

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
Austin, Texas

Special Meeting -- September 26, 1972

The meeting of the Commission was called to order at 2:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Municipal Building.

Present

Buford Stewart, Vice-Chairman
Sonia Ashworth
David Barrow, Jr.
Charles Betts
Bob Bobbitt
C. W. Hetherly
Jean Mather

Absent

Royce Faulkner
William Milstead

Also Present

Jack Alexander, Assistant Director of Planning
Caroline Schreffler, Administrative Secretary

C5-72-4 Neighborhood Development Program (NDP)
St. John's Area

Dr. Reynell Parkins presented the following information. St. Johns is a community of approximately 250 acres in Northeast Austin. The present population numbers about 1300 persons, most of whom are black. All of the streets within the area are unpaved with the exception of St. Johns Avenue, and the portions of the community adjacent to Buttermilk Creek are subject to flooding. A recent survey indicated that 7% of the homes in the area are in sound condition; 46% are in need of minor repairs; 30% are in need of major repairs; and 17% are dilapidated. Approximately half the land in the area is presently undeveloped.

The St. Johns Neighborhood Development Program was developed through the joint efforts of the residents of St. Johns, students in the Graduate Program of Community and Regional Planning, the Community Development Corporation of Austin, and the Urban Renewal Agency. The boundaries of the project area, as approved by the City Council on May 18, 1972, are Atkinson Road, Interstate 35, U. S. Highway 183, and the property line one-half block east of Blessing Avenue.

The objectives of the land use plan are to preserve the quiet residential character of the St. Johns area; to develop a centrally-located park facility; to eliminate the flooding problem along Buttermilk Creek; and to provide a small neighborhood shopping center. The Land Use Districts provided in the plan are as follows:

R-1 Low-Density Residential. The interior of the community will be maintained as a predominantly single-family residential district. The construction of duplexes and townhouses will also be permitted in this area, which should be zoned "A" Residence for this purpose.

C5-72-4 Neighborhood Development Program--Contd.

R-2 Low to Medium-Density Residential. Where residential and commercial uses adjoin, it is felt that a buffer is needed between the low-intensity residential core of the community and the higher-intensity commercial areas. Accordingly, the construction of three-plexes and four-plexes (as well as the uses permitted in the R-1 District) will be allowed along the northern, southern, and western edges of the residential community, which should be zoned "BB" Residence.

P-1 Parks. The site selected for the park is an area which is generally free of structures and which already serves as an informal play area for children of the community. The park will be augmented by a hike and bike trail along the flood plain of Buttermilk Creek.

P-2 Public Buildings. This district includes the St. Johns School and the site of the proposed U. S. Post Office.

B-1 Local Retail. The residents of St. Johns, many of whom do not have access to an automobile, are in need of a conveniently-located neighborhood shopping center. At present the nearest shopping facilities are located on Cameron Road and west of Interstate 35. The designated local retail site will serve both the St. Johns area and the adjoining Grand Canyon Drive subdivision on the east. Its location on St. Johns Avenue will insure a minimal traffic hazard. This shopping center should be zoned "LR" Local Retail, with uses restricted to those which will best serve the needs of the community.

B-2 General Retail. The frontage along U. S. Highway 183 is not suitable for residential purposes because of its proximity to the highway. The uses permitted in zoning classification "GR" General Retail, would be compatible with the adjoining residential area and would provide a buffer between it and the highway.

B-3 Commercial. The frontage along Interstate 35 should be zoned "C" Commercial in accordance with present usage.

The intent of the proposed thoroughfare plan is to confine most of the through traffic to the periphery of the community. St. Johns Avenue will continue to serve as a secondary arterial in accordance with the Austin Thoroughfare Plan. Bennett and Blessing Avenues will be extended up to but not across the median of U. S. Highway 183, and all other interior streets will be blocked at some point in order to discourage non-local traffic.

Dr. Parkins noted that the residents of this area have participated in this plan; it is felt that the proposal will be beneficial to the St. Johns area and the City. Several area residents were present and spoke in favor of the proposed plan.

Mr. Nat Ricker reported that he owns a lot at the corner of St. Johns Avenue and Bennett Avenue, which he plans to develop as an auto repair shop. A zoning application is presently being processed on this tract; Mr. Ricker requested that it be omitted from the plan under consideration. A petition was presented bearing forty-five signatures in favor of this request.

C5-72-4 Neighborhood Development Program--Contd.

The members reviewed and discussed the information. Mr. Paul Jones, attorney, stated that legally the one lot cannot be omitted from the plan. It was noted that the land use plan could be changed at a later date to include this use at this location. The members also noted that commercial use adjoins this tract to the rear, and there are single-family homes across the street.

Mr. Leon Lurie represented the Urban Renewal Agency; he expressed general agreement with the plan as presented. He pointed out that a basic asset of the Neighborhood Development Program is the yearly re-evaluation, where problems will be brought before the residents for consideration. The City Council is the final authority in approving the adoption of this plan, and will conduct a public hearing before reaching a decision.

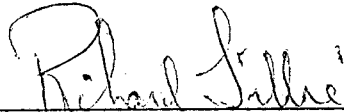
The members of the Planning Commission commended Dr. Parkins for his work on this plan; it is felt that this plan will be an asset to the St. Johns area and to the City of Austin. The members then

VOTED: To recommend the St. Johns Neighborhood Development Plan to the City Council as conforming to the general plan of development of the City, and authorized the Vice-Chairman to sign the necessary resolution upon completion.

AYE: Messrs. Stewart, Barrow, Betts, Bobbitt and Hetherly. Mmes Ashworth and Mather

ABSENT: Messrs. Faulkner and Milstead

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.


Richard Lillie
Executive Secretary

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Austin has submitted to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation the St. John's Neighborhood Development Plan in accordance with the Urban Renewal Law, Article 1269L-3, V.T.C.S.; and,

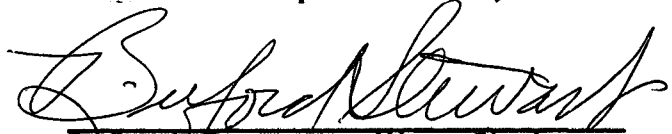
WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has, at its special meeting of September 26, 1972, reviewed the Plan with a view toward making a recommendation to the City Council, thereon; and,

WHEREAS, upon such review, the Planning Commission finds that, as submitted to it, the St. John's Neighborhood Development Plan is in conformity with the general plan for the development of the City as a whole and with the Master Plan of the City of Austin; Now, Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

That the St. John's Neighborhood Development Plan be recommended to the City Council as conforming to the general plan of development of the City, and that an executed copy of this resolution be filed with the City Clerk.

ADOPTED: September 26, 1972


Buford Stewart, Vice-Chairman

ATTEST


Executive Secretary