

South Lamar Neighborhood Association
General meeting Minutes
February 15, 2007

The meeting was called to order by Oscar Lipchak at 7:10 pm.

Treasurer's report:

- Checking account has \$1234; 2 CDS are worth \$2121
- We have 21 members as of tonight, down from 54
- Treasurer is planning to send membership reminders
- Brief general discussion of strategies to increase membership and general participation, possibly an event. It is important to have a large membership.

Report from Officer Barboza, our district representative from APD:

- Copper thefts have been occurring in the neighboring Galindo neighborhood. The perpetrators seem to be addicts trying to get money for their habits.
- A neighbor asked about the allowable hours for construction work. Barboza said we could access city website to read the ordinance, but also he will email Oscar with the answer to that question.
- APD is deploying more officers to the streets in general (an Austin Surge). The source of these officers is the District representatives, but our neighborhood is calm enough that he doesn't have to go out.
- A neighbor asked that Barboza watch the parking situation with Walgreen's and Maria's, particularly on Sunday mornings, where we expect some spill over to Bluebonnet.

Kevin Lewis made a presentation on the Vertical Mixed Usage (VMU) a new zoning "overlay" being implemented this year in Austin.

- This overlay is to be allowed generally on Core Transit Corridors (CTC's). In our neighborhood the CTC is Lamar. Oltorf is expected to be a future CTC, but is not right now.
- The point of this overlay is to get more dense residential on the edges of a neighborhood.
- The council will generally declare this overlay to be in force on any property along a CTC that is not used as residential, that has a current zoning of CS (commercial uses) or MU (mixed use). By definition the VMU adds on GR (some retail uses) to the zoning that is already there.
- VMU allows 5 stories maximum. The general idea is that the first floor will be commercial/retail and the floors 2 through 5 will be residential (Apartments or condos). It does not alter or relax the required compatibility for height restrictions where a VMU abuts residential.
- The neighborhoods are being asked to consider every eligible property along their CTC and recommend it be opted OUT if they have a good

reason. If a property is being left as a VMU (as indicated by the City of Austin (COA) then a neighborhood has several decisions

- Should that property be allowed density bonuses? (These are relaxation of rules that will have the affect of allowing more density than you could normally build in the square footage.)
- Should the development be allowed to reduce the amount of parking provided? (In theory these VMU things are SO pedestrian friendly that people will walk there instead of driving and so won't need so many parking places). It lets them do more development with less parking.
- What target MFI does the neighborhood want to set? Allowable choices are that 10% of the units will be priced to be affordable to a family making X% of the Median Family Income (MFI). The possible values for X are 60%, 70%, and 80%. A neighborhood must determine one value of X for the whole neighborhood.
- Also neighborhoods are being allowed to opt-in likely properties that are not on the CTC if they so desire.
- There is a 90-day clock starting momentarily for the neighborhoods to make their determinations and submit it to the city, else generally all eligible properties will be declared as VMU eligible. [editor's note: the clock started shortly after this meeting date and the deadline of 90 days expires on June 4th]
- There will be presentations made around the city to explain VMU in more detail and the neighborhood process as well.

The topic of the McMansion ordinance: it defines a "tent", a developable envelope. And it must follow the Residential Design and Compatibility rules.

Neighborhood Plan Process: report from Carol Gibbs, indicates our NP is still on hold. And there is a house bill #252 looking at preventing cities from down zoning a property to a penalty of more than 10% of value.

Thornton Bungalows: a project on Thornton road previously presented to the neighborhood. The request is to get to the zoning SF-4B, in order to build a more interesting project of small cottages, than the current SF-3 zoning would allow. To get to SF-4B they have to go to SF-5, then go to SF-4B (you can't go straight from SF-3 to SF-4B). They sticking point right now in negotiations is that the developer wants to build 18 units, but 14 units is all the original SF-3 would allow. We are working with the developer on a private Restrictive Covenant backed by a performance bond. City staff is proposing a conditional overlay of impervious cover at 50% (not 60%) and not reducing the parking by 20%. Thanks to Bryan King for his lobbying of city and council.

SoLa Homes Project: this is a project at the corner of Bluebonnet and Del Curto. The developers met with city staff about a month ago. The site plan filed shows he has dropped from 70 units to 62. We are pleased to note that the city staff's

review of the site plan recognizes some of our concerns and issues, particularly on the subject of drainage – we are lobbying for a separate containment, not to allow the project to dump runoff straight into the current wastewater conduit. Now we are waiting on Symcox to respond to the city's comments. His permit expires in May.

Status of Unity Church Property: it has been placed under contract of sale, the full 10 acres, to Cypress Properties for a price of \$5.55 million. The developer has also accumulated some adjoining properties: Habibi's Hutch, South Austin Machine Shop. The developer's goal is a VMU project on Manchaca, backed by townhomes and single family on Del Curto. Under current terms the church can stay only until Jan 2008.

Other Items:

- Next Keep Austin Beautiful neighborhood cleanup is planned for 3/31. Watch for announcements.
- Banff Mountain Film festival is on Sunday March 25th, 6pm at the Paramount. www.wholeearthprovision.com for info on this fund-raiser.

Adjourned at 9:00 pm.