

Austin St Liaison Committee Meeting Notes

March 16, 2017

Newton Senior Center

Attending Liaison Committee Members: Jake Auchincloss (facilitator/City Councilor), Helene Sroat (Newtonville Area Council), Michael Tucci (Jackson St), Brian Shaw (Craft Beer), Gwen Noyes (Austin St Partners), Alison Leary (City Councilor), Susan Albright (City Councilor)

Also attending: Mark Dufton (Austin St Partners), Ouida Young (City Legal Dept), Marc Welch (City Tree Dept), Rachel Blatt (City Planning)

Agenda:

1. Request **for public comment:** There were no comments.
2. Ouida Young explained that any minor changes to the Special Permit approved Austin St plans will need a **'consistency ruling'** confirming that they are consistent with the intention of the permit. Such a 'ruling' will happen closer to the time of getting a building permit.
3. Mark Dufton opined that **Star Market has no development plans** for the foreseeable future. He also reported that the **Austin St appeal is now scheduled for an April hearing**, but timing to be free of the appeal is not predictable. Project schedule depends on being out from under appeal.
4. At this time there is an **Austin St gas line question that the City engineers would like some clarity on.** Because the gas line running along the S side of Austin St is coated steel* and will be in very good condition for years to come, Town engineers do not recommend changing it, moving it, or planting street trees over it - as shown in the approved plans for Austin St. Alternative placement on the opposite (north) side of the street for a similar number of trees was suggested; a plan drawing and section sketches illustrating the alternative was provided. It was pointed out by Marc Welch that such a placement would allow a more beneficial sun exposure for the trees' healthy, full growth as well as greater protection from snow plows or street traffic. It was also pointed out that sidewalk planting areas along the front of the proposed new building would still be retained, and would allow plant/shrub roots systems that would not endanger the gas line.

5. **Street Lighting:** There was a brief discussion about where and what sort of new street lighting should be added to Austin St. Electric wires will be underground. Where, and what sort of street/sidewalk lighting should replace current fixtures? Could be poles or attached to building. This is a topic for further exploration at a later date.

6. **Walnut Street Planning:** Group meeting with design consultants and progress being made which will help with some Austin St decisions.

7. **Aquinas Lot:** Plans and operations for this lot need a further review once the project timeline is firmed up.

8. **Parking Kiosks:** Expected to be installed in the Austin St parking lot on May 12.

Notes respectfully submitted by Gwen Noyes