

SLNA Newsletter

South Lamar Neighborhood Association www.southlamar.org

NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, APRIL 15 7:00 to 9:00 P.M.
UNITY CHURCH YOUTH ANNEX – 2806 Del Curto Road

This month's SLNA meeting has several newsworthy presentations on the agenda:

IN THIS ISSUE:

- **Walgreens Update**
- **Alamo Drafthouse**
- **Neighborhood Planning**
- **SLNA Clean-Up Committee Report**
- **The Turkey Tree**

Walgreens developer David Darr and his team will present an updated version of the proposal for a new 24-hour Walgreens store at Bluebonnet Lane and South Lamar. The basic layout is the same as was shown at our February meeting: the new store would sit behind what is currently Taco Xpress and the boot shop, and Taco Xpress would be in a new building just south of its current building. No new changes have been made to the Taco Xpress plans or the balance of the Trailer Park. They hope to submit their zoning request soon, so it's an opportune time to make suggestions.

Significant changes since the last meeting include:

- moving the storm water retention to an underground chamber next to the Water Quality Ponds
- widening Bluebonnet and putting sidewalks on both sides, for the length of their property
- re-engineering the traffic signals at Lamar & Bluebonnet
- and some cosmetic changes to the building itself.

At that meeting the SLNA voted to support the project in principle, but to oppose the driveway access to Bluebonnet as it was proposed. At the April 15 meeting, we will consider the revised plans and whether to reconsider our position. Those who have internet access are encouraged to view the latest plans at www.southlamar.org.

The Alamo Drafthouse is planning a new movie theater in place of the former Fiesta grocery in the Lamar Plaza center on South Lamar at Treadwell. They differ from most theaters in that they serve meals during the movies. They contacted the SLNA early in their process, and have been very proactive in seeking surrounding neighborhoods' input. At the April meeting they will present their plans to the neighborhood, and free movie passes to their current theaters will be available at that time.

Finally, Bryan King will present an update on the City of Austin's Neighborhood Planning process as it relates to our area. He gives a brief introduction and a link to the Neighborhood Planning website below, and will explain more at the meeting.

I look forward to seeing everyone on April 15th from 7 to 9 pm at Unity Church's Youth Annex. -- **Kevin Lewis, SLNA President**

It's Time To Get Involved!

by Bryan King

SLNA is scheduled to begin the City's "Neighborhood Planning" process late this year, and that process will happen with or without our involvement. 21 other neighborhoods throughout Austin have already gone through this process. Bouldin and Dawson were among the first, and South River City (Travis Heights) is doing theirs right now. More information than you ever wanted is available on the city website <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning>.

Simply, the process takes a holistic look at land use, zoning, transportation, business development, housing options, etc. -- both the current state and a desired state. The City appears to be pushing higher density "urban infill" development, while the neighborhoods typically want to retain a more traditional (lower, residential) density.

SLNA is likely to be combined with Zilker, Galindo and Barton Hills neighborhoods, into one large plan area. Leaders from these 4 neighborhoods met with City planners almost a year ago to start the ball rolling. A small steering group has been meeting monthly for the past several months, sharing information and ideas. We want this to be OUR neighborhoods' plan, not something the City thinks is best FOR us.

We need your help! This is a giant task, and once the formal process starts, it takes about 8 or 9 months to complete. We want to have a good idea of what we want - grass roots style - before the City ever starts their process, so we'll be prepared to address any ideas different from our vision. Are you interested in working on our neighborhood plan? If so, get in touch and let's get started! We need you.

Contact: Bryan King - bryanking@bkradio.net - 444-9268

THE TURKEY TREE

by Patricia Fiske

I confess. I love trees, hug them every chance I get. I've hugged trees from Mexico to Canada, from Hawaii to Maine, from California to Florida, in England and Scotland.

This true story is about a special tree that still stands in my South Lamar neighborhood in Austin, Texas. When I was around six, my family moved from Kerrville, Texas to Austin, the capital of Texas. We made frequent trips back and forth as most of our extended family stayed in Kerrville. Land along what is now South Lamar Boulevard was still out in the country in the early thirties and 290W was two country lanes. In fact, there was little development South of the Colorado River.

My family competed to be the first to see the capitol when we would return from Kerrville. They could not understand why I always won. The secret to my success was that I had observed that the dome would appear shortly after we passed this solitary oak that jutted into the road. We usually returned after dark and the dome of the capitol was always well-lit. There was no missing it as it rose in solitary splendor in the early thirties for none of the present skyline had been built. When we passed the tree, I would yell, "I see it!" and by the time they looked, sure enough, there it was in the distance.

That old oak still stands next to El Rancho Restaurant on South Lamar, between Manchaca and Bluebonnet on the South side of the road.

I was telling this story at a neighborhood get-together and a young neighbor, Lynn Rutter, told me this story in return: It seems that when Lynn's grandfather was a young boy, he helped his father herd a flock of turkeys all the way from Johnson City to Austin to sell at market. They timed it so they would arrive the evening before market to that same tree. They would shoo the turkeys up into the tree so both turkeys and herders could be rested when they arrived. The dams along the Colorado had not been built at that time and there was a rock ledge and a narrowing of the river at about the place where the present railroad bridge is. That is where the turkeys crossed the river.

I hope that gnarly old landmark is still standing for years to come and my granddaughter, Maria, can say to her children, "See that tree? My grammy called it the turkey tree."

Carpenter Ants . . . Tearing Down The House?

Carpenter ants nest outdoors in dead wood (tree stumps or dead limbs, fences, firewood). Indoors, they can be found in wood siding, beams, joists, fascia boards or trim. Damage is usually limited since carpenter ants tunnel and nest within in the wood; they do not eat wood. However, wood can become weakened by the ants' excavation.

Carpenter ant excavation may be identified by the clean, smooth walls. Galleries are excavated following the grain of the wood. Nest locations may be discovered by searching for piles of sawdust-looking material under exit holes. Sawdust piles may also contain soil or sand, uneaten insects as well as dead ants from the colony.

Carpenter ants are able to enter homes through tree branches or utility lines touching the home, cracks and crevices around windows and doors, cracks in foundation walls, ventilation openings or heating and air conditioning ducts. Here are some tips to reduce the chance of a carpenter ant infestation:

- ❖ replace wood that is water damaged
- ❖ repair plumbing leaks
- ❖ prune trees & shrubs that touch the home
- ❖ remove wood debris & firewood that is near the home
- ❖ provide good ventilation under the home & in the attic
- ❖ keep exposed wood in good condition
- ❖ drain water away from the home

For more information, contact Wizzie Brown, Travis County Extension Agent-IPM, at 512-854-9600 or via email: ebrown@ag.tamu.edu

Clean Up Fast and Fun

by Rona Distenfeld, SLNA Cleanup Committee Chair

SLNA took part in Clean Sweep Austin on April 3rd. 13 people filled 28 bags with trash and hauled tires, chicken wire, barbed wire (or bob wire for those who speak Texan), and even a car hood out of the brush along Del Curto between Cinnamon Path and Clawson Rd.

The clean up started at 8:00 with about 6 early risers. By 11:00 we had the bags neatly lined up at a designated address for the city to pick up on Monday. Keep Austin Beautiful provided the trash bags and made the arrangement with Solid Waste Services for a special trash pick up. Many hands made light work, and everyone had a good time visiting with their neighbors as they worked.

The next neighborhood clean up will take place Sunday, June 6 on Clawson Road, from Southgate to Grayford. Flyers will be distributed at least a week before the clean up as a reminder, but put it on your calendar now and come out and join us!

SLNA is part of the Keep Austin Beautiful neighborhood clean up program, and will be doing a clean up like this four times a year. We will work in a different place each quarter, so if you have an area that needs cleaning up, please let us know. Come to a bi-monthly SLNA meeting, or email Rona at rona@sbcglobal.net.

Are you registered to VOTE ? In the right Precinct? Do you know where your Voter's Registration Card is (it's BLUE this year) ?

If you answered "NO" to any of the above, you can pick up a Voter's Registration Card at the April SLNA meeting, so you can register in plenty of time for the November General Elections!



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South Lamar Neighborhood Association

Membership Status: New Member _____ Renewing Member _____

Please complete the following. Couples, please use both first names.

NAME(S): _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

AREA CODE & PHONE NUMBER: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

☐ Check here if you want to join SLNA's Yahoo Email Group.

If you live outside SLNA's borders, please note the address of the SLNA property you own: _____

Membership is \$10 per year per household (due in January each year)

Or be a "Big Bubba/Big Bubbette" for \$20 (or more) per year

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

☐ Request Hardship Waiver of Membership Fee

Make checks payable to "South Lamar Neighborhood Association"

Mail/Deliver to Bill Stoughton, 3200 South Oak, Austin, TX 78704

Check out the SLNA Website at www.southlamar.org

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Membership in the Association shall be issued on the basis of residency and payment of **annual dues**. SLNA boundaries are:

North - Oltorf; South - Ben White; East - Union Pacific Railroad; West - S. Lamar / Manchaca.

Persons meeting the above criteria but who are unable to pay membership dues may request a reduction in dues or a waiver.

The privilege of introducing motions and voting shall be limited to those who have joined the Association at least ten days prior to any regularly scheduled or special called meeting.

Complete bylaws are available at regular meetings and online at www.southlamar.org.