

From: Zenobia Joseph
To: [Richardson, Ashley](#)
Cc: [Ojeda, Felicia](#); [Washington, Mark](#)
Subject: Thank you!_Re: Convention Center and Palm School District 9 Town Hall
Date: Tuesday, March 28, 2017 3:55:51 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[Palm School Preservation \(VITF Citizens Communication\) 28Mar2017-355pm_zcj.pdf](#)

To: Ashley B. Richardson

Policy Aide

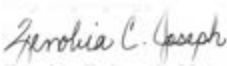
Mayor Pro Tem Tovo, District 9

1. Gratitude: Thanks tremendously for promptly sending the Palm School Town Hall weblink. I'm not sure how it's archived on ATXN, but I couldn't find it. So you've been a godsend. I'm actually listening to the video while sitting in the Visitor Impact Task Force (VITF) Regular Meeting at Austin Convention Center and, thus far, appreciate hearing Commissioner Margaret Gómez share an overview of the site's history in addition to Judge Sarah Eckhardt provide insight into the Palm School no longer serving a programmatic function due to movement of social services clients.

2. Pending: I copied Felicia Ojeda to share the link with VITF members and attached my Citizens Communication testimony from today (March 28, 2017), noting archived Travis County Commissioners Court weblinks that may be helpful to you as you prepare for the upcoming Palm School Committee Meeting. The genesis of my request for the link came from a VITF member asking if I thought Palm School could be used for an African-American Museum. I referred the member to my interest in the Dedrick-Hamilton House and, too, with funding of the African-American Cultural and Historical Facility, I mentioned use of the Palm School as an African-American Museum may be unlikely. The member then asked if I knew the history. I mentioned that Palm School had, in part, military history. Subsequently, I read an Austin American-Statesman article that chronicled the site's changes over time. This resource may be helpful to you as well. Please send me the date and location once the next Palm School Committee Meeting is confirmed. You may also want to copy Ms. Ojeda, too. ~Thanks.

- Reference: Walsh, S. (2015, October 20). Should former Palm School site be sold to developers or preserved? Retrieved from <http://www.mystatesman.com/news/local/should-former-palm-school-site-sold-developers-preserved/nysD5MjePakpbp5ziX8VmM/>

Very respectfully,



Zenobia C. Joseph

On Tue, Mar 28, 2017 at 2:11 PM, Richardson, Ashley
<Ashley.Richardson@austintexas.gov> wrote:

Dear Ms. Joseph,

This link will allow you to watch the Town Hall meeting that occurred on February 25, 2017.

<http://austintx.swagit.com/play/03032017-548>

I'll be in touch soon regarding any future meetings related to Palm School.

Best,

Ashley

Ashley B. Richardson

Policy Aide

Mayor Pro Tem Tovo, District 9



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March 28, 2017

Visitor Impact Task Force, Regular Meeting

Topics: [*Errors contained in original transcript.]

1) Palm School Historic Preservation [Pending: Historic Structure Report]

Citizens Communication: Zenobia C. Joseph

2) Austin Convention Center Expansion: **Ensure economic opportunities for low-wage workers** (e.g., \$13/hr. living wage, benefits)

Palm School Committee: <https://www.traviscountytx.gov/commissioners-court/board-committee-appointments?appt=Palm%20School%20Committee>
December 15, 2015 [Charge]: <http://traviscountytx.iqm2.com/Citizens/SplitView.aspx?Mode=Video&MeetingID=1559&Format=Minutes>
May 21, 2016 [CM Renteria]: "Conversation on Palm Park" [conjoined w/Palm School] — <http://austintx.swagit.com/play/05272016-569/>
February 7, 2017: Transcript: <http://traviscountytx.iqm2.com/Citizens/SplitView.aspx?Mode=Video&MeetingID=1701&Format=Minutes>
February 25, 2017 (Palm School Town Hall - Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo): <http://austintx.swagit.com/play/03032017-548>

Feb 7, 2017 9:00 AM Commissioners Court Voting Session

[Show prev 60 sec](#)

[Eckhardt:] Next, we will go to our palm school item, which is agenda item number 9, to receive update on efforts and progress related to the palm school committee. Hello, mr.r ilbert [Gilbert].

[Gilbert:] ~~We meet~~[It's me] again, yes.

[Eckhardt:] Wearing palm trees because it's almost 90 outside.

11:10 AM [Gilbert:][That's right]. Underneath a heavy jacket. so, the purpose of this item is to give y'all an update. It has been a little bit of time since we[ve] talked about it in court. To give a brief timeline to the **best of my ability, we started talking about palm school and its potential future as soon as we started talking about the [N]orth campus development. Since that is still slated for health and human services staff currently to relocate to airport boulevard.**In February of 2016, all y'all, the commissioners, gave action towardd a c[o]mmittee charge for the palm school committee under Commissioner Gomez. That palm school committee was charged w h exploring the preservation of the building and its historic designation in any future use, as well as additional historic designations, and to examine the current and previous uses of palm school utilizing the services of a professional historian, an architettural istorian, and a structural engineer. Through committee meetings it became a participant -- apparent that before much could b@ done in terms of making informed decisions about the building's future or how best to restore and preserve it, a historic structure report would be needed. That was what came after the committee charge in February of 2016, was a decision to draft ascope of work for a historic structure report. And that was largely done with the help of the travis county historical commission, which was completed through the spring and summer o 2016, awaiting a funding allocation on October 1st of 2016 for the funds necessary to carry out such a historic structure report with external services. We did receive funds through the budget process on October 1st. And then due to a lot of changes in our office, were not able to really get to that item until late december. We had a meeting of the pala scho l committee with several members from the city of austin present asking about the stay us to -- status of that, to which I said I would get the rfq out as quickly as possible. That [RFQ] did go out for the **historic structure report** on February 3rd. There is actually a pre-submittal conference for that tomorrow and it will be open until February 22nd, at which time we have an evaluation committee made up of my office as well as facilities management on selecting a successful respndent. That should be very timely in the sense that if we hire that team over spring we hope they can complete their historicstructure report through the st of 2017 and allow for 2018 to be more work with the palm school committeee on making recommendatioo about the palm school's future before the building is vacatede by hhs in 2019.

11:13 AM [Eckhardt:] That sounds great. and I was digging back through my stuff, and I didn't pull it up. We did have a charge with regard to palm school. And Commissioner Gomez, do you want to give us an update on where we are on the charge?

[Gomez:] I think he has just run through basically the steps that we're -- we've taken. The good thing is, belinda and mark have been attending our meetings to hold us to the charge to make sure we didn't lose our way. And so we've had some successf[u] meetings of folks who were interested in this issue. And now we have reached the point where it's time to get the rfq up so we'll have better information as we continue [di]scussing this issue. The city of austin is very much interested in this, as well as the **nature conservancy** and we are getting a lot of support for these issues, but they're waiting for this particular in[f]ormation to move forward.

11:14 AM [Eckhardt:] With regard to the utilization of this information, we would use this to put restrictive covenants on the property in advance to putting out request for proposals for its purchase?

[Gomez:] > [Well] I imagine that those are the next steps. Are they, mark?

[Mark:] Yes. we had several steps that we were hoping to follow in a linear function in terms of ma[k]ing decisions. **And everyth[i]ng is still hinging on this historic structure report, which is a depth of information that really informs all the possible recommendations, all the possible conclusions we can draw.**

[Gomez:] And we've been very careful to make sure that wee don't skip any steps, and make sure that we, kind of, move forward carefully.

[Mark:] And deanna just infomed me that I was supposed to mention the official palm school committee list still lists belinda powell and the p o staff contact.

March 28, 2017

Visitor Impact Task Force, Regular Meeting

Topics:

1) Palm School Historic Preservation [Pending: Historic Report]

Citizens Communication: Zenobia C. Joseph

2) Austin Convention Center Expansion: **Ensure economic opportunities for low-wage workers** (e.g., \$13/hr. living wage, benefits)