

**SHNA Meeting Minutes**  
**November 5, 2013**

SHNA board members present: Toria English, Kirsten Siegfried, Hunt Andre, Jennifer Pritchard, Louisa Brinsmade, Polina Koronkevich, Jeff Harris. Approval of last month's meeting were postponed in case anyone wanted to read and comment on the edits and additions by Toria English and Kirsten Siegfried.

**Agenda Item #1**

Presentations by (A) Andy Brown's political campaign, and representatives from (B) Next Door, a neighborhood networking application.

**A.** Presentation by representatives from Andy Brown's campaign for Travis County Judge

Marco Orrantia

[marco@voteandy.com](mailto:marco@voteandy.com)

Campaign headquarters are located at 1406 Waller

Mr. Orrantia described their campaign as the "biggest race of the Democratic primary coming up," and conveyed the importance of all Democrats in our neighborhood to show up for the vote. Mr. Orrantia noted that many of the public safety unions are "supporting Andy," including the police and firefighter unions.

Swede Hill neighbors are invited to visit with Mr. Brown at his headquarters in our neighborhood at any time, and we are welcome to any of their events.

**B.** Next Door social network mobile application.

Presentation by Amos Stolfus, field organizer for Next Door.

Description of Next Door's services for Swede Hill: Our neighborhood uses a listserv right now, but Next Door is a great improvement on a listserv for the following reasons:

- 1.** Private social network - to join have to provide your address and next door will verify it is within neighborhood boundaries, no search engines have access to your information with Next Door;
- 2.** Next Door is a local network- it was built for neighborhoods only, not for any other platform;
- 3.** Next Door is useful - we have categories that are relevant to neighborhoods. Think of it as a Craigslist for the neighborhood with community events planners, crime and safety information swap. Plus Next Door is mobile with an application for your phone. You can send text alerts to your neighbors in an emergency situation.

Next Door is partnering with the City of Austin to be specific about their alerts.

Next Door also has profiles, get to know your neighbor, neighborhood maps, and a "Nearby Neighborhoods" feature.

Next Door is free and will always be free.

Swede hill's Next Door network has a few members already. Our neighborhood is in a pilot phase until it gets the threshold of 10 members to be established as a permanent Next Door neighborhood.

Q: Can we post documents? Search archives?

A: Yes, there's a documents category, a history, and it's searchable. It's a lot like Facebook, there's a news feed, and recommendations.

Q: Is it for residents only or property owners too?

A: It is mostly for neighbors, but businesses that own property can join. However, they must use an individual's name and contact information within that business.

Q: Can we block other members?

A: Yes, the "leaders" of a Next Door neighborhood are like monitors on other sites. In the case of an abusive member, the "leaders" can contact Next Door and give an explanation, and Next Door will research the problem and act on it.

Q: Who are the Next Door founders?

A: Our founders have been in tech startup industry for a long time. Our field organizers are former Obama campaign people. The founders wanted to use the trend towards social media, and see how to use that to organize neighborhoods.

Q: Where is your money coming from?

A: We have quite a bit of capital investment to build a platform that works. The business model is to allow local businesses to connect to the community base in your area. There could be advertising in the future. Allowing local business to use the Groupon model to build regular customers. Our profit model is still a few years out.

Q: How will you maintain privacy?

A: Your name is visible, but you can choose to show your address or not.

Q: How do we get neighbors to sign up?

A: You have to have a few champions for Next Door to get their neighbors to sign up.

## **Agenda Item #2**

Cap Metro update

Toria English: Update on the bus stop at Oleander and East 12th st, and 12th St. and

Chicon: Capitol Metro says the passenger pick up numbers are still pretty low, but they will stay on top of the population and development growth to see if we need a bench or shade in the future.

### **Agenda Item #3**

Austin Neighborhoods Council Update by Kirsten Siegfried

Items for update:

10-1 redistricting maps: [www.austinredistricting.org](http://www.austinredistricting.org): 10-1 re districting map - not a lot of controversy around our district. We are in District 1, an African American opportunity district. There are four minority opportunity districts and one is for African Americans. In the first draft of ICRC map they chose to include the LBJ library, and the Capitol complex as a symbolic gesture for both historic reasons and to break the IH-35 "Berlin Wall." In that first draft, Swede hill was left in the African-American opportunity district, which leaves us intact.

Resolution to oppose depressed lanes in downtown and I-35: The resolution passed. Ms. Siegfried voted against the resolution as a representative of Swede Hill. Explanation: (TxDot has a "Reconnect Austin" plan that is going to either depress the I-35 lanes or raise them. The plan is to use state and federal dollars to "cap" those lanes and create real estate on the top, and sell that land. But there are those who are concerned with gentrification who oppose this plan because they wanted affordable housing to be part of the Reconnect Austin plan on that new real estate.

Resolution to oppose River Hills Sports Complex: The resolution to oppose passed. The land is across the river from Emma Long Park and is owned by Eanes. Ms. Siegfried abstained from voting on this resolution due to our neighborhood's lack of involvement in this issue.

### **Agenda Item #4**

Update on RFP's for Tract 5 on East 12th St and Angelina. Proposals were due Friday, November 8 to the Real Estate Dept of the City of Austin.

Toria English begins the discussion by noting that none of the developers who are submitting proposals to the city has contacted the SHNA to present their ideas for Tract 5.

Rob Seidenberg (one of the developers who is submitting a proposal with partners Sean Garretson and others): I can speak to it...

Rob: Last Friday (November 1) at noon everything was coming together. And still, every day we make a little more progress to finish it. Our anchor tenant is a 5000 sq ft grocery store. We have 9000 square feet of commercial space and 40 condo units upstairs.

I dreamed of doing a Harlem theater, but that didn't go over well with the neighborhood here. We've said it before and we mean it: we care. We live here. (All of the developers in Rob and Sean's group are residents and/or property owners in Swede Hill.) We're trying to create something that appeals with the neighborhood.

We have 100 pages of the proposal for this latest mixed use project. It's a lot of work, and a lot of money. We'll try to do the best we can. They (Urban Renewal Board) say they will make a decision some time in mid-December. In the RFP rules, the real estate transaction will happen on January 15. Our proposal is only for the Angelina and East 12th St tract, not Tract 3.

Jennifer Pritchard: Have you approached Wheatsville as a grocery store anchor?

Rob: Hopefully the one we've been dealing with so far will be there, but we've also talked to the Aldi chain, Royal Blue, and others. There's not enough size for a large grocery store. Groceries, yes, but the store will possibly do better with sandwiches and prepared food to sell as well. Grocery store that signed the letter of intent with us, will sell basics to gourmet items.

Tracy Witte: Will you be renting the commercial space and the condos?

Rob: No, we'd like to sell everything.

Kris Bowen: Thank you for changing your vision and position. I'm excited you're working to bring a grocery store into our neighborhood.

Q: What is the criteria for a grocery store?

Rob: It's weird - everyone is going to "say" they'll put in a grocery store, and that they're going "green," but will they? The RFP is a terrible document, redundant, etc, and it's not clear how they would enforce the criteria for the winner.

Q: Will you have limits on the amount of investor-owned condo units allowed in the building?

A: Those limits are determined by lender, like for the Seaholm development it's 10%. The fewer the investor-owned units, the better for the lender and the other residents.

Tracy: Tract 5 is on your proposal, but are you interested in the other tracts available?

Rob: It's not on our radar. We wondered about the furthest east building of King tears - Stuart King is King tears, but his sister owns the print shop to the east and will not sell. She wants to continue her business.

Kirsten: Sean mentioned a 20-40% parking reduction. That's a wide gap. Do you know which amount you'll ask for?

Rob: The NCCD allows a 20% reduction from what is generally required in some places. Not the Central Business District, but other places. And there has been talk of doing away with parking requirements for businesses altogether in the Central Business District and other neighborhoods. We share the neighborhood's concern: we want to minimize the number of cars parking in the neighborhood.

If we're selling condo units, those people purchasing are going to demand that they have parking. Downtown, the city is thinking about getting rid of parking requirements for developers. Seems like a lot of businesses now will get 40%. When we met with city staff,

they said 20% was standard procedure now, and they were thinking about 40%. Should we win, we will talk about that process, and we'll be open to you about that process.

Tracy: What about Tract 3 (at Navasota and East 12th St)? Looks like you might sell the lot next door.

Rob: Eureka holdings bought the Minnie's lot (Mann's land at Waller and East 12th St), and we sold the food court lot to Eureka. We put serious restrictive covenants in place. We are assuming Eureka is going for the Tract 3 RFP. They want to do a boutique hotel. They know about Eleven (another boutique hotel at East 11th St), but they are 100% convinced they can do a boutique on East 12th.

Am I happy about giving up the theater project? No, I'm not. I'm disappointed.

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[Discussion stopped due to Carver Library time restraints. Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm]