

July 17, 2020

Hello neighbor,

We are reaching out to residents to make sure that everyone is aware of some recent developments in our neighborhood.

Greenbelt Committee (Task Force) Updates

Earlier this spring, our neighborhood experienced a spike in the number of greenbelt visitors accessing the Hill of Life. Severe overcrowding led to safety and security concerns: parking congestion, limited line of sight for drivers, visitors drinking under the influence, public intoxication, public urination, litter, theft, destruction of property, trespassing, loitering, off-leash dogs, pet waste, and COVID-19 exposure and spread.

A neighborhood-wide meeting was set and great effort was made to reach all residents who access their homes from Scottish Woods Trail, to notify of the meeting. During the meeting, a group of residents - representing each street in the neighborhood - volunteered to serve on the "Woods of Westlake Greenbelt Task Force", formed to find solutions to address these concerns.

The task force met soon thereafter, formulating a plan to approach the City of Austin, which owns the trail access and the greenbelt, with a unified voice. The city did not immediately respond with substantive answers, while our neighborhood conditions worsened with increasingly large crowds trying to access the greenbelt at the Hill of Life. The task force felt that the conditions were so dire that it issued a demand letter to the city that it close the designation of this trail as a public park - though the trail itself would not disappear - in order to immediately halt the crowds and address the extraordinary safety concerns.

At this point, the city responded to the task force's concerns. In a conference call, city representatives told task force members they had decided to on two new pilot programs for our neighborhood: 1- a reservation system for greenbelt visitors at peak times, and 2- an integrated parking plan ("parking plan") for the neighborhood streets. In summary, the parking plan was to make Scottish Woods Trail a digitally metered parking zone, while all other streets would become resident-only parking. Residents' registered guests on all streets could park for free. The city informed the task force during that call that new parking signs would be installed.

The city sent letters to residents via US Mail to announce the parking plan, and published it on their website. Unfortunately, the online version of the city's plan differed from their US-mailed letter, with the online version stating the scope of the metered zones would be expanded post-pilot. Both versions - the US-mailed version and the online version - differed from what the task force and city reps had discussed in their prior phone call. Fundamentally, it appears the city's intentions differ from the task force's expectations in the following two critical ways: 1- no visitor parking on the street for residents' guests, and 2- the metered parking scope may expand.

The task force responded to the city, letting them know that these two problematic terms were not acceptable. The task force had not heard back from the city at the time of this publication.

The task force did not conceive of the integrated parking plan, and still believes that ultimately the best solution for the neighborhood, greenbelt visitors, and the health of the greenbelt, would be to remove the "public park" designation at the Hill of Life, and open a new public trail head access nearby on city-owned land south of us on Loop 360.

The city in fact agrees that this is ultimately the right solution, but that these interim pilot programs - a greenbelt visitor reservation system and resident-only and metered parking zones - will be viable short-term solutions. The city is actively looking for funding to endeavor into the creation of a new, safer trail head that would be a public park, outside the boundary of this neighborhood.

The task force agrees that the pilot ideas are viable, but hold contention with the two terms we found unacceptable: no visitor passes, and a future expansion of the metered zones.

Woods of Westlake Neighborhood Association Updates

The Woods of Westlake Neighborhood Association (WWNA) is one of several associations/ HOA's in the greater "neighborhood", which accesses homes from Scottish Woods Trail. Boundaries for the association can be found on our website, woodsofwestlake.org.

The WWNA is revitalizing its board, asking for nominations for a new board, requesting dues, and hosting board and general meetings via Zoom. During the next meeting on Sunday, July 19th at 7pm via Zoom, association-specific topics will be covered, including a proposed budget, description of the board, board roles, election plans, and how to ensure all residents are aware and feel welcome to participate.

WWNA will also cover topics relevant to the entire neighborhood. This entire meeting is open for all to attend. WWNA wants to make sure that all residents- even those already contributing to a separate HOA or association - are aware of and feel welcome to attend **the next meeting on Sunday, July 19th at 7pm via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2215513678>**. Please call or email WWNA Interim President Christie Schultz: 512.994.9393, or christieschultz@hotmail.com for any questions or help on the instructions to join this meeting.

Help Us Reach Every Resident!

WWNA has indefinitely postponed board elections based on feedback that it has not been communicative or inclusive. The board asks for all residents to read all correspondence from the City of Austin and from WWNA, and to connect with the neighborhood in one of the ways outlined here. If you have a neighbor who appears to not be aware of current issues or plans affecting them, please direct them to us to help. ***We are an inclusive, welcoming neighborhood. We want every resident to feel invited, educated, represented, and heard.***

How to connect :

Web-based connections

Website



1- Type www.WoodsofWestlake.org in your internet browser.

or,

2- Here is a QR code to reach this web address. To use the QR code method, point your smartphone's camera lens on this image.



Then click on the RESIDENTS tab.



Social Media

From the RESIDENTS tab, follow links to connect to several Facebook groups. You will also find a link to connect to our Instagram account.



Newsletter

From the RESIDENTS tab, follow links to subscribe to our newsletter. This is our PRIMARY means of communication.



Texts

From the RESIDENTS tab, follow links to join our text messaging service, intended only for urgent messages.



Zoom Meetings

From the RESIDENTS tab, follow links to find the next Zoom meeting.



Non-web-based connections



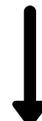
Phone

Call Christie Schultz at 512-994-9393 for updates.



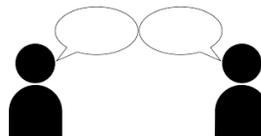
Paper Delivery

Call Christie Schultz at 512-994-9393 to request printed paper deliveries of all electronic newsletters.



Chat with Neighbors

Reach out to neighbors who can fill you in. Call Christie Schultz at 512-994-9393 for names and addresses of task force and board members.



Zoom Meetings

Call Christie Schultz at 512-994-9393 for the phone number to use to call into our Zoom meetings.

