

Proposal to Eliminate the Feb/July Plan Amendment Window

On January 13th Margaret Valenti notified contact teams that the Neighborhood Planning Staff would ask the Planning Commission's (PC) Codes & Ordinances Subcommittee to eliminate the February and July application submittal window in the neighborhood plan amendment process. Staff argued that the process is inefficient and this change would benefit contact teams. Instead, allowing submittals year round created controversy and caused great concern for most contact teams.

Staff claims it sent a survey to contact teams on April 29, 2011 asking for input on the proposed changes. Only 27 out of 400+ recipients participated, so staff assumed the low response indicated that contact teams had no preference on the issues. Contact teams posted messages on the Austin Neighborhoods Council's listserv and contacted staff to make it clear that most were not aware of the survey or this proposal. Overall, most contact teams believe that removing the window will both create a lot more work for volunteers already burdened by the process and benefit staff and applicants rather than neighborhood volunteers.

At its January 17th meeting, the Codes & Ordinances Subcommittee did not initiate this change but, instead, directed staff to present the proposal to the PC's Neighborhood Plan Subcommittee on Feb 15th at City Hall, 6:00pm, Executive Session Room. Afterwards, staff will provide a report on current issues and potential solutions. To follow the process, go to:

http://www.austintexas.gov/cityclerk/boards_commissions/meetings/40_1.htm

For more information, contact Margaret.Valenti@austintexas.gov or 974-2648.

Euclid-Wilson Storm Drain Project Update

The City of Austin Public Works Department will soon begin work on the Euclid-Wilson project. The work will include installing storm drains, water lines, and curbside inlets in the area bordered by Oltorf, S. Congress, Cumberland and S. 1st. The project's goal is to reduce the potential for localized flooding of houses, streets and yards due to an overloaded storm drain system. McClean Construction is the contractor for this project. The expected completion is December 2013 but that date and the overall schedule are subject to change.

Beginning in January, there will be lane closures on Oltorf. The original construction schedule called for these closures to start in February; however, the schedule has been modified to prevent traffic congestion on major roads during the SXSW Festival. In order to make progress during this time, in mid-February the contractor will begin installing storm drain junction boxes at the intersections of Oltorf at Wilson and Forest. At the same time, the contractor will begin installing storm drains and relocating water and wastewater on Durwood and Wilson.

As the project progresses, there will be additional lane closures on S. 1st, S. Congress, Cumberland and neighborhood streets. The agreement with the City allows the contractor to work from 7 am to 7 pm on weekdays and weekends. Thank you for working to help keep children away from the construction area and equipment.

To receive email updates, contact: Carolyn.Perez@austintexas.gov.

Additional contacts:

Project Manager, Charles.muela@austintexas.gov or 974-7124.

Construction Inspector, Simon.Orta@austintexas.gov or 974-8755.

<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/dawson>.



2011 Neighborhood Habitat Challenge Results:

- 1st Place: Windsor Park Neighborhood
- 2nd Place: Northfield Neighborhood
- 3rd Place: Dawson Neighborhood

Congratulations! The Dawson Neighborhood Association would like to thank all of you who participated in the Challenge in 2011. The 2012 Challenge should begin mid-April, so let's work together again to win the challenge for Dawson.

If you would like to share your Habitat Challenge experience and/or photos of your habitat, please contact Sandy McMillan at smandpd@earthlink.net or post a message on our listserv (details on page 1).

For more information about this and other parks events, go to: <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/parks-and-recreation>.

Crow Bar Owners Host Meeting with Area Neighbors

On January 16th, APD District Representative Robert Barboza facilitated a meeting between the Crow Bar owners, Mike & Steve, their supporters & area residents searching for a solution to problems they feel are caused by the bar & its patrons. The primary complaints are patrons parking in the neighborhood rather than in the bar's overflow parking, noise from patrons especially when leaving the bar, public urination, trash such as beer cans, condoms & needles, & car burglaries/vandalism. Officer Barboza pointed out that some problems, such as car burglaries & trash associated with prostitution & homeless camps, are city-wide problems & cannot be attributed to the Crow Bar. Plus, other long-time nuisance businesses nearby (i.e., by-the-hour motels) contribute to these problems. After discussion on both sides of the issue, Mike & Steve agreed to work even more aggressively to stop patrons from parking in the neighborhood & to provide escorts at closing time to encourage patrons to please be quiet as they leave. Area residents will also continue pursuing Residential Parking Permits (RPPs) to limit parking to permitted vehicles only. Most attendees seemed satisfied at the end of the meeting.

Dawson Neighborhood Association (DNA) Meeting Minutes-- December 12, 2011

1. The meeting was called to order.
2. Minutes from the 10.10.11 meeting were approved.
3. New Business:
 - a. City staff member Charles Muela discussed the "meet the contractor meeting" to be held on 1.19.11 at 6 pm to discuss the drainage work in the neighborhood - what will be done, areas covered, timeline, etc. Mr. Muela can be reached at 974-7124.
 - b. The officers were elected as nominated: Myron Smith, President; Sandy McMillan, Vice President; and Sheila Fox, Secretary.
4. The meeting was adjourned.

Dawson Neighborhood Plan Contact Team (DNPCT) Draft Minutes --December 12, 2011

Minutes: Minutes from 10-10-11 were approved as written in the newsletter.

Membership Report: New member, Stephen Gee of the Crow Bar introduced himself.

New Business: DNPCT Board Member elections for 2012: Peter described the board per the Dawson Neighborhood Plan Contact Team Bylaws, adopted 4/11/11. The board has 6-10 seats with at least one property owner, renter, and business operator. Additionally, representatives from 4 neighborhood geographic sectors (North, North Central, South Central, and South) are desired. Written ballots were distributed to DNPCT members and the ballots were counted by Myron and Jerome. All 10 nominees---Mike Densley, Peter Davis, Sandy McMillan, Julie Woods, Donna Knapp, Marty Harris, Cole Alexander, Julie Alexander, Becky Sheller, & Myron Smith---received a majority of "yes" votes.

Old Business: a) The property for sale at Ben White/Wadford was discussed: 3 lots are on the market with CS or GR designations. b) A commercial kitchen is for lease at Ben White/Reyna/Dunlap. c) Construction on the rehabilitation hospital on Ben White is progressing.

Meeting adjourned.

Rebecca Sheller, DNPCT Secretary in 2011