

OWANA OWL

Watching over Old West Austin since 1983



March 2017

I remember on a middle school trip to Washington, DC staring at the statue in front of the National Archives inscribed, "What is past is prologue." That Shakespeare gem has been useful as the cycles of politics, the national economy, and our little neighborhood bring new light and change the color and meaning of it. In the spirit of understanding our past, this month we are adding to our website a [1969 UT School of Architecture pamphlet on Clarksville](#) and a [1973 Statesman article on the Smoot Home](#). Some may disagree, but the two qualities of our neighborhood that make it unique to me are the magical places such as the Smoot Home and historic Clarksville, and our diverse and very talented neighbors.

Speaking of talented neighbors, [Aimee Bobruck](#) will perform at our March 7 meeting starting at 6:30 on the main stage at Mathews. Prepare to be entertained! Aimee also gives back to the neighborhood by providing music lessons and hosting recitals. We are lucky to have folks like her in our hood, and I'm thrilled she can join us.

While not as entertaining as Aimee, our agenda includes discussing fundraising efforts for West Austin Park, some helpful reforms proposed for the Historic Landmark Commission, a variance request on Winflo, discussion of speed bumps on 10th Street, and other improvements neighbors have been pursuing. We will also talk about exciting community events this year. One event to add to your calendar is the annual [It's My Park Day](#) this Saturday, March 4, at 9am at West Austin Park.

Enjoy the spring and hope to see you at Mathews or the park soon.

Scott Marks, Chair

March 2017 General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, March 7, 2017 - 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM

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

- I. Live Music with Aimee Bobruck / Social Gathering **(NOTE: 6:30 – 7:15)**
- II. Call to Order (7:15) – Scott Marks
- III. Approval of Minutes (7:15) - Sean Williams
- IV. Treasurer’s Report (7:15-7:20) - Ted Barnhill
- V. 804 Winflo Variance (7:20-7:45)—Rosemary Merriam
- VI. 10th Street Speed Bumps – Lorri Michel (7:45-8:00)
- VII. Mathews 100-year time capsule Kickstarter campaign (8:00-8:15)
- VIII. Palma Plaza Park and West Austin Park planning and fundraising (8:15-8:30)
- IX. Committee Reports (8:30-9:00)
 - A. Zoning – Rosemary Merriam (including Historic Preservation with Shawn Shillington)
 - B. Community Events – Orlando Castillo/Kathleen Deaver/Marjorie Moore
 - C. Public Safety and Transportation – Mike Sullivan
 - D. Affordable Housing – Scott Marks
 - E. Membership – George Warmingham
- X. Other Business and Announcements
- XI. Adjourn

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



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West Austin Park Update

Over the past several months the West Austin Park fundraising committee has spent a lot of time getting ready to prepare for submitting a grant application to the Austin Parks Foundation. This has involved meetings with various city departments: parks and recreation, public works and watershed to determine what needs to be done to make our Park more accessible to our neighbors and their families.

The biggest stumbling block to initiating any improvements and changes to the park is the drainage or the lack thereof. When it rains, the water pours throughout the park making it uninhabitable, cutting off access and not just during the rain but up to several days afterwards. In addition, there are numerous springs throughout the park which contribute to the flooding.

In order for any other structures to go up in the park, we have to fix the drainage or at least alleviate and slow it in some areas. The City wastewater department came up with a number of solutions for the park and submitted to us a design of a series of strategically situated rain gardens and berms to help slow down and absorb some of the water. Rain gardens will also add color to the park and provide gardening experiences for children and adults.

In addition, a [Facebook](#) page, "Friends of West Austin Park" has been created. We encourage you to visit and share it with friends and neighbors throughout the city. If you wish to contribute to the Facebook page contact Rosemary Merriam at rdmerriam@gmail.com.

To donate go the Austin Parks Foundation website and make a tax deductible contribution today: [Friends of West Austin Park fund at Austin Parks Foundation](#) (Be sure and select West Austin Park or the Canine Social Club)

You can also send a check to the Austin Parks Foundation. Make the check payable to “APF-Friends of West Austin Park” and mail it to:
Austin Parks Foundation
507 Calles, Suite 116
Austin, TX 78702

Council kicks off process to reform Historic Landmark Commission

*Reprinted from the Austin Monitor
Monday, January 30, 2017 by Caleb Pritchard*

City Council on Thursday voted to initiate a code amendment that could make it easier for the Historic Landmark Commission to overrule the wishes of property owners.

Mayor Steve Adler overcame his own skepticism to vote for the measure, which passed 9-2 with Council members Ellen Troxclair and Delia Garza in opposition.

The aim is to strike the requirement of a two-thirds vote on the HLC to recommend historic zoning of a property against an owner’s objection.

The resolution was championed by Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo, who argued that the city is losing many of its “sacred spaces” as property owners opt to scrap old houses in order to construct new ones.

“These are visible reminders of our history, and it changes our neighborhoods dramatically,” Tovo said. “There are parts of my district where I go by and I’m not struck anymore by the character of the houses,



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but by the number of demolitions and the number of vacant lots. It is really becoming an epidemic throughout our central city.”

Tovo cited a handful of high-profile cases in which the HLC failed to recommend historic zoning due to the supermajority threshold, including the case regarding the Montopolis Negro School. In that case, the recommendation fell one vote short, in part because several members were not present, which is another lingering issue with the commission.

Adler voiced his preference to reform the HLC by adding four alternate commissioners to shore up its attendance problem. He expressed skepticism that torpedoing the supermajority requirement would be the appropriate solution, but he explained that he would vote to initiate the code amendment process in order to listen to the continuing discussions.

“We have a challenge with respect to this commission,” Adler acknowledged before adding, “I don’t know how I will vote when it gets back to us.” The mayor indicated that, in the meantime, he may still pursue his proposal to appoint alternate members for the commission.

Even if the supermajority requirement is reduced to a simple majority, any historic zoning case opposed by a property owner would still need the support of three-fourths of Council. That high hurdle notwithstanding, supporters of lowering the HLC’s threshold hope that the move will help preserve more of what they consider to be Austin’s definitive character.

Before the vote, attorney Scott Marks urged Council to support the measure and noted the changes he’s seen since moving to Austin in the early 1990s.

“It’s a lot less affordable, it’s a lot less diverse, and there’s a lot less history,” Marks said.



Meetings Planned About New City Initiatives

CodeNEXT: City of Austin Draft Land Development Code



The CodeNEXT team recently released a new draft Land Development Code. In order to share improvements made in the new draft and gather feedback from the community, we are hosting a number of [public engagement events](#) across the city. At these open houses, you can learn about the new draft code, speak to code experts about changes in the code, and provide your feedback. To read and comment on the draft code online, visit www.codenext.civiccomment.org.

The CodeNEXT team also has a variety of other documentation to help explain the new code:

1. Here is a [link to education materials](#) that help explain the new Draft Code.
2. Here is a [video of a presentation](#) as well as [the presentation](#) made to City Council explaining the draft code.
3. Here is a [link to the online CodeNEXT survey](#) - through the collaborative and comprehensive process of CodeNEXT, problems in the existing Land Development Code (LDC) were identified and solutions were developed to align the LDC with the values and vision of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan. In the ongoing effort to solicit public input in the CodeNEXT process, this survey will ask you how well these solutions address the issues identified as problematic in Austin's LDC.



Walk + Bike Talks

The City of Austin's Transportation Department is launching Walk + Bike Talks, a series of community conversations where you can learn about and provide feedback on efforts to improve pedestrian safety and how the City should prioritize bicycle network projects.

There are plenty of opportunities all over the city to provide input. For more information, email ActiveTransportation@AustinTexas.gov or call 512-974-7853. Be sure to also check out our social media pages: [Facebook.com/AustinBikePed](https://www.facebook.com/AustinBikePed) or [@AustinMobility](#) on Twitter.

The full schedule is available at austintexas.gov/activetransportation

Discussions will include:

[Pedestrian Safety Action Plan](#)

Learn more about this planning effort to improve pedestrian safety and share your concerns related to walking safely on Austin streets.

[Bicycle Master Plan](#)

Provide feedback on how the City should prioritize projects that can complete gaps in the bicycle network. The prioritization process will affect how the City of Austin allocates [2016 Mobility Bond](#) funding to bikeways.

Traffic Jam! A Mobility Solutions Workshop for Central Texans

Presented by CAPITAL METRO and the
CITY OF AUSTIN

Saturday, March 4 | 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Bullock Museum
1800 Congress Ave.
Austin, TX 78701

Join us for presentations, panel discussions, hands-on activities, and special appearances by Texas State Senator Kirk Watson, Travis County Judge Sarah Eckhardt, Austin Mayor Steve Adler, Capital Metro President and CEO Linda Watson, Austin Transportation Department Director Rob Spillar and more.

Bring the Family:

The first 200 people to register for the Traffic Jam Workshop on site will receive free admission to the Bullock Museum. Activities for Kids.

The Spread:

Breakfast tacos and beverages will be available.

Take Transit:

The museum is served by Routes 1, 3, 5, 18, 19, 801 and 803.

Ride B-Cycle:

Bike to the Bullock Museum free by using code 660304 at any Austin B-station. Usage fees apply for any trips lasting more than an hour.

Find Out More:

ProjectConnect.com | AustinTexas.gov/asmp



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Mathews Mazilla and Time Capsule Update

Greetings neighbors in Old West Austin. Design and planning work continues on the Mathews Mazilla Sculpture and Time Capsule project that OWANA has graciously endowed with starter money. We've launched a Kickstarter to provide additional funding.

We're currently at just over \$8,000 with a goal of \$12,000. The campaign ends Wednesday, March 8, 2017. Please use this link to help us reach our goal!

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/476492432/mathews-mazilla-time-capsule>

Please share this local community art and history project with your friends and, if you are so inclined - give to the project!

Like my friend says...Give til it feels good!

March 2017 Zoning Report

New Cases

804 Winflo: SP-2016-0329C - Requesting a variance from Board of Adjustment to build three units condo on a lot less than 8,000 square feet. Neighbors and OWANA Zoning and Steering Committees opposed. Expected to be reviewed by Board of Adjustment on 3/13/2017.

Ongoing Cases

607 Pressler Street: 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.



You also can find out all about Mathews Elementary and the time capsule/sculpture project at www.mathews360.com

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OWANA Steering Committee voted to support and send a letter in favor.

611 West Lynn: NRD-2015-0112 – Proposed demolition permit. Postponed indefinitely at the applicant’s request. OWANA opposes demolition. Staff has suggested historic zoning for house and dividing property. Demo application has expired.

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.

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: 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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1108 West 10th Street: no case number - Remodel & addition. Reviewed by Certificate of Appropriateness Review Committee on 2/13/17.

1105 West 10th Street - Remodel and addition

Closed Cases

806 Blanco: LHD 2016-0017 - Partial demo and remodel of the back of the home. OWANA zoning supports remodel. Reviewed by Certificate of Appropriateness Review Committee on 2/13/17. Approved by HLC on 2/27/17.

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OWANA 2017 Membership Report

As of the end of the previous month

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Residential memberships	270	280	295									
Business memberships	25	20	26									
Total memberships	295 (1%)	300 1.7%	321 7%									

Join OWANA!

Keep reminding your neighbors and the local businesses you frequent to join OWANA. Send them to 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 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 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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