



# News Northwood from

[www.northwoodna.com](http://www.northwoodna.com)

July/August 2017

## *Zoning & Development*

### **Oak Creek (Elysium) Apartments update**

#### ***Background - multifamily zoning approved***

Earlier this year with a developer's plan of building 90 apartments, most of which are reduced rent ("affordable") on the undeveloped 7 acres at the eastern side of Oak Creek, the City Council unanimously voted to change the zoning to MF-4, over the strenuous objections of Northwood and nearby neighborhoods.

#### ***Tax credits not yet awarded***

The developer must still obtain the Housing Tax Credits (HTCs) from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs for their project, Elysium Grand. There are 9% and 4% HTCs; there are numerous projects across the state competing for the 9%. Points are awarded or subtracted for numerous categories, including support or opposition of involved registered neighborhoods. A single point can make the difference between receiving the 9% tax credits or not. A project that does not receive the 9% HTCs may apply for the non-competitive 4% tax credits. (For details on these programs, visit the TDHCA's website, [www.tdhca.state.tx.us/multifamily/](http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/multifamily/). The website's 9% page has spreadsheets available for download that list all projects and their scores.)

Northwood neighbors have been strongly against this project; many neighbors believe the site is not suitable for any apartments. We submitted a QCP (Quantifiable Community Packet) opposing the HTCs for the project. This initially resulted in -4 points for the project. Then the developer appealed that scoring; it was reversed.

#### ***Current status***

Elysium is now ranked 5. The top 3 projects get funded so as of this writing, Elysium is not in the money. But they are tied with the 3rd and 4th projects.

As soon as we became aware that our QCP was discounted, the Northwood Board had our attorney write a letter to the executive director of the TDHCA explaining why our QCP should be counted (the reasons follow); they did not change their decision. A couple of officers met with the executive director and multifamily housing program director to explain; they again ruled in favor of the developer.

It is possible for one of the top-ranked projects to drop out, which could result in Elysium being funded. With this in mind, several Association

2017 Dues are Due! see page 5

**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.



officers and a zoning committee member attended the TDHCA July 13 hearing to speak to the TDHCA Board about why our QCP was not accepted. Elysium was not on the agenda so we were only able to speak at the very end during the public comments. We explained our reasons (below). In brief, the QAP rules can be interpreted in more than one way; we wanted the Board to be aware of how these different interpretations can affect neighborhoods who have submitted a QCP.

### ***Reasons for QCP disqualification***

The reason our QCP was suddenly disqualified all comes down to an interpretation of a certain rule in the Qualified Application Plan, QAP. The QAP gives the rules for the point systems for the 9% tax credits.

Before we submitted our QCP, we asked the TDHCA to clarify rules for when our neighborhood organization had to be on file with the Secretary of State in order for our QCP to count. Per TDHCA staff, we needed to be registered with the SOS by March 1; we registered with them in February. We were also told to provide proof of existence prior to Jan 9; we included a 2012 newsletter.

The QCP packet written by the TDHCA asks if the neighborhood was on record by March 1 as this was the deadline to be on record. The QCP packet also states that if an organization was on record with the SOS after Jan 9th, it needs to provide evidence of existence prior to Jan 9 by showing newsletters or other documentation.

We followed all the rules and submitted all documentation required to the best of our ability.

When the TDHCA reviewed all of our documents, we met all the criteria for the QCP to count. However, on May 8th, the developer wrote a letter of appeal to the Executive Director which interpreted the meaning of the rule in the QAP

differently. The developer stated the rule in the QAP meant we had to be on record with the Secretary of State by Jan 9 to have our QCP accepted and for our organization to exist prior to Jan 9. The TDHCA decided after the appeal that we did not exist prior to Jan 9 because we were not on record with the Secretary of State by Jan 9.

During the TDHCA Board meeting we listened to other developers talk argue about interpretation of rules, down to the level of discussing the definition of the word “and” when used in a certain context.

When we were able to speak at the end of the TDHCA Board meeting, we explained our interpretation of the rules, how they differed from the developer’s interpretation and the result - our QCP no longer counted. Then we thanked the Board for their attention and left. We did not expect any action at that time; our goal was to get our concerns on the record. Hopefully our concerns may be addressed in next year’s QAP and rules for neighborhoods, especially if Elysium again requests HTCs. The meeting transcript will eventually be posted at <https://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/board/meetings.htm>

We will continue to monitor the HTCs and will post updates in NextDoor. We may have to again engage the services of an attorney, so **please pay your dues!** Either clip and use the form in this newsletter or go to our website, northwoodna.com, and pay with PayPal. ☺

## ***Home & Family Safety*** **Community Crime & Safety Meeting Notes**

Based on the number of “same here” replies to the recent “car broken into” NextDoor post, it appears that there are a number of incidents happening in this part of town. In mid July Officer Henry “Hank” Moreno (the Northwood APD contact) and Officer Fox met with people from nearby neighborhoods to provide updates and answer questions.. The



following is from notes from the meeting by a Lamplight Village neighbor on NextDoor:

There have been a number of property crimes, theft of packages and mail (mailbox theft is a federal crime, not APD's oversight) and car burglaries. Neighbor perception is that there are more crimes than this time last year; crime stats are not available.

Several individuals have shown up on multiple home security cameras but none are identified yet. It's possible some of these incidents may be due to organized crime rings that travel from town to town sweeping neighborhoods. Juveniles who are out of school may also be part of the cause.

To combat the crime increase, bait bicycles and motor cycles have been placed and unmarked cars and bicycle officers are patrolling the area.

What to do? Call 911 if you see anything suspicious. The 911 operator can determine if the situation is emergency or non-emergency. If the event is in progress, call 911. If you see a suspicious person who appears to be casing houses, call 911.

If you notice something later (such in the morning seeing a car was broken into overnight), call 311 or file the report online. If you are victim of a crime, **FILE A REPORT!** Police need that information to identify patterns and get the tools needed to prevent and solve other crimes.

Calling the police means patrol cars in the neighborhood and it lets criminals know your neighborhood is watchful; criminals learn to avoid that area.

**Basic Crime Prevention:**

- Lock your doors (cars and home)
- If you have a dog and it starts barking a lot, be alert.

- Hide your stuff. Don't leave anything visible in your car. Don't leave clues to what you "might" have inside your home or garage. Crooks will "window shop" to see if you have anything that could be of value.
- Consider home safety investments: Motion Sensor lights, security systems and/or "Ring" Doorbell from V-tech. <https://ring.com>
- If you have packages delivered to your home, avoid letting them sit on the porch - schedule deliveries when you are home or to your work or somewhere you know they will be received by a person and not just left sitting there.
- If you are going out of town, order online for your mail to be held until your return through USPS.gov.
- FREE HOME INSPECTION - Officer Moreno will inspect your home to look for areas of vulnerability and give you home security suggestions. Just call 512-974-4767 or email, [henry.moreno@austintexas.gov](mailto:henry.moreno@austintexas.gov) to schedule.
- Get to know your neighbors. Look out for them and they can look out for you. 🤝



**30 Mailbox Units vandalized during July**

From [cbsaustin.com/news/local/usps-30-austin-mailbox-units-damagedvandalized-in-july](https://cbsaustin.com/news/local/usps-30-austin-mailbox-units-damagedvandalized-in-july)

A number of community mailboxes have been vandalized or damaged in July. Community mailboxes are easy targets - thieves can just pry off the back of one box and have access to dozens of people's mail. In the Wells Branch neighborhood this is happening in the predawn hours when no one else is out.

The thieves know to target the mailboxes at the first of the month when social security and other checks are mailed or mid month when personal information arrives.





If your mail is delivered to a community mailboxes, be sure to check it daily. ☞

**Get online notification about your mail**

Want to know what's in your mailbox today? Sign up for a free email using the USPS Informed Delivery system, <https://informedelivery.usps.com>.



Per the website, "Black and white images of your actual letter-sized mail pieces, processed by USPS® sorting equipment, will be provided to you each morning." This can be helpful if you are expecting an important piece of mail and/or are traveling. ☞

*Neighborhood News*

**Chiggers**

From Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, Wizzie Brown [www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com](http://www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com)

Chiggers are the immature stage of a mite. They climb onto people walking through infested areas, crawl upwards, and wander around the body seeking a good site to settle down and feed. Feeding preference for these mites is in areas where skin is thinnest or where clothing fits tightly, such as the ankles, waist, behind the knees, and the groin area.



Chiggers do not burrow into skin as many people believe, so "smothering" them with nail polish is useless. When chiggers feed, they inject a digestive enzyme that breaks down skin cells which are then eaten. Itching and redness is caused by our body reacting to the enzymes injected into our skin. Itching typically begins 3-6 hours after being bitten, peaks at 24 hours, and can last up to two weeks.

The best way to avoid getting chiggers is to avoid infested areas. Since this is not always possible, here are some other things to try:

Wear protective clothing- tightly woven items that fit loosely; including long sleeves & pants; shoes or boots

- Tuck pant legs into boots
- Avoid sitting on the ground
- Remove & launder clothing ASAP after being in infested areas
- Shower/ bathe after being in an infested area; scrub vigorously with a washcloth
- Use an insect repellent with DEET or picaridin

To treat chigger infestations around the home try the following:

- Keep the lawn trimmed
- Maintain vegetation; do not allow weeds to grow up & keep brush cleared
- Use targeted residual pesticide sprays, usually pyrethroids

For chigger bites:

- Do not scratch pustules; opening pustule might lead to infection
- Use oral antihistamines or topical anti-itch creams to relieve itching sensation

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. ☞



## 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 60 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. &



### 2017 Due\$ are due

The 2017 dues are due. They are \$20 and are for the calendar year 2017. The dues pay for the gift certificates for the yard of the month, the website fees 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](http://northwoodna.com). A Texas-size Thank You! to everyone who has paid their dues! &

## Upcoming Events

### Fall Garage Sale Oct. 14

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 14. &

### Neighborhood Police contact

The police contact for Northwood is Officer Henry "Hank" Moreno. Contact him at 512.974-4767 or [henry.moreno@austintexas.gov](mailto:henry.moreno@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/](http://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](http://spotcrime.com).

Street	Crime	Time
<i>May</i>		
Oak Creek Dr.	Violation City ordinance – Other	10:16
Palfrey	Resisting arrest or search	12:14
<i>June</i>		
Burr Oak	Burglary of Vehicle	7:50
Oak Bend	Family disturbance	23:57
Palomar	Burglary of vehicle	11:16



Palomar	Burglary of vehicle	10:02
Silver Creek	Burglary of Vehicle	16:24
Tamarack	DWI	17:01
<i>July</i>		
Burr Oak	Assault w/injury – family/date violence	20:57
Tamarack	Burglary of Vehicle	9:13

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 14 Fall Garage Sale  
 December Holiday Yard of the Month

<b>Officers:</b>		
President	Leanna Lang	512.680.6977
	NorthwoodPresident@gmail.com	
Vice President	Jo Ann Bredl	512-914-8106
	NorthwoodVicePresident@gmail.com	
Secretary	Donna Blumberg	512.244-7500
	NorthwoodSecretary@gmail.com	
Treasurer	Nancy Grijalva	512.218-9492
	NorthwoodTreasurer@gmail.com	
The News from Northwood is a publication of the Northwood Neighborhood Association		
Editor Donna Blumberg 512.244-7500		
northwoodna@gmail.com		

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

**Northwood dues \$20.00**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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](http://www.NextDoor.com) and our Facebook group (see the website, [www.northwoodna.com](http://www.northwoodna.com) for a link).

## *Your Realtor® and Neighbor on Timberside Dr*



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program saves you  
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Call me for details!**

I've called Northwood home for over 25 years and have been a REALTOR® for 16. We live in one of the most unique and desirable neighborhoods in North Austin.

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

**Linda Holmbeck**

**ABR, CRS, GRI, REALTOR®**

[www.austinhomesbylinda.com](http://www.austinhomesbylinda.com)

[www.facebook.com/AustinHomesByLinda](http://www.facebook.com/AustinHomesByLinda)

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# NORTHWOOD REAL ESTATE UPDATE

(As of 07/20/17)

By Linda Holmbeck, REALTOR® - Horizon Realty Austin

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

- 8 – Homes sold in Northwood
- 4 – Active listings on the market in Northwood
- 4 – Pending listings on the market in Northwood
- 12 – Average number of days homes in Northwood spent on the market
- \$203.57 – Average sold price per square foot in Northwood
- \$356,812 – Average sales price for homes sold in Northwood

## Austin Area Market Stats for June, 2017 (Per latest data released by The Austin Board of Realtors®)

- 3415 – Single-family homes sold volume (up 4% from June, 2016)
- \$314,000 – Median price for single-family homes (up 7% from June, 2016)
- 45 – Average number of days homes spent on market (up 2 days from June, 2016)
- 3.1 – Months of inventory (up 0.5 months from June, 2016)
- \$1,347,423,877 – Total sales dollar volume (up 12% from June, 2016)

Central Texas home prices continued to increase steadily while single-family home sales slowed down in the first half of 2017 according to the Mid-Year 2017 Central Texas Housing Market Report. “The Central Texas housing market continued to show signs of normalization in the first half of the year, with positive but more moderate gains in sales activity,” said Brandy Guthrie, President of the Austin Board of REALTORS®. “Homes are spending more time on the market and housing inventory levels have slowly increased throughout the year. “

Market activity for single-family housing in June maintained steady growth with a home sales volume increase of 4.4 percent year-over-year to 3,415 sales. The median sales price rose 6.6 percent to \$314,000 during the same time frame while the monthly housing inventory jumped 0.5 months annually to 3.1 months of inventory (6.5 months is considered a balanced market).

Summer sales in Northwood are brisk once again this year with the average sales price up 9% from June, 2016. There are currently four active listings on the market in Northwood ranging from \$285,000 to \$375,000.

Note: “Like” and follow me on Facebook for the latest information on the Austin housing market as well as helpful news about real estate: [www.facebook.com/AustinHomesByLinda](http://www.facebook.com/AustinHomesByLinda).



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A u s t i n



*Your real estate goals  
are my priority.*