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NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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APRIL 2019

EVENTS CALENDAR

Saturday, April 6: Community Arts & Crafts Fair, 10 am to 4 pm at Faith Lutheran Church, 6600 Woodrow Avenue. Family friendly activities and games including face painting, music and one-of-a-kind items made by local artisans.

Monday, April 8: Crestview Neighborhood Association Meeting at 7 pm at the Crestview United Methodist Church, 1300 Morrow Street. **Agenda:** District 7 Council Member Leslie Pool discusses city issues (includes Q & A session) and discussion and vote on \$250 donation to Violet Crown Community Works for their spring festival.

Tuesday, April 16: Crestview Neighborhood Plan Contact Team (CNPCT) Meeting. 6:30 pm at the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection Chapel, 2200 Justin Lane. Agenda: Bi-annual election of Facilitator and vote on the meeting schedule. Contact Chip Harris at austinchip@hotmail.com for additional information.

Saturday, May 4: Violet Crown Spring Festival, 10 am to 5 pm at Brentwood Park with 40+ artisan booths featuring locally handmade goods, food, live music, roaming entertainment and free, family-friendly activities including craft stations, life-sized Jenga, face-painting, and a push-up challenge. Free admission. Attendees are encouraged to walk or cycle to the festival. For more details and updates, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/events/492192407976759/> and website: <http://violetcrowncommunity.org>



CodeNEXT Re-emerges

Although CodeNEXT was tabled by the City Council in August of last year, it is rapidly re-emerging in a fast-track process through different actions of the City Council, departments and commissions. A Housing Blueprint, Affordable Housing Resolution and a Strategic Mobility Plan have emerged as "policy foundations" for the process. The latest, the Strategic Mobility Plan is expected to go to council on March 28. Among other policies, the Planning Commission is pushing for residential and mixed use redevelopment ½ mile deep into neighborhoods along transit priority corridors to support transit. If these policies are adopted and later integrated into the new land use code, significant redevelopment will rapidly occur in existing neighborhoods from the private sector. But, the public sector's ability to pay for improvements is much less certain. As an example, even though the City of Austin is under mandate to bring the city's existing sidewalks into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the city needs \$580 million to bring all of the city's existing sidewalks into compliance, and an additional \$1.46 billion to build the 2,300 miles of absent sidewalks. This would take 90% of all the funds that the city invests in the Capital Improvement Program each year.

Additionally, rather than returning with a new process for formulating a new Land Development Code that he had promised to deliver at the end of February, City Manager Spencer Cronk released a memo on March 15, 2019 which can be read here: <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=316755>. He first asks for a choice between the processes of either adopting a new Land Development Code (LDC) and map, or amending the current code in targeted areas. He goes on to ask

for policy guidance from the council on key controversial elements, including density and housing, compatibility and parking, but he limits them to three choices in their response: a) maintain status quo (do nothing), b) implement CodeNEXT version 3 (the version the City Council rejected in August) or c) a more significant departure from the current LDC than was proposed in CodeNEXT 3 (generally providing for greater densification than CodeNEXT). The memo also includes appendices which discuss their "plans" to go forward with option 3, which include creating the "transition zones" ½ mile into neighborhoods. All discussion of policies such as compatibility standards that were created to enhance quality of life are referred to with negative terminology. For example: *"However, retaining compatibility standards in their present form may limit the construction of new multifamily units and result in a certain degree of unpredictability for developers considering potential new projects."* Whereas the option C language is *"Compatible transitions can be created by applying high-density, mixed-use zoning on corridors and activity nodes, moderate density adjacent to the corridors (including missing middle and small-scale commercial), and then stepping down to a lower-density residential core."* Of course, ½ mile into most of the neighborhoods in the core from "transit corridors" will meet in the middle of the neighborhood - there will be no cores.

Besides the actual zoning changes, the memo discusses drainage and water quality improvement, parkland dedication and open space requirements, tree preservation, transportation improvement and utility easements as "regulations that discourage redevelopment of under-utilized properties", and suggests redevelopment exceptions to these as a tool. These policies dramatically impact existing neighborhood

See CodeNEXT, continued on page 3

CRESTVIEW

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CNA General Meetings are held the second
Monday of every month at 7:00 PM at the
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Howdy Neighbor!

by Mike Lavigne, CNA President

This dispatch comes at you from the Seattle airport on the first day of Spring and the end of Spring Break. Spring Break sure does take on new meaning when school aged children are in the mix. Kids change lots of things, of course. Summer used to mean lost long days on the lake and late care free nights. Now it's child care, summer camps, family vacations and trying to figure out how to still be productive enough to make a living.

Seattle is a regular destination for our family and has been for over a decade. We are fortunate to have friends and family who put roots down long enough ago to have single family dwellings where we can crash and from which exploring boomtown is pretty easy.

It's been interesting watching Seattle explode, the victim of it's own success. High paying jobs keep housing prices, well, high. With every visit, fewer and fewer families with children are seen in the central city, as single family housing stock is discouraged and replaced with million dollar one and two bedroom condos. The suburbs like Redmond, Woodinville, Everett and points as far as an hour away are where families are pushed to if they want access to things like close public schools, daycare and other children.

While in Seattle, their City Council unilaterally increased the height allowance to around 6 stories in 27 neighborhoods that still have single family housing remaining.

Parking is difficult, but it doesn't mean less cars, it means the wealthy have private parking spots and working families trying to hold on are relegated to circling for a good chunk of their lives looking for a spot.

I see many similarities and warning signs for Austin. Do we want a city that caters to wealthy, childless white people? The industries we seem so keen to give away our public school, public safety and infrastructure money to (tax abatements) are some of the worst when it comes to diversity in the workplace and equal pay. The result is grass fed, fertilized gentrification and the relegation of families with children to the suburbs. All in the name of what? Being "cool" and more coffee options? Cool.

Also, Seattle doesn't allow the scooter companies and it is delightful and nobody seems to be worried that the city is falling behind on innovation.

Push-Ups!

I've fallen off the training wagon due to SXSW, Legislative Session and Spring Break but I'm eager to get back to it.

At 4 pm at the main stage at the Violet Crown Festival we will have our push-up-off. We still need a local gym to let us borrow some mats and some help with the judging, so if this is you please reach out!

See y'all at the Violet Crown Festival!



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Eliminate Single Family Zoning?

By Allan McMurtry

The push in Austin to eliminate single-family zoning continues and has picked up speed. This theory is based on three elements: density prevents environmental damage brought on by sprawl, more density in neighborhoods creates affordable housing, and single-family neighborhood zoning is biased.

The issue about this three-pronged attack is that it is active in Austin. Minneapolis' City Council just approved by a 12-1 vote a motion to eliminate single-family residential use zoning. It has to go through a regional board for final approval, but that board is under political pressure for not being elected and being disproportional in its makeup. It is unlikely such a board would overrule the largest city in its jurisdiction. There are two interesting facts about Minneapolis: 1) it has 72% owner occupancy, usually associated with single-family housing and 2) the new Austin City Manager was hired from his job as the City Administrator of Minneapolis.

Austin City Manager Spencer Cronk sent a memo to the City Council on March 15 asking them where they stood on key land development policy issues such as housing capacity, compatibility and parking requirements, among others. The Mayor is pushing for a vote on a new comprehensive land use plan before the end of the year. According to news sources, the Mayor doesn't have all of the City Council behind him on this, but he might well have a majority.

So that provokes a review of what CodeNEXT proposed in its final stages. First, it wanted to eliminate all single-family zoning in the entire City of Austin. As a measure, Minneapolis has 57.49 square miles in its city limits while Austin has over 264.9 square miles or 4.6 times the size of Minneapolis. Second, CodeNEXT was proposing re-subdividing existing

residential lots down to 2,500 square feet while envisioning a wholesale resubdivision of lots in single-family neighborhoods. Third, CodeNEXT envisioned either 1 parking space or none for new residential units. Fourth, the new code envisioned multiple dwelling units per lot.

Many core neighborhoods in Austin such as Crestview, Allandale, Brentwood, Rosedale, Tarrytown, Zilker and Hyde Park are now ranked in multiple top ten real estate promotion lists identifying the best neighborhoods to live in Austin. And that raises an interesting question as to why the City would want to destroy desirable places in Austin.

This change in zoning is important to our neighborhoods because if single-family-zoning is eliminated, then you will not be notified if a developer wants to turn the house next door to you into a triplex or more dense use under the new land code.

What I intend to do over the next several months is tackle each of the issues raised above as to why core neighborhoods supposedly need to be torn apart. But this is in the bones of CodeNEXT, in the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, and in the Strategic Housing Blueprint.

Let's visit the theories behind these assertions in upcoming newsletters.

CodeNEXT continued from page 1

communities in the city of Austin that have already been changing because of economic pressures, and will apparently strip residents of any rights to have input on how their community will change with these entitlement increases. There is no mention of displacement, only impediments to redevelopment.

The only chance for the public's input into these choices is now scheduled for April 11, and council expects to choose option A, B or C by the end of April.



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James Surls at the Umlauf

By Marilyn Querejazu

Umlauf Sculpture Garden and Museum (605 Azie Morton Road) is the perfect place to experience the art of James Surls. The property is a natural treasure adjacent to Zilker Park and Barton Springs Pool near downtown Austin.

James Surls is a Texas born and bred artist best known for his sculptures of wood, steel and bronze. Surls, in his late seventies now, has spent most of his life creating art, teaching art and supporting other artists. The Gallery at Umlauf provides the open space required for his art, most of which is angular and pointy. Despite Surls' longtime status as one of America's preeminent sculptors, this will be his first-ever solo exhibition of sculptures in Austin. His exhibit *With Out, With In*, that goes through August 19, showcases more than 30 major sculptures, dating back from 1989 to the present and fill the gallery, terrace and garden. His carvings combine the beauty of the wood with his singular imagery. In addition, some of his well-known giant steel and bronze structures will be on display. You just have to see it.



Sightlines by James Surls

The Umlauf Gardens, donated to Austin by Charles and Angeline Umlauf, are beautifully landscaped and populated with 168 (or thereabouts) of Umlauf's sculptures. The museum and gallery keep it interesting with seasonal exhibits and special events. I encourage you to read up on these two sculptors and then take a few hours to soak up some art in a lovely natural setting. They also have a "treasure hunt" for kids that might help keep your young ones engaged.



Dougherty Arts Center, just down the road at 1110 Barton Springs Road, is a great next stop. If you have time and want to avoid traffic, the hike and bike trail is a perfect way to connect these two art outings. The Julia C. Buttridge Gallery (inside the Dougherty) is free and open to the public. The 2019 exhibits include:

Mayuko Ono Gray - *Anything That Takes A Form Will Break Sooner or Later*. Ono Gray's graphite drawings mix influences from traditional Japanese calligraphy and western techniques. (through May 4)

Katy Schmader - *Terra Chartam*. Abstract landscape collages (through May 4)

Totally Cool Totally Art - Annual Teen Art Exhibit. Dougherty's afterschool artists exhibit their amazing work. Apr. 20 - May 4, 2019

43rd Annual Student Exhibit. Outstanding work by Austin Community College art students. March 23 - Apr. 13, 2019



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In Memoriam - Howard Pringle

by Sean Little

Howard Pringle, one of Crestview's original residents, passed away on March 21st at 97 years of age. Howard was a successful businessman who built homes and developed subdivision tracts in Crestview along with his partner and brother, Wiley Pringle. He lived in his house on Princeton Avenue until his massive stroke a few weeks ago.

Howard's success was never handed to him on a silver platter; rather, it came from hard work and persistence. His modest beginnings were rooted in Cameron about 70 miles northeast of Austin. Howard's parents operated the Pringle Hotel in Cameron until about 1939 when the family relocated to Austin. Howard's nephew, Terry, speculates that it must have been difficult for the Pringle family to continue to make a living in the small rural community of Cameron after the great depression. Up until that point the family had survived by operating the hotel and selling restaurant meals to the town folk and the temporary workers who were building the railroad through the area. The Pringle family had four children: Howard, Wiley, and his two sisters, Juanita and Vera. The family grew their own food and raised their own livestock for their family and the hotel.

Howard had a patriotic attitude as a young man and all throughout his adult life. Howard, like other WWII veterans, was part of the Greatest Generation of young men who stepped up to serve our country when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and the U.S. entered the war. When the news of war occurred, Howard was angry and wanted to go to fight immediately. However, Howard had to wait to serve because his draft notice was followed by a deferment due to his father's illness. At about 20 years of age, Howard was sent to the Aleutian Islands in Alaska as part of the Army's Alaska Defense command. Howard told me that it was really cold (of

course, for a Texas boy) and that he ended up "feeding the fish" (Howard's code for "SEASICK"!) on a few occasions while on duty aboard ship. Thankfully, Howard survived the military duty in cold Alaska but declined the government's offer of 80 acres of land if he stayed on as a homesteader. Instead, he opted to hightail it back to warm Austin, Texas.

Back home in our Crestview neighborhood, Howard and Wiley (a WWII vet as well) worked hard painting homes. At some point along the way, someone suggested that they ought to build homes. They were hesitant because they did not think they would have enough supply of bathtubs due to the redirection of metals toward the war effort. Someone convinced the brothers that they could supply them with as many bathtubs as needed, so the Pringle Brothers, which eventually became Pringle Company, built homes in Crestview, Allandale and surrounding areas. Pringle Company had an office next to what is now Arlan's Market and later at Richcreek and Burnet Road. Pringle Company homes were marketed and featured in Austin's Parade of Homes back in the day. Later, Pringle Company developed and built Shenandoah Subdivision in Cedar Park.

Like the rest of us, Howard had his rituals of everyday living. Howard enjoyed movies from the golden age of Hollywood. Two of his favorite male stars were Jimmy Stewart and Duke Wayne. He watched movies on his big screen T.V. via VHS copies. His most consistent daily event was visiting with friends and colleagues at the Dart Bowling Alley established in our neighborhood in the late 1950's. Howard drove himself there every morning and visited this old Austin icon until his passing this year. I've been told they are leaving his chair vacant now to honor and remember their fine friend. Howard Pringle and his brother Wiley were early leaders in our fine community, and Howard will be sorely missed by all those that were lucky to know him.



Viki Swensenberg, M.S.N., APRN, FNP-C
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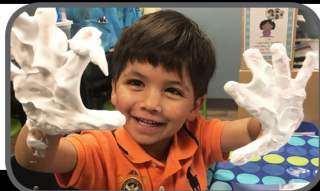


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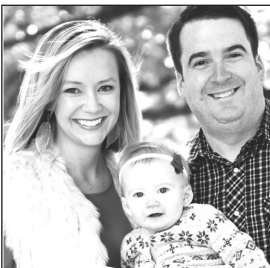


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