



The North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area

Final Workshop, November 2, 2009

Meeting Notes

The final workshop was intended to present stakeholders with design guidelines and infill options to consider, as well as a chance to tie up any loose ends or address any outstanding concerns before the final open house.

The evening began with a process update given by Jacob Browning; he provided a review of the planning process and gave stakeholders a tentative timeline regarding the implementation of the neighborhood plan. Jacob presented residential design guidelines (parking placement, garage placement, front porch placement) that can be adopted by a neighborhood to apply to the entire planning area or subdistrict, or not at all. Greg Dutton followed with a brief presentation on infill options (secondary apartments), restricted parking, and a streetlight recommendation update. Similar to residential design guidelines, infill options and restricted parking may be applied to the entire neighborhood planning area, a subdistrict, or not at all. Jacob finished with a FLUM and zoning update.

During the presentations some questions were raised; they and their answers can be found below.

Residential Design Guidelines (Jacob)

Parking Placement

Q. What is impervious cover?

A. Any surface that doesn't let water through. Only pavement/concrete is allowed. Gravel, shell, rock, etc. that currently exists in driveways may have been grandfathered when properties were annexed by the City.

Q. What about duplexes? How does parking placement apply to them?

A. The tools presented (parking placement, garage placement, and front porch placement) would apply to the entire lot (both lots).

Q. Do these tools apply to just new construction?

A. Yes. They are not applied to existing construction.

Outcome: Consensus on applying the parking placement design guideline to the entire planning area.

Garage Placement

Q. Can the driveway go all the way to the back of a lot if a garage has to be placed behind a house due to a narrow lot? Will this conflict with the parking placement design tool that restricts impervious cover?

A. Yes, the driveway can go all the way to the rear of a lot to reach a garage placed behind a house.

No, it will not conflict with the parking placement design tool, because the parking placement design tool only speaks to impervious cover restrictions in the front yard, not the entire lot.

Outcome: Consensus on applying the garage placement design guideline to the entire planning area.

Front Porch Placement

Q. Are both covered and uncovered porches allowed?

A. Yes.

Q. Are screens and/or windows allowed on these porches that extend into the setback?

A. No. Enclosure of the porches is not allowed (walls, screens, windows).

Outcome: Consensus on applying the front porch placement design guideline to the entire planning area.

Secondary Apartments (Greg)

Greg continued the presentation with a brief introduction to a residential infill option that had not been previously discussed with the group--secondary apartments. Secondary apartments are an additional dwelling unit on a property with a minimum lot area of 5,750 square feet. Additional regulations apply to secondary apartments and can be found in the Special Use Infill Options guide at: http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/downloads/infill_tools.pdf. The group's questions, comments, and decisions regarding secondary apartments can be found below.

Q. Are garage apartments regulated to be only two stories? Can they be one story?

A. Garage apartments (also known as secondary apartments or granny flats) can be either one or two stories in height. Also, the dwelling unit does not have to be above a garage (as seen in the examples given in the presentation).

Q. The secondary apartment has to be 850 square feet. How many bedrooms can you have in an 850 square foot apartment?

A. This infill option does not regulate the number of bedrooms one can have in their secondary apartment structure. Construction of a secondary apartment still has to follow any regulations the City code sets forth and the number of people living within a secondary apartment must also comply with City regulations.

Comment: With secondary apartments, we may be encouraging additional absentee landlords. These apartments could fall into the same disrepair that other properties in the area have experienced.

Comment: Secondary apartments allow you to rent out your back yard.

Comment: There is probably a good reason that the 7,000 square foot lot size (that allows secondary apartments) was chosen.

Outcome: The group decided by consensus to not adopt the secondary apartment residential infill option for the North Lamar neighborhoods.

Front Yard Parking Regulations (Greg)

Greg moved to finalize the discussion of front yard parking regulations that the group started back in the summer. The goal of the discussion was for the group to decide whether or not to apply front

yard parking regulations throughout the entire neighborhood or to a particular portion(s) of the NLCNPA. The group's questions, comments, and decisions regarding front yard parking can be found below.

Comment: The subdistrict map should be expanded to the east side of Georgian Drive south to Home Place. The preliminary subdistrict map can be found on slide 19 of the presentation.

Q: Can we apply the front yard parking regulations to the portion of the NLCNPA north of Rundberg?

A: We can if approved through consensus.

Outcome: By consensus, the group decided to apply the front yard parking regulations to the entire area north of Rundberg Lane.

Comment: You have to remember that front yard parking is a complaint-driven system. It is only regulated if you call in to complain about people parking on their front lawns.

Q: The area east of Georgian Drive between US Highway 183 and Rundberg Lane is older than other parts of the NLCNPA with non-compliant driveways (i.e., not made of concrete). Can we extend the boundaries of the proposed subdistrict for the eastern half of Georgian Acres (the area between Georgian Drive and I-35, Rundberg Lane and US Highway 183) so to opt-out of the front yard parking regulations?

A: That is an option. The planning team will go out and assess/research the area so to solidify the subdistrict's boundaries. We will bring our findings to the final open house in January.

Comment: We need to capture all the homes near Middle Lane and I-35 to include them in this subdistrict.

Outcome: The group decided by consensus that front yard parking regulations would be applicable to that area of Georgian Acres not covered by the pending boundaries of the subdistrict discussed above.

Streetlight Recommendations (Greg)

Greg also revisited recommendations the group made regarding streetlight installation and repair throughout the NLCNPA. Austin Energy had reviewed the recommendations and reported that most of the recommendations could not be implemented due to various reasons. Comments and questions regarding the streetlight recommendations are found below:

Q: So, are we striking all recommendations for installation of new streetlights?

Comment: There was reason we asked for the streetlights at the end of dead-end streets--they are dark and sometimes unsafe areas that need lighting.

Q: Is there a way higher wattage light bulbs could be placed in the streetlights near those requested at dead-end streets?

A: That's a very good question. We'll have to contact Austin Energy and see what they say.

Q: Why does Austin Energy say it's so difficult to install new lights?

A: Austin Energy would have to tear up private property to install lights at the dead-end areas found in your recommendations.

Outcome: It was decided that all streetlight recommendations would remain in the plan document.

FLUM and Zoning (Jacob)

The FLUM and zoning map for the NLCNPA were presented, as there had been minor changes made since the last neighborhood meeting (October 6th). (See pages 13-15 of the presentation for areas that were discussed,

http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/downloads/nlcnpa_finalworkshop_presentation.pdf).

Provines Dr. Area

Staff made a new suggestion to change the FLUM *from* Neighborhood Mixed Use *to* Neighborhood Commercial and Mixed Use/Office.

Q. What does Mixed Use/Office land use allow?

A. Zoning districts: LA, RR, SF-1 to SF-6, MF-1 to MF-5, NO, LO, GO

Q. Would Mixed Use/Office allow liquor stores and pawn shops?

A. No, it does not allow either.

Outcome: Decision by consensus to accept FLUM change.

Rundberg Lane Area

Staff made a new suggestion to change the FLUM *from* Mixed Residential and Neighborhood Mixed Use *to* Single Family, High Density Single Family, and Neighborhood Mixed Use. Staff proposed zoning to match these suggested FLUM changes, such that the Single Family proposed area would have SF-3 and SF-2 zoning, and the High Density Single Family area would have SF-6 zoning. The land owner and representatives (from the NRP Group) of the eastern-most property that fronts Rundberg Lane were on hand to answer questions about a proposed development for that property.

Q. Does SF-6 promote home ownership?

A. Yes.

Q. Would the proposed housing development on the eastern tract that fronts Rundberg Lane have rental units or owner-occupied units?

A. NRP representative: rental units.

Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of the proposed development. Concerns citizens have with proposed development: overcrowding of schools, overcrowding of area, possibly more crime in the area.

Outcome: Decision by consensus to accept FLUM and zoning changes for the western tract that fronts Rundberg Lane. Decision by consensus to hold off on FLUM and zoning changes, and to discuss further options with the land owner regarding the eastern tract that fronts Rundberg Lane (where development has been proposed).

The meeting ended with a reminder of the next meeting. We adjourned at approximately 8:35 p.m.