



C19

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commissioners

FROM: Lee Heckman, AICP
Planning and Development Review Department

DATE: March 26, 2013

SUBJECT: C14-2012-0109 / Sunflower
Additional Correspondence

Attached please find correspondence from the owner of this rezoning case, which I believe was forwarded to the Commission on March 25, 2013. Also attached is additional correspondence from neighborhood stakeholders that was inadvertently not included in the staff report.

Lee Heckman
Planning and Development Review Department

November 30, 2012

Dear Neighbors,

As you are aware, we are in the process of selling part of our property for the development of homes. My father purchased thirteen acres in the Zilker neighborhood in 1950, which included the 4 plus acres where the Zilker Syline Condo homes are now located, six acres across the drainage channel on the West side of Bluebonnet Lane, and the land where the home is located on 2000 Melridge Place. My father built our current home at 1201 Robert E Lee Rd in 1952. After both of my parents passed away, the 4.08 acres was sold to settle the Estate, which included six children, with only three of us living in Austin.

My wife and I purchased the family home in the 1980s from the Estate, at the same time the 4 acres were sold to the Skyline Developer. The land has set dormant, after the Skyline Community Condos were built, until last year, when I hired a State of Texas Certified Arborists to remove the non-native brush and trees from our property. This was to allow the large oak and elm trees to obtain proper sunlight and rain for survival and preservation. In 2011 one of the worst summer droughts in history took its toll on landscape in the area and our actions of vegetative clearing with intent to save the gorgeous heritage oaks worked!

At that time, we had no intentions of selling any of our property as we were working on putting in an extensive, and expensive, rainwater collection system, just off our front porch. VRI Austin approached us earlier this year with a comprehensive plan to develop the property in a peaceful and efficient manner. As we are in our early seventies, and our daughter is not interested in moving into the family home where we now reside, we listened to their offer, plans for the property, and decided, after negotiations, to accept. We may soon reach a point where we will not be able to navigate the hills and stairs in and around our home and will need to move to more "elderly-friendly" living quarters.

The rezoning is necessary to preserve all of the heritage trees and decrease the impervious cover as much as possible. VRI and its firm are "green" single family home builders. They have no interest in building dense developments that lend themselves to investor interest and depleted home values surrounding the project. They have a vision on our site to develop in a way that keeps integrity of the neighborhood in non-shared wall structures, limit the exclusivity central Austin has now obtained by making the homes affordable, and put a plan on the ground that will encourage a sense of community and allow families to move into the Zilker community. Their plans include solar energy, rainwater collection systems, and will provide for the use of environmentally friendly building materials.

I just wanted to attempt to bring some clarity to the situation, and I am hoping for your cooperation in getting this project to completion. As I understand, duplexes can be built on the property without any rezoning, which I do not want, since many are not owner-occupied, and would not maintain the stability our present neighborhood now enjoys. The duplex concept would increase impervious cover implications and require many more trees to be impacted on site.

Please feel free to contact me, if you have any further questions, or if I can provide additional information.

Joe & Hazel Joseph
1201 Robert E Lee Rd
Austin, Texas 78704
Phone: (512) 442-8467

Exhibit H

The result of intense development of the land neighboring our home would be a great loss in quality of life for existing residents in the name of financial gain for developers, a land owner, and the city coffers. Already, because of "growth" as a city goal, quality of life has diminished greatly in the last dozen years, and a rezoning of this property would continue that trend. Presumably "zoning" is in place to maintain a certain quality of life, but what is the point if zoning status is readily changed when an individual or company wants to make a profit?

Particular concerns:

- 1) Aesthetic concerns: A lovely green space would be replaced by view-blocking two-story houses, ugly and heat-generating concrete drives, lights, noise-generating air conditioners and cars, making the immediate environment unpleasant for us and other neighbors. This is in addition to the incredible disruption of noise, dust, and traffic during the construction period. We have had to endure living next to construction sites for many of our years in Austin, and we wonder why noise concerns seem to apply to live music in the evenings but not deafening building noises early on weekend mornings and throughout the day.
- 2) Loss of community: Dense housing creates residents that are separate from the community. The Zilker neighborhood has a great community feel which makes living here the amazing experience it is, but residents in the new luxury mansions and secluded town-house types of residences tend to be removed from the community and even complain about being located in the quirky "78704" area. That "quirkiness" is what most of us longer-term residents appreciate about this unique neighborhood. It isn't just a bedroom "close to downtown". Zilker neighborhood is a community of people bound by walking the neighborhood with our kids and dogs, stopping at the Bluebonnet Market, and spending time at wonderful Zilker Elementary for school or play.
- 3) Increased traffic that is already problematic: During rush hour, cars waiting for the Barton Springs Road light to change line up to near our driveway, beyond Barton Hills Drive. People are in a hurry and not careful—I was nearly hit last week at the stop sign at the top of Robert E. Lee Road as someone plowed through the stop sign out of turn in a rush to get to work. Our son has to cross Robert E. Lee to walk to his bus stop and cars already careen down that hill in a crowd and at high speeds. We worry that someone might hit him or hit the school bus that stops at the bottom of the hill. In addition, car fumes fill the road here, and make bicycling or walking uncomfortable and unhealthful during rush hour.
- 4) Wildlife habitat will be lost: We regularly see great horned owls, have had nesting broad winged hawks, see grey foxes, coyotes, white tailed deer and many

others. If this land is paved over, these animals along this important creek side corridor to Barton Creek will likely vanish with their habitat.

Please consider "quality of life" for Austin resident and not just "financial growth". Is it so "smart" to grow when it involves such a loss of what Austin means to its current residents? Although we live in an area that is now considered "Central Austin", we are not "downtown" and don't want our neighborhood to lose its South Austin charms. On the other side of our community we see Lamar being made over into an incredibly dense housing zone and anticipate all the adverse effects that will bring. Please keep part of our neighborhood intact as a viable community by voting no to rezoning the Robert E. Lee property.

Written comments must be submitted to the board or commission (or the contact person listed on the notice) before or at a public hearing. Your comments should include the board or commission's name, the scheduled date of the public hearing, and the Case Number and the contact person listed on the notice.

Case Number: C14-2012-0109
Contact: Lee Heckman, 512-974-7604
Public Hearing: Feb 26, 2013, Planning Commission
Apr 11, 2013, City Council

Helen Snook + Steve Stratakis

Your Name (please print)

1113 Robert E. Lee Rd.

Your address(es) affected by this application

Helen C. Snook + Steve Stratakis

Signature

☐ I am in favor
☒ I object

2/25/13

Date

Daytime Telephone: 512-444-3703

Comments: see attached

If you use this form to comment, it may be returned to:
City of Austin
Planning & Development Review Department
Lee Heckman
P. O. Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-8810

PUBLIC HEARING INFORMATION

This zoning/rezoning request will be reviewed and acted upon at two public hearings: before the Land Use Commission and the City Council. Although applicants and/or their agent(s) are expected to attend a public hearing, you are not required to attend. However, if you do attend, you have the opportunity to speak FOR or AGAINST the proposed development or change. You may also contact a neighborhood or environmental organization that has expressed an interest in an application affecting your neighborhood.

During its public hearing, the board or commission may postpone or continue an application's hearing to a later date, or may evaluate the City staff's recommendation and public input forwarding its own recommendation to the City Council. If the board or commission announces a specific date and time for a postponement or continuation that is not later than 60 days from the announcement, no further notice is required.

During its public hearing, the City Council may grant or deny a zoning request, or rezone the land to a less intensive zoning than requested but in no case will it grant a more intensive zoning.

However, in order to allow for mixed use development, the Council may add the MIXED USE (MU) COMBINING DISTRICT to certain commercial districts. The MU Combining District simply allows residential uses in addition to those uses already allowed in the seven commercial zoning districts. As a result, the MU Combining District allows the combination of office, retail, commercial, and residential uses within a single development.

For additional information on the City of Austin's land development process, visit our website:

www.austintexas.gov

R 2/27/13

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Case Number: C14-2012-0109

Contact: Lee Heckman, 512-974-7604

Public Hearing: Feb 26, 2013, Planning Commission

Apr 11, 2013, City Council

Lee Heckman

Your Name (please print)

2107 MELISSA PLACE UNIT B

Your address(es) affected by this application

2-22-13

Date

Signature

Daytime Telephone: (214) 801-2883

Comments: *Support what V&T is developing!*

See attached

[Signature]

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Contact: Lee Heckman, 512-974-7604

Public Hearing: Feb 26, 2013, Planning Commission

Apr 11, 2013, City Council

RAY IVOND

Your Name (please print)

1901 DEXTER ST

Your Address(es) affected by this application

Dynned P. Hr

Signature

Date

2/19/2013

Daytime Telephone: 512-472-1196

Comments: I am not in favor of changing the zoning. Increasing the density other than what is allowed in SFS. The intent is to increase the number of units. Living in this area for 20 years I know the traffic impact on Robert F Lee, Melridge & Glabannett and the safety issues that will happen if the zoning ~~change~~ happens.

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R 03/05/2013

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Case Number: C14-2012-0109

Contact: Lee Heckman, 512-974-7604

Public Hearing: Feb 26, 2013, Planning Commission

Apr 11, 2013, City Council

BEN SMITHERS

Your Name (please print)

2130 MELRIDGE PLACE

Your address(es) affected by this application

☐ I am in favor
☒ I object

Signature

Date

Daytime Telephone:

Comments: *Discrepancy with surrounding homes*

If you use this form to comment, it may be returned to:

City of Austin
Planning & Development Review Department

Lee Heckman

P. O. Box 1088

Austin, TX 78767-8810

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R 031513

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Case Number: C14-2012-0109

Contact: Lee Heckman, 512-974-7604

Public Hearing: Feb 26, 2013, Planning Commission

Apr 11, 2013, City Council

Donna Ramsey Hinson
Your Name (please print)

1116 Bluebonnet Lane

Your address(es) affected by this application

Donna Ramsey Hinson 3-12-13
Signature Date

Daytime Telephone: 512-476-4811 ext. 38

Comments: I object to the rezoning of these properties.

The topography and location so close to Barton Springs makes them unsuitable for any

form of density development. The clearing

by these lots last year has dramatically

increased erosion on the creek. All cleared area

within 150 feet of creek need to be replanted

with native species, not duplexes or

condos. Protection of Barton Springs is paramount.

If you use this form to comment, it may be returned to:

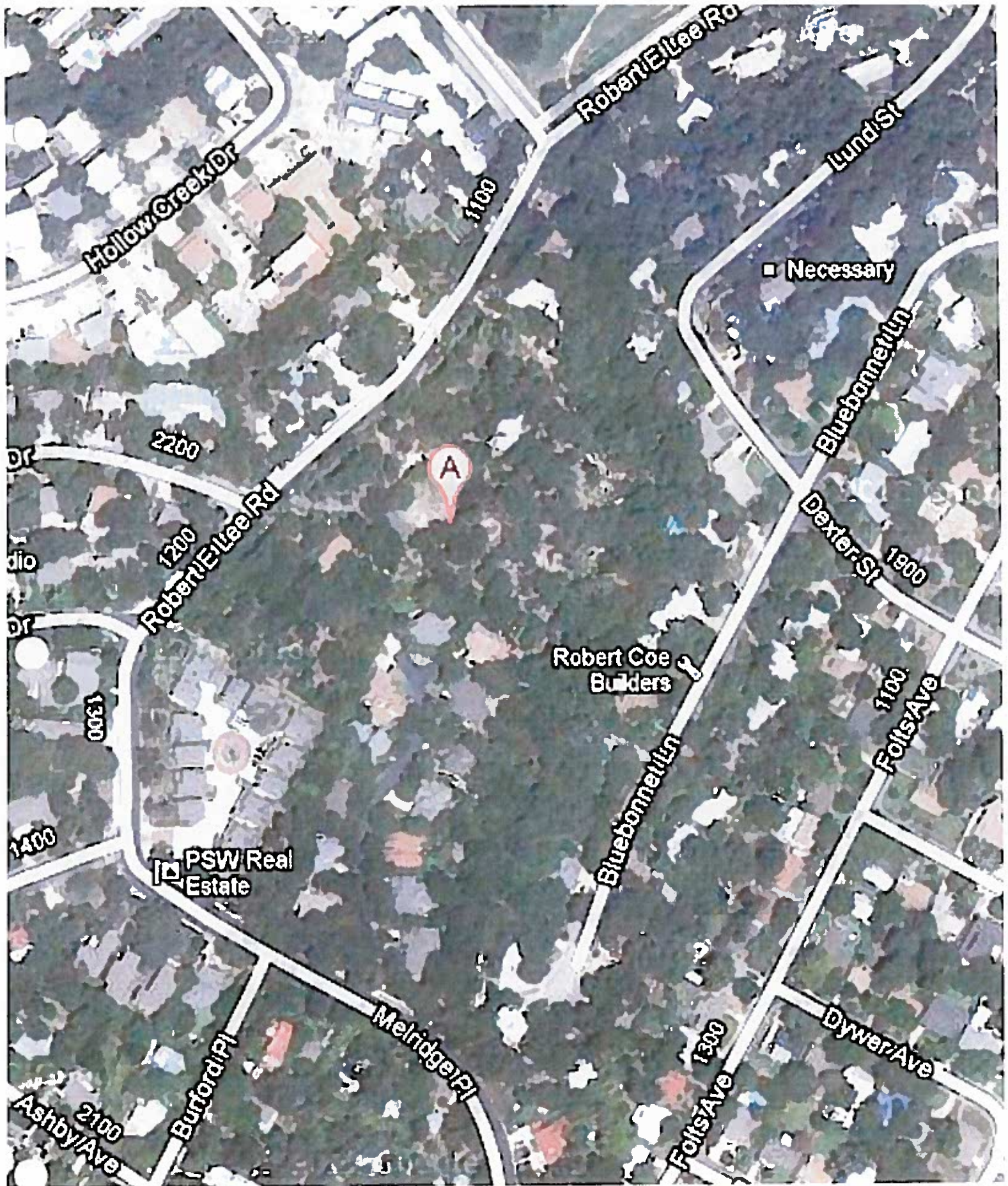
City of Austin

Planning & Development Review Department

Lee Heckman

P. O. Box 1088

Austin, TX 78767-8810



19 C14-2012-0109 MARCH 26, 2013
Submitted by DAVID DAVIS, 2133 Melridge Pl, 78704

