



**City of San Marcos Regular Meeting Minutes
Neighborhood Commission
June 19, 2019 at 6:15 p.m.
Code Compliance Conference Room
630 E Hopkins, Building 5
San Marcos, Texas 78666**

Call to Order

*Meeting was called to order by Chair **Lizbeth Dobbins** at 6:15 p.m.*

Roll Call

In attendance: Joe Cantu, Lizbeth Dobbins, Estella Enriquez, Roland Saucedo, Angie Ramirez and Kendra Wesson. Michelle McWatters joined the meeting at 6:41 p.m. Absent were Lupe Costilla, Cathy Dillon, Shane Scott, and Jennifer Katz.

30 Minute Citizen Comment Period: *Each speaker signed up prior to the meeting being called to order will be called in order of sign-up, and will be allowed three minutes to speak about items posted or not on the agenda*

Lisa Marie Coppoletta – concern regarding trees and flooding caused by blacktop overlay. Toxic overlay. Neighbors have headaches, etc.

Anthony Cross – representative of MOVE SM – improving alternate methods of transportation. Walk bridge at Sessom: lives at 1309 Alamo Street so his family crosses the street often. Urges commission to consider alternatives to pedestrian bridge as being costly and ineffective. Feels that a walk bridge would limit traffic to just vehicle traffic. Consider the cost and also the effectiveness of the request, but applauds the commission's effort to review the issue.

MINUTES

Consider approval, by motion, of the **May 15, 2019** meeting minutes.

- *Motion made by **Roland Saucedo** to approve minutes as written of May 15, 2019 minutes. Seconded by **Kendra Wesson**. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.*

PRESENTATIONS

Bobcats Give Back (Jeff Caldwell)

Diversion program to target students, but will also include citizens this year, to keep items out of the landfill. The program collected over 700 pounds of clothing last year just on campus alone. Information can be found on the City's website. These supplies go back to those who need it. Limited number of sites with participating ACT Ally Partners listed on website. Off campus site will be in the 100 Block of Craddock in the Hughson Heights Neighborhood 2nd, 3rd, 4th weekend in July.

*If volunteers are needed? Check with Amy Kirwin. **Roland Saucedo** noted that Tommy Cuevas collects furniture and re-distributes to those in need. He may be able to help with collecting couches. **Roland** will provide contact information.*

Future plans include a trailer to collect mattresses and haul to a facility in Houston.

Alert Cooperative by the Office of Emergency Management (Rachel Ingle)

Would like to create a cooperative between the OEM and the NC. There is a gap when it comes to emergency alerts in our community. Warn Central Texas is available to those who sign up. Reverse 911 system reaches those with landlines. How do we reach the rest of our community? Would like to propose that our neighborhood block captains recruit folks in neighborhoods to be the points of contact and who can alert neighbors of emergencies. Would like to bridge gap to warn community. Previously digital signage was placed to try and do this, but not as effective as getting in to the neighborhoods. OEM has reached out to CONA and spoke to Sara Lee Underwood. There is an overlap in people listings for NC and CONA. CONA has individual representatives to go to neighborhoods. This would possibly look like a phone/text tree to notify neighborhood representatives to go door to door with warning messages. Looking at non-traditional ways of communication. Use our community to help our community. We have 14 alert sirens in our community at this time. Those sirens are intended to warn people who are outdoors only. New homes are well insulated and not built to receive siren alerts. OEM will go through transition program to educate the public beginning in the fall regarding the purpose of sirens, what the reaction should be, what they are meant to alert citizens to, etc. Sirens were placed in locations after density studies of outdoor activities and coverage areas.

ITEMS FOR ACTION/DISCUSSION

- a) Discuss and consider action regarding the presentation provided by the Office of Emergency Management about the role that Commissioners can play in alerting neighborhoods of emergencies and disasters.

Roland Saucedo: *has worked in the past with Mike Jones with the County Emergency Management Since the 2015 floods, they have been collaborating with CONA. Encourages every commissioner to attend a CONA meeting to create partnership and collaboration to obtain contact information for block captains, neighborhood representatives, etc. CONA already has block captains set up. Meetings are on the 3rd Monday of every month held at Dunbar at 7:00 p.m.*

Lizbeth Dobbins: *what would be our role if CONA has this set up already? It was noted by Rachel Ingle that only 6% of our community is signed up to receive notifications through Warn Central Texas.*

Joe Cantu: *doesn't know who his block captain is, and doesn't know if they even exist. His neighborhood has a NextDoor app that they use that gets the word out. He likes the idea of this cooperative but feels everyone in their district should be able to identify who their commissioner is and how to contact them. Concerned about knocking on doors in the middle of the night, ringing doorbells, going out in tornado watches/warnings and personal safety.*

Roland Saucedo: *not every neighborhood has block captains, and the blocks are not specific to "blocks". Neighborhood Commission is more about the overall neighborhoods (sectors), while CONA is about communities.*

Kendra Wesson: *feels like the neighborhood captains/block captains need to be made known and a determination made about what they will do before we start doing it.*

Angie Ramirez: *what triggers this level of alert? Rachel Ingle answered that it is an imminent threat to life and safety of residents. These are more in line with evacuation notices.*

Roland Saucedo: *will forward email contact list of CONA reps to commissioners through staff liaison, Tammy Strakos.*

Michelle McWatters: *please include on that information when the next CONA meeting is scheduled.*

Roland Saucedo: *CONA now operates by round table rather than agenda.*

Lizbeth Dobbins: requests a location of where 14 sirens exist and believes a more expanded discussion should be held at next meeting.

MOTION was made by **Roland Saucedo** and seconded by **Estella Enriquez** to bring this item back to the agenda for the next Neighborhood Commission meeting in July. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

AMENDED MOTION was made by **Roland Saucedo** and seconded by **Michelle McWatters** to include a request for Rachel Ingle to provide a listing of locations for digital sign placement. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

- b) Review and discuss for possible action a draft resolution to Council regarding changes to Neighborhood Commission ordinance based on strategic planning exercise.

Lizbeth Dobbins reviewed draft resolution wording, reading aloud. **Michelle McWatters** requested that listing order be changed. **Lizbeth Dobbins** noted an additional recommendation that District 8 be added to District 1, which would move the downtown area to **Cathy Dillon** (heritage area) and combine the two districts into one.

Angie Ramirez: what do stakeholders have to say? It was noted that it is difficult to find residents to serve, because many of the downtown residents do not live in San Marcos, being comprised of mostly businesses and students. Property owners do not necessarily live in San Marcos or even in Texas.

MOTION made by **Roland Saucedo** and seconded by **Michelle McWatters** to agendize discussion of combining Sector 8 with Sector 1 at July meeting.

Further discussion ensued regarding changing the order in the language to reflect "neighbors, residents, city departments."

AMENDED MOTION by **Roland Saucedo** to change the language in the draft resolution to reflect the order of neighbors, residents, city departments. **Michelle McWatters** seconded.

FINAL MOTION by **Roland Saucedo** to accept the entire resolution with the noted verbiage change. **Kendra Wesson** seconded. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

- c) Review and discuss for possible action a draft resolution to Council related to speed display signs in school zones

Lizbeth Dobbins reviewed draft resolution and noted that **Shane Scott**, who originally proposed this resolution but was not present at this meeting, approved verbiage.

MOTION to approve resolution as written made by **Roland Saucedo** in light of the fact that Shane Scott had approved verbiage. **Michelle McWatters** seconded and asked for further discussion. **Joe Cantu** asked if this request is in addition to flashing school zone signs or as replacements, citing a concern that if drivers ignore one sign, they may ignore the other but feels it is worth looking at. **Roland Saucedo:** Traffic control will do their own studies, but this prompts the idea. **Roland Saucedo:** possibly include "to evaluate installing additional speed display signs in school zones of San Marcos." **Michelle McWatters** and **Joe Cantu** like the current language as is, but **Michelle** would like to include the word "all" before school zones.

MOTION to amend the draft resolution by **Michelle McWatters** to add the word "all" before "school zones." **Roland Saucedo** seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

- d) Review and discuss for possible action a draft resolution to Council regarding a walk bridge at Sessom and Comanche

Lizbeth Dobbins noted that **Jennifer Katz** was not present at this meeting to entertain changes to her proposed draft resolution. Therefore, **Lizbeth** recommends that this item be moved to the next agenda for additional research and that **Jennifer** be contacted so that she is fully aware of new considerations submitted by citizens to review.

MOTION made by **Roland Saucedo** to table Item D to July meeting. Motion seconded by **Kendra Wesson**. All in favor, none opposed. Item D tabled until next meeting.

- e) Review and discuss for possible action a draft resolution to Council regarding protection of heritage trees when making changes to neighborhood areas.

Lizbeth Dobbins reminded commissioners that **Shane Scott** requested language to reflect that the City adhere to same requirements outlined for developers to minimize effects on trees. **MOTION** to approve draft resolution made by **Kendra Wesson**, seconded by **Joe Cantu**. Further discussion ensued. **Roland Saucedo** noted that there are no policies for trees on private property at this time.

Lizbeth Dobbins: Belvin Street is not the only street that deals with heritage tree issues. There are many other streets in the City. Need to focus on habitat preservation as much as developers are required to do. **Roland Saucedo:** would this resolution, as it is written, affect policy for private homeowners? Clarification was made by Jeff Caldwell, Director of Neighborhood Enhancement, that there are currently steps in place to protect trees already. Can provide further research trees in LDC. We also have a City arborist to consult with. His concern is with the term "heritage" tree not being defined in City code and, if used by Neighborhood Commission in resolution, may create confusion. **Lizbeth Dobbins:** willing to do additional background and research and bring back to commissioners to include a definition of what a heritage tree is, since it is not currently a term used in the land development code. **Angie Ramirez:** what is currently the requirement of City workers to follow? Answer provided by Jeff Caldwell described bulb outs around trees, elevating sidewalks (aka sand bridging), and using air spades instead of shovels. These are techniques currently being used.

MOTION by **Roland Saucedo** to table this item until July meeting pending further research and verbiage clarification. **Kendra Wesson** rescinded earlier motion and seconded **Roland's** motion. All in favor, none opposed, Item E tabled for July meeting.

REPORTS

- a) Staff Report: Code Compliance Staffing Status from Shanna O'Brien, Code Compliance Manager

Code Compliance now fully staffed. There are now five full time code compliance officers onboard. Great team, hitting the ground running. Working on programs and hopes to report back in future meeting regarding code revisions and to get feedback from group.

- b) Staff Report: Follow up from Jeff Caldwell, Director of Neighborhood Enhancement, regarding citizen concerns of emergency vehicle access on narrow streets/parking reported by Joe Cantu at 5-15-19 meeting and explanation of Residential Permit Program.

Concern was referred to the Fire Marshal's office. They went out and looked at it and did not note any problems with access. However, if there are specific times that this occurs, they ask that they be notified so that they reassess.

There is some confusion on the Residential Parking Permit program. This program only happens when a group of residents create a petition and it get passes. The RPP requires that residents have a permit to park on specific streets. Only residents that live in that section can park there, but they can get guest passes. Some neighborhoods have also asked for no parking signs on one side of street and City can do that and make better access available on narrow streets.

- c) Commissioner Report: Review of Annual HOA Willow Creek Estates Meeting by **Lizbeth Dobbins** (Sector 9)

Annual meeting recently held at SMPD. Very positive. Only comment was a dirt pile on Stagecoach Trail. A bit of an eyesore at this time. Eventually the developer that takes on that property will need to clean it and eliminate hazards.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (*motions to place a discussion item on an agenda for a regular commission meeting*)

- a) Discuss and consider discussion items for future agendas.
- **Roland Saucedo** to provide a commissioner's report next month regarding an update on an upcoming Wallace Addition neighborhood meeting.
 - **Roland Saucedo** would also like to share his experience with and the process of procuring the services of a mural artist for interested sectors.
 - **MOTION** was made by **Estella Enriquez** and seconded by **Michelle McWatters** to add above mentioned items to the next meeting agenda. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Question and Answer Session with Press and Public

- None

Adjournment

*Motion was made by **Kendra Wesson** and seconded by **Joe Cantu** to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m. All approved, none opposed, motion carried.*

The minutes for the June 19, 2019 meeting of the City of San Marcos, Texas Neighborhood Commission are respectfully submitted on July 17, 2019 by Tammy Strakos, Staff Liaison, Neighborhood Enhancement

Approved by:

Lizbeth Dobbins, Chair
Chair or Vice Chair