

Neighborhood Plans and the Proposed Comprehensive Plan

By Cynthia Medlin

On January 6 the City of Austin planning staff held a meeting to address the role of neighborhood plans in the new Austin Comprehensive Plan. Greg Guernsey, Director of the Austin Planning and Development Review Department, again assured the attendees that in the areas such as Dawson, with an adopted neighborhood plan and a future land use map, the plan amendment process would remain the same. Neighborhoods without a plan will be at a disadvantage as they must work within the parameters of the Comp Plan. The Dawson Neighborhood Plan Team (DNPT) members will need to be vigilant in order to protect the Dawson area.

The four Comp Plan scenarios have been presented for public comment at meetings, online and in the newspaper. After selecting Scenario D, staff adjusted the map to include, among other things, highlighted mixed use corridors one mile long by ½ mile wide, one of which was placed over Dawson, to indicate the desired population density of approximately 7,500 people at full build-out. Many people present expressed concern that the intent was to up-zone single family homes, but city staff stated that, no, the intent was to indicate future average density. Central Austin may be able to accommodate the desired density without any up-zonings and staff is compiling current capacity data.

For more information, go to: www.imagineaustin.net

Dawson Plan Team Bylaws Review — Progress Report

Following a unanimous vote in support at the last meeting the review subcommittee has been reconvening to refine the work that began in 2009 drafting improvements to the Plan Team bylaws. The objective throughout has been to evolve to an improved charter supporting a less divisive, more durable, logical, workable, fair and transparent process.

A second objective has been to bring our bylaws more in-line with the City's published plan team template. It is essential that the Neighborhood can communicate effectively with the City to ensure all concerned are heard. Interaction will escalate as the recession plays out, development picks up, and the Imagine Austin plan takes shape.

The subcommittee has also responded to a request to clarify the language in one clause: That the proposed board would not have the power to make decisions on plan amendments and zoning changes without the input and vote of the full membership.

There will be a report and discussion at the February meeting and copies of the current draft can be obtained on the listserv, from design4spirit@earthlink.net or call (512) 693 2532. The subcommittee invites your comments in the same manner.

Dawson Neighborhood Meeting

Tuesday, Feb 22, 2011, 6:30 pm
South Austin Multipurpose Center
2508 Durwood

Note change from regular date due to Valentine's & Presidents Days

Dawson Neighborhood Association

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Old Business
4. New Business: Dawson Elementary
5. Issues in the Neighborhood
6. Adjourn

Dawson Neighborhood Plan Team

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Membership Report
4. Old Business
5. New Business
 - a) Front/Side Yard Parking, vote
 - b) Restructuring Bylaws, discussion only
6. Adjourn

Next Meeting: April 11, 2011

Restricted Front/Side Yard Parking

The purpose of this ordinance is to prohibit a person from parking a motor vehicle in the front or side yard of a residential property except in a driveway or a paved parking space depicted on an approved site plan. The City of Austin asks neighborhoods that have not approved this ordinance to vote annually to decide whether or not to adopt these parking restrictions. For more information go to http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/planning/neighborhood/fyp_mfv.htm or contact Maureen Meredith at 974-2695.

Molly Dawson Elementary School Faces Possible Closure

When the AISD's task force first targeted schools for possible closure, Dawson Elementary was not on the list and thus seemed spared. However, on January 25th, the district staff suggested adding four more schools, including Dawson, to that list. As many of you may be aware, this proposal has ignited activists across Austin to save neighborhood schools and urge AISD to find other cost-saving measures. To find out more about their actions, go to <http://saveaustinschools.com/>

The DNA has contacted Dawson Elementary inviting them to make a presentation at our February meeting and to provide information about what we can do for Dawson (and other schools), but those items were not finalized before our newsletter deadline. More information will be available at the meeting, so please join us to find out what we can do to support our neighborhood schools. Schools and other utilized facilities are essential to thriving and vibrant communities. Clearly the same can't be said about vacant buildings.

Community — Stay in touch

Join the DNA listserv and receive neighborhood news by email. Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DawsonNeighborhood> to subscribe, or send an email message to DawsonNeighborhood-subscribe@yahoo.com

Newsletter Sponsors and Volunteers

Many thanks to Ginger McGilvray for sponsoring this edition. Also, we always appreciate hearing from more newsletter delivery volunteers for primary and standby coverage of some routes, including apartment residents. Please contact the editor on 820 0934 or rehkram@gmail.com




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Green Neighbor Final Task, Drain Markers

While you are walking around our Dawson streets, please look at the concrete drain inlets at the curbs to check whether or not they have circular blue metal plaques that read "No Dumping Drains to Creek". If you find drains needing markers please contact Peter Davis at design4spirit@earthlink.net or 693-2532 to arrange affixing the markers. This is the last task for us to have the city officially call us a GREEN NEIGHBORHOOD. For more information about the Green Neighbor program, <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/watershed/greenneighbor/>

New Storm drains for Dawson

The City Watershed Protection Dept is progressing towards construction of new drains installations that affect areas north of Lightsey.

1. A Havana Street drain from South Congress to a new bridge outlet into the creek.
2. Drains in all streets around Dawson Elementary collecting at a new outfall where Wilson ends at the creek.
3. Drains along South Congress and down Cumberland to a new outlet at the bridge.
4. New drains along Oltorf to Durwood to connect at the detention pond in Gillis Park.
5. Euclid, Wilson, Forest and Durwood to connect at Cumberland or Gillis into the creek.

Gillis Park is to be used as a construction staging area and will be partially closed for a year.

Plans will be available at February's meeting and there will be a presentation by the city at the April meeting. Some people have already expressed concerns about the degradation of the creek. You can voice concerns by calling the city at 311 or contact Peter Davis at 693 2532.

Save the Date for East Bouldin Creek Cleanup

Saturday, April 9th marks Keep Austin Beautiful's 26th Annual Citywide Cleanup. The Dawson Neighborhood uses this event as an opportunity to come together as a community to clean up our creek. To volunteer contact Sandy McMillan at 693-2532 or smandpd@earthlink.net Go to <http://www.KeepAustinBeautiful.org/> for more.

Keep Austin Wild

The Dawson Neighborhood participated in the 2010 Neighborhood Habitat Challenge that encourages people to certify their backyards as Wildlife Habitats and tied with West Creek for 4th place. Not bad at all for such a small neighborhood! The 2011 Habitat Challenge begins April 15th and ends November 14th, so let's work together again this year to certify our backyards. The other winners were Bouldin Creek in 1st, Heritage Hills-Woodbridge in 2nd and Southwood in 3rd place. See <http://www.cityofaustin.org/parks/wildlifehabitat.htm>

LIVESTRONG Austin Marathon & Half Marathon

This run will take place on February 20, 2011 starting at 7 a.m. at Congress and 17th Street and will run south on Congress to Ben White, turn west and run north on S. 1st. Most of S. Congress and S. 1st will be closed 5 a.m. – 9:30 a.m., but one northbound lane of S. Congress and one southbound lane of S. 1st will remain open. East/west crossing points are at W. Mary, Oltorf, Cumberland, Lightsey and W. Alpine. Go to www.youraustinmarathon.com/course for more information or call Christina Conklin at 512-476-7223.

Draft Minutes from DNA and DNPT Meetings - December 13, 2010

DNA Draft Minutes

Minutes: The minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Old Business: There was no old business.

New Business:

Election of officers: The following officers were elected for 2011:

President: Sandy McMillan; Vice President: Myron Smith; Secretary: Sheila Fox; Newsletter Editor: Mark Herman
Meeting adjourned.

DNPT Draft Minutes

Approval of Minutes: Approved unanimously as written in the newsletter.

Membership Report: October 11, 2010: Jason Callahan, new member; Claire Stone, Susan Hublein, Mohammad Nasir & Tariq Khan, pending until submit application & eligibility verified; Adele Riffe & Mary Dawas(?) signed in but did not stay for DNPT. December 2010: Mariah Crawford, new member. February 2010 Correction: Chris Ahuero's application noted "did not stay for meeting"; however, Chris joined in 2009, membership pending proof of eligibility. End of year notes: Kim Cook & David Barker removed as members, no longer live/own property in Dawson.

Old Business:

a) **Election of Officers:** Myron moved & Kam seconded that we elect the slate via acclamation; approved unanimously.

2011 Officers – Chair: Peter Davis; Vice Chair: Sandy McMillan; Secretary: Rebecca Sheller; Membership: Cole Alexander.

b) **P. Terry:** The City of Austin approved P. Terry's site plan administratively.

New Business: Cynthia Medlin moved that DNPT reconvene Bylaws Committee to revisit 2009 bylaws proposal, revise based on input, wordsmith for clarity & bring up for review in Feb 2011. Myron seconded motion; motion carried unanimously. Discussion: 2009 Bylaws Committee: David Barker, Dell Shaw, Charlie Faye, Julie Woods, Marty Harris, Mark Herman & Cynthia Medlin. Julie, Marty, Mark & Cynthia agreed to serve again. Tentative timeline: present draft in Feb & maybe vote in April. Peter Davis suggested committee approach previous opposition to work out compromise to avoid last minute opposition that occurred in '09. Donna Knapp noted bylaws meant for DNPT, not for particular member or faction. Others suggested instead of talking directly to opposition — no written record of those who opposed & why — present revised version for discussion, while also providing clear vision for new bylaws & why they provide better way for DNPT to operate.

Meeting adjourned.