



*Face-painting and balloon-twisting were popular at the celebration after last year's North Shoal Creek Independence Day Parade.*

## **Join us for NSC Independence Day parade and celebration**

Get your red, white and blue ready! North Shoal Creek's 19<sup>th</sup> annual Independence Day parade and celebration is right around the corner.

**North Shoal Creek's 19<sup>th</sup> annual  
Independence Day Parade and Celebration  
9-11:30 a.m. Thursday, July 4  
Pillow Elementary School  
Free to all**

Everyone who lives in North Shoal Creek is invited to this free event. Bring your family, your friends, your pets – even your pet pig – and celebrate the Fourth of July with your neighbors.

To join the parade, please arrive at the Pillow Elementary main entrance and circular driveway by 9 a.m. in your most festive patriotic gear.

*See **Independence Day** on page 10*

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### **IMPORTANT DATES**

June 11: District 7 Town Hall, 6:30-8 p.m., Northwest Recreation Center  
 June 20: NSCNA board meeting\*  
 July 4: NSC's Fourth of July parade/celebration, 9-11:30 a.m., Pillow Elementary  
 July 18: NSCNA board meeting\*  
 August 8: NSC contact team meeting\*  
 August 15: NSCNA board meeting\*  
 September 3: NSCNA General Membership Meeting, 6:30-8 p.m., Pillow library  
 \*6:30-8 p.m., First Texas Honda Conference Room

## Neighborhood News Summer 2019

A quarterly newsletter of the North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association (NSCNA)

**Editor:** Sharon Justice

**Contributors:** Brian Cobb, Amy Culbertson, Dick Dunbar, Donna Eagar, Pam Ferguson, Anna Hobbs, Jon Menegay, Kenneth Webb, and Kevin Wier.

Color edition of newsletter available at [www.nscna.org](http://www.nscna.org).

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# Commentary: Council threatens to erode neighborhood plan

By Sharon Justice, chair, North Shoal Creek Contact Team

Less than a year after approving our hard-fought North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Plan, Austin City Council appears to be putting the plan's central compromise at risk.

Council's new policy guidelines for a revised land development code threaten to erode some of the protections hammered out in our plan. (See "**Council issues code rewrite guidance**" on the next page for details.)

Our neighborhood plan is based on what Mayor Steve Adler, in his 2017 State of the City Address, called "the Austin Bargain," which he described as containing two goals: to protect our neighborhoods and to deliver the increased housing supply Austin needs to make it more affordable.

Our plan speaks to both goals by directing new growth to the corridors along our neighborhood's perimeter while keeping our residential core predominantly single-family. The latter was the most contentious part of the plan, and NSCNA's Development Committee had to fight to get it included. Fortunately, its efforts were successful, resulting in a land-use policy for North Shoal Creek's residential interior that reads: "Retain single-family houses as the most dominant building type."

In return for protecting a single-family-dominant neighborhood core, the plan allows some 151 acres on the perimeters of

North Shoal Creek — currently zoned commercial and industrial — to become eligible for development as multi-family residential or as mixed-use (i.e., commercial plus multi-family residential). According to city planning staff estimates, these 151 acres hold the potential for 3,802 new housing units. Our neighborhood currently contains 2,155 housing units.

Now, this compromise — which city staff agreed to and which nine of the current 11 council members voted for on August 23, 2018 — may be in danger. The recent code rewrite instructions council sent to City Manager Spencer Cronk include several directives that appear to conflict with our plan. The two most worrisome ones are these:

1. Introducing transition zones from outer corridors that can extend from two to five lots into a neighborhood, intended primarily for missing-middle housing — duplexes, multiplexes, townhomes, cooperatives and cottage courts.
2. Substantially reducing compatibility standards, which regulate the distance and height of commercial buildings constructed near residential housing.

Now that North Shoal Creek has a neighborhood plan, our neighborhood's official liaison with the city on matters regarding the plan is the North Shoal Creek

See **CONTACT TEAM** on page 8

**NSCNA needs volunteers to serve on its Nominating Committee. This 5-member committee selects candidates to fill NSCNA's eleven officer and director positions. If you are interested in serving on this important committee, email [treasurer@nscna.org](mailto:treasurer@nscna.org).**

## JOIN NSCNA

**Dues are only \$15 per household per calendar year. Renters and property owners residing in North Shoal Creek are eligible to join. Just fill out the membership form on page 12, then mail it and your \$15 check to NSCNA Membership / P.O. Box 66443 / Austin, TX 78766-0443. Join online via PayPal at [www.nscna.org/join](http://www.nscna.org/join). Or come to our next membership meeting — 6:30 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, September 3, in the Pillow Elementary School library — and join there via cash or check.**



# Council issues code rewrite guidance

By Sharon Justice, newsletter editor

Austin City Council has issued policy guidance for a revised land development code, asking city staff for a code rewrite that would increase Austin’s density; encourage more missing middle housing and affordable housing; and add transition zones to areas defined as activity centers and activity corridors by Austin’s master plan, “Imagine Austin.”

Council also gave staff leeway to ease compatibility, parking and other regulations that could limit the potential number of housing units in new developments.

Because North Shoal Creek is a central Austin neighborhood with activity corridors on its eastern and southern boundaries, it will be affected by the new code. Some of the guidelines — such as allowing residential uses in commercial zoning categories — align with our neighborhood plan. Others — such as establishing transition zones from two to five lots into a neighborhood — conflict with our neighborhood plan and could have considerable impact on North Shoal Creek’s residential core.

NSCNA’s Development Committee and North Shoal Creek’s Contact Team members intend to closely monitor the rewrite’s progress, focusing on policies that conflict with our neighborhood plan. Council’s policy guidance says the new code should “regulate uses through context-sensitive policies,” which gives us some hope that the new code won’t be “one-size-fits-all.”

See **CODE REWRITE** on page 10



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# Maximizing networking with *Nextdoor*

By Pamela Ellen Ferguson, contributor

The neighborhood jumps to life under your fingertips when you become active on the *Nextdoor.com* social network for North Shoal Creek.

On *Nextdoor North Shoal Creek*, you can find info on everything from political gatherings to surveys on bike lanes and pedestrian crossings, to neighborhood association alerts, to yard sales, to recommendations on caregivers; from neighborhood beautification projects to community garden updates, library events and voting info. You can exchange private messages with other members, too.

Lost a beloved pet? I cannot name the number of owners who have found a missing escape artist or storm-spooked pet just through the postings on *Nextdoor* and the neighborhood experts who list multiple resources and advice. I'd say this is one of the most active resources on our *Nextdoor* network. A bit of advice: If you are posting a lost or found notice, please add a pic of the dog/cat/rabbit and include the street and surrounding blocks where the pet was lost – or spotted wandering. And don't forget a phone number. Time and again I find myself adding these requests when I read a bald post such as "Grey fluffy cat found. Blue collar."

Looking for a reliable plumber, whether for a minor fix or for one of those all-too-common mega-jobs requiring trench digging and pipe replacement? Just pose the question on *Nextdoor*, and you will be stunned by the advice and referrals. Folks find pet sitters, electricians, lawn cutters, painters, repair experts, fence builders and all kinds of other professionals through *Nextdoor*. You'll find an emphasis on local and family-run businesses.

Neighbors helping refugee families or families hit by disasters often post specific requests, furnishing an emergency apartment just by posting on *Nextdoor*. Parents seeking materials for kids' projects list requests for everything from old textiles to chipped ceramics. Neighbors offer free items, from furniture to plants, to anyone who will pick them up from the curb.

Is noise a problem? Start a discussion rolling on *Nextdoor* (and raise the matter at the next neighborhood association meeting). *Nextdoor* encourages collective activism and input.

See *Nextdoor* on page 5

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**Nextdoor:** *continued from page 4*

Experience bad service at a local business? Post a helpful note on *Nextdoor* — but please avoid nastiness! Found a new restaurant you want to recommend? Post that too.

Don't be put off by the occasional griper or sourpuss. Compassionate folks are quick to tamp down the heat and offer constructive resolutions.

How do you join *Nextdoor*? Google “Nextdoor North Shoal Creek” or go to <http://nextdoor.com>. You'll be asked for your address, but it won't be displayed on postings; you'll be identified only by neighborhood. It's free.

Look forward to seeing you!

*Neighbor Pam Ferguson is an author and teacher who enjoys gardening, cycling and rescuing pets. Read more about Pam at her website: <http://www.pamelaferguson.net>.*



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# Pillow's Page: Program will put produce from school garden onto kids' plates

by Brian Cobb, Community Garden volunteer

The garden beds behind Pillow Elementary School are ready for their second act: By next spring, students should be finding produce from the garden on their plates at school meals.

Pillow is seeking approval to join the new Garden to Café Program, which allows schools in the Austin Independent School District to incorporate school garden produce into their meal programs. The North Shoal Creek Community Garden Committee and Pillow staff are working together to set up the program at Pillow by next spring.

Pillow teachers will lead students in planting the new beds to supply the produce, although it may be necessary for neighborhood families to adopt the plots over the summer to ensure that summer crops are harvested and the beds prepared for fall.

Big thanks to the NSC Community Garden Committee for providing the seed money (sorry for the pun)

to refurbish the old beds.

Several talented neighborhood gardeners have led initiatives with AISD and Pillow Elementary to teach kids about composting, worms and the importance of good soil. Special thanks go to teachers Candy Ellard, Jeannine Frenzel and Leslie Pearlman, whose students have been caring for the plots allocated to Pillow in the community garden.

If you are a gardener or want to come learn to become one, contact Garden Chair Dick Dunbar at [gardenchair@nscna.org](mailto:gardenchair@nscna.org) to volunteer. For more information on the new Garden to Café Program, a project of AISD with the Austin Area School Garden Collaborative, go to <https://sustainablefoodcenter.org/latest/gardening/aisds-new-garden-to-caf-program-allows-school-garden-produce-to-be-served-in-school-meals>.

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# North Shoal Creek Community Garden gets turquoise table and accessible raised beds

By Dick Dunbar, Community Garden chair

New amenities at the North Shoal Creek Community Garden include a turquoise table overlooking the garden and three new raised beds (photos below).

Garden Committee Chair Dick Dunbar provided the turquoise table, offering seating to anyone passing by. The goal of the turquoise-table movement, started by Austinite Kristen Schell, is to foster neighborliness and human interaction, so feel free to use the table to rest, relax, meet old friends and make new ones, or even to bring a picnic to the garden.

Thanks to a \$745 mini-grant from the City of Austin's Equity Office, three new raised beds (photo below) have been added at the community garden. They are intended for wheelchair gardeners or gardeners who cannot bend and need to garden from a standing position. All three have been taken.

Currently, all the garden's beds are rented, and there is a waiting list. If you want to add your name to the waiting list, or if you want more information about the garden, email [gardenchair@nscna.org](mailto:gardenchair@nscna.org).



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**Contact team** *continued from page 2*

Contact Team. The contact team was established soon after council approved our plan, as called for in Section 25-1-801 of the city’s land development code.

In addition to advocating for and working to implement the neighborhood plan, North Shoal Creek’s contact team is charged with:

- Serving as the point of contact when the city needs to notify a neighborhood of new policies and changes to the Land Development Code.
- Meeting with developers to discuss developments and zoning changes proposed for a neighborhood.
- Proposing amendments to a neighborhood plan.

The contact team is separate from but works hand-in-hand with the North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association Development Committee, which in the past has worked with city staff and developers to mitigate any negative effects a development might have on North Shoal Creek. (As independent grass-roots organizations, neighborhood associations have no official standing with the city, though historically council has recognized neighborhood associations as representatives of and advocates for their areas.)

The contact team will wait until the code rewrite is present-

ed to the public and city council this fall to offer an official response to the city. But the topic will be the main subject of the team’s next quarterly meeting on August 8, when members will formulate its strategy. The NSCNA Development Committee will hold meetings this summer to discuss the issue and prepare an official response from NSCNA as well.

The efforts of both entities, however, likely won’t be enough to prevent the code rewrite from overriding important parts of our neighborhood plan, such as keeping our core predominantly single-family residential and ensuring strong compatibility standards where commercial zoning meets residential. Ultimately, all the neighborhood association and the contact team can do is offer recommendations on behalf of the neighborhood. Council is the final decision-making body. While it wants our input, it is not obligated to agree with it or to act on it.

The greater the neighborhood residents’ participation in our decision-making and our presentations to the city, the louder our voices will be to the members of the Austin City Council, whose 11 votes will determine the future of our neighborhood.

What can you do? Stay informed through NSCNA communications and local news media. Participate. Join us at meetings—both the NSCNA Development Committee and

*See CONTACT TEAM on page 9*

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- |               |                                      |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| June 9, 2019  | Limitless Compassion: Reluctant      |
| June 16, 2019 | Limitless Compassion: Grace          |
| June 23, 2019 | Limitless Compassion: Response       |
| June 30, 2019 | Limitless Compassion: Repentance     |
| July 7, 2019  | Limitless Compassion: Abounding Love |

**10AM SUNDAYS | PILLOW ELEMENTARY**



**Contact team** *continued from page 8*

the NSC Contact Team.

This fall, go to city-sponsored meetings about the code rewrite. Encourage your neighbors to get involved and be prepared to write letters and attend meetings later this year.

The contact team meets quarterly — the second Thursday in February, May, August and November — from 6:30 to 7:55 p.m. in the conference room at First Texas Honda, 3400 Steck Avenue. Any neighborhood resident may become a voting member by attending two consecutive meetings. Please come to the August 8 meeting. For information on the meeting or the contact team in general, email [nscontactteam@gmail.com](mailto:nscontactteam@gmail.com). Join NSCNA's Development Committee. Just email [development@nscna.org](mailto:development@nscna.org) for more information or to join.

Meeting announcements are posted 10 days before each meeting on NSCNA's Facebook page and Yahoo Group as well as the NSCNA website and on Nextdoor North Shoal Creek. All meetings are open to the public.

Our neighborhood planning process was a

sometimes contentious multi-year effort. I believe the neighborhood plan we produced (and which council approved unanimously) is a good one that walks a careful line between North Shoal Creek's need for increased affordable housing while maintaining the neighborhood vibe and character we love. I believe the plan deserves the support of North Shoal Creek's residents, and I ask for your help in what promises to be a hard fight. Please join us in defending it.

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## **Independence Day** *continued from page 1*

Want to win a prize for your costume or decorating skills? Enter our contest by picking up a number from one of the judges before the parade begins.

This year's categories:

- Most patriotic children's costume
- Most patriotic adult costume
- Most patriotic pet
- Best-dressed bike
- Best-dressed trike
- Best-dressed wagon
- Best-dressed stroller

After the parade, the fun continues at the pavilion with awards for contest winners, face-painting, balloon-twisting, games, refreshments and a special guest appearance by an Austin Fire Department fire truck.

Sponsored by the North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association's Social Committee, the Independence Day celebration is our neighborhood's biggest social event of the year. It's a great time to meet new friends, catch up with old ones and support our neighborhood by joining or renewing your NSCNA membership. Take a moment between face-painting and snow cones to stop by the NSCNA membership table. Dues are \$15 and can be paid via PayPal at the event.

### When and where

- **9 a.m.:** Gather in front of Pillow Elementary. Registration for the costume contest.
- **9:05 a.m.:** Brief opening ceremony, including a rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner."
- **9:10 a.m.:** Parade kicks off for a march around the block with a special police escort, ending at the pavilion behind the school.
- **9:45-11:30 a.m.:** Food, fun and games at the pavilion.

**Want to make sure our Fourth of July celebration is amazing? We need your help!**

We're looking for a few volunteers to help set up, take down and manage the activities at our celebration. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/NSC4ofJuly> to sign up for a volunteer spot. Thank you for helping make our Independence Day fun and free for all!

## **Code rewrite** *continued from page 3*

Highlights of the code rewrite guidance include:

- A housing-capacity goal of at least 405,000 new units. (Housing capacity refers to the number of units that *can* be developed under the revised code; it is neither a prediction of nor a goal for the total number of units to be built.)
- Allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in all residential zones.
- Reducing minimum lot sizes and prioritizing housing unit yields over non-zoning regulations, such as tree protection and parkland.
- Placing 75% of new housing capacity within 1/2 mile of transit priority networks (rapid-transit bus service lines), activity centers and activity corridors. All of North Shoal Creek lies within 1/2 mile of transit priority networks and activity corridors (Burnet Road and Anderson Lane).
- Reducing site development standards for missing middle housing — duplexes, multiplexes, town-homes, cooperatives and cottage courts — making it easier, faster and cheaper for developers to build missing middle housing.
- Adding transition zones, intended primarily for missing middle housing, adjacent to activity centers, activity corridors and transit priority networks.
- Reducing compatibility standards — zoning rules regulating how far away from residential housing commercial or multi-family buildings must be placed — in activity centers and along activity corridors.
- Reducing the impact of parking requirements on development, which includes eliminating parking requirements within 1/4 mile of activity centers and corridors and along priority transit routes.

City Manager Spencer Cronk has been directed to have the revised code and zoning map ready for council to consider for adoption beginning in October.

You can read council's new guidelines at [http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Communications/Council\\_Adopted\\_LDC\\_Policy\\_Direction\\_5.2.19.pdf](http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Communications/Council_Adopted_LDC_Policy_Direction_5.2.19.pdf).

If the code rewrite is a topic you are interested in, please consider joining NSCNA's Development Committee and attending meetings of the North Shoal Creek Contact Team. Email [development@nscna.org](mailto:development@nscna.org) for information on the former, [nsccontactteam@gmail.com](mailto:nsccontactteam@gmail.com) for information about the latter.



# Short takes on neighborhood news

By Sharon Justice, newsletter editor

**Please scoop the poop:** Folks, we have a problem with pet poop on the grounds of Pillow Elementary School. Kiddos are stepping in it, and that's unpleasant and unhealthy for both kids and staff. So please pick up after your pets — and deposit the poop in the designated receptacle next to the school driveway off Rockwood.

**A reminder: Pillow Playground isn't an off-leash dog park.** The closest off-leash area is at 7099 Great Northern Boulevard, a 10-acre site owned by Austin's Watershed Protection Department. Yard Bar, a restaurant and bar at 6700 Burnet Road, includes an off-leash area: [www.yardbar.com](http://www.yardbar.com). Letting your dog run free in a park not designated as off-leash can lead to a fine of up to \$500 in Austin.

## Retail and dining updates:

**DipDipDip Tatsu-Ya**, which will offer shabu-shabu — Japanese hot-pot cooking — is scheduled to open in June in the Centennial Shopping Center, 7301 Burnet Road.

It's the latest venture for the team behind the popular Ramen Tatsu-Ya and Kemuri Tatsu-Ya. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/dipdipdiptatsuya/>.

**Red Pepper Szechuan House** opened earlier this year at 2700 W. Anderson Lane, site of the former Kiwami Ramen and Shabu. <http://redpepperaustin.com/>.

We failed to note last year's opening of Eastern European restaurant **Brama** ("gates" in Polish) at 3301 Steck, Suite 106 (formerly Marakesh), with Russian, Ukrainian, Polish and Romanian dishes: <https://www.bramarestaurant.com/>.

Chain restaurant openings: **Jason's Deli**, 2438 W. Anderson Lane, Suite D5; **Louisiana Crab Shack**, 2525 W. Anderson Lane, Suite 265.

Early this summer, **Goodwill** is scheduled to move from 7727 Burnet Road to Northwood Plaza, replacing Stein-Mart at 2900 W. Anderson Lane.

**Benold's Jewelers**, also in Northwood Plaza, is celebrating its 90th anniversary. Benold's originally opened on Sixth Street in 1929 and moved to Anderson Lane in 1997.

The North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association (NSCNA) holds five membership meetings a year, on the first Tuesday of these months: January, March, May, September and November. Meetings are held from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the Pillow Elementary School library, 3025 Crosscreek. All meetings are open to the public.

North Shoal Creek Neighborhood News ad prices: Business-card size, 3.5" wide by 2" high, \$30. Quarter-page, 3.5" wide by 4" high, \$60. Half-page: 7.5" wide by 5" high, \$115. 10% discount when three or more ads are purchased at the same time. To advertise, email [newsletter@nscna.org](mailto:newsletter@nscna.org).



## North Shoal Creek real estate

### Single-family homes for sale:

8500 Stillwood	3-2	1,051 sq ft	\$387,000
3204 Benbrook	4-2	1,742 sq ft	\$549,900
8200 Sandalwood	3-3	1,449 sq ft	\$480,000

### Condos for sale:

2425 Ashdale	1-1	642 sq ft	\$145,000
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### Pending sales:

8310 Franwood	3-2	1,056 sq ft	\$415,000
8401 Millway	3-2	1,505 sq ft	\$450,000
8406 Briarwood	3-1	1,051 sq ft	\$359,000
2500 Steck	1-1	680 sq ft	\$183,000

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## NORTH SHOAL CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

### MEMBERSHIP FORM 2019

Names of all residents over 18: \_\_\_\_\_

Residence address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Which committees are you interested in?

\_\_\_\_\_ Beautification    \_\_\_\_\_ Bylaws    \_\_\_\_\_ Development    \_\_\_\_\_ Garden  
\_\_\_\_\_ Media    \_\_\_\_\_ Membership    \_\_\_\_\_ Safety    \_\_\_\_\_ Social    \_\_\_\_\_ Traffic

Please bring this form with you to our next membership meeting or mail it with a \$15 check payable to NSCNA to: NSCNA Membership / P.O. Box 66443 / Austin, TX 78766-0443. You can also join online via PayPal at [www.nscna.org/join](http://www.nscna.org/join). Cost is \$16, which includes a \$1.00 PayPal processing fee.