

# July Meeting

When: 7:00 p.m.  
Monday, July 1, 2013

Where: Trinity United Methodist Church  
4001 Speedway

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

## HPNA General Meeting Agenda for July 1<sup>st</sup>

- Announcements
- Presentation by Austin Police Department Neighborhood Representative on crime trends and prevention in Hyde Park
- Presentation about the Resolution on Dorm Style Housing and a vote by HPNA membership (see page 3 in this issue)

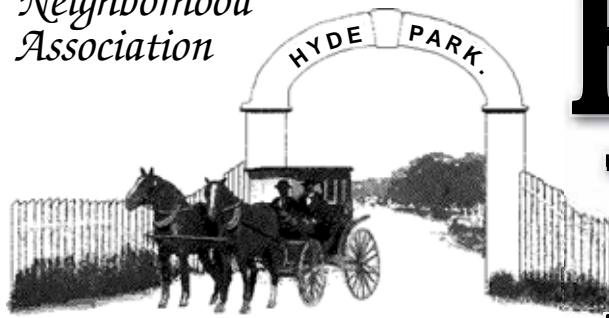
## New Editor for Pecan Press!

We are pleased to announce that beginning with this July issue, the *Pecan Press* has a new Editor. Michael Nill of Avenue A has agreed to accept this very important position for our neighborhood. Michael, a former HPNA Steering Committee member, has the appropriate experience and skills necessary to continue the Hyde Park tradition of putting out great issues that we all look forward to on our doorsteps each month. Please note that the new email address for *Pecan Press* submissions is <editorpecanpress@gmail.com>.

We would also like to thank Paul Kamprath, former Editor of the *Pecan Press*, for his many hours of volunteer time working on the publication. Like many other aspects of HPNA, the *Pecan Press* is a collaborative effort that comes together each month to offer the neighborhood specific information that makes us all feel just a little more connected as a community.

Please help us welcome Michael as the new *Pecan Press* Editor! And see page 6 in this issue for an article in which he introduces himself.

The Hyde Park  
Neighborhood  
Association



# Pecan Press

July 2013 • National Register District Neighborhood • Vol. 39, No. 7

## A Farewell Interview with Our Departing Co-President

**E**ditor's Note: In her too brief time in Austin, Ashley Schweickart devoted countless hours to the Hyde Park community. As a leader she was unassuming, fair, thoughtful, and ever so knowledgeable. As she moves away, we salute and thank her; and in the spirit of our Editor Emeritus Grant Thomas, we say, "outstanding job, Madame Co-President." In her answers below to the Editor's questions, Ashley talks about her experiences, accomplishments, and views on future challenges facing Hyde Park.

*How did you come to live in Hyde Park?*

My husband, who moved to Austin in 2008, scouted central Austin communities that were in close proximity to bus lines and other amenities, but away from freeway noise. As I was still in Los Angeles completing my master's degree, I agreed to live at the Su Casa apartment complex sight unseen! Thankfully, when I arrived a year later, I immediately fell in love with the wide tree lined streets, beautiful historic homes, and vibrant community.

*What motivated you to devote so many hours to neighborhood issues. Such dedication is uncommon for renters and temporary Austin residents.*

Like homeowners, many renters are very devoted to their neighborhood and want to see it thrive; but few know how to get involved. My initial involvement was not with the neighborhood association (HPNA), but with the Hyde Park Neighborhood Contact Team. At the time, the City sent out a leaflet to all residents informing them of the creation of a neighborhood organization that could assist in the implementation of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Plan.

I think my greater motivation to become active in HPNA leadership was that I recognized how rare neighborhoods like Hyde Park are. Over the last 15 years, I've lived in Houston, Seattle, San Jose, and Los Angeles and I've never found a place quite like Hyde Park—beyond its natural beauty and superb



Ashley Schweickart, HPNA's departing Co-President

Continued on page 10

# From the President's Desk



Another July is upon us and as the heat intensifies, so does the desire to duck inside the nearest air-conditioned building, to find a shady patch of grass, to slurp down a cold drink, or to just jump in the nearest body of water! Thankfully, all of those opportunities can be found right here in Hyde Park.

We'd like to take this chance to thank Friends of Shipe Park for another fabulous Shipe Pool Opening Party on June 29th. It was an especially momentous occasion this summer due to the official dedication of the Shipe Mosaic Mural! We'd like to thank the hundreds of neighborhood volunteers that helped create the mural at the "community work days" held at Griffin School over the past three years. We hope everyone enjoyed the festivities once again this year at this annual event that marks the beginning of the fun in the sun at Shipe.

You may have noticed the in-

stallation of the new Hyde Park Local Historic District sign toppers around the neighborhood. We'd like to thank our tireless HPNA Vice President Mark Fishman for shepherding the sign toppers through the Signs Division of the Austin Transportation Department. So far, five sign toppers have been placed, including one that we installed at the north-east corner of Avenue G & 44th Street, just in time for the Elizabeth Ney Museum's First Annual Ney Day on June 15th! We expect the installation of more sign toppers throughout the neighborhood at more intersections over the upcoming months. (See page 8 for related article.)

Finally, we'd like to call to your attention an issue that has received growing attention over the past few months and was discussed at the May meeting of the Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC). Northfield Neighborhood Association (NNA) President Michael Wong presented the growing issue of "stealth dorms," also known as "dorm duplexes." Many central Austin neighborhoods have seen increasing examples of developers demolishing existing housing stock and replacing it with large structures designed to house large numbers of unrelated adults. The houses are permitted as SF-3 structures, but they are clearly never actually intended for single-family use. The development next to Lee Elementary School on Harris Avenue, which we've mentioned in a previous column, is one such instance. Because of Austin's relaxed regulations regarding occupancy limits and its lack of ability to enforce even those relaxed standards, many central Austin residents feel that these stealth dorms are creating a burden on existing neigh-

borhood communities. All materials from the meeting can be found on the ANC website at: <[www.ancweb.org](http://www.ancweb.org)> and NNA's position paper on the issue can be found at: <[www.northfieldna.org/Stealth-DormsinNorthfieldNeighborhood.pdf](http://www.northfieldna.org/Stealth-DormsinNorthfieldNeighborhood.pdf)>. The HPNA Steering Committee meeting will be discussing a resolution presented from Hancock NA at the July HPNA general meeting to start the debate in Hyde Park about dorm duplexes. Please read the resolution in this *Pecan Press* issue and come to the July general meeting to join us in this debate.

— John Williams  
HPNA President

## 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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• Kevin Heyburn • Kathy Lawrence • Paul Kamprath

• Annette Luckinger • Lisa Harris

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656-5505

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Tree Preservation • ..... VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Triangle Development • Cathy Echols, 4002 Ave. C 206-0729

Zoning • Dorothy Richter, 3901 Ave. G 452-5117

# New Resolution Scheduled for Discussion and Vote at July General Meeting

The Hyde Park NA Steering Committee discussed this resolution at their June meeting and voted to present it at the July HPNA general meeting. The resolution was written by Hancock NA members. This resolution, with some amendments, one of which says that this resolution only applies to new construction in the neighborhood, was passed in some version by Hancock, Heritage, NUNA, Northfield, and West University NA's. The proposed restrictions on rentals could generate some vigorous debate. Neighbors are encouraged to attend to voice their views. The particulars follow:

## Resolution of Hyde Park Neighborhood Association Regarding Dorm-Style Housing in Single-Family Zoning Districts

**Whereas**, public outcry has arisen among Central Austin/North Central Austin neighborhoods regarding the development of Single-Family zoned properties that are intended to house multiple unrelated adults as in a rooming house; and

**Whereas**,

- the historic fabric of certain Central Austin/North Central Austin neighborhoods is being destroyed by the increasing number of demolitions of older, smaller owner-occupied structures, to be replaced by structures designed only for occupancy by multiple unrelated persons; and
- these "dorm" duplexes and houses will, by their very nature, devalue the single-family use of a street, punishing those who have maintained their homes over many decades; residents will be burdened with financial hardship as well as emotional damage if they must sell their homes because of dorm-style housing;
- the financial impact of these properties on neighborhoods has a domino effect, as adjacent properties become viable only as high occupancy rentals; they set a precedent that will discourage future families to move to the street and encourage home-owners to leave the area, thus abandoning sites for yet more construction of this type;
- the high-occupancy use of these properties negatively impacts neighboring residents' quality of life in terms of noise disturbances, litter, unsafe driving, and inappropriate behavior;
- the high occupancy use of these properties results in overflow parking that restricts emergency vehicles and utility vehicles, endangering health and safety of citizens; these properties pose health problems through overfilled trash receptacles that attract wild animals and insects; SF zoning does not require fire prevention systems, such as sprinklers and emergency exits as would be required in a rooming house or property zoned for multi-family use;
- the cities of Lubbock, San Marcos and Bryan College Station have already reduced occupancy limits in single-family districts;
- in 2004 the Austin City Council took action to reduce occupancy limits to six; however, this has not solved the problem in our neighborhoods.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it resolved the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association asks the City Council of Austin to take emergency action to limit the number of occupants in single-family properties from six to four unrelated adults, in conjunction with the City Council proposed rental registration program, and enforced by the City's 311 program, in any of the following neighborhoods whose memberships have voted for this action: West University Neighborhood Association, Heritage Neighborhood Association, North University Neighborhood Association, Hancock Neighborhood Association, Hyde Park Neighborhood Association and Northfield Neighborhood Association.

HYDE PARK



We Welcome Your Submissions to *Pecan Press*

Send in your articles, letters, and photos (but not your poetry\*) by the 15th of each month to:

**Editor, Pecan Press**

**<editorpecanpress@gmail.com>**

Please note the change of email address.

\*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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# Around & About the Avenues

**A Sad Announcement:** We unhappily report the passing of longtime neighbor and HPNA member Kitty Clark on May 12th. A committed “Yaller Dog” Democrat, she was an AISD teacher for many years at Burnet Middle School and active in the teachers’ union and many social and political causes. She is survived by her children Lee, Dail, Bill, Pearl and Thomas and by many grandchildren. Her son Thomas is also a Hyde Park neighbor.



**Neighborhood Outreach Updates:** The Committee met in June with Kris Donley of the Austin Dispute Resolution Center to discuss policies and procedures that can help Hyde Park meetings run smoother while still resulting in wise decisions. The feedback from the survey was sobering: many responses of residents were about not feeling welcomed and not participating because particular viewpoints are not in line with the mainstream. A number of strategies were discussed to uncover the values behind partisan positions that polarize debate and use these in order to point to opportunities for inventing solutions for mutual gain. This is all in the early stages, but the Outreach Committee will be working to understand these strategies, with a goal of presenting a proposal to the Steering Committee on implementing some of the ideas that would address the concerns we heard in the survey.

In other news, its initiative to establish a PayPal link on the Hyde Park website for joining/renewing HPNA memberships is in the final stages of implementation. Committee members also met with Hyde Park list-serv moderators. While the list-serv performs an important role, the recent survey indicated many wrongly think it’s sponsored and operated by HPNA. At the meeting some steps were agreed upon to help rectify the misconception. This Committee is actively seeking more members. Please contact Larry Gilg, Committee Chair, at <gilg@dieproducts.org>




**News from the Ney:** Regular hours resumed on June 1. Attendance has been outstanding, with many plaudits for its exhibits and appearance. On June 15, it celebrated Ney Day, with 5 bands and 10 booths. Nearly 500 people attended, perhaps the Ney’s biggest day ever! Much thanks is owed to the Ney’s neighbors, Friends of Shipe Park, HPNA, and the numerous volunteers who helped. And finally, its rich landscape has allowed the Ney to team up with the University of Texas on an urban pollinator study, with the goal of determining exactly what species of pollinators populate its urban landscape and to determine their overall health. The project will last throughout the summer.—Oliver Franklin (franklin.oliver@austintexas.gov)



**Improving Austin’s Streams:** A current Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)/City of Austin effort is underway to develop a plan to reduce bacteria levels in four creeks, including Waller, which currently do not meet state water quality standards. This public process was began last fall and will culminate in an implementation plan to submit for approval by the Texas Commis-

Continued on following page

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sion on Environmental Quality. Additional information is available online at <[www.utexas.edu/law/centers/cppdr/seriveces/tmdl.php](http://www.utexas.edu/law/centers/cppdr/seriveces/tmdl.php)>

The Coordination Committee appointed to oversee this process has set up four working groups: public land management, wastewater infrastructure, stormwater treatment and resident activities. It is not too late to participate. To join a group, contact Suzanne Schwartz, at <[sschwartz@law.utexas.edu](mailto:sschwartz@law.utexas.edu)> or (512)471-3507.

Participation in the process has been narrow. Please consider participating if your schedule allows for daytime meetings and you live near the creek, are interested in the environment, or have expertise on water issues.—Lisa Harris



**Restoration Help Around the Corner:** Interested in hands-on training to repair your wood windows? There will be a workshop on that on Saturday July 27<sup>th</sup>, 9:a.m. – 1p.m., in the Chapel of the Commodore Perry Estate, 4100 Red River St. Sponsored by Preservation Austin, the workshop will feature John Hindman and craftsmen from Red River Restorations. The cost is \$75. Contact Angela Reed for more info: 512-474-5198; or register online at <[www.preservationaustin.org](http://www.preservationaustin.org)>.



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# To the Readers, from the New Editor

At the start of my tenure, it seems appropriate to introduce myself and express some preliminary thoughts about the publication. This, I hope, will help me be seen as a real, flesh-and-blood neighbor, and not just the distant bearer of a role.

To begin at the beginning, my first experience of Austin (and Texas) was of a four-year duration, starting in 1968 when I arrived with the goal of completing a Ph.D. at UT. Caught up in those turbulent times, however, I instead put my energies into opening up GROK Books in the fall of 1970 as an "alternative" bookstore on W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. This became my claim to a small piece of Austin history since later on to my surprise, with a change of name, BookPeople traced its origin all the way back to that small little bookstore on 17<sup>th</sup> St., started with an investment of \$5,000. Yes, \$5,000!

Moving back East, I opened up another community bookstore, served as an editor of Liberation magazine, and worked as a freelance copyeditor. Returning to Austin in 1978—this time for three years—I did complete a Ph.D. in Classics and philosophy. Thereafter I settled into a career in education, starting as a teacher at the Greenhill School in Dallas and ending up as headmaster of Brooklyn Friends, an independent, Quaker PS – 12 school in New York. Upon my retirement three years ago this month, my wife Irene and I decided to move to Austin, choosing Hyde Park because we wanted an older neighborhood with abundant and mature trees near the university.

Since "returning," I have enjoyed having the leisure for reading, woodworking, and, volunteering at a number of organizations. Closer to home so to speak, I have attended most HPNA general meetings and been happily engaged in the Neighborhood Outreach Committee.

It is with humility and excitement that I agreed to take on the *Pecan Press* editor position. It is definitely humbling to follow in the line of editors who have over the years crafted a publication of such excellence—and one I am told that has never ever been late!

The *Pecan Press* is an outreach vehicle; it not only communicates news items of interest to all residents of Hyde Park, it also has, I think, the capacity to encourage respectful, civil dialogue and ensure that its pages reflect the diverse viewpoints of residents, be they owners or renters. That prospect is exciting. It is thus my hope that regular, recent contributors will continue to write, but also that we add the voices of individuals who haven't written in the past for whatever reason, but who have views on what would be of benefit to neighbors or the neighborhood we all reside in and cherish.

Over the last several weeks I have waded through all back issues from 1979 on. That has given me not only a wonderful grounding in the history of Hyde Park but also some ideas of how the publication, however excellent it now is, might be improved. As I think this through over the next few months, I invite you to email me your

Continued on following page

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suggestions for what you value and what you think might better serve the residents.

In this issue I have experimented by reactivating the Around and About the Avenues column, as a way of including items of interest that are not necessarily appropriate for stand-alone articles. I have also added an outstanding Advisory Board to serve as my sounding board for ideas and guidance: Lisa Harris, Kevin Heyburn, John Kerr, and Grant Thomas. I thank them for their willingness to serve in this way. The Editor, however, remains solely responsible for the publication's content; and so any complaints, kudos, and suggestions should be directed to him, not the Advisory Board.

And finally I am happy to report our Poetry Editor, Charlotte Herzele, and Production Manager, Bob Farr, will be remaining at their respective helms, as well as the publication's impressive network of volunteer distributors, to whom we are all indebted.

— *Michael Nill,*  
<editorpecanpress@gmail.com>

## HPNA Meeting Minutes: June 3, 2013

No formal meeting occurred this month; however at around 7 pm, neighbors gathered to enjoy a potluck dinner in the Trinity Methodist Church parish hall. Everyone brought a salad, entrée or dessert to share with the group. Pizza was also available, compliments of The Parlor, located at 43<sup>rd</sup> & Guadalupe.

Some announcements were made. The Local Historic District designation street sign toppers should be installed by the time of the Ney Museum re-opening on June 15. After that, Shipe Pool Splash Day will be celebrated the evening of June 29 with music, a movie, late closing time, and an unveiling of the completed pump house mosaic. On another note, the Hyde Park Homes Tour needs more homes by July 1 for the upcoming tour in November. Anyone can volunteer for a variety of jobs during the tour by contacting Homes Tour Chair Carolyn Grimes at cgrimes@cbunited.com.

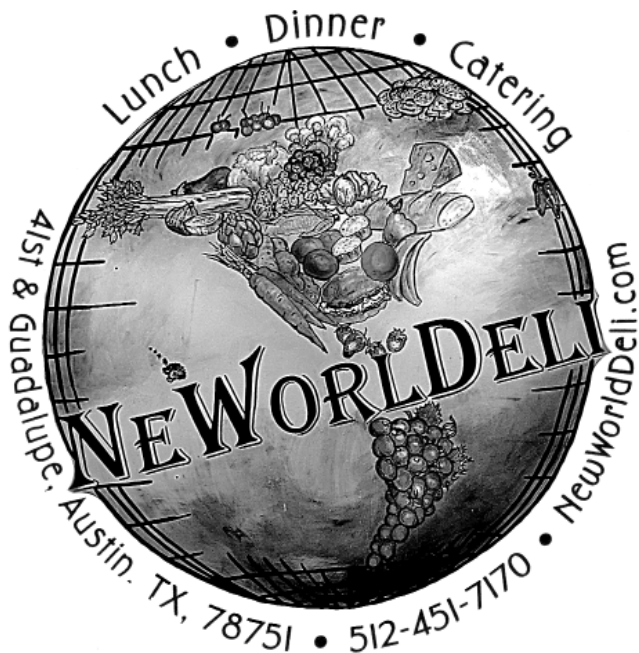
Neighbors were reminded to weigh in on the proposed resolution before City Council on June 6, regarding registration of residential properties in Hyde Park and adjacent areas. Also, it was announced that The Austin Neighborhoods Council Sector meeting would be taking place on June 4, with Councilmember Mike Martinez as its guest.

John Williams thanked Ashley Schwieckart for her many years of service to the neighborhood and presented her a Shipe Park T-shirt. There was no further business, and the group left by 8:30.

— *Submitted by Claire de Young &  
Mike Pikulski,  
HPNA Co-Secretaries*

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## Toppers for a Top Neighborhood

As chair of the HPNA Parks & Public Space Committee, I am pleased to report the successful deployment of the first set of Hyde Park Local Historic District sign toppers. HPNA and the City of Austin (COA) have approved these toppers, which were designed and paid for by HPNA members. The manufacture and deployment of additional historic signs will require more funds.

HPNA, COA Historic Preservation Office, Historic Landmark Commission, and COA Transportation Department all worked together to bring this project to completion. Special thanks are due to Nick Treviño, of North Loop Sign & Graphics Shop, for his help in the manufacture of the historic sign toppers & whose expertise contributed greatly to the success of this project. These street signs are an effective way of letting everyone know that Hyde Park, as a Local Historic District, is a neighborhood that desires to preserve its historic character, and now has a zoning ordinance to help enforce it.

Residents & businesses may donate \$100 or more for the installation of a sign topper at or near their location with recognition by the HPNA of their contribution to be made in the *Pecan Press* and at a future neighborhood event. Please contact Mark Fishman for more information at <mlfishman@gmail.com>.

— Mark Fishman



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## Farewell Interview... ...cont'd from page 1

urban location, Hyde Park is a complete community. It has a thriving mix of renters, owners, and businesses. I thus felt compelled to work as hard as I could to ensure that this unique community would continue to thrive, regardless of how much longer I would be able to enjoy it.

*What in your background prepared you to be an effective neighborhood leader and fluent about all sorts of issues that face urban neighborhoods?*

I received a double Bachelor of Science in Sociology and Political Science and a Master's in Urban Planning. Urban planning is a fascinating field of study, combining elements of demography, economic development, transportation, public policy, environmental studies, and community development. It provided me with an understanding of the challenges facing American cities in the 21st century: as our population continues to grow, our natural and civic resources are strained, and our local governmental bodies, constrained by limited financial revenues, continue to defer infrastructure improvements.

Also, I've long been active in political and professional development organizations, which have taught me that the qualities of transparency, accountability, and diplomacy are of the utmost importance for a leader. As Secretary and Co-President of HPNA, it has been my goal to uphold those qualities.

*Are there some aspects of your work in the neighborhood that you feel particularly good about?*

There are a few efforts that I'm very proud of. First, I'm glad that early on in our tenure as Co-Presidents, John and I held a joint meeting of the HPNA Steering Committee, the Development Review Committee (DRC), and the Outreach Committee to discuss the appropriate role of these committees within the greater structure of HPNA and how HPNA communicates both with residents and with the City and its various Commissions. Second, during my time as Co-President, I was active in the Outreach Committee and am very proud of the Neighborhood Outreach Survey that was conducted—I think the results of this survey can guide future decisions of HPNA as it attempts to engage more Hyde Park residents. Finally, I am proud that John and I have been able to maintain strong partnerships between HPNA and our fellow neighborhoods to provide increased quality of life to our residents.

*Would you elaborate on how you see the survey guiding future decisions of the HPNA?*

One of the strengths of the survey is that it provided perspectives from neighbors that we don't typically hear from, either because they aren't current members of HPNA or they don't actively engage in traditional neighborhood activities. In terms of correcting inaccurate knowledge about HPNA, I think we need to more fully utilize existing resources that could serve to educate residents, such as the HPNA website, *Pecan Press*, and the New Resident Welcome Packets that have been established by the Outreach Committee. In regard to residents who are dissatisfied with the neighborhood association,

**Continued on page 12**



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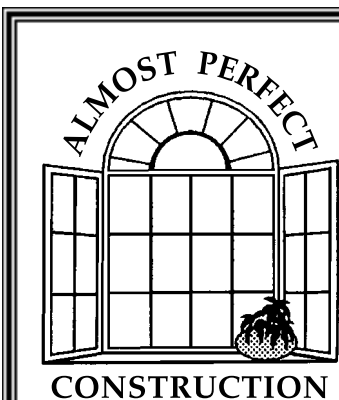
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## Farewell Interview...

...cont'd from page 10

their comments have been catalytic in starting a dialogue around improvements to HPNA meeting facilitation, choice of meeting topics, etc.

*What do you see as the most challenging and important tasks for the neighborhood to address in the future?*

One shared goal that John and I have tried to work on is making the neighborhood association a more welcoming, inviting organization that respects and appreciates many varying perspectives. We believe that the best way to build trust and reduce long-standing tensions is by actively engaging in community building. Steps taken in the last 9 months include increasing the number of family friendly events such as the Egg Scramble and working more closely with Hyde Park organizations such as the Ney Museum and Friends of Shipe Park, etc. This is obviously a large undertaking and requires concerted effort over many years, but I hope the future HPNA leadership will continue to work towards this long-term goal.

*Looming large in our future is Imagine Austin's support for density and infill. Is Hyde Park adequately preparing itself to engage constructively with the City on these matters?*

That is an issue. Austin's population has grown at an incredibly rapid pace for the last 15 years and the City will continue to see a large influx of new residents. It's no use denying that fact and burying our heads in the sand—instead we need to proactively figure out ways to balance the need to accommodate growth while still maintaining neighborhood interests and priorities. So instead of screaming at the City that growth doesn't belong anywhere in Hyde Park, an argument which is bound to fail because it ignores reality, let's make a more nuanced argument pinpointing where growth makes the most sense. For example, I would argue that the Guadalupe corridor (Hyde Park's western border) is an ideal location for adding density to central Austin and there is underutilized or vacant land on both sides of the street (the State will eventually sell off portions of the Austin State Hospital property). I encourage neighbors to check out Central Austin Community Development Corporation's website <www.centralaustincdc.org> which discusses other possible recommendations along these lines.

*What are your plans as you move back to Seattle?*

My immediate goal is to try to do all of my favorite Austin things before departing. I will miss this city and Hyde Park dearly and I hope I can find an equally wonderful community in Seattle. While I'm originally from the suburbs of Seattle, my husband and I are looking to move closer to central Seattle and we're both very excited to embark on a new adventure!



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# Hyde Park Poets —

## The Fairy House Unseen

While riding the bus down Duval Street  
I glanced at a house from my window seat,  
a house that seemed a half block over,  
a building I'd never noticed before.

It stood away from the others, about two stories tall,  
canting slightly off of plumb, with a balcony over all.  
A most curious house, as if from a mythical tale:  
sharply pitched roof, dormers, and a gingerbread rail.  
All seen in a moment way too brief,  
then sight cut off as we lurched down the street.

Though I've looked from that route many times since,  
and on foot poked behind every garden and fence,  
that house that I saw – I saw it, I swear! –  
it's gone, gone... it's just not there.

No two storied house, no apartment or garage;  
just a mind playing shadows, or a Fairy's mirage?

— *ES Cuny* - 04/13



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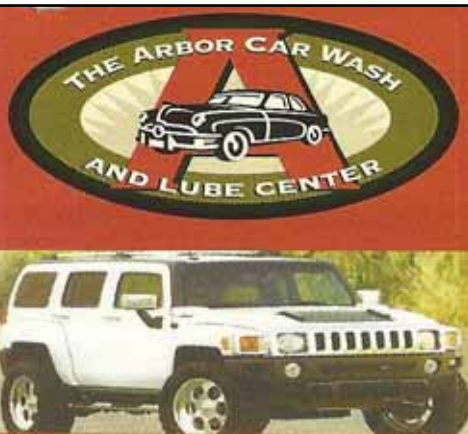
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