ORDINANCE NO. 20100805-028

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CITY CODE SECTION 14-11-73 TO REQUIRE ALLEY VACATIONS TO BE REVIEWED BY THE DESIGN COMMISSION AND DOWNTOWN COMMISSION.

PART 1. The city council finds that:

(A) Alleys are important public spaces that serve to enhance downtown connectivity.

(B) Many cities are reclaiming their alleys and utilizing them for housing, recreational opportunities, pedestrian and biking connections, enhanced water quality, greenways, and redevelopment opportunities that contribute to thriving pedestrian centers.

(C) The City of Austin Downtown Design Guidelines state, in reference to the *Plan of the City of Austin* conceived in 1839 by Edwin Waller, "It is important to preserve and honor the heritage of this original plan and discourage the creation of super blocks which close streets in the Waller Grid."

(D) The draft Downtown Plan recognizes the importance of downtown alleys and recommends that they be preserved and enhanced.

(E) Alleys in Austin have been the focus of Austin's Alley Flats Initiative, a collaboration between The University of Texas Center for Sustainable Design, the Guadalupe Neighborhood Development Corporation and the Austin Community Design and Development Center, which encourages new, sustainable alley housing as a way to mitigate sprawl and expand the inventory of affordable housing options.

(F) The significance of downtown alleys warrants review of alley vacations by the Design and Downtown Commissions.

PART 2. Subsection (A) of City Code Section 14-11-73 (*Review by Commissions*) is amended to read:

(A) If the director of the Public Works Department determines that the right-of-way serves no present or future public purpose, the director shall forward the application to:

(1) the Urban Transportation Commission and the Planning Commission for review and recommendation; and[.]

(2) for an application to vacate an alley in the downtown area, the Downtown Commission and the Design Commission, in addition to the commissions required under Paragraph (A)(1).

PART 3. This ordinance takes effect on August 16, 2010.

PASSED AND APPROVED

§
§
August 5, 2010 §

Lee Leffingwell
Mayor

APPROVED:

Karen M. Kennard
Acting City Attorney

ATTEST:

Shirley A. Gentry
City Clerk