

C14-2021-0150 Menchaca South Agenda 130

My name is Eugene Sutton (5125274424), former president of Matthews Lane Neighborhood Association. While investigating drainage along railroad tracks from 1609 Matthews Lane (MF-2 CO 10 units maximum, .6 acre), I wandered onto Keilbar and learned from neighbors that a site plan was being developed for 1903 and 1905 Keilbar (SF-6, condos). No neighborhood association was in existence there and I began to follow the rezoning on Keilbar which is west of our residence at 1505 Damon Road (separated by tracks). I also learned that existing drainage on Keilbar was a boggy area by the tracks.

Even though this was beyond our boundaries, it was close enough to follow the zoning notices. Several SF-3 cases popped up (3 total now) but then this case arrived. Valid petitions have been very helpful in ensuring discussion and resolution and I spoke to several neighbors about this process (they lived outside 200 feet) and we began gathering signatures.

If I was a developer, I would look for Keilbar properties. Smallish and slightly forgotten with older residents and a smattering of mobile homes, narrow streets (18 feet) with no infrastructure, older trees, and near a church and/or offices or a business; these make petitions hard to complete at that 20% level. Only one Keilbar resident signed as two were selling (closest to development) and LLC's owned the others. The office owner and church were not interested. The folks on Helecho across Menchaca were very interested as they did not wish to view three stories from their back yards.

We managed to obtain a valid petition and the Zoning and Platting Commission designated SF-6 in keeping with the project next to it. Commissioner King spoke of heritage trees and documented flooding. Several other zoning designations (SF-5, etc.) were discussed but SF-6 was chosen. Petition sought single family with 10 units on the 1.127 acres.

Keilbar representatives and myself have met with Leah Bojo who presented her plan of the three story (35 feet) 23 unit apartment, two buildings, and 59 parking spots (first floor). Entrance will be from Menchaca. Residents are very concerned about parking on Keilbar and excess parking spots are offered. Height is somewhat mitigated as there is a dip in the property from Menchaca. Drainage has 1-2 drainage inlets that are planned, however there is only a 30% reduction of stormwater. We have had several postponements (mutual) and we requested another one for this meeting but Ms. Bojo wishes for this to go forward for second and third reading for MF-2.

During our last meeting, we offered MF-2, 31 foot height (3 story), and 12 units. This was not acceptable and offers of up to 23 units and/or duplexes were turned down.

The section of Menchaca from William Cannon to Dittmar has no 3 story buildings along Menchaca. There is an apartment complex (Perch 310 units) at 7713 which begins at one story and rises to 4 as it proceeds downhill to the tracks. Multiple two story homes exist and businesses remain at one story. New rezoning of MF-2 at 1609 Matthews Lane has heritage trees and is located next to a business and the tracks. MF-2 on Dittmar (911 & 915) started out as 34 units, two buildings, but a petition and resolution achieved 20 units in 10 buildings, two story (next to a church on one side and single family community on another).

But the parking, drainage, and lack of infrastructure are the underlying factors and this intrusion on this property is not in keeping with Keilbar which will have SF-6 condos, SF-3 (single family and ADU) at three properties and houses and mobile homes on others.

Our request is that Council not approve the MF-2 zoning for the apartment plan and that we resume discussions. We are amenable to modify unit sizes, perhaps seek affordability, look at SF-6 designs, etc., but Keilbar is not the ultimate solution of Austin's housing needs.