



The North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area Infrastructure Workshop, November 18, 2008 Meeting Notes

The Infrastructure Workshop began with meeting participants locating additional areas of flooding within the NLCNPA. These additional areas were added to the *Areas of Flooding* map which was derived from the Initial Survey results from November 2007. A brief meeting of the North Creek/Georgian Acres Neighborhood Association followed.

A presentation by Mr. Matt Hollon of the City of Austin's Watershed Protection and Development Review Department was given to meeting participants which focused upon flooding issues within the NLCNPA, especially storm-water drainage problems. The presentation also provided information regarding water/creek pollution, areas of erosion along Little Walnut Creek, water quality, tree canopy and coverage (updated canopy data was provided), and recent WPDR projects that have been implemented within the NLCNPA. The presentation can be found on the North Lamar website: http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/north_lamar.htm.

Several questions and comments were asked and/or made during Mr. Hollon's presentation. They can be found below:

Comment: Complete improvements need to be made to Applegate Drive and Grady Drive to improve storm-water runoff issues there.

Mr. Hollon mentioned that when Brownie Playground was built, several improvements were made to that area, including portions of Brownie, Applegate, Jean, McMillan, Georgian, and Turner Drives. There was mention that sometime in the future, this part of the NLCNPA is slated for further improvements. He was uncertain as to when these projects are slated to take place.

Mr. Hollon: The WPDR is responsible for permitting businesses on an annual basis that pose any detrimental impact to their surrounding environments, including lube shops, auto repair/mechanic shops, etc.). WPDR is willing to grant a two month "grace period" to review any businesses and/or permits for the North Lamar area during the planning process here.

Q. Does WPDR have any public service announcements regarding water pollution and its impacts on the environment?

A. That's a good idea but, currently, we don't have any PSAs to present this information to our City.

Comment: It needs to be looked into to provide this information to the population, in both English and Spanish. You can provide PSAs to Spanish-language publications and/or television channels. The City needs to interact with the press, because this outreach will increase awareness to your programs.

Q. Is there a landscaping ordinance? How is it applied?

A. Yes, there is a landscaping ordinance. New developments are required to provide trees and landscaping on the developed property. Redevelopments on once-developed properties (not affected by this ordinance) are also required to plant trees and landscaping; however, the developers

of these projects have the ability to “pay” into a tree fund rather than provide landscaping on their property. The tree fund is used to provide landscaping elsewhere in the City.

Q. Has the updated tree canopy data been provided to Tree Folks?

A. Not yet. The data is still being finalized and edited.

Q. Is it possible to build soccer fields in the large drainage basins behind the quadplexes on Brownie Drive? Could the neighborhood adopt this area? Many people are already using these basins for recreation anyway.

A. It is possible to build soccer fields there, but the space may be inadequate for these types of activities.

It was mentioned that this drainage basin is private property, included within the property lines for each building. This would deter any provision of public services (i.e., recreation facilities) for this area. Ms. Jean Drew of WPDR mentioned that the drainage basin was private property because it was probably subdivided before 1974. If properties were subdivided before 1974, creekbeds/drainage basins were included as part of the property. (?)

Comment: North Lamar Boulevard (between Rundberg Lane and Braker Lane) has many flooding problems, but planting trees along this street may help with this matter.

Mr. Hollon: If there is a Watershed Emergency (e.g., spills, pollution that could affect the environment), call 974-2550 and report the problem. Dispatchers will quickly send a response team to the affected area to address the emergency. If there is a non-emergency, then you should call 311.

Q. Would oil cans spilling onto people’s driveways be an emergency?

A. Yes, we would consider that an emergency. Please call 974-2550 if you see such things as this in your neighborhood.

Q. What are food service assessments (as mentioned in part of Mr. Hollon’s presentation)?

A. This refers to the proper disposal of waste products (e.g., grease) by restaurants located in the City.

Q. Do you provide information regarding the recycling of waste (for the manufacturing of biofuels) to restaurants?

A. Currently, we do not.

Comment: There were recent floodplain changes made by FEMA, which may affect your area. Information was sent in September 2008 to those areas affected by these changes.

Q. Who should we contact so that our streets can stop being resurfaced with the asphalt/pebble mixture?

A. Probably 311.

Q. What is an example of a “collector street”?

A. Applegate and Georgian Drives are examples of collector streets.

Comment: We need more public education about code enforcement issues in our area, especially parking on front yards.

Q. Can we get any information or a flyer that informs violators of their illegal actions?

A. You can create a flyer to place on cars or houses that are in violation. NPZD will first have to review the information on the flyer to ensure its correctness and, then, you will be able to pass them out in your neighborhood.

Greg Dutton gave a brief presentation on curbs and gutters and how to acquire such infrastructure. It was mentioned that the addition of curbs and gutters is tied to the construction of new sidewalks and/or roadways in an area. Prioritization for future construction of curbs and gutters depends upon the street category (arterial, collector, and residential), the adoption of a neighborhood plan, and the number and type of attractors for the infrastructure's location.

Jacob Browning then led a discussion about trees as part of the incomplete exercise from the previous (10/16/08) meeting. Meeting attendees provided answers to the questions asked by Mr. Browning below:

1) What are the characteristics of the NLCNPA's existing urban forest?

- There are a lot of hackberries in the area (not a good thing)
- Illegal parking on lawns restricts the growth of trees there
- There is a group of oak trees near the intersection of Masterson Pass and North Lamar Boulevard that needs some care. (It was mentioned that PARD would be responsible for maintaining these trees if they are, in fact, located in the public right-of-way.)

2) What areas of your neighborhood would benefit from additional tree plantings?

- These areas were discussed and are included in the Tree Recommendations map. This map can be found on the North Lamar website.

3) What types of trees would you like to see in those areas?

- Trees should be hearty, long-lasting, and drought-tolerant

The following tree species are **recommended** to be planted in the NLCNPA:

- Mountain Laurel
 - Crepe Myrtle
 - White (Monterey) Oak
 - Pecan
 - Texas Persimmon
 - Texas Redbud
 - Texas Ash
 - Cedar
 - Silver Leaf Maples
 - Wax Myrtle
- } Native Species

The following tree species are **not recommended** to be planted in the NLCNPA:

- Hackberry
- Chinaberry
- Arizona Ash

- Mexican Plum
- Willow
- Cottonwood
- Oleanders

4) What type of educational materials would be beneficial to your community (information on how to plant trees, fertilization, maintenance, etc.)?

- Tree species that will provide large canopies (similar to Tree Folks poster)
- Native tree species (similar to Tree Folks poster)
- Parking requirements as related to tree growth (i.e., front yard parking regulations and its affects on trees and their critical root zones)
- Irrigation/care needed to sustain tree growth
- Types of less harmful fertilizers

This information should be provided through **various mediums**, including:

- Public Service Announcements
- Brochures
- Leaflets in COA electric bills