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**Subject:** CodeNext Concerns

Dear Zoning and Planning Commission Staff,

At a recent neighborhood CodeNext meeting I attended, Mayor Adler spoke about his concerns that we are "losing what is magical about this city." I couldn't be in more agreement, but I have little doubt that the zoning changes proposed by CodeNext and the manner in which they have been applied to established and even historic central Austin neighborhoods will merely accelerate that process.

My husband and I moved to Bryker Woods fifteen years ago, drawn by the excellent schools, friendly neighbors, and modest but charming bungalows in this historic neighborhood. CodeNext threatens all of this. In short, my three main concerns are: (1) that the increased commercialization, traffic, and congestion encouraged by the rezoning around Bryker Woods Elementary raises significant safety issues; (2) that the proposed commercialization of solidly residential neighborhoods, coupled with reductions in parking and a disregard for neighborhood plans, will detrimentally impact our communities to the benefit of a few; and (3) the proposed levels of density will severely increase tear-downs and displacement while not actually achieving any affordability goals.

First, the increased entitlements assigned to properties in the immediate area around Bryker Woods Elementary is of great concern. I invite you to visit this school just before or after classes so that you can see all the parents and children walking to and from. The CodeNext changes would not only

encourage increased traffic and commercial activity immediately surrounding the elementary school, but it would do so while simultaneously reducing or eliminating parking requirements. With the increased cut-through traffic just caused by MoPac, I have already stopped walking anywhere near 33rd and Churchill Dr. because there have been too many close calls with drivers whipping around that blind corner adjacent to the school. These sort of incidents will only increase with the proposed zoning and undermine the asserted goal of encouraging residents to use alternate modes of transportation (i.e., walking to a bus route and biking).

Second, the commercialization of residential areas is the most distressing aspect of CodeNext. My home is located in the heart of Bryker Woods, and having lived across the street from an illegally run "art school" for four years, I have learned first-hand that there is no place for that level of commercial activity in such a solidly residential area. Do not underestimate the disproportionate and adverse impact the proposed allowable commercial activity in any of the residential and transect zones will have on the neighboring residents. What is good for business (e.g. increased traffic, loitering, the customer-is-always-right mentality) is detrimental and even dangerous for the surrounding residents (e.g. safety hazards from increased traffic and parking, reduced sense of security by excessive loitering and trespassing, threatening confrontations with angry customers who insist they can do what they want). My experience has taught me that the current code enforcement process is wholly inadequate to enforce even the existing home occupation exceptions, nonetheless the broadly expanded commercial activity proposed by CodeNext. In short, people desire and need a safe place to live. Opening up solidly residential neighborhoods to the haphazard application of commercial development will severely erode the social fabric of these established communities. Restrict commercial activity to corridors (i.e. property directly adjacent—and no further—to major through-fares such as Burnet, Lamar, 45th St., etc.) and currently established transitional areas (i.e. areas currently comprising of various zoning uses within a single block or less, for example, the southern portion of Brentwood). (I mention that part of

Brentwood as an example because a friend who lives in that transitional area is very supportive of the proposed changes to her neighborhood.)

And third, the increased density proposed by the transect zoning broadly applied to areas of the National Register Old West Austin Historic District is a direct assault on the very homes that make this a historic and unique area. Mayor Adler spoke of how we should not have a code that incentivizes tear-downs. This puzzled me, because when I read the code it immediately occurred to me that if I and others residing in modestly sized homes did not max-out our square footage before selling them, then they would very likely be torn down and replaced with a lavishly finished (and priced) duplex and ADU. And despite repeated assertions that the McMansion ordinance was incorporated into CodeNext, schematics provided by Rosedale architect Chris Allen depict the opposite result: the tent and FAR restrictions were cast aside, and the square footage limit for a 50x135 foot lot would increase by approximately 70%. My husband and I would tolerate increased density if it actually achieved the goals of affordability for existing lower/middle-income residents. But the proposed zoning changes appear only to be a boon for developers and their prospective luxury home buyers at the expense of existing residents.

I am hopeful that Austin can grow while maintaining the vibrant and safe communities located in the central core. But I fear that the reductions proposed by CodeNext in the safety and quality of life for existing urban neighborhood residents are merely the latest assault on what makes this city so magical.

With sincerest concerns,

Elizabeth Goettert

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