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To: [Shaw, Todd - BC](#); [Hempel, Claire - BC](#); [Azhar, Awais - BC](#); [Cohen, Jessica - BC](#); [Connolly, Joao - BC](#); [Cox, Grayson - BC](#); [Flores, Yvette - BC](#); [Howard, Patrick - BC](#); [Llanes, Carmen - BC](#); [BC-Richard.Mendoza@austintexas.gov](#); [Mushtaler, Jennifer - BC](#); [Praxis, Solveij - BC](#); [Schneider, Robert - BC](#); [Shieh, James - BC](#); [Singh, Arati - BC](#); [Thompson, Jeffrey - BC](#)
Cc: [Kitchen, Ann](#); [Tiemann, Donna](#); [Rivera, Andrew](#); [Clark, Kate](#)
Subject: Item B. 13. Rezoning: C14-2020-0144 - 2700 S. Lamar, District 5
Date: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 12:38:07 PM
Attachments: [2700 SLamar \(2021-06-06 version\).pdf](#)

*** External Email - Exercise Caution ***

Honorable Commissioners, Todd Shaw, Chair, Claire Hempel, Vice Chair, Awais Azhar, Jessica Cohen, Joao Paulo Connolly, Grayson Cox, Yvette Flores, Patrick Howard, Carmen Llanes Pulido, Richard Mendoza, Jennifer Mushtaler, Solveij Rosa Praxis, Robert Schneider, James Shieh, Arati Singh, and Jeffrey Thompson,
Regarding item B. 13 - [C14-2020-0144 - 2700 S. Lamar](#) - District 5.

City of Austin Planning Commission,

Thank you for postponing this hearing, allowing us to meet with the applicant to discuss and clarify the major issues listed in our letter of opposition in May. I am here to report on the results of our meeting with the applicant last Friday.

Last night the Executive Committee of the Zilker Neighborhood Association voted to continue ZNA's support of the redevelopment of these parcels on South Lamar under the existing VMU zoning, and to support the extension of the VMU overlay to Tract 1 at 2700 S. Lamar if the owner requests it. This decision was based on information extracted from the applicant on Friday.

The ZNA zoning committee has calculated that the existing zoning, with VMU extended to Tract 1, could result in 483 residential units on 86% impervious cover. With MF6 zoning, the owner proposes to build 480 units in 8 floors and 80% impervious cover. The increased entitlements of MF6 would actually allow 686 units, but this is probably reduced by compatibility setbacks for height. The concept plan presented by the owner would likely contain only 463 units, if one assumes that most of the ground floor would be taken up by parking.

Subchapter E includes standards and incentives explicitly for the development of Vertical Mixed Use (VMU) buildings. Subchapter E, Article 4 states: *"The mixed use provisions define the uses of land and the siting and character of the improvements and structures allowed on the land in a manner that encourages a balanced and sustainable mix of uses. They promote an efficient pedestrian-access network that connects the nonresidential and residential uses and transit facilities. Redevelopment of underutilized parcels and infill development of vacant parcels should foster pedestrian-oriented residential and mixed use development."* Article 4.3.3 goes on to list multiple pages of the superior aspects of VMU development over other zoning districts. For these reasons it is of great concern that neighborhoods would get an inferior product with MF-6 zoning such as that applied for at 2700 S. Lamar Blvd.

To sum up, in the meeting on Friday the applicants disclosed that they do not intend to build more housing than could be achieved under VMU, and they might build much less. The primary difference appears to be that MF6 zoning would relieve them of the obligation to provide the community benefits, such as income-restricted units, required by VMU. The MF6 rezoning could set a precedent for overriding existing VMU zoning on core transit corridors.

The ZNA Executive Committee therefore requests that the Planning Commission recommend against the MF6 rezoning and encourage the applicant to request an extension of the VMU overlay to Tract 1.

Thank you for your service to Austin.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Atherton

For the ZNA Zoning Committee

P.S. About the offer of affordable units:

On Friday the ZNA zoning committee discovered that the applicant in this case, as of March, owns the entire Goodwill property shown in pink on the attached exhibit. When we first heard of this case last year, we assumed that Goodwill was a partner, because the rezoning request includes a parking lot on the Goodwill site. We expected the applicant to present a proposal that would coordinate with the redevelopment of the Goodwill site, including the 109 units of permanent supportive housing that already had ZNA support from the 2013 rezoning. We were disappointed, to put it mildly, to learn that Goodwill is not a partner, that the applicant has no other nonprofit partner to manage or administer any affordable housing, and that they are refusing to include the bulk of the Goodwill property in this rezoning case.

The refusal to include all of 2738 South Lamar in the rezoning case eliminates the prospects for meaningful negotiation on the other factors (besides residential affordability) affecting this case. That includes impervious cover limits and the use of the Redevelopment Exception in the SOS ordinance 25-8-26, the area and location of the Parkland Dedication requirement, preservation of numerous trees, protection of the storm sewer and unnamed stream through the center of the property and its effect on the downstream multifamily buildings, coordination of the shared driveway and parking that will have to be moved on the Goodwill site, a traffic impact analysis to aid coordination of traffic controls and improved pedestrian access that will be required between the two existing crosswalks and on Dickson, and preservation of the community of four-plexes on Skyway Circle (which presents the opportunity for 18 new moderately priced townhouse units). I will be available at the hearing to answer your questions about these issues.

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