

# Heritage Newsletter



Heritage Neighborhood  
Association

November 2025



## Wheatsville Co-Op Abandons Plan to Move to Fresh Plus in Hyde Park

By Jeff Webster

Wheatsville Food Co-Op has reversed its plan to expand its footprint to stores in Hyde Park and on Anderson Lane. Instead, the grocery will maintain its Guadalupe store at a reduced capacity until shuttering it sometime next year before the lease ends December 31, 2026.

"After a great deal of consideration and based on information obtained during our due diligence period, we shared with owners that the deal we were exploring was no longer financially viable," said General Manager Bill Bickford in the October issue of the Wheatsville newsletter. Cancelling

the plan to acquire two existing Fresh Plus locations means that Wheatsville will concentrate on the more successful South Lamar store. Meanwhile, the Fresh Plus store in Hyde Park remains in business with no public announcement of any future plans.

Without elaborating on what was learned during the due diligence effort, Wheatsville Board President Brandon Hines emphasized that economic realities dictate the closure of the beloved Guadalupe store.

Continued on page 3

### Inside:

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HNA Update

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Fetler-Malof  
Family Band

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34th & West Ave  
City Council  
Update

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Transportation  
Changes

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White  
Mistflower

---

Halloween  
Photos

---

Glossary and  
Heritage Index

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## Steering Committee

Jenny Carlson  
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Rebecca Marcus – Secretary  
Dan Mottola  
Jill Parrish  
Jeff Webster – Treasurer



## Newsletter Contributors

Jeff Webster  
Brenda Bell  
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Jenny Carlson



## Heritage Calendar

Dec 5 – Neighborhood holiday get-together  
@ 2907 Rio Grande St., home of Mike  
Grable and Ben Garner (5-7 pm) BYOB  
and Mike and Ben will provide light  
snacks.

Feb 17 – Early voting for Texas primaries



## Sign Up for Neighborhood Listserv

Send an e-mail to:

**[heritage-na+subscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:heritage-na+subscribe@googlegroups.com)**

You will begin to receive emails once you accept your invitation. To post content or update your settings, create a Google Groups account by following instructions [here](#). Note that you can create an account without a Google email address.



[Heritageaustin.org](http://Heritageaustin.org)

## HNA Update

Have story ideas for the newsletter? Want to contribute an article or photo? Please contact Jeff Webster, Managing Editor, at [jeffjweb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jeffjweb@sbcglobal.net).



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## “Wheatsville” continued from page 1

“While we love our Guadalupe location, we cannot avoid the fact that the corridor has been in decline—a decline that continues to be reflected in sales.” Hines did not rule out a return to Central Austin someday, but said Wheatsville could not afford to wait. “It is possible that once the transit corridor is complete there will be economic growth in that area, but that is likely 10 years away and we do not have the cash to sustain the Guadalupe location in anticipation of the transition.”

That timeline alludes to the expected duration of road construction associated with adding light rail to Guadalupe as part of Project Connect. “While this news may be disappointing to some, it is a decision rooted in a core truth of business and life: timing is everything. And the timing right now is not right,” said Hines.

“This decision was not made lightly—it reflects the realities of running a business, not the value of the neighborhoods served by the store, and it was reached after years of effort, both to keep the Guadalupe location viable and to identify alternate locations,” said Bickford. The Wheatsville newsletter explained that because the Guadalupe “store footprint is larger than its sales justify. . . we are

planning a series of departmental resets that will reduce the sales floor to something more appropriate for its current sales volume and staffing levels.”

These resets include:

- \* Reducing store hours to 8am to 9pm daily
- \* Removal of unused cash registers, some baking products, and other slower selling products
- \* Walling off the back of the store and relocating products to the front of the store
- \* Closing deli counter service and public restrooms.

These resets will 1) make the store easier to work and shift employees to other functions, 2) reduce inventory and the associated costs, and 3) reduce theft which has become widespread, especially among beer, wine, and meat. Despite the reductions, as long as the grocery remains open on Guadalupe, it “is deserving of our love,” said Hines.

If you have feedback regarding these changes, you can reach out to either General Manager, Bill Bickford ([bbickford@wheatsville.com](mailto:bbickford@wheatsville.com)) or Guadalupe Store Director, Jason Ewing ([jason@wheatsville.com](mailto:jason@wheatsville.com)).

“While this news may be disappointing to some, it is a decision rooted in a core truth of business and life: timing is everything. And the timing right now is not right,” said Wheatsville Board President Brandon Hines.



## To Sing Through the Night: The Family Band That Escaped Wartime Europe and Its Tie to the Heritage Neighborhood

by Susan Van Haitsma

Our backyard adjoins the home of Andrew Malof and Michael Williams, and we couldn't ask for kinder neighbors. Andrew walks their dog, Nila, through Heritage regularly and keeps his eye on the neighborhood. Michael is a welcoming presence at the Senior Activity Center on 29<sup>th</sup> Street, where she volunteers at the front desk.

Andrew and Michael share an interest in archeology, which they both studied at the University of Texas San Antonio. Andrew was an archeologist at the Lower Colorado River Authority for 20 years, and Michael worked for the State Health Department. They've enjoyed traveling to archeological sites in the US and abroad since their retirement.

Andrew is also a musician, as were members of his father's large family. Several years ago Andrew mentioned that his father, Joseph Malof, who was a beloved professor of literature at UT,

had been in a traveling family band as a boy. Born in Latvia in 1934, Joseph and his family had barely managed to reach safety in the US in the weeks before World War II broke out.

We were intrigued by his story. It's partly a neighborhood story, as Joseph Malof was the previous owner of the house where Andrew and Michael live. (The Malof family lived on Lake Travis, but because Joseph taught at UT he purchased the house on King's Lane for his office during the week.)

Andrew's brother Peter made a film about their father's family band, and Andrew invited us over to see it. We were fascinated by this beautifully made documentary. Co-written and co-narrated by Joseph and Peter Malof, "Family Band" is a remarkable story about immigration, family bonds,

Continue on page 5



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## “Fetler-Malof Family Band” continued from page 4

religion, education and the rise of fascism -- all themes that resonate today.

Joseph (far right in the postcard photo) was the youngest of 13 children born to William and Barbara Fetler, Latvian missionaries who pastored a prominent Baptist Church in Riga, Latvia. The Fetler family was musically gifted, and as the children came along, they formed a family band to augment both their ministry and their income.

and anxious delays at Ellis Island, the family band finally entered the US. They earned their living by traveling and performing folk songs and hymns in multiple languages in churches throughout the country, delighting congregations with the stair-step “rainbow” of children and their brass instruments.

Along with their musical ministry, education was highly valued by the family, and all the children attended



Amid religious persecution, the family left Latvia and traveled, lived, and performed in Sweden, England, and Holland while much of Europe fell to authoritarianism. In 1939, to raise funds for escape to the US, the family undertook a concert tour in Switzerland reminiscent of "The Sound of Music," then they embarked on a perilous journey through Nazi Germany to Denmark. After passage to the US aboard an ocean liner that the Nazis later sank,

college. Most of them, like Joseph -- who adopted his father's pen name, Malof -- later became teachers themselves.

What a fascinating family history to learn about our next-door neighbors! "Family Band" is now on youtube and Andrew has posted the link [here](#):



## Update on City Council Action on the 34<sup>th</sup> & West Ave Zoning Compromise

by Jenny Carlson

*Editor's Note: On September 11 the Austin City Council passed the modified zoning request from the owner of the lots around the intersection of West Avenue and W. 34<sup>th</sup> Street. This request reflected the agreement between the developer and the Heritage Neighborhood Association (HNA) that was mentioned in an earlier newsletter article (Issue 1 July 2025).*

*Our neighbor Jenny Carlson was the lead negotiator for HNA. This is her excerpted statement to the council before the vote.*

"On behalf of the Heritage Neighborhood Association, I worked with our neighborhood president and the attorney for the applicant to negotiate an agreement that is mutually beneficial to our community and the applicant. I'd like to share a few insights from that process.

"The Heritage Neighborhood is a close-knit community that has long been home to diverse Austinites working in industries that make our city strong. With an even distribution of rented and owner-occupied homes, we've historically represented what some now call Austin's "missing middle." In recent years we've watched fellow neighbors compelled to leave because rising costs made it prohibitive to put down roots here.

"When the tracts in question came up for rezoning, some in Heritage feared that with the possibility of fee in lieu in

existing density bonuses, large office towers would come to dominate our neighborhood, with minimal housing to preserve the diversity of our community. Given Austin's affordability crisis, we were keen to ensure that if height came to our neighborhood, it came with concrete prospects of housing.

"Through many hours of research, as well as spirited negotiation with the applicant's attorney, we arrived at an agreement with a list of mutually agreeable uses, with excluded uses reflected in the ordinances before you today. This agreement gives us hope for preserving our neighborhood while making room for future growth.

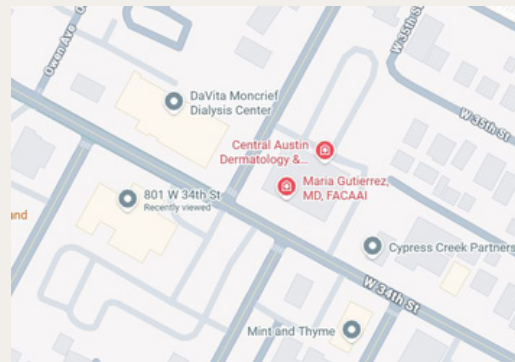
"We are confident that the proposed zoning designation of GR with height limit of 45' for non-residential buildings

Continue on page 7

will enable mixed-use development, bringing us more neighbors while allowing community-supportive businesses to flourish. We are proud of the agreement we've reached and grateful that all involved showed good faith and respect for our community. We are also deeply grateful to city staff, whose commitment and insight were invaluable through this process.

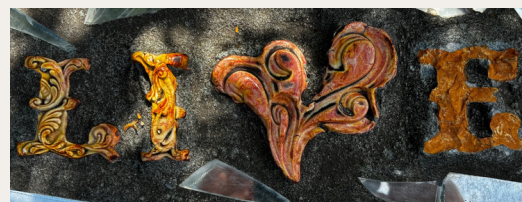
"We are also aware that unlike others facing zoning changes in Austin, we had the privilege of time that allowed us to learn the lay of the land, then bring that knowledge to the negotiating table. I implore the city council to continue their efforts to overhaul existing density bonuses to ensure that their impacts are as equitable and environmentally sustainable as possible. Thank you for your time."

**Jenny Carlson, Heritage  
Neighborhood Association Steering  
Committee Member**



### **What role did the 34<sup>th</sup> St. and West Ave. initial commercial development play in the Heritage Neighborhood Association origin story?**

For that answer, look for the next issue of the Heritage Newsletter where the whole story will be revealed. You will meet the founders of the association and learn how reducing the voting age from 21 to 18 helped lead to significant neighborhood victories at Austin City Council. The article will try to recapture the neighborly good vibrations of Austin in the early 1970s.







## Transportation Changes in Heritage

by Jeff Webster

With Austin growing as fast as any in the country over the past 20 years, how can biking be made safe, fast, and efficient for cyclists of all abilities?

This public policy question has tested an army of analysts, cycling advocates and policymakers since at least 2014 when the first All Ages and Abilities Bicycle Priority Network was adopted by the Austin City Council as part of the 2014 Bicycle Plan. This plan was later updated in 2019 and again in 2023 after the passage of the 2020 Mobility Bond Bikeways program which paid for the recent the bikeway improvements in Heritage, Rosedale and North University neighborhoods.

### Just Completed

The work in Heritage neighborhood helps link better-established bike corridors like Shoal Creek to our west, Speedway to our east\* and to our south, the West Campus on-street protected bike path. The road construction uses traffic calming tools like speed cushions and humps to slow traffic and increase safety for bikes and scooters traveling east and west between Speedway and Shoal Creek. Wayfinding road markings like “sharrows” and signage are meant to alert drivers to share our streets with other forms of transportation besides cars.

Continue on page 9



## “Transportation changes” continued from page 8

Planners faced topographical challenges in our ridgetop neighborhood including the steep hill just east of Lamar on 31<sup>st</sup> St. Although the plan calls for eventual removal of parking on both sides of 34<sup>th</sup> St between West Avenue and Guadalupe, business concerns appear to have postponed construction of protected bike lanes along this corridor. This resulted in compromises that the planners felt were necessary to fulfill the broader vision of city leaders who promote a more bikeable city.

- Sidewalk improvements along San Gabriel north of 29<sup>th</sup> St and along Lamar until it reaches 31<sup>st</sup> St.
- A new pedestrian crossing at Lamar on the north side of 31<sup>st</sup> St, making two crossings at that intersection
- New bicycle-accessible push buttons on both sides of 31<sup>st</sup> St to activate the crossing beacon across Lamar
- ADA accessible curb ramps on both sides of the Lamar/31<sup>st</sup> St intersection

Additional road construction will alter



### More Construction Along Lamar Blvd

Additional transportation changes are underway along Lamar as it intersects with 29<sup>th</sup> St. and road work is expected to last until November 2026. These changes address the “middle gap” in the Shoal Creek Trail between 29<sup>th</sup> St and 31<sup>st</sup> St:

- A new urban trail to the west of Lamar from 31<sup>st</sup> St south to 29<sup>th</sup> St which carves space from the existing street to create a wider, safer buffer for bikes and pedestrians

southbound traffic options by eliminating the left turn onto San Gabriel. Instead southbound traffic turning left will do so at 29<sup>th</sup> St. For Capital Metro riders, the bus stop will move from south of 31<sup>st</sup> St to north of 31<sup>st</sup> St.

This project is funded by the 2020 Mobility Bond programs for Urban Trails and Bikeways. For more information, please email [MobilityBonds@AustinTexas.gov](mailto:MobilityBonds@AustinTexas.gov) or call 512-974-2300.

\* Note: Even further to our east is the [Eastlink](#) trail network and beyond that, the South [Walnut Creek Trail](#).

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## White Mistflower: More Butterflies and Bees and Less Watering

By Susan Van Haltsma

Recent, welcome rain showers have brought out fall blooms on native plants in our neighborhood. One of the most dependable native shrubs that thrives in our area is the White Mistflower, also called Shrubby Boneset (Aster Family, *Ageratina havanensis*). This multi-branched 2 to 4-foot perennial is drought tolerant and grows well in sun and part-shade. Its showy, white flowers bloom reliably in Spring and Fall and sometimes in between after soaking rains. The fuzzy blooms are magnets for butterflies, bees, moths and hummingbirds, and

the flowers traditionally emerge at just the right times to provide nectar during migration periods.

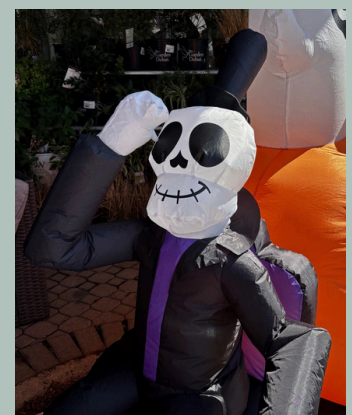
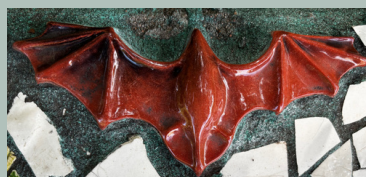
The White Mistflowers in our yard have grown best in south-facing locations and have not needed watering even in drought conditions. As our climate warms and Central Texas becomes drier, we recommend landscaping with native flora like the White Mistflower to conserve water and benefit the local fauna, including us!





## Halloween Party!

Thank you Kisla Jimenez and Jonathan Williams for hosting the neighborhood Halloween party. It was all treats and no tricks. And thanks to our performing cheerleaders whose routine generated the pep we needed at the end of the week.





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## Glossary

### **Chicane:**

Sometimes called serpentines, chicanes present drivers with alternating curves where once was a straight road. The forced curves force motorists to slow down while steering back and forth. Usually, chicanes are three landscaped curb extensions.

### **Choker:**

A mid-block curb extension of a sidewalk or a roadside island into the street resulting in a narrower roadway section. Chokers calm traffic speeds allowing pedestrians and cyclists to cross a road more easily.

### **Dumjš tas putns, kam sava ligzda nav mīla:**

An old Latvian proverb that translates to “It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest.”

### **Smiltis birst:**

A Latvian proverb that translates to “The sand is pouring.” It is a metaphor meaning that someone is getting old.

### **Kaķa lāsti nenāk debesīs:**

Latvian for “Cat's curses don't climb the heavens” meaning that the insults of someone unimportant don't matter.

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## Heritage Index – November 2025

In 2023, the percentage of workers in 78705 ZIP who drove alone to work : 39.2

Percentage who walked : 25.2

Percentage who bicycled : 2.2

In 2023, the percentage of Texans without health insurance : 16.7

Percentage from 78705 ZIP without health insurance : 11.0

In 2022, percentage of Latvians without health insurance : 0.0

Median distance in miles to the nearest grocery in 2019 in the U.S. : 0.9

Number of participants in the 2023 Latvian Song and Dance Festival : 40,560

Number of UT Austin football players who have been named consensus All-American : 53

Number of Texas A&M football players named consensus All-American : 33