

COCHRAN HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
MINUTES
of
March 30, 2011 Meeting

The March quarterly meeting of CHNA took place at Hector's Restaurant on Wednesday, March 30, 2011. After members socialized, **CHNA President Charles Ostermann** called the meeting to order.

Introductions

Pres. **Charles Ostermann** announced that there would be a change in the Agenda as to the timing of the special guests speaking because they had not arrived. He then called for the reading of the Minutes of the December meeting. **Mary Miller** read the Minutes and [**Cynthia Mondell** moved to approve] [they were approved by [consensus] [acclamation]].

Charles called for any new residents to introduce themselves, but there were none present. A discussion followed about how we can welcome new residents into the neighborhood. It was suggested that there be a Block Captain for each street and they be responsible for greeting the new residents, inviting them to meetings, and giving them a Welcome Package. The Block Captains will also distribute each issue of the paper CHNA Newsletter. The discussion concluded with five members volunteering to be Block Captains on their streets: **Janet Coplin** (for Mission), **Judy Sullivan** (for Homer); **Rick Roberts** (for Alcott) , **Gary Tinsley** (for Milam); **Jessie Zaragaza** (for Pershing) and **Noreen Grant** (for Lee and Normah).

Charles then introduced **Alan Mondell**, who stated he is working on a documentary film about the history and development of Henderson Avenue, and said that if anyone did not want to be in the film (have their image taken), please let him know and he will avoid including them in the filming.

Officer Reports

Vice Pres. **Shei Unger** stated he had nothing to report.

Treasurer **Janet Coplin** stated that there is [a little more money] [**Janet – what do you want to include here?**] in the CHNA bank account than was stated in the Newsletter. **Janet** also said she met with [Lee of Consilient (?)] and CHNA now has responsibility to pay the patrol officers (through the City of Dallas) directly. The officers patrol each Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. She explained that Consilient gives us the money for the patrol officers each month and we pay that amount to the City of Dallas, which is withdrawn immediately from the CHNA bank account. **Charles** stated that a business cannot have its security officer patrol a neighborhood, and [**Rick Roberts**] stated that an officer who is patrolling a neighborhood cannot be paid by a business – he/she must be paid by the Neighborhood Association who benefits from the service. **Kent Cobb** asked what the boundaries are of the area that is patrolled and **Janet** agreed to find out and report that information to CHNA. **Cynthia Mondell** asked if it is considered a tax-deductible expense for the CHNA. **Janet** stated that the amount of the Consilient donation for

the patrol officer is \$2300.00 per month (\$450.00 for the police car and \$1850.00 for the officer's(s') pay).

Committee Reports

Beautification: **Jessie Zaragaza** (architect and CHNA member) stated that she has submitted her Henderson Ave. median design plan to the City for its approval. **Karen Anderson** suggested we put the plan on the CHNA website. **Karen Anderson** and **Judy Sullivan** volunteered to help **Jessie** to implement the plan once it is approved.

Bylaws Committee chairman **Kent Cobb** stated that his committee has met and they are recommending significant changes to the CHNA bylaws, including boundary designation for the neighborhood, modest dues and membership, voting rights, etc. Although the new bylaws are supposed to be ready for distribution to the neighborhood for everyone's review and comments 30 days in advance of the June meeting, **Kent** stated that they will not rush the process so that the committee can present the new bylaws substantially in final form.

[At this point in the meeting, City Councilmember for District 14 **Angela Hunt** arrived and **Charles** introduced her as the guest speaker.]

Angela Hunt talked about the positive changes to Lower Greenville that have had to be initiated by the City in order to break the worsening cycle of crime in that area. Some of those changes include the new ordinance that any business that is open past midnight must have a special permit from the City; streetscape improvements between Bell and Alta (the "Libertine" business and the "Taco Cabana" business) for walking, parking and that include street furniture and trees, with some minor streetscape improvements to open up the area from Belmont Ave. south on Greenville. **Ms. Hunt** talked about the need for neighborhood associations to stay vigilant on challenges to neighborhood property integrity by inappropriate development along main streets (like Greenville and Henderson). There was open discussion about traffic and development issues in the Cochran Heights neighborhood: **Rick Roberts** asked if the City has considered making Henderson Ave. a One-Way street (Angela Hunt answered that she has not heard this idea before, but she will look at it); **Karen Anderson** pointed out that PD462 (Plan for Development for Henderson Ave.), which was instituted as a result of much study and deliberation, would serve us well if we maintained the balance it calls for, however, whose job is it to police the balance necessary for optimum development on Henderson? (**Angela Hunt** stated it is probably the planning and zoning department, but will get with Pauline Medrano regarding the planned additions/changes to the Henderson businesses that are in the works now); **Ryan Kruger** suggested that as a former resident of Washington, DC, he has noticed the absence of pedestrian-friendly signs along Henderson and believes that the addition of them will greatly improve the walkability of the neighborhood (**Ms. Hunt** agreed, and **Ryan Kruger** stated he will send **Angela Hunt** a formal letter requesting pedestrian signs for crosswalks; **Piya Kruger** asked **Ms. Hunt** how we can get Bond money for the neighborhood (**Ms. Hunt** said that in the next Bond program – 2012 – most of the money will go to existing programs and with what is left, street repair and improvement will be a priority, but matching funds might be possible; she suggested her website, **AngelaHunt.com** for information updates); **Greg Branch** stated that he would like to speak up for those in the neighborhood who like to see development in the area,

and who see parking on the streets as a positive – it brings people into the neighborhood, and therefore decreases crime because of the visibility and abundance of witnesses (**Ms. Hunt** acknowledged that these issues always have people on both or multiple sides of the discussion and she will maintain balance and openness in her listening to concerns and consideration of these issues).

[**Karen: Question or statement re: Boundaries?**]

Website: **Piya Kruger**, webmaster for CHNA website (*Cochran-Heights.com*), reported that the website is up and running and requested that everyone look at it and give her suggestions as to what can be added or improved.

Charles [NSOA(?) map? **Charles: what materials did you distribute?**]. **Piya Kruger** moved that the Block Captains initiate collecting email addresses for the neighborhood to improve communications. **Charles** gave corrections to the Newsletter: Homer Street doesn't have Resident Only Parking; also, the City office for purchasing hangtags on Ross Avenue is closed – you now have to go to City Hall, in person (not online or by mail), to purchase them, and bring a photo i.d. and a current utility bill for proof of residence.

Crime: **Charles** suggested members refer to the recent Newsletter for crime stats and pointed out that most of them are property crimes (vehicle burglaries, etc.) and that there has been a 100% drop in crime in our neighborhood.

Special Orders

Tax exempt status: **Rick Roberts** and **Will Rosellini** are researching the CHNA's tax exempt status.

Alley abandonment: No news.

Good neighbor donations: **Charles** stated that he would add the date of the last donation for each donor in the Newsletter so that anyone who wants to donate again may see when they last donated.

New Business

[**Someone**] stated that the bulky trash pickup day is the week of the third Monday of the month. **Piya Kruger** stated that the bulky trash pickup days are also listed on the website.

Arlene Colbert announced that none of the schools in the area are closing because of the State and City budget cuts, although we will lose 25 teachers (out of 120). Bonham is going to ½-days and that school is losing 2 teachers. North Dallas High School will lost ½ of its budget for paper and **Arlene** suggested that if someone wants to help, they can donate enough to provide paper for a month or some other period of time. She also talked about Bonham's loss of the \$18,000 grant for the purpose of after-school activities and tutoring; Andres Property Company stepped in and is donating the \$18,000 to meet the need this year and promised to continue donating this money

in the future if necessary. **Arlene** talked about the mentoring program for North Dallas High School, how much these students need mentors, how rewarding it is for the individuals who volunteer to be mentors, how easy it is to be involved; she announced that for anyone who wants to be involved or just to see what the mentoring program is about, there will be a luncheon at North Dallas High School on April 15 and everyone is invited.

Charles distributed plat materials and opened the floor for discussion for comments about the proposed zoning change on Miller for the bakery and expansion of parking. Although the property in question is not within the boundaries of Cochran Heights, several people voiced their concerns about the zoning change and the increased parking the owners want to put in. **Cynthia Mondell** moved that Charles write a letter to Angela Hunt and Pauline Medrano from CHNA voicing our opposition to the Bakery plan; however, **Greg Branch** pointed out that we might not have a quorum present in order to take a legitimate vote; **Charles** said the motion would be tabled, based on the current bylaws. **Charles** agreed to send an email notification to CHNA when Vickery Place Neighborhood Association meets regarding the Bakery/zoning change.

Piya Kruger stated that she looked up information on the planned restaurant, the “Velvet Taco,” to be opened in the recently-closed “Church’s Chicken” location and shared the information: **[Piya: could you send me an abbreviated version of the info – I didn’t get it all written down and don’t want to leave anything out.]** [_____ and _____] stated their concerns that the Velvet Taco was being characterized as a sexually-oriented business when it is not, that they know the owner personally, they can vouch for his good character, and this restaurant will be a good addition to the area. In the discussion, several members voiced their concerns that the Velvet Taco has requested additional zoning for a [late night?] business. [_____] suggested that we invite the owner of Velvet Taco to speak to CHNA at our next meeting to explain his plans for the business.

[Charles, what was that last quip the guy standing up behind the wall made – I’d like to end the minutes with it -- it was so funny], the meeting was adjourned.

CHNA Secretary,
Mary Miller