



PLANNING COMMISSION

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, February 15, 2012

The Planning Commission Neighborhood Plan Subcommittee convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, February 15, 2012, at 301 W. 2nd Street, City Hall, Room #1027, in Austin, Texas.

Commissioner Chimenti called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Subcommittee Members in Attendance:

Dannette Chimenti - Chair
Saundra Kirk
Dave Sullivan
Jeff Jack – Ex-Officio

City Staff in Attendance:

Greg Dutton, Senior Planner, Planning and Development Review
Jody Zemel, Neighborhood Advisor, Planning and Development Review
Carol Haywood, Manager, Comprehensive Planning Division, Planning and Development Review
Kathleen Fox, Senior Planner, Planning and Development Review
Maureen Meredith, Senior Planner, Planning and Development Review

Others in Attendance:

Lou O'Hanlon, Austin Neighborhoods Council, University Hills Neighborhood Plan Contact Team
Dennis Weaver, River City Youth Foundation
Matthew Geisheimer, River City Youth Foundation
Sue Cole, River City Youth Foundation
Mona Gonzalez, River City Youth Foundation
Pat Smith, Southwest Combined Neighborhood Plan Contact Team
Joan Bartz, University Hills Neighborhood Association
Tracy Witte, Swede Hill/Organization of Central East Austin Neighborhoods
Myron Smith, Dawson Neighborhood Plan Contact Team
Richard Brock, Brentwood Neighborhood Plan Contact Team
Meredith Morningstar, Coronado Hills Neighborhood Plan Contact Team

1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

a. Tracy Witte, Swede Hill/Organization of Central East Austin Neighborhoods.

Ms. Witte explained that there are neighborhood concerns with the new report "East 11th and 12th Street Development Strategy," prepared for the City of Austin by the consultants at Economic and Planning Systems, Inc. The report calls for relaxing some of the current development standards in the East 11th and 12th Street corridors to encourage development;

some of the surrounding neighbors are concerned about this and would like to make sure certain development standards are retained, which could mean amending the NCCDs that currently regulate the East 11th and 12th Street corridors. Ms. Witte asked if PC could work with concerned neighbors to amend the regulating NCCDs, but PC and Staff were not sure of the answer. Staff will look into this.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. The minutes for the regular meeting of January 18, 2012, were approved on Commissioner Kirk's motion; Commissioner Sullivan's second on a 3 to 0 vote.

3. OLD BUSINESS

a. Discussion of Dove Springs/Southeast Combined Neighborhood Issues. Discussion of various Dove Springs/Southeast Combined neighborhood issues. This is a continuation from the January 18th meeting. (Discussion and/or Possible Action)

Commissioner Sullivan gave a brief overview of some meeting he had attended in the Southeast Combined Neighborhood Planning Area (SCNPA)/Dove Springs, as there are numerous infrastructure and neighborhood concerns in that area. Several people, including Pat Smith, Sue Cole, and Mona Gonzalez spoke about the needs and desires of the community, and stated that the inclusion of a neighborhood center in the area, as spelled out in Imagine Austin, would be a great benefit to the community. In addition, several children were present to explain what they wanted their neighborhood to look like in the future. Among others, the following desired items were noted:

- higher education opportunities in closer proximity
- high capacity transit to serve the area
- jobs
- recreation/community center
- health clinic
- police sub station
- general infrastructure improvements

No action was taken.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. None.

5. STAFF BRIEFINGS

a. Neighborhood Plan Amendment Ordinance – Kathleen Fox, Senior Planner, (512) 974-7877, will present information about an ordinance amending Chapter 25-1, Article 16 of the City Code to amend the requirements for neighborhood plan amendment and neighborhood plan contact team procedures. (Discussion and/or Possible Action)

Carol Haywood explained that changes were proposed to alter the way in which applicants could request a neighborhood plan amendment (NPA). Most of these changes had to do with

clarifying existing practices, such as waiving application fees for Neighborhood Plan Contact Teams.

The primary proposed change was to alter the application window for NPAs, which is currently once per year (February or July, depending on where the application property is). A lengthy discussion followed, with several neighborhood plan Contact Team members from various Contact Teams indicating that there were opposed to the change. Ms. Meredith explained the reasons that a change to the application window had been proposed: applicants only applying at the very last minute, high withdrawal rate, several PC postponements due to lack of communication between applicants and neighborhoods. Contact Team members explained that although they felt the application process could be lengthy and sometimes messy, that it was a huge benefit for them (Contact Teams) to know that NPAs would only be coming in during one month out of the year. They also indicated that they felt, in general, that the application process was working correctly, by encouraging applicants and the neighborhoods to talk to each other. Commissioners indicated that they felt the issues noted by Staff had more to do with the application itself and not the actual application window, and suggested that the application window remain as is, one year out of the month. In addition, Commissioners did not recommend Staff's suggestion to allow the Planning Director the ability to file an NPA at any time.

Commissioners recommended, without objection, that Staff go ahead with the minor NPA code changes suggested by Staff, except for the amendment to allow the Planning Director to file an amendment at any time, and except for the proposed change to the application window, indicating to Staff that the application window should remain as is (one month out of the year).

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

a. None.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Chimenti adjourned the meeting without objection at approximately 7:45 pm.