

COCHRAN HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
MINUTES
of
June 25, 2012 Meeting

The June quarterly meeting of CHNA took place at Hibiscus on Henderson on Monday, June 25, 2012. After attendees signed in, socialized, and voting cards were distributed to members, **CHNA President Ryan Kruger** called the meeting to order. After his opening remarks, thanking Hibiscus for their hospitality and asking new residents of Cochran Heights to introduce themselves, **Ryan** spoke about the neighborhood initiatives survey that was distributed as attendees arrived.

Neighborhood Initiatives and Survey

Ryan stated that he will review everyone's survey, prioritize what projects or issues hold most interest, and will send the results to everyone on the email distribution, asking for volunteers to be involved in the work and development of these projects. Several members brought up ideas and questions regarding needed projects and possible ways the Association's money could be used.

Fitzhugh/Bennett Development Project

Ryan then introduced the subject of the proposed development plans for the Fitzhugh/ Bennett project by **Steve Gottsecker**, owner of the property and **Ellis Winstanley**, developer. **Ryan** then asked **Ellis Winstanley** to describe the development plan. **Mr. Winstanley** introduced himself, gave a history of himself, his family and his businesses, all of which are located in Austin, Texas. He stated that he would like to build a family-driven "restaurant row" on Fitzhugh/Bennett, using the unique triangular shape and the existing buildings, for the most part. He is planning a 28,850 square foot development for restaurant, bar and entertainment with an additional 9,500 square feet for patio seating. The development involves 3.72 acres of land (162,099 square feet) with surface parking included (280-300 parking spaces). Where Fers (tire store) is now located, there would be an El Arroyo Restaurant; he is also planning an Abel's Restaurant, a pizza parlor, a 10-lane bowling alley (where the Super Save is now located), and a bakery, a coffee shop/diner, and a beer garden with patio seating. **Ryan** stated that, while the developer is interested in working with the neighborhood and addressing the Association's concerns, the only area where they specifically need our cooperation and approval is the Special Use Permit that will be required before the bowling alley can be built. **Ryan** stated that tonight is just the initial presentation, and that we would take a vote at a future meeting regarding our neighborhood's stand on the Special Use Permit. In the meantime, we would be conducting a study of any issues related to the development. If anyone has a question or concern, they should email **Ryan** so that he can pass it along to **Mr. Winstanley**.

Once the floor was opened for questions and comments, **Mr. Winstanley** responded: (1) to a question regarding whether he would be agreeable to financing more Enhanced Neighborhood Patrol officers, he said "Yes"; (2) to the question regarding whether there would be an effort to get the City to abandon streets, he stated that although it would not be vital to the development

plan, it would be a good thing to have those streets adjacent to the development abandoned and dedicated to those businesses – he also stated that this was not at issue at the moment and they could decide later whether to do this or not; (3) to the question regarding whether any of these businesses would be “late-night”, he stated that his businesses in Austin officially close at 10 or 11 but occasionally have some patrons later in their private event rooms; (4) to the question about the time frame for the starting and finishing of construction, he stated that they would like to start construction this Fall and finish and open in the Spring of 2013; (5) to the question of whether **Mr. Winstanley** still owns any of his businesses, or if he just goes in and starts one, then sells, he stated that he still owns all of the businesses he started; (6) to the comments about needing to have attractive landscaping and walkability and appeal to the neighborhood, he assented that this would be considered in the design; (7) to the question of what makes **Mr. Winstanley** believe this will be a successful investment at this location in Dallas, he admitted that any development is a risk, but said that the restaurants are conservatively-managed and that they don’t invest over-aggressively. He also mentioned that his restaurants in Austin have been open since the ‘70’s and ‘80’s and he feels they are time-tested concepts, and that, because he has been searching for a location for some time, he believes a bowling alley at this location would be successful.

September Elections

Ryan then opened the subject of Board elections slated for September. There are four positions up for election: **Alan Rister’s** seat as Board Member at Large, **Allen Mondell’s** seat as Board Member at Large, Secretary (now held by **Mary Miller**), and Treasurer (now held by **Mary Cronin**). **Ryan** asked for declarations or nominations from the floor and **Mary Cronin** declared her candidacy to keep her position as Treasurer; **Allen Mondell** declared his candidacy to keep his seat on the Board; **Alan Rister** nominated **Mary Miller** to keep her position as Secretary (which she declined, so **Alan** withdrew the nomination); and **Sandy Sander** declared his candidacy to fill **Alan Rister’s** seat on the Board. **Ryan** encouraged everyone to contact anyone who might be interested in participating on the Board to come to the next meeting when we will have elections. There will be an opportunity for write-in nominations at that time.

So far, the candidates are as follows:

Board Member at Large – Allen Mondell
Board Member at Large – Sandy Sander
Treasurer – Mary Cronin
Secretary – [no candidate as yet]

Old Business

Arlene Colbert spoke about the Bonham School closing after 89 years of service to the community. The Principal, all of the Teachers, and the Staff transferred to a new school in Pleasant Grove, the Adelfa Callejo Elementary School. The DISD will “mothball” the school (keep it empty and unused, but spend a minimal amount – \$35,000 per year – on maintenance). **Arlene** stated that we need to get DISD to remove the temporary buildings as soon as possible, as they get to be “eyesores” very quickly.

Kent Cobb gave the update on the parking lot. Some individual neighbors prepared an appeal to the Board of Adjustment, had the hearing last week, and the City denied their appeal. The City decided to approve an 8-car parking lot, without the alley abandonment, and with three light poles no higher than 10 feet.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Miller
CHNA Secretary,