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HPD



Tuesday, February 7th, 2023
To: Mayor Watson and Austin City Council Members
Subject: Brodie PUD

Dear Mayor and City Council,

The Barton View Neighborhood Association (BVNA) believes that the Brodie Oaks PUD has the potential to be a great development for Austin, but what is currently being proposed falls short. Our concerns are outlined below.

ELECTRICITY

BVNA has questions and concerns as to how this development would be powered. We have heard that a substation is required but have not seen a concrete plan. This important detail should be worked out prior to the zoning approval. We support Ann Kitchen’s memorandum to require an onsite station not be deducted from Park or Water Quality land. We would also add that if it is to be situated under one of the buildings, that it not be the largest one that will sit directly over Airman’s Cave.

ENVIRONMENT

With a maximum proposed height of 275’, this property will dwarf everything in its vicinity. We feel that this height is inappropriate for the location given its proximity to the Barton Creek Greenbelt and the Barton Hills, Barton View, South Lamar, Westgate and Zilker neighborhoods – most of which are zoned SF2. Our neighborhood was startled during the crane demonstration to realize that this new development will be viewable from nearly every point in our small, greenbelt surrounded community. We feel that a maximum height of 120’ is more appropriate for this location, which is still double the current height maximum. A height of 120’ would provide more protection to migrating birds and would result in significantly less light pollution than a 275’ structure. This startling height is contextually out of place, and does not adhere to current code, or any recently proposed code changes such as Code Next.

How will this development affect light pollution in South Austin? We ask that you take this into consideration and require the developers to take steps to limit light pollution by following recommendations made by the International Dark Skies Association, which the developers agreed to at the Environmental Commission meeting.

We ideally would like to see the impervious cover of this development come closer to the SOS Ordinance maximum of 15%. If this is not feasible, we support the Sierra Club and SOS Alliance's request that fees be paid to mitigate the 41% beyond the current limit. With that said, the purpose of the SOS ordinance is to protect the Barton Springs watershed, which this property sits directly on top of. It is difficult to see how any offsite mitigation can match the benefit of increased pervious cover on this site.

Another concern with this development is its proximity to critically sensitive environmental features. We agree that restoring the grading of the greenbelt side of the property to its original slope is far superior to the retaining wall currently encroaching on the nearby spring. We request that City Staff disallow any non-natural disturbances for 50' from springs. We have grave concerns regarding tall vertical structures being built over Airman's Cave. The developer's assessment that a 20' depth of Del Rio Clay (the amount of cover agreed to leave in place after excavation) is sufficient to protect the cave from the weight of a 20+ story building is at best untested, and at worst a disaster waiting to happen. BVNA strongly urges the City to take strong measures to protect Airman's Cave by limiting the structural load built directly above the cave, and by requiring continuous geotechnical monitoring during construction. Additional boring samples and better analysis of soil stratification should be performed prior to potential approval at 3rd reading.

TRAFFIC/ACCESS

Aside from the safety issue of building on top of a cave, BVNA is worried about how this development would impact traffic as well as pedestrian safety along South Lamar Boulevard and the Westbound US 290 service road. One issue is that there are no contiguous sidewalks west of the proposed development on the 290 access road, which is our neighborhood's only egress. The bigger issue, however, is that the developer incorrectly asserts their traffic mitigation plan will be solved by the 803 metro route, an unrealistic proposal.

BVNA supports the developer's efforts to reduce vehicular traffic by reducing parking and providing ample bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure on-site. We would like to know: just how we can access this property without the use of a passenger vehicle? Our neighborhood is located just 1.2 miles from this development, however, the only bus route between our neighborhood and the site is quite circuitous, and there is no sidewalk or accessible path that would allow one to walk or ride a bicycle to the site. The irony of this is not lost on us.

Thank you,

Barton View Neighborhood Association:

- Sarah LeBorde - Chair
- Genest Landry - Vice-Chair
- Ingrid Morton - Treasurer
- Shellayne Burkhart - Secretary
- Rachel Walker - Communications Coordinator

Jean Wilkins - Neighbor and past board member

Subject: FW: Brodie Oaks PUD C814-2021-0099

From: Stan Ostrum
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 4:53 PM
To: Watson, Kirk <Kirk.Watson@austintexas.gov>; Ellis, Paige <Paige.Ellis@austintexas.gov>; Alter, Ryan <Ryan.Alter@austintexas.gov>; Alter, Alison <Alison.Alter@austintexas.gov>; Harper-Madison, Natasha <Natasha.Madison@austintexas.gov>; Fuentes, Vanessa <Vanessa.Fuentes@austintexas.gov>; Jose.Vela@austintexas.gov; Kelly, Mackenzie <Mackenzie.Kelly@austintexas.gov>; Pool, Leslie <Leslie.Pool@austintexas.gov>; Qadri, Zo <Zo.Qadri@austintexas.gov>; Velasquez, Jose <Jose.Velasquez@austintexas.gov>
Cc: Rhoades, Wendy <Wendy.Rhoades@austintexas.gov>; Clark, Kate <Kate.Clark@austintexas.gov>; Melissa Hawthorne; Peter Hess; Stan Ostrum
Subject: Brodie Oaks PUD C814-2021-0099

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Dear Mayor Watson and Austin City Council members,

The Barton Hills Neighborhood Association (BHNA) wishes to register its opposition as an interested party in the matter of

Brodie Oaks PUD
C814-2021-0099, Restrictive Covenant Amendment, and site-specific amendment to City Code Chapter 25-8, Subchapter A, Article 13 (Save Our Springs Initiative)

via the resolution that follows, which was passed overwhelmingly by the BHNA membership at its January 24, 2023 membership meeting.

The BHNA opposes the planned high-density Brodie Oaks PUD, its desirable features notwithstanding, and asks City Council to reject the project as submitted.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Stan Ostrum
BHNA VP and acting President

**Barton Hills Neighborhood Association (BHNA)
Resolution in Opposition to the Planned Brodie Oaks PUD
January 24, 2023**

WHEREAS the Barton Hills Neighborhood Association (BHNA) anchors the South Lamar Planning area that includes the planned Brodie Oaks PUD; and

WHEREAS the BHNA borders the Barton Creek Greenbelt and has been one of its primary guardians over the years; and

WHEREAS the Barton Creek Greenbelt is an environmentally extremely sensitive area, being located in the Barton Springs Recharge Zone, and being the crown jewel of Austin's natural resources; and

WHEREAS the 2012 Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan designates this area as "sensitive environmental area; and

WHEREAS the BHNA supports a low-density, environmentally compatible redevelopment of the site; and

WHEREAS the Brodie Oaks tract, as an environmentally sensitive tract, was denied VMU zoning by the City Council in 2008; and

WHEREAS current zoning of the Brodie Oaks tract limits development to a height of 60 feet; and

WHEREAS current Restrictive Covenants limit development on the Brodie Oaks tract to a height of 35 feet; and

WHEREAS the planned Brodie Oaks PUD has some desirable environmental features, including a reduction in water-impervious cover; and

WHEREAS the Brodie Oaks tract sits on top of environmentally sensitive karst rock formations, including Airmen's Cave; and

WHEREAS the planned Brodie Oaks PUD is a high-density development with at least 3,100,000 square feet, as opposed to the currently developed space of 350,000 square feet; and

WHEREAS the planned office and hotel towers of up to 275 feet diminish the citizens' experience of the neighboring Barton Creek Greenbelt; and

WHEREAS the planned Brodie Oaks PUD would set a detrimental precedent for other developments in the Barton Creek Recharge Zone, such as the neighboring apartment complex and Barton Creek Mall;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the BHNA opposes the planned high-density Brodie Oaks PUD, its desirable features notwithstanding, and asks City Council to reject the project as submitted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the BHNA asks City Council to issue a permit only for a low-density development with a maximum height of 60 feet; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any future development on the Brodie Oaks tract meet parkland compatibility standards; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the BHNA, through its president and its elected officers, makes the content of this resolution known to the Austin City Council, to city staff, and to other relevant parties.

This resolution was passed overwhelmingly by the BHNA membership at its January 24, 2023 membership meeting.

Stan Ostrum, acting President, Barton Hills Neighborhood Association

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