

February 15, 2018

To  
City Mayor  
City of Austin Council  
Zoning and Planning Commission

Subject: Do Not Oppose Plan Amendment Zoning Case: C14-20170097  
File Number: NPA-2017-0015.03  
Project Name: Jackie Robinson Residential

Dear Mayor, City Council Members, Planning Commissioners, COA Employees,

**We are not opposing the change to the zoning and Neighborhood Plan for this proposed development, but ask for the actions as listed below from City Council.** Although we understand that vacant property in our neighborhood will be developed and although we support the continued development of Austin, as long as it is thoughtfully done to ensure the future needs of citizens, we would like this opportunity to point out that the traffic study done for this project has graphically proven and illustrated our very valid concern about traffic AND the lack of foresight and infrastructure development in the neighborhood. We believe that infrastructure should be done first, but are willing not to oppose the development, knowing we are asking City Council for what can be accomplished today.

We are asking City Council to help create a solution for these infrastructure issues. In addition, we have worked with the developer's agent (Jim Wittliff) to create an agreement between the developer and the Hog Pen NA for the benefit of the neighborhood and wish to list those agreements in this letter.

Before listing the specific actions that we will ask of City Council, we would like to fully explain the traffic issue that we have identified.

The NTA done for this development shows an average of 1406 trips down Delano St every day. This is high considering that Delano is a strictly residential street, 30 feet in width, with many parked cars, especially at night. The high traffic on Delano is the result of several things: the City Maintenance Facility trucks use the street to commute into central Austin; a long term neglect of infrastructure development on the east side of Austin; flawed street design in the 1980's creating Delano St very long; and most importantly, a lack of arterial streets that had been planned, but not built. Streets that are shown on the FLUM do not exist and are not even secured rights-of-way. Because the area is now experiencing intense development, these problems converged. The slide show we will present shows the problem very clearly.

We can see that rapid development will continue to happen in our corner of Austin. We believe this development and other new construction in the neighborhood will lead to traffic on Delano St to be over the acceptable level of 1800 trips per day.

We understand that a second traffic analysis was done showing that using the development specifications as proposed by the developer would not create traffic over acceptable levels. However, the study does not take into account that 13 additional duplexes are under construction in the neighborhood right now, and the folks moving into these dwellings will be using Delano St (and its extension Ft Branch Blvd) for all their driving. Adding 26 additional dwellings to the neighborhood means an additional 247 trips per day. 1406 trips (trips counted

in October of 2017) plus the 269 trips from the 62 units of the development plus the 247 trips from new construction is a total of 1922 trips, which is unacceptable.

Please see the studies prepared by traffic analyst Mehrnaz Mehraein of the Development Services Department. Please also see the list of current construction or soon to be available dwelling units that will be using Delano St. at the end of this letter.

Thirty or more neighbors within 500 feet of the project have sent in comment forms requesting that the zoning and NP not be changed. Each one cites traffic as their main concern. One neighbor explained to me that his mirror on his parked truck (on Delano) had been clipped twice in the last 2 months, each time requiring costly repairs.

**We ask that City Council order a higher level traffic study and order that possible solutions be analyzed and brought before Council for consideration. The purpose of this would be to enact an ordinance that would require some additional street right-of-way acquisition and construction as shown on the present FLUM (or equivalent transportation corridors) to alleviate the over-capacity traffic pressure on one narrow residential street that serves the entire area.**

We have identified two possible solutions. The first one, because it would have the most impact, is a completion of Tannehill Lane, curving through a corner of the recently sold AISD property, through a tiny bit of the International Cemetery, then on through to Hudson Street. This solution completes the needed arterial street that would serve our area.

The second possibility is a bridge over Fort Branch Creek using existing right-of-way. (This is at the dead end of Fort Branch Blvd.) This bridge would create a delta effect for the traffic coming down Hudson, helping relieve the pressure on Delano St. The added benefit is that this is one of the possible solutions being studied for La Loma Trail. Locations for La Loma Trail are being studied as walking/biking trails, but consolidating the spending is worth considering.

**We ask that City Council inquire about and advocate for a 4-way stop sign at the intersection of Hudson St. and Delano St.** So far, the City Transportation Engineering Department through Citizen Service Requests (311) has not approved this basic safety improvement after numerous requests.

**We ask that City Council pass an ordinance prohibiting City of Austin maintenance trucks to travel along Delano St.** In particular, we would like to specify pick-up size trucks and those trucks towing trailers, since these are the problem vehicles from the City. Because of past citizen's requests, the facility has asked its drivers not to travel on Delano, but a request only lasts for a season or two, then drivers are back to what is most convenient.

**We ask that City Council add the following 3 items as a conditional overlay to the development:** 1) Keep 95% of trees over 12" in diameter 2) Build three detention ponds to contain 110% of the pre-development run off 3) Establish a cap of 62 condo units for the project (Jim Wittliff has agreed to these conditions.)

**Please see future requests for the City of Austin on page 4.**

**We affirm that an agreement has been made with the developer and the Neighborhood Association.** \$40,000 will be spent on neighborhood improvements, part of which will be City required off-site sidewalks.

Some of that \$40,000 will be spent by the developer on City required sidewalks outside of the subject property. (This is not part of the spending on sidewalks on the subject property.) The developer estimates that less than \$40,000 will be used for those required sidewalks. Any of the \$40,000 un-spent on sidewalks is to be spent in the neighborhood, at the discretion of both the Hog Pen Neighborhood Association and the Developer. The developer will create an escrow account to deposit this money, as necessary, after sidewalks are complete and an exact amount is determined. This amount (after constructing off-property required sidewalks) would not be part of the City's oversight. The City, of course, would have oversight of required sidewalks.

The money would be spent when the selected neighborhood project is chosen. Here are two examples of the possibilities for this money: contribution toward a connection from the neighborhood to Sprindale Park, or contribution to the master plan for Red Bluff Nature Preserve. (Jim Wittliff has agreed and sees the positive benefits of projects such as those mentioned.)

Lacking a plan to address the traffic over-capacity issue in the neighborhood, this development would be a detriment to the following East MLK Combined Neighborhood Plan Goals:

- # 4 Promote the development and enhancement of the neighborhood's major corridors.
- # 7 Create a transportation network that allows all residents to travel safely throughout the neighborhood by improving safety on major arterials and neighborhood streets.

However, we believe that if the above actions are taken by City Council, that the development would be in alignment with the following East MLK Combined Neighborhood Plan Goals:

- # 2 Promote a mix of land uses that respect and enhance the existing neighborhood and address compatibility between residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
- # 9 Improve bicycle and pedestrian traffic safety on neighborhood streets.
- # 11 Protect and enhance the neighborhood ... by reducing ... dumping in this neighborhood.
- # 12 Improve the quality, safety, and cleanliness of area creeks, and reduce the impact of flooding in the neighborhood.

### **To summarize our position:**

The City of Austin has responsibility for Infrastructure needs, and we ask that the City take all measures necessary to make up for prior neglect, and move forward on creating a safe and viable neighborhood by taking all actions as shown above.

We believe the developer has created a forward thinking agreement with the neighborhood. Although we see the huge piles of illegal fill on the property as a very significant problem, the developer has expressed that that issue will be dealt with in an engineered and responsible way.

We are gratified that pedestrian safety needs in this high-traffic neighborhood are now being addressed using Capital Improvement Funds for needed sidewalks. This is a very positive step, although it does not address the actual traffic issues.

**Future requests:** In addition to our recommendation for the development being considered today, we would like to express that these same concerns will continue as other zoning and NP

change requests are made. We ask officials for awareness of traffic issues as a whole in the neighborhood as future zoning changes are requested. Considering the compact development encouraged by CodeNext, considering future zoning change requests in the pipeline (The Aviary and Interlocal), considering the recent \$15 million sale of a property in the neighborhood to be developed, and considering the rapid dense development happening in our area already; we must all be aware that infrastructure needs are on-going and ever more urgent as time goes by. Infrastructure needs must be considered before development.

**We are asking the City to be ready to enact an ordinance requiring a road or roads so we have planned ahead when the next development is ready for consideration.** We ask that this ordinance require future zoning change and NP change requests in this area to contribute to the needed street infrastructure.

**We also ask that City Council direct the Development Services Department to assess Delano St. as a whole when new developments are considered and traffic studies are created.** In other words, measuring traffic on Delano at its outflow area (close to Webberville Rd.), not near the traffic origination, in order to assess the bigger picture rather than a smaller area that misses the larger context. We also ask that the Department take into account other current development and consider likely future development when conducting traffic studies.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,  
Ali Ronder for the:  
Hog Pen Neighborhood Association  
And the East MLK Combined Contact Team

### **Construction in the neighborhood right now.**

Current construction of single family duplexes that must use Delano St (and it's extension, Fort Branch Blvd.) as the only ingress and outgress. These homes were not occupied at the time of the traffic study, but will be adding to the overall traffic load soon. Each address represents 2 dwellings, as each are duplexes. This represents 26 additional families with that many additional trips per day. That would mean an additional 247 trips per day.

1220 Delano St.  
1102 Delano St.  
1116 Eleanor St.  
1120 Eleanor St.  
1142 Eleanor St.  
1218 Eleanor St.  
1307 Fort Branch Blvd.  
1305 Fort Branch Blvd.  
1309 Fort Branch Blvd.  
1311 Fort Branch Blvd.  
1313 Fort Branch Blvd.  
1416 Fort Branch Blvd.  
1418 Fort Branch Blvd.

Numerous vacant lots are available in the neighborhood that will probably be built out in the future. Although we did not consider these future traffic possibilities in our calculations at this time, we must be aware that development in the area will be continuing:

1214 Delano St.  
5501 Harold Ct.  
1124 Eleanor St.  
1128 Eleanor St.  
1138 Eleanor St.  
1224 Eleanor St.  
1412 Fort Branch Blvd.  
1414 Fort Branch Blvd.

These are only the single lots available that do not require zoning changes. There are also many large multi-acre properties available and for sale at this time.



