

12/30/08

NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHT

Secret is out on quiet oasis not far from downtown

By Clayton Stromberger

SPECIAL TO THE AMERICAN-STATESMAN

"We've been discovered," Phyllis Tennie says of her Burlleson-Parker neighborhood, a quiet area of modest middle-class houses just northeast of the intersection of Interstate 35 and East Ben White Boulevard. "They've discovered our little piece of paradise, and they're trying to build out the entire area."

Most Austinites have zoomed past this area on their way to the airport, unaware of the neighborhood tucked away in the gentle hills. Tennie made her own discovery of the area 10 years ago while looking for a step up from "apartment city" along East Riverside Drive, where she was living with her daughter. Travis Heights was too pricey, but in Burlleson-Parker she found an empty lot and built a 1,500-square-foot house with a big backyard bordered by a dry creek.

Later she found out that the area around

See NEIGHBORHOOD, G9

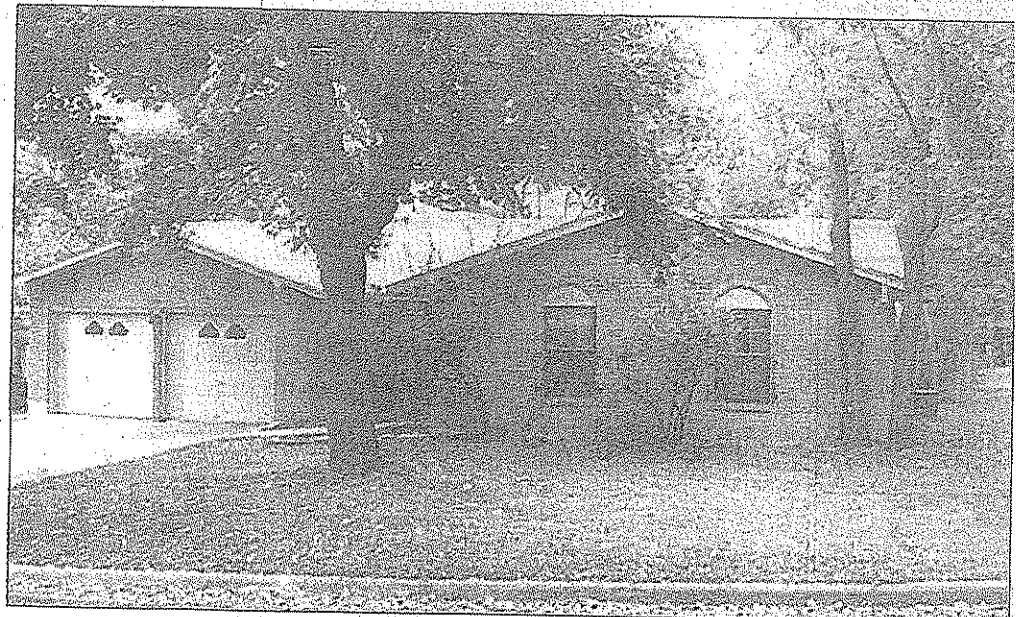
About Burlleson-Parker

Boundaries: East Oltorf Street on the north, Burlleson Road on the east, Parker Lane on the west and East Ben White Boulevard on the south.

Schools: Linder Elementary School, Fulmore Middle School, Travis High School

Amenities: Easy commute to downtown, rolling hills, mature trees.

The market: In October, three homes sold in the real estate zone that includes Burlleson-Parker, with a median price of \$190,000. That compares with seven homes sold in October 2007, with a median price of \$226,900. It took about 134 days to sell a home in the area.



AUSTINHOMESARCH.COM

This house at 2304 Granada Drive, on the market for \$199,500, has a pool and is on 0.3 acre. The Burlleson-Parker area has houses built in the 1960s and '70s, big yards and mature trees.

NEIGHBORHOOD: Close to downtown, green space

Continued from G1

her house had been a landfill until the 1960s. "We still dig up some of the weirdest stuff in the yard," she says.

Burlleson-Parker has always been a quick commute from downtown, but since Austin-Bergstrom International Airport opened in 1999, the entire 78741 ZIP code has become a plum for developers looking to create middle-class housing. Just west of Tennie's house, Newmark Homes is building Edgewick, a gated community with two-story cottages and

carriage homes priced from about \$160,000 to \$220,000.

Tennie enjoys the mature trees of the neighborhood, her "humongous" backyard and the proximity to the 50 acres of green space in Mabel Davis District Park. She has long been involved in efforts to protect and beautify the area. As an early member of the neighborhood association, she helped create a Neighborhood Watch program.

"I'm the self-appointed graffiti patrol," she says. "As soon as they draw a line of graffiti, I'm on it."

11/30/08 A.A.S.