

August 2003

Volume 2, Issue 4

SLNA Newsletter

South Lamar Neighborhood Association www.southlamar.org

Next Meeting

Thursday, August 21st
7 - 9 pm
Unity Church
Youth Annex
2806 del Curto

AGENDA TOPICS:

- **CityView Storage**
Sarah Crocker
- **Kinney Mues**
Nathan Munk
- **Neighborhood Planning**
Bryan King
- **Other SLNA Business**
Kevin Lewis

SLNA Development Updates

By Kevin Lewis, SLNA President

Walgreens: DOWN but not necessarily OUT... yet

As many have already heard, City Council voted July 17 to oppose the zoning changes requested for a Walgreens store at South Lamar and Bluebonnet. Many thanks to Mayor Wynn and Council Members McCracken, Goodman, Alvarez, and Slusher for listening to our concerns and supporting our position.

We are very lucky to have such a talented, dedicated and selfless bunch of volunteers on the Trailer Park Zoning Study Committee. We all owe a great debt to co-Chairs Carol Gibbs and Marci Roberts, committee members Bryan King, Don Ewalt and Daryl Thompson; webmaster Bill Stoughton; and our many Zilker friends. Thanks also to all neighbors who came to meetings and patiently listened and contributed their views, and especially to the thirty-plus individuals whose names were read into the record as having signed up against the zoning request. This victory has shown that sometimes people power is more than a match for mega corporations. It is very likely that had we not worked so hard and made a strong case, Council would have gone with the flow and approved the project. Our grassroots efforts truly won the day.

Council did pass GR commercial zoning for the rear half of Harper tract (former Anna's Toy Depot). Although that was not our preference, it may have limited or no impact in the short term. I hope that someone will come forward to plan a small business using the existing building, and requiring only minimal parking.

Our heartfelt "*Congratulations to the TRUE home team!*" are followed by a word of caution: it is likely, though not at all certain, that the developer may bring back a revised version of the Walgreens plan for the Village Trailer Park. If that happens, the City will re-notify the surrounding property owners and the Neighborhood Association, and we will post it on the SLNA email list immediately. Stay tuned - and stay ready - we may need to rally again!!

CityView Storage: Act Two, Scene Three

Several SLNA neighbors met with the developer on July 30 to see a newly revised plan for the proposed CityView Storage site on Kinney Rd. at S. Lamar (the vacant triangle next to Gold Creations, fronting on Kinney). They will present this revised plan to the entire SLNA membership at the Aug. 21 SLNA meeting.

This case started over two years ago, when they wanted to install only a fraction of the parking spaces required by City Code. The developer lost not just that request, but lost again one year later, and now is seeking a formal reconsideration of that ruling. Throughout these many months, SLNA's position has been clear: any building on that site should be built to City code with no variances, period. The developer has argued that City code is wrong in this case, and the Code should be disregarded.

Now, while their reconsideration request is still pending, the developer has presented a second plan that would require NO variances, which would satisfy what we've been demanding all along. This plan would use the ground floor of their 4-story storage facility for parking in order to meet the Code -- but that means less rental income for them. Therefore, they are offering us a third plan -- a "compromise": if we will let them have SOME of the parking spaces waived, then they will install nicer landscaping and fencing.

Confounded? Join the crowd. Come to the meeting and hear about it first-hand.

Neighborhood Planning on SLNA's Horizon

Bryan King, President of Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC) and Past-President of SLNA, will explain the purpose of Neighborhood Planning ("NP") and what we, as "stakeholders", need to do to prepare for it. We need everyone's input into deciding what we want our part of town to look like -- if we don't do it, the City will decide for us! Come to the August meeting to see if this is something you could get involved with.

SLNA Keeps Growing... & Growing... & Growing!

by Bill Stoughton, Treasurer

As of July 31, the Association had 65 active members, a 23% increase over the total membership for all of 2002. The Walgreens rezoning issue brought in several new memberships from neighbors wanting to express solidarity with SLNA's opposition to the proposed development. However, for some members, it was a tough reminder that active membership involves paying annual dues, not just a one-time fee.

SLNA memberships are due at the beginning of each calendar year -- not twelve months from when you joined or paid last year... So if you have not paid SLNA dues in 2003, your membership is not current. The dues are minimal, and the Executive Committee can grant a hardship waiver if requested, so there is no reason to delay!

If you don't recall if you've paid your 2003 dues, you can contact me by e-mail (bill@southlamar.org), phone (448-2754), or at the next meeting to confirm your membership status. We've come a long way in the short 2½-year existence of the SLNA. With your support, we can continue working together to make (keep) our neighborhood what we want it to be.

Become A Green Garden Block Leader

The City's environmental departments have combined efforts to assemble the Green Gardening Block Leader Program, and are now recruiting citizens to become Block Leaders to help promote Austin's environmental programs. Are YOU interested?

As a Green Garden Block Leader, you will receive a sign to post in your yard for easy identification by neighbors who might want to learn more about the program. You will act as spokespersons for the City's environmental programs by distributing city-produced door hangers to your neighbors three or four times a year. Each hanger will have pertinent seasonal information about environmental conservation in Austin.

Austin needs our help to keep our city clean and green. By becoming a Green Garden Block Leader, you will be doing your part for the City's park system, water supply, and environment as a whole. For more information call 974-2978 or e-mail karen.stewart@ci.austin.tx.us.

Keeping Your Neighborhood Beautiful

by Daryl Thompson

Do you have a nice neighbor whose hobby is to restore old cars and thinks nothing of being surrounded by a wrecking yard?

Or maybe you have a nice neighbor who is "mechanically challenged," and hasn't mowed the yard since their lawn mower broke a few years ago.

We've all had neighbors we like as individuals but their hobbies are trashing their yards - and your street. Maybe you've tried to drop hints, but they just don't get it. You really like them and don't want to jeopardize your friendship, so you just let it slide....

But every time you drive by the place, you cringe and think, "I wish they would clean up that mess!"

The City has programs that can help preserve both your friendship and your neighborhood's appearance. By calling the appropriate City Department and reporting the street address and the problem, you can remain anonymous but your neighbor still gets the message - and doesn't get a fine unless they refuse to comply with City Ordinances. These programs are paid for by your tax dollars, so you might as well use them.

The most commonly needed numbers are:

"Yard Cars" - cars being parked on the lawn all the time: 311

Overgrown weeds or litter on private property: 494-9400

Junk Cars on private property: 291-5816

OR just call the City Switchboard (974-2000) and ask what department handles the issue you are reporting.

Find SLNA's Quick Directory, with more helpful phone numbers, at www.southlamar.org/resources.htm.

South Lamar Neighborhood Association

Member Information: Current Member _____ New Member _____

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

NAME (S): _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

AREA CODE & PHONE NUMBER: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

If you live outside the SLNA boundaries, please note the address of the property you own in the SLNA: _____

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



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SLNA Social Every Friday

*Enjoy good conversation, good music,
good eats with good people!*

*Usually at Maria's Taco Xpress, 6 to 8pm
Look for the NEON table decoration!*

2003 SLNA Contacts

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Membership in the Association shall be open to all residents & residential property owners within these boundaries: North - Oltorf; South - Ben White; East - Union Pacific Railroad; West - S. Lamar / Manchaca; *Membership in the Association shall be issued on the basis of residency and payment of **annual dues**. 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.*