

A U S T I N C I T Y C O U N C I L

AGENDA



Thursday, May 25, 2006

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#15

Neighborhood Planning & Zoning RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Subject: Approve an ordinance amending Section 2-1-513, Article 51 of the City Code to continue the existence of the Zoning and Platting Commission until June 18, 2010.

Additional Backup Material

(click to open)

 Comments on RCA

For More Information: Jerry Rusthoven, 974-3207; Sylvia Arzola, 974-6448

Section 2-1-513, Article 51 of the City Code abolishes the Zoning and Platting Commission (ZAP) on June 18, 2006 unless the City Council approves an ordinance to continue its existence. The ZAP was created to allow the Planning Commission to focus on neighborhood planning and other long range planning issues. Staff recommends continuing the ZAP at least until 2010, at which time the neighborhood plans for the urban core are projected to be completed.



M E M O R A N D U M

To: Mayor and Council

From: Greg Guernsey, Director
Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Dept.

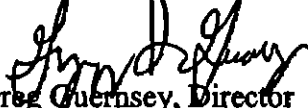
Date: May 16, 2006

Subject: Continuation of the Zoning and Platting Commission
Item on the May 25, 2006 Council Agenda

On June 18, 2001 the City Council approved ordinance number 010607-8 which created the Zoning and Platting Commission (ZAP) and allocated duties between it and the Planning Commission. A portion of the ordinance is codified in Section 2-1-513 of the Austin City Code which is a sunset provision that abolishes the ZAP on June 18, 2006 unless it is continued in existence by ordinance. On the May 25, 2006 City Council agenda staff will be posting an item recommending the extension of the Zoning and Platting Commission until 2010, when it is projected that neighborhood plans for the urban core will be completed.

The sunset provision also provides that the staff and ZAP shall report to the Council on the effectiveness of the Commission. The Zoning and Platting Commission was created to allow the Planning Commission time to focus on neighborhood plans and amendments to those plans, code amendments, CIPs and other longer term planning issues assigned to them by the Charter. The ZAP has been effective in redistributing the workload. Staff recommends that the ZAP be maintained at least until the entire urban core has adopted neighborhood plans. Therefore the staff recommends that the Council approve an ordinance to continue the Zoning and Platting Commission until 2010 with another provision for possible extension at that time if the Council so desires.

Attached is a letter from the Chair of the Zoning and Platting Commission.


Greg Guernsey, Director
JR

cc: Members of the Zoning and Platting Commission & Planning Commission
Toby Futrell, CMO
Laura Huffman, ACOMO
Candy Parham, OCC
Victoria Hsu, WPDR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Will Wynn and Council Members
FROM: Betty Baker, Chair, Zoning and Platting Commission
DATE: May 18, 2006
SUBJECT: Consolidation of Planning and Zoning and Platting Commissions

It has been my privilege to serve both on the Planning and Zoning & Platting Commission after they were separated. It goes without saying that the time required for land-use issues as they proceed through the bureaucratic pathway is immeasurable and costly. With the duties shared between the two commissions, certainly the timeframe is substantially reduced, and for development, time is of utmost importance.

The advantage of two commissions also provides an opportunity for each to concentrate on specific issues such as neighborhood plans and downtown development. Given the workload of staff and the agendas for each commission, if there were only one commission to address land-use, it is my opinion a meeting would certainly be required weekly, if not more frequently. Even if one commission could address the workload in a meeting each week would be necessary and practical to form committees for special issues, which would required more than one meeting weekly for some commissioners.

As a former staff member, Planning Commissioner, Zoning and Platting Commissioner, I would respectfully suggest that the City Council favorably consider extending the current arrangement for minimally five (5) years. A review might be appropriate after three (3) years.

Thanks for the opportunity to serve Austin, and if you have any questions or need additional information from me, my office number is 583-7226; and by my e-mail is: bbaker@austintexas.org or bbaker5@austin.rr.com.


Betty Baker, Chair
Zoning and Platting Commission