IMAGINEAUSTIN
Our Plan for the Future. **In Action Today.**

Land Development Code Advisory Group
draft Meeting #24 Minutes

October 20, 2014 at 4:00 pm
Carver Branch Library
1161 Angelina St., Austin, Texas 78702

Members in attendance: Jim Duncan, Stephen Delgado, Melissa Neslund, Jeff Jack, Will Herring, Dave Sullivan, Beverly Silas, Mandy De Mayo, Brian Reis.

Members Absent: Stephen Oliver.

Meeting Objective: Review Approach Alternatives & Annotated Outlines. The Advisory Group may vote on a resolution on any agenda item.

1. <u>Public Comment:</u> moved to the beginning of the meeting to provide the opportunity for anyone who had not spoken about the Approach Alternatives & Annotated Outlines in the previous two Code Advisory Group meetings. Comments included: consideration of the importance of the landscape architecture profession for the advisory group.

2. <u>Approval of Minutes:</u> minutes from October 6 meeting adopted by consensus.

3. <u>Review Approach Alternatives & Annotated Outlines:</u>
    Objective: General discussion of the Approach Alternatives & Annotated Outlines report and feedback from Advisory Group.
    Clarity was requested for the differences in approaches 2 and 3. Discussion included the amount of substantive rewrite that could occur under both approaches; the amount of form-based zones that could be incorporated to each alternative approach; the desire for a more detailed expert recommendation of what Austin needs and would require in order to properly implement Imagine Austin; the fear of a wasted opportunity for a comprehensive rewrite.

    Motion by the Code Advisory Group was to recommend Approach 2 with the following amendments: on the "Choosing the Approach" chart, changing the level of 'Content Rewriting' from medium to high, and changing the amount of 'Form-Based' development standards from medium to high. The motion passed 6-3, with Neslund, De Mayo, Sullivan, Silas, Delgado and Herring voting for, and Reis, Duncan and Jack voting against.
    Note: Most members of the CAG supported changing the level of 'Content Rewriting' from medium to high. The greater division occurred in adding the amendment to increase the level of form-based development standards.

4. Standing Items:
    a. Discuss structure and organization of Advisory Group
        - Consider selecting an individual to fill a vacancy: nominees present at the meeting were allowed to speak for one minute regarding their interest in the advisory group vacancy. Speakers included: Ed Wendler Jr., Brennan Griffin, Frank Harren, Michael Wong, Peter Pfeiffer (who withdrew his name in support of Ed Wendler), and Katherine Nicely. Voting on the vacancy was postponed to November 17 meeting by consensus.
    b. Discuss work product type and goals for Advisory Group
    c. Update from members on their outreach activities
    d. Report from Working Group on Envision Tomorrow
    e. Agenda items to consider for next meeting (November 17): Discuss document presented by Jeff Jack regarding neighborhood plans; elect a new member to fill current vacancy.

5. Presentation on neighborhood plans:
    Objective: Jeff Jack to present information on neighborhood plans
    Jeff Jack presented advisory group members with a proposed resolution to give Opticos direction to ensure that the new code is equipped to implement neighborhood plans. Discussion included vetting the proposed resolution through the joint Planning Commission Neighborhood Plan subcommittee and CAG working group formed earlier this year. The item was postponed to the November 17, 2014 meeting with a request that the working group look at it in the meantime.

6. Presentation on green infrastructure:
    Objective: Eleanor McKinney to present information on green infrastructure
    Presentation on integrating nature into the city for CodeNEXT: presentation identified best practices across the nation for green infill codes and performance based codes, identified tools that the City of Austin should consider moving forward, and expressed the passion and interest for the American Society of Landscape Architects to be involved with CodeNEXT.

7. CodeNEXT Team response to public comment

Meeting adjourned at 6:05pm

September 30, 2014

The Honorable Lee Leffingwell, Mayor
Honorable City Council Members
City of Austin
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, Texas 78767

Ref: CodeNEXT Code Approach Alternatives & Annotated Outlines

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

When Imagine Austin was adopted in 2012, our community codified the aspiration for all City codes, plans, and ordinances to begin to orient over time toward Austin's collective vision. In this roadmap we committed to setting priorities, thinking holistically, expanding the growth-shaping toolkit, measuring progress, and adapting to our rapidly-developing landscape.

Unpredictable code interpretations, rising costs, and disconnected and overwhelmed infrastructure introduce risk and inefficiency to the development process, inflicting detrimental pressures on our businesses and neighborhoods. Our adopted plan points us toward a healthier future, if we can successfully implement it. Thoughtful urban design can harness—and even capitalize on—the inevitable growth and change of the coming decades in ways that improve quality of life while preserving our neighborhoods' character.

In the absence of a strong central vision, the fight to protect and improve Austin's quality of life has previously focused on implementation of piecemeal development tools. The Code Approaches laid out by the CodeNEXT team provide a general framework for orienting our existing ordinances toward our adopted plan. The recommended "Deep Clean" hybrid path balances reorganization and alignment of existing content with a more robust performance-based toolkit that more fully realizes the intent behind Austin's most embattled and influential ordinances.

AIA Austin strongly recommends that this City Council authorize the CodeNEXT team to continue the "Deep Clean" trajectory. Our community must continue working toward infusing our adopted priorities into all layers of the code and regulatory framework. We cannot ignore the urgency of growth that, in the absence of a healthy regulatory system, threatens to apply destabilizing pressures on our community. This is a historic opportunity for the City's leaders and staff, together with community stakeholders, to strike an utterly crucial balance with a development code that can help avoid unhappy surprises, reduce delays, and promote efficiency—all while preserving the character and appeal that has made Austin such a great destination and place to live. We stand ready to continue our participation in this process and welcome any questions or comments.

Sincerely

Philip Keil
2014 President

October 13, 2014

Mayor Lee Leffingwell
and members of the Austin City Council
City of Austin
301 W. Second Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Re: Code Approach Alternatives & Annotated Outlines

Dear Honorable Mayor and Council:

For the past year, the CodeNEXT consultant team has worked with citizens, developers, landowners, local officials and planning staff to determine a direction for the city's land development regulations. The recently released Code Approach Alternatives & Annotated Outlines provides options for the new development code, ranging from a "brisk sweep" to a "complete makeover."

After deliberate consideration, **CNU supports "Approach 3," a complete makeover.**

This City Council has labored under this dysfunctional code for many years, crafting custom solutions on a case-by-case basis. The arduous task of making our City a better place in spite of outdated regulations has been yours. CodeNEXT is your opportunity to create a more equitable and functional code for all. Your unique perspective gives you the responsibility to set the direction for this critical project.

While it is tempting to select a less comprehensive approach, we do not believe that the problems Austin is facing, including skyrocketing housing costs, diminishing diversity in many parts of our City, and land-use patterns that do not support a multi-mobility system, can be resolved by tepid half measures.

The Code Diagnosis found serious flaws with our current code: it's disorganized, laden with contradictions and an administrative labyrinth. The code rewrite represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to:
- Simplify the code and the development review process
- Accommodate growth, while making our City a better, more diverse place
- Address affordability (all housing options at all price points in all parts of the City)
- Integrate transit and improve mobility options
- Create complete and diverse communities

Critically, the selected approach must:
- Use the code to shape the City envisioned by our Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan
- Continue to gather <u>representative</u> public input
- Promote more by-right development
- Focus more on form than use
- Reduce the application of customized, site-specific zoning

In conclusion, the CodeNEXT project provides you with an immense opportunity to create a long-lasting impact on the <u>entire</u> city and its surrounding region. The weight of thousands of voices is behind the Imagine Austin Plan, and the Plan sets high expectations for the adoption of a great land development code through a complete makeover.

CNU is a multi-disciplinary organization recognized globally as a leader in city-building. The local members of the Congress for the New Urbanism stand ready to provide assistance and expertise on this project that is so critical for the future of our great city.

Regards,

Cid Galindo, President
Congress for the New Urbanism, Central Texas Chapter

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speakupaustin! The City of Austin's community engagement portal

Discussion: CodeNEXT: Setting a Path for Austin's Code

CodeNEXT is an initiative to realize the Austin we imagined -- by updating Austin's 30-year-old land development code that determines where development can go.

Following the "Listening to the Community" and the "Code Diagnosis" phases of the project, the Code Approach Alter...

Code Approach Alternatives

| 1 Topics | 1 Attachments | 2 Answers | Closes 2014-10-20 |

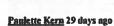View Discussion
Topic: What do you think about the recommended approach?
2 Responses

× Before you respond to this topic please: Sign In or Sign Up
2 Responses

Paulette Kern 29 days ago

As a lay person, I find it difficult to follow and understand the Code Next Language. In you proposed approach #2, deep clean and reset, please elaborate on the meaning of "through a significant reworking of its content and structure". Does this mean you would redefine zoning categories and requirements? If so, what is the goal?

1 Vote

Coapublic Information admin 18 days ago

Great question Paulette. The goal is to craft a land development code that is easy to use and helps build a better Austin for everyone.

This is a complex, technical initiative and we'll try to help clarify here:

Yes, we would redefine existing zoning categories, and the goal is to simplify the complex system of overlays.

Each approach is made up of three elements: code format and organization, development review, and development standards

Format refers to the way information is presented on a page; size and style of text, indenting, clear graphics, tables, and paragraph structure help make information easy to find and understand. Organization refers to the way information is arranged within the overall code document (for example in the table of contents) to enable all users to easily navigate and find the information they need. Approach 2 would replace the existing format and organization of the land development code.

Development review refers to how you use the code, for example the processes by which development applications are submitted, evaluated and approved or denied. Approach 2 relies more on a by-right model, where development applications that comply with the zoning regulations can move quickly to the building permit.

Development standards refers to what and how a code regulates, for example permitted land uses (residential, commercial, etc.), dimensional standards (lot size, building height, etc.), and environmental regulations. Approach 2 calls for a moderate level of change to the content of the existing development standards.

To view the Code Approaches Alternatives Report and a new video overview, visit http://www.austintexas.gov/department/next-steps-analysis

0 Votes

comment...	
	Reply to Coapublic Information

comment...	
	Reply to Paulette Kern

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email address   Sign Up

Participants

Ideas In Action

MACC parking available to residents with proof of residency during street closures March 17-20. MACC permit required.
Enforcement to prevent SXSW parking traffic.
Single Member Districts without Gerrymandering
Add the ability to change/remove options on this site
Bike Lane or sidewalks down Lakeline to Metro Station

Recent Activity

hasan zamil created an Idea
hasan zamil created an Idea
Kat Botts created an Idea
Kat Botts voted on an Idea
Kat Botts voted on an Idea

Projects

CodeNEXT: Shaping the Austin We Imagine
Elevate Austin

From:	Joyce Basciano ████████████
Sent:	Monday, October 20, 2014 12:17 PM
To:	Zapalac, George
Cc:	Adams, George; Dugan, Matthew; Jeff Jack; Leffingwell, Lee; Cole, Sheryl; Morrison, Laura; Tovo, Kathie; Spelman, William; Martinez, Mike [Council Member]; Riley, Chris
Subject:	CodeNEXT Approaches and Issues

Dear George,

As I said several months ago at City Council Subcommittee meeting, the CodeNEXT process is seriously flawed. The latest work product "Code Approach Alternatives & Annotated Outlines" lacks specifics and details necessary for the public and the City Council to make an informed decision. This is not surprising since it is primarily based on two incomplete work products: the "Code Diagnosis" and the "Neighborhood Plan Summary". We are being rushed into the code development process without fully understanding the existing code 9and it is really not that complex). It is premature for City Council to select a code approach at this time, rather the approach should be selected by the new 10/1 City Council who will ultimately approve the final version of the code.

We have been able to thrive as a city perfectly well with the existing code. This strongly suggests to me that what our existing code really needs is reorganization and some "tweaking" to fill in the loopholes. This would be similar to Approach 1, "The Brisk Sweep". In my opinion, if more time was scheduled to work on the "Code Diagnosis" and the "Neighborhood Plan Summary" the CodeNEXT team would be recommending Approach 1, or possibly a "hybrid" between Approach 1 and 2 ("The Deep Clean"). I believe that this would be the least expensive and least contentious approach.

The public deserves a more transparent, balanced and iterative process. The last public input meeting of the CAG was not recorded, yet staff announces strong citizen support for Approach 3 ("The Complete Makeover"). Some in the community interpret Approach 3 to mean starting with a "clean slate", that is, doing away with the entire existing code and Neighborhood Plans. This misinterpretation needs to be corrected as soon as possible. The composition of the Land Development CAG remains stacked in favor of the development community. Also, the public needs to know how the data we submitted with the "Community in a Box Exercise" will be used during the code rewrite process.

The next phase of the CodeNEXT process needs to be clearly defined as the existing CodeNEXT Timeline gives us few details. How is the CodeNEXT team going to "foster a robust conversation in Austin"? When will the public be able to review the "Envision Tomorrow Scenarios"?

Finally, have you forwarded the Intent Paragraphs that were removed from the LDC to Dan Parolek? He did ask for them the last time he visited Austin. Thank you for forwarding them to me. Intent paragraphs would definitely help PDR permitting staff to interpret the new Land Development Code.

Joyce Basciano

Zapalac, George

Not enough information to recommend any approach, this is a job for the new 10-1 council.

Zapalac, George

The Citizen Advisory Group should recommend that the decision on which CodeNext approach to take should be decided by the new City Council in January. This delay will not impact the timeline for CodeNext, and it will assure that CodeNext has the support of a majority of the citizens of Austin.

Malcolm Yeatts Austin Neighborhood Council Sector 9 Representative