

**President's Report
JUNE 2006**

By Bill Bednar

I want to thank you for the opportunity to serve as your president. It is an honor and a challenge to follow in the footsteps of all the fine neighbors whose efforts have accomplished so much for NUNA over the years. Here are some thoughts on the increasing pressures on our neighborhood and some specific objectives for us to accomplish this year.

We are in a crucial time for NUNA. Since June of last year, there have been over 100 permit or variance applications and over 20 city hearings and meetings affecting NUNA, and that is just my rough count. Undoubtedly there have been many more. Every year sees more absentee landlords and fewer owner occupied homes, with corresponding increases in noise, violence, and residential crime. Hemphill-Adams continues to slide despite our efforts. Surely (and not so slowly any more), we are seeing deterioration of the historically quiet and pleasant neighborhood we call home. On the upside, we are on the verge of a precedent-setting collaboration with Austin Energy, Parks and Recreation, and private industry to create a little miracle we've been calling Sparky Park. We have many opportunities to fight the bad and advance the good. However, the demands for action on us now greatly exceed the time and resources of those in NUNA who have put forth such heroic efforts in the past. It is time for many more of us to get involved, and to learn to function effectively as an organization.

We are off to a good start with the adoption of new by-laws last April. There are many new things, such as refinement of our goals and objectives, revision of our membership, meeting, and fiscal procedures, and restructuring of our officers and committees. One of the most important is the recognition of NUNA's new status as a Neighborhood Conservation Combining District (NCCD) as part of the Central Austin Combined Neighborhood Plan (CACNP), and the benefits and responsibilities that come along with that. We now have a standing committee called the NUNA Neighborhood Planning Team (NUNA-NPT). I cannot stress too strongly the importance of this committee's work. However, it will be effective only if we make it so through our energy, diligence, cooperation and teamwork.

The Executive Committee, at its May meeting and over the next couple of meetings, will be developing a "to-do" list for

NUNA Meeting

**Monday, June 5, 2006, 7 p.m.
First English Lutheran Church
3001 Whitis (Whitis and 30th Street)**

Agenda

- Power Point Presentation by Dick Peterson:
"Rainwater Harvesting for Land Irrigation"
- NUNA Objectives for 2007-2008
Member input
- CANPAC Update
- McMansion Task Force Report
- NPT Update
- Parks Report
- Other Business

NUNA this year. So far, we have approved and assigned top priority to a group of tasks in a category I call "Peace and Quiet." These include identifying landlords, asking their cooperation, and suggesting tenant code of conduct and noise/nuisance clauses in leases. We also want to provide packets to students, establish a link to NUNA on the UT housing web site, designate liaison persons to Commanders' Forums, improve crime and noise reporting, evaluate possible amendments to the open container ordinance, and expand and improve communication with UT and city police leadership. Also receiving top priority are assessment of sidewalk and traffic calming needs, and review and participation in pedestrian and bicycle master plans. The Committee has also approved two specific tasks related to Waller Creek drainage. First, we will support the 34th Street owners in their effort to return the street to grade and reduce flooding at the intersection with Hemphill Park. Second, we have appointed a NUNA member to the Central Park Site Plan Review Committee, where we expect to have further beneficial influence on drainage. We will also be improving the NUNA web site and newsletter. There will be more to come, as the Executive Committee sifts through all the many things we could be doing and adds items to the action list. I'll keep you posted.

Of course, very little of this can be accomplished without help from you. We will be doing our best to reach you and seek your participation in small or large ways as you are able to help. If you're a resident but not a NUNA member, come join us!!! There's a lot to do, and all of it aimed at making our neighborhood a better place to live. 

Guest Speaker and Presentation at NUNA Meeting
 Monday June 5, 7 p.m., First English Lutheran Church



Dick Peterson is an Environmental Program Coordinator with the Austin Energy Green Building Program and consults with builders, designers and homeowners on rainwater

harvesting, irrigation, and landscaping, as well as general building topics. He is responsible for over 500 single-family residential ratings per year, related to S.M.A.R.T. (Sustainable, Moderate income, Accessible, Reasonably priced, and Transit oriented) Housing. He joined the Green Building Program in 2000, after 5 years as Program Coordinator for rainwater harvesting, irrigation and Xeriscape programs with Austin's Water Conservation Program. His interest and experience in affordable rainwater harvesting has led to numerous presentations and workshops for national and international audiences.

CANPAC Group Continues Working
 by Mary Gay Maxwell

The Central Austin Neighborhoods Planning Area Committee continues to work to improve the new neighborhood plan that was adopted almost two years ago. It is vital that the group continue because, even though there is a new plan in place that covers zoning and land use categories, there is much more to the plan in terms of its overall impact on our neighborhoods. There has been no attention given by the City of Austin to the implications for the general quality of life of the area resulting from the plan to add 5000-7000 more residents to the campus area.

It became very clear shortly after the plan was completed that there needed to be additional work done to provide a more adequate infrastructure for the area than is currently in place. The term "Infrastructure" refers to and includes more police presence in the area, development of some form of education by the University of Texas for their student body about being good neighbors while living in the surrounding neighborhoods, and better understanding in the City of Austin of the requirements for building inspections and code enforcement in the area, since it is being redeveloped at a very rapid pace.

It is necessary at this crucial time to begin development of an active partnership among the neighborhoods, the University of Texas, and the City of Austin. To date, there have been several meetings that have occurred between the CANPAC group and the City Manager's staff, between the Austin Police Department and a number of CANPAC members, and between the Police Chief of the UT Police and the CANPAC group. It is a beginning for developing the infrastructure that will protect our quality of life as the population in the UT neighborhoods increases dramatically.

NUNA members who are part of CANPAC are: Mary Ingle, Rick Iverson, and Mary Gay Maxwell, the Coordinator of the group. The neighborhoods that are included in CANPAC are: NUNA, Heritage, Shoal Crest, West University, Hancock, Eastwoods, and University Area Partners.

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The boundaries of the area represented are: MLK on the South, Lamar on the West, 38th St. to Duval, Duval to 45th St. to I 35 on the North, and I 35 to Dean Keeton, Dean Keeton to Guadalupe to MLK on the East. The blocks east of Guadalupe to University Blvd. between 21st St. and MLK are also in the plan area except for the new UT hotel that is under construction at MLK.

SINGLE FAMILY TASK FORCE COMPLETING BUILDING REGULATIONS

by Mary Gay Maxwell

The Austin City Council appointed a 26-member task force on February 27, 2006, to begin work on developing building regulations for single-family zoned properties. This action was in response to the increasing concerns of long term residents in established central city neighborhoods over the "McMansion" phenomenon that is occurring in older neighborhoods. "McMansions" are very large homes (3000-5000 square feet) which are currently being built next door to more modestly sized bungalows and traditional homes. The result is an overpowering of existing housing and an encroachment on the privacy of current residents.

The new regulations will apply to SF-3, SF-2, and SF-4A zoned properties. The task force has met at least once a week for 3 hours at a time to work on developing a consensus among the representatives of diverse communities in Austin. There have been many meetings of subcommittees on topics such as :

- 1) FAR/Setbacks/Heights of buildings on SF lots;
- 2) Impervious Cover, Drainage and Building Cover; and
- 3) Interpretation, Enforcement, and Policy.

Occupancy, Use, and Parking was originally designated as a topic for review, but as the task force began to work on the recommendations for regulations of massing and scale of buildings on single-family lots, it became clear that the work associated with that was extensive and required the attention of most of the task force members. Another aspect of the occupancy issue is that it relates directly to the "McDorm" phenomenon that is taking place in our neighborhoods around UT as well as Rosedale, Brykerwoods, North Loop, Chestnut and the Blackland areas in near east Austin, and in Highland Hills in northwest Austin. Because this is such a complicated topic, the recommendation of the task force regarding occupancy and use will be to reconvene a task force to work in depth on occupancy limits in single-family zoned areas.

The FAR/ Setback/ Height recommendations along with relevant Enforcement and Interpretation topics will be submitted to the City Council for review on June 8, 2006. At that time, there will be a number of other recommendations made, such as:

- 1) The proposal that Occupancy be brought up again in the near future as a task force item; and,
- 2) Recommendations that there be additional funds in the budget for increasing staff in the permitting, building inspection and code enforcement areas because of the need for more staff to manage and enforce single family building regulations.

The goal is to have permanent regulations adopted by Council prior to the expiration of the Interim Single Family Regulations ordinance that is currently in force. 



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Faye Carpenter In Memoriam

by Mary Ingle

Dedicated volunteer and resident of NUNA, Faye Carpenter, died Sunday, May 21. Faye and her husband, Ed Carpenter, served as NUNA's co-treasurers for 16 years. Their commitment to our neighborhood and to public service is irreplaceable and



would be hard to match. Faye was also very active in Hyde Park's Church of Christ and in the Texas State Speech Association. I remember sitting next to Faye at various Planning Commission meetings (before our neighborhood plan passed at City Council in 2004) where she always was humorously critiquing the speaker's effectiveness and style. Since Faye was an avid baker; I will always remember her in pursuit of the best cookies at any neighborhood function. We will miss her sweet smile and all the warmth she bestowed on this neighborhood. Thank you, Faye Carpenter, for all your good works.





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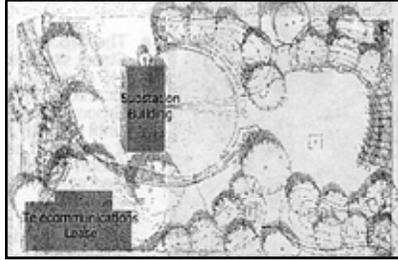
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Park Update: Sparky and Hemphill
by Mary Ingle

On April 15, the Saturday before Easter, a handful of NUNA neighbors met at the bench in Hemphill Park for a continuing discussion about Hemphill Park. There was much concern about the maintenance of this park which seems to be nonexistent. The general consensus was to reconvene at a later date when various City staff could also attend to answer questions. The City staff from PARD, Watershed Protection, Street and Bridge would like for the neighborhood to format their questions ahead of time, in case any in-depth research is needed. This later date for the meeting has not yet been determined due to scheduling conflicts.

Since our last neighborhood meeting, Sparky Park has been undergoing small but significant changes. After temporary bollards were installed as barriers to mischief, soil, which badly needed an immediate home from Zilker Park, was delivered to the site in preparation for the installation of four berms. In addition to the visible signs of progress, there have been some invisible signs of movement by the cell phone companies. Their equipment must be moved with a new reconfiguration around one pole. This small but complicated move requires a new survey of the proposed positioning of all the cell phone equipment boxes. The survey is necessary so that a protective wall may be constructed around this equipment. Additionally, the wall itself has gone through a series of



HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS	
Animal Control	472-7387
Austin Police Dept. Rep.	974-5342
City of Austin, main switchboard	499-2000
Dead Animal Collection	499-2111
Dumping (Creek/Storm Drain Concerns)	499-2550
Electric Trouble Reports	322-9100
Garbage/Recycling Collection	499-2111
Graffiti Hotline	974-1028
Pothole Complaints	440-8444
Street Light Repairs	505-7617
Street Sign (Trouble)	457-4850
To complain about noise	911
Zoning Changes/Review	499-6370
Zoning Violations	974-6576

transformations from a large, rigid, linear brick structure to something more fun, compact, and neighborhood friendly- an art wall- designed by a distinguished European artisan named Bertholde Haas. One of Mr. Haas's trademarks is to incorporate found or collected objects in his work; acquiring these objects will require neighborhood participation. The architects of the park, Simon Atkison and Robin Abrams have been working on the larger details and the minutia in the park plans: these details include specifications of height, width, and slope of the berms, placement of pavers and plantings, compatibility of plantings, irrigation specifications, and materials for pathways and gates. The actual construction should begin in June under the auspices of Austin Energy. 

Austin Neighborhood Council Update
by Mary Ingle

The Austin Neighborhood Council's monthly agenda features a range of topics. At the most recent ANC meeting, there was a spirited debate between 2 State District 14 Candidates: Former Austin Mayor Kirk Watson and Rock Howard. The discussion centered around a comprehensive understanding of regional planning and economies in Texas. After this, ANC President, Laura Morrison, who is also a co-chair of the Single Family Residential Task Force updated the group on their substantial work focusing on "building envelopes," which impose vertical setbacks, and possess appropriate FAR (floor area ratio). These recommendations will be presented to the Planning Commission on June 6 and then to City Council on June 8. Letters of support are requested.

Following this report were short presentations concerning AISD school closures, a very serious situation within Austin, and the recommendations from the City appointed Tree Task Force. The next topic, Capitol Metro's proposed streetcar program with rapid bus lines, was presented by Lucy Galbraith. More information about this program is available online: www.allsystemsgoconnections.org. 



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