

Judges Hill Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes

7:30 PM Thursday March 26, 2015

Home of Judges Hill Neighborhood Association President, Ray and Christy Langenberg

1802 Vance Circle, Austin, TX 78701

A quorum of 20% was present. The meeting was called to order.

Chairman Ray Langenberg announced that under the Association Bylaws, owners or designated owner representatives who paid 2014 Dues would be entitled to run for office and vote on all matters at the annual meeting, regardless of whether they paid 2015 dues, since 2015 dues were not yet due. Owners or designated owner representatives who only paid 2015 dues would be entitled to vote on all matters, except officers, and could not run for office at the annual meeting because the Bylaws require membership for 180 days to engage in those activities.

Minutes from May 11, 2014 were unanimously approved: [http://judgeshill.org/resources/Information/JHNA\\_2014\\_05\\_11\\_minutes.pdf](http://judgeshill.org/resources/Information/JHNA_2014_05_11_minutes.pdf)

Judges Hill Neighborhood Association Treasurer, Mark Seeger as of March 26, 2015, gave a financial report. Members may contact the President for a copy of the report. Reimbursement to the President was requested for the Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015 Judges Hill Neighborhood Association party refreshments. The request was unanimously approved.

Judges Hill Neighborhood Association voted to opt in to the City of Austin's Restricted Front and Side Yard Parking Ordinance, which would prohibit parking a motor vehicle in the front or side yard of a residence except in a driveway or a paved parking space with a majority in favor and 4 opposed. <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/front-yard-parking>

A motion was approved to table a resolution to decline to take a position in favor or opposed to the establishment of a Local Historic District until after the City of Austin holds a meeting for Judges Hill Neighborhood Association to explain other options to preserve the single family character of JHN.

A discussion of the Downtown Austin Plan was held. (in the Downtown Austin Plan see page 109 for Compatibility Zones, Setbacks in Judges Hill map is on page 111.)

Motion: Resolve that a small group (members to be appointed by the new Chairman of Judges Hill Neighborhood Association) should use David Gilliland's Memo as a template to approach city leaders and advocate for their adoption into Code features of the Downtown Austin Plan as relates to Judges Hill Neighborhood and protecting its residential character.

## Memo

**To:** Our Neighbors in Judges Hill  
**From:** TBD  
**Date:** February 16, 2015  
**Re:** Proposal for Action

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We continue to want to work together to try to clarify any present internal disagreements regarding how best to preserve our residential character and still plan to have neighborhood meetings on the matter. But in light of the fact that the City is currently moving forward on the Code Next Project during which it will consider incorporating aspects of the Downtown Austin Plan, we think it is timely to approach key city leaders to tell them that there is consensus support in our neighborhood to request that the City codify the goals and suggestions in the Downtown Austin Plan for Judges Hill.

The Downtown Austin Plan makes specific references to, and proposals concerning Judges Hill, which are discussed below.

Page 31 of the Plan states: "The character of Downtown ranges from the skyscrapers of Congress Avenue to the single-family neighborhood of Judges Hill. This diversity gives Downtown an authentic sense of place - a unique character that fosters district pride, enjoyment and investment, as well as visitor appeal." Thanks in large part to the efforts of Jay Tassin, the Plan proposes no zoning changes for Judges Hill. The current use and height restrictions that exist would be maintained. This supports our consensus desire to remain a predominantly single-family residential neighborhood consistent with the existing diverse mix of housing choices in the neighborhood, but with no further condominium or apartment complex developments and no further offices. Our consensus desire is also supported by Page 78 of the Plan, which provides that "(a)n appropriate mix of residential and non-residential uses should be allowed in all parts of Downtown, except for Judges Hill, which should generally be preserved as a single-family residential neighborhood." This is consistent with one of the stated goals of the Plan (page 86), which is to make Downtown housing family-friendly. As the sole predominantly single-family residential area within the confines of Downtown Austin, as defined in the

Plan, our neighborhood contributes significantly to the realization of this goal and should be preserved consistent therewith.

The Plan addresses height restrictions in our area to provide for an appropriate transition to residential housing. The Plan provides:

Properties in Downtown have Floor Area Ratio (FAR) limits ranging from 8:1 in the Central Business District (CBD) to less than 1:1 in the single-family neighborhood of Judges Hill. ("FAR" is amount of building square footage divided by amount of site square footage. It is the typical measure to describe building density). Height limits transition upward from 35 feet in Judges Hill and the portions of Northwest District to unlimited height on properties designated with CBD zoning. These limits have helped to shape Downtown and have provided a level of certainty in terms of real estate value. The Downtown Austin Plan calls for these limits to be substantially maintained . . .

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The Land Development Code's generic Compatibility Standards should not apply in Downtown; instead, the City should adopt more specific standards to protect adjacent neighborhoods and to promote compatibility of building scale and massing. Five compatibility zones are proposed, each with specific height standards aimed at providing an appropriate scale transition to the Judges Hill and Old West Austin Neighborhoods. These are illustrated on Page 109 (Proposed Downtown Compatibility Zones and Standards).

A copy of Page 109, reflecting the unique compatibility standards suggested for West Avenue and streets to the east of West Avenue, is attached.

The purpose of communicating with city leaders now is three-fold: (1) to demonstrate that we are not a divided community with respect to the issue of preserving the residential character of our neighborhood; (2) to discern, if possible, whether they will support our vision, and (3) to explore whether working together we can secure assurances from and action by the City that is sufficient to satisfy the desires and concerns of all neighbors. Although there is a division of opinion regarding the proposed Judges Hill Local Historic District, this should not distract us from pursuing what is plainly the consensus desire of our small community, which is to preserve the residential character of our neighborhood.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Discussion of additional regulations for mobile food trailers concluded that food trailers are not allowed near residential areas. Mobile food trailers would be an issue for Code enforcement.

<http://www.austintexas.gov/departments/mobile-food-establishments>

Annual Election of Judges Hill Neighborhood Association Officers resulted in these officers:

Chairman: Jo Sue Howard

Vice- Chairman: Ben Schotz

Treasurer: Jim Montgomery

Secretary: Jeanne Graves

Austin Neighborhood Council Representative: Megan Meisenbach

The past president, Ray Langenberg was acclaimed for doing a fine job.

The meeting was adjourned