

Old Austin Neighborhood Association (OANA)
5 June 2018

The OANA Board of Directors (BoD) came together for their monthly meeting on Tuesday 5 June at the Shoal Creek Saloon. BoD members in attendance were Ted Siff, Charles Peveto, Diana Zuniga, Paul Byars, Blake Tollett and Bill Schnell. Ray Canfield, Katie Jackson, Perry Lorenz and Michael Portman had indicated they could not attend or would be running late. Advisory Council members in attendance were Roger Cauvin, Chris Riley and Dorothy Doolittle.

The first order of business was the adoption of minutes from our May meeting, expertly taken by Paul. Upon motion from Charles with Paul seconding they were unanimously adopted and Bill will post them on our webpage.

Under Current & New Business:

Due to his employer's guidelines, Michael is having to resign as our Treasurer and Ray has stepped up to be his replacement. Sometime soon Ray, Ted and Michael will meet at the bank for the transfer of responsibility.

Chris then gave us an update on the string of arsons in the neighborhood centered along W 14th Street. These incidents have abated and both the Austin Fire (AFD) and Police (APD) Departments have identified a person of interest. He appears on surveillance video from one of the crime scenes and he has been questioned, but so far there is not sufficient evidence for an arrest. Neighbors in the area have formed a loose watch group and many have added additional lighting and surveillance equipment.

The month of June should prove pivotal for the proposed overhaul of the Land Development Code (LDC), CodeNext. Specifically to our neighborhood, Chris related that the recommendations coming out of the Planning Commission (PC) that have gone to the City Council (CC) increase the recommended developmental entitlements we currently enjoy under our neighborhood plan, the Downtown Austin Plan/Northwest District (DAP/NWD). The DAP/NWD calls for a rezoning of our office properties to a mix of uses including residential with the retention of a 60-foot developmental height, a height entitlement equal to the current zoning on most of our properties (depending on the zoning district, properties with a current developmental height of 40-feet will retain that developmental height). Although the DAP/NWD blanket rezoning has not been fully implemented by Council, since the adoption of the plan by Council every rezoning of property in our neighborhood has reflected the recommendations of the plan. Our neighborhood plan is a developmental compromise; allowable uses of property were expanded to include residential uses but developmental entitlements (height and floor-to-area ratios) were kept close to what are currently available by zoning district. The overriding idea was to encourage the retention of our neighborhood's defining historic building character while permitting reasonable development. The matter is in the hands of the CC and they have begun work sessions to digest the City staff/consultant documents along with the PC recommendations coupled with citizen communications. After extended discussion it was decided that OANA's position on the LDC rewrite would become clearer when there is a final product to consider.

Politically, the thought is that the Council will not have a first reading of the document until August, but that might prove ambitious. August is traditionally the time for budget hearings and this year the Council must also finalize the language for the November bond election.

Continuing our discussion of the upcoming bond election, it appears that a majority of the Council tends to favor the recommendations of the Citizens Bond Advisory Task Force, although there appears to be consensus that the Affordable Housing component needs to be increased substantially. Of specific interest to our neighborhood is the amount of funding proposed to be allocated to downtown parks. It is hoped that there will be funds to complete and implement the master plans at Wooldridge Square Park and Duncan Park, among other proposals. Due to legal requirements the bonds will be broken out into separate proposals (IE-parks, transportation, public safety, affordable housing, etc.).

Under **Committee Reports and Action Items:**

- Under **Marketing**, Katie, Charles and Bill continue to work with our website developer and will have an update by the next BoD meeting.
- Under **Planning and Zoning**, Blake reported that the rezoning request by the Gilfillan House is under an indefinite postponement in front of the Historic Landmark Commission. Over on the 1200 block of San Antonio and Nueces Streets, the Texas Association of Counties continue their redevelopment project to erect an office building.
- Under **Parks**, Charles reported that the Austin Parks Foundation arranged a second volunteer day at Wooldridge Square focusing again on weeding and mulch around the trees. This time the volunteers came from Balfour-Beatty Construction, and it seems that organization is interested in establishing a continuing volunteer program. The Friends of Wooldridge Square Park have asked the Parks & Recreation Department to install interpretive signage at the park in advance of completing the master plan and the funding for the signage will be coming from the 2012 bond package. Ted reported that the formalized Shoal Creek Trail Plan would be published soon. The delay in publication is due to the trail wash out above W 24th Street and the plan will now address how the loss will be remedied. Paul gave us a recap of the City's bike to work initiative. Volunteers set up in Duncan Park and over 130 bike commuters stopped by to meet and greet and share refreshments.

Under **Other Business**, the ongoing traffic concerns around Seaholm continue to vex both drivers and pedestrians. Charles suggested that OANA along with the Shoal Creek Conservancy and the Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association facilitate a meeting to holistically address the issue.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 10 July at Shoal Creek Saloon. Ted will check with the folks building the Independent to see if we could tour the tower after the meeting. Today's meeting was adjourned early so the BoD could go tour the 5th & West project.

Blake Tollett, Secretary
OANA