

# Z-News

Austin, Texas

The Newsletter of the Zilker Neighborhood

April 2000

## A Message from the ZNA President

### Zilker's Outstanding Voting Record

Jeff Jack

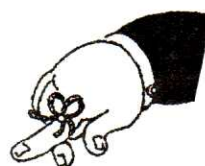
The election on March 14 focused on the national Democratic and Republican primaries and a few races of local interest. However, it is important to understand that all elections are watched closely by our local elected officials. Since their jobs are dependent on *our* votes, these office holders scrutinize election returns to see who votes and who doesn't. They pay attention to these results especially when they are lobbied on local issues. As the old adage goes, "All politics are local."

Since one of the goals of the ZNA executive committee this year is to increase our clout with elected officials, we also need to pay attention to these voting results. For the March primary, there were 530,590 registered voters in the 229 precincts that are in Travis County. Of those registered, 82,687 voted, or about 15.69 percent. While the boundaries of the Zilker Neighborhood Association include small parts of other precincts, Precinct 332 encompasses the majority of the Zilker neighborhood. In Precinct 332, we have 2,991 registered voters, and 384 voted in the March primary. This is about 13%, which is somewhat lower than the county-wide average.

This low turnout may reflect that we did not have any "hot" local contests, since Zilker has historically voted at higher rates than the rest of Austin. Here are some statistics for the past five City Council elections held before March 14, 2000.

	City Wide		Precinct 332	
	Total Votes	%	Total Votes	%
May 1, 1999 City/County Election (Slusher, Goodman, Griffith)	34,211	8.36%	604	20.58%
May 31, 1997 City Council Runoff (Spelman, Lewis)	43,046	11.65%	725	25.19%
May 3, 1997 City Council Election (Watson/Reynolds, Garcia, Spelman/Zuniga, Lewis/Mitchell)	62,840	17.09%	901	31.32%
June 1, 1996 City Council Runoff (Slusher, Griffith)	46,364	12.26%	842	30.66%
May 4, 1996 City/County Election (Slusher/Hart, Goodman, Griffith/Wheeler)	47,234	12.59%	712	25.95%

*continued on page 11*



**Don't forget!**

## Zilker Neighborhood Association

### April General Meeting

The Zilker Neighborhood Association,  
in conjunction with the Barton Hills  
& Horseshoe Bend Neighborhood Associations,  
will host

### **A Candidates Forum**

on

**Monday, April 24 at 6:30 p.m.**

**Kinney Ave. Baptist Church  
in the Fellowship Hall  
1801 Kinney Ave.**

### **MEETING AGENDA 6:30 - 10:00 p.m.**

<b>6:30 pm</b>	<b>Mayoral candidates</b>
<b>7:00 pm</b>	<b>Place 2 candidates</b>
<b>8:00 pm</b>	<b>Place 5 candidates</b>
<b>9:00 pm</b>	<b>Place 6 candidates</b>

**Moderator:**

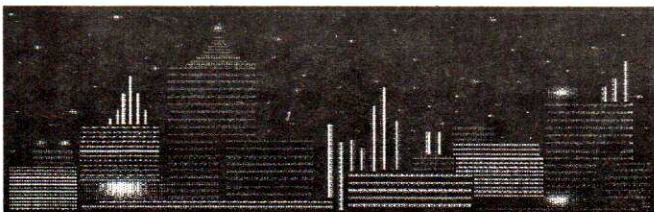
**Robin Cravey, ZNA Past President**

**There will be an opportunity to ask the candidates  
questions during this meeting.**

**Everyone is welcome!  
Light refreshments will be served.**

Due to the length of our agenda, and the speaking schedule of the candidates, our "Meet and Greet Social" will not be held before this general meeting.





## Our Neighborhood: Growing, Growing, Gone?

In our last issue of *Z-News*, we provided some background information on the demographics of the Zilker neighborhood. It was noted, that based on City of Austin data, our density in 1990 was a little over six people per acre for the neighborhood proper (excluding Zilker Park), or about 4,700 residents.

Since then, we have gathered additional information from the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO), formerly called the Austin Transportation Study (ATS). CAMPO is charged by the state to do transportation planning for the area, and they have done extensive population projections that are used by the city for planning purposes. These projections are based on what are called Traffic Serial Zones (TSZs).

The Austin metropolitan area is divided into small geographical areas, and the Zilker neighborhood includes all, or part of, seven different TSZs. Because the TSZs are not contiguous with the ZNA boundaries, it is not an "apples to apples" match. But a good approximation would conclude that Zilker neighborhood's density had grown to about 8.47 people per acre by 1997. This is an increase of approximately 1,700 people since 1990. Such an increase could have occurred with new apartment construction and in some single family construction. But have we really *seen* this much construction and growth in the neighborhood since 1990?

CAMPO not only has the 1997 data, but also the projections for the year 2025. This is even more questionable! CAMPO is projecting that our density will increase to an average of 10.71 people per acre for an approximate population of 8,200 people--an increase of another 1,700 people over the 1997 figure.

When asked about this report, Jeff Jack, ZNA president, said "This CAMPO information--both the 1997 data and the 2025 projections--raises some serious questions we need to ask ourselves. First, is the 1997 CAMPO data accurate? Second, what will these 2025 projections be used for? Since only 4% of the land area in Zilker is underdeveloped, how will the neighborhood accommodate another 1,700 people?"

CAMPO's numbers suggest that we are either faced with major redevelopment along the commercial edges of South Lamar Blvd. and/or significant densification in our residential area, changing our neighborhood from its current single family residential character. However, before we accept this scenario, we need to ask several important questions: How much growth is appropriate and wanted by our neighborhood? What kind of growth do we want (apartments, duplexes, single families)? Where should this growth be? Can our streets, especially South Lamar Blvd., accommodate this growth combined with the increased traffic coming from the sprawl in southwest Travis County?

Stated Jeff Jack, "Rather than relying on CAMPO or the city staff to make these decisions for use, we need to address these basic issues in our neighborhood planning process. After all, while these projections are their's, Zilker is *our* neighborhood. Whatever growth we have in the area should respect our neighborhood character and preserve our quality of life."

## Buying or Selling your Home?



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## Thank You! Thank you! Thank You! Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

The Zilker Neighborhood Association executive committee would like to thank these folks who have given their time, energy, and commitment to our neighborhood over the past year. Some of our volunteers, Richard and Paulette Gravois for example, have served the neighborhood in various capacities for years. Others, like Ken and Laura Marsh, have just recently joined our volunteer team. Our supporters, both individuals and businesses, have given goods, services, money, and their expertise to our neighborhood. Our advertisers make it possible for the ZNA to publish *Z-News* and distribute it to 2,000 homes and businesses four times a years. We thank our advertisers who have continued to stay with us over the years, and welcome our new advertisers!

Without the contribution of the fine folks listed here, our Zilker neighborhood would not be what it is today. Thank you, friends! Thank you, neighbors!

### Z-News Walkers

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Did we forget to put your name on this list? If so, please accept our apologies for the oversight. Please know that we appreciate the service our volunteers give, and you--the unacknowledged ones--also receive our deepest thanks!

## Thank You! Thank You! Thank You! Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!





## HAVE YOU HEARD Z-NEWS?

### A time for hello....

Z-welcome goes out to **Ken and Laura**, who recently moved to Dexter Street. They both jumped right into being good neighbors by volunteering to deliver Z-News!

Dexter Street has another addition, too! Our Zilker congratulations go out to **Annick and Ed**, the proud parents of **Baby Nicholas**. He arrived in the 'hood on February 18. Grandmother **Gloria**, Annick's mother, recently moved into the neighborhood, too! She lives on Kinney Ave. (Just in time--and just close enough to do some *serious* baby-sitting!) Welcome, friends.



### A time for good-bye....

"Poets and friends are born to what they are."

Katherine Fowler Phillips  
English Poet/Playwright

Sweet Clifford, you were a poet to many and a friend to all. Now rest in the arms of the angels. We will miss you.

### And all things in between....

Happy birthday wishes go out to **Lars**, who had a birthday in February and **Eleanor**, who celebrated her birthday in March. They live on Kinney Avenue. Although she didn't say how many, birthday candles were on the cake for **Jan**, who lives on Garner Ave. Her birthday was March 27. And a great big birthday hug goes out to **Grant**, our ZNA mascot, whose 5th birthday was March 21.

Just a personal note from the Editor:

Happy anniversary to my **Sweet Angel**. Tell me, how could 22 years pass by so quickly? Time only makes my love grow stronger.

Have some news? Write us about it!

Z-News  
P. O. Box 33546  
Austin, Texas 78764-0546

**OOPS!** In the last issue of Z-News, it was reported in this column that **Cody** was the *sister* of **Brandy**. Actually, Cody is the *brother* of Brandy. We regret the error of this gender typo, and we are sure Brandy *really* regrets torturing her older brother with this error.

**The grass actually may be greener on the other side of the fence. But it still has to be mowed!**

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## A Note from Zilker School

"Okay, you can *light* the candles on the cake; just don't burn down the school!"

### Zilker Elementary School Celebrates Its 50th Birthday and Outdoor Learning Center

Wow! Zilker School is *the* place to be! Last year, Zilker was given the National Blue Ribbon Award for excellence. Now our neighborhood school is having a 50th birthday! Now I wouldn't miss this party if I were you. It's going to be a good one! Principal Trevino, her staff, and students have been getting ready for this celebration all year. The students have been learning about their school, the neighborhood, and the decades that preceded them. In other words, *history*. The 1850's may seem like a ancient history to a 5th grader, but what about the 1950's--when Zilker Elementary School was young? What were the clothing styles then? Who was in the news? What was our neighborhood like *way back then*?

But don't think that it's all work and no play for Zilker. Oh, no. The party is **Friday, April 28**, and everyone is invited to attend--whether you attended Zilker School or not. Children's entertainer Joe McDermott will begin the day-long celebration starting at 9:00 a.m. in the Texana Faulk Conn Outdoor Learning Center. Tom Amiss of Keller Williams Realty is donating the performance for the students, parents, and community members. "We were thrilled to hear about Mr. Amiss' generous donation," said Ms. Trevino. "This is a prime example of the extraordinary community support Zilker Elementary School has enjoyed over the past 50 years."

Mr. Amiss, who has lived and worked in the Zilker area for eight years, stated simply regarding his donation, "We are very proud of our neighborhood and our school. We just wanted to give something back to the community."

At 1:00 pm, the festivities will continue with a ribbon cutting and dedication to officially open the **Texana Faulk Conn Outdoor Learning Center**. This beautiful stone amphitheater will complement a school that has already displayed high student achievement and community involvement over the past several years.

During the celebration, the students will present "The History of Zilker". And, if you really want to feel old, check out the classic cars on display. (Little did I know that when I was 10 years old riding in the backseat of my aunt's maroon and white '56 Ford, I was riding in a car that would someday be called a *classic*!)

At 6:30 pm, as the daylight grows short, the air will continue to be alive with the sound of music. Scheduled to perform are Sara Hickman, Ana Egge, Jan and Jean Evans, Jean Caffeine, the Bob Rose Band, and the Zilker Underground Conjunto Band. If these musicians aren't enough to get your toes tappin' or your feet dancin', you might want to check your pulse to see if you are still among the living.

Don't forget the date---**Friday, April 28**. Come on over to the schoolhouse, get yourself a big slice of cake, and enjoy the party!

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## ZNA Neighbors Are Taking It to the Streets! Running, Walking & Cycling Clubs Now Forming

Our neighborhood is a z'cellent place to stay active and make friendships. Let's put both together! Mary Ann Sides, ZNA co-secretary, is coordinating running, walking, and cycling clubs for folks who want to get active, stay active, and develop friendships along the way. Perhaps you need to run at night. Maybe you want a buddy to support and encourage you when you feel you can't go that extra mile. For whatever reason you have, your ZNA is ready to help make these clubs a reality!

So what do you want to do? Run? Walk? Cycle? If you are interested in any of these activities, let us know. Hey, let's *all* take it to the streets! Be Z-ACTIVE in the ZNA!



### **Sign me up now!**

### **I want to to join the Club!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

1. I am interested in (check any activity):

Walking \_\_\_\_\_ Jogging/Running \_\_\_\_\_ Cycling \_\_\_\_\_

2. My preferred activity day(s) is: \_\_\_\_\_

My preferred time is: Daytime \_\_\_\_\_ Evening/Night \_\_\_\_\_

3. I am interested in helping coordinate the club(s):

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete this form and send to:  
Mary Ann Sides  
Zilker Neighborhood Association  
P. O. Box 33546  
Austin, Texas 78764-0546

## Neighborhood Mobility and Transportation Options

Over the last year, all of us living in Austin have experienced the growing problem of traffic congestion around the city. Everyone will admit traffic is a mess and getting worse; the situation has to be addressed immediately. But, beyond the general frustration, there is very little consensus about what to do.

Like most problems facing our neighborhood, improving transportation is very complex and not easily solved. As we begin to develop our neighborhood plan, transportation mobility and options must be a primary focus of our efforts. Most people recognize the root causes for our traffic problems are explosive suburban population growth coupled with inadequate planning. We also know that it will take a comprehensive regional transportation plan that provides a variety of transit options for us to solve our congestion problems while preserving the quality of life in our neighborhoods. These options range from building more sidewalks and bikeways to creating a light rail system.

While more options will help citywide, in Zilker our most important transportation improvements may come in the form of an improved bus system. But what improvements to Capital Metro's bus service would we like to see? On page 7 is a map of the current routes and the locations of existing bus stops. As you look at this map, there are two important questions to keep in mind:

1. How can Capital Metro improve neighborhood services to encourage more neighborhood residents to take the bus on a regular basis?
2. How will the neighborhood bus service connect up to the proposed light rail line to the benefit of Zilker residents?

Capital Metro is in the early design stages of light rail, and is also in the process of redefining how bus service will be provided to the Austin community and outlying areas. Now is the time to work with Capital Metro to ensure that the Zilker neighborhood is well served. Please bring your ideas for improving Capital Metro's service to our April 24 meeting for discussion. We thank Capital Metro for providing our Zilker bus route map for our newsletter.

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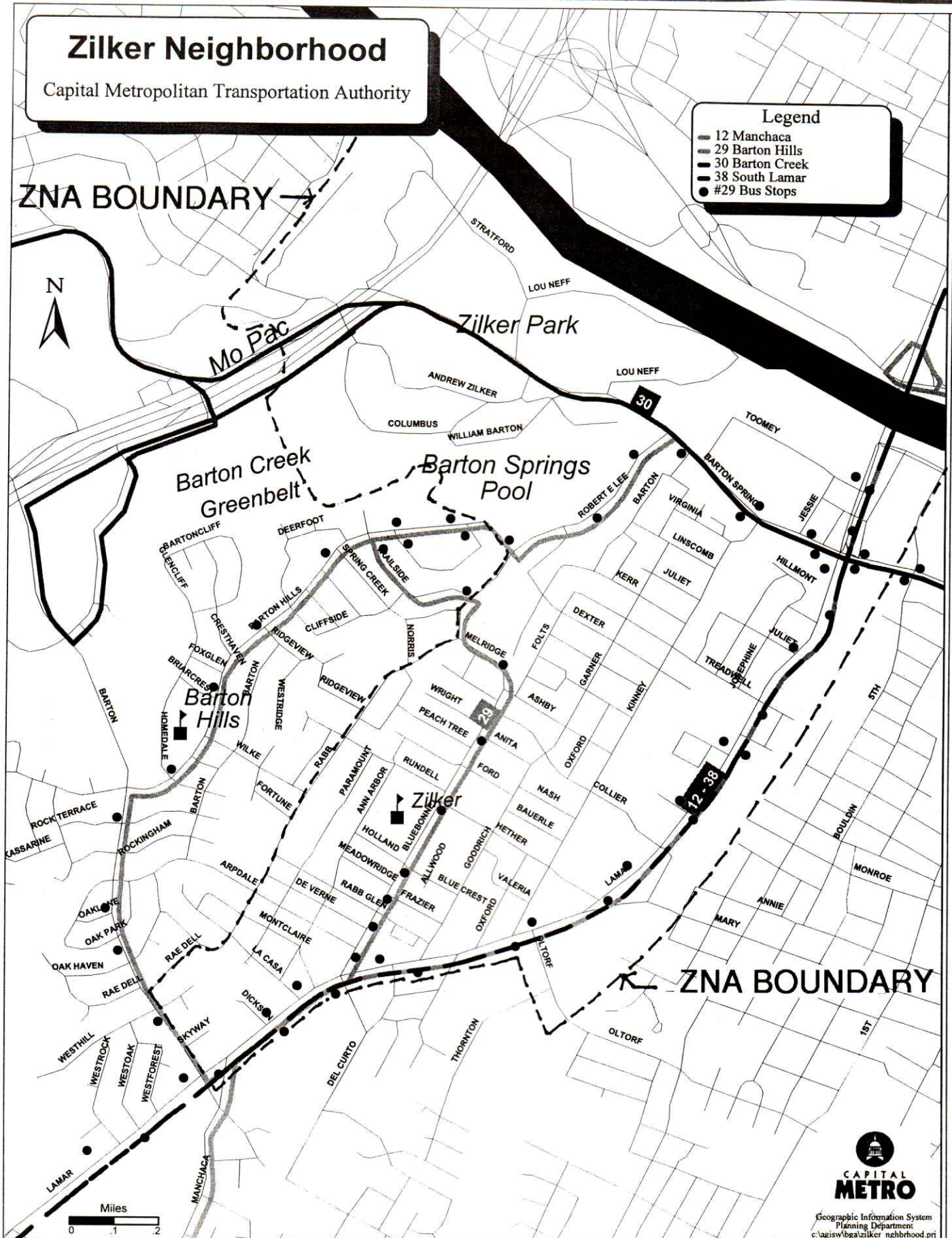


## Zilker Neighborhood

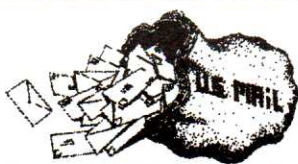
Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority

### Legend

- 12 Manchaca
- 29 Barton Hills
- 30 Barton Creek
- 38 South Lamar
- #29 Bus Stops





**BRING IN Z-MAIL!***Letters to the Editor***Dear Z-News:**

While I appreciate the thanks for my volunteer efforts on the Barton Springs Road median project, it is important to state that the landscape architect for this project is Russ Bragg. Russ is a highly respected landscape architect who has been practicing in the Austin area for a number of years. He is responsible for all of the designs for the medians in collaboration with the architects and civil engineers. It is his vision that will create a colorful median for us to enjoy.

Sincerely,  
Eleanor McKinney  
Kinney Avenue

**Dear Z-News:**

Hats off to you and the new board. This last newsletter was terrific. I want to express my gratitude for your efforts and compliment you on the newsletter.

I have lived in the neighborhood for five years, and appreciate the work and contribution of my neighbors. I will do what I can, if there is a task that can be done on the weekend. We do appreciate all your work. Thanks.

Sincerely,  
Kathleen Tice  
Jessie Street

**Dear Z-News:**

Just moved to the area last year. Have lived in Austin my whole life. Thank you for the (news) letter.

A few questions: Can we do anything about the Fantasy Club on South Lamar? It is a little too close to my house for comfort. Two, the convenience store on Bluebonnet is okay, but they have one too many advertisements outside by the gas pumps for a neighborhood store, in my opinion. Three, billboards. Never knew you could have so many so high. What are our rights as an association, if any?

I know this sounds frumpy, but I think this 'hood is up and coming as far as aesthetics, inferring from you last publication. Thanks, and let me know if I can do anything.

Sincerely,  
Dan Inman  
Oxford Avenue

*ED: Thanks for writing, Dan! We hope these questions you raised will be addressed in our neighborhood planning. Of course, you are invited to attend our ZNA general meetings with any concerns you have regarding the neighborhood.*

Z-News welcomes your letters of compliments, comments, questions, and criticism (although we don't like *that* so much!) for publication. For letters to be considered for publication in Z-News, all correspondence must contain the full name, address and home phone number of the writer. Please note that letters may be edited for length and content. Send your letters to:

**Bring in Z-Mail!**  
Barbara Cossie, Z-News Editor  
Zilker Neighborhood Association  
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### Zilker Area Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment Cases

Each month we see changes in the neighborhood with new projects popping up here and there. Many of these projects already have the correct zoning. They are designed in accordance with all city codes and regulation, and proceed through the city's review and permitting process without any neighborhood notification. However, if a project needs a zoning change, or does not conform to existing regulations, it must go through either the City of Austin Planning Commission, Board of Adjustments or other review board.



In such cases the neighborhood is notified of the proposed project and is asked to comment on whether the requests should be granted.

During this month, there are three projects in our neighborhood the ZNA executive committee has been notified of that are requesting variances or zoning changes from the city. They are:

**1. Planning Commission: Case #C14-00-2034**  
**902 South Lamar**

**Fine Arts Services is requesting a zoning change from SF# (Single Family) to CS (General Commercial Services).**

This applicant's current picture framing business is growing, and he wants to add a 1,000 square foot addition to the existing building. While the front part of the lot is already zoned to allow for the business, the rear portion of the lot is zoned single family. As the proposed expansion would be in this area, the business owner needs a zoning change. This single family portion of the lot backs up to the railroad tracks, and is surrounded by other retail or commercial zoning.

**2. Board of Adjustments: Case #015-00-032**

**2115 Bluebonnet Lane**

**Owner/builder, Dan Davis, is requesting a variance on the required street frontage for a lot from 50 feet to 45.45 feet.**

Mr. Davis wants to subdivide this existing large lot, currently with one house on the property, into four smaller lots of approximately 7000 square feet each, so that he can build four duplexes (8 units to be sold as condominiums). This lot can legally be subdivided into the four lots already. However, it would result in what is commonly referred to as "Flag" lots, with the major portion of three of the lots to the rear, connected to the street by a narrow strip of driveway and only one lot facing the street. Mr. Davis wants the variance so that he can have two lots fronting the street, and two lots in the rear all sharing a central drive with only one curb cut on Bluebonnet.

**3. Sign Review Board: Case #016-00-003**

**2300 South Lamar Blvd.**

**The owner is requesting a variance to the maximum size of a sign from 72 square feet to 110 square feet.**

This applicant is the developer of the small commercial center on the corner of Goodrich and South Lamar Blvd. where the old Sahara Motel was located. As a corner lot, the owner is allowed two signs, one for each street frontage. These signs may not exceed 0.7 square feet for each linear foot of street frontage. This would allow 72 square feet for each sign, or total of 144 square feet for both. Instead of having two signs, the owner wants one sign of 110 square feet which would be larger than would be allowed for one sign, but less than the total allowed for two signs.



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It's spring, and that means gardening to lots of folks! But whether you have a "green thumb" or not, this is one garden anyone can cultivate!

### *The Millennium Garden*

**Plant three rows of peas:**

Peace of mind  
Peace of heart  
Peace of soul.

**Plant four rows of squash:**

Squash gossip  
Squash indifference  
Squash grumbling  
Squash rudeness.

**Plant four rows of lettuce:**

Lettuce be kind  
Lettuce be tolerant  
Lettuce be happy  
Lettuce really love one another.

**No garden should be without turnips:**

Turnip for service when needed  
Turnip to help one another  
Turnip the music and dance!

**To conclude our garden,**

We must have thyme:  
Thyme for fun  
Thyme for rest  
Thyme for ourselves.

**Water freely with love**

Watch your plants grow.  
You'll have one great garden  
Because you reap what you sow.

Pretty nice garden, don't you think?



Author unknown



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**The next issue of Z-News will be distributed  
in July.**

**DON'T LET THIS SPACE GO TO WASTE!**



## Mary Lee Foundation Has Plans for Improvement

Opened in 1969 to serve the special needs clients of our city, the Mary Lee Foundation is one of our neighborhood's oldest social service organizations. While providing rehabilitation for individuals with brain injuries, and job training for the sight and hearing impaired and mentally challenged, it also offers transitional and affordable housing for 150 residents.

Currently, the Mary Lee Foundation owns 11 of the 15 buildings in the cul-de-sac at Lamar Square, but as their needs continue to grow, the need for more space also increases. With that in mind, the Mary Lee Foundation is considering the purchase of the other four buildings to create a unified "campus."

Last February, the Mary Lee Foundation held a design workshop to develop a master plan for this proposed campus. The workshop was a community event with clients, service agencies, and neighborhood participants in attendance. The resulting master plan focused on providing a supportive environment for clients while being neighborhood compatible. The master plan includes remodeling or replacing some of the dilapidated buildings and landscaping the grounds. Since a majority of the Foundation's clients

and residents do not drive, there is a plan to reduce the amount of parking space, and then replacing some of the existing concrete and asphalt with grass, flowers, and trees. The Mary Lee Foundation Executive Director, Don Lilljedaal, along with Chairperson Charlene Crump, attended the ZNA February meeting, and presented their final master plan which received a positive response from the audience.

One of the issues the Mary Lee Foundation planners would like to address is how to make crossing South Lamar Blvd. more pedestrian-friendly and safer for their clients and residents. As this issue is shared by many others in the Zilker neighborhood, the ZNA hopes to incorporate into the neighborhood plan improvements such as crosswalks along South Lamar Blvd. to address this mutual concern.

The ZNA executive committee would like to thank the board, staff, and planners of the Mary Lee Foundation for including our neighborhood in their process, and for presenting their master plan at our last general meeting. Working together, we will make a positive change for South Lamar Blvd.



*continued from page 1 ... Zilker's Voting Record*

As this data shows, Zilker (Precinct 332) has consistently voted at 12 to 18 percentage points higher than the city average. It is crucial that we not only continue this pattern, but actually increase our voter turnout for coming elections. With the May 6 City Council elections just around the corner, it is important to mark your calendars for the voting date and to encourage your friends and neighbors to register and vote. We will again have voter registration cards at the April ZNA general meeting, and hope you will take the time to help make our neighborhood the best voting precinct in the city!

Don't forget to attend our ZNA meeting on **Monday, April 24**. Several candidates who are running for city council offices will be available to answer your questions. See the enclosed flyer for more information. Also, be sure to vote on Saturday, May 6!

Your neighbor--

**Jeff**

## 10 Ways To Be A Good Zilker Neighbor

1. Attend your ZNA meetings. The general meetings are held four times a year: February, April, July and October.
2. Be a volunteer at Zilker School, the Umlauf Sculpture Gardens, or through the ZNA.
3. Support Zilker businesses with your dollars.
4. Become a member of the ZNA.
5. Watch your street. Call 911 *immediately*, if you see any suspicious activity in your area.
6. Get to know your neighbors. Find out who may need extra help on your block, and offer your assistance.
7. Drive below the speed limit. The average speed limit in our neighborhood is 30 mph. Can you drive 25 mph, and *still* get to where you are going?
8. Attend Zilker neighborhood functions.
9. Smile and wave to those you pass on the street.
10. Vote.

## Be Part of Z-Action. Join Your ZNA!

Annual dues are only \$5.00 per person.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt.#: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Send this completed form and your check (payable to Zilker Neighborhood Association) to:

**Fontaine Maverick, Treasurer**  
**Zilker Neighborhood Association**  
**P. O. Box 33546**  
**Austin, Texas 78764-0546**



## Which of *These* Costly Homeseller Mistakes Will You Make When You Sell Your Home?

**Austin, Texas**--A new report has just been released that reveals the seven costly mistakes most homeowners make when selling their homes and the 9-Step System that can help you sell your home fast--*and* for the most amount of money.

This industry report clearly shows how the traditional ways of selling homes have become increasingly less and less effective in today's real estate market. The fact of the matter is that fully three-quarters of today's homesellers don't get what they want for their homes and become disillusioned and financially disadvantaged when they put their homes on the market.

As this report uncovers, these seven deadly mistakes home sellers make will cost them literally thousands of dollars when they go to sell their homes. The good news is each and every one of these mistakes is entirely preventable.

In answer to this issue, industry insiders have prepared a free special report entitled, "*The 9-Step System to Get Your Home Sold Fast and For Top Dollar.*"

**To hear a brief recorded message about how to order your free copy of this report, call 1-800-278-5449 and enter ID #1086. You can call anytime 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

Call NOW to find out how you can get the most money for your home.

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### Z-News Newsletter

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#### ZNA Officers

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447-5877

Vice President  
Kaye Trybus  
447-4437

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Lorraine Atherton  
447-7681

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443-3290

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445-5469

Social Chairperson  
Carlene South  
442-7909

Newsletter Editor  
Barbara Cossie  
326-1222

Zilker Neighborhood Association (ZNA) general meetings are held four times a year: in February, April, July, and October. Meetings are scheduled on the last Monday of these months as announced. These general membership meetings are open to all Zilker residents and others interested in the preservation of the Zilker neighborhood.