



**PLANNING COMMISSION NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
REGULAR MEETING
SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES**

Wednesday, February 17, 2010

The City Planning Commission Neighborhood Plan Subcommittee convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, February 17, 2010 at 301 W. 2nd Street, City Hall, Room #2016 Street in Austin, Texas.

Commissioner Sullivan called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Subcommittee Members in Attendance:

Danette Chimenti
Dave Sullivan
Kathie Tovo

Committee Members Absent:

Sandra Kirk, Chair

City Staff in attendance:

Greg Guernsey, Planning Director, Planning and Development Review Dept., PDRD
Carol Haywood, Planning Manager, PDRD
Mike Hockmuller, HRD
Maureen Meredith, Senior Planner, PDRD
Jody Zemel, Neighborhood Advisor, PDRD

Others in Attendance:

Clint Small, Planning Commissioner (left after the EIS discussion)
Stuart Hersh
Lou O'Hanlon, ANC
Steve Beuerlein
Alice Glasco
Trevor Dickens

1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

Stuart Hersh provided an overview of the information on his hand-out called, "Gaining Affordability Through Entitlements." He states that the number of affordable housing units in Austin has drastically decreased over the years. He would like the City to look at the tools available under State law and at what he calls Traditional Austin Design (TAD). TAD was when

a single family lot in Austin could have a house and garage apartment regardless of the lot size. Affordability and density was achieved through this method in single family neighborhoods. There has been a 78% decline in the production of affordable housing since 2007. This should be considered a crisis given that Austin has one of the highest population growths in the U.S., according to the U.S. Census Bureau. We need to address this issue sooner rather than later.

Commissioner Sullivan suggested he take this issue to the Citizens Advisory Task force because housing is one of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Hersh said he would do this.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. The minutes for the regular meeting of January 20, 2010 were approved on Commissioner Sullivan's motion, Commissioner Tovo's second on a 3 to 0 vote.

3. OLD BUSINESS

a. Educational Impact Statement (EIS) tool – Follow-up discussion from the January 20, 2010 subcommittee meeting. **Greg Guernsey**, Director, Planning and Development Review, (512) 974-2387. (Discussion and/or possible Action)

Greg Guernsey, Planning Director, addressed the following concerns raised by the Commissioners at the January 20, 2010 meeting:

- How will the Planning Commission use the information on the EIS tool?
 - It would not be the sole basis for approval or denial, but would be used in conjunction with other information about the development.
- What to do with small developments that when combined meet the thresholds, but individually do not?
 - Since the last meeting, AISD asked Greg if COA staff can flag applications noting for the AISD the number of dwelling units, but another form would have to be created for City staff to do this task.
- Development details may not be available except for cases with a Traffic Impact Analysis.
 - Sometimes the City gets development details from developers, but not always because often the developer intends to sell the property after rezoning.
 - Conditional Use Permits are approved administratively, so planning commissioners will not see these.
 - Development details are required for affordable housing developments, so staff will be able to get this information.

Mr. Guernsey then addressed the hand-out provided by Commissioner Tovo and Susan Moffat, detailing what could or could not be added to the form.

- Type of housing: Typically staff will have this info.
- Amount of rent: Unless it's an S.M.A.R.T. housing project, usually the developer will not provide information on market rents.
- Amenities: Usually self-evident from the site plan.

- Number on Free Lunch program: AISD can usually determine number of students on Free Lunch programs within a designated area.
- Ages: Staff may get break-down on elementary, middle school, or high school, however, not have the break-down on number of children in each.
- How students get to school: May not know if there are contiguous sidewalks around the school. If there's a site plan, it will show the sidewalks, but variances could be requested.

Commissioner Small said the Planning Commission is statutorily obligated to approve or deny subdivisions and replats, so what about the cost to AISD staff to complete this form? Greg Guernsey said AISD staff already does this analysis on developments. Commissioner Sullivan added that the more information the City can get regarding developments can assist in the decision-making process, such as planning Capital Improvement Projects and park land acquisition.

Commissioner Tovo asked how quickly this information can be incorporated into the form. Why can't the City require the developer to provide a best estimate regarding number of units, rent levels, etc., (although we cannot hold them to their responses)? Mr. Guernsey said the City can certainly ask developers for this information, but it will require a rule change to revise the application.

Commissioner Tovo asked why those particular thresholds are recommended. Mr. Guernsey said that AISD provided the threshold levels, which are the thresholds for information given to AISD School Board. Commissioner Tovo said she felt the levels are too high and more information might be gained by lowering the thresholds. Mr. Guernsey said he would have to go back to AISD to discuss this.

AISD can capture and provide as part of the EIS how many children in a particular development go to area schools. Joe Silva from AISD said, at the last meeting, that this information could be gathered and added to the EIS form.

The question was asked how useful is the information if a developer cannot be held to it? Could a developer send a notice to AISD when property is sold or if the project has changed substantially from what was on the EIS tool? Mr. Guernsey said this is not likely to happen.

Commissioner Tovo feels all the information (from developer, AISD, and city staff) should be in one place and, ideally, on one page. Staff should sit down with community stakeholders to discuss staff constraints, etc. Mr. Guernsey said can set up a meeting when Commissioner Tovo returns from her trip.

Commissioner Sullivan said he would like information that Mr. Guernsey said is available on the ratio of the number of the children per household based on different parts of the city.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Vote for new chair of the subcommittee (Action Item)

Commissioner Tovo nominated Commissioner Chimenti, seconded by Commissioner Sullivan, which passed on 3 to 0 votes.

b. Central West Austin Neighborhood Plan – Paul DiGiuseppe, Principal Planner, Planning and Development Review Department, (512) 974-2865. (Discussion and/or possible Action)

Paul DiGiuseppe provided an overview of the planning process, which has been in process since June, 2007. See hand-outs provided at meeting with details regarding number of meetings, topics discussed and properties proposed for rezoning, etc. The final open house is scheduled for March 4, 2010. The purpose of the presentation is to get subcommittee members' support to move the neighborhood plan to full planning commission.

The issue of affordable housing the planning area was discussed. Paul said the neighborhood only supported small lot amnesty, but did not support other in-fill tools that could have been opportunities to provide affordable housing. Land use options on the future land map could create affordability by providing multifamily and mixed use in areas along Enfield and 35th Street. In addition, portions of the future land use map along Windsor Road are zoned Vertical Mixed Use.

Commissioner Sullivan said he has grave issues about the affordable housing element of the plan.

Commission Sullivan made a motion to move the Central West Austin Neighborhood Plan to full planning commission, with Commissioner Tovo's second. The voted passed 3 to 0.

5. STAFF BRIEFINGS

a. None

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

a. none

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Chimenti, the new chair, adjourned the meeting without objection at 8:45 p.m.