

July 10, 2020

RE: C14-2017-0010 - 4500 Nuckols Crossing Road Rezoning  
NPA-2016-0014.01 Plan Amendment - 4500 Nuckols Crossing Road Rezoning

To Planning Commissioners and City Council Members,

Based on information received at the 07/08/2020 meeting with City Staff, Applicant, Austin Transportation Department, SE Combined Neighborhood Plan Contact Team and concerned neighbors, the Los Arboles Homeowners' Association OPPOSES the proposed development at 4500 Nuckols Crossing. Some of the considerations for opposition are listed below.

1. The proposed driveway to 4500 Nuckols Crossing will be only 150 ft from Viewpoint Dr on the east side of Nuckols Crossing and an entrance to Woodway Village Apartments on the west side of Nuckols Crossing. The accepted distance between driveways should be 500 ft.
2. The proposed solution to the driveway problem of adding turn lanes with vertical delineators in the middle of Nuckols Crossing will cause a major hazard, in our opinion. Nuckols Crossing/E St Elmo is used as a thoroughfare for many commuters in SE Austin to and from downtown. Traffic that is driving from the blind curve at E St Elmo onto Nuckols Crossing must go up a hill which will make it difficult to see the vertical delineators in the middle of the street. And the traffic driving north from Stassney and Teri Rd on Nuckols Crossing will need to go around the vertical delineators onto a widened area of the right of way before swerving back onto the main road, a short distance from the blind curve where the road turns into E St Elmo.
3. Traffic on Nuckols Crossing is already 10 times the amount that this road is designed to ideally handle. Traffic counts taken in February 2020 indicate that existing vehicle trips is at 14,929. According to Section 25-6-116 of the Land Development Code, streets which have pavement width less than 30 feet are considered to be operating at an undesirable traffic level if the average daily traffic volume for such roadway exceeds 1,200 vehicles per day. Nuckols Crossing Road is currently operating at an undesirable level and will continue to do so with the addition of site traffic. These statistics, and the opinion that Nuckols Crossing is currently at an undesirable level, are taken directly from the Zoning Review Change Sheet provided by City Staff. The proposed development will add another 979 vehicle trips, an increase of over 13%.
4. The City has no plan to improve Nuckols Crossing/E St Elmo. It is a narrow 2 lane road in very poor condition with no curbs, gutters, sidewalks or bike lanes, or even enough right of way to add them. There is a very sharp curve with no sight lines where Nuckols Crossing becomes E St Elmo, just a short distance from the proposed driveway for this development. Vegetation and low water bridges contribute to the narrow lanes. The developer's proposal to add improvements would only cover the small area in front of the development and would not improve the quality of this road. There is no safe way for pedestrians or bikes to reach the bus stop at Pleasant Valley and Todd Ln.

5. The developers have applied for S.M.A.R.T. housing credits stating that this will make the development a needed addition to the neighborhood. There are already 6 existing affordable housing complexes in a one and a half mile radius and more in the near East Riverside/Oltorf area. Of course affordable housing is desirable, but not at the cost of creating a major traffic crisis for SE Austin.

6. COA recommends SF2 zoning rather than MF4, which the applicant is asking for. Applicant states they need this MF4 in order to build a bigger complex so they can make more profit. The Applicant's desire for profit should not supersede the neighborhood's right to safely travel one of the main roads through it.

7. The proposed 5 story building does not fit into the aesthetics of the neighborhood which is single family (Los Arboles) and townhome apartments (Woodway Village). The 2 apartment complexes on E St Elmo, Kingfisher Creek and Rosemont, are set back from the road so aren't easily visible. This proposed development can't move further away from the road due to environmental constraints. Even with landscaping it will be very visible as you enter SE Austin and the Dove Springs area.

8. Los Arboles is not opposed to development; we want to see it done in coordination with our neighborhood and drivers on Nuckols Crossing. This proposed development does not meet these standards.

We ask the Planning Commissioners and City Council Members to review this proposal with the realistic view of what Nuckols Crossing/E St Elmo actually looks like and determine that this development would not be a benefit to the neighborhood but instead create a major traffic hazard and clash with the existing aesthetics.

On behalf of the Los Arboles Homeowners' Association,  
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