

SLNA Newsletter

South Lamar Neighborhood Association www.southlamar.org

NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19 7:00 to 9:00 P.M.
UNITY CHURCH YOUTH ANNEX - 2806 Del Curto Road

FEBRUARY AGENDA:

- **SLNA Bylaws, Membership**
- **Walgreens Update**
- **Neighborhood Planning**
- **Oak Wilt in the 'Hood**
- **SLNA KAB Beautification Committee Report**
- **APD District Representative**

Revisions to SLNA Bylaws

by Carol Gibbs, Vice President

On Feb. 19, the Executive Committee will recommend changes to the SLNA Bylaws for the membership to discuss and vote on (entire original text can be found online at www.southlamar.org/Bylaws.htm and will be available at meeting). Proposed changes are:

IV. Membership

A. Eligibility (*re-wording for clarification*)

1. Membership in the Association shall be open to *all residents and owners of residential property* within these boundaries: north: Oltorf, south: Ben White, west: South Lamar / Manchaca and east: Union Pacific Railroad.

2. Membership in the Association shall be issued *on the basis of annual payment of dues or request for waiver*.

C. Voting (*addition to make membership renewal easier*)

5. At the Association's first general membership meeting of a year, a member in good standing in the previous year may vote or make a motion immediately upon payment of dues.

Members should feel free to suggest any additional such modifications for the entire membership to consider at that time.

Walgreens Update

by Kevin Lewis, President

The developer of a proposed Walgreens at South Lamar and Bluebonnet Lane will present a revised plan to SLNA residents at our regular membership meeting Thursday, Feb. 19. At a preliminary meeting with our Trailer Park Study Committee Feb. 3, developer David Darr discussed the new plan. Changes include moving the Bluebonnet driveway closer to Lamar, leaving the corner property (now Wireless Toyz) untouched, and building a new home for Taco Xpress just south of the current one, with the agreement of owner Maria Corbalan. The new plan would eliminate much of the existing trailer park, requiring a city rezoning of that land from residential to commercial. The developer plans to initiate the rezoning process soon, so this is the most opportune time to give input.

SLNA members unanimously opposed the original plan in July 2003. Some of the changes may benefit the neighborhood, but some concerns remain. For instance, the Bluebonnet driveway would likely handle even more traffic in the new plan, serving not only Walgreens' but also Taco Xpress' customers and the remaining trailer park residents. The developer has stated improved stormwater retention as a goal, but some details are unclear. Questions are encouraged as we seek to understand the issues in this case. Again, we have an opportunity to articulate a vision for our neighborhood and actively pursue its realization. Current members may vote on an official position for the association. As always, everyone is welcome in the discussion.

DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR DOG IS?

by Joshua Bingaman, SLNA member

I walked out my front door one recent morning to be greeted by two large collarless dogs in my front yard. I crouched down and whistled to them, and in response they both stopped cold, looked me in the eye, squatted and defecated in my yard. Is there a K9 god somewhere seeking revenge against me for something I might have done as a child? I don't think so. I'm just trying to figure out how to deal with this recurring situation, and sarcasm seems to be the only personal cure.

After looking into Austin's regulations regarding dog poop, there doesn't seem to be much legal incentive for dog owners to scoop it. The closest "incentive" might be the 1981 City Ordinance (Code 3-3-2), stating that any pet "not under the direct physical control of the owner" can be impounded or the owner may be fined up to \$500.

As for the waste itself, here are some health incentives I found on the City's website. I hope they will enlighten those readers who have a faithful furry friend that likes to poop in your neighbors' yards: "...pet waste is more than smelly and unsightly: it is a health risk to pets, bodies of water and people, especially children. Pet waste left on trails, sidewalks, streets, and grassy areas is immediately flushed into... the nearest storm drain, where it travels to your neighborhood creek... *untreated*. Like human waste, animal waste may contain harmful bacteria and viruses, rendering the water unfit for irrigation, recreation, or other uses. In addition, pet waste contains nutrients that will accelerate the growth of nuisance algae." According to a TNRCC study in 2000, approximately 30,308 dogs live in the Town Lake watershed, while an estimated 1,327 lbs. of dog waste is deposited into the watershed daily - nearly 500,000 lbs./year!

The City has provided "Mutt Mitts" - biodegradable bags for scooping your dog's poop - along most hiking trails and in leash-free parks around Austin. You can buy your own supply of Mutt Mitts at local pet stores, or just use that stash of plastic grocery bags piling up under your kitchen sink. Whatever your method, please discourage your dogs from contaminating your neighbors' yards; but if that fails, at least clean it up so your neighbors don't have to endure its effects.

KEEPING (SOUTH) AUSTIN BEAUTIFUL

by Carol Gibbs, Vice President

At October's meeting, SLNA members voted to join Keep Austin Beautiful's "Adopt-A-Street" program. This means we will get one of those green "Keep Austin Beautiful" signs, identifying SLNA as an active participant in this well-respected program. We will adopt a different stretch of SLNA roadway for each quarterly cleanup project, but the KAB neighborhood sign will be erected in one permanent location. **Rona Distenfeld** will Chair the committee, and will present their first report at the February meeting. Anyone interested in being on this committee is encouraged to attend the meeting and sign up! This will be an excellent way for teens to learn the value of getting involved in their community!

OAK WILT ALERT

by Charlton Perry, SLNA Representative to ANC/SCC

SLNA has one of Austin's worst Oak Wilt zones! You can see its devastation by looking at the oak tree skeletons along Clawson Road, between Southgate and Morgan Lane. If nothing is done to stop the spread, it will continue to spread. Fortunately, we are not powerless, but it will take decisive action by all property owners.

SLNA has our own equipment and members who've been trained on using it. For information and assistance on diagnosing Oak Wilt, contact SLNA member Charlton Perry at 731-6518 or via email: cperry@ststephens-texas.com. Useful oak wilt information can also be found at: <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/oakwilt/>.

SLNA Membership Grows in 2003

by Bill Stoughton, Treasurer

2003 was a year of growth for SLNA, both in our savings accounts and membership roll. As of 12/31/03, SLNA had a combined balance in its savings and checking accounts of \$2940, compared to \$1535 at the end of 2002.

Most of the Association's receipts were from membership dues and newsletter advertising. 2003 expenditures were primarily associated with printing the newsletters and photocopying backup materials for zoning cases at City Council. The Association also purchased new yard signs to announce our general meetings.

SLNA's membership roll grew by 42 percent to 75 in 2003, compared to 53 members at the end of 2002. Of the 75 members, eight were granted hardship waivers of the 2003 dues. A delineated report will be available at the February membership meeting.

Election Workers Needed

by Carol Gibbs

If you're a Registered Travis County Voter, you could earn \$7.15/hr while helping make our country's democratic process work. The upcoming March 9th Primaries (and potential April 13th Run-offs) need one Presiding Judge and one Alternate Judge representing both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, plus additional clerks, at every Polling Place.

A 3- hour training is required prior to working the Primary, and sessions are offered at all hours, weekdays and weekends, throughout February. They will try to assign you to your own precinct, but you may be assigned to work in a precinct other than your own.

The basic responsibilities of Early Voting and Election Day workers include greeting, assisting, and verifying the eligibility of each voter as they enter the polling place. **Early Voting** workers should be available to work approximately 8 hours/day for 14 days (typically not exceeding 40 hours a week). **Election Day** workers should be available to work a minimum of 12 hours on Election Day. **Election Night** workers are needed to work at receiving substations and at the Central Counting Station.

For more information, call the Travis County Elections office at 238-VOTE or visit http://www.co.travis.tx.us/county_clerk/election/ or email them at election@co.travis.tx.us.



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South Lamar Neighborhood Association

Membership Status: New Member _____ Renewing Member _____

Please complete the following. Couples, please use both first names.

NAME(S): _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

AREA CODE & PHONE NUMBER: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

[] Check here if you want to join SLNA's Yahoo Email Group.

If you live outside SLNA's borders, please note the address of the SLNA property you own: _____

Membership is \$10 per year per household (due in January each year)

Or be a "Big Bubba/Big Bubbette" for \$20 (or more) per year

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

[] Request Hardship Waiver of Membership Fee

Make checks payable to "South Lamar Neighborhood Association"

Mail/Deliver to Bill Stoughton, 3200 South Oak, Austin, TX 78704

Check out the SLNA Website at www.southlamar.org

2004 SLNA Contacts

Kevin Lewis, President

443-1576 klewis@wholeearthprovision.com

Carol Gibbs, Vice Pres. & Newsletter Editor

442-8060 cgibbs1@austin.rr.com

Secretary

(to be filled)

Bill Stoughton, Treasurer & WebMaster

448-2754 bill@southlamar.org

Charlton Perry, SCC/ANC Delegate

731-6518 cperry@ststephens-texas.com

Membership in the Association shall be issued on the basis of residency and payment of **annual dues**. SLNA boundaries are:

North - Oltorf; South - Ben White; East - Union Pacific Railroad; West - S. Lamar / Manchaca.

Persons meeting the above criteria but who are unable to pay membership dues may request a reduction in dues or a waiver.

The privilege of introducing motions and voting shall be limited to those who have joined the Association at least ten days prior to any regularly scheduled or special called meeting.

Complete bylaws are available at regular meetings and online at www.southlamar.org.