



June 23, 2021

Planning Commission, City of Austin

Via E-mail: [maureen.meredith@austintexas.gov](mailto:maureen.meredith@austintexas.gov), [Heather.Chaffin@austintexas.gov](mailto: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,

The role of the East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood team is to preserve the integrity of our neighborhood plan and that of the Saltillo TOD. Both plans were heavily researched, vetted, and considered by knowledgeable, capable folks. They're our plans, smart plans, and plans that feel good to the neighborhood. They say that 60 feet is the appropriate height for buildings at this project's location.

That said, as stewards of our neighborhood plan, projects that propose strong affordable housing components in exchange for height variances 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.

**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 inclusion of family-friendly units with a minimum of 2 bedrooms.**

**Furthermore, on June 17, 2021 at a general meeting, the parties clarified that support for an 85' height variance was strictly contingent upon the delivery of 10% of the gross square footage of affordable housing being committed to family friendly units with a minimum of 2 bedrooms.**

**Additionally, the ECC-NPCT voted to support a 90' height variance strictly contingent upon the delivery of 20% of the gross square footage of affordable housing being committed to family-friendly units with a minimum of 2 bedrooms. While the 90' zoning height would apply to the entire site, the building shall not be any taller than 85' height as measured from the ground floor elevation on E. 6th Street. The ECC-NPCT understands that a private Restrictive Covenant may be necessary to enforce the height limit on E. 6th Street.**

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. Additionally, it benefits from its location on a sloped site - the added height remains compatible with neighboring structures. This project only scratches the surface of the need for affordable units in our neighborhood and we hope to see more follow in its footsteps. We recommend that the Planning Commission consider the applicant's proposal favorably.

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*