

From: Collier Gibson <

Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 11:56 AM

To: Meredith, Maureen <Maureen.Meredith@austintexas.gov>

Subject: RE: Case Number: NPA-2024-0019.01

Hi Maureen,

I understand the meeting regarding the rezoning is happening tomorrow. I'd like to update my comment to the below given some additional details I've learned. Thank you for your assistance.

Dear Austin Planning Commission,

I am a resident of the neighborhood affected by the proposed rezoning and am writing to express my thoughts about the current proposal.

I support the general concept of developing these vacant lots with the goal of increasing density in the neighborhood. I understand Austin does not have enough housing and these lots seems like a great opportunity to help with that.

I have reservations about approving a rezoning request without some sort of development plan in place. As it was communicated to me by their agent, Victoria Haase, the current property owner is seeking this zoning change prior to selling the property, rather than having a specific development project planned. Further, they stated at the Hancock Neighborhood Association meeting that they were unwilling to spend the money to develop potential plans that would provide additional information about the development.

The current zoning already permits townhouse development, which would appropriately increase urban density in the neighborhood. It also seems reasonable to convert the lot into some sort of mixed-use commercial/residential development and it was communicated on one of the meetings that such a development was possible.

It appears that the current owner is hoping to change the zoning and sell the property for a higher price given it's new zoning potential. If the goal is to increase urban density in Austin, then it would seem more appropriate to me that the individual or entity willing to actually undertake development should benefit financially rather than someone merely flipping the land.

I am not opposed to potentially re-zoning the property, but I believe the current circumstances are not the appropriate ones. Asking the developer to at least give a basic idea of what they would like to develop on the land prior to approving a zoning request would incentivize actual development of new housing stock rather than speculation and give neighborhood residents the opportunity to understand how the development might impact them.

Thank you for your consideration.

From: Kathy Macchi <

Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 12:06 AM

To: Hempel, Claire - BC <BC-Claire.Hempel@austintexas.gov>

Cc: Boudreaux, Marcelle <Marcelle.Boudreaux@austintexas.gov>

Subject: Planning Commission Case Nos. NPA-2024-0019.01 and C14-2024-0121 (4305-4309 Red River)

Honorable Claire Hempel, Chair, Planning Commission, City of Austin

Dear Chair Hempel,

I live on East 44th Street between Bennett Avenue and Red River, and I am writing to express my opposition to the zoning changes requested for 4305, 4307, and 4309 Red River Street. While I **strongly support adding more housing—especially affordable housing—Austin needs to grow in a way that benefits everyone, not just developers looking for a quick profit.**

The reality is that the property owner bought the land knowing its zoning restrictions. If they're now asking for a change, it should be to create something reasonable that fits the neighborhood—not to maximize profit at the expense of the community. The city's job isn't to ensure an investor gets a massive return, but to ensure development makes sense for the people who actually live here.

The Right Kind of Development

A 30-foot height mixed-use or single-family option with additional dwelling units or multi-family would be the best way forward. This would allow for more housing while keeping buildings in scale with the rest of the neighborhood, preventing an oversized structure from **dominating the area** and worsening traffic and parking issues.

***Note:** I know the city wants more mixed use but this piece of land is one block from Hancock Shopping Center and a 5-min walk from the Hyde Park/Duval Shopping Center. I'm not sure what business would want to open there when all the shopping is happening in one of those two major commercial centers. More housing, though, is needed so it would be a good use of the land.*

Concerns with the Proposed Changes

- **Excessive Height & Scale:** Most homes in our neighborhood are single-story, with a few two-story houses that stay within the 30-foot height limit. The applicant's request for a **DB90 density bonus would allow a 70-foot building—more than twice as tall as anything else and four times taller than most homes.** Nothing that size exists here, and it would **overshadow** surrounding properties. That alone is reason enough to reject this request.

Even the **40-foot** height allowed under the Planning Department's recommendation would create a building that **towers over the rest of the neighborhood.** Without setback requirements, there's nothing to soften the impact of such a tall structure—it would feel completely out of place.

- **Traffic & Parking Issues:** The City's Planning Department seems to recognize that this proposal is excessive, recommending approval for a shift to mixed-use zoning but **not the**

DB90 density bonus. While **removing the DB90 bonus is a step in the right direction**, it doesn't go far enough. The proposed changes **still don't fit the neighborhood and would cause significant issues** for the community.

The **traffic study used to justify this proposal is deeply flawed**—it doesn't account for major nearby developments like the Hancock Shopping Center expansion, the ongoing I-35 construction, and the actual street size at this stretch of the road, all of which will already increase congestion. Parking spillover onto **44th Street** would create serious hazards for pedestrians and cyclists.

- **Street Size.** It appears that the street study did not realize that Red River Street at these properties narrows and is **reduced to one lane in each direction**. Red River is wider at Hancock Shopping Center. The traffic study should be redone based on the actual street size.
- **Safety Risks:** Red River between **43rd and 44th** is already a difficult stretch of road, with bus stops, a crosswalk, and narrow bike lanes. Increasing density at this location without addressing these risks will only make it more dangerous for everyone.

A Better Approach

Zoning changes should be approved only when a **clear and reasonable development plan** is presented—not on speculation. Right now, it seems like the owner either wants to **maximize profits at the community's expense** or already knows what they plan to build but doesn't want to be upfront about it. Neither is a reason to approve this request.

While Austin **needs more housing**, it needs **smart growth that works for everyone**—not just developers looking to make a fortune. Please reject this request in its current form and consider a more **balanced approach that respects the character, safety, and livability of our neighborhood**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kathy Macchi

1003 E. 44th Street

Austin, TX 78751

From: Kristin Phillips <
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2025 2:04 PM
To: Meredith, Maureen <Maureen.Meredith@austintexas.gov>
Cc: Tony Di Fiore <
Subject: Protest: rezoning of 4305, 4307, and 4309 Red River Street

Dear Ms. Meredith,

We live in Austin's Hancock neighborhood at 806 E 44th St, close to ((three buildings from) the proposed land that the city is allowing to be rezoned at multi-use with 70 foot height.

We have serious concerns about the city's rezoning of this piece of land because the **location is not appropriate for the proposal.**

1. No buildings in this part of Hancock are anywhere near 6 to 7 stories tall. At most, there are some buildings that might be approaching 30 feet ... but they are far from the location. A 70 foot structure would be a strange, solitary tower built on two small lots that shadows all other buildings
2. Red River narrows at this point to single lanes in either direction, and there is a bus stop (and a crosswalk with an island) right in front of 4305, 4307 and 4308 Red River. If a multi-use property is added at this location — with no offsets— it will create a true bottleneck next to a gigantic tower.
3. If there is additional foot traffic, safety would be a concern with the speed of driving on Red River if a building with no offsets is approved.
4. There is no parking on Red River Street, and there is no proposed parking to be built with this rezoning.
5. E 44th St on either side of Red River are both very narrow streets. When cars are parked on both sides, it is nearly impossible to drive down the streets now ... and will be even more impossible with additional vehicles created by any proposed development. Please talk with the garbage services ... they can barely drive down the street on some days.

In short, this proposed rezoning at this location is misguided. Please look very carefully at the size of the property as well as the location — approving this will only crate further problems for the city and for the residents.

Thank you,

Kristin Phillips and Anthony Di Fiore

646-400-4287

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