

WEST AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP

P.O. Box 5722 • Austin, Texas 78763-5722 • June, 2013

Organized 1973

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

Our next meeting will be Monday July 1st, 2013, 7:00PM at the Howson Library.
We look forward to seeing you! Please join us.
And speaking of joining us....

President's Message

By Cathy Kyle

MoPac Improvement Project Underway

Board of Directors

Cathy Kyle
President

Michael Cannatti
Secretary

Blake Tollett
Assistant Secretary

August "Happy" Harris III
Past-President

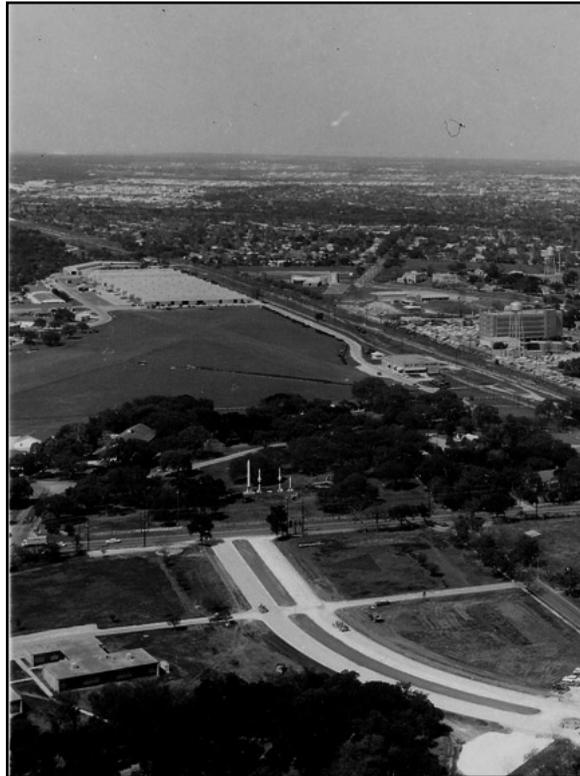
George Edwards
Treasurer

Committee Members

Mary Arnold
Joyce Basciano
Joseph Bennett
Erik Cary
George Edwards
Gwen Jewiss
Haidar Khazen

Honorary Committee Members

Hon. Lloyd Doggett
Hon. Lee Leffingwell



Aerial view of Camp Mabry and the State Assisted Living Center (looking north) before construction of MoPac, 1964.

You may have noticed drilling rigs set up alongside MoPac in recent weeks. These drilling rigs are the first visible evidence of the Mopac Improvement Project. This project has been an integral component of Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's (CAMPO) long range master plan. The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority is leading the project in coordination with TxDOT, the City of Austin, and Capital Metro. An environmental study (NEPA) of the corridor was completed in 2012, and construction of express lanes is slated to begin this fall. At the moment, core samples are being taken to provide information

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Presidents Message, continued from page 1

about the geological underpinnings of the highway (hence the drilling rigs). You will see painted marks interspersed along the shoulder, showing where core samples have been taken. The contractors are also testing vibration levels to mitigate any impact on adjacent structures.

The improvement project includes sound walls and managed lanes, also known express lanes, and use variable rate tolling to maintain optimal traffic speeds through the corridor. Managed lanes were first included in the long-range plan for MoPac in 1994. Successful examples may be found throughout the U.S. but this is Austin's first exposure to this type of traffic management.

The project is intended to address mobility and the movement of traffic within the region -- not necessarily capacity. Since 2000, traffic on MoPac has increased by 33,000 trips per day and is moving ever closer to a daily count of 200,000. Multimodality, that is, essentially all modes of transit, is an essential component of the project. Consequently, \$5 million is allocated to bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Significant bicycle and pedestrian improvements have been emphasized at key intersections in our neighborhood (Enfield, Windsor, Westover/Northwood and Perry/45th), although these plans are not final. These proposals aim to improve east-west connectivity across the corridor.

The first significant improvement to MoPac will be the construction of sound walls. Under federal rules, only residential property owners adjacent to MoPac were given the opportunity to vote on whether sound walls that would be included along sections of the highway. Not surprisingly, most owners in our neighborhoods voted in favor of sound walls. The walls will stretch along the east side of MoPac from 5th Street to Anderson Lane, except for the area next to TxDOT's facilities at 35th Street, Westminster Manor and the Gables Apartments and a portion of Allendale. Along the west, the sound walls will run from north of Westenfield Park to West 35th Street, and then from Perry Lane/45th Street to just past Hancock. You can find detailed maps of the location of sound walls at mopacexpress.com/environmental/Sound%20Wall%20Maps.pdf and a list at mopacexpress.com/environmental/Sound%20Wall%20List.pdf. The sound walls will be constructed of modular concrete, but aesthetics do enter

into the equation. The CTRMA's community Aesthetic Advisory Committee voted against the ubiquitous monolithic pebbled surface seen elsewhere. A great deal of thought was incorporated in the final design to make it as appealing as modular concrete can be.

The only major change from the original plans concerns the 5th Street exit. Originally, the exit was designed as a flyover from MoPac to eastbound 5th Street. The design/build firm, CH2M Hill, has reconfigured the design of that intersection so that the exit will go underneath the highway rather than over it. Going under is easier from a construction perspective and ameliorates cost concerns. Some neighbors were concerned about the height of the flyover; going under will resolve those issues as well.

The project is funded by state and federal resources. Because this project was "shovel ready," it was moved up in priority over projects in other cities which were still in the design stage. Even so, the project will not be complete until well into 2015, although the construction schedule will not be finalized for the next couple of months. As CH2M Hill finalizes the schedule, they will determine where construction will begin and will begin the process of engaging and informing the neighbors in close cooperation with CTRMA.

These improvements are harbingers of significant changes for our neighborhood. The sound walls and the managed lanes should reduce the impact of having a major highway cutting through our area. Stay tuned for more information about the construction schedule and more community information meetings.

**WEST AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP
MINUTES FOR JUNE 3, 2013 BOARD OF
DIRECTORS MEETING
By Michael Cannatti, Secretary**

These are the minutes of the **West Austin Neighborhood Group Board of Directors Meeting** on Monday, June 3, 2013 at the Howson Branch Library.

I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm with the following Board members in attendance: Mary Arnold, George Edwards, August Harris, Cathy Kyle, Joseph Bennett, Haidar Khazen, Blake Tollett, and Michael Cannatti. Joyce Basciano

joined the meeting shortly thereafter.

II. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from the May 6, 2013 board meeting were unanimously approved by a vote of 8-0.

III. **Neighbor Communications:**

A. **Proposed Race Course for Luke's Locker Downtown Classic 10K:** Michael Bush provide information on the proposed race course for the Luke's Locker Downtown Classic 10K race on Sept. 29, 2013. The race course will run down Cesar Chavez (W. 1st Street), across MoPac, and down Lake Austin Boulevard to a turnaround point past Exposition, with partial closure of all streets to allow two-way single lane traffic except for eastbound Cesar Chavez which will be closed. Intersections will be staffed by traffic police. Proceeds from the race will benefit Austin Parks Foundation.

Action: On a motion by Haidar seconded by George, the Board voted to support the temporary closure of a right-of-way requested in the City's Notice of Proposed Closure form.

B. **Parkland Parking Ordinance:** Blake reported that the Planning Commission voted unanimously against the proposed parkland parking ordinance which allows city parks to be used to meet parking requirements for any business located within 1000 feet of the park. Blake also reported that Chris Riley attended the Parks Board hearing on the proposed parkland ordinance, and apparently his presence influenced the Parks Board which did not provide a recommendation on the proposed ordinance, either in support or opposition. Cathy noted that WANG's opposition to the proposed parkland parking ordinance had previously been sent to the Planning Commission and Parks Board.

Action: Cathy Kyle will send a follow-up letter to City Council noting WANG's opposition to the proposed parkland parking ordinance.

C. **Dorm Duplex Resolution:** Joyce reported on

the proposed ANC resolution to request the City Council for an emergency ordinance to address the stealth dorm problem by reducing the occupancy limits of duplexes from 6 to 4 unrelated adults in selected core neighborhood areas, including NUNA, Heritage, Old West University NA, Hyde Park NA, Hancock NA, and Northfield NA. According to Joyce, the resolution covers all single family zoned properties, not just duplexes, and attempts to reduce the impact of stealth dorms ("dorm-style housing") that are wiping out core neighborhood areas by bringing problems into residential neighborhoods, including noise, traffic, trash, etc. August noted concerns about the language in the proposed resolution. Mike noted the challenges posed to enforcing such ordinances since City Staff has limited personnel and enforcement powers to determine how many unrelated people are living in a house.

Action: August will review and revise the language of the proposed ordinance, and circulate proposed revisions to the Board for review.

D. **Reed Park Watershed Walk:** Mary Arnold reported that the City will be conducting a Watershed Walk in Reed Park (Thursday, June 6, 2013 from 3:30 to 5:00 PM) to explore the Grow Zone in Reed Park with a City of Austin Environmental Scientist, and to review winter planting activities, to talk about what's coming up and to identify what needs attention in view of detected levels of e. coli in the Reed Park creek which exceed state standards. Mike noted that the City Staff is proposing tree root protection measures to cover the roots of the big tree at the creek cross path that won't suffocate the tree root system.

E. **Mount Bonnell Historic Marker – Zoning and Platting Commission:** Blake reported on the status of the West Point Society appeal of the Historic Landmark Commission decision on the grant of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the repair of the historic monument at Mt. Bonnell. PARD has requested that WANG address the issue, and Blake recommends that WANG support the Historic Landmark Commission's recommendation to

repair the already on site historic limestone marker rather than replace it with a granite marker.

Action: The Board voted unanimously to support HLC’s recommendation 8-0-1 (August Harris abstaining).

F. ACL Music Festival Update: Joe reported on traffic management plans for controlling neighborhood parking during the two weekends of this year’s ACL Music Festival (Oct. 4-6 and 11-13). The roads into Zilker Park will be opened during the intervening week. In addition, traffic control signage will be used to limit neighborhood parking to one side of the street. Additional inbound trash cans will be positioned this year. In addition, WANG will receive 10 tickets for each weekend for use in raising funds for WANG, either by direct sales or raffle ticket options. Joe requested help from board members in distributing flyers to Deep Eddy Heights neighbors.

G. Camp Mabry Special Events: Board members discussed recent efforts by City Council to explore feasibility of an interlocal agreement with administrators of Camp Mabry Garrison Command that would facilitate the use of Camp Mabry’s grounds for public events previously held on City property. At Council’s May 23 meeting, Council was scheduled to approve a resolution to determine whether or not the City can financially participate in moving some of the displaced events originally slated for Auditorium Shores to Camp Mabry. August reported on his efforts to reach Council Member Morrison, but no response has been received yet.

Action: WANG will contact City Council to express our concerns and interest in being involved as an affected stakeholder on this issue, and will contact adjoining neighborhood associations (Oakmont Heights, HPB-WNA and Westminster Manor) to make sure they are engaged in the process and not run over like Zilker

IV. **Committee Reports:**

A. Zoning/Board of Adjustment:

1) C15-2013-0052 (2200 Westover Road; Owner/Applicant: Andrew and Ann Erben). The applicant has requested a variance to decrease the minimum front street setback requirement from 25 feet to 15 feet in order to rebuild a carport for a single-family residence. August noted concerns that the carport was rebuilt several months ago without a permit, and that the new carport is quite substantial. There is a possibility that the carport was destroyed by natural forces.

Action: Blake will check on the history of the carport and any “natural disaster” issues, and will circulate information by email for possible action.

2) 3218 Stevenson (Owner/Applicant: Jim Bennett). The applicant’s original request for a variance from the front yard garage placement requirement is being withdrawn so that the architectural plans can be revised.

3) 3304 Meredith (Owner/Applicant: Jim Bennett). Blake explained that a variance may be required for a proposed new constructions being built by Brian Fuchs and the architects at Cornerstone Architects which fails to meet the garage placement requirement. Mr. Bennett explained that the layout inspection was initially approved during plan review by City Staff, but the building inspector red tagged the design for violating the garage placement requirement. At this point, the slabs have not been poured, and any variance request would not be heard for two months (at August 15 BoA hearing) due to backlog at the Board of Adjustment. Blake and August noted that there was no hardship here, especially given the delayed BoA decision, and that the plans could be re-done since this was an error by the architects that should have known better. Cannatti noted that the garage placement issue may also be occurring next door to the 2100 Elton property where a similar structure was built with initial city approval.

Action: No action required at this time since a variance request has not been

filed. Joyce will provide Cathy with the names of city staff in planning and development review so that we can request that reviewer training include attention to the development requirements for our neighborhood plan, such as the garage placement tool.

- B. Membership: Joe reported that our current membership (194 members) is down from last year. Joe will include a membership reminder in the upcoming newsletter, and will use some of the ACL tickets to solicit business supporter members by using a raffle of two tickets each weekend.
- C. Newsletter: August and Cathy noted that the appearance of the newsletter could be improved by using uniform fonts and improving the layout. Haidar will request assistance from the printers with this. The newsletter should include an announcement of the 23rd Fourth of July Parade details (Thurs, July 4 at 9 am, starting at Good Shepherd), and August reported that he had obtained the required parade permits, but that the parade has been largely organized by Drew Tate (drew@tateproperty.com). The deadline for receiving content for the next newsletter is 10 days from the board meeting (June 13).
- D. ANC Liaison Report: Joyce Basciano reported that the City's watershed department is interested in having neighborhood associations sign up as "adopt-a-creek" supporters for our park creeks. Mary noted that this effort seems premature until the exact nature of the creek problems, goals, and solutions have been specified. August suggested that, instead of signing up neighborhood associations, the individual "friends of the parks" type groups in our neighborhood could be used.
- E. Pemberton Heights Neighborhood Association Liaison Report: No report.
- V. Treasurer's Report – The Checking Account Balance is \$8,262.03, and the Oak Wilt Account Balance of \$1205.95.
- VII. Old Business – August noted that Good Shepherd Church is halfway through its fundraising campaign, so construction could begin soon. George noted that

concerns and questions raised by neighbors (regarding parking and traffic access) has not been addressed by GSC.

August also reported that the MoPac survey crews have started their work on the MoPac lane improvements, but that may need to be an additional National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) study performed due to utility changes. According to August, the sound walls will be constructed before the road improvements are made.

VIII. New Business – Mary reported that the 4th Annual Lloyd Morrison Junior Golf Tournament to benefit the Save Munny group will occur on June 6, 2013. Cannatti thanked WANG for its support of the Austin Parks Foundation grant application by the Central West Austin Combined Neighborhood Plan Contact Team to plant trees in Westenfield Park.

IX. Adjournment -- The meeting was adjourned. The next board meeting will occur on Monday, July 1, 2013 at 7 pm at the Howson Library.



Let us know what you think about possible improvements for I-35!

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**23RD ANNUAL
TARRYTOWN**

4TH OF JULY PARADE

**9:00 AM Thursday
Good Shepherd Episcopal Church
Windsor at Exposition**

**Post-parade festivities
at Reed Park**

Planning is well under way for the Tarrytown Fourth of July Parade. As always, the route will be from the corner of Windsor and Exposition to Pecos and then concluding at Reed Park where food, fun and merriment await. Floats line up between 7:45 and 8:45AM and the Parade will begin at 9AM. For the second year, the Texas National Guard is participating in the parade. Contact Drew Tate at drew@tateproperty.com for more information including sponsorship opportunities and float coordination.



MEMBERSHIP REMINDERS

All West Austin Neighborhood Group Memberships are running concurrently from November 1st to October 31st of each year. Join or Re-new now (June/July) and your Membership is good through October 31, 2014. Those who renewed prior to June will need to renew on or before November 1 to be active for 2014. If you have questions about your membership, please contact membership@westaustinnng.com.

We are constantly working on outreach and membership development. Talk to your neighbors and ask them if they are members!

Membership is open to all West Austin residents and businesses. All members are invited to participate in public forums, engage in social activities and serve on committees. The Stronger the Membership, the Greater the effort for the Neighborhood.

We would like give a big THANK YOU ! to all our Members for their support of the Neighborhood and especially our Patron and Friend Level Members:

Patron Level - Julie & Ben Crenshaw, Colleen & Brad Theriot, Carter Shanklin, Marcia & George Edwards, Alex & Julie Gregg, Libby & Bruce Malone, Judith Kenney, and Joseph & Amber Bennett

Friend Level - Glenn & Cyndi Corser, Andrew & Connie Mawer, Mary Ellen Oliver, Jay & Mary Alice Lucas, Linda & Kelly Dickens, Neil & Susan Pasco, John & Caroline Trube, Noelle Paulette, Vicky Y Spradling, Jim & Lee Ann Anderson, Catherine Kyle, Jerry & Mary Bell, Lidia Agraz & Allen Peck, Jim & Joanna Essler, Flo Ann Randle, Judy Coker, The Girl's School of Austin, Ann Moody, Dealey & David Herndon, Amy & Brent Corbett, and George Henderson

Benefactor Level \$ 250

Patron Level \$ 100

Friend Level \$ 50

Family Level \$ 30

Senior Level \$ 15

Student Level \$ 15

Sustaining Level \$ 500

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

Paper wasps

Paper wasps are about 3/4- 1" long with a pinched waist and smoky wings. They are reddish-brown in color and some may have yellow markings. Paper wasps have chewing mouthparts and construct their nests from chewed wood fiber. Nests are open-faced and hang from a single filament. The nest starts out small in the spring with just a few cells. It grows larger as newly emerged adults help expand the nest. Nests are often constructed in sheltered locations- under the eaves of homes, on fences, mailboxes, etc.

Wasps are capable of stinging repeatedly, but are considered beneficial since they can help reduce number of insects that feed on landscape plants. If nests are in areas where there is little chance of a stinging incidence, then it is recommend that you leave them alone. If the nests are built in areas where people or animals may get stung then management may be necessary. Choose a wasp spray that can reach the nest from a distance and treat the nest in the evening when wasps are not out foraging for food. Once the wasps are dead, knock down the nest and dispose of it.



For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Also check out www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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West Austin Neighborhood Group

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student | \$15.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend | \$50.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$250.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$500.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Friend | \$500.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Sustaining | \$1,000.00 |

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