

Wynnewood North Conservation District Exploratory Neighborhood Meeting 1
Meeting Notes May 7th, 6:00 PM.

Note, this is a summary, please listen to the recording also posted. If you were not able to join us at the meeting covered in these notes, we are having another meeting Wednesday, May 20, 6:00 pm, at the Oak Cliff Public Library, 302 West 10th Street, 75208.

1) Introduction (by Steve Westerheide)

a. *Welcome!*

b. *Who is on the Committee?*

a. This is an effort driven by people who live in the Neighborhood, utilizing the City's guidelines, with help from City staff. The City is not pushing this on us, nor is the Board. This started because some people are concerned about what has happened in other neighborhoods, where tear downs start, the remaining homes are overwhelmed, and then reduced to lot value.

c. *When did this start?*

a. This was first discussed in 2020, and an ad hoc committee of your neighbors was formed in October of 2022.

b. Since then, the topic has been discussed at almost all Neighborhood General Meetings, with updates in most of the quarterly newsletters.

c. City Staff has presented at three neighborhood General Meetings.

2) *What are the goals of the proposed Conservation District?* (by Ben Orr)

a. *To protect homeowner value.* Ben related his experience in his former neighborhood, in Houston, where the new builds caused the remaining existing houses to be reduced to lot value. Also, the new houses tend to drive up the appraised values, and therefore the taxes. This has happened in a lot of older neighborhoods in Dallas.

An attendee related the story of how this happened in Lakewood Heights, with the reduction in existing home values, while the taxes go up, and the issue of new drainage patterns created by big new houses.

b. *To encourage renovation and new construction that fits in with the existing homes and feel of the neighborhood.*

c. *What is proposed is not a Home Owners Association, and not a Historic District.*

d. See the brochure provided for more information.

3) *Who creates the standards?* (by Pat Ford)

a. You, as a homeowner in the proposed district.

1. See handout for the City provided list of things that can be part of the Conservation District Standards, we DO NOT have to address all of these topics.

2. You and your neighbors get to decide what issues are addressed, and how these issues are dealt with.
 - a. See the City provided timeline (attached to the handout) for the process of creating the standards. The blue marks where we are (at the very beginning), the green highlights show the multiple times the homeowners in the neighborhood have opportunities to provide comments.

On the timeline, the box with *"The Dir. (Director of Planning) conducts a min. of two pre application meetings.."*, is, as it states, the minimum. We know there will be more meetings to discuss each of these topics listed on the City provided list. There will be as many as it takes to understand and come to some kind of consensus. A recent District effort had 16 of these meetings.

- b. To go forward, we will need support from 58% of the homeowners. There are 283 homes in the neighborhood, so we need support from 165 homes.
- c. This process might take up to two years, with meetings run by City Staff to help us decide what issues to address, then a petition, then City Plan Commission action, then finally City Council action. See timeline in handout.
- d. On these easels adjacent are boards with the issues for the City provided list that can be addressed, please put a sticker in one of the columns to the right of the issue, in either, "Very Concerned", "Maybe Concerned", "Not Concerned", or "Needs further explanation". (See attached photos for the placement of dots on the boards)

You will have additional opportunities to give opinions as these concepts are developed in further meetings and the survey. Your decisions today are not final; you will have multiple opportunities to revise your position.

The items shown on the City provided list, and the boards, will eventually be in a survey that will be sent to all homeowners, to get closer to a list of concerns. This will be sent out electronically, and via paper. Details of this will be on the Conservation District Committee website.

Questions arose as to what some of the items on the City provided list meant. One being what is Floor Area Ratio, these are the kinds of questions that will be hashed out in the Pre Application meetings.

- b. *What area is part of this effort?*
 - a. See attached map in handout. Not included is Owenson's block, or the empty triangle to the east of Kroger.
- c. *Once a Conservation District is in place, who applies the standards to new exterior construction?*
 - a. The City's Urban Planning and Design Department staff, not your neighbors.

Questions arose as to timing of the Planning staff's review; we have been told their review is a five day turnaround. Then the proposed work goes to the Building Department for Permitting, no idea on their timing. It was pointed out that all construction work has to go thru the Permitting process at the Building Department.

It was also mentioned by an attendee that there is a lot of forthcoming development pressure, with the opening of Halperin Park, leading to a comment that it might be good to fast track this process.

Another point was made that if we, in a few years, decide we want to change the standards, the same 58% process needs to happen, with Plan Commission and Council approval.

Until a Conservation District is approved by the City Council, the only regulations are those in the base R 7.5a zoning, so there is nothing currently to stop someone from building a large, non-contextual house.

Another point was made is that this proposed Conservation District cannot address any existing construction, meaning what is existing is grandfathered in.

- b. In other words, we as neighborhood decide what issues we are concerned with, but once the Conservation District is in place, your neighbors have no voice in reviewing your proposed work, once the Ordinance, if adopted, is in place. City staff looks at proposed new work, based on the standards we develop.

Pat emphasized that we need as much input for everybody as possible, and that if you believe this is a good idea, we need you to talk about this effort with others in the neighborhood.

- 4) *How do I find out more?* (by Cynthia Michaels) Use the QR code on the brochure. Meeting notes and / or recordings from this meeting and future meetings will be posted there also.
- a. Next meeting, Wednesday, May 20th, 6:00, here at the Library, see handout.

Thanks for coming to this meeting! Please relate the content of this meeting and the upcoming meeting to your neighbors.