

# THE NEIGHBOR

P.O. Box 5722 • Austin, Texas 78763-5722

June, 2004



West Austin Neighborhood Group

Organized 1973

*"To preserve our neighborhood and protect it from deterioration."*

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#### President's Message June 2003

##### Summer Salutations to All:

OK, it's finally hot. Balmy, even. And what's with these mosquitoes? I'm afraid that the heat and these biting insects are preventing me from coming up with a coherent theme for this month's message. So in lieu of good writing, here are Mike's Quick Tips:

##### TIP # 1: TARRYTOWN FOURTH OF JULY PARADE

Join your neighbors for the 14th Annual Tarrytown Independence Day Parade on SATURDAY morning, July 3 (NOT July 4). The parade will begin at the corner of Exposition and Moffett, in front of Good Shepherd Church. Beginning at 9:00 am, a long list of local luminaries will leisurely leave the Good Shepherd Church area and will proceed West on Windsor to Pecos, and North on Pecos to Reed Park.

We invite adults and children to walk, ride bikes, and push strollers in the parade, or simply watch and enjoy. Neighbors and friends who do not start with the parade at Good Shepherd Church may want to join along the way. Children can (or should) decorate bikes and strollers. Pets (or people) are welcome on leashes. Those whose homes border the parade route are encouraged to invite neighbors, friends, and families to join them in their front yards in cheering on the Parade.

The Grand Marshall for this year's parade is Mrs. Roberta Crenshaw, our long time neighbor and benefactor who donated the Reed Park land to the city fifty years ago. So on this 50th anniversary of Reed Park being established, come participate in this fun, family event by munching on hot dogs, gobbling cookies, and slurping lemonade at Reed Park. And don't forget to decorate those bikes and animals!

##### TIP #2: CHILL OUT

For a break from that cold, dry air-conditioned environment of your home, you can chill out at any of our three wonderful neighborhood pools at Deep Eddy, Westenfield Park and Reed Park. Both Reed and Westenfield pools have swim teams for the kids, as well as lap swimming for the big kids. At Westenfield, the City also has a Summer Playground Program with wide variety of recreation activities for children 6-12 years old. The program begins Wednesday, June 2nd at 1pm and ends; Friday, July 23rd at 3pm. Normal hours of Operation are Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Friday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. All sites will be closed July 5th. Pre-registration is not required, just register at the site on your child's first day. The Summer Playground Program is designed to provide "drop-in" activities for children and is not a substitute for day camp or childcare. Call 480-3043 or see <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/playgrounds.htm> for details.

While you are enjoying splashing about in the water, be sure to think about how much you enjoy our

pools, because we may need to fight for them if the budget cuts our City is facing creates pressure to close neighborhood pools. We may need your help to let the City Council know that our pools need to be kept open, so please keep tuned here for more news on this issue.

##### TIP #3: INVITE THE NEW NEIGHBOR OVER

It's summer, so that means that new folks are moving into the neighborhood left and right. This is a great chance to greet someone with that legendary Texas hospitality. Go down the street and meet the new family, invite them over for BBQ or help fill their fridge with some beers (unless of course their fridge is full of beer, in which case you could offer to help clear some space).

##### MISCELLANEOUS TIPS FOR DEALING WITH NEIGHBORHOOD LIFE

Since people are always asking questions about how to deal with problems in the neighborhood, I've pulled together some helpful information and numbers from the City's Neighborhood Resource Guide ([www.ci.austin.tx.us/neighborhood/resource1.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/neighborhood/resource1.htm), [www.ci.austin.tx.us/neighborhood/resource2.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/neighborhood/resource2.htm) and [www.ci.austin.tx.us/neighborhood/resource3.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/neighborhood/resource3.htm)) for your convenient reference:

##### Q1: How can I start a Neighborhood Watch group?

Participation in a Neighborhood Watch Program can help reduce crime in your area. To be eligible for a Neighborhood Watch sign, 50 percent of your neighborhood or block must attend two to three meetings where helpful information on personal and property crimes is shared. Tips include how to reduce your chances of becoming a victim of crime. For more information, contact the Austin Police Department (APD) at 707-7851 or 707-2047.

##### Q2: Who do I call to report flooding or drainage problems in my neighborhood?

To report flooding or drainage problems in your neighborhood, contact the Watershed Protection Department at 499-3366.

##### Q3: How can I get a bus stop moved or added in my neighborhood?

To request that an existing Capital Metro bus stop be moved to another location in the neighborhood contact Capital Metro. Provide the location of both the existing stop and the proposed stop. Capital Metro will review the request and evaluate the new location for safety.

To add a bus stop in your neighborhood, Capital Metro suggests first obtaining signatures from neighborhood residents on a petition supporting a bus stop in the neighborhood. Once the request for the bus stop and the petition are received, the Capital Metro Planning Department will schedule a meeting with the neighborhood to discuss the issue. For more information, contact Capital Metro at 385-0190.

##### Q4: What is code enforcement?

Code enforcement is the investigation of complaints concerning the possibility of work done without proper permits, license, occupancy, land use vio-

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#### IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

NEXT TO HULA HUT  
ON LAKE AUSTIN BLVD.

**651-0505**

*Check Out Our New Menu Items!*

Thursday, July 8th, 2004, 7:00 pm  
Howson Branch Library

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

*Please Check Mailing Label for Renewal Date*

*Having a baby?  
We can help!*

*Cards, announcements  
and invitations.*

*(All except the labor.)*

**M C C A R T H Y**  
P R I N T

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**West Austin Neighborhood Group**

P.O. Box 5722  
Austin, Texas 78763-5722

Background Photo of Lime Kiln #PICA24140,  
Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

**Be sure to visit our website at <http://www.deepeddy.com/wang/>!**

lations, substandard and dangerous building complaints and right-of-way use complaints. Due process is established by State law and incorporated in City Codes and adopted rules. For more information, contact the Development Review and Inspection Department at 499-2875.

**Q5: When do I need a building permit?**

If your property is within the city limits (full-purpose annexation) and you are erecting, constructing, enlarging, altering, repairing, improving, removing, converting, moving or demolishing any building or structure, you are required to obtain a City of Austin Building Permit and a site plan approval or site plan exemption. Depending on the extent of your work, you may be required to obtain one or more of the following permits: Building; electrical; mechanical (heating/air conditioning); plumbing; concrete; or development. For more information, contact the Development Review and Inspection Department at 499-2380.

**Q6: Do I need a permit for a fence?**

Any fence 6 feet in height or less does not require a permit. You must put it on your property. Taller than that, contact the Zoning Review Division, 974-2380 for more information.

**Q7: What size fence can I build?**

Unless otherwise provided by the Land Development Code, fences are permitted as accessory uses in all districts, subject to the following provisions:

*It shall be unlawful for any person to construct or replace any fence on or in that portion of any corner in the city, which portion includes all property ten feet in from the curbline and 40 feet on either side from the street corner intersection of the curb lines.*

*A solid fence or enclosure wall constructed on property lines can not exceed an average height of six feet or a maximum height of seven feet at any point.*

*Any fence, hedge or enclosure wall located within 20 feet of the intersection of the two street lines shall not exceed a height of three feet.*

*A solid fence or enclosure wall may be constructed to a maximum height of eight feet, subject to the following:*

*The written consent of the property owner(s) whose property adjoins any section of a fence or wall constructed to such height must be filed with the Building Official.*

*If there is a change in grade of at least two feet within 50 feet of and parallel to the common boundary between adjoining properties.*

*If there is a legal structure close to the fence, that would enable a child to climb over a six-foot high fence and possibly gain access to a hazardous situation. For example, an unattended swimming pool.*

*If located on or within required building setback lines, the fence may be eight feet in height and consent from other property owners is not required.*

*An ornamental fence exceeding six feet in height shall have a ratio of solid portion to open portion not more than one to four.*

For more information, contact the Development Review and Inspection Department at 499-2380.

**Q8: What can be done when plants or trees block the visibility at an intersection or are hanging in the street?**

The City Code prohibits the owner or occupant of any corner lot from placing any plant having a height greater than two feet on any corner. A corner includes all property within ten feet of the curbline, for a distance of 40 feet from the street corner. If there is a

location where visibility is obstructed due to plants or trees, contact the owner or occupant of the property and request that the plants or trees be trimmed back. If this does not work or does not apply to your situation, report blind corners; mid-block obstructions; weeds on the right-of-way or in the median to the Parks and Recreation Department at 440-5150.

**Q9: Can my neighborhood get a residential parking permit restriction?**

The Residential Parking Permit Program is currently in the pilot stage. If approved City wide, the program will designate parking-by-permit-only streets and allow parking only for vehicles with a RPP sticker or a visitor hang tag. Only residents will be eligible to purchase the parking stickers and hang tags. For more information, contact the Department of Public Works and Transportation at 499-7276.

And with that, I wish you all a Happy Fourth!

**Michael Rocco Cannatti**  
338-9100 or mike@hamiltonterre.com

**WANG Executive Committee Meeting Minutes June 7, 2004**

**Attending Board Members:** Joyce Basciano, Erik Cary, Linda Neavel Dickens, Selena Serna, Jim Girardeau, Blake Tollett, Susan Pascoe, Mike Cannatti and Hal Katz.

**Guests:** Sara Madera, Catherine Dwyer, John Kleeman, Tony Jarnigan, Ron Huddleston

**I. Call to Order**

Mike Cannatti called the meeting to order at 7:00pm, June 7, 2004.

**II. Member Communications Library Grounds Improvement**

The Howson library grounds will serve as a demonstration area for green gardens. The design will be ready by the end of June. Kathy Shay from the watershed protection department of the city will present the design and project plans at the next WANG meeting.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the WANG meeting in April were approved. Linda Dickens made a motion to approve the minutes. Mike Cannatti seconded the motion, and it passed 10-0.

**IV. Committee Reports Communications**

The May newsletter was sent out on time. The website will be modified to allow comments to WANG.

**Liaison:** No news.

**Membership**

Postcards are being sent out to those residents who drop out their memberships.

WANG members will be assisting with the 4th of July parade.

**Transportation**

Enfield lane is now open both ways. Sidewalks on the North side of the street from Mopac to Lamar will be added.

**Historical Designation:** No news

**Infrastructure**

WANG is continuing to monitor the future land use where the Texas State School currently resides. The 95 state-owned acres are being considered for sale. WANG will provide recommendations on the best uses of the land should the State School close.

**Nominating:** No news

**Bylaws:** No news

**Zoning: Moffet Drive Vacation**

WANG sent letters to COA officials to express concern over the reduction in price for the sale of Moffet drive:

“On behalf of the West Austin Neighborhood Group (WANG), we are writing to express concern about the City’s proposal to reduce the valuation of the proposed vacation of Moffett Drive to ten percent (10%) of its fair market value.

While the Good Shepherd Church is a valued member of our neighborhood, the proposed bargain basement valuation amounts to a highly improper give away of City funds in a time when the City budget and services are being cut. Are the appropriate City officials and taxpayers aware that almost \$490,000 is being taken away from potential City revenue with this proposed valuation? We are especially troubled to hear about the discounted valuation at a time when the property valuations and property taxes for all the rest of us have continued to increase without relief.

Our view is that Moffett Street should be valued at the full market value. There are many excellent uses in our neighborhood for the “full fair market value” proceeds from the vacation of Moffett Drive that we would recommend to you. For example, \$500,000 would go a long way toward keeping our neighborhood pools (at Reed Park, Enfield Pool and Deep Eddy) open for longer in the summer.

Alternatively, the proceeds could be used to establish a “sidewalk fund” for the construction of badly needed new sidewalks in West Austin. The Bathhouse Project at Deep Eddy Pool could also be funded with these proceeds. As for the notion that the discount is being granted because the City is retaining a Public Utility Easement (PUE), this would not appear to hold

# Join WANG

- Yes, I want to join WANG.
- I want to renew my WANG membership.

I have enclosed:

- \$20 household membership
- \$10 student/senior membership

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to WANG  
and mail to:  
WANG  
P.O. Box 5722  
Austin, TX 78763-5722

water if it is correct that the City intends to terminate the PUE after the vacation is granted. To make sure that the PUE is not terminated in the future, we request that a written agreement be recorded making the PUE permanent, and that the West Austin Neighborhood Group be a signatory with the right to enforce the PUE limitations in any such agreement.”

**C15-04-057; 3301 Windsor Road**

The applicant has requested a variance to decrease the minimum side street setback requirement from 15 feet to 9 feet (along Meadowbrook) in order to maintain an addition for an entryway for a single-family residence. This addition was constructed without the benefit of a building permit. A building permit would not have been issued initially without an approved variance.

WANG was not able to review this request at its regularly scheduled monthly meeting of 3 May 2004 due to lack of notice from the City or the applicant. Operating under our Bylaws, after review of the submittals and documents contained in the City file pertaining to this matter and a telephone conversation with the applicant, WANG voted electronically (10-2-1) to oppose the variance request referenced. At the 20 May 2004 meeting of the Board of Adjustment, the vote to deny the variance request was 3-2. Applicant has asked the Board of Adjustment to reconsider their ruling.

**C-15-04-051; 601 Deep Eddy**

The applicant has requested two variances, (1) to decrease the minimum side street setback requirement from 15 feet to 2 feet, and (2) to decrease the minimum rear yard setback from 10 feet to 4.8 feet, in order to erect a second story addition to an existing non-complying accessory structure in a Family Residence zoning district.

WANG voted electronically (9-1) to not oppose the above referenced variance request conditioned upon the following criteria specifically mentioned in the applicant’s submitted Findings Of Fact: That the footprint of the currently nonconforming structure to be remodeled remains the same; that the remodel of this structure will result in the reconfiguration of the driveway and an overall reduction in impervious coverage from 53.7% to 39.2%; and that the applicant place a Restrictive Covenant on the subject property that would prevent the non-conforming accessory building from being utilized for residential purposes. At the 20 May 2004 meeting of the Board of Adjustment the variance request was unanimously approved subject to the conditions negotiated between the applicant and WANG.

**Balcony at 3208 Enfield**

A contractor is scheduled to remove the balcony.

**Fences on Corners**

**Sara Madera**  
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WANG received questions on regulations regarding large fences that obstruct the view of traffic on corners. The city code reads as follows: *TRAFFIC OBSTRUCTIONS AND PLACEMENT OF FENCES IN STREET CORNER AREAS It shall be unlawful for any person to permit any fence to remain, or to construct or replace, or cause to be constructed or replaced any fence on or in that portion of any corner in the city, which portion includes all property ten feet in from the curb line and 40 feet on either side from the street corner intersection of the curb lines.* (In other words, on corner lots, no fence can be closer than 10 feet from the curb line in either direction from the corner)

**V. Treasurer’s Report**

Account balances: \$ 1,866.71 checking, \$1,196.63 Oak Wilt, \$3181.17 Savings. 239 paid members.

**VI. Old Business:** No News.

**VII. New Business:** No News.

**VII. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned by Mike Cannatti at 8:10 pm.

Minutes recorded by Jim Girardeau.