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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.

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

I have enclosed:

- \$20 household membership
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Howson Branch Library

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

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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Vice President

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NEWSLETTER

Hal Katz
Editor

Linda Dickens
Assistant Editor

THE NEIGHBOR

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

January, 2003

**President's Message
January 2003**

Since my previous President's messages have focused on WANG's internal activities, I thought it might be a good idea to report on events that are "external" to WANG, but that we are involved with or affected by as a neighborhood. This is my attempt to provide an update report on activities outside of WANG's boundaries that affect us, starting with the local activities of our neighboring neighborhood associations and proceeding to the city and regional level events that affect us.

Nearby Neighborhood Association Activities

- There are other neighborhood associations that adjoin or overlap with WANG's boundaries. We try to work closely with these other groups to further our mutual interests. Indeed, a number of our board members actively participate with the other neighborhood organizations. For example, WANG's past president, Susan Pascoe, is on the Board of the PEMBERTON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (which, loosely speaking, represents the neighborhood north of Windsor and east of MoPac). We also have a representative with the BRYKER WOODS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (www.txinfo.com/brykerwoods), where WANG's Joyce Basciano is President. In addition, we have two representatives with the overarching neighborhood group, AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOODS COUNCIL ("ANC") - the current Vice President is our own Joyce Basciano, and Susan Pascoe is the representative for Sector 4 (which is the area covering West Austin). Other neighborhood associations in our area include OLD WEST AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (http://www.main.org/owana/) and the WINDSOR EXPOSITION NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP (set up by neighbors in

the immediate area to be the negotiating group to deal with the planned expansion of Good Shepherd Episcopal Church).

As you may recall, WANG worked closely with these neighboring neighborhood associations and the MoPac Neighborhood Associations Coalition ("MONAC") to rebuff TxDOT's (Texas Department of Transportation) efforts to widen and expand MoPac. But the battle here is not over, since there will likely be other efforts to expand MoPac, which would create traffic problems in our neighborhood. This situation continues to be monitored, and was discussed at a recent meeting between representatives from the affected neighborhoods. As a result, MONAC will be pushing strongly for some kind of rail commuter service down the MoPac corridor, calming of traffic in our neighborhoods, especially cut-through traffic, safety for school children who walk or bike to our neighborhood schools, noise and vibration from the train, and other concerns voiced by neighbors.

In addition, to working together to fight expansion of MoPac, these neighborhood groups are also pursuing other common objectives. For example, an effort is underway to qualify as a National Register District by the Old West Austin Historic District, which includes many of the homes in the Bryker Woods, Pemberton, Old Enfield, and OWANA neighborhoods. This is part of an ongoing effort to preserve homes, maintain property values and obtain federal protection against negative impacts (particularly from highway development). According to the OWAHD web site (www.owahd.org), the Texas Historical Commission is currently reviewing OWAHD's nomination, which claims 1,563 contributing structures (including the bridges in Pease Park!) representing over 60% contributing historic properties in OWAHD. WANG is also investigating

continued, next page

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

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

continued from cover

possible registration as a National Register District, and has started the process of collecting data about qualifying houses. Stay tuned for further details!

Of course, these neighborhood associations also actively participate in zoning matters to protect and regulate building activities. Speaking of which, there will be a "Zoning 101 Class" presentation made at the ANC Meeting on January 22, at 7 pm at First English Lutheran Church, 3001 Whitis Avenue. For current information on ANC, go to www.ancweb.org.

City-Wide Activity Affecting Our Neighborhood - In addition to the neighborhood associations' activities, there are also events outside of our neighborhood that will affect us. For example, the city's Front Yard Parking Ordinance continues to evolve. As you may recall, the City discussed an ordinance last year prohibiting front yard parking. Apparently, the City is now requiring neighborhood associations that previously opted into the restricted parking area (as WANG did) to submit a new application during the month of February which includes the necessary exhibits, such as notarized statements, bylaws, notices, voting, etc. The required application must include the following information:

(A) an official certification of the action taken by the association on the parking issue that includes the notarized signature of the authorized officer of the association;

(B) a statement that the vote was taken in accordance with the association bylaws;

(C) a copy of the association bylaws;

(D) a copy of the notice of the meeting at which the vote was taken and the process by which the notice was issued;

(E) the total number of people voting on the parking issue and the number of people voting for and against the item;

(F) the number of eligible voters in the association;

(G) the number of households in the association area; and

(H) an identification of associations that are known to have overlapping boundaries with the association, and a statement of:

(1) whether attempts have been made to contact the other associations; and

(2) whether the other associations are in favor of inclusion on the Restricted Parking Area Map.

THIS WILL REQUIRE A VOTE AT WANG'S FEBRUARY 3 MEETING, SO ANY INTERESTED PARTIES SHOULD BE SURE TO ATTEND TO PROVIDE THEIR INPUT ON THE PARKING ISSUE VOTE.

There has also been a proposed ordinance that will affect WANG's neighborhood plan. The City Council is apparently set to vote on a Neighborhood Plan Amendment Ordinance, which apparently would set procedural requirements and limits on how neighborhood plans are amended. This underscores the importance of doing a thorough job on the WANG Neighborhood Plan, which is at the moment more of a long-term goal for WANG than a pressing need because the City's schedule for considering our neighborhood as part of the AUSTIN TOMORROW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN does not include our neighborhood in the near future. For details about the City's efforts to direct the neighborhood planning process, see www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/default.htm.

Another event that may affect those of us who enjoy and support downtown's local merchants (like BookPeople and Waterloo Records) is the Community Forum for "Creating a Liveable 6th and Lamar" on Tuesday, January 21st at La Zona Rosa, 612 West 4th Street (5:30pm - 7:30pm). This forum will discuss the new development plans for 6th and Lamar. Part of the current plan includes a Borders bookstore that will be located one block from both Book People and Waterloo Records & Video. For information about some of the concerns about the development, download a summary of an economic analysis at www.liveablecity.com/lcexecsum.pdf, which explains how the proposed development could harm the local economy and businesses. If you cannot attend, feel free to comment on the online comment card (www.liveablecity.com/projects/commentform.htm).

Envision Central Texas Project Update

- At the regional level, Envision Central Texas (ECT) is an attempt to provide community input from the people of Central Texas in the planning process to assist in the public development and implemen-

tation of a regional vision addressing the growth of Central Texas, with an emphasis on land use, transportation and the environment. The outcome of the "Envision Central Texas Project" could significantly affect the West Austin neighborhood, especially if MoPac were expanded to accommodate increased traffic. For 2003, ECT has selected six communities to host a series of public planning workshops where citizens will have the opportunity to design neighborhoods, towns and communities in their own backyards. The cities of Bastrop, Lockhart, Dripping Springs, Pflugerville, Austin and unincorporated Williamson County were selected from 14 communities who applied for the free planning work. Much like the regional workshops held throughout Central Texas last fall, people will work around tables with aerial maps and game pieces. This time, however, they will work with much smaller areas encompassing acres, not miles. For further information about ECT, see their web site at www.envisioncentraltexas.org.

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WANG Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2003

Attending Board Members: Michael Cannatti, Joyce Casciano, Joe Bennett, Erik Cary, Linda Dickens, Gwen Jewiss, Susan Pascoe, Kenneth Pfluger, Selina Serna, and Blake Tollett

Guests: Ron Magnuson, John Barr, Joe Draker, Ann Boswell, and Officer Stephen J. Fleming (APD).

Update from Austin Police Dept.—Officer Stephen J. Fleming noted that this past month was relatively quiet, because neighbors were at home more which had the effect of reducing the number of residential burglaries. Officer Fleming discussed some of the information that was available on the department's website at <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/police/>, including crime statistics, news reports, and information about crime prevention.

Officer Fleming reported that the City engineering department has now evaluated the cross-walk across Exposition at the Howson Library. The engineers believe that reflective cross-walk is sufficient as it exists. Officer Fleming did note that the neighborhood group could purchase a sign to place in the area. It was proposed that the transportation committee look into the costs of providing a sign in this area and near Casis Elementary.

Good Shepherd Church — Ron Magnuson reported that there was a meeting between WENG and various church officials. Church officials have been receptive to the groups concerns. According to Mr. Magnuson, it appears as though the height of the structure will be reduced and there may be plans for some parking under the structure. The school drop-off area may be changed to an overhang near the parking lot. Mr. Magnuson believed that there will be no changes in the plans for the fellowship hall.

Approval of Minutes
Because there was no formal meeting last

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month, approval of the minutes was unnecessary.

Committee Reports

Zoning — 2413 W. 10th Street - A variance request has been made by owners Janet Krueger and John Barr to reduce the side set-back requirements from 5 feet to 3 feet to accommodate an existing metal shed on the property. Mr. Barr explained that there was a 9' x 10' shed on the property in the same location; however, because of deterioration, the shed was torn down and a new shed was put back in its place on the same footprint. The committee, indicated that unless there were neighbor complaints, no formal opposition would be lodged.

2608 West 7th Street (Maudies) - A variance has been requested by Mr. Joe Draker of Draker Enterprises (Maudies) to decrease the off-street parking requirement from 72 off-street parking spaces to 61 off-street parking spaces in order to expand the size of the restaurant into the space formerly occupied by the previous laundromat. Mr. Draker indicated that the restaurant does not have enough on-site parking spaces, but that a variance is necessary to support the expansion. Because of uncertainty in the lease situation, Mr. Draker would be requesting a delay in the hearing.

2418 Scenic — The owner, through his agent, is requesting a variance from a 25 foot front set-back to a zero foot set back. No representative from the owner appeared at the meeting. Neighbor Ann Boswell appeared and explained that she opposes the variance request. After discussion, including the fact that the lot had the present limitations at the time of the new owner's purchase, the committee voted to request that the owner postpone the hearing, but that if there is no agreement to delay the hearing, we will oppose the request.

Communications — Blake Tollett indicated that he was been working on issues relating to advertising in the newsletter. Several committee members indicated that the website looked very good.

Liaison — No formal report, but it was noted that the ANC Christmas party was a success and that Lloyd Doggett came to the celebration.

Membership Committee — No report. Members are asked to look at their membership expiration date on their mailing labels for the newsletter.

Transportation Committee — No report.
Historic Preservation Committee — Joe Bennett

displayed the maps he has been working on to facilitate historic preservation efforts.

Infrastructure — No report.

Treasurer's Report — It has been reported that the checking account balance is \$2,050.51; savings account balance is \$3,172.22; oak wilt account's balance is \$1,194.57, and Paid Membership is 323.

Old Business

It was reported by Michael Cannatti that the Irwin Spear Tree Planting ceremony went very well. A nice burr oak tree now occupies the north east corner of the Reed Park swimming pool area in honor of former executive committee member, and University of Texas professor, Irwin Spear.

New Business

Hal Katz has been asked to circulate a copy of the Bylaws prior to our next meeting so that the amended Bylaws can be reviewed and the final version approved. Comments should be made to Susan Pascoe. Committees have been asked to separately meet regarding this years' goals and report back at the executive committee meeting next month.

CITY OFFERS SOLUTION TO YOUR LABOR NEEDS

Need help around the house or the workplace for a day or a week? Whether it's landscaping, yard work, tree trimming, carpentry, masonry work, plumbing, tile setting or other skilled or unskilled jobs, visit First Workers Day Labor Center, 4916 N. IH-35.

This City program provides a convenient, safe facility that brings together day laborers and employers. It provides a location for workers to directly negotiate a short-term job placement with employers and homeowners.

For more information, call the First Workers Day Labor Center, (512) 453-3712.

COUNCIL REVIEWS CHANGES TO NOISE ORDINANCE

The Austin City Council is reviewing changes to an ordinance that regulates sound amplification from outdoor music venues and other activities.

The ordinance addresses sound levels in residential areas, including a provision that would lower the allowed decibel level in residential areas from sound equipment to 75 (down from 85 decibels).

A public hearing was conducted on Dec. 12. Council action is expected in January. To view the draft ordinance, visit www.city-ofaustin.org/news/02/downloads/noise7.pdf.