

2222CONA Report

Summer 2007

The 2222 Coalition of Neighborhood Associations (2222CONA) continued to be very active in 2007. I wanted to give you a run-down of a few projects we've been (and are still) working on. If you have questions or would like to get involved in any issues, please call Carol Lee or me.

The WEBB ESTATES project looms immediately in front of us. Due to the overwhelming response from residents to City Council for the 21 June rezoning hearing, the Council asked us to meet with the applicant and staff late Thursday afternoon to see if we could agree to the zoning with additional terms that would be specified in a Public Restrictive Covenant. The public hearing remains open, with the 2nd/3rd reading scheduled for 26 July. We just received a draft of the Restrictive Covenant on 5 July.

Go to <http://www.2222cona.org> for more information about the project and status. (Our Web site is still under development, but we had 19,923 page visits since the new site was rolled out Memorial Day, most of which was to the Webb Estates project page!) Depending on how the negotiations go with placing additional terms on the zoning via a Restrictive Covenant, we may need a large turnout for the 26 July public hearing. We won't ask residents to attend unless it appears really necessary to the outcome.

OTHER PROJECTS this year have included:

- Hosting a meeting of stakeholders that included neighborhood representatives, business owners, and public officials to preview TXDOT's plans for the RM2222 intersections at Loop 360 and at Hwy 620. The plans are posted at <http://www.2222cona.org/Projects/TxDOT/TxDOT.html>.
- Opposing the relocation of 4 huge billboards to Hwy 620 near RM2222. We joined with Scenic Texas and other citizens in a January 2007 public hearing to oppose a request to relocate 6 billboards. The request violated every provision of the City's Billboard Relocation Ordinance, and 4 of the billboards would have been visible from 2222CONA neighborhoods in addition to visitors of our Hill Country Roadways. Council Member Leffingwell demonstrated real leadership in making a motion to deny the request, which the Council then approved. This was a surprisingly close case.
- Filing an application for 501(c)(3) status. Contributions to non-profit organizations that have been approved by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization are tax-deductible. We understand that it can take six or more months to receive a ruling, but we have filed the application.
- Ladera Bend: We are monitoring the construction of this office/retail complex on the NW corner of 2222 and Jester Blvd to ensure it complies with the terms of the rezoning and a Private Restrictive Covenant.

- Plant Rescue: Helped the Native Plant Society with the rescue of thousands (literally!) of native plants from two development sites. Before the bulldozers arrive we arrange with the developer to rescue the native plants, which are then transferred to parks and public preserves (in addition to private homes of those who help with the rescue!).
- Aspen Properties: This 23-acre property is at the SW corner of 2222 and River Place Blvd. The developer is trying to obtain "grandfather" status which would allow for 60% impervious cover rather than the 30% that would be allowed under current watershed regulations. CONA is continuing to monitor the status and meet with the developer as plans progress.
- Ribelin Ranch, Colina Vista, and Rancho la Valencia are 3 separate developments at the top of Tumbleweed Hill and on the North side of 2222. CONA was successful in having the City require that these 3 developments share an entrance driveway, which we continue to monitor all the plans for. Rancho la Valencia also encroached onto adjoining BCP land, which CONA periodically reminds the City must be corrected and the public preserve restored.
- Vaught Ranch: This property is directly across 2222 from Jester Blvd. Trammel Crow is building a 5-story condo complex at the top of the ridge, and a 2-story complex at the lower elevation (which is subject to the height restrictions of the Hill Country Roadway Ordinance). The developers agreed to build the bridge across the creek and the water retention facilities first, to avoid water pollution during the rest of construction. However, they proceeded to clear the hillside and hilltop prior to completion of the bridge and water quality ponds, allowing West Bull Creek to suffer serious degradation with the heavy rains this season. We are currently discussing mitigation of this breach.

In almost all these cases, 2222CONA volunteers are up against attorneys and other professionals hired by developers. While we will always remain a grass-roots organization, we sometimes need to hire legal, engineering, or land-planning professionals to review legal documents or help us form substantive positions. We are frugal in spending money since all that we have comes from neighbors' donations. Our volunteers, representing 7 neighborhoods, give huge amounts of time, energy and resources, trying to moderate traffic safety issues on RM2222 and water quality issues for the Bull Creek watershed, one of the biggest contributors to Austin's drinking water.

We are working for YOUR benefit, so please donate as generously as you can. We also welcome more residents who can become a CONA volunteer. There is much to be done.

Make contributions payable to 2222CONA, with Glenlake noted in the Memo line of the check, and send to:

2222CONA
P.O. Box # 29602
Austin, TX 78755

Thank you,
Lisette Schmidli
Glenlake representative to 2222CONA
345-1776.

2222CONA
Coalition of Neighborhood Associations