CITY OF RICHARDSON
COUNCIL DISTRICT BOUNDARY COMMISSION
MINUTES – FEBRUARY 21, 2012

The Council District Boundary Commission met February 21, 2012, at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall in the East Conference Room, 411 W. Arapaho Road, Richardson, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT:
David Gantt, Chairman
Bill Hammond, Vice Chair
Gerald Bright, Commission Member
Janet DePuy, Commission Member
Barry Hand, Commission Member
Thomas Maxwell, Commission Member
Don Bouvier, Commission Member
Eron Linn, Commission Member

CITY STAFF PRESENT:
Michael Spicer, Director of Development Services
Sam Chavez, Asst. Dir. of Dev. Svcs. – Planning
Susan Smith, Asst. Dir. of Dev. Svcs. – Dev. & Eng.
Israel Roberts, Development Review Manager
Keith Krum, Sr. Planner
Chris Shacklett, Planner
Pete Smith, City Attorney
Kathy Welp, Executive Secretary

1. **Convene Meeting**

2. **Staff Presentation regarding Redistricting Requirements and Process.**

Mr. Smith opened the discussion by reviewing some of the guidelines for the Members noting that redistricting of Council boundaries was covered under the Voting Rights Act and the Members should take into consideration the following items when making their decision:

- Population Equality
- Minority Representation
- Contiguity and Compactness
- Neutrality toward incumbents
- Communities of interest

Mr. Smith pointed out that redistricting would be based on total population as determined by the 2010 U.S. Census and the overall range of deviation between population of the largest and smallest districts must be less than 10 percent. He noted that a plan could not have the effect of diluting racial, ethnic, or language minorities; however, race could not be the dominant factor in drawing a district

boundary, but a boundary could be drawn where minorities have a fair chance to win where certain factors are present.

Mr. Smith closed his presentation by explaining that districts must be compact and composed of contiguous territory; be neutral to the incumbents so as to neither protect nor defeat the incumbent; and should attempt to preserve communities of interest and avoid splitting up neighborhoods.

Mr. Hammond asked if there were any demographics available on the language groups within the City and had they been figured into the options that would be presented by staff.

Mr. Krum replied that demographics had been used when preparing the options, but there was not an overwhelming difference between the districts.

Mr. Bouvier mentioned that citizens vote for all candidates under an "at large" system and wanted to know the significance of redistricting the boundaries other than defining the four districts for council representation.

Mr. Smith replied that the boundaries must be drawn so as not to reduce the possibility of minority candidates running for office even though the citizens vote for all candidates under the "at large" system.

3. **Staff presentation and Commission discussion of possible City Council district boundaries.**

Mr. Krum presented historical information regarding the 1990 and 2000 boundaries and the results of the 2000 U.S. Census that changed those boundaries to their current configuration. He noted that the population as distributed within the current boundaries had created a deviation in population between the least populous and the most populous districts of 32.43%, which was above the required 10% in the Federal Voting Rights Act.

Mr. Krum offered four options for the Commission to consider in adjusting the current Council District boundaries:

- Option A – reduced the size of District 2 and increased the size of Districts 1, 3 and 4 with a total deviation of 3.18%
- Option B – reduced the size of District 2, and increased the size of Districts, 1, 3, and 4 with a total deviation of 6.98%
- Option C – reduced the size of District 2, left District 1 "as is" and increased the size of Districts 3 and 4 with a total deviation of 3.14%

- Option D – reduced the size of District 2, increased the size of Districts 1 and 3, and slightly reduced District 4 with a total deviation of 1.50%

Mr. Hammond asked if the ideal population figure for each district that was used as a benchmark was the total City population divided by four districts. Mr. Krum confirmed that was correct.

Mr. Spicer stated that the staff's presentation was complete and reminded the Members of the guidelines and considerations used to determine the best options, but noted that City Council had indicated that Central Expressway should not be a limiting factor when proposing options for new district boundaries.

Mr. Hammond asked if the Members should consider where future population growth would take place when determining the new boundaries.

Mr. Spicer replied that areas of growth had been taken into consideration, and may continue to be a factor for the Members to consider. He pointed out that District 2 had shown the largest population growth, which was the reason it had a static boundary in all four options. He added that future growth potential exists in the Eastside area, the DART Transit Oriented Development (TOD) areas, and along President George Bush Turnpike (PGBT).

Mr. Hammond asked if the proposed static boundary for District 2 was due to the staff not anticipating a great deal of change in that area.

Mr. Spicer replied District 2 had been outperforming the rest of the City for the past 10 years in terms of population growth and in order to comply with the 10% deviation requirement it was necessary to reduce the size of the district and maintain that reduction in all four options. In addition, the Plano Road boundary on the western edge of the district was the same boundary line that was present prior to the revisions made in 2000.

Mr. Bright asked if there were demographics available showing the racial and/or ethnic make up of each district.

Mr. Spicer replied that District 3 had the largest Hispanic population; District 2 had the largest Asian population; and District 1 the largest African-American population. He explained that District 3 was the district that needed the most population added and if the boundary line was moved to the east, as in some of the options, more non-Hispanics would be added to the district. This change would cause a slight decrease in the overall percentage of Hispanics in the district, but the district would still maintain the largest concentration in the City.

Mr. Krum added that there might be minor fluctuations between the different options of one to two percent in terms of ethnicity.

Mr. Gantt requested that a demographic summary for each option be made available to the Members at the next meeting.

Ms. DePuy pointed out that the needs of the citizens in the north were different than in the south and asked how important was it to the Council to keep the districts more concentrated.

Mr. Gantt said the Members had the option to discuss that subject and decide the importance, and agreed that the development needs in the northern part of the City were different from the southern part, but the purpose of the redistricting had to do with voting.

Mr. Spicer added that Members could determine if there was more value in diversifying a district or keeping it more homogenous in terms of development opportunities.

Mr. Hand stated that his first instincts were to cluster "like cultural" characteristics when setting district boundaries, but felt Council members might find it advantageous to have districts that were vertical in shape so both north and south areas of the City were contained in three of the four districts.

Mr. Krum replied that his main concern with a vertical district configuration was the possibility of getting away from respecting the Homeowners Association (HOA) boundaries, but it would depend on how the Census blocks were configured.

Mr. Spicer added that staff had respected the HOA boundaries when putting together the four options, and that the City Council concurred that the HOA boundaries should be respected. He suggested the Members should decide what their guiding principles would be prior to determining district boundaries.

Ms. DePuy thought it might be confusing if there were different voting areas within a HOA; however, Mr. Gantt pointed out that that district boundaries would only pertain to City-wide elections.

Mr. Hammond stated it might be a good idea to go through the options and point out the pros and cons of each, and stated that he concurred with Mr. Hand's suggestion of looking at options other than those presented.

Mr. Hand stated that the options presented by staff seemed to address the question of future growth patterns, but felt this was an opportunity break down some of the barriers between the different areas of the City and realign some of the districts.

Mr. Smith suggested that at the next meeting the staff might provide the demographics and the Members could review that information. He added that when the demographics are presented, the Members will notice there is little difference in the concentration of the different ethnic groups.

Mr. Hand said he felt the perception was that District 1 was the African-American district, District 2 was the Asian district, District 3 was the Hispanic district, and District 4 was the Anglo district.

Mr. Krum reported that if you look at the actual percentages, the Members would notice that although one district may have a higher concentration of one ethnic group, the difference between that district and another is within a few percentage points.

Mr. Hand again suggested that vertical districts might better integrate the City, but he would like to respect the HOAs boundaries.

Mr. Krum said he would put together an option for review at the next meeting.

Mr. Gantt asked to have the HOA boundaries added to the next options presented by staff, reminded the Members about the need for public hearings, and suggested having one in each district.

Mr. Smith replied that the public hearings were usually held in the council chambers, but staff could look at the possibility of having the meetings in the districts. He also suggested that there should be at least two public hearings.

4. Determine next meeting date.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 6, 2012, at 5:30 p.m.

5. Adjourn meeting

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

For

David Gantt, Chair
Council District Boundary Commission