

Old Austin Neighborhood Association (OANA)
11 March 2014

The Board of Directors (BoD) of OANA came together at their regularly scheduled meeting time and place, the second Tuesday of the month at the Regency Apartment's Common Room, with the meeting beginning at 4 PM. Directors in attendance were Perry Lorenz, Bill Schnell, Ted Siff, John Horton, Paul Isham, Richard Hardin, Charles Peveto and Blake Tollett. Albert Stowell and Ray Canfield sent their regrets.

Our guest this afternoon was Ann Isham.

The February BoD minutes, as corrected and upon motion by Charles with John seconding, were passed unanimously and Bill will post them on our website.

Under Current News and Action Items, the discussion regarding the 718 W. 5th Street project was deferred until later in the meeting.

Under Committee Reports, Albert through Ted submitted the following financial statement:

Total Checking/Savings: \$4,534.26
Accounts Receivable: \$15.45
Total Current Assets: \$4,549.71
Liabilities: None
Total Equity: \$4,549.71

Ted reported that Albert has taken on the task of reminding previously paid up members that it is important for them to renew their memberships.

Under **Government Relations/Social Order** we discussed the recent election of Travis County Commissioner Bridget Shea and Travis County Judge Sarah Eckhardt and how this affects OANA. While Shea is somewhat less known, Eckhardt is a proven friend of Wooldridge Park, and their election should generally be viewed positively for the neighborhood. While he had no official report, John related a midafternoon outing he took with the Downtown Austin Alliance (DAA) using the new rapid transit bus outbound to the Crestview Station and the Black Star Co-Op brewpub and the light rail train inbound back downtown. The Capital Metro sanctioned adventure began at Halcyon Coffee and John reports the buses are spacious and comfortable and WIFI equipped and things went rapidly as advertised, but unfortunately only as far north as MLK. At that point the rapid transit bus left the Lavaca Street designated bus lane and entered normal traffic. It took approximately 45 minutes to arrive at the Crestview Station where Airport Boulevard intersects North Lamar. After a pause for refreshments, the southbound light rail was utilized to return downtown, a trip of approximately 15 minutes. John noted that the train is being heavily utilized during SXSW as a downtown connector.

Under **Marketing**, Bill told us it is time for the spring e-newsletter. Suggested topics include a wrap up of Its My Park Day (IMPD) in the neighborhood where at least five projects were completed-four along Shoal Creek including one at Duncan Park and a mulching day at

Wooldridge. For ongoing construction projects news, the new library, and both the Seaholm and Greenwater projects are fully under way. When the new library opens, the Austin History Center (AHC) will expand south into their building, and Charles will provide a link for the newsletter to the AHC webpage. This discussion segued into a discussion of the ongoing effort to have the W. 6th Street bridge over Shoal Creek designated a State Historic Landmark. In an update to last month's meeting, Ted showed us a revised membership form that will be utilized as a hard copy and electronically on our web site.

Under **Parks & Open Spaces**, Charles elaborated on the IMPD mulching effort at Wooldridge Park and John reported that the mobile food vendor in the northwest corner of the park next to the courthouse has returned. Their hours of operation are 9 AM to 2 PM and everyone is encouraged to patronize the establishment.

Under **Planning & Zoning**:

805 Nueces-This is the Aspen Heights project; five levels of parking with a first floor lobby and work/live area topped by sixteen residential apartment floors. We discussed in general the history of the property and the limitations on the site. It was noted the property is zoned DMU with a height limit of 90 feet, but under the Downtown Austin Plan (DAP), additional entitlements sufficient to build the proposed project are available under the density bonus program (NOTE: this program in theory replaces the CURE vehicle for increased entitlements-See a discussion of CURE in our OANA minutes of 8 November 2011). As far as can be determined this is the first project seeking increases in entitlements under the administratively overseen density bonus program. One of the necessary criteria under the program is a giving back to the community in exchange for increased entitlements and OANA has conferred with the developer of the project about identifying Wooldridge Park as the beneficiary of necessarily increased Parkland Ordinance fees flowing from an increase in residential units. OANA and the developer will be working with the City and the Parks & Recreation Department (PARD) on this.

718 W. 5th Street-This project as currently proposed will consist of a small base of parking with a slender residential tower going up to 400 feet. The existing entitlements on the property call for an 8:1 Floor To Area Ratio (FAR). Under the density bonus program the entitlements can be increased to a 15:1 FAR. For the developers to have what they believe is an economically viable project they need an FAR of 20:1. An FAR of 15:1 can be reached administratively but to go beyond that initial cap will require, per an ordinance allowing such an increase enacted on 6 April 2014, a public hearing before City Council. OANA is on record supporting the developer's request for a 20:1 FAR on the tract (a copy of our support letter dated 4 February 2014 is in last month's OANA minutes) conditioned on amongst other requests:

- That the Parkland Ordinance fee paid by this project be used for the improvements to the Shoal Creek Greenway between West 5th and West 10th Streets managed by COA-PARD in conjunction with the Shoal Creek Conservancy; and,
- That after addressing site specific flood mitigation requirements, the fee paid by this project to mitigate flood issues be managed by COA-Watershed Protection to

determine a regional or watershed scale flood mitigation solutions in conjunction with the Shoal Creek Conservancy.

A question was raised as to whether OANA's support of these projects that require public hearing waivers from the initial DAP FAR cap, a condition of our support being an agreement between OANA and the developer to direct monies towards the Shoal Creek Conservancy (SCC), could be misconstrued in that OANA and the SCC are separate organizations. After general discussion, the answer is that each project that comes before the BoD is judged individually on its merits. This is a residential project and that is a big plus. If monies from the project can be directed towards the rehabilitation of Shoal Creek, so much the better. This will be a good example of dense downtown living, a goal of the organization.

Time having run short, we adjourned until our next meeting on 8 April.

Blake Tollett, Secretary
OANA

Subsequent to our meeting Ted shared with us the following document submitted to the Downtown Commission in support of an increase in the property's entitlements from a FAR of 8:1 to a FAR of 15:1.

Fifth and West Residences-Design Commission Urban Design Working Group

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Riverside Resources has engaged in several conversations with neighborhood associations and other stakeholders in the area surrounding the Fifth and West Residences property to identify community benefits that will improve that portion of downtown. The following is a list of those community benefits that Riverside commits to provide in connection with the density bonus it is seeking.

Improve Sidewalks. In addition to the Great Streets streetscape improvements required adjacent to its own property, Riverside agrees to extend the Great Streets improvements along both sides of West Avenue for the length of the entire block between 5th and 6th Streets. Riverside can make those improvements during the construction phase of Fifth and West Residences and will be reimbursed by the city. (This agreement furthers the Streetscape Guidelines Nos. 2 (Minimize Curb Cuts), 4 (Reinforce Pedestrian Activity), 6 (Enhance Streetscape), and 8 (Install Street Trees) of the Urban Design Guidelines.)

Bike Share. Riverside will purchase a one-year B-Cycle membership for each of its 163 condominium buyers to introduce them to the program and encourage participation. There are three B-Cycle locations within one block of the property, making it easy and convenient for residents to use their membership. (This program will encourage more bike use in downtown and further the goals of the Transportation and Parking Provision 3.6 of the Downtown Austin Plan that provides for the implementation of a community bike share program.)

Car Share. Riverside will reimburse one Car2Go registration for each of its 163 condominium buyers. Additionally, Riverside will work with the city to locate at least two Car2Go parking spaces near the site. Signing up for a car share program is often the biggest barrier to participation. We believe that if a membership is included with the condominium purchase, residents will be much more likely to use the service. (Car share programs help control on-site parking which furthers Building Guideline No. 5 [Control On-Site Parking] of the Urban Design Guidelines.)

Shoal Creek. Riverside will allocate one-half of its community benefit funds to Shoal Creek Conservancy for: (1) the creation of a Shoal Creek Action Plan to mitigate flood risks and make other improvements on Shoal Creek from the West Avenue bridge to the West 10th Street bridge and (2) trail improvements to Shoal Creek from the West Avenue bridge to the West 10th Street bridge via a public-private partnership with the Public Works Department and the Watershed Protection Department of the City. In addition to allocating its community benefit funds to Shoal Creek Conservancy, Riverside will also participate with Austin City Lofts (ACL) in ACL's obligation to maintain the portion of Shoal Creek near the 5th Street bridge by contributing \$10,000.00 per year for three years to ACL. (This agreement furthers the goals of 1) the Public Realm Provision 1.3 of the Downtown Austin Plan which calls for improving downtown's urban greenways and adjoining public parks, as natural refuges and pathways; 2) the Utilities/Infrastructure Provisions 3.1, 3.5, and 3.6 of the Downtown Austin Plan which call for increasing watershed maintenance of Shoal Creek and implementing a restoration and flood control plan for Lower Shoal Creek; and 3) Leadership and Implementation Provision 1.2 of the Downtown Austin Plan which calls for encouraging public/private partnerships and conservancies aimed at building and operating parks and open space improvements.)

Green Building. Riverside commits to exceed the downtown density bonus 2-Star AEGB rating requirement by achieving a minimum of a 3-Star rating. (This will improve sustainability that is listed as Shared Value No. 3 in the Urban Design Guidelines.)

Shoal Creek Conservancy. Riverside agrees to provide marketing material to its 163 condominium buyers about the benefits of membership in the Shoal Creek Conservancy and pay for their membership for the first year. (This will increase participation in Shoal Creek Conservancy and further the goals of the Utilities/Infrastructure Provisions 3.1, 3.5, and 3.6 of the Downtown Austin Plan which call for increasing watershed maintenance of Shoal Creek and implementing a restoration and flood control plan for Lower Shoal Creek.)

Notice of After-Hours Construction. Riverside agrees to provide at least 48 hours advance notice to the property managers of Austin City Lofts, 404 Rio Grande, and the Monarch if Riverside or its contractors apply for a permit per section 9-2-21 of the City Code to pour concrete after 7:00 p.m. (This agreement will help mitigate any disturbances to nearby residents, which will make urban living more comfortable in furtherance of Vision No. 9 of the Urban Design Guidelines ["Create a Comfortable Urban Environment"].)

For-Sale Condominiums. Riverside agrees that the development will consist solely of for-sale condominiums rather than apartments. (A condominium development such as this one with large units and multiple bedrooms is catered to families, which furthers the goals of the Activities and

Uses Provision 2.5 of the Downtown Austin Plan ["Make Downtown Housing More Family-Friendly"].)