

Minutes Neartown Association Meeting 1/24/06

- **Allen Ueckert called the meeting to order at 7:00pm**
 - Allen noted that: Jack Rose is working with him on transition items
 - Allen noted several administrative items: he requested a list of current year civic associations in good standing as Neartown members; the same meeting format, limiting time to 1 hour in deference to the time constraints of attendees; Allen's email as Neartown President is: ntaprez@hotmail.com.
 - Priority goals for the coming year include:
 - Progressing Neartown participation in the lower Westheimer Redevelopment Project.
 - Support for the Montrose Boulevard Conservancy which is just completing the legal process of become a not-for-profit organization as a 501(c)(3).
 - Defining the conditions of support for the Metro Rail line and maintaining contact with Metro/ City government on the routing and design.
 - Continue to build relationships with key institutional community members: St. Thomas, the Museum District Business Alliance, etc.

- **The Superneighborhood Action Plan items were discussed.**
 - Tom Cooney (City of Houston, Planning) suggested that some "quickie" items in terms of street markings on signage were possible. He requested attendees to notify him of places where these items were a priority (by January 31st) and noted that the City would likely focus on major thoroughfares first.
 - Robin Holzer identified the issue as relevant on Montrose in the restaurant area near Westheimer.
 - Tom proposed that Neartown invite a speaker from Public Works to inform NTA of city process with respect to identification.
 - Note was made of the poor quality of street remediation work done in the North Montrose sewer project area. The suggestion was made that a letter be sent to the Director of Public Works with the sense of the community's dissatisfaction with that work.
 - Ed Gonzales requested that a Stop sign be placed at the corner of Haddon and Morse.

- **The suggestion was made that Meet Your Elected Official Night be scheduled in April or May, a time which is suggested is more conducive to the availability of elected officials.**

- **Kelly DeHay brought the members up to speed on the results of a meeting of the MBDA with Neighborhood Protection relative to the graffiti problem which is common in Neartown.**
 - Kelly spoke favorably of the attitude and approach of Chief Lumpkin whom he characterized as an asset in this effort to eliminate graffiti.
 - The city has been working the problem.
 - Suggestions:
 - Interested parties who note graffiti on City property are encouraged to call 3-1-1 for prompt remediation, and to continue to call if it is not handled timely.
 - Property owners were encouraged not to fail to press charges if the culprits are located.
 - Special paint is available so that graffiti can be cleaned with simple solvents. Dean Stevens of Southwest Paints (NE corner W. Gray and Montrose) has been helpful in this regard and has offered discounts to Montrose business owners who have been “tagged.”
 - A good website to gain an appreciation of the problem/ solutions is: www.cleanmontrose.com

- **Sgt Richard Wilson has replaced Sgt. Marion Boyster at the storefront.**

- **Randall Ellis, representing Garnet Coleman, indicated that the meeting has not yet been set with respect to the Management District.**
 - Enabling legislation has been passed.

- **AU led the discussion with respect to the next phase of the rail line and Neartown’s conditional support of Richmond routing for the line.**
 - Neartown, after much discussion, has elected to support the Richmond routing, but this is heavily conditioned on the design and proposed implementation plan meeting requirements as noted in the letter of support.
 - A meeting with Ada Edwards in early February to discuss the issue was anticipated.
 - Jack Rose noted that he has been working closely with the NTA neighborhoods most affected by this routing and are supportive.
 - The timeline is progressing rapidly: much of the design work will be completed by summer; environmental studies are in progress and will be sent to the FTA for approval.
 - Boulevard Oaks is concerned about potential alternative routing through their neighborhood.
 - Robin Holzer indicated that small business owners on Richmond are alarmed what would happen to their businesses under the Richmond routing.

- Jack Rose requested CM Peter Brown's representative (who was in attendance) to get CM Brown engaged in the design aspects of both lower Westheimer and the rail line.\
- **Dale Harger noted that Avondale is reviewing a proposal that would permit designation of buildings in the area as part of an historic district and that community meetings were in progress on the matter.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm. The attendee sign-in sheet is attached.