



SAN ANTONIO CONSERVATION SOCIETY

STATEMENT:

July 6, 2018

TO: Michael Guarino, Chair, and Members
Historic and Design Review Commission, City of San Antonio

RE: Agenda Item No. 14 – 1603 S Hackberry Street
HDRC Case No.2018-304

The San Antonio Conservation Society supports the preservation and finding of historic significance for 1603 South Hackberry. We concur that the former Crystal Ice Factory, built c. 1928, meets the three criteria for eligibility identified by the Office of Historic Preservation.

This building, which operated as a family-owned ice plant into the 1940s, is eligible under Criterion 11. Constructed out of then-modern materials, it represents a later example of the type of factory that produced commercially manufactured ice; a major San Antonio industry from the post- Civil War era to the 1950s.

The concrete and steel building retains much of the form and materials once integral to its original function, including cork-insulated walls. We commend the owner for removing the historically inappropriate cladding that once covered the building to reveal its original structure. Because this structure embodies the distinguishing characteristics of a valuable building type and method of construction, it qualifies under Criterion 5.

Finally, the two-story building's prominent location on the corner of South Hackberry and High reflects its importance to the commercial corridor that historically served the surrounding Highland Park neighborhood (now included in the Denver Heights Neighborhood Association). As an ice factory supplying local refrigeration needs and, later, as an African American-owned lounge providing a community gathering place, it meets Criterion 7.

When this building first opened as the Crystal Ice Factory, the *San Antonio Light* touted it as "an important addition to the community center at Highland Park on South Hackberry." Once stabilized and repurposed, 1603 South Hackberry can once again make a positive contribution to the neighborhood. Historic designation, and the associated tax incentives, will help the owner achieve this end.

Respectfully,

SAN ANTONIO CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Susan Beavin, President

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The Purpose of this Society is to preserve and to encourage the preservation of historic buildings, objects, places and customs, relating to the history of Texas, its natural beauty, and all that is admirably distinctive to our State; and by such physical and cultural preservation to keep the history of Texas legible and intact to educate the public, especially the youth of today and tomorrow, with knowledge of our inherited regional values.