

**SUPER NEIGHBORHOOD 22 COUNCIL MINUTES  
May 9, 2011 MEETING**

**I. Call to Order and Introductions** 6:30pm

**II. Approval of minutes from March 14<sup>th</sup> and April 11<sup>th</sup> meeting** (10 minutes)

**III. Presentations** (60 minutes)

- a. **Lower Washington Cultural Arts District Application: Jeanette Chinelli:** The presentation described the pending creation of the non-profit Lower Washington Cultural Arts District which will have the borders of Interstate 45 (East), Heights Blvd. (west), Interstate 10 (North) and Memorial (South). These boundaries incorporate the 1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> wards in SN22. There are currently over 300 artist working in studios, 15 artist live/work spaces and various presentation and performance locations within this area. Additionally, there is an educational component which is supported by MECA and Crocket elementary as well as professional design services. There are 9 similar districts in the state with 2 of these in Houston (Theater and Museum districts). A team of local leaders have been working on the application for several months and will be submitting it to the Texas Commission on the Arts on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Achieving this designation will allow for :

- i. Renewed interest in the area
- ii. Revenue generation
- iii. Designation/Identification as a tourist location
- iv. Business stimulation
- v. Creation of a cultural hub
- vi. Urban revitalization

Ms. Chinelli has requested that SN22 provide a letter of support and that individuals sign a petition supporting the creation of the district which will be included in the application. Tom Dornbusch provided a motioned for this support and it was seconded by Paul Nicosia. The motion passed unanimously.

- b. **Kathryn Bruning, CoH Deputy Assistant Director. Commercial Permitting:** Provided information regarding changes to the CoH current Noise Ordinance (Ch 30) revisions. This issue was identified approx. 1-1/2 years ago as a city-wide issue that needed to be addressed. In the past 3 years, 58,000 calls have been received by HPD regarding noise complaints. The next stakeholders meeting will be held at the Southwest Multi-Service Center, 6400 Highstar at 6:30pm. The key points to be discussed are:

- i. Definition of “clearly audible”
- ii. Clarification of the property line and curb line designation
- iii. Creation of a tiered permit system
- iv. Procedures for denial or revocation of a permit after 3 or more convictions in a 36 month period.

The current ordinance allows for permit holders to increase the level of sound coming from their property up to 75Db on a daily basis. The new ordinance will provide HPD with increased administrative tools to enforce the revised ordinance and a means to regulate habitual offenders.

- c. **Catherine Flowers, Director, CoH Office of Neighborhood Services:** Ms. Flowers is the Director of the newly formed Department of Neighborhoods, which will include the current Mayor's Citizen Assistance Office, Neighborhood Protection and the Mayor's Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs. This new department will act as a One-Stop shop for issues related to residents. Ms. Flowers introduced her Special Projects Manager, John Paul. He will be working with SN22 on our issues and concerns.

#### IV. Old Business (45 minutes)

- a. **Livable Centers Study Local Match Fundraising effort: Peter Brown & Lydia Clay:** On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Better Houston presented a check to the City for \$50,000 which will be used for the local match funds for the HGAC - Livable Centers Study. With this milestone being reached, the CoH Planning Department will be finalizing the RFP for professional services. SN22 will have representatives from the Planning Department at next month's meeting to discuss the process and details of the study.
- b. **HISD proposal to close Memorial and Stevenson Elementary schools:** In April, HISD held a community meeting at Stevenson Elementary regarding the possible closure due to low enrollment numbers and reduced funding from the State. SN22 has previously fought to keep Stevenson open and will take the same stance with this current round of possible closures. The next opportunity to talk on this subject will be at the HISD Board meeting on May 12<sup>th</sup>. Current plans are for the students at Stevenson to be consolidated with those at either Memorial or Love elementary. The SN22 area has seen a 30% population increase in the past 10 years and this increase is projected to increase. An example of this is the recent sale of the previously closed Ben Milam Elementary school to a private pre-school provider which is utilizing the facility. This new pre-school is already full and demonstrates the future need for elementary schools in our area. The district's sale of the property at Stevenson will provide an initial savings to the District but will need to be replaced in the future. All residents are asked to write to their HISD Board members to ask for support in keeping the school open.
- c. **Washington Ave Entertainment District:** As the CoH continues to look into the issues along Washington Avenue, the first item to be addressed will be parking. The CoH is finalizing a plan to implement a Parking Management District which will allow for greater control over the various parking issues. The area, along Washington, will have meters installed and a portion of the funds collected will be re-invested into the area. Specific details of the plan have not yet been released but additional information will follow. Current indications are that the residents will be able to obtain residential parking permits for their neighborhoods. Discussion continued to the issue of the planning/opening of possible sexually oriented businesses (SOB) within SN22. Currently 3 properties have been purchased by the owner's of several of these businesses in Houston. The locations include 5335 Washington, the 2500 block of Washington @ Detering and the 5700 block of Washington. The current CoH ordinances prohibit the establishment of a SOB within 1,500 feet of a school, day care, church or park. SN22 representatives will be monitoring this issue and working with the community.
- d. **Municipal Setting District (MSD) Sought in Magnolia Grove, Jane West:** The applicant, Thermo Electron Metallurgical Services, has responded to the questions put forth by the CoH and the City is still reviewing the responses.
- e. **Wal-Mart Operating Agreement: Eileen Reed of RUDH:** No update.
- f. **Committee Reports**

- i. **Transportation Committee, Scott Johnson:** SN22 has sent letters of support for the adoption of legislation currently being reviewed which would allow for the designation of park space within 300 miles of electrical line easements. This bill is stuck in committee and needs additional voter support. Separately, a lawsuit has been filed against TxDOT, regarding the possibility of excessive noise (above 67 Db) which will be produced due to the planned 290'6-10 highway construction project. The current project specification does not include the requirement for noise mitigation. The question at hand is whether or not SN22 wants to be named as a plaintiff in this lawsuit. After discussion, it was decided that not enough information is available to determine our position.
  - ii. **MKT Detention Pond, Hike & Bike Trail and 380 Agreement, M-J Buschlen & Scott Johnson:** No update.
  - iii. **Variances from Alcohol Free School Zone Ordinance, Kathy Vossler:** The CoH has decided not to proceed with this variance request at either location.
- g. **Recycle Center: City of Houston Plans to Move Forward with Sale:** The City is currently soliciting sealed bids for the sale of this property..
- h. **2011 SNAP/CIP Request Update:** [http://pdinet.pd.ci.houston.tx.us/snap\\_public/index.asp](http://pdinet.pd.ci.houston.tx.us/snap_public/index.asp) No update.
- i. **Congress for New Urbanism (CNU), Nathan Norris Workshop and Public presentations:** On May 5<sup>th</sup>, CNU hosted a workshop on Placemaking for Neighborhoods which focused on the Washington Ave. corridor. Tom Dornbusch and Paul Nicosia participated in the workshop and several SN22 representatives attended the public presentation that night. After various discussions, it was identified that in order to solidify the Washington Ave. Corridor's identity as a mixed-use destination we need to solidify our vision, establish a comprehensive code format and develop a means for implementation of these goals. The residents and businesses need to work with the City departments to facilitate this process.

**V. New Business (40 minutes)**

- a. **Street Parking on Wescott :** The owner of Canyon Creek, Gary Mosely, has submitted a request for a letter of support from SN22 which would allow him to adopt the median in front of Canyon Creek. It was decided that SN22 would defer to Camp Logan and support their decision. The Camp Logan Civic Club does not meet for another 3 months so Jane will contact Jim and discuss this matter.
- b. **Candidate Forums:** A committee lead by Kathy Vossler and Jane West will work on organizing a series of candidate forums for this November's elections. SN22 will work with the League of Women Voter's, as was done 2 years ago. The committee will develop a series of questions which will focus on how the candidates for council districts C, H and the At-Large council members will support our neighborhoods as well as general city related issues.

**VI. Announcements: (5 minutes)**

- a. West End Park re-dedication will be held on Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm. 1401 Patterson St.
- b. Metro Visioning Workshop will be held at the West End Multi-Service Center on May 19<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 8:00pm. Residents are encouraged to participate in defining how Metro provides service in the future.

- c. State Representative Jessica Farrar is holding an open house on June 11<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am until 11:30am. The location is to be determined.

**VII. Adjournment:** 8:30pm