

**Austin Neighborhoods Council**  
**General Meeting**  
**May 24, 2006**  
721 Barton Springs Rd.

**Minutes**

Prepared by Kevin Lewis, Secretary

Members Present:

[see sign-in sheet]

Vice-President Joyce Basciano called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

Program:

State Senate Candidates

Discussion and question/answer period with the State Senate District 14 Candidates, Democrat and former Austin mayor Kirk Watson and Libertarian Rock Howard.

Single Family Residential Regulations (aka McMansion) Task Force

Laura Morrison gave an update.

The task force has been working on regulations affecting single family and duplex development and redevelopment. Their recommendations will be presented to the Planning Commission (again) June 6, and will be given to the City Council for action June 8. Of the 16 task force members, 15 support the task force recommendations.

Details are available at [http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/task\\_force.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/task_force.htm)

The regulations have several features, including:

- Vertical Setbacks—develop within the “setback envelope”, with allowed height stepping back at a 45-degree angle.
- Total square footage—greater of 0.4 floor-to-area ratio or 2300 s.f. (some exceptions for small or substandard lots)
- Articulation to avoid “billboard effect”—articulate over 32’ length walls taller than 1 story.
- Adjustments—Neighborhoods may customize the above regulations. A residential Design Review body may waive above regulations. The task force will reconvene in 1 year to review impacts and recommend adjustments.

Vertical Mixed Use (VMU) and Commercial Design Standards

Laura Morrison gave an update.

The Commercial Design Standards regulations have been processed into code language by the Clarion consultants. They will be presented to City Council for consideration and possible approval in June.

These regulations will greatly affect what is permissible for commercial development, especially along “transit corridors” most major arterial roads in the central city. In particular, the Vertical Mixed Use code allows significantly larger entitlements than existing zoning regulations.

June 7 at 6pm there will be another meeting to discuss these regulations with Council Member McCracken and city staffer George Adams at Austin Energy Building, 721 Barton Springs Rd.

#### Neighborhood News Radio Show on KOOP

Presentation by Bill Stoughton, ANC Communications Coordinator.

A new community talk radio show on neighborhood issues is now airing weekly on KOOP radio, 91.7 FM. It airs Wednesday at 12:30pm, and features activists and city officials reporting on and discussing current issues. You can get archived shows at [www.ancradio.org](http://www.ancradio.org), as well as posting to forums. You can also stream the audio live at [www.koop.org](http://www.koop.org).

#### School Closures

Update by Kathie Tovo, Bouldin Creek NA

The Austin Independent School District has proposed to close some older schools. Oak Springs and Becker elementaries recently narrowly escaped being closed, but the plan to close them will likely be re-voted next year. In addition, between 10 and 20 schools will be studied for possible closure by a attendance boundaries and facilities use task force.

The new AISD board will consider creating a task force to study ways to support underenrolled schools. School closings (and savings) will be the topic of the June 28 meeting.

#### Tree Trimming Task Force

Report by task force member John Paul Moore. Joyce Basciano, ANC VP, WANG, BWNA and Urban Forestry Board member who attended Tree Task Force meetings but was not allowed to participate, reported Austin Energy has resumed their tree trimming-line clearance program. Residents who are concerned when notified that their trees are scheduled to be trimmed can use the prescribed Customer Refusal Process. Joyce distributed official AE brochures and an additional arborist informational handout.

Seven neighborhoods had representatives on the task force. Their recommendations were given to the City Council's Land Use and Transportation Subcommittee (LUT) for consideration and action, May 8, 2006. ( During the May 18, 2006 Storm Briefing and Rept to Council, AE reported that it was looking at the Tree Task Force's recommended alternatives as it relates to trees falling on the power lines.) The Council did not discuss the Tree Task Force results, that is up to the LUT within 30 days.

Task force report available at <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/trees/default.htm>

Recommendations include using insulated lines so that tree trimming clearance distances could be reduced to 4 feet, greatly reducing damage to trees.

### Capitol Metro Streetcar Alignment

Presentation by Lucy Galbraith, co-director of project for Capitol Metro.

Capitol Metro is studying a possible streetcar line for 6.5 miles from around Seaholm plant downtown to the Robert Mueller development. The cost estimate is \$230,000,000. They are studying route, vehicle and cost questions. They are sharing information about the process, and soliciting input.

See details at [www.allsystemsgoconnections.org](http://www.allsystemsgoconnections.org). Contact Lucy Galbraith at 369-6515,

Meeting adjourned at 9:20pm.