

# Barton Hills News

BARTON HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

## Greenbelt Guardians Finish Gus Fruh Trail Project

by Stan Ostrum (BHNA Vice President and Greenbelt Guardians Coordinator)

The Greenbelt Guardians completed our entry trail resurfacing project at the Barton Creek Greenbelt - Gus Fruh access on Saturday June 1, National Trails Day. Twenty volunteers braved the heat, humidity, and an endless stream of visitors to the creek to move, spread, and pack 7 cubic yards of decomposed granite mixed with StaLok binder and 3 cubic yards of road base - over 12 tons of material in all! We repaired and resurfaced the upper 300 feet of trail, from the top of the first switchback where we left off in March to the trailhead by the street. Our small but dedicated crew worked hard and did a great job, contributing another 66 hours of volunteer labor to the greenbelt's upkeep. Please check out the results and photos from the workday on our website at [www.greenbeltguardians.org](http://www.greenbeltguardians.org).

The 500 feet of steep, switchback trail that we resurfaced at the beginning of March is holding up well to all the rain and traffic that we've had. Any natural surface trail like this will wear over time and require maintenance and repairs, but we're happy with the way everything looks so far.

We'd like to thank our partners at Parks and Rec, everyone who's donated to the Greenbelt Guardians (we spent \$5,568 of our funds to buy materials for the last 2 workdays), and especially all of our great volunteers, without whom none of this work would have happened. We're taking the rest of the summer off but will be back with another project at the end of September for National Public Lands Day.



### NEXT MEETING

July 23, 2019  
• 6 - 9 pm •

Please join us at

**St. Mark's Church**

(Corner of Barton Hills Dr. & Barton Skyway)

**Dinner 6 pm  
Torchy's Tacos \$10**

### NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

• 7 - 9 pm •



## Barton Hills News

The Barton Hills Neighborhood Association newsletter is published quarterly and supported by sponsorships. It's distributed to homes in the Barton Hills neighborhood of Austin, Texas. For more about membership and neighborhood affairs, contact the appropriate person below.

### 2019 Executive Committee

#### President

Mark Gentle  
president@bartonhills.org

#### Vice President

Stan Ostrum  
vicepresident@bartonhills.org

#### Treasurer

Position Open

#### Secretary (Recording)

Kyle Gray  
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#### Community Partnership Coordinator

Michelle Eades  
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#### Corresponding Secretary

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#### Austin Neighborhoods Council Representative

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### Committee Chairs

#### Committee on Area Development

Peter Hess  
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#### Greenbelt Guardians

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#### Neighborhood Watch

Position Open

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#### Neighborhood Outreach

Position Open

#### Barton Hills Community Park

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#### Webmaster

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#### Newsletter Editor

Position Open

[www.bartonhills.org](http://www.bartonhills.org)

Newsletter printed on 100% recycled paper.

## President's Message *by Mark Gentle, BHNA President*

Dear Neighbors,

Included in this edition of the neighborhood newsletter is a Joint Statement that our Association took the lead in developing to stop the development of a permanent 7.5 acre parking lot on parkland in Zilker Park.

The short history is that the parking lot plan, developed by the promoters of the ACL Music Festival and supported by the Austin Parks and Recreation Department and the Austin Parks Foundation, was unanimously rejected more than a year ago by the Environmental Commission. The Mayor and City Council did not directly act on that Resolution; rather, they created the Zilker Park Working Group to try and sort out a solution. Unfortunately, the 36-member working group, appointed by the City Manager, was heavily tilted toward the special interests most wanting the parking lot. On the big issues, the Working Group failed to find a consensus set of recommendations.

Please read our statement and recommendations for Zilker Park. This is an important issue for our neighborhood and the city. With the great help from our friends in the Zilker Neighborhood Association, Bruce Wiland and Gail Rothe, as well as Roy Waley from District 7 and Bobby Levinski from SOS, we have presented to City leadership a united position on immediate actions that will help resolve the key issues going forward.

We will remain diligent in our efforts to preserve Zilker Park and will, as they say, play the long game. However, this is a critical juncture and each of us need to let our voices be heard at City Hall and in the various boards, commissions and departments of government that will make and implement related decisions.

Mark Gentle, President



### Barton Hills Neighborhood Association Needs Volunteers

**Treasurer** - The Treasurer is a part of the Executive Committee and is responsible for the collection and disbursement of Association monies, keeps an accurate record of all receipts and expenditures, and approves all payments drawn on the accounts of the Association. The Treasurer prepare's quarterly financial reports for each general meeting and responsible for the filing of all tax returns and periodic reports required by the IRS. This position is our backbone and once membership dues are collected at the beginning of the year, the workload is relatively light.

**Neighborhood Watch Coordinator** - Neighborhood Watch is in need of a coordinator. There are several folks that are willing to participate, but we have yet to find a King or Queen of the Watch. Get to know more of your neighbors and help organize our eyes on the streets. Neighbors looking after neighbors.

**Newsletter Graphic Designer** - We also are in need of a Newsletter Graphic Design person. As our template is in Indesign we are hoping for a person that can make the content beautiful and coordinate getting it to the printer and getting it to your doors.

**If interested in any of the volunteer positions,  
please email [officers@bartonhills.org](mailto:officers@bartonhills.org)**



**JOINT STATEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF BARTON HILLS  
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION, ZILKER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION,  
SAVE OUR SPRINGS ALLIANCE, CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 7 AND  
CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 5**

**RELATING TO THE USE OF ZILKER METROPOLITAN PARK  
STRATFORD DRIVE-BUTLER LANDFILL AND POLO FIELDS**

**Background**

The undersigned individuals, in our representative capacities, respectfully submit this Joint Statement and Recommendations to the Mayor and City Council. We actively participated as duly appointed, voting members of the Zilker Park Working Group (ZPWG) established pursuant to City Council Resolution 20180628-072.

The ZPWG failed in its essential mission of finding a consensus plan for the future use of the Stratford Drive-Butler Landfill area (Butler Landfill) and Polo Fields. Despite our efforts to contribute to and clarify the recommendations in the main section of the Zilker Park Working Group Final Report (ZPWG Final Report), that document does not fully or accurately convey our unified position on certain key issues assigned to the ZPWG by the Mayor and Council.

**Recommendations for Immediate Action  
by the Mayor and Council**

In the absence of action by City leadership, we are concerned that the ZPWG Final Report will do little more than serve notice that the key controversies that bogged down the ZPWG are being postponed to the master planning process.

The lesson learned over the nearly nine months of meetings and deliberations by the group and its sub-groups is that in order to make any real and lasting progress toward the resolution of these difficult issues, the Mayor and Council must make hard choices, set firm timelines and establish clear expectations that are reflective of the public's consistent demand for parks that are a natural experience in environmentally protected settings and that are not highly developed, over-programmed, semi-privatized parking lots or staging areas.

Accordingly, we recommend that the Mayor and Council take four immediate steps to express its intention to protect approximately 20 acres of Zilker Park that are currently used in an unauthorized manner that violates environmental regulations designed to protect this parkland:

1. Adopt the Environmental Commission's unanimous recommendation dated June 20, 2018 (Resolution 20180620 007a), to deny the so-called "Atkins Plan" redevelopment of the Stratford Drive-Butler Landfill sponsored by PARD, C3 Presents and the Austin Parks Foundation;
2. Adopt a maximum 4-year timeline for the master plan process to deliver a plan that restores the Stratford Drive-Butler Landfill area to permanent open, useable green space;
3. Adopt a similar maximum 4-year target date for the master plan process to provide a plan for the elimination of

all parking from the Polo Fields, including overflow park use and parking for special events. Unless all unauthorized parking is eliminated, this parkland cannot be revegetated, irrigated and reprogrammed for recreational use;

4. Adopt the set of consensus recommendations of the ZPWG related to both short-term transportation solutions and clearing the six-acre area of the Stratford Drive-Butler Landfill known as the "boneyard" (area west of MoPac) by removing the collection of rubbish, surplus equipment, and dumpsters.

If the City takes these four actions before the selection of the main consultant for the master planning process, the expectations of that critically important process will be focused toward delivering a realistic, park centric, environmentally sound plan rather than being yet another platform for an extended re-hashing of the controversial "Atkins Plan" for Butler Landfill and the equally controversial "parking lot swap" that would move Polo Field parking onto Butler Landfill.

**Recommendations for Medium and  
Long-Term Action**

In addition, we recommend that the Mayor and Council establish a set of "Guiding Principles" and other specific measurable goals that will direct PARD's medium term actions for the management of Zilker Park as well as through the Zilker Park master planning process as follows:

1. Guiding Principle - PARD should preserve and protect Zilker Park as an irreplaceable public asset to be operated primarily as open space for present and future generations;
2. Guiding Principle - All special event uses of Zilker Park should meet the highest standards of environmental ethics and sustainability and provide utilization of parking and transportation alternatives, compatibility with community values, and opportunities for immediate and direct community input to resolve questions and concerns;
3. Guiding Principle - The Zilker Park Master Plan should establish a viable, actionable plan that minimizes vehicular traffic in and through the park and surrounding neighborhoods by identifying a range of alternative, affordable transportation and parking strategies for park patrons;
4. Guiding Principle - Direct the City Manager to assure that all consultants hired or assigned to the Zilker Park master planning process are free of conflicts of interest with any organization that generates revenue from or has contracts with the City of Austin relating to events held or operations conducted in Zilker Park and the Butler Hike and Bike Trail;

5. Authorize PARD and the Austin Transportation Department to expend revenue generated by parking fees in Zilker Park for the rental of off-site parking and shuttle services to serve Zilker Park and related public education programs;
6. Direct PARD to remove the “temporary” and non-compliant placement of the gravel on the Landfill and revegetate the area no later than summer of 2020 in accordance with the long-standing demand from City of Austin Watershed Protection Department; beyond 2020 and prior to completion of the Master Plan, find an alternative method to protect the surface of the landfill if used for staging or parking;
7. Direct PARD to begin immediate implementation of the 2016 Parkland Events Task Force recommendation to establish a more equitable distribution of opportunities for special events in parks across the Austin area that will also provide alternative sites for events now occurring at over-utilized urban parks. Direct PARD to assure that affected neighborhoods have a formal role in the decisions about and planning for events at nearby parks;
8. Direct PARD to establish higher standards of transparency in its planning, operation, and expenditures relating to Zilker Park to allow direct public access to a broader range of information in anticipation of the Zilker Park master planning process;
9. Direct appropriate staff to create a publicly available web-based repository for all documents relating to the Zilker Park master planning process, including copies of contracts with consultants, public surveys, list of stakeholders, results of interviews with stakeholders, and searchable survey result files; and
10. Assure the public that the Zilker Park master planning process will not be unfairly controlled by special interests that seek to monetize this parkland.

### **We Do Not Support Several Key Recommendations in the ZPWG Final Report**

While many individuals, including the working group Chair, Vice-Chair and sub-group leaders, contributed many hours of work and made good faith efforts to allow the members a full and fair opportunity to express various opinions during the meetings, many of the ZPWG Final Report recommendations relating to the Stratford Drive-Butler Landfill Plan and Polo Fields simply miss the mark.

The core recommendation of the ZPWG Final Report for the Butler Landfill is to leave the multi-acre expanse of gravel on the Butler Landfill for an undefined period of time. This recommendation is directly contrary to the long-standing directive from the Watershed Protection Department that C3 remove the existing rock and gravel from the Landfill and revegetate the area to protect the cover of the landfill. Nor does this recommendation address the issue of parkland being transformed into parking lots, a concern we expressed in 2019 to the Parks and Recreation Board and the Environmental Commission, which led to the formation of this Working Group. This “do nothing” approach of the ZPWG

Final Report assures that the controversies surrounding the Butler Landfill will continue unresolved.

Unstated in the ZPWG Final Report is the fact that the controversial “Atkins Plan” did not garner sufficient support among the group to even come to a vote. It is time for the Mayor and Council to end the community’s long simmering anxiety concerning this plan to turn 7.5 lake-front acres of Zilker Park into a bed of ballast stone by explicitly rejecting that plan, allowing the community to move on to other solutions.

The ZPWG Final Report provisions relating to the Polo Fields attempted to address not just the Polo Field parking, but also includes various findings and conclusions as to the use of Butler Landfill and transportation options. The Polo Field report was presented to the ZPWG for deliberation during the last hour of the special-called final meeting of the ZPWG on May 30th and was met with confusion and disagreement over its wording.

The full Polo Field sub-group report (attachment to the ZPWG Final Report) contains multiple ambiguities and misleading or incorrect “facts,” as well as conflicting, controversial suppositions that appear to us to be an attempt to support the swap of parking on Polo Fields for a development of a permanent parking lot on Butler Landfill, a proposition that we vigorously oppose. In our deliberations, an oft-repeated statement was that the Polo Field was more environmentally sensitive than the Butler Landfill, and although it appears there is not enough evidence to support that statement, the environmental regulations are extensive for both.

### **Conclusion**

Ultimately, it is up to the Mayor and Council to direct and fund the planning and execution of strategies that will protect Zilker Park for future generations. This is a critical point in time to plan for moving the community away from the use of private passenger automobiles (consistent with the 2019 Austin Strategic Mobility Plan) as the primary means of access to Zilker Park.

Zilker Park is currently being used in ways that are not only unsustainable, particularly during peak times and special events, but illegal under the City’s own regulations. Immediate steps are required by our City’s leadership to reassure the public that this incredibly valuable asset will remain a symbol of the core values of this community.

Respectfully Submitted,

- Mark Gentle,  
President of Barton Hills Neighborhood Association
- Bruce Wiland,  
Treasurer of Zilker Neighborhood Association
- Bobby Levinski,  
Staff Attorney, Save Our Springs Alliance
- Roy Waley,  
Appointed Representative of City Council District 7
- Gail Rothe,  
Appointed Representative of City Council District 5

## Barton Hills Community Park Update

by Roy O. Smithers, Chair, Park Executive Committee

**Beautification of the Area around the Stairs.** The last project of the Barton Hills Community Park Master Plan is underway. You probably have noticed the heavy equipment, piles of dirt, new limestone blocks, etc. at and around the stairs on the eastern side of the park. Strata Landscape is working diligently to beautify the area around the stairs. They are also redoing the trail originally created as an Eagle Scout project in the same area and the rain garden below the music room. Included as well are dealing with the erosion problem adjacent to the running trail and improving the entrance, both at the north end of the park. Funds to do the project have come from donations by neighbors and the Barton Hills PTA, which are being used as matching funds required by a major grant from the Austin Parks Foundation. Also, Barton Hills Neighborhood Association made a major matching donation of \$5,000 to the project.

**Exercise Equipment.** The Committee next will explore the possibility of adding exercise equipment to the park. There are many hurdles and specific requirements by Parks and Rec. for this to be done. If it is possible, the Committee would seek another grant from the Austin Parks Foundation and use matching funds from our remaining donations.

**Thanks.** As always, the Committee truly appreciates all of the support from Barton Hills Elementary School, City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department, the Barton Hills PTA, Barton Hills Neighborhood Association, the Austin Parks Foundation and every Barton Hills neighbor. If you are interested in keeping up with the latest Committee discussions, the minutes of Committee meetings, they can be obtained by emailing me at [rormsmith@aol.com](mailto:rormsmith@aol.com).



## Haaaaaaaave You Met Cherylann? by Melanie Gantt

Way back in 2011, the precious gem of the neighborhood, our beloved Barton Hills Elementary School, came under attack when it ended up in a report on school closures. With two kids still at Barton Hills Elementary, Cherylann Campbell joined with other BHE parents and neighbors trying to understand the school district's plan for neighborhood schools. From those efforts grew a well-organized group of parents who challenged the assumptions being made by the school district to justify the closure of BHE. Using her communication skills honed from many years in the human resources office of the Lower Colorado River Authority, Cherylann helped craft the message from our community to the school board that their process was ill-conceived and flawed beyond

repair. Following an arduous spring of 2011, the school district ultimately chose not to close any schools, but rather to undertake a long-range planning process that would learn from the mistakes of the 2011, namely that transparency and community input was a crucial component of district decision-making, especially when considering school closures.

As the mission to save BHE was wrapping up, Cherylann looked around for other ways to stay involved with the community. With a handful of other neighbors, she helped usher in the era of the Friends of Barton Hills Community Park. The endeavor to develop a Master Plan for the park started with three years of focus groups facilitated by Cherylann and Kathleen Schneeman,



with expertise and coordinating efforts from several other neighbors (many of whom we hope to introduce you to in later newsletters). The work of this group, between 2012 and 2015, birthed the city-approved Master Plan for the park, the final stages of which can currently be seen in the works.

## Haaaaaaaave You Met Cherylann? *continued from page 6*

Even as she was focused on shepherding the construction of the park's master plan through its various phases, Cherylann remained involved in other things, including driving for the Barton Hills Neighborhood Watch. But the interest awakened in Cherylann during the school closure debates of 2011 had taken a strong hold and she used that insight into district affairs and knowledge of the school evaluation process to critically assess and eventually champion Amber Elenz and Gina Hinojosa to the AISD Board of Trustees.

As a thank you for her involvement in the 2011 district facilities master planning process and helping as a neighborhood volunteer introduce school board candidates to neighbors, our board of trustees representative, Amber Elenz, appointed Cherylann as a member and eventual tri-chair to the fabulously named Facilities and Bond Planning Advisory Committee, known as FABPAC. For the last four years Cherylann has attended, led and made presentations at countless meetings of the FABPAC and interested groups (e.g., PTA/PTSA meetings and neighborhood associations) throughout the school district, initially working to construct and successfully usher through the last school bond elections, and now to continue efforts to make sure the district is transparent in its future planning and use of those bonds.

As she became more involved in these fulfilling and time-consuming community efforts, Cherylann left LCRA and started her own human resources consulting firm, C2 HRSolutions. For the last five years Cherylann has simultaneously built a successful business and has devoted untold hours to an expansive, complicated, and at times thankless job of understanding the educational needs of AISD students throughout the entire district. She has become one of a handful of experts on how our current facilities meet or fail to meet the educational needs of students. Gathering information, listening to community input and making countless presentations, Cherylann continues to work to help the school district make the best decisions possible for the students of AISD.

Originally from Buffalo, NY, Cherylann moved to Barton Hills in 1996 with her husband Tom and their two children. Rising through the ranks of Barton Hills Elementary, O'Henry Middle School, and Austin High, the Campbells' son Benn is on the AHS golf team and will be a senior next year, and their daughter Angela is a junior in college. Cherylann's involvement in the improvements to Barton Hills Community Park grew from a sincere love of parks. A self-described Park Geek, each year she travels to National Parks, working toward visiting each one and getting that stamp in her National Parks passport. And her involvement with school district policy, well ... that started with frustration at a

process that lacked transparency and community input. In trying to help change that dynamic, Cherylann committed herself to countless and often thankless volunteer hours, for which we should all be grateful.

Back to the original question of Have You Met Cherylann (how many of you got the How I Met Your Mother reference?), if you haven't had a chance to meet her, you really should. She is a frequent presenter to the Barton Hills Neighborhood Association meetings, attends the Fourth of July parade and neighborhood gatherings, as well as other gatherings of neighbors, when her busy schedule allows. Through her C2 HRSolutions she consults with small businesses on their human resource needs, including hiring and firing employees, writing or updating employee handbooks, and customer service training. Our neighborhood is fortunate to have a neighbor like Cherylann Campbell, dedicated to helping both Barton Hills and the city become an ever-better version of itself.

### Upcoming Events

#### JULY

- 4 Barton Hills Independence Day Parade
- 5 - 21 Austin Chamber Music Fest
- 12 - 28 Zilker Summer Musical (Thursday through Sunday)
- 17 Blues On The Green – Zilker Park
- 18 Blanton Museum Third Thursday
- 23 Barton Hills Neighborhood Association Meeting
- 27 - 28 Classic Game Festival – Palmer Event Center

#### AUGUST

- 1 - 11 Zilker Summer Musical (Thursday through Sunday)
- 7 Blues On The Green – Zilker Park
- 23 - 25 Fall Home and Garden Show – Palmer Event Center
- 24 Bat Festival – Congress Bridge
- 25 Hot Sauce Festival – Fiesta Gardens Park

#### SEPTEMBER

- 6 Zilker Relays – Zilker Park
- 7 - 8 Cactus and Succulent Show – Zilker Botanical Gardens
- 19 - 26 Fantastic Fest – Multiple Theaters
- 20 Rock the Park – Mueller Lake Park
- 28 National Parks Day
- 28 - 29 Pecan Street Festival – 6th Street

Barton Hills Neighborhood Association  
P.O. Box 41206  
Austin, TX 78704

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Once you're a BHNA member, you can join the Barton Hills listserv.  
Visit [groups.yahoo.com/group/barton\\_hills/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/barton_hills/) for more information about how to sign up.

## 2019 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Fill out this form to join or renew your membership in the Barton Hills Neighborhood Association. Annual dues are \$10 per household, payable when you join (for a new membership) or every January (for renewal).

**Your Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other 18+ members of your household:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form along with your annual dues to:

**Barton Hills Neighborhood Association P.O. Box 41206 Austin, TX 78704**

Make checks payable to BHNA. You can pay dues online through PayPal at <http://bartonhills.org/about/membership/>.  
(PayPal service fee of \$1 will be added to your total.)