



Newsletter of the
**Zilker
Neighborhood
Association**

OCTOBER 2007

Austin, Texas
Established 1981



Monday, October 29

Zilker Elementary School

1900 Bluebonnet

6:30-8:45 P.M.

☆ ☆ ☆

Meet and Greet Social
Election of Officers for 2008
Parks Master Plans
ACL Fest Wrapup
Kinney Parking
Holiday Family Fund

Newcomers, old-timers,
homeowners, renters, and
business owners
all welcome.

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Change Highlights ZNA Year

A message from Jeff Jack, President of ZNA

Early this morning I walked down to the little city park next to Zilker Elementary. The sunrise was beautiful, and the cool air signaled that fall is on its way. I love this time of year in our neighborhood, with the anticipation of change and the end of summer.

Among the more exciting changes I'm envisioning this fall are the improvements to our little park (see article below). I want to thank all the volunteers from the PTA, the school staff, the Parks Department, TBG Landscape Architects (for their pro bono work), and our ZNA members who have worked so hard to move this project forward. Great job.

The park project began a year ago with the Rolling Stones concert in Zilker Park. During the planning for that event, the neighborhoods most affected by it negotiated \$150,000 for improvements to our parks. The neighbors had that opportunity because we have been cooperating for many years to protect and enhance Zilker Park, and we have built a positive relationship with the City's Parks Department.

Little Zilker Park is just one highlight of this year's ZNA activities. On almost every street we find new residential construction, and new commercial construction is popping up on South Lamar and Barton Springs Road. Most of these projects will be positive additions to our neighborhood, but they still require us to pay attention to what is going on. This year alone we have had 6 major zoning cases, 10 Board of Adjustment or *(continued on page 4)*

A Running Start for Little Zilker Park *by Heather Way and Shelly Leyden*

Since our last report (*Z-News*, July 2007) on the master plan for the park next to Zilker Elementary (affectionately known as Little Zilker Park), the steering committee has made great progress.

Because we already had a draft master plan to guide us, the committee (made up of ZNA members, PTA and school reps, and other neighbors) was able to apply for a new Public Health grant as soon as the program became available this sum-

mer. As a result, new soccer goals should be installed on the playing field behind the school in November, and equipment is being purchased for some of the exercise stations planned along the Little Zilker running track. At the same time, the parks department has committed to a substantial investment in the realignment and resurfacing of the track and scheduled it for completion during the winter break. These gen-

erous contributions from city departments, combined with the \$31,500 from last year's Stones concert, will implement more of the master plan more quickly than expected. Of course, much more remains to be done. You can view the complete master plan for the park at the ZNA Web site, main.org/znaweb, or if you are a member of the Zilker Yahoo group, look in the Photo file on the home page.

To make more of the master plan for the park a reality, we need folks to contribute money and volunteer their time. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Heather Way at hway@austin.rr.com, or 444-3093.

Short on time? Please send a tax-deductible contribution to the Austin Parks Foundation at 701 Brazos St., Suite 170, Austin, TX 78701. Be sure to note on your check that the contribution is for Zilker Neighborhood Park.

As we learn of other matching grant programs, your donations can go a long way: \$50 can buy new landscaping plants, \$100 a new tree, \$800 a new park bench, \$2000 a new picnic table.

Zilker Elementary and its grounds are a central part of our neighborhood and key to our quality of life. Let's make Little Zilker ROCK!

Calling All Tree Planters

Help wanted: 12 volunteers with shovels to help with planting, mulching, and watering trees for Little Zilker Park this winter. Please call ZNA parks chair Gardner Sumner at 468-6200 or e-mail zltan@sbcglobal.net.



Lamar/Bluebonnet Construction Set for March

Water and wastewater lines will be replaced along South Lamar between Hether and Bluebonnet and within adjacent neighborhoods. Construction is expected to begin in March 2008 and continue for 16-17 months. For more information, call Larry Mendez, Project Manager, at 974-1581 or email larry.mendez@ci.austin.tx.us.

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New ZNA Officers for 2008

The Zilker Neighborhood Association elects new officers every fall, at our October meeting. Below is the slate of candidates recruited by the executive committee. The executive committee can accept nominations up to a week before the election, which is Oct. 29, so you have until Oct. 22 to make nominations. Phone any of the executive committee members listed on the back of this newsletter, or e-mail ZilkerNA@austin.rr.com.

These neighbors have been nominated to serve as elected officers in 2008:

President: Jeff Jack

First Vice President: Richard Gravois

Second Vice President: Bobby Rigney

Secretary: Ryan Stryker

Treasurer: Andy Elder

ANC Delegate: Kurt Koegler

Z-News Editor: Lorraine Atherton

Social Chair: No nominee yet

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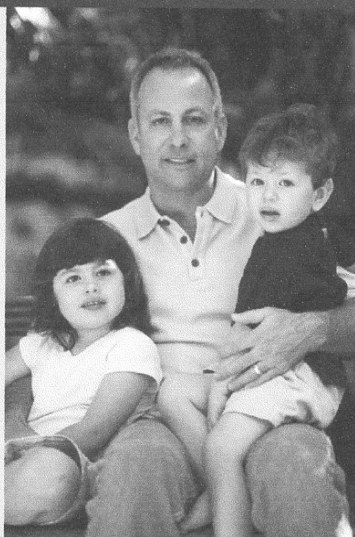
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(Continued from page 1) Residential Design Commission cases, and another 10 administrative site plans or conditional use permits that had to be monitored.

All these cases take hundreds of hours of volunteer time, to meet with applicants, analyze the issues, and prepare for and attend multiple public hearings. ZNA members expect their association to understand and protect the interests of our neighbors, to ensure that as we change, we re-

spect the character of this very special neighborhood. That investment of time has paid off for our neighborhood. For example, in negotiations with ZNA, the developers of the Barton Place Condominium project agreed to community benefits that were in balance with the benefit the developer will get from the zoning change. Not only did the project keep the restaurants on the property, but we also saved some trees, got pedestrian access across the property, kept the buildings to a reasonable scale, and avoided any variances to the Waterfront Overlay. Plus, up to \$500,000 may be contributed to affordable housing in the Zilker area.

ZNA's most important land-use work this year has been in connection with the new Vertical Mixed Use ordinance and the continuing saga of our neighborhood planning process (see page 10). We have also worked with the other neighborhoods in the South Central Coalition (think 78704), supporting them on zoning cases that set precedents for us all. We also continue to participate in the Austin Neighborhoods Council on a wide range of citywide issues, from the new side-

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walk ordinance to the noise ordinance. And let's not forget monitoring the Austin City Limits Music Festival (see page 6) and the completion of Town Lake Park!

None of that would be possible without the continued volunteer effort that goes into organizing the quarterly meetings, maintaining the membership rolls, and publishing this newsletter.

We always need more neighbors to help us meet new challenges and opportunities. So whether you are an old-timer or just moved in, if you want to help this association in any way, please contact one of the Executive Committee members listed on the back page. I would also like to thank the ZNA executive members, who have done an outstanding job covering the bases this year, and our *Z-News* walkers. Without them you would not be reading this now! To all those who have contributed time, thank you for helping to make Zilker such a wonderful neighborhood. As this year comes to an end, I would like to say how much I appreciate having the opportunity to serve you as ZNA president this past year.

The best part of the ZNA year is yet to come.

For eight years now ZNA has collected gifts and donations for families selected through Zilker Elementary School and delivered a brighter holiday to those neighbors. See Barbara Cossie's article on page 8, and start the holiday season early with a joyful donation to the ZNA Holiday Family Program.

We have an interesting and full agenda for our next general meeting. So I hope to see you on October 29.
Your Neighbor, Jeff Jack

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ACL Fest Parking Woes Extend to Kinney Avenue *by Peggy Pfaff*

Thanks to the many folks who shared their experiences, observations, and two cents regarding ACL Music Fest 2007 and its impact on the Zilker Neighborhood. Thanks also to several monitors who volunteered to walk the neighborhood during the festival, count cars, and be a contact for the Austin Police Department with respect to parking and related hazards created by the added vehicles.

Despite coordination between the Parks and Police departments, the promoters of the event, and affected neighborhoods to reduce the traffic problems, festival parking extended deeper into the neighborhood than ever before.

Compared with 2003, parking in the north end of the neighborhood increased 33% to 113%, depending on the street. Streets north of Margaret have always been packed for at least part of the festival, to the point that the city erected barricades to keep certain streets open for emergency vehicles. Other areas of concern this year were the Lund hill area along Bluebonnet, Garner Avenue between Linscomb and Dexter, and Oakie Heights

north of Lamar Plaza (Juliet, Josephine, Jessie, and Ethel). The greatest increase was along Kinney between Virginia and Collier (from 55 cars in 2003 to 188 cars in 2007). Cars parked between Treadwell and Collier increased from 13 to 105.

Without a doubt the biggest issue was the reduction of Kinney to one lane when cars are parked on both sides for long stretches. The fire that occurred on Friday at the festival highlighted the need for emergency vehicle access through the neighborhood. Kinney is a primary response route for Fire Station 11, at the corner of Collier and Kinney.

For some time now ZNA members have been discussing limiting parking on Kinney to only one side of the street, not just during park events but rather as a permanent installation. The issue will be discussed at ZNA's Oct. 29 meeting. Kinney residents in particular need to consider which side of the street should be restricted and how far south to extend the parking restriction.

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Shudde Fath Honored by YWCA of Greater Austin *by Barbara Cossie*

Talk about your Austin icons! Longtime Zilker resident and ZNA member Shudde Fath is certainly one.

The YWCA of Greater Austin was honored to present Shudde as its 2007 Woman of the Year in Public Policy at the YWCA Women of the Year Awards Gala on Friday, Oct. 5, at the UT Alumni Center. Describing herself as a "yeller dog Democrat," Shudde has been involved in political and environmental movements in Austin most of her adult life. She has been a member of Austin's Electric Utility Commission, Save Barton Creek Association, Austin Women's Political Caucus, Ecology Action, and Consumers Union.

Shudde relishes the good fight, battling those who want to go after the poor and disenfranchised, tear up the environment, or stomp on someone else's rights, from her landmark sex discrimination suit against the Texas Employment Commission to her work for clean air and water today.

In 1977, she joined the Electric Utility Commission (EUC), a citizen advisory board appointed by the City Council to study and make recommendations on Austin energy issues. This year, the conference room at Town Lake Center where the EUC meets was named after her, in honor of her 30 years of service.

Shudde has been a volunteer for the Save Barton Creek Association since 1981, and she has petitioned for clean water, clean air, and conservation through her work with Save Our

Springs. In recognition of her environmental work, a conservation area at Loop 360 and Hwy 290 was recently named after her. The awards and accolades for her service to the Austin community are many. But for Shudde, praise and glory are not nearly as important as making Austin a better place for its citizens.



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Reaching Out with Helping Hands for the Holidays

Donate Now to the ZNA Holiday Family Program by Barbara Cossie

Before you begin reading this article, please lift your eyes from the page of this newsletter. What do you see? Are you sitting in a comfortable chair? Have you just had a good meal? Is your family with you? Now, raise your hand if you feel blessed.

Wow! That's a lot of raised hands! Did you know that some of our families in the Zilker neighborhood aren't quite so blessed? Single moms raising their kids alone. Parents with disabled children. The underemployed trying to

raise their families on meager wages.

To help these families over the holiday season, the Zilker Neighborhood Association has hosted the Holiday Families Program. In its ninth year, we will sponsor 10 families who have children at Zilker Elementary School. The families are selected by the school counselor, who is aware of their circumstances and helps compile wish lists in November.

Please consider sharing your blessings with those who need help for the holidays. You can



ZNA Holiday Family Program Volunteer Sign Up 2007

Yes, I want to help make the holidays happier for 10 Zilker families.

- I would like to purchase a gift from a family's gift list. Please contact me when the lists arrive.
- I would like to donate money to the program. I have enclosed a check for \$ _____

Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Please make checks payable to Zilker Neighborhood Association and mail with this form to:
ZNA Holiday Family Program, 1818 Treadwell, Austin, TX 78704

BECOME A ZNA MEMBER TODAY

Membership is open to Zilker residents (renters or homeowners) 18 years old or older.
Annual dues are \$7 per person. Additional contributions are welcome. (Many couples pay \$25.)

Name: _____ E-mail: _____

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give a financial donation or purchase items from a family's wish list. All money collected will be used to purchase gifts. Gift cards (from Target, Walgreens, HEB, for example) and food donations are also welcome. Our Zilker elves will wrap and deliver the presents to families by Christmas Eve.

Please write a check today (payable to ZNA) and mail it to 1818 Treadwell St., Austin, TX 78704. Write "Holiday Family Program" on the memo line. If you would like to purchase gifts to donate, call Barbara at 326-1222 (daytime number only) for more information.

For the past decade ZNA's executive committee has been overwhelmed by the generous donations that come from our Zilker neighbors. The spirit of giving brightens the season for all of us!

When Disaster Strikes

by *Laura Morrison,*
Austin Neighborhoods Council President

Austin's Health and Human Services Dept. has launched a project to coordinate communication with neighborhoods in the event of a disaster. The effort focuses on pandemic flu, but the work will be useful in the event of other types of disasters or emergencies.

Besides gathering information on how the city can communicate broadly with Zilker NA, the department is looking for volunteers willing to be listed as individual "Disaster Contacts." If city services are overwhelmed or unable to meet a need in a particular neighborhood, the listed volunteers would be one possible connection in the effort to find someone who can help.

For example, the City's 311 line may be receiving calls for help from elderly neighbors living alone. If the City doesn't have the resources to respond, the volunteer Disaster Contact may know of a nearby neighbor who could help. Also, the City's pandemic flu preparedness plan includes the possibility for distribution of supplies at neighborhood gathering points if there is severe disruption to the supply chain. In that case, local volunteers would be needed to help distribute the supplies, and the Disaster Contact may be able to find available neighbors to help.


In volunteering as a Disaster Contact now, there is no commitment to assist in the future, as no one can know before a disaster if they themselves would be in a position to help.

One of the lessons learned through many disasters is that in the end, we may well be relying on neighbors to care for each other. Surprisingly, across the country, few local governments have recognized the potential of neighborhood organizations as a source for disaster response. It is a positive step that here in Austin, the idea has taken hold.

To volunteer as a Disaster Contact for your neighborhood, or for more information, please contact me at LCMorrison@prodigy.net or 494-8702.

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Steering Toward a Neighborhood Plan *by Jeff Jack*

The five neighborhoods in the South Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning area have continued to meet with the City Planning Staff about restarting our neighborhood planning effort. These meetings have been facilitated by the University of Texas Law School Center for Dispute Resolution. The meetings have been productive, and staff hoped that we could restart the actual planning exercise by late fall; however, there is still one major issue to resolve, and it looks like several more meetings will be needed before a schedule can be finalized. The best guess at this point is that the South Lamar plan will not restart until early next year.

The question still to be resolved is, How will decisions about the Future Land Use Map and the related zoning be made? City staff has suggested several alternatives ranging from a so-called consensus process (leaving decisions to whoever shows up at the meetings) to formation of a steering committee (stakeholder team, leadership group, or whatever else you want to call it). The consensus approach, which is supposed to encourage wide participation, does not guarantee that the process is inclusive, since there are no clear lines of communication between interest groups. Other planning areas have found that people tend to turn up at the end of the process and complain that they were left out of the decisive meetings. A steering committee, however, would include representatives of all neighborhood interests in the

process. It would also allow those representatives to serve as a conduit of information to and from their interest groups, so that more people can participate and fewer people will feel left out. We have seen that well-run stakeholder groups can help to build a stronger community and a better planning document. This was certainly the case with the rebuilding of Barton Springs Road and the design of Town Lake Park.

ZNA's Executive Committee has been considering this option as the basis for moving forward with our neighborhood plan. The composition of the steering committee still needs to be resolved, and we have asked for some data about our neighborhood to use in a formula for allocating representation on such a committee. We discovered that in the Zilker neighborhood, 62.5% of the land area is single family or two family (duplexes). Multifamily is another 10.3%, and commercial zoning is only 27.2%. In terms of market value, the single- and two-family land accounts for 75.3%, multifamily is 6.5%, and commercial land is the balance of 18.2%. The average land value for single- and two-family is \$487,127 per acre, with multifamily at \$265,639 and other commercial at \$266,604.

It is clear from these statistics that the traditional residential interests of our neighborhood constitute about two thirds of our land area and three quarters of the area's market value. Our residential property has almost twice the tax value for the city, compared with com-

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mercial property. It seems appropriate that a steering committee charged with leading the neighborhood planning process should include a corresponding proportion of residential stakeholders. With this in mind, we have recommended the following composition for a Zilker Neighborhood Plan steering committee. It would have a total of 11 members. Five would be resident property owners who live in the neighborhood (four from ZNA and one who is not a ZNA member), one would be a single-family home renter, and one would be a multifamily apartment renter, for a subtotal of seven seats for various types of residents, or 55% residential representation. The remainder of the members would be one representative of commercial property owners (people who own property here but do not work or live in the neighborhood), one representative of business operators (who rent or lease in the neighborhood but do not own the property where they have their businesses), one representative of citywide interests (for the City of Austin as a stakeholder and local institutions such as our churches and schools), and one at-large position (used to balance out the demographics of the committee).

If this type of steering committee is accepted by the City, the next step will be to find volunteers for these seats. If you or someone you know is interested in working with our association, being a part of the neighborhood plan, and willing to fill one of these seats, please contact Dave Piper, chair of ZNA's Neighborhood Planning committee, or one of the ZNA officers for more information.



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Clean Out Your Files *by Barbara Cossie*

There is a great resource right here in Austin where you can go to find out what happened in the city 5, 10, or more than 100 years ago. It's the Austin History Center, at Ninth and Guadalupe. AHC houses the archives of Austin's cultural and historical events, along with records from people and organizations that made Austin the city it is. AHC depends on the citizens of Austin to provide these archives through private donations.

Do you have any articles, newsletters, letters, photos, or other documents about the Zilker neighborhood that you would like to donate to ZNA so that we may pass them on to the Austin History Center? If so, please call Lorraine Atherton at 447-7681. She will collect and hold any materials that are received until they can be donated to the AHC.

Please don't keep Zilker's history in your file cabinet or closet. Clean out your files, box them up and call Lorraine. We want to document what we have today, because tomorrow it's history!



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Peter Stiles
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**Newsletter
of the Zilker
Neighborhood
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2007 Executive Committee of ZNA

Elected Officers:

President: Jeff Jack, 447-5877
jjack2@austin.rr.com
1st VP: Richard Gravois, 441-3430
2nd VP: Bobby Rigney, 471-3758
Secretary: Ryan Stryker, 431-4245
Treasurer: Andy Elder, 428-9180
Social Chair: Rachel Elder, 428-9180
ANC Delegate: Robert Singleton
ZNews Editor: Lorraine Atherton

Committee Chairs:

Holiday Family Program: Barbara Cossie, 447-4437
Neighborhood Plan: Dave Piper, 916-9636
Parks and Environment: Gardner Sumner, 462-0210
Town Lake Park Rep.: Kaye Trybus, 447-4437
Zoning: Peggy Pfaff, 383-1595

About the Zilker Neighborhood Association

ZNA holds general meetings the fourth or fifth Monday of February, April, July, and October, at Zilker Elementary School. The Executive Committee meets at 7 PM 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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