

President's Report December 2008

by Bill Bednar

It's late November and we've had a rash of car break-ins over the last few days. Mary Ingle has fired off a request for additional patrols, and Officer Schouest has posted a list of dos and don'ts on the ListServe. It looks like an organized effort to me-too many incidents in too short a time to be random. Vehicles parked on the street are the most vulnerable, and just anything of value in view through the window appears to be enough to trigger a strike. Get your stuff out of sight, and let's keep our eyes peeled to report suspicious activity.

The battle at 400 East 33rd Street has moved on to the Board of Adjustment, where the owner has requested a variance for just two off-street parking places instead of the three required by the NCCD. As recommended by the NPT, NUNA will oppose the variance. See more in the NPT article this issue.

At its November meeting, the Executive Committee agreed to recommend the following individuals to the general membership for appointment to the Nominating Committee: Kimberly Renner, Mary Ingle, Bill Bednar, and Doug Plummer. Other members would be welcome. Please come to the meeting with your own ideas of persons who would be good in this job.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to have served as your president for the last three years, but as I told the Executive Committee, it's time for some new leadership. That makes the nominating committee's job especially important this year. We need some new participants in all parts of the organization, so please be receptive if the nominating committee comes your way.

Our next general membership meeting is Monday, December 1 2008, at 7:00 PM at the First English Lutheran Church. We will have a short program on the car-share program here in Austin in lieu of the Code Enforcement folks from the City, who had to postpone until February. Then we will have officer reports, and appoint the nominating committee for next year. See you at the meeting!

Bill Bednar
476-1135
587-3504 cell



NOTICE: Next Neighborhood Meeting

**Monday, December 1, 2008, 7 P.M.
First English Lutheran Church
30th and Whitis Streets**

AGENDA

Car Share Program: guest, Brian Donovan

**Appoint Nominating Committee for
Officer Election**

**Reports:
Treasurer- Jan Moyle
Committee Reports**

NPT Update

By Mary Ingle

The NUNA Planning Team (NPT) usually meets once a month depending on agenda items. Last month the NPT did not meet, but in October, we had our regular meeting to discuss to problem property situations: 400 E 33rd Street and 408 W 33rd. 400 E 33rd Street is a project termed as a "remodeled" duplex plus and addition consisting of (according to the permit) 3 bedrooms plus a study per side, but on Craig's list it was advertised as a 4 bedroom duplex per side which could violate the City's occupancy limit of 6 unrelated adults per site. This configuration of 8 bedrooms constitutes a super duplex or a stealth dorm. This is not the kind of redevelopment that is compatible with our neighborhood or with our NCCD.

The permit review for 400 E 33rd Street was not thorough and did not refer to our NCCD (Neighborhood Conservation Combined District) ordinance which has more flexible tools for cohesive redevelopment within the boundaries of our older, historic, central neighborhood, as well as other regulations differing from the Land Development Code (applied to most other neighborhoods) in Austin. As reported before, this project failed to consider the parking regulations until it the project was almost completed. Oops, now what? Much to the chagrin of the NPT, the City staff found no other option but to allow the owner to apply for a variance from the Board of Adjustment (BOA) for only 2 parking spots (the NCCD would have

Continued on next page...

required 4 spots), but the Urban Core Parking Reduction Ordinance of 2004 diminishes that by 20% to only 3 required parking spaces. The only compliant solution to this parking dilemma other than tearing down the addition would be if the duplex were converted to a single family dwelling where only 2 parking places are required. The BOA hearing has been postponed from November 10 to December 8, 2008; the hearing starts at 5:30 in City Hall Council chambers. Your support of NUNA's NCCD parking requirements against the granting of this variance at this hearing would be much appreciated.

Since parking is such a "hot button" topic these days, it also becomes a sore subject when property owners ignore the impact on our neighborhood with not enough parking. Because NUNA still gets spill over satellite parking from commuters to the University of Texas, which makes our streets rather crowded and in some cases unsafe for pedestrians, the importance of adhering to parking regulations remains strong. Not every block in NUNA has the residential parking program (RPP), parking by permit, in place. In a perfect world, not everyone in Austin might have or use a car with good, alternative, public transportation options; until then- until we as a community change our transportation and car use patterns, parking is still a prominent concern in our central city neighborhoods.

408 W 33rd is also a duplex and has been used as duplex for many years. The trouble with this property is that it has many units in the back that were not compliant with City Code. The owner was forced to get an amnesty CO (certificate of occupancy) before any permit could be obtained. Fortunately, the City staff noticed the multiple units on this property; the City has allowed the duplex use to remain and requested that the owner only have one unit in the back- a garage apartment. This configuration of a duplex with a garage apartment is not generally allowed for an SF 3 property; since this property had been non complying and non conforming since 1984, the date when an ordinance was passed which allowed these types of properties to become complying, the City was able to grant an amnesty CO for just "three" units at 408 W 33rd Street. (Complicated?!)

We are eagerly awaiting revisions of the NPT bylaws being prepared by Bill Bednar and Scott Morris for our next regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, December 10 at the AGE building, 6:30 pm. These meetings are open to all NUNA residents. We encourage and need your participation in our collective neighborhood issues. If you would like to attend one of our meetings, please call Mary Ingle, NPT (NUNA Planning Team) Chair - 302-8449. It is recommended to call in advance because these meetings are sometimes canceled and/or the venue gets changed.



A special thanks to Will Donovan who formerly lived in NUNA and who has formatted (once again) this issue of the NUNA newsletter! We appreciate your willingness to help from afar during our newsletter "crisis."

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Join Your Neighborhood Association Today

It is never too late to renew or establish your membership with NUNA. We need your support in the form of a check for \$10 per individual or \$20 per family. This money helps pay for the newsletter, for the annual usage fees of the church and AGE building, and for other memberships and expenses our organization encounters.

Please send your dues to:

Jan Moyle
Treasurer for NUNA
200 West 32nd Street
Austin, 78705

Increase in Car Break-Ins Strikes NUNA

By Douglas Plummer

NUNA has seen a noticeable increase in car break-ins recently. Over the last couple of months, numerous cars have been broken into, burglarized and sometimes vandalized. Typically a window is smashed and the glove boxes and consoles are searched. Sometimes the trigger seems to be chargers left in view within the cars, and other times, several cars in a row, typically parked on the street, have been burglarized. Areas of NUNA most impacted seem to be east of Speedway between 32nd and 35th streets, but Laurel Lane has been hit as well.

NUNA residents are encouraged to report the break-in immediately to the police (please use 311) and to request a police report case number. If you feel comfortable posting the event on the NUNA list serve it will help us to build our case with the district office to increase patrols in our neighborhood until such time that the culprits are caught. Of course, keeping an eye out for your neighbors' vehicles and reporting anyone looking into vehicles would be a huge help in our efforts to reduce or stop this problem. If you spot someone suspicious looking into cars, please call the police immediately (911) so that they can check out the individual. Additionally make sure to remove all valuables including chargers, ear pieces and other electronics from easy view. Some neighbors have installed web cams to track street views and record street happenings. If you are interested in hearing the costs and effort involved in setting up such a system, let us know on the list serve and we may invite some of the homeowners that have implemented such systems to give a brief overview at one of our upcoming meetings. Until then, stay safe!



Curfews and Noise Levels - Tips

We are an eclectic neighborhood with many kinds of people living here, including students. It is not a predominately student neighborhood, and it is sometimes necessary to remind those of you who are not permanent residents that you live here alongside permanent residents: families with young children, professionals such as doctors and nurses, UT professors, and older residents. Because of our unique composition, it is important to remind you of the rules regarding noisy parties and loud music that the City of Austin enforces through the Austin Police Department. The neighborhood residents routinely notify the police if there are noisy, disturbing parties in progress, and the police officers will come and shut them down.

If any resident is having problems with noise, noisy parties, something currently in progress, please call 911 (not 311) to report the problem. Please also ask for a reference number.



CANPAC Update

By Mary Ingle

CANPAC (Central Austin Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee) was created by a NUNA resident, Mary Gay Maxwell, during the City's neighborhood planning process beginning in 2002 and ending in 2004 with our Central Austin Neighborhood Plan (CANP) for 7 neighborhoods- Eastwoods, Hancock, Heritage, North University, Shoalcrest, West University (now called OWUNA- Original West University), and University Area Partners. This group of volunteers later became the official planning team for the neighborhood plan recognized by the City of Austin; with newly constructed bylaws, each neighborhood has 2 voting representatives with staggered terms and 1 alternate representative. NUNA's current representatives to CANPAC are Mary Gay Maxwell, Mary Ingle, and alternate, Rick Iverson. Subsequent representatives will be chosen by the neighborhood for the purposes of reviewing all proposed plan amendments to the CANP, of supporting, reviewing, and monitoring the CANP and its goals, and of tracking these recommendations for implementation. In the past, this group had so much work to do that semimonthly meetings were a necessity; now the group meets once every month.

The CANPAC group was responsible for the submission of our Vertical Mixed Use (VMU) application. After multiple, individual neighborhood meetings and officially recorded votes, the VMU recommendations were submitted to the City by the CANPAC group. The most affected neighborhood by VMU would be the Heritage Neighborhood which is surrounded on 4 sides by commercial corridors from Guadalupe to Lamar, and 29th to 38th Streets; out of concern from what the back sides of new development would look like, the Heritage Neighborhood asked the City for neighborhood side design standards. These standards are currently being considered in the commercial design standards review process but have not been decided upon or adopted yet. These neighborhood side design standards would affect all neighborhoods and their VMU new developments. Some items of concern are the exterior lighting- trespass lighting and light pollution, placement of trash receptacles and air conditioners, and the types of building materials for the back sides of these projects. For the most part, compatibility and esthetics, to a lesser degree, are the bases for these neighborhood concerns. Our CANPAC VMU application is scheduled to be presented to the Planning Commission on Tuesday, December 9.

The best news for NUNA is that all of the plan amendments submitted earlier this year to CANPAC were considered as corrective ordinance issues; we found some errors in the text and on charts that needed to be changed. Fortunately the City's Legal Department was able to accommodate these corrections as corrective ordinance measures. These corrective ordinances measures passed on consent at the City Council meeting on November 20, 2008.



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NEW DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE WITH APD

Our neighborhood APD District Representative has changed; Troy Schouest is the new officer. He may be contacted- 974-5829, and his email address is: Troy.Schouest@ci.austin.tx.us

HybridRealtor@Stanberry.com



Jeff Baker 619-7421

ABOR, REALTOR®

4000 Duval Street

Former State Licensed Appraiser
NUNA Neighbor & Central Austin Specialist
Past recipient of Austin Heritage
Society Award for Historic



Preservation of the Ross/Black House
(112 West 32nd St.)

Also check out jeffbakerart.biz

**Call me if you're planning to
Buy or Sell a Home**

A Special Thanks To A Great Neighbor

Our neighborhood association would like to extend a very special thank you to **Pallas Art Web Design** who most graciously offered to let us use their server for our NUNA website, www.nuna-austin.org.

Advertise your business in the NUNA Newsletter!

Here are our rates for ads:

\$200 per year (6 issues) for 2" X 3.5"

or \$300 per year (6 issues) for 4" X 3.5"

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Douglas Plummer
Managing Director and
NUNA Board Member



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