



City of Austin
Downtown Commission
Meeting Minutes - Wednesday, April 18, 2007
Board & Commission Room (Room 1101)
City Hall
301 W. 2nd Street

OFFICERS:

J. E. "Jeb" Boyt - Chair
Stan Haas - Vice Chair
Ernestine (Tina) Balderrama Kubicek, Ph.D. - Secretary

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bryan Cady, Theresa Ferguson, Tim Finley, Carl Huntley, Robert Knight, Tina Balderrama Kubicek, Daniel Leary, Perry Lorenz, Chris Riley, Beth Ann Sprengel, Bruce Willenzik.

CITY STAFF: MICHAEL Knox

MEMBERS ABSENT: Patric Goetz, Bob Woody.

1. Chairman Jeb Boyt called the meeting to order at 5:41 PM. Introductions were bypassed and the meeting went directly to approval of minutes.

2. Handicap Parking Downtown

Presentation was made by Bruce Elfant, Travis County Constable, Precinct 5. Bruce knows that handicap parking is being abused. When he spoke with his peers, they said "Cops can write tickets." Volunteers were authorized to write tickets too. A survey showed 20% of parking people had placards and 50% were being misused. Employees who work downtown are abusing these. 35% of people are parked legitimately.

Volunteers wrote about 250 tickets for misused placards. People use a relative's placard or buy one on ebay. There are 6 criminal cases pending for misuse of placards. The Legislature is being asked to do a study. The American with Disabilities Act was passed years ago to help handicapped people and now with this abuse, there is a need to study how the placards are being used. Also, who should be able to issue these cards?" Some doctors issue to their patients. The question is "Who should be issued placard and are they issued for the right reason? How much parking should be available? One size fits all is the law that the state has passed. This is not working. Too many areas do not need that many spaces.

Discussion and Possible Action on Recommendation

A conversation has to occur between the Downtown Commission and the City of Austin.
Beth Ann Sprengel– Bring up to the Downtown Master Plan consultant and go to City Council.

3. Citizen Communications

None.

4. Proposed Revisions to Parkland Dedication Ordinance

Ricardo Soliz made an update, PARD

Tim Finley recused and sat in the audience.

Park has received approximately 10 million and 8 million has been spent. Where the funds are collected the money is spent within that one-mile radius.

Beth – If more money needed for downtown, is there any?

Robert how many acres of parkland do we have within a mile of the perimeter of downtown?
Now that more are moving downtown we need to trim out more on what is right.

Theresa - Affordable downtown should not be excluded from this. Need to present to parks that this could help. Downtown should not be excluded from this.

Robert – Spend it wisely.

Perry – Take more money from general fund and allocate for parks. Allocating seems the way to do it.

Ricardo - Close gap of development and redevelopment

Discussion and Possible Action on Recommendation

Development plan

Charlie Betts – DAA

\$650 flat fee is in excess of 30% increase over what the parks fee is now on an average size of a home. He questions the need to increase by over 30% and consumer price index. Do not need to add another fee. Every time you increase through the Pass fees that basically work in cross-purposes. This is another fee that works against affordability. If you do it through the general fund everybody contributes.

Teresa – Take staff and other commissions and other recommendations say \$750 per unit.
Motion was to accept the design commission recommendations.

Bryan wanted a definition of reduction.

Perry Lorenz seconded.

Beth Ann Sprengel – Cannot support motion. If it is a per unit fee it is a tax passed on to a consumer and will hurt affordability.

Stephanie Webb – private citizen comment – families would not be as apt to move in condominium units. Promoting plazas would be positive.

Bryan Cady - HCC position is similar to Beth. More in line with proposal with DAA.

Roger Couvin – Would recommend to reject the flat fee. This penalizes density.

Jeb – For Downtown it would be scaled according to project meeting benchmarks for affordability of medium family income. Amend the amendment for fee to be paid when it is completed.

Fee paid at end of process. Affordability benchmarks base on percentage of NFI.

New motion:

The downtown fee be scaled and that the fee be assessed on square footage.

Beth - No indexing as amendment.

Carl Huntley seconded.

Oppose indexing fee 7 to 1 and remove indexing.

Vote was on the motion as a whole.

Teresa – favor of motion.

Commissioners voted and motion passed.

5. Waller Creek Whitewater Trail

Presentation by Jim Stuart

Passed out reference materials. PowerPoint on what it is and what it could be.

Current design is already good. From Waterloo Park to Town Lake a Whitewater Trail would be good for Austin. PowerPoint showed various water areas in US and Spain showing what has been done to make waterways successful. Dallas has one in planning. Houston, Phoenix and Spokane are planning one. People will come to see and hear the rush of rushing water.

Demonstrate Austin's environmental commitment. Good for tourism. Jim has done this kind of thing all his life.

6. Downtown Development Committee — Capitol View Corridor Report

Submit a question to legal. Need discussion and Public comment. List each Commissioner who has a conflict and has some property downtown. Wooldridge Park and Mueller park corridor. People can submit written comments to Michael by May 4th.

Mary Guerrero McDonald spoke and said her sister, Lens Guerrero (former Legislator) was the author. She respected the view corridor. Will review the report because she has property in the corridor. UT also has a property in that corridor. May be view #1. It is the South Mall of UT. DC has recommended no change for it. In fact DC has recommended no change for 19 of 30 view corridors.

7. Committee Reports

- Arts & Culture
- Bond Election
- Creek & Parks
- Cleanliness
- Membership
- Pfluger Bridge Extension Project
- Transportation

8. Items from Commission Members

Bruce – Arts Commission meeting - Jude made a presentation on projection for lofts and will bring recommendation to their next meeting. Have a downtown plan.

Jeb - Downtown has consultants who are hired and working on the plan. They have requested a joint meeting and details will be worked out.

9. Items from Staff

We will have a meeting on the Downtown Austin Plan process & status and it will be a joint meeting. We will meet on May 16 with Planning and Design Commission members

Downtown Commission meeting adjourned at 7:58 PM