



CHERRYWOOD SIDEWALK PHILOSOPHY AND SIDEWALK PLAN DECEMBER 31, 2009

For the past few months there has been much discussion within Cherrywood regarding the Sidewalk Philosophy and Sidewalk Plan that were published in the [November 2009 issue of THE FLEA](#). Some of the discussion has occurred on Cherrywood's Listserv, NeighborNet, while other discussions have been held at neighborhood meetings. At the last Cherrywood Neighborhood Association's (CNA) General Meeting held in November the consensus was to engage in a broader neighborhood dialogue in regard to the proposed sidewalk plan, and to bring the topic back to the February CNA General Meeting for further discussion and possible action.

At its December 2009 meeting, the can Steering Committee approved a two-step process for the neighborhood's contemplation of sidewalks, which is as follows:

1. Revisit, discuss, and amend as necessary the neighborhood's philosophy regarding sidewalks.
2. Once the neighborhood has arrived at a decision (we hope a consensus) regarding the sidewalk philosophy, work to create a sidewalk plan built on the philosophy.

A Short History of the CNA Sidewalk Philosophy

Ten years ago the Neighborhood adopted a [vision statement](#). The first item listed is "safe, walkable streets." This goal was included in the [Upper Boggy Creek \(UBC\) Neighborhood Plan](#), which was subsequently adopted by the Austin City Council. This neighborhood plan guides City policy regarding our transit, street, bicycle and sidewalk projects, and our vision for "safe, walkable streets" remains as a centerpiece for the Neighborhood.

The topic of sidewalks has been discussed by Cherrywood residents well before and throughout the decade after the adoption of a Neighborhood Vision in 1999. The input received could be classified within the following continuum:

1. ...no sidewalks on any streets at all, including perimeter streets;
2. ...same, except that they should only be on the true "perimeter" corridors (for Cherrywood, this would be IH-35, Airport Blvd. and Manor Road);
3. ...same, except that they should also be on our internal "commercial corridor" (East 38½th, west of Cherrywood Road);

4. ...same, except that they should also be on East 38½th from IH-35 all the way to Airport Blvd. (both sides), and Cherrywood Road (west side only, Manor Road to East 38½th);
5. ...same, except that they should also be on some internal streets in order to allow no property to be more than a few blocks from a sidewalk on one side of the street, connecting to major destinations at the perimeter). This is the philosophy that appeared to the drafters of the proposed plan to have evolved over the years, and which the proposed sidewalk plan represents;
6. ...same, except that they should also be on both sides of a few internal streets, and on one side of some not currently shown on the proposed sidewalk plan;
7. ...sidewalks on at least one side of all street;
8. ...sidewalks on both sides of all streets.

Most of the input received fell within the range of classifications 4-6 above, which helped guide various individuals, task forces and committees to articulate a shared philosophy about sidewalks in our neighborhood. The philosophy that has evolved from this process is as follows:

CNA Sidewalk Philosophy

The Cherrywood Neighborhood favors the establishment of sidewalks where required by Federal Accessibility statutes (perimeter arterials plus East 38½th from IH-35 to Cherrywood Road), and within internal, accessible corridors to establish connectivity to perimeter destinations. There should be a sidewalk within a block or two of every residence to allow access to the entire sidewalk system. Internal sidewalks, when warranted, should generally be on only one side of the street. The Neighborhood further recognizes that minor, low traffic streets should not have sidewalks (as those streets are, in fact, safe and walkable).

Part One: Revisiting the CNA Sidewalk Philosophy

The CNA Transportation Committee used this philosophy to develop the Sidewalk Plan that was published in the November 2009 issue of THE FLEA, and it is this philosophy that now represents the starting point of the needed neighborhood dialogue regarding our sidewalk philosophy. Your consideration and discussion of the following questions and survey is requested:

1. In light of the background provided above, what are your thoughts about the neighborhood's sidewalk philosophy?
2. What changes, if any, do you recommend to the sidewalk philosophy, keeping in mind that the intent of the philosophy is to guide the development and implementation of a

sidewalk plan? Please include other concepts, if any, that you think ought to be incorporated into the sidewalk philosophy.

3. We have drafted an [online survey to gauge neighbors' interest in sidewalks](#) using the continuum posted above. All interested Cherrywood residents are welcome to participate.

Again, please remember that in this first part of a two-part process to engage a conversation about the Neighborhood's sidewalk philosophy. The discussion and process to amend as necessary the sidewalk plan will occur within the second part of the process.

In addition to comments received and results of the survey, the CNA Planning, Zoning and Transportation Committee and the Steering Committee will co-host a sidewalk philosophy meeting on Wednesday, January 6, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. at Asbury United Methodist Church in the Fellowship Hall. The church is located on the southwest corner at the intersection of Cherrywood Road and 38½th. The goal of this meeting will be a coherent written statement of the philosophy that underlies our sidewalk plan. Please note that this does not conflict with the BCS National Championship game, which will be held on Thursday, January 7, 2010.

Once we have reconsidered and revised, if necessary, our sidewalk philosophy, it will be discussed and given tentative approval by the CNA Steering Committee at its January meeting to which, as always, all Cherrywood residents are invited to attend. Once this philosophy is adopted, we will resume work on the actual sidewalk plan. Please keep the following dates in mind regarding the working of this plan.

Part Two: Drafting the Cherrywood Sidewalk Plan

- Wednesday, January 20, 2010: a sidewalk "tutorial" where City officials will fully explain the City's sidewalk program, and answer detailed questions about what can and cannot be done, who pays for what, etc.
- Saturday, January 23, 2010: a walk through along the controversial streets that are within the Street Reconstruction Project Area (as you know, this does not include Maplewood Avenue, but a future walk through on Maplewood needs to happen as well). The project engineer and other City officials will join us on the walk.
- Wednesday, February 10, 2010: the last meeting of the CNA Steering Committee before the CNA General Meeting. Any last details regarding a Sidewalk Philosophy and Sidewalk Plan to be proposed at the meeting the following week will be hashed out there.

- Wednesday, February 17, 2010: discussion and action at the CNA General Meeting regarding the sidewalk philosophy and plan. If a further meeting is required it will be a special called meeting within a couple of weeks after this meeting.
- Monday, March 15, 2010: the deadline that we have been issued by City officials, and to which we have agreed, that we will have an adopted sidewalk plan for Cherrywood (at least for the streets to be reconstructed, but we hope for all streets), knowing that plans can always be amended.

Note that the UBC already contains what the City regards as our plan (sidewalks on Lafayette, 32nd and from Randolph to 38½th. Any change to that plan will require an amendment to UBC, so whatever is adopted as our Sidewalk Plan will be taken to UBC to be included in the next amendment of the UBC Neighborhood Plan.

On behalf of the Cherrywood Neighborhood Association's Steering Committee, we welcome and look forward to your participation in this discussion.

Jeremy Mazur, Chair of the CNA Steering Committee

Girard Kinney, Chair of the CNA Planning, Zoning and Transportation Committee