

Original Austin Neighborhood Association (OANA)  
4 April 2012

The Board of Directors (BoD) of OANA came together shortly after 4 PM. Directors in attendance were Ray Canfield, Ted Siff, Bill Schnell and Blake Tollett. We did not have a quorum. Daniel Schieb came to visit with us.

Our first order of business was the acknowledgement that the minutes from our last meeting, as amended, had been approved electronically and posted to our website. The idea here is to keep the publication of our meeting minutes as current as possible.

Next, from Albert our **Treasurer**, in abstentia:

“I filed OANA's Franchise Tax Report so we are in good standing. We had \$1,100 of collections and no expenses for 2011. I wrote one check this month, \$52 for the annual renewal of the PO BOX. Our balance in the OANA account is \$3,573.14.”

We next had a presentation from Daniel Schieb who works for our good neighbor Whole Foods about their proposed community Deep Roots Learning Garden. Apparently Whole Foods through their original leasing of the land their flagship store then sat on (the now REI store) also controls the “greenbelt” wedge of land at the corner of West 9th and Henderson Street, the land between Henderson Street and the creek just east of the Nakona. Daniel and fellow “green mission team members” came up with the idea of converting the approximately half acre of land into a garden. They have secured in-house funding to have water brought to the site and are ready, more or less, to get tilling. With the idea that “health through growing food is powerful” their stated goals are:

- Build a simple garden structure to allow all types of growing to flourish. Keep things simple.
- Become a sought after destination for school field trips.
- Become part of the Lamar store tour.
- Focus on water conservation and rainwater collection to eventually not have to rely on city water.
- Become a place for community in the area.
- Become a garden where cutting edge practices meet ancient methods.
- Setup the administrative structure of the garden for the long term.

They envision “a beautiful food and herb garden where volunteer Team Members work side-by-side with local nonprofit partners and neighborhood residents to create both a production and teaching garden on the banks of Shoal Creek. Harvests are shared with community garden participants including team members, neighbors, and, as possible, by school partners and nonprofit groups.” This is also envisioned as a Beneficent Garden where a portion of the harvest goes to charitable groups with potential partners being the Sustainable Food Center, Green Corn Project and Urban Roots.

We thanked Daniel for sharing this very worthy project with us.

Continuing with the agenda, John had electronically reported nothing particularly new **Government Relations** wise but that he continues to learn about the County's pursuit of the parking lot at the northeast corner of West 11th Street and San Antonio Street.

We then returned to Albert's **Planning & Zoning** Committee Report:

Schlosser "East Block" on Shoal Creek between West 5th & 6th. Ted filled in some here by relating that his understanding is the developer's representative Rick Duggin and the folks from Whole Foods are touring corporate campuses across the country (think Google) for ideas. There is a site plan on file but it is subject to change. Our concern is Shoal Creek and how it is envisioned being treated. With OANA's holistic vision of the long-term rehabilitation of the creek, we couldn't ask for a better project lead tenant than Whole Foods.

Miller Blueprint Block between West 5th & 6th Streets-The Nueces tunnel project is to be tied into the 8th Street tunnel by June 1 and is on schedule. As soon as that is tied in the work will begin on the construction on the lot behind Miller Blue Print just north of the new Federal Court House. Ted tells us this is an Andrews-Urban project so will probably be residential.

The 7 Rio project at West 7th & Rio Grande Streets is to start demolition on the existing building in early May with the excavation to start shortly after that.

705 North Lamar – There has been an application for the demolition of the Butler family's old Constant Communications Communication Building at 705 North Lamar. They vacated it four or five years ago and have done a long-term land lease with Schlosser Development for the site's redevelopment as retail. Albert proposed we support the demolition permit. It is unknown at this time what will be redeveloped on the site, but one guess is some sort of parking. Ted will ask for an email vote on this.

We next turned to the Judge's Hill Neighborhood Association (JHNA) Local Historic District (LHD) proposal. Ted has sent the letter authorized last month to JHNA putting in writing OANA's concern regarding the LHD's proposed boundaries but has heard nothing back from them. The folks at Austin Community College (ACC) were copied and they did respond with a Thank You and an invitation to come by and view their Rio Grande campus master plan before the submit it to the City for preliminary comments. Ted and Albert have been in discussion with ACC on the master plan and Ted will follow up on this invitation.

Under **Membership/Marketing/Camaraderie**, Bill reported that when he recently forwarded to our group email list some information regarding utility work affecting some of our streets, he heard back from a member that complained of not knowing when our BoD meetings are taking place. We discussed various options and settled on having some signage made that Ted will set out a few days before our regularly scheduled first Tuesday of each month meeting announcing the meeting. Bill will continue to study this and get back to us.

We then turned to a general discussion of **Parks & Open Spaces**:

For Shoal Creek, Ray informed us that his Shoal Creek Saloon and PARD have signed a formal stewardship agreement for graffiti abatement along the creek from West 6th Street up to West 10th Street, and maybe a little beyond. Joe Diaz with PARD will supply Ray with a specific paint and color code so that there will be uniformity in the abatement. Thank you Ray.

Ted reported that proposed bond package going before voters in November may have specific funds designated for Shoal Creek. He has been attending the **Bond Task Force** meetings and in a perfect world, at least from this Board's perspective, the creek would benefit by 3.5 million in bond monies from the Greenways & Nature Preserve initiative and an additional 1 million under the Transportation & Connectivity initiative. Early days on this.

We then discussed briefly the **City Charter Revision Committee's** proposal for an all district representational City Council makeup. As of now there are not enough residents in the central city core to justify a unique district.

We then turned to the City's proposed sale of the **Green Water Treatment Plant (GWTP)** site. There are 4 city blocks involved and the current proposal is for three of the blocks to be either residential or hotel use with one block of office/mixed use. It is a big project and from an urban forest preservation view, there are on site seven heritage trees and one protected tree. It is proposed that one of the heritage trees is to be relocated and the rest taken down. We have established from previous OANA board meetings that we will look at each request to remove heritage trees from our urban forest individually and weigh the proposed mitigation benefits.

In this case, the contract between the City and the developer allows for basically triple the minimum required mitigation, half in cash and half in caliper inches of new trees. These caliper inches for new trees can be achieved either through planting new trees (minimum 4 inch caliper, potential heritage tree variety) in nearby City owned parks or green space, or increasing the size of required trees on site under the Great Streets Development Program. The developer will be obligated to maintain and irrigate the transplanted heritage tree for five years and maintain and irrigate the new trees that are located off site, if any, for two years.

After discussion, and subject to the full OANA Board's approval, our support of the project would be conditioned on the premise that the mitigation is exclusively in new trees, not monetary compensation. The caliper inches would not be available to augment trees already required to be on site, the minimum potential heritage tree caliper would be 6 inches not 4 inches, and OANA would like a place at the table when the location of these new trees off site is decided.

In further review of the proposed sale agreement Ted called our attention to the provision dealing with commitments by the developer to put monies towards improvements along Shoal Creek. As written, the contract calls for the donation to be made piece meal as the project builds out and the City would have discretion to use the funds not only for future improvements to the creek but also to have discretion to use the monies as reimbursement of past expenses related to improvements in Shoal Creek. It was decided by the board members present that at a minimum any monies when received should go exclusively towards new improvements to the creek and not be used to reimburse the City for past work.

At this point, having completed all of the posted agenda items possible absent a quorum, we adjourned. Our next meeting will be May 1st at the Regency Common room starting at 4 PM.

Blake Tollett, Secretary  
OANA