



CITY OF DALLAS

CITY PLAN COMMISSION
URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE
Thursday, May 5, 2016
Meeting Minutes

Meeting	Dallas City Hall, 5BN	8:10 a.m.
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Members Present:

Tipton Housewright (Vice Chair), Evan Beattie, Noel Aveton, Mike Johnson

Others Present:

Robert Abtahi (City Plan Commission), Andrew Sturm (RAD Consultants), Anna Hill (Dolphin Heights Neighborhood Association), Peer Chacko (Planning and Urban Design), Luis Tamayo (Planning and Urban Design, Strategic Planning), Asma Shaikh (Planning and Urban Design, Strategic Planning), Amy Albright (Planning and Urban Design, Strategic Planning)

The meeting was called to order by Tipton Housewright (Vice Chair) at 8:15am.

Andrew Sturm with RAD Consultants briefed the committee on the Dolphin Heights neighborhood planning process. Dolphin Heights Neighborhood Association president Anna Hill provided a recent history and background of the neighborhood:

- Neighborhood was primarily African-American in the 70s and 80s.
- The 80s and 90s saw an increased crime rate, and the neighborhood formed a Crime Watch Group.
- The CWG paved the way for a Neighborhood Association, which is now a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.
- Neighborhood is now primarily (60%) Latino.

Andrew Sturm discussed the following in regards to Dolphin Heights:

- The planning effort stemmed from Dolphin Heights leadership desiring the area to remain competitive and retain its residents and character, as the area is ripe for gentrification with its proximity to Downtown and high percentage of land vacancy.
- The neighborhood is essentially insulated by railroad tracks, Schepps Dairy, and White Rock Creek. A utility easement (formerly Interurban rail line) runs through the center of the neighborhood.

- Schepps Dairy and the Shearith Israel Memorial Park Cemetery were two of the first land uses in the area. Dolphin Road is a busy north-south connector with gas stations and “defunct” retail that can be reimaged. There is also a senior living facility on Dolphin Road, and elderly residents must cross four lanes of traffic (without a signal) to reach a bus stop on the opposite side.
- Community engagement over the past two years has been extensive and inclusive, with 7 public workshops, discussions at 12 Neighborhood Association meetings and a National Night Out, door-to-door engagement, and flyers. A Neighborhood Advisory Committee has been formed to facilitate the process.
- The neighborhood’s vision hinges on connectivity, diversity, growth, and safety.
- A major connectivity issue involved the dead-end Mingo Street and Beall Street. Dolphin Heights is currently working with DART to obtain right-of-way for the land adjacent to the railroad tracks to the East, in order to construct a street that will connect the neighborhood’s dead-end streets. The project is funded and its design is 70% completed.
- Vice Chair Housewright asked about the prioritization of projects and issues. Anna Hill and Andrew Sturm agreed that infrastructure is the first priority, but the neighborhood’s other needs are pressing as well. Further thought will be given to priorities and funding options, including the 2017 bond.
- Regarding next steps, Andrew Sturm will send an updated plan draft to Staff for review and to filter through the appropriate departments (potentially Parks, etc.).

Luis Tamayo gave a process briefing on Preston Center. The Advisory Task Force has postponed the initial project schedule, as they desire to have another ATF meeting to discuss the project. Peer Chacko commented that he anticipates the Preston Center vision and plan to be “less aggressive” than other Area Plans, as the area’s high-income residents generally tend to resist major change. Vice Chair Housewright asked if a public-private partnership has been considered regarding parking garage improvements. Peer Chacko commented that despite efforts to discuss such a partnership, the high number of stakeholders, along with the business owners’ inclination to keep conditions as they are, has made consensus difficult.

Chair Schultz will be interviewing candidates for a Landscape Architect vacancy on the Committee, as Linda Tycher will no longer be serving on UDC. Regarding future meetings, the next meeting date will be May 19, at which the Committee will be briefed on updates for Preston Center (a Public Open House will be held for Preston Center May 17th, 6:00pm at Walnut Hill Rec Center). Further upcoming briefings include Buckner Terrace and a Neighborhood Planning Guide being created by Staff. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved unanimously after a motion by member Johnson and second by member Beattie. The meeting was closed to order at 9:05 am.