

Cherrywood Neighborhood Association Quarterly Meeting

OPEN TO ALL RESIDENTS OF CHERRYWOOD

> Presentation from Ecology Action

> Democratic nominees for District 46 State Representative speak:

Dawna Dukes (incumbent) and challenger Brian Thompson

**Wednesday
February 20**

6:30–8:00pm

MAPLEWOOD ELEMENTARY LIBRARY

The quarterly newsletter for the Cherrywood Neighborhood Association
Feb 2008 | **Volume 14, Number 2** | cherrywood.org



The Road to a Block Party *by Jen Spencer*

When my husband and I moved on to Breeze Terrace two years ago, we felt like we were meant for this neighborhood and this house. Everything about it just felt right.

There are so many great things to do in Cherrywood, and there are so many ways to get involved. It took me a year or so to really seek out how I could participate, but once I did, I fell in love with this neighborhood and its people even more.

For me, it started last September. I began wondering how we could better embrace the heritage of Cherrywood and the surrounding area while new buildings, higher housing costs, and an influx of new Austinites are daily realities.

I started calling local places. I called a few local churches and got the contact information of old cohorts in the area. I talked to Holy Cross, David's Chapel, and Tommy Wyatt, Editor of the "The Villager," who spent some time giving me some info about the area and their annual events and celebrations. I spoke to a professor at UT (eastustinstories.org) that works with his students to capture the stories of the East Side through documentaries. Everyone was extremely generous and kind with their time.

I began to see what was at the heart of the dilemma for me. I was talking about it from outside my neighborhood versus being a part of the community. I wasn't really connecting with my neighbors. I knew a few of them, but how was I going to embrace the community when I didn't know anyone?

One of the local ministers introduced me to a Cherrywood resident who has lived in Cherrywood for 41 years! We met at Clementine's and after a few hours of hearing about the history and her experience with Cherrywood, an idea for a Community BBQ was born. After recruiting a few avid BBQ'ers who were also interested in getting to know their neighbors, we had a living, breathing event. We decided to keep it small with about 5 streets in our area of Cherrywood.

We spent a few days canvassing the neighborhood with fliers, introducing ourselves to our neighbors and encouraging interested and un-interested parties to pass along the news.

The result was a lovely afternoon full of multi-generational conversation, new faces, fun babies, great food (I have to mention the food: brisket, sausage, cupcakes, beans, a bratwurst casserole, salads, 6 layer dip, etc.), and an early evening crossover to chats and laughter around a fire.

Why share the story of the BBQ? Because it's time to take it outside of our 5 streets and include other Cherrywood folks as well. Several neighbors have been interested in closing down a street and creating a block party in Cherrywood in late spring or early summer of this year. One generous neighbor has already offered to get the permit.

If this sounds fun to you, send me an email (jenspencercoaches@mac.com). Let me know what you want this block party to be like: What games could we play? What food could we eat? Let's spend some time together. After all, it's our home! 🏡

Cherrywood Calendar

February

- 2/6 6:30 Planning & Zoning Committee, Location TBD
- 2/10 10:00 Second Sunday at Asbury UMC (Food Bank Collection)
- 2/13 6:30 CNA Steering Committee, Location TBD
- 2/19 6:30 Upper Boggy Creek Meeting at Kleberg Hall
- 2/20 6:30 CNA Quarterly Meeting at Maplewood Elementary**

March

- 3/5 6:30 Planning & Zoning Committee, Location TBD
- 3/9 10:00 Second Sunday at Asbury UMC (Food Bank Collection)
- 3/12 6:30 CNA Steering Committee, Location TBD
- 3/18 6:30 Upper Boggy Creek Meeting at Kleberg Hall

April

- 4/2 6:30 Planning & Zoning Committee, Location TBD
- 4/9 6:30 CNA Steering Committee, Location TBD
- 4/13 10:00 Second Sunday at Asbury UMC (Food Bank Collection)
- 4/22 6:30 Upper Boggy Creek Meeting at Kleberg Hall

If you would like your event included here, contact textimage@mac.com

Steering Committee		
Chair	Summer McKee	426-3934
Vice Chair	Julie Winckler	826-0477
Secretary	Jeremy Mazur	789-9862
Treasurer	Rebecca Kohout	477-9560

Members: Michael Bray, David Greene, Girard Kinney, Glenn Reed, Mark Schiff, Tom Wald

Communications		
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More details at cherrywood.org click on **committees**

1715 Giles Resubdivision by Girard Kinney

Some time ago, the 16k+sf lot at 1715 Giles was purchased, and until recently the new owner rented out the small one story house that existed for many years on the lot. Over the last year, the owners decided that they would like to remove the existing building, divide the lot into two 8k+sf lots, and then sell the lots or, if they were unsuccessful in selling them at a price that could earn them a profit, build on them and sell the improved lots. They applied for a demolition permit and began the process to re-subdivide the lots. Unfortunately, neither the application for a demolition permit, nor the filing of a resubdivision, trigger a requirement to notify the neighborhood. We were all unaware that this was happening until a few weeks before a public Planning Commission hearing was to be held and notice was finally sent to adjacent property owners and CNA. At the first hearing, in December, we were able to get a postponement until the 16 January PC meeting based on the fact that we had not had time to thoroughly research the case to see if there were any illegalities which might allow the Commissioners to oppose the resubdivision.

From the first hearing to the second hearing, we did some research. The lot backs up to a creek and until recently the majority of the lot was in the 100 year flood plain, which would have made it impossible to build even the house that existed there by current rules, but a recalculation of the Flood Plain within the last couple of years actually LOWERED the 100 year flood plain line in the Boggy Creek watershed, and thus many properties which were previously unbuildable suddenly became buildable or, in cases like the Giles lot, the amount of buildable area on some properties increased. On the Giles lot; where previously the flood plain had come up very

close to the rear of the house that existed there, the new calculations shifted that line down and away from the street toward the creek, yielding much more buildable area; enough that two legal lots, with enough room for two legal residential structures (even perhaps duplexes) to be built. Our research, which was not exhaustive, did reveal that the City Flood Plain staff had looked at the entire issue of the flood plain and buildable area, and had concluded that with the new easement placed on the lots, staff could recommend this subdivision (and in fact we are told that they are bound by law to do so since it met all statutory requirements). At this point we reported back that it is clear that we would NOT be able to prevent the creation of the two lots.

At the P&Z Committee meeting before the PC hearing, our committee voted to support the resubdivision, both because there was nothing we could do to stop it AND because the Committee agreed with Glenn Reed (P&Z Committee Chair) conclusion (with which I agree) that given the fact that there IS going to be another house built on that lot, we are better off with there being two, smaller, lots there.

At the hearing, the item was on the Consent agenda, but was pulled for discussion when some neighbors who were not in agreement with the decision made by the P&Z Committee signed up in opposition, meaning that it would be heard much later, after hearing many other cases and then from all speakers. When the item came up late that Tuesday night, Glenn Reed and I spoke first, articulating both the reasons that our Committee had supported the case after having done our research to assure ourselves that it is apparently a legal subdivision and therefore neither Staff nor Commission could legally oppose it. Two neighbors then spoke

against the case and requested another postponement. The Commission's vote was unanimous, as I knew it would be, in approval of the resubdivision of the lot.

Some things that we learned during our research period between the two hearings may be of interest. If left as a single lot, this very large lot, based on current economics and demand, would certainly guarantee a HUGE structure on that 16K+sf lot. Even with the McMansion ordinance, which for the first time in Austin history actually limits the FAR (Floor Area Ratio) of a residence, and the "envelope" that limits the volume of the structure, this very large lot would guarantee a structure that totally dwarfs everything around it. Two lots, on the other hand, will be so narrow that the McMansion ordinance and the new side yard setbacks that will occur between the two lots will severely limit the size of the two structures that can be built. And, instead of another house that only a small percentage of Austin residents can afford, there will be at least two, and if they build duplexes, four relatively affordable residences will become available (whether for sale or rent). Also it is very likely, in our opinion, that whoever builds on those two lots will probably have to get variances at the Board of Adjustment and/or the Residential Design Commission and, if so, we will then have the opportunity to exact some requirements that will be to our benefit. If variances are sought, in return for our support we can, for instance, require design configuration and character features, as well as provision of adequate off street parking, that we feel will make the structures more compatible with the neighborhood. True, they will almost assuredly be two story, and they may be duplexes, but in our opinion, the outcome is the best that was possible in this situation. ☺

CHERRYWOOD.ORG

Cherrywood maintains an informative Web site: cherrywood.org. You'll find a Calendar of local events, a *Library* of useful downloads, the popular *Recommendations* list (babysitters, plumbers, etc.), and many other links. This is our neighborhood information vault. Also you'll find a link to "NeighborNet", our Cherrywood Listserv. With over 700 subscribers in the yahoogroup, you can share your opinion, read about what's on your neighbors minds, search the archive, and more! Stay informed. Become involved. Questions? Contact jules.vieau@gmail.com.

SC(atterings)... by David Greene

A few quick updates on Steering Committee (or related) activities not covered elsewhere in this issue:

Citizens on Patrol

This is actually an initiative led by Eve Richter that has emerged out of NeighborNet, and is not part of the SC (yet!). Austin Police has recently revived this volunteer monitoring program—participants will be trained in safety and communication with APD, and have car magnets, radios, and reflective vests to help become a visible presence to help deter crime in the neighborhood. There's a training scheduled for Feb. 2, 8am–2pm at the APD substation at 812 Springdale. Kudos to Eve (916-752-8795) for organizing this.

Communications

The SC is working to update or improve its various communication resources—from the Flea, website, and NeighborNet to signage, block captains, and welcome booklets. We've had a couple of volunteers step up to lend specific help with the website and editing the Flea as the current editor & designer step down – thanks Jennifer and David for your quality work!

Homelessness

Neighbors organized an informative panel discussion on homeless-

ness in Austin, with attention given to affordable housing needs, mental health services, recovery & re-entry support, and enforcement. Turns out many Cherrywooders are involved professionally in these fields, and we will be working in the coming year to identify specific projects to work on, from recruiting volunteers to retaining or improving the affordable housing stock within Cherrywood.

New SC, Nominations

Finally, we added some new members to the SC in November and December—Julie Winckler and Jeremy Mazur stepped up and quickly agreed to join Summer McKee and Rebecca Kohout as the officers for 2008—Summer's hit the ground running. Mark Schiff has been able to rejoin the SC after a brief hiatus, but we still have three vacancies.

So here's the pitch: if you have a pet project for the neighborhood, if you have an interest in keeping Cherrywood a great central neighborhood, consider serving on the SC—your obligations start at a monthly 1.5-hour evening meeting, but the benefits are being quickly brought up to speed on what's going on, what's been tried, what's being envisioned in the neighborhood. And we'll benefit from your contribution. Contact me at 828-7450, dmgreene@igc.org for more details. ☺



Have you seen these Yellow Signs?

Courtesy of Austin's Public Works Department, these warnings recently popped up in our neighborhood to warn about possible flooding. A 5-year storm event has a 20% chance of occurring in any given year with a magnitude of 4.99 inches in 24 hours. To view a Floodplain map: coagis1.ci.austin.tx.us/website/NewFloodplain/viewer.htm

Work began in January to improve the street light system along Airport Boulevard from IH-35 to 38 1/2 Street. Periodic closures of the boulevard's inside lanes are necessary, but only during off-peak traffic hours. This project is scheduled to finish by the spring.

Mueller UPDATE by Rick Krivoniak

An elementary school has been shown on plans for Mueller for over seven years, yet the **Austin Independent School District is considering removing a Mueller school from the 2008 bond package.** This after such a school was subsequently dropped as one of the three schools included in the 2004 bond package. The AISD Board will be making their decision on the ballot wording by the end of February for the May 10th vote. Planning now for a school at Mueller, which would open at the earliest in the fall of 2010, will keep Blanton Elementary from being overcrowded as Mueller develops and new families continue to move into Windsor Park. Learn more at: austin.isd.tenet.edu/inside/2004bond/2008bond/.

The Mueller Neighborhoods Coalition hosts a **March Primary Candidate Forum** on Monday, February 25th, from 6 to 7:30 pm at the Austin Studios screening room. The two Democratic candidates for State Representative District 46 are incumbent Dawnna Dukes and challenger Brian Thompson. No Republicans are running. State Sen. Kirk Watson and Congressman Lloyd Doggett have been invited, though neither faces an opponent. The Studios are at 1901 E. 51st Street. Go through the gates and around the former hangar at your right. The screening room is just beyond another gate in a set of portable buildings.



Celeste and Ananda Fry Myhre welcome an easier path to take along East 38 1/2 Street with the newly installed curbcut near Half Penny. Thanks Sonny Poole and Austin Energy!

Site preparation for the **Mueller Home Depot** at 51st and IH-35 is underway. The Mueller Commission meets 6 pm on February 12th, at 625 East 10th St., Room 105. On the agenda is a short report from Home Depot, the City and Catellus regarding day laborers. The City of Austin should feel obligated to be involved, since they located the nearby First Workers site over much community protest, have failed to support it as originally promised, and because the City's purchase of the St. John's Home Depot site is displacing day laborers.

The two **51st Street Water Tower** bids came in above what the Austin Water Utility expected. The Composite (concrete base) Tower came in at \$7,946,000, while the Steel Tower we hoped for came in at \$15,942,000, putting it out of the realm of possibility.

AWU has agreed to have Cotera + Reed Architects present to the Project Advisory Committee some landscaping and lighting enhancements to the Composite design. Those will be recommended to the City Council when the project is on their agenda, likely some time in February. Thanks to all who were involved and sent postcards to the City Council. We fought a good fight and have a better tower than would have been built without your participation.

AISD Performing Arts Center by Jim Walker

Many of you may have noticed the two stories and Statesman editorial on 1/17 about the rumor of a new AISD Performing Arts Center (PAC) on Mueller land, based on an offer from a local developer and philanthropist Dick Rathgeber (statesman.com/opinion). Trouble is, the Statesman editorial is still running on misinformation, including the fact that Mr. Rathgeber isn't really in a position to make such an offer. I encourage folks to join groups (yahoo.com/search?query=mueller+redvelopment), write letters to the editor, or just continue to follow the issue. Here are several main points to consider:

We need a Mueller Elementary School named in the bond. The City and Catellus have always (20 years) had 10 acres set aside for AISD. This is an effort to invest in planned growth vs. waiting for critical urgency. New families are moving into Mueller at a rate to support the Elementary. While it may be true that there is excess capacity in elementaries around Mueller (including some at Maplewood) this seems largely a function of transfers out of the area, which speaks to the need for a new commitment from all of us to making all Mueller area elementaries into true neighborhood schools that are all successful and desirable

If there is a District PAC on the ballot, then it CANNOT be at Mueller The Mueller process is something special, it doesn't apply only when convenient. The process enables all of us to understand the impacts and trade-offs and figure out if they can be dealt with or not, if so,

then a new use is appropriate at Mueller, if not, then the use is inappropriate, this is called planning. Currently, no one besides Catellus is able to make offers of land, and even then, they have committed to the community not to do so unless a collaborative process has occurred.

A recent statement from Catellus outlined their position on the PAC—especially this part: “Catellus will not contract for or agree to a facility of a performing arts center until there is a thorough public process that is open to residents, neighbors and other stakeholders in order to properly weigh the local impacts of this type of facility.”

Mueller has evolved into a process and a place that exemplifies how we, Austinites, can do better in planning for growth than we have in the past. The past is defined by narrowly crafted deals, such as Rathgeber has cleverly packaged, that tend to ignore the ripple effects of the deal. The future is defined by broadly discussed opportunities, such as UT has positioned the medical complex at Mueller, that tend to not be afraid of reasonable concerns or of the possibility that the first idea may not be the best idea. Is Mueller perfect? No, and no one has ever claimed it so. But it is unfortunate that 20 years in, we still need to be so adamant that Mueller is different and better. People who built their legacies on the past may never be ready for the future, which means we will need to remain strong and consistent and adamant in this through this issue and probably many more...

Maplewood News by Wendy L. Morgan

Maplewood is celebrating its connection to community, opening its doors to new families sending their children to the school in the coming years. In January, Maplewood hosted families with kids about to enter elementary school, as well as new Mueller families at a Q & A session and Maplewood School tour.

Dozens attended the Q & A where families learned about the amazing teachers at Maplewood, some with more than 25 years tenure at the school, and how their child's educational needs are met and their development enriched. Maplewood is currently home to 345 students from pre-K to 6th Grade, which includes early childhood development and special areas inclusion.

Maplewood boasts: **Low student-teacher ratios** average of 14 kids per class. **Experienced teachers** who stay for years because they love the school. **Vibrant, diverse student body**—one of the highest transfer-in rates in the district. **Small, neighborhood-based school** where the principal knows every kid by name. **Free After-school program** with lots of science, Spanish vocabulary, music appreciation, jewelry making, sign language, sports activities and more. **Highest rate in AISD of library books checked out per student per year.**

Maplewood Elementary School is one of nine schools in Austin ISD to offer an elementary 6th grade. Students are big fish in a little

pond while they refine leadership skills before moving into a middle school setting.

Maplewood's 6th Grade offers students: **Fieldtrips** NASA, UT, State Capitol, Nature & Science Center, Camp Champions. **Mad Science Program** 6th grade leads school in experiments each nine weeks. **World Cultures Studies** project-based, World Religion speakers. **Peaceful Heroes partnership** with Professor Kurtz, UT Sociologist Leadership in Student Government. **Commencement Party** a very special dance event. **Arts Program** Band/Orchestra, plus access to Art, Music and PE rotation. **Legacy Project** (commemorative project i.e. mural created with neighborhood artist.) **Gardening**

experiences. **PAL mentors** to little Mustangs & Reading Buddies with K & 1st graders. Small class size and plenty of individualized attention.

Maplewood is a community school where families, teachers and staff work together for the benefit of every child. Parent participation is very high and new families have opportunities to be as involved in their child's school experience as they desire. Maplewood is a small school that will welcome many new faces in the years to come. If you'd like to know more about Maplewood call the school at 414-4402 or e-mail PTA President Isabelle Headrick at isaneews@texas.net. ☺

Vote Baby Vote! by Jeremy B. Mazur

Clerk Seeks Younger Workers

Travis County Clerk and Cherrywooder Dana DeBeauvoir is looking for tech-savvy young-adult poll workers to serve on an “early start team”.

Starting at 6am on Tuesday, March 4th, these teams will set up over 200 polling places for the Democratic and Republicans primaries held that day .

Her office wants to reach new generations of young voters.

For more information: traviscountyelections.org, or call 854-9188.

If you don't vote you can't gripe. That's the simplest justification I use to encourage my friends to vote. This year we, the electorate, have three occasions to go to the ballot box and vote for what we believe in, or against what we don't want to see. On March 4th, we will have the opportunity to vote in the Republican and Democratic primaries. Saturday, May 10th marks the occasion for the Austin City Council election. And lastly, for those of you who have been living in a cave on this side of Boggy Creek, on November 4th we decide who shall be our next President.

Historically, the Cherrywood Neighborhood, most of which is neatly packed into Travis County voting precinct 152, has voted above the county average. In 2004, we had a 66.5% voter turnout, above the county average of 64%. During the 2006 gubernatorial election, 28.5% of us showed up at the polls, compared to the 23% county average. And during the 2005 city council election, nearly one-third of registered Cherrywood voters turned out to vote. Few other precincts in Austin came close to our record.

According to the Travis County Clerk's Office, there are 3330 registered voters in our neighborhood. That makes us a substantial voting block. Or, to phrase it differently, when the Cherrywood Neighborhood votes, elected officials listen.

The upcoming Neighborhood Association meeting on Wednesday, February 20th will provide us another opportunity to make our voices heard. Both candidates for the Texas House District 46 Democratic primary (there are no GOP contenders) have been invited to our meeting. Already one candidate, Representative Dawnna Dukes, has agreed to attend. The other candidate, Brian Thompson, will hopefully attend as well.

2008 will certainly be the Year of Decision, if the pundits haven't started calling it that already. Before this year is over, we will have chosen a Mayor, City Council Members, State Representative, U.S. Senator, and, among other positions, a new American President. The policy impact of what we decide will be felt at home and abroad. From this neighborhood that we enjoy calling “home”, to the U.S. Capitol in Washington, and even to Iraq, what we decides matters. It is for this reason, and the exclusive right to gripe, that we should do our best to vote this election year. ☺

CHERRYWOOD BLUE RIBBON YARD by Leslie Vieau



The Cherrywood Neighborhood Association Steering Committee, and the Blue Ribbon Yard Committee, voted to use our Winter Yard award as an honorary tribute to a fantastic yard just outside of our boundary.

Mrs. Firey's gorgeous landscape at 1307 Wilshire is known and revered throughout Austin and beyond. It is meticulously maintained all year long and always beautiful. It becomes a dazzling showpiece in the early spring, when thousands of azalea flowers team up with hundreds of other spring blossoms in a blaze of blooming color.

Mrs. Firey is more than an inspiration to us all, and we are thrilled to have her very green thumb so close to us! She will receive a \$25 gift certificate from the generous folks at Shoal Creek Nursery. Congratulations! ↻

When Austinites are asked what they like best about our city, our outdoor lifestyle is always near the top of the list. In large part that's because we are surrounded by accessible waterways—the creeks, lakes and springs that connect us to our environment.

The City of Austin's Green Neighbor Program helps homeowners preserve our waterways as well as our drinking water supply. The companion booklet, Clean Creek Challenge, provides useful suggestions on earth-wise landscaping, water conservation, car and pet care tips, toxic chemicals and many more.

You can use the booklet as a helpful reference, to test how "green" you are, or take part in the Clean Creek Challenge. If enough of your neighbors become Green Neighbors, we can become a Green Neighborhood and be eligible some neighborhood beautification awards.

To learn more about the Green Neighbor program please visit: cityofaustin.org/watershed/greenneighbor/.

Copies of the Green Neighbor booklet are also available at all Austin libraries or 505 Barton Springs Road, 11th floor.

Going Green on the Entertainment Scene

by Dolly Ensey

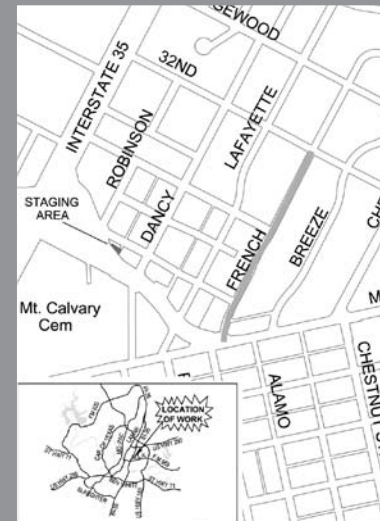
This year, South by Southwest continues its pledge to offset 100% of its carbon emissions during the 10 day festival by purchasing credits from Green Mountain Energy Company. It hopes to negate the electricity and gas generated at its offices, the Austin Convention Center, events, movie sites and by travel.

Kicking off the festivities will be Austin Film Society's 8th Texas Film Hall of Fame on Friday, 7 March, at Austin Studios' Stage 2 located at the Mueller Redevelopment site. Actors, directors, screenwriters, filmmakers and films from, influenced or inspired by the Lone Star State will be recognized for their contributions. All proceeds support film and filmmaking, filmmaker grants and educational programs in Texas, the valuable internship program at Austin Film Society. Deadline for summer internship applications is Thursday, 1 May 2008. austinfilm.org/files/internship_application.pdf

Emceeding this year's Texas Film Hall of Fame, Wharton native Dan Rather will lead the honoring of Austinite animator Mike Judge (Office Space, Idiocracy) El Pasoan Thomas Haden Church (Spiderman 3, Sideways, Wings), Debra "Sissy" Winger for Urban Cowboy and Law & Order's Mariska Hargitay on behalf of her late mother and Dallasite Jayne Mansfield.

The studios at Mueller are not open to the public but Austin Film Society has an annual open house during SxSW and the public is welcome to attend the Texas Film Hall of Fame. www.austinfilm.org ↻

Sewerline replacement



You may be aware of a project called the Hyde Park Water and Wastewater improvements project. Most of the work will be done within the Hyde Park neighborhood boundaries, but there is sewer line work to be done within the Cherrywood neighborhood boundaries.

This project map shows just the sewer line segments located on French Place.

The construction is going to begin in February for the overall project. We are working with Austin's Clean Water Program to schedule a "Meet the Contractor" meeting so that those who are interested in the project and/or impacted by the work can attend and ask the contractor questions. We do not have an exact schedule yet of when the work on French Place will begin; however, we should know something more within the next few weeks and will do our best to get the word out via the Neighbor Net and Asbury's outdoor community sign.

Cherrywood Plant Swap by Jack Darby

A couple of years ago, my neighbor, Liz, invited me to an event called a plant swap at her house. The basic idea was to bring some plants that were in abundance and take home plants that you like—no money changed hands. In the process, I met a few neighbors and learned some plant lore. About a year later, I decided to schedule such an event at Cherrywood Green to see if anyone would attend. This was at a time when our neighborhood message board, NeighborNet, was beginning to take off. We had the first Cherrywood Plant Swap in March 2005. About 30 people attended and I ended up with about 15 new plants, many of which I had never heard of. Many of the people that attended were enthusiastic about making this an ongoing event. Since then there have been a total of six plant swap events: two a year. The number of attendees has varied from a handful to several dozen. Quite a few neighbors have become regulars and they have really energized the event. There have even been several people that drive across town to attend.



The Cherrywood Plant Swap is a simple event: it is free and there are no rules. Basically, if you have plants bring them but you don't have to bring a plant to take some home. Plants can be indoor or outdoor, annual or perennial, from seed or transplant.

Here are a few suggestions:

- 1) Plan ahead by deciding the plants you have that are suitable for propagating this season
- 2) Label your plants
- 3) Bring planting tips
- 4) Tell your friends
- 5) Give us feedback/testimonials

This year the plant swap will expand to include a book swap. There are several benefits to adding a book swap. First, it should increase interest in the event. Second, it creates another opportunity to share and recycle. Third, it is a convenient way to get organized and reduce the clutter around the house. The book swap will be conducted the same as the plant swap where people bring



what they have and take what they need. The books that remain after the swap will be donated to charity. We are seeking volunteers that can help participate in the event by helping with setup, breakdown, signs, and take photos (for The Flea). We could also use tarps and tables for the day.

Looking to the future, it would be interesting to integrate the plant swap with other events in order to invigorate and beautify the neighborhood. One idea is to expand the plant swap so that it is one facet of a fair at Cherrywood Green that includes other activities such as acoustic music, fun walk/run, and gardener's market. Another idea is a network that tracks people and plants, e.g. John Doe has sunflowers, bromeliads, and lilies available. The database could facilitate exchanging plants year-round.

Please join us on Saturday, April 12, 9–11 at Cherrywood Green for the next Cherrywood Plant and Book Swap (<http://tinyurl.com/38fvn5>). Questions? Contact me at jdlink@yahoo.com. ↻



Cherrywood Green Update by Mike Damal

Most of you have noticed the construction materials at the Cherrywood Green site. The parts of the water fountain are now complete! What awaits is the final assembly, the complicated concrete base pouring which will include a water basin for dogs, and changing of the current gravel path to include access to the fountain. The light is at the end of the tunnel, and it looks like the fountain will be ready when the weather starts to turn warmer, after a long delay. It promises to be a welcomed addition to Cherrywood Green!

Cherrywood Green is maintained totally by neighborhood volunteers. I am soliciting volunteers to help with mowing and litter pick up from February through June. If you would like to volunteer for these duties, please email me at mdamal@peoplepc.com. For a few hours you can make a tremendous contribution to our neighborhood! ↻



Planning and Zoning Committee Meeting Update *by Glenn Reed*

The P&Z committee is tracking a variety of issues that affect our neighborhood, in addition to the **1715 Giles Resubdivision** (as detailed in the pg 3 article by Girard Kinney).

CNA Application for Zoning Changes to Allow VMU CNA submitted an application to the City to “upzone” 12 properties along Manor Road and IH-35 from their current MF (multi-family) zoning category to GO-MU (General Office—Mixed Use), to make them eligible for VMU development. It is expected that this zoning change will be readily approved.

Part of the neighborhood’s intent in encouraging VMU is to retain residential uses, including affordable housing, on the subject properties. Girard Kinney identified an unintended consequence of the requested zoning change from MF to GO-MU—that if, after the zoning change takes effect, a property owner chooses NOT to opt for VMU, the property could be developed as a pure commercial use under the base GO zoning and could lose its residential component. If this issue cannot be resolved then the application for the zoning change would be withdrawn.

The city has recently proposed a new ordinance that would allow VMU development on MF zoned properties. If this ordinance were to pass, our zoning change request could be withdrawn, as most of the properties in question already have MF zoning. This would be the best outcome for the neighborhood, as it would assure a continuing residential use on these properties while allowing the denser and higher quality development demanded by VMU.

We expect the VMU zoning change requests to be on the Planning Commission agenda in the near future.

Zoning Change Request for 1106 and 1110 East 30th Street (Cell Tower) The owners of two properties, located near the intersection of 30th St. and IH-35, wish to change the zoning of these properties from MF to GO in order to meet the regulatory requirements to allow the height of the cell tower on the site to be increased by 20 feet, thereby allowing additional cell phone carriers to use the tower. They have expressed their intention to develop the two sites into

medical offices (in the existing residential structures) with off-street parking.

The committee expressed concern about commercial development of any kind moving eastward into the residential part of the neighborhood, the possible incompatible uses that the zoning change would allow, and the desire to avoid exacerbating the existing parking problems associated with the inadequate parking at the People’s Community Clinic.

Girard Kinney & I met with the applicant’s representative, Vince Huebinger, on December 20 at the applicant’s request. Mr. Huebinger related that under the current regulations, two properties within a 200-foot diameter from the base of the cell tower may remain in residential use, but must have at least GO zoning. The property on 31st Street that falls within the 200-foot zone is too small to receive GO zoning. Therefore he is seeking a variance to allow the cell tower extension to occur without rezoning any of the three affected properties. This would allow the current residential zoning to remain, which is the outcome that would best serve the neighborhood’s goal of retaining the residential uses at these locations. The P&Z committee would likely support the applicant’s variance request, or remain neutral.

Possible Core Transit Corridor Designation for Manor Road and Airport Blvd. At issue is whether to request that these two roads be upgraded from “Urban Roadway” designation to “Core Transit Corridor” designation. Michael Bray and Girard Kinney clarified that this designation would bring legal requirements for future development affecting building position, sidewalk width, street amenities (trees, benches, shading), parking, etc. Girard Kinney is seeking materials, and possibly a presentation at a future P&Z meeting, from Mark Walters, the COA neighborhood planner assigned to the UBCPT, in order to clarify the substantive differences between Urban Roadway and Core Transit Corridor designations.

East 38.5 Street Issues A request for neighborhood support of a zoning change for the residential property at 3717 Robinson was the catalyst for a broader discussion about the future of 38.5 Street between

the railroad tracks and IH-35. At the November 12, 2007 meeting, the P&Z committee voted unanimously to begin developing a comprehensive plan for this section of East 38.5 Street. The purpose of this effort will be to establish a consistent framework within which to consider future zoning change requests concerning the properties along this portion of East 38.5 Street.

The owner of 3717 Robinson requested the neighborhood’s support for a zoning change from MF to GO in order to open a business at that location. Primarily because of the committee’s new initiative to develop a long-range vision for this section of East 38.5 St., the committee voted not to support the requested zoning change at the present time, the rationale being that the vision/plan for the street must be established first so that this and future similar requests may be considered within the context of that vision.

The CNA membership at large supported this position at the December 2007 quarterly meeting.

At the January 14 P&Z meeting the discussion focused on compiling a list of problems on this section of East 38.5 Street We identified numerous wide-ranging and interrelated issues that affect the overall feel and function of this street section and committed to reviewing past efforts to effect solutions to some of the persistent problems. The intent is to create a comprehensive outline of problems, stakeholders, and possible solutions that can be pursued in the coming months. We will also partner with the CNA Transportation committee and others as appropriate.

3203 Larry Lane Billy and Alissa Zachary introduced their plans to renovate their residence in order to open a home-based acupuncture clinic. This property is among those that will be eligible for VMU development when the Planning Commission approves the program for our neighborhood, assuming that the associated zoning change is also approved. They have hired Vehko Architecture, and a builder to look at costs and feasibility issues including ways of meeting off-street parking requirements. They intend to use sustainable building materials. We look forward to future updates. ↻

CRIME PREVENTION

Officer Sheldon A. Salisbury, Jr., Senior Police Officer, Austin Police Department

Cherrywood is known to the criminal element as a good place to burglarize as almost everyone has laptops, televisions, and other electronic items that can be stolen and resold for drugs. There has been a recent rash of burglaries where the front door has been kicked in or locked garages have been broken into. The Austin Police Department (APD) is working on a case where we have a suspect’s name, but there may be more than one group working the area.

I would love to change this and make the neighborhood a harder target. Each of you can help by being more watchful and calling in suspicious activity. If your gut instinct tells you that it does not look right it probably isn’t. If you see suspicious activity, go ahead and call 911 to report it as “in progress.” For example, if someone knocks on your door at 10 p.m. asking for gas money or if you see a car parked at your neighbor’s house that you know does not belong there. If the 911 operator does not think it’s a priority one call, he/she will ship you over to 311.

Get to know your neighbors and the cars they drive. Exchange cell phone numbers so you may get in touch with one another if you see or learn of suspicious behavior. When you are going to be away, tell trusted neighbors and ask them to watch your property. When on vacation, have someone cut grass. Shrubbery should not hide neighbors’ view of

To gain a working knowledge of the Austin Police Department, consider attending the APD’s Citizen Police Academy, which is an 11-week program that starts in April. You may choose either the 1:30–4:30pm or 5:30–9:30pm classes. Classes will be held at APD headquarters. For more information, contact Joe Munoz at joe.munoz@ci.austin.tx.us.

windows or doors. Be sure to have someone pick up newspapers and mail. Tell neighbors to call police if they notice anything suspicious.

Mark your valuables with an engraver. Marking your property serves as a deterrent to would-be burglars and it helps police in identifying and returning stolen property. Record the serial numbers on all of your valuables in case of theft. Make a property identification list. Put warning stickers on doors and windows.

For more tips, visit the APD Web site at cityofaustin.org/police/burglary.htm. Remember, crime prevention is much easier than apprehension. ↻

Rising up from The Ashes *by Dolly Ensey*


Over this year’s first weekend, did you hear Fire Stations 14’s sirens? Neighbor KOOP radio (koop.org) sadly suffered yet another fire—the third fire within the past two years. Two 2006 fires knocked the hip community service provider off the airwaves on January 6 (smoking materials in adjacent apartment) and February 5 (Taste Club’s malfunctioning HVAC system). However, the most recent blaze differs greatly; it was intentionally set according to the Austin Fire Department. Might the arsonist be celebrating an anniversary with this year’s crime?

While sister KVRX radio tuned up round the clock, KOOP began to regroup and repair. However, the Texas State Arson Hotline is offering a reward of up to \$5,000 for information leading to the arrest – but not necessarily conviction—of those responsible: 1-877-4FIRE45 or 1-877-434-7345.

KOOP Board President Andrew Dickens: “We will not be silenced. We’re not going to be intimidated or scared. We’re not going to allow someone to squelch radio for the community, by the community. We will take all appropriate measures to protect our volunteers, staff, and operations. We’ve been through worse, and we know we have the skills, the determination, and the support of the community.”

KOOP’s neighbors City Theatre (citytheatreaustin.org) and Neighborhood Acupuncture Project (napaustin.org) were also damaged by the fire but both are open for business. Cherrywooders Randall and Donya Stockton have stepped up to the plate by holding the Mutants Ball Benefit on Saturday, February 16 at their club, Beerland (see sidebar). So what can you do to help our neighboring businesses since they need us now more than ever?

An Austin Chronicle poll voted KOOP as being the “Best Phoenix Act” before, let’s hope this holds true again for them and our neighbors. ↻



Mutants Ball Benefit for KOOP Radio
Saturday, February 16, 10:00 p.m.
Beerland, 711.5 Red River

Mutants, robots, freakazoids, and pathetic earthlings of all kinds are cordially invited to this year’s Mutants Ball. Dancing the night away to the sounds of KOOP DJ Scott Gardner and live music performers:

- Pataphysics
- The Carrots
- Alright Tonight

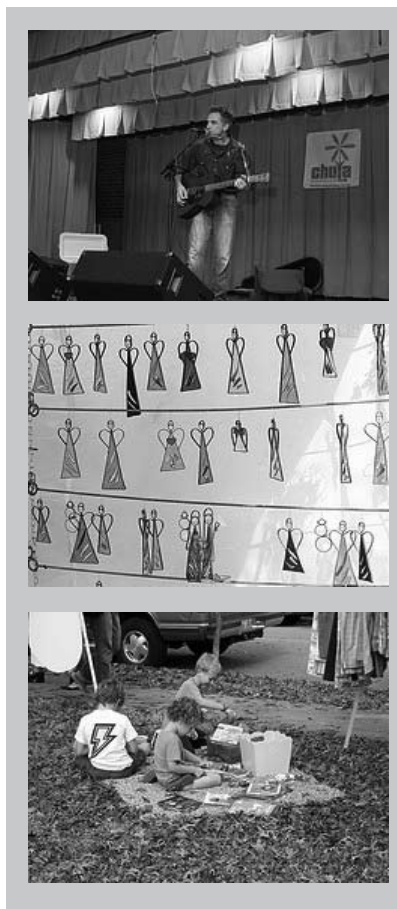
All proceeds will go to KOOP Radio to help rebuild the station.

A GREAT BIG THANK YOU!

by Priscilla Boston, Kathleen McTee and Jane Walton

The 2007 Cherrywood Art Fair's smashing success could not have happened without the generous help of the following sponsors. Each of these companies and individuals gave us much-needed financial support, contributed to the silent auction, or paid for some essential something our budget would otherwise not have allowed (uh, hello, Santa Claus!): **Adaptive Reuse (Christine Terrell), Alamo Drafthouse Cinema, Amy Cook, Austin Museum of Art, Bark for Peace, Big Weekend Calendars, Catellus/Mueller, Clarity Decisions, LLC, Delwood's Royal Touch Cleaners, Equality Texas, Fiesta Market, Gene Johnson Automotive Services, Grande Communications, H.E.B., MUSE Cards, MusicMania, Sonic Drive-ins, State Farm Insurance: Steve Vinklerek, Neighborhood Agent, Thai Cooking with Jam (Sanit-chat), The Austin Chronicle, UT Press, Vivo...** and every artist in the show!

And some key folks put in hours and hours of their time and talents: **Luke Torn** of Pop Culture Press, who milks all his connections to put together our musical lineup and who REALLY outdid himself this year! **Craig High** of the Box-car Preachers, who ran the sound all weekend and helped promote the show with the band on KGSR. **Wendy N. Morgan**, whose PR expertise earned us a record amount of media coverage. **Scheleen Walker**, who got us on every calendar on the web and sent notices to every listserve she's connected to (and this gal's connected!). **Richard Behal**, who coordinates the set-up year after year and finds solutions to the problems that crop up over the weekend. **Melissa Gable** of One Creative Girl, who creates our captivating graphic design. **Erika Albright**, who skillfully assembled, designed and (along



with Anna Borne) ran the Silent Auction, which brought in a full \$1000 more this year! **Deb Ziegler** and **Nance Bell**, who gracefully handled artist check-in.

And then there are all our amazing volunteers, who helped with every aspect of the show, and had fun along the way! Consider joining these valiant souls in 2008: **Amber Welsch, Anna Talley, Beverly Scarborough, Beverly Schiff, Debbie Wood, Dolly Ensey, Emma Pickering, Evelyn McAlister, Girard Kinney, H.Ly Blair, David Boston, Emma Pickering, Henry Boston, Holly Chacona, Jane Nelson, Jane O'Brien, Jean Dahlgren, Jim Cullers, Jim Walker, Joanne Smolen, Julie Meacham, Julie Winckler, Kay Hereford, Kyra Edeker, Lee Clip-pard, Mark Schiff, Martha Paull, Meg Brooks, Mike Hurewitz, Mike Stricklin, Patty Raspino, Rebecca Kohout, Sara Young, Sarah Taylor, Sasha Rasco, Scheleen Walker, Scott Daigle, Shane Walker, Tom Wald, Will Boston.**

Last but not least, CHULA would like to thank YOU, our neighbors and friends, for supporting the show, and showing Austin how groovy things can happen – from the ground up – when we all pull together. In six short years, the Cherrywood Art Fair has grown by leaps and bounds. It's no longer just a neighborhood event, but one of the most popular and highly-regarded arts events of the busy holiday season. We are looking forward to our seventh year!

Whether it's as a volunteer, sponsor, artist or fair goer, please join us on December 13–14, 2008 for art, food, music and festivity. For more information, check our web site cherrywoodartfair.org for continuing developments, and join us on myspace: cherrywoodartfair.

END NOTES

As cliché as it sounds, apathy is the worst enemy any of us faces. In the absence of emotion, passion and excitement, very little is accomplished—and that progress which is made is lackluster at best. One of the things which makes Cherrywood so unique is the passion we all feel for our neighborhood, but even in this setting it is easy to let apathy rear its ugly head.

It's easy to assume that someone else is out there taking care of things, that someone else is attending city meetings on our behalf, that someone else will be sure the lawns of the parks are mowed, that someone else will speak up on our behalf when developers step in with plans to change the face of our neighborhood. But to always rely on "the other guy (or gal)" to champion the causes of our neighborhood, to be our voice, is a dangerous trap.

As we enter 2008, we're extremely fortunate for the energy and enthusiasm of our Steering Committee along with so many other key volunteers which give their time and energy towards making Cherrywood such a fabulous place to live, but that never means we can take for granted the role each and every one of us should be playing towards this goal. Even if your participation is as simple as attending our quarterly neighborhood meetings, it goes a long way in showing your support for our community while also educating yourself on what's going on around you. So please join us February 20th at Maplewood Elementary—bring along any concerns, or success stories, you'd like to share. Meet your neighbors, meet your Steering Committee, and do your part to counter the most dangerous threat to our hood—apathy.

Look forward to seeing you there! *Summer McKee, CNA Chair*

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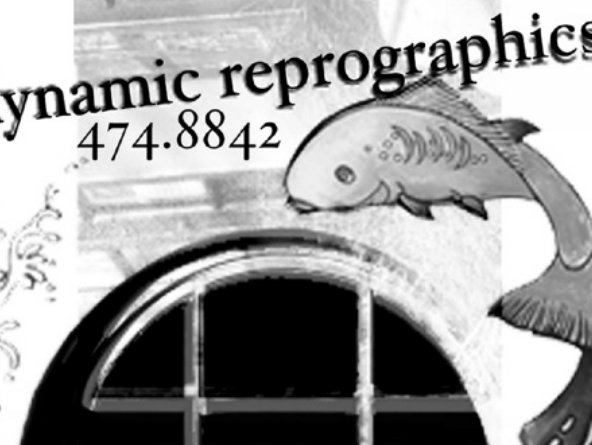


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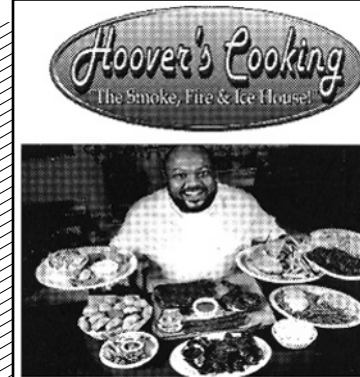


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NUMBER SOLD DEC 2007-JAN 2008	FOR DEC 2007-JAN 2008
Number of Sales: 5	Number of Homes for Sale: 15
Average Asking Price: \$185,000	Number of Homes Pending: 5
Average Selling Price: \$185,000	Price Range: \$120,000 - \$240,000
Percent of Asking Price: 98%	Average Price: \$185,000
Average Days on Market: 30	Average Days on Market: 47

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Rebecca's

HOME OWNER'S UPDATE

What's Hot And What's Not In The Cherrywood Neighborhood

Volume 11, no. 1

Spring 2008

FIVE TIPS FOR BUILDING AN OUTDOOR KITCHEN

It will be Spring in Austin and thoughts turn to outdoor entertaining. So here are some tips for creating your own outdoor dining experience. Be aware that an outdoor kitchen with a built-in barbecue is a serious endeavor. Hopefully, it's going to be part of your yard for a long, long time.

Location, location, location. Place your barbecue and entertaining area near the house--particularly the kitchen. Ideally, an outdoor kitchen should be sited where it has a minimum exposure to the elements and protection from the wind. Because it is designed for entertaining, an existing patio is often an ideal site, but beware of flammable materials overhead, including trees, trellises, and patio roofs.

Allow for utilities. A sink will require a water supply and a drain. Electricity is needed for an outdoor refrigerator, a rotisserie, and lighting. Consider how and where these utilities will be routed from the house to the outdoor kitchen. Design for comfort. An outdoor kitchen is like an indoor kitchen and should be designed with many of the same considerations. The countertop should be from 32 to 36 inches high and at least 24 inches deep.

Use sound construction. A large, heavy masonry barbecue will require a concrete pad--typically a steel-reinforced, 4-inch-thick slab poured over a 4- to 6-inch-deep bed of gravel.

Many have a perimeter footing that's twice as wide as the barbecue's walls and 16 to 18 inches deep (6 inches below frost line). Be sure you install any rough plumbing or wiring conduit before you pour the slab.

Build according to code. Before finalizing your design, check zoning requirements to make sure your outdoor kitchen will be a legal distance from property lines. Though you may not need a building permit for the outdoor kitchen's construction, you probably will need permits for any electrical or plumbing work. And, in most cases, a gas grill insert must be framed by non-flammable material.

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If you're planning a move to a larger home, need to relocate, or know someone on the move - contact me, **Rebecca Kohout** at Coldwell Banker United Realtors, 415-9876, or rebecca@austinexpertrealtor.com. www.austinexpertrealtor.com



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Rebecca Kohout

MARKET ANALYSIS

FOR THE CHERRYWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD

Due to the large number of Active listing in our neighborhood in the past 90 days, I am listing the general statistics of the available properties. This summary includes sales data for all Active, Pending and SOLD properties in the Cherrywood neighborhood.

As you know, average prices and values vary widely within our neighborhood boundaries. For a professional analysis of how your home fits into this market, contact Rebecca, your neighborhood specialist.

15 Active listings

Average 2 bed/2 baths ... 1,165 sq. ft.

Average list price....\$269,438

Average price per square ft. ...\$233

Average days on the market....41

6 Pending listings

Average 2 bed/1 bath... 1,145 sq ft.

Average list price \$250,683

Average price per square ft. ...\$225

Average days on the market....90

11 SOLD listings

Average 3 bed/1 bath... 1,283 sq. ft

Average list price....\$278,823

Average SOLD price... \$272,318

Average price per square feet... \$216

Average days on the market... 45



Bit of Feng Shui

- The more burners you have on your stove, the greater wealth you will have.
- Avoid sleeping under beams in the bedroom.
- Avoid having the stairs as the first thing you see when you enter a house.

Feng Shui: The Chinese Art of Placement, (New York, NY: Arkana, 1983).



Neighbors, if you've been waiting for the right time to buy a house in this neighborhood... this is it! Interest rates are at a 45 year low and home prices are at a level that they were 3 or 4 years ago!

You can't go wrong with these factors. So if you're considering investing in the neighborhood, give me a call and let me tell you about the opportunities available.