

First Heart of Lakeway Town Hall Meeting, November 10, 2017

Thanks to everyone for attending last night's Lakeway Town Hall Meeting! It was great to see so many residents who clearly care about this community.

As promised, here is a short summary of some of the conclusions that the group arrived at Thursday night:

1. Residents are encouraged to make their positions known to the City Council regarding the raw land behind HEB that is being called the "Heart of Lakeway." There are three ways to do that: (1) attend the next city council meeting on November 20 (6:30 pm at City Hall) and speak during citizen participation; (2) email the city council members and the city manager at the email addresses listed below; and/or (3) call the city council members and the city manager at the phone number listed below. Combining two or all three of these options can be very effective. While the general tenor of the group was to request that the city council take no action on the Heart of Lakeway until they have heard from, and communicated with, the residents of Lakeway, your response should be the one that most expresses what you want to say?

2. The zoning and planning commission (known as ZAPCO) does not have their email addresses listed on the city website. Their names are listed below.

3. There was a consensus from the meeting that the council should address at least these following ten issues:

- A. Density of housing and parking
- B. Traffic and roadways
- C. Light and noise pollution
- D. Crime, safety and emergency services
- E. Cost and transparency on budgeting
- F. Availability of water
- G. Impact on wildlife
- H. Need for additional city staffing
- I. Impact on sewage usage
- J. General infrastructure needs

4. We have tentatively reserved the Lakeway Activity Center for Thursday, December 14, at 6:30 pm for a follow-up Town Hall Meeting. Would you let us know as soon as possible if that date is a problem for you?

Thank you again for attending and supporting our Lakeway community. Have a great weekend!

Second Heart of Lakeway Town Hall Meeting - December 14, 2017

About 40 residents attended the second Town Hall Meeting last Thursday evening regarding the Heart of Lakeway property. Mayor Bain and Council Members Haley and Hennagin participated as well.

As widely reported, Legend Communities (Haythem Dawlett's company) has a portion of the Heart of Lakeway land under contract from the Lakeway MUD. Legend has been extending the closing date by making periodic payments to the MUD. It is unknown how long the closing can be extended. Perhaps the contract is accessible to the public.

The meeting began with a review of Legend's August 2017 proposal to the Zoning and Planning Commission (as graciously provided by Legend for use at the meeting) regarding their proposed development. In addition to smaller acreage (about 5,000 sq ft) home lots, the proposed development includes 210 age-restricted (55+) apartments in land previously zoned for such purpose as part of the Tuscan Village PUD and a separate baseline of 130 condos. The number of condos (and the number of floors thereof) could increase depending on market interest and, therefore, height variances may need to be requested. The center of the proposed development would be mixed use (retail/office/condo), adjacent to a 2.5 acre common area (with perhaps an outdoor amphitheater). Legend would like to see a luxury hotel anchor this section. The entire development would be under an HOA that would be responsible for maintenance; landscaping would use recycled water.

The council does not believe it has free reign to zone the MUD property as something other than a PUD that accomplishes projects similar to that proposed by Legend. It is possible that Legend has developed its plans based on discussions with the city council over the past few years. It would be interesting to know from Legend's perspective what sort of promises they believe have been made to them. The council expressed concern of a lawsuit (from, presumably, Legend or the MUD) if the city were to zone the MUD land as R-1 rather than a mixed-use PUD.

About 60% of those in attendance favored the city buying the entire remaining raw land (excluding the Tuscan Village PUD area) and making it into a park. A number of residents noted that the Heart of Lakeway land is the last major undeveloped acreage in Lakeway and called for a plan to keep it beautiful. Mayor Bain thought that residents who lived in Old Lakeway might like that plan but that residents in the newer areas would not. Question – has anyone really made that value proposition to the residents?

There was somewhat of a feeling that the city had been painted into a corner by prior discussions with Legend. Question – when did those discussions occur?

The residents were a little less outspoken than they were at the first Town Hall meeting, on November 9. Perhaps that was due to the large increase in information being made available since then, or perhaps it was due to the presence of the Mayor and the two Council Members. As for the Mayor and Council Members, they politely participated throughout as a part of the group and listened much more than they spoke.

One of the participants mentioned that residents should also consider the city's long-term Development Plan to see how the currently proposed development fits into that Plan.

If you are interested in future resident Town Hall meetings, please let us know. The cost is minimal – it's \$150 for the room, plus \$50 extra if you want to use A/V equipment. Individual members of the Committee (including us) paid for the November 9 Town Hall and we paid for the December 14 Town Hall ourselves. It's time for someone else to step up and help fund this effort if you believe it to be valuable. We'd be happy to help in other ways.

Have a great week – there's another City Council Meeting tonight. This one – among other things – proposes changes to the city charter.

Third Heart of Lakeway - Town Hall Meeting - January 11, 2018

Thanks to those who participated in last night's Town Hall Meeting at the Lakeway Activity Center. We estimate that around 80 folks attended the meeting, with quite a few returnees from the prior two citizen-sponsored Town Halls and a number of new faces as well.

Rick Alan started the meeting with an inspiring reading of his short story "Sad Patrick," which encouraged civic engagement. As poignant as it was for our community, you should know that Rick wrote it nearly 25 years ago. It seems that getting involved in a city has always been a challenge.

We then discussed the City's Comprehensive Plan, which was last updated in 2003 and was only designed to take the City through 2015. Many items in the Comprehensive Plan still resonated with the vast majority of last night's attendees. Among these items are the following from the Mission Statements of the Plan:

- We will use our resources in a cost-effective manner to provide quality infrastructure, open space, recreational opportunities, and professional government services.
- We will maintain a secure environment for all citizens by carefully planning ingress and egress to the city and by providing a well-trained police force.
- We will strive to ensure that all new development will complement our desired quality of life and will be an asset to the community.
- We will work with local merchants to ensure that business development is mutually beneficial to the business interests and the quality of life in Lakeway.
- We will work with our neighboring municipalities to ensure local area growth is compatible with our objectives.
- We will attempt, where possible, to maintain natural physical buffers on our borders, in order to preserve the separate identity and character of Lakeway.
- We will ensure that RR 620 and other commercial corridors are developed in a manner that reflects the uniqueness, special character, and quality of life in the City of Lakeway.

There was general agreement that the Comprehensive Plan should be updated and then followed when land development is being considered for approval.

After additional discussion, participants voted nearly unanimously to recommend a moratorium on any new major development for up to 18 months until a new Plan is studied, discussed and adopted, with substantial input from citizens at open town hall-style meetings (similar to how the current Plan was adopted).

Two other straw polls were taken – 70% favored making all of the Heart of Lakeway property (regarding the Stratus land behind HEB and the MUD land that has been optioned to Legend Communities) into parkland for the City; and only 20% supported any sort of performing arts center built with City funds.

There was an interesting discussion regarding why the MUD needed the \$11 million or so it would get from selling its land to Legend Communities. Jerry Hietpas, a MUD board member, indicated that it might be used to defray costs to citizens of a possible septic-to-sewer conversion for Old Lakeway. He said that the MUD could not require the conversion but that the LCRA could. We received additional input from other MUD-related parties today. We were told that, as Jerry noted, this conversion has not yet been approved by the MUD Board. We were also told that the LCRA could only require conversion if they could show seeping pollution into Lake Travis. We also confirmed that the current MUD debt is due largely to infrastructure costs of years past. We will try to get more information at the next MUD meeting.

There was a general consensus that participants wanted to have a greater voice in how the short-term and long-term future of Lakeway would be developed.

It should be noted that Keith Trecker, current member of the City Council, attended and participated. At least one member of ZAPCO and a former Mayor of the City also attended. Thanks go to George Blume, who led part of the discussion regarding the Comprehensive Plan and who himself was a City Council member during its passage, for sponsoring the cost of last night's Town Hall.

The next City Council meeting is scheduled for 6:30 pm on Tuesday, January 16, at City Hall. Among the agenda items is an update (whatever that means) on the Comprehensive Plan by City Manager Steve Jones. No additional information is available regarding that topic. There is a Special Session of the City Council scheduled for 5:30 pm that day to discuss the Charter amendments to be put before residents for vote in May.

As we mentioned last night, if you are interested in either forming or participating on a committee to discuss and act on any of the items discussed at last night's meeting or volunteering your talent and expertise in connection with a committee, please let us know and we will put you in touch with other interested parties for that purpose.

Have a great weekend in beautiful Lakeway, Texas!

Greg and Judy

An Additional Summary of Third Town Hall Meeting by **Rick Alan**

The Stakes Are High In The Heart Of Lakeway

The Stakes Are High In The Heart Of Lakeway Thoughts On The 4th Citizens Town Hall Meeting There Is Yet Hope For A Happy Ending

The organizers of the 4th Citizens Town Hall Meeting last Thursday have posted a summary under "Summary of Last Night's Town Hall Meeting". Here are some more more points that might be worth noting.*

The claim was made yet again (if I heard it right) that if the current high bidder for the MUD land decides not to exercise its option to buy, that we (the taxpayers of Lakeway) will be on the hook to it for \$13,000,000 or so. I was glad that a professional lawyer in the room clearly rebutted that claim, just as has been done multiple times elsewhere on Nextdoor. The current high bidder can simply walk at any time, if its demands for variances from the City are rejected. (As I certainly hope they are.) It does not own the land. There is no done deal. What bothers me about this, is that the bidder's ability (and implicit threat) to simply walk away is such a simple and crucial fact that it seems like bad faith to re-assert its opposite, especially by someone who would presumably know better. Did anyone else understand that conversation differently? I'd like the current bidder to walk, so we can build a beautiful park in the Heart Of Lakeway. Something good for us. Something for us to enjoy. Not something for us to suffer.

I think a lawyer also made the point that if the City simply said that it had decided to zone the land as a park, and the current high bidder sued on the grounds that that was a "taking", that the case would come down to the details of what assurances had been given to the bidder, and how, etc. In other words, the case could conceivably be a mess for Lakeway if our councillors were sloppy or unethical, but it could possibly (probably?) be somewhat less than a slam-dunk for the bidder, too. (Again, if I understood what was being said.) I, for one, would like to know just what our councillors have promised. Or not. To me, for something like this, if it isn't in writing, it doesn't matter. (But no lawyer, I — so I was glad to hear one I respect, weigh in.) Also, if an official gave you his word on something while publicly pretending to be somebody else, how many millions would you bet on it? Me, neither. Actually, I wonder how many, we did. Maybe "Jack Smart" could tell us? (There is also a "micro play" that I wrote and posted on Nextdoor that is about the possible consequences of the bidder suing Lakeway — search for "Antheel Towers" if you're interested.**) Any businessman knows that there is often a rather wide gulf between what one can do in the abstract, weightless world of legal theory, and what is practical in the real world. And as I mentioned in the "Antheel Towers" thread, we seem to live in a horse-rich environment, and there are many ways to trade.

Louis Mastrangelo made an excellent (both in content and presentation) extempore speech about what a poor thing it is to keep sticking the City Council Citizens Participation segments at the very end of the meetings, with the effect of discouraging, as much as possible...citizens participation. More bad faith. No wonder there is a huge issue of trust (or lack thereof) between the people whose land is being sold out from under them, and the people in power.

Someone also made the point that it was ridiculous that the citizens of Lakeway had to "go rogue", organize, and pay for these Town Hall meetings themselves. Hear, hear!

For my two cents, I also thought that the idea of a moratorium on major new development until a new Comprehensive Plan can be developed (with citizen involvement) was brilliant. It would at least be the polite thing to do.

It was certainly gratifying to see so many civic-minded people supporting their town in its hour of need. It reminded me a little of the film, "Darkest Hour", currently in theatres. Lakeway may be betrayed, and bruised, but she is not yet broken. The ending, of course, is up to you. Perhaps there is yet more in the goodness of our hearts, than we have heretofore let shine. In this, I do believe.

Finally, some guy stood up at the beginning and told a story, but forgot to mention that he is also a composer/arranger, whose music is available at RoyalLightMusic.com. It seems to appeal most to people with a live spiritual sense, an affinity for Classical Music, and a love for America from the time when such love was unquestioned. And pure. Yes, out of fashion, to the extreme! Isn't it about time?

* Of course, it's all based on memory, so please do correct me if I'm wrong. ** The thread's overall title is "The Truth Comes Out About The "Heart Of Lakeway".