

To Todd Shaw and the Members of the Planning Commission on this evening the 27<sup>th</sup> of September:

My name is Brian Bedrosian and I am currently serving as the Vice President of the North Loop Neighborhood Association, a post I have held since 2019. I am writing this letter on behalf of the Neighborhood Association in regards to the new development proposed by SECO Ventures on the old TxGas property on the southwest corner of the intersection at Avenue F and 2222/Koenig Lane.

Our neighborhood association met on the evening of the 13<sup>th</sup> of September for our regular monthly meeting. We discussed at length the SECO's appeal to PARD and Planning Commission regarding the Parkland Dedication requirements on their site. After much discussion a vote was held with the goal of providing input to the PARD Board for their meeting the following evening, September 14<sup>th</sup>, and ultimately for the Planning Commission meeting to follow two weeks later on Tuesday September 28<sup>th</sup>. The results of the vote held the majority in favor of opposing SECO's appeal. Following additional discussion, it was requested by those in attendance that when we conveyed these results that it be made clear this was not a unanimous decision, with the vote breaking down roughly as 60% opposing the appeal and 40% supporting.

As PARD has identified, we are in an area of town with very little to no available park space. Our neighbors have used the small front yard at Dayspring Chapel and the playground at Ridgetop Elementary as surrogate parks. The only official green space we have is Bruning Green – a small triangular forgotten piece of land between 52<sup>nd</sup>, Evans, and Bruning Avenues that was cleared, planted, built out and maintained entirely by our neighbors. We need a park. Those that voted to oppose the appeal see the TxGas property as a once in a lifetime chance for us to have a substantially sized park in our neighborhood as we have few properties of this scale that our not already developed. They also acknowledge the power and importance of the Parkland Dedication Ordinance and do not wish to undermine its authority in any way.

We are also a neighborhood that is seeing rapid growth and explosion of property values that have pushed many long-term residents and young families out of our neighborhood, something which we have long fought with a neighborhood plan focused on encouraging density and affordability. Both of the elementary schools our young neighbors attend offer dual language programs and encourage diversity in their student bodies. We aspire to being a place that offers a chance for folks of many different economic and cultural backgrounds to be able find a home in the center of the city. Those that voted to support the appeal see the reduction in units, especially those targeted to be affordable, as a compromise against our neighborhood goals. SECO's proposal for the TxGas site also depicts a level of investment we are not accustomed to seeing in our neighborhood, where developers tend to focus on fast and cheap construction which often leads to short term renters who do not invest long term in our neighborhood.

The week following this meeting, SECO presented to us a compromised plan which expanded the eastern park to approach the design dimensions requested by PARD but left the western park at a reduced size and utilizing the parkway on the north as the balance of their proposed green space. In an

effort to provide both PARD and SECO input on this option, we held a special meeting of the neighborhood association on the evening of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September. Our bylaws require two weeks prior notice for a special meeting at which a formal vote is to be held, so we were unable to provide any official response, but we did conduct a few straw polls in order to get a feel for where folks sat after this new information. When asked how they would vote regarding the appeal with this new information, the numbers were much closer than before, with just over 50% in favor of opposing the appeal. When asked if they would consider supporting a variance to increase the height of the project allowing for SECO to retain their current number of units or more while allowing full compliance with Parkland Dedication, the results suggested a strong majority would do so. Please understand that this was an unofficial vote, we did not limit the participants to members of the neighborhood association (though most were), and we did not have a majority of the neighbors adjacent to the proposed development in attendance.

While a delay to your deliberations would provide us time for a formal vote and allow us additional time to consider the proposal presented to us by SECO, the board does not feel at this time that the neighborhood position would be substantively different than presented here unless a compromise supported by PARD was put forth. We greatly value and appreciate the effort SECO has made to reach out and engage the neighborhood, even before the issue of the required parkland dedication had been made apparent, and we value them as potential partners in developing this property in our neighborhood. We strongly encourage SECO and PARD to work together to find a solution that serves all parties and brings to our neighborhood much needed high quality affordable housing and much needed green space.

I thank you for your time in considering our position on this matter and trust that you will make the decision that best serves our community and city as a whole.

Sincerely

**Brian Bedrosian**

Vice President, North Loop Neighborhood Association

(512) 203-4612

This message is from Laura Ruby. [

Dear Commissioners,

I support the Appellant in this case. Their compromise plan provides affordable housing as well as neighborhood parkland, both critical needs in our city.

We shouldn't pit these two important urban needs against each other.

Thank you!

Dear Commissioners,

I support the Appellant in this case. Their compromise plan provides affordable housing as well as neighborhood parkland, both critical needs in our city.

BEst,  
Megan Glasgow

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Thank you for accepting comments. I have very mixed feelings about SECO's appeal. Although the project seems beneficial to our neighborhood, I do not believe their proposal for adding parks to our neighborhood is consistent with the city's requirements, which are designed to improve accessibility to parks especially in a neighborhood like North Loop that is so deeply deficient in parks. While SECO's proposal to create a dog park at the Avenue F/Koenig Lane corner might be attractive to their own tenants, the fact that it's adjacent to a high speed, 4-lane street makes it noisy and potentially dangerous. I have seen cars blast through that intersection and land exactly in the area that is designated in their proposal. The bike path might be attractive years down the road, but for the next decade or so, it will be a path to nowhere, unless you count it as an amenity to the storefronts that rent from SECO. Finally, the remaining land at the east end of the property will

be bordered by a busy train that does not currently have any value to the park; it is also bordered by a four-story apartment wall which cannot be made to feel park-like; part of the green space is actually a utility easement that SECO says it will keep mowed; and it's tucked away in such a way as to invite folks who are looking for a place to hide rather than to encourage neighborhood activities. I am especially concerned that these spaces will not actually be city parkland; will eventually be neglected or worse by a management company or new owner whose only concern is ROI; and will be overwhelmed by the hundreds of new residents they will be bringing. As citizens, we are not in the position to enforce SECO's promises to our neighborhood. Finally, I think SECO can do better if it would be open about working through its process with PARD and the neighborhood. I live half a block from this project, and I look forward to new neighbors and amenities, but I have to oppose SECO's appeal because it's not providing us with the parkland we are entitled to under the city's rules.

Kristine Patrick

5508 Avenue G  
(512) 788-0033

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This message is from Deborah Yurco. [

Dear Commissioners,

I support the Appellant in this case. Their compromise plan provides affordable housing as well as neighborhood parkland, both critical needs in our city. We shouldn't and don't need to pit these two important urban needs against each other. Let's truly build back better for a change!

Deborah Yurco

This message is from Ben Fuller. [

Dear Commissioners,

I support the Appellant in this case. Their compromise plan provides affordable housing as well as neighborhood parkland, both critical needs in our city.

We shouldn't pit these two important urban needs against each other.

This message is from Rex Gore. [

I reccomend that this plan be approved. As proposed it is providing for both the construction and the maintenance of some very nice park space. But , as importantly , the proposal will provide some much needed additional affordable housing.

Thanks  
Rex

This message is from Scott Bissmeyer. [

Dear Commissioners,

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This message is from Philip Joseph. [

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Philip C. Joseph

This message is from Wesley Joseph. [

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This message is from Casey Martin. [

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LASTLY, please pass to as many people as possible. Meeting is tomorrow night at City Hall starting around 1800 [6 pm] if y'all want to come in-person!

JJN This message is from Casey Martin. [

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JJN

This message is from Amy Johnson. [

Dear Commissioners,

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Best,  
Amy Johnson

This message is from Ben Adams. [

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