

The Whisperers

Bi-Monthly Newsletter of the Whispering Oaks Homeowners Association Published by Neighborhood News, Inc.

New Sober Home may have Minimal City Oversight



An investor has begun operating a group home in Whispering Oaks which has raised questions about local regulations. The sober home on Windy Oaks St on the subdivision's east side is operated by Best Days Recovery LLC and intended to provide a supportive group living environment for adults combating drug or alcohol abuse. Sober homes have long served an important role in the recovery process and while most function with few complaints, the Whispering Oaks facility may be off to a rocky start.

State law allows many types of group homes to operate in residential neighborhoods and clients are typically protected by both federal housing and disability regulations. Addiction is an ADA classification that applies to clients in sober homes. Nonetheless, municipalities may impose reasonable requirements and San Antonio's Boarding House ordinance is worded to apply to most facilities whose clients don't require nursing care. But when WOHHA inquired why the Windy Oaks facility did not obtain a city permit, staff with the Development Services Dept were uncertain whether the ordinance applies to sober homes at all.

"Our Board was surprised to learn that the city isn't sure its group home ordinance applies to what is likely the most prevalent and potentially problematic type of group home" says WOHHA President Peter Lund. "We think it should, and its modest safeguards are critical for neighborhoods like ours". The organization is partnering with newly elected District 9 Councilwoman Misty Spears to engage city staff on the issue.

The city ordinance provides several neighborhood protections. Beyond permits and inspections, it also limits occupancy to six clients maximum which ensures a manageable client to supervisor ratio. Without this safeguard, the four bedroom Windy Oaks facility could legally accommodate up to double the ordinance's limit. The location reportedly has ten current inhabitants including its house manager. Experts advise it's not uncommon for house managers to also be in recovery and receive housing or meals in lieu of employment.

The city ordinance also mandates at least a half mile distance between group homes to avoid overrunning a given subdivision. The facility on Windy Oaks is just one block away from a longstanding group home for mentally disabled adults on Whisper Valley which has operated for decades without incident. Lund worries that without the ordinance's proximity protection, there may be no limit to the number of sober homes that could begin operating in Whispering Oaks or even on a given street.

Unlike other types of group homes, sober home tenancy is often contracted by the week and turnover can be high. Nearby neighbors report the Windy

Oaks facility appears to have a steady churn which has made establishing neighborly familiarity difficult. Some residents report their interaction with Best Days staff has been a mixed bag so far and that CEO Dr. Charles Nolan hasn't been empathetic to their concerns.

Relapses are not uncommon among those struggling with addiction and episodes occurring at sober homes can escalate. A homeowner several blocks from Windy Oaks called SAPD when a man claiming to be a resident of the facility pounded on her front door the evening of October 15 demanding assistance. He left before officers arrived. When the homeowner advised Best Days about the disturbance, she claims staff told her the client had been ejected due to substance use. She was told he didn't have a history of violence and was experiencing a mental health episode. The homeowner says she remains concerned for her family's safety and filed a police report.

If a persistent series of intrusions are properly documented, Best Days could run afoul of state law safeguarding a nearby homeowner's right to enjoyment of a homestead. Repeated nuisance complaints may also violate the Whispering Oaks Community Covenants which enable homeowners to seek relief in court. But Lund cautions those longstanding subdivision rules could not be further amended to prohibit group homes in the same manner Short Term Rental properties were recently curtailed.

(Continued on page 4)

SEE INSIDE FOR SPOOKTACULAR CONTEST RESULTS



Celebrate the Season with WOHHA's Holiday Home Decorating Contest!



Judges will tour the neighborhood the evening of Sunday December 14 to identify the most festive exteriors. Prizes will be awarded and winners featured on whisperingoaks.org

Halloween Home Decor Contest Winners

Grand Prize:

David Pate & Wendy Faldet
at 11302 Whisper Dawn

Runner Ups:

Rich Shevlin at 2710 Oak Bluff
Bryan & Denise Miranda
at 2826 Whisper View



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Experts say a sober home's permanence could hinge on how well it is managed and that the facilities aren't immune to management issues. Last month, the Wall St Journal reported the lucrative addiction treatment sector can generate thousands in revenue per client, per day. That potential for high profits has attracted some unscrupulous operators who exploit vulnerable clients and deny them meaningful support services to minimize operational costs. In some cases, house managers have been accused of incentivizing prolonged stays to rack up insurance billings.

The number of national fraud cases remains relatively small and Lund says Best Days eviction of a client violating its rules is a good sign even if the process could have been handled better to avoid the man wandering the subdivision impaired. Day-to-day house management is critical because government regulation and oversight of sober homes can be lax, particularly if the operator accepts only direct payments or private insurance. Most of the Texas state-level regulations apply to only to operators which receive taxpayer funding via public programs such as Medicare.

Lund says WOHA will continue to press for sober homes to be confirmed under the existing local ordinance and believes the lengthy regulation was developed with the most potentially disruptive types of facilities in mind.

But if city leaders determine sober homes are exempt, he says WOHA will lobby for amendments. However he warns that cumbersome process would work its way toward a Council vote slowly and existing facilities could be exempted from some types of new regulations in the end.



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**Saturday, December 6, 2025 &
Saturday, February 7, 2026**

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

11327 Dreamland Drive

Founded in 2013, The Eleanor Kolitz Hebrew Language Academy is a free public school located in Northeast San Antonio. EKHLA raises the bar in public education by providing strong academic and behavioral standards, as well as teaching impactful core values. EKHLA's core values are Support, Passion, Integrity & Honesty, Respect & Acceptance, Curiosity, Creativity, and Learning and "Repairing the World". With a total enrollment of under 550, students in grades Kindergarten thru 8th, receive extraordinary support from staff. *Contact registrar@ekhla.org with questions.*

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WOHA Secures new Traffic Controls

Last month, city crews installed additional stop signs along Whisper Valley near the community pool. Both the Whispering Wind and Whisper View intersections have been upgraded to all-way stops. The latter intersection near the Upper Olmos Creek pedestrian bridge will soon receive new sidewalk extensions to keep pedestrians out of the flow of traffic.

WOHA lobbied city leaders for two years with the goal of deterring aggressive driving that has long plagued the nearly mile long roadway. The affected intersections are common crossing points for neighborhood children headed to the pool and tennis courts. Traffic engineers opted for the signs when it was determined that speed bumps weren't feasible along this stretch of the street and had provided lackluster influence elsewhere in the neighborhood.

Around the same time, Public Works also installed two radar feedback speed signs on Wurzbach alongside Whispering Oaks. The long-awaited enhancements were budgeted by former Councilman John Courage over two years ago. WOHA had petitioned for the technology to discourage speeding along the increasingly congested roadway where collisions are not uncommon.

Both projects serve as reminders of how neighborhood association advocacy routinely benefits all residents. Whispering Oaks has been allocated well over a million dollars in publicly funded roadway improvements in the past five years. Those funds could have easily gone to other subdivisions if not for the efforts of tireless volunteers.



Cool Weather? Go Green!

Fall is the ideal time to plant new trees, shrubs and sod. Visit the SAWS website gardenstylesanantonio.com for helpful recommendations on hearty species appropriate for a water-strapped San Antonio.

Whispering Oaks Home Sales

September thru October 2025

Prepared by Jean Marie Ruffini, Resident Realtor

	Price	Per sq ft
Active listings (12)		
High	\$575,000	\$205
Median	\$392,900	\$171
Low	\$225,000	\$110
Sold listings (10)		
High	\$550,000	\$188
Median	\$430,000	\$159
Low	\$212,000	\$150
Pending (1)		
Median	\$264,777	\$122

Source: San Antonio Board of Realtors

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Whispering Oaks

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Yard of the Month



September - Norma Maradiago-Guzman
2614 Whisper Hill



October - Michael & Esmie Herrera
1119 Whisper Meadow

"We may think we are nurturing our garden, but of course it's our garden that is really nurturing us." - Jenny Uglow

Whispering Oaks Garden Club



The WOGC has kicked off their new season with a bang. In August David Goree, Education Coordinator with San Antonio Park & Rec, described the wildlife, programs, and hiking trails of Walker Ranch Trailhead, and also nearby parks including Eisenhower, Friedrich Wilderness, Government Canyon, and Phil Hardberger.

Robin Norton, Pollinator Specialist with Rainbow Gardens joined us in September and provided a 3-step guide for beginners to create a pollinator garden. Included in her presentation was a list of plants that attract butterflies, hummingbirds, and bees. In November we will welcome Kathrine Trumble and her presentation on The San Antonio Botanical Garden Master Plan. Lastly, in December, we will enjoy our annual Holiday Luncheon at the elegant Club Giraud.

WOGC is a federated garden club and some of our activities are shared with the San Antonio Garden Center located at 3310 N. New Braunfels Ave in San Antonio. Below are two family fun events free and open to the public at that venue:

Holiday Market and Social - December 3 from 10am to 2pm

Enjoy shopping, raffles & holiday music. Silent auction fundraiser for our Scholarship Fund plus traditional Christmas Tasting.

Cookies with Santa - December 7 from 1pm to 3pm

Face painting and sweets. Bring your kids, grandkids and your camera! Take as many pictures as you like with Santa.

The WOGC consists of 40 members with a wide range of interests that include gardening, flower arranging, environmental issues, community service, conservation, and most of all community fellowship. Please feel free to join us or contact us via email (whisperingoaksgardenclub@gmail.com) if you would like additional information.



Lisa Gorena and Ann Long at the August Meeting