

CRNA Board Meeting – Minutes

March 11, 2010

Attending Board: Marilyn Barbera, Pax Bobrow, Kevin Brown, Betty DiMarco, Ariel Wallick Dorfman, Camilla Franklin, Rudolf Garrison, Tilman Hardy, Andreas Hoffman, Byron Johnson, Anne Nicolay, Julianna Padgett, Liz Reed, Jerry Speir, and Betsy Weymann

Absent Board Members: Barry Brantley, Gordon Cagnolatti, Marshall Hevron, and Gary Smith

Residents/Guests: Jason Coleman, Colby Johnson, and Christopher Peragine

Minutes approved. On motion by Ariel, seconded by Pax, the Minutes of the February 18 meeting were approved unanimously.

Finances. In the absence of Treasurer Cindy Morse (out-of-town), Jerry Speir reported that the CRNA bank balance remains at about \$1500.

Committee Reports:

--Blight (Byron Johnson)

The committee is drafting a standard letter to be sent at the request of members to owners of blighted properties in the neighborhood. The aim is to be pro-active in addressing such problems and to assist owners, where possible, in getting access to the right information regarding bringing their properties into compliance. The letter is based on a model used in other neighborhoods. A draft of the letter will be circulated for refinement.

Byron is co-chair of the Neighborhood Partnership Network's Advocacy Task Force Blight Committee. That group is seeking to work with Mayor-elect Landrieu's Transition Task Force on Blight to address problems with the existing system. Improvements in the reporting of blight hearings and related matters are anticipated on the city's website.

He noted that there is a problem city-wide of what to do when people legitimately don't have the resources to bring a property into compliance.

Pax, on behalf of the Communications Committee, offered to help in getting appropriate information disseminated.

--Communications (Pax Bobrow)

The committee is looking at ways to improve information dissemination in the neighborhood, perhaps with the aid of community bulletin boards. The committee is also assisting with the collection of data regarding the number of students bussed into and out of the neighborhood—as part of an effort to make a solid case for the continued need for public education in the neighborhood. The committee is working with the Palmer Park group in promoting a new and improved playground for Palmer Park.

--Education (Ariel Wallick Dorfman)

The committee has been examining ways to work more closely with the Johnson Elementary School. One idea is to institute a recycling program there and to integrate the program into the curriculum.

A primary goal is the development of a database of local talent in the neighborhood, of people who would be willing to offer their services in the furtherance of the missions of our local schools and our other neighborhood organizations.

--Priestley School Site (Anne Nicolay)

The consensus of the group is that there is a strong preference for the building to become a school again, and the committee is working to build relationships toward that end. Renovation of the building is estimated at \$8-10 million. The School Board, which owns the property, has no immediate plans for it and no money to put into it. In fact, they are appraising vacant properties, apparently for possible sale.

The committee is working with the board of the Priestley School of Architecture and Construction (which was originally intended for that building) on possible ways to partner toward getting a school there.

Some discussion centered on the problem created by the sign that has been in front of the building for some time that suggests that work is in progress.

Next meeting of the committee: Tuesday, March 23, 6:30, probably at Squeal. Place to be confirmed.

--Safety/Crime (Liz Reed)

Liz will host a porch party on Saturday, March 20, 6-8 p.m., at her home at 1223 Joliet, and hopes that event will draw interest in serving on the committee.

Camilla noted the need to get started in planning for the annual August "Night Out Against Crime" event.

Pax noted that Carrollton United is circulating a new "Hot Sheet" that is designed for anonymous dropping in "safe boxes." She also continues to pursue the possibility of a cell phone alert system.

--Sustainability (Andreas Hoffmann)

AmeriCorps volunteers will be conducting a trash pick-up on Saturday, March 20, a few blocks on either side of Oak Street.

Pax moved, seconded by Rev. Garrison, to spend up to \$50, preferably in the neighborhood, in support of this effort (garbage bags, gloves, etc.) Passed unanimously.

--Zoning/Land Use (Marilyn Barbera and Betsy Weymann)

Re: the proposed monopole cell tower – Immediate neighbors are more concerned about the condition of the substation itself than the height of the proposed tower. The proposal for the 120' tower was withdrawn from the City Council's March 11 agenda.

Jerry noted that we have begun an effort to have a conversation with Entergy about the site.

Betsy reported that the committee is forwarding a letter to the state DEQ requesting an environmental assessment of the site before any new activity there.

Discussion centered on possible future uses for the site: a streetcar museum, parking, a park, etc. There was discussion of surveying the neighborhood re: what is desired at the site.

The next meeting of the committee will include a discussion of the future of Oak Street, with particular concern to the density of alcohol beverage outlets on the street. The committee is also

considering ways to provide more information to the community on issues related to codes, variances, and the like.

--Executive Committee (Jerry Speir)

The Executive Committee discussed ways to do better outreach to the community, principally through more general meetings and events. Meetings connected to other events, for example the Night Out Against Crime, were particularly favored.

The last meeting we had in Palmer Park was referenced as a model.

Re-instituting the newsletter was discussed. Pax noted the problem with getting timely news items into the newsletter, but observed that if each committee would contribute an article on its efforts and plans, "it would be a breeze." To get a newsletter out promoting a general meeting/party in mid- to late-May, for example, would require a deadline of around March 31 to early April (which would assume that the party plans are also final by then).

Other matters:

Betty reported a request from Rev. Stanford Williams for possible contributions for uniforms for Harrell Playground teams. She will inquire further about the potential of our sponsoring a team, costs, etc.

Pax noted the need to find a home within one of our existing committees (or to create a new one) for such issues as improvements, infrastructure and beautification .

Marilyn reported on the Preservation Resource Center's "Neighborhood Sellabration" event on March 20. Anne and Pax agreed to assist with the event on behalf of CRNA.

Minutes by Jerry Speir