

Old Austin Neighborhood Association (OANA) Highlights 2016

The following passages are taken directly from the official minutes of OANA. The official minutes in their entirety can be found on our website www.originalaustin.org under News.

12 January 2016

We next discussed the increased parking rates and expansion of metered parking hours on Wednesday in our parking enterprise area (from Lady Bird Lake to West 10th Street, Guadalupe Street to Lamar Boulevard). In discussions between OANA and Steve Grassfield, the City's Transportation Department head in charge of Parking Enterprise Funds, we learn that the parking meter rate has been increased from \$1 per hour to \$1.20 per hour and that the Wednesday meter compliance times have been extended from 6 PM to midnight. These increases in fees are based on statistics showing that current demand for the parking spaces has exceeded the benchmark of 75% occupancy, in some instances approaching 90%. The intent is to cause more turnovers in the use of the spaces. Of note is that unlike some areas of our City, a portion of this meter revenue is not allocated for public amenities in our neighborhood. On motion from Michael with Perry seconding, the OANA BoD voted unanimously to support the increases. There is also sentiment on the board to explore a way for the neighborhood to recoup some of these monies with an eye to bringing public benefits to the neighborhood such as public trash receptacles or perhaps planting trees along the City's right-of-way.

09 February 2016

We then revisited the suggestion from last December of an ad hoc committee to the OANA BoD consisting of representatives from the Home Owner Associations (HOAs) within our neighborhood, specifically from the condominium towers. We aren't envisioning this necessarily as an advisory board, but rather a way for the various HOAs to bring forward to us their concerns and suggestions on issues common to the neighborhood. At this point we are thinking that to begin with we identify 6 HOAs and that each HOA would then appoint one member to the committee. The roles and duties of these representatives are still unclear, and it is possible they could even meet virtually with some sort of messaging forum. Michael, Paul and Charles will work on further refinements on this idea and bring their thoughts back to the full BoD this spring.

08 March 2016

Over the last 36 months there has been an amazing transformation occurring at Wooldridge Square brought about by the infusion of \$350,000 of public monies and the initiation of a long term planning process. As the public stakeholder meetings that are integrated into the Master Plan for Wooldridge Square have progressed, there has been identified a need for an defining vision statement to base the report on. Is Wooldridge to function as a traditional park, or is the vision historical, that Wooldridge function as a civic square? Whatever the function, wouldn't this be the time to envision the space within its geographical context as a focus of the Northwest District (I.E.-our neighborhood). At this point, the stakeholders and Friends of Wooldridge

Square (FOWS), PARD and the Daniel Woodroffe Group (DWG), the landscape architects, all agree that there needs to be a pause in the process and this defining vision formalized.

05 April 2016

Ray has circulated electronically to the OANA BoD the preliminary work product coming out of the Flood Mitigation Task Force (FMTF). As expected, there are alarming deficiencies in areas such as infrastructure that will take major financial commitments to address. From the executive summary:

“The basic goals of flood mitigation and preparedness strategies are to identify and quantify known and predicated flood risk; to make the general public, elected officials, and emergency responders aware of the risks and how to respond; and to develop and implement mitigation strategies that reduce the potential of creating new or future problems (regulation) and reduce the potential risk related to existing flood problems.”

For real world input, Ray told us he shared with his section the protocol he and his employees go through to prepare for flooding along his business’s section of Shoal Creek as well as proposing some proactive maintenance measures that would at least lessen the impact of the inevitable flooding along the creek. Ted reported that the City in conjunction with SCC is focusing on the stretch of the creek between W 15th and W 5th Streets to improve flow. There are some more easily addressable issues in all of the City’s watersheds, but again, long-term solutions will require true commitment.

10 May 2016

Ted then talked with us about a possible bond election this year the City is contemplating. There is a citizens advocacy group for bonds under the name GetAustinMoving.com that has brought this discussion forward. They support the concept of a transportation bond covering all forms of mobility but their emphasis is towards pedestrian/bicycle and trail options. After discussion that centered on the idea that what projects are specifically being called for is right now unknown, the OANA BoD voted to advocate for (lend our name at a minimum) and provisionally support putting a transportation bond proposal before the citizens this coming November. The ultimate composition of a bond package, if there is one, will be determined by the City Council. The GetAustinMoving.com coalition wants to show the City Council that there is support for sidewalks, bike facilities and trails in the community and that those mobility options need to be considered.

7 June 2016

Purple Pipe and Duncan Park-we again returned to a topic discussed last month. The route from Wooldridge Square to Duncan Park appears to have gone down W. 10th Street rather than W. 9th. The \$94K mitigation fee paid by the Water Department to the Parks & Recreation Department (PARD) did not go to the CIP (Community Initiative Program) account for Duncan Park in order to fund the master improvement plan as we had hoped but rather turned out to be an accounting adjustment between City departments. This apparently was an oversight, and the

next time PARD gets credits from the Water Department, an aggregate amount of \$94K will go to Duncan Park. There is also an outside chance that Parkland Dedication funds from developments within one mile of the park could be assigned for this planning process.

11 July 2016

Under **Current News**, Ted and Blake reported that the rezoning change to DMU-CO at 701 Rio Grande and 602 W. 7th Streets went by consent on all three readings at City Council on June 16th. As proposed, in a couple of years we will begin to see the addition of 95 residential units on this site. At the same meeting, the rezoning of 1204 San Antonio Street to DMU-CO was also finalized on third reading. The CO referenced in both cases is a Conditional Overlay limiting development height to 60 feet and prohibiting bail bond services, cocktail lounges, pawn shops, liquor stores, outdoor entertainment and amplified music uses. The zoning district entitlements granted in both of these cases reflect what is called out in the Downtown Austin Plan/Northwest District. These were good outcomes for the neighborhood.

09 August 2016

- Travis County Civil Courthouse/ECHO:
 - Diana Zuniga reported that she and Ted Siff met with Ann Howard executive director of Echo (Ending Community Homelessness Coalition) to discuss Echo's interest in the US Courthouse. Ann explained that the process gives priority to organizations whose mission it is to provide assistance and services to the homeless, therefore Echo's bid for the courthouse would trump a bid from Travis County. There is currently a feasibility study being done for Echo which encompasses a conversion of the space to housing units, office and meeting space. Echo's bid is due in mid-September. It was agreed that at this point all OANA can do is wait to see if Echo submits a bid.

06 September 2016

Ted further reports that the Shoal Creek Trail "Gap" project is back on track after the heavy rains in early August heavily damaged the temporary stabilization work. The revised end date now is late December or early January. Once this section is opened there will still need to be some sort of signage to direct those unfamiliar with the trail on how to reach Lady Bird Lake. Currently it is an ever-evolving maze that in some areas requires portage of bicycles out of the creek side trail and across city streets and railroad tracks. As for the Bowie Street underpass project, the funding remains in place but the execution remains uncertain. The idea to expand the original TIF that has set aside the funds allocated to the project so as to encompass the end portion of Shoal Creek remains in play. Perry H. reports that the young professionals' auxiliary to SCC, the Shoal Mates, are working with the good folks at the Contemporary with the idea of bringing some art installations to the creek in the future similar to what is being done along Waller Creek.

11 October 2016

Blake had forwarded to the BoD an email announcement he received from the Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC) concerning a demonstration of a soundwave mitigation technology at the Austin City Hall Plaza... Containment of sound on a property, or rather the trespass of sound from one property to another, is something OANA continues to take seriously. We are an association of neighbors, and we should endeavor to live if not in harmony, then at the least we should contain our impact on the neighborhood. The initial friction over sound trespass from outdoors amplified music between the Allan House and the neighborhood was substantially mitigated by the installation of a sound absorbing band shell on the property. Perhaps this technology being demonstrated will allow amplified music and sounds within structures to remain contained within the structures. Perry H and Austin will attend the demonstrations and report back to the BoD.

07 November 2016

We then discussed the ongoing situation at the Gilfillan House. Austin reports that his understanding is that they are going to reapply for Downtown Mixed Use-Historic (DMU-H) for the property from its current zoning district of General Office-Historic (GO-H). The owners have been working with historic preservation architect Tere O'Connell in regards to the main house and are also contemplating a substantial addition of office/work space on the property. The zoning district change they are seeking will be necessary for the use they envision for the property and the attendant building and parking requirements. The OANA objective in all of these changes of use applications that come before us is for the applicants to be mindful of the effect the changes have on their neighbors. The OANA BoD will revisit this subject as warranted.