


June Meeting

When: 7:00 p.m.
Monday, June 1, 2015

Where: **Special Location!** 
Hyde Park Theater
511 West 43rd Street

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

HPNA General Meeting Agenda for June 1

- Vote on a resolution to support a variance requested by the Griffin School
- Vote on a resolution to offer Hyde Park as one of the test neighborhoods to assess the impact of CodeNEXT
- Arts Focus: Presentation about the Hyde Park Theater by Ken Webster
- Announcements

See You There!

Kid's Corner: Summer Camp Fun!

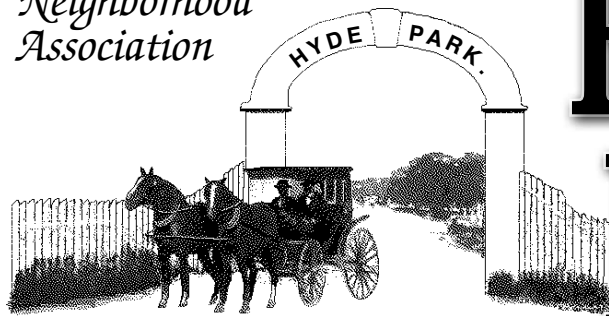
Welcome to the Pecan Press Kid's Corner, where you can find out about kid happenings in Hyde Park. Feel free to submit anything kid related, including event info, kids' drawings, stories, comics, songs, poems, what have you! ppkidscorner@yahoo.com

Check out the cool camps offered around our neighborhood and keep a look out for summertime fun close to home like the Shipe Pool Opening Party and Movie Night, June 20th!

- Griffin School, 5001 Evans, <https://griffinschool.org/summer-camps/>
– Rising 6th-9th graders can choose from music, radio, fashion, art, and writing camps.
- Camp at the Elizabeth Ney Museum, 304 E. 44th Street, 512-458-2255 – “Visual Literacy: Storytelling through Art”.
- Austin Junior Golf Academy, Hancock Golf Course, 811 E 41st Street, <http://austiniuniorgolfacademy.com/about>
– Ages 5-13 hit the links and celebrate the week with a hot dog and snow cone party.

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*The Hyde Park
Neighborhood
Association*




Pecan Press

June 2015 • National Register District Neighborhood • Vol. 41, No. 6

The Rubik's Cube: CodeNext, New Urbanism, and the Effects on Neighborhoods

Editor's Note: In May, HPNA welcomed Jeff Jack, architect, member of CodeNext Citizens Advisory Group (CAG), chair of the Board of Adjustment, and ex-officio member of the Planning Commission. Jeff spoke about the CodeNext process and its potential threats to neighborhoods. Excerpts of his remarks appear below.

The CodeNext Background

Know what this is? It's a good analogy  a Rubik's Cube. The Rubik's Cube for what we've been doing in the city of Austin for a long time. I was president of the Austin Neighborhoods Council when we started neighborhood planning. It was supposed to be a vehicle to address the conflict between neighborhoods, environmentalists, and the development community, where the community would come together and map out the future and get codified into a neighborhood plan. Then that neighborhood plan would be respected by the Council.

It didn't work that way. After the first couple plans were created, the staff began to take the process in a different direction. Staff's intention was simple – new urbanism, density. What we've had over the last 20 years is a process where each turn of the Rubik's Cube was lining up for an inevitable conclusion. That is going to play out in the last step of the process called CodeNext.

Imagine Austin was one of the steps in this process. We went through this great community gathering of people interested in shaping our city. Out of that came some recommendations, but a lot of the voices in the neighborhoods weren't heard. Many felt that the staff already had a foregone conclusion of where they wanted the process the end. At the very last of the process, council members Tovo and Morrison put in page 207. Page 207 is critical for our neighborhoods because it said that the neighborhood plans that had been created by the communities, codified by the vote of the council, would be respected in the CodeNext process. Well, maybe and maybe not.

When we started dealing with smart growth, in 2000, Kirk Watson had just become mayor and he brought with him all of the smart growth initiatives. He had about a dozen that he wanted to get implemented immediately. The Neighborhoods Council at the time said, wait a second. We're doing neighborhood plans, we really shouldn't be doing this as a one-size-fits-all in the city. So the only one that he got through was a

Continued on page 10

From the Desk of the Co-Presidents Summer!



This issue of the *Pecan Press* brings us to June, the start of summer. We have much to be grateful for this summer. Barring unforeseen circumstances, our pools will open on schedule, Shipe Pool on Monday, June 8 and Shipe Wading Pool on Tuesday, June 16. We can also look forward to the 7th Annual Shipe Pool Party and Movie Night on Saturday, June 20th this year. We still haven't heard anything about the dates for constructing Shipe Pool anew, but the community engagement process for the design of the new pool should begin this winter.



Monthly Calendar June

- 1 — HPNA General Meeting
- 8 — HPNA Steering Committee Meeting
- 12 — Recycling Collection
- 26 — Recycling Collection

Pecan Press

The *Pecan Press* is published monthly by the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association in Austin, Texas.
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We're excited to announce the first recipient of our lifeguard scholarship, Alberto Edwards. Alberto already had a conditional offer of employment with the City of Austin Lifeguard Program, so he was a perfect candidate for one of our scholarships. Congratulations, Alberto!

Resolution

The HPNA has an important resolution to vote on at our June meeting: Should Hyde Park volunteer to be a CodeNext test neighborhood? Four areas around Austin will be used as test areas to apply some of the CodeNext principles, to determine what effect the code would have on those areas. In the words of our May speaker, Jeff Jack (see related article on the facing page), "It's going to be very important they pick (an area) with a neighborhood plan that has been adopted, that has a strong neighborhood association, has a strong contact team, and has all the characteristics that are going to exemplify what the code write is going to be: core transit corridor, proportion of residential that backs up to commercial strips, infrastructure." Hyde Park certainly has those characteristics. Watching what effect the new code would have on our Neighborhood Plan, NCCDs, and LHD would be valuable to all of the central Austin neighborhoods.



We hope you plan to attend and to vote on the resolution.

— Kevin Heyburn &
Lorre Weidlich
HPNA Co-Presidents

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The Arts in Hyde Park

Hyde Park Theater

Every weekend, around 8:00 pm, something unusual happens at the corner of 43rd and Guadalupe in Hyde Park.

At this location, a few years ago, a group of dysfunctional people in a filthy trailer park hired a hitman to murder a member of their family. More recently, at the same location, a preacher started a fight with his congregation and his wife over the existence of Hell. Then there was the weekend when an uncle could be found reconciling with his niece in a hut among the trees. And some weekends a man or woman will show up to tell the story of his or her life to anyone who will listen.

People from all over the state come to witness these events. If you want to share in these experiences, you need only walk over to the corner of 43rd and Guadalupe, pay a modest admission fee, and find a seat in the Hyde Park Theatre.

When I moved to Austin in the 1990s, I was surprised to learn that Austin had a much busier theatre scene than Houston did. A big reason for this is Ken Webster, the Artistic Director of Hyde Park Theatre. Hyde Park Theatre's stage rarely goes dark, because, in addition to Mr. Webster's own productions, the theatre features work from other acting companies and hosts an annual four week drama festival each winter. It is one of the busiest play houses in the city.

Hyde Park Theatre, originally built as a neighborhood post office (circa 1947), began a new life as a theatrical venue in 1982. It is small and unpretentious, with seating for only 70 to 85 patrons. No seat is more than 25 feet from the center stage, thereby creating an unusual intimacy between audience and performer. This intimacy, and the opportunities and challenges it presents, has caused some of Austin's best actors, designers, and directors to want to produce plays there.

If you have not yet been inside the theatre, please come to our June Neighborhood Association meeting. You will not only get to see the theatre but you will also get to hear Ken Webster talk to us about Hyde Park Theatre's past, present, and future. I hope you can make it to the meeting, and I hope you will eventually see some of the wonderful shows the theatre puts on throughout the year.

— Kevin Heyburn

Resolutions for Vote

- *The Hyde Park Neighborhood Association requests that the Hyde Park neighborhood, as defined by the Hyde Park Neighborhood Plan, be selected as one of the four areas used during the evaluation of the proposed CodeNext changes to the land development code.*
- *The Hyde Park Neighborhood Association supports the Griffin School's application for a variance from the minimum street paved width requirements of Section 25-2-832(1) of the Austin City Code in order to add new classroom facilities to the school and increase its enrollment to a maximum of 125 students.*

Hyde Park Neighborhood Association Membership

• 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 its boundaries.

• All memberships expire on September 30th of each year.

• 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.

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We Welcome Your Submissions to Pecan Press

• Send your articles, letters, and photos by the 10th of each month to the HPNA Steering Committee at pecanpress@austinhypark.org.

Opinion articles and letters to the editor must not exceed 500 words.

• Send your poems to Charlotte Herzele at herzele@gmail.com

All poems, even if written under a pen name, must include a name and contact information for identification and verification purposes.

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	2012	2013	2014
NUMBER OF HOMES SOLD	76	79	74
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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May 2015 Hyde Park Neighborhood Association Minutes

Before the meeting was officially called to order, the neighborhood association held a potluck. The attendees brought dishes including salads, appetizers, and desserts for everyone to enjoy. Co-President Lorre Weidlich called the May meeting of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association to order at 7:29 PM at the Griffin School.

The first item on the agenda was a presentation from Jeff Jack about CodeNext and other development-related initiatives at the city. Jeff is a member of the CodeNext Citizens Advisory Group. The Citizen's Advisory Group has 11 members, one member selected by each Council Member of the previous City Council and four members by the city manager. It also has three working groups: Affordability; In-fill, Compatibility, and Missing Middle; and Small Business. Jeff talked about the origins of the current CodeNext process and its roots in the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan. An important upcoming part of the process is the evaluation of the effect of the new code on four neighborhoods within the city. Jeff accepted questions and comments from the floor throughout the presentation. (See related article, page 3).

The meeting moved to announcements. Lorre Weidlich announced that the Steering Committee would meet at 7 PM on May 11th at Trinity United Methodist Church. David Conner announced that the DRC would meet at 7 PM on Thursday. Adam Wilson announced that Shipe Pool is expected to reopen as planned but lifeguards are still needed to staff the city pools. Adrian Skinner announced that the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association has offered to support 2-3 individuals to become lifeguards for the City. Those interested should contact him. The City is also in the process of hiring someone to oversee the Shipe Pool restoration. Finally, it was announced that the vacant lots on Duval are going before the Historic Landmark Commission in the next couple of weeks.

Co-President Lorre Weidlich adjourned the meeting at 8:43 PM.

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



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June 8-12 AT THE QUARRIES
June 15-19 AT HYDE PARK

9:00am - Noon

Ages 5 (by Sep. 1) - 5th grade

Take a Journey Off the Map to uncharted territory! Kids will discover that Jesus is the Ultimate Guide on a journey uncharted by them, but known by HIM! Register at hpbc.org/vbs



June 28-July 1

Completed grades 4-6

Highland Lakes Camp - Spicewood, TX

Don't miss out on this great time as we enjoy wet & wild recreation activities, swimming, archery, BMX track, and other games. The Bible studies will be GREAT and the Worship will be AWESOME! Register at hpbc.org/camptejas



July 27-31

Completed grades 1-5

9:00am - 2:00pm

KAMP is a week for children to explore their creativity in music, art, drama, movement and more. Join us at the Hyde Park campus for lots of imaginative fun! Info at hpbc.org/kamp

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Hyde Park Contact Team Minutes

The Hyde Park Neighborhood Contact Team regular meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm on May 27, 2015 at Trinity United Methodist Church by co-chairs Jennifer Berbas and Adrian Skinner.

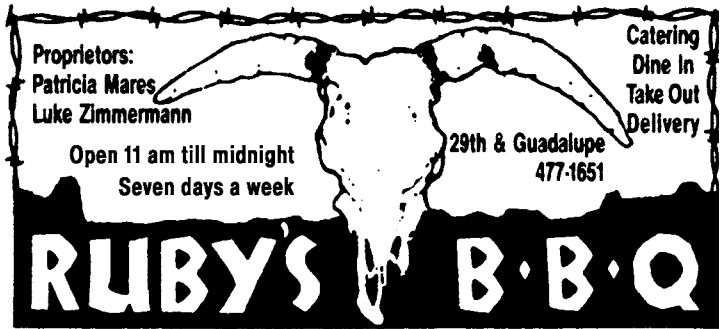
The CT welcomed John Eastman, City of Austin Public Works Office, Sidewalks Department, to discuss the City's 2009 Master Plan and future goals. The 2009 Master Plan can be found at <http://www.austintexas.gov/faq/where-can-i-find-copy-approved-sidewalk-master-plan>. According to the most recent survey of sidewalks, about half of Austin's street frontage has a sidewalk. Mr. Eastman explained that there are no dedicated tax dollars applied to sidewalks, instead they rely upon bonds, grants, fees, and builders to construct sidewalks. When there is money, they follow a set of priorities explained in the Master Plan and on the City website, Public Works page. Mr. Eastman reminded members to call 311 if there is a sidewalk issue, such as a needed repair, an obstruction, or the need to address a gap.

Mr. Eastman concluded by informing the CT that the City is getting ready to update the 2009 Sidewalk Master Plan. He advised that neighbors take advantage of opportunities for public comment and communicate with elected officials that sidewalks are a priority and should be funded. He also asked that Neighborhood Plan requests should be kept up to date as they help set priorities. [CT Secretary's note: Hyde Park is scheduled to review priorities in January, 2016.]

The meeting continued with a discussion of by-laws revisions led by bylaws committee chair Reid Long. He presented an overview of changes under consideration and noted that most revisions reflect the need for updated or clarified language and do not change the substance of the bylaws. No votes were taken and discussion will continue at the July CT meeting. This summary lists sections in which substantive changes are proposed. The committee has not yet addressed sections 12-17.

- Section 3: Boundaries - Include the apartments on 51st behind Rowena.
- Section 4: Membership - Request that a representative of any neighborhood association in Hyde Park be included, as long as the representative owns property or a business or rents property in the neighborhood.
- Section 6: Voting - Clarify that elections are to be held every other year and add that voting discussions will be managed by parliamentary procedure (Robert's Rules of Order).

Continued on page 9



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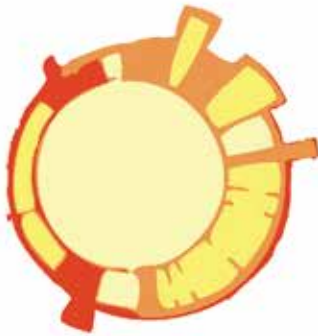
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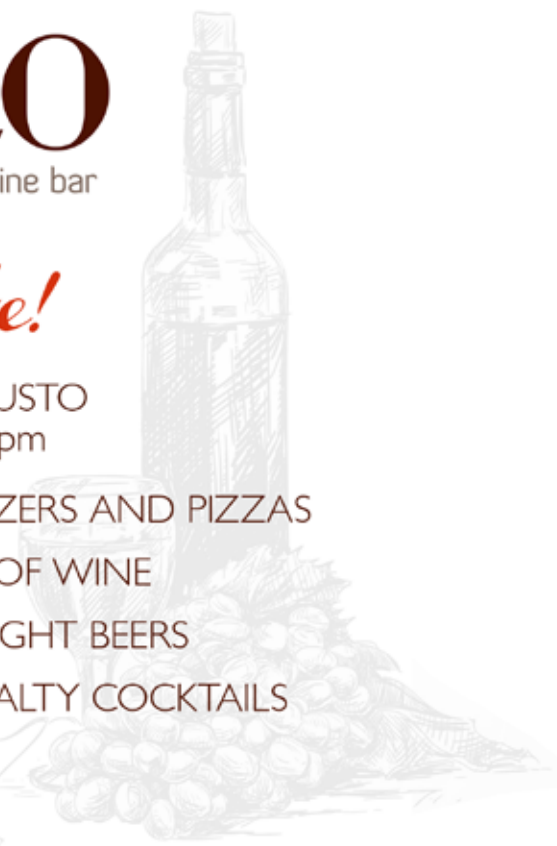
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Contact Team Minutes... ...cont'd from page 7

- Section 7: Meetings - Add language that allows additional meetings to be called by a majority of elected officers or seven voting members and add language to allow an agenda item to be added at the request of two or more CT members, during a meeting or in writing to the listserv.

Discussion focused primarily on voting. Currently, in order to vote a member needs to have attended at least one meeting in the last nine months. The committee asked for feedback on removing that requirement and allowing anyone who is qualified to vote. The discussion balanced the common concern that the CT should welcome the involvement of all neighbors with the concerns that those who vote are well-informed and that meetings are not stacked (as other CTs have experienced). A number of possible compromises were suggested that allow for a reasonable restriction that allows for more openness but prevents such abuse of the system as stacking meetings.

The bylaws committee continues to meet and discussion will continue at the July 27 meeting.

The meeting concluded with brief updates of old business items and general announcements:

- Adrian Skinner and Jen Berbas have submitted a request to Kathy Tovo to submit the new FLUM map and are still waiting to hear back from her staff.
- The CT heard a brief update of CodeNext planning.
- The next City quarterly CT training meeting will be held May 20, 2015, from 7 to 8:30pm, at One Texas Center, 505 Barton Springs Road, in the 3rd floor training room. See <http://austintexas.gov/departments/neighborhood-plan-contact-teams>.

The next quarterly meeting will be held Monday, July 27, at 7pm. All residents, renters or tenants, property owners, and business owners in Hyde Park are encouraged to become members of the CT and participate in discussions. An agenda will be posted two weeks before the meeting.

(A more complete set of minutes has been posted to the CT Yahoo page, https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/HydeParkContactTeam/files/Meeting%20Minutes/CT%20Minutes%2004_27_15.docx. If you would like a copy, please email Mity Myhr, CT Secretary, at myhr_steds@yahoo.com.)

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CodeNext...

...cont'd from page 1

secondary unit on a 7000-square-foot SF3 lot. All of the other infill options were made optional for the neighborhood planning process. It was essentially a zoning change, but staff's legal department said no, it's not a zoning change, so you didn't have to get notified.


Forces Driving New Urbanism in Austin

The new urbanist idea has been around for a long time, but in Austin we have essentially five groups of people who support the idea. There are those people who like the urban lifestyle. They want a bar on every other corner and a coffee shop on the corners in between. Now I'm an old urbanist. When I lived in Denver, I lived downtown in a high rise, my office was in a high rise, I didn't take a car, I rode the bus between, and I could walk to the neighborhood bar if I wanted to. But when I came to Austin I joined the Zilker Neighborhood Association. I realized neighborhood are more than just buildings, it's the people who live in the neighborhoods that really count and define the neighborhood. If you start from that position, neighborhoods really need to be respected.

We also have people who believe in Economics 101. You simply have supply and demand. All we have to do is increase the supply of housing in the city and the price of housing's going to go down. The problem is, what we have done is encourage an in-migration of much wealthier people over the last 20 years, so instead of the demand curve simply moving out, it's moved up.

One thing I've been advocating in the city of Austin for many years is to have a city economist. We're a \$3 billion a year corporation with no economic expertise on staff. When they want to prove something, they hire a consultant and tell him what they want him to do, and he gives them a report giving them what they want. We have nobody on the city staff who has the ability to do an analysis of any of the deals that we've made, any of the code changes that we're proposing, to know whether they really work or not. It's total resistance from city staff to have that expertise available, because they don't know what the answer's going to be.

Third group of people. There are environmentalists who believe that the automobile is the root sin of sprawl and if we can just get enough density in Austin, we can stop sprawling. Now I don't know about you, but I know that capitalism doesn't stop at the city limits. If you drive out 71, 290, 183, as soon as you get past the city limits you're going to see development. The developers know they can go out there, buy the land cheaper, build the houses that people want, and make money. Sprawl's not going to stop by densifying our neighborhoods. It's just going to change the nature of the sprawl.



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There are also people who are advocates for transit. They believe we have to dense pack the neighborhoods in order to have enough ridership in our neighborhoods to support rail. Those four are sort of the vanguard for the discussion about new urbanism, CodeNext, and density in our neighborhoods.

But you know what's really driving it? Money. The development community, the homebuilders, the land speculators, the engineers, they're salivating at Austin becoming a gold mine to be mined for our real estate. Because they understand that the lot that you own today is going to be worth a lot more if they tear down that house and build something else on it.

Zucker Report

One of the first things that we heard in pushing the new code was that the code is difficult, it's expensive, and it's time-consuming for the development community. We suggested that you look at the administrative, managerial, and procedural issues with the code that we have today and fix that first, then deal with the substantive issues. Staff would not do that. When they wrote the RFQ for CodeNext, they excluded that work totally.

A year after we'd started CodeNext, they hired a California consultant, Zucker Systems, to look at those issues. They came up with a 700 page indictment of the city staff. It's taken the mask off of what the agenda was. But the city staff hasn't embraced it. They're trying to say, maybe the consultant didn't have all the facts, but the fact of the matter is they don't want to acknowledge that most of the claims by the development community about time and money for getting things permitted was really managerial

in nature. It hid the real agenda of getting rid of the neighborhood protection parts of the code.

I think the Zucker report scared the city management. One of the things that's happening in the CodeNext process is a shakeup in our staff. For the last two years we've dealt with staff members who basically pushed the new urbanist creed. We hired a new assistant director for planning and he has a little bit different perspective. He says that the new code should be based on the DNA of your neighborhood.

The CodeNext Process

Back in November I proposed a resolution that clarified that the CAG supported being able to replicate your neighborhood plan with a new code. The pushback was amazing. The staff said, this is all bad, and I said, wait a second, in Imagine Austin it says we're going to be able to do this. Staff said, respect, it's not the same thing as replicate. If you don't think that "replicate" means what you want, what does "respect" mean? We can't get answers.


CodeNext went through a couple things. One of the important ones is the community character analysis. But they didn't take it very far. They didn't show you what percentage of your lots was in different classifications. But they did give you a bunch of pictures showing this house or this little corner grocery store that you like, and they're going to use that to justify future changes in the code that affect your neighborhood. Oh, you like that picture of that house with the big tree and the nice Victorian roof? By the way, it had a granny flat in the back, so you automatically like granny flats, don't you? It's called a visual preferencing survey and it's very manipulative. Another part of the Rubik's Cube.

One of the big disappointments is that they didn't do anything really data-drive. This is Zilker (pointing

Kid's Corner: ...cont'd from page 1

- Junior Tennis Summer Camp at Pharr Tennis Center, 4201 Brookview Road near Mueller, prostrokestennis@gmail.com - Ages 6-14 have fun on the courts.
- GENaustin at Trinity United Methodist Church, 4001 Speedway, <http://genaustin.org/what-we-do/camps/> - Girls grades 4-7 gain skills to navigate girlhood in a fun, interactive environment.
- Austin Parks and Recreation at Hancock Recreation Center, https://connect001.rectrac.com/wbWSC/txaustin_1.wsc/wbsearch.html?wbsi=f82d9aba-0aca-5ca8-f813-309cf0cfc6c8 - Age groups 5-9, 9-13, and 12-16 explore this year's theme, "Keep Austin Weird".
- Creative Action at Trinity United Methodist Church, 4001 Speedway, <http://creativeaction.org/programs/camps/summer-camps/> - Ages 5-9 enjoy amazingly imaginative camps all summer long.
- Bits, Bites, and Bots at Trinity United Methodist Church, 4001 Speedway, http://austintx.bitsbytesbots.com/?page_id=304 - Ages 8-14 have loads of technical fun.

Continued on page 12



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CodeNEXT...

...cont'd from page 11

to a map). Those color-coded districts are each different service areas for sewers. And this yellow area right here? The load is 1320 LUEs, living unit equivalents. The capacity is 1340. So if we were to put density in that area, somebody's going to have to pay to increase that sewer capacity, from there practically all the way to Govalle. When asked about this in the Imagine Austin process, city staff said, we'll deal with the cost of infrastructure later. It's called a bond election.

We were also supposed to have some code talks because we understood that there were issues unresolved, like compatibility standards. What's the relationship between residential property and commercial property? Right now our code says that commercial property will step back and step down adjacent to residential property so that there is not an adverse effect on the residential. That is a huge problem for commercial development. We had code talks, there's no consensus, haven't had another code talk since. So about three months ago the city staff came up with another bright idea called working groups - three working groups and they got to pick the topics. The CAG didn't have any say about it.

One of the good things that's come out of this is that they hired an innovation officer for the city of Austin, somebody who's been in federal government, dealt with bureaucracies and trying to create new ways of doing things. She basically led the working group exercise. At the end everybody could agree on only the beginning questions. She called them, "How might we do something?" How might we respect deed restrictions? How might we assure that if we build units for affordability, they actually are affordable? A whole slew of questions like that didn't get answers. The staff trotted out a bunch of best practices. They were doing this in San Diego, they were doing this in Eugene, and the problem is that they weren't contextually the same as Austin.

Our entire city government budget is based on mainly property, sales, and franchise tax, unlike a lot of cities that have income from state income tax. So when you say that you're going to do affordable housing in Oklahoma City by having a sales tax, does that work in Austin? Is the gap between income levels and cost of living the same in Oklahoma City as it is in Austin? Well, there's no data. It was just thrown out there as, well, they're doing it over there, why don't we do it? So that came to a screeching halt and the "How might we?" questions are the only thing that got forwarded to Opticos, the consultants doing CodeNext.

In the fall of this year, they're going to do some testing of the code ideas. They are going to pick four



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areas of town. We asked to see the RFQ about this testing. They won't show it to us, because I understand what they're going to do: They'll give you a dog-and-pony show about how wonderful it's going to be if we do it this way. My suggestion is that we take a neighborhood that has an adopted neighborhood plan with a core transit corridor through it and really test it. Will the character of this neighborhood be the same if we adopt all of these infill tools? That's the kind of question I'm hoping that the core exercises charrettes are going to address. If we don't do it, my resolution goes back on the table. We're not going to let the last piece of the Rubik's Cube fall into place and end up with a picture we don't want.

Missing Middle Housing & Effects of Entitlements

The consultants and the city staff said we don't have enough missing middle housing to accommodate our growth. In most neighborhoods, you want to have a variety of housing, but where do you do it? If you look at some of the examples of form based code that have been adopted in other cities, they come in and say, in this transect, we're going to allow these different types of housing units and we're going to put them in your neighborhood somewhere. It doesn't mean that people are going to bulldoze your houses immediately, but it does change the entitlements. In time the investment community is going to buy up those properties at the value of housing and tear them down and build something denser.

When you do that, what happens with your evaluations of your property? I have a site next to me. Guy bought a house for \$800 thousand, tore it down, built six units, each one is priced at \$600 thousand to \$1 million. My property taxes went up \$58 thousand. When TCAD looks at the sales price of the properties around you, they put that into the pool of comparables and it raises everybody's property taxes. Increasing tax is directly related to increasing entitlements.

If you look at the city of Austin, how much land area do we have in the city full purpose, when we look at our ETJ, our extra territorial jurisdiction? The amount of land area in neighborhoods with neighborhood plans, what percentage all total do you think it is? 17%. So 83% of the opportunity to accommodate growth is outside of our planning areas. We're focusing all of this attention to densify these urban core neighborhoods when we're paying almost no attention to all of that 83% of land area that we control that is out there beyond us. I rail about this at the Planning Commission every time we have to approve a low density large lot subdivision at the edge of town in one case and in the next case we're trying to push entitlements to densify an urban core neighborhood.

Deed Restrictions & HOAs

We've been asking the city since the beginning of neighborhood planning to do an analysis of deed re-

strictions in these planning areas. It does us no good as a community to put neighbor against neighbor by not acknowledging deed restrictions. If you live in a subdivision that says you're not going to have a second story unit and you build a 2-story ADU, you get sued if you have a strong enough neighborhood association or HOA. In the South Austin Combined Neighborhood Plan, for the first time, the city staff looked at deed restrictions in one part of the neighborhood and the infill options that were in conflict with the deed restrictions were taken out of the plan. So we have a precedent. If you look at most of our older neighborhoods we're going to find out that the deed restrictions are pretty extensive.

We have a new city council because there's little trust in this community in our city staff. Those council members are going to be faced with a huge problem because a lot of the neighborhood plans are in essentially four of the ten council districts. Don Zimmerman doesn't have any neighborhood plans in his entire district but he's got a lot of HOAs that have deed restrictions. The other council members all have to understand that some of the pushing they feel, they're going to have to push back and say, wait a second, my neighborhood doesn't allow that.

Conclusion

It's not all bleak. We do have a new city council. I think that we do have to engage them, make them understand our issues. And hopefully they're not tied as previous councils have been to the development community, and maybe we'll get some traction out of this and we'll get a new code that actually works for the community.



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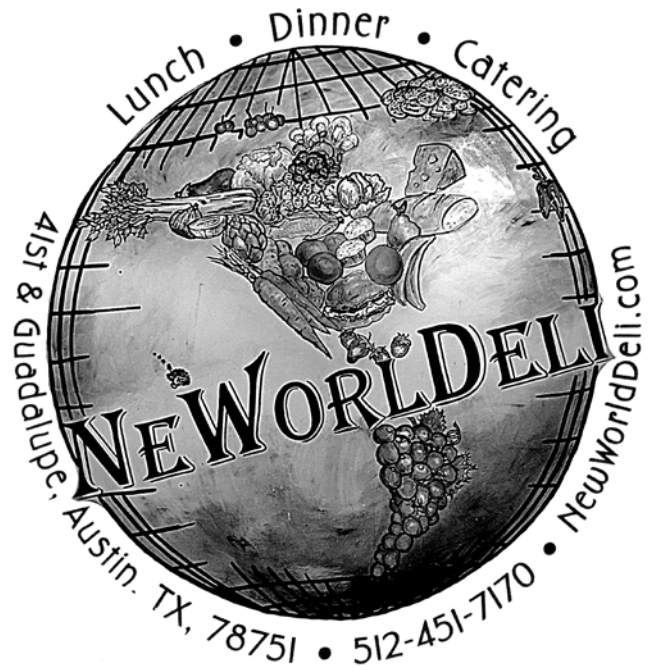
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— Elzy Cogswell
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Fruit Flies in a Jar

I was describing a “Gemini” event
To my friend who was very sympathetic
In the space of ten minutes, I had received two, totally divergent
emails, one thanking me for being sympathetic, understanding,
inspiring, and, even saying that if he had a million dollars, he would
try to figure out how to give me some of it.

The other, a vitriolic diatribe questioning how I could
Call her a friend when more than two months ago,
I had “yelled” at her because I had a different view of college football;
It was my usual response to people who complain that the university
Could afford to build a multimillion-dollar football stadium
But could not afford a shuttle to run between the university
And a research facility, or pay TAs more, or whatever,
That, somehow athletics robs academics;
She said I used my status as a professor to bully her. What???

I now believe this whole incident occurred so that my sympathetic
friend could tell me that it reminded him of something
Mark Twain said, “Anger is an acid that can do more harm to the
vessel in which it is stored than to anything on which it is poured.”

She referenced Halloween; had it been that long?
I had written her back an apology, saying that I meant no harm,
That I had nothing but respect for her and that
I was sorry that her last impression of me
Was anything but warm, but
I doubt that I’ll hear anything more, neither good nor bad,
The strange odd incident only makes me sad,
Sometimes people store their sorrows
Like fruit flies, in a jar, but
Stored up anger or sorrows
Will never take you far.

— Herzele
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Still Life with Grocery Store and Tree

I'm haunted by the view of the parking lot of the grocery store across the street, As night falls and the store closes, the lights in the side of the building come on and I watch from my front window this empty square with its desolate glow, thinking that I should paint it. Instead, I search for words to convey that stillness, the way the light triangulates down the side of the building to puddle and spread across the black surface. A tree stands silhouetted at the edge of the street, its spreading branches lopped off by the darkness. Even with cars passing, there's a soundlessness about the scene that draws me forward, listening intently as though the silence might at last be broken.

— Albert Huffstickler
Jan. 23, 1988



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