



The Pemberton Journal

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF PEMBERTON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

JULY 2007, VOLUME 1, ISSUE 5

ACWP Dedicates New Pedestrian Bridge To Honor Trail Pioneer Janet Fish



City Council member Lee Leffngwell, center, wields the big scissors to cut ribbon at entrance of new Janet Fish Pedestrian Bridge. Shown left to right are Linda Guerrero, Andrew Fish, John Fish, honoree Janet Fish, Warren Struss, Mr. Leffngwell, Stuart Strong, Bill Curra and Glen Coleman. (Photo by Jennifer Herber, COA Public Works)

The Austin Clean Water Program (ACWP) hosted a ceremony this summer to honor the environmental and civic works of Janet Fish, whose family originally cut the trail along the banks of Shoal Creek in the 1950s.

The new Janet Fish Pedestrian Bridge near West 29th Street and North Lamar was named in her honor and is part of efforts by ACWP to restore creek-side facilities as it rehabilitates or relocates adjacent wastewater lines to prevent sewer overflows. A commemorative plaque has been installed on a massive rock near the bridge. Ms. Fish, daughter of Austin pioneer Walter E. Long, joined her family members in expending countless hours and dollars to establish the trail. Now 85 years old, she still resides in the family home on Shoal Creek and has dedicated much of her life to ensuring its preservation as Austin has grown.

At the dedication ceremony, Fish's son

Andy commended Austin for its commitment to "maintain and improve the vision she had so many years ago." For that, he said, "We sincerely thank you." The construction of the bridge was made possible by funds from the Austin Water Utility's ACWP in partnership with the Public Works, Watershed Protection and Development Review and the Parks and Recreation Departments.

In addition, a formerly-eroded section of trail on the west bank of Shoal Creek has been reconstructed and is open to runners, walkers and bikers after being closed for almost two years as the wastewater projects were constructed. Currently, contractor Austin Filter Systems is working on the Shoal Creek Channel Stabilization project. The contractor has removed all the old wastewater pipes and structures that were exposed in the creek beginning at the bridge on Shoal Creek (near Gaston) and extending upstream 1,800 feet to the Janet Fish Pedestrian Bridge at West 29th and North Lamar. The contractor is rebuilding the eroded creek banks out of limestone rocks and other native material and is expected to finish in December. Part of the work will include restoration of deteriorating sections of the Gaston Street Bridge.

The eight Shoal Creek area projects currently underway or substantially complete in this area total \$16.5 million. Besides the Shoal Creek Channel Stabilization project, they include West University, Phase I and Phase II; Windsor, Phase I and Phase 2; Shoal Creek West 34th wastewater line improvements; Shoal Creek Tunnel, 29th to 34th Street; Shoal Creek wastewater improvements 25th to 29th Streets (includes trail reconstruction and the new pedestrian bridge).

Partial Results of Neighborhood Planning Survey

As you may know that Pemberton Heights will be going through the city Neighborhood Planning process this year, in combination with Brykerwoods and Tarrytown. The City will seek input from residents and owners in the planning area and will notify us as opportunities develop for neighborhood participation. The planning process will be comprehensive, inclusive, and extensive in duration.

You can see adopted neighborhood plans for other neighborhoods in Austin at <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/adopted.htm>

The response to the survey sent in the previous newsletters was excellent and we thank each person who took the time to respond. We have not compiled all the information, but here is the compilation of the questions in the first section:

- A vast majority of residents own, rather than rent
- More than half use Pease park as opposed to the other parks
- Town Lake and Shoal Creek are the favorite hike and bike trails.
- The vast majority feel there are adequate stores in the area
- Less than five percent (5%) use Capital Metro
- Over sixty percent (60%) consider traffic calming very important with even more considering it very important to create a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment
- Almost ninety percent (90%) feel it is very important to keep MoPac from expanding into the neighborhood and oppose expanding the right-of-way while favoring sound walls

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Neighborhood Planning Survey. - (Continued from Cover Page)

- A majority strongly oppose increasing the density of the neighborhood and feel it is very important to preserve the historical character of Pemberton

- Over seventy-five percent (75%) consider it very important to protect the trees and would support an ordinance to that end

A majority feel it is important to add amenities such as lighting and parks

- Although many consider it important to lower the speed limits in the neighborhood to 25 mph, over half were opposed or did not consider it important to explore the feasibility of circular median on Harris Blvd or add speed bumps

- The vast majority opposes closing the Westover exit from MoPac or to close the Gaston/Shoal Creek entrance

- The majority would like to see sidewalks added to Harris Blvd and Wooldridge, but fewer were concerned about Northwood

- The majority would like to see a pedestrian-activated stoplight at Harris and Windsor

- Establishing a safe pedestrian and bike route under MoPac at Westover is supported by the vast majority

We will publish more results when we compile the and continue to encourage you to contact your PHNA board members with questions, concerns, or ideas.

Precision Overhead

Bill Intended to Negate Austin's "McMansion" Ordinance Fails in the Legislature

State legislation proposing to negate the City of Austin's "McMansion" ordinance never saw the light of day in the waning hours of the 80th session of the Texas Legislature. The McMansion ordinance stands.

Early in the session, Representative Edmund Kuempel of Seguin filed two bills designed to effectively supersede the newly enacted McMansion ordinance. McMansion, which became effective on October 1, 2006, represents an attempt by the City to address concerns stemming from incompatible infill in older, central Austin neighborhoods, such as Pemberton Heights.

Representative Kuempel's bills passed through committee and moved to the House Calendar Committee which places bills on the calendar for the House to consider. Kuempel's bills did not get placed on the calendar and the House never considered either bill for passage. Although the bills

could have been added as amendments to other bills that were considered by the House, this never occurred.

Many Austin groups objected to Kuempel's bills as the Austin Neighborhoods Council carefully monitored the bills' progress. The local chapter of the American Institute of Architects, as well as the Heritage Society of Austin, and various neighborhood groups, opposed the bills. The City of Austin also battled to save the ordinance it worked so hard to create. The bills were disfavored by other Texans since passage would have undermined local control of development issues. Senator Kirk Watson and our state Representatives from Austin opposed the bills.

Thank you to our neighbors who took the time to write and tell the PHNA board how they felt about Representative Kumpel's efforts.

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T-C Sun & Window Solutions

PHNA Meeting Minutes

Date: May 24, 2007

Board members attending: Bryan Chester, Gail Morriss, Charles Johanson, Tom Daniel, Susan Pascoe, Drew Miller, Greg Hybl, Elizabeth Cash

Board members absent: Candace Volz, Matthew Wheeler, Pat Tate, Charles Heimsath

Honorary directors present: None

Visitors present: John P. Kelly – DMJM HARRIS; Crispin Ruiz, Gopal Guthikonda, Joe Sesil, Joe Hoepken – Austin Clean Water Program

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7pm and adjourned at approximately 9:20 pm. A quorum was present.

Agenda Item #1: Austin Clean Water Program (ACWP) update

*Note: for a map of this project, see the April 2007 Pemberton Journal, page 6, archived at www.peelinc.com.

This project will impact all Pemberton residents as certain streets are torn up temporarily and traffic is slowed or redirected. Two segments of the project will affect some Pemberton residents more significantly because the waste water lines coming from their homes will be reoriented and/or the street directly in front of their homes will be trenched.

Mr. Guthikonda provided background for this project. In 1999, the EPA required waste water systems be updated to eliminate overflow problems. Waste water is sewage, not street run-off. The EPA's deadline for completing the work is August 2009. The wastewater group has been performing investigations to pinpoint where leakage has been occurring. The investigations are almost complete and most improvements are needed in the older parts of Austin. The pipes were originally intended to last 30 years but have been in use for 100 years in some places. We saw photos taken by cameras that were sent into the waste water system; they showed cracks, off-set joints, collapsed pipes, and tree roots growing into pipes.

In preparation for the projects affecting Pemberton, the collection pipe that ran under Shoal Creek from 34th Street to 29th Street has been replaced and moved under the bank. There is now a 66 inch diameter collection tunnel running alongside Shoal Creek.

It eventually meets an east-west line that is about 85 inches in diameter.

Mr. Hoepken described the projects that will affect Pemberton. In the neighborhood, most wastewater pipes run under the streets. Some are in backyards and some have structures or pools on top of them now. In addition, in some places the easement granted was only 10 feet and 25 feet is required for the work ACWP is doing. Portions of the waste water pipe system that cannot be accessed will be moved instead. In some instances, waste water "laterals" running from the back of homes will be rerouted to the front.

One project affecting Pemberton will take place on portions of Windsor, Hartford, Jarratt, Harris Boulevard, Hardouin, and Wooldridge. The far north lane of Windsor will be worked on only during the summer and during University breaks. Traffic along Hartford will also be disrupted and several private laterals along Hartford will be moved. A plumber will be hired to do the work. The work will be coordinated with the homeowners and will be performed at no cost to them. The streets will be patched when the project is completed. This portion of the project is set to begin in mid-September and will last about a year.

The second project in Pemberton will affect Wooldridge, McCallum, Claire, Preston, and Gaston. Some homes along Gaston will have their laterals moved to the front. This project will begin in mid-October and end in the summer of 2008.

The third project is located at W. 29th Street and Mohle. Work will begin in late June.

Any property affected can expect about one week of disruption. However, service to homes will not be interrupted except to have water turned off for a period of a few hours. Work will progress one block at a time. No work will be done from 7pm to 7am. Preparations will be made to allow emergency vehicles to pass during work time and the street will be passable during non-work hours. Homeowners will always be able to access their homes.

A full-time construction supervisor will be assigned to the project.

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Fairway Mortgage

PHNA Meeting Minutes. - (Continued from Page 4)

This person will be introduced to the neighborhood before work begins and will be available for questions. Neighbors with questions or concerns are invited to call the ACWP hotline at 684-3204. A construction awareness website is located at www.ci.austin.tx.us/ca/ and will post project details once the work is underway.

Agenda Item #2: MoPac update

John Kelly provided an update on the MoPac project. There was an open house last fall and another in March. The plan that has evolved from input received calls for four lanes in each direction. There are currently three, plus an auxiliary lane along some stretches. There will be no elevation of lanes and no widening of the current MoPac footprint. Furthermore, efforts to acquire land from the railroad proved burdensome. TxDOT cannot condemn railroad land because the railroad pre-dates TxDOT. Noise testing has been performed along MoPac and the federal formula to determine appropriate sound walls has been done. The current plan is for 8 foot concrete sound walls that are 6 inches thick to run from Allandale to the lake. Whether the walls would have acoustic surfacing has not been determined. The walls will address traffic noise only and not train noise.

The extra lane in each direction will be a managed lane separated from regular traffic by a series of plastic posts. Buses and van pools would be able to use the lane for free. Cars would pay a fee that would vary according to the amount of congestion present. Managed lanes are not considered to be toll lanes and it has been found that they move more drivers along that HOV lanes do. They are intended to serve through-traffic. Entry and exit opportunities would exist at Parmer Lane, 35th Street, Enfield, and the river. No current MoPac exits will be changed. The managed lanes will be 12 feet wide and regular lanes will be 11 feet wide. Shoulders will be narrow but bridges will be widened.

The next required public meeting will take place in February 2008. After that, all the documentation will go to the Federal Highway Administration, who will distribute it to various agencies for review. Environmental clearance is expected in late summer 2008. After this occurs, the plans would be finalized. Construction may begin as early as late 2008. It will be a two-year project. Costs is estimated to be \$110M.

The board asked what PHNA should do if it is interested in: 1) assuring acoustic surfacing for the sound walls, and 2) getting the sound wall height raised to ten feet. Mr. Kelly recommended attending the next open house. He also suggested sending letters to TxDOT as more effective than email. Project contact information is:

Phone: 498-7700

Mail: MoPac 1 Project Office, 400 W. 15th Street, Suite 1500, Austin, TX 78701

Much more detail about the MoPac project may be found at the official web site at www.MoPac1.org.

Agenda Item #3: Development project at 2520 Jarratt

This was a follow-up of the Michael Deane new construction about which some neighbors had expressed concern regarding drainage and set-backs. Charles Johanson performed deed restriction research on this property and discovered that the situation is confusing because the lots that make up this property have been divided and recombined

several times with the accompanying deed restrictions poorly drafted. Due to the lack of clear information, it was determined that the board is unable to take or recommend any action regarding this project.

Agenda Item #4: Neighborhood Planning update

The official kick-off meeting will take place June 21st from 6:30 – 8:30pm at the Lion's Club House, 2901 Enfield Road. Neighbors should receive their notices from the City shortly. [Post meeting note: Notices went out the last week of May.] Susan and Elizabeth received a PDF of the notice and the board decided to send it to the PHNA email distribution list.

The City's notice includes a link to the web site where neighbors may fill out the City's survey and indicate whether they would like to receive notice of meetings to follow the Kick-Off. If you prefer to have a survey mailed to you, please contact 974-2865 or 974-6355. The survey due date is June 15th.

The Central West Austin Neighborhood Planning Area (CWANPA) website is located at http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/central_west_austin.htm.

Agenda Item #5: Directors' and officers' insurance

Tom Daniel is getting a quote for insurance for the board. Once the quote is received, he will circulate it for an email vote.

Agenda Item #6: Triangle update

The date of the next fundraiser will probably coincide with the date of the annual picnic. The location will be changed to the Hartford/

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Scubaland Adventures

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Ethridge triangle. We will apply to the City for permission to close off the street during the picnic/fundraiser. This will allow us to highlight the potential of this location for a neighborhood park.

There was a hurdle finalizing a contractor to do the triangle irrigation, however this has been overcome. The Harris/Windsor triangle is under construction, as is the Hardouin/Wooldridge triangle. Next priority is the small triangle at Harris/Windsor, then the Jarratt triangle. The Jarratt triangle is not yet fully funded. The play area is retained in the center of this triangle.

The potential for a roundabout at Claire/Wooldridge was discussed. Historically, this area had a triangle. A recent traffic study on Wooldridge showed the highest speed clocked was 78 mph and it was felt a roundabout might provide traffic calming.

Agenda Item #7: Newsletter

The difficulty of meeting the submission deadline of the 10th of each month was discussed. There is no option for quarterly publishing using Peel Inc. It is also challenging to come up with content. Various ideas for newsletter content are: the PHNA bylaws, selections from the handouts provided to us by tonight's speakers, reviews of restaurants in the immediate area, and information on parks in the area.

**The next meeting is Thursday, July 19th at 7pm.

Minutes prepared by Elizabeth Cash, Secretary

Teenage Job Seekers

Name	Age	Baby	Pet	Yard	Phone #
Caroline	13	•	•	•	512-457-0137
Jacob	16	•	•	•	512-413-0524
Callie	13	•	•	•	512-499-8494

Attention Teenagers

PHNA newsletter will serve as your free advertising for services to your neighbors. Simply submit your name, age, phone number and type service to c_johanson@sbcglobal.net by the 7th of each month for the next newsletter.

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Peel - Newsletter List

MOPAC Alternatives Developed and Evaluated

The MoPac 1 project was initiated by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to improve travel conditions along the Loop 1 (MoPac Expressway) corridor. MoPac 1 focuses on identifying near term solutions to improve mobility along the central portion of the Loop 1 corridor. Other studies and plans pertaining to the Loop 1 corridor have been conducted in the past by TxDOT and others, including the Loop 1 & U.S. 183 Improvement Study (2000) and a study by the Downtown Austin Alliance to consider converting a general purpose lane to a managed lane (2004). In June 2005, the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) included a recommendation to add two new “managed lanes” to Loop 1 in the CAMPO Mobility 2030 Plan. (For additional information on managed lanes, see the project publication: MoPac 1 PROJECT FACTS No. 2.)

The development of alternatives for the Loop 1 corridor built upon the previous planning efforts by applying updated information to previous plans as well as incorporating managed lanes strategies into the spectrum of potential alternatives. In addition to the numerous planning studies, the MoPac 1 project team has received input from many of the stakeholders directly impacted by conditions on Loop 1. User, business, neighborhood, city, county, transportation, environmental, bicycle and pedestrian groups have offered input through questionnaires, one-on-one interviews and meetings, open houses and oral and written comments.

Among the issues voiced to the team by stakeholders are the following:

Environmental: noise and air quality

Congestion relief: rush hour traffic, bottlenecks

Local and neighborhood concerns: cut-thru traffic, no new right-of-way

Aesthetics of improvements: landscaping, noise barrier appearance

The *MoPac 1* project evaluated a range of options for improving mobility within the Loop 1 project area. Improving travel for transit riders is an important study consideration. The project team developed and evaluated the following seven preliminary alternatives:

Alternative 1: Transportation System Management/Travel Demand Management (TSM/TDM) – operational improvements of the existing transportation system, without adding capacity, using low cost measures, such as ridesharing, ramp metering, trip reduction programs, and/or other strategies and techniques. Two alternatives (2 and 3) would involve using High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes as the principle improvement to Loop 1. HOV lanes are dedicated lanes for vehicles carrying two or more people (e.g. carpools, vanpools, and buses).

Alternative 2: Add one Reversible HOV/Managed lane – a single, reversible lane would be added to the existing freeway to accommodate travel inbound (to Central Austin) in the morning and outbound in the afternoon.

Alternative 3: Convert one existing General Purpose lane in each direction to HOV/Managed lane – an existing general purpose lane in each direction of travel would be converted to an HOV lane. A non-toll facility/lane cannot be converted to a tolled facility/lane without public approval. Therefore, conversion of the existing facility/lane

was not considered.

Two alternatives (4 and 5) would involve adding a new lane in each direction on Loop 1. Options for adding one lane in each direction could be accomplished on Loop 1 for either of these alternatives by: A) redesigning within the existing right-of-way boundaries; B) expanding the outside right-of-way boundary; or C) expanding the inside right-of-way boundary toward the rail lines. D) depressing all lanes which could only be accomplished by expanding right-of-way boundaries.

Alternative 4: Add one Managed Lane in each direction – an actively managed lane in each direction would be added to ensure “free flow” conditions on these lanes during peak periods. One or more of the following mechanisms would be applied and adjusted to match the operational efficiency of the managed lanes with regional goals:

Eligibility – allowing certain vehicles access to the lanes

Price – varying price by level of congestion in the lanes

Access control – limiting physical access to the lanes

Alternative 5: Add one General Purpose Lane in each direction – would add an unrestricted lane in each direction.

Alternative 6: Add multiple lanes (General Purpose and Managed) – This alternative could consist of adding multiple managed lanes, HOV lanes, general purpose lanes, or a combination of lane types in both directions. Multiple additional lanes on Loop 1 could be added:

A) at the existing grade;

B) by using elevated structures; or

C) by creating a depressed roadway section.

Alternative 7: No-Build – consists of the existing transportation system (roadway, transit, bikeway, sidewalk) plus improvement projects with committed funding. All of the preliminary alternatives were evaluated against the following criteria:

Purpose and Need: Would the alternative meet the Purpose and Need of the project?

Environmental: Would the alternative adversely impact the natural or human environments?

ASA Rail District: Would the alternative accommodate an additional track for commuter rail operations south of RM 2222?

Performance: How effectively would the alternative add capacity (in terms of moving people, not just vehicles) and improve travel time?

Constructability: How easily and quickly could the improvements be built?

Cost: How much would each alternative cost, and how beneficial would it be?

After evaluating the seven preliminary alternatives against the criteria, the recommended alternative determined to best serve the mission and goals of the MoPac 1 project would be Alternative 4A – to add one managed lane in each direction within the existing Loop 1 right-of-way.

Next month we will publish a more detailed explanation of Managed Lanes.

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