
St. John/Coronado Hills Combined Neighborhood Plan
Tuesday, June 23, 2009 – Virginia Brown Recreation Center Room B
Community Life Workshop

Overview: Shelia Balog, facilitator, began with introductions and review of ground rules that were developed during the Kick-Off meeting. Dee Dee Quinnely provided a neighborhood planning process update and introduced the agenda and topic discussion (community life – schools and community beautification) for the evening.

After a brief process update and presentation of the agenda outline, the guest speakers from AISD were introduced and the community life/schools discussion began.

AISD – Community Schools discussion Question/Answer and comment period:

Guest speakers: Claudia Kramer-Santamaria, Supervisor of Parent Programs and Allen Weeks, Consultant to AISD; Joe Silva, Assistant Director for Planning Services – Office of Facilities, was also present to answer participant's questions and address their comments.

Q: Why can't the school [Pickle Elementary] be named St. John elementary? It was once named after the community and that made us unique; our identity and things that meant something to us have been taken away.

A: Claudia mentioned that she would check with AISD and find out what the process is for changing a school's name. As the former principal of Pickle Elementary, Claudia was able to provide background on how the art installations in the St. John Community Center were driven by the community's voice speaking out in support of preserving the community's history and its special and unique features.

Comment: It would be great to have a "celebration day" in the community. Hold an event to explore the history; to identify where things came from, "this is where we have been...this is where we came from" – an event focusing on answering these questions and bringing the community together.

Q: Is the history of the community being brought into the schools? There is a great opportunity to build community within the schools by teaching the history

A: There is an oral history project currently being organized by the St. John library to engage Pickle students to continue the history of the community.

Principal Joel De La Garza commented on the importance a school having an identity and how this supports building well-rounded students. He stressed the importance of meeting the needs of each child and he shared an example referred to as the "5th Grade promotional" where Webb Middle and Reagan High representatives come to Pickle classrooms and spend time with the 5th graders to motivate kids to continue to middle and high school. An additional comment was made regarding the opportunity for senior citizens to visit classrooms. This prompted the question, "How do we generate interest in these types of activities?"

The second part of the Community Life workshop focused on community beautification with a presentation by Alanna Reed, Events Manager with Keep Austin Beautiful (KAB). For your reference, Alanna's presentation is posted to the SJCH website ([click here for download](#)).

KAB/Answer and Comment session:

Comment: It would be interesting to explore the possibility of community gardens on vacant lots. Community gardens would help beautify the community.

Comment: On February 27th, 2009, "The Project" will be taking place in St. John community. "The Project" is a one-day service project led by University of Texas. This one-day effort includes a large number of student volunteers organized to accomplish specific community beautification projects.

KAB – community beautification mapping exercise results:

Following the presentation by KAB community beautification, participants engaged in a small group mapping exercise to identify areas in the SJCH community in need of beautification and enhancements. Neighborhood Planning staff facilitated five small groups where participants were encouraged to identify ten target areas in SJCH, ultimately narrowing these ten locations a top three priority list.

The following table is a result of staff's effort to pull together the information collected on the five working maps. A corresponding "**community enhancement**" ([click here](#)) map is provided to illustrate the specific locations identified by the SJCH stakeholders as top priority areas suitable for beautification and/or enhancements. Top priority areas in the table

were classified as such based on how frequently participants identified a specific location. If a location was identified by at least two of the five small work groups then staff determined this area to be of utmost importance to the stakeholders. For example, all five work groups identified “Buttermilk Creek” as an area that they would like to see beautified, therefore it is classified as a top priority.

The table below is organized into three columns:

- Location corresponds to where the participant’s physically marked on the working maps
- Issue/Solution captures either an issue or solution mentioned by participants
- Frequency equates to the number of times a specific location was marked on the working maps

Location	Issue/Solution	n	Frequency
Buttermilk Creek	Clean-up creek; green-up; restoration; install more lighting; Adopt-a-creek (Pickle expressed interest in being involved in this); Possible fence for safety?		5
Nelson Field	Make green planting sidewalk improvements (raised islands/landscaping); trees (issues: buses, noise, drums)		4
Apartments North of E St. John Avenue; West of IH-35; block bounded by Duval on the East and Twin Crest Drive on the West	Clean up apartments; put trash in recycle bins and it isn’t picked up; Empty buildings, empty lands create area suitable for drugs, crime, etc.		4
East St. John Avenue	Clean up along road; plant street trees		3
E St. John/Cameron Rd intersection	Gateway – opportunity to enhance; public art		3
E St. John/IH-35 Frontage	Gateway – opportunity to enhance		3
St. John Park	Plantings/enhancements		3
Neighborhood defined by boundary: St. John South to Atkinson; Bennett East to Blessing)	Clean up		2
Vacant land behind east extent of Buttermilk Creek Park/Greenbelt	Vacant land – extend park		2
Intersection of Cameron Rd. and US 290 underpass	Gateway opportunity; public art; street trees		2
Housing along Creekside Dr.	Clean-up front yards		1
Strip center on Cameron Rd. (across from Wild Wood Apts.)	Clean-up		1

Burger King (area around bus stops)	Loitering	1
GENERAL	Parking in front yards	1
Condemned House (Duval street North of Blackson; South of Delmar)	Pile of wood from cut down trees; Is this house condemned?	1
Dodge car dealership; old Home depot site	Enhancements	1
Segment of Bennett (west side of Bennett; north of Atkinson and south of Booker)	Obstruction on road	1
Blessing Avenue (North of East St. John; South of Blackson)	Enhancement/beautification	
Vacant lands east of Old Town; South of Anderson Lane; West of 290	Vacant lands – make into a park?	1
Frontage road to 183 – E Anderson Lane (specifically, the segment of roadway in between where Carver and Blessing intersect the frontage road)	Need sound barriers; need safety barriers; trim overgrown shrubs to increase view/sight lines; traffic problems with visibility; high speed feeder road; hole in road not fixed properly	1
Grand Canyon Drive	Street needs to be cleaned-up; beautification/enhancements	1
Radcliff Drive	Too much architectural diversity	1
Cameron Road	Crosswalks along this road; (increase safety of pedestrians)	1
Intersection of Cameron/McKie Drive	Gateway opportunity	1
Intersection of Cameron Rd. and Berkman	Gateway opportunity; public art	1
Intersection of Cameron Rd. and US 183; E Anderson Service road	Gateway opportunity; street trees	1
Vacant lands behind the property at St. John/Duval intersection	Community gardens	1
Atkinson Road	Street trees; enhancements	1
Frontage to IH-35	Street trees	1
Frontage to US 290	Street trees	1
Frontage to US 183; East Anderson Service road	Street trees	1
GENERAL (Coronado Hills)	Community garden somewhere	1
Berkman Drive	Street trees; enhancement	1
Creekside Drive	Street trees; enhancement	1
Coronado Hills Drive/Cameron Oaks	A lot of traffic; need street trees and crosswalks	1

Plaza		
Park at Pickle Elementary	Cars cut through this park	1
Rental properties in Coronado Hills	Increase homeownership of this area	1
Westheimer apartment complex	Apartments that suffered fire; renovation plans?	1
Property on Bethune (located on segment of Bethune between St. John and Booker Ave)	Fire; what is happening with this structure?	1
West end of Wheatley Ave	Dumping trash	1
Delmar Avenue to St. John Avenue (west side of IH-35)	Consider a foot path to connect apartments north of Delmar to services on St. John Ave	1
Houses East of Twin Crest; West of Martin Avenue; South of Delmar; North of Blackson	Trash in yards; do they need help picking this up?	1