

Neartown Association Meeting

Tuesday, November 24, 2015

Minutes

Meeting called to order by Greg at 7:01 p.m.

1. Welcome and introductions. 19 in attendance
2. Nominations for Neartown Board Officers for 2016 - Greg announced that nominations are open for Neartown officers. Current nominations are:

President	Greg LeGrande
Vice President	Kay Warhol
Co-Secretaries	Julie Young & Sylvia Drew
Treasurer	Mark Johnson

Greg requested any nominations of other people from the floor, or to be submitted by email. Discussion ensued. Since there will be no Neartown meeting in December during which we can vote, the Neartown civic association presidents will be asked to vote electronically.

3. Update on the proposed Montrose TIRZ – Greg led discussion and review of two recent community meetings. The Montrose TIRZ (#27) was to go before City Council on Dec. 2, with a vote by Council on that date, or soon thereafter if a Council Member tagged it. However, due to a delays by the Economic Development office to complete due diligence and confirm boundaries, the Council consideration and vote has been moved to Dec. 9.

There is concern that the late date for Council action puts the TIRZ in danger of delaying it to January for consideration (if the item were tagged twice). In that event, we will lose a significant amount of increment, because the base value is set as of January 1 of the year it's established. If that is delayed to 2016, the incremental tax value from all construction done in 2015 would be lost (because it would become part of the base). That's a lot of tax-based revenue to lose!

Steve Longmire suggested that we should send speakers to the 1:30 pm public session on December 8 (speakers must request time in advance from the City Secretary's office), and also e-mail City Council of our support. He will send around a template of what to say, along with addresses of whom to send them to.

4. Other
 - There will be no December 22 Neartown meeting
 - Greg asked for input from anyone who might have attended the Dunlavy re-build meeting. Jack Valinski and one or two others had attended and shared the proposed plan:
Dunlavy between Allen Parkway to a bit south of W. Dallas, plus some sections close to Richmond, will become a 2-lane with a center turn lane, plus bike lanes on the outer edges, plus a cross walk with a signal to get to Buffalo Bayou Park from Dunlavy & Allen Parkway. They are considering a 9-ft wide shared bike and pedestrian path on one side, but this met with a lot of concern about safety. Comments on Dunlavy Street Reconstruction can be submitted to pweplanning@houstontx.gov by December 15th.
 - Jack and Lloyd Matzner also told us that a 44-story apartment building is proposed near the new Sovereign 21-story apartment building on W. Dallas west of Waugh as part of

the Regent Square development. The developer has told one of the officers of North Montrose that they hope to complete the Regent Square project in a couple of years.

- Steve enlightened us re problems of huge multi-level residential buildings, as well as the HEB, in the vicinity of Dunlavy and W. Alabama and Richmond, disgorging people and vehicles onto our already over-taxed streets, so that fire trucks, which are called upon frequently from Sta. 16, often cannot get out of their firehouse, because growing traffic snafus block their exit.
- Back to Greg ... The welcoming monument on Elgin / Westheimer has been around since 1997 and is getting tattered, and the City is doing construction work around there and damaging the structure even more, so the City approached the Avondale Assn. to see if they would be willing to take on upkeep of the grounds, and Avondale felt they would say, "O.K." Well, it turned out that it was more work than anyone anticipated, plus, the Management District had already said they would take over maintenance, and they have more funds, so Avondale was more than happy to let the MMD run with it. In addition to maintenance, the MMD will provide landscaping, lighting, and a new sign, which will stop welcoming people driving from Elgin onto Westheimer to the "Museum District," but rather to "Montrose."
- Resolution to let the Montrose Management District take over this endeavor: Steve made it, Kay seconded it, it passed by unanimous vote.
- Greg – there is still talk about a Montrose museum to be built near the site of the old Mary's Bar, mostly headed by the GLBT community.
- Kay gave an update on the recent meeting of the Super Neighborhood Alliance:
 - There will be two seats made available on an advisory panel to the City's general plan for representatives from the Super Neighborhood Alliance.
 - Buses and diesel truck drivers are facing an "anti-idling" ordinance to keep them from pulling into parking lots, letting passengers out, and then sitting in the vehicle for hours while the motor idles, which creates noise, fumes, wastes gas. Following a 3-month educational period, they can be subject to citations and / or fines.
 - Houston Bike Plan – it should be concluded in April 2016. It is being drafted now, and they will seek public input during December. As a side note, the Lamar Track – a 2-way bike lane in downtown will soon be connected to Buffalo Bayou Park and to EADO
 - Steve talked about the "don't block the box" laws, meaning that vehicles should not block the intersections at red lights (or ANY intersection), which is on the books but is not enforced very often these days. He would like to see these laws publicized and enforced.
 - Jack talked about how the mayor wants to pass via City Council a "no cell phone / no texting ANYWHERE in the city" – not just in school zones, as it is now. She wants to put it to Council before the end of the year / her term.

The formal Neartown meeting was dismissed at 8:04 p.m.

Two City Council runoff candidates spoke Amanda Edwards and Dave Robinson.

Amada spoke about her run for City Council At-Large Pos. 4 and her qualifications. Amanda reminded all that early voting begins December 2nd for the election on December 12th and that the normal election polling locations may be different during the runoff election.

David Robinson gave his endorsement of Amanda Edwards and solicited votes for his runoff stating that he loves Montrose and those who live in Montrose.

Initiated by

Julie Young

Neartown Secretary