

A meeting of the Old Austin Neighborhood Association (OANA) was held in the Regency Apartments Conference Room on Wednesday, October 1, 2008. The official boundaries of OANA extend from Lady Bird Lake up to West 15th Street, and from Lamar Boulevard to Guadalupe.

Ted Siff called the meeting to order; all present identified themselves and spoke a few words about their interest in attending. Those attending were:

Bruce Andrewartha
Tom Buckle
Ray Canfield (Shoal Creek Saloon)
Glen Coleman (Randi Shade's assistant)
Ian Inglis
Mark Holzbach
Wayne Huffman
Bobby Levinski (Laura Morrison's assistant)
Susan Morrison
Steve Nagle
Reba & Bob Ohlendorf
Bert Pence
James Powell
Paul Parson & Nelly Herrera
Ben Proctor
Stuart Ramser
Chris Riley
Brad Reagan
Steve Sadowsky
Ted Siff
Lin Team (Austin Heritage Society)
Blake Tollett
Juan Pablo Wright
Doug Young

The first item on the agenda was a discussion of the past, present & future of the OANA. Ted Siff led this discussion.

- OANA was formed in 1978; its goal has been to maintain the historic and residential character of the neighborhood.
- The new OANA website is: www.oldaustin.org
- Ted has submitted annual application forms to the City to represent the neighborhood.
- Chris Riley described the content on the website, and encouraged everyone to review it and consider adding to it. In addition to historical info, it would be helpful to get input on the goals page to make sure it accurately reflects the group's positions. Chris noted that the goals currently include "bringing residents back," and we need to consider whether there's agreement on that. Chris organized DANA (Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association).
- Ted explained that he had led numerous efforts to minimize the destruction of the older homes in the neighborhood.

- Susan Morrison distributed the goals listed on the OANA website.
- For the future, Susan Morrison suggested organizing like the Old West Austin Neighborhood with officers and standing committees such as Steering, Historic, Membership, Land Planning, etc. Ray Canfield agreed and suggested quarterly meetings. Doug Young also agreed and is willing to work with Susan on this organization.

The second item on the agenda was the discussion of the 800 West Avenue zoning application:

- Ben Proctor led the discussion. The case number is C14-2007-0144; briefly the history is:
 - o Oct 23, 2007 Planning Commission Approval of DMU with 6 conditions
 - o Nov 13, 2007 Notice of Public Hearing for Rezoning 800 West Avenue from LO/GO to CBD at the City Council
 - o Prior Nov 29 Petition signed and presented to oppose change to CBD
 - o Nov 29, 2007 Council denied CBD zoning but passed the first reading of zoning change to DMU with 6 conditions. They subsequently asked staff to find a way around the compatibility requirement.
 - o Jan 23, 2008 Jorge Rousselin stated that the petition was valid with 25.75% opposed.
 - o Mar 17, 2008 First meeting of Codes and Ordinances Sub-Committee to take a Position on removing compatibility.
 - o Apr 15, 2008 Second meeting of Codes and Ordinances Sub-Committee to take a position on removing compatibility.
 - o May 20, 2008 Third meeting of Codes and Ordinances Sub-Committee to take a position on removing compatibility. Passed motion to not make any zoning changes until the ROMA plan was accepted.
 - o July 2008 Submitted updated petition to City staff opposing zoning change.
 - o Aug 19, 2008 DANA sent letter to Council opposing change to zoning.
 - o Aug 21, 2008 Council at their meeting on August 21 approved only the 2nd reading allowing the zoning change from GO/LO to DMU-CO to proceed; the 3rd reading will be heard sometime in the future. The vote was 5-1 to pass with Randi Shade not being on the dais and Laura Morrison voting against passing 2nd reading. Our valid petition requires a super majority (6 votes) only on the 3rd reading, and not the 1st and 2nd reading.
- The six conditions approved by the Planning Commission and the Council contained in the proposed zoning change are:
 1. The tower structure is restricted to 100% residential use and associated parking. The existing and proposed historically residential structures fronting on West Avenue may have any use permitted under DMU zoning.
 2. The West Avenue frontage must be consistent with the street's existing character. The existing house on site must be preserved, and a similar house must be placed in the space next to it - preferably a vintage house downtown that would otherwise be demolished or moved out of downtown.
 3. All trees with a diameter of 19" or greater must be kept onsite.

4. Impervious cover must not exceed 75 percent.
5. Public access must be provided to and along Shoal Creek
6. Parkland dedication fees from the project should be dedicated to improvements to the Shoal Creek greenway.

DISCUSSION:

- James Wells is the current owner of the property.
- On the 800 West Avenue site there are approximately 45 trees including six heritage trees (trunk size of 24" or greater in diameter) and two protected trees (trunk size of 19" or greater in diameter)
- Current zoning (GO/LO) allows buildings up to 60 feet in height. Requested zoning of DMU with conditions would allow building up to 120 feet in height.
- The proposed development would be built in the 100 year floodplain with much of it in the 25 year floodplain.
- Early in the process Chris Riley and Ted Siff supported a residential tower structure at 800 West Avenue as an opportunity to bring residents back to the neighborhood, and to preserve the Gregor house currently on the property; because the lot is so deep, the character along West Avenue could be preserved and enhanced by the addition of a vintage house that would otherwise be removed from downtown.
- During the meeting, an "800 West Avenue Committee" was identified to develop a proposal for meeting with the developer which would then be presented to the neighborhood before meeting with the developer. Those volunteering for the committee were: Ben Proctor, James Powell, Bob Ohlendorf, Chris Riley, Albert Stowell, Stuart Ramser, Susan Morrison and Mark Holzbach.
- Ian Inglis suggested that the developer put his plans in writing so that Chris Riley could add it to the OANA website.
- Many in attendance spoke of their concern for building in the 100 year floodplain and recall damage caused by the Memorial Day Flood in 1981. Other properties will be put at more risk of flooding if the City allows development in the floodplain.
- Glen Coleman (Randi Shade's assistant) commented that Randi respects the petition process and wants parties to come to agreement, but might vote against the petition.
- Bobby Levinski (Laura Morrison's assistant) commented that Laura supports the neighborhoods' positions and that we should use the neighborhood planning process and take advantage of an opportunity to establish a local historic district.
- During the meeting the consensus was that OANA is to support the valid petition and to officially oppose the zoning change; many would prefer a height restriction of 3 or 4 stories.

The third item on the agenda was the discussion of Cap Metro Buses on West 11th Street. Albert Stowell led the discussion and recommended that the bus be rerouted to 12th St for safety reasons. Chris said that Capital Metro representatives have attended several recent meetings organized by ACC Trustee Tim Mahoney, who is working on establishing an ACC Campus Advisory Committee for the Rio Grande Campus. Chris will work with Albert to bring this issue to Capital Metro's attention.

The fourth item on the agenda was a discussion on applying for Local Historic District Status (LHD). Steve Sadowsky with the City led the discussion.

- A designation of LHD is designed to preserve a collection of properties.
- Historical Preservation established protection for a historical landmark.
- LHD establishes a neighborhood as an entity to protect against demolitions; it provides protection for any property that “contributes” to the LHD.
- The first action required in the LHD process is to make an inventory of the building which allows the setting of standards for enforceability.
- City has technical assistance for those interested in establishing an LHD.
- Lin Team, with the Austin Heritage Society, said that the OANA website is a good start, and that the content could be used in an LHD application if it is adapted to the Park Service format. She added that the Heritage Society considers our area to be a “precious” site. Preservation is a wonderful resource for the City.

The last item on the agenda was Other Business.

- Ray Canfield opposed a proposed parking variance requested by the Emerald Press (Coffee, Flowers and News) at 915 N. Lamar. Parking is already an issue and the site has very limited parking. He asked others to consider opposing this variance. There was a consensus that we would join Ray in opposing the variance.
- Chris Riley briefly discussed the the potential designation of Nueces as a “Bicycle Boulevard,” which is currently being considered in connection with the Downtown Plan.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00PM.

Noted by Susan Morrison.