

Austin Neighborhoods Council
General Meeting
June 22, 2005

AGENDA

1. Call to order and review of agenda (7:00 pm)
2. Roll call of member associations (7:01)
3. Program (7:10)

*Zoning Code Rewrite with George Adams, Acting Urban Design Officer
and
COA Legal Dept. representative*

4. Announcements (8:10)
 - a. Texas Neighborhoods Together Legislative Report – Tim Mahoney and Clare Barry
 - b. CASA of Travis County Volunteer Opportunities – Karen CoxBusiness Items (8:20)
 - c. IBIZ report – Kevin Lewis
 - d. Zoning issues – Open Discussion
5. Adjourn (9:00 pm)

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MINUTES

1. Call to Order – 7:02 p.m.
Announcement – tonight we will be collecting money in memory of Mary Lou McLain for the Family Eldercare Summer Fan Drive.
2. **Roll Call:** 18 member neighborhood associations are present, plus three officers
3. **Program:** Zoning Code Re-write with George Adams, Acting Urban Design Officer for the City of Austin.

The last time a major re-write was in 1986. The Zoning Code has become a patchwork and is fairly cumbersome and does not reflect current best practices.

Major code initiatives are driving re-write, including corridor design initiatives, commercial design standards, transit oriented development, Envision Central Texas and others.

The process began in December of 2004 with a request for proposals from consultants to work with the city on the re-write. Three consultants are under consideration by City Council. Presentations will be made at the July 28 City Council meeting, with the anticipation of a selection being made from the three.

If so, then contract negotiations would be undertaken and defining of code re-write.

Following comments from Mr. Adams, questions and comments were received from ANC officers and attendees:

- It was requested for ANC to be closely involved from a stakeholders perspective.
- One of the goals will be to create a code which is easier to read, and interpret.
- Examples of misinterpretation were given, specifically the Shelly Flats situation being dealt with by OWANA, influenced by city legal department.
- City Council can accept interpretation of consultants, or interpretation can go back to City Council.
- Q: Why do we need consultants? A: City staff will be involved, but consultants bring experience from similar re-writes from across the country; plus, they can serve as mediators between internal city departments, as well as between the public and city staff.
- There should be significant public input during the process.
- Q: We are spending Cap Metro money on consultants; why not spend the money on more sidewalks? A: Cap Metro has a component of the ¼ cent they collect earmarked for “planning” for the city, which includes the code re-write, which should benefit the city, including transportation.
- The end result of the collaborative effort with city staff managing consultants to create a re-write staff can endorse and is acceptable to constituents. Periodic updates would be provided to Council along with stakeholder involvement (Community Advisory Group).
- Will be using the current code and addressing problem areas as well as addressing new development standards.
- Safeguard for protecting integrity of Neighborhood Planning process will be City Council.
- Other safeguard: It will be difficult to make minor changes without public input.
- There was a major concern expressed about decisions being made on an economic basis, rather than on respecting needs of incumbent neighborhoods.
- The process should take 18 months after 3-5 month preliminary process.

4. Announcements

- a. Texas Neighborhoods Together Legislative Report by Clare Barry
Ms. Barry referred to a legislative summary prepared by TNT Legislative Coordinator, David M. Smith, with introduction by Tim Mahoney, ANC Communications Coordinator. The bill of significant interest was SB 574 by Sen. Ken Armbrister, which was passed and signed into law. The bill weakens city zoning, allowing for grandfathering by way of simply filing an application.

A good bill for TNT was HB 525 by Rep. Eddie Rodriguez which enables homestead preservation districts, homestead land trusts, tax increment financing zones for purpose of building affordable housing and creates a homeowner land bank.

- b. CASA of Travis County by Karen Cox
Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) need volunteers to be the voice for children. Undergo a nine-week training program and spend 15 – 20 hours per month with children to know their needs and represent them in court.
- c. Kevin Lewis announced Austin Moving Forward, presenting George LaKoff at St. Edward's University Ragsdale Center, Saturday June 25 from 1:30 – 5:30 p.m. The event is hosted by Liveable City, Democracy for Texas, Austin ELO Network, and the Austin Chronicle.
- d. County Bond Election – Approx. \$100 – 360 million needed. Citizens Bond Election Bond Committee has been formed and is conducting meetings to formulate bond package, address 1) roads; 2) parks/open spaces; & 3) jails.
- e. IBIZ – Kevin Lewis – Independent Business Investment Zones, part of Austin Independent Business Alliance. Goal is to target areas for economic development; such as Guadalupe from 24th to 30th Streets.
- f. Zoning Discussion
- Some expressed concern regarding threat of elitism with new urbanism.
 - Concern for key zoning issues and naming names
 - Collect information on egregious zoning violations, while also collecting information on “good” zoning situations.
 - ANC should volunteer to serve as a facilitator of repository of zoning situations.
- g. July Meeting – Former City Council member Jackie Goodman will discuss how to mount an effective presentation to City Council

5. Adjournment – 9:10 p.m.