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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
ALL ARE WELCOME

*We meet on the first Monday of the month
at 7PM at the Howson Branch Library.*

West Austin Neighborhood Group
P.O. Box 5722
Austin, Texas 78763-5722



West Austin Neighborhood Group

Organized 1973

*"To preserve our neighborhood
and protect it from deterioration."*

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THE NEIGHBOR

P.O. Box 5722 • Austin, Texas 78763-5722

January, 2006

Westminster Presbyterian Rezone

In a follow up to last month's Presidential Message concerning the expansion plans of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, we thought it might be beneficial to print a letter from WANG to the City staff in November. We are happy to report that as a result of meetings and discussions between the Church, WANG, City staff and the affected neighbors, there is cause for optimism that there will be a resolution to this matter satisfactory to all.

17 November 2005

Jorge Rousselin, Case Manager
Neighborhood Planning and Zoning
Department
City of Austin
PO Box 1088
Austin, Texas 78767

RE: C14-05-0184

Dear Jorge Rousselin:

At its regularly scheduled meeting on 7 November 2005 the Executive Committee (ExComm) of West Austin Neighborhood Group (WANG) voted 8-0-1 to oppose the above referenced rezoning request.

The Applicant, Westminster Presbyterian Church of Austin, Texas, and WANG had met this last summer to discuss Applicant's expansion plans, and the Applicant formally presented their plans to the ExComm in September. WANG explained to the Applicant that in two previous expansions of church campuses located along Exposition Boulevard the neighborhood association had worked closely with the churches, and the expansion plans were accomplished with vari-

ances to the Land Development Code (LDC) rather than through the rezoning process. We feel very strongly that the variance route is the appropriate way to accomplish this expansion also, and we request the City Staff to Disapprove this rezoning request.

WANG is initially opposed to the rezoning for two reasons:

This is spot rezoning that would set an unfavorable precedent. All along Exposition Boulevard between Enfield road and 35th Street, with the exception of well defined shopping centers, it is an unbroken zoning of SF-3. That is by design, not chance. Within this twenty block stretch of Exposition, we have four major religious campuses, two of which, as pointed out above, have undergone major expansions. These expansions have been accomplished without rezoning. In addition, directly across the street from Applicant's campus is the Austin State School campus. The neighborhood association necessarily must make contingent plans for the possible future sale or lease of this property to private developers. Any chink in the SF-3 zoning will be seized upon as precedent to justify a less restrictive zoning category for the property that abuts directly onto Exposition, on either side of the Boulevard.

This rezoning request is all about impervious cover limits. It is our understanding that the purpose of zoning is to regulate land use, not to increase the allowable impervious coverage. The land use the Applicant has operated under for many years, a religious function, is allowable under the current zoning. This zoning category needs to remain intact and a variance under the LDC needs to be applied for.

Background Photo of Lime Kiln #PICA24140,
Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

Be sure to visit our website at <http://www.deepeddy.com/wang/>!

WANG considers the Applicant a long-standing good neighbor and does not oppose either their continued function in the neighborhood or their planned expansion within their campus. We simply believe they have elected to go about this process in a way not consistent with the well being of the neighborhood as a whole. We again ask that the City Staff give a recommendation of Disapproval to this rezoning request. We also ask that WANG be afforded the status of interested party in any decisions, administrative or otherwise, affecting this property.

Please feel very free to call on me if you have questions.

Sincerely;
Blake Tollett, WANG

MINUTES OF MEETING

WANG Board of Directors Meeting
January 9, 2006
Howson Library

Chair: Gwen Jewiss
Present: Edwards, Basciano, Pascoe, Faulk, Bennett, Cannatti

Jewiss called the meeting to order at 7:15pm. No quorum present.

Citizen communication:

John Carlson presented his concerns about the development at 2204 Westover Road. He stated that subdivision deed restrictions indicate that building should be SF-3. City application requires adherence to deed restrictions. He asked if something could be done about current development. Discussion ensued on city enforcement of deed restrictions. Enforcement is actually responsibility of affected neighbors. Economic interests work in favor of the builder. Audience requested that WANG support neighbors with a letter to the city. There was a suggestion that WANG assist with education on deed restrictions and the Land Development Code as well as notify the neighbors of

building activity in the area. Gwen Jewiss noted that WANG website has link to city demolition and building permits. Since there was not a quorum to take action, Mr. Carlson agreed to get back to the WANG board after additional discussion with the neighbors and the city.

Approval of minutes: Deferred

Committee reports:

- A. Communications – no report
- B. Liaison – ANC program for January is "Affordable Housing". Question from audience on loss of affordability in area as newer, larger houses are built.
- C. Membership – no report
- D. Transportation – request from Ken Pfluger that WANG oppose the city's newest idea on sidewalks:

The Planning Commission has requested WP&DR to comment on the feasibility of requiring that sidewalks be required as part of any single family building permit. WANG is able to comment to WP&DR on this and Ken requests that we do so. This dovetails to some extent with the "Sidewalks to Nowhere" issue we have been following. Here are at least a few positions WANG could take:

- a. Oppose the proposal.
- b. Oppose the proposal unless there be an "in lieu" fund created so that required on site construction of a sidewalk be excused and instead funds that would have built the sidewalk on site be used for sidewalk construction in the same neighborhood area and in conformance with a neighborhood sidewalk plan. Two variations of this could be:
 - 1. The homeowner or developer would be able to construct the sidewalk if they desire. (This could result in more "Sidewalks to Nowhere").
 - 2. The sidewalk could be constructed only if in conformance with the neighborhood plan (in most all cases this would be off site) and otherwise payment into the fund would be required.
- c. Approve the proposal for single

family new construction only.
d. Approve the proposal for new construction and for substantial (threshold to be established) remodels.

WANG has already stated its opposition to unplanned sidewalk construction associated with subdivided properties and its support for the "in lieu" fund. We have requested via George Zapalac at WP&DR a legal review of the feasibility of such a fund and have now been waiting for over three months for an answer.

Ken's opinion is that ANY sidewalk construction in residential areas be done only if in conformance with a neighborhood sidewalk plan (and that this be retroactive to any sidewalks that have already been required but not yet constructed).

One other issue is whether there are some neighborhood streets that should have no sidewalks under any circumstances and if so, how any permitting along those streets should be handled.

- E. Historic District – no progress to report
- F. Infrastructure – met with Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department. Neighborhood Planning for this area is anticipated for 2007. Discussion on area to include. NPZD is working on a residential compability code amendment. Updates will be provided as available.
- G. Nominating – see executive session
- H. Zoning –
 - a. Impervious cover in Water Supply Suburban Watershed
 - i. Blake Tollett reported on meeting with WPD. Susan will post email on issue to Austin Neighborhoods Council listserv since issue affects many neighborhood associations.
 - ii. Discussion with attendees: WANG should request that city require what science demonstrates- 30% impervious cover in watershed.
 - iii. Motion by Blake Tollett – Existing Water Supply Suburban Watershed ordinance to apply to any new subdivision or resubdivision including, but not limited to 30% impervious cover.

- 1. Seconded by George Edwards
- 2. vote: All in favor
- b. 500 Atlanta Street – variance request opposed by electronic vote
- c. 8 Scott Crescent – variance not opposed by electronic vote
- d. 300 Oakmont – postponed

Treasurer's Report: \$3,149 in main operating account. There are 290-300 members – approximately 10% of households in area.
Old business – none
New business – none
Motion to adjourn by Mike Faulk and seconded by Joyce Basciano with all in favor

LAKE AUSTIN TODAY

One topic WANG has been following lately involves application of ordinances governing the amount of impervious cover allowed in subdivisions that are approved in areas where the streams flow into Lake Austin. WANG supports a more restrictive application of the ordinance. We will report the results of this activity in a future issue of The Neighbor. In the meantime this is some history about one of our lakes within the city limits from the Handbook of Texas.

...and Yesterday

Lake McDonald, the first large reservoir in Texas, was formed by the construction of Austin Dam, which was begun in 1890 and completed in 1893. Because there were no other major obstructions of the Colorado River at that time, the Austin Dam trapped large amounts of sediment that washed downstream. Gradually, the pressure caused the dam to slide, and in 1900 it gave way during a heavy rainstorm, causing extensive flooding. The dam was partially rebuilt in 1915, but construction was abandoned because of a dispute between the contractor and the city of Austin. High waters destroyed the unfinished dam later that year. In 1938 the city of Austin gave a contract to the Lower Colorado River Authority to build a new dam. Tom

Miller Dam, a concrete pier and slab structure 1,590 feet long, was completed in 1939.

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- sweep & vacuum regularly
- use a plastic bag to line garbage cans & remove garbage weekly
- do not leave food out or dishes in the sink overnight
- clean up any spilled food or drink
- remove old newspapers, magazines & books
- clean closets regularly
- do not buy damaged food products
- store food in sealed plastic or glass containers
- clean containers before refilling
- inspect all items for pests before bringing them into the home
- clean drains with a stiff brush & then flush with boiling water
- remove tree stumps from yard
- remove debris (firewood, bricks, stones) away from the home
- keep lawn trimmed
- repair plumbing leaks
- prune tree limbs that overhang or touch the home; also prune shrubs touching the home
- seal entry points on the outside of the home with caulk, expanding foam or steel wool

- keep screens, weather stripping & door thresh holds in good repair
- use yellow bulbs in outside lights to reduce the number of insects coming near doorways

For more information,

contact Wizzi Brown, Texas Cooperative Extension Program Specialist at 512.854.9600.

BECOME A MEMBER

Make checks payable to WANG and mail to:
WANG
P.O. Box 5722 • Austin, TX 78763-5722

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