



# Newsletter of the Zilker Neighborhood Association

MAY 2015

Austin, Texas  
Established 1981

## *A Message from ZNA President David King:* **Connecting Zilker's Past and Future**

THE ZILKER NEIGHBORHOOD Association (ZNA) was established in 1981 with the mission of protecting the character of the neighborhood and enhancing the quality of life for all our residents, with an emphasis on "sensible planning," as Richard Gravois, a ZNA founder, puts it (see page 8). You can help accomplish this mission by joining ZNA, participating in ZNA meetings, and volunteering to help with ZNA committees.

With the South Lamar Transportation Improvement Program gathering steam (see the Open House invitation on page 3), ZNA needs volunteers for a Transportation and Mobility committee to help neighbors stay involved in the planning process and to address the immediate need for sidewalks, bike lanes, and improved traffic safety in the neighborhood (see page 2). If you would like to volunteer for the committee, please send me an email!

Meanwhile, the Communications committee is trying to make ZNA's records of *(Continued on page 8)*

## **ZNA Meeting, May 18**

**Monday 6:30-8:30 PM**

Zilker Elementary School

1900 Bluebonnet



**AISD Trustee Amber Elenz on  
School Funding**

**Council Member Ann Kitchen on  
City Budget Priorities**

**Marya Crigler, Chief Appraiser, Travis  
Central Appraisal District, on  
Property Tax Appraisals**

**Vote on Clean Affordable Energy  
(see page 6)**

**ZNA Member Engagement**



**Newcomers, homeowners, renters,  
business neighbors**

**❖ ❖ All Welcome ❖ ❖**

## **Connecting with City Hall**

*by Ann Kitchen, Austin City Council Member, District 5*

*Hello, Zilker Neighbors!*

As your District 5 representative I am looking forward to joining you at the upcoming May 18 Zilker Neighborhood Association meeting. I anticipate discussing my Council Committee assignments and the associated work as it relates to property taxes, traffic congestion, and events in Zilker Park, as well as to kick off the annual budget conversation. I am looking forward to hearing what budget priorities rise to the top for the neighbors of Zilker.

Your budget feedback is important in anticipation of the City's annual budget conversation. The Budget in a Box 2.0 will be utilized again as a self-contained community engagement tool. It allows participants to facilitate their own small community discussion about the City of Austin's services, performance, and budget. Individual neighbors and associations are *(Continued on page 10)*

### **Inside this issue:**

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## Connecting with New Places to Walk and Bike

by Lorraine Atherton



A SIGNALIZED CROSSWALK, otherwise known as a pedestrian hybrid beacon, has been installed on South Lamar north of Oxford. By allowing pedestrians to cross Lamar between the bus stops at Birds Barbershop and Office Depot, the light makes it easier and safer for bus riders to make their connections between north-south routes and the east-west Oltorf route. It also allows pedestrians and cyclists to avoid the messy traffic around the Black Sheep Lodge at Kinney, where the public right-of-way is often blocked by parked cars and motorcycles.

*Below:* Bus riders cross South Lamar headed for the Oltorf stop.



Sidewalk and bicycle improvements on South Lamar and within Zilker are not waiting for the corridor plan (see page 3). Sidewalk projects completed in the last few months include the 1500 block of Treadwell (right), Treadwell at Lamar Union (center right), the Hanover apartments at 809 S. Lamar (bottom), the sidewalk connecting the Mary Lee Foundation to S. Lamar (left), and, not pictured, the Cielo apartments at Manchaca and repairs to the sidewalk on Hether. Also, new bike lanes have been striped on the recently repaved blocks of South Lamar south of Barton Skyway.



With the completion of the Treadwell sidewalk and the repairs to the Hether sidewalk, the top priority from ZNA's 1999 wish list is closing the gap in the Melridge sidewalk, between Zilker Skyline and Ashby. There is currently no sidewalk connecting the school and Bluebonnet Market to the sidewalk on Robert E. Lee and Zilker Park.

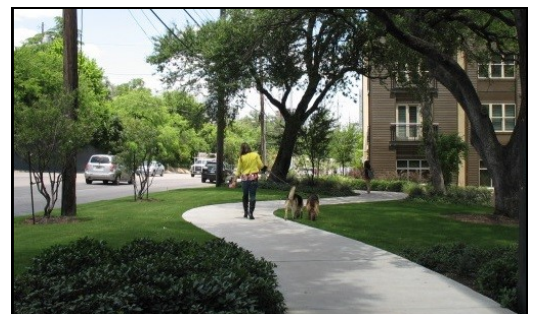
## Fairy Alley Adds Sparkle to New Treadwell Streetscape

THANKS TO SUVI AIKA and to WaBuCy, the sidewalk on



Treadwell is complete, connecting the Kinney sidewalk to the new Lamar Union streetscape and South Lamar. Suvi got the project started last year, and WaBuCy helped her complete the agreement with the City Neighborhood Partnering Program to fund it. The best part is, Fairy Alley has been rejuvenated as an "art placement." For more info, look up "current projects" under the Neighborhood Partnering Program on the City Web site [www.austintexas.gov](http://www.austintexas.gov).

*Below:* Two neighbors use the new sidewalk on Treadwell. Photo by Rene Renteria





**South Lamar Corridor  
Study Open House**

May 27, 2015

Business Open House (5-6 PM) and  
Public Open House (6-8 PM)

Zilker Elementary School Cafeteria  
1900 Bluebonnet Lane

THE CITY OF AUSTIN INVITES YOU to participate in an Open House for the South Lamar Boulevard Transportation Corridor Study on Wednesday, May 27, 2015. This will be the second public meeting where you can share your thoughts regarding potential safety and multi-modal enhancements along the corridor. For information about the study, visit the project Web site at [www.austintexas.gov/southlamar](http://www.austintexas.gov/southlamar).

The Corridor Program Draft Recommendations and activities for the Open House are still being solidified. More details will be distributed to stakeholders as soon as possible.

Interested in walking, bus riding, and cycling in Zilker?

Find WaBuCy on Facebook, or join [wabucy@yahoogroups.com](mailto:wabucy@yahoogroups.com)

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## Outdoor Music Venue Update

by Lorraine Atherton

UNCLE BILLY'S LATE-HOURS permit was approved by the Planning Commission on March 24, including the conditions in the revised sound agreement approved by the ZNA membership at our last general meeting, on March 9. The restaurant's owner, Rick Engel, negotiated similar agreements with the Lost Canyon and Talisman homeowner associations, with restrictions on weekday hours and on the volume of patio speakers.

The restaurant's Outdoor Music Venue (OMV) permit has also been renewed, incorporating the revised sound agreement. Uncle Billy's is at 1530 Barton Springs Road.

The terms for all OMV permits within ZNA boundaries are now essentially the same as the City's sound ordinance requirements, with a limit of 70 decibels and cutoff times of 8 PM Sunday-Thursday and 10 PM Friday and Saturday for outdoor performances.

Currently, four restaurants in the Barton Springs Road area (Restaurant Row) have active OMV permits:

- Uncle Billy's,
- Shady Grove,
- Baby Acapulco, and
- Flour and Vine.

Only two other neighborhood restaurants have OMV permits: Opa and Taco Xpress, both on South Lamar.

## Kinder Kamp at Zilker Elementary

INCOMING KINDERGARTNERS and their families are invited to join us for Kinder Kamp on Friday, May 22, at 9 AM in the school library. Story time! School tour! Play time! Snacks! Get to know other kindergartners and families. We hope to see you on May 22!

*Randall W. Thomson, Principal  
Zilker Elementary School  
"... a GREAT place for kids!"  
1900 Bluebonnet Lane*

If you have questions about Kinder Kamp or registration, please call the school at 512-414-2327.

## Oak Wilt Threat Returns to Rabb Road

OAK WILT may be on the move again along Rabb Road. If you have oak trees that need protection, you may contact Chris Dolan, the oak wilt specialist in the City of Austin Arborist Office, by email ([chris.dolan@austintexas.gov](mailto:chris.dolan@austintexas.gov)) or phone (512-974-1881).

Or visit the City Web site at this link: [www.austintexas.gov/page/oak-wilt-suppression](http://www.austintexas.gov/page/oak-wilt-suppression)  
To find answers to general questions about oak wilt, try [TexasOakWilt.org](http://TexasOakWilt.org).



## Join the Friends of Little Zilker Neighborhood Park

through  
[FLZP@yahoo.com](mailto:FLZP@yahoo.com)  
or contact  
[littlezilker@gmail.com](mailto:littlezilker@gmail.com)  
to find out how to  
volunteer for  
projects, planning,  
and events



## Weekend Art Tour Returns to Zilker

THE WEST AUSTIN STUDIO TOUR has Zilker covered this May. From Barton Skyway to Jessie, and from Ridgeview in Barton Hills to West Bouldin Creek, dozens of neighbors will be displaying their art work at private studios, and many more can be seen at gallery exhibits. It's a great excuse for a neighborhood stroll or bike ride.

This free tour is two weekends, May 9-10 and 16-17, 11 AM to 6 PM. Admission will be free at the Umlauf Sculpture Garden and Museum both weekends.

Catalogs listing hundreds of artists and studio locations across the city are available at all branches of the Austin Public Library and online at [west.bigmedium.org](http://west.bigmedium.org).

On the online map, look for numbers 83-110 to find studios in Zilker's immediate area. Exhibits in Zilker or along South Lamar are numbers 247-253. And don't overlook the community of artists on Thornton, south of Oltorf.



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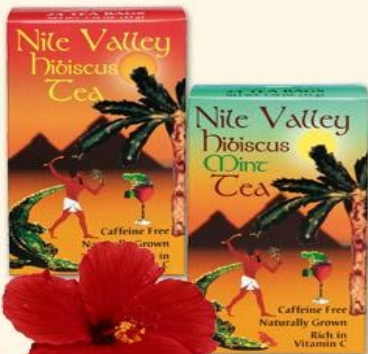
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## ANC Proposes Clean Affordable Energy

THE AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOODS Council (ANC) will be considering the following resolution at its meeting on Wednesday, May 20. ZNA is a member of ANC. Our ANC delegate, Elizabeth Yevich, will present the resolution to the ZNA membership for a vote at our meeting on Monday, May 18. The complete resolution is available at [www.ANCweb.org](http://www.ANCweb.org), under "Resolutions."

*Whereas*, energy produced at the coal-fired Fayette power plant and natural gas-fired Decker power plant causes environmental degradation in the form of air and water pollution; and

*Whereas*, Austin Energy has proposed to build a new natural gas-fired power plant that would emit air pollutants locally, contribute to air and water pollution in other parts of Texas by using natural gas that is obtained partly through hydraulic fracturing (fracking), and contribute to climate change; and

*Whereas*, the Austin Generation Resource Planning Task Force recommended increasing the goal for energy efficiency and demand response<sup>1</sup>; and

*Whereas*, the Austin Generation Resource Planning Task Force recommended replacing the existing highly polluting Decker natural gas-fired power plant with west Texas solar generation<sup>2</sup>; and

*Whereas*, large quantities of precious and scarce water or wastewater would be used to cool a

new natural gas-fired power plant<sup>3</sup>; and

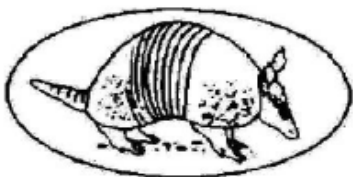
*Whereas*, investing in clean energy produces more jobs per dollar invested compared to fossil fuels<sup>4</sup>; and

*Whereas*, the proposed natural gas-fired power plant would be built on the east side of Austin, adding emissions harmful to health and adding to the significant past and current environmental injustices;

*Now, therefore, be it resolved* that the Austin Neighborhoods Council, in order to create and restore trust for public transparency, requests that the Austin City Council ensure that the consultant selected to conduct the independent Generation Gap Study for Austin Energy provide to the public all unadulterated drafts and the final version of the report, which shall be based on unbiased and accurate data and assumptions; and

*Be it further resolved* that the Austin Neighborhoods Council requests that the Austin City Council retire the Fayette Power Project coal-fired power plant and the existing Decker

### South Austin Community Acupuncture



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Creek gas-fired power plant as quickly as possible; and not approve construction of any new fossil fuel-burning power plants, in keeping with the Austin Energy affordability goals; and

*Be it further resolved* that the Austin Neighborhoods Council requests that the Austin City Council direct Austin Energy to invest in clean energy, including solar, wind, energy storage, energy efficiency, and demand response to meet Austin’s energy needs, protect public health, and keep electric rates affordable.

- <sup>1</sup> Report of the Austin Generation Resource Planning Task Force. July 2014. Pg 23. [www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=215527](http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=215527)
- <sup>2</sup> Report of the Austin Generation Resource Planning Task Force. July 2014. Pg 18. [www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=215527](http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=215527).
- <sup>3</sup> NREL. A Review of Operational Water Consumption and Withdrawal Factors for Electricity Generating Technologies. March 2011. <http://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy11osti/50900.pdf>.
- <sup>4</sup> Pollin, Robert, et al. The Economic Benefits of Investing in Clean Energy. June 2009. [bit.ly/CleanEJobs](http://bit.ly/CleanEJobs)

*To contact ZNA, visit [zilkerneighborhood.org](http://zilkerneighborhood.org) or phone or e-mail the officers listed on the back page*

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(Continued from page 1) neighborhood advocacy available on [www.zilkerneighborhood.org](http://www.zilkerneighborhood.org). Newsletters from 2006 to the present and a few issues from the 1990s are now posted. In the coming weeks, newsletters for 2000-2005 will be archived online, along with a fascinating scrapbook kept by Richard Gravois in 1982-1987, still relevant to today's Code Next and neighborhood planning processes. If you have copies of the July or October 2005 newsletters, any issues before 1999, or other ZNA materials from the 1980s or 1990s, please let ZNews editor Lorraine Atherton know.

ZNA has a proud history of strong advocacy for our neighborhood. We encourage you to join today and help keep Zilker a great place to live.

*Your neighbor,  
David King*

### ZNA: Frequently Asked Questions

*How many members does ZNA have?* At least 280 paid members will be eligible to vote in May. To join, see the form below or visit the ZNA Web site [zilkerneighborhood.org](http://zilkerneighborhood.org).

*How much are the dues, and what are they spent on?* Dues of \$7 per person entitle the member to vote at quarterly and special meetings from Nov. 1 through Oct. 31. The dues support meeting expenses, the Web site, and other operating expenses.

*Are donations to ZNA tax deductible?* No. ZNA does not handle tax-deductible donations. When we raise money for a neighborhood project, donors are usually asked to give directly to

### In the Beginning, There Was a Flood

*Richard Gravois on ZNA's twenty-fifth birthday, excerpted from ZNews July 2006*

"It was a dark and scary night when ZNA was founded on May 30, 1981, in response to a proposal to build the Kinney Avenue Condos. Then the rains came in biblical quantities, and on the next day we had the Memorial Day Flood. The condos were built two years later, and are now the Ashton Green Condos, but we took the message of the flood as incentive to get involved in sensible planning. Since then we have worked with developers and city staff to influence designs and do what we could to keep Austin as the very livable city that it is.

"Some of the changes since 1981:

"Traffic light at Kinney and Barton Springs. (Cars used to line up as far back as Kerr.)

"Zilker Place, Talisman, Zilker Skyline, Lamar widening, Barton Springs Road redesign, Umlauf Sculpture Gardens, footbridge over Barton Creek."

a public entity or foundation. For instance, donations for Little Zilker Neighborhood Park should be made to the LZNP account with the Austin Parks Foundation, not to ZNA.

*Who does ZNA represent?* Directly: The members. Indirectly: A larger cross-section through neighbor-to-neighbor discussions and the quarterly circulation of more than 2800 newsletters.

*Who represents ZNA at various boards and commissions and at City Council hearings?* The executive committee members who volunteer to go.

*How does the ZNA Executive Committee arrive at a position on an issue?* The committee considers several factors in determining a position that is consistent with the sentiment of the neighborhood,

### BECOME A ZNA MEMBER TODAY

Membership is open to Zilker residents (renters or homeowners) 18 years old or older. (See map on page 9.) Nonresident property owners are not eligible for membership.

**Annual dues are \$7 per person. Please list each member's name and e-mail address below.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues amount: \_\_\_\_\_ Additional contribution: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to Zilker Neighborhood Association and mail with this form to:

ZNA Memberships, 2009 Arpdale St, Austin, TX 78704  
or bring this form with you to the next ZNA meeting.

To join online, or for ZNA bylaws and other information, visit [zilkerneighborhood.org](http://zilkerneighborhood.org).

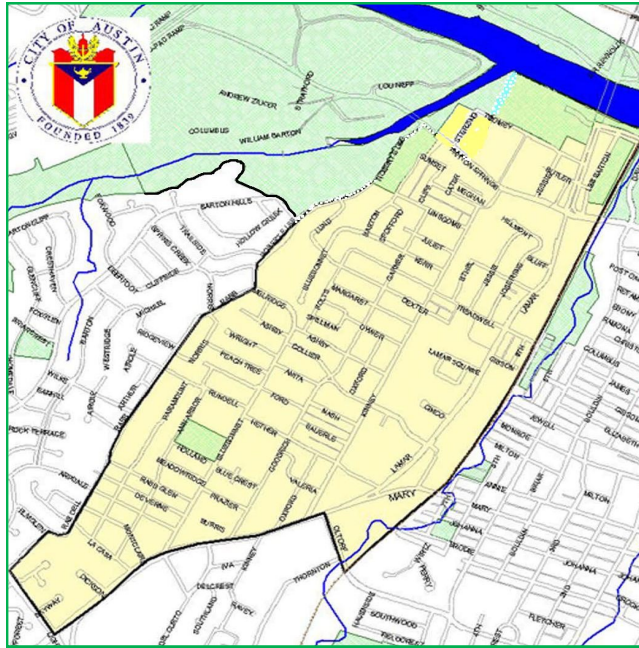


beginning with the bylaws and previous decisions of the association and including, depending on the issue, the ZNA neighborhood planning survey conducted in 2004, the City of Austin neighborhood planning survey in 2005, the voting history of our neighborhood precincts, discussions and resolutions adopted at our quarterly meetings, direct discussions with affected neighbors, and consultation with city staff, board and commission members, and City Council members.

*I want to build something that does not comply with city code. Will ZNA support my request for a variance?* ZNA encourages all neighbors to comply with city ordinances. ZNA does not support variances unless the property has a unique physical feature that qualifies as a hardship under city code. Under state law, personal or financial circumstances do not qualify.

*Does ZNA have design rules that limit house colors, landscaping, or other aesthetic standards?* No. Within ZNA's boundaries, however, there are well over a hundred subdivisions and condominium or property-owner associations, each of which may have its own restrictive covenants and other rules. ZNA encourages all neighbors to understand and abide by the private covenants that apply to their properties.

*Is zilker@yahoo.com the official list serve for ZNA?* No. The Yahoo group, with more than 1000 members, is a useful communication vehicle, but it is not the official list serve for the association. It is owned and managed by Richard Gravois, who has kept it open to all residents, whether they are members of ZNA or not, since 1999. For more info, visit Yahoo.com and search "Groups" for "Zilker."



ZNA includes Zilker Park and Rabb Road on the west and extends to the railroad on the east, Barton Skyway on the south, and Lady Bird Lake on the north. Residents on both sides of boundary streets may join ZNA. ZNA is within City Council District 5.

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  - 1307 Kinney #152
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(Continued from page 1) encouraged to host their own meetings, attend facilitated meetings, or participate in the online version. I cannot emphasize enough how important your feedback will be in informing my budget policy.

My office recently hosted a Budget in a Box opportunity during the April 28 Kitchen Cabinet meeting of District 5 neighborhood leaders. ZNA's cabinet leader is David King. He joined the group in these preliminary budget discussions in anticipation of sharing that experience with you all and spurring more participation from our District.

In late May or early June I will be hosting another District Town Hall meeting at which staff from the Budget Office will present a summary of what they heard from District 5 and provide another opportunity for input from our District. We are looking forward to and counting on an enthusiastic response from District 5!

Your feedback and participation is important as the new Council enters into the beginnings of its first budget conversation. The City's Budget Office will be taking initial public comment on budget issues until June 5. The inclusion of this portion of your feedback occurs at the beginning of the budget process, enabling it to contribute to staff's work as they create the Draft Budget.

There will be seven public hearings in the month of August to allow additional discussion on tax and utility rates and the overall budget.

### Budget in a Box, May 16, at Twin Oaks Library

Council Member Kitchen notes on page 1 of this newsletter that the City of Austin has started the budget process for the City's 2016 budget. As ZNA's president, I join her in urging you to participate in this historic opportunity for Austin's citizens to improve their local government through the 10-One City Council.

The City's budget office has a tool called Budget in a Box to facilitate citizen input on budget priorities. A neighborhood workshop on the Budget in a Box will be held from 2 to 4 PM on Saturday, May 16, at the Twin Oaks Library, 1800 South Fifth Street. Please look for more information about the workshop on ZNA's Web site or zilker@yahoo.com.

You can request a Budget in a Box kit and submit input on the budget online at <http://www.austintexas.gov/budgetbox>.

And don't forget the ZNA meeting Monday, May 18, 6:30 PM, at Zilker Elementary School, where you can talk directly with your City Council representative. See you there.

Your neighbor,  
David King

Visit [www.austintexas.gov/finance](http://www.austintexas.gov/finance) to review the Annual Citizen Survey, updated Annual Performance Report, and sign up for a Budget in a Box today!

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*Town Hall meetings* (3 times a year and/or for key topics)

*Council Cabinet*, quarterly meetings (neighborhoods; small businesses; PTAs)

*District Coffees* (monthly, office hours in coffee shops/homes)

*Neighborhood association* and other meetings (invite us!)

*Appointments to Citizen Commissions*

Call or send us an e-mail if you would like to be notified of future meeting opportunities!

ANN KITCHEN,

District 5 Council Member;  
ann.kitchen@austintexas.gov

KELAN ROBINSON,  
Constituent liaison;

kelan.robinson@austintexas.gov

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**Newsletter of the  
Zilker Neighborhood  
Association**

[www.zilkerneighborhood.org](http://www.zilkerneighborhood.org)  
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**2015 Executive Committee of  
the Zilker Neighborhood  
Association**

**Officers:**

*President:* David King, 512-415-6016

*1st Vice President:*

Richard Gravois, 512-441-3430

*2nd Vice President:* Dave Piper

*Secretary:* Jacob Scheick

*Treasurer:* Sabrena Wright

*Social Chair:* Dave Floyd

*Austin Neighborhoods Council*

*Delegate:* Elizabeth Yevich

*Newsletter Editor:*

Lorraine Atherton

**Other executive members:**

*Parks and Environment Chair:*

Gardner Sumner, 512-468-6200

*Zoning and Code Chair:*

Bill Neale, bneale15@yahoo.com

The Executive Committee may be contacted by e-mail through [www.zilkerneighborhood.org](http://www.zilkerneighborhood.org)

**About the Zilker Neighborhood Association**

ZNA holds quarterly meetings, usually the last Monday of February, May, July, and October, at Zilker Elementary School, 1900 Bluebonnet Lane. The Executive Committee meets at the Umlauf Museum, 605 Robert E. Lee Road, 7 PM the first Monday of most months. Watch the Web site for updates.

**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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