

From: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: C14H-2024-0162
Date: Friday, December 27, 2024 10:58:43 AM

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External Email - Exercise Caution

Hello,

When are the agenda and backup materials available for this Knox Lane case? Given that the notification for the hearing on January 7 was sent during the holidays, and some of the homeowners who would be significantly affected by this development are away, is there any chance this agenda item will be postponed until later in January?

Thank you.

Jim Jarrett
7301 Running Rope

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Update On The Knox Preserve

Margaret *Thomas* Knox passed January 20, 2022 allowing the development of the Knox Preserve subdivision to proceed. We've had several past articles in the newsletter on Mrs. Knox so I won't dive into her history here. But briefly for context, her husband James Knox inherited the property from his parents. His father, Capt. Warren Penn Knox, was prominent in Boy Scouting in Texas, acquired the property and after WWII started Running Rope Boys Ranch. Barring a thorough deed search, by 1946 the newspaper reports "W.P. Knox" buying the 184 acre property (The Austin American, 26 Apr 1946, Fri, Page 20). By 1947 Running Rope Ranch is up and running in the news.

The farmstead (a core house that was extended over the years; out buildings; cleared fields) is extant in the 1937 aerials of Travis County that have recently become available. An oral interview of Margaret Knox for the book *Austin Originals*, 1982, puts the farmhouse at ca. 1900 at least. Based on the history of this area, could the property be older? Maybe. For example, Esperanza School, which was above Spicewood Springs, was a one room log cabin started in 1866 serving this area.¹ The school was less than a mile from the Knox Preserve. Old aerial photos seem to indicate an older entrance to the property may have been off of Spicewood Springs Rd. not far from the school. Could the property be that old? We don't know without a lot more research, but from the history of the school we know there was sufficient population in the community of Spicewood Springs in 1866 to warrant a school. The log cabin school was open until 1893; so close in time to the age of the Knox house quoted by Margaret Knox. The Thurms, a German family, settled on Bull Creek in 1855 on what is today's Old Spicewood Springs Rd. at the bottom of what was known then as Thurm's Hill. Their homestead was in today's Bull Creek Park, roughly the 5300 "block" of today's Old Spicewood Springs Rd; most of it was obliterated by Loop 360 construction; the current round of work is probably finishing off any potential sub-surface remains. All to say, settlement in this area goes back a ways and the Knox Preserve, with its own spring (called out on property plats as "Indian Springs"), close to Spicewood Springs, its namesake road and Esperanza School would have been a .. what's the saying in real estate? Location, location, location.

I've been in contact with Ms. Kalan Contreras, Historic Preservation Officer, City of Austin Planning Department, swapping history on the property. She attended the Historic Landmark Commission meeting September 4th where they are considering "initiation of historic zoning on the property"; the review includes not only the house, but potential archeology of the site in

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general. Everything is tentative at this point. An argument is being made to preserve the house, either on-site (possibly to an alternate spot on-site) or off-site to another location.

The Knox Preserve is one of the last relatively untouched areas in Northwest Hills up on the mesa which is today our NWACA neighborhood so it would a be good if the developer would hire a firm to conduct a more thorough archeological assessment of the property as a whole. A cursory survey by UT was done in 1969 confirming prehistoric Native American presence on the property. While the wetland critical environmental feature (CEF; the springs area) will be preserved, once the bulldozers move in for development outside the CEF anything that is there is going to be lost. Fingers crossed.

She Was a Late Archaic Resident of the Neighborhood

There are scores of archeological sites – prehistoric and historic – within the bounds of our NWACA neighborhood. But one in particular has long captured my imagination; it is associated with a woman that called our neighborhood home some 1,600 years ago.

In 1970 - 1971, the Texas Highway Department, today's TxDOT, carried out archeological excavations along the route that would be disturbed by the building of Loop 360. These types of excavations are called "salvage excavations"; they are done ahead of the proverbial and literal bulldozer to try to salvage information associated with sites before they are destroyed. One of the discoveries made was a "cairn burial", not far from Bull Creek, on the northwestern boundary of our neighborhood, under what is now Loop 360.¹

What is a "cairn burial"? From Texas Beyond History, a public education website of the Texas Archeological Research Lab (TARL) at UT Austin:

"The countless stone mounds dotting the low hills and flat-topped mesas of west-central Texas have perplexed landowners and archeologists alike for more than a century. Known as "cairns," these mysterious arrangements of rock can be found by the hundreds—and perhaps thousands—along the rocky ridgelines and bluffs overlooking the broad valleys of the Brazos and Colorado rivers and the canyons of their tributaries. Area ranchers typically have referred to these large cairn clusters as "Indian burial grounds"—and with good reason. Many of the cairns have been found to contain human remains—men, women, and children who long ago were carefully interred in specially prepared graves."

So as opposed to a cairn used for navigational purposes (stacked stones still used for example to mark hiking trails) a cairn burial is a tomb dug into the ground, lined with and / or walls encircled with a row of vertical slabs protruding out of the ground, hence visible as a grave from the surface, then topped with a large slab and / or mound of rocks. That's a generalization and their architecture varies just as European burials in Texas cemeteries vary from region to region and over time.

So who was buried there? Because the skeletal remains were not complete only so much can be said about the person: probably a female, age at death 35 or older. Stature, indeterminate based on remains. No indication of death due to trauma, but again because of the fragmentary remains this too is uncertain. Indications were she had degenerative bone disorder, typically in load bearing joints, no doubt due to hard work in life.

When did she live in our neighborhood? Based on materials in the grave (e.g. a dart point; no, not an arrowhead, see below) and radio carbon dating, she likely lived here about 1,600 years

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She lived here before the bow and arrow was invented in North America! And while she would have lived here about 1,600 years ago, the site overall shows occupation from about 8,000 years ago through about 1,250 years ago; a roughly 7,500-year period.

A question some will be asking: “What tribe was she?”. To quote Dr. Michael Collins²: “*The present territory of Central Texas was not the long-term ancestral homeland of any indigenous group for whom an ethnographic account exists. The ethnographically well-known Comanche, Apache, Wichita, Kiowa, and even the Tonkawa arrived in Central Texas just before or during the early European contact period.*” I would additionally question if the concept of a “tribe” for that period makes sense; maybe a “band” or just extended family unit better fits.

To conclude, while we don’t know a lot about this lady, like how she died, of this we can be sure of this early resident of the neighborhood: given the effort required for a cairn burial, she was obviously someone loved.

² *The Prehistory of Texas*, p.217. Austin's own Dr. Collins is best known as the principal investigator and savior of the Gault site; dating back as far as 20,000 years, the Gault site predates previous scientific estimates of human habitation in the New World by thousands of years.

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [Fahnestock, Sam](mailto:Sam.Fahnestock@austintexas.gov)
Subject: FW: August 7 Meeting
Date: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 9:25:13 AM

External Email - Exercise Caution

Mr. Fahnestock,

Just to clarify. I mean you should add the following to what already exists in my public comment for tonight. I do NOT mean you should include all the correspondence between you and me and the emails from the others.

Commissioners:

I remain strongly opposed to the developer's request to relocate the existing structure on the Knox Lane property. The developer has yet to communicate with neighbors on Running Rope who would be most affected. Please see my other comments immediately below.

Thank you.

James Jarrett

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 9:22 AM
To: 'Fahnestock, Sam' <Sam.Fahnestock@austintexas.gov>
Subject: August 7 Meeting

Mr. Fahnestock,

Please add this to my earlier email for the public comment section of tonight's meeting. I will not be speaking or calling in. Thank you.

Commissioners:

I remain strongly opposed to the developer's request to relocate the existing structure on the Knox Lane property. The developer has yet to communicate with neighbors on Running Rope who would be most affected. Please see my other comments immediately below.

Thank you.

James Jarrett

From: Fahnestock, Sam <Sam.Fahnestock@austintexas.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 2, 2024 9:20 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Knox Lane Development: July 3 Meeting

Good morning, Mr. Jarrett,

All backup from the past meeting will be migrated to the new meeting and will be posted online today at 3PM. If you have any updated materials, please send them to me and I will post them!

Thank you,

From: [Jack Richards](#)
To: [Fahnestock, Sam](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Knox Ranch Development in NW Hills
Date: Monday, June 24, 2024 3:35:06 PM

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email - Exercise Caution

Mr. Fahnestock-

1. Is there an upcoming hearing re this project? If so, I would like to attend by phone. Where can I sign up for this?
2. I would like my slightly amended comments to be substituted for my earlier email if possible. Please see below for the amended comments.
3. Will you discuss these questions with me? Possibly what I'm asking for is groundless. Possibly not. I would like the City of Austin to help me rather than a developer explaining the law to me, who obviously has a conflict of interest/is adverse to me on this issue.
4. Is the development plan approved, regardless of whether the home is designated "historic"? I was not given notice of this, or at least it's been years since I received any notice.

Thanks,
Jack Richards

Jack Richards | Shareholder | Trop, Pruner & Hu, P.C. | 512.517.6051
Patent Procurement, Litigation, and Counseling

From: Fahnestock, Sam <Sam.Fahnestock@austintexas.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 24, 2024 10:52 AM
To: Jack Richards <[REDACTED]>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Knox Ranch Development in NW Hills

Hi Mr. Richards,


Thank you for writing in – I understand your concerns. I will add your comments to backup for the case so the Commission may review them ahead of the next meeting, and they can take them into consideration when making their decision.

You may wish to call the applicant to address your questions. You should have received a notice in the mail about the relocation of the house on the property if you live within 500 feet, which has their contact information on it, but here it is just in case:

Ricca Keepers
(512) 550-6508

Ricca is just the one relocating the existing house, but she may be able to put you in contact with the developer. I do not have their information, unfortunately, but I hope you're able to get in contact with the right people to address these issues!

Thank you,

 <p>PLANNING DEPARTMENT</p>	<p>Sam Fahnestock <i>Planner II he/him</i> City of Austin Planning Department P: (512) 974-3393 E: sam.fahnestock@austintexas.gov 6310 Wilhelmina Delco Drive, Austin, Texas</p>
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From: Jack Richards <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, June 24, 2024 8:50 AM
To: Fahnestock, Sam <Sam.Fahnestock@austintexas.gov>
Cc: [REDACTED]; Historic Preservation Office <Preservation@austintexas.gov>
Subject: Knox Ranch Development in NW Hills

Some people who received this message don't often get email from richards@tphm.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email - Exercise Caution

Hi Mr. Fahnestock-

I live at 7300 Running Rope (on the corner of Running Rope and Knox Lane—big blue house). **I have not met with the developer of the Knox Ranch in years** and now hear things are moving more quickly. I'm not sure who to relate the following to:

1. Running Rope traffic is increasing dramatically. Adding 13 or so lots to the new development will increase the traffic further (e.g., lawn service trucks, UPS trucks, family cars, etc.). And now I hear about 20 additional living units of some sort. Can we alter Running Rope so that the lower portion (East of Knox lane) feeds the new development to Chimney Corners but Running Rope does not connect all the way to Mesa? For example, Chimney Corners at its Northern tip does NOT feed into the adjacent development to its west. Otherwise, Chimney Corners would become a bypass street—like Running Rope is becoming. We could bisect Running Rope so it terminates just west of Knox Lane. That would decrease the traffic on the street and better accommodate the traffic from the new development. **Has anyone done a traffic survey on Running Rope recently? Is Running Rope wide enough for this traffic? The street basically goes to one lane when single homes are built on the street and construction crews stage on opposite sides of the street. Running Rope does not seem equipped for this in the same manner as Mesa or Far West.**
2. Why is the new development gated? Unless they move the gate far into the development, **I'm going to repeatedly be unable to exit my driveway** onto Knox lane because of the aforementioned series of lawn service trucks, UPS trucks, family cars idling at the gate waiting to get into the property. And speaking of idling adjacent my property, a gate adjacent my driveway will increase **noxious fumes adjacent my property**—would could be alleviated if no gate is present or is located so the cars idle further into the development. **Further still, when someone approaches the locked gate...where will they turn around? My driveway.** Why not do away with the gated community

and let people turn around in the hammerhead structure the developer is building within the property instead of my driveway (or my yard when they miss my driveway)? Additionally, if I gate my property to prevent continued backing up into my driveway, how long will a car have to go in reverse to get back onto Running Rope. Maybe this is speculation but maybe not—these seems highly *unsafe* and something the City should be concerned with. Just off the top of my head my neighbors on Knox Lane have grandchildren and Betsy Clements and her neighbor have elementary school kids just at the opening to Knox Lane.

3. How will staging occur so my home is not adjacent construction vehicles (parked along Knox lane) for more than a year?
4. What will become of my tree that overhangs Knox Lane? Will the developer be in charge of trimming the branches? Can they be trimmed to an extent that will allow for the cement trucks etc. to pass? Those are huge trucks that are quite tall. I assume that oak will be just hammered and replaced on some distant property. But isn't it my oak? I guess they will just lop off any branch that extends onto their land.

Can you please direct me to the proper person to address these concerns with?

Thanks,
Jack

Jack Richards | Shareholder | Trop, Pruner & Hu, P.C. | 512.517.6051
Patent Procurement, Litigation, and Counseling

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From: [Champe Fitzhugh](#)
To: [Historic Preservation Office](#); [Fahnestock, Sam](#)
Cc: [Jack Richards](#); [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] [Betsy Clements](#)
Subject: Knox Lane Development: July 3 Meeting
Date: Wednesday, June 26, 2024 1:38:18 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email - Exercise Caution

To whom it may concern:

My name is Champe Fitzhugh, and I live with my wife and our 3 boys at 7221 Running Rope. We are directly across the street from the entrance to the short Knox Lane cul-de-sac which ends at the Knox property.

At the July 3 meeting, it is my understanding that Mr. Jimmy Nassour intends to speak. Apparently Mr. Nassour represented that he has had several meetings with nearby residents regarding his plan to redevelop the historic Knox property. If that is the case, and I do not believe it is, those meetings did not involve us, despite our being directly impacted by the proposed plans.

The development "plans" continue to experience mission creep. Mr. Nassour now apparently proposes 20 ADUs rather than the original single-family home project. Of course all of his plans have a single entrance and exit, one that involves traffic aimed directly at our home. There is no infrastructure to support the number of vehicles that would involve. There is no accounting for the environmental devastation such a development would entail. This is just a developer, with no regard for anything but his pocketbook, trying to take advantage of a situation.

The Knox property is a historical feature of our neighborhood. It is a scarce natural water source for wildlife. It is a singular property in the City of Austin. Allowing someone to callously destroy that, with an indefinite plan, a single entrance and exit onto a quiet residential street (one that would have to provide for, conservatively, the comings and goings of 40 new vehicles) would be to completely disregard the neighborhoods, the citizens, and the many, many children who regularly ride their bikes up and down Running Rope, use it to walk to school (we have a group of about 9 children who walk to Doss every morning), and to permit the creation of health and safety hazards while allowing the destruction of natural resources. No one would benefit from this plan except for Mr. Nassour and his wealthy investors.

There have not been ANY meetings regarding 20 ADUs. It is completely unreasonable to permit that many residences with one way in and out. In addition to everything else, it would create a hazard for the putative residents, in addition to being a nuisance to my family and our neighbors. Mr. Nassour's proposal is reckless and must, if considered, be reformed to a reasonable number of units considering the natural limits on ingress and egress.

We will not be in town for the July 3, 2024 meeting, but I wanted the Commission to know that we vehemently oppose this covert attempt at destroying neighborhood history, safety, and sanctity.

T. Champe Fitzhugh
Shareholder
Andrews Myers | Attorneys at Law
TEL: 512-900-3053
EMAIL: [REDACTED]
WEB: www.andrewsmyers.com

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [Fahnestock, Sam](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: Knox Lane -- Relocation Permit--July 3
Date: Thursday, June 27, 2024 10:34:44 AM

External Email - Exercise Caution

Mr. Fahnestock,

Below are my comments for inclusion in the July 3rd Commissioner packet. Also I wish to register to speak by phone. The pertinent registration information is at the end of this email.

Dear Members,

I object to the proposed relocation permit for the property at 7304 Knox Lane.

James E. Jarrett
7301 Running Rope
Austin, TX 78731

Comments:

My objections about relocation of the Knox house are four-fold.

1. Relocation does not preserve the house which has been the centerpiece of a large part of the nearby Northwest Hills land. This house has been a major landmark for several generations of Northwest Hills families. As a homeowner that can see the dwelling from my property, I can attest that for at least 32 years it has been decorated during the holidays as a gingerbread house. Not only have nearby families come by on foot to view the spectacle but cars often were parked on Knox Lane so that children and their parents could view this special structure.
2. Communication by the developer and his team with neighbors has been abysmal. I know of only two meetings that have occurred: February 2013 and July 2015. Nothing has been shared in 9 years. And while the postponement from the June 5th meeting to this July 3rd meeting supposedly was to allow time for providing residents an opportunity to meet with the developer, he has not reached out to schedule anything with us on Running Rope, the street that will be most affected.

At the May 1 Commission meeting, the developer mentioned he had met with

someone from the Northwest Austin Civic Association (NWACA). No date was given. Besides this obvious omission, Commission members should know that NWACA traditionally has never become involved as either a proponent or an opponent of proposed new developments in Northwest Hills.

3. 20 ADUs—Nothing has been communicated by either the developer or the City of Austin about this to my knowledge. We do not know if they have been approved, if these 20 ADUs would be in lieu of, or in addition to, the original 13 single family homes proposed.
4. The traffic situation from the original 13 proposed homes would be bad enough. (There are no sidewalks on Knox Lane, Running Rope, or Spurlock, the nearest adjacent street that leads to Far West and Doss Elementary.) If there are 20 ADUs, the traffic would truly become hazardous for the many families with children. While it may not be within the scope of the Landmark Commission's responsibilities, there needs to be some type of new traffic analysis performed about the anticipated increase in vehicular traffic.

Finally, I want to reiterate that the Knox house exemplifies the history of Northwest Hills. It should not be removed from the property. Ideally it could be repositioned on the property and continue to be a holiday spectacle for families in the future.

Thank you for your consideration.

James E. Jarrett

I wish to speak by phone at the July 3rd meeting.

- Name: James Jarrett
- Email: [REDACTED]
- Phone number you will be calling in with: 512-343-1884
- Project address: Knox Ranch (Knox Lane)
- For/against proposed project: I am against approving a relocation permit

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [Fahnestock, Sam](mailto:Sam.Fahnestock@austintexas.gov)
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Knox Lane Development: July 3 Meeting
Date: Tuesday, July 2, 2024 12:43:28 PM

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To whom it may concern:

My name is Christopher Spandikow. My wife, twin 8-year old children, and I live at 7219 Running Rope. I completely agree with Mr Fitzhugh’s assessment provided in his email. I won’t repeat those same points here. Instead, I’ll offer my proof-point. My family also has not been in contact with Mr. Jimmy Nassour even though we live right next to the Fitzhugh and across from the Knox property.

I respectfully recommend the committee to not take Mr. Nassour’s word on topics going forward, but would instead suggest that the committee seek proof of all of his claims.

Thank you for your consideration and service.

Best Regards,


Christopher Spandikow

On Thu, Jun 27, 2024 at 9:18 AM Fahnestock, Sam <Sam.Fahnestock@austintexas.gov> wrote:

Good morning, Mr. Fitzhugh,

Thank you for writing your concerns. I will upload your comments for the Commission to review ahead of the meeting.

Thank you,

	<p>Sam Fahnestock <i>Planner II he/him</i> City of Austin Planning Department P: (512) 974-3393 E: sam.fahnestock@austintexas.gov 6310 Wilhelmina Delco Drive, Austin, Texas</p>
<p>PLANNING DEPARTMENT</p>	

From: Champe Fitzhugh <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, June 26, 2024 1:38 PM
To: Historic Preservation Office <Preservation@austintexas.gov>; Fahnestock, Sam <Sam.Fahnestock@austintexas.gov>
Cc: Jack Richards <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Betsy Clements <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Knox Lane Development: July 3 Meeting

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To whom it may concern:

My name is Champe Fitzhugh, and I live with my wife and our 3 boys at 7221 Running Rope. We are directly across the street from the entrance to the short Knox Lane cul-de-sac which ends at the Knox property.

At the July 3 meeting, it is my understanding that Mr. Jimmy Nassour intends to speak. Apparently Mr. Nassour represented that he has had several meetings with nearby residents regarding his plan to redevelop the historic Knox property. If that is the case, and I do not believe it is, those meetings did not involve us, despite our being directly impacted by the proposed plans.

The development "plans" continue to experience mission creep. Mr. Nassour now apparently proposes 20 ADUs rather than the original single-family home project. Of course all of his plans have a single entrance and exit, one that involves traffic aimed directly at our home. There is no infrastructure to support the number of vehicles that would involve. There is no accounting for the environmental devastation such a development would entail. This is just a developer, with no regard for anything but his pocketbook, trying to take advantage of a situation.

The Knox property is a historical feature of our neighborhood. It is a scarce natural water source for wildlife. It is a singular property in the City of Austin. Allowing someone to callously destroy that, with an indefinite plan, a single entrance and exit onto a quiet residential street (one that would have to provide for, conservatively, the comings and goings of 40 new vehicles) would be to completely disregard the neighborhoods, the citizens, and the many, many children who regularly ride their bikes up and down Running Rope, use it to walk to school (we have a group of about 9 children who walk to Doss every morning), and to permit the creation of health and safety hazards while allowing the destruction of natural resources. No one would benefit from this plan except for Mr. Nassour and his wealthy investors.

There have not been ANY meetings regarding 20 ADUs. It is completely unreasonable to permit that many residences with one way in and out. In addition to everything else, it would create a hazard for the putative residents, in addition to being a nuisance to my family and our neighbors. Mr. Nassour's proposal is reckless and must, if considered, be reformed to a reasonable number of units considering the natural limits on ingress and egress.

We will not be in town for the July 3, 2024 meeting, but I wanted the Commission to know that we vehemently oppose this covert attempt at destroying neighborhood history, safety, and sanctity.

T. Champe Fitzhugh
Shareholder

Andrews Myers | Attorneys at Law

TEL: 512-900-3053

EMAIL: [REDACTED]

WEB: www.andrewsmyers.com

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [Historic Preservation Office](#)
Subject: relocation of Knox homestead case # GF 24-043942
Date: Monday, September 30, 2024 3:27:51 PM

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At the last meeting (April) it was noted that the Knox home might be moved to another site. In order to do this the house was to be cut into two pieces and moved via trailer to another site.

It should be noted that no matter how you cut this house, the hard part is moving it from the site. In order to exit the property via Knox Ln (the only access) several very old oak trees would have to be severely cut back; there is then no other way but to exit west or east onto Running Rope. Running Rope has a canopy of very old oak trees in either direction covering both sides of the street. These trees extending from either side of the street would have to be severely cut back to allow a trailer with a house on it. I suspect the neighborhood would never allow these trees to be butchered to allow movement of the Knox house. There is also an electrical utility line crossing the west end of the street. I suggest preserving on site or demolish. I, personally, see no reason to save this house. It is poorly and cheaply constructed with a poorly designed add on bathroom (sitting on a slab. Note the original house utilized an outhouse). The back porch roof is an add on that will simply fall apart no matter how the house is cut. The only thing of any value is the flooring which could be easily salvaged. The roof is steel (not period) and the siding is composite material (also not period) and with a huge stone fireplace occupying the rear wall being the main structure of the rear wall.

Stephen A. Mangold

7214 Running Rope, Austin, TX 78731

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Knox Lane -- January 7 Zoning and Planning Commission Meeting

From Jack Richards [REDACTED]

Date Thu 1/2/2025 12:12 PM

To Garcia, Ella <Ella.Garcia@austintexas.gov>; Contreras, Kalan <Kalan.Contreras@austintexas.gov>

Cc [REDACTED]

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All-

I'm Edwin "Jack" Richards and I live at 7300 Running Rope (on the corner of Running Rope and Knox Lane).

I oppose the proposed development for the property at 7304 Knox Lane for, in the least, the following reasons:

- 1. TRAFFIC SAFETY/LIABILITY:** Running Rope traffic is increasing dramatically. Adding 13 or so lots to the new development will increase the traffic further (e.g., lawn service trucks, UPS trucks, family cars, etc.). And now I hear about 20 additional living units of some sort. Has anyone studied whether, for example, we can alter Running Rope so that the lower portion (East of Knox lane) feeds the new development to Chimney Corners but Running Rope does not connect all the way to Mesa? For example, Chimney Corners at its Northern tip does NOT feed into the adjacent development to its west. Otherwise, Chimney Corners would become a bypass street—like Running Rope is becoming. Has anyone studied whether we can bisect Running Rope so it terminates just west of Knox Lane? That would decrease the traffic on the street and better accommodate the traffic from the new development. Has anyone done a traffic survey on Running Rope recently? **For example, is Running Rope wide enough for this traffic? Compare the widths of, for example, Mesa/Far West/Greystone to Running Rope. Mesa/Far West/Greystone are FAR WIDER than Running Rope. Running Rope basically goes to one lane when single homes are built on the street and construction crews stage on opposite sides of the street. In other words, Running Rope does not seem equipped to safely accommodate this increase in traffic in the same manner as Mesa/Far West/Greystone. Considering Running Rope has no sidewalks (unlike, e.g., Mesa or Far West) and the width of Running Rope is far less than Mesa/Far West/Greystone, is it safe to allow 13-26 homes without first proving (e.g., via traffic study or otherwise) a narrow street like Running Rope can handle the increase in flow? This seems like a liability that needs to be mitigated by the city and Developer.**
- 2. GATED COMMUNITY/SAFETY:** Why is the new development gated (or at least that was proposed at one time)? Unless the Developer moves the gate far into the development, I'm going to repeatedly be unable to exit my driveway onto Knox lane because of the aforementioned series

of lawn service trucks, UPS trucks, family cars idling at the gate waiting to get into the property. And speaking of idling adjacent my property, a gate adjacent my driveway will increase noxious fumes adjacent my property—would could be alleviated if no gate is present or is located so the cars idle further into the development. Further still, when someone approaches the locked gate... where will they turn around? My driveway? Why not do away with the gated community and let people turn around in the hammerhead structure the developer is building within the Developer's property instead of my driveway (or my yard when they miss my driveway)? **Additionally, if I gate my property to prevent continued backing up into my driveway, how long will a car have to go in reverse to get back onto Running Rope. Maybe this is speculation but maybe not—these seems highly *unsafe* and something the City should be concerned with. Just off the top of my head my neighbors on Knox Lane have grandchildren and Betsy Clements and her neighbor have elementary school kids just at the opening to Knox Lane.**

3. **STAGING:** How will staging occur so my home is not adjacent construction vehicles (parked along Knox lane) for more than a year?
4. **ENVIRONMENT:** What will become of my tree that overhangs Knox Lane? Will the developer be in charge of trimming the branches? Can they be trimmed to an extent that will allow for the cement trucks etc. to pass? Those are huge trucks that are quite tall. I assume that oak will be just hammered and replaced on some distant property. But isn't it my oak? I guess they will just lop off any branch that extends onto their land.
5. **AMBIGUITY:** I have not met with the developer of the Knox Ranch in years. I'm not sure I even have a formal plan the Developer is proposing.

Thanks,
Jack

Trop, Pruner & Hu, P.C. | [REDACTED]

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Knox Lane -- January 7 Zoning and Planning Commission Meeting

From Champe Fitzhugh [REDACTED]

Date Thu 1/2/2025 11:43 AM

To Garcia, Ella <Ella.Garcia@austintexas.gov>; Contreras, Kalan <Kalan.Contreras@austintexas.gov>

Cc [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] gmail.com
<oconnorm324@gmail.com>; Betsy Clements <betsyclements@gmail.com>

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To whom it may concern:

I'm writing in regards to the Knox Lane zoning and development plan. My name is Champe Fitzhugh and my family lives directly across from the entrance to Knox Lane. We have three boys, ages 8, 13, and 16. Our next door neighbors have twins, age 9. Across the street from them are three children, ages 8, 6, and 2.

There are young children all up and down our street. There are no sidewalks on our street and all of these children regularly ride bikes and visit neighbors. Most of them also walk to school at Doss Elementary and walk home from school.

We are all firmly opposed to the proposal from the developer to build up to 20 units on the historic and environmentally sensitive Knox property. Our opposition is based largely on three points:

(1) The developer intends to use a single, short cul de sac as the sole entry and exit for 20 residences (including ADUs), which could conservatively mean 40 vehicles. Knox Lane is a short cul de sac, perhaps 50 yards long. The developer has not conducted a traffic study to my knowledge. The developer has continually increased the number of planned units for the space, without regard to the effects that these vehicles will have on the neighborhood and the environment. The increased traffic will be dangerous to the children in the neighborhood, bad for the many heritage trees adjoining Knox Lane, and detrimental to the area at large.

(2) As was discussed previously at the historical commission meeting, the Knox property includes a spring fed pool (it has been estimated there may be up to 6 springs), which are believed to house an endangered salamander. To our knowledge, the developer has not conducted any hydrological study purporting to examine the impact that paving a massive portion of this property (the developer plans to put a private drive in where now there is open ground) will have on recharge zones for these springs or the endangered species inhabiting them. This type of groundwater is scarce natural resource, one that

every citizen has an interest in protecting. No development should occur without an examination of the impact on the watershed of the planned paving.

(3) The Knox site is a known archaeological and historically significant site. The Texas Archeological commission has recorded the presence of burnt stone middens evidencing previous native American use of the springs. It is likely that there are other sites of significant on the rest of the Knox tract, but no investigation has been made and no preservation efforts have occurred. Allowing important common cultural sites to be disturbed and destroyed so outside financiers can squeeze maximum profit out of a site cannot be what the City of Austin is about. A detailed study of the property needs to be conducted.

These concerns must be addressed. The developer has made no effort to meet with residents to discuss this. They have, instead, hurried this agenda forward right after the holidays with minimal notice to residents.

I plan on attending the zoning commission meeting and discussing these points.

Sincerely,

Champe Fitzhugh

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