



NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN NEAR COMPLETION

IMPROVEMENT PLAN OBJECTIVES

At the December 2nd meeting of the North University Neighborhood Association (NUNA), enthusiastic support was given to the revitalization plan submitted by the NUNA Planning Committee. NUNA President Jerry Roemisch displayed an illustrated map of the neighborhood. This map, created by Jim Stone, gives an overview of the entire NUNA area, identifying important sites and structures as well as future planning.

Rick Iverson, co-chairman of the Planning Committee, along with June Hawley and Stella Nilsen, conducted a detailed review of the Neighborhood Plan. Following active participation by the membership, a resolution was adopted authorizing submission of the plan to the Dept. of Planning and Growth Management. This resolution describes the general objectives of the neighborhood improvement plan:

1. Enhancement and preservation of single family residences and encouragement of lower population density.
2. Provide additional lighting in designated areas, particularly in Hemphill Park, consistent with existing lighting.

(Continued on Page 4)

NEXT NUNA MEETING: FEB. 3, 1986

Who: ALL North University Neighborhood residents are welcome.

Where: First English Lutheran Church
30th and Whitis

When: 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

AGENDA:

Discussion of neighborhood street widening, Austin Transportation Study

Review of neighborhood burglaries

Selection of nominating committee for upcoming elections.

Status report on Huntington-Surrey School

Update on Blind School Annex (Historic Landmark hearing, Mon 1/27, 7 PM, 307 W 2nd St.)

BURGLARY ALERT

A series of burglaries in our neighborhood has grown into a major concern in recent months. The police report more than 30 burglaries apparently committed by the same person, using the same modus operandi:

- The crimes are committed at night, when someone is in the house but asleep or in another room.
- Entry is made through an open window.

Everyone is cautioned to secure windows and doors. A discussion of precautions that can be taken will be held at the Feb. 3rd meeting.

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

THE BUDDINGTON/BENEDICT HOME

The next time you stop for ice cream or croissants on Guadalupe, look behind the building on 34th Street, and you'll see one of the oldest properties in our neighborhood. It's a large, 2-story limestone house that dates from 1860. A high stone wall separates the house from the commercial property fronting on Guadalupe and extends along 34th and Fruth Sts. to enclose several units.

Rick and Nancy Iverson, who own the property today, live in the house that faces Fruth. There's a smaller house with ornamental wrought iron window bars you can see on 34th St. and two small efficiencies as well. Mrs. Wilhelmine Sheffield, who sold the property to the Iversons in 1978, holds a life estate in the old home.

The old house is random ashlar-laid Austin limestone. The walls are twenty or so inches thick, the roof is slate, and all the wood is heavy red cedar hauled from Bastrop in ox-team wagons. Originally there were two large rooms, one up and one down. Over the years, the house came to contain several bedrooms, a parlor and sitting room, and two dining rooms. A large wooden gallery was added to the east side of the second floor. Heat was supplied by five fireplaces, all still intact.

Like many immigrants to Austin, the man who built this house came from New York State. Albert G. Buddington made his way here in an ox-drawn covered wagon. Mr. Buddington, who had settled first in Gonzales, his wife, Rebecca V. Henderson of Michigan, and her sister and brother-in-law came to Austin together. They liked the site where they camped so much the Buddingtons decided to buy ten acres there on March 27, 1860. In two more transactions, in 1865 and



1868, they obtained the entire 40 acres of the land granted to Martin Moore and Henry Blessing in 1841. The entire 40 acres cost the Buddingtons \$1700.

It wasn't an accident they camped where they did. Beside a tributary of Waller Creek fed by several cold springs, this was a popular spot with travelers. (If the springs were still at the surface today, they would be located across Guadalupe.) The springs enabled the Buddingtons to plant a large fruit orchard and dam up the creek to form a large pond. The house was a famous gathering place for the young people of Austin. The Buddingtons had seven children, one boy and six girls. Maud Buddington Johnson, one of the daughters, told Mrs. Sheffield about grand dances in the gallery and spying on her older sisters and their beaux spooning in boats out on the pond.

Apparently commuting from this far out in the country was a problem. Twice Mr. Buddington leased the home and "forty-acre farm" and moved to town to be closer to his business - but only for short periods.

Before he died in 1895, Mr. Buddington sold off considerable acreage at more than 20 times his costs. In a move many will recognize today, the Buddingtons made quite a profit by creating the Buddington Subdivision and keeping only the block surrounding the house and pond.

In 1900, Mrs. Buddington sold this block to two ladies from San Francisco for \$1000. Called the "Old Buddington Place", the property changed hands several times until Dr. Harry Yandell Benedict bought it in two parcels in 1921 and 1926.

Dr. Benedict was President of the University of Texas from 1927-1937. He built the rock wall, a rock garage (now a cottage), and planted the now immense cypress trees. The house became a landmark in the city. Dr. Benedict apparently had a lot of fun with the property and considered it a refuge from UT. In the cement porch, he inscribed *parva sed apta mihi* ("small but suiting me"). Almost any day in the early mornings and after office hours, he could be found pattering around in the gardens he loved so well. He wrote in the *ALCALDE* (UT's alumni magazine) of November, 1921:

Amid the oaks, and by the creek in the summer time, blackbirds and blue jays dispute with one another, replaced in winter by field larks and flickers. Sundry mocking birds are permanently established; likewise a golden fronted woodpecker. The creek, in ancient days, when grass covered the land, ran of its own accord but is now kept running by two artesian wells in the asylum grounds. Therefore is the creek called Crazy Creek and its waters Crazy Water. Moreover, there is a lovely beach along Crazy Creek. So why not christen it Bonehead Beach and have thereon some day a High Brow Faculty Picnic? [Actually Dr. Benedict was mistaken about the source of the creek.]

He made a number of other changes in the property and, like most remodelers, had his share of unsolicited commentary about his "improvement" plans. To the suggestion he stucco the walls, for example, Dr. Benedict responded:

Ye Gods, it were better to tar and feather the Goddess of Liberty or to allow mudswallows to nest in the Wrenn Library than to daub cement on a beautiful Bull Creek limestone ashlar wall.

In 1937 the flamboyant Delia Edwards from Laredo, widow of an oil man and rancher, bought the property from Dr. Benedict's widow.

The stone garage became a 3-room cottage with a Peter Mansbendal walnut carved fireplace, pine walls, and elaborately patterned Mexican tile floors. To the main house, Mrs. Edwards added a solarium and a new curving oak and wrought iron staircase.



Mrs. Frazer Neal owned the house between 1944 and 1946, when Mrs. Sheffield bought it. In the early 1950's, Mrs. Sheffield partitioned the old living room on the upper floor to create a wide hall. Construction of a short extension on the north end allowed for a kitchen, dressing room and bath upstairs, and a music room, bath and storage room downstairs. Two small efficiencies were added to the north end of the west side of the house. Mrs. Sheffield also conducted extensive landscaping and stone work on the grounds. She built a stone house at the far east end of the block (500 W. 34th) and a small stone room and bath in the garden.

The Studdite monks held the deed for a brief time in the 1970's, but it was returned to Mrs. Sheffield until she sold it to the Iversons. Although the property has been modernized and altered extensively, the old house is intact. The alterations are in keeping with the spirit of the early Texas architecture. The Iversons investigated designation as a historic site, but the property has been altered too much. It has adapted to the changes in Austin, as the city has grown far beyond the wildest imaginations of the early pioneers who camped beside the cold sweet waters of the creek.

January 25, 1986

OBJECTIVES (Con't from p. 1)

3. Improve all sidewalks and construct new sidewalks where none exist.
4. Enhance police protection and increase neighborhood patrols.
5. Establish a more effective, comprehensive neighborhood crime watch program.
6. Repair and upgrade existing water and wastewater systems.
7. Establish "gateways" at entrances into the neighborhood. These "gateways" are indicated on the plan as a change in pavement texture; however, they might also take the form of distinctive street signs with lighting; masonry columns and lighting similar to that existing at the entrances to Aldridge Place; or even archways where appropriate.
8. Preserve existing ground cover and open spaces, including unpaved alleys.
9. Provide additional landscaping throughout the neighborhood; encourage the use of native or indigenous plants; and provide "ramblas" or tree-lined avenues in the designated areas.
10. Promote appropriate "down zoning" or zoning which might reduce site population density and incompatible use.
11. Provide additional designated bicycle transportation lanes.
12. Establish a clearly marked and enforced school zone along 38th St.

GENERAL INFORMATION

NUNA meetings are held bimonthly on the first Monday of the month, at the English Lutheran Church at 39th and White from 7 - 9 PM.

For further information, please contact

President: Jerry Roemisch, 474-6917

Vice-President: Rick Iverson, 454-6438

Secretary-

Treasurer: Barbara Buttrey, 476-0910

Austin Neighborhood Council

Delegate: June Hawley, 452-6248

Quadrant Representatives:

SW: Jim & Pat Creswell, 477-0973

SE: Robert Kaler & Carol
Journey-Kaler, 474-0631

NW: Stella Nilsen, 459-5821

NE: Position open

Newsletter

Editor: Ethel Jackson, 482-0538

Associate

Editor: Madeline Maxwell, 467-0994

Graphics

Editor: Jim Stone, 480-0471

13. Encourage single story, mixed use occupancy along Guadalupe.

14. Preserve and protect all historic structures throughout the neighborhood.

15. Preserve Hemphill Park as an existing greenspace rather than a park.

16. Reduce traffic lanes on Duval Street from four to two lanes and establish bicycle transportation lanes.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NORTH UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (NUNA)

Attn: Jerry Roemisch, President 107 Laurel Lane Austin, Texas 78705

NAME: _____, PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Dues are \$3.00 per person per year, from April 1, 1985, through March 31, 1986.