City of San Marcos Regular Meeting Minutes
Neighborhood Commission
August 21, 2019 at 6:15 p.m.
Code Compliance Conference Room
630 E Hopkins, Building 5
San Marcos, Texas 78666

Call to Order
Meeting was called to order by Chair Lizabeth Dobbins at 6:15 p.m.

Roll Call
In attendance: Joe Cantu, Lizabeth Dobbins, Estella Enriquez, Roland Saucedo, Lupe Costilla, Cathy Dillon, Shane Scott, Jennifer Katz, Angie Ramirez, Kendra Wesson and Michelle McWatters.

30 Minute Citizen Comment Period: Each speaker signed up prior to the meeting being called to order will be called in order of sign-up, and will be allowed three minutes to speak about items posted or not on the agenda

Sara Lee Underwood-Meyers – Blanco Gardens – working with Traffic to do new street signs. Her big concern is that the sign says “Neighborhood” somewhere on it. Feels it is important as a wayfinder and hopes that other neighborhoods will follow.

Lisa Marie Coppola – recognizing CONA rep Sara Lee and how she runs CONA meeting. Concerned about protecting historical resources of community. Expressing appreciation for work of Neighborhood Commission and for Jamie Lee Case, City Secretary. Would like to support item #5 on agenda tonight (sic) regarding Heritage trees.

MINUTES
Consider approval, by motion, of the July 17, 2019 meeting minutes.

- Motion made by Jennifer Katz to approve minutes as written of July 17, 2019 minutes. Seconded by Roland Saucedo. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

PRESENTATIONS
a) Commentary on the Historic Preservation Survey: A Neighborhood Perspective (Tom Wassenich/Amy Meeks)
Presentation made by Cama Davis, Amy Meeks in attendance. Focus of presentation was on LDC zoning and neighborhood impacts.

ITEMS FOR ACTION/DISCUSSION
a) Discuss the presentation: Commentary on the Historic Preservation Survey.

Cathy Dillon asked when the LDC changes were to be finalized? Per Michelle McWatters, the topic will re-open for comment next May. Roland Saucedo pointed out that the Affordable Workhouse Task Force has not yet submitted their recommendations so the Neighborhood Commission can continue to work through them. Lupe Costilla asked if the current LDC is responsible for the new building on LBJ behind Taco Bell. Jennifer Katz asked where DO we build? Affordable housing is needed, but responsible building is needed. Joe Cantu noted that growth is coming whether we like it or not, so where do you build is the
reasonable question. Dilapidated buildings are largely ignored until someone wants to revitalize the area and then you pay through the nose for improvements. Discussion was made regarding additional discussions/presentations needed from all sides. Roland Saucedo noted that, effective 2020, all ADU rental properties will be required to do rental registration. Shane Scott feels like you should be able to fix your home without needing a permit. Lizabeth Dobbins proposed that the topic be included on the next meeting agenda and identify how to vet it out from all different perspectives. Commissioners in agreement.

b) Consider possible recommendation for custom street signs in Blanco Gardens by Transportation Department.

Ning Zou, Transportation, discussed process of working with neighborhood reps to come up with possible designs for custom street signs. The options were presented at the Neighborhood Conversation meeting held in Sector 6. Transportation is recommending the design that received the highest votes from citizens in attendance at the Neighborhood Conversation. Conversation was led by Lupe Costilla about the lack of representation at the Neighborhood Conversation and the possibility that the votes were not a true reflection of the entire neighborhood. Shane Scott asked how many people showed up at the Neighborhood Conversation meeting and noted that he feels that the minute amount of people voting seems silly. Roland Saucedo stated that he believes in the democratic process and has trouble going against the majority vote, especially in light of outreach in the neighborhood. Angie Ramirez stated that she personally voted for the top pick and did it purposefully and would be disappointed to learn that her vote was not going to count. Cathy Dillon asked how this initiative came to pass. The neighborhood reps worked with the City after the flood to create possible signage that represented their neighborhood to better identify their specific neighborhood. Other neighborhoods like Rio Vista already have their signs in place. It was noted that advertising for the Neighborhood Conversation included fliers, email distribution, door knockers and yard signs. Lupe Costilla feels since advertising did not include street sign voting information, that should be factored in to the decision. Ning Zou indicated that an email was sent out to the neighborhood listing requesting further feedback but none was received. Roland Saucedo felt the two sector reps should have the call. Ning Zou stated that the process could be extended. Angie Ramirez noted that she feels this is a wrap up of the process. Lupe Costilla differed in her opinion. It was noted by staff that this was not a Neighborhood Commission initiative, that this was led by CONA and other neighborhood representatives separate from the commission. Cathy Dillon stated that she believes this is a great idea and it should have a PR push. Joe Cantu recognized the work that was done by Lupe Costilla and Angie Ramirez in bringing this to fruition. It was noted that the Neighborhood Commission had been requested to provide a recommendation to Transportation, not tasked with making the final decision. Lizabeth Dobbins outlined two routes for action: send back to CONA for further processing/re-evaluation OR recommend the design that garnered the top vote at the Neighborhood Conversation meeting. Roland Saucedo seconded and called for vote on motion. Option 1: send back to CONA for further processing/re-evaluation; all in favor were four (4), those opposed were six (6), with one (1) abstention. Option 2: recommend the top voted design to Transportation department; all in favor were eight (8), those opposed were three (3). Motion carried to recommend the top voted design to Transportation.

c) Review and discuss for possible action an amended draft resolution to Council to address pedestrian/cyclist traffic safety at Comanche and N LB J Dr., Academy and Sessoms.

A review was made of the amended resolution draft as presented by Lizabeth Dobbins. It was noted by Cathy Dillon that the third sentence down was missing the word “they”. MOTION was made by Roland Saucedo and seconded by Shane Scott to amend with word “they” as noted. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried. MOTION was made by Michelle McWatters and seconded by Shane Scott to send amended resolution to Council All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.
d) Discuss and consider possible recommendation to Council regarding combining Downtown, Sector 8 with Sector 1 as it relates to Neighborhood Commission representation.

Per Roland Saucedo, the Commission has always had a difficult time of getting a resident to represent Sector 8. This is the purpose of combining the two. MOTION was made by Roland Saucedo and seconded by Lupe Costilla to recommend to City Council combining Downtown Sector 8 with Sector 1. All in favor, none opposed. Jennifer Katz absent during the vote. Motion carries. Cathy Dillon requested email addresses for both sectors.

e) Review and highlights of Sector 6: Neighborhood Conversation held August 15, 2019. Samantha Armbruster provided a summary of the presentations located in meeting packet on pages 7 and 8. Questions and comments by those in attendance are reflected on page 9, categorized by department. An email was sent to people in attendance requesting clarifications/corrections to document and after that was routed to the appropriate departments. Angie Ramírez notes that there is a need for the neighborhood to get an update from engineering and status of federal funds. During the Neighborhood Conversation it was noted that TxDOT plans to replace the turnaround under the highway by the river. Angie Ramírez feels strongly that this needs to be changed and perhaps the Neighborhood Commission could draft a resolution to Council to give input to TxDOT. It was noted that this should be a future agenda. As far as the DR Funding in the neighborhood, there are certain steps and processes to be followed. Lupe Costilla supports having engineering provide updates to the neighborhood.


Upcoming 2019 dates: Sector 4: September 11, Sector 2: October 10. Discussion was made regarding combining efforts with Parks and Recreation Department to host Neighborhood Conversations in conjunction with Party in Your Park events. After considering the pros and cons such as parking, weather, and focus/intent of the two events, the commission determined that blending the two events is not a good idea, but it may be possible to use the Party in Your Park event as an outreach.

g) Discuss and consider possible recommendation regarding a Neighborhood Vitality Grant Program.

Samantha Armbruster led a discussion on the new Neighborhood Vitality grant program that will be rolled out in September. This is a nationwide initiative to facilitate a review of public facing, public right of way areas and focus efforts to make neighborhoods better. The program will be launched with National Good Neighbor Day and during the proclamation on Monday, September 16, three neighborhoods will be randomly chosen to receive this grant. Moving forward into 2020 there will be an application and award process for interested neighborhoods.

REPORTS

a) Commissioner Report: Wonder World/Hunter TxDOT project updated by Lizbeth Dobbins

(Sector 9)

Item deferred to next meeting at the request of Lizbeth Dobbins.
b) Staff Report: Status report of success for Bobcats Give Back by Samantha Armbruster
   Item deferred to the next meeting for time's sake.

c) Staff Report: National Neighborhood Day – September 23, 2019
   Proclamation scheduled September 16. Neighborhood Commissioners invited to attend

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Discuss and consider discussion items for future agendas.

- Receive a status report of success for Bobcat Giveback (deferred in this meeting)
- Commissioner Report: Wonder World/Hunter TXDOT project by Lizbeth Dobbins (deferred in this meeting).
- Receive a report from Planning on results of Historic Preservation Survey at September 18 meeting.
- Receive a presentation on different perspectives for LDC with discussion only. Lupe Costilla would like to limit other items to make room for discussion. Per Roland Saucedo the Housing Task Force will close in September. Shane Scott notes that there are so many possible topics in that sort of presentation that it needs to be simplified and prioritized. Roland Saucedo will send background information to staff liaison to be distributed to commission. September 4 is the deadline. Commissioners decided to focus on more immediate issues that they can actually do something about and retracted this request for future agenda items.
- Receive a presentation by TXDOT regarding I35 corridor planning from Yarrington to Posey, including the turnaround by the San Marcos River.
- Discuss and take possible action for method of following up with Neighborhood Commission resolutions and being accountable to citizen inquiries.
- MOTION was made by Roland Saucedo and seconded by Michelle McWatters to add above mentioned items to the next meeting agenda. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION WITH PRESS AND PUBLIC

- None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Roland Saucedo and seconded by Jennifer Katz to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m. All approved, none opposed, motion carried.

The minutes for the August 21, 2019 meeting of the City of San Marcos, Texas Neighborhood Commission are respectfully submitted on September 18, 2019 by Tammy Strakos, Staff Liaison, Neighborhood Enhancement

Approved by:

[Signature]
Chair or Vice Chair