

DALLAS-FORT WORTH NEIGHBORHOODS

# Little Forest Hills — or Funkytown?

East Dallas area prides itself on its mix and bohemian feel

By MARY JACOBS  
Special Contributor

Austinites want to keep Hills, there's a campaign to keep things funky.

The East Dallas community of about 1,000 homes has many artists, and creative lawn art, colorful exteriors and workshops dot the neighborhood.

"We may have more artists studios here per capita than any other neighborhood in Dallas," said Max Davis, co-president of the Little Forest Hills Neighborhood Association.

Most of the homes, built from the 1920s to '40s, are wood-frame cottages of 700 to 1,900 square feet, situated on small lots. Many have been renovated but maintain their architectural character, said Scott Jackson of Ellen Terry Realtors.

"For what you're able to get for the price, I think it's the best-valued real estate within the 635 loop," said Mr. Jackson.



KYE R. LEE/Staff Photographer

Denise Tyler and Max Davis, co-presidents of the Little Forest Hills Neighborhood Association, are leading an effort to make Little Forest Hills a conservation district.

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Hills Funky." A group is pressing the City Council to make the area a conservation district, with restrictions on the size of homes built in the area.

Opponents worry the proposed measures will restrict builders too much, keeping property values down. Advocates fear artists will be priced out of the area.

Mr. Davis, who's on the conservation district committee, says the proposal will preserve trees and maintain in the area's smaller scale.

"Beyond that, we don't care," he said. "If you want to paint your house purple or lime green, great."

Despite the bohemian flavor, Mr. Jackson notes that Little Forest Hills is also home to a number of older folks who give the neighborhood a sense of stability.

"About half the people there," he says, "would never sell."

"When I read that story, I thought, 'I want to be a part of this,'" said Ms. Tyler, who is co-president of the neighborhood association. Now Mr. Walker lives next door, and a group of folks, still gathers to do home repair for those in need.

Visitors to the neighborhood will see signs urging residents to "Keep Little Forest



## AT A GLANCE Little Forest Hills

**History:** The area was developed beginning in the early 1920s. *Subdivided*, a 2006 documentary about the neighborhood, has been shown on public television.

**2007 home sales:** \$97,000 to \$415,000

**Shopping:** Casa Linda Plaza and Lakewood area

**2007 crime:** No murders, no rapes, no aggravated assaults, 1 robbery, 14 burglaries, 15 thefts, 3 auto thefts

\*Reported sales prices of homes listed through MLS

SOURCES: Dallas Police Department; Scott Jackson, Ellen Terry Realtors; Dallas Police reporting area 1174

Dallas Morning News research