



PLANNING COMMISSION **REGULAR MEETING**
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES **Wednesday, September 21, 2011**

The Planning Commission Neighborhood Plan Subcommittee convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, September 21, 2010, at 301 W. 2nd Street, City Hall, Room #2016, in Austin, Texas.

Commissioner Chimenti called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Subcommittee Members in Attendance:

Danette Chimenti, Chair
Saundra Kirk
Dave Sullivan

City Staff in Attendance:

Greg Claxton, Senior Planner, PDRD
Carol Haywood, Manager, Comprehensive Planning Division, PDRD
Garner Stoll, Assistant Director, PDRD
Jody Zemel, Neighborhood Advisor, PDRD

Others in Attendance:

Ben Carrasco, Smith Robertson LLP
Tracy Ekstrand, Pedernales Neighborhood Association
Gavino Fernandez, Jr., Holly Neighborhood Plan
Kerry Getter, Balcones Resources, Inc.
Sara Koeninger, Holly Neighborhood Plan / Balcones
Gloria Moreno, Pedernales Neighborhood Association
Trey Salinas, 3PP / Balcones

1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

a. None.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. The minutes for the regular meeting of July 20, 2011, were approved on Commissioner Sullivan's motion; Commissioner Chimenti's second on a 2 to 0 vote, with Commissioner Kirk absent.

3. OLD BUSINESS

a. None.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Holly Neighborhood Planning Area. Discuss and consider the initiation of a zoning and future land use change for the property located at 2416 East 6th Street. (Discussion and/or Possible Action)

Commissioner Sullivan was contacted by Gloria Moreno, president of the Pedernales Neighborhood Association, with the intent to discuss with the subcommittee a future land use and zoning change to the Balcones Resources, Inc., property located at 2416 East 6th Street. Ms. Moreno wanted to bring attention to issues related to the potential sale of the Balcones Resources property; the neighborhood would like to see a less-intense and more neighborhood-friendly business to take the place of Balcones Resources once a sale of the property is finalized, thus initiating the discussion for a zoning and future land use change. Ms. Moreno suggests that the neighborhood association is not seeking a down-zoning of the property.

Commissioner Sullivan suggested a zoning change to LI-PDA, which will allow for the construction of condos and/or apartments on the property and will allow the continued use of the property as recycling center.

Tracy Ekstrand, a Pedernales Neighborhood Association representative, discussed Balcones Resources' good rapport with the neighborhood but would like to seek new zoning for the property to open up the possibility for a mixed use-type development that would be more compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Ms. Ekstrand stated that the recycling facility is an incompatible use to the residential uses of the neighborhood, especially to the Pedernales Lofts located across the street from Balcones Resources. Commissioner Sullivan suggested that the fully-occupied condos are a testament that people are okay living near the recycling facility.

Gavino Fernandez, a Holly Neighborhood representative, said that LI-zoned properties (Balcones Resources is currently zoned LI) would be grandfathered until these properties were sold. Because the Balcones Resources property is up for sale, Mr. Fernandez thought it would be an appropriate time to talk about a zoning change for the property that would be appropriately compatible to nearby residences and elementary school.

Kerry Getter, CEO of Balcones Resources, gave a brief history of his company and its stewardship in the neighborhood. Mr. Getter realized that the highest and best use of his property is not a warehouse, but was reluctant to change the current zoning without further discussion. Mr. Getter liked Commissioner Sullivan's suggestion of a zoning change to LI-PDA, but would like to talk to someone who further understands the ins-and-outs of the rezoning. He stated that there is no need to change the zoning of his property if it is not warranted. Trey Salinas, legal counsel for Balcones Resources, suggested that it would be beneficial to have a working group discussion to further talk about the zoning options for the property; the neighborhood would be part of this discussion. Commissioner Chimenti discussed the rezoning initiation process, ensuring that this beginning phase is not an end-all decision for the future of the property; in this initial phase, discussions between property owners and the neighborhood are encouraged to come to a mutual understanding.

The motion to postpone the decision to initiate a zoning and future land use change for the property located at 2416 East 6th Street for one month to allow for further talks between the property owner and neighborhood representatives was approved on Commissioner Sullivan's motion, Commissioner Kirk's second, on a 3-0 vote.

5. STAFF BRIEFINGS

a. Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan. Greg Claxton, Senior Planner, Planning and Development Review Department, and Garner Stoll, Assistant Director, Planning and Development Review Department, will provide an update on the final phase of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan planning process. (Discussion)

Greg Claxton provided the subcommittee a brief update on the final phase of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan process stating that a draft plan will be released for public review on Friday, September 23, 2011. The intent of the update was to address how neighborhood plans will fit into the new comprehensive plan and to answer several questions Commissioners provided near the beginning of the planning process. Mr. Claxton provided a brief background on Imagine Austin and discussed the relationship between neighborhood plans and the comp plan. Many public meetings have been held over the past two years to discuss this relationship.

Mr. Claxton discussed the use of neighborhood plans' future land use maps (FLUMs) to determine the shape of activity centers found in the comp plan's draft growth concept map. Mixed use corridors can contain a continuous string of development. A goal of Imagine Austin is to provide a framework for coordination between City plans (including small area plans, master plans, departmental plans) and the new comp plan; the intention is to incorporate adopted City plans into Imagine Austin. All plans that are currently attached to the Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan as amendments will be attached to Imagine Austin. Staff will review suggestions from the Task Force to attach other plans (e.g., CreateAustin, African American Study, etc.) to Imagine Austin.

Mr. Claxton continued with a discussion regarding how to resolve potential conflicts between Imagine Austin and neighborhood plans. There would be a staff recommendation based on the content found in both the comp and neighborhood plans. But, the ultimate decision/resolution falls to the Planning Commission and/or City Council. The updating of neighborhood plans was also mentioned in the discussion and several concerns were brought up. Commissioner Sullivan suggested that because neighborhood plans are attached to Imagine Austin and because Imagine Austin has to be updated every 5 years, so too would all attached plans, including the neighborhood plans. Commissioner Kirk suggested creating an opt-in/opt-out tool for neighborhoods who wish to update or not update their plans. Updating the Land Development Code (LDC) could affect the neighborhood plan updates; however, those affects depend on the scope of the LDC update. Mixed use corridors were also discussed, especially applicable site development standards for corridors containing different-sized lots along their lengths. Commissioner Kirk suggested the creation of neighborhood tools to allow for site development standards along mixed use corridors through neighborhoods as determined by Imagine Austin.

No action was taken.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

a. St. John / Coronado Hills Neighborhood Plan. Dee Dee Quinnelly, Senior Planner, Planning and Development Review Department and Greg Dutton, Senior Planner, Planning and

Development Review Department, will provide an update on the planning process in preparation for the plan to move forward to a full Planning Commission hearing.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Chimenti adjourned the meeting without objection at 7:28 p.m.