

Guests

- Angie Granado, Rice Military
- Arum Lee, COH Planning & Development
- Ashley Johnson, LINK Houston
- Alvaro Guzman, HPD Central Commander
- Bill Henderson, Commissioner Cagle’s Office
- Brinn Miracle, Rice Military
- Catherine King, Harris County Precinct 4
- Chris Zabarowski, Woodcrest
- Colin Lupold, Houston Public Works
- David Chin, Yellow Cup Coffee & Tea
- George Frey, SN14 – Lazybook/Timbergrove
- Howard Watson, West End Civic Club
- Jack Valinski, Mayor’s Assistance Office
- Joyce Steensrud, Crestwood
- Kay Walton, SN62 - Midtown
- Kevin Strickland, SN15 – Greater Heights
- Lance Gillian, District C CM Abbie Kamin’s Office
- Linda Trevino, METRO Public Affairs
- Lucy Vieira, HPD Community Outreach Liasion
- Marcela Gonzalez, Rice Military
- Margaret Wallace Brown, City of Houston
- Mark Williamson, SN15 - Greater Heights
- Matt Tetlow, West End
- Mauri Bird Lucas, West End Civic Club
- Melonie Curry, ParkHouston
- Michael Wall, Houston Public Works
- Michelle Wolpert, Camp Logan
- Mike Engelhart, 151st Civil District Court Judge
- Neil Bremner, Crestwood
- Olivia Lee, HD134 Rep. Ann Johnson’s Office
- Paul Hesson, Rice Military
- Rashad Cave, SD15 Senator John Whitmire’s Office
- Roy Lira, Super Neighborhood Alliance
- Rhonda Hunt, Crestwood
- Sophia Gonzalez, Community Impact
- Suvudha Bandi, COH Planning & Development
- Tammi Williamson, COH Planning & Development
- Tim Hassett, SN14– Lazybook/Timbergrove
- Thomas Hardin, HPD Assistant Chief Patrol Region 1
- Valerie Luna, Houston Public Works
- Geoffery Weise, TABC Enforcement Lieutenant

Civic Club Representatives

- Abby Kincer, First Ward / SN22
- Victor Valencheck, First Ward
- Stacie Fairchild, Rice Military / SN22
- Dexter Handy, Rice Military
- Mark Fairchild, Rice Military / WAPBD
- Mike VanDusen, Crestwood / SN22
- Drew Wiley, Cottage Grove
- Jill Metcalf, Cottage Grove
- Mark Kosiara, West End
- Steven Vealey, Camp Logan

Meeting Minutes | August 18, 2022 @ Zoom

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

I. Introductions & Roll Calls

II. Acceptance of July Minutes

- A. Mark Kosiara requested clarification on the Civic Club Representative section of the minutes – who is included there and should it only include voting-eligible members? Mark also noted that under section III, A, the civic club representatives may not have voted unanimously for Abby Kincer as Secretary

because Abby was unable to vote for First Ward. Stacie suggested they take this feedback offline so the meeting can continue. July minutes have not been accepted and will be brought up again in October.

III. Presentations

A. Transportation and Drainage Operations, Colin Lupold with Houston Public Works

Coming this fall – Washington/Westcott roundabout intersection safety improvements. Plans include replacing damaged curbs, refreshing signing and pavement markings, repairing damaged roadway surfaces, installing raised crosswalks, and improving drainage. Project goals include improving driving surface and pedestrian safety. Construction plans: 150-day schedule, limited to single lane closures on main approaches, minimized impacts to local access. No start date has been specified, and no specific plans are available for pedestrian access but that is a requirement for the project. No landscaping improvements are included in this project.

B. The Case for Sidewalks, Suvidha Bandi and City of Houston Planning Department Team

Sidewalks reduce risk of accidents by 25%. Residents in areas with sidewalks are 65% more likely to walk on the sidewalks rather than the streets. Properties in areas with sidewalks have up to a 5% higher home value. New sidewalks are required if a: new single-family home is constructed; non-single family buildings are constructed; new parking lots are constructed or expanded; pedestrian routes are established. HPW Sidewalk Program constructs new sidewalks and ramps leading to schools and to major thoroughfares for residents with disabilities. Recent changes have been made to sidewalk requirements in 2020, including: sidewalks moved from Public Works to City Planning; established review committee for exemptions; introduced sidewalk standards and fees. The new proposed sidewalk fee: gives property owners another option besides building a sidewalk; eliminates the construction of sidewalks to nowhere; creates sidewalk funds to promote a complete sidewalk network.

How does a community ask the department for support in building out sidewalks? There is no process currently. Where are we with the city-wide sidewalk plan? No answer is available currently. Does a developer paying a fee vs. building a sidewalk go through a review, and how much is the fee? The fee is based on square foot and on the type of street. There are requirements, and not all homes or developments will be approved to pay the fee rather than build. The criteria for paying the fee has been requested for member visibility. A neighbor concern is that a builder can opt out of building and pay the fee, which then goes into the 70% pot, and this home could possibly never have a sidewalk and the pot never used for that space – how do you respond to that option when talking about the opt out? Based on the criteria, this would not be approved to pay the fee instead of building the sidewalk, but that is a valid concern. An in lieu of fee should not be on par with a builder payment, but rather double or triple the cost since only 70% is going back into potentially our area. Costs will be indexed.

C. Livable Places, Arum Lee and Tammi Williamson

Livable Places Action Committee is creating more accessible, diverse, and inclusive neighborhoods with a greater variety of housing and transportation options. One goal is reducing sprawl; sprawl raises flood risk, increases cost of infrastructure, increases overall reliance of cars, and degrades environment,

water, and air quality. This means an encouragement of more infill near the core of Houston which reduces development pressure on greenfield areas, maximizes use of existing infrastructure, and encourages use of multi-modal transportation. No deed restrictions will be overridden. Livable Places is in the process of petitioning ordinance changes on home and driveway types to allow for more affordable housing and improved / additional street parking.

How does this affect the WAPBD? That information is not readily available – they will get back with Stacie on this. How does this affect neighborhoods where parking is a huge issue, such as Rice Military and Montrose? Stacie will call Director Wallace Brown to discuss this more in depth. Neighbors can provide feedback at letstalkhouston.com/livable-places, and there is no deadline for feedback, but Livable Places would like to have these recommendations to the city by the end of the year. Livable Places Action Committee meetings have been discussing this; you can listen in on recordings to have specific data.

IV. New Business

- A. Early Monday morning in front of the Heart night club, a security guard was injured, a patron was shot and killed, and someone fleeing the scene was injured. There is an increasing incidence of violence in this community that seems to go relatively unchecked. Rice Military is concerned with HPD's efforts to maintain peace around the Washington bars, HPD conflicts of interest when working at these bars, and the neighborhood's safety.

Long-term, HPD is pushing for more visibility up and down Washington by next weekend. This additional manpower will also help with traffic flow during high-traffic times such as 2 AM. There are now two Noise Ordinance units to manage noise in the area, as well. If a location routinely violates the law, officers will not be allowed to work at those businesses any longer. HPD disciplines officers who are not upholding their duty, on duty or during their second job. Near-term, HPD hopes their next plan, increased visibility, will have an impact. The goal is to get these establishments to be good neighbors, and to hold them accountable and take significant action when possible. Rice Military has been asking for partnership with other agencies – do you have plans to partner with the county, state, and Public Safety? More HPD money and bodies are being provided to this area during these problem times. Lt. Weise comments on the issue of visitors drinking before and after attending the night club, which exacerbates the issues in the neighborhood but does not constitute a violation in the club. The Trace Unit works hand in hand with HPD, and any time there is a fatal incident, they investigate. In many cases, a night club does not legally facilitate a shooting, and thus HPD cannot act against the club. Additionally, HPD cannot fine a club if they cannot prove that they are knowingly serving an already intoxicated person, which is difficult to prove. Sound meters are overseen by South Central, and Commander Guzman will contact them to communicate concerns heard tonight.

- B. Mark Kosiara requests an update on the two letters voted on in July and would like a copy. Mike confirmed that he sent the letter to Civic Club representatives.
- C. George Frey and SN14 have requested information from Ann Johnson's office regarding TxDOT. On August 25, a forum will take place.

V. Announcements from City Officials

- A. Lance Gilliam confirms that he can get options for Blossom to the community for the October meeting.
- B. Jack Valinski notes that a city bond for infrastructure – for rebuilding buildings, buying trucks and hardware – is coming up for vote in November. The largest portion of the bond, 59%, is specifically marked for HPD and HFD.
- C. Olivia Lee with Rep Johnson’s Office notes that Multi-Modal Transportation forum will be held over Zoom on August 25 at 4 PM. Submit questions for the forum here: bit.ly/johnsonforum.

VI. Motion to Adjourn

- A. Motion to adjourn the meeting by Abby Kincer, second by Mark Fairchild. Adjourned at 9:39.