

Zilker Neighborhood Association

Re: Opposition to 1725 Toomey rezoning in Waterfront Overlay (C14-2021-0009)

May 27, 2021

The Zilker Neighborhood Association strongly opposes the proposed rezoning of the property at 1725 Toomey Road from CS to a zoning category that would allow for a building up to 90 feet in height, since the rezoning would conflict with the environmentally sensitive area, exacerbate existing traffic issues, and create new problems.

Below is a "before and after" photo approximation of how an MF-6 zoned building would appear if it were built to the limits of the entitlements, which would likely happen in order to accommodate 215 units. The view in the photo is looking southeast across Barton Creek from the Butler Hike and Bike Trail at Lou Neff Point. The horizontal white line across the building's face is the current zoning height of 60 feet.



Building in excess of current height limits, which are 60 feet tall, would be out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood and would be incompatible with the purpose of the Waterfront Overlay, since it would not promote the harmonious interaction and transition between urban development and the park land and shoreline of Lady Bird Lake (as is required by the City Code). It would block sunlight and views, impair access, and accelerate efforts to create a canyon-like effect of tall buildings in close proximity to—and especially on the east shoreline of--Barton Creek. A building greater than 60 feet in height would also be especially inappropriate for this particular property because:

1. The property is not just on the edge of the Waterfront Overlay. Rather, the overlay extends south of the property across Barton Springs Road.
2. There is an Overlay Setback running through the front of the property.
3. The property is only approximately 325' from Barton Creek.

4. Increased zoning entitlements at the intersection of Toomey Road and Sterzing Road would exacerbate congestion on Barton Springs Road very near the intersection of Azie Morton Road, and also exacerbate congestion at Toomey Road and South Lamar, which is very near the entrances of the proposed Dougherty Arts Center parking garage and the area-wide parking garage of the Schlotzsky's PUD project at 218 S Lamar.

A building taller than 60 feet is also incompatible with the proposed new Dougherty Arts Center, which is planned to be constructed on the other side of Toomey Road. The center will serve as a valuable cultural resource, and it should be protected against the type of construction that would be allowed under the proposed 90 feet zoning. Toomey and Sterzing are very small streets that provide the only access to Butler Shores Park. Toomey is, in essence, a "park road," providing essential park access while providing safe pedestrian and bike travel, away from Barton Springs Road and Lamar. Toomey traffic and parking is already problematic. The city should not be making land use decisions that increase auto traffic on Toomey and Sterzing.

Sincerely,

David Piper

Secretary, Zilker Neighborhood Association