

Z-NEWS

Austin, Texas

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Zilker Neighborhood Association

Success in Kinney Ave Hill Sidewalk

Project Fundraising

By Deborah Bice-Broussard

Great news! Neighborhood residents and supporters have opened their wallets and donated enough money for both phases of our project. City staff plan to begin construction in mid-June, installing the curb and gutter and also our portion of the sidewalk at the top of the hill (running 112 feet north from the end of the existing sidewalk at Virginia). They will need to close the east lane for the duration of the project which, weather permitting, will be completed in about two weeks. Based on assurances from the Lost Canyon condominium complex developer and his agent, we expect that once the curb and gutter are in place, the developer's completion of his sidewalk installation should follow shortly thereafter.

Our cost for the curb and gutter is \$4,875 and for the sidewalk is \$1,470. As of press time, we have received \$6,905 for the project. Extra money will be used for additional enhancements to the area or a related project. Hats off to the individuals, families, and businesses who donated, and to the people who helped with the fundraising.

Three neighborhood businesses pitched in, in a big way. Mark Kamburis, owner of Flipnotics Coffespace Café, asked how they could help as soon as he read about the project. In a combination of concert proceeds from a benefit concert, customer contributions to a donation jar, and a direct contribution, we received \$757 from Flipnotics. Bicycle Sports Shop owner Hill Abell responded with a \$1,000 donation. Baby Acapulco's contributed \$1,300, thanks to man-

(continued on p. 3)

Next Meeting

Monday, April 26, 2004

6:30 p.m. - Meet & Greet

7:00 p.m. - Meeting

Note New Location:

Zilker Elementary
1900 Bluebonnet

Homeowners, renters,
and business owners are
welcome!

Meet your neighbors,
learn about issues
affecting you and the
neighborhood you live in

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President's Message

Making South Lamar Beautiful Together



It's Saturday morning and I just finished my regular stroll down South Lamar. It's a street that leaves a lot to be desired. Yet frequently along the street signs of new life are emerging. They're the harbingers of a new era in the boulevard's evolution. I hope we can cooperate to make this evolution a flourishing success.

Each Saturday as I walk down the long slope from the Bluebonnet intersection to the river, I recall something my elder daughter, Emma, said when she returned from her first trip to Europe: "I never realized South Lamar was so ugly!"

Much of the length of the street looks like a neglected afterthought. Broken sidewalks and dirt trails run along past used car lots, garages, barren parking lots, and vacant lots. Most of the new developments in the past few years have been lost

opportunities—car washes and big gas stations and other servants of the thundering herds of automobiles from the suburbs that clog the boulevard at 9 and 5 each

Still surviving in surprising numbers are hidden cottage industries and shops in adapted old lumber yards and crumbling buildings that seem to be caught in an eddy of time. Some of these are the sorts of marginal businesses that can only exist where rent is cheapest, and they are an important source of jobs and income to the neighborhood.

Infiltrating these old buildings now are young new businesses with fresh paint, careful renovations, and new energy. Some of these are transitional businesses that mark the turnaround of the street from decline to new growth. They come because the location is cheap and funky, but their very presence starts the resurgence that leads to higher values. Restaurants on the street reflect this growth as they gradually make improvements.

The loss of our neighborhood grocery store was a serious setback, but that has been offset by the exciting announcement that an Alamo Draft House movie theater will move into the space. That is sure to bring new attention to South Lamar.

The Greater Zilker Committee recently hosted a gathering at Artz Rib House for some of the merchants and businessfolk along South Lamar and Barton Springs Road. It was a meeting to get acquainted and begin talking about cooperating on the big job of planning for this dawning era on South Lamar. We look forward to a continuing collaboration.

We'll get another perspective on South Lamar at the April general meeting of the Zilker Neighborhood Association. There we'll hear presentations from two public servants whose jobs include planning for the future of the street. The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) has plans to widen the street to six lanes to accommodate yet more rumbling fleets of suburban commuters. Mike Aulick, CAMPO Executive Director, will discuss the organization's rationale and its process for revising the plan. The City of Austin, at our request, recently downscaled its plans for the street to retain it as four lanes. Tom Forrest, Assistant Director of the Transportation, Planning, & Sustainability Department (TPSD) will talk about how the city plans to maintain and improve the street without adding more lanes.

We have an opportunity on South Lamar to make something really great happen. The many expanses of asphalt offer easy sites to build multi-story apartment houses with ground floor retail that can bring new vibrancy to the boulevard. Adding broad sidewalks, bike lanes, and planted medians to the streetscape can improve the safety and attraction of the boulevard. These kinds of improvements can turn the street from just a speedway (or chugway) to a real place to enjoy.

We'll want to be careful to preserve floodplains and drainage and trees. We'll want to cause the least disruption we can to our businesspeople and workers making a living on the street. And we'll want to work with landowners to understand their interests. But we'll make a beautiful boulevard together.

See you on the boulevard!

-Robin Cravey

Kinney Sidewalk, continued from page 1:

ager Evie Martinez (\$1,000 plus a percentage of food sales during a special event). The many businesses in and around Zilker play a significant role in making our neighborhood great and, as always, we should do what we can to support them. However, the places that give back to the 'hood in some way, such as participating in a project important to us like this one, are especially deserving of our appreciation and support. So please be sure to thank the folks at Baby Acapulco's, the Bicycle Sports Shop, and Flipnotics for their help with our sidewalk project. **

Over half of the money we raised came directly from Zilker residents, including some very generous donations. The contributors are Suvi Aika, Jan Austin, Nancy Barnes, Steve Barnick, Walt & Katie Barron, Maura Belliveau, Peter Bickel, Mike Blizzard, Charlotte Boyle, Jon & Cheryl Brandt, Elaine Braun, Elizabeth Carmack, Barb & Bruce Christman, Pat Cramer, Gina Diehl & Steve Donohue, Janet Dunkelberg & David LaPier, Shudde Fath, Carol Ginn, Richard Gravois, Chuck Hess, Greg Hirsh, Aletha Huston, Lindsey Idlet, Courtney Johnson, Katy Kappel, Peggy Kelley, Siobahn Kenna, Thomas & Crissy Knape, Paul & Vanessa Long, Fontaine Maverick, Dan McClellan, Laurie & Pier Miraglia, Linda Mizell, Linda Nanno Breining, Louise & Steve Parks, Rick Piel, Dave Piper, Linda Quasebarth, Sandra & Jeff Ransom, Mary Christine Reed, Bobby Rigney, Mary Sahs, Kirk & Liz Scanlon, Leonora Siedo, Cicily Simms, Tony Sirgo, Robert Jerome Smith, Scott Stewart, Stonecipher Family, Bratten Thomason, Dunya Tretjak, Lois & Don Vajgert, Ran & Joe Willman, and Chris & Tricia Yost. Carving their names in the sidewalk apparently isn't an option. That's too bad, because their generosity and willingness to do what it takes to solve this longstanding safety problem are quite a gift to the multitudes that will benefit. Three cheers for these folks!

A big Zilker thank you also goes to:

* The fundraising team (folks who con-

tacted businesses): Jane Kurzawa Cravey, Tina Heffernan, Katy Kappel, Paul Long, Ken Marsh, Dan McClellan, and Laurie Miraglia. Special thanks to Dan for creating our project flyer.

* The 3 bands who donated their time to play for our benefit concert at Flipnotics: Boxcar Preachers, the Grassy Knoll Boys, and Last Free Exit. The Boxcar Preachers also donated money from their CD sales.

We're all eager to see the Kinney Ave. Hill Sidewalk Project finished as soon as possible, so I had hoped that construction could begin in April. But by the time we had our money in hand and could ask to schedule the construction, the folks who will be doing this work were about to begin an 8-week assignment. My neighbors say that people have been trying to get sidewalk on this block for over 15 years, so I suppose waiting another 2-3 months is no big deal.

**Honorable Mention: Folks at the Umlauf Sculpture Garden and Maudie's Too, and Awad Abdelgadir of Nile Valley Herbs contacted us with offers to donate goods for use in fundraising. We just haven't yet had an event where we could take advantage of those great neighborly offers, but certainly will keep them in mind for our next big project.

Kinney Avenue Baptist Church

Gordon R. Bergstrom, Pastor



Join us!

Sunday School at 9:45 am

Sunday Worship at 11 am & 6:30 pm

Wednesday Prayer Meeting at 6:45 pm

1801 Kinney Ave. * 442-6719 * geoginger@juno.com

Kinney Ave. Wastewater Improvements

Project

By Deborah Bice-Broussard

The City of Austin's Public Works Department is preparing construction drawings for improvements to the existing wastewater line located along Kinney Ave. According to project manager Andy Gonzales (974-7121), "the project will replace approximately 3,800 linear feet of the old 6" line with a new 8" line from just south of Barton Springs Road, up the hill to Virginia Ave., then continuing along Kinney to Collier St." He noted, that "there are many root intrusions and sags all along this section of line. Also, there have been numerous reports of overflows, stop-ups and house connection problems in this area." Mr. Gonzales expects construction to begin in December 2004, and to be completed by August 2005. Temporary closure of sections of Kinney Ave. will be necessary. City staff will work with the contractor to minimize the negative impact on neighborhood traffic, likely closing one block at a time and allowing local access for residents.

Austin City Limits Music Festival

By Deborah Bice-Broussard

Why are we talking about the ACL Festival in April? Both prior to and following each Austin City Limits Music Festival, representatives of the Zilker, Barton Hills, and Bouldin neighborhood associations and Rollingwood meet with the Parks & Recreation Dept. Director and Capitol Sports & Entertainment (CS&E) representative Charlie Jones to discuss plans for the

festival and neighborhood questions or concerns. If you haven't done it yet you can mark your calendar now, this year's festival is happening Sept. 17-19th. The pre-event meeting for neighborhood reps will occur in the next month or two, and I'll share new information about plans for the 2004 Festival in July.

In the meantime, I can mention some key aspects discussed in the 2003 Festival debriefing meeting last November: Charlie Jones assured us that CS&E would take several steps to improve sound control, addressing neighborhood resident complaints about excessive sound levels in their homes and violation of the sound ordinance mandated cut-off time on Sunday night. They will provide more bicycle racks this year. A primary purpose of efforts to control event-related parking in the neighborhood is to allow emergency vehicles to travel freely. At our request, parking control efforts will be enhanced to solve some specific problems identified last year, where emergency vehicle travel would have been difficult or impossible.

If you have comments or questions about the impact of the ACL Festival on the Zilker neighborhood, you are welcome to let me know (dbb@austin.rr.com, 443-8755).

Z-News Deliverers Needed!

It's good exercise and it feels good too! Routes generally take about 30-45 minutes every 3 months. Contact Andrew Murphy at 442-9380 to learn how to get involved.



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Meeting Agenda

Monday, April 26, 2004
New Location: Zilker Elementary
Cafeteria at 1900 Bluebonnet

6:30 Happy Half Hour--
Social Time

7:00 Call to order,
introductions, and
announcements

7:15 South Lamar's Future
Mike Aulick,
Executive Director of
Capital Area
Metropolitan Planning
Organization (CAMPO)
will discuss
the organization's
plans to widen the
street to six lanes.
Tom Forrest,
Assistant Director
of the City of Austin
Transportation,
Planning, & Sustainability
Department (TPSD) will talk
about how the city plans to
maintain and improve the
street without adding
more lanes.

8:00 Travis County Hospital District
Judge Guy Herman (or a representative)
will discuss this public health
care proposal

8:15 Alamo Drafthouse Presentation

8:40 New Business

9:00 Adjourn



ZNA Social Chair Needed!

Neighborhood resident with interest in planning and carrying out social events (watermelon social in summer, spiced cider in winter?) please contact anyone on the executive committee.

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Debate on Density

By Matthew H. Moore

As citizens of Austin we should be proud of our government's regulations regarding water and air quality, urban forest and green building. All these policies are designed to minimize our impact on the environment. They are important, insightful and responsible and we are a national leader in these areas. But we need to go further.

As we move forward with neighborhood planning, the plan should address, among other important issues, population density and its relationship to our environment. I hope our organization can become an advocate for high quality design and urbanism. We need to avoid the preconception that all development is bad and should be fought. As an example I cite the Slick Willy's strip suburban center/mini



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storage and Race Trac mega gas station. These sites, with planning, could have resulted in a more dense, more livable, more pedestrian-friendly and more interesting design.

I firmly believe our prime objective should be to minimize our impact on the environment and moderate our consumption of natural resources while enjoying a high quality of life. As a country, our national behavior is the sum of our individual behaviors and if progressive central Austin neighborhoods cannot lead by example then there is indeed reason to worry.

As a member of the Austin Planning Commission I have seen several neighborhood plans come through the system for adoption. With all due respect to the creators of those plans, mostly they focus exclusively on the area within their boundaries and ignore Austin as a whole.

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So please get involved in the neighborhood planning process and follow your heart. If you believe the best we can do is to maintain the status quo then you will be in abundant company. If there is a radical streak in you that thinks clearly of the future and of future generations, I would appreciate your help and support. Thanks to the leadership of the Zilker Neighborhood

Association for allowing me space for this article on our pending neighborhood plan. Please take a moment to view the brief *PowerPoint* presentation I placed at www.main.org/znaweb/, which explains my viewpoints further.

Editor's Note: This debate is "to be continued" in future issues of *Z-News*. Anyone interested in writing on the topic for publication, please contact Peggy Kelley at 440-1269.

Become a ZNA Member Today

All residents of Zilker are welcome, not just homeowners!

April 2004 Membership Form

Name _____
Address _____ Austin, TX 78704
Phone _____ Email _____

Annual Dues: \$7 per person or \$25 Sustaining member

Circle one: New Member Renewal

Please make checks payable to Zilker Neighborhood Association and mail with this form to Zilker Neighborhood Association, Memberships, P.O. Box 33546 Austin, TX 78764-0546.

Notes from the Executive Committee

Your ZNA "Ex-Comm" would like to thank all of you who renewed your membership during the membership renewal drive.

We'd also like to thank each and every one of you who volunteered to help us out with various projects at the last meeting.

And speaking of meetings--we appreciate your input in what you would like to see/hear/discuss/do at our quarterly meetings. Please give any one of us a call with your ideas!!


After all, it's the people who live in the neighborhood who make the difference here. Get involved!

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Got Stung by a Caterpillar?

Did you know that some caterpillars are able to inflict a painful sting? Various caterpillars have urticating hairs or spines that are connected to a poison gland. When an object brushes against the hairs, the hairs stick in the skin, injecting venom and sometimes causing a rash.

There are several caterpillars in this area that can sting, including the lo moth, the buck moth and the saddleback caterpillar, but the most common is the asp or puss caterpillar. Asps are about an inch and a half long, teardrop shaped with long, silky hair. They are usually tan, but can be a variety of colors. Asp caterpillars are typically found on trees and shrubs around homes, and generally do not harm the plants.

If stung, pain will immediately be felt and blood-colored spots may form at the site of the sting. Other symptoms that may occur are nausea, headache, vomiting or even respiratory distress. Cover the sting area with tape. Remove tape repeatedly to remove spines from the skin. Applying an ice pack to the sting area may help to soothe the skin. An oral antihistamine may also be taken to relieve itching. If respiratory distress occurs, seek medical attention.

There are many dangerous-looking caterpillars that are safe to handle, but unless you are sure they will not sting, I would advise not to touch!

For more information, contact Wizzie Brown at 512.854.9600.

ZNA welcomes our new Z-News Editor, Peggy Kelley. Many thanks to Wendy Papasan for her work as Editor for the previous 18 months.

Report from A.P.D.

MAIL THIEVES
GET PERSONAL
(The Problem of Identity Theft)

I wanted to bring your attention to a maybe not so common crime, but a potentially serious one- mail theft. Think of all the personal information we put in and take out of our mailbox everyday. Identity theft is an increasing problem which means we must be more careful about who we give access to our personal information. Some easy preventative steps you can take are, bring your outgoing mail directly to the post office, don't leave any mail in your mailbox longer than necessary, and cancel your mail when you go on vacation or have a trusted person pick it up daily.

SPO Dawn Leonard #4395
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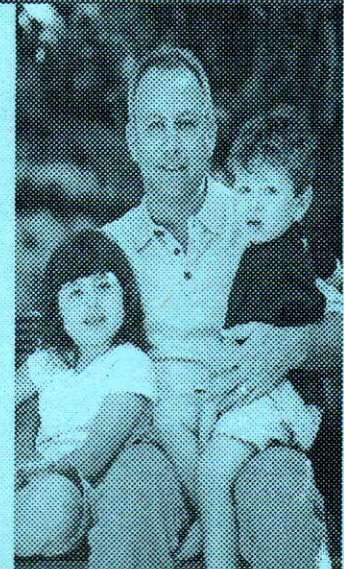
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About the Zilker Neighborhood Association

ZNA holds general meetings the 4th Monday of February, April, July, and October. The executive committee meets at 7 p.m. the first Monday of each month, usually at Artz Rib House.

Our purpose: To improve the quality of life in the neighborhood in matters of land use, environmental protection, public services, consumer protection, preservation of the historic and unique character of the community; to provide support in other matters of neighborhood concern and to promote and participate in the civic life of the city.

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