

Dawson Neighborhood News

Nov/Dec
2014

The Newsletter of the Dawson Neighborhood

Changing Dawson by Peter Davis

City of Austin Council and Mayor enter a new era this month with the change-over to district representation by 10 council members. Strangely our District #3 is being contested in a run-off between brother and sister. We can only hope that we will be better served by a winning council member who will be responding directly to the needs and concerns of the citizens of Dawson. Austin is rapidly growing and upset about change is inevitable, therefore it is important to look for the positive side of what is happening.

The demand for Dawson locations for new businesses and residences is increasing and the use of alternative transport is the goal of the city. We do have multiple bus routes here and bike lanes are appearing, although far from complete. Reduced parking requirements and the increased use in street parking puts stress onto residents' safety, so as a relief; two Residential Parking Permit zones have been applied for in Dawson. These applications are processed by the city on a block by block basis. Sidewalks are still a priority for us and we have seen some progress in the routes identified in our Neighborhood Plan. We just need more as soon as possible.

Concern about the loss of affordable family homes is due to high priced houses and duplexes popping up around the neighborhood, with modest size homes (perhaps an Austin tradition) being demolished to make way for the large single family houses or modern duplexes. The city is currently looking at "the missing middle" as part of the CodeNext development that would potentially provide more affordable homes.

Through the impetus of the City Planning Department, the neighborhood voted in 2007 to accept Mixed Use Developments along the Congress and S. 1st corridors, with the goal that a quota of affordable residential units and retail would be included. The "Tree" apartment complex at Post Road now has the highly praised gastro pub "Porter", but affordable units were passed over. Around the city, incentives for including affordable homes are not always picked up by developers. However, a project in the works is an apartment complex for the empty lot at 3110 S. Congress that is taking all the benefits it can to make the development viable by reducing parking area and providing affordable units at our approved 60% of Median Family Income and a retail unit. It is a very tight lot for what is proposed, so application issues are still to be resolved, as is common and completion time is extended.

Internationally renowned Habitat for Humanity's mission is to build and repair homes for low income families. The organization has been on the east side of town for 20 years. Now a move to Dawson at the corner of South First and Hwy 71 in the former Chuck E. Cheese is in the works. There are permits and construction needed so opening late 2015 sounds like the earliest. Based on their current goals and operations, this addition to the neighborhood will be a resource for DIY home improvement as they accept materials donations. There are educational classes and volunteer opportunities at the Restore. The organization's administration headquarters may be moving there too.

There are multiple buildings and properties with light industrial uses at 121 Pickle Road. Now redevelopment plans are moving along. An Urban Winery company based in Colorado is looking to move into one warehouse, while a rock-climbing gym will occupy the rest of the metal building. Ruta Maya was moving there but has moved attention to another Dawson location. Other properties on South Congress near Pickle Road have recently appeared on the market and their future may be something that will further change that section of our neighborhood.

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Many thanks to our newsletter sponsor, Fitch Estate Sales!

ANNUAL POT LUCK

Join us for neighborhood festivities!
Please bring your favorite dish or drink.
The meeting will be brief so we can spend the time eating, drinking and otherwise being merry.

Monday, December 8, 2014
6:30 pm
South Austin Multipurpose Center at 2508 Durwood

DNA Meeting Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes
2. New Business
 - a. Election of Officers (See minutes page 2)
3. Old Business
4. Issues in the neighborhood

DNA Planning Contact Team

1. Approval of Minutes
2. Membership Report
3. New Business
 - a. Election of Board Members (See minutes page 2)
4. Old Business

DNA meets on the 2nd Monday of Feb, Apr, June, Aug, Oct & Dec

DNPCT Membership Report:

Members to move from Active or Pending to Suspended: **Jerome Garvey & Daniela Ochoa**, & members to Remove, **David Elliot**, if they do not attend the December 2014 meeting.

Austin Police Department District Representative

serves as a liaison between the community and the police department to assist in solving neighborhood problems. Our District Representative is **Officer Robert Barboza (512)-974 8246** or **Robert.Barboza@austintexas.gov**

COA Community Registry provides information about 500+ community groups, including DNA & DNPCT, austintexas.gov/page/community-registry-search.

Neighbors – Stay in Touch! Join the DNA Yahoo site for notices about events, missing or found pets, garage sales & other news. Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DawsonNeighborhood> or [email DawsonNeighborhood-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:DawsonNeighborhood-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

If you would like to sponsor the newsletter or write an article, contact: smandpd@earthlink.net

City of Austin Hands-Free Law for Vehicles and Bikes

Austin is leading the state of Texas in the effort to refocus drivers on the task of driving. Changes coming into effect will expand the current ordinance that bans texting while driving. "Unless using a hands-free system such as Bluetooth or headphones, or a permanently affixed GPS system, use of portable devices while moving in a car or on a bike will be a citable offense beginning Jan. 1, 2015." The new rules make it illegal to use gadgets including cell phones, MP3 players, electronic games, messaging devices, and any other hand-held electronic device.

VOTE in the City Elections! District 3 Council Seat Run-off

Susana Almanza is the co-director of People Organized in Defense of Earth and Her Resources (PODER) and a long-time civic and neighborhood activist, including president of Montopolis NA, city commissioner (planning, environmental and currently Parks and Rec) and neighborhood advocate for affordable housing. Ms. Almanza's primary issues are equity, social justice, environmental protection, affordability, property tax reform, a living wage of \$15/hr, and job creation. For more information from the candidate, go to www.votesusana.org or, on Facebook: Vote Susana Almanza for District 3, Austin City Council.

Sabino "Pio" Renteria's experience includes extensive volunteerism and community activism, founder or board member on several nonprofits and community organizations, E. Cesar Chavez NPC and Friends of the MACC. Mr. Renteria's primary issues are affordable housing/Eastside resident displacement, reducing homelessness and criminalization, Homestead Preservation Dist., Holly Shores Master Plan and cultural preservation. For more information from the candidate, go to district3forpio.com or, on Facebook: Sabino Pio Renteria.

District 3 was drawn by the 10-1 Commission as a Hispanic opportunity district and includes parts of South Austin between Oltorf and Stassney, Montopolis, and the Cesar Chavez area eastward. According to the 2010 Census, this district is 60.8% Hispanic/Latino, 26.6% Anglo, 8.0% African-American, and 4.6% Asian or other. It has 40,145 registered voters and the 2012 election turnout was 37.9%.

Many sources of information about the candidates are available online and in print. Their KLRU run-off conversation about leadership is available at www.klru.org/episode/civic-summit/district-3-runoff-conversation/. The Austin League of Women Voters' Guide is available at <http://lwvaustin.org/> and in public libraries. Archives of candidate forums are available at www.austintexas.gov/department/atxn.

Voters may vote anywhere they see a "Vote Here" sign. For specific information about early voting and polling locations, go to www.traviscountyclerk.org or call 512-854-4996.

Early voting runs December 1 -12 and Election Day is December 16

Dawson Neighborhood Association (DNA) Draft Minutes – October 13, 2014

Minutes: Minutes approved as printed in the newsletter.

New Business: A) Nomination of officers: President – Myron Smith, VP – Steve Gee, Secretary – Sandy McMillan & Newsletter Editor – Sandy McMillan. B) Residential Parking Permits (RPP): 1. El Paso, S. 1st to La Mesa 7am – 7pm M-F & 10am – 5pm S - S approved 16 yes, 4 no & 1 blank; 2) Post Road Dr., S. 1st to Wilson 5pm – 12am M-F & 12pm – 12am S – S approved 18 yes & 3 no.

Announcements: A) Julie W. invited neighborhood to Dawson Elementary School's Carnival. B) New principal of Dawson, Tania Jedele, introduced herself, mentioned school's service club interest in neighborhood projects, contact if know of one. C) Sandy M. circulated sign-up for election clerk volunteers. D) Chad announced children's outing in Gillis, BBQ & happy hour. He also requested "3 non-controversial votes". Pres noted items not on agenda as is procedure & need to adjourn to use final 15 minutes for DNPCT meeting.

Dawson Neighborhood Planning Contact Team (DNPCT) Draft Minutes - October 13, 2014

Minutes: Minutes approved as printed in the newsletter with motion from Donna and second by Sandy.

Membership report: The meeting welcomed new attendees, pending membership, introduced themselves - Corinne Sumpter, Frank Medrano, and Tania Jedele.

New Business: Carol Gibbs from the City of Austin Neighborhood Assistance Center gave an overview of her role sprint neighborhoods, and Michael Reeves from Austin Code Department presented code compliance and enforcement for the newly standalone department. Nominations for the DNPCT Board Members included, Steve Gee, Sos Palomo, and Marisa Fushille.

Old Business: 103 La Vista St. still does not permit to be used as a business. There appears to be some activity at the property and Michael Reeves said they need a firewall as part of going through the permit process. Ruta Maya was looking move into a 121 Pickle Rd building but may have changed to look at Dawson. 3114 S. Congress is planned as a 20-apartment vertical mixed use building with retail and 18 parking spaces. The permit process has been extended while they respond to issues. The Habitat for Humanity ReStore is looking to relocate to the former space of Chuck E. Cheese.