

## Original Austin Neighborhood Association (OANA)

Interim Board of Directors Meeting 15 June 2009

The interim board came together at Mark Holzbach's home beginning around 6 PM. Board members in attendance were Susan Sullivan, Blake Tollett, Ted Siff, Mark Hozbach and James Powell. Also in attendance were OANA member Ben Procter and guest Subbu Rama. Susan Morrison was delayed and Al Stowell was out of town. Ted led the discussion.

By invitation, Subbu Rama spoke to us about an internet service he is working on called Community List. My understanding is that the concept is a localized social/business networking site. Whereas Facebook and Craig's List are macro/global sites, Subbu is exploring the need for a micro platform focused on specific neighborhoods. The site could potentially contain features for bartering, direct sales and services, social engagement calendars and individual Facebook type listings. It is an interesting concept and Mark will liaison with Subbu and provide feedback to him.

One of the first orders of business was the announcement by Ted that board members Bob Ohlendorf and Stan Pitkin were unable to continue. We discussed whether it was appropriate for the board members present to fill those two slots, and we decided that in the interest of time and efficiency that we could and should. It was noted that so far this organization had registered with the Secretary of State as a tax exempt organization under the name Original Austin Neighborhood Association, that we had established goals and areas of interest and that we are established as an interest advocacy group and not a charitable organization, that we have a website <[www.originalaustin.org](http://www.originalaustin.org)>, that we have an interim board in place and membership criteria, and that in the fall we will have a general membership meeting at which time an official election of directors will be held. Ben Procter was accepted to fill one of the open slots on the interim board and it was suggested that JuanPablo Wright, a resident of the Regency Apartments, or some other resident of the neighborhood, might fill the other slot. Both Ben and JuanPablo are residents of the neighborhood and we will be looking for them to work on the membership drive.

Nonprofit Status- Since OANA is an advocacy group, IRS nonprofit 501(c)(3) status is probably unavailable to us. If down the road we become involved in a neighborhood project such as establishing the area as an historic district (either national or local) that would necessitate the raising of substantial funds, there are numerous umbrella organizations that we can turn to for help. These organizations basically allow groups that qualify to use their 501(c)(3) status to raise monies for that specific project that in turn can be classed as charitable donations by the donors for federal income tax purposes.

Membership Recruitment- As already stated we have a mission statement outlining goals and areas of interest (see website). Ted has offered to put together a letter highlighting this information along with other data such as a membership application form (members must either own property within our boundaries or be a resident), and we will bundle this into a recruitment document. Once board members have had the opportunity to provide

input, we will individually sign the document. Ted will email this document to all of those on his neighborhood email list, and all board members have undertaken to walk this recruitment package around to their neighbors. Blake and Ted will explore getting a list of property owners within the neighborhood, and if successful, we will use the list for later recruitment.

Boundary Question- We then had a discussion about the southern boundary of the organization itself. It was pointed out that right now the City of Austin registry of neighborhood associations show our southern boundary extending all the way down to the river, and this boundary demarcation has been in existence for over twenty years. At the 27 April 2009 meeting of members, when this issue was visited, those present unanimously recommended to the rest of the membership that the southern boundary be defined as the alley between 6th and 7th Street from Guadalupe Street to West Avenue and then some as yet defined continuance over to Lamar Boulevard, the idea being that we didn't have that much in common, goals and interest wise, with those business owners along 6th Street and south or with the residents of the towers south of 6th Street. We then discussed some of the historical jewels along 6th Street such as the Stratford Arms building and the effect of future development along Shoal Creek south of 6th Street and agreed that the demolition or awkward renovation of the former or the degradation of the later would significantly impact us. We discussed the historical philosophy and actions of the Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association (DANA) and whether it would be to our benefit to have overlapping jurisdiction with them over some areas. It was decided that for now, the boundary shown in the neighborhood association registry would remain unchanged but that our summer recruitment efforts should focus on property owners and residents from 7th Street north to 15th Street. A final determination of our southern boundary was put off until the initial annual membership meeting in the fall.

Noise Issues- Susan Sullivan talked about the ongoing problems encountered by the residents of the Posada Apartments and others in the area in dealing with the owners of the Ranch 616 Restaurant. There appears to be a complete indifference by the restaurant operators to the fact that the residential use in the area predates the loud music use of the establishment, and Susan is not particularly satisfied with the City's response to the perceived nuisance so far. We had no real helpful suggestions for her except to continue working through the City's complaint system. It was noted that opt-in neighborhood associations with respectable membership numbers sometimes hold the authorities attention better and longer than individual complainants. We are going to work on this noise bleed problem long term, but first membership recruitment. We briefly discussed the noise problem at the Allan House at 11th Street and San Antonio, but that situation is a little different in that they are going to need a Conditional Use Permit to continue their outdoor activities, and they will need to go before the Planning Commission where it will be a public hearing.

As time had run out (8 PM), we adjourned. Our next board meeting will be 20 July at Ted's home (604 West 11th) beginning at 6 PM.

Blake Tollett