
From: Leah Bojo
Sent: Wednesday, May 14, 2025 3:11 PM
To: Paul Gosselink; Estrada, Nancy <Nancy.Estrada@austintexas.gov>
Cc: Harden, Joi <Joi.Harden@austintexas.gov>; Middleton-Pratt, Lauren <Lauren.Middleton-Pratt@austintexas.gov>; Barton-Holmes, Christine <Christine.Barton-Holmes@austintexas.gov>; Qadri, Zo <Zo.Qadri@austintexas.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for Postponement; item 84

External Email - Exercise Caution

We agree to postpone to 6/5.

Leah M. Bojo, AICP, Director of Land Use & Entitlements
2705 Bee Caves Road, Suite 100, Austin, TX 78746
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From: Paul Gosselink
Date: Wednesday, May 14, 2025 at 4:07 PM
To: Estrada, Nancy <nancy.estrada@austintexas.gov>
Cc: joi.harden@austintexas.gov <joi.harden@austintexas.gov>, Middleton-Pratt, Lauren <Lauren.Middleton-Pratt@austintexas.gov>, christine.barton-holmes@austintexas.gov <christine.barton-holmes@austintexas.gov>, Leah Bojo, Zo Qadri <Zo.qadri@austintexas.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Request for Postponement; item 84

From: **Paul Gosselink**

Dear Nancy

I write to request a postponement of item #84(case #C-14-2024-0155). I am the Vice President of the Judges Hill Neighborhood Association (JHNA) and a signatory on the valid petition on file in this case. I am the spokesperson for both groups.

Our concern is that the applicant plans to excavate the toe of a slope that has a very sensitive environmental and structural geologic setting. More specifically, canyon rimrock, a Critical Environmental Feature (CEF) and steep slopes. This slope lies between the adjacent homes on the top of the bluff and the proposed project at the bottom of the slope. Our experts, including Professor Robert Gilbert, Chair of the UT school of geotechnical engineering, have advised that the applicant's conceptual site plan violates the 150' regulatory buffer requirement and will

result in a catastrophic landslide where these homes could/would slide down this bluff if not fully protected against that risk. Dr. Gilbert was retained by the city to analyze the major slope collapse that occurred at Wooldridge Dr (Pease Park). He has stated that it is likely possible to design a retaining structure but it will be a difficult and sophisticated engineering project and very likely very costly. If it is correctly designed, we will abandon our protest.

This point was made at the Planning Commission (PC) public hearing. While the PC recommended approval of the zoning change, they also required the applicant to provide the geotechnic study to the city before the 5/22 hearing and to provide the materials to the protestants so we could also review those materials and any proposed design. The applicant agreed to do both.

Today is 5/14. According to my understanding of city policy, a request for a postponement must be filed "at least one week prior to the scheduled council meeting." And it must specify the reasons.

Our reason is that we have not received any of the materials required by the PC. We asked for interim information (Work Plan) and have emailed with the applicant several times to check on the status because, while it no doubt takes time to develop this study, it will also take time to review/analyze the study by our geotechnic experts. We are out of time. The failure to timely deliver anything is one problem. Dr Gilbert also will not be able to attend a hearing on May 22 because he will be at his daughter's graduation from Columbia.

The stakes are obvious; a mistake on this design or construction will put public safety at risk; both for the homeowners whose homes are at risk of sliding down the bluff and the condo owners if the landslide reaches them. The city doesn't have a geotech on staff. Our experts can provide an analysis that the city does not have the specific expertise to undertake.

We request a postponement until the 6/5 meeting - assuming we receive the promised study. This date preserves the applicant's desire to have the matter considered before the Council goes on summer break but allows time to evaluate this important matter

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Gosselink

