

January 23, 2017

To
City Mayor
City of Austin Council
Zoning and Planning Commission

Subject: Oppose Plan Amendment Zoning Case: C14-20170097
File Number: NPA-2017-0015.03
Project Name: Jackie Robinson Residential

Dear Mayor, City Council Members, Planning Commissioners, COA Employees,

We request that you allow the current zoning and Neighborhood Plan designation to stay as it is. We understand that vacant property in our neighborhood will be developed and we support the continued development of Austin, as long as it is thoughtfully done to ensure the future needs of citizens. We support the right of all property owners to develop their property or sell their property at a profit as they see fit.

We believe approving the zoning change and NP change will lead to traffic on Delano St to be over the acceptable level of 1800 trips per day.

The first NTA (Neighborhood Traffic Analysis) done showed that this development would create unacceptable traffic levels on Delano St. The study showed 1406 trips per day as existing traffic and 1,919 trips per day with a 64 unit development. We understand that another NTA was done wherein the study used the development specifications as proposed by the developer's agent, Jim Wittliff. If these conditions are met, we understand that the traffic analysis shows that the traffic will not be at an unacceptable level. However, the study does not take into account that 13 additional duplexes are under construction in the neighborhood right now, and the folks moving into these dwellings will be using Delano St (and its extension Ft Branch Blvd) for all their driving. Adding 26 additional dwellings to the neighborhood means an additional 169 to 247 trips per day. The existing traffic as counted on the days of the study were 1406 trips per day. 1406 plus the 269 trips from the 62 units of the development plus the 169 to 247 from new construction is a total of 1844 to 1922 trips, which is unacceptable.

Thirty or more neighbors within 500 feet of the project are requesting that the zoning and NP not be changed. They cite traffic and affordability as their reasons, but traffic is the predominant reason. One neighbor explained to me that his mirror on his parked truck (on Delano) had been clipped twice in the last 2 months, each time requiring repairs.

As suggested as a compromise by Planning Commissioner Trinity White, we were interested in lowering the number of units in this development. However, we were told by Jim Wittliff that the project would not go forward using that reduced number. The last page of this letter includes traffic data calculated by City employees expressing the traffic effects of reducing the number of dwelling units.

Please see the chart on page 3 of the Memorandum revised January 17, prepared by traffic analyst Mehrnaz Mehraein from the Development Services Department. Please also see the list of current construction or soon to be available dwelling units that will be using Delano St. at the end of this letter.

If a compromise cannot be worked out, we request that the Planning Commission and City Council turn down the request for the change and allow the zoning and Neighborhood Plan to remain the same.

Explanation of details regarding traffic issues on Delano St.: We are concerned about the pressure to continue development above the current zoning and neighborhood plan without the proper infrastructure. The infrastructure we are discussing is the street and road system. The traffic study done shows unusually high traffic counts for Delano St. of 1409 trips per day, a surprisingly high number of trips considering the street itself. Analysis of the neighborhood reveals that the reason for this is that almost all traffic in the area, including The City of Austin Maintenance facility traffic, is funneled through Delano St. That is because the Hudson St / Delano St route is the only convenient route through the area. The slide show presented at the Planning Commission hearing on Jan 23 will demonstrate the problem.

Delano St is functioning as an arterial street, but is designed as a residential collector street, which is why it carries traffic beyond what it would normally be expected to carry. Delano St. is 30 feet wide with cars parked on the street night and day.

The neighborhood needs additional streets to carry the load of traffic. Streets that are shown on the FLUM do not exist and are not even secured rights-of-way. To provide that street infrastructure to develop this area would involve purchasing property or possibly using eminent domain. Since that is an iffy prospect, we must not add further density until this issue is addressed.

We are gratified that pedestrian safety needs in this high-traffic neighborhood are now being addressed using Capital Improvement Funds. This is a very positive step, although it does not address the actual traffic issues. We understand the developer is offering to build additional sidewalks. Although valuable, we believe it would be better not to bring traffic over acceptable levels.

Lacking a plan to address the traffic over-capacity issue in the neighborhood, this development would be a detriment to the following East MLK Combined Neighborhood Plan Goals:

- # 4 Promote the development and enhancement of the neighborhood's major corridors.
- # 7 Create a transportation network that allows all residents to travel safely throughout the neighborhood by improving safety on major arterials and neighborhood streets.

However, we believe either building the development with the lower number of units (40); or building homes using the current zoning would be in alignment with the following East MLK Combined Neighborhood Plan Goals:

- # 2 Promote a mix of land uses that respect and enhance the existing neighborhood and address compatibility between residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
- # 9 Improve bicycle and pedestrian traffic safety on neighborhood streets.
- # 11 Protect and enhance the neighborhood ... by reducing ... dumping in this neighborhood.
- # 12 Improve the quality, safety, and cleanliness of area creeks, and reduce the impact of flooding in the neighborhood.

We would like to present our additional concerns about this development:

Illegal Fill: There are multiple piles of illegal fill material on the property. Some appear to be 30 feet or so in height. We understand that the developer has an option to purchase the property from the seller, who was responsible for the putting the fill there. These fill piles require expensive mitigation. The burden of this problem should not be borne by the neighborhood, but by those responsible. We would like to mention that multiple piles of illegal fill are on additional property tracts in the neighborhood, all created and owned by the owner of this property. These piles were being added to as recently as 2016.

Infrastructure in the Hog Pen realities and FLUM conclusions: The Hog Pen area has some very serious infrastructure shortcomings. There are residents without water and sewer facilities living on Hudson St. right now. There are multiple streets without storm gutters. The topography in the area is dramatically hilly. The Neighborhood Plan and FLUM says: "Because of the rural nature and limited infrastructure in the Hog Pen area, development is not suitable." (paraphrased) Overdevelopment is not advisable.

In Conclusion: We acknowledge that the developer's agent has made an honorable effort to work with us. The high traffic count already existing on Delano St. is the result of several forces, including flawed street design concepts in the 1980's that created especially long residential streets, past agricultural use, hilly topography, and neglect by the City of Austin to create the needed streets. These are not the fault of the developer. On the other hand, there is existing zoning and Land Use Plans that could be used to build homes on this property.

Please allow the existing code and Neighborhood Plan to continue.

If the Planning Commission and City Council approve this zoning and plan change against our recommendation, then we ask that the developer follow through on a conditional overlay that would include the following items AND contribute \$40,000 toward a project that would benefit the neighborhood as a whole. The project would be decided upon jointly by the developer and the Hog Pen Neighborhood Association. The project selected would either be the sidewalks as originally required by the city or a project as designated in the Capital Improvement Project Requests. An example of a worthy project is a needed walking/bicycle bridge over Fort Branch Creek to connect our neighborhood to Springdale Park, the only park close to this section of the neighborhood. If the developer is required to create some, but a lesser amount, of sidewalks than originally requested, the remainder of the \$40,000 would then go toward a project other than sidewalks.

- Three detention ponds with 110% of existing flood water retention
- Save 98% of trees 12" or over in diameter

Future requests: In addition to our recommendation for the development being considered today, we would like to express our strong concern for the future in our area and ask officials for awareness of traffic issues as a whole in the neighborhood as future zoning changes are requested. Considering the compact development encouraged by Codenext, considering future zoning change requests in the pipeline (The Aviary and Interlocal), considering the recent \$15 million sale of a property in the neighborhood to be developed, and considering the rapid dense development happening in our area already; we must all be aware that infrastructure needs must be met before and during development. We are asking the City to enact an ordinance that would require some additional street right-of-way acquisition and construction as shown on the present FLUM (or equivalent transportation corridors) to alleviate the over-capacity traffic pressure on one narrow residential street that serves the entire area. We ask that this

ordinance require future zoning change and NP change requests in this area to contribute to the needed street infrastructure.

We also ask that future zoning and NP change requests have traffic studies done that assess Delano St. as a whole to be used. In other words, measuring traffic on Delano at its outflow area (close to Webberville Rd.), not near the traffic origination.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Susan Tingley and for the:
East MLK Combined Contact Team
and the Hog Pen Neighborhood Association

AVERAGE TRAFFIC VOLUME

Using the same ITE code 210, and the same trip assignment percentages, the average daily traffic volume of each proposed intensity is as the following:

Intensity	Total Traffic (Vehicle per day)
48 DU	1,799
43 DU	1,765
36 DU	1,709

Prepared by Mehrnaz Mehraein of the Development Services Department

Construction in the neighborhood right now.

Current construction of single family duplexes that must use Delano St (and it's extension, Fort Branch Blvd.) as the only ingress and outgress. These homes were not occupied at the time of the traffic study, but will be adding to the overall traffic load soon. Each address represents 2 dwellings, as each are duplexes. This represents 26 additional families with that many additional trips per day. Using the above figures to interpolate, that would mean an additional 169 trips per day or using the figure given to me for single family homes, 247 trips.

- 1220 Delano St.
- 1102 Delano St.
- 1116 Eleanor St.
- 1120 Eleanor St.
- 1142 Eleanor St.
- 1218 Eleanor St.
- 1307 Fort Branch Blvd.
- 1305 Fort Branch Blvd.
- 1309 Fort Branch Blvd.
- 1311 Fort Branch Blvd.
- 1313 Fort Branch Blvd.
- 1416 Fort Branch Blvd.
- 1418 Fort Branch Blvd.

Numerous vacant lots are available in the neighborhood that will probably be built out in the future. Although we did not consider these future traffic possibilities in our calculations at this time, we must be aware that development in the area will be continuing:

- 1214 Delano St.
- 5501 Harold Ct.
- 1124 Eleanor St.
- 1128 Eleanor St.
- 1138 Eleanor St.
- 1224 Eleanor St.
- 1412 Fort Branch Blvd.
- 1414 Fort Branch Blvd.