

1000 Glen Oaks Ct.
Austin, TX 78702
September 20, 2023

**This is a joint statement from Jane Rivera, Chair of RNCT,
Gilbert Rivera, President of Rosewood/Glen Oaks Neighborhood Association
Chris Page, President of the Homewood Heights Neighborhood Association, and
Jenny Grayson, President of the McKinley Heights/Clifford-Sanchez Neighborhood Association**

Dear Mayor Watson and Members, Austin City Council:

We, the Homewood Heights Neighborhood Association, McKinley Heights/Clifford-Sanchez Neighborhood Association, and the Rosewood Neighborhood Contact Team overwhelmingly oppose the rezoning and Neighborhood Plan Amendment proposed in Items 90 and 91 (NPA-2022-0008.01 & C14-2022-0150). For any of you who are new to Austin, Rosewood was the historic African American area approved by the City's 1928 Master Plan.

The applicant, Geyser Group, asks you to eliminate a conditional overlay from the Rosewood Neighborhood Plan that restricts building height to 40ft on this parcel. If granted, these cases create a precedent for fundamentally incompatible land use along the rest of E. 12th Street and potentially several other interior residential streets in the Rosewood Neighborhood Plan area. It would allow the applicant to build up to 90 feet in height on a section of the street that consists of single-family homes and missing-middle scaled VMU.

Staff earlier stated that the parcels in question were on Airport Boulevard, but they are not. On Airport there is a mobile church, then west onto E. 12th there is a complex of homes for the elderly, then about 500ft away, the property Geyser Group purchased in 2022. Staff also wrongly stated that the applicant's property is in a TOD area. Maps in the MLK Jr. Boulevard TOD Station Area Plan Executive Summary clearly show that it is not, and on foot, the MLK station is about a mile walk away.

Two recent developments on 12th Street show that the Rosewood Neighborhood Plan allows for repeatably scaled mixed-use projects that provide housing and retail. There is one apartment building with retail on the front of the ground floor farther west, at 2931 E 12th Street. This building was built with support of the Rosewood Neighborhood Contact Team. Closer to the applicant's property, another apartment complex was built at 3007 E 12th Street. Both are zoned CS-MU-V-CO-NP with the conditional overlay.

The Rosewood Neighborhood Plan area has achieved a high concentration of affordable housing for the city. In about a quarter mile radius from the applicant's property, there's more than 2,000,000sqft of land dedicated to some of Austin's most deeply affordable multifamily housing. The biggest detractors of new housing supply are buy-and-decay speculators and the conversion of naturally affordable housing to unoccupied short-term rental properties.

It is critical for you to understand that the single-family housing here is some of the last remaining truly affordable housing in Austin. That is because of construction costs. Any housing built today, no matter how deeply subsidized, will be more expensive than our naturally occurring, truly affordable housing. It is also important to note that today's "affordability" requirements in mixed-use developments are unaffordable to the many residents in our census tract threatened by displacement.

Our community has met with Geyser Group multiple times for the past several months. The applicant has rejected every significant request. Geyser Group suggested only unenforceable verbal commitments to minimal concessions.

From communications with Geyser Group's CEO, we have learned:

- The main goal of these cases is to eliminate the conditional overlay from the Rosewood Neighborhood Plan.

- Geyser Group is seeking entitlement increases to attract investment and/or more profitable financing.
- Geyser Group markets its ability to generate higher returns for investors by up-zoning.
- Absent a significant (if not impossible) change in market conditions, Geyser Group does not plan to build anything.

Our community is seeking an outcome that leads to balanced, community-informed development: deeper affordability, balanced scale, environmental improvements, safer streets and sidewalks, and protection against speculation. We have met with the applicant with this goal in mind. The District 1 Office facilitated the past three negotiation sessions and is fully aware that approval of these cases will harm our community while adding enormous financial value to a dormant property. Additionally, there is a valid petition. Nevertheless, the District 1 Office calendared final approval for today's City Council meeting.

Please do not give final approval to this request.

Sincerely,

Jane H. Rivera, Ph.D., Chair of the Rosewood Neighborhood Contact Team
Gilbert Rivera, President of the Rosewood/Glen Oaks Neighborhood Association
Christopher Page, President of the Homewood Heights Neighborhood Association
Jenny Grayson, President of the McKinley Heights/Clifford-Sanchez Neighborhood Association

9/20/2023

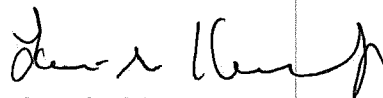
Dear City Council,

I submit this letter in support of the rezoning application for 3117-3121 E. 12th Street. I live close by in district one at 2802 Oak Springs Drive. This is where I grew up and my family has lived for the past 80 years. I've seen a lot of change over the years, and have been actively involved in the neighborhood's development. In fact, I was part of the group that crafted the current Rosewood Neighborhood Plan.

I have personally met with the applicant, and I agree that their plan for the property is better than what could be done today under current zoning. The forty foot height limitation that we put in place for the Rosewood Neighborhood Plan roughly twenty years ago is no longer proper for that site. I believe the 12th street corridor is an area well suited for a project with more height. I also am a fan of the project's plan to include affordable housing.

I hope that you will support their rezoning request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Louis Herrera", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Louis Herrera
2802 Oak Springs Drive