

NEARTOWN ASSOCIATION (NTA) MEETING
Cherryhurst Community Center, Tuesday August 26, 2003
Minutes

NTA President Raju Adwaney opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m. Robert Graham moved to approve the minutes from the July meeting; Jack Rose seconded.

HPD officer James Sobota announced that this year's National Night Out was well attended. He expressed his thanks to all of the groups that participated. During the first eight months of 2003, crime statistics in Houston were down compared with 2002. The Neartown area is the second worst in the city for burglaries of motor vehicles. Officer Sobota reminded everyone not to leave anything visible in a car (even loose change). Also, if a garage or driveway is available, use it.

NTA Vice Pres. Jack Rose announced the upcoming Candidate's Forum sponsored by the Intown Chamber (formerly Upper Kirby District) and Houston Community College. The forum for city council candidates will be held Tuesday, September 2 from 7-9:00 p.m. at the HCC Auditorium, 3100 Main St. at Elgin. A mayoral debate will be held at the same location on Thursday, Sept. 11 from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. This is a sit-down lunch, \$50/person.

Janet Donath, Executive Director of the Good Neighbor Healthcare Center, 277 West Gray at Taft, gave a brief overview of the clinic which has been at this location for 30 years. This general medical clinic is a United Way agency and accepts a sliding scale of fees for services. Ms. Donath invited Neartown leaders and residents to arrange for a tour of the facility.

Kathleen Schipper, with Hyde Park Civic Assoc., gave a presentation on an upcoming project to plant trees in Montrose. Last year volunteers planted 200, 15 gallon trees within Hyde Park's boundaries. The trees were a gift from the city and had to be planted in the public right-of-way. Kathleen has asked the city for up to 1000 trees to expand the project across Neartown. The city will give away these trees (5 gal.; 15 gal. for main thoroughfares) sometime this fall. Please contact her at kathleencanty@aol.com or leave a message at 713-522-2538.

Treasurer's report from Jack Rose: \$1197 + \$6830 (for the save-the tree fund) = \$8027.

Gayle Ramsey noted that there are six large oak trees on the city right-of-way near the old Half-Price Books site (Hyde Park and Waugh). Gayle made a motion that NTA address a letter to Bob Litke at the City and cc: councilmember Ada Edwards, alerting them to our concern for the preservation of these trees. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Mike Mark spoke on the Spur 527 topic. He announced that the phase one feasibility study to determine the possibility of de-coupling the Spur project from the US59 construction is about 95% complete. At this point there are benefits and detriments. De-coupling will not allow for the rerouting of Spur traffic back onto US59 as initially hoped for. Mike preferred not to discuss the details of the project, but noted that the next step is to contact TXDoT about their willingness to work with the results of the engineering study. Neartown has contributed \$6500 to the project

which satisfies our financial obligation up to this point. Mike noted that there is now a commitment from Metro to have zero increase in bus traffic on Richmond or W. Alabama, although he was unwilling to say how that would be accomplished. The Spur is currently scheduled to be closed Feb. 15, 2004.

Raju Adwaney announced that our District D City Councilmember Ada Edwards will be next month's guest speaker.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.
NTA Secretary, Dana Padgett