

Old Austin Neighborhood Association (OANA)
12 September 2017

The OANA Board of Directors (BoD) came together for our regularly scheduled second Tuesday of the month meeting at the Shoal Creek Saloon. BoD members in attendance were our gracious host Ray Canfield, Diana Zuniga, Ted Siff, Michael Portman, Katie Jackson, Blake Tollett and Austin Stowell. BoD member Charles Peveto sent his regrets.

Advisory Council members in attendance were Kathy Marcus from the Spring and Roger Cauvin from Plaza Lofts. Brandi Clark Burton sat in with us.

Before the meeting started, Greg Hitt, a candidate for a newly created Travis County District Court Judge position, spoke to us of his credentials and asked for our support of his candidacy.

The minutes from our August meeting were still being prepared and when they are submitted, Ted will distribute them VIA email and an electronic vote to adopt them will be taken.

Continuing with the agenda, under **Pending Programs/Projects Committee**, Ted gave us an overview of the City's Parking Benefits District (PBD) program and how it might apply to our neighborhood. Ted has been working with Paul Byars, an OANA member who works in the neighborhood but lives at Mueller where he helped set up a PBD program for that neighborhood. Under the PBD program, the City installs new parking meters/kiosks, and once operating expenses are met, a portion of the revenue stream is diverted to neighborhood projects such as sidewalk improvements and landscaping (I.E.-for us the envisioned/proposed W. 12th Street Esplanade is a possibility). There is an initial threshold that the proposed district results in at least 50 new metered parking spaces. Because our neighborhood is fairly blanketed with metered parking, Paul has volunteered to go around and see if there are potentially 50 unmetered parking spaces available. If we can't meet this threshold, and hopefully we are at least close, there is a mechanism to ask for a variance to this requirement. Ted will report back to us next month.

Discussions of the historic survey of the neighborhood as well as the W. 12th Street Esplanade were deferred. Progress is being made on both however.

We then turned to our **Special Agenda** item, the OANA Neighborhood Tour. Ted and Katie took this exploratory assignment on with the idea that this project would be produced by outside talent (thus the presence of our guest Brandi Clark Burton) with a possible timeframe of either the coming spring or even next fall. However, the grand opening of Austin's new main library in our neighborhood on October 28th has presented us with an interesting window of opportunity. The library folks are anticipating over 10,000 visitors to the facility that day and are arranging shuttle service from seven of the City's branch libraries so as to alleviate parking needs. Attendees will be encouraged to take in and explore the Seaholm EcoDistrict, a 90-acre mixed-use brownfield redevelopment project next to the library. Shoal Creek Conservancy (SCC) will be sponsoring a walk the creek trail program beginning at Duncan Park and going south to the library area, and an additional area visitor draw will be a reopened Republic Square and attendant farmers' market. Tying OANA somehow to this day's activities might not necessarily bring us that many new members, but it would help us to gain citywide recognition (advancing our brand),

something that is strategically beneficial. Having engaged our imagination, Ted introduced us to Brandi Clark Burton.

Brandi recently came away from being one of Mayor Adler's Senior Policy Advisors and returned to private community and environmental entrepreneurship. She is an Austin native with decades of experience in event production with an emphasis on green initiatives. She began her talk by emphasizing that the timeline here is very compressed, but it is doable if everything falls in place. She has spoken with the library folks and they are amenable to allow an OANA presence, and there have also been some positive talks with the area's restaurants and saloons. Ted suggested that he, Michael and Katie continue to work with Brandi and asked for \$2,500 from OANA for Brandi's expertise with the proviso that the money only be disbursed if the project is deemed financially feasible and it is begun.

At this point we had an extended discussion of the proposal. It is envisioned that through sponsorships and possibly ticketed events we would earn back our initial outlay plus be able to make Brandi's time worthwhile. The SCC also was discussed as being a potential beneficiary with a 50-50 split with OANA of any funds brought in after our initial outlay is recouped and Brandi's time is compensated. Because these funds would be from a social event, Katie suggested that new OANA revenue be allocated to update our social media presence. On motion from Diana with Michael seconding, Ted and Katie will go forward on the project with authority to spend up to \$2,500. Everyone involved understands that if this doesn't come together fairly quickly, especially the sponsorships, then we would walk away from it.

Under **Committee Reports** Michael reported one new member and stable financials. Katie brought up the membership opportunities available on the Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association (DANA) website and wondered if we too could expand our membership categories. Michael and she will explore and report back. Diana knows a very reasonable and competent web designer (a student) and she will inquire whether he might look over our website and get a proposal if warranted.

Under **Parks**, while we didn't have any formal presentations, Ted did give us an update of the ongoing City Council discussion of the allocation of Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) monies. This year this amounts to 92 million dollars, not an insignificant amount. Under state law, up to 15% of these monies can be allocated to the arts as well as 15% can be allocated to historic preservation. What is being proposed is to allocate more closely these available funds for their enumerated uses rather than leaving the lion's share with the convention center itself and its promotional efforts. This discussion is ongoing.

Under **Old Business, Planning & Zoning**:

- There has been no update on the Gilfillan House rezoning proposal at 603 W. 8th Street. The owners/developers have agreed in principle VIA email to the conditions of our proposed Restrictive covenant, but it hasn't actually been signed.
- The property at 405 W. 14th Street is again under contract and the potential owners are in accord with preserving the structure.

- At 1205 Rio Grande & 1218 West Avenue, the Austin Community College campus, there is a 50 million dollar renovation underway. OANA several years back urged the college to preserve these iconic structures (the old Austin High School) with conditions and that appears the way it is playing out.
- The rezoning at 1202 San Antonio Street from GO to DMU-CO has been finalized.

Under New Business, Kathy Marcus spoke to us about the Margaret Moser Park, a pocket park at the corner of W. 3rd and Nueces Streets she has somewhat adopted. Although sited in a dedicated City R-O-W, this often-overlooked park has an interpretive sign, public art in the form of a guitar, and picnic tables. Apparently with all of the nearby construction the area is looking somewhat ratty. Since Ms. Moser recently passed, Kathy feels it would be very appropriate for us to take notice of this situation. We shared some good suggestions with her, especially bringing in the project managers of the various new construction sites with an idea to inform them of the parks existence and significance as well as to encourage them to work at keeping the area cleaned up. She will follow through on these suggestions and get back to us if she needs further assistance.

Having once again reached our allocated time limit, we adjourned. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 10 October 2017.

Blake Tollett-Secretary
OANA