

Support Our Sidewalks

By Cynthia Medlin

The Dawson Neighborhood Plan passed in 1998 contains a section concerning priority sidewalks for our neighborhood. During the 12 years since its passage only one section of that sidewalk has been built, one block long on Wilson St. from El Paso to Cumberland. In March of this year I reviewed the City of Austin staff proposal to the Bond Election Advisory Task Force concerning funding for neighborhood sidewalks. The only sidewalk improvements included for our neighborhood were to upgrade existing sidewalks along South Congress and South First St to ADA standards. While I support making sidewalks accessible along these two important transit corridors I was distressed that no improvements or additions were slated for the interior of the neighborhood. In 2010 a transportation bond package passed that punted our sidewalks to a future bond proposal and the future is here but again with no funding.

On March 20th I appeared before the Transportation Subcommittee of the BEATF and requested additional interior sidewalks sections be added to allow safe access to the major transit corridors. The committee seemed receptive. During the April DNA/DNPT meeting neighbors voted on the priority sidewalks and updated the Implementation Tracking Sheet for the Dawson Neighborhood Plan (see Minutes). I am hopeful that some of these segments will be included in the 2012 Bond Election.

Why are interior sidewalks important you ask? The most compelling reason is safety. Sidewalks provide safe passage for school children, pedestrians walking through the neighborhood, and people mobile by wheelchair or who have other challenges that make it unsafe to walk down the middle of the street. Elderly or mobility challenged people who are fearful of walking in the street become homebound. When major construction occurs, such as on Wilson St, there is no place to go when the street is blocked and cars are coming. People who are dependent on mass transit have difficulty getting to the bus stops on our major transit corridors of S Congress, S First and Oltorf.

I grant there are many opinions about sidewalks. This dialog does not occur in new subdivisions because sidewalks are now required to be built. Because we are in an older central city neighborhood the sidewalk fabric is largely missing the 10 ft utility easement at the front of our lots has become impassable for pedestrian use. Again, this is a safety issue. Sidewalks are a desirable community benefit especially as our population density continues to increase and the “Boomers” age I hope you will join me in support of any bond package that includes money for our sidewalk improvements and, should we receive funding, that you will not resist their construction.

Dawson Neighborhood Meeting

Monday, June 11, 2011 6:30 p.m.
South Austin Multipurpose Center
2508 Durwood

I. Neighborhood Association

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
3. New Business
4. Old Business

II. Planning Contact Team

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Membership Report
4. New Business
 - a. Bylaws amendment required by the COA
5. Old Business

We meet on the 2nd Monday of
Feb, Apr, June, Aug, Oct & Dec

Plan Team Bylaws Amendments

To be recognized as an official contact team, the following requirements must be addressed in the Dawson bylaws for compliance with the Code:

Please add to Section 4-Membership of the Dawson Neighborhood Plan Contact Team “residential renters” and “neighborhood organization members owning or renting property within the neighborhood plan area” to comply with Article 25-1-805 section B (2) and (4) of the city Code.

Typo in Section 9- Officers and Duties Article 5: “rights and responsibilities” should read “roles and responsibilities”

Margaret Valenti, Contact Team and Education Coordinator

The printing of the newsletter is brought to you by:

**SOUTH AUSTIN
COMMUNITY ACUPUNCTURE**



**\$15 - \$35
SLIDING SCALE**

**SUPPORTING HEALTH
BUILDING COMMUNITY**

**321 W BEN WHITE BLVD
(512)707-8330**

acupunctureworldheadquarters.com

DNPCT Membership Report

The following DNPCT members have not attended a meeting in 12 months so will be moved from Active to Suspended status until attending another meeting:

David Adams, Reed Baker, Patti Bishop Adams, Cheryl Fillekes, Mark Herman, Anne Lewis, and Erin Skehan.

For more information, please refer to the bylaws or the previous newsletter (both of which are posted on the listserv) or contact Peter Davis at 296-4906 or design4spirit@earthlink.net.

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@yahoogroups.com