

NEARTOWN ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEETING
Cherryhurst Community Center, Tuesday April 23, 2002
Minutes

NOTE: This meeting followed the same agenda as the NTA Leadership meeting of the previous week (4/18/02). Items in boldface are new at tonight's general meeting.

NTA Pres., Ed Gonzales, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. The minutes were approved with a correction noted to Ed's appointment to the COH Buildings and Standards Commission.

Ed Gonzales announced that NTA has \$1530 in its treasury.

Ed Gonzales recounted the following old business:

?? NTA needs volunteers for two projects - 1) Two or three people to organize and participate in a task force to address Social Rehabilitation Sites (SRSs) in the neighborhoods in preparation for the 2003 State legislative session. Activities would include compiling a census and map of existing facilities and examining ways of limiting the density of such facilities. Unlike Sexually Oriented Businesses (SOBs) or bars, these businesses don't have to register with the city - there is no central record of how many there are and where they are located. 2) A task force is also needed to organize next year's "Meet Your Elected Officials" event.

Robert Graham volunteered for the "Meet Your Elected Officials" event.

?? Neartown Little League's request for Stop signs at the corner of Dunlavy and Castle Court which borders the city park and ball field has been approved and the signs are in place.

A representative from Richwood Place asked how to get this for Woodhead as well.

?? The Neartown Super-Neighborhood SNAP/CIP response from the city is expected next month (May).

Kevin McCarthy from Richwood Place reported that a 6' chainlink fence enclosure was going up around the ballfield at Dunlavy Park. He stated that this divided the open area of the park and accused NTA of supporting this at the expense of the neighborhood. Ed Gonzales explained that although Neartown Little League and Neartown Association shared a similar name they were not the same organization and that NTA was not involved - Neartown LL is a constituent group of NTA just like the constituent civic clubs/associations. Several of the Neartown leaders said that they were unaware of the project. Ed explained that a Little League parent had recently provided the funds for the fencing and that the City Parks Dept. had permitted the project. Ed asked Richwood Place reps to talk w/ him after the meeting to schedule a meeting with Neartown LL.

Ed Gonzales reported on the NTA meeting w/ Reliant/HL&P regarding the new large concrete utility poles along Montrose Blvd. Ed asked Debra Danburg to arrange the meeting and representatives from city councilmembers Edwards, Parker and Berry's offices were in attendance. Reliant has a franchise agreement with the city to work, install, etc. on the city right-of-way which means that they do not have to notify the city of such projects. Ed has sent a letter to the city Americans w/ Disabilities Act coordinator, Laura Rowe, asking two questions - does the franchise agreement w/ Reliant supersede City code and/or ADA in regards to utility poles obstructing sidewalks, and what are the maximum/minimum measurements for unobstructed sidewalk passage. Ed presented Reliant officials with a photo of a new pole in the middle of the sidewalk at Dunlavy and Bonnie Brae (there is also such a pole on Dunlavy between Westheimer and Hawthorne - please notify Ed of other such locations). Ed asked that NTA be notified of all future utility pole placement. He also requested that residents have the ability to disguise the poles w/ landscaping, etc. Jack Rose is working with Reliant legal to come up with rules and regulations to address this. Ed asked for the old wooden poles to be installed at the back of Dunlavy Park to prevent balls flying into I-59. Reliant stated that the old poles are not discarded, but sold to other utility companies. Debra Danburg said that TXDoT might have funds for this.

Ed received a response from the city ADA coordinator stating that Reliant must abide by all local, state and federal laws and that a minimum 3' sidewalk width is required by ADA.

Ed Gonzales reported that in a recent meeting with community leaders HPD Chief Bradford repeatedly cited 802 Westheimer as the best HPD Storefront. Upper Kirby District and Intown TIRZ area representatives expressed interest in getting a storefront and HPD Sgt. Johnny Vollert informed them that his 802 Storefront is already responsible for these areas. UK district wants to announce their "new" relationship with the storefront and possibly raise funds for its support/activities.

John Friedman with Hyde Park United reported that 1511 Fairview is a problem property with ongoing drug dealing, kids (gang members?) living there and a couple of drive-by shootings (March 29th and April 10th). HPD Sgt. Vollert is now working w/ the owners of the property (there are 3 standing buildings) and evictions are in process. Neighborhood Protection cited 14 violations on the property.

The meeting was adjourned.

NTA Secretary, Dana Padgett