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CRESTVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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December 2015

EVENTS CALENDAR

Monday, December 21: Crestview Neighborhood Association Social, 7:00 PM at the Crestview Shopping Center, 7100 Woodrow Ave.

Monday, December 21–Friday, December 25: Luminarias along Arroyo Seco.

Monday, January 11, 2016 at 8:30 AM and **Friday, January 15** at 10:00 AM: Brentwood Elementary School Welcome Walk for Future Brentwood Families. Principal Amber Laroche will lead the tour and answer questions. The tour will begin at the school's front office.

Saturdays: Johnson's Backyard Garden and Bikkurim Farms farmers' market, 9:00 AM–1:00 PM, at 7113 Burnet Rd., in front of Dallas Nightclub.

Sundays: Sunday yoga, 10:00–11:00 AM, Brentwood Elementary covered slab. For more information, see www.yogadenada.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Longtime Crestview resident Ruby Gage passed away on September 24, 2015. Our condolences to her family and friends. She will be sorely missed.

Eva Jo Chappell, mother of Crestview residents Kelly Chappell and his brother Chris Chappell, passed away on November 20, 2015. Our sincere sympathies to them and their families on their loss.

But for this rock, its shadow says, I could get at the sun.

-James Richardson

From the President

Dave Considine, CNA President

For the December CNA meeting we have decided to have a second annual social event. The meeting will be moved from the second Monday of the month to the third (December 21). This coincides with the first day of the lighting of the Luminarias on Arroyo Seco. All Crestview neighbors, family and friends are invited to meet at the Little Deli/IGA parking lot at 7:00 PM to enjoy hot cider and cookies. At 7:30 PM, we will begin a walk down the arroyo.

As we approach the holiday season, it is a good time to reflect on how fortunate we are to live in a wonderful neighborhood. Much of what is wonderful about Crestview is the neighborly feeling that is fostered by neighbors looking out for neighbors. Please take a moment this holiday season to reach out to your neighbors, particularly the elderly and those in need. Not everyone who needs a helping hand will ask for it. On behalf of the CNA Executive Committee, I would like to wish you and yours a peaceful and safe Holiday Season.

Brentwood Park Fall Work Day

By Hedrich Michaelsen

Brentwood Park Fall Workday a Success!

Thank you to everyone who came out to help with this year's fall workday! With your help, we accomplished the following at Brentwood Park:



- 20 cubic yards of mulch were distributed to trees in the east and southeast sections of the park.
- The sign bed was weeded and mulched.
- The purple martin bed was weeded and mulched and the edging was repaired and reinforced.
- The volleyball court sand was sifted for gravel and debris.
- The waterboxxes were removed or replaced.

Thank you also to our sponsors! Genuine Joe's provided coffee, Tacodeli provided tacos, Austin Parks Foundation provided mulch, tool loan, and other assistance, and Austin Parks and Recreation provided logistical assistance.

Never fear if you missed this weekend's workday; keep an eye

out for emails regarding It's My Park Day 2016 on Saturday, March 5. For more information, see www.austinparks.org/its-my-park-day.html.

And if you'd like to support future projects of Friends of Brentwood Park, you can donate at <https://austinparks.org/sfa/support-brentwood-park>.

CRESTVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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CNA General Meetings are held the second Monday of every month at 7:00 PM at the Crestview United Methodist Church
1300 Morrow St.

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Neighborhood Character in Conflict with City Permitting

By Clark Cornwell

Could you describe your neighborhood, in twenty words or less, to someone unfamiliar with Crestview and adequately convey that hard to describe feeling that you and your neighbors have when strolling around the block or riding a bike to Brentwood Park?

The Crestview feeling is in part attributable to the layout and design of our neighborhood. The design (residential core, lot sizes, house size, design, house placement, street width, setbacks, utility layout) is the result of development covenants unique to Crestview, and even some that are unique to different sections within Crestview.

Through development covenants, also called deed restrictions or restrictive covenants, residential neighborhoods attain some of their character. The covenants place legal limitations on how we use and develop our lots, elements common to each lot. It's important to note that there remain in the record race restrictions from the 1940s alongside our neighborhood development covenants stating prohibitions against non-Caucasian residency, that aside from being morally repugnant, are illegal and unenforceable. Race restrictions were prevalent at a particular time in our history, not unique to Crestview or Austin, commonplace across the country in the 1920s through 1940s.

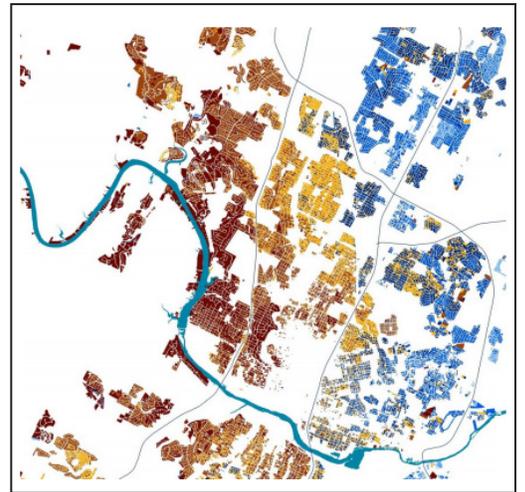
By contrast, the valid and enduring true development covenants most affecting Crestview's character are those setting location, layout, and building limits of residential lots. For example, most sections of Crestview include a covenant prohibiting building within 30 feet of the front property line.

Last month the Austin City Council passed a city-wide measure that would make it easier for the owner of a single family residential property zoned SF-3 to obtain a permit to construct a secondary dwelling, also called Accessory Dwelling Units or ADUs. The most significant relief granted to ADU permitting, relief in part aimed at solving City-wide development pressure, was a reduction of the required minimum lot size. The minimum lot size requirement for an ADU permit was reduced from 7,000 sq. ft. to 5,740 sq. ft. Almost every single family residential lot in Crestview is zoned SF-3 and is larger than 5,740 sq. ft.

Whether it's good public policy or not, the City of Austin has taken the position that its permitting programs, such as those for ADUs, should ignore conflicting neighborhood restrictive covenants. In fact, the City's current residential permit application excludes what had been included on the prior application form, a signed acknowledgement by the applicant that he or she is responsible for complying with development covenants and will provide them to the City if requested.

This is where property owners get into trouble. Development covenants on several areas within Austin, including Crestview, conflict with City permitting. One of the most apparent conflicts is that between the City's ADU permitting and the covenant in several sections of Crestview limiting each lot to only one single-family residential structure and prohibiting residential out-buildings. ADUs, by definition, are prohibited by the covenant. Although the City may determine that a permit applicant meets all of the City's requirements and issue a permit to commence construction, by violating development covenants, an owner is exposed to law suits and mortgage default, not to mention money lost to engineers and contractors on a terminated project.

It is important to be mindful that although you may not quite place your finger on the source of Crestview charm, neighborhood covenants play a fundamental role in defining our neighborhood's character.



Zoning Update: Austin Korean Presbyterian Church Property

By Chip Harris

On November 12, the City Council held a hearing on the proposed rezoning of the .94-acre lot at the corner of Cullen Ave. and Hardy Dr. Currently zoned single-family (SF-3), the requested change in zoning is for MF-3. MF-3 zoning allows up to 36 units per acre (depending on size). The height limit is 40 feet which would allow a three-story apartment complex.

Several Crestview residents attended and spoke in favor of an alternate, less intense zoning and development that would be more compatible with the existing neighborhood and surrounding uses.

On a vote of 9-2 (Council Members Ora Houston and Kathie Tovo opposed), the council approved the developer's request for MF-3 zoning. The motion was made by CM Pio Renteria and seconded by CM Delia Garza. Keep in mind that this was only "second reading". In order to approve a change in zoning to MF-3, the council needs to vote on the case three times. Nothing is final yet and won't be until the case comes back before the council for a third reading, possibly in February of 2016. While CM Leslie Pool voted for the motion, she prefaced her vote by saying that she was only supporting the zoning for second reading and that she hoped that before the case came back to the council for the third reading that several things would happen. First of all, that

there would be more conversation between the applicant and the neighbors on the number of units to be built. Second, she said that because of the flooding issues, reducing the proposed impervious cover to between 45% and 55% was important (currently the developer is proposing 65%). In addition, she voiced concerns about the lack of affordable housing in the developer's application since the rents stated by the developer would be market rate—roughly \$2 per square foot, which would be \$2,000 a month for a 1,000 square foot apartment.

Where do things go from here? At this point, the timing of third reading is in the developer's court because of various documents that need to be submitted by the developer prior to the third reading. Of importance in this case is the fact that there is currently a valid petition opposing the MF-3 zoning. As a result, in order for the MF-3 zoning to be approved, there must be nine affirmative votes for it at third reading. CM Tovo and CM Houston voted against the zoning on the second reading and we're hoping that unless the developer modifies his zoning request, that CM Pool will become the third vote against the case on the third reading, resulting in denial.

Thanks to everyone for their involvement. For more information, contact Chip Harris at austinchip@hotmail.com.

Brentwood/ Crestview Mom's Group

By Alison Koleszar

Calling all neighborhood moms (and expectant moms!) to The Brentwood/Crestview Moms' Group. Originally founded in February 2013 by neighborhood mom Donna Chen, the monthly meetings typically attract five to 15 moms and kids ranging from newborns to toddlers. Our winter meeting location is at Crestview United Methodist Church at 1300 Morrow St., room #10 (enter through the red door near Morrow and Grover). Please join us for the next meeting, scheduled for Saturday, December 19, at 10:00 AM.

For more information, contact Alison Koleszar (akoleszar@gmail.com) or Carolyn Stalzer Mehlomakulu (carolynmehlo@gmail.com).



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Crestview Loses Another Historic House

By Chip Harris

The November 16 agenda of the Historic Landmark Commission included a demolition permit request for the house at 1208 Stobaugh St., referred to by city staff as a nice example of a post-World War II vernacular cottage with a stone veneer. Unfortunately, the Commission voted to approve the demolition permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package. The owner's representative told the commission that there were plans at this time to move the house rather than demolish it.

Background information provided by the City of Austin:

Architecture

One-story, rectangular-plan, hipped-roof frame house with stone veneer and a central side gabled roof peak; central, partial-width, front-gabled independent porch on ornamental wood supports. Single and paired 8:8

Colonial Revival-styled fenestration.

Research

The house appears to have been built around 1947; the earliest utility permit



for this address dates from 1951, as this house was on the outskirts of town when it was built, and most likely relied on

a well prior to city water service. The house was built for Paul B. Williams and his wife, Leona, who lived here for the rest of their lives. Paul B. Williams was the youngest son of T.H. Williams, one of Austin's leading merchants, who

had a ladies' clothing store at 5th Street and Congress Avenue for many years. Paul B. Williams had no occupation listed in the city directories of the late 1940s and early 1950s. After his father's death in 1954, the business was left to the children, including T.H. Williams, Jr., who had taken over management of the business from his father in 1938. Paul B. Williams is listed as the proprietor of the store in the 1959 and 1962 city directories; he is listed a retired after that. His wife, Leona, died in 1971, and he remained in this house until his death in 1987. His son-in-law, Glen Knipstein, was

listed in the 1992 city directory as the renter of the property.

Continued on page 5

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Additional comments made by Steve Sadowsky (Historic Preservation Officer for the City of Austin) at the hearing:

We're just seeing an absolute frenzy of houses being torn down when people haven't even considered whether they can use what they've got. It is environmentally sound and it retains the character of the city through architecture. People really need to start looking at using what they've got and stop throwing perfectly good houses in our landfill and make what you have usable for you.

This is not the city it was five years ago, never mind 20 years ago, and I wish I could say everything was for the better but it's becoming unrecognizable, and unless we encourage people to think about alternatives to demolition, we are going to lose everything we've got.

I think that it is extremely important in every decision that this commission makes and every decision that we make in the historic preservation office, that we're considering the long-range effects and the big picture effects of our decision. There have been hundreds of houses torn down in Austin this year. We need to look at the big picture. What are we doing to the architectural character of our city when we make our decisions?

Prevent Package Theft

With the recent rash of seasonal front porch package thefts in Crestview, here are some tips to help avoid being a victim:



- Request a signature confirmation of delivery. By doing this, the deliverer will have to wait until you're available or deliver the package to a neighbor.
- Insure valuable items.
- Encourage you neighbors to watch for deliveries and agree to secure each other's packages. This includes being watchful for any stranger who is going onto porches for no apparent reason or following delivery trucks.
- If you have an understanding boss, have your packages delivered to you at work.
- Track packages online to see exactly when they're sent to your house for delivery. Many companies offer a text notification to your cell phone when a package has been delivered.
- Leave special instructions for where to deliver the packages. A good place is on the side or back of the house, so that the package is out of sight from the road.

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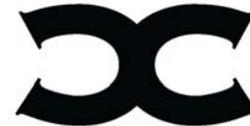
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