



FEBRUARY COMMUNITY MEETING

February 24, 2014
8637 Spicewood Springs Rd.
6:30-8:30 PM

The meeting began with brief introductions a run through of NWAC core advocacy areas of transportation, water/wildfires, affordability, and public safety.

Jimmy Flannigan led a discussion about the urban rail plan being discussed at the city. He attended the most recent Project Connect Central Corridor¹ Advisory Committee meeting (also attended by Jeb Boyd) where planned routes were debated. Routes covering East Riverside, crossing the river into downtown, through UT campus, and up to the Highland Mall site have been narrowed down to a handful of key options, as noted on the maps provided by Project Connect.² It was noted in the meeting that DFW's "DART" system is the largest rail system in the nation (at 91 miles) but it started with just a small system contained within the city of Dallas.

Jimmy also referenced the 183 North Mobility Project, which is currently soliciting community input on how to improve conditions on 183 from MoPac to 183-A. An open house was held on February 18th attended by Jimmy and Ed English.

Joyce Statz informed the group about an event coming on May 3rd called National Wildfire Community Preparedness Day³. There are opportunities for interested neighborhoods to participate in activities. Already events have been organized by Lake Travis Fire and Rescue and the City of Austin.

The group also briefly discussed the recent Austin Police Commanders Forum attended by Jimmy Flannigan, Susan Reed, and Chuck Pace. Response times in NW Austin are longer than in the rest of the city due in part to staffing issues and to the area's unique geography, city boundaries, and road patterns. It was also noted that while violent crime rates are low in NW Austin, property crimes are higher than in the rest of Austin. However, significant portions of what APD does in NW could be addressed by changes in citizen safety precautions. Reducing false alarms on homes, upgrading garage door equipment, and keeping cars secured could all result in dramatic reductions in reported crimes, which could help address some of the understaffing issues faced in NW Austin.

The main topic of the night was CodeNext⁴, presented by Matt Dugan, Development Services Process Coordinator, Planning and Development Review Department at the City of Austin. The presentation covered a high-level explanation of CodeNext, the effort to revise the city's Land Development Code, which determines how land can be used throughout the city. The current code is an expansive and often confusing two volumes of 800 pages each, which hasn't had a comprehensive rewrite in 30 years. CodeNext is attempting to cover the city over 103 neighborhood reporting areas to document the character of each area and getting input from residents and businesses on what people value. Only 15 areas have been covered so far, and only one in NWAC's footprint (Northwest Hills). Their "Community Character in a

Our Mission: To support leaders in Northwest Austin and address the needs of our communities through collaboration, communication, and education.

www.nwaustin.org

 /NorthwestAustin

 /nwatx

info@nwaustin.org

¹ <http://www.projectconnect.com/connect/central-corridor>

² http://www.projectconnect.com/connect/sites/default/files/PCC_Task%2011%20-%20Final%20Alternatives.pdf

³ <http://www.WildfirePrepDay.org>

⁴ <http://www.austintexas.gov/CodeNEXT>

Box” process⁵ is setup to allow neighborhoods to document their part of town with photos and maps. The entire CodeNext process is planned to run through October 2016 but input from neighborhoods is being sought now.

A fascinating discussion about the impact of code brought up issues of affordability and gentrification, historic preservation, density, neighborhood future land use plans (none of which exist in NW Austin), and the impact of the new council on the process.

The next NWAC meeting will be March 24th, 6:30pm at the Spicewood Springs Library. Staff from the City of Austin’s Neighborhood Partnering Program will be there to discuss their program to help neighborhoods make improvements in their local community.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/229912147196865/>

In Attendance (as listed in sign-in sheets where legible)

Tina Cannon
Jeb Boyt
Joyce Statz
Ed English
Matt Stillwell
Tamarah Brownlea
Mandy Dealey
Luisa Gavino
Marco Moncillas
Sharon Blythe
Susan Reed
Kirt Reed
Sumit DasGupta
Aaron Cleaver
Chuck Pace
Jimmy Flannigan
John Bucy
Dolores Ortega Carter

⁵ <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/community-character>