

Original Austin Neighborhood Association (OANA)

The OANA Board of Directors (BoD) came together at Al Stowell's house on Monday 14 December 2009 and Ted opened the meeting at 3:08 PM. Directors in attendance were Mark Holzbach, John Horton, Albert Stowell, Perry Lorenz, Ted Siff, JuanPablo Wright, Rick Hardin and Blake Tollett. Kevin Williamson sent an email saying he was unexpectedly delayed in Dallas and could not attend.

The first order of business was the adoption of the 4 November 2009 minutes (unanimous) and a review of the treasury account (\$1930). That being done, Ted asked us to go around the table and tell the other board members our personal goals for, and areas of interest in, the neighborhood and neighborhood association.

As for the functioning of the board, Ted hoped that we could do the majority of work by committee and that the committees would then bring to the board meetings a product or motion that would be reviewed. The decision by the board to endorse or not would then be made. Blake stated that one of his main concerns was openness of the process and it was agreed to by all that board of director meetings going forward would be regularly scheduled, would be noticed to the membership, or at least those who have supplied an email contact address, and would be open to the public. Mark would like to see each committee, as they are adopted or formed, have a statement of purpose and a delineation of authority. Perry felt that due to the spirited election of directors back in mid November that we should make a true effort to work in harmony. General discussion followed.

As for goals, John, as a neighborhood property owner, spoke to the board about considering all sides of issues coming before us and to keep in mind that there are property rights inherent in property ownership. Al spoke of his desire to see a more dense residential use in the neighborhood coupled with historic preservation of structures. Mark and JuanPablo spoke to forging a more active community sense among the residents and property owners in our area. Social networking VIA the Internet affords opportunities to make this happen.

We then moved on to setting the initial term limits of board members (the bylaws speak to term limits of 2 years with 4 members elected initially for one year and 5 members elected initially for the regular 2 years) and the election of officers for the first term. By unanimous consent, the following was decided:

Directors serving an initial 1-year term: John Horton, Perry Lorenz, Kevin Williamson and Rick Hardin.

Directors serving an initial two-year term: Mark Holzbach, Albert Stowell, Blake Tollett, Ted Siff and JuanPablo Wright.

Officers elected:

President: Ted Siff

Vice-President: Mark Holzbach

Secretary: Blake Tollett
Treasurer: Albert Stowell

We then continued a general discussion begun earlier in the meeting highlighting current or imminent areas of concern to the neighborhood. Two governmental entities, Austin Community College (ACC) and Travis County are actively looking to expand their campuses. Rick succinctly explained to us that the State is at the top of the pecking order, then county government, then local, and that they all have powers of condemnation over local property owners, so we obviously should seek a place at the table as these expansion plans evolve. In addition, there are currently two local government “plans” ongoing, the Northwest District plan and the Downtown Austin Plan, and both affect our neighborhood. We will also need to keep abreast of their progress through the system and make sure that our neighborhood association views are considered in the plans’ formation. An additional area of concern is quality of life in our neighborhood, whether it is trash on the streets, the interaction between residents and property owners and the homeless and/or transient population of the area, or the bleeding of noise/music from commercial interests.

We then moved on to the formation of committees:

Planning & Zoning: The Chair will be Al and Blake, Mark, Perry and Rick will be members.

Government Relations: We decided that this Committee would be the umbrella committee for City & County relations, ACC & AISD relations and Transportation issues. John will be the first Chair with Ted, Al, JuanPablo and Rick being members.

Historic Preservation: Chair will be Al with Mark, Rick and OANA member Bridgette Beinecke as members.

Parks & Open Space: Mark will be Chair with John and Ted as members.

Quality of Life/Social Order: Kevin will be Chair with BoD members John, Al and Rick.

Membership and Marketing: Mark will be in charge with the entire board helping, as needed.

Social Events and Camaraderie: JuanPablo will be Chair with the entire board helping, as needed.

The next order of business was a discussion of the 20 January 2010 General Membership Meeting agenda:

1. The question of where the neighborhood association’s boundary will be is slated for general discussion and a vote. Historically, the OANA boundary is Lake Lady Bird, North Lamar, 15th Street and Guadalupe. When the neighborhood association was re-envisioned this last year, and specifically at the general membership meeting held on 27 April 2009, there was a motion passed unanimously by those in attendance that the recommendation to the to-be-elected BoD would be that the neighborhood association’s southern boundary should be moved to the south side of 7th

Street rather than the lake. As stated, this issue will be re-discussed and again voted on by the general membership at this meeting. Mark has put some information on this matter up on our website (<http://www.originalaustin.org>) and our Citicite (<http://www.citicite.com/oana/>) and BoD members and general members are encouraged to post information and their views. We talked about doing a general mailer to all residents and property owners to advertise the meeting and as a means of recruiting new members. Mark will look into the costs for a blanket mailer.

2. Blake has been tasked with reviewing the By-Laws and bringing recommended changes to the general membership for a vote.

3. It is hoped that at this general membership meeting that there will be interest in joining the above outlined committees and volunteers from the general membership will be actively recruited.

4. We are going to set a 2010 calendar of BoD meetings, general meetings and social events. It was again noted that all BoD meetings are open to the general membership and will be so noticed.

Other business items:

1. The board voted to reimburse Mark for the cost of securing our domain name on the Internet.

2. Both Mark and Al have expressed interest to the DANA (Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association) organization to be included on their board of directors. It will be good that we have a liaison relationship with them and Mark and Al got our blessing to go forward.

3. The City proposed Bike Boulevard was discussed. Their original plan was for Nueces Street to be converted for this purpose, but after discussion, the OANA BoD voted unanimously to propose that we would rather see Rio Grande Street used for this purpose. Key to our vote was the educational facilities located along Rio Grande Street, the width of the street, how Rio Grande Street crosses MLK Street in a better north-south alignment, and that from MLK Street to 24th Street, Rio Grande is a one-way street north. The Government Affairs Committee was authorized to issue a statement to the City to this effect.

4. Rick gave us a recap and we then discussed the much publicized ongoing rezoning of residential property in the City as historic. One concern is that if there is an eroding or loss of political and popular support for historic zoning, there will be a very real potential loss of support for ad valorem tax exemptions by the various taxing authorities. Rick also expressed concern that the nascent Local Historic District program, its rules and procedures, could be negatively affected collaterally by the current dustup. The resolution of this matter is not going to go away since historic zoning qualifies properties for property tax exemptions, and quite frankly the taxing authorities need all the monies they can get in the current economic climate.

5. The OANA BoD will next meet on Monday 11 January 2010 from 4 to 5:30 PM at the Regency Apartments. The Regency will also be the site of the general membership meeting on Wednesday 20 January 2010 from 6 to 8 PM.

Having covered quite a bit of territory in our inaugural BoD meeting, Ted called for an adjournment at 5:06 PM and it was unanimously agreed to.

Blake Tollett-Secretary