

ICP's Voices for Opportunity Initiative Helps "Justice for Joppa" Campaign Get its First Win

After months of public comments after public comments at Dallas City Council meetings, members of the Joppa Freedman's Town Association (JFTA) finally won their battle against the inclusion of two batch plants within the confines of their small Dallas neighborhood of about 500 households. Long-time Joppa neighbor, Union Pacific Railroad, sought a zoning request that would have aided continuation of a current asphalt batch plant located in the community. Among other changes, it would have also made way for an additional concrete batch plant that would have been operated by its tenant, Martin Marietta. Batch plants are mixing plants that produce batches of concrete or aggregate-asphalt mixture. The homeowners' concerns focused on the health/environmental and quality of life impact that approval of the zoning request would have had.

While recognizing the fair housing and neighborhood inequity implications of the long term continuance of the current batch plant and the addition of another in an already heavy industrial neighborhood of color, the Inclusive Communities Project (ICP) was pleased to agree to lend support in helping this group of "never give up" Habitat homeowners. Through its "Voices for Opportunity" initiative, ICP helped this group of women better understand local zoning and city council procedures, how to educate their neighbors about the potential impact of the pending zoning request and how to engage media while garnering broader support for their cause.

On March 28, 2018, the Dallas City Council supported Councilman Kevin Felder's motion to deny Union Pacific Railroad's zoning request. It was a joyous day for the Joppa Freedman's Town Association, and it was a day ICP was glad to see. The association members say they have plans to continue quality of life improvements to uplift the Joppa community. ICP looks forward to witnessing what their future advocacy efforts will bring. To read more about JFTA, visit their Facebook page called "Justice for Joppa".

Some Recent Press Coverage:

<https://www.dallasnews.com/news/dallas-city-hall/2018/03/28/joppa-spared-batch-plants-dallas-city-council-denies-new-permits>

<https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/commentary/2018/03/30/dallas-councils-joppa-debate-exposes-ugly-realities-city>

