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NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

RECEIVED 2280
AUG 15 2014
NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Hancock Golf Course
Other name/site number: Austin Country Club
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 811 E. 41st Street
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Not for publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐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

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer 8/5/14
Signature of certifying official / Title **Date**

Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ 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: _____

Joe Edson K. Beall 9.30.14
Signature of the Keeper **Date of Action**

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

	Private
X	Public - Local
	Public - State
	Public - Federal

Category of Property

	building(s)
X	district
	site
	structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
1	0	sites
0	2	structures
2	0	objects
5	2	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: Recreation and Culture: sports facility = golf course
Social: clubhouse

Current Functions: Recreation and Culture: sports facility = golf course
Social: clubhouse
Commerce/Trade: specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification: OTHER: Golf course; NO STYLE

Principal Exterior Materials: Stone/Limestone, Brick, Wood

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-9)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

X	**A**	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
	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.
	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance: 1899-1964

Significant Dates: 1899, 1900, 1913, 1934, 1951

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): N/A

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): N/A

Architect/Builder: Page, Charles H., Jr.

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 8-10 through 8-16)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheets 9-17 through 9-18)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
- _ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- _ 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:
- x State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission*, Austin)
- _ Other state agency
- _ Federal agency
- _ Local government
- _ University
- x Other -- Specify Repository: *Austin History Center*

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Approximately 50.5 acres

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

	Latitude	Longitude
1.	30.301559°	-97.726359°
2.	30.299731°	-97.722494°
3.	30.296565°	-97.723235°
4.	30.296293°	-97.724379°
5.	30.298103°	-97.728466°

Verbal Boundary Description: The nominated property includes approximately 50.5 acres of Outlot 1-13, Division C, City of Austin (property ID 211727). The property is trapezoidal in shape, and is bounded by Peck Avenue to the northwest, 41st Street to the north, Red River Street to the east, 38½ Street to the southeast, and 38th Street to the southwest.

Boundary Justification: The nominated property is a contiguous parcel bounded by city streets. A triangular parcel approximately 1-acre in area to the southeast is separated from the majority of the legal parcel by 38½ Street, and is not included in this nomination.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Margaret Hereford and National Register Coordinator Gregory Smith
Organization: NA
Street & number: c/o University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture, 310 Inner Campus Drive
City or Town: Austin State: Texas Zip Code: 78712
Email: mhereford16@gmail.com
Telephone: 512-471-1922
Date: March 7, 2014

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheet Maps 19 through 24)

Additional items (see continuation sheets Figures 25 and 26)

Photographs (see continuation sheets 5 through 7 and 27 through 42)

Photographs

Hancock Golf Course
Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photographed by Margaret Hereford, 2013

Photo 1
Camera Facing S
Looking toward Hole 1 Fairway from Hole 1 tee

Photo 2
Camera Facing NNE
Looking toward Hole 2 Fairway and Hole 1 Fairway from in between Hole 1 Fairway and Hole 2 Fairway

Photo 3
Camera Facing NW
Looking toward Hole 1 Hole from near the SE edge of property boundary

Photo 4
Camera Facing WNW
Looking toward Hole 2 tee and Hole 1 Fairway from near the SE edge of property boundary

Photo 5
Camera Facing ENE
Looking toward Hole 3 tee

Photo 6
Camera Facing E
Looking toward Hole 3 green from S edge of property boundary

Photo 7
Camera Facing W
Looking toward Hole 4 Fairway from elevated area W of Hole 3 Fairway

Photo 8
Camera Facing N
Looking toward Hole 4 Hole from Hole 4 Fairway

Photo 9
Camera Facing NW
Looking toward Hole 6 Hole and Fairway from near W side of Hole 4 tee

Photo 10
Camera Facing W
Looking toward Hole 4 Hole from Hole 5 tee

Photo 11
Camera Facing NW
Looking toward Hole 5 Hole from Hole 5 tee

Photo 12
Camera Facing N
Looking toward Hole 5 Fairway and Hole 9 Fairway from SE edge of Hole 5 Fairway

Photo 13
Camera Facing W
Looking toward Hole 5 Hole and Hole 6 Fairway from SE edge of Hole 5

Photo 14
Camera Facing SE
Looking toward Hole 9 Fairway from Hole 9 tee

Photo 15
Camera Facing SW
Looking toward Hole 6 Fairway from Hole 6 tee

Photo 16
Camera Facing WNW
Looking toward Hole 8 Hole and NW corner of property from W of Hole 6 Fairway

Photo 17
Camera Facing S
Looking toward Hole 8 tee and Hole 6 Fairway from W edge of Hole 8 Fairway on W edge of property boundary

Photo 18
Camera Facing NE
Looking toward Hole 8 Fairway and Hole 6 Fairway from NW of Hole 8 tee on W edge of property boundary

Photo 19
Camera Facing S
Looking toward Hole 7 Fairway from Hole 7 Hole on W edge of property boundary

Photo 20
Camera Facing ESE
Looking toward Hole 6 Fairway from in between Hole 8 tee and Hole 7 Hole on W edge of property boundary

Photo 21
Camera Facing SSE
Looking toward Hole 7 Fairway and Hole 6 Fairway from W of Hole 7 Fairway on W edge of property boundary

Photo 22
Camera Facing NE
Looking toward Hole 7 Fairway and Hole 6 Fairway from SW of Hole 7 Fairway near SW edge of property

Photo 23
Camera Facing NNW
Looking toward Hole 7 Fairway and Hole 6 Fairway from Hole 7 tee on S edge of property boundary

Photo 24
Camera Facing WNW
Looking toward Hole 9 Hole and Fairway and putting green from SE of Hole 9 Hole

Photo 25
Camera Facing NE
Looking toward Hole 9 Hole and putting green from S of Hole 9 Fairway and SW of putting green

Photo 26
Camera Facing SW
Club House

Photo 27
Camera Facing S
Club House

Photo 28
Camera Facing NE
Club House

Photo 29
Camera Facing N
Club House Interior, Fireplace

Photo 30
Camera Facing E
Club House Interior

Photo 31
Camera Facing SW
North Gates

Photo 32
Camera Facing SW
Storage Barn / Quonset

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.

Description

Hancock Golf Course in north-central Austin is a turn-of-the-century nine-hole golf course with a 1934 clubhouse designed by local architect Charles H. Page, Jr. The nominated property occupies approximately 50.5 acres and includes two contributing buildings, two objects, and one overall site. The property lies just east of the Hyde Park Historic District (NR 1990), south of the Edgar Perry Estate (NR 2001) and in the general vicinity of numerous early 20th century residential subdivisions. Although there have been additions to the clubhouse and minor changes to the golf course, none have greatly altered the property's integrity. There is a non-contributing soccer field in the northeastern corner of the site and a small basketball court west of the clubhouse, but otherwise, the property appears much as it did throughout the 20th century.

The primary entrance to the Hancock Golf Course property is on the north side, from 41st Street. A driveway leads to a parking lot on the north side of the clubhouse (now the Hancock Recreation Center and Pro Shop), which is located near the center of the property. The original entrance to the course was west of the current driveway, also on 41st Street, and is marked by a small pair of brick pier, remnants of the original gates which were designed by Hugo Kuehne, a prominent local architect, city planner, and architecture professor at the University of Texas. A metal Quonset-type shed is northeast of the Hole 5 green. It features two large sliding metal doors on the front and two floors of storage space inside. The construction date is unknown, but it is similar to a 1946 building contributing to the Zilker Park Historic District in south Austin. Tree cover is dense around the clubhouse, along Waller Creek, and along the south and north boundaries.

Golf Course

The nine-hole golf course covers a roughly-square 50.5-acre area, with generally level terrain ranging from 597 to 605 feet above sea level. Waller Creek runs through the western half of the course on its way south to the Colorado River (Lady Bird Lake) in downtown Austin. The nine-hole golf course was laid out by former Austin mayor Lewis Hancock in 1899. A series of gravel paths for golf carts is laid over much of the course. Due to the compact size of the course, and short distances from tee to green, there are only two measurements for the tee placement: level red (2427 yards total), and level blue (2633 yards total). A six-hole putting green is located between the ninth green and the portion of the parking located in front of the pro shop.

Hole	Blue Distance (yards)	Red Distance (yards)
1	324	303
2	335	309
3	346	326
4	264	246
5	152	137
6	462	428
7	357	317
8	149	127
9	249	234

Holes 1 through 3 run parallel to each other, are generally oriented north/south, and occupy the eastern half of the course.

Hole 1 (303/324 yards) runs south before jogging slightly to the right (west) about midway down the fairway. This fairway slopes gradually upward over a ridge, before falling down towards the green. There is a ridge defines the northern and western edges of the green.

Hole 2 (309/335 yards) runs from the southeast corner of the course to the north, sloping gently downward before jogging slightly to the left near the tee. The fairway runs parallel to Red River Street. The back portion of the green slopes upward slightly.

Hole 3 (326/346 yards) runs from near the northeast corner of the course south-southwest in an almost straight line. The tee is just to the west of the tee for Hole 6. The fairway stays fairly level before gradually sloping downward. There are two sand traps on either side of the green: the one to the left (west) is elevated above the green, and one to the right (east) lies just below the green.

Hole 4 (246/264 yards) runs north-northwest in an almost straight line and features a water hazard just southwest of the green. The fairway slopes steeply downwards before reaching a small hill and then rising slightly up towards the green. This hole has thick trees to the north and west near the creek.

The tee for **Hole 5** is northwest of the clubhouse. Hole 5 (137/152 yards) is the second-shortest hole and runs to the west. The hole includes a small hill before steeply sloping down to the creek, which crosses about midway down the fairway. There are two bridges crossing the creek on either side of the fairway, and thick grove of trees to the west.

Hole 6 (428/462 yards) is the longest hole and runs south before jogging to the southeast (to the left). The falling slope is gradual than becomes moderately steeper before the crossing of the creek near the end of the fairway, just after the southeast jog. After the creek crosses the fairway, the hole slopes upward to the green.

Hole 7 (317/357 yards) runs from the southwest portion of the site to the northwest before veering north just more than halfway down the hole. This veer is to the right for the golfer. The creek crosses the hole about halfway between the tee and the beginning of the jog north. The hole drops slightly in elevation to the creek crossing and then rises slightly before the jog in direction. After the jog, the slope rises steeply up to the green.

Hole 8 (127/144 yards) is the shortest hole on the course, and is a straight shot from tee to green, running north. The shorter tee distance is at a slightly lower elevation than the far tee. This hole runs parallel with Peck Street along the west side of the course, with the green near the corner of 41st Street and Peck in the northwest corner of the course. The slope of the fairway falls for a short distance and then gradually rises up to the green.

Hole 9 (234/249 yards) runs along the north-central portion of the course to the east. The farther tee is slightly elevated over the short tee. This hole has a very slight jog about two-thirds down the fairway is to the north (left). The fairway drops in elevation down to the creek, close to the tee. After the creek crossing, the slope rises to the green. There are thick trees to the north of the fairway.

The golf course has experienced minimal changes since its original construction in 1899. In 1913, the size of the course was doubled, with nine holes added on a large plot of land to the northeast of the nominated property, and the original course became the back nine. The tee for Hole 1 was placed at the far northeast corner of the original course, with the fairway and green on the new course, requiring players to shoot diagonally over the intersection of Red River and 41st streets. There were seven complete holes on the new portion of the course, as well as the tee for Hole 9, with the associated fairway and green across the same intersection on the original course. Physical changes have been made to only three holes on the original site, primarily to improve the safety of the golfers on the course and automobile drivers on the bordering streets. In 1962, the City of Austin, which had owned the course since 1946, sold the front nine for

commercial development, and the original property again became a nine-hole course. The former Hole 11 was divided into two shorter holes (now holes 7 and 8), the Hole 9 green and Hole 1 tee were removed from the northeast corner of the site, and Hole 17 on the southeast edge of the site was likewise removed.

These changes do not affect the historic integrity of the golf course, especially in comparison to larger private courses. The Hancock Golf Course measures 2,427 or 2,633 yards (depending on tee selection), rather than the standard 3,500 - 3,750 yards (for 9 holes) found on modern courses. Most historic golf courses have had their course and hole lengths altered over time, in response to ball and club technology that improved precision and drive distance. Newer golf courses also lack the tree density and natural terrain that exists at Hancock Golf Course, and the greens are smoother in general. As the Hancock site is situated so centrally in Austin, which grew quickly during the first half of the 20th century while the Austin Country Club resided there, there was not enough adjacent landmass to alter the golf course in length, or in layout beyond the minimal changes that were made.

Clubhouse

Presently called the Recreation Center, the 1934 clubhouse is a two-story building built into a hill, so the primary level is the top floor. The clubhouse is constructed of load-bearing limestone and brick, which were donated from the demolition of the University of Texas' Old Main Building. The building faces southeast and has an irregular floor plan with two main hallways on the upper level and one on the lower. There are five activity rooms, a ballroom, sun room, pro shop, storage closets, restrooms, and office spaces located within the building. The original stone building is clearly distinguished from the wooden siding and white painted brick of a 1963 addition.

The primary elevation faces southeast, as is dominated by a symmetrical projecting bay with a central door and two arched windows. The bay has a gabled roof and is finished with rusticated limestone laid in regular courses, with brick defining each arched opening. The double wood doors are each divided into fifteen lights, flanked by half-height sidelights and topped with an arched transom window behind a decorative wooden arch with eleven turned spindles. The door is flanked by metal lantern and arched windows, subdivided into eighteen lights. The southern recessed bay has a flat roof and the façade is largely comprised of four windows subdivided into eight lights each. Next to this window series is a double door, subdivided into fifteen lights, surrounded sidelights and lanterns, and a transom on top. The double door is the entrance to the sun room. The northern recessed bay is also finished with rusticated limestone, with two additional windows, identical to those on the front central bay, to let light into the ballroom. At the junction of the central and north bays is the stone chimney. Two concrete steps and an accompanying concrete ADA ramp lead up to this entrance. An additional stairway to the entryway platform leads from the north. Directly in front of the northern bay is concrete and stone pavement. In front of the central bay and stretching about halfway across the southern bay is a limestone patio defined by low stone walls to the east and south and a metal railing with a gate to the north. The east wall of this patio has the same metal railing for a central portion of the wall as well. There are trees and shrubbery surrounding the wall. To the southeast of the patio is a paved parking lot.

The northeast façade is divided into four bays of three different materials; rusticated limestone, wooden siding, and painted brick. This façade shows the slope of the land, downward to the west, on which the building sits. This slope is clearly illustrated by the two staircases leading up the slope to the paving and entryway in front of the southeast façade. The northwest façade consists of three bays, each of a different material. The southernmost two-story bay is finished with white painted brick, with a concrete basketball court is located in front. The air conditioning equipment for the building is located directly in front of the north bay. The southwest façade is divided into four bays. The westernmost 2-story bay is finished with white painted brick. The upper floor has two identical double hung windows and a metal door that opens onto a painted metal staircase. The bottom level contains an identical door. The easternmost bay is the façade of the sun room and is made of smooth limestone along the sun room level with the rusticated limestone below. This bay has a flat roof and four sets of windows symmetrically flanking an entrance. This entryway has a lantern on

either side and is fronted by a wide staircase of ten steps leading down to a sidewalk. There is also a ramp leading from the top of the staircase to the southeast, out to the front of the building and the parking lot. A playground runs the length of the three easternmost bays and is directly in front of this façade.

The clubhouse plan is arranged asymmetrically, with a ballroom and sunroom serving as the primary public spaces on the main level. There is a tiled foyer upon entering the building that currently houses tables and bulletin boards promoting events, services, and local businesses. A hallway runs towards the northwest, with access to restrooms and the ballroom. A front desk and waiting area is located past the restrooms and doorway. At the end of the hallway is the first activity room, with brick walls and a vaulted ceiling with visible wooden beams and trusses.

The ballroom is the largest room in the building and has hardwood floors, brick walls, and a vaulted ceiling with similar wooden beams and trusses to those in the activity room. On the southeast wall of the ballroom is a double door entryway and two arched windows. Each of these elements has a partial brick surround. The southwest wall consists of five large, arched openings, each with a partial brick surround, opening into the sun room. The northwest wall is punctured by the door leading to the activity room and the window looking into the waiting area. There is a large Texas Shellstone fireplace in the middle of this wall, in between the doorway and the windows.

The sun room ceiling slopes slightly to the southwest, with exposed wooden beams and a ceiling system similar to that of the ballroom and activity room. The floor is comprised of smooth limestone tiles of various sizes. There is a step down into the sun room from the ballroom on each doorway, except for the one located closest to the activity room, which features an ADA concrete ramp. There are four lanterns located between the doorways.

A hallway from the first activity room leads to the more modern section of the building, which includes a kitchen, restroom, two storage closets, the second and third activity rooms, and an exterior exit. This exterior exit leads outside to the northwest, down the metal staircase discussed in a previous section. All of these rooms, with the exception of activity room two, have sheetrock walls and ceilings and the floors vary from linoleum in the kitchen to tile in the larger storage closet and bathroom, with the hardwood extending to the smaller storage closet and the third activity room. The southeast wall of the kitchen is made of the same rusticated limestone as the exterior of the building; however it has been painted a cream color. The third activity room has identical double hung exterior windows.

A wooden staircase leads to the lower level of the building, which contains a small storage closet located underneath the stairwell, two restrooms, and the pro shop. At the northwest end of a hallway is an exterior exit to the northeast and the fourth activity room. At the southwest end of the hallway is another storage closet and a double door entrance to the fifth activity room. The southwest wall of this activity room has a metal exterior door with a single light transom above.

The main entrance to the pro shop is located on the lower level of the northeast façade. The main room features painted brick walls and a plain sheetrock ceiling. There are two wooden 15-lite doors on the southeast wall of the main room, one leading to a storage space and the other leading into an office.

Features

Golf Course	site	C
Clubhouse	building	C
Quonset-type shed	building	C
Pair of entrance gate piers	two objects	C
Soccer field	structure	NC
Basketball court	structure	NC

Statement of Significance

Hancock Golf Course was the first location of the Austin Country Club, established in 1899 and incorporated the following year during a national rise in the popularity of golf that saw the establishment of numerous private golf associations across the United States. The nine-hole golf course was the first in the city, and is the oldest continuously-operated course in the state. Founded by former Austin Mayor Lewis Hancock with a committee of business and civic leaders, the Austin Country Club added nine holes on a separate parcel in 1913 and continued to operate the course as a private segregated facility until 1951, when the organization completed a move to a new location. The City of Austin thereafter operated the course as a public facility, selling off all but the original nine-hole course for commercial development in 1959. The course has played an integral part in the introduction and popularity of the sport in Austin and retains its historic layout. The property is nominated to the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Entertainment/Recreation at the local level of significance.

The sport of golf originated in Scotland in the 15th century, and eventually spread to the British Isles through the mid-19th century. Americans are reported to have played some form of golf during the colonial period, but the first formal golf courses weren't built in the United States until the late 1800s, when affluent men with ties to Scotland established the game in the northeast. The first golf club in the United States was St. Andrews Golf Club in Yonkers, New York, organized in 1888 and incorporated in 1894. By the mid-1890s, golf had become a bona fide craze, with approximately 75 clubs nationwide, a magazine dedicated to the sport called "the Golfer," and the establishment of the United States Golf Association (USGA), all of which illustrate the meteoric rise in the popularity of a game that had been virtually unheard of in the U.S. less than a decade prior.[1] The majority of these early clubs and courses were in New England and the New York metropolitan area, but by the turn of the century, the game had taken hold in cities throughout the country, including several in Texas.

Newspaper articles from the period indicate interest in golfing in San Antonio, Dallas, and Galveston, but the Galveston Country Club established the first chartered course in Texas in 1898. The Dallas Country Club also formed in the late 1890s.[2] By the turn of the century, Texas boasted five courses, including the Austin Country Club, far fewer than in northeastern states or California. The warm Texas climate and greater upward mobility for many Texas residents made the game an appealing pastime. In the early 20th century, men's and women's golf associations were established in Texas, and well-publicized contests and championships drew more attention to the game. In 1916, the municipal golf course in San Antonio's Breckenridge Park opened as the first public 18-hole course in the state, and became the site of many championships and exhibition events. Professional golf events such as the 1922 Texas Open in San Antonio offered high-dollar ($5,000) prizes, and Dallas hosted the 1927 NPGA (National Professional Golfers Association) championship in 1927. While the Great Depression saw the closing of many golf courses across the state, continued wealth generated by the petroleum and other industries help spur the development and improvement of some elite country clubs. Texas produced many talented professional golfers beginning in the 1920s, and has continued to be the source of champion players.[3]

[1] Moss, Richard J. *The Kingdom of Golf in America*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 2-7. Moss describes the evolution of American golf through the 1890s in the aptly-titled chapter "From Nothing to Something," offering changes in ball technology, the perceived egalitarian nature of the game, increased mobility and rise of the suburbs, and the corresponding desire by suburbanites to join clubs and associations, as some of the factors that bolstered the popularity of the game.
[2] King, J.C., and Frances G. Trimble, "GOLF," *Handbook of Texas Online* (http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/xsg01), accessed March 03, 2014. Stricklin, Art. *The Texas Golf Guide*. Plano, Tex: Republic of Texas Press, 1999. The Galveston course was destroyed in the 1900 storm.
[3] "GOLF," *Handbook of Texas Online*.

Austin Country Club

In the late 19th Century, Austin was home to rising middle and upper classes, who sought out the lifestyles and trappings afforded to elites in other metropolitan areas nationwide. The growth of state government and the University of Texas fueled the suburbanization that spread the growing city well beyond its original 1-mile-square plat centered on the state capitol. Hyde Park was the residential neighborhood of choice for the upper echelon of Austinites, and quickly became home to scholars and professors at the university, which opened in 1883. Residents were entranced by golf and other recreational activities enjoyed in major American cities, especially those in the northeast part of the country, where many prominent residents would vacation. Lewis Hancock frequently visited the northeastern United States for school, business, and holidays, and also traveled to Scotland, the birthplace of golf.[4] He became enthralled with the game, and desired to bring golf to Texas.

Hancock was a prominent figure in the Austin community, having founded the Hancock Opera House, served as president of the State National Bank, and was elected mayor in 1896 and 1897.[5] He was eager to formalize the game of golf in his hometown, and assembled a committee of influential men to help support and finance his endeavor. He sent out invitations and placed an ad in the *Austin Daily Statesman* entitled "A Golf Club on Tap," calling for fellow golf enthusiasts to join him in establishing a club. The group held its inaugural meeting at the Driskill Hotel on November 13, 1899, with many of the city's leaders in attendance.[6] Attendees included University of Texas president Franklin Houston, Greek and Latin professor Daniel Penick, and William Bell, director of Austin National Bank, and the discussion included consideration of not only inviting women to the following meeting, but opening the possibility that women could be allowed to play every day. [7] The committee's report, published in the *Daily Statesman*, included recommendations that the club adopt the rules of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews (Scotland), and allow children between 10 and 15 years of age to play with a reduced fee structure.

The men spent the remainder of 1899 establishing membership rules and dues ($5 initiation fee and $3 quarterly; both women and men could join), as well as securing a suitable plot of land, with appropriate elevation inundations and tree density. The organization was named "Austin Golf Club" and formally incorporated on January 10, 1900. After briefly trying out sites along Duval Street and east of Waller Creek, the club settled on the site of the current course, which was leased to the club. The members worked diligently to lay out and construct the course.[8] The course was rough, with sand greens – no sod, and no earth moving – but was ready for amateur tournament play on February 22, 1900.[9] News of the inaugural games, whereby the course would be played twice for a round of 18, was reported the following day in the *Stateman*. In May 1900, one of the club's directors, Robert Connerly, traveled to Dallas and Waco to arrange a tri-city club tournament to be held in Waco.[10] In February 1902, the *Dallas Morning News* reported that the Austin Golf Club held its "regular annual tournament," and described the

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[4] Trimble, Frances G. *One Hundred Years of Champions and Change: The History of Austin Country Club*. Austin Country Club, 1999, 5. Ramzy, John W. *A Brief History of Hancock Golf Course: The First Hundred Years. https://www.hancockna.org/www/node/24. Accessed March 7, 2014.*
[5] Goldwater, Michael. *Austin Golf. http://www.golfaustin.org/aboutus/history-of-golf-in-austin/austin-golf-by-michael-goldwater. Accessed March 7, 2014.*
[6] "A Golf Club on Tap" *Austin Daily Statesman*, November 14, 1899.
[7] "The Austin Golf Club. The Initial Meeting Held at the Driskill Hotel Yesterday Afternoon." *Austin Daily Statesman*, November 14, 1899.
[8] Ramzy, John W. *A Brief History of Hancock Golf Course: The First Hundred Years. https://www.hancockna.org/www/node/24. Accessed March 7, 2014.*
[9] Ibid.
[10] "For a State Golf Tournament," *Dallas Morning News*, May 30, 1900.

aristocratic scene associated with the new golf club:

> …fine scores were made by lady and gentleman players. It was also quite the social event, there being a fashionable crowd on the links, with the swellest vehicles in the city, and Austin possesses a few fine equipages.[11]

That same year, the Austin club received membership in the United States Golf Association, which allowed members to compete in national amateur tournaments "under the auspices of the national association."[12] That summer, the club sent its best player (and state champion), John Connerly, to represent the club at a national tournament in Chicago.[13] The following year, Connerly competed at the state championship in Dallas, against players from Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, Paris, Galveston, Cleburne, Fort Worth, and Waco, indicating how the game had become established throughout the state in a relatively short time.[14] By 1907, the club was known as the "Austin Country Club," perhaps more in line with the association's identity as a social club, and not strictly as a sporting group. Club activities beyond golfing are illustrated by the Austin Country Club's central role in a 1915 case before the Texas Supreme Court regarding the establishment and rights afforded to "bona fide social clubs." Travis County District Court had previously ruled that such clubs had the right to operate and dispense alcoholic beverages at all times "with the exception of election days," while the Third Court of Appeals ruled that such clubs must first obtain state liquor licenses.[15] The Supreme Court ruled in the club's favor (noting that private clubs providing alcohol to members were not engaged in the business of *selling* intoxicating beverages) on June 25, 1919, but the issue became moot with the passage of statewide prohibition in Texas in the fall of 1919.[16]

The club continued to grow through the early 20th century, and its physical structure changed as well to reflect growing membership and a higher level of sophistication. The club had built a small frame clubhouse (later destroyed by fire) in 1900, followed by a larger and more formal 2-room clubhouse in 1901, described as a "commodious single story building, surrounded by cooling balconies built on the style of the old southern home veranda."[17] The club continued to lease the golf course property until 1906, when the purchase agreements were finalized. In 1908, a two-story clubhouse was built at the site of the current clubhouse, and was enlarged in 1914 when the club membership reached approximately 300 members.[18] In 1911, the club began to plan changes to the course, including the addition of sand traps and bunkers.[19] In 1913, the club acquired a large parcel of land on the block to the northeast of the site, in order to expand the course to eighteen holes. The additional nine-hole course (which became the front nine) had few trees, high rough, and bunkers, more in common with Scottish style golf courses than the original nine. John Bredemus (1884-1946), co-founder of the Texas Professional Golfers Associations in 1922, and renowned designer of golf courses in Texas and Mexico, is thought to have been instrumental in the design of the expanded course. In 1924, the club announced plans to install "modern grass putting greens," and a practice green near the clubhouse.[20] The club course continued to be used by non-members on certain occasions, allowing play by the Austin High School and University of Texas teams, as well as "faculty, visiting dignitaries, convention groups, and legislators."[21] In 1924, members of the Austin Lions Club formed the

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[11] "Golf Tournament at Austin," *Dallas Morning News*, February 23, 1902. The Austin team defeated the Waco team that day.
[12] "Austin Golf Club Now Entitled to have a Competitor in the National Contests," *Dallas Morning News*, April 29, 1902.
[13] Ibid.
[14] "Austin Golf Club. It is all Agog Over Approaching State Championship," *Dallas Morning News*, May 7, 1903.
[15] "Social Club Case Resubmitted," *Dallas Morning News*, November 4, 1915.
[16] Trimble, 47. National prohibition went into effect on January 17, 1920.
[17] "The New Golf Club House was Formally Dedicated on Friday Night." *Austin Daily Statesman*, June 30, 1901.
[18] Ramzy. The 1901 clubhouse is reportedly standing at 512 E. 39th Street; the 1914 clubhouse was destroyed by fire in 1934.
[19] Trimble, 40.
[20] "Many Improvements Planned for Country Club During Year," *Austin Statesman*, January 10, 1924.
[21] Trimble, 63.

Austin Municipal Golf and Amusement Association and leased a portion of the University of Texas' Breckinridge tract in west Austin for use as Lions Municipal Golf Course. In 1936, the lease was transferred to the city. [22]

In 1914, future World Golf Hall of Fame member Harvey Penick began his golf career at the Austin Country Club as a caddy at the age of 10. Penick made such an impression on Lewis Hancock that he was allowed to play alongside the founder of the club. The life of a caddy was challenging during this time when many young boys were all seeking to become the best. Penick continued to study under Lewis Hancock until he moved through the ranks to assistant pro and then head pro in 1923.[23] By the 1930s, the club was also the home to teams from Austin High School and the University of Texas, coached by Penick beginning in 1931, who were eager to begin golf instruction at a young age in hopes of fledging promising talents from the area. Penick led the UT team to 22 conference championships during his time as coach. Penick also instructed individual students at the Austin Country Club, five of which have also been inducted into the Hall of Fame.

In March 1934, the revered clubhouse of the Austin Country Club perished to fire, but this loss allowed the club to rebuild on an even grander scale. The club desperately needed more space to accommodate their growing membership and was able to hire the locally prominent architect, Charles H. Page, Jr. to design the building. The building is built in a style similar to Page's chapel in the Oakwood Cemetery and the Zilker Park Clubhouse, also built in 1934. Both of these examples are listed in National Register districts and use a similar limestone, timber bracing, and character-defining window multi-light arched windows. Page was also the architect of other well-known and respected buildings in the Austin area, including the Austin National Bank and the Travis County Courthouse. He utilized stone salvaged from the demolition of the old University of Texas Main Building, built in 1883 and deconstructed earlier in 1934.[24]

The Austin Country Club was the regular subject of stories in the *Austin Statesman* (later *Austin American-Statesman,* as well in the *Dallas Morning News*) regarding events, tournaments, players, and facilities. The club was notable for its number of women golfers throughout the first half of the 20th century, following in the footsteps of Julia Pease, who initiated women's role in the sport. By the 1940s, the Austin Country Club began to outgrow its facilities and its oddly-configured course, whereby players had to drive golf balls over an increasingly-congested city street intersection on two holes, and had limited potential for redesign to meet the current standards of a modern course. The club sought a more secluded location and once a suitable site was found on the city's east side, the club sold its property to the City of Austin for $175,000 in December of 1946.[25] The course remained at the original location for a few more years while the new site was prepared. In January 1951, the city began operation of the property as a municipal golf course (second to Lions Municipal Golf Course, on the city's west side, established in 1924).

In 1954, the city received several offers to sell the property east of Red River, as the City Council had previously voted to dedicate only the original course as park land. In December, 1959, the city sold the front nine to Homart Development for $800,000. The decision was contested by citizens, who insisted that the sale was illegal, as the

[22] "Desegregation of Lion Municipal Golf Course." Official Texas Historical Marker, and "In the Shadow of Sweatt v. Painter: The Desegregation of Muny." http://www.savemuny.com/uploads/4/2/5/2/4252242/history_of_lions_municipal.pdf. Lions' Municipal allowed African Americans to play beginning in 1951.
[23] Penick was inducted into the Hall of Fame for both his professional player and instructor accomplishments. He is regarded as one of the greatest golf instructors of all time. In addition to the accolades of his students, the Professional Golfer's Association recognized him as a teacher of the year, and his *Little Red Book* of golf instruction became the highest selling golf book ever published.
[24] Strong, 1.
[25] The club moved to its current site in the Davenport Ranch Subdivision in far west Austin in 1984.

back nine had previously been used as a park and that its sale must be approved by voters. The sale was approved by voters in 1962, and construction of the Hancock Shopping Center began in 1964.[26] Once the golf course was reduced to a nine-hole course, slight modifications were made to accommodate safety concerns for both players on the green and cars driving on the adjacent streets. The clubhouse was also altered in the mid-1960s after a fire damaged the back of the building in 1963. The brick portion of the building was added at this time, providing additional activity rooms and storage to make the facility more appropriate as a public community center. An irrigation system was installed in the 1980s to help maintain the greens and was recently updated. The landscape of this golf course is still highly recognizable as a historic course, due to its smaller putting greens, less undulation of hills, and shorter fairways, although it is still recognized by the PGA as having a certified regulation length.[27] As the oldest continually-operating golf course in the city and state, Hancock Golf Course meets National Register Criterion A in the area of Entertainment/Recreation at the local level of significance.

[26] Ramzy.
[27] Morrison Interview

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10. Geographical Data

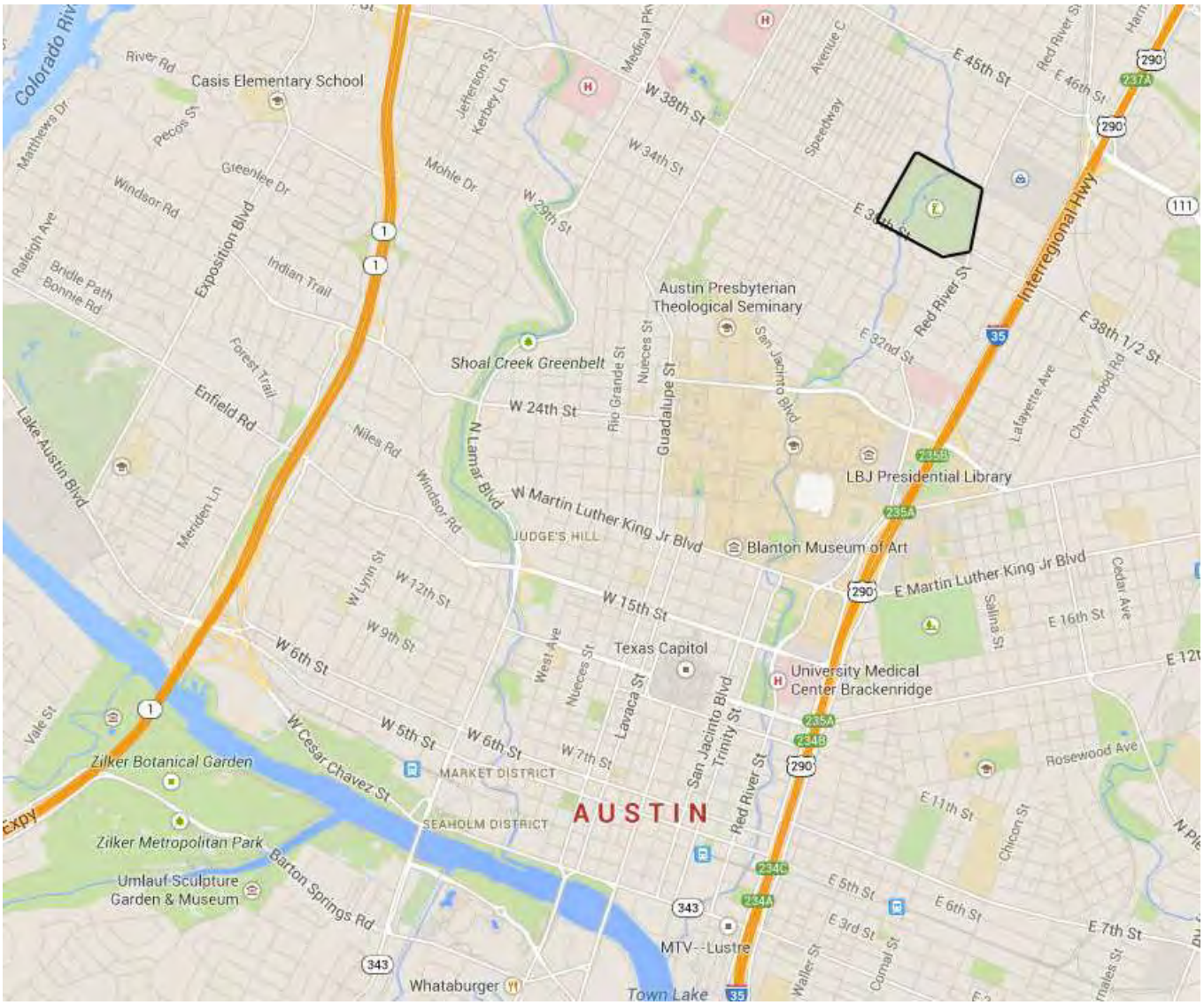
Acreage of Property: Approximately 50.5 acres

	Latitude	Longitude
1.	30.301559°	-97.726359°
2.	30.299731°	-97.722494°
3.	30.296565°	-97.723235°
4.	30.296293°	-97.724379°
5.	30.298103°	-97.728466°

Verbal Boundary Description: The nominated property includes approximately 50.5 acres of Outlot 1-13, Division C, City of Austin (property ID 211727). The property is trapezoidal in shape, and is bounded by Peck Avenue to the northwest, 41st Street to the north, Red River Street to the east, 38½ Street to the southeast, and 38th Street to the southwest.

Boundary Justification: The nominated property is a contiguous parcel bounded by city streets. A triangular parcel approximately 1-acre in area to the southeast is separated from the majority of the legal parcel by 38½ Street, and is not included in this nomination.

Hancock Golf Course (outlined in black), in relation to central Austin.
Google Maps, accessed March 7, 2014.



Course diagram by the Maggie Hereford, 2014

Based on a plan by Planned Environments, as published in Trimble, Frances G. *One Hundred Years of Champions and Change: The History of Austin Country Club*. Austin Country Club, 1999.

Birdseye view, via Bing Maps, accessed March 11, 2014.

N

1940 aerial photograph, courtesy Texas Natural Resources Information System (TNRIS)

Hancock Golf Course is at center-left.
At center-right are the original front nine (Holes 1-9), currently site of Hancock Shopping Center.

N

1951 aerial photograph, courtesy Texas Natural Resources Information System (TNRIS)

Hancock Golf Course is at center-left.
At center-right are the original front nine (Holes 1-9), currently site of Hancock Shopping Center.
The IH-35/Airport Boulevard interchange is shown under construction at the top-right.

N

Austin Country Club Clubhouse, no date.

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"Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Penick - Country Club Golf"

Photo by Neal Douglass, June 3, 1942.
(Standing at the entrance to the clubhouse, left to right: unknown, Mrs. Penick, Mr. Penick).

Source: Neal Douglass Collection Austin History Center, via the Portal to Texas History.
http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth62476/. Accessed March 7, 2014.

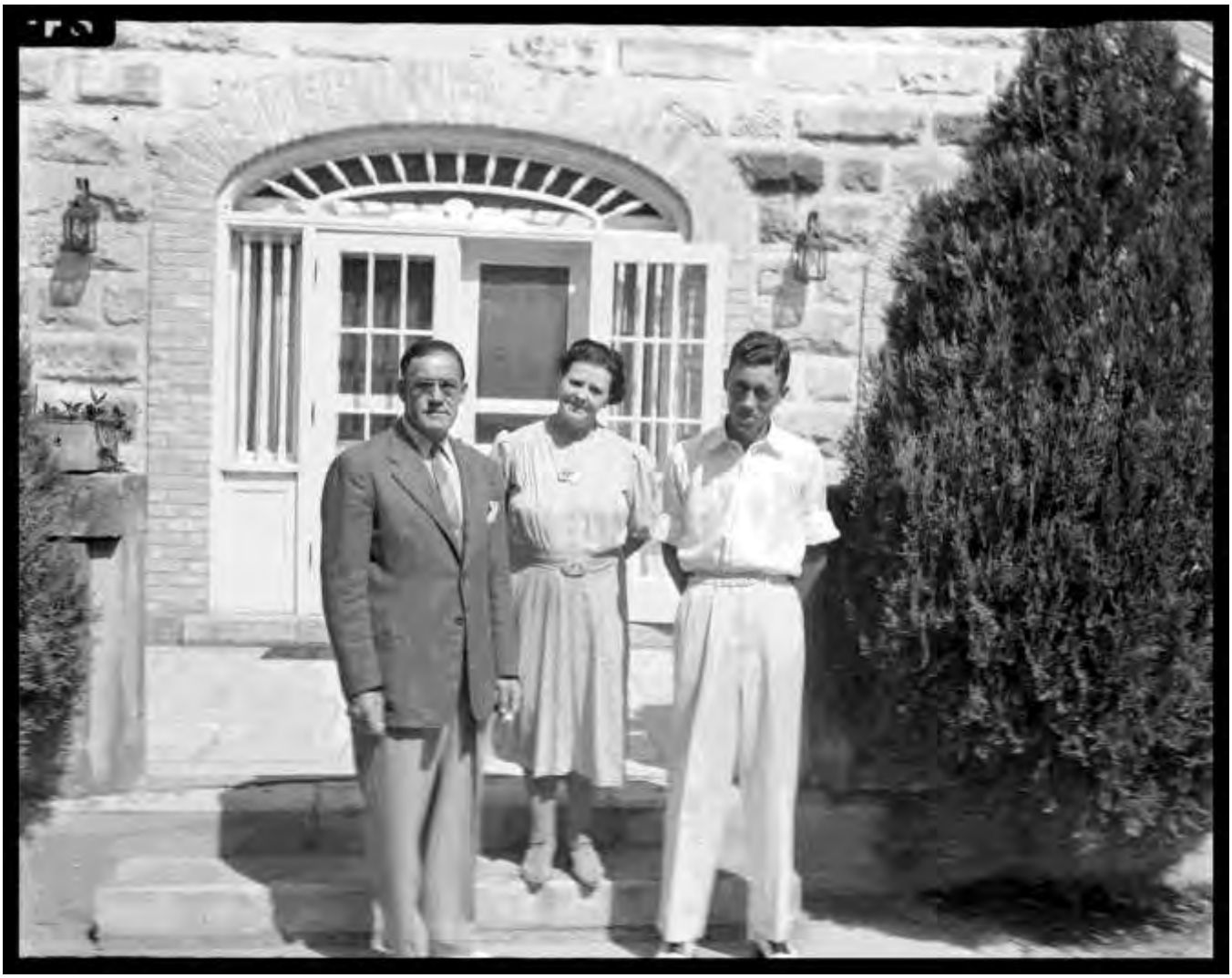

Photo 1
Camera Facing S
Looking toward hole 1 fairway from hole 1 tee

Photo 2
Camera Facing NNE
Looking toward hole 2 fairway and hole 1 fairway from in between hole 1 fairway and hole 2 fairway

Photo 3
Camera Facing NW
Looking toward hole 1 hole from near the SE edge of property boundary

Photo 4
Camera Facing WNW
Looking toward hole 2 tee and hole 1 fairway from near the SE edge of property boundary

Photo 5
Camera Facing ENE
Looking toward hole 3 tee

Photo 6
Camera Facing E
Looking toward hole 3 green from S edge of property boundary

Photo 7
Camera Facing W
Looking toward hole 4 fairway from elevated area W of hole 3 fairway

8
Camera Facing N
Looking toward hole 4 hole from hole 4 fairway

Photo 9
Camera Facing NW
Looking toward hole 6 hole and fairway from near W side of hole 4 tee

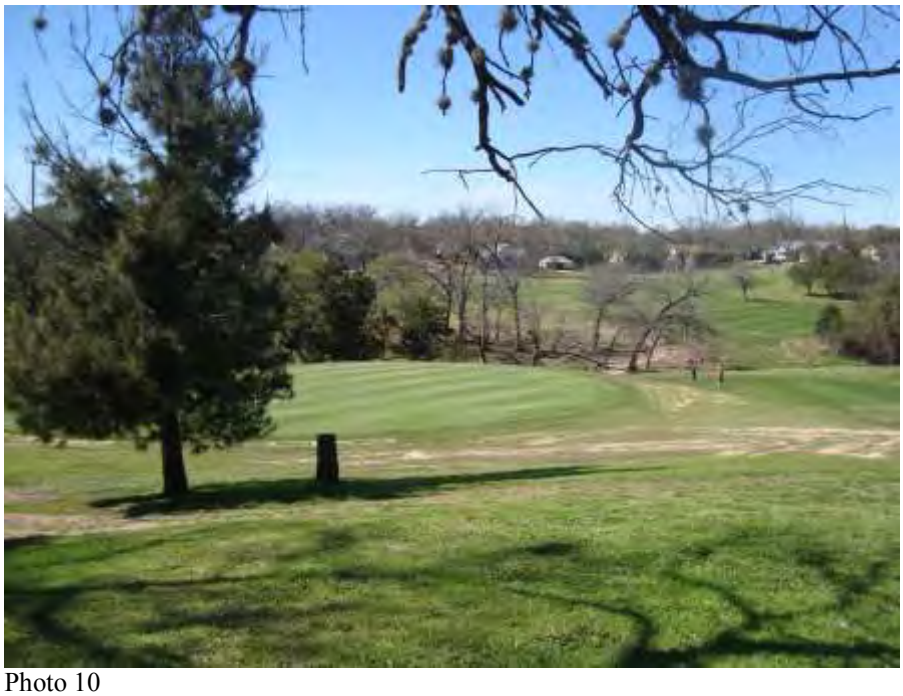

Photo 10
Camera Facing W
Looking toward hole 4 hole from hole 5 tee

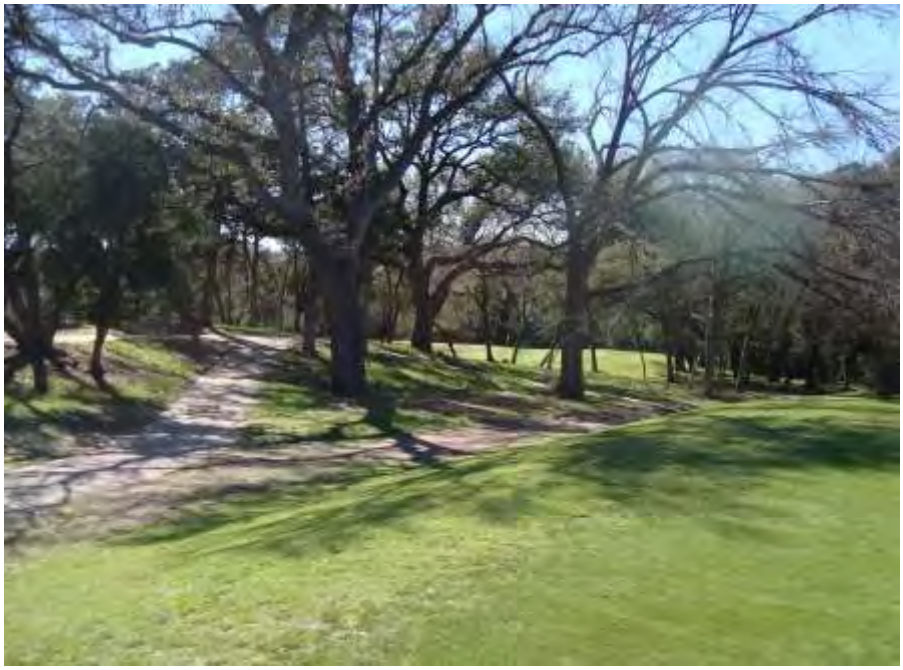

Photo 11
Camera Facing NW
Looking toward hole 5 hole from hole 5 tee

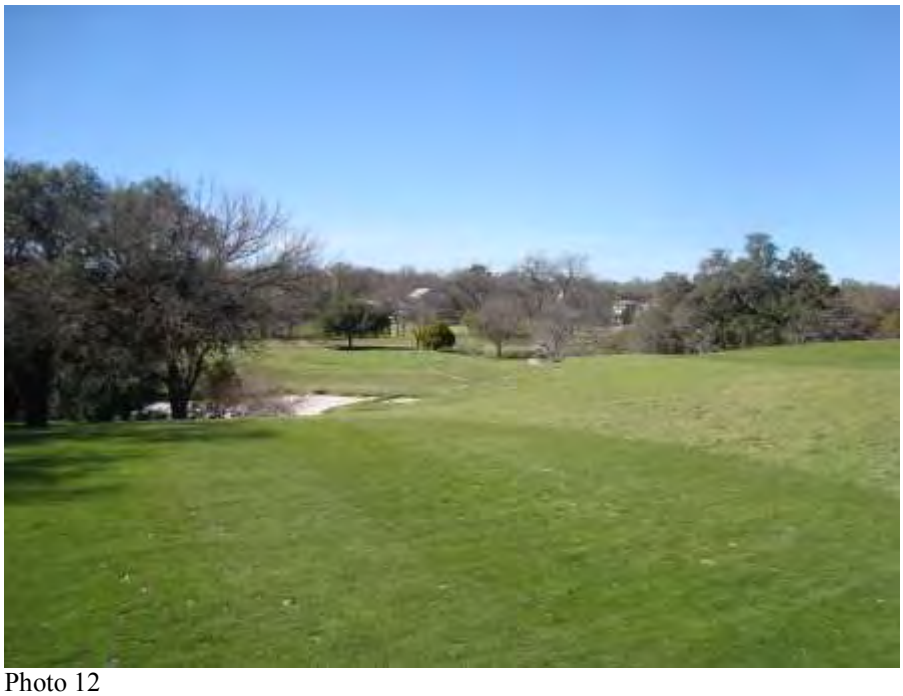

Photo 12
Camera Facing N
Looking toward hole 5 fairway and hole 9 fairway from SE edge of hole 5 fairway

Photo 13
Camera Facing W
Looking toward hole 5 hole and hole 6 fairway from SE edge of hole 5

Photo 14
Camera Facing SE
Looking toward hole 9 fairway from hole 9 tee

Photo 15
Camera Facing SW
Looking toward hole 6 fairway from hole 6 tee

Photo 16
Camera Facing WNW
Looking toward hole 8 hole and NW corner of property from W of hole 6 fairway

Photo 17
Camera Facing S
Looking toward hole 8 tee and hole 6 fairway from W edge of hole 8 fairway on W edge of property boundary

Photo 18
Camera Facing NE
Looking toward hole 8 fairway and hole 6 fairway from NW of hole 8 tee on W edge of property boundary

Photo 19
Camera Facing S
Looking toward hole 7 fairway from hole 7 hole on W edge of property boundary

Photo 20
Camera Facing ESE
Looking toward hole 6 fairway from in between hole 8 tee and hole 7 hole on W edge of property boundary

Photo 21
Camera Facing SSE
Looking toward hole 7 fairway and hole 6 fairway from W of hole 7 fairway on W edge of property boundary

Photo 22
Camera Facing NE
Looking toward hole 7 fairway and hole 6 fairway from SW of hole 7 fairway near SW edge of property

Photo 23
Camera Facing NNW
Looking toward hole 7 fairway and hole 6 fairway from hole 7 tee on S edge of property boundary

Photo 24
Camera Facing WNW
Looking toward hole 9 hole and fairway and putting green from SE of hole 9 hole

Photo 25
Camera Facing NE
Looking toward hole 9 hole and putting green from S of hole 9 fairway and SW of putting green

Photo 26
Camera Facing SW
Club House

Photo 27
Camera Facing S
Club House

Photo 28
Camera Facing NE
Club House

Photo 29
Camera Facing N
Club House Interior, Fireplace

Photo 30
Camera Facing E
Club House Interior

Photo 31
Camera Facing SW
North Gates

Photo 32
Camera Facing SW
Storage Barn / Quonset

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