

**South Lamar Neighborhood Association  
General Meeting Minutes  
October 19, 2006**

Officers Present: Carol Gibbs, Nancy Maclaine, John Bissell, Kevin Lewis

The meeting was called to order by President Carol Gibbs at 7:10pm.

Announcements

- Carol gave the treasurer's report for Don Ewalt. We have a savings account, two CDs, and about \$750 in checking for a total of just over \$4049. We have a good financial position as the only ongoing expense is producing the newsletter and some miscellaneous items.
- The December Pot-Luck Holiday Social (and installation of 2007 officers) will be at Unity Church on Thursday, December 14 at 7:00pm. The meeting is being moved from the normal third Thursday schedule due to the 21<sup>st</sup> being too close to Christmas. Come by for pot-luck finger foods and some holiday caroling (not to be confused with the happy tunes that Carol will be singing as she relinquishes the presidency)!
- The slate of officers for 2007 is as follows:
  - ❖ President: Oscar Lipchak
  - ❖ Vice-President: Jan Cartwright
  - ❖ Secretary: Nancy Maclaine
  - ❖ Treasurer: John Bissell
  - ❖ Austin Neighborhoods Council/South Central Coalition Rep: Bill Stoughton

The vote was held later in the meeting. There were no additional nominations from the floor. The slate was confirmed by affirmation.

- Dottie Cartwright (Jan's wife) has agreed to take over the newsletter, a much-appreciated service.
- There are two cases pending for the October 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Planning Commission (6:00pm):
  - ❖ 3510 Clawson: re-subdivision with a sidewalk variance (i.e. no sidewalk) has been recommended by City Staff.
  - ❖ 2608 Del Curto: Zoning change from SF-3 to SF-5 with a Conditional Overlay limiting the density to SF-3. This is because the lot is only 60' wide which is below the minimum needed to accommodate three lots.
- There are two cases, recommended by the Planning Commission, scheduled for Council on November 2:
  - ❖ 2206-2210 Thornton Rd.: This project was discussed at the August SLNA meeting. The developer wants SF-4B zoning in order to construct up to 18 cottage

units. The property is currently SF-3 and cannot be directly taken to SF-4B. Thus, the request is in to go to SF-5 and then rezone to SF-4B.

❖ 3504 Clawson: Also discussed at the August meeting. The desire is for SF-5 zoning but limited to SF-3 density (4 duplexes for a total of 8 units).

- The City's Vertical Mixed Use (VMU) ordinance was briefly discussed. If you are interested in this topic, you can review the Commercial Design Ordinance on the City's website ([www.ci.austin.tx.us/development/commercial\\_design.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/development/commercial_design.htm)). You might want to skip to the Mixed Use section, starting on page 75 of 98.

There will be a special Austin Neighborhoods Council meeting to review this proposal on Monday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00pm on the ground floor of the Austin Energy Building at 721 Barton Springs Rd.

- Bob Thompson reviewed and expanded on his proposal at the June SLNA meeting for a more equitable voting system for SLNA. There was not enough time to discuss the proposal in any detail. A copy of Bob's proposal is in Attachment A of these minutes.
- The annual Art Sale on at the Thornton Road artists' warehouses will be held on December 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Unity Church is again exploring the possibility of a sale of some or all of its property.

### Developer Presentation

Jay Symcox (<http://www.symcoxdev.com>) presented a draft site plan (Attachment B and <http://www.symcoxdev.com/ActiveProjects-SoLa.html>) for the property at 2500 and 2502 Del Curto (at the corner of Bluebonnet). Both properties are already zoned MF-2 (multi-family) which allows a density of 23 units per acre. He is planning to acquire the property at 2502 Del Curto (stone house with stone fence) depending on whether it is determined to be historic or not.

The Landmark Commission will hear the historic zoning case on 2502 Del Curto at 7:00pm on Monday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>. The current owner (Carol Gittinger) was present and indicated that her family wants to sell rather than be surrounded by construction (a "war zone") and then condos. Thus they will not support a historic designation.

If the house is not deemed to be historic, then Mr. Symcox will acquire the property, demolish the house, and build about 70 units on the combined properties. Otherwise, he will not acquire 2502 Del Curto and will instead build 48 units on the U-shaped parcel surrounding the house. All the units will be three stories high.

Questions were raised about the amount of on-site parking available. Units will have two-car garages but he was vague about where guests would park, but discussed upgrades to Bluebonnet as if overflow parking would be on the street. Mr. Symcox, to some derision, blamed the high cost of the land and the city's impervious cover rules for his inability to reduce the number of units to provide more on-site parking.

The potential for more flooding in the area was discussed. The Walgreens project has already caused some flooding and the City agrees that drainage in the area is substandard.

Mr. Symcox first asserted that all water generated by the development would be detained on-site. When pressed, he volunteered to have his engineer come to the February SLNA meeting to discuss this issue. He also agreed to talk with the homeowners on Bluebonnet about their flooding concerns, although he indicated that he is not likely to agree to any expenditure beyond what is required by City code.

Mr. Symcox is also acquiring the two properties at 2602 and 2606 Del Curto, immediately adjacent to this development. Since these properties are currently zoned SF-3, his plan calls for seven duplexes (14 units) to be built on that combined property without any zoning changes or variances.

He offered the neighborhood a trade-off: if we would agree (quickly) to allow higher-density MF-2 zoning on these lots, he would agree to reduce the height of all the units facing Del Curto three stories to two stories. Even if SLNA were amenable to this proposal, Mr. Symcox admitted that his construction schedule is tight and there is little time to work out such a compromise.

If anyone has questions, Mr. Symcox can be reached at [jsymcox@symcoxdev.com](mailto:jsymcox@symcoxdev.com) or 617-6420.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.

- John Bissell

## Attachment A

### **A SUGGESTED MECHANISM FOR PAYING DEFERENCE TO THE OPINIONS OF NEARBY, CLOSELY AFFECTED NEIGHBORS REGARDING CONTROVERSIAL ZONING-TYPE ISSUES BEFORE SLNA**

- 1) Any member would have the right to call for a polling of closely affected neighbors, in regard to any issue whose impact is expected to diminish with distance from the subject site.
- 2) The SLNA membership would have to agree that the issue in question is of such a nature as to more strongly affect the close neighbors.
- 3) The SLNA membership would then vote upon the appropriate distance from the site (e.g., 500 feet) that would characterize the range of the strongest impact.
- 4) The SLNA membership would vote upon the wording of the polling question to be put to the nearest neighbors, keeping the number of alternative choices to a minimum (e.g., two).
- 5) Once the results of the polling of the nearest affected neighbors is obtained, the “neighborhood position” represented by SLNA shall agree with that of the polled neighbors, unless the vote of the SLNA membership at large is in the opposite direction of that of the polled neighbors, and also is of a percentage magnitude which is greater than that of the polled neighbors.

Example: The polled nearest neighbors vote 65% in favor of position A. The SLNA membership can only represent position not-A as the “neighborhood position” if a vote in excess of 65% is achieved for not-A.

Observation: Such polling would only tend to occur in a small minority of cases in which the issue is both controversial and of stronger impact upon nearby neighbors. Following such a policy would be much appreciated by our neighbors, and could well lead to an increase in participation in SLNA by the neighborhood.

**Attachment B**



BLUE BONNET LANE  
(60' RIGHT-OF-WAY)  
VOLUME 4432, PAGE 2121  
T.C.D.R.



**SITE PLAN**  
SCALE: 1"=20'-1"

DEL CURTO  
(60' RIGHT-OF-WAY)  
VOLUME 4432, PAGE 2121  
T.C.D.R.