



IMAGINEAUSTON

Our Plan for the Future. In Action Today.

Land Development Code Advisory Group Meeting #37 Minutes

September 1, 2015 at 6:00 pm
Austin Public Library Windsor Park Branch
5833 Westminster Dr, Austin, Texas 78723

Members in attendance: Jim Duncan, Jeff Jack, Dave Sullivan, Mandy De Mayo, Nuria Zaragoza, Sarah Linares, Kevin Wier, Melissa Neslund, Beverly Silas,

Members Absent: Stephen Oliver, Will Herring, Brian Reis, Stephen Delgado, Jackie Goodman.

Meeting Objective: Public Comment. The Advisory Group may vote on a resolution on any agenda item.

1. Approval of Minutes: Approved on consent.
2. Review criteria and Focus Areas to be studied during the November 2015 Code Workshop: Jim Robertson of the City of Austin discussed the most recent list of focus areas to be studied during the November Sound Check. Discussion included: the size of focus areas; addressing transition zones; that focus areas represent place types that can be found elsewhere in the city; how the community can plug in; examples of other places in the city that have shared characteristics with chosen focus areas; general project plan for CodeNEXT; how approved neighborhood plans will interact with the new code and how they will be incorporated into the testing during the November workshop; that the role of staff is to provide tools for the toolkit, leading ultimately to City Council deciding where the tools should be applied; language for the workshop lacking consistency between language used in Imagine Austin; timeline of when a draft code would be ready; a hybrid approach to a code rewrite; the role that advisory group members can play moving forward.
3. Public Comment: Discussion included: the desire to increase density in central Austin neighborhoods; that neighborhoods have experienced rapid infill and redevelopment with a negative impact on stormwater management; density is less affordable; Austin is the most segregated city in the United States; encouragement for the code to take a holistic view of the context regarding flooding, infrastructure, transportation and other land uses; how public input will be gathered and used at the November workshop is not clear; RECA has provided white papers on the topic of affordability, and the role that supply plays; putting a constraint on supply will damage affordability; support for a comprehensive rewrite of the land development

code because it will help us deal with all the moving parts rather than suffocate beneath it; ASLA has submitted comments online regarding green compatibility, tree canopy goals, access to parks and ensuring that new development does not worsen flooding; complexity of the code was designated as one of the barriers to more affordable housing; single-family detached houses are gone as an affordable living option in central Austin; the only way to get at affordability is to densify; a comprehensive rewrite of the land development code will provide clarity and predictability for people to understand what is happening around them; length of time and delays in process negatively affect affordability; unclear on how input is used; the desire to see draft code before November; exploring options in order to avoid growing like every other big city; incorporating a better use of architecture through form-based codes; provide evidence that form-based code is appropriate for Austin; maintaining overlays and design standards for areas of historic preservation; questions regarding what information would be available leading up to the November workshop; the need to address neighborhoods and growth including how neighborhood plans will be respected; the code needs more pictures; the toolkit needs to go back to the basics and to trust in city staff; encouragement to include a central-city neighborhood as a focus test area in November; fear is misplaced regarding the rewrite of the code; support for compact and connectedness is imperative from advisory group members; neighborhood plans allow for tearing down expensive homes and building more expensive homes; affordability for teachers, police officers and others is necessary; the code needs to be good, predictable and sensible; make sure to include utilities and understand how these all work together and how all of the components affect affordability from a big picture perspective.

4. Closing remarks from the CodeNEXT staff team: as criteria and standards for testing are developed they will be shared; thank you to all members for their service over the past two years.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm