



June 01, 2021

Planning Commission, City of Austin

Via E-mail: maureen.meredith@austintexas.gov, Heather.Chaffin@austintexas.gov

**RE: Plan Amendment Case: NPA-2020-0002.02
Zoning Case #: C14-2021-0058**

Property Address: 1501 E. 6th Street (also known as 1509 East 6th Street and 1510 East 5th Street)

Dear Planning Commissioners,

Members of the ECC-NPCT attended the Virtual City Led Community Meeting regarding this project on the evening of September 24th and hosted a Special Meeting to further discuss this case following that event. In our Special Meeting, the applicant was able to quickly present building design reconsiderations that could produce the project at a height of 78 feet. We made good progress towards finding common ground between the applicant and the neighborhood. We trusted that given more time the expert team of architects and engineers on the applicants team would find ways to reduce the height of this project.

Our role is to preserve the integrity of our neighborhood plan and that of the Saltillo TOD. The Saltillo TOD was heavily researched, vetted, and considered by knowledgeable, capable folks. It's our plan. It's a smart plan, a good plan, one that feels good to the neighborhood, and one that says 60 feet is the appropriate height for buildings at this location.

Every 36 inches the ECC-NPCT gives away only adds 36 inches more to the next project's height increase request and our neighborhood suffers a slow "death by a thousand inches" if you will.

That said, as stewards of our neighborhood plan, projects that bring strong affordable housing components are welcomed and cannot be ignored. Increased height precedents have been established for projects that bring strong affordable housing and/or fee-in-lieu proposals to our team. Those precedents cap out at building heights of 75 feet.

The ECC-NPCT requested that the applicant seek solutions that cap the building height at 75 feet or less and we have requested that the applicant keep us informed of their progress. The applicant attended additional general meetings however no compromise on height was ever reached.

On May 19, 2021 at a general meeting, the ECC-NPCT voted to support the applicant's proposal to amend the zoning height definition in this case to change the base maximum building height from 60 feet to 85 feet strictly contingent upon the delivery of family friendly affordable housing units as defined by the City of Austin Affordable Housing Development Incentive Policy for Transit Oriented Developments.

This proposal is one of very few projects that come before the ECC-NPCT that add real value to the neighborhood by including critically needed affordable housing. We trust that the Planning Commission will keep the areas 75' height increase precedents in mind when vetting this decision. We recommend that the Planning Commission consider the applicant's proposal favorably.

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Sincerely,

K Heaney

Kristen Heaney

Chair

East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood Planning Team

CC:

ECCNPT via e-mail

Planning Commission via e-mail

Council Member Pio Renteria, via e-mail