



The Cherrywood Neighborhood is bounded by I-35, E. 38 ½ Street, Airport Boulevard, and Manor Road. We are a flourishing neighborhood of homes, businesses, and green spaces in Central Austin.

P.O. Box 4631 | Austin, TX 78765 | www.cherrywood.org
Contact | steering@cherrywood.org

January 16, 2024

The Cherrywood Neighborhood Association (CNA) Steering Committee met on January 10, 2024 and considered the rezoning request (C14-2023-0130) and voted to support the request for rezoning to CS-1 to allow liquor sales on the two properties currently occupied by Thunderbird Coffee, and to recommend limiting certain uses. Commensurate with this rezoning we also request renewed engagement with the City of Austin on a sidewalk for Breeze Terrace as illustrated in the Cherrywood Sidewalk Master Plan.

We appreciate that the applicants and Thunderbird owner reached out early in the process in October, 2023 to answer questions and met with an ad hoc group of our Steering Committee in December, 2023.

Background

The CNA has a long history of trying to shape the inevitable changes in the character of our neighborhood, with special consideration of changes in use and density on the transportation corridors that transect our area. We are not opposed to change in our neighborhood.

CNA shares the Manor Road corridor with several other neighborhoods, notably Blackland and Rogers Washington-Holy Cross and Austin Heights. The evolution of the commercial properties from residential and retail to restaurants and bars has resulted in benefits for and impacts to residents of all our neighborhoods.

Considerations

This is a limited request to change the base zoning in order to allow a use for liquor sales, although no amendment to the Upper Boggy Creek Neighborhood Plan is required. We have reviewed and discussed with the applicants the other permitted and conditional uses allowed in CS-1 zoning and recommend several uses be prohibited or made conditional (see below). We understand both parcels will retain the Neighborhood Plan overlay.

We were positively influenced by the commitment of Ryan McElroy, the applicant and business owner, who also operates several other businesses on this corridor, in the success of the corridor as a whole.

As with many, if not all, conversions of businesses to bars and nightlife in the urban core of Austin, our first concerns are with parking, transportation access and congestion, and pedestrian safety, with secondary concerns about future expansion of seating which then exacerbates these concerns. This corridor is part of the Expo Center MetroRapid line which should help alleviate future parking and access pressures.

The Manor Road corridor was one of the first Independent Business Zones in Austin and has been evolving for many years into a vibrant diversity of commercial uses, with more family-oriented uses in recent years. The corridor is anchored by multi-family residential developments at each end. We are also concerned with the long-term use of parcels and that future owners may not share the current owners interest in the corridor.

Decision points

We reached out to several residents on Breeze Terrace, the mostly directly impacted residential street connecting off of Manor Rd where these properties are located, and found no strong opposition to the specifics of the rezoning request but we did hear concerns about pedestrian safety.

Recent improvements along Manor Rd have greatly improved pedestrian and cyclist safety, however there is no sidewalk on Breeze Terrace, a residential street that sees nightly traffic and parking from patrons of various businesses on Manor Rd. There is a concern this daily and nightly impact will increase and worsen after renovations at Thunderbird.

A sidewalk for Breeze Terrace was first discussed in 2002 (www.cherrywood.org/sidewalk-plan) as part of the Upper Boggy Creek Neighborhood Plan (UBC NP Action Item 38) along with a vision and goals for why and how sidewalks support safety and community. The broad goals and a specific proposal for Breeze Terrace was reaffirmed in 2009 and again in 2020. We have a long and successful relationship with the City of Austin in implementing the Cherrywood Sidewalk Plan, although several sidewalk additions by the City in recent years were not part of the plan.

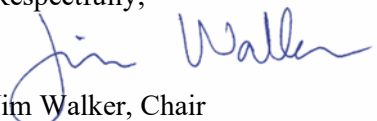
Commensurate with, but not conditional for, this rezoning request, we request the City of Austin collaborate with the Cherrywood Neighborhood Association to evaluate and refresh a vision for a new sidewalk on Breeze Terrace for the purposes of pedestrian safety.

In addition to the focus on sidewalks for pedestrian safety, our Steering Committee discussions also centered on limiting several specific uses that would be allowed at the properties under the proposed CS-1. We note that a much more extensive limiting of uses along the Manor Rd corridor was implemented by the City as part of the neighborhood planning area-wide rezonings in 2002 (UBC NP Action Item 9). However, we believe the limitations below are appropriate for the current day and only list the specific uses we are recommending be limited (except see note for Cocktail Lounge):

ZONING USE SUMMARY TABLE (LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE)			
P = Permitted Use C = Conditional Use Permit -- = Not Permitted			
COMMERCIAL USES	CS	CS-1	CNA proposal
Adult-Oriented Businesses	C	C	--
Adult Lounge	--	C	--
Automotive Rentals	P	P	C
Automotive Repair Services	P	P	C
Automotive Sales	P	P	C
Automotive Washing (of any type)	P	P	--
Cocktail Lounge [<i>just noting CNA support for this as a new Conditional use</i>]	--	C	C
Equipment Repair Services	P	P	C
Equipment Sales	P	P	C
Liquor Sales	--	P	C
Custom Manufacturing	P	P	C
Limited Warehousing and Distribution	P	P	C
College and University Facilities	P	P	C
Communication Service Facilities	P	P	C
Maintenance and Service Facilities	P	P	C

The Cherrywood Neighborhood Association is excited about the future of the Manor Rd corridor and supports this incremental change for these parcels toward the ongoing vitality and function of the corridor as well as its longer-term evolution.

Respectfully,


 Jim Walker, Chair
 Cherrywood Neighborhood Association

Cc: Councilmember Zo Qadri, District 9
 Mayor Kirk Watson
 Austin City Council