

- Whether the request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan (*Comprehensive Plan Goal 69 recommends that the City enhance the heritage image of the City by designating historic areas and structures that should be preserved, restored, and used for adaptive reuse.*)

**ADDRESSES A NEED/ISSUE IN A CITY PLAN OR COUNCIL PRIORITY:**

	Yes	<p><b>City Plan/Council Priority:</b>                  2006 Comprehensive Plan  <i>Pros and Cons Based on Policies Plan</i></p>	<p><b>Pros: Goal 69: Enhance the heritage image of the City by <u>designating historic areas and structures that should be preserved, restored, and used for adaptive reuse.</u></b> The designation of this property will enhance the heritage image of the City and encourage the preservation and adaptive reuse of the property.</p>
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**FISCAL IMPACT:**

N/A

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

The Historic Landmark Commission held a public hearing on April 11, 2017 and recommended approval of the designation (5-0-0). Commissioners Gonzalez, Davis, Kammerer were absent and Commissioner Leitch recused.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on June 6, 2017 and recommended approval (7-0-0).

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the Historic Landmark Designation as the subject structure meets three of the three of the six criteria for approval (criteria 1, 4, and 6) as stated in the City’s Code of Ordinances, Article III, Section 66-56 which states: a historic landmark or district may be designated if it meets at least one of the following criteria:

- (1) Possesses significance in history, architecture, archeology, or culture. *The structure reflects early subdivision development patterns as one of the early structures built in the Jahn addition and advances in building technology in circa 1890 New Braunfels due to advances in transportation and manufacturing technology.*
- (2) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local, regional, state, or national history. *No such associations are known.*
- (3) Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past. *No such associations are known.*
- (4) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. *The subject structure retains characteristic features of its style including the retention of the overall form and decorative features.*
- (5) Represents the work of a master designer, builder, or craftsman. *No such representation is known.*
- (6) Represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood or city. *The structure has been located at this site since circa 1890.*

*Notification:*

Public hearing notices were sent to 20 owners of property representing 24 tracts of land within 200 feet of the subject property. Staff has received five responses in favor (#1, 5, 6, 7 and 12) and none in objection.

*Attachments:*

1. Application
2. Maps
3. Notification & Responses
4. Photographs of Subject Property
5. Article III, Section 66-54
6. Article III, Section 66-56
7. Excerpt from the April 11, 2017 Historic Landmark Commission Meeting
8. Excerpt from the June 6, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting
9. Ordinance