

Original Austin Neighborhood Association (OANA)
2 April 2013

The Board of Directors (BoD) of OANA came together shortly after 4 PM at our regularly scheduled first Tuesday of the month meeting at the Common Room of the Regency Apartment. Members in attendance were Perry Lorenz, Ray Canfield, Paul Isham, Ted Siff, Bill Schnell, Karen Armstrong, Tom Borders, Albert Stowell and Blake Tollett. Rick Hardin and John Horton had sent their regrets.

Neighbor Ian Inglis who offices in the neighborhood and lives in the Austin City Lofts joined us.

The first order of business was the discussion of the previous month's minutes. They were unanimously accepted as written and Bill was asked to post them on our website.

We then briefly revisited the discussion of the OANA Operational Goals of 2013 as outlined in last month's minutes. Ted encouraged each of us to review them, find a personal responsibility in them we are comfortable with and start going forward.

On the financial front Albert reports the following:

Beginning balance of \$7,465.05

Checks written:

US Postmaster, PO Box rental \$54

Shoal Creek Project \$451.34

Austin Neighborhoods Council membership \$35

Monies received:

Michael Portman Shoal Creek Fund donation \$250

Ending balance of \$7,174.71

[NOTE: \$2,298.66 of these funds are segregated for the Shoal Creek Fund with \$4,876.05 of the cash on hand being unrestricted.]

We then reviewed John's Government Relations report he submitted to us electronically:

OANA Government Relations Report 4-2-2013

I was meeting with Steve Grassfield, Austin Transportation Regulatory Manager on a personal issue and while I was with him, I got an update on the new parking meters and extended hours that have been implemented in our neighborhood. The purpose of the metered parking is to encourage "turn over" so there is adequate street parking available for guests, customers, and patrons coming to downtown. Before we had the meters and extended hours (night time) most of the street parking was taken up by the employees of the bars and restaurants and their cars remained parked for an average of 8 hours. Since the extended parking meter hours have been implemented, the average time for a parked car is 2.5 hours. The argument by the establishments against this was that it would be an additional burden on their employees and hurt their business. According to TABC reports, downtown liquor sales are up over \$20 million this past year. So it

looks like the bars and restaurants are doing just fine. I asked Steve how the employees are coming to their jobs downtown. He said the bus ridership is up including the addition of another E-Bus that runs until 3am on the weekends. Ridership on the Metro Rail is up also. There also have been accommodations for some employees in downtown garages.

Steve also told me about a new pre-paid parking meter device that is now available in Austin. You purchase the device (see link below - I am not sure of the cost – I think around \$30) then you “load” or pre pay for parking time through your computer and online connection. Once it is loaded, you just hang it inside your car window to show parking enforcement that you are paying for parking. When you return, you stop the device. This eliminates the need to guess the amount of parking time you need. This can also be a nice perk for employees and customers of downtown businesses that want to provide parking.

<http://kutnews.org/post/pay-just-parking-you-use-new-device>

John Horton
Government Relations Committee Chair, OANA

[NOTE; It should be mentioned that the new parking meters in this expanded parking regulation zone only allow for a 2 hour maximum rental. This built in governor most likely has something to do with this increase in turnovers although the old style parking meters also had “maximum” time limits to some extent.]

After some general discussion, we decided to look at these current regulations and compare them to how OANA envisioned their reformulation:

“John and Rick have been working with the City of Austin (CoA) representatives Steve Grassfield and Lee Austin on the extension of parking meter enforcement hours in the neighborhood. Although this is still in flux, the thought is to extend the present hours of metered parking from 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM Monday through Friday to 8 AM to 6 PM Monday through Friday and 8 AM to Noon on Saturday. The northern boundary for these new hours would be 10th Street (East and West between IH-35 and Lamar Boulevard), both north and south side. On the new Saturday hours, there may be a way for folks to pay on Friday to get coverage on Saturday. For residential uses within the new parking district, a Residential Parking Permits (RPP) program will be initiated. Permits will not be issued automatically, but rather the City will consider the number of Land Development Code (LDC) required parking spaces for each residential property and the number of actual spaces available, and issue permits accordingly. As for employees of commercial businesses within the new district, CoA is working with the parking garages in the area. These garages don’t really want to accommodate the patrons of entertainment/eating establishments as those folks can become disoriented and therefore not leave the facility in a clean, orderly and timely fashion. They are willing to entertain the idea of renting spaces after regular business hours to employees of these establishments and to professional valet services. John and Rick are going to keep working on this.” **OANA Meeting of 8 February 2011**

“On 3/3/2011 the City Council voted 6-1 (Morrison opposing) to approve the extended parking meter hours for downtown. The parking meter hours for downtown will now be from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm M-Sat. The “core” downtown area (defined by I-35, Lady Bird Lake, Lamar, and 10th Street) will have “extended” meter hours that will charge for parking from 8:00 am until Midnight M-Sat. On Sunday all meters will remain free.” **OANA Meeting of 8 March 2013**

We discussed whether the extended hours were applicable in practice to both sides of W 10th Street (Ray will eyeball this and report back) and whether OANA had asked that the expansion of the “core” stop in the middle of W. 10th Street. Karen asked whether the new pre-paid parking device John reported on in this month’s report would in effect bypass the current parking meters built in governor of only allowing a maximum of 2 hours paid parking per transaction.

Prior to the meeting Ted had shared with the Board an email from the Texas PTA in response to an email from him regarding the recent demolition of their headquarters building at 408 W. 11th Street (see last month’s minutes). After discussion, Blake was tasked with contacting Steve Sadowsky, the City of Austin’s Historic Preservation Officer, to inquire how and why the demolition took place without notification to the neighborhood association and apparently without going before the City’s Historic Landmark Commission.

Bill then reported on the electronic newsletter. The publishing deadline for the next quarterly installment going out in late April/early May is (?). Our known distribution list is around 300 edresses and that doesn’t count distributions to residential managers who in turn forward the newsletter to their tenants. Bill will ask these managers for an estimate of edresses they forward to so we can have a more accurate count.

Under Membership, Karen set for herself the goal of increasing our paid members from around 50 to 150 by year’s end. She has the edress list of 300 to work with and all are encouraged to bring in new members. She tells us that if we run across anyone with design skills or general marketing experience they are willing to donate to the cause, please forward that contact to her.

Our guest and neighbor Ian Inglis then talked to the Board about the ongoing relationship between his residential tower, the Austin City Lofts (ACL) and their across W. 5th Street neighbor, the Tiniest Bar in Texas (TBT). It seems that TBT was granted an outdoors music permit earlier this year and ACL as well as other residential properties close by are appealing this administrative decision. From a letter from ACL to the City:

“The Tiniest Bar in Texas (TBT) has long been a nuisance to our neighborhood, disrupting the peace with loud amplified outdoor sound and noise. It has produced this sound both in the form of live bands and a bar sound system, often after designated hours and at sound levels that far exceed the bar's legal limit of 75 decibels and the City's Noise Ordinance limit of 85 decibels. TBT originally received an OMV permit after agreeing to amend its site plan to limit any outdoor amplified sound to 75 decibels and to cease all amplified sound after the cut-off hours provided by the City Noise Ordinance. TBT proceeded to produce amplified sound, both live and recorded, at excessive decibels and long after the cut-off times. Residents of our associations called police over and over, to little avail. When TBT applied for a renewal of its OMV permit, we objected strenuously to City staff. See the letter set forth below dated March 1, 2010, which

details the history of TBT's behavior. Staff denied the renewal application. TBT has continued to produce amplified outdoor sound and noise despite the absence of an OMV permit. Like the renewal application, this application should be denied. TBT has had the same ownership all along, and there is no reason to believe it will behave any differently than it did when it had the original permit. Our neighborhood will be subjected to the same unlawful and disruptive behavior as under the previous permit.”

This appeal is scheduled to go before City Council on 9 May and Ian has asked that OANA support them. On motion from Perry and Ray the BoD voted unanimously to support the residential neighbors and Blake was tasked to work with Ian in drafting a letter.

We then discussed the City's noise ordinance. The City's current standard measures treble, not bass, so your walls and windows can still vibrate even if the venue is technically within the ordinance. As more folks pour into downtown, and especially this area of town, there is going to have to be some realistic reevaluation of the interface between commercial and residential uses. Noise trespass and its effect on our residential neighbors has been a recurring topic of discussion for the OANA BoD since we were reorganized in 2008.

We then moved on to Planning & Zoning matters.

The Austin Community College (ACC) rezoning request (4 cases covering 9 separate properties) has been approved by the Planning Commission (PC) and moves to a 29 April hearing before City Council. What came out of the PC is essentially what ACC and OANA had agreed upon. It was noted that the Downtown Commission (DC) had added a requirement of Great Streets to the project and had also wanted the prohibition of cocktail use under their DMU zoning district. This has worked out nicely for everyone and by unanimous approval, OANA supports the rezoning requests as they came out of the Historic Landmark Commission (HLC), the DC and the PC.

In discussing the Cirrus Logic cases before the HLC and the PC, long story short is that OANA continues to press the applicant to approach their expansion plans holistically, to do a master plan. Their rezoning request at 702 West Avenue is to go from the GO and LO zoning district to the DMU zoning district with a developmental height of 90 feet. OANA's original letter of support conditioned our support, along with prohibiting some uses allowable under the DMU zoning district, on the following:

- That the project's height not exceed 90 feet.
- That the northern end of the project be stepped back from the existing residential use as has been agreed upon by the applicant in this case and the homeowner's association cited above (the homeowner's association of the condominium project contiguous on the north).

OANA's current position is that before the rezoning request is weighed and before entitlements are increased, there needs to be a master plan in place. As of now, OANA cannot support the 702 West Avenue rezoning if the addition is to be used as a parking facility, but we can support a maximum height development of 90 feet. Whether that increase from the developmental height of 60 feet called for in the Downtown Austin Plan (DAP) to the requested 90 feet needs to be

“stepped back” as envisioned in the original OANA letter of conditional support was not discussed. Karen reports that the condominium homeowner’s association at 706 West Avenue of which she is a member also cannot support a parking facility in the proposed expansion and cannot support a developmental height beyond 60 feet. She cited a concern that a 90-foot building would effectively take their daylight from them. Regardless of what occurs at the PC meeting on 9 April, Ted has the Board’s permission to ask that the City Council hearing be delayed at least for 2 weeks.

As for Cirrus Logic’s application to demolish the former Arquelle Restaurant building at 606 Rio Grande Street, OANA’s would like to see the structure preserved, if not on site then within the neighborhood. This property, recently acquired by Cirrus Logic, is zoned Central Business District (CBD) and the matter will go before the HLC on 22 April.

Ted reports he has been in touch with the good folks at Humanities Texas (their building is on the southwest corner of Rio Grande Street and 15th Street) about the possibility of OANA having a function at their newly rehabilitated home. During conversation the idea of this building being combined with properties along West Avenue to form a Local Historic District (LHD) were discussed, and the idea was received positively.

As we were running late, we breezed through the announcements:

- ACC Carnival Ah! - April 3rd & 4th 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.
- AISD bonds – May 2013 - \$892 million
- ACC bonds – Nov 2013 - approx. \$385 million
- Travis County – Nov 2013 - Civil Courthouse bonds (maybe/maybe not), plus 11th St bldg. (\$38 million)
- Possible COA- Nov 2013 or May 2014 - Affordable Housing bonds –

Our next meeting was set for Tuesday 7 May 2013 from 4 to 5:30 PM at the Common Room of the Regency Apartment, and we adjourned.

Blake Tollett-Secretary
OANA