

From: austinchip@hotmail.com
To: steve.sadowsky@austintexas.gov
Subject: 1501 Richcreek Road questions
Date: Thu, 17 Oct 2013 00:14:45 -0500

Steve,

Thank you for being so helpful. I had a few questions about the case at 1501 Richcreek Road: HDP-2013-0528.

The easy stuff first. I understand that, because the case is listed on the agenda, anyone wishing to speak at the October 28th meeting when it comes up on the agenda will have three minutes, with the exception of the lead speaker, who has five minutes. In addition, no one may donate their time to another speaker, whether they are present or not. Please correct me if I am wrong on this or if there are other rules that I should be aware of.

As you explained to me, the Historic Landmark Commission has not "initiated" a zoning case on this parcel to have it designated a historic landmark; they are simply reviewing it as a result of the demolition permit application filed by the owner. And, if the HLC doesn't vote to recommend historic zoning, then the demolition application will be released and the owner will be free to demolish or relocate the property. If the HLC votes to recommend historic zoning, where do things stand?

Is it then considered an "active" zoning case? And what is the process from that point forward?

What happens if the demolition permit applicant withdraws her application for a demolition permit?

If the HLC recommends historic zoning and the case moves forward to the Planning Commission, can the demolition permit application be withdrawn at any later time prior to being approved by the City Council, with the result of cancelling or nullifying the zoning case?

Much of the information that we will be supplying to the commission is from the website <http://savemckownhouse.wordpress.com/>.

The website includes numerous pages on the history of the house as well as the original owners, along with many pages of testimonials written by current or previous residents of the neighborhood or surrounding community. Additionally, separate from the website, there is an online petition site that contains many more comments of a testimonial nature. And then, we have a collection of pictures and newspaper articles. We plan to deliver all of this documentation to your office by Tuesday, October 22, 2013 unless you

notify us that you need it sooner in order to be included in the commissioners' packets. Will the commissioners receive copies of all this material in their backup packet?

Thank you again for your time and assistance,

Chip Harris
512-458-2488

Steve,

I would like you to read the email from a Crestview Resident about the "Crestview Neighborhood Planning Contact Team" . (Read below)

As you can see by item # 2 on the agenda. The neighborhood's motivation for making 1501 Richcreek "Historic" is for the sole purpose of preventing development. (in black and white) What worries me about this group is that they will elect officers to represent a small faction of the neighborhood to this neighborhood group. .

Thank you,
Lori

FYI – note second item on agenda tonight:

HI All -

The Crestview Neighborhood Planning Contact Team (CNPCT) is the officially recognized neighborhood entity that the City of Austin looks to for input on any development issues that affect our area. Currently, the Executive Committee of the CNPCT is completely vacant - meaning no one has volunteered to help the city assist the residents of Crestview in making sure that any developer plans are scrutinized prior to approval.

The CNPCT is holding a meeting TONITE at 6:30PM at the Crestview Methodist church - corner of Grover and Morrow - in the southeast parking lot.

2 big issues will be on the agenda:

- 1) Electing CNPCT officers - 3 seats (Facilitator, Vice-Facilitator, and Secretary)
- 2) General discussion of the request to make the McKown house at 1501 Richcreek a historic landmark
and thus prevent development on the property.

The CNPCT can't function unless there are 12 residents of Crestview present to hold a vote, so please come participate in the election process!

Cheers,
Matt

October 18, 2013
Planning and Development Review Department
Historic Landmark Commission
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088
Attn: Steve.Sadowsky@austintexas.gov
Re: Application for Demolition Permit - 1501 Richcreek Road, Austin

Dear Commission Members:

I have been a resident of Crestview for more than ten years, and am quite fond of the neighborhood as a place and as a community. I have enjoyed observing the evolution of Crestview and participating in its transformation over the past decade. I do not object to the approval of the demolition permit, but I do have a couple of observations.

While I'm no expert on these matters, I believe the issue presented by the house at 1501 Richcreek might be described best as the difference between the objective historical value of a structure and the subjective sentimental value that one may attach to a residence. Those who have lived in this neighborhood longer than I no doubt remember when 1501 Richcreek was occupied by the original owners, and indeed I remember more recent times when it was a lovely, well-kept property. Sadly, it is no longer. A structure does not attain historical value simply with the passage of time. There has to be more to the designation of historical significance than age alone.

It seems to me that a great deal of the concern about the demolition permit could be caused by a fear of the unknown. If the demolition permit is granted, what might appear on the site a year from now? How would the new structure(s) "fit" in the neighborhood? Zoning laws can help to answer that question, but only to a limited degree. While the Historical Landmark Commission is likely not the proper venue for addressing future use, the new property owner could make her plans for the property known to the neighborhood. Those plans could be disclosed and detailed with some specificity and perhaps assuage fears that the replacement would denigrate the property, its past, and the neighborhood. It is difficult for concerned neighbors to be mollified only with oral assurances such as "don't worry, I've done this before."

Very truly yours,
Jacqueline Rixen
1703 Cullen Avenue,
Austin, TX 78757