

City seeks nominations for Austin's 2011 Tree of the Year

The City of Austin is seeking nominations for the 2011 Austin Tree of the Year awards that are given annually to one large and one small tree within the city limits

The Austin Tree of the Year awards program was created to inspire proper tree care and promote the outstanding results of nurtured and healthy trees.

Look for trees that are native, healthy and beautiful. Deadline for nominations is June 30. A nomination form may be found at www.ci.austin.tx.us/treeoftheyear or may be picked up at Zilker Garden Center and local plant nurseries.

Winners will be chosen by a committee of representatives from the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department, Austin Energy, the City's Watershed Protection Department, the University of Texas, the Urban Forestry Board and the community.

The large and small tree category winners will be honored at an event in October or early November.

For more information, visit www.cityofaustin.org/treeoftheyear.

Contact: Leah Haynie, Air Quality & Urban Heat Island Mitigation, Austin Climate Protection Program, (512) 482-5342, leah.haynie@austinenergy.com, treeoftheyear@austinenergy.com

Keep Austin Wild

The 2011 Habitat Challenge begins April 15th and ends November 14th so let's work together again this year to certify our backyards. Meeting the criteria for certification by the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) is simple and will help us to win the challenge and ensure that Austin maintains its status as a NWF certified Community Wildlife Habitat.

The Parks and Recreation Department's Wildlife Austin program sponsors the challenge. Wildlife Austin is an initiative to educate and support Austinites in the creation of wildlife habitats to benefit its people, wildlife, and biodiversity.

It's easy to create homes for wildlife in our city! Properties that provide food, water, cover, places to raise young for wildlife and practice sustainable gardening practices are eligible for NWF wildlife habitat certification. Schools, places of business and worship, and other community sites can also be counted in the Habitat Challenge! For more details about NWF habitat certification visit www.nwf.org/gardenforwildlife.

You can even certify your property with a Pre-Paid NWF habitat certification application courtesy of the City of Austin. Email wildlife@ci.austin.tx.us for an application today. Please include your mailing address and phone number in your request.

Creating habitat is as simple as...

- Planting native plants that provide nectar, pollen, seeds, and berries year round
- Including a reliable water source to attract a variety of critters
- Providing places for cover and rearing young such as planting evergreen shrubs, leaving rock piles or putting up a birdhouse

For more information, go to

<http://www.cityofaustin.org/parks/wildlifehabitat.htm>

New Plan Team Bylaws Approved

Members in attendance at the April 2011 Dawson Neighborhood Plan Team meeting approved restructuring so that the organization will now be called the Dawson Neighborhood Planning Contact Team (DNPCT). Copies of the new bylaws will be available at the June meeting. They are also available in the Files section of the listserv and by contacting Peter Davis, Chair, at 693-2532 or design4spirit@earthlink.net.

Grant funds available for tree projects in Austin

The City Of Austin's Urban Forest Grant Program, established to promote conservation and other projects that benefit Austin's urban forest, has funding available to help preserve and grow Austin's canopy of trees. Projects associated with tree planting and preservation, education, public service announcements, disease control and management of invasive species are eligible for funding. To learn more, please visit <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/trees/ufgp.htm> or Mariben Ramsey at 472-44.83 or Jason Traweek at 974-2332.

DNA Draft Minutes – April 11, 2011

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the 2-22-11 meeting were approved as written in the newsletter.

Old Business: (a) The Watershed Protection Department (WPD) provided a presentation on 4 ongoing and upcoming storm drain projects for the Dawson Neighborhood: "Brinwood", "Havana St.", "Lightsey/Wilson", and "Euclid/Wilson". Five WPD representatives presented illustrations and answered questions about the projects. Neighbors expressed concern for potential increased erosion to our creek due to the storm drain projects. (Meeting adjourned and then reconvened after DNPT meeting.)

Old Business continued: (b) The Dawson neighborhood has been certified as a "Green Neighborhood". Only 3-4 other neighborhoods in the city have received this designation. One of the prizes, a 2-hour landscape design, has been donated to the Molly Dawson Elementary School. Another prize, a Green Neighborhood sign, needs to be located on private property. The scoop the poop box also needs a good location.

New Business: Sandy made a public call for Newsletter Editor nominations, but nobody volunteered even though a template is available and sponsors are lined up for the year.

Issues in the Neighborhood: (a) Krebs Lane on 1st Street side – residents have reported incidences of doors being knocked down. (b) When police aggressively track criminals with helicopters and cars, citizens do not know how to react because they are not notified by any means such as a bullhorn announcement.

Meeting adjourned.

DNPT Draft Minutes – April 11, 2011

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the 2-22-11 meeting were approved as written in the newsletter.

Membership Report: Potential new members at the meeting with applications submitted: Erin Skehan, Jake Skehan, Reed Baker, and Mary Dallas.

Old Business: Restructuring Bylaws vote: Paper copies of the proposed new DNPT bylaws were distributed. Peter provided an overview of the bylaws and clarifications of each section. A few discussions ensued. The vote was by a preprinted paper ballot. Myron and Chad collected and counted the ballots. The new DNPT bylaws were passed with 15 yeas, 1 nay, and 1 abstention.

New Business: DNPT officers have been notified by the City of Austin about the pending development of the Oak Meadows church property at 3715 Post Road. The current owner, Cypress wants to sell to Graystar, who plans to develop the property as vertical mixed used (VMU). Graystar has contacted 62 property owners in the subdivision to ask for a change of use on 3 single family (SF) properties, designated as SF in 1954 restrictions, but currently part of a church parking lot. Graystar needs 31 signatures from the subdivision in order to change the use on the 3 SF properties. Additionally, Graystar is subject to the restrictive covenant with the DNPT that was developed in 2008 with Cypress. Much discussion ensued regarding setbacks, variances, and traffic. Graystar is negotiating with city representatives to move the development forward. Meeting adjourned.