

Old Austin Neighborhood Association (OANA)
7 July 2014

The OANA Board of Directors (BoD) came together at our regularly scheduled day, time and place (the second Tuesday of the month, 4 PM, the Common Room of the Regency Apartment). Members in attendance were Ted Siff, Charles Peveto, Michael Portman, Richard Hardin, Bill Schnell and Blake Tollett.

The first order of business was the review of the June 2014 Minutes, as amended, and on motion from Michael, seconded by Charles, they were approved unanimously and Bill, by custom, will post them on our website.

We then turned to Current News & Action Items:

Ted reported that the Riverside residential project at 718 W. 5th Street, with its increased entitlements, has been approved by the City Council. The developers have also received their variance to build the project in the flood plain so they should be breaking ground this September. Additional community benefits accruing from the project are a commitment to doing Great Streets on both sides of West Avenue between W. 5th and W. 6th along with the previously reported payment of \$333,000 to the City for improvements to the lower Shoal Creek trail system and the three year commitment of a \$25,000 donation to the Shoal Creek Conservancy (SCC).

Ted also reports that he and the developers of the Aspen Heights project at W. 9th and Nueces Street are soon to meet with the Parks & Recreation Department (PARC) staff to try and nail down an understanding that the Parkland Development (PLD) monies, approximately \$127,000, spun off from the project should logically go to Wooldridge Park. Wooldridge meets all of the requirements to qualify for PLD funds and is right next door to the project.

Speaking of neighborhood parks, we are reminded that it is time to fulfill our individual and organizational yearly pledges to the Shoal Creek Conservancy (SCC). On motion from Michael with Charles again seconding, the BoD unanimously approved the payment by OANA to the SCC of \$500, the second of three yearly commitments.

Continuing with park news, Charles talked with us about the Pease Park Conservancy and their recently completed master plan that is beginning to go before the various land commissions and ultimately the City Council for approval. The master plan covers the area between 15th Street and 31st Street (the area between 24th Street and 31st Street is not really Pease Park but is within the Shoal Creek greenbelt) and should fit seamlessly within the overall plan for Shoal Creek being advocated by the SCC. Ted and Charles will send the BoD links to the plan for our evaluation and we will vote on whether to endorse the plan in August.

Albert reports we have \$4,742.96 in the bank.

Under Government Relations/Social Order, John had nothing specific to report. Richard asked if the BoD had received any music/noise trespass complaints from the neighbors of the Rio Bar at

West 6th and Rio Grande Streets. Apparently they like to crank it up, and with the soon to be completed residential tower going in right next door, the BoD is sure to be “hearing” of any complaints. Actually, a solid tower to the north of the venue should act as a buffer.

We then briefly discussed the CodeNEXT project, the City initiated process to try to make the Land Development Code (LDC) more “user friendly” as well as to align the LDC with the City’s master plan, Imagine Austin.

Under Marketing, Bill was congratulated by the BoD for another outstanding electronic newsletter, this issue having focused on the ongoing construction projects in our neighborhood. He will be editing another one for late September with emphasis to be determined. The newsletter is distributed to around 300 edresses.

Under Planning & Zoning, Ted related a conversation he had with Don Pitts, the City of Austin’s Outdoor Music Venue (OMV) permit leader, concerning independent events that are held outside official major events. Apparently over half the music shows that occur in Austin during SXSW are not under SXSW aegis, and most of these independent events occur outside. These independent events, to be legal, have to register with and be licensed by the City, but currently there is no provision to require that neighbors to the events need to be notified that they are going to take place. The City is looking into whether there needs to be notification and in what form. On a side note Charles relates that during this year’s SXSW Woodridge Park’s food trailer moved from the park closer to the official music area. This coming year, to further support the trailer’s entrepreneurs and to hopefully encourage the trailer to stay put, the Friends of Wooldridge are contemplating having a music presence in the park during SXSW, perhaps acoustic sets in the gazebo.

Under Parks, Open Space & Trails, Charles tells us that he and Mitchell McGovern are going to be leading up the Friends of Wooldridge Park this next year and they will be initiating a mini-master plan for the park focused on programming. Charles also spoke briefly about the Austin History Center’s transition from its traditional home to the soon to be vacated library to its south and we discussed whether the Great Streets program just finishing up on West 8th Street is going to be replicated on West 9th Street, a natural corridor between Guadalupe Street and Lamar Boulevard with Duncan Park and Shoal Creek in between.

We then briefly discussed the upcoming bond elections, specifically whether the Austin Community College bond will include monies for the old Austin High Campus at Rio Grande and W. 12th Streets and how the City’s transportation bond is being presented.

Ted lastly spoke to us about a meeting he attended of the Urban Land Institute (ULI). Right now, in the southern area of our neighborhood there is more than a billion dollars of development in play including a 300 million dollar project at the Seaholm site and 500 million dollars being invested in the Green Water Treatment project. The Seaholm project will see the restaurant and retail section open late this year and the adjacent condominium tower will open in late 2015. The Green Water Treatment project, a four square block endeavor, will build out over the next 4 to 5 years. These developments, along with the new library and the transportation connections under

the railroad tracks between Cesar Chavez and the neighborhood to the north, makes for a very dynamic area of the City.

Having run out of time, we adjourned until Tuesday, August 12th.

Blake Tollett-Secretary
OANA