

SRCC GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES
(www.srccatx.org)

Tuesday, February 18, 2025, 7:00 PM
SRCC: See the future. Shape the future.

Minutes

Sign up or renew your membership at www.srccatx.org. There is a 28-day holding period before you can make/second motions or vote. For questions: membership@srccatx.org.

1. 7:03 Welcome and Announcements

Presenter: Vice President Robin Sanders

- It was requested that thanks be extended to Noah Balch for his tenure as a Vice President, and then President for SRCC via his e-mail President@srccatx.org
- The Secretary position, Historical Preservation Committee Chairman, South Central Waterfront Advisory Board Rep, and Area Coordinator Positions that are still vacant
- Project Connect and ATP will be discussed at this meeting
- Mary Janecek-Friedman also performed a voting demonstration for attendees
 - <https://www.srccatx.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Voting.pdf>
 - Mary mentioned votes on public safety, and Project Connect DEIS proposed comments.
 - <https://www.srccatx.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Fireworks-Permitting-Concerns-Signed.pdf>
 - <https://www.srccatx.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Proposed-Comments-South-Congress-Ave.pdf>

2. 7:09 Minutes approved from previous meetings

Vote on motion to approve minutes from January 21, 2025 GM Meeting. Meeting minutes available at: www.srccatx.org.

- **Minutes approved** with no objections
- **Mary Janecek-Friedman** discussed that January 21, 2024 was listed under this bullet point on the agenda, and that the minutes being approved are actually for the January 21, 2025 GM meeting

3. 7:10 Treasurer's Report

All reports available upon request: treasurer@srccatx.org

Presenter: Treasurer, Will Andrews (5 min)

- \$19,000 in the bank
- Excel balance sheet to be included in the minutes
- Will Andrews to send Ken Burnett excel balance sheet/income statement to be included in the February GM minutes
- Concerns were brought forth re: Treasurer's report information being included in the minutes
- Mary Janecek-Friedman presented a motion to move discussion on what information will be included in minutes to the next EC meeting
 - **Sam Martin** seconded the motion
 - **Motion passes** with no objections
- Finance Committee to recommend the extent of the treasurer's report to be included in the minutes at the upcoming EC meeting

4. 7:15 Membership Report

Members must pay dues to participate in SRCC business and actions, such as voting and making motions. Try the subscription option for automatic annual renewals. *Presenter: SRCC Membership, Mary Janecek-Friedman*

- 256 members as of February 2025 vs 243 members in February 2024
- 69 in attendance today
- There is a 28 waiting period for voting after a dues payment has lapsed
- Mary Janecek-Friedman shared another demonstration of the voting process
 - <https://www.srccatx.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Voting.pdf>

- New member Mehrad Yasrebi was introduced to the membership
 - Mehrad Yasrebi is passionate about project connect

5. 7:21 Reports from Standing Committee Chairs

a) Planning and Zoning;

- Two twin vertical mixed use buildings being added on Riverside with commercial space at the bottom
- Apartment building being added to the South Central Waterfront
 - We should have a position letter for the city in March
- For additional information regarding the light rail and bridge please reach out to the Planning and Zoning Committee Chair,

Anita Tschurr

- Anita's contact e-mail address is anitatschurr@gmail.com

b) Historic Preservation;

- Mehrad Yasrabi shared the historical designation map of Travis Heights
 - <https://austin.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5251cd8ad3534754ad9a3d6a222c68ec>
- Robin Sanders announced that we are in search of a Historic Preservation Committee Chairperson
- Any interested parties are to reach out directly to Ruth Casarez in order to nominate a candidate
- Ruth's contact e-mail address is rucasar@swbell.net

c) Finance;

- Update to be shared at the upcoming EC regarding recommendations on what information from the Treasurer's report should be included in the General Membership minutes

d) Mobility;

- See Items 10 & 11 below

e) Public Safety;

- See Item 8 below

f) Parks and Environment;

- See Item 9 below
- Blunn Creek Nature Preserve Clean-up will take place March 1, 2025

at 8:30 AM for National Park Day

- In honor of Jean Mather's legacy – SRCC is pursuing:
 - the addition of Jean Mather to the Austin Women's Hall of Fame,
 - a proclamation from the city,
 - a distinguished service award, as well as
 - a name feature in Stacey Park or Blunn Creek to memorialize her impact to the community
 - The application fee for a name feature/sign with the city is \$350
 - The fee for the actual name feature/sign is \$900
- Any other ideas, or questions or concerns are to be shared with David Todd directly
 - David Todd's contact e-mail address is dtodd@wt.org

g) Schools;

- Spring Break is on the horizon

h) Communications

- Adam Greenfield from Safe Streets Austin was in attendance
 - <https://www.safestreetsaustin.org>
- District 9 Senior Policy Advisor - Melissa Beeler was also in attendance
 - district9@austintexas.gov
 - melissa.beeler@austintexas.gov
- Betty Weed is currently having exploratory meetings in search of a better hybrid meeting experience, especially for those virtual attendees

6. 7:37 Reports from Area Coordinators and Group Representatives

a) TECHS CAT;

- No update

b) ANC;

- No update

c) SCC;

- No update

d) EROC;

- Gayle Goff shared update on the time insurance cases
- Gayle Goff also discussed the impact of the proposed ATP plan on equity in relation to EROC, and the strain on the electrical system
- Dawn Cizmar, a long time member of SRCC, has passed away
- Any inquiries re: EROC please reach out to Gayle Goff directly
 - Gayle's direct contact e-mail address is gayle.goff@gmail.com

e) GSRC NPCT;

- All existing members of the Neighborhood Planning Contact Team please reach out to David Swann in the interest of revamping the team
 - David's contact e-mail address is expfc@att.net

f) SCWAB;

- Ken Burnett updated the general membership that all SCWAB meetings thus far in 2025 have been cancelled
 - Ken Burnett can be reached at covicepresident@srccatx.org

g) St. Edward's

- No update

7. 7:45 Update regarding Filling Vacancies

Presenter: Ruth Casares

- Area Coordinator positions are covered
- Positions that have yet to receive nominations include:
 - the Historical Preservation Committee Chairperson,
 - the Secretary, and
 - the South Central Waterfront Advisory Board Representative
- Russell Frasier nominated Michelle Webre for the Historical Preservation Committee Chairperson position
 - Michelle can be reached at (512)422-1262

GENERAL BUSINESS ITEMS

8. 7:47 Public Safety [VOTE ANTICIPATED]

Resending January 2020 SRCC letter requesting revisions to City's fireworks permit to enhance public safety and decrease wildfire risk. The original letter is [here](#). Proposed transmittal letter reads as follows:

Dear Mayor and Council,

Attached to this letter is South River City Citizens' January 10, 2020, letter requesting improvements to the City's fireworks permitting process. We are not aware of any responsive action taken to address our concerns.

We write today reiterating our request that you revise the permitting process to reduce the risk of wildfires. Neighborhood safety continues to be threatened and replacement cost for damaged structures has dramatically increased in recent years.

Please take these reasonable steps to make the city safer by proceeding with the improvements requested years ago. Thank you for your consideration and prompt action.

*signed,
Pres. SRCC*

Presenters: Thomas Groce and David Swann

- St Edwards University is the primary user of fireworks in our neighborhood
- The process to update residents is out of date
- With proper update fires can be avoided
- There is a need for more stringent regulation, and advance notice of fireworks
- Wendy Todd made a motion to resend original letter in order to reiterate our perspective; and to copy the local fire marshall, Travis County fire marshall, and the state fire marshall
- Russell Fraser moves to amend the letter to include the Bastrop fire from 2011, the Los Angeles fires in 2025, the current drought, the Blunn Creek fires, and current officers

- Russell's motion was seconded by Ken Burnett
- Russell withdrew motion
- **Ruth Casarez** moves to send the letter to the stakeholders mentioned by Wendy including original content and recommended updates
 - Ruth's motion was seconded by Mary Janecek-Friedman
 - Jeff Kessel asks for a friendly amendment to the motion to include explicit expectations for firework notifications
 - **Motion passes** with a vote of: 22 in favor, 0 opposed, 5 abstentions

9. 8:03 Parks and Environment Committee

Beautification of parkland near West Live Oak and Congress Ave. using wildflowers. Mr. Epstein's summary of principles and presentation [here](#).

Presenter: Guest speaker Adam Epstein

- Theresa Corsentino introduced Adam Epstein
- Adam Epstein spoke on reseeded, mowing, and maintaining wild flower meadows by the *Your Essential Magnificence* statue between West Live Oak and Bartlett on Congress Ave - which has been approved by the city
- The project aims to create a pollinator-friendly space and provide an educational resource for the neighborhood
- Live Oak Beautification Mulching projects will begin in April/May
- Adam's direct contact e-mail address is adamjamesepstein@gmail.com
- Theresa's direct contact e-mail address is theresa.m.corsentino@gmail.com

8:09 Mobility and Transportation [Related Items]

10. Austin Transit Partners (ATP) Presentation regarding Project Connect light rail proposal. Presentation by Austin Transit Partners (ATP) team members regarding Project Connect light rail proposal.

Presenter: ATP introduced by Mark Thompson

- Mark Thompson introduced the ATP team
 - Jocelyn Vokas is the community partner for ATP
 - Jennifer Pyne is the Executive Vice President, Planning Community & Federal Programs for ATP
 - Alex Medina is the Senior Urban Designer for ATP
 - Lindsay Wood is the Executive Vice President, Engineering & Construction for ATP
 - Anrab Gupta is the Vice President, Design & Construction for ATP
- The ATP team shared the Environmental Impact Statement with SRCC Membership and received feedback
- The Austin Transit Partnership team then presents updates on their light rail project, focusing on the South Congress and Riverside areas.
 - They recommend removing the Travis Heights Station and propose a Greenway concept along East Riverside.
 - The presentation includes artist concepts of the project
 - SRCC requests more specific information about the configuration of the elevated portion of the rail on Riverside, and South Congress Ave
- Alex Medina presented the proposed elevated bridge design for the light rail system, which would connect downtown to south of Ladybird Lake.
 - The design includes an elevated station and connections for bikes and pedestrians
 - Jennifer Pyne explained that the elevated design was recommended for maintaining reliable service and operational efficiency
 - Concerns were raised about the impact on property values, privacy, and the overall aesthetic of the area
 - The team discussed the possibility of lowering the structure and the need for further design work
 - The conversation ended with a discussion on the importance of considering the human element in the design process
- Dean Van Landuyt, an engineer from SRCC, had feedback on the

feasibility of the draft plans that were shared

- Mark Thompson and Wendy Todd to meet with Dean to discuss his professional opinion regarding the Riverside light rail elevation
- Dean's direct contact e-mail address is dean33@gmail.com
- SRCC members raised concerns about the impact on property values, privacy, the overall aesthetic of the area, and more
 - Robin Sanders suggested a structured feedback loop be implemented to ensure SRCC resident concerns are addressed
 - Robin suggested forming a committee of residents to liaise with ATP team members and to get a recommendation encompassing all issues
 - This ad hoc committee would be tasked with communicating a strong collective response to the proposed project
 - Pam Kostos had passionate feedback regarding the encroachment of the draft plans on SRCC residents rights
 - Wendy Todd expressed concern about the lack of transparency in the process, and the design being tailored for the new property owners.
 - Mark Thompson expressed frustration about the lack of openness and transparency in the process
 - Ken Burnett suggested the idea of having a poster-making party and protesting to highlight our concerns.
 - SRCC has a widely accepted sentiment that the South Central Waterfront Advisory Board original plans are being adjusted as plans skew towards the interests of the new owners of the Statesman building & developers, and against the interests of SRCC residents
- Jennifer Pyne clarified that changes can be made as part of the community input process in response to public comments.
- The ATP team suggested that each person write a letter to be compiled into a final draft to be sent to ATP as input/feedback
 - Jocelyn Vokas to serve as point of contact for SRCC's questions and concerns

- Jocelyn’s direct contact e-mail address is jocelyn.vokes@atptx.org
- Environmental Impact Statement feedback can be shared via input@atptx.org
- SRCC members are to submit individual feedback on the Project Connect plans through the official feedback portal by **Mar 11, 2025**
 - <https://austinlightrail.org/austinlightrailinput>

9:07 11. SRCC Proposed Comments in response to DEIS [VOTE]

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Project Connect light rail proposal has been released and ATP is accepting public comment through March 11, 2025. While SRCC Mobility encourages members to participate in the public comment process and information-sharing events on an individual basis, tonight’s topic is adoption of principles for SRCC’s comments in response to DEIS.

Presenter: Mark Thompson

The DEIS, along with a summary, may be found on the following website: <https://www.atptx.org/milestones/austin-light-rail-progress-update/>

These [proposed comments pertaining solely to South Congress Ave.](#) have been unanimously approved by SRCC Executive Committee.

These [proposed additional comments pertaining solely to the elevated bridge on Riverside Dr.](#) are presented by neighbors on or near Riverside.

Here is a [schematic](#) of the proposed elevated bridge.

- SRCC members raised concerns that are relevant to the SRCC approved comments in response to the DEIS
 - Russell Fraser referenced industry design standards for this type of construction
 - Wendy Todd spoke with FTA’s Terrence Glaskin to discuss our options during this time
 - Robin Sanders discussed three elements of congestion: business

- harm, equity, and adding to interception congestion
- Barbara Cilley discussed the addition of congestion at key intersections including East Live Oak and South Congress
- SRCC approves a base letter addressing concerns about the Project Connect transit plan, particularly focusing on the South Congress configuration, and then considers an amendment that includes: comments from Pam Kostos about the elevated rail line, concerns from Sherwood Oaks residents about traffic changes, remarks about the impact on bats, suggestions from Yorgos Economos to improve pedestrian safety if the plan proceeds, David Todd's comprehensive comments, and Barbara Cilley's suggestions
 - Wendy Todd made a motion to approve the base letter comments covering the SRCC position on the DEIS, linked above
 - Anita Tschurr seconded the motion
 - **Motion passes** at 9:30 with a vote of: 21 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions
 - Mark Thompson made a motion to amend DEIS comments to include David Todd's points(Larry Aker's alternative transit system proposal is referenced in David Todd's comments), Pam Kostos' points, including mention of the Lady Bird Lake bats, and Yorgos Economos points
 - Robin Sanders seconded the motion
 - **Motion passes** with a vote of: 27 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions
 - Barbara Cilley made a motion to include her points regarding the social justice aspect of the plan, the impact on South Congress businesses, and the addition of congestion at key intersections including East Live Oak and South Congress in the comments covering SRCC's position on the DEIS
 - David Todd seconded the motion
 - **Motion passes** with a vote of: 16 in favor, 1 opposed, 4 abstentions
 - Barbara will work with Mark to refine and clarify her document for inclusion

- Mark to compile all approved amendments and the original base letter into a final draft for EC review in 2 weeks

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Emily Schwartz announced that the Wildlife Response Center supports fire adapted communities.
 - They also perform trainings, and do fire preparedness inspections
 - <https://www.austintexas.gov/department/wildlife>
- Emily Schwartz announced that The Texas Water Day at the Capitol is on March 3rd, 2025 by the Texas Water Foundation
 - <https://ww.texaswater.org/texas-water-day>

The meeting adjourned at 10:03pm CST.

Upcoming meetings:

GM Mar. 18, Apr. 15, May 20, June 17, Aug. 19, Sept. 16, Oct. 21, Dec. 16

EC Mar. 4, Apr. 1, May 6, June 3, Aug. 5, Sep. 2, Oct. 7, Dec. 2

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH: contact Tom Groce, SRCC Public Safety

Chair at: tgroce71@gmail.com

If you have questions about using the Neighborhood ListServ:

<https://groups.io/g/SouthRiverAustin>

Check crime reports and statistics here:

https://www.krimelabb.com/basic/view/v_welcome.php

The next **General Membership** meeting is **March 18, 2025**

The next **Executive Committee** meeting is **March 4, 2025**

Frequently used acronyms:

ACF: Austin Community Fund

ANC: Austin Neighborhood Council

BoA: Board of Adjustment
CDC: Community Development Corporation
EROC: East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Contact Team
FLUM: Future Land Use Map
GSRC NPCT: Greater South River City Neighborhood Planning Contact Team
NCCD: Neighborhood Conservation Combining District
NHPA: National Historic Preservation Act
NPCT: Neighborhood Planning Contact Team
PC: Planning Commission
PUD: Planned Unit Development
SCC: South Central Coalition of neighborhood associations
SF: Single Family zoning category
TECHS CAT: Travis Early College High School Campus Architectural Team
ZAP: Zoning and Platting

*Minutes Prepared by Ken Burnett, covicepresident@srccatx.org
Please check www.srccatx.org for updates.*