



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Design Commission

Recommendation Number: 20160328-2D.

Request to authorize utilization of message board similar to Council

WHEREAS meeting only monthly in-person and abiding by Open Meetings Act restrictions on communications between Austin Design Commission members can substantially slow the work of the Commission;

WHEREAS changes to the Open Meetings Act spearheaded by Austin's own Senator Kirk Watson created an exception (Sec. 551.006) to those restrictions, allowing members of a governmental body to communicate or exchange information regarding their official business as long as "(1) the communication is in writing; (2) the writing is posted to an online message board or similar Internet application that is viewable and searchable by the public; and (3) the communication is displayed in real time and displayed on the online message board or similar Internet application for no less than 30 days after the communication is first posted";

WHEREAS the Austin City Council created such a message board at <http://austincouncilforum.org/> and makes use of it for Council business;

WHEREAS for many members of the public, reading about the Commission's business is probably easier than watching long videos of meetings;

WHEREAS the members of the Austin Design Commission wish to expeditiously yet transparently discharge their duties under the city code;

WHEREAS the Commission wishes to utilize the message board to discuss general matters and policies and not to actively debate the merits of specific cases that are to come before the Commission;

WHEREAS this may serve as a useful experiment to inform the practices of other city commissions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Austin Design Commission requests that the Austin City Council allow members of the Commission to utilize a new section of the Council's message board created for members of the Commission to discuss Commission business between meetings, and direct staff to make any necessary technical changes to make this possible.

Date of Approval: March 28, 2016

Record of the vote:

The motion to approve the Resolution as amended on the Dias made by Commissioner Conor Kenny; Second by Commissioner Heyden Walker was unanimously approved on a 9-0 vote.
(Commissioner David Carroll absent)

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jorge E. Rousselin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent vertical stroke on the left side.

Jorge E. Rousselin, CNU-A
Design Commission Executive Liaison