

Austin Neighborhoods Council
General Meeting
September 27, 2006
721 Barton Springs Rd.

Minutes prepared by Kevin Lewis, ANC Secretary

Call to Order—VP Katrina Daniel called the meeting to order.

Discussion of Vertical Mixed Use Ordinance (VMU)

Jim Robertson and George Adams, City of Austin Urban Design department

Beginning in 2004 the City started working to improve the regulation of commercial building designs. That led to the creation of a task force, including architects, developers, businesspeople, city staff and neighborhood representatives.

Whether the CDS ordinance applies depends on roadway type, and on if there's new construction or significant redevelopment. Roads and areas in which it applies are named within the ordinance.

Alternative equivalent compliance allows an applicant to comply with the intent of the article even if they are not able to meet the exact language of the ordinance.

Site Development Standards: The CDS regulates the relationship of buildings to streets and walkways, i.e. sidewalks. Parking reductions may be available depending on certain provisions. Exterior lighting standards regulate how lighting is used and how much can extend beyond the site.

VMU buildings get certain "density bonuses", including exemption from minimum site area requirement, floor to area ratio limits, maximum building coverage. Bonus uses: if you have a base office zoning, you could have uses who would otherwise not be allowed like retail.

VMU buildings are subject to compatibility standards and height limitations of base zoning [what about impervious cover??].

Three types of opt-in/opt out applications:

1. Opt-out—for properties in the VMU Overlay District, the default is that they will be included in VMU. An application would have to be made if you wanted them removed from that.

2. Opt-in—for properties in the MU Combining District, the default is that they are not included. If neighborhoods want to include a particular property in VMU, they “nominate” it to the city.
3. Opt-in—for properties outside the VMU Overlay District and the MU Combining District, the default is that they are not included. An application would have to be made to include them.

What recommendations can a neighborhood make via opt-in/opt out process?

1. Whether (and which of) the “density bonuses” will be available for a particular property.
2. Whether the “bonus” ground floor uses will be available for a particular property.

What are the actual effects of the “density bonuses”?

On small lots subject to compatibility standards (i.e. bordered by Single Family), density bonuses are likely to have little effect. The limiting factor will likely be the compatibility standards.

On small lots not subject to compatibility standards, density bonuses may provide some increased development potential.

Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Dept. staff (TBA) will discuss the impact of the new VMU ordinance on neighborhoods and considerations for determining whether to opt in or opt out of the zoning. Neighborhoods with a “Core Transit Corridor” or a “future core transit corridor” [See APPENDIX A below], will be asked to provide a recommendation to the city council about whether certain development bonuses should be available.

(VMU is part of the new Commercial Design Standards. Info available at http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/development/commercial_design.htm.)

Parkland Dedication Fee Ordinance—Linda Guerrero, Parks Board, Richard Soliz, Parks and Recreation Department

The parkland dedication ordinance requires developers to contribute land or fees for parkland when doing a new subdivision or re-platting an existing property. It dates to 1985 with only minor changes. The question is whether the

The current ordinance exempts dedication for redevelopment less than 5 acres, less than 12 units, and if there is no subdivision application.

The Parks Department will continue to study this and will make recommendations to the Parks Board and City Council, most likely within a year.

Resolution on Long-Range Planning—Lori Renteria—East Cesar Chavez NPT

Lori Renteria introduced the Resolution on Long-Range Planning, previously sent out via email and in print to meeting attendees. [See APPENDIX B.] There was discussion on the resolution. Lori moved for approval. Motion seconded. Katrina Daniel called for a voice vote. The motion carried.

Resolution on Affordable Housing—Bo McCarver, Blackland NA

Bo McCarver presented a resolution on Providing Affordable Housing for Austin, previously sent via email and in print to meeting attendees. [See APPENDIX C.] This resolution calls for a one-for-one replacement policy for existing affordable housing. There was discussion on the resolution. Bo moved for approval. Motion seconded. Katrina Daniel called for a voice vote. Motion carried.

Updates from ANC Representatives

• Affordable Housing Task Force—Bo McCarver, Blackland NA

The City has created an affordable housing incentives task force that has been meeting for about 5 weeks. In the next phase, the task force will create a report by end of October suggesting what the city should do. Bo will participate on this task force and continue to report to ANC.

• Day Labor Advisory Board—Lori Renteria—East Cesar Chavez NPT

The city is proceeding forward with the process of selecting a site. The Day Labor Advisory Board has attempted to provide input on this process. Neighborhoods from near the proposed sites have worked to voice their interests and concerns with the city. This process is ongoing.

• New Environmental Ordinance Committee—Donna Tiemann, Barton View NA

Council Member Leffingwell has created an advisory group on environmental policy. The website is www.ci.austin.tx.us/council/leffingwell_bsag.htm The advisory group will be covering much of the same ground that the Environmental Board studied.

• New Open Government Ordinance Committee—Jeff Jack—Zilker NA

No action is expected before January.

• AISD Schools and Communities task force—Kathie Tovo, Bouldin Creek NA

AISSD seems to be moving the Schools and Communities work group from a combined city/school district effort to an AISSD-only group. Kathie and other neighborhood representatives will continue to participate.

Meeting was adjourned.

APPENDIX A—Road Designations for Vertical Mixed Use standards

Core Transit Corridors

Core Transit Corridors are the following roadways:

1. South First Street, north of Ben White Boulevard ;
2. East Seventh Street, west of Pleasant Valley Road ;
3. East Fifth Street, from I-35 to Pleasant Valley Road ;
4. West Fifth Street, from Guadalupe Street and Mopac Expressway ;
5. East Sixth Street, from I-35 to Pleasant Valley Road ;
6. West Sixth Street, from Guadalupe Street and Pressler Street ;
7. Thirty-eighth Street, from Mopac Expressway and Speedway Street ;
8. Airport Boulevard from Lamar Boulevard to I-35;
9. Anderson Lane, from Burnet Road and Mopac Expressway;
10. Barton Springs Road, east of Robert E. Lee Drive ;
11. Burnet Road, from 45th Street and Anderson Lane ;
12. South Congress Avenue, north of Stassney Lane ;
13. Guadalupe Street;
14. Lamar Boulevard, from Banyon Boulevard and Ben White Boulevard ;
15. Martin Luther King, Jr., Boulevard, from Pearl Street and Airport Boulevard ;
16. Riverside Drive, west of Pleasant Valley Road .

Core Transit Corridors, Future

For purposes of Section 4.2.2. of this Subchapter, the following roadways are considered “future core transit corridors” (including all lots with frontage on the listed intersections):

1. South Congress Avenue from Stassney Lane to Slaughter Lane ;
2. Slaughter Lane from I-35 to Mopac;
3. Seventh Street from Pleasant Valley Road to 183;
4. Lamar Boulevard from Banyon Lane to Howard Lane ;
5. Manor Road from Dean Keaton Street to 183;
6. Airport Boulevard from Manor Road to I-35;
7. Fifty-first Street from Manor Road to Airport Boulevard ;
8. Far West Boulevard from Mopac to western side of Chimney Corner;
9. Cameron Road from Fifty-first Street to Highway 183;
10. Mesa Drive from Spicewood Springs to Steck; and
11. Jollyville Road from Great Hills Trail to Highway 183.

APPENDIX B—Resolution on Long Range Planning in Austin

Austin Neighborhoods' Council

Resolution to Improve Long-Range Planning in Austin

Whereas, the Austin Neighborhoods' Council was established in 1973 to act as a coordinating body for the efforts of Austin area neighborhood groups, to serve as a clearinghouse for information, to give guidance in all matters of concern to individual neighborhoods and/or the City of Austin, and to strive to make a positive contribution to Austin through the betterment of our neighborhoods and the promotion of civic awareness, and

Whereas, the Austin Neighborhoods' Council has embraced and supported each and every effort of the City's planning department over the last 30 years to empower neighborhoods through long-range planning such as the Austin Tomorrow Plan, the AustinPlan, the Citizens' Planning Committee, and the Neighborhood Planning Process, and

Whereas, Austin Neighborhoods' Council member associations and planning teams over the past ten years have regularly reported frustration, disappointment, and total confusion regarding the current Neighborhood Planning Process culminating and documented in a workshop we held in January 2006, and

Whereas, Austin Neighborhoods' Council had a formal presentation on the current status of "Long-Term Planning" and received copies of the Audit Report conducted by the City Auditors Office at our general membership meeting on August 23, 2006 which was fully discussed and overwhelmingly supported by the members of our organization, and

Whereas, the four specific recommendations by the Auditor if fully implemented would greatly improve the relationships and communications between and among neighborhood associations, planning teams, city planning staff and policy makers, and

Whereas, Austin Neighborhoods' Council is concerned that the City Manager's Response to the Auditor's Report did not concur with and strongly disagreed with three of the four recommendations which generally call for clear connections between vision, strategic priorities, and investments with ongoing oversight by a central group of both short-term and long-term comprehensive planning, and

Whereas, the City Manager postponed in-depth discussion of the reasons behind the disagreement with three of the four recommendations with the City Council when the Auditor made its Report to Council instead offering a Council Retreat to be held in November, 2006 to discuss it further, and

Whereas, by nature of the time and format for public input is restricted during Council Retreats, NOW THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by Austin Neighborhoods' Council that we urge the City Council to 1) support and direct the City Manager to implement all four of the Auditor's recommendations on long-range planning, 2) the Planning Commission members be included as full participants in your November Retreat, and 3) that once the Manager develops a plan to implement all four recommendations that the Council hold a public hearing so that all stakeholders in the planning process have an opportunity to provide Council feedback on the Manager's implementation plan before Council directs her to act on implementation.

Adopted by the Austin Neighborhoods' Council General Membership on September 27, 2006

Austin Neighborhoods Council

Resolution for Providing Affordable Housing for Austin

Whereas, there exists a dire need to increase the quantity and quality of housing for low and middle-income households in Austin; and

Whereas, some of the City's S.M.A.R.T. housing policies have fostered gentrification of East Austin neighborhoods, and

Whereas, the City has allowed developers to systematically remove affordable housing units with insufficient or no replacement; and

Whereas, the City's economic policies have fostered inflation in the housing market which most adversely impacts low-income, minority households; and

Whereas, the City of Austin should provide such housing throughout its municipal boundaries including new subdivisions; and

Whereas, the City of Austin could more vigorously pursue programs, policies and laws to resolve these deficiencies at all levels to include the state, city and neighborhoods;

Be it resolved that the Austin Neighborhoods Council:

Urges the City to sponsor corrective legislation, revise and create ordinances and policies that will increase the quantity and quality of affordable housing for low and middle income households throughout the municipality. It is further urged that the City immediately adopt a "one-for-one" replacement policy to assure retention of the quantity of affordable units.

Signed

Laura Morrison, President

September 27, 2006