

News Northwood from

www.northwoodna.com

July/August 2016

Zoning & Development

Oak Creek Apartments - City Council Hearings Aug 4 & Aug 11

The rezoning application to change the 7+ acres on Oak Creek to MF-4 for apartments is nearing its end. Next—and last—in the process are the City Council rezoning readings, which are scheduled for August 4 and August 11 at or after 4 PM. Our case could be heard at 4 PM or any time after that; there's no way to know how close to 4 PM it will be heard.

We need everyone to be at City Hall, 301 W. 2nd Street, by 4 PM on both dates. There is parking under City Hall, the entrance is on the west side (Guadalupe); be sure to get your parking ticket validated.

Carpooling available

We are arranging carpooling: if you need a ride or are leaving from Northwood and can carry

passengers, please contact Lynn Rogers, 512.341-8989.

Action needed:

- Call or email Council Member Leslie Pool, 512.978-2107, district7@austintexas.gov. Include "opposed to C14-2016-0023.SH Elysium Park" in the subject line. cc NorthwoodSecretary@gmail.com (details on next page)
- Attend the two City council meetings at City Hall, scheduled for at or after 4 PM:
August 4 is the first rezoning reading where we will speak. Please attend to show your opposition to apartments
- **August 11** is the second and third readings; the Council's vote for after the third reading is the deciding vote.
- Carpooling is available

What happens August 4 - first reading?

The public (developer and us) can discuss why the MF-4 rezoning should be granted or denied. We will have a number of speakers; *we need everyone to attend even if not speaking to show support for our opposition.* We will bring our 1,000 petition signatures.

After the first reading the Council votes to either accept the MF-4 rezoning as is or with changes or they may vote to deny the rezoning. On the first reading, we would require a majority - 6 of 11 votes - to deny the rezoning and stop the process. That is highly unlikely.

2016 Dues are Due! see page 6

Oak Wilt Alert: only prune and paint oak trees when it is very hot or very cold, then prune and immediately paint (you can use latex spray paint). Avoid pruning between February and June when the beetles transmitting the fungus are most active.



What happens August 11 - second/third readings?

The second and third readings will be held on August 11, at or after 4 PM at City Hall. The public cannot speak but we can stand during the reading to show our opposition. Between August 4 and 11 the officers will be again contacting City Council members.

The vote after the third reading is the deciding vote... and since we have a “valid petition” (over 20% of landowners within 200 ft. oppose the rezoning), 75% of the Council must vote to approve the zoning. So if we get 3 “No” votes, the rezoning fails.

Votes required to approve		
1st reading	2nd reading	3rd Reading
6	6	9

Do we have a chance to defeat the zoning?

We are cautiously optimistic, **especially if everyone contacts Council Member Pool and attends the readings.** The workgroup has been hard at work behind the scenes, contacting City staff and meeting with City Council members and/or their staff to explain our position.

Since most Council members are not familiar with this area of Austin, we have invited them and their staff to tour this area; several Council staff members have accepted, and have gained insights about our concerns. As of this writing we have invited our own Council Member Leslie Pool to tour the site and meet with the workgroup to hear our concerns about the rezoning.

Everyone contact Council Member Pool!

Please either email our City Council member Leslie Pool at district7@austintexas.gov or call her at 512.978-2107 (you can leave a message if needed); if emailing, include “opposed to C14-2016-0023.SH Elysium Park” in the subject line and cc NorthwoodSecretary@gmail.com so we can track the emails that have been sent.

In your communications, focus on concerns such as the increased flooding risk, dangers of increased traffic and the location near the frontage road and railroad line, lack of easy access to grocery and public transportation—imagine walking to HEB, a nearby restaurant or the bus stop along the frontage road (the sidewalk is next to the high speed traffic with no protection), NOT property values.

Contacting Council Member Pool is important; her office tracks all contacts from her constituents.

Housing Tax Credits awarded end of July

The planned Elysium Park apartments will include reduced rent units, aka “affordable housing” units (for details see our website, northwoodna.com). To compensate for the reduced rents, the developer has requested 9% Housing Tax Credits from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, aka TDHCA. This is a very competitive process; the HTC awards will be announced at the end of July. The Association officers and others are closely monitoring this.

At the Zoning & Platting Commission hearing (link to the recording is available on our website) the developer’s project manager stated that if they did not get the 9% HTC award they would ask that the MF-4 rezoning application be withdrawn... and HER STATEMENT IS NOT LEGALLY BINDING.

Even if they cancel the project, the rezoning application continues unless the initiator withdraws it; we must assume

Even if they cancel the project, the rezoning application continues unless the initiator withdraws it



this is the case unless we hear otherwise. Thus it is possible the rezoning could continue even if the present project is canceled.

Check the website, NextDoor.com, and Facebook for last minute updates.

What if the rezoning to apartments is granted and the tax credits are not awarded to the Elysium Park project?

The end of July is the preliminary award of housing tax credits. It is possible that by October 2016 some projects that receive a preliminary award are canceled and their funds are available for other projects.

If this tract is rezoned for apartments and enough funds are available, this project could still happen... and with the MF-4 apartments zoning in place, we would not be able to prevent it.

Another possibility: if the new MF-4 zoning is granted, ANY apartments - including more units than currently planned - can be built and we would have little or no influence.

Our only chance to defeat this is NOW!
Contact Council Member Leslie Pool and attend the August 4 and August 11 Council hearings to show your opposition to the proposed change. ♡

St. Francis Anglican Church Update

Anyone who has entered or left Northwood on Oak Creek may have noticed the construction behind the office building. Weather permitting, the target completion date for the church, our newest neighbor, is during October 2016. ♡

**Home & Family Safety
Peacefully Coexisting with Coyotes**

From

austintexas.gov/department/coyotes-central-texas



Coyotes are our outdoor neighbors, and if we understand them, we can coexist peacefully. Based on new research and experiences from other cities, in 2014 Austin changed its policy in dealing with coyotes. Understanding them is important to peacefully living with them as neighbors.

Urban coyotes territory covers one mile square mile. If a coyote is relocated, others will take over that range, and to enforce their new turf they may have more litters and bigger litters than usual. So relocating coyotes may eventually mean more coyotes in the area.

Coyotes are normally nocturnal and also are very adaptable, which means it isn't unusual to see urban coyotes during the day.

They normally only have a den between January and June when they have pups. Otherwise, they sleep under brush, so keeping brush trimmed reduces their sleeping spots around your house.

They are omnivores. Their frequent food includes small furry animals—mice, rats, squirrels—and they eat *anything*: fruit, pet food, bird seed, garbage, small pets and more.

Within their territory, they learn—and remember — which areas have easy meals, such as back (or front) yards with pet food, fruit trees, bird seed and easily accessible food garbage. To discourage coyotes from adding your yard to their easy food list

- If you have fruit trees, pick up fallen fruit daily
- Bird seed attracts rats and mice, which are their natural prey



- BBQ droppings and open compost bins also attract coyotes
- Don't leave pet food outside overnight
- Keep small pets inside and monitor them when they are outside
- Provide secure shelters for poultry or other animals living outside
- Install motion activated sprinklers or outdoor lighting around your property

Doing all of the above encourages coyotes to hunt their normal prey of small furry animals and avoid encounters with humans and pets.

Unfortunately cats and small dogs are also “small furry animals” which coyotes may consider as prey. When walking your (small) dog, avoid retractable leashes, which limit control and keep your pet within 6 feet of yourself. More than that distance and coyotes don't associate the pet with you.

Coyotes can climb fences - add coyote rollers

Coyotes and some dogs can climb chain link fences and even wooden privacy fences less than 6 ft. tall. Add a “coyote roller” to the top of the fence to prevent coyotes and the climbing dogs: using brackets and wire, attach PVC pipes to the top of the fence so they roll freely. As the animal reaches the top of the fence and puts their weight on the roller, they fall backwards. The website coyoteroller.com sells kits with steel pipes and has photos; hardware stores also sell the brackets, wire and PVC.

Encounter a Coyote? Haze them!

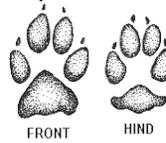
Hazing a coyote encourages them to return to their natural behaviors without harming people or pets.

- Make eye contact, yell and wave your arms. You want the coyote to know the behavior is directed at it. Waving your arms will make you seem bigger.

- Use noisemakers such as whistles, air horns, a “shaker” can full of small rocks (or something similar), or bang something like pots and pans together.
- If the coyote does not leave immediately, throw non-edible objects near it. Use small rocks, sticks or tennis balls. Remember, the goal is not to hurt the coyote, you want to get it to leave and associate humans with unpredictable “scary” behavior.
- Spray the coyote with a water hose, water guns or spray bottles. Or use a mixture of water and vinegar, pepper spray or bear repellent.
- Do NOT haze a coyote that is sick, injured, is a pup or is displaying acceptable coyote behavior.

If the coyote does not leave after escalating hazing efforts, maintain eye contact and back away slowly. Notify 311 immediately. Do NOT turn around and run; that is prey behavior and the coyote may chase—and they are *very* fast runners.

Coyote tracks are frequently confused with dog



tracks. One clue: dog tracks often wander; coyote tracks usually follow a straight line through their territory.

For questions call the City's Wildlife Education contact, 512-978-0514. ☎

Neighborhood News

Balcones Park Updates

From balconespark.org

We met our goal of raising \$15,000 and secured the \$200,000 in grants from Austin Park Foundation and Neighborhood Partnering Program and Austin's Parks & Rec Dept! The support and generosity was astounding. We had 300+ donors including First State Bank Central Texas, Amplify Credit Union,



& Textruss and raised more than \$25,000 in less than 2 months - with donations still coming in. We had over 480 sign the petition to get improvements and amassed an email list of over 1,100 passionate Park Users in just a few short months while also meeting a large number of the volunteer hours needed in just 4 months!

While researching the improvements, we learned that our park's playground is among the oldest and smallest in the city for a district park, which brought us full circle to realize that adding an enhancement (the pavilion) to an asset that is clearly at the end of its life is not in the best interest of our park's users. Therefore we approached PARD, Playground Dept and Council Member Pool to see what our options are moving forward.

PARD has allowed us to submit a Concept Plan, which takes 4-9 months and is much less costly instead of a Master Plan which requires 2-5 years due to the Grant Monies Pending, timeline and cost. Since we will be relocating the playground and pavilion, through community input we need to make sure we find the right spot to make the best park possible.

We will have several community input meetings on the new playground location and other details. We have a tight timeline; we need to get this in as close to October as possible since PARD's Fiscal Year starts over at that time and gives us the best chance for the funds. But we can do it!

If you are interested in joining the park committee, call 512-636-9176 or email mnaboard@milwoodna.com.

Our Park is now slated to get:

- pool shade to be installed Fall 2016 / Spring 2017 to be ready for the next summer season

- A pavilion by Fall 2017 or Spring 2018
- A new, larger playground, most likely in a new location by Winter 2017 or early Spring 2018. ☺

Support Balcones Park signs

Many thanks to all who support the Balcones Park improvements and show their support with the yard signs. If you have a sign and are ready to return it, deliver it to 13025 Silver Creek. ☺

General & Continuing News

Another great 4th of July parade

A fun time was had by all at the July 4th neighborhood parade. The group included over 50 marchers with numerous children, babies and dogs, many of whom dressed in red white and blue. Some neighbors on the route brought out chairs to watch the parade and wave flags as we passed on foot, on bicycles, in wagons and strollers.

The parade ended at a front yard on Poquoson; a group of Poquoson neighbors had set up chairs and refreshments; the Neighborhood Association also contributed cookies and water. Everyone enjoyed these while visiting with neighbors. Many thanks to the Poquoson folks for setting this up. ☺

Join the Northwood Facebook and NextDoor discussion groups!

Join the Nextdoor Northwood neighborhood group and the Facebook groups (see website) to stay updated on the latest - from lost/found pets (a number of pets have been reunited with their families thanks to "found" posts), free/for sale items, recommendations for home repair and more to alerts of suspicious persons. They both also have apps for smart phones. ☺





2016 Due\$ are due

The 2016 dues are due. They are \$15 and are for the calendar year 2016. The dues pay for the gift certificates for the yard of the month and help pay for the newsletter and some of the special activities.

Dues must be current to be eligible for financial assistance for treatment of oak wilt

To join the Northwood Neighborhood Association, just complete the form on the back of this newsletter and mail a check to the treasurer at the address listed on the form, or pay the dues through PayPal on the web site, northwoodna.com. A Texas-size Thank You! to everyone who has paid their dues! ☺

Yard of the Month resumes next issue

We are very fortunate in our neighborhood to have so many people take such pride in the presence of their lawns. Summer winners will be announced in the next newsletter.

Things that we look for include any of the following: healthy yard, trimmed and edged grass, xeriscape layouts, whimsical treats and/or flowering growth. (Also, no equipment left out or piles of leaves.) Judging will usually occur during the week to allow for weekend yard work. Good luck, and thank you to all who help keep our neighborhood beautiful! Along with the yard sign and an article in the newsletter, winners who have paid their dues receive a gift card from a garden store. ☺

Upcoming Events

Fall Garage Sale Oct. 8

The fall garage sale is scheduled for Saturday, October 10. Start gathering all those unused items and outgrown or never worn clothes! The sign-up will be held for approximately two weeks before October 8. ☺

Neighborhood Police contact

The police contact for Northwood is Officer Michael Whetston. Contact him at 512.974-5553 or Michael.Whetston@austintexas.gov. To just report an incident, call 311 or use the 311 mobile phone app. ☺

Police report

The City's Crime Viewer is available at www.austintexas.gov/GIS/CrimeViewer/. You can subscribe to a daily crime report for any area (such as for 1 mile) around your address at spotcrime.com.

Street	Crime	Time
<i>June</i>		
Silver Creek	Assault by contact Fam/dating	8:47
Silver creek	Burglary of vehicle	12:49
Palomar	Death from natural causes	1232
Pegasus	Family disturbance	20:49
Burr Oak	Theft	12:56

Any time you see a person or vehicle that doesn't seem to belong, get as detailed a description as possible and notify the police – call 311 (or 911 if they are still present). And if you can safely do so, take a photo. ☺

Calendar

October	8	Fall Garage Sale
December		Holiday Yard of the Month



Classified Ad rates:	
Business card	\$15
1/4 page	\$35
1/2 page	\$60
Full page	\$85

Officers:
 President Leanna Lang 512.680.6977
 NorthwoodPresident@gmail.com
 Vice President Jeanie Beckham 512.371.7014
 NorthwoodVicePresident@gmail.com
 Secretary Donna Blumberg 512.244-7500
 NorthwoodSecretary@gmail.com
 Treasurer Nancy Grijalva 512.218-9492
 NorthwoodTreasurer@gmail.com

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 Editor Donna Blumberg 512.244-7500
 northwoodna@gmail.com

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Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

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Make check payable to Northwood Neighborhood Association and mail to Nancy Grijalva, 4507 Tamarack Trail, Austin, TX 78727 (do not drop in the Association mailbox, it isn't waterproof). Be sure to join the Northwood NextDoor group to get updates, learn about lost/found pets and more at www.NextDoor.com and our Facebook group (see the website, www.northwoodna.com for a link).

Your REALTOR® and Neighbor on Timberside



*Your
real estate goals
are
my priority*

I've called Northwood home for over 24 years and have been a REALTOR® for 15. We live in one of the most unique and desirable neighborhoods in North Austin.

Austin is currently a seller's market and I would love the opportunity to meet with you if you're considering selling or buying. I'll focus on your individual needs and provide you with the highest level of service.

Linda Holmbeck

ABR, CRS, GRI, REALTOR®

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NORTHWOOD REAL ESTATE UPDATE

(As of 07/04/16)

By Linda Holmbeck, REALTOR® - Horizon Realty Austin

Northwood Numbers (Based on sales data from the last 90 days)

- 9 – Homes sold in Northwood
- 2 – Active listings on the market in Northwood
- 2 – Pending listing on the market in Northwood
- 13 – Average number of days homes in Northwood spent on the market
- \$185.46 – Average sold price per square foot in Northwood
- \$320,544 – Average sales price for homes sold in Northwood

Austin Area Market Stats for May, 2016 (Per latest data released by The Austin Board of Realtors®)

- 2909 – Single-family homes sold (up 10% from May, 2015)
- \$288,085 – Median price for single-family homes (up 5% from May, 2015)
- 40 – Average # of days single-family homes spent on market (down 3 days from May, 2015)
- 5,725 – Active single-family home listings on the market (up 5% from May, 2015)
- 2.4 – Months of inventory of single-family homes (no change from May, 2015)
- \$1.05 Billion – Total dollar volume of single-family properties sold (up 12% from May, 2015)

Single-family home sales rose again across the Austin-Round Rock Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) in May 2016, according to the Austin Board of REALTORS®. “Housing demand continues to be at an all-time high in the Central Texas region, with properties priced under \$500,000 selling rapidly,” said **Aaron Farmer**, 2016 President of ABOR. In the five-county MSA, single-family home sales rose 9.9 percent year-over-year.

Within the City of Austin, high home prices and critically low inventory have resulted in more homebuyers looking outside the city limits for more affordable priced housing. “Austin-Round Rock unemployment recently hit a 16-year low, largely thanks to Austin’s booming tech sector,” said **Eldon Rude**, principal at 360 Real Estate Analytics. “Tech companies such as Apple Computer continue to fuel employment growth in Northwest Austin and in turn, are driving home sales growth in southeast Williamson County where homes are less expensive and new home development continues to be strong.”

The market in Northwood continued to be active during the last 90 days with nine houses closed and two listings currently pending. Active listings on the market in Northwood are priced from \$309,900 to \$369,900.



Linda Holmbeck

ABR, CRS, GRI, REALTOR®
512-653-4644

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