

Dawson Neighborhood News

Newsletter of the Dawson Neighborhood Association
and Dawson Neighborhood Plan Contact Team
www.dawsonneighborhoodassociation.org

Nov/Dec 2020

Draft Letter to City Council Re Lessin Lane Zoning and Input Process

As outlined in the draft letter below, several members of the Dawson Neighborhood Association attempted to participate in the October 15 City Council meeting in order to provide opinions on the pending zoning change for the property at 219 Lessin Lane.

The draft text of the letter is as follows:

To: Austin City Council

From: Dawson Neighborhood Association

Re: Citizen input process; Lessin Ln zoning case

October 2020

Residents of Dawson Neighborhood attempted to participate in the City Council October 15 meeting to express opinions regarding zoning case #C14-2020-0085 (Lessin Lane Villas at 219 Lessin Ln, agenda item #63) for re-zoning from SF3 to SF6. The process for citizen participation was cumbersome and difficult. After signing up ahead of time and being on the speakers list, residents who missed initial 1:45 calls or who were unable to “unmute” even after waiting hours were not able to speak. When Council members experienced technical difficulties, accommodations were made for them. Citizens were perplexed that, unlike in person City Council meetings, public opinions of different zoning cases were mixed together. Citizens were not able to provide a coherent opinion for any single case. Citizens waiting on the phone had no idea when their name would be called and were stuck on the phone indefinitely. We realize that we are in a pandemic and emergency mode, but does Council truly want to hear their citizens? Does this process satisfy Open Meetings Laws?

The change in zoning from AF3 to SF6 at 219 Lessin Lane was approved (without full participation of citizens) on 3 readings on the consent agenda. It was recommended by City Staff and Planning Commission (Sept 22), for the benefit of Urban ATX Development LLC represented by Alice Glasco, former Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department Director. The deck was stacked against City Council actually hearing citizen input.

Residents of Dawson Neighborhood want fewer units (e.g. 12-14) on the new SF6 zoning at 219 Lessin Ln. The proposed 17 units on the oddly shaped 1.45-acre lot at East Bouldin Creek headwaters will make this new development the densest single-family housing in the neighborhood at 11.7 units per acre. Considering the health of East Bouldin Creek, traffic on the dead-end street (Lessin Lane), parking (Lessin Ln already requires residential permits), and relative inaccessibility to this interior lot, a reduced number of units, from 17 to 12 should be built.

Next Meeting

Monday, Dec 14, 6:30
Online meeting

Agenda

Neighborhood Association

1. Greetings and introductions
2. Approval of minutes
3. Election of officers
4. Draft resolution
5. Issues in the Neighborhood

Plan Contact Team

1. Approval of minutes
2. Old business
3. Lessin Lane

New Dawson Neighborhood List Serve: Groups.io

The old neighborhood Yahoo group has been replaced by a new groups.io group:

<https://groups.io/g/dawsonneighborhoodassociation>

Newsletter Sponsored by The Dawson Guinea Fowl



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

Covid Resources and Information

Need more information about help during the COVID-19 pandemic? Here's a list of some resources:

<https://communitynotcommodity.com/2020/03/27/more-than-75-resources-to-help-our-fellow-austinites-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

The city of Austin has FREE COVID testing! They are urging people who've attended protests to get tested and have a link to a self-assessment to help you decide whether to get tested. The city's page on their coronavirus response is here:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/covid19>

Here's the city's data page for the numbers of COVID cases. (This page sometimes fails to load, so if it doesn't work for you on the first try, wait awhile and try again later.)

<https://austin.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/43b91f7147934b0190119781f81aa896>

Interested in how the city's spending the mobility bond money? Here's their latest newsletter:

<https://mailchi.mp/austintexas/this-fall-is-full-of-2016-bond-funded-projects-and-outreach-417090?e=78840c9c07>

The city of Austin will be seeing a budget shortfall in the coming year:

<https://communityimpact.com/corporate/na/education/2020/04/28/austin-isd-preliminary-fy-2020-21-budget-shows-shortfall-of-493m/>

Austin ISD has information about what they plan to do for the fall semester; essentially, they're still figuring out the details but plan to resume classes on August 18. They also want to hear from students and their families about considerations for planning the coming year.

<https://www.austinisd.org/covid19>



Dawson Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes, October 19, 2020

Virtual meeting via Zoom

DNA and DNPCT Officers met via Zoom on 10/12/20 to call this meeting

Julie Woods, President, called the meeting to order.

- A. Introductions of 9 attendees
- B. Officers nominated:
 - President: Julie Woods
 - Vice President: John Murphy
 - Secretary: Rebecca (Becky) Sheller
 - Newsletter Editor: Eliot Kimber
- C. Lessin Ln rezoning:

Council approved rezoning 219 Lessin Ln from SF3 to SF6 on consent agenda, all 3 readings, on October 15, 2020. Neighbors discussed the cumbersome and frustrating process of trying to speak at the online City Council meeting. Neighbors recommended fewer units than 17 in the proposed new development. A motion was passed to write a letter to City Council to protest inability of citizens to fully participate in Council meetings and express disapproval of zoning change at 219 Lessin Ln.

- D. Plaza Columbian Coffee music:

Plaza Columbian Coffee has been playing outdoor music during the pandemic but it does not have an outdoor music venue (OMV) permit. Neighbors have complained about loud music played late at night to the manager, the property owner, and 311, but have not found resolution. City process seems to allow a new venue to receive an OMV without neighborhood input. A motion was passed to write a letter to the City's OMV department to preemptively describe that the DNA will not recommend an OMV permit for Plaza Columbian Coffee unless neighbors provide positive recommendations.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes for DNPCT meeting October 2020

This was our first zoom meeting and members joined in DNA talking about permitting on Lessin Lane and the Outdoor music venue ordinance in a non-downtown area that was brought up by Chad Vanderlinden, and relating to The Plaza Columbian Coffee establishment on South Congress. We made a push for new members to join the DNPCT for a two year position. And a promise to announce this on ND.