

OWANA OWL

Watching over Old West Austin since 1983



December 2016

OWANA volunteers have done some solid work this year. Check out our reinvigorated website at www.owana.org, and many thanks to Chris Rankin for the design work. We now have tens of thousands of dollars in matching funds for West Austin Park and Palma Plaza Park, thanks to the tireless work of our zoning committee and especially Maureen Mettauer, who appeared before historic landmark commission and city council on our behalf. Rosemary Merriam and Ashley Victory began the planning process for the next phase of improvements at West Austin Park, meeting with neighbors and the Parks and Recreation Department. Shawn Shillington and Mike Sullivan pushed for pedestrian and bike access to Lady Bird Lake on Pressler Street. Thanks to you, all I've had to do is draw up an occasional newsletter article or agenda!

Beyond the civic engagement work, our group has tried to bring more fun to the neighborhood. Whether it was 4th of July at West Austin Park, planning park features for older kids, or supporting the Mathews 100-year birthday, we're investing in playtime and becoming more serious about fun. In the spirit of taking ourselves less seriously, this month we launch our sister comic publication, *The Howl*. Hope you enjoy it, and if you're inspired, please contribute to future editions. There are some funny characters and funky places in our little corner of this town.

At our December 4th meeting, *The Melancholy Ramblers* featuring Highland Avenue's famous actor and musician, Brady Coleman, will start us off with live music at 6:00pm. Brady moved into the neighborhood in 1973. His fellow Rambler, the very talented Frances Barton, has lived on Patterson since 1978 and will also perform. Please come early and enjoy these melancholy ramblers on the Main Stage at the Mathews cafeteria.

We'll also have Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo for what I am affectionately calling Question Time—to discuss historic preservation and other city council topics on your mind. There will be an update on 1618 Palma Plaza, and some exciting news for our parks. We'll also ask you to be generous and try and find your checkbooks soon to give back to West Austin Park, where I first met so many of you and your beautiful kids and adorable and not-so-adorable dogs. We have matching funds if we can raise at least \$30,000 in the first few months of the new year, and will be asking for your help and also your ideas on the next phase of work. At the December meeting we'll also hear from Project Connect and discuss residential permit parking on 8th Street.

2017 is right around the corner. Our neighborhood is sure to change. We need your help so the next generation of kids or dogs will enjoy raising their kids and running with their pups in our urban neighborhood. Join us when you have free time!

Scott Marks, Chair

December 2016 General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, December 4, 2016 - 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Mathews School Cafeteria (906 West Lynn at West 9th)

- I. Live Music with The Melancholy Ramblers (including our neighbors Brady Coleman and Frances Barton) / Social Gathering **(NOTE: 6:00 – 7:00 PM)**
- II. Call to Order – Scott Marks (7:00)
- III. Approval of Minutes (7:05)
- IV. Treasurer’s Report (7:05-7:10)
- V. Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo Q&A on Historic Preservation and other topics of interest (7:10-7:30)
- VI. Project Connect (7:30-7:50)
- VII. Residential Permit Parking on 8th Street (7:50-8:00)
- VIII. Update on Mathews 100-year celebration (8:00-8:15)
- IX. 1618 Palma Plaza Update, Palma Plaza and West Austin Park planning and fundraising (8:15-8:30)
- X. Committee Reports (8:30pm-9pm)
 - A. Zoning Committee Report – Maureen Metteauer/Rosemary Merriam (including Historic Preservation with Shawn Shillington)
 - B. Community Events – Orlando Castillo/Kathleen Deaver
 - C. Public Safety and Transportation – Mike Sullivan
 - D. Affordable Housing – Scott Marks
 - E. Membership – George Warmingham
 - F. Steering Committee Nominations
- XI. Other
- XII. Adjourn

NOTE: Votes may be taken on any scheduled agenda items.

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2017 Steering Committee Nominees

Scott Marks
Kevin Sims
Terry Snider
Derek Victory
Shawn Shillington
Ted Barnhill
Serena Bolliger
Orlando Castillo
Brockett Davidson
John Davis
Ashley Endler
Hunt Foster
Sean Williams

& a special thank you to

Judy Alexander
Janice Burckhardt
Kevin O'Hanlon
Chris Rankin
Christy Butler
Lizzie Fischer
Joey Kazzoun
Jason Laturner

These eight neighbors have served two or three years and won't be returning to the Steering Committee in 2017.

Almost City Limits Festival to Double In Size

The Almost City Limits festival announced today that it will double in size during four weekends in 2017, delighting festival-loving homeowners and commuters alike with promises of double the distance, double the people – double the traffic – for the foreseeable future. The *Howl* has also learned that Jim Bob Mophead and Stratosphere Properties are currently in a bidding war for sponsorship rights at the floating stage, to be built on top of Barton Springs Pool.

“You know that it has never made any sense to build *up* when you could just be going *out*” said acclaimed urbanist and environmentalist Andrew McCalla, an Austinite hip enough to have arrived before the days of Slacker. He added that New York had tried the “up thing” and has nothing quite like ACL. “New York is an island,” he said, “Austin is an island in your mind, noting that his neighborhood floats like a mighty boulder within the Almost City Limits terrain, and was “really doing its best to continue to support the spread of sprawl in any way we can, consistent with universally held notions of taste, health codes, and other barriers to rapid and unlimited population expansion.”

“The newcomers are spoiled, really,” said Scott Marks, an Austinite who remembers days when he could get in a car and leave Austin in a matter of minutes. “Back in the day, you would see fields, or even unoccupied *hills*,” he said, recalling the feelings of isolation those drives produced in him and others vowing to Get Austin Cleared.

“What’s really amazing now is you can just drive and drive on Mopac, 183, 35, any direction you want for hours and never be more than 20 minutes from a Starbucks,” said Shawn Shillington, an



Almost City Limits regular who has for years brought his family to see the dwindling horizon of countryside as it moves further and further toward Dallas. “The cost of these tickets keeps going up but it’s worth it. As long as more and more people are coming, we know that at some point, we won’t be able to sense when Pflugerville turns into Waco, or even Arlington. It’s all the same funky town, man!”

“When we first started the festival, we had some problems with the destruction of grassy areas – and all we could do really was restore it,” said a spokesperson from WeBeCements, the groundbreaking California entertainment company that took the lead obliterating boundaries around Austin geographic and musical identities. “Our company has identified huge revenue opportunities enabled by replacing post-festival mudlands with asphalt, foundations for bigboxes, and other horizontal limit expanders.”

“So put me on a highway, and show me a sign, let’s take it to the limit,” noted the mayor of the Almost City Limits region, “one more time.” The Mayor’s office later called to clarify he was in no way making reference to the music of Don Henley or any other member of the Eagles, a band tarnished by its association with the smaller Austin city limits of yesterday, and by that notorious cab ride in *The Big Lebowski*. The Mayor also confirmed there is no reason for council debate on the festival until it actually expands to the city limits.

In a related story, the 77th Chuys and 89th Threadgills within City Limits are rumored to open on Saturday and Sunday of the celebratory weekend. The *Howl* was unable to discover the locations, although a reliable source confirmed they will be near a Starbucks.



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Trail of Lights Offers Free and Reduced Price Tickets to OWANA

The Trail of Lights Foundation is offering two opportunities for Old West Austin residents to experience this year's event.



Free Night of Lights

The Trail of Lights is giving OWANA a free viewing of this year's lights and activities on **Monday, December 5** from 7:30 to 9 PM. To get your free tickets go to:
<https://trail-of-lights-foundation.ticketbud.com/austin-trail-of-lights-neighborhood-night-monday-12-5-16>

Enter **OWANA** in the Promotional Code box, pause and the page will automatically refresh to reveal the complimentary ticket offer. Indicate the quantity of tickets requested (max 4) and click the Register button to advance to the next page. Fill-in the required information. *Please note that tickets do not include parking.*

Night Lights Neighbor

Another chance to see the Trail of Lights is **Friday, December 9** from 6-10 PM. On this night OWANA residents have an opportunity to purchase tickets at a special discounted rate of \$25 each. Each ticket includes event access, complimentary ride on Ferris wheel or carousel, complimentary beverages, and tastings from Austin restaurants. Purchase required for ages 6 and over; children 5 and under are free with a ticketed adult.

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For both nights

Tickets will be emailed from Ticketbud to you directly upon order completion. Please check your junk/spam folders in case the message gets filtered. The email will not only contain confirmation details about your order and a receipt for the charge but also an attachment that contains the actual ticket(s).

You will need to either print the attachment or have that attachment readily available on your mobile device. You will present your printed ticket or mobile ticket at the Trail entrance on the night of the event for proper admission.

Customer Service

Should you have questions regarding your order or need assistance purchasing, contact ticketing@austintrailoflights.org.

–George Warmingham, OWANA Membership Chair



UPDATE: Lamar Beach Park Master Plan & Pressler Street Access

In 2013 OWANA thought Pressler St was being extended. It came with a bike lane and two wide sidewalks to Lamar Beach Park and Cesar Chavez St. Also crossing arms at the railroad tracks to make for safer crossing and provide a 'Quiet Zone' for trains. And a traffic light with crosswalks at West 6th and Pressler. The Austin Transportation Dept wanted it, there was funding, and it seemed like a done deal. Since it was a Street project I was involved as OWANA's Traffic and Safety Committee chair.

Then the previous City Council put the project on hold, for a Lamar Beach Park Master Plan. Now it appears that Pressler Street won't be extended anytime soon, if ever. The associated bike lane and sidewalks suffered the same fate in the Master Plan.

There were at least 8 concerned Pressler/OWANA folk at the Parks Board Land, Facilities and Programs Sub-committee Meeting on Tues November 16, to consider the troubled Lamar Beach Master Plan. Thank you all, and very much. How much you helped is detailed below.

A Little Recent History:

The previous Land Facilities and Programs Subcommittee meeting in October had the Master Plan on the agenda. They didn't have a quorum, and allowed limited conversation for attendees, but no action could be taken. Next, at the previous full Parks Board meeting there were questions about the plan that were not answered, and their motion to accept the Master plan and recommend it to the Council failed. The full Board sent it back to this Subcommittee to get answers and more information.

This time in November, the Subcommittee had a quorum and Parks Dept. head Sara Hensley was there, as well as Transportation head Rob Spillar. The sub-committee had questions about the timing

and funding of the details in the Master Plan, and they seemed unsatisfied with the answers.

The Master Plan was to include a Pressler St connection to a new, relocated Cesar Chavez St. It was listed in the bottom half of Phase 2 improvements. It is not clear when that would happen, if ever, how much it will cost, or how it will be paid for. This was to be when Pressler St would get a bike lane and sidewalks which would connect to Lamar Beach Park and Lady Bird Lake.

I made it clear that OWANA opposed the Master Plan because we wanted neighborhood access, which was not a priority in this Master Plan. I also stated that OWANA would support the Master Plan if the Pressler Bike/Ped connection was moved to the top of Phase One. This is consistent with the motion OWANA passed at the March 2017 General Membership Meeting.

The OWANA/Pressler folks who spoke all sent a similar idea, that this parkland is within our neighborhood, yet inaccessible and disconnected to those of us who live here. The subcommittee heard it over and over. We were asking for the Bike/Ped connection to come first, so that the folks who live here could get into the Park, and then to Lady Bird Lake and the trails and bikeway. All those voices really helped send the message. The Austin High PTA even agreed with Bike/Ped access. Previously they had opposed any connection to Pressler St.

After 2 1/2 hours the Subcommittee made a motion to recommend the Master Plan to the full Parks Board, after adding the Pressler Bike/Ped connection to the top of the Phase One improvements, and adding more information about timing and funding all the various improvements. But this motion also failed, again mostly due to a lack of information.

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Now it will go to the full Parks Board, perhaps at a called meeting in December, but it will have no recommended for adoption.

I will provide the Meeting information when available, possibly December 5. Interested people can attend and help the neighborhood achieve this connection to our parks, hopefully in this lifetime.

I'm not sure whether the Master Plan should be changed and adopted or scrapped and re-done. It is not a quality product, and it overlooks the general Austin recreation needs, and our neighborhood, in most areas. It contains some ideas that are nice, like relocating Cesar Chavez St, but no funding, and perhaps too expensive to ever happen. It seems more like a Master Dream, and funding most of the ideas is also a dream at this point.

But neighborhood access is OWANA's primary issue, and in the Master Plan that seems to be on the rise. I will provide more information as it becomes available. I wish I believed it would happen.

-Mike Sullivan, OWANA Transportation & Public Safety Chair

Local Historic Districts 101

9am-Noon (Check-In opens at 8:30AM)
Preservation Austin (Texas Society of Architects building), 500 Chicon 78702
FREE, RSVP REQUIRED BY DECEMBER 5

Looking to preserve your neighborhood's heritage for future generations? Local historic districts are an excellent planning tool that allows communities to establish demolition review and design standards to insure new development is compatible with the historic fabric already in place. This workshop will give you the guidance and tools you need to establish your own local historic district, including how to identify architectural styles and neighborhood characteristics; how to craft effective design guidelines to fit your community; and how to navigate the city's code and approval process to take your district to City Council.



Presenters:

- **ALYSON MCGEE**, PA's Immediate Past President and Former Deputy Historic Preservation Officer for the City of Austin
- **KATE SINGLETON**, PA's Executive Director and former Chief Preservation Planner for the City of Dallas

Free, but RSVPs to director@preservationaustin.org are required by Monday, December 5. Space is limited. Coffee and light refreshments provided!

This workshop is presented with the generous support of the Butler Family Foundation.

For more information:

<https://www.preservationaustin.org/events/local-historic-districts-101>

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December 2016 Zoning Report

Ongoing Cases

607 Pressler Street: Case# SPC-2016-0288A – Application for conditional use permit for Cultural services (Museum) in use an historic residence. The Flower Hill Foundation is seeking a use permit to turn Flower Hill, former residence of the Smoot family, into a house museum. A public hearing will be scheduled at Planning commission and City Council. OWANA steering committee voted to support and send a letter in favor.

611 West Lynn: Case #NRD-2015-0112 – Proposed demolition permit. Postponed at the applicant's request until September 26, 2016 HLC meeting. OWANA opposes demolition. Staff has suggested historic zoning for house and dividing property. Case ongoing.

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524 Lamar Blvd: No Case Number – Whole Foods Re-Design of 524 Lamar Blvd (including Whit Hanks properties.) Present plan includes demolishing all existing buildings. New site would consist of 3 separate buildings to be phased in over time and could include office space and retail shops in addition to a WFM concept hotel. The property surrounding treaty Oak would remain in public hands. Proposed buildings would require zoning change to LIPDA (as opposed to a PUD) so that WFM could increase building height to 90 Ft. at Lamar and 60 Ft. along West 6th. (Current overlays cap height at 60 and 40 feet respectively in those two spaces). New spaces would include underground parking and open courtyard area near Treaty Oak that potentially could be public space. NO traffic study has been undertaken yet. Zoning members expressed support for wider sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities and ground floor retail options. Zoning members also asked that Armbrust come back to zoning with more info about the plans and what WMF will do about the traffic issues. Case Ongoing.

1102 Charlotte Street: Proposed new construction on empty lot. Sherry Matthews, owner. Dick Clark Architecture. Clarksville NRHD. Scheduled before HLC September 26, 2016. Case Ongoing.

1315 W. 9th Street: Case# NRD-2016-0035 Proposed demolition permit. Current house is zoned MF and is contributing to the Old West Line National Register District. Historic Landmark Commission voted on June 27 to release the permit upon submission of the building plans. Zoning committee met with the owner. Plans calling for two, two-story units on the lot (town homes) are in development. Case ongoing.

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Dec. 2016 Zoning Report, cont.

Closed Cases

1004 Maufrais Street: Case# NRD-2016-0086 – Application for building permit in OWL NRHD for non-contributing building. Owner is adding partial second story. The owner has met with nearby neighbors. The plans would add square footage in the back of the building and remove the front driveway. Zoning committee had no objections. HLC released the permit. Case closed.

1618 Palma Plaza: Case #NRD-2016-0061 – Application to demolish a 1930s four-plex. Part of the Old West Austin National Register Historic District (Old Enfield) and is listed as non-contributing. Nearby neighbors oppose the demolition and there is evidence that the NRHD listing should be “contributing.” OWANA Steering Committee voted to oppose the demolition. HLC initiated H zoning at the September mtg. In October, majority of HLC voted to zone historic, however the 2/3rds rule required that eight HLC members vote in favor. Due to vacant HLC seats and absent members, that threshold was unachievable. Commissioner Papisivilous motioned to have a vote on the demo permit, but that vote also failed. In the end, the Historic Preservation Officer said the stalemate on HLC meant that the permit to demo would be released. Following that vote, Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo introduced a resolution to initiate historic zoning anyways. OWANA Steering Committee voted to reach out to the owner of the building to see if a compromise could be reached. Owner agreed to allow nearby neighbors to see the proposed plans for condos and donate funding to re-do Palma Plaza Park and to the West Austin master plan fund. OWANA signed an agreement and in return, remained neutral on the historic zoning issue. Demo permit will be released with site plan. Owner will reach out to nearby neighbors on the new structure design. Case closed.

812 Theresa: Case #NRD 2015-0135 – Proposed demolition permit. Owner met with the Zoning Committee and heard objections to demolition of the

house and suggestions for applying for a partial demo. Case was heard at the April Historic Landmark Commission meeting, where owner’s attorney submitted documentation stating that the house was beyond repair. Commission voted to postpone the case until the June HLC meeting so alternatives to demolition could be explored. Contractor Tom Blackwell and Architect Tom Hatch assessed the property and estimated that the property could be rehabilitated. HLC voted on July 25 to postpone case to conduct further research into historic zoning. Commission voted in September to initiate historic zoning but did not have the votes at the October meeting to sustain historic zoning. The Demo permit was approved by the Commission in October. Case closed.

910 Baylor Street: Case# NRD-2016-0033 - Proposed demolition permit. A non-contributing property to the Old West Line NRHD. HLC voted on June 27 to release permit as soon as plans are submitted for the property. OWANA did not oppose. Permit was released. Case Closed.

1508 West 9th Street: Case # NRD-2016-00 – Building permit and partial demo application for historic bungalow along West 9th Street. House will be renovated and one story addition added of the back. Zoning Committee voted not to oppose. HLC approved in September. Case Closed.

1000 Lamar Blvd: Case# C15-2016-0081– Applicant is proposing 4-story building on the site - 2 levels of parking and 2 levels of office. Variance requested for loading zone parking. Applicant requested a variance to avoid 1 off-loading spot in order to preserve streetscape plans for North Lamar. Applicant pledged to explore offering after-hours parking in their garage and presented plans to widen sidewalks along North Lamar and close off street access to parking garage from North Lamar. Zoning Committee met with applicant and voted 5 to 0 (with 1 abstention) not to oppose the variance. Board of Adjustment approved the variance on Aug. 8, 2016. Case Closed.

[continued on next page]

1205 Enfield Road: Case# NRD-2016-0049 – Application for partial demo and building permits for single-family property. Listed in the Old West Austin National Register District (Old Enfield). Applicant will remodel existing building and demolish accessory unit to build a new accessory dwelling. Not visible from Enfield Road. Historic Landmark Commission approved the application on July 25. Case Closed.

1605 Palma Plaza: Case# NRD-2016-0048 – Partial Demo permit and proposed 2-story addition to single-family house. Contributing property to the Old West Austin National Register District (Old Enfield). Owners are proposing a partial demolition in order to remodel existing bungalow into single-family residence. New plans call for second-story addition and retention of the historic façade of bungalow. Zoning Committee met with owner and provided input on façade materials. Historic Landmark Commission voted on July 25 to approve application. Case Closed.

705 Theresa Avenue: Case# NRD-2016-0043 – Proposed addition to existing bungalow. Historic Landmark Commission approved permits on June 27. OWANA did not oppose. Case closed.

1701 Waterston Avenue: Case # NRD-2016-0038 — Proposed new construction on the back of the lot. Clarksville NRHD. Approved by Historic Landmark Commission on June 27. Case Closed.

1712 W. 11th Street: Case# NRD-2016-0036 – Proposed Demolition permit. Clarksville NRHD/CCDC is not opposing demo, as it does not contribute to the Clarksville NRHD. Historic Landmark Commission voted to approve in on June 27. Case closed.

1826 W. 10th Street: Case# NRD-2016-0039 - Clarksville NRHD. Demo permit application. CCDC did not oppose. Case closed.

716 Patterson: Case # NRD 2016-145208- Remodel and addition. Historic Landmark Commission approved on May 23 hearing. Case closed.

1303 Lorrain Street: Case #: NRD-2016-0034 — Proposed demolition for existing house in order to build new single-family house. Historic Landmark Commission voted on May 23 to release demo permit and approved new plans. Case closed.

608 Baylor Street: Case #NRD 2016-000020 - A variance is requested to reduce side yard setback in order to install two rainwater collection tanks. Board of Adjustment voted against the variance on March 7. Case closed.

704 Oakland: Case #NRD-2015-0096 - Proposed remodel to convert attic to living space with rear and side additions. Owner met with zoning committee on September 20, 2015 and there were no objections. Case was passed upon consent at the October 26 Historic Landmark Commission meeting. Case closed.

806 Baylor: Case #NRD 2015-121233 – Proposed remodel and restoration. Applicant received approval by HLC for Certificate of Appropriateness at Feb. 22nd meeting. Building Permits issued. Case closed.

710 Augusta: Case # NRD 2015-0750668 – Zoning Change –in previous case OWANA supported change of zoning from SF3 to SF4. Applicant requested return to SF3 zoning also approved by OWANA. Case has been recommended for approval by city staff. Case closed.

“Howl” Cases

Crooked Houses: The Zoning Committee took up the issue of certain houses in our neighborhood that are not aligned correctly. So-called crooked houses may be worse than McMansions because they defy the city grid, some maddeningly sitting at a diagonal on their lot. Members of the committee have noticed houses on 9 1/2 Street and on Patterson Street, for example, that are in fact quite crooked. In response the City Council has directed the Land Development Code Advisory Group to propose a code amendment for crooked houses, and the code rewrite is widely expected to reach consensus on time and within budget.

OWANA 2016 Membership Report

November 21, 2016 As of the end of the previous month

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Residential memberships	274	279	275	273	265	269	265	272	284	275	267
Business memberships	31	32	32	32	28	32	29	31	30	28	28
Total memberships	305 (0)	311 (2%)	307 (1.3%)	305 (0.7%)	293 (3.9%)	301 2.7%	293 (2.7%)	303 3.4%	314 3.6%	303 (3.5%)	295 (2.6%)

Join OWANA!

Keep reminding your neighbors and the local businesses you frequent to join OWANA. Send them to <http://www.owana.org/join> where residents can join online and business can download an application form.

Thanks for your continued support and participation.

George Warmingham
Membership Chair

Join the OWANA Yahoo Discussion Group

Keep in touch with your neighbors by joining the Yahoo discussion group moderated by OWANA. If you would like to join please go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/owana/>, click "Join This Group!" and follow the instructions. If you have any difficulties,, please contact George Warmingham at oldwestaustin@gmail.com.

Thank You OWANA Business Members

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