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# CRESTVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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August 2017

## Editor's Note: August Meeting Cancellation Notice

Thanks to all of the residents who participated in the June Town Hall meeting with the Mayor and the July ice cream

social. With such a busy summer, CNA is taking a break and cancelling their August meeting. We'll see you again in September!

## Considerations for New Construction in Crestview

By Anne-Charlotte Patterson, CNA Vice-President

**H**i Crestview! Anne-Charlotte here, Vice-president of the CNA. As everyone knows, our neighborhood is seeing lots of new home building. Sometimes builders contact the CNA to share their plans with us and to find out if we have any recommendations or preferences beyond what's required by city zoning. We think it's very neighborly when builders take this communicative approach! Here's what we suggest to those planning to build.

**1. Say no to demo.** Rather than defaulting to demolition, consider whether the home might be a candidate for renovation and addition. Many original Crestview homes feature built-to-last construction, and the most environmentally friendly house is the one that's already built. For inspiration, just look around the neighborhood to several stunningly remodeled homes.

**2. If you can't save it, reclaim it.** Lots of Crestview houses were built with desirable materials like wood flooring, brick, and ceramic tile. If it's determined that the structure can't realistically be saved, reclaim some of the materials and use them in the construction of the new home. That way the whole house doesn't wind up in a landfill and the new house is enhanced by reclaimed materials.

**3. Be a tree-hugger.** One of the nicest things about Crestview (besides the really nice neighbors) is our urban forest of big shady trees. Plan construction to take advantage of the trees, not to take them out!

**4. Cheer for the character.** We're all for keeping Austin weird, but we have a preference for new construction that matches the neighboring homes. Crestview was developed in the 50s and 60s, so a nod to mid-century architectural styles is a nice choice here! Also, think about scale—original "Crestview charmers" range in size from modest to elfin. Rather than dwarfing neighboring dwellings, think about putting more of the construction budget into upscale finishes instead of maxed out square footage and height.

**5. Offer affordability.** If the plan is to build more than one unit on a lot, instead of making them identical in size, think about a "big and small" approach, where one unit is smaller and more affordable. Affordability helps preserve Crestview's economic diversity, one of the things that make our neighborhood awesome.

**6. Follow the directions.** In addition to city zoning regulations, check to see what covenants apply to the lot. For example, most of Crestview lots require a 30' setback, and some blocks specify one home per lot.

**7. Meet the neighbors.** Sharing construction plans with the neighbors (and the CNA) helps ease concerns, demonstrates regard for the people living around the construction, and gets the project started off with a dose of good karma.

Got construction questions for the CNA? Email us through the website [www.crestviewna.com](http://www.crestviewna.com).

## Brentwood Park Playground Improvement Update

By Kristine Poland, Brentwood Park Playground Improvement Committee

**T**he Brentwood Park playground committee recently submitted a grant application to Austin Parks Foundation (APF), seeking funding for park renovations. The APF Board will announce the recipient of the \$100,000 grant during the first week of October. If awarded, the funds will be used to replace the failing adult exercise equipment with play equipment that engages older children in our beloved neighborhood park and is considered Phase 1 of the multi-phase project. A comprehensive park redesign was developed and

generously donated by Studio Balcones Landscape Architect (and Brentwood neighbor) Stephanie Saulmon. Pending all required approvals from the city of Austin, this plan will be presented to the neighborhood at meetings this fall, along with options for equipment that fits into the space available. Please attend one or both of the following meetings to provide your input on the design and equipment at Brentwood Park.

Visit [www.brentwoodplaygroundproject.com](http://www.brentwoodplaygroundproject.com) or follow us on social media for the latest updates!

Saturday, September 23  
Brentwood Park Pavilion, 6710 Arroyo Seco  
10:00–11:00 AM

Tuesday, October 24th  
Crestview United Methodist Church Classroom,  
1300 Morrow St. 7:00–8:00 PM

# CRESTVIEW

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
NEWSLETTER

is published monthly on 100% recycled paper by the Crestview Neighborhood Association (CNA).

For information and to submit articles contact:  
Chip Harris  
nlchip@outlook.com  
512-458-2488

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EDITOR	Chip Harris
DESIGN	Thomas Moore
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#### CNA Contact Information

P. O. Box 9505, Austin, TX 78766  
www.crestviewna.com

CNA General Meetings are held the second  
Monday of every month at 7:00 PM.  
Location to be announced.

Twitter: @CNAneighbors  
Facebook: CrestviewNeighborhoodAssociation

#### Neighborhood Email Groups

crestview-neighbors@yahoogroups.com  
crestview\_forsale@yahoogroups.com  
crestview-gardeners@googlegroups.com  
crestview-parents@googlegroups.com

#### CNA Committees

ADOPT-A-MEDIAN  
NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH  
ART AT ENTRANCES

## CodeNEXT: Win-Win or Land Grab?

By James B. Duncan, FAICP, CNU

*Editor's note: James B. Duncan is a former planning director for the city of Austin and currently serves as the Vice-Chair of the city's Zoning and Platting Commission. The following are excerpts from a PowerPoint presentation Mr. Duncan made at the July 26 general membership meeting of the Austin Neighborhoods Council. To view his entire presentation, visit the Austin Neighborhoods Council website: <http://ancweb.org/download/CODENEXT-ANC-WIN-WIN-7-26-2017b.pdf>*

The CodeNEXT text came out in January and map in April. Austin has now had six months to digest, discuss, and debate both and the only thing everybody seems to agree upon is that neither text nor map is ready for primetime. Staff and consultants have said they are listening. Revised versions of both are to be released in September. We will then see how well they have been listening!

After five years of service, the CodeNEXT citizens advisory group (CAG) recently released its final report. It is telling that not one member supported the text or map. Half want significant change and half a complete overhaul.

The most controversial aspect of CodeNEXT is its focus on densifying urban core single-family neighborhoods. With densification comes many changes. Home prices, rents, and taxes increase and the less affluent are forced to move. Parked cars crowd streets and bigger buildings displace yards and trees. Green is gone! Neighborhood character changes overnight! Local examples are West Campus where densification increased land values, rents, and taxes, causing many less affluent students to relocate, and East Austin where densification is rapidly displacing low-income families.

In 1985, Austin was one of the first cities in the nation to adopt performance-based compatibility standards. Since then, they have mitigated the negative effects of incompatible development on single-family homes. For example, tall buildings must be at least 300 feet, the length of a football field, from any single-family home.

CodeNEXT cripples Austin's compatibility standards! In the suburbs, the protected distance is reduced to 100 feet, the length of a basketball court. And in the urban core, that distance is reduced even further to 50 feet, or half-court.

In keeping with national "best practices", for decades Austin has limited the size of accessory dwellings to 850 square feet or less to encourage their affordability and compatibility. Last year, at the urging of local infill builders, the city council increased ADU max floor area by 30% to 1,100 sf. Now, CodeNEXT is proposing another 20% to 1,344 sf. With these increases, Austin is losing an affordable-housing resource and creating neighborhood compatibility issues.

Since 2004, Austin has attempted to use density bonuses as a zoning tool to secure affordable housing. Thus far, the program has been a major disappointment because:

- it does not benefit truly needy families
- it does not produce many units
- two of its programs are short-termers
- its "bail out" fees-in-lieu are ridiculously low

CodeNEXT recommends that the density bonus program be expanded fourfold and that bonus densities be doubled if 10% of the bonus units are affordable. These may be very worthy recommendations, but existing problems should be fixed before expanding the program. Since the State has now denied access to most other tools, it is imperative that Austin gets density bonuses right!

In order to speed up Austin's development review and approval process, CodeNEXT recommends shortening required times for waivers, adjustments, notices, and input. After a thorough examination, the CAG and League of Women Voters both determined that, although maybe saving builders and developers' time and money, the changes would significantly diminish public noticing and input and should not be implemented as proposed.



# Protecting Our Trees

By Council Member Leslie Pool



We are fortunate here in Austin to be blessed with a number of beautiful natural resources. Earlier this year, for instance, I oversaw an initiative that brought Austin into the ‘Biophilic Cities Network,’ recognizing the work we have done to protect our natural resources.

One of our most important natural assets is our trees. Trees add character to our communities and have a number of important ecological and cultural benefits. They help us maintain our connection to the natural world in an urban environment, provide us with protection from the sun during hot Texas summer days, and are a natural way to store carbon dioxide and fight climate change.

Because of this, the Austin community has supported city initiatives to protect our trees. This includes our beloved Heritage Tree Ordinance, which protects many of our older, large trees. Many other cities across Texas—large and small—have also recognized their trees have immense value and have adopted similar protections.

Unfortunately, these protections are now in question. When governor Greg Abbott brought the state legislature back into special session in late July, he called on them to pass a law overturning local tree protections. As of this writing, the Senate has already passed a bill that, if adopted, would do just that. The House, in contrast, has passed a bill that would preserve the ability of cities to protect their trees.

Protecting our trees is very important to me. I have been

very vocal on this issue both in relation to the governor’s special session but also on many zoning cases that have come before Council. My office has been in close contact with our City Arborist and the relevant staff on how best to advocate for maintaining Austin’s ability to continue to preserve these beautiful resources for future generations.

Many of these trees have been here a lot longer than we have—and I intend to fight to make sure we don’t lose them now.

District 7 residents should not hesitate to contact Council Member Pool and her staff on any city-related matter at [District7@AustinTexas.gov](mailto:District7@AustinTexas.gov).



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## Art and the Big Screen

By Marylyn Querejazu

Over the next several months, right here in Austin there are several opportunities to come face to face with one of the greatest movies ever: *Giant*. You can become a *Giant* expert this summer (without gaining a pound).

The movie lives up to its name and beyond. Big Stars: Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson, James Dean. Big Setting: under the west Texas skies. Big Story: love, social justice, loyalty, family—the works. It's a 200-minute epic based on the novel by Edna Ferber, (IMHO a great summer read).

A temporary exhibit at the Blanton Museum of Art explores the skeletal remains of the ranch house façade as it is now, 62 years after *Giant* hit the big screen. Viewers sit in front of three large screens, resulting in an almost total immersion into the natural environment. There is also flip flop back and forth to 1955—which I'll let you try and figure out. All in all, you will experience great photography and sound—although minimal action (spoiler alert—absolutely nothing happens). Just relax and let your mind travel to the plains outside Marfa.

Learn more about the exhibition here: <https://blantonmuseum.org/exhibition/teresa-hubbard-alexander-birchler-giant>. It will leave you curious about the film and curious-er about Marfa.

## Upcoming Volunteer Opportunity

By Kristine Poland, Brentwood Park Playground Improvement Committee

Little Helping Hands Volunteer Day with TreeFolks  
Tree Mapping at Brentwood Neighborhood Park  
6710 Arroyo Seco  
Saturday, October 7th, 9:00–11:00 AM

Great news for neighborhood volunteers and tree lovers! Through discussions with Austin Parks Foundation regarding Brentwood Park playground renovations, the playground improvement committee was connected with the non-profit organization TreeFolks. TreeFolks has selected Brentwood Park as the site for their October 7th volunteer project with Little Helping Hands from 9-11am. TreeFolks will lead a tree mapping exercise that day with Little Helping Hands volunteers (3rd-5th graders and their families). Our park was selected based on these factors: \*We have an active Adopt-a-Park organization \*We can use help surveying trees \*Our park is not too forested (individual trees can be seen on an aerial map) \*We have a park group that is interested in tracking tree care. Representatives from the committee on playground improvements will attend to talk to the volunteers about how this tree survey will help with overall park improvements. Visit [www.littlehelpinghands.org](http://www.littlehelpinghands.org) to register for the volunteer day.

Ready for the reel thing? You're in luck. *Giant* will be at the Paramount Theater on Congress September 1 at 7:00 PM. Get your tickets early and take a sweater. It's a long movie, but worth the time because there is nothing quite like an epic film on a big, big screen.

Road Trip! What is it about this tiny west Texas town that attracts the artsy crowd? Not only was Marfa featured in *Giant*, but also in *No Country for Old Men* and *There Will be Blood*. There are at least a dozen art galleries and an organic grocer in a town of 2000.

Whether you like the movie or not, whether you are into modern art or not, you will probably love Marfa. It is a lovely, walkable town, with an old cattle town feel—despite its dual role as an art mecca.

If you go, take time to explore the historic Hotel Paisano, a roomy, elegant hotel built in 1930. You'll find cool tile floors, a lovely bar, a patio and a restaurant. Back in the 50s, Warner Bros executives and *Giant* stars socialized here. Stop and take in the large framed black and white photos of the *Giant* movie stars relaxing on the set near Marfa. Top it off with a stroll around the courthouse, just like Liz Taylor must have done.



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Back-to-School...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sunday, Aug. 27, 5 to 6:30 pm</li><li>• Free Pizza</li><li>• Water Slide Bounce House &amp; Water Games</li></ul>	
<b>Crestview United Methodist Church, 1300 Morrow</b> 512-451-1741, <a href="http://www.crestviewmethodist.org">www.crestviewmethodist.org</a>	


# Austin PD Crime Search Report for June 2017

Crime	Street	Date	Time
Abandoned Vehicle	76XX Grover Ave	6/26/17	13:18
Accidental Drug Overdose	71XX Easy Wind Dr	6/17/17	0:12
Auto Theft	21XX Anderson Ln	6/28/17	11:24
Burglary of Residence	8XX St Johns Ave	6/7/17	18:42
Burglary of Vehicle	15XX Richcreek Rd	6/5/17	6:30
Burglary of Vehicle	17XX Morrow St	6/5/17	9:23
Burglary of Vehicle	15XX Richcreek Rd	6/5/17	9:23
Burglary of Vehicle	77XX Mullen Dr	6/21/17	10:30
Burglary of Vehicle	21XX Anderson Ln	6/28/17	12:36
Crash/Leaving the Scene	7XXX Lamar Blvd	6/9/17	22:27
Crash/Leaving the Scene	78XX Hardy Dr	6/10/17	10:52
DWI	77XX Burnet Rd	6/28/17	23:31
Indecent Exposure	71XX Burnet Rd	6/20/17	12:29
Theft	74XX Burnet Rd	6/12/17	15:37
Theft	9XX Anderson Ln	6/23/17	15:04
Theft	7XXX Easy Wind Dr	6/27/17	14:25
Theft from Auto	76XX Woodrow Ave	6/24/17	13:27
Theft of Bicycle	75XX Lamar Blvd	6/6/17	9:53
Theft of Bicycle	72XX Easy Wind Dr	6/25/17	18:51

## August Crime Prevention Tip


Avoid becoming the victim of a con or scam. Never give your social security number, credit card number, bank account number or other personal information to anyone unless you initiated the contact. Be wary of any "offer" that

sounds too good to be true (this includes free vacations, investment opportunities, services/items for sale at a lower than typical price) because it probably isn't legitimate. Always read any written information about an offer before making a financial commitment.



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