

Late Backup



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October 18, 2012

Mayor Lee Leffingwell
And
City Council Members
City of Austin
301 W Second Street
Austin, Texas 78701

RE: 1700 ½ Frontier Valley Drive
NPA-2012-0005.1
C14-2012-0067

Dear Mayor and City Council Members:

We began this process as any development would begin in the City of Austin. After our internal due diligence, we met with staff from the City of Austin Planning and Development Review Department to determine the feasibility of the Project and the applicable ordinances and requirements.

As outlined in the City's process, we initiated the public process by scheduling a meeting with the Montopolis Neighborhood Plan Contact Team (MNPCT). On May 21, 2012, we met with members of the MNPCT Executive Committee to introduce the project, receive input from the committee and to request an out-of-cycle submittal. The executive committee provided input and positive response, but requested that we return to the MNPCT to meet with the entire contact team. That meeting occurred on June 14, 2012. The MNPCT voted to approve the out-of-cycle submittal and provided support for the Neighborhood Plan Amendment (NPA) request and the Zoning change request. Following the June 14, 2012 meeting, we prepared our application to the City of Austin, and submitted the application on June 25, 2012.

Per the City of Austin Neighborhood Plan process, public notice was mailed to invite interested persons to attend a public meeting on our application for July 30, 2012. This meeting was sponsored by and lead by Neighborhood Planning staff members, Maureen Meredith and Jason Golbabai. On the same night and following this meeting, a meeting of the MNPCT was held, and the MNPCT again voted in support of the NPA and the zoning change requests.

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For the next three weeks we received input from city staff and neighboring residents. We incorporated many of the suggestions and requests into our plan. A number of residents in opposition to our Project requested a meeting. We met with opposing neighbors on August 24, 2012, where there was discussion on connectivity, street parking, and how our plan fit into the neighborhood.

On August 28, 2012, staff provided a positive recommendation to the Planning Commission. Opposing residents requested a 30-day postponement, and received a 14-day postponement. During that postponement period, city staff, residents, and our team met on September 4, 2012 to discuss the project. Additional input was provided and we made a couple of modifications to our plan.

Zoning and Neighborhood Planning staff provided their recommendation on September 7, 2012, prior to presentation the Planning Commission meeting on September 11, 2012. Prior to the Planning Commission meeting, we met with a few Planning Commission members to discuss the project and receive input. After presentations from staff, our team, and supporting and opposing residents, and general discussion by Planning Commission members, the Planning Commission support our Project by a 6 – 1 – 1 vote. We were scheduled for discussion and action by City Council for the September 24, 2012 city council meeting

Based upon input received from all, we chose to modify our request, and because of the modification request, we requested a postponement at the September 27, 2012 City Council meeting. We voluntarily met again with interested residents on October 4, 2012. At that meeting, we again received support from the MNPCT. Again, we voluntarily chose to present our modifications to the Planning Commission on October 9, 2012. The residents in opposition again requested a postponement. Planning Commission denied the request for postponement and provided support for our Project with a 9 – 0 vote.

Our case has already been delayed at least twice as a result of our client wishing to continue working with the residents in opposition, and our offer to voluntarily return to the MNPCT and Planning Commission. Our voluntary action was in an effort to provide City Council with a comfort level that all parties were able to review, comment, and act on our modifications.

In addition, we did not shortcut or expedite the process to allow more buffer time for potential postponement requests, such as today's request. City Council understood our deadlines of October 18, 2012 and voted in support to schedule our case for October 11, 2012. That support would have provided us a one additional week to address any questions, comments, or concern from City Council or to allow for a postponement by the residents in opposition. However, due to notification issues, City Council was not able to hear our case or take action on our Project October 11, 2012.



This brings us to today. We have met with supporting and opposing residents, representatives of adjoining properties, zoning staff, neighborhood planning staff, long-term planning staff, planning commissioners, and city council offices. We have incorporated many of the ideas and suggestions into our plan. We have explained why we did not incorporate certain ideas and suggestions into our plan. Our Project has changed no less than 10 times because of community involvement. We have made as many changes as we can, subject to project and market feasibility. The residents in opposition are again requesting a postponement.

We feel that the plan presented to you today is the best plan for the nearby residents, the Montopolis community, the City of Austin, and our Client. We respectfully ask for your support on our Project, which will provide 252 workforce/affordable housing units and provide an approval to the NPA and the Zoning requests.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Amelia Lopez
Principal