

# Dawson Neighborhood News

Newsletter of the Dawson Neighborhood Association  
and Dawson Neighborhood Plan Contact Team  
[www.dawsonneighborhoodassociation.org](http://www.dawsonneighborhoodassociation.org)

Jan/Feb 2020

## Land Development Code Draft Updated

City of Austin released the 2nd reading draft of the proposed land development code on 31 January 2020, along with updated proposed zoning maps.

There appears to be little, if any, change to the proposed Dawson zoning. All interior lots currently zoned single family will be upzoned to R2A or R2B (two units per lot) and lots on the edges are upzoned to RM1 (up to six units) or R4 (up to 4 units). Stacy Lane is typical, where the lots nearest to S. 1st are upzoned to RM1 and most of the lots on the other side of Stacy are upzoned to R4. All these lots are currently zoned SF-3. Lots on the edges are some form of vertical mixed use: main street (MS) or mixed use (MU).

Note that while RM1 and R4 allow more units, most of the lots that would be upzoned are small enough that they would likely not permit the maximum, except possibly through the preservation incentive.

The new draft sets a minimum of two units for R4 but also allows existing single-family use to continue as long as the home is continuously used. Likewise, one or more additional units may be added as for R2, up to the maximum allowed.

Another concern with the first LDC draft was the preservation incentive for single-family homes 30 years old or older. As written in the first draft it appeared to be able to redevelop older homes almost without restriction. The new draft adds significant restrictions to the preservation incentive, including a maximum impervious cover limit and clearer restrictions on how an existing structure can be changed. The incentives still allow an additional unit beyond the base zoning, which would mean a third unit for typical lots in Dawson.

The new draft clarifies the allowed usages for each zone. In particular, lots zoned RM1 are not eligible for Type 3 short-term rentals (rental of units within multi-family dwellings, i.e., apartments and condos). Likewise, larger multi-family developments are limited in the number of Type 3 rentals, reducing the likelihood of stealth hotels.

Lots on S. 1st, Oltorf, Congress, and Ben White are mostly zoned MS2 (main street) or greater. The new draft changes the setback requirements slightly. For example, making the minimum setback triggering distance for MS2 50 feet rather than 25 feet, but increasing the allowed height from 25 feet to 35 feet.

Similar changes are made for mixed use (MU) zones, such as the Lindsay's property. The setback height limits are increased from 25

## Next Meeting

Monday, February 10 at  
6:30pm, Mollie Dawson  
Elementary, 3001 S. 1st.

## Agenda

### Neighborhood Association:

1. Approval of Minutes
2. Greet guests
3. Old/Continuing Business
  - a. Park adoption and proposed survey
4. New business
  - a. presentation by Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

### Plan Contact Team:

1. Approval of minutes
2. Old business
3. New business

*Land Development Code Draft Updated (continued)*

to 35 feet for properties within 50 feet. More significantly, the new draft removes all stepback requirements for properties that meeting the affordable housing bonus. This implies that the Lindsay's development could be built to its full height if it satisfies the affordability bonus requirements, for example.

This increases the incentive for builders to provide affordable housing but also increases the chances that adjacent neighbors will have even more encroachment. That seems like a significant change in a narrow neighborhood like Dawson.

The new draft also expands and clarifies the various affordability incentives and bonus programs. Dawson is now included in the "Equity Area Affordable Housing Bonus Program Area", which provides additional incentives for affordable housing.

The new draft does appear to reflect concerns voiced to Council but it still drastically changes the zoning of almost half of the single-family lots in Dawson.

## Thanks to our newsletter sponsor!

*I live and work in the Dawson Neighborhood*

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We meet on the 2nd Monday of  
February, April, June, August,  
October, and December.

## It's My Park Day, March 7

— Julie Woods

It's My Park Day is a twice-yearly event sponsored by the Austin Parks Foundation. We will be picking up trash and spreading mulch at Gillis, our neighborhood park.

Please join us at Gillis Park, 2504 Durwood Avenue, at 9 a.m on Saturday, March 7.

The neighborhood association has, under the auspices of the parks foundation, adopted the park and will be looking for ways to make the park better for everyone. We have held mulch-spreading efforts throughout the years, which is why so many of the trees have weathered last summer's drought so well, since the mulch helps improve the soil and keep trees' roots from drying out as quickly.

We are aware of the people experiencing homelessness who've been using the park and are working with city officials (and others) to improve the situation where possible. We'll be conducting a survey regarding the park soon, so please watch social media (we are on Facebook and Nextdoor) for more information when the time comes.

### Dawson Neighborhood Gallery



Agave on La Mesa



Mural at PAZ Veterinary



Mosaic on bridge over Bouldin creek at El Paso

#### Dawson Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes December 9, 2019

Julie Woods, President, called the meeting to order. Minutes approved.

Guest, Yvonne Meyer from the South Austin Neighborhood Center was introduced.

Old/Continuing Business:

A. Julie reported that the Austin Neighborhood Council is discussing the proposed new land development code.

New Business:

A. Officers for 2020 were elected:

President: Julie Woods, Vice President: John Murphy, Secretary: Rebecca (Becky) Sheller, Newsletter Editor: Eliot Kimber

B. Julie asked for ideas to support Gillis Park now that it has been officially adopted by the Dawson Neighborhood Association. A survey might be developed on the DNA website to get neighborhood input for park projects. Surveys might also be done at the park during the summer. Galindo neighbors could be invited to help with park projects. APD might add fencing around the restrooms. A good number of volunteers showed up to mulch the trees on It's My Park Day.

Meeting adjourned.

#### Dawson Neighborhood Plan Contact Team Meeting Minutes December 9, 2019

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Eliot Kimber, at 7:00pm. Minutes from the previous meeting on October 14 were approved and seconded.

The following candidates for the Plant Contact Team board were elected to two-year terms:

John Murphy, Jason Callahan, Michael Moody, and Don Dory

Cynthia Medlin summarized the District 3 meeting with Council Member Pio Renteria. She reported that there was serious concerns expressed about the proposed upzoning. The inclusion of feeder streets in transition zones is being rethought.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.