

PUBLIC HEARING INFORMATION

Although applicants and/or their agent(s) are expected to attend a public hearing, you are not required to attend. However, if you do attend, you have the opportunity to speak FOR or AGAINST the proposed development or change. You may also contact a neighborhood or environmental organization that has expressed an interest in an application affecting your neighborhood.

During a public hearing, the board or commission may postpone or continue an application's hearing to a later date, or recommend approval or denial of the application. If the board or commission announces a specific date and time for a postponement or continuation that is not later than 60 days from the announcement, no further notice is required.

Commission is required to approve the subdivision by State law if no variances are required, and if it meets all requirements. A board or commission's decision on a subdivision may only be appealed if it involves an environmental variance. A variance may be appealed by a person with standing to appeal, or an interested party that is identified as a person who can appeal the decision. The body holding a public hearing on an appeal will determine whether a person has standing to appeal the decision. A notice of appeal must be filed with the director of the responsible department no later than 14 days after the decision. An appeal form may be available from the responsible department.

An interested party is defined as a person who is the applicant or record owner of the subject property, or who communicates an interest to a board or commission by:

- delivering a written statement to the board or commission before or during the public hearing that generally identifies the issues of concern (*it may be delivered to the contact person listed on a notice*); or
- appearing and speaking for the record at the public hearing; and:
- occupies a primary residence that is within 500 feet of the subject property or proposed development;
- is the record owner of property within 500 feet of the subject property or proposed development; or
- is an officer of an environmental or neighborhood organization that has an interest in or whose declared boundaries are within 500 feet of the subject property or proposed development.

For additional information on the City of Austin's land development process, visit our web site: www.ci.austin.tx.us/development.

Written comments must be submitted to the board or commission (or the contact person listed on the notice) before or at a public hearing. Your comments should include the name of the board or commission, or Council; the scheduled date of the public hearing; the Case Number; and the contact person listed on the notice.

Case Number: C8J-2009-0136.0A

Contact: Don Perryman, 512-974-2786 or

Michelle Casillas, 512-974-2024

Public Hearing: July 8, 2010, Zoning & Platting Commission

Theodore A. Klein, Jr.
Your Name (please print)

☐ I am in favor
☒ I object

14456 Agarita Road - Austin, TX 78734

Your address(es) affected by this application

Shaul Adler

Signature

Date

Daytime Telephone: 512-266-1801

Comments: My primary objection to this

project is environmental. This entire
area is a karst (cave) zone
containing many rare cave
limited in distribution. Every slab
further decimates populations.
Attached is a report that
wrote about previous development.

If you use this form to comment, it may be returned to:

City of Austin - Planning & Development Review Dept./4th Fl

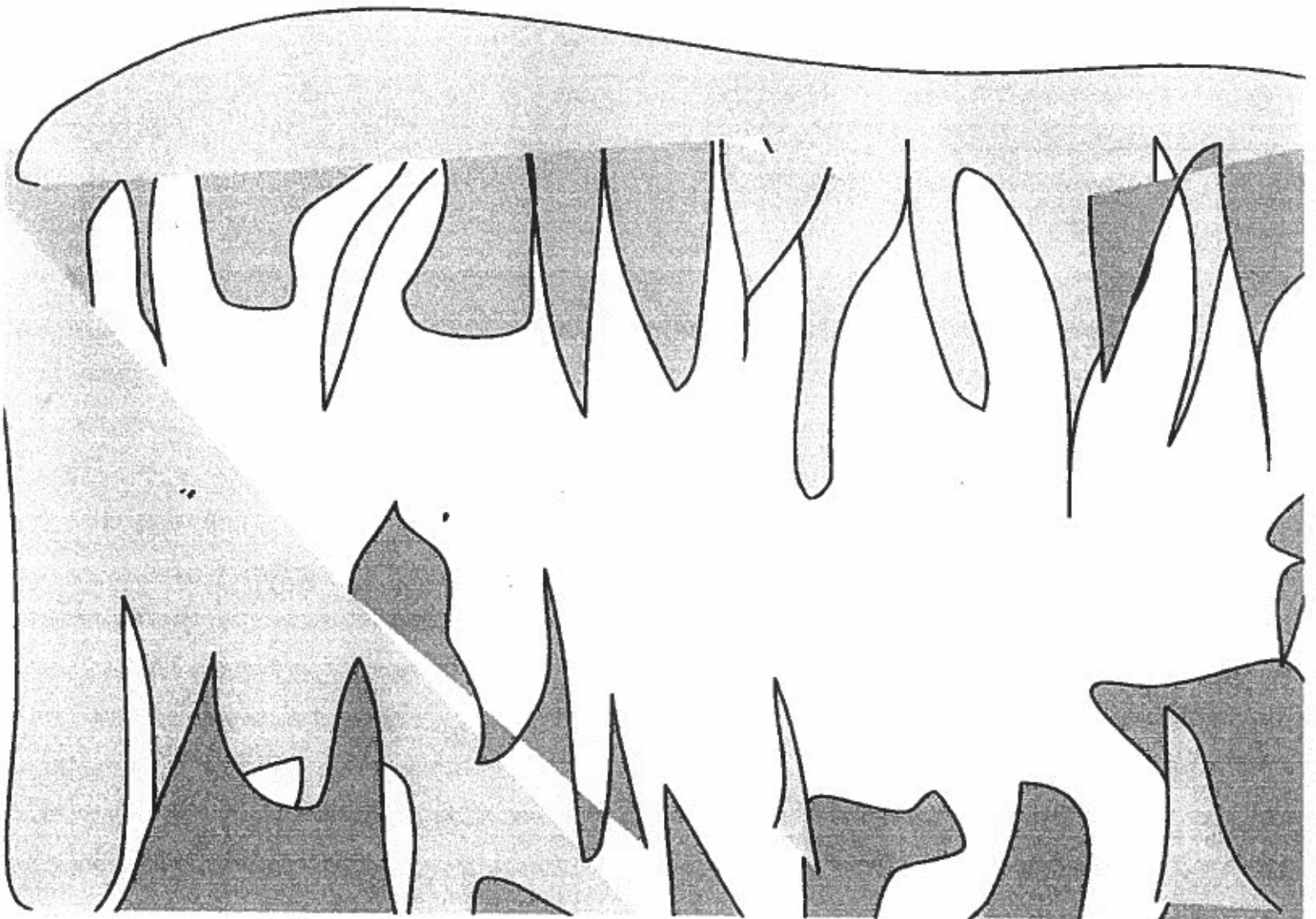
Don Perryman

P. O. Box 1088

Austin, TX 78767-8810

KARST ZONE REPORT

Theodore A. (Ted) Klein, Jr. 1998



KARST ZONE REPORT; BIG HOLLOW/COMMANDER'S POINT AREA IN THE VICINITY OF THE PROPOSED VON ADRIAN DEVELOPMENT

Theodore A. (Ted) Klein, Jr.

August 10, 1998

The following information is based on observation of the subject area between 1962 and 1998.

Background: I have been involved with collection, observation and some publication in the field of herpetology since an early age. Biology was my primary pursuit over a ten year period from the late 1940's through around 1958. I majored in biology at Southern Methodist University, later in zoology at the University of Texas, and then changed fields, although my interest has continued to this day. I assisted at the San Antonio Zoo in the reptile house while in high school and did field collecting with the curator of reptiles and others in Texas and Mexico. I worked for the San Antonio Reptile Garden and did some field collecting for them. Hundreds of hours were spent in the field then and later in the Edwards Plateau area of central Texas, observing and collecting amphibians and reptiles, including extensive time in caves in Bexar, Kendall, Hays, Comal and Travis Counties. I was an active member of the San Antonio Herpetological Society and the Texas Herpetological Society and editor and publisher of their newsletter in 1957-1958. I built a serpentarium, the "Palo Duro Reptile Ranch" in Palo Duro State Park and directed it for one summer. Some of the herpetofauna and invertebrates that I collected remain in the University of Texas, SMU, and Arizona State University collections. I was an active member of the Herpetologists League, a national organization, and was published by them several times. I served as collector and interpreter for an extensive Tulane University expedition in Mexico sponsored by the Zoology Department in 1953.

HISTORY

In 1962 I purchased the first home that had been constructed on Commander's Point. The house was built between 1939 and the mid 1950's by a Mr. Crawley, who was one of the persons who engineered Mansfield Dam. A lot of the construction is native stone and the house was not occupied from about 1959 until we bought it. Between 1962 and 1992, the house was primarily used on weekends and rented out for some periods, when my family and I were in San Antonio or overseas. Until around the mid or latter 1980's, and until development in this area and feral cats began to appear, there was a relative abundance of vertebrates and invertebrates that in many cases were quite typical of karst zone (or cave) creatures, in and around the area of my home. The numbers are down now, but all can still be found occasionally. Most of these fauna are not RESTRICTED to cave zones, but many favor them. However, I have never observed these creatures in COMBINATION in a non-cave zone. They include the following:

Large clusters of "Daddy Longleg" spiders have been observed over the years in and out of my home. At times in the past, the numbers have been great enough to cover several square feet. They are less common now, but were abundant in the past, particularly when my home was unoccupied for any length of time. They occur the same way on cave ceilings and commonly seek other locations, including homes, during hot and dry weather. They are typical karst zone inhabitants throughout the Edwards Plateau.

Cave crickets of the genus *Ceuthophilus* were abundant in and out of my home and still occur with fair frequency. Two species occur in Travis County; *Ceuthophilus secretus*

and *Ceuthophilus cunicularis*. Neither is endangered, but they are commonly associated with endangered species. I have not seen this type of cricket far from cave entrances.

On rare occasions, I have found dark brown to almost black cave scorpions, perhaps eight or ten, over some thirty years. A preserved specimen is available from Dr. Mannas' home, just below the proposed development.

I have found Pale Harvestman spiders (genus *Texella*?) in my home on several occasions, the last some two years ago. They are normally inhabitants of damp caves and are rare.

Many years ago troglobitic pseudoscorpions could occasionally be seen in this area. These invertebrates look like scorpions without tails. They are known as cave inhabitants and are not at all common.

At one time, the Whitethroat Slimy Salamander (*Plethodon glutinosus albagula*) was fairly common in the Big Hollow area. Its common habitat includes the entrance to caves. There are still some in the vicinity of the proposed development.

The Cliff Chirping Frog (*Syrrophus marnockii*) is moderately common in the vicinity of Big Hollow. "A Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Texas" (Garrett and Barker) describes their habitat as "adapted to life in caves and crevices of the limestone hills within its range." During my field work, I rarely found this unique species far from caves.

The Texas Alligator Lizard (*Gerrhonotus liocephalus infernalis*) was at one time fairly common in the vicinity. Although it is not restricted to cave areas, it tends to favor crevices leading to caves.

CAVE EVIDENCE

Almost two years ago, Dr. Ken Mannas mentioned having found some stalactite and stalagmite specimens on the ground near Ranch Road 620 around the Commanders Point Road turnoff. Because of the proposed development in this vicinity, Dr. Mannas and I explored the area. Within less than half an hour, we found a small opening below RR 620, that proved to be the entrance to a live and wet cave. Although the entrance was too small for a grown person to enter, I managed to make some flash photos at arm's length inside the opening. These photos are attached to this report. We also gathered several fallen stalactite and stalagmite pieces and have saved them for evidence. Two of them came from almost directly below the line from the proposed development. We are sure that there are more entrances in the vicinity and I feel that the system may be extensive.

Mr. Pat Kimbrough, a longtime resident of this vicinity at one time had a home at the end of Big Hollow that has since burned down. He reports seeing "steam coming out of a crevice" in the vicinity of that property in the winter. This may indicate a large cave and is below the proposed development.

Mr. Kimbrough also reported talking to one of the Mansfield Dam construction engineers many years ago, who reported that "numerous caves were found during construction under the dam area which were filled in with concrete, so the dam could be completed." This would no longer be acceptable or legal.

A triangulation of known and reported caves and other evidence would include the area of the proposed development.

CONCLUSION

It is my opinion that a sizeable development, as proposed by the Von Adrian U.S.A. group, would have serious long-term impact on the wildlife of this area and most probably involve endangered species. These caves are live and active and the odds are that there is cave water under this area that could include neotenic blind salamanders and other species known to live in cave waters. The amount of construction foundation material involved, the possible spillage from vehicles, the possibility of other forms of pollution and simply the amount of new disturbance to the area, that has already been impacted by present development levels, indicate potentially very-serious ecological danger. The Edwards Plateau of Central Texas is one of the most unique areas biologically in the entire world. What sets it apart is its unusual geological and biological history which has led to micropopulations of unique species of vertebrates and invertebrates, which can not be found elsewhere in the world. The acceptance of unlimited development is absolutely inappropriate. The area could POSSIBLY contain lots of a minimum of two to four acres, each with one VERY carefully designed house. This may work and needs more research by biologists and geologists. A sizable development could very quickly speed the end of a unique environment.



**Views in and
around the small
cave opening
below RR 620 near
Commander's
Point, Travis
County, Texas.**

**Photos by Ted
Klein, Jr. 1996**



