

# River North Master Plan

## 9th PLANNING TEAM MEETING

Monday, December 1, 2008

5:00 PM

Cliff Morton Development & Business Services Building (One Stop)  
1901 S. Alamo, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Training Rooms A & B

## MEETING MINUTES

**Planning Teams Members in attendance:** David Adelman, Christine Vina for Manjiri Akalkotkar, Lynda Billa Burke, David Bogle, Ben Brewer III, Timothy Cone, George A. Geis, Carol Harris, Harper Huddleston, Glen Huddleston, Marcie Ince, John Kenny, Mary K. Martinez, Cathey Meyer, Pedro Martinez for Sam Mills, Bill Myers, Dr. Marion Oettinger, Howard Peak, Terri Rubiola, Don Ryden, Lewis T. Tarver, Murray Van Eman, Michael Westheimer

**Planning Team Alternates in attendance:** Dean Perry

**Visitors in Attendance:** 12

5:05 – 5:30 **Introduction and Final Meetings Overview** – T.C. Broadnax, Assistant City Manager, reviewed the agenda, meeting expectations and adoption process memo.

5:30 – 6:30 **Presentation by Moule & Polyzoides: River North Draft Development Code** – David Sargent and Stefanos Polyzoides presented a power point presentation discussing the development code. They reviewed six key design issues and ten big ideas from the charrette process. Build out scenarios were depicted showing how the “shades and shadows report” and parking requirement would potentially constrain development along the San Antonio River. Other illustrations showed how buildings would need to step back after 4-5 stories along the River. Developments on the south and eastside of the River need to step back more to comply with “shades and shadows”.

Mr. Sargent reiterated that the River setback (recommended 20 ft) and the San Antonio River Improvements, together, would make an open space system along the River. Development to avoid would be a commercial block with four to five layers of parking and then towers on the top. This would diminish the street activity. A sidewalk was recommended in private developments adjacent to the River to avoid cutting into the grade with long expanses of terraced ADA ramps.

It was reiterated that the real driver is not the development height, but the parking, as parking is what will be constraining development in River North. Suggested heights were for the River a 3-5 plinth plus 10 with 15 stories as a maximum, for Broadway a 3-5 plinth with three additional floors not to exceed 8 stories; for Avenue B 3-5 stories, for Madison Square neighborhood 2-3 stories, and 3-5 along the expressway’s edge.

6:30 – 7:00 **Question and Answer with Moule & Polyzoides** The consultants entertained questions after their presentation. Mr. Glen Huddleston concurred with keeping the River setback at 20 ft. Mr. Perry suggested that fences and walls along the river not exceed 4 ft in height. Ms. Harris inquired if the standards could be incorporated into an extended RIO-2 district. The consultants replied that most of the RIO-2 provisions have been incorporated into the development code. Mr. Adelman inquired about the SUP restrictions for hotels. The consultants responded that they heard in the charrette that the area should not be dominated by hotels. Mr. Tarver inquired about the architectural review process. The consultants stated this approach could vary from review by the HDRC to having a “Town Architect” on staff. Mr. James Lifshutz commented that the TIRZ should support and promote residential development. However, additional investment by the City should be required for street improvements, public art, street cars, etc. Mr. Tarver added that a grocery store would be essential.

The consultants responded to a question as to why conventional zoning would not work for River North. They stated D zoning would allow for buildings to eat up demand, but does not spread the demand horizontally. D zoning also lacks the form and design standards that could provide more certainty. If you have an area of D zoning that is full of great buildings, D would be OK, but not if you are trying to promote compatible infill.

Mr. Huddleston inquired about the different height and intensity allowed on properties facing both sides of Avenue B. The consultant responded that a zone could be extended 30 ft in width along the frontage of Avenue B that would equalize the heights not exceeding 5 stories, and not bisect the street.

Mr. Geis stated that the plan did not appear to fairly address parking requirements for difference uses and densities. The standards should take use into consideration.

Ms. Martinez stated she was concerned that schools were not permitted by right across the board in the use matrix.

7:00 – 8:00 **Discuss and Reach Consensus on General Elements of the Development Code** – Ms. Andrea Gilles, Senior Management Analyst, and Patrick Howard, Assistant Director, led the discussion. Mr. Geis stated he had a lot of concerns, and staff agreed to sit down with him to consider these concerns. Several members of the planning team discussed the need to try to get the document as close as possible to the document that would be presented through resolution to City Council and eventually taken out to the public. They felt that a report summarizing agreement on basic code concepts would dilute the development code document. The consultants proposed providing a more user friendly document incorporating the items that the architects discussed in this meeting for a final review.

8:00 **Next Steps** - Pat. DiGiovanni, Deputy City Manager, reviewed the next steps. The 2nd Public Meeting would be held on December 8 at the San Antonio Museum of Art, 200 W. Jones Avenue, at 6 p.m. The 10<sup>th</sup> Planning Team meeting will be held on

Monday, December 15, 2008, at the Development and Business Services Center, 1901 S. Alamo.

The meeting was adjourned.

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