

July Meeting

When: 7:00 pm
Monday, July 10, 2017

Where: Griffin School
5001 Evans Avenue

Note: HPNA meetings usually take place on the first Monday of each month.

HPNA General Meeting Agenda for July 10

- How the 2018 Austin Marathon will affect Road Closures in Hyde Park - Dan Carroll from High 5 Events
- Coping with Rat and Mosquito Infestation - City of Austin Public Health Department
- Urban Wildlife and How to Avoid Harming Wildlife while Controlling Pests - Hayley Hudnall from Austin Wildlife Rescue
- Ongoing Plans at Quack's, from Heather
- Hyde Park Homes Tour - Carolyn Grimes and Ellie Hanlon
- Announcements

See You There!

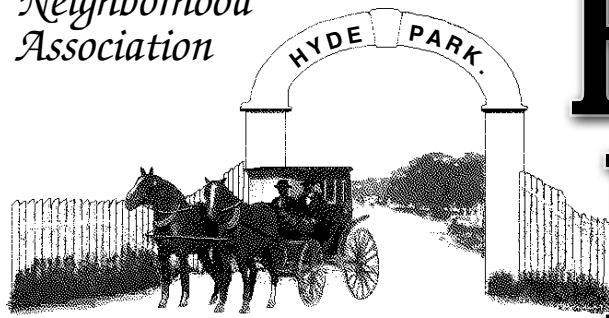
Ball Moss Removed from Shipe Park Live Oaks

Thanks to an urban forestry grant provided by the City of Austin Forestry Department, the Friends of Shipe Park was able to hire Just Trees arborists in early June to remove 90% of the ball moss that was smothering the oaks surrounding the playscape and the two massive heritage oaks that frame the cabin.

Ball moss is an epiphyte or air plant member of the bromeliad or pineapple family. Ball moss is an organism that scarcely roots but instead grows upon other plants without being parasitic upon them in order to be in a better position to secure light. It clings to branches and is able to obtain and store water and to catch drifting nutrients that cluster around its base, because it never actually touches soil.

Continued on page 5

The Hyde Park
Neighborhood
Association



Pecan Press

July 2017 • National Register District Neighborhood • Vol. 43, No. 7

A Perspective on CodeNEXT If It's a Mistake, Fix It

Editor's Note: At its June meeting, the HPNA welcomed Mayor Adler, who answered questions on the subject of CodeNEXT. Following are his remarks and responses.

Opening remarks: Thanks for the invitation. It's nice to be back in my old neighborhood. I used to live at the southwest corner of Avenue C and 44th Street. If I hadn't married a woman with two children in the Eanes school district, I would still be here among you. I appreciate the opportunity to be here. It was a crazy week last week. I wrote a really good piece on climate change and where we are on that, a pretty good piece on Senate Bill 4 and on immigration; we launched the first regional work force plan that the region has ever had. And what last week will be remembered for is the response I sent back to the guy about Wonder Woman. I will tell you that, for my three girls, I'm not sure that this job and what I was doing ever was really relevant to them until I managed to make it into BuzzFeed last week and suddenly that, I understood, had significance.

But you all really want me to talk about CodeNEXT. So let me talk about that and let me talk as briefly as I can about that so that I can turn to questions and I can try to respond to you.

I begin with a couple overarching premises, as where I sit right now on this CodeNEXT thing. And the first is that we shouldn't pass anything unless we get it right, and I'm not going to vote for anything that's wrong. That's the first thing I want you to know. The second thing is that our current code is not working well for us. We have a lot of problems and challenges in this city that relate to affordability, that relate to gentrification, that relate to flooding. We have a lot of challenges in this city and if we don't change the code, then I fear that we will lose the spirit and soul of the city and we will even ultimately lose the character of the neighborhoods like Hyde Park.

This is an opportunity to do something, I think, that is good and that would be helpful in the city, and now we're involved in a process to figure that out. I am trying as best I can to get people focused on working on this and seeing if it can be made better, because the question right now with the code is, "Is it good?" The answer is no. I wouldn't endorse the code the way it's set up now, and I wouldn't endorse the maps the way they're set up now. I'm not sure I know anybody in this city that would.

I think the question before us is, "Is there something that we can use in this opportunity to make something that would work?" So when people come up to me and they say, this is an outrageous draft because it does this, whatever "this" might be, my answer is, "See if you can fix that," because I think that the overarching issues that we want in this city, globally within this city, are important things and I think generally they unite us as a city. And the question is, "Can we translate that into a code? Can we map that code on a city to make the city work well?" Because if we don't, if we just stay with

Continued on page 13

From the Desk of the Co-Presidents



At our June meeting, we were privileged to have the Mayor attend and discuss the current affairs of the City. As you might imagine, the conversation focused largely on CodeNEXT, but other topics discussed included affordability and transportation.

While a full transcript of his remarks begins on the first page of this issue, we mention here that the Mayor made the point numerous times that this draft of CodeNEXT is only a start and is wrong in many places. He committed to shining some light on the issues with the draft, and throughout the month of June the Council is hosting numerous sessions on the draft with the consultant and city staff. One of the areas about which he had heard numerous complaints was the perceived upzoning of SF3 lots. The Mayor reiterated that this upzoning, if it is in the draft, was a mistake and would be fixed. He asked neighbors to submit any additional questions to him or Mayor Pro Tem Tovo and promised that one of them would help get appropriate answers. While we, as a neighborhood, will be continuing to monitor the code as the draft progresses, we encourage you to reach out to them with your comments and questions. Additionally, either of us is happy to assist you if you have questions for which you cannot get an answer.

While we are deeply saddened by the loss of Shipe Pool for the summer, we are thankful for the efforts

of Friends of Shipe Park for putting on the Shipe Pool Closing Party to send the old pool off in style. The loss of the pool this summer means that neighbors will be without a critical cooling off place, but we are continuing to work with Friends of Shipe Park to ensure that this summer is the only season we are without the pool for the foreseeable future. The renovation of the pool will not be the only construction project in Shipe Park in the coming years, though. As is plain to anyone who has been by the park recently, the log cabin is in need of restoration. We look forward to continuing our work with the Friends of Shipe Park to explore possibilities to restore the structure. We hope to be able to discuss this in more detail later this year.

Finally, the July meeting will be full of interesting discussions regarding issues of direct impact on the neighborhood. First, we will have a representative from the Austin Marathon to discuss the route. This year, the route will be more intrusive in the neighborhood, coming down 45th Street and trapping residents south of 45th from exiting to the north, east, and west. One of us is a runner who enjoys long distances and the other is a fan of watching the race, so we both hope that this change in course will encourage the neighborhood to make the race a celebration both for the neighborhood and for the runners. One of Reid's favorite parts of the half marathons that he has run here in Austin is the way neighborhoods make a big celebration of the race. In addition to that presentation, two speakers will discuss pest and wildlife management in a residential neighborhood. Given the proximity of the neighborhood to Waller Creek, Hyde Park is often plagued by insects

and also blessed with a plethora of wildlife including monk parakeets, owls, and other birds. This particular talk will be especially interesting. Finally, Heather from Quack's will be stopping by to provide an update on the bakery. We hope that you will be able to attend.

— Kevin Heyburn & Reid Long
HPNA Co-Presidents



Hyde Park Neighborhood Association

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www.austinhdepark.org

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Pecan Press

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Hyde Park Merchant

Folk Botanicals: Freshly Made in Hyde Park

Maureen Serrao Cole, a Hyde Park resident since 2000 and the founder of St. Selkie Soap Company, recently rebranded as Folk Botanicals to focus on an expanded line of body care products with an emphasis on fresh ingredients. Folk Botanicals includes hand-crafted soaps, bath salts, body scrubs, facial serums, aromatherapy sprays, and harmonic essential oil blends.

Ellie Hanlon: How did you get started making soap and other body products?

Maureen Serrao Cole: I developed eczema about twelve years ago and couldn't find a soap that didn't irritate my skin. I'm trained as a pastry chef and enjoy the process of experimentation and creation. I began making chemical-free soaps using pure ingredients for myself and my family and it grew from there.

I'm currently working on my aromatherapy certification and have grown so much in how I approach and use essential oils in my products. My work began with a need for pure products and I have expanded on that to include a focus on extremely fresh ingredients and responsibly sourced and used essential oils.



EH: How do you responsibly source and use essential oils?

MSC: It takes a lot of plant matter to make essential oils because they are so concentrated. In some cases, like sandalwood, the trees and plants are being harvested for products faster than they can regrow. I search for and use alternatives with similar aromas and benefits that come from more abundant, fast-growing plant sources. Essential oils are quite strong and need to be used carefully in order to reap the benefits and avoid adverse effects. One of my goals is to teach consumers, through my products, to appreciate natural scents, fresh ingredients, and the judicious use of essential oils.

EH: Why do your body products have a shelf life?

MSC: My products have the freshest and fewest number of ingredients possible. There aren't any chemicals, fake fragrances, artificial colors, or preservatives. They are created in small batches and meant to be used before the ingredients lose potency or change over time from contact with air and sunlight. I like to think about it in terms of food—you wouldn't eat food that was past the prime in

Continued on page 7

Membership Information

- Membership in HPNA is open to all residents 18 years or older residing within the boundaries of Hyde Park or within 300 feet of its boundaries.
- All memberships expire on September 30th of each year.
- New members and members who lapse in dues for over six months are eligible to vote at HPNA meetings 30 days after receipt of dues.
- Membership dues can be paid in several ways: By signing up at an HPNA meeting or event, by mailing in the membership form, or by joining online using PayPal. To pay online, go to www.austinhiddepark.org and click on the Join Now button. Dues paid online are \$6.

Submission Information

- Send your articles, letters, and photos by the 10th of each month to Lorre Weidlich at lweidlich@grandecom.net.
Opinion articles & letters to the editor must not exceed 500 words.
- Send your poems to Charlotte Herzele at herzele@gmail.com.
All poems, even if written under a pen name, must include a name and contact information for identification and verification purposes.

Hyde Park Neighborhood Association Membership Form

Name _____ Phone _____

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HYDE PARK AREA: YTD SALES IN REVIEW

	2014	2015	2016
NUMBER OF HOMES SOLD	21	29	24
AVERAGE SALES PRICE	\$470,419	\$570,905	\$578,158
AVERAGE SQ FT	1,582SF	1,549SF	1,927SF
AVERAGE SOLD \$/SQ FT	\$321.75	\$376.47	\$361.16
MEDIAN DAYS ON MARKET	14 DAYS	7 DAYS	7 DAYS

All statistics & square footage are from Austin MLS for Single Family Residence taken 10/04/2016 from the Austin MLS. For detailed market information about your home, contact Sam Archer, Broker.



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News from the Ney

July 2017 will see some wonderful programming at the Ney. First of all, in collaboration with #BossbabesATX, a young women's creative network, the Ney will present the Meet Her Hands series once again.

Last summer, three young Austin artists were interviewed and their art shown in the gallery. This summer, artist Roshii K, known for her colorful and unique murals and street art, will have a pop-up exhibition from July 5 through July 16. A reception with interview program will take place on



the evening of Thursday, July 6, starting with a tour of the museum at 6:30 and a talk at 7. Following Roshii K will be Rachel Stuckey, a digital artist. Dates for her show will be announced shortly.

The Ney's outdoor art program also continues with two pieces that were officially opened during the West Austin Studio Tour and celebrated at Ney Day. *The Dwelling*, the reflecting structure in the grass by 45th Street, was created by UT MFA grads Jieun Beth Kim, Sara Madandar, and Christina Coleman. If you haven't noticed, *The Dwelling* changes from day to night. During the day, it reflects its surroundings – Hyde Park, the museum's grounds, and its own viewers – but at night, it lights up inside to reveal an homage to Elisabet Ney through objects, structures, and images within. Honoring the neighborhood by day and Ney's presence at night, the artists' goal was to show the audience a rooted tradition, connecting Elisabet's time and place to the community today. It also draws a line to the UT MFA program; one of Elisabet's dreams was that UT would start a College of Fine Arts and perhaps use her property upon which to build it.

Habitat:Quarry, by Renee Nunez, graces the museum's historic landscape recreation. In it, the artist depicts several biomorphic forms as free-standing metal sculptures thriving in the museum's pastoral wild, overlaid with the prospect of predation represented by the wolf-like creature stalking them. With this depiction, Nunez's aim is to promote art and environmental awareness. Of particular interest to the artist is "the changing paradigm of how we feel about and value different species." In so doing, the landscape becomes a medium for commentary as well as historiography.

These join *Receptacle* by Jenn Hassin, which will remain on site for several more months.

Monthly Calendar July

- 4 — Happy Independence Day
- 6 — Meet Her Hands Reception at the Ney
- 7 — Recycling Pickup
- 10 — HPNA General Meeting
- 13 — DRC Meeting
- 17 — HPNA Steering Committee Meeting
- 21 — Recycling Pickup
- 24 — Hyde Park Contact Team Meeting

Ball Moss Removal... ...cont'd from page 1



A little ball moss does not harm a tree, but if it begins to dominate the branches, it can contribute to a gradual weakening of the tree by preventing new secondary branches and leaves to grow, thus impacting the tree's ability to sustain itself through photosynthesis. When the stress that comes with ball moss is combined with other factors such as drought and soil compaction (from all the little feet running around the playground), our precious oak trees suffer.

At the next It's My Park! Day in November, we will mulch these trees again to help them recover and return to good shape, so they can provide much needed shade and cover for the park. For more information on park improvement projects and how you can get involved, go to www.shipepark.org.

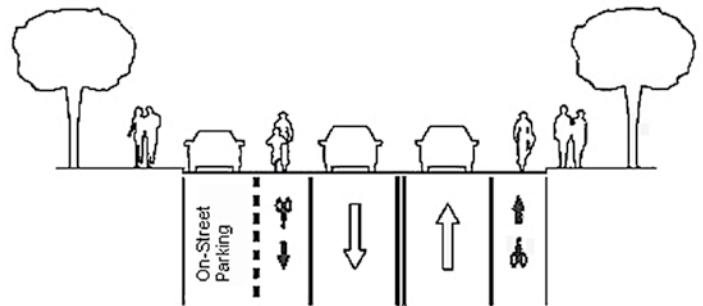
– Jill Nokes

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Around & About the Avenues

Speedway Updates. As scheduled, the City of Austin began improvements to Speedway during June. Based on feedback



from residents, there were some changes to the original plan. Four to eight parking spaces will still be available on the west side of Speedway on the following blocks: 39th-40th Streets, 41st-42nd Streets, 42nd-43rd Streets, and 44th-45th Streets. The graphic illustrates a cross section of Speedway where parking will be available. The remainder of the street will have protected bike lanes where feasible, and a pedestrian refuge island will be installed between 39th and 40th Streets.



Recognition for Antonelli's Cheese Shop. Duval merchant Antonelli's Cheese Shop has been on a winning streak lately! *The Gourmet Retailer* just named it one of the "best U.S. cheese shops." In addition, the website Movers + Makers published an interview with owner Kendall Antonelli (http://themoversandmakers.com/kendall-antonelli-of-antonellis-cheesel?utm_source=6.9.17+recent+press&utm_campaign=6.9.17&utm_medium=email). We're always happy to see our great neighborhood businesses get recognition!



Police Identify and Arrest Hyde Park Bike Thief. Thanks to the assistance of Hyde Park residents, APD was able to arrest the perpetrator of a series of bike thefts in Hyde Park. APD identified the thief as Travis Ferestad, a known member of the Bloods gang. KEYE reported on his identification and arrest on June 2 and cited from Hyde Park residents in its story (<http://cbsaustin.com/news/local/police-identify-hyde-park-bike-theft-suspect-say-he-is-bloods-gang-member>): "Hyde Park residents say the community is well connected. 'The Hyde Park neighborhood association is an old association so just the neighbors in general we all talk with each other we are all family we kind of look after each other,' said 11 year resident Troy Campbell. ...Resident Steve Sanderson says it's great to see that comradery and the power of social media helped bring someone to justice. 'There's a lot going on not just online, but face to face there's a lot of people out walking, chatting but social media is a big deal,' Sanderson said."

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Ney Day a Great Success. Originally postponed due to rain, Ney Day, rescheduled on June 10, was an outstanding event. Minor Mishap Marching Band (above) opened the event and set the standard for an afternoon of great music. Visitors enjoyed viewing displays that celebrated women in the arts, sciences, and civic life. It was another excellent offering from Hyde Park's beloved Elisabet Ney Museum!



HPNA Nominating Committee Seeks Officer and Steering Committee Candidates. Would you like to serve Hyde Park? The HPNA Nominating Committee is seeking candidates for officers and Steering Committee members. The election will take place at the October, 2017 HPNA meeting, and winners will assume their positions at the Fire Station Festival in late October. If you're willing to donate some time to the neighborhood, please get in touch with Nominating Committee member Kathy Lawrence at klawrencetexas@yahoo.com.



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Thank you, Seoul Whitehead 512-302-3436

Folk Botanicals...
...cont'd from page 3

terms of freshness. Most beauty and body products have a period of time within which they should be used. At Folk Botanicals we make the expiration date explicit and encourage our customers to use their products on a regular basis so they are at their peak in terms of potency and freshness.

EH: How can people find Folk Botanicals?
MSC: We are currently rebranding and developing packaging for the new line of products. The best way to keep up with our progress and stay in touch is to follow us on Facebook and Instagram and check the website. We'll introduce our new creations at the end of the summer!

- <http://folkbotanicals.com/>
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– Ellie Hanlon

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Shipe Pool Closing Party



The Sieker Band



The Friends of Shipe Park: Jill Nokes, Adam Wilson, Alison Young, Lisa Harris, Jack Nokes



Refreshments, Courtesy of Quack's



Enjoying the Slide



Above: Decorating the Wading Pool
Right: The Tug of War



2017 Flag Day Parade



The 2017 Flag Day Parade might have been shorter this year than last year, but it was no less enthusiastic. Flag enthusiasts gathered at the residence of vexillologist Jim Ellinger to enjoy the color and variety of his collection and to carry flags around the circle at Fairfield Lane and Eilers Avenue. After the parade, Jim presented awards in a variety of categories. The *Pecan Press* is pleased to announce that, despite the media coverage of the event, including an early morning feature on KXAN, it received the award for Best Flag Day Coverage.

Above: After the Parade
Right: Parading around the Circle
Below: Two Paraders Converse before the Event
Lower right: Flag Jim Gives out Awards



HPNA Minutes: June 5, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 by co-President Kevin Heyburn. The agenda included the following:

1. A report on the Shipe Pool and Park renovation projects
2. The CodeNEXT Resolution
3. Mayor Adler, addressing issues concerning CodeNEXT

After brief introductory remarks and self-introductions from several first time attendees, the main meeting began.

1. Jill Nokes of Friends of Shipe Park presented details of the renovation that will begin this fall. Her presentation included the following information:

- The Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) is underfunded by approximately \$100 million a year. As a result, public-private partnerships are necessary to keep up.
- Shipe Park is an important local amenity. Friends of Shipe Park has been instrumental in maintaining the park, doing things like planting trees and painting benches, all the things that help keep our park something we can be proud of. In keeping with that, we will have an additional It's My Park! Day this year in November.
- In 2014 a City of Austin Aquatic Assessment determined Shipe Pool to be a critical pool. As a result, former Council Member Laura Morrison, in 2015, was able to push through funding for its reconstruction. Details about the project are available at <http://austintexas.gov/shipepoolimprovements>.
- Current bathrooms in the log cabin will be upgraded; the plan is to renovate the log cabin itself using funds from both private and public sources.
- The swings will be moved a bit and the old baby pool will be removed in order to remove some of the stress on the trees that shade that area.
- There will be a bond election in 2018; it is hoped that some of the proceeds will go to the replacement of the playscape.
- The renovation that is about to take place will provide an opportunity to define what the park will look like for decades.

Jill answered some questions:

Q: How old are the trees?

A: Somewhere between 250 and 300 years old.

(The huge post oak "climbing tree" by the log cabin that will have to be removed due to its condition is only about 90 years old.)

Q: What about the significant cracks on the basketball court?

A: It is possible that they are related to the water leaking from the pool over the last years. Any repairs will have to be part of a separate project.

Q: Are there plans for a shade structure for the

new pools?

A: It is uncertain at the moment.

Q: What about the build time for the project? Will the pool be ready to open for the 2018 swim season?

A: The expectation is that they will be able to make it.

2. Next came the discussion of the CodeNEXT resolution (in the June issue of the *Pecan Press*), conducted by Kevin Heyburn.

- There was a request to incorporate existing NC-CDs into the CodeNEXT transect descriptions.
- In addition, there was an amendment proposed to remove language in the resolution about the requirement for a white paper. That amendment passed unanimously.
- A comment from the floor suggested that if CodeNEXT goes into effect, the NCCD process would probably disappear.
- It was also stated that many neighborhoods are submitting resolutions to maintain the input they have had.
- A question was brought up concerning whether local historic districts (LHDs) would still be in effect? It was expected that this would be the case.
- The membership then brought the resolution, as amended, to a vote, with the following results: 34 in favor, 4 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

3. Lorre Weidlich prepared and circulated a white paper (as well as posting it to the local listserv) as a private citizen sharing her personal views on the subject. Many neighborhood residents as independent citizens signed on to that white paper. It was mentioned that Friends of Hyde Park has proposed eliminating the Hyde Park NCCDs as well as eliminating the process in general.

4. At 8:07 pm, Mayor Adler arrived. He was introduced by Reid Long, co-President. Some of his comments were as follows:

- The premise of CodeNEXT is to address the things in the current code that are not working well, such as affordability, transportation, and flooding problems. The code needs to change in order to maintain the character of the city. The current proposal is a first draft; if there are problems we should fix them.
- He will not support a final proposal that is not right. For example, he believes that the tools provided for public comment on the new code are not adequate. Getting it right, making the changes that will help produce the city that we want to see moving forward, is our task.

Continued on page 12

June Meeting Minutes...

...cont'd from page 11

He answered some questions:

Q: What would change to deal with flooding issues?

A: Be sure that future development not only does no harm, but, for example, captures more runoff than it creates.

Q: How can other council members be convinced of the need to "get it right?"

A: Generally speaking, though there are certainly some disagreements on how to proceed, the hope is that the Council will work in that direction.

Q: The proposed code gives an uncomfortable amount of power to individual city officials. How do we keep citizens as part of the process?

A: Any abuse of that power should not be tolerated and the officials involved should be removed. The point of the changes is to streamline the system. Currently much of our planning is done by exception and variance. Neighborhoods deal with uncertainty because the code is not clear. Currently, almost every case ends up going before Council for a final decision; this is costly and inefficient. Making the code clearer would avoid that.

Q: The language of CodeNEXT is substantially different from the language used in current code. Why?

A: New tools require new terms. T3 in the new code is intended very much like the current SF3. If that's not the case it needs to be fixed.

Q: We hear comments like "Central Austin is economically segregated" and should be densified. What about West Austin? When will it take its share of the load?

A: The term "density" has multiple meanings. There's density of structure as well as "yield," which refers to density of people. T3, for example, is not meant to be an upzoning of SF3. Yield density works better in an area that was scaled for walkability. He emphasized that even if the new code is done by April as originally planned, that will not mean the work is done. There will likely need to be two years of small-area planning yet to come.

Q: How much have the plans of Texas DOT been taken into account?

A: The Austin Metro area will likely go from a current population of two million to approximately four million by 2040. Traffic will get bad everywhere. Ultimately, you have to get people out of cars. More traffic lanes will not help. Currently our bus system does not work well. Unfortunately, it's a chicken-and-egg problem: it can't be improved because it doesn't have the ridership and can't get the ridership because it needs to be improved.

Q: If all parts of the city were treated the same, perhaps there wouldn't be the level of objections we're seeing?

A: The reality, however, is that all the areas of the city are not the same.

Q: What about parking? Parking along the edges of the neighborhood has resulted in traffic backups and streets not being cleaned due to too many cars. Density increases the need for services.

A: Parking is a tough question. While we will not remove parking wholesale, there will likely be some differentiation between the core of neighborhoods and their edge corridors.

Q: How can we fix the fact that Central Austin has lost most of its shopping?

A: Big box stores are regional draws and need to be accessible.

Q: How can we improve transportation? Public transportation, as it exists, is just not efficient.

A: It's a difficult problem. Frequency requires ridership which requires frequency. Perhaps if we solve the first and last mile problem more progress can be made. Currently Chariot is in testing; CapMetro is launching a local on-demand solution as well.

Q: Our streets are very dark. How can we fix that?

A: We have huge infrastructure needs; the need for sidewalks in much of the city is just an example.

Q: What about protecting our trees?

A: If CodeNEXT does not protect our trees at least as well as they're being protected under current code, it will need to be fixed.

In closing, Mayor Adler stated: "I will not vote for something that's not right. Please stay engaged. Let's fix it."

Thanks were expressed to Mayor Adler for coming. The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 pm.

– Artie Gold,
HPNA co-Secretary



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CodeNEXT Perspective...

...cont'd from page 1

what we have, we're on paths that we will not be able to get off of. And that's where I come from with respect to this process.

The process is set up right now where people are asked to participate. There are even problems associated with people's ability to participate in terms of the tools, the ability to go online and make comments. People have raised those issues. We've all looked at our staff and said, you need to fix those issues, and the tools are going to be changed here within the next couple of days so that people can actually be able to respond in a way that's meaningful and so that everybody in the community can see not only the questions that are being asked but the responses that are being given.

I hear things from people who look at the code and say that it does away with things like McMansion, those protections. I hear from other people that it does not. I will tell you that if it does, then that's a mistake and it needs to be fixed. I'm trying really hard to try and keep people engaged at this point in the process to see how good we can make this. In eight months, nine months, we can look and see whether we've gotten to a place that justifies continuing on this path, but I don't want people to be talking about that decision now. I think what would be most constructive for the city would be to engage in the process. So with that said, let me get to your questions.

Q: What would actually change in CodeNEXT that would reduce people in the flood plain?

A: Right now the code is built around the policy premise that somebody who's building or developing or doing something on a piece of property should not do any harm. By that, the standard that gets applied is that there should be no greater runoff than what exists on the property before the work begins. CodeNEXT was intended to actually make up the stagger that exists in the city by saying that we want across the city, generally, for development to capture not only the runoff that it creates relative to what existed before but to also go beyond that and for us to require people going beyond that so that it captures additional runoff. If it doesn't do that it's a mistake and it needs to be fixed.

Q: Your position sounds great but you're only one vote on the dais. How are you going to convince your other Council Members to go along with what you say?

A: You're right, I only have one vote on the Council. Generally speaking, I think that the people on the Council are people that are all working really hard. And I think that, while there are disagreements as to tactics or sometimes paths, and certainly there probably are, on any issue, one or two Council Members that would form, that would be coming from, an extreme outlier space, I think that generally speaking, across the two and a half years I've been on this Council, the Council's been able to work through those kinds of issues and end up in a good place. I can't guarantee the Council, but I know what I have said about this process from the beginning, going back a year, and pretty much everything that I've described at every

point in the process has been what has happened and I just trust that. This Council is going to act that way.

Q: I'm pretty uncomfortable with the idea of unilateral administrative authority by the staff.

A: I understand your concern, certainly when we saw things like we saw this last week, with that employee, because you just don't like to see that happen. When you have 14,000 employees, I guess that happens. What you hope for is a system of check and balances so that you find those people who are abusing their positions so that you remove them, and in this case that person was found and removed.

Let me talk just for a second about the policy behind the issues that you raised, and it's something that isn't in its final form and I would say that we need to fix it and get it right. But one of the things that I don't like about the code that we have right now is that we have ended up in a place where we plan by exception and by variance. So a developer or somebody wants to use a piece of property, it has a code that enables them to come in and argue for things that I don't think the code was intended for them to be able to do, but the systems and the processes are set up so that they can try.

We have neighborhoods that are living with some measure of uncertainty because they don't know what a developer is going to do or what constraints will actually apply. We have developers that don't want to push outside that envelope, but feel uncertain as to whether they're going to be able to achieve the things that the code does say they should do. What that results in - that measure of practice results in a situation where virtually every case is a candidate for going to the City Council, which requires an inordinate amount of time, especially for people who are volunteers, and an incredible amount of cost, and just inefficient waste as well as emotional expense and cost. It's just a bad process. I would prefer to have a system where we didn't plan by variance and by exception and that the parameters within which somebody had to operate were more clearly defined, and then we hold people to operate within that more perfect box. I think that would be better.

One of the things that could happen, if in fact you could achieve that place, is that you don't need the same kind of reviews that you have today because the questions that are being decided are very different than the questions that are being decided today. I would never propose that we take the processes we have today and the code we have today and let staff have the discretion without appeal to decide things, but that's not what this is intended to be. And if this code doesn't achieve that result, where you have more definitively described the box, then we shouldn't do that; but if we can, then there's an opportunity to do that. And I think that if we get to that place, that would be good for the city. If it doesn't get us there now, that's not what the code does, then we need to fix it.

Q: What about the language in CodeNEXT? People are saying, I don't understand what this term means. It's different from the way things used to be described.

A: It is presenting different tools, and those different tools do have different application. This is now the time to be going through those tools and seeing what the

Continued on page 15



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CodeNEXT Perspective... ...cont'd from page 13

impacts are, for example, SF3 – you all know what SF3 is because we're familiar with that. The T3 transect is, as described, intended as a zoning classification that, while a transect classification, is very close to being what SF3 is. I have seen drawings that have been made by people of the community that would suggest otherwise. I would suggest that T3 is a significant upzoning from SF3. If that's the case, then that's a mistake and it needs to be fixed. I see drawings, I compare what is actually built on a lot versus what is able to be built under T3; and for me the more apt comparison, if we're talking about the potential of what can be built on any lot, is to look at what the potential is under SF3 compared to what the potential is under T3, because anybody looking at that lot under either of those systems would look at what the potential was to be built. But I haven't seen those drawings and we've asked staff to do that.

There are a lot of questions that are circulating in the community, not just with you guys, but all over the city, and not just people who are coming from where generally you're coming from, they're people coming from the other side that find fault with the document the way it is and are complaining as well and are raising consistently questions from a different perspective. I understand that, but this is an opportunity for us to look at those.

I went to Kathie, Mayor Pro Tem, and suggested, and together we joined in, trying to daylight a lot of these questions with the consultants, in front of cameras, during the month of June, every Wednesday from 1 to 3 – and, too, however much time we can grab on Tuesdays at our work session for Council. I asked our consultants to be present for those so that we can take the questions that we're hearing in the community in the situation room. The consultants are there, the TV cameras are on, it's recorded so that people can go back to it, so that we can ask those questions. If you have a question about CodeNEXT that you're unable to get an answer to, for whatever reason, get that question to me or John Michael (Mayor Adler's assistant) and we'll get you an answer to that question. The one thing I've learned in this job is that, when asked a question, I can usually get an answer and I'm willing to share that. So if you're unable to get an answer to a question, bring it to one of us and we will get you an answer to your question.

Q: Can we change CodeNEXT from form-based code?

A: My sense is probably not at this point, in the process that we're in now. But the intent of this is not to change the character of the neighborhood. So, one of the things that's nice about Hyde Park for me and for the people that live here, I think, is the small commercial area that exists in Hyde Park. This is something that we all collectively have to take a look at. I am more disturbed by the large, contemporary home that is built in the middle of a neighborhood that looks like Hyde Park than I am the Avenue B Grocery, and I am ready to work toward a code that protects me from the one, which I have no protection from now, and allows for the other, which actually is something that I love about living where I lived

on Avenue C. So, my sense is that, at this point, and then looking at other examples, we're going to be continuing this process to look at use of the form-based code but making sure that it gets applied in a way that is constructive and if it doesn't, then we fix it.

Q: West Austin is the least dense part of Austin, yet Opticos has upzoned the central city and zoned West Austin as residential. When is West Austin going to be taking its share of the densification burden?

A: I think it needs to and it can. I think we need to take a look at – I'm going to unpack what you said several different ways. The first one is that I'm getting increasingly uncomfortable with the use of the word "density" and the concept of increased density and densification. I'm getting uncomfortable with it because the more conversations I'm in, the more I realize that different people are using that word in many different ways. So it's hard to have a conversation with someone right now about density, because I've now learned I have no idea what they're talking about and I have no idea what they're hearing me say when I use the word. There're lots of different ways to look at increased density. Let me give you just two. One way to look at increased density is to look at the volume or the massing of a structure, so increased density could be increasing the floor-area ratio, but not necessarily. One way to do it would be to increase the height that you can put on the side of buildings that would go up to the eave, the height to the peak, because different structures will field different massing, not only based on the square footage, the volume inside the structure, but also in terms of how that's constructed. So there's that concept of density.

Another way to use the word "density" is with respect to yield. So, I can have a building that is half the size of another building and this building could house one family and the building that is half the size of this building could house three families depending on how you did that.

And then the question would be, "Which is the structure that has greater density?" When I started the conversation, I was thinking this was density (hand gestures indicating the definition referring to the massing or volume of a structure) because it was bigger, bulkier, had more volume, it came closer to the setback areas, more visually intrusive. Imagine my surprise when I realized that the consultants would say that this (hand gestures indicating the definition referring to the more heavily occupied structure) was the home with the greater density because it had greater yield.

So when we talk about density, one, we have to be really careful about making really sure that everyone's understanding what we mean, and those words mean two different things. And, I'm not sure that the rules that apply to this kind of density (first set of hand gestures) are the same rules that apply to this kind of density (second set of hand gestures), volume versus yield, because to me they feel different and their application might be a little bit different.

The second thing I want to unpack again is (that) the intent was not to have the T3 transect be an upzoning over SF3, and we're going to talk about that at the (meeting). As I told the consultants, "You say it's not, I'm

Continued on page 16

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CodeNEXT Perspective... ...cont'd from page 15

looking at drawings that people have brought me from the community. We need to talk about this." So on at least two of the different Wednesday occasions from 1 to 3 we're going to be talking about that question of upzoning, we're going to be talking specifically about T3 as well as T4, T5, but that specific conversation.

I think we need to have increased density or yield - yield is really what I focus on now - in all parts of the city because I think that's a healthier way for the city to be and I think the mixing of opportunities that would result from that are healthier for everybody involved; and when I look at the city over the next fifty years I think that is a component of a city that would feel good to live in. I will tell you that there have been some choices that the Council has made to try to increase the number of yield, in the case we just did with Austin Oaks at MoPac and Spice-wood Springs Road. That was one of the issues that was discussed. Obviously, there are lots of tradeoffs. I wish this whole thing to me was black and white and that there was one argument that was right and one argument that was wrong. It would make this so much simpler. But I'm kind of lost in grays and conflicting - not conflicting that one of them is wrong - but there are good and bad things about most of the choices that we get to make.

The reason, as I asked the consultants, that they have included more zoning that allows, in a form-based code, for additional uses is because of the grid and the layout of those neighborhoods not being able to be something that in fact can take advantage of what were the elements that can work in a neighborhood that already work in Hyde Park. But I think there's a lot to be said for this community to look at Hyde Park just the way that it is today in terms of a neighborhood. This is a neighborhood that has a lot of yield to it, has walkable abilities, has access to retail. But, I think, we do need to take a look at that.

There is work that ultimately needs to (get done). If you were to work through everything we're working through and if we were to adopt something in April and the process isn't over in April because we have not accurately or fairly planned all of the corridors that we need to work on or all of the activity centers or all of the nodes, when we finish in April, we then need to turn in the city to small area planning studies with respect to those activity centers and those nodes and those corridors that are in other areas. But the consultants were not given the charge to replan areas. They were asked to basically follow generally what exists, tempered by what they see in the other direction, from Council and from the city back to the plan that we have, Imagine Austin. But we're going to get to all those other areas. But those are perhaps new planning efforts. This is not something that happens quickly or easily and even if this were to get passed in April, there's another two years back behind that, as you do small area plans in the other parts of the city where it still needs to be done.

Q: Please address traffic congestion in neighborhoods.

A: It is full all over the city and it's a real challenge in this city. The biggest determinant of traffic road and congestion in the city is the fact that this metropolitan area is going

to go from two million people to four million people soon after 2040, and there's very little that we can do to stop that from happening. It's not just us, it's cities in the southwest part of the country. We could stop growth in the city if we were to make this an undesirable place for people to live. I don't want to be the mayor who does that. So that is the biggest determinant. So traffic is going to get bad in all parts of the city. That factor alone will outweigh anything else that happens, just the sheer number of people.

That said, long term, if you really want to do something about traffic congestion, and I think you do, we have to get people out of cars. Give you an example. If we were to add four more lanes on MoPac – four more lanes all the way out to Leander – you know what we would accomplish? We would immediately have free flow traffic on MoPac, which means people could get from Leander to downtown Austin in 15 minutes. The day someone can get from Leander to downtown Austin in 15 minutes, the first thing that happens is a housing crisis in Leander because now there's a whole universe of people who are interested in housing in Leander that right now don't ever look at a house in Leander. And then there's people moving and the prices go up until such time as the traffic on MoPac looks exactly the way the traffic on MoPac looks today.

The answer is not building more lanes. Ultimately that won't work, so it's getting more people to get out of their cars. We have a bus system right now that we're trying to make work. Our bus system – transit system – does not work, and one of the reasons it doesn't work now is (that) it doesn't have the ridership that would support it. You're never going to have a transit system that works if you can't get to it and, when you get to it and it takes you somewhere, you can't get from where it drops you off to where it is you want to go. The transit system is never going to work if you actually have to look at a schedule to know when it is that you go to the bus stop. You need to just have to go to the bus stop and know that in the next five minutes a bus is going to come by. And if you miss a bus and you find yourself having to wait 25 minutes for the next bus, it's the last time you do that.

So when I increase the number of people that are within walking distance of the corridors that I have in the city, that increases the potential and chance for a bus system to really work. Now I recognize that doing that creates challenges too, which is why I said a second ago, I'm living in the world of grays; because all the things that we could do in one respect help us get to where we want to go but also come with reservations and challenges associated with them. If the answers were clear and truly one way or the other we wouldn't be doing this. The reason we're doing this is because that's not the case.

Q: if there weren't a differentiation between parts of the city and the same CodeNEXT rule applied to everyone, everybody would be happy because everybody would be in the same situation.

A: Well, part of the problem with that – and I understand that and hope ultimately over time maybe you can get to that, but we have to deal with the reality that, within the city of Austin, 300 square miles and our ETJ another 300 square miles, all parts of the city are not alike. And they're not alike, first, with respect to where people will want to buy, where people will want to live, where

the demand is, where the pressure is. You know a lot that is within three minutes of downtown will be a lot that continually escalates in value if the supply of housing within three minutes of downtown doesn't change. There are forty people bidding on every one of those lots today. We don't do anything about that supply in short order, there will be sixty people bidding on each one of those, then eighty people bidding on each one of those; because different parts of the city are, in fact, different in terms of the pressures and the challenges that are present. That does not give us a clear answer on what to do, it's just a recognition of the fact.

Q: What about parking? In HP, the over-parking is creating traffic jams and interfering with garbage pickup and street sweeping.

A: So, I don't know what the right answer is to parking but I'm trying to learn. I would say it's something we've been dealing with for the last two and one-half years on this Council and it was an issue, as you well know, before that. I hear what you're saying and I recognize those challenges and they're real. But I also know that the problems that you're describing exist today with the code that we have right now; and if the answer to the question is to not change the code that we have right now, then I'm concerned because the code that we have right now is not working for us as evidenced by exactly what you have described.

So we have to listen to and evaluate what the alternatives are that are being proposed, taking into account all the things you just described and looking at what it is about the proposals that are being made that would have that proposer say that, on balance, this is the thing that we need to be doing because ultimately it could, in fact, be something about the existing product that we have. And that is the question and the issues that we're working through right now.

I have told people that I would not support ending parking requirements in residential areas. Then (there is) what I said when I talked to you all a year ago, that I did not believe we were in a place where we should pick wholesale development changes and apply them across all neighborhoods. I was uncomfortable with that and remain that way. But the solution with respect to parking (that) went to the Council a year ago, where there was a differentiation between parking requirements that were close to corridors and those that were not, seemed to me to reach a better articulated response to the concerns about parking generally and the soft benefit of doing those things that would in fact have made the transit system in the city be able to work. So I don't know ultimately the answer on parking, but I do know that it was worthy of getting one of those times on Wednesday in front of the TV cameras with the consultants and staff so that we can daylight the positions and ask those questions.

Q: Central Austin is losing its shopping. We need bigger stores where people can get to them without driving twenty miles.

A: I hear that. Those big box users are something that work as regional draws so they really need to be placed in areas that are susceptible of regional access. So, we're

Continued on page 18

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CodeNEXT Perspective... ...cont'd from page 17

probably not going to have those big boxes anywhere close to the more residential kinds of areas, but we've identified where those regional places are and we need to do what's necessary in a plan amendment to actually get those things there. That's one of those things that will actually happen more out there in the Domain regional area; there will be a lot more square footage for that, a lot more uses for that in that area, too.

Q: It's inefficient in a low density area in Austin to take the bus. It doesn't take me where I need to go efficiently with small kids at the right time. That has to happen before any of the other things.

A: My sense as I go through this, everything has to happen before any of the other any things work. That's one of the other problems. So, you're right. Generally speaking, Austin is not dense as compared to other cities, and by dense I mean yield, I mean the number of people per acre. That is a problem because in order to increase frequency on routes, you need to have a certain ridership; but you're not going to get the ridership until you increase the frequency and the reach.

Part of the problem we have in this city is the first-and-last-mile issue. There are people who would take the bus if I actually could get to the bus. And I would take the bus if, when I got off the bus at the end, I was close to where it was I want to be going because, when I get off the bus, I need a car to take me to where I work at the end of the day. So, there are multiple things that we need to be doing to see if we can make that work. We need a first-and-last-mile solution. We need a different way to get people from where they are to the bus and then from the bus to where they work and then back again.

We have two things that are being tested right now. We have Chariot, which is a private company that's come in that was starting with targeted routes to support significant employers and is now working more regionally in zones. We're one of the few areas that's testing that and Ford just gave them capital to buy another 160 of those chariots to put into this market to see if that concept can be tested. And Capital Metro is launching an on-demand first-mile-and-last-mile solution. My hope is that they work and my hope is that that also relieves the pressure that Cap Metro has right now.

Everybody wants buses, so one way to do a bus system is kind of like spreading peanut butter on the ground where we're going to reach everybody. Everybody has some even if your bus only comes once a day. And you look at that and you go, "Why? Why would you do that?" Yes, they have buses. I know they have a bus, it comes once a day. What you really want to do is (that) you want to run your buses on the corridors and run them frequently; but then you have to go and explain to some parts of the city why they lost their bus, because in order to be able to do all those buses you don't have enough money to spread peanut butter all around. That creates political issues as well as real issues for the people that need bus access. So my hope is these on-demand services

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that Chariot and Capital Metro are doing will point us in that direction.

You know we had another one that was coming in that just failed. It didn't start up here. But I am now recruiting as many of those new technologies as we can so that we can start testing. You know we have announced pretty widely, "Come test these things in Austin. We want you to test them here." We'll make it easy to test these things because it's existential for us for some of these to actually work the way people think that they will. So when you can get to the bus, when that becomes a viable option, people are not going to ride the bus no matter how civically motivated they are; people will not ride the bus until it's cheaper and faster, until somebody feels confident, if I don't take my car to work and my child calls and is sick, I can get to my child as quickly as I can get there in my car - just because, whether I ever need it, just because. And that's the system that we have to get to, and the way that our code is set up now, the way we're operating now, we will never get there, ever get there, which is why I want us to look at this and see if we can in fact make this better.

Q: How about park and rides? There's an express bus that goes out to the airport but there's no place to park.

A: The first thing I said when I got elected - Capital Metro came to me with a new plan for rail, I thought it was too fast to go back for rail, and I suggested to them that the first thing they should do is figure out how to do park and rides so that they could actually get transit that comes into the city. And that is what they had and you're going to start seeing more of those at the perimeter to the city.

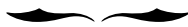
Q: This is slightly related. Streets are so dark. How can we make these things possible when the road isn't safe?

A: We have pretty significant infrastructure issues. When you add up the cost of the infrastructure that this city needs, it's mind boggling. But I'll tell you that we started an effort against that. The first thing we started putting effort against is sidewalks, so that children can have safe passage to school, so you get the kids from out in the streets; and the bond election that we just did back in November had the largest component associated with sidewalks and safe routes to schools than anything that we've ever done before.

Q: How will the added density affect the trees?

A: The policy behind CodeNEXT is to protect trees the same way the existing ordinance does. If it does not do that, it is a mistake and it needs to be fixed.

Closing remarks: I just want to thank you for doing what you're doing and for staying engaged. I know the angst that this has created. It is palpable to me as it is to you. I can only (repeat) where I started off, I will not vote for something that is not right. Please stay engaged and let's see how right we can make this. This is not a question of "Is this code right?" The answer to that question is no. The code is wrong. Or, "Is that mapped right?" The answer to that is no. It's mapped wrong. So let's fix it. Let's see if we can fix it. Let's stay engaged. Thank you.



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Classic 1925 Hyde Park bungalow in heart of historic district. 2 BR, 1 BA, updated kitchen and hall bath, utility porch. Wood floors throughout. One-car garage.
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