

Zilker Neighborhood Association

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February 8, 2019

Re: C14-2018-0128, 2323 S. Lamar, rezoning hearing, Feb. 12, 2019
To: City of Austin Planning Commission

In the case of the rezoning hearing for 2323 S. Lamar, the Zoning Committee of the Zilker Neighborhood Association (ZNA) requests a postponement to the Planning Commission's next meeting, on February 26.

ZNA appreciates the cooperation among the South Lamar Neighborhood Association (SLNA), City of Austin staff, and the previous owner during the rezoning of this site in 2008. That effort produced a well-calibrated set of conditions designed to balance neighborhood and developer interests in providing more multifamily housing on South Lamar with the urgent need to correct major problems of the drainage and street systems on and surrounding the property. The agreement is documented in the existing zoning ordinance and in a private restrictive covenant, which should be carefully considered in this new rezoning request.

A lot has changed since 2008, but the infrastructure problems persist, affecting:

1. access to Zilker Elementary School on Bluebonnet for families in both ZNA and SLNA,
2. everyone's access to businesses and transit on South Lamar, including residents in the Foundation Communities permanent supportive housing next door to this site and in the 120-unit apartment building under construction for the Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA) on the ZNA side of South Lamar Blvd.
3. impervious cover and flood mitigation in a 100-year inundation zone extending from the ZNA side of South Lamar Blvd. through the site in question all the way to West Bouldin Creek.

Now that both the Del Curto Storm Sewer Improvement project and a reconfiguration of the intersection at Bluebonnet and South Lamar (described in the South Lamar Corridor Plan) are poised to move from the planning stages to engineering and implementation, ZNA is eager to work with our SLNA neighbors and city staff to assure that redevelopment of this problematic site is consistent with those long-term infrastructure projects. We would hate to see this property come up for site plan review with features that interfere with or preclude the completion of capital improvement projects in which the community is already heavily invested. These issues should be dealt with now, in connection with the zoning, and not left to the site plan stage. That is why we are working with SLNA to examine the status of transportation and drainage projects directly affecting this property. ZNA volunteers are also meeting with the owner's agent the week of February 11.

With the help of the office of Council Member Ann Kitchen, we expect to have clearer answers to our questions later this month. A two-week postponement of the Planning Commission hearing would be much appreciated.