

Old Austin Neighborhood Association (OANA)
10 November 2015

The Board of Directors (BoD) of OANA came together just after 4PM on Tuesday 10 November 2015 at the home of BoD member Albert Stowell. Kay Stowell graciously allowed us to take over her dining room as the Common Room of the Regency Apartments was unavailable to us due to a rekeying of the door lock. Members in attendance were Charles Peveto, Paul Isham, Diana Zuniga, Michael Portman, John Horton, Bill Schnell, Albert Stowell, Blake Tollett and Ted Siff.

Clara M. Haynes came to speak with us concerning membership and public relations.

We began with the approval of October's minutes, and upon motion from Albert with Michael seconding, the minutes with a minor grammatical correction were unanimously approved.

We then turned to Old Business, Current News and Action Items:

Gilfillan House-OANA continues to have concerns about the proposed rezoning of the home from GO-H to DMU-H without a restrictive covenant in place that would amongst other things prohibit the use of outdoor amplified music. Currently the rezoning request is on an indefinite postponement before the Historic Landmark Commission, but during last month's F1 event there was a large party at the site that included outdoor amplified music. These kinds of entertainment rentals are normally not allowed in the General Office zoning district and it is unknown if the current owners of the Gilfillan House cleared the rental through the City.

The Texas Association of Counties (TAC) request to rezone 1204 San Antonio Street and 1205 Nueces Street from their current zoning district of GO to CBD has been filed with the City. Albert has spoken with Alice Glasco, the TAC representative, and expressed the concerns that OANA has in the matter. After discussion, the OANA BoD voted unanimously to oppose the rezoning request. The City Council has told City Staff to implement the Downtown Austin Plan/Northwest District (DAP/NWD), and although the plan has not been formally adopted, we still look to the document for guidance. Under the DAP/NWD, this property is slated for rezoning to DMU-60, Downtown Mixed Use with a maximum building height of 60 feet. Blake was tasked with composing a letter to the City outlining our opposition.

We then moved on to the initial planning of our Annual Membership Meeting in January. The BoD will be meeting as scheduled on the second Tuesday of the month, the 12th, and the Annual will be on Tuesday the 26th. Blake and Ted were tasked with going back through the minutes to determine which board member positions are up for election and it was noted that in order to vote at the Annual for board members you need to have joined OANA at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Bill tells us he has tentatively planned an email newsletter going out before Thanksgiving and will send out another email announcing the Annual celebration along with a save the date reminder. Our visitor Clare then spoke to us about general membership promotional ideas and recapped the work she and Michael have done on the downtown high-rise circuit, specifically the home owners' associations at the 360 and the Nakona, touting membership in OANA. One of the tools they have come up with is a postcard size reproduction of the map we

commissioned showing our association boundaries on one side with promotional information on the reverse. Thank you Clare for your fresh perspective.

The failure of the Travis County Civil Courthouse bond was discussed with focus on how the County will go forward. There was never real questioning of the need for new courtrooms but rather concern over the cost and the proposed location. We again discussed possible alternatives that might address these concerns such as locating the new facility at the Airport Road site, a site in the eastern section of the City, or perhaps locating the new courtrooms across the street from the current courthouse. John, Diana and Albert were tasked with exploring alternatives and keeping the BoD updated as appropriate.

The Shoal Creek Flood Mitigation Task Force (FMTF) seems to be getting underway. BoD member Ray Canfield was at a FMTF meeting that superseded this afternoon's Board meeting and Ted reported that the Mayor had appointed a hydrological engineer to the task force.

Ted reported that a neighborhood business, Studio 8, along with Overland Partners from San Antonio have been commissioned to begin the master plan for the Austin Community College Rio Grande Campus.

Moving to Committee Reports, Albert reports our bank balance remains stable. He did bring up that he received a certified letter from Austin Energy concerning the tree-trimming project slated to begin soon in the neighborhood.

We then quickly ran through the status of some of the ongoing construction projects:

- At W. 10th Street and Nueces they have begun excavation; across the street (more or less) Aspen Heights continues upward.
- Shoal Creek Walk directly east of the Whole Foods building is also in excavation.
- At W. 2nd Street and Nueces, the last buildable area in the Green Water Treatment project is slated for ground floor retail with a hotel and condominium project above similar to the W project.
- The Shoal Creek Gap project continues.

Under Government Relations/Social Order, John reminded us to use common sense and to be aware of your surroundings in the neighborhood (or anywhere in the city for that matter). He sounded this cautionary note specifically in light of the recent attempted assassination of a sitting District Judge. Her courtroom is in the County's Criminal Justice Complex.

We then turned to Parks, Trails and Open Spaces:

Whether the Bowie Street Underpass project remains viable is uncertain. It is rumored that the railroad operator has shown little interest in allowing a tunnel under the Union Pacific mainline track. If it is not built the funds could be used for a number of basically shovel ready projects such as the Shoal Creek Trail by the new library and sidewalks along Lamar Boulevard, and there are numerous pedestrian and bicycle amenities that could be funded. From an email Paul sent out subsequent to our meeting:

“The Seaholm TIF, officially called Seaholm Redevelopment Project Tax Increment Financing Zone No. 18, was approved in March 2009, and contained the boundaries of 3rd Street on the North, the extension of West Avenue from 3rd to Cesar Chavez on the east, Cesar Chavez on the south, and Seaholm Drive on the West. In April 2012, the TIF boundaries were expanded to include the Gables Apartments, Phase II which extended 3rd Street to its intersection with Bowie and included 2nd Street from Seaholm Drive to the west abutting the Gables Phase II property.

Also, in April 2012, the proposed public improvements within the amended TIF boundaries were amended to include the Bowie Street bike/pedestrian underpass at an estimated cost of \$6.8 million. The funding for such improvements are to come from a 1/4-cent sales tax generated within the TIF boundaries.

If the Bowie Street bike/pedestrian underpass is not constructed, theoretically the \$6.8 million could be reallocated to one or more additional public improvements within the TIF boundaries. It could also be removed from the public improvements budget, reducing the amount of the budget, and resulting in the life of the TIF being shortened. From a City standpoint, this would mean that revenues from the TIF allocated to reimbursement for the construction of public improvements would be less and the City would receive that revenue at an earlier date.

Either way, the City Council, sitting as the Board of the TIF, would ultimately decide to reallocate the monies to other public improvements within the TIF boundaries or amend (reduce) the public improvements budget if the Bowie Street bike/pedestrian underpass is not constructed.”

Ted and Paul will continue working on this.

Ted thanked everyone for following through on their pledges to the Shoal Creek Conservancy.

Charles spoke to us about the goings on at Wooldridge Park. As part of the park’s rehabilitation a purple pipe system was installed allowing for a future connection to the reclaimed water system currently being built into the City’s downtown to supply, amongst other uses, water for the cooling systems for the buildings. This is important to the park because reclaimed water is cheaper for the Parks & Recreation Department to purchase, and reclaimed or non-potable water is not subject to City water restrictions. This will enable the park’s landscape to remain green and vigorous even in time of drought. Charles did report a large Cedar Elm was lost in the last round of storms but they hope to plant a replacement this fall. The DWG planning group is in an analysis phase of the Wooldridge Park master plan, and this group will also be involved in the Duncan Park master plan.

Having run over our time we adjourned. Our next meeting will be on December 8th.

Blake Tollett, Secretary
OANA