



NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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Mark Your Calendar

NSCNA General Meeting

Tuesday, September 6
6:30 pm
Pillow Elementary

National Night Out

Tuesday, October 4
6:30 pm
Homes in the NSCNA area

NSCNA General Meeting

Tuesday, November 1
6:30 pm
Pillow Elementary

North Shoal Creek Neighborhood News is a bimonthly newsletter for the North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association (NSCNA)

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NSCNA

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Our Website..... www.nscna.org
Membership..... www.nscna.org/join
Email List..... www.nscna.org/elist
Calendar..... www.nscna.org/calendar

Tree Planting Update

Last year, NSCNA was awarded a City of Austin Urban Forest Grant for \$8,000, to plant trees around our neighborhood for shade and heat mitigation. The Beautification Committee has been working on the project and has an update ... and a request.

Matthew Tobola, the arborist we hired to survey our neighborhood for "hot spots" (locations needing shade), has submitted his report, and it contains a list of 43 addresses in need of a shade tree along with 14 addresses with dead or declining trees.

Matthew assigned a priority of 1 - 5 to each address. He gave 17 addresses a Priority 1 rating (most in need of a shade tree), and the Beautification Committee decided to concentrate on these locations first.

On September 1, we mailed information packets describing our project to the 17 Priority 1 addresses. We included a form that each homeowner who wants to take part in the project needs to sign and return to the Beautification Committee by September 30.

In October, once we know how many Priority 1 homeowners want a free shade tree, we can begin contacting the remaining homeowners on Matthew's lists. We hope to finish distributing the trees by December and to have them planted by the end of the year.

If you believe your home should have been included in the Priority 1 listing for tree replacement, but you have not received an information packet, please contact the Beautification Committee at beautificationchair@nscna.org.

--Sharon Justice

Short-Term Rentals Growing

Austin neighborhoods are facing a new concern: year-round short-term rentals of single-family residences owned and managed by corporate investors. The NSCNA Board of Directors would like the neighborhood to examine this issue and decide whether to take a position.

Houses and condos in neighborhoods like ours are available to rent for weekends or vacations through websites like HomeAway (homeaway.com). HomeAway currently lists nearly 600 residential rentals in the Austin area, up from 300 in 2010. Many local rentals are downtown or near the lakes, but you can find short-term rentals all around Austin, including two here in North Shoal Creek.

Corporate investors own an increasing number of short-term rental residences in Austin. Investors are actively buying multiple homes in neighborhoods and preparing them for short-term rents.

The City of Austin has no specific regulations for rentals of residences for less than 30 days. They're not classified as hotels/motels under the existing City Land Use Code. In March, City Planning Director Greg Geurnsey issued a decision that short-term leases of single-family homes were not illegal under current code.

The City Planning Commission is working on an amendment to the City

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President's Corner



As you may know, the City is in the midst of developing a comprehensive long-range plan. This plan will lay out how Austin will grow and develop for decades to come. You can read about it at www.austintexas.gov/compplan

Development Chair Kevin Wier has been following the process for us. In January, the city reviewed a map with neighborhood representatives. The most significant impact to our neighborhood shown on that map was designating Burnet Rd. as a core transit corridor. This designation would mean a moderate density increase for our neighborhood, directed along that corridor.

We were surprised when later maps showed an additional designation: a “town center” at MoPac and Anderson. The City’s rationale is that when commuter rail extends down Mo-Pac, they’ll want to focus development around the station south of Research. The “town center” designation calls for 15,000 residents and 5,000 commercial units.

The NSCNA Board felt this scope of development would be vastly harmful to our neighborhood, and sent a letter to the city, jointly with the Allandale Neighborhood Association,

expressing our concerns. You can view a copy of our letter here: www.nscna.org/?p=1808

Earlier this month, the City asked to meet with us to discuss our concerns. Here is what we learned:

- The City will reduce the size of the designation from a “town center” to a “neighborhood center.” That would reduce the size of the projected development by half.
- The City will be moving away from the fixed numbers assigned to the designations, recognizing that development can’t be one-size-fits-all, and different density levels are appropriate for different parts of town.
- The actual location and size and character of the development will be driven by the rail station siting process, something we’ll want to follow closely.

We are one of the few central city neighborhoods without a neighborhood plan, and thus no existing “Future Land Use Map” directing development. So it’s important that we monitor the comprehensive plan process to ensure our neighborhood’s character is protected.

Thanks to Kevin and the NSCNA Board for working diligently on this issue.

--Chip Rosenthal

A large advertisement for RBFCU Rockwood Branch. The background features a silhouette of the Texas State Capitol building against a light sky with birds. The main text is in a large, bold, white font with a drop shadow: "North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association Members, You Can Join!". In the bottom right corner, there is a circular logo for RBFCU with a white star above the text "RBFCU". Below the logo, it says "Join online - rbfcu.org", "512-833-3300 | 1-800-580-3300", and "Federally insured by the NCUA".

**North Shoal Creek
Neighborhood
Association Members,
You Can Join!**

Rockwood Branch
8620 Burnet Rd. (Near Taco Cabana)

RBFCU
Join online – rbfcu.org
512-833-3300 | 1-800-580-3300
Federally insured by the NCUA

July 4 Parade and Celebration a Success

The 11th Annual NSCNA Independence Day Parade and Celebration was a great success. Many neighbors and their friends joined the July 4 parade around Pillow Elementary, and still more gathered at the school and playground to enjoy a fun-filled morning.

Activities included face painting, balloon animals, games of washers and ladders, sidewalk chalk drawings, and a cake walk (well, a cupcake walk anyway). Snow cones helped everyone stave off the heat. Many attendees decorated bikes and wagons, some wore festive costumes, and a few dressed up their pets in red, white and blue.

Many people worked hard to make the celebration such an enjoyable event. We'd like to thank everyone who volunteered their time and hard work, or who donated items.

--Juliette Kernion



Short Term Rentals

(continued from page 1)

Land Use Code to recognize and regulate short-term rentals. Requirements might include registration with the City, payment of state hotel occupancy taxes, and periodic health and safety inspections.

Opponents say short-term rentals bring more strangers to neighborhoods. They view investors as “absentee landlords” who don’t monitor properties on a daily basis. Finally, they’re worried about a possible decline in property values to homes near short-term rental properties.

Supporters of short-term rentals claim investors often buy homes that are in disrepair and improve them, then must keep the residences in good condition so they’re attractive to renters. They believe these improvements are likely to increase property values.

Some opponents of neighborhood short-term rentals say the rentals are already illegal because they’re in neighborhoods where hotels aren’t permitted. They want the City of Austin



Special Thanks:

Austin City Council Member Sheryl Cole
Austin City Council Member Chris Riley
Austin Police Department
Pillow Elementary
Nader Mdeway, Keystone Insurance Services
Mott Leonino, Art for Your Head!
Sun Harvest
Hey Cupcake!
Dairy Queen
Sonic, America’s Drive-In
Boy Scouts Ben Anderson, Caleb Anderson and Thane Downing
Dana Boyd
Kate Brien
Donna Eagar
Candy Ellard
Ernie Garcia
Alice Kubacak
Dallas Maham
Helene Maham
Lois McEvoy
and Social Committee Chair Amelia Cobb!
Tiny Pies
Taco Cabana
Schlotzky’s
Town North Nissan
Ken Moyer
Bonnie Moyer
Tom Murphy
Tomas Rodriguez
Chip Rosenthal
Robert Seidel
Ethan Seidel
Kenneth Webb
Roger Wines

to fine corporate investors running short-term rentals in “family-oriented” neighborhoods (zoned DF and MF).

Other opponents don’t support a ban on short-term rentals owned by corporate investors, but want the City to regulate rentals in a way similar to bed and breakfasts or hotels.

Whatever their potential and actual effects, short-term rental properties are part of the North Shoal Creek neighborhood, and it’s important that we recognize and address this issue. Please attend the Sept. 6 NSCNA General Meeting to discuss and vote about the position we would like to take.

--Juliette Kernion

National Night Out

National Night Out (NNO) takes place in Austin this year on Tuesday, October 4. NSCNA would like to encourage neighbors to host block parties that evening.

National Night Out is a program designed to “promote neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships.” Much of the country observes NNO in August, but Texas has designated October as a more appropriate (and cooler) time.

Anyone can host a NNO event. The Austin Police Department has details about what you can do, whether it’s a get-together with some refreshments, a cookout or a neighborhood walk.

Visit the City’s NNO website (<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/police/nno.htm>) to find an application you can submit to officially register your block party. You’ll receive NNO materials, plus you can request a visit from safety personnel, although their attendance is not guaranteed. Registration deadline is September 16.

Please contact Donna Eagar at nightout@nscna.org about your event. We’ll compile a map of block parties so neighbors can find out if there’s a party near them, and post the map to the NSCNA website.

Finally, invite the neighbors on your block. We recommend you distribute a flyer or invitation directly to your neighbors. You may want to ask them to bring snacks or lawn chairs.

--Juliette Kernion

Sept. 6 Meeting Items

We have a full agenda for our Sept. 6 general meeting at Pillow Elementary School, 3025 Crosscreek Dr. We’ll try to start promptly at 6:30 pm to ensure all the issues are covered.

Some of the items planned are:

- Discussion of next steps in the neighborhood tree planing project, including the siting of “priority one locations.”
- A presentation on the short-term rental issue, and possible action on adopting a policy position.
- Updates on other news and issues in the neighborhood.

All North Shoal Creek residents are invited to attend. Hope to see you there.

Nominating Committee

NSCNA members will nominate and elect a Nominating Committee at the September 6 general meeting. The five-member Nominating Committee makes recommendations to the membership for the four Officer and seven Director positions we will elect in January 2012.

If you are interested or have questions, contact any Board member, or President Chip Rosenthal at 512-573-5174 or president@nscna.org.

Become an NSCNA Member Today

The North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association (NSCNA) promotes community in the area stretching from Burnet Road to Mopac, and from Anderson Lane to Hwy 183.

NSCNA works for our neighborhood. We monitor potential development projects in the area, work on traffic issues like the Steck Ave. restriping, plan social events such as the annual July 4 parade and party ... and much more!

When you join NSCNA, your membership fee helps fund these events and services. The neighborhood association also relies on volunteers to make these efforts a success.

Membership is just \$15 per household per year. Why not join today?

You can pay your membership dues online at www.nscna.org/join or contact any Board member for a printed application that you can fill out and mail to us.

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