



## The North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area

Zoning Workshop 3, August 17, 2009

Meeting Notes

The third zoning workshop focused on residential infill options for the large vacant properties on or near Rundberg Lane and mixed-use options for properties designated “mixed-use” during the future land use discussions, especially those along North Lamar Boulevard. The night’s presentation and handout are available at: [http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/north\\_lamar.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/north_lamar.htm).

Jacob Browning gave a brief introduction and review of changes made to the future land use map (FLUM) based on recommendations received at the last meeting. Everyone agreed to the changes made to the properties along Middle Fiskville near Grady Drive (from commercial to neighborhood commercial) and to the state-owned property at the tip of the “island” at Middle Fiskville and the I-35 frontage (from commercial to transportation). A change was suggested for the vacant property at the dead-end of Guadalupe Street, near its intersection with San Jose Street. The property was originally designated as higher-density single-family; the recommendation to change it to single-family was discussed.



Vacant property near Guadalupe St. and San Jose St.: Change FLUM designation from **higher-density single-family** to **single-family**.

It was mentioned that a single-family future land use designation will prevent any more density in an area that already has enough density.

### Residential Infill Options

Mark Walters took over the discussion and re-introduced the residential infill options that are applicable to the large vacant tracts on or near Rundberg Lane. Certain guidelines and restrictions are related to the residential infill options; they can be found in either the presentation or handout on the NLCNPA website. Mark fielded questions during his presentation. They can be found below with their answers:

Q. Is residential infill similar to what developers did to the Mueller area?

A. Yes, that is a good example of residential infill.

Q. Can we say where we want single-family homes to be located on these large lots? It makes sense to put single-family homes near the already established single-family neighborhoods surrounding the lots.

A. No, we can't regulate the location of housing types on these properties through the infill options tool. But, there is a way to regulate the number of single-family homes allowed on these lots (i.e., up to 80% of the units on each lot can be single-family homes under the specifications of the infill tool).

Q. What is staff proposing for these lots that is different than what was presented before?

A. The infill options allow for smaller-lot development, including cottage homes and urban homes.

Q. Are duplexes considered "multifamily"?

A. No, duplexes are considered single-family; multifamily consists of triplexes and denser residential developments.

Q. What is the incentive to have cottage lots and/or cottage homes on these properties?

A. It is a way to get home-ownership in an area that otherwise has little such opportunities.

Comment: The cottages are a more realistic option to get single-family homes in our area.

Q. If we decide to put a cottage lot or urban home subdivision on these lots, what is the probability for that subdivision to become a place of renters and not home-owners?

A. There is not a great chance that an entire neighborhood (or subdivision) would become all renter-occupied; it just doesn't occur that often. It's also too expensive for a developer to build a subdivision with new infrastructure for it to become renter-occupied. Yet, we still can't control ownership through this--or any other--process.

A motion was made to vote on whether or not to accept the cottage lot and/or urban home infill options for these vacant properties. Consensus was not reached because more information was needed and the discussion continued.

Q. If we decide to adopt both the cottage home and urban home options, can we regulate how many of each we can build on these properties?

A. No, there is no regulation regarding the percentage or number of each option being built on these properties. If both options are adopted, the developer may choose to only build cottage homes; or, he may choose to build only urban homes. Just because both options are available doesn't guarantee that both options will be built.

Q. Is there any way we can generate a better use for this lot? It seems a residential use like the one proposed may not be as beneficial to the neighborhood as originally thought.

A. Not really, in these economic and financial times. A different use may not be feasible currently.

Q. Maybe this lot (the easternmost vacant lot on Rundberg) could be an employment center, providing jobs for this area?

Comment: The community has already decided that a mixed residential future land use designation is more appropriate for this area to provide homeownership opportunities.

Q. Okay, you want to increase homeownership, but what about increasing the number of jobs for the area?

Comment: North Lamar Boulevard is designated as a job center for the area. We designated mixed-use for the roadway to include businesses that will provide and retain jobs in the area. It is also a way to get residential units here, too.

Q. So, what types of businesses do you see going onto this vacant lot, then?

A. I'm not sure.

Comment: Businesses have already tried to locate here, but their plans have never come to fruition.

Comment: This could really be a community changer if an employment center was located here.  
Comment: But, we can't regulate what type of commercial establishments will locate here if we decide to change its designation. We may want one thing, but another may be built.

Q. The reason we chose mixed residential future land use for these properties was the prospect of getting some parkland when they are developed. If we accept the infill options, do we still get the same percentage of parks or open space provided under the mixed residential designation?

A. There is some confusion between the mixed residential land use and the residential infill options. With the infill options, the developer will incur a parkland dedication fee, but what that fee is, I'm unsure of at the moment. It has to do with subdivision regulations, but I don't know what those are off the top of my head. We will do some research on this and relay the information to you next time.

Q. If we vote for the cottage home and urban home, you said that it's probable that only one will get built, correct?

A. Correct, it's likely that only one option will be built so the developer can maximize his profits (minimize his costs).

Q. So, why don't we only vote for one option?

A. That decision is up to you guys.

Q. What amount of open space is required with the infill options?

A. Again, we don't know, but we will definitely look into this and get back to you.

A second motion was made to vote on adopting the infill options. Because more information was needed regarding parkland and/or open space requirements, no vote was taken. The vote will be held at the September meeting once staff finds the information regarding these requirements.

### Mixed-Use Options

Mark then presented the mixed-use options available to apply to those properties with a mixed-use future land use designation. Certain guidelines and restrictions are related to the mixed-use options; they can be found in either the presentation or handout on the NLCNPA website. Again, questions were asked during the presentation; they can be found below with their answers:

Q. Why make a distinction between mixed-uses for our purposes?

A. Each "type" of mixed-use mandates a different type of development. We are giving you all the options for you to decide which one captures your vision for the neighborhood.

Q. Once we apply a mixed-use option to North Lamar Boulevard, will this option force currently-operating businesses to move out of the area? Will they be grandfathered in?

A. Currently-operating businesses will not be affected by the zoning changes to allow mixed-use. They will be allowed to continue their business as is. Only if a property is (re)developed, then the new design standards and regulations would apply.

Comment: I would like to see more high-end retail instead of industrial-type businesses, especially along North Lamar Boulevard, at the southern portion of the NLCNPA. Small-scale specialty shops, restaurants, and cafes are desired along North Lamar Boulevard.

Comment: Mixed-use is the antithesis of strip malls.

Q. Can we have a variety of mixed-use options on one property? For example, can the Crockett Center be a neighborhood urban center and have VMU, too?

A. Yes, a property can have several mixed-use options applied to it.

Discussion moved to the roadway designation of North Lamar Boulevard and related commercial design guidelines. We discussed changing its designation to a “core transit corridor” so to apply stricter design guidelines to new commercial development along the roadway. The guidelines monitor: sidewalk width, including the placement of street trees and furniture; building placement on the property; and, off-street parking.

Q. Is there a drawback to changing the status of North Lamar Boulevard to a “core transit corridor”?

A. No, there is no drawback, unless it’s a matter of taste--if you don’t like pedestrian-friendly development.

Q. If a commercial building is put up close to the street (as is regulated by the design guidelines for a core transit corridor), where are the loading docks located?

A. The loading docks are at the rear of the building just as they usually are. They are located in the rear in addition to the parking for the development.

Q. I guess I was talking about larger retailers like Target.

A. Along North Lamar, there should not be any large retailers building here to worry about the placement of loading docks and parking. It does happen, though, in larger, denser cities like New York. North Lamar should have more modest retailers with smaller storefronts in new mixed-use developments.

A motion was made to vote on changing the designation of North Lamar Boulevard to a core transit corridor. Consensus was reached to change its status.

Comment: We should promote family values in future development in the neighborhood. It’s important to keep families in mind when thinking about the future.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:20 p.m.