

West Austin Neighborhood Group (WANG)  
5 June 2025

The WANG Board of Directors (BoD) came together at 6pm in the Howson Public Library.

BoD members present were Mike Cannatti, Kris von Rosenberg, our president Cathy Kyle, David Bolduc, George Edwards, Heidi Gibbons, Joyce Basciano, Blake Tollett and Holly Reed. We also had several neighbors in attendance.

Upon motion, the minutes from our 5 May 2025 WANG BoD meeting were approved.

**Under Neighborhood Communications:**

- Zach Knight is one of the leads on this year's upcoming Tarrytown 4th of July Parade and Party and he has reached out to us for sponsorship money. Our treasurer George Edwards reminded us that last year we gave the organizers \$500 and thought we might be a little more generous. On motion from Kris with Heidi seconding, the BoD has authorized George to write them a check for \$1,000. David, Heidi, Holly and Kris all volunteered to man a WANG membership table.
- Alissa Dean from the City of Austin Capital Delivery Services spoke to us about the upcoming 2026 General Obligation bond proposal. The city is beginning the public engagement phase and is seeking input that will be forwarded to the Bond Election Advisory Task Force. The relevant website is: [www.AustinTexas.gov/Bond2026](http://www.AustinTexas.gov/Bond2026) Questions from the BoD focused on whether any of the bonds will be allocated to the city's park system, specifically whether the bonds could be used to benefit the acquisition of the Muni golf course or to help implement the watershed work contemplated at Reed Park. Although there are no specifics known at this early stage of the process, historically funding for our parks department, either for acquisition of parkland or capitol projects in existing parklands, absent a specific stand-alone parks' bond, is considered a secondary priority.
- Barbara and Bill Anderson spoke to us about the resurgence of oak wilt in their corner of the neighborhood. This arbor disease can be treated but first it must be recognized. New neighbors to our area may not be aware of this oak killer and a stepped-up awareness campaign can be featured in our electronic newsletter.
- The overflow of towing vehicles and boat trailers from Walsh Boat Landing, a yearly occurrence during boating season, continues to cause problems on our streets. Yes, these are public streets, but when massive trailers and towing vehicles are on both sides of the street, navigation down the middle of the street can be dangerous. Blake spoke to his experiences as neighbor to the landing since 1977. One solution to the problem is to restrict access to Lake Austin through Walsh Boat Landing based on parking availability on the designated parking lots, but that is something the city has shown no willingness to undertake. Neighbors are advised to reach out to our Austin Police Department (APD) Community Liaison Andrew Kabbah.
- A neighbor inquired about speed cushions on Pecos Street; her son had a close encounter with a vehicle and was injured recently. Unfortunately, our understanding is that the Austin Transportation Department (ATD) current policy is to not use those devices to

calm traffic. Holly has worked with ATD to address controlling speed along Enfield Road and offered some insight to the neighbor. Mike suggested that WANG might ask ATD to install one of their solar powered speed indicator devices. He also will explore WANG purchasing one of the devices that we could then move around the neighborhood as warranted. Another suggestion was to ask neighbors to make it a habit to not exceed the posted speed limits in the neighborhood; along Pecos the speed is posted at 25mph.

#### Under **New Business**:

- Westenfield Park is now Don Baylor Park. Mr. Baker was a Clarksville resident who was prohibited from using the park as a youngster due to his skin color. Subsequently he led the integration of O'Henry Middle School and Austin High School. Later in his life he played and coached professional baseball. More information on his life is posted on our website. Our Council Member Marc Duchen led this honoring effort.
- The rezoning to commercial and the then allowable addition of the Density Bonus-90 Feet Entitlement (DB-90) controversy surrounding the residential multifamily zoned Acacia Apartments property was discussed. Basically, if a property is zoned commercial and a residential redevelopment of the property is proposed, if some income-restricted housing is included in the plan (12% of units, either rental or ownership with ownership developments available to take advantage of the fee-in-lieu opt out), then the height entitlement increases to 90 feet while modifying or eliminating compatibility requirements with surrounding residential properties. Prior to our meeting the BoD voted electronically to allow our president Cathy to write a letter of concern about how this controversy is unfolding. The letter sent to City Council is attached and incorporated into these minutes.
- Our fall annual meeting was discussed and a tentative date of Saturday 8 November and location of the club house at Lion's Municipal were chosen as placemarks.

#### Under **Land Matters**:

- The proposed redevelopment of the Austin State Supported Living Center (ASSLC) campus was discussed. [NOTE: Subsequent to our meeting we were informed that the proposal has been abandoned for this legislative session.]
- Both of the rezoning requests involving the Rawson/Saunders school and Tarrytown Christian Church have been formally withdrawn. In a related matter, Texas Senate Bill SB854 relating to the multi-family residential development of church property did not make it to a vote from both houses.
- A WANG member has reached out to us for guidance on dealing with potential flooding from a new residential development in the 800 block of Wayside Drive. Blake will work with them.

Under **Communications**, Holly has volunteered to take over the editorship of our newsletter in conjunction with ex-BoD member Joe Bennett.

Under **Membership**, we discussed standardizing one membership renewal date, most likely the annual meeting date. Because the majority of our dues come from online, we also discussed

migrating and consolidating our electronic payment hubs from PayPal to only our Square account. Long-time BoD member Sara Cain tendered her resignation and it was accepted.

Under **Transportation**, we had no report.

Under **ANC Report**, Heidi shared:

- Barbara McArthur reported on SB15, originally intended to prevent large cities from blocking smaller homes on smaller lots (a minimum of 1,400sf) was changed during negotiations. The bill passed by both houses and sent to the Governor speaks to allowing homes to be built on 3,000sf lots in new subdivisions and not in existing neighborhoods. The Senate and House bills put forward to restrict petition rights in reference to rezoning of residential property along with notification about and protest of rezonings did pass and was sent to the Governor's desk for signature.  
[NOTE: From the Austin American Statesman's Friday June 6th edition, we have the following paragraph-*Other bills lawmakers sent to Abbott aimed to make it easier to convert vacant office buildings into residences and would force cities to allow manufactured homes. They also relaxed local rules in college towns that say how many unrelated adults can live in a home.*]
- Bill Bunch from Save Our Springs (SOS) Alliance spoke to the Texas Department of Transportation's proposed expansion of Mo-Pac south of the river to add lanes as part of a potential long-term vision of connecting IH-35 and SH-45 continues going forward. The website for the SOS argument against expansion is [www.keeppopaclocal.org](http://www.keeppopaclocal.org).

Under **Treasurer's Report**, George tells us we have \$20,576 in our business account and \$1,235 in a legacy savings account allocated to oak wilt. On motion from Kris with Heidi seconding, the BoD voted to consolidate the accounts with the provision that WANG actively seek to educate the neighborhood about oak wilt.

Under **Old Business**, Holly reported that the Muni Conservancy was proactively looking at the potential for wildfires at the course. There were no other matters to report this month.

Having covered our agenda items, we set our next WANG BoD meeting for Monday 7 July, we then adjourned.

Blake Tollett, Secretary  
WANG



## WEST AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP

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June 3, 2025

Organized 1973

### OFFICERS

Cathy Kyle  
Interim President

Holly Reed  
Past President

Blake Tollett  
Secretary

George Edwards  
Treasurer

### BOARD MEMBERS

Mary Arnold  
Joyce Basciano  
David Bolduc  
Michael Cannatti  
Darcy Gardiner  
Heidi Gibbons  
Craig Lill  
Kris von Rosenberg

*via email [district10@autsintexas.gov](mailto:district10@autsintexas.gov)*

The Hon. Kirk Watson  
Council Member Marc Duchen  
Members of the Austin City Council  
301 West 2nd Street  
Austin, Texas 78701

**Re: Agenda Item 103 C14-2024-0181 – Far West Multifamily  
Request to Postpone Acacia Cliffs Rezoning Case and Reform DB90  
Policy**

Dear Mayor Watson and Members of the Austin City Council:

On behalf of the West Austin Neighborhood Group (WANG), we respectfully request that the Council postpone action on the proposed rezoning of the Acacia Cliffs Apartments until a clear, enforceable plan is in place to preserve Acacia Cliffs and other naturally occurring affordable housing across the city.

While Acacia Cliffs is not located within our neighborhood boundaries, the implications of this case resonate citywide—including west of MoPac, where WANG represents a community that includes a number of smaller, older apartment complexes offering relatively affordable housing options. These properties—though not currently rezoned under the Downtown Density Bonus program (DB90)—could still be vulnerable. DB90 incentivizes redevelopment that typically replaces a large number of modestly priced units with far fewer affordable units (often just 10–12%), alongside a substantial increase in market-rate units.

We recognize that the affordability of the older units in our area hasn't been formally quantified, and in some cases, the 10–12% affordable units offered under DB90 might technically meet affordability thresholds. However, the net result is almost certainly a loss in the number of relatively affordable units—just as we are now seeing with the Acacia Cliffs proposal. Moreover, such redevelopment risks transforming communities that are currently integrated and scaled to their surroundings into high-density enclaves with minimal affordability gains.

We are among those urging the Council to develop effective mechanisms and sustainable funding strategies to preserve these existing affordable units as an alternative to relying solely on the DB90 tool. Preservation offers more stable and equitable results than policies that incentivize demolition and replacement at significantly higher cost and density.

In addition, we urge the City to uphold the original intent of DB90 and to reform its application as follows:

1. **Limit DB90's use strictly to pre-existing commercially zoned properties**, and close any workarounds that allow DB90 to be applied to properties zoned for multifamily use. Allowing DB90 to override MF zoning undercuts the stability of residential areas and accelerates displacement.
2. **Require a one-to-one replacement of affordable units** whenever preservation is not possible, to prevent a net loss of affordability.
3. **Ensure that DB90 projects are compatible with and less destructive to existing residential communities**, rather than enabling redevelopment that ignores context and existing character.

These reforms would help prevent the loss of critical workforce housing and provide the Council with responsible alternatives to granting DB90 in sensitive or inappropriate areas.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your commitment to balancing growth with preservation and equity.

Sincerely,

Catherine Kyle, Interim President

West Austin Neighborhood Group