

# April Meeting

**When:** 7:00 p.m.  
Monday, April 6, 2015

**Where:** The Griffin School  
5001 Evans Avenue

*Note: HPNA meetings usually take place on the first Monday of each month.*

## HPNA General Meeting Agenda for April 6

- ◆ Local Business Spotlight – Sala & Betty, a new local restaurant on Airport Blvd
- ◆ City of Austin Code Compliance presentation
- ◆ Announcements

**See You There!**

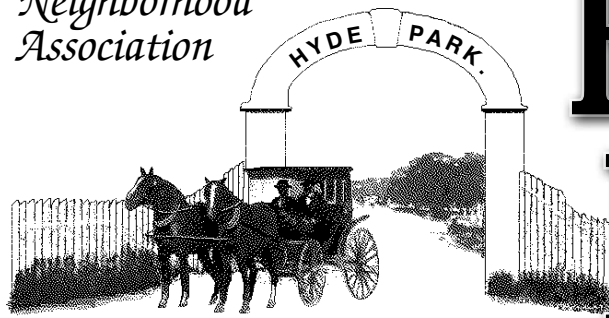
## A Morning of Work, Fun, and Community

I arrived at Shipe Park on the morning of Saturday, March 7 around 7:30 a.m. to start setting up for the annual It's My Park Day (IMPD). First thing to do was to set out traffic cones to reserve parking along Avenue F for Austin Fire Department's Engine #9. Firefighters were expected to show up at the park to meet all the volunteers and sell some cool firefighter t-shirts. Next, members of the City of Austin Parks & Recreation Department (PARD) pulled up with some new park benches and a trash can, which they installed over the next few hours. Landscape materials had been delivered the day before, which were distributed by volunteers – Dillo Dirt at the playing field and mulch around all the trees

By 8:00 a.m. many more folks started showing up, including IMPD project leaders, Rhonda & Philip Baird, who received this year's second annual Friends of Shipe Park (FoSP) Park Hero award, and Jack and Jill Nokes, with tools, t-shirts & their kind love of all things natural and

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The Hyde Park  
Neighborhood  
Association



# Pecan Press

April 2015 • National Register District Neighborhood • Vol. 41, No. 4

## Fool's Errand: A Rollo Treadway Retrospective

## Park in Fact As Well As in Name?

*Editor's Note: Every April for 10 years, Hyde Parkers were amused or confused or sometimes totally fooled and outraged by articles published under the pseudonym of Rollo Treadway. We now know their author was in fact John Kerr, a longtime resident of Hyde Park who sadly passed away this past August. His April pieces were such masterpieces that it just seemed right to give them a second life. The one below was first published in 2007, and reprinted here with minor modifications. Enjoy.*

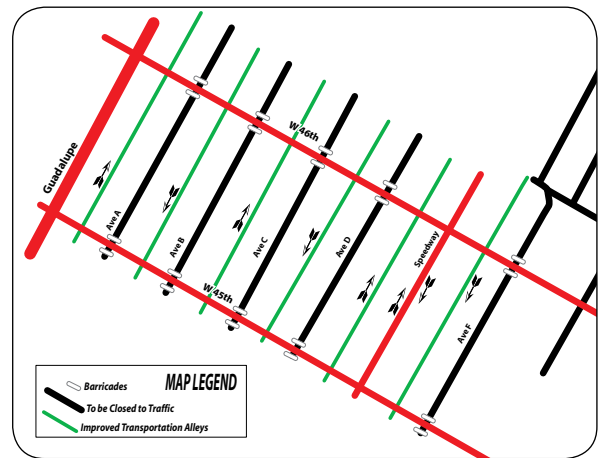
About a year and a half ago, at a monthly HPNA meeting, neighbor Sophie Forsythe proposed turning the stretch of Avenue G between Shipe Park and the Ney Museum into a public space. With the approval of the general membership, a "Paseo Committee" was formed to explore various possibilities. After several encouraging meetings with public officials, the proposal was dropped when vocal opposition developed among some of the neighbors.

However, unknown to the neighborhood, the planning at the city's Transportation and Land Use Department continued on. The department's initial recommendation, released in early March, goes far beyond the concept explored by the Paseo Committee and proposes to close all of the

lettered north-south avenues in lower Hyde Park, routing vehicular traffic through substantially widened and improved alleys.

The idea is new but not unique. Three other small, upscale communities have undergone similar transformations: Carmel Palisades in California, Grosse Pointe Estates outside of Detroit, Michigan, and Turtle Cove in Dallas. The overwhelmingly positive response of those communities, despite bitter initial opposition, convinced Austin officials to proceed with the project.

Heading the Transportation & Land Use planning team was Ed Reisenweber. A graduate of Stanford's regional planning program,



**Continued on page 17**



## Appreciation

Thanks to the leadership of the Friends of Shipe Park, It's My Park Day 2015 was a rousing success. Between 200 and 300 people attended and participated. The day's tasks – aerating and mulching the tree roots, cleaning out the pools, spreading the Dillo Dirt, painting the tables and benches, and all the rest – were completed before schedule, while participants enjoyed the bluegrass music of The Lost Pines. Thanks to the Friends of Shipe Park and all participants! Events like this underline the value of community effort in maintaining the livability of a neighborhood.

A Thank You also goes to Alison Young for her gift of 100 No Dog Poop stickers to Hyde Park. The Steering Committee will take up this challenge and make sure that, when Alison's stickers run out, more will be available,



courtesy of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association.

your last one, perhaps the Zucker Report will be the reason.

– Kevin Heyburn & Lorre Weidlich, HPNA Co-Presidents

## Pecan Press

The Pecan Press is published monthly by the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association in Austin, Texas.

Note: Each month's ad and editorial deadline is the 15th of month preceding publication.

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## Zucker Report

Residents of Hyde Park have certainly had their share of problems with inefficient service from the City of Austin Planning and Development Review Department and even more with the inaccurate application of city code by that department. Hyde Park residents are not alone. Zucker Systems, an independent company that has reviewed planning departments across the country, recently reviewed Austin's Planning Department and included a survey of Austin customers as part of its review. According to Zucker Systems, "The negative responses we received in this survey are the worst we have seen in our national studies including many Texas communities."

Austin had planned to release the survey in April, but released a draft version during March. To read the draft version, access [www.austintexas.gov/department/zucker-working-report](http://www.austintexas.gov/department/zucker-working-report). The report contains 464 recommendations, 121 of which are considered high priority. If your next encounter with the Planning and Development Review Department is better than



## Hyde Park Neighborhood Association

P. O. Box 49427 • Austin, TX 78765

[www.austinhdepark.org](http://www.austinhdepark.org)

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## Is Direct Democracy the Ideal?

In her March article in the *Pecan Press* ("Invitation to Direct Democracy"), Lorre Weidlich states that "direct democracy can be a disconcerting business." I agree with that view, but unfortunately she glosses over its real, and deeper problems.

All democratic processes will find it challenging to satisfy the three conditions James Fishkin's lays out as necessary for real democracy: *deliberation*, *participation*, and *equality* at the same time. HPNA's direct democracy seems to me to fall short on the latter two conditions.

First, Hyde Park has thousands of residents (in addition to business and non-resident property owners) who are affected by HPNA decisions, and so widespread participation using face-to-face meetings is an almost impossible task. This could be addressed somewhat by technology, but it would require that the organization be open to change and be determined to do the work needed to overcome such a challenge.

And second, because the votes and deliberations are taken only at monthly meetings, those with commitments to family and work (or indisposed for whatever reason) have a less equal chance of having their views taken into account. It does not necessarily mean that these individuals do not care about what gets voted on at HPNA. To take the ADU issue as an example, when the Contact Team offered the opportunity to take an online survey on ADUs or when Friends of Hyde Park sponsored an online ADU vote, people cared enough to register their opinions on the issue in significantly greater numbers than voted in person at an HPNA meeting.

Further, the lack of renters and non-resident property owners in HPNA also speaks to its lack of equality. The first group represents 80% of the residents, but only a small fraction of the HPNA voters; and the second group commands a significant share of Hyde Park property values (apartments, churches, businesses) but are not even allowed to vote.



## Monthly Calendar April

- 3 — Recycling Collection
- 4 — Hyde Park Egg Scramble
- 6 — HPNA General Meeting
- 13 — HPNA Steering Committee Meeting
- 17 — Recycling Collection
- 27 — Contact Team Meeting

The reason that participation and equality are important, and that this is not just a tempest in a teapot, is that the positions of HPNA are relayed to the city as the voice of "the neighborhood," with the intent of influencing city officials. It could be said to exercise power in other ways also. For example, anyone seeking a variance from the city is asked whether they have talked to "the neighborhood," when what is meant is whether they have talked to HPNA.

No one is arguing that HPNA is a not a democracy for those who show up at meetings, but it would be hard to argue against the view that more participation and equality would make HPNA a more democratic and responsive neighborhood organization. In looking to the future, I would hope that it becomes less self-satisfied and self-congratulatory, and more self-critical, acknowledging its shortcomings and working diligently to pursue the voices of more if not all neighborhood stakeholders.

— Matt Desloge  
Avenue G

Hyde Park Neighborhood Association Enrollment	2014-15 Membership	HPNA Membership Info
<p>Name _____ Phone _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I wish to be notified via email of HPNA meetings and events.</p> <p>Email _____</p> <p><b>Dues (per person)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Standard - \$5/year/person    <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizen- \$1/year/person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> New Member    <input type="checkbox"/> Renewing Member</p> <p>Payment: <input type="checkbox"/> Check    <input type="checkbox"/> Cash    Date _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Amount Paid \$ _____</p>	<p>Bring to an HPNA meeting, or send to:</p> <p><b>HPNA Membership</b> P.O. Box 49427 Austin, Texas 78765</p> <p>Make checks payable to HPNA.</p>	<p>All memberships expire on September 30th of each year.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">❖</p> <p>Membership in HPNA is open to all residents aged 18 years or older who reside within the boundaries of Hyde Park or within 300 feet of the designated boundaries.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">❖</p> <p>New members, and members who lapse in dues for over six months, are eligible to vote at HPNA meetings 30 days after receipt of dues.</p>

## We Welcome Your Submissions to *Pecan Press*

Send in your articles, letters, and photos (but not your poetry\*) by the 10th of each month to:

**Editor, Pecan Press**  
**editorpecanpress@gmail.com**

\*Send your poems to:  
**Charlotte Herzele**  
**herzele@gmail.com**

Note: The *Pecan Press* will not publish unsigned/unattributed poetry. All poems (even if written under a pen name) must carry a name and address or phone number for identification and verification purposes.

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AVERAGE SALES PRICE	\$401,513	\$477,040	\$470,565
AVERAGE SQUARE FOOTAGE	1,606 SF	1,773 SF	1,565 SF
AVERAGE SOLD \$/SQ FT	\$257.20	\$284.11	\$316.36
MEDIAN DAYS ON MARKET	34 DAYS	44 DAYS	29 DAYS

All statistics & square footage are from Austin MLS for Single Family Residence taken 12/31/2014 from the Austin MLS. For detailed market information about your home, contact Sam Archer, Broker.



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# Stealth Dorm Update

In February, 2014, Austin City Council adopted an occupancy ordinance that limits the number of unrelated individuals in duplexes and homes to four, down from six. The ordinance is limited to two years. As a part of the occupancy ordinance, the Austin Planning Commission was asked to study and make recommendations on code enforcement and violations.

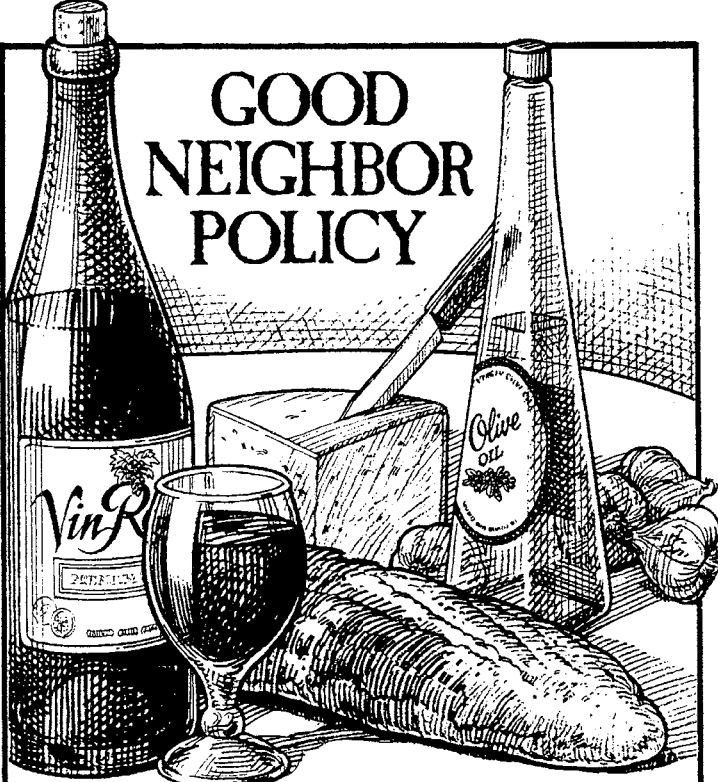
At its February 15, 2015 meeting, the planning commission unanimously adopted recommendations on the occupancy limit ordinance to be sent to the new city council. The recommendations include:

- 1) newly permitted buildings with designs typical of over occupancy must agree to an inspection after one year (the inspection will ensure that buildings are in compliance with the occupancy limit ordinance);
- 2) grandfathered structures with repeat violations of the Property Maintenance Code will lose the status that allows them to house six unrelated individuals;
- 3) Code Compliance investigate housing for over occupancy if there are violations of the Property Maintenance Code;
- 4) Code Compliance establish a system of escalating fines for repeat offenders, and coordinate communication between departments in order to track violations;
- 5) City Council institute civil proceedings for code violations, rather than resolve violation complaints through criminal proceedings;
- 6) City Council extend the occupancy limit boundaries to neighborhoods outside the McMansion Ordinance boundaries (properties from Research Blvd to William Cannon Drive and from Loop 360 to Ed Bluestein Blvd).

In an effort to stop the misuses of single-family zoned property, the Planning Commission recommends creating a new zoning category called "multifamily lite" to encompass duplexes, fourplexes, and sixplexes.

The commission also recommends that council review the effectiveness of the ordinance and consider expanding it beyond the two-year limit. The new council has had one briefing on stealth dorms. They will discuss the issue in more detail in the newly formed special council committees.

– *Mary Sanger*  
Hancock Neighborhood  
Association



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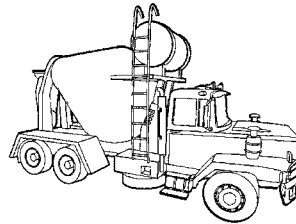
# HPNA Meeting Minutes: March 2, 2015

Lorre Weidlich, co-president, called the March meeting of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association to order at 7:06 p.m. She announced that the DownHome Diner had cancelled its appearance. Instead, Kathy Lawrence brought coffee and cookies.

Alison Young spoke about the stickers that she had printed to notify people that the resident does not want dog poop in his or her garage bin. Stickers will be on the bulletin board at Fresh Plus, as well as inside the store. Kathy Lawrence requested that HPNA purchase the next batch of stickers. The Steering Committee would consider that request at its next meeting.



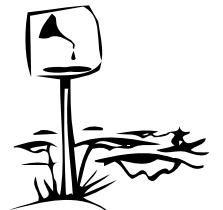
The next item on the agenda was a presentation by the Mobility 35 group regarding proposed changes and improvements to the IH-35 corridor. The plan includes 65 miles of improvements from SH-130 in Georgetown to San Marcos. The goal is to increase



traffic carrying capacity, as well as improve safety. In addition to such presentations as the one at the meeting, the group has virtual open houses for many of its projects. Proposed changes include signal optimization, modifications to the service roads, realignment of the ramps, and the addition of additional lanes. Realignment of the ramps and modifications to the intersections at 38th Street, Airport and 51st are planned. More detail can be found by visiting the Mobility35 website at <http://www.mobility35.org/>.

A representative of Sunshine Gardens at 4814 Sunshine spoke about its plant sale on March 7 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be about 25,000 plants, including more than 150 varieties of tomato and over 70 varieties of pepper. The proceeds help support the garden as well as the Texas School for the Blind.

Kathy Lawrence also announced that the Hyde Park Baptist Church was having a family movie night on March 27 with a screening of Frozen. Another recycling collection is being planned for hazardous materials such as batteries and CFL's on April 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. She also mentioned that HPNA would try to bring neighborhood businesses to each of the HPNA meetings.



Continued on following page



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## Mockingbird

Barely a mockingbird ago  
 You kissed me.  
 And it's been twenty years  
 Of Spring and Summertime,  
 Of honeysuckle and red roses  
 Strung along a path of happiness.

Now and then low fevers,  
 Colds and aches and pains.  
 But time has changed just little things,  
 The important ones have stayed the same.  
 Like the kernel of emotion  
 From which daily sprouts  
 The inner force of life.  
 -Some call it the heart-  
 That makes our conscience flow  
 In varying rhythms,  
 Morning into night  
 As it has done for twenty years,  
 Barely a mockingbird ago.

— Miguel González-Gerth

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## March Meeting Minutes... ...cont'd from page 6

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Requests were voiced to invite NeWorld Deli.  
 Kevin Heyburn announced that Kathy Tovo had attended much of the meeting. There was a reminder about It's My Park Day on March 7 from 9-12 at Shipe Park. The Lost Pines will play for the volunteers and the cleanup will include some of the Ney Museum property. Lorre announced that the Steering Committee will meet as usual on Monday, March 9 at Trinity United Methodist Church.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

— Submitted by Artie Gold  
 & Reid Long  
 HPNA Co-Secretaries



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## Around & About the Avenues

**Shake Hands with the Bunny:** Now in its third year, the annual Hyde Park Egg Scramble takes place Saturday April 4, in Shipe Park, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.



**Attention Gardeners:** On Saturday, April 11, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Mayfield Park will host Trowel & Error, the spring event that annually attracts gardeners from all over Central Texas to hear experts provide tips for beautiful gardens. Sponsored by Friends of the Parks of Austin, the event will feature three presenters: Jay White (“Fabulous Flora for Your Fauna”), Trisha Shirey (“Ten Terrific Tips for Spring Garden Success”), and Molly Ogorzaly, (“Supermarket Botany: Sagas, Secrets, and Surprises from the Grocery Shelves”). Not to be missed will be the legendary raffle of “garden goodies.” Everyone goes home a winner. All for a \$5.00 donation. For more information, please contact Karen Cannatti at Neenok@aol.com.



**Upcoming Contact Team Meeting:** The regular quarterly meeting will occur on Monday, April 27, 7:00 p.m. at the Trinity United Methodist Church. The agenda so far includes (1) discussion of sidewalks, with a representative from the City of Austin, (2) a discussion of proposals for amending the Contact Team bylaws, (3) an update on the neighborhood FLUM, and (4) an update from the joint Contact Team - HPNA subcommittee on CodeNEXT. All residents, renters/tenants, property owners and business owners in Hyde Park are encouraged to become members of the Contact Team and participate in discussions.



**Hyde Park Local Historic District Sign Toppers:** Are you interested in sponsoring a Hyde Park Local Historic District sign topper? The Hyde Park Neighborhood Association and the City of Austin Transportation Department are partners in the effort to install additional signs throughout the neighborhood. A \$100 donation allows you to designate a sign location (within the LHD boundaries) and be recognized as a sign sponsor in the *Pecan Press*! Contact Mark Fishman, HPNA Parks & Public Space Committee chair at 512-656-5505 or MLFishman@gmail.com to sponsor one of these signs!



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# A Morning of Work... ...cont'd from page 1

beautiful – and on and on until we increased our number to easily 300 people. Folks from the Wheatville Food Coop, the Austin Software Council, and members of a UT fraternity were a few of the larger groups that arrived for the occasion.



Music keeps spirits high, photo by Lorre Weidlich.

By 9:00 a.m., banners from It's Shipe Park Day sponsors, HPNA & the FoSP, were flying. Participants then swarmed over the park and must have completed in three hours an amount of work which would have normally taken three months. This year's entertainment, the Lost Pines Band, was thoroughly enjoyed by all. All seemed to be smiling ear to ear; and if they weren't working, they were dancing.



Volunteers are engaged in a variety of tasks, photo by Lorre Weidlich.

Thanks are owed to all the organizers and participants. By any measure, IMPD 2015 was as good as it gets. The work performed was perfectly executed by a community of folks who love their neighborhood.

– Mark Fishman  
Chair, HPNA Parks &  
Public Space Committee



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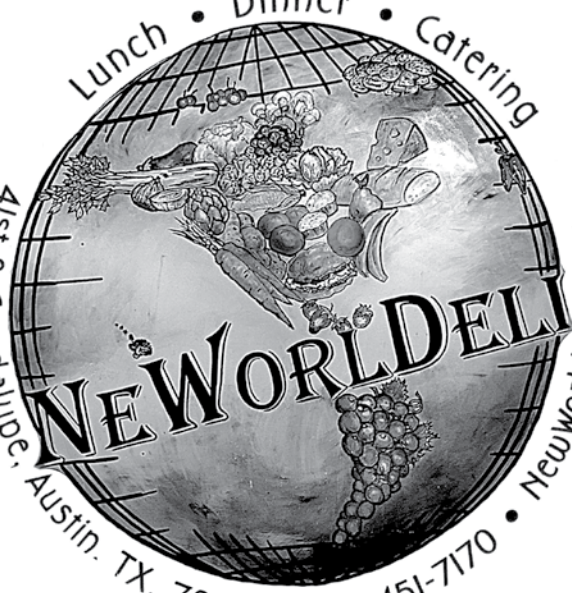
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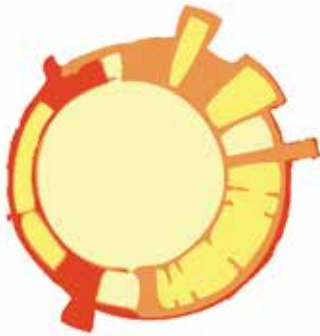
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# Hyde Park Poets —

(It only takes)

## Three Good Days

Three days of gorgeosity make it hard to remember  
That only three days ago we were clenched in the fist of winter  
Who, or what, was sitting on my chest  
Turning every breath into a prayer against a fit of coughing  
Coughing that threatened to unloose the fabric of my lungs?

Who, or what, was sprinkling the air with non-fairy dust  
That piqued a tickle in my throat or worse, my eye  
My fat eye, raw throat, constricted chest  
Turning every morning into a nightmare (even in the morning)?

Now that the mystery, unwanted guests are gone,  
The sun is shining and warming the earth  
The fiends may be lurking  
Waiting to afflict unwelcome attentions, but, I see them not, and out of mind, as they say...

A short memory is often a wonderful thing to possess,  
One does not wish to dwell in error, or as my friend says,  
“Would have, Should have, Could have,” or, as I say,  
“Moving forward...let the past stay in the past.”

This is a beautiful a day as one could wish for  
There may be the odd freeze ahead – it is only the beginning of winter, after all,  
Whoever, or whatever wanted me to close down shop,  
Turning my joie d’ vivre into a soggy pile of tissue,  
Is gone. I am respectful but choose to shut the door.

— *Herzele*  
01/18/15



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# Hyde Park Poets —

## Waller Creek and a Heron

... for our sister water, who is very serviceable  
unto us, and humble, and precious, and clean.  
— St. Francis of Assisi

A yellow-crowned night heron  
flaunts such fine markings,  
black, white and even a touch of gold,  
that I feel privileged to serve  
as audience. Her glare sears my conscience,  
so I mosey on, crossing the bridge,  
leaving the wild—both creek and bird—  
to be wild.

— Elzy Cogswell  
Aug. 27, 2009

## What to Love

I go to work each day,  
too preoccupied and busy  
to celebrate seasons.  
Once in a blue moon  
an unexpected wind thrusts  
a cold hand down my collar,  
or the sun nuzzles through  
an overcast day.  
It takes something like that  
to remind me —  
Look! Look at all this!

— Elzy Cogswell  
Jan. 5, 2015

## Spring

The ground is swelling  
Narcissus sits by a spring  
He likes what he sees

— Adam Callaway



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# Fool's Errand...

...cont'd from page 4

Reisenweber said the idea was the brainstorm of Stanford's legendary regional planner Akiro Tanaka, who came up with the idea after viewing the impressionistic 1982 environmental documentary, *Koyaanisqatsi*. "We all watched the film together," said Reisenweber. "Tanaka was just blown away. He said he suddenly realized that automobiles and transportation corridors are utilities, just like sewer and water lines. They are absolutely essential, but social interaction and neighborhood aesthetics are best served by keeping them out of view."

As currently envisioned, alleys would be widened 8 feet on either side and paved. Those between Guadalupe and Avenue A, Avenues B and C, Speedway and Avenue F, and Avenues G and H would run one way north. The other alleys would run one way south. Speedway would remain open to two-way traffic as would all the numbered side streets.

"This is already going on in Austin on a smaller scale," said Reisenweber. "Look at Central Market or Hancock Center. Imagine how messy it would be if all the trucks unloading merchandise for those stores parked in the regular parking lot. All we're doing is taking that idea one step further."

Under the new plan, all vehicular traffic, including UPS and FedEx deliveries, emergency services, and parking would be made through the alleys and the numbered side streets. The Avenues between 38th and 45th Streets would be closed to all except pedestrians and cyclists.

If approved by the neighbors, construction would begin shortly and be completed by the start of the HPNA Historic Homes Tour. Costs would be shared between federal, state and local government agencies. Hyde Park residents would be expected to provide between 2 and 5 percent of the costs, depending on negotiations still underway.

"This is major surgery," Reisenweber said, "especially if you have to move or shorten your garage. I don't want to underestimate either the challenges involved or the emotional gratification of the final result." That sentiment was shared by Richard Tumlinson of Turtle Cove in Dallas. Contacted by phone for this article, he agreed with Reisenweber's assessment. "It was a royal pain in the keister, I guarantee you," he said. "But then when it's over, you look out your front door and 'Voila!', a Zen garden." He said all his neighbors were struck by the sense of calm that descended over a once busy street. Neighbors along his stretch of Lilac Lane pitched in to build a planter down the center of the street, planting it with plum-bago, daffodils, and azaleas with a drought-tolerant miscanthus grass border.

Continued on page 19

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# Fool's Errand...

...cont'd from page 17

The city is putting substantial resources into selling the concept, which it would like to replicate in several other Austin neighborhoods. It is offering to send up to four tour buses to Dallas in early June to allow interested Hyde Parkers to see the Dallas project first hand and talk with the neighbors there. Buses would leave from the Hyde Park Baptist Church parking lot at 7 a.m. on a Saturday morning and return by 6 p.m. that evening, with the city providing a box lunch. At the May HPNA meeting, Reisenweber and his team will present the plan, answer questions, and sign up neighbors for the Dallas trip. A final vote is scheduled for the July meeting.

Reisenweber said the final outcome would make Hyde Park "a park in fact as well as in name," but added he was anticipating opposition. "Anytime you try to take a forward step, there will always be a small but highly vocal clutch of mossbacks, naysayers, enviromaniacs and little old ladies in tennis shoes that comes out of the woodwork to fight you. I don't expect this will be any different."

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