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**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Howson Branch Library**  
**June 1st, 2002, 7:00 pm**  
 Please Check Mailing Label for Renewal Date

**West Austin Neighborhood Group**  
 P.O. Box 5722  
 Austin, Texas 78763-5722



West Austin Neighborhood Group

Organized 1973

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

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 Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

# THE NEIGHBOR

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

June, 2002

## President's Message June 2002

### City Happenings

Stop! Be careful where you post that sign--the City is watching. Austin is getting tough on "bandit signs" -- those placed illegally in the public right of way. Some of the more common types include garage sale notices, political campaign signs, advertisements, and solicitations. In most instances, the public right of way is the land between the expansion joint of a driveway and the street. Last year the City received over 1,000 complaints about sign violations and expects to remove more than 21,000 illegal signs by the end of this year. Up until now, the volume exceeded the resources needed to effectively handle the problem. Now, City staff members are planning new ways to deal with the problem and they want your help.

You can report illegal signs at 974-6576. First offenders will receive education, but repeat violators will have charges filed. A violation is a Class C misdemeanor with fines up to \$500 per violation.

You can volunteer for the Sign Ranger Program, a partnership program with the Austin Police Department's Community Liaison Office. Participants will be required to attend special training and will be assigned to specific areas of the city. To participate, contact Sherry Mitchell, Austin Police Department, at 459-4309 or Gloria Quinonez, Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department, at 974-7673.

You also can volunteer for the Great City Signoff sponsored by Keep Austin Beautiful. Contact them at 974-3577.

As you can tell from the minutes of our June meeting, the issue of zoning and city codes remains an important topic. I had the opportunity to attend a City Codes and Ordinances Committee meeting last week. I found the information I received very disturbing. City staff is proposing multiple code amendments that have the potential to change our neighborhoods drastically.

The most alarming recommendation is the new citywide "Two Family" amendment, which would overwrite existing SF-3 zoning and replace Duplex and Secondary Apartment code regulations. All of this is being proposed without public awareness or involvement. A more detailed report is in this newsletter. I urge you to review carefully. The concern of the majority of neighborhood association representatives is the City's obvious intent to implement code changes without informing those most affected. And, since this is intended for citywide implementation, that would be all of us.

I wish everyone fun-filled summer days and nights, but don't forget your association meeting, Monday, July 1, 2002. It is a good opportunity to let your association board know your concerns and needs. I hope to see you there; and bring a neighbor -- it may be just the invitation they need to investigate membership.

In the meantime, remember to water wisely as our warm and dry summer continues.

**Susan Pascoe**  
 494-1386  
[spascoe@ascensionhealth.org](mailto:spascoe@ascensionhealth.org)

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

**WANG Executive Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
June 3, 2002**

**Attending Board Members:** Susan Pascoe, Erik Cary, Selina Serna, Joyce Basciano, Linda Neavel Dickens, Gwen Jewiss, Blake Tollett, Emily Covich, James Allman, Ian Inglis, Balie Griffith, Joe Bennett

**Guests:**

**Stephen Fleming** with the **Austin Police Department** is our new district representative. He has been with APD for 5 years. He plans to attend as many of our monthly neighborhood meetings as his schedule permits. He asked us to warn our neighbors that car burglaries are on the rise in our area, particularly of vehicles parked on the street and left unlocked. He would like to increase the number of neighborhood watch groups to help with these types of problems. We are encouraged to contact our immediate neighbors to form a neighborhood watch group, and set up a time with Stephen to speak with our groups. He can be reached at 974-5341 or stephen.fleming@ci.austin.tx.us.

Sonia Taborsky asked that the Executive Committee write a letter to Austin Duck Adventures requesting them to turn their vehicles south onto Exposition from Enfield rather than continue west on Enfield to get to Walsh Boat Landing where they do their big splash into Lake Austin. This is the route they used to take, but have recently begun going all the way down Enfield. There are no houses to be disturbed on the west side of Exposition between Enfield and Lake Austin Blvd. A motion was seconded and approved that Blake Tollett write a letter with this request.

Several written communications from neighbors were read and discussed:

- One regarding various traffic calming needs in the neighborhood, another requesting a protected left turn signal at the corner of Enfield and Exposition. The transportation committee members will review these comments. It is likely that we will need a traffic study of our neighborhood to address these issues.

- There is a gap in the No Parking signs on Scenic near Walsh Boat Landing and the boat trailers parking on Scenic decrease the visibility on this street. A motion was seconded and approved that we write to the City of Austin about installing additional No Parking signs.

- The Friends of Deep Eddy organization is applying to the Austin Parks Foundation for a grant to renovate the historic bathhouse at Deep Eddy Pool. They asked that WANG

write a letter supporting their application. It was motioned, seconded, and approved that we write this letter of support.

**Committee Reports**

**Transportation Committee** – Ian Inglis attended a Capital Metro Board meeting at which staff-recommended cut backs of routes and schedules were discussed. After citizen complaints, these proposed reductions were thrown out.

**Membership Committee** – Emily Covich is a new member of this committee. James Allman distributed a list of strategies to increase enrollment in our neighborhood group at the May meeting. The executive committee will discuss these recommendations at the July meeting.

**Zoning Committee** – Discussion ensued regarding the setting of guidelines to assist WANG in determining our stance related to variances brought before the City Board of Adjustment. The following proposed position statement was discussed:

- WANG requests that neighbors seeking variance requests provide copies of all city documentation to the WANG Executive Committee at a regularly scheduled Executive Committee Meeting prior to their hearing by the Board of Adjustment. We have no choice but to oppose variance requests for which we have no details or documentation.

- WANG will oppose any variance requests seeking to decrease the impervious cover limits.

- WANG will oppose fence height variance requests.

- WANG will support neighbors in their opposition to variance requests by proximate neighbors.

- WANG will oppose variance requests in the case of egregious violations of city codes (e.g. knowingly building the incursion then applying for the variance).

- In instances in which we do not receive sufficient notification of variance requests, WANG requests that neighbors agree to postpone their hearing pending review of their request by the WANG Executive Committee at our regularly scheduled monthly meeting. If agreement to postpone is not granted, WANG would be forced to oppose the variance request.

This draft proposal will be voted upon at our July 1, 2002, meeting to allow time for citizen review and comment.

**Communication** – Our June newsletter will be an expanded issue. Executive

Committee members were asked to forward any articles of interest to neighbors to Linda Dickens by June 10, 2002.

**Historical Designation Committee** – Joe Bennett has done tremendous work in creating a database of west Austin residences. Of the approximately 900 residences he has surveyed so far, 66% would be considered conforming for neighborhood historical designation purposes. To be considered conforming, a house must be more than 50 years old. Now that Joe has a system and database in place for the documentation for this survey, he could use some help gathering data from the Travis County Tax Appraisal web site. Anyone interested in helping with this project is encouraged to contact Joe at jmb3arch@yahoo.com.

**Treasurer's Report** – checking account \$966.31; savings account \$5,166.90; oak wilt account \$1,192.09. Paid Membership is 332.

**New Business**

Overflow parking of delivery vehicles from the Tarrytown Shopping Center onto Indian Trail was discussed. Susan will contact Hal Katz, Liaison Committee Member, about talking to the property management company about this problem.

SF3 zoning changes are on the agenda of a June 5th meeting of the Codes and Ordinances Committee of the Planning Commission. Gwen will write an article discussing these zoning changes for the July newsletter. Gwen and Susan will attend the June 5th meeting and request a postponement of the committee discussion to give citizens time to review and provide public comment.

The new EMS Station on Lake Austin Blvd. will open next week. The official grand opening remains to be scheduled.

WANG needs a new representative for the Austin Neighborhood Council. ANC meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month. Interested persons are asked to contact Gwen Jewiss.

**Old Business**

The minutes of the May meeting were approved as written.

A zoning variance request at 1804 Elton to allow a dilapidated garage to be rebuilt was granted. The footprint and height of the garage will not change.

—Minutes prepared by Selina Serna



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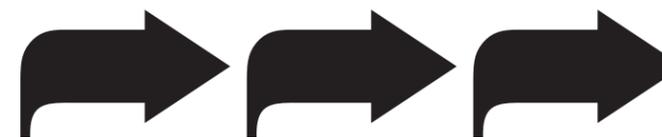


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**MEMBERSHIP DRIVE**

Take care of your neighborhood! Please take forms to your friends and neighbors and ask them to join WANG. An active membership will be a strong voice that's heard when critical issues are debated.

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**TARRYTOWN  
4<sup>th</sup> OF JULY PARADE!**

Join your friends, neighbors and area merchants for the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Tarrytown 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade.

**Thursday, July 4<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 a.m.**

Parade starts at Good Shepherd Episcopal Church and ends at Reed Park, where you'll enjoy donated food, fun and entertainment.

Parade Route - Float line-up at Good Shepherd, West on Windsor, North on Pecos to Reed Park.

Lance Fisher 457-9722      Kathryn Burniston 475-3131

 **Watershed Protection  
Development Review**

Flood Information Survey

Please complete the following information to help the City of Austin Watershed Protection and Development Review Department in their study to reduce flood damage to structures.

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

4. E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

5. I \_\_\_\_\_ own or \_\_\_\_\_ rent this house.

6. I have lived at this address for \_\_\_\_\_ years/\_\_\_\_\_ months.

7. Flood Information

Approximate Date(s) Flooded			Structure(s) Flooded (house, garage, etc.)	Estimated Depth of Floodwater at structure (specify inches or feet)
Month	Day	Year		

Comments or observations during flood:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Continued - please turn page

Copies of this Flood Information Survey Form are available from Susan Pascoe or are available in PDF (Adobe Acrobat) form on the WANG website.

2002  
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- ◆ *Canadian husband and wife duo pianists Duo Turgeon delight with their artistry and expressive playing. July 18*
- ◆ *Artistry by the Marian Anderson String Quartet, named for legendary contralto Marian Anderson, who made musical and civil rights history with her compelling voice. July 9*
- ◆ *Excitement and passion of contemporary Latin American music with Cuarteto Latinoamericano. July 14*
- ◆ *Festival Finale at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, featuring Peter Bay, the dynamic conductor of the Austin Symphony Orchestra. July 20*

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Every two and a half minutes in Texas, someone is burglarized. I want to decrease your chances of becoming a victim so please help in stopping these thieves. There is a way: a successful program called 'Neighborhood Watch.' You may have heard of it and may have thought it might be a good idea. Now is the time to implement this idea.

Together with just 6-12 of your neighbors, you can help us, your police department, defend your neighborhood against intruders. You can target harden your home against intrusion and help make our city a place where crime cannot flourish.

Please call me at 974-5341 to help you set up your first Neighborhood Watch meeting or email me at stephen.fleming@ci.austin.tx.us.

The Neighborhood Watch is a program involving the joint efforts of the police department and the community designed to enhance neighborhood security, heighten neighbors' powers of observation, and encourage assistance and concern among neighbors. Its main objective is to reduce the incidence of crime through increasing citizen awareness, improving security for personal property, developing neighborhood action programs, and encouraging citizens to report crime or even suspect crime.

Each block of neighbors participating in the program has a block captain who coordinates the local activities, such as coordinating meetings, acting as liaison with the police department district representative, recruiting residents to be involved in the watch program. Block watchers act as the eyes and ears of the neighborhood.

Consider taking the steps to establish a Neighborhood Watch program on your street now; make your community a safer place.

—Sr. Police Officer Stephen Fleming  
Central West District Representative

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**West Austin Neighborhood Group  
Executive Committee Meeting  
July 1, 2002**

- I. Call to Order (7:00p)
- II. Member Communications/Presentations
- III. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting
- IV. Committee Reports
  - A. Zoning
  - B. Communications
  - C. Transportation
  - D. Historic District
  - E. Liaison
  - F. Neighborhood Plan
  - G. Membership – discussion of proposed strategies
  - H. Nominating
- V. Treasurer's Report
- VI. Old Business
  - Memorial for Irwin Spear - Mike
  - Camp Mabry Update - Hal
- VII. New Business
- VIII. Adjourn (8:45p)

**Become a Friend of Deep Eddy**

The Friends of Deep Eddy organization came into being in the summer of 2001, when some of the regular patrons of the pool got together to try to extend the summer's end closing date. A few regulars even wanted to make Deep Eddy a year-round facility. Swimmers are an active and dedicated bunch, and the Friends generated enough interest and money this past winter to get an earlier opening in the spring and to ensure that the pool would remain open through this November. Our goals have expanded to include working with Parks to guarantee quality maintenance of the park as well as forming a PARD-nership with the City to renovate the historic bathhouse. Our goals are ambitious, but we are energetic and willing to put our time and money into our non-profit organization and make Deep Eddy more enjoyable and accessible. Check out our website at www.deepeddy.org or give me a call (477-4028) to find out what you can do to improve our neighborhood gem. We do need your help.

—Blake Tollett

The 2002 City of Austin Adult Swimming Championships will be held on July 6, 2002 at Walnut Creek Pool, 12138 N. Lamar Blvd. in Austin. The "City Champs" is a fundraising event benefiting the Friends of Deep Eddy (FODE).

As you probably know, Deep Eddy Pool, one of Austin's unique treasures, is the oldest swimming pool in Texas. FODE is a Texas non-profit corporation dedicated to the support and improvement of Deep Eddy.

Please support the "City Champs" as a participant (participants will be of all levels of swimming skills), as a sponsor, or by recruiting or referring a sponsor. Let's help make this event a success.

For more information or for an entry form phone 327-2260, email champs@adultswimming.com or go to www.adultswimming.com/champs.htm.



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### Howson Library to Close Each Thursday

In an effort to improve service delivery to the community and provide adequate library staffing levels within the current City of Austin budget climate, a modification in library service hours has gone into effect. Beginning the week of June 3, the 20 branches began closing on Thursdays or Fridays. Howson Branch is closed on Thursdays, while neighboring Yarborough and Old Quarry branches are open Thursdays and closed Fridays. Hours at the Faulk Central Library have not changed.

During the current year, the Austin Public Library has been operating with a significant number of staff vacancies due to reductions in staff as part of the FY 2002 budget and a hold on positions to meet the overall City personnel savings plan. The change in service hours will allow branch locations to share staff and also provide needed administrative time at the closed branch. Administrative time is necessary to prepare the library for the public, including re-shelving books, routing materials to other library locations, organizing and ordering material for customers and other essential functions.

No youth programs will be impacted by the one-day closings. Free bus passes will be available to customers at the branches allowing library customers to take Capitol Metro buses from one branch in a service area to another.

### Summer Reading Program Underway

The theme of this year's Summer Reading Program is Read Across Texas! Youth of all ages who join the program will receive a certificate of participation and a game board with instructions. Kids may read on their own or be read to by another person. Prizes will be given for completion of the program.

Summer storytimes for all ages are offered on Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m. Storytime topics include Cowpokes ridin' the range, Astronauts in space, Stories under the Texas sky, Let's barbecue, Texas bugs, Texas plants, and Tales by Texas authors and illustrators.

Special summer events featuring storytellers, singers, and zoo animals will take place on Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m. Storytellers, singers, and zoo animals will entertain children age 5 years old and up.

—Anita Fudell

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am Trish Wadsack, project manager with the Public Works Department and I have taken on management of the Old Enfield/Parkway road project, which will focus on improving flow between Windsor Road and Lamar Blvd.

Bids have just been received, and we expect to send the contract to Council for approval in mid-summer. We estimate construction start-up for mid-August and we expect the work to take about six months.

The work is a water and wastewater project with street overlay performed at the end to put the street back into service. On the south side of the street, we will replace 1930s-era infrastructure with new water and sewer lines. Neither the street nor any intersection will be widened. Two traffic-calming devices will be installed on Enfield as a part of this project.

We will begin work on the Lamar (east) end of the project area. Once the new utilities are installed and tested, we will perform the street overlay and curb and gutter repair.

#### Work will occur daytime only, in four phases:

During **Phase 1**, construction will take place on the south side of Parkway between Lamar and Baylor. The street will become one way westbound in that area only. Eastbound traffic will detour via Baylor and W. 12th Street to reach Lamar. Two-way traffic will be maintained in the remaining portion of the project.

During **Phase 2**, work will occur on Parkway (south side) between Baylor and Enfield. The street will become one way westbound between Baylor and Castle Hill. Eastbound traffic will detour via Castle Hill and 12th Street to reach Lamar. During this phase or perhaps the next one, work also will occur on Parkway immediately north of its intersection with Enfield.

During **Phase 3**, crews will work on Enfield between Parkway and Castle Hill. The street will become one way westbound in that area only. Eastbound traffic will detour via Castle Hill and 12th Street to Lamar.

For **Phase 4**, work will occur on Enfield between Castle Hill and Windsor. The street will become one way westbound in that area only. Eastbound traffic will detour via Windsor and 12th street to Lamar.

If you have any questions or concerns about this project, please contact me at 974-7199.

—Trish Wadsack  
Project Manager  
Public Works Department

### Planning Commission Proposing Major Zoning Changes

The Codes and Ordinances Committee of the Planning Commission is proposing some changes to the City of Austin Land Development Code. The issues discussed in this article concern all citizens of Austin--homeowners and renters alike--as the proposed changes may dramatically impact the very fabric of our city. For ease of understanding, the topics will be broken into two sections: Infill Revisions and Sub-Districting. Since the areas are inter-related, what the Planning Commission accepts and recommends to Council on one topic may pave the way for acceptance of the other.

As a concept, the infilling of vacant and underutilized land in the central city is not a new topic in Austin. A few years ago, Council reviewed and rejected some of the densities that are now being proposed. The history of that battle will not be discussed here. The Austin in which many of you grew up, and the laid-back town to which my family moved, has grown quickly into a city competing for high-tech, bio-tech and emerging businesses. Part of the attraction for these companies is the quality of life in our central-city neighborhoods. As the need to accommodate more new residents increases, so will the pressure on our central-city, single-family neighborhoods. There is an urgent need for not only a thorough and unbiased study as to what the long term costs and benefits will be, but also, a comprehensive plan for how all of Austin is to grow.

To address some of these issues, a Codes and Ordinances Committee, reporting to the Planning Commission, was established. This group presented its recommendations to the Planning Commission members in a meeting open for public comment on June 5, 2002. Much of the text that follows synthesizes the discussions at that meeting.

Sub-Districts would allow certain Infill Revisions to be limited to (or encouraged in) the Sub-District areas of the neighborhood. The five options proposed on a Sub-District basis include: Cottage Lot, Urban Home, Secondary

Apartment, and Small Lot Amnesty. The three options to be considered on a 'property specific basis are: Corner Store, Neighborhood Urban Center, and Neighborhood Mixed Use Building. These options would become available when a neighborhood went through the Neighborhood Planning process. The Secondary Apartment was proposed as a citywide change. Central city property owners may be concerned by the possibility of treasured empty lots being filled. Even more alarming is the risk that quaint cottages may be torn down and replaced by McMansions and "new urbanist" homes, perhaps without adequate off-street parking.

The Codes and Ordinances Committee (C&OC) of the Planning Commission has surveyed participants of the neighborhood planning process to determine which of the infill options are most popularly accepted. Since the survey is anonymous, we are not privileged with understanding what stake those respondents had in the process or in the survey. We also have no information about what other studies the Committee has performed to support the Revisions it proposed.

In a noteworthy move, the City has targeted particular neighborhoods to usher through the neighborhood planning process. Other sections of the city, including West Austin, are not even on the horizon for starting the process. Some residents have expressed concern regarding whether those neighborhoods that have 'approved plans' would want or need to amend their plans to incorporate these potential new rules.

The participants of the Upper Boggy Creek (UBC) neighborhood planning process have been driving the need to address Sub-districts at this time. Due to the multiple sections grouped together to form the UBC Neighborhood Planning Area, there is a lot of diversity in the needs and desires of the residents. Through a relatively cordial planning process, these residents have seen the need for Sub-districts. This group also desires the possibility of selecting from all of the special use options being considered--the site specific as well as the sub-district specific.

The citizens in attendance at the June

5th meeting expressed considerable concern about the C&OC recommendations. Issues ranged from projected increase in property taxes to traffic to impervious cover violations. Residents also voiced distress about the speed at which these recommendations were to be presented to and voted on by both the Planning Commission and Council, without an extended period for public input. The attendees had many questions for staff, specifically for those staff members involved with putting forth these recommendations. Jeff Jack presented a list of eleven issues to consider and address. Because of limited time, many questions were left unanswered at the meeting. Those in attendance agreed that Katie Larsen would add the questions and responses to the City's web pages dealing with these issues. As of this writing, the posting to the web site has not occurred.

The Planning Commissioners present at the meeting directed the C&OC to continue with its work on Sub-districts, but to refrain from redefining zoning on a city-wide basis. All Special Uses are to be recommended. Three of the Special Uses are still to be considered on a property specific basis, rather than under Sub-districts. The conversion of the current definitions of SF-3 Zoning (see Exhibit B) is to remain as per the Land Development Code. One staff member noted that the conversion from SF-3 to a Duplex currently is considered a 'change of use' and must be reviewed as such.

The neighborhood planning process was instigated to help neighborhoods define themselves. What has resulted, however, is the City overlaying large planning areas that are unwieldy. Perhaps recognition of this paradox will bring about some change in the defining of areas for Neighborhood Plans.

Go to <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/development/codeamend.htm>, or contact City Staff: Katie Larsen, TPSD, 974.6413 for further information.

—Gwen Jewiss