



THE MUELLER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

# the FRONT PORCH FLYER

## Meet Rowan

*By Kate Splendoria Holler*

Hello Neighbors, I am so thankful to have the opportunity to introduce my family and myself. My name is Kate and my husband is Jason and we have a daughter who is 4 years old named Rowan. We have lived here in Mueller for a little over 2 years now and really love this neighborhood! We feel really lucky to live so close to Rowan's doctors and so many fun things to see and do as a family.

Our daughter Rowan was born with a genetic connective tissue disorder called Recessive Dystrophic Epidermolysis Bullosa, or EB for short. Rowan is unable to produce the "glue" that holds her skin to her body at the lowest layer, meaning her skin can blister or shear off from activities such as wearing clothes, walking, eating, or even just swallowing. These wounds are similar to second-degree burns occurring on the skin on the outside of her body and internally as well. As you can imagine, EB is incredibly painful. It is also progressively disabling and life limiting. EB is known as "the worst disease you've

never heard of."

The most difficult part of being a parent to a child with EB is seeing your child in pain every single day. The second most difficult part of being a parent to a child with EB is watching them deal with the social stigma that having a very visible disorder entails. At the age of 3 our daughter told me that she didn't want to look at herself in the mirror. She was only 3 years old. You see, every time we go out in crowded places, like our farmer's market, she is stared at. It is difficult to know every time we go certain places we will be met with staring.

I am sharing in hopes that I can not only teach others about EB, but also spread the word that no matter what— it is not OK to stare at those who may look differently from you. Please teach your children this as well. When you see someone who looks different than you, just smile, and say hi.

To learn more about EB go to [EBresearch.org](http://EBresearch.org).

## the FRONT PORCH FLYER

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## Letter from the Co-Chairs

Dear Neighbors,

With summer ending, you may notice our community is another season larger. By this we mean that every season our community grows – simply visit the area east of Vaughn Street and north of Zach Scott Street to see the remarkable change. We're excited to welcome new neighbors and want to put out a call to everyone who calls Mueller home: we want to hear from you!

Diversity plays a crucial role in the health and vibrancy of our neighborhood and our association. When there are more voices from different backgrounds and from different life experiences, our organization is better because of it. Keeping this in mind, we want to hear from you at our general membership meetings. We want these meetings to be as informative, relevant, and meaningful to you as possible. Is there a neighborhood topic or event you want to see discussed? Is there an organization or outside individual you think the membership should hear from? Drop us a line through the "Contact" section of our website, [www.muellerneighborhood.org](http://www.muellerneighborhood.org) and let's talk.

There are plenty of amazing opportunities to get involved in your community and meet your neighbors. We hope you take advantage of them and that we will see you soon!

Sincerely,  
John and Preston

## Zach Scott Gets an Upgrade

On July 28th, the public came out to celebrate the bike lane improvements installed along Zach Scott Street on the west side of Berkman. The City of Austin worked with the neighborhood association and residents along Zach Scott to create a protected bike lane, while also keeping parking spots available next to the homes, creating not only a safer route for cyclists, but an interactive process that worked for the city and Mueller residents.



*Photo provided by Michael Velarde*



*Photo provided by City of Austin*



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# FRONT PORCH FLYER



## What is the Mueller "Affordable" Program?

By Jim Walker

Since the 1980s the community-driven vision for Mueller has acknowledged two key aspects for the redevelopment to be a success – creating quality single-family and multi-family housing and ensuring “the redeveloped site [is] an asset for the whole community.”<sup>1</sup> Within that second principle is the foundation for the affordable housing goals and program for Mueller.

Community leaders suggested numbers and percentages for the affordable housing concept in the 1990s, often more progressively than what City of Austin staff was recommending, and certainly deeper and broader than the developer community thought feasible. The overall goal established in the late 1990s was that 25% of the total housing must be offered at an affordable price, and be preserved over time. At full build-out this was estimated to equate to about 1,500 housing units.

This was broken down into for sale/ownership housing offered at 80% regional median family income (MFI, equating to approximately \$160,000 in 2007) and rental housing offered at 60% MFI; the proportion of ownership to rental had to be no greater than 60/40 either way.

These goals, along with accountability provisions, were codified in the Mueller Master Development Agreement signed in 2004 between the city and Catellus. A recent presentation to the Mueller Commission provides a more detailed summary and update (<https://tinyurl.com/y4qhusyf>).

But let's get a quick historical reflection. In the early 2000's, Austin was not in the affordability crisis that we are in now. We barely discussed putting an upper limit on housing prices. We were more concerned with ensuring affordability goals – the most progressive community affordability goal for a large development in Austin at the time – were codified.

We were also concerned about preventing the State of Texas from reopening Mueller as a general aviation airport, managing for traffic impacts on surrounding neighborhoods, planning for a new elementary school, and heading off how the dot-com bust might influence city council relative to the tax increment financing district that enabled Mueller's funding model.

By 2006, a year or so before the first residents moved into Mueller, Austin was fully recovered from the dot-com dip, fears of a national housing bubble hadn't yet materialized, and Mueller was emerging as a hot local market. In that fervor, Catellus created the Mueller Foundation as a means for preserving the affordability of the ownership housing

*(Continued on Page 5)*

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stock through multiple buyers. Land trusts were not legal at the time, city programs were not advanced enough, and a proposal for the city to retain ownership of Mueller and sell ground-lease rights for residential and commercial improvements was not politically palatable.

The Foundation holds a deed restriction on each ownership affordable unit, giving the Foundation a first option to retain a home at an affordable price for a second (or third, or fourth) buyer. This remains the system today. Without the Foundation, hundreds of homes to date would have been offered to a first buyer at an affordable price, then sold at a market price, greatly rewarding the first buyer but losing the affordable housing unit.

Now, over 12 years later, and in the midst of our current affordability crisis, it is totally understandable for Mueller residents, community leaders, and advocates citywide to look at Mueller, and the high profile, high priced homes, and wonder if more could have been done or should still be done. I get it.

So, what is being done now? What more is possible?

Catellus, the Mueller Commission, and the Foundation remain committed to ensuring the 25% overall goal is met. Achieving that goal is baked into the financial agreements between Catellus and the various individual builders. The remaining residential areas of Mueller have all already been platted and approved by the City and builder agreements are already in place. The recent inclusion of Habitat for Humanity and Foundation Communities as Mueller builders and developers brings a refreshing new affordability approach.

The Foundation remains committed to preserving the affordable housing stock, both ownership and rental, as well as defending the current families in those units as much as we can from the hyper escalating market (see Travis County Appraisal District controversy from recent years). The Foundation is also working on strategies for life-after-Catellus, meaning a shift in focus from the high volume identification of first buyers to a lower volume of retaining homes as they come up for sale.

The conversation and challenge of preserving affordability will be ongoing. I'm hopeful Mueller remains an early Austin model for both how to hardwire affordability into a large public-private development deal, as well as how to preserve the affordability over time.

While certainly all models can and should be improved over time, perhaps the more interesting challenge now is how to replicate the Mueller model, and go deeper and broader, in future developments across Austin.

1 Mueller Airport Redevelopment Plan, Major Goals, Prepared by the Airport Redevelopment Planning Committee of Citizens for Airport Relocation (C.A.RE.), August 1984



# *Help Keep Our Neighborhood Beautiful!*



## MUELLER PSYCHOTHERAPY

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## Mueller Property Owners Association: Second in a Series

*By Joe Freeland, Karen Sharp, and Bill Berman*

The Mueller Property Owners Associations (POA) are the required associations for property owners within Mueller, both residential and commercial. The POA is responsible for the oversight and maintenance of the community amenities at Mueller, such as the parks, pools and trails, the external maintenance/insurance of row homes, enforcing the policies and rules that govern the neighborhood, and for setting and collecting assessments from property owners to generate sufficient funds to carry out its obligations.

The POA is made up of three associations: the Mueller Master Community, Inc., and two geographically distinct sub-associations: the Mueller Mixed-Use Community, Inc., and the Mueller EC/TC Community, Inc. The following is a brief overview of the governance of the three associations as set out in the existing covenants:

**Mueller Master Community** – The Mueller Master Community includes the entire development. Every property owner in Mueller is a member of the Master Community. As the community is currently structured, the Master Board performs the management functions such as budget, assessments, rules, enforcement and hiring the Community Manager (Associa) for the entire development. None of these functions are performed by the sub-associations.

The Master Community is governed by a seven-person Board of Directors:

- 3 directors appointed by the EC/TC Board (primarily commercial property owners)
- 3 directors appointed by the Mixed-Use Board (primarily residential property owners)
- 1 director appointed by the EC/TC Board in odd-numbered years, and by the Mixed-Use Board in even-numbered years

Because the EC/TC Board and the Mixed-Use Board are administered by the Master Declarant (Catellus), the entire Master Board is currently appointed by Catellus.

The current directors of the Master Board are: Ken Blaker (President), Brian Dolezal (Vice-President), Fei Dai (Secretary/Treasurer), Sergio Negrete, Leo Lopez, Jessica Reynolds, and Carl Paulson.

**Mueller Mixed-Use (MMU) Community** – The Mixed-Use Community includes the areas of the neighborhood that are primarily single-family residential, but also includes Wildflower Terrace, the upcoming Jordan apartments, and the future mixed-use around the control tower. Every property owner within the boundaries of the Mixed-Use Community is a member of the Mixed-Use Community. As the community is currently structured, the Mixed-Use Board's sole official responsibility is to appoint directors for the Master Board.

The Mixed-Use Board currently has five directors. The current governance documents call for selection of the five directors as follows:

- 3 directors appointed by Catellus
- 2 directors (residential property owners) elected by the Mixed-Use Neighborhood Delegates

To date, the two residential Mixed-Use directors have been elected at large, as the prescribed Neighborhood Delegate system has not yet been implemented. This is contrary to the provisions of the covenants, but the decision to delay implementation of the Neighborhood Delegate system was made at the request of residential property owners. The next article

in a future Front Porch Flyer will describe: the role of Neighborhood Delegates under the existing covenants, the current Neighborhood boundaries, and some thoughts on how the concept of Neighborhood Delegates and Neighborhoods could be implemented or changed.

Once the City of Austin issues certificates of occupancy for 75% of all lots planned for the Mixed-Use Community, the Mixed-Use Board will expand to nine (7) directors – 4 appointed by Catellus and 3 elected by the Neighborhood Delegates. At 90%, this changes to 1 appointed by Catellus and 6 elected by the Neighborhood Delegates. At the end of the Mixed-Use Development and Sale Period, all of the directors will be elected by the Neighborhood Delegates.

The transition from developer governance to property owner governance is being addressed by a **Transition Committee**, recently appointed by the Master Board. The goal of the Transition Committee is to educate owners about the functioning of Mueller and to get the community ready for the transfer of responsibility from Catellus to the property owners.

The current directors of the Mixed-Use Board are: Brian Dolezal, President (appointed), Ken Blaker, Vice-President (appointed), Jessica Reynolds, Secretary (appointed), Joe Freeland, Treasurer (elected), Bill Berman, Director (elected).

**EC/TC Community** – The EC/TC includes the areas of the neighborhood that are primarily retail/commercial/multi-family. Every property owner within the boundaries of the EC/TC is a member of the EC/TC. As the community is currently structured, the EC/TC Board's sole official responsibility is to appoint directors for the Master Board.

The EC/TC Board currently has five (5) directors:

- 3 directors appointed by Catellus
- 2 directors elected by the EC/TC property owners

As with the Mixed-Use Board, once the City of Austin issues certificates of occupancy for 75% of all lots planned for the EC/TC, the EC/TC Board will expand to seven (7) directors – 4 appointed by Catellus and 3 elected by the property owners. At 90%, this changes to 1 appointed by Catellus and 6 elected by the property owners. At the end of the EC/TC Development and Sale Period, all of the directors will be elected by the EC/TC property owners.

Unlike the Mixed-Use Board, the EC/TC directors are elected by the property owners at large in accordance with the covenants. The number of votes an owner gets is determined by the number of each property's Assessment Units. For example, the Sync at Mueller apartments has 151 Assessment Units, and Texas Mutual Insurance has 215 Assessment Units.

The current directors are: Ken Blaker, President (appointed), Brian Dolezal, Vice-President, (appointed), Stephen Harris of UT, Secretary (elected), Leo Lopez, Treasurer (appointed), and Shawn Lavin of Seton, Director (elected).

Stay tuned for the next article in this series where we will discuss neighborhood delegates more in depth and also provide more information regarding preparing for the eventual transition from developer-governed to property owner-governed Property Owner Associations.

## Foundation Communities to Welcome Families to Mueller This Fall

*By Mary Ann Lopez, Foundation Communities*

Foundation Communities is excited to announce we will be opening The Jordan at Mueller on the corner of Philomena and Tilley streets later this fall. We are thrilled to be a part of the Mueller community and to welcome 132 low-income families, including 14 who were formerly homeless.

A local, homegrown non-profit, Foundation Communities has operated in Austin since 1990. Our goal is to provide affordable, beautiful homes along with free, on-site support services for thousands of families with children, as well as veterans, seniors and individuals with disabilities. The Jordan at Mueller will be our 24th community.

As with our other communities, The Jordan at Mueller is being built to the highest of green standards and will house our 14th Learning Center providing child and adult academic programming all year long. When the Learning Center is not in use for our programming, it is available for community use.

We can't wait for our families to get to know the family-friendly environment Mueller offers, including the kid and pet-

friendly outdoor spaces, and The Thinkery, an award-winning children's museum within walking distance of The Jordan.

But more importantly, the Mueller neighborhood will be a great location for our residents because of its close proximity to much needed resources including jobs, grocery stores, public transportation and Dell Children's Hospital.

We couldn't provide all of the wrap-around services to our residents without the support of volunteers in our communities. We will be seeking volunteers in Mueller to help with after-school tutoring for students, creating Welcome Home Baskets, serving at our Supper Clubs and helping at our healthy food pantries. In addition, we also have a variety of opportunities to serve others around Austin at our Community Financial Centers, helping area residents with their taxes, assisting with health insurance enrollment and providing money management coaching.

To learn more about our work and how you can get involved visit us at [Foundcom.org](http://Foundcom.org).

A promotional image for Mighty Fine Burgers. It features a person's hands holding a burger, a drink, and onion rings. The text "MIGHTY FINE" is at the top, followed by "JOIN OUR TEAM" and "\$12 ALL POSITIONS" in large red letters. At the bottom, it says "Apply at mightyfineburgers.com".

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## Back to School: How's Your Morning Going?

By Steve and Judith Katzman

How do mornings go at your house when the kids are back in school? Most families describe mornings with words like difficult, maddening, chaotic. Kids don't always get ready on time. One forgets to brush his teeth, one can't find her favorite socks, and one is deep into a video game. Often someone in the house is yelling, "It's time to go!"

Articles about back-to-school time offer tips: lay out clothes the night before, create a basket by the door for all things school-related, and make breakfasts easier by pre-measuring cereal and having a spigot on the milk container.

But these tips don't address the deeper challenges of transitioning from a summer schedule to a more demanding school year. Kids need to know more than how to make their breakfast and find their clothes.

The first weeks of school involve figuring out the new teacher, grappling with new courses, and assessing the social hierarchy. Any of these can be a source of anxiety, and parents have to slow down and pay attention to how children of any age are doing. Busy households don't always have built-in time for connecting quietly with children.

So how do you stay tuned in and really know what's going on?

"How was school?" "Good." is not a conversation. Some kids are careful not to bother parents with their feelings.

One of us, Steve, was a teacher and school principal before becoming a therapist. In each setting, he noticed that kids and parents often complained about their mornings being hectic and stressful. If the only interactions are the same questions every day about teeth, clothes, breakfast, lunch, and homework, then something valuable is being lost.

Although it's tempting to reassure children by telling them there is nothing to worry about or to tell them quickly how to solve their problem, they need to be listened to. Being present with your full attention, according to psychiatrist Dan Siegel, author of *Parenting from the Inside Out*, develops neural pathways that help children develop courage and resilience.

Morning is an opportunity to greet a child with a hug and a few moments to check in with how they're feeling. This is when they might say they're worried about who will sit with them at lunch or that they aren't sure about the teacher.

There are other times of the day and week to connect with kids. But mornings are when we greet a new day and each other. Parents who make a little extra time for a calm connection feel less stressed about sending kids out the door and back to school. Good for you and good for the kids.



## MUELLER'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2019

**September 14, 5:30:** Austin Bollywood Day: Food, Shopping & Entertainment, Mueller Lake Park

**September 21, 10 am:** Mueller Neighborhood Association Meeting, Seton Offices, 1345 Philomena

**September 20, 6:15:** KUTX Rock the Park – Mueller Lake Park

**October 4, 6:15:** KUTX Rock the Park – Mueller Lake Park

**October 11, 6:15:** KUTX Rock the Park – Mueller Lake Park

**October 20,** Fermentation Fest (more info TBA)

**November 16,** Thinkery's Gingerbread Run (more info TBA)

### September Events at Mueller on Wednesday:

**September 4, 5:30 - 7:30pm:** Season's Best Chef Demo  
w/ Maggie Perkins

### September Events at Mueller on Sunday:

**September 8, 10am - 2pm:** TFM at Mueller 7th  
Birthday Celebration w/ free cake!

**September 8, 11am - 1 pm:** Texas Farm Fresh Jump with Jill

**September 8, 11am - 1 pm:** Season's Best Chef Demo w/ Maggie Perkins

**September 22, 11am - 1 pm:** Season's Best Chef Demo w/ Maggie Perkins



## Census Bureau to Hire Nearly Half a Million Workers for the 2020 Count

By Lila Valencia, Senior Demographer at the Texas Demographic Center

Census Bureau to hire nearly half a million workers for the 2020 count. By Lila Valencia, Senior Demographer at the Texas Demographic Center. Once each decade, America comes together to count every person in the country. The decennial census is the nation's largest peacetime effort. The next count will take place April 1, 2020. Ahead of the 2020 count, the U.S. Census Bureau will be hiring nearly half a million workers. Many of these jobs will be right here in Central Texas. The jobs, of course, are temporary but include a variety of duties, such as census takers, recruiting assistants, census office staff, and supervisor roles. The pay for Census Bureau jobs in Travis County starts at \$22 per hour. To be eligible, potential employees must be at least 18 years old, have a valid Social Security number, and be a U.S. citizen.

Decennial census data are used to determine:

- congressional representation,
- allocation of more than \$675 billion in federal funds for after-school programs, road and transit improvements, parks, and hospitals,
- business location and hiring, and
- much more.

The Census Bureau is committed to hiring people to work in the area where they live. Therefore, these positions provide the perfect opportunity to earn some extra income while helping your community. The 2010 decennial census counted 2,697 residents in 1,418 housing units in census tract 3.06, the census geography that houses Mueller. Census Bureau estimates place the Mueller census tract at 4,869 residents in 2,431 housing units in 2017, a population increase of 80.5 percent. Fast-growing populations, such as the Mueller development, can be challenging to count at census time, making census workers who are familiar with the community an incredible asset to the Bureau and our neighborhood.

To be a part of history and ensure our neighborhood is counted, visit <https://2020census.gov/en/jobs>. To learn more about positions in the Central Texas Area, contact the census office at 1-855-JOB-2020 (1-855-562-202) and select option 3. You may also use the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 for TTY/ASCII.



## Austin ISD to Reimagine, Reinvest, and Reinvent

By Dusty Harshman



After decades of managing an urban school district growing rapidly in step with the city it served, the Austin Independent School District (AISD) has spent much of the last decade evolving to address new challenges of budgetary shortfalls due to declining enrollment and aging facilities.

AISD's 30-year Facility Master Plan ([www.austinisd.org/fmp](http://www.austinisd.org/fmp)) adopted in 2017 and the Budget Stabilization Report in 2018 were both offered to holistically address this evolution. Both inform the district's most ambitious transformation in recent memory, plainly entitled "School Changes 2019" ([www.austinisd.org/schoolchanges](http://www.austinisd.org/schoolchanges)). It is through this process that AISD seeks to reimagine, reinvest in, and reinvent itself to best serve students and families.

What might "school changes" mean for AISD families and surrounding communities? Part academic reinvention, part financial efficiency, and part equity study, AISD explains School Changes 2019 as "committed to providing better learning environments and inspiring academic opportunities for all students. This means working together to reimagine how our schools could be used to benefit students and communities, reinvesting resources to bring the visions into reality and reinventing how students are educated in Austin ISD... While this process involves tough decisions like school consolidations and boundary changes, it will also make way for opportunities such as new, specialized programs, more equitably distributed across the district and repurposed facilities to meet other community needs." AISD has published a "Reinvention Roadmap" (graphic below) to guide the School Changes process.

Spring 2019 began with a series of regional discussions with AISD and Austin civic leaders facilitating roundtables on the district's current operating landscape and its potential to evolve in new directions. This was followed by early summer visioning sessions and think tanks where further campus data was presented and community-driven changes were discussed openly.

September should include the public's first look at proposed school changes. From September to October, the public will review and comment on the proposals before the AISD Board of Trustees is scheduled to finalize changes in November. It is believed that many of the school changes would be enacted for the 2020-2021 school year, while others would be phased in over in the ensuing years.

Visit AISD's School Changes website to get involved or stay tuned to The Front Porch Flyer for relevant updates.

# FRONT PORCH FLYER

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### *Classified Ads*

**Personal classifieds** (one time sell items, such as a used bike...) run at no charge to Mueller residents, limit 30 words, please e-mail [fpf@muellerneighborhood.org](mailto:fpf@muellerneighborhood.org).

**Business classifieds** (offering a service or product line for profit) are \$50, limit 40 words, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office @ 512-263-9181 or [advertising@PEELinc.com](mailto:advertising@PEELinc.com).

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## What's With All the Millipedes?

By Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension  
Service Program Specialist

Millipedes are often mistaken for worms. While millipedes have elongated bodies similar to worms, they have lots of legs which worms lack. Millipedes have a long, cylindrical body, a pair of antennae and two pair of legs on each segment of their body. They often curl into a spiral as a way to protect themselves when threatened.

Millipedes live in moist environments such as soil, leaf litter, and compost piles, under mulch, rocks or wood. Millipedes most often feed on decaying organic matter, though some are carnivorous. They are not typically thought of as pests, but more of a nuisance although they may occasionally damage seedling plants by feeding on stems and leaves.

Large numbers of millipedes may move into structures after heavy rainfall or during periods of drought. If millipedes do wander indoors, they usually die quickly due to lack of moisture.



*Millipede, provided by Wizzie Brown*

### Tips to prevent millipedes from moving indoors:

- Move objects providing harborage (compost piles, firewood, stones) away from structures
- Create a band of gravel between the home foundation & landscape beds
- Adjust watering schedules if overwatering
- Turn mulch so it dries out

- Seal accessible areas where millipedes can move into the home — around doors & windows; pipe penetrations, etc.
- Ventilate crawl spaces to allow for air flow

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600.



## Mueller Neighborhood Association Membership Form

To become a voting MNA member, a Mueller resident must complete this form and submit annual dues. New members must then wait 14 days before they may vote. Annual dues are \$5.00 per resident, 18 years or older. These funds are used to help pay for the Front Porch Flyer, MNA Grants, funding neighborhood events, and operating costs such as printing, record-keeping, and the MNA P.O. Box. You may give your dues to your Block Captain, bring it to an MNA meeting, or mail it to MNA, PO Box 49123, Austin, TX 78765. Checks may be written to "Mueller Neighborhood Association."

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