

Minutes
Audubon Place Association
General Meeting
Thursday, Jan.2, 1997 at the River Cafe

In attendance were: Gary Coover, Clay Sterling, Peter Boyle, Tony Herrada, John O'Donnell, Rob Devinney, Laura Devinney, Maaike VanBemmel, Sam Bernstein, & Karen Bernstein.,

The meeting was called to order at 7:35PM by President, Sam Bernstein. Review of Minutes

Treasurers Report: Maaike Van Bemmel

Checking Account Balance as of 11/25/96: 1027.45
Savings Account Balance as of 12/10/96: 6399.99
Total: 7427.44

Historical Committee: Gary Coover

Meeting will be called in a few weeks for the committee to pull information for application to Texas Nat'l Historical Commission for Audubon's Historic Application. Discussion of a membership Home/Historical Tour in the Spring as a fund raiser. Also a tour of Audubon put on by Houston Preservation Alliance. Next meeting for Historical committee Sun., Jan.26 at 804 Kipling.

Alliance Security Patrol: Maaike VanBemmel

Non-functioning at this time. Call Southgate's Civic Assoc. person for exploration of payment to organize and bill for this service.

Sign Design: Peter Boyle

No permit process for signs of this kind. HL&P will not give permission for placement of sign on electric poles.

John O'Donnell made motion to accept revised sign design. It was seconded by Karen Bernstein. All present approved motion.

Karen Bernstein moved for sign committee to investigate colors. Clay Sterling seconded. All present approved.

Laura Devinney moved for Audubon Place Assoc. to award sign design winner, Peter Boyle, a gift certificate for dinner for two at River Cafe. John O'Donnell seconded. All present approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Membership:

Sam Bernstein suggested to put together a flyer and members go door to door to

solicit new members. Sam will co-chair with someone/Maaike VanBemmel to devise a plan to gain new members. First step to be to bill all of 1996 members for the current year.

Speakers:

A list of suggested speakers for the general meetings in 1997:

Anti-graffiti spokesperson from the Mayor's Office. Lazy Gardener-Brenda Nusmith of the Chronicle Scott Howard-president of Neartown

Beautification: John O'Donnell

Meeting once a month of this committee to accomplish priority project of the esplanades on Audubon, to be coordinated with the sign project. Discussion about establishing a separate fund for esplanade improvement. Need a landscape design that is easy, low maintenance with low cost installation. John has a friend that is a landscape designer and has a nursery wholesale license. He will investigate designs & costs.

Review of Committees:

Tabled

FYI:

Tarot Card Reader business on Hawthorne is gone. M-Bar on Westheimer has gotten approval from the City to go ahead. Avondale Civic is thinking about getting an injunction to stop the rehab of their location. Grif's Has No Parking.

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Laura Devinney made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Karen Bernstein seconded. All present approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 PM

Respectfully submitted

Laura Devinney

February 6, 1997

The Audubon Place Civic Association met February 6, 1997 at the River Cafe. Sam Bernstein called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. In attendance were Karen Bernstein, Peter Boyle, Tony Herrada, John O'Donnell, Ann Lugg, Maaike Van Bommel, Laura and Rob Devinney, Ceryden and Karl Ferenczy, Philip Paratore, Michael Landrum, Clay Sterling, and Adi Bgno (sorry, couldn't read name).

General Meeting

January Minutes: The minutes were distributed and approved.

Treasurer's Report: Maaike reported a checking balance of \$1,027.45 and a savings balance of \$6,411.80, making a total of \$7439.25.

Old Business

Historical Committee Report: Gary Coover was acknowledged for all the work he's put into the historical committee efforts. Fie reported that the goal to be designated historical by the State is close and that on the next day (Friday, Feb. 7) the State Historical Review committee would meet at his house at 804 Kipling to review the neighborhood and talk about the historical designation.

Traffic Survey: Clay Sterling began by saying that the efforts to do something about the excessive traffic through the neighborhood began two years ago. The traffic counters placed in the neighborhood by the city in November determined that 21% of the traffic in the neighborhood is cut-through traffic. They counted more than 5,000 cars per day using Hawthorne, 1,200 using Audubon, and 500 using Harold. The street with the second highest traffic was Taft. All problems seem to stem from Hawthorne, so greater weight will be given to the residents of that street in dealing with the problem. For now, flyers need to be distributed and in a couple of weeks we will need to do a door-to-door survey of the residents. Volunteers took flyers to distribute.

Signs: Peter Boyle was recognized for all the work he's done toward getting Audubon Place signs in place. He then reported that large signs for the esplanade would cost \$3,500. The unit cost of small pole signs would be \$175. There was considerable discussion about where these signs should be placed, and it was decided that Peter would present a map of the neighborhood with an overlay of proposed sign locations at the next general meeting. Sam suggested a fundraiser to cover the cost of the signs. It was generally agreed that getting the signs made and put up will take more time and probably more money than anticipated, and that they won't be in place for April on Audubon.

April on Audubon: After much discussion about the format and goals of this event, it was decided to have a walking tour of the neighborhood for members only, then a pot luck party in someone's yard. Whose yard that will be was not decided, but it was agreed that the esplanade, although a nice public space, is too dangerous for the gathering.

Membership Renewal Time: Everyone was reminded that it is time to pay dues again.

New Business

Capital Improvement Meeting: It was announced that the City of Houston would be holding a meeting to solicit input on what to do with capital improvement funds. Everyone was invited to attend our district meeting with Jew Don Boney at the Museum of Fine Arts. Last year the sewage problem on Hawthorne was fixed not long after the meeting. Forms were distributed for submitting suggestions.

Security: We still need a security czar to oversee getting a patrol in the neighborhood again. No volunteers came forward, although Maaike did volunteer to attend the PIP meetings. Sam said he would ask someone personally to take on the security project.

Beautification Proposal: The city will match what we spend on neighborhood improvement projects up to \$5,000, with a minimum of \$1,000. The city suggests projects like planting, newsletter publication, and building playgrounds. It was agreed that we should draw up plans for planting the esplanade. Clay said we already have \$2,500 earmarked for esplanade improvement. It was suggested that we keep the location and shape of future signs in mind when planning the planting.

Committee Reports

Security: Still need security and PIP person

Membership: Sam and Maaike will spearhead the efforts.

Beautification: Sam John, Peter, Tony, and Valeric will write a proposal for planting the esplanade to try to get capital improvement funds from the city.

Historical: This committee is moving forward on getting historical designation for the neighborhood. Need no extra help now.

Signs: Laura will help Peter prepare a neighborhood map with an overlay representing proposed sign locations for the next meeting.

Newsletter: Sam made a call for submissions. Gary will write a report for the Historical Committee; John will write something on the matching grant proposal; and Ann will summarize the monthly meeting.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at about 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Lugg
Secretary

March 6, 1997

The Audubon Place Civic Association met March 6, 1997 at the River Cafe. Sam Bernstein called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. In attendance were Sam Bernstein, Ann Lugg, , Laura and Rob Devinney, Clay Sterling, Chuck Noll, Robert Martinez, John O'Donnell, Jack & Clare Rose, Gary Coover, Dana Roberts, Valerie Peisen, John Unger, and Sarah Ella and Lewis LaMaster.

General Meeting

February Minutes: The minutes were distributed and approved after correcting the spelling of Andrea DiBagno's name.

Old Business

Treasurer's Report: In Maaike's absence Sam reported a checking balance of \$824.05 and a savings balance of \$6,421.89, making a total of \$7,245.94. We earned \$10.09 in interest in February.

Historical Committee Report: A meeting was announced for Sunday, March 9 at Gary Coover's house to discuss alterations to houses that make them contributing or noncontributing to the neighborhood's historical status. The next meeting of the State committee is in November, so our historical committee's report needs to be to them by August. There will be a walking tour of historical houses by the Greater Houston Preservation Alliance in a few months. Gary would like a walking tour of Audubon Place next month.

Traffic Survey: Surveys have been passed out. Some have been conducted, but more need to be before the meeting with the city on Thursday, March 13, when the AP committee will be presenting a map showing people who support and those who oppose changing the traffic in the neighborhood, and the neighborhood's conclusions to this point.

Beautiflcation Plans: John O'Donnell, Peter Boyle, Tony Barrada, & Sam got together to make a plan to present to the city to get funding for neighborhood beautification. John is looking ointo getting city permission to plant on the esplanade. jPeter wants to get information on the original planting from Teas Nursery, and possible donation of plants, but after some discussion of the city's plans to dig up Audubon Place to replace the drainage pipes, it was decided to scale back plans for beautifying the esplanade. It was approved that the plants growing on the esplanade now be dug up and the area be seeded for new grass.

New Business

Automated Trash Pickup: The automated trash pickup program is spreading to more neighborhoods. Laura said no matter what the neighborhood prefers, the city will make it mandatory when it comes to our area. An informal vote on whether area residents want this program showed that they don't.

Security: Barbara Skjonsby, Presidnet of First Montrose Commons spoke briefly and brought questionnaires for area residents to guage the level of support for a neighborhood patrol. She said that there are no statistics to prove that the patrol contracted with the constable's office in 1994 helped bring down the crime rate in the area patrol, but there seems to be some support to start up the service again. Now it will cost about \$40,808 per year for a 40-hour a week patrol. There was some discussion about whether it is best to pay a bookkeeper to take care of billing, etc., and it was decided that it's too big a job for

anyone to do as a volunteer. The point was made that the patrols will give us just about any level of service we ask for, for a price. They are authorized to arrest people, and they carry guns.

Street Festivals: Robert Martinez from Griffs attended the meeting and described the St. Patrick's Day activities that business had planned. Plans included expansion to the vacant lot at the corner of Westheimer and Stanford. Robert said they were putting 50 trash cans out and that people on golf carts would patrol the neighborhood and pick up trash throughout the weekend. It was suggested they patrol first thing in the morning to get the late-night hevellers' debris, and he agreed that was a good idea. He assured us that the noise from the bands would be kept at legal limits, and the bands would stop playing at 11pm. Robert assured everyone that they would do their best to have the least impact on the neighborhood, given the type of activity the St. Pat's Day Festival is.

The Audubon Association is opposed to the ocntinuation of the Westheimer Street Festival and want to see to it that it's controlled. The Hemp Store is making noises about closing part of Westheimer for a festival April 19-20, although the Westheimer Street Festival is to be held in early May. Sam urged everyone opposed to these festivals to write to the city council about their feelings on the street festival. There is a movement now to craft an ordinance to deal with such festivals, led by Mike Yarborough. It was suggested that we maintain an active opposition to the Westheimer Street Festival. Writing to the city council en masse is a good way to keep up the pressure.

The Good News

Sam announced that Montrose between Richmond and the Museums will be a banner distict, and that in the spring or summer we may get a gateway at Westheimer and Bagby.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at about 8:55 p.m. Sam was commended for keeping the meetings on track and adjourning on time.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Lugg
Secretary

April 3, 1997

The Audubon Place Civic Association met April 3, 1997 at the River Cafe. Sam Bernstein called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. In attendance were Sam Bernstein, Ann Lugg, Alexandria DiBagno, Gabriele Shuster, Gary Coover, John O'Donnell, Tony Herrada, Rob & Laura Devinney, Lewis Ma Master, Patti Thompson, and Maikke van Bommel.

General Meeting

March Minutes: The minutes were distributed and approved.

Old Business

Treasurer's Report: Checking account: \$1049.05. After paying Neartown Association dues and collecting membership dues the balance was \$1209.05. Savings account balance was (as of 3/12/97) \$6,431.99, for a total of \$7,641.04.

Security Service: Mr. Dougherty, whose office is at 909 Kipling offered to be on the committee to send out security service bills.

Sam expressed concern about the vagrants who started the fire at Pasternak's on Alabama, and the fact that the debris is still there. He asked for a volunteer to call the Pasternaks and express concern over the fact that the mess has not been cleaned up.

Historical Committee Report: A group of residents has had two walking tours of the neighborhood to determine the properties that contribute to the historical nature of the neighborhood and those that don't (and why). Mrs. Peterson (homeowner at corner of Audubon and Marshall) invite the group in for a tour of her house. She also offered to sit down with someone and give an oral history of the neighborhood. A motion was made and approved that the association send her flowers for being such a gracious hostess. **Beautification Committee:** The word from the company that's doing the radical streetwork in the area is that there are no plans to tear up Audubon. John O'Donnell reported that Jane Curtis (?), a horticulturist with the Friends of Herman Park will suggest plants, native and hardy types, to put on the esplanade. John suggested that people in the neighborhood plant canopy trees on the edges of their property to shade the streets.

Signs Committee Report: The group met and Peter and Laura decided that funding for small perimeter signs could be voted on and installed in the near future. Laura brought a map showing the proposed locations of the signs, which cost \$89 each. Poles and installation cost \$132 each. For the 15 signs needed, the cost would be \$1,988 total.

Gary suggested that we get a couple of extra signs in case of damage or theft. It was agreed that the date on the signs should be 1912. The motion was made that we purchase 15 small signs now, and it was approved.

New Business

APA is no longer a non-profit organization because the paperwork was allowed to lapse. Sam is going to file paperwork for reactivation. The motion was made and approved to become an active non-profit again.

Highway 59 project: Maiike volunteered to attend SWAP meetings to represent the interests of APA.

Walking Tour & Membership Event: Gary will talk to the Robin's Nest about having a membership drive/party there after a walking tour of the neighborhood. The target date is May 18 or 25.

Westheimer Street Festival & Griffs: Griffs had annual St. Paddy's Day party. The noise level went down at 11 p.m. Trash was controlled better than in previous years. Individuals who had positive things to say about how the party was controlled were asked to contact Robert Rodriguez directly to compliment him on the improvements over previous years.

The Westheimer Street Festival will be held May 3-4. In the past, APA has opposed the festival and insisted that regulations be enforced. There is to be no change this year. The association would like for streets to be closed except for emergency vehicles. Sam will ask Neartown if they need our support in

opposing the festival to city council, so that the associations appear as a united front.

There was some discussion on the article in "This Week" about River Oaks Health Care's plan to put a 26 bed facility for HIV positive men at 312 Alabama. Westmoreland will fight it based on deed restrictions. The motion was made and approved to support Westmoreland in their opposition.

Alleyway Security: At Jew Don Boney's capital improvement meeting Sam made a request that high weeds at 610 Harold be taken care of. The city has written the property owner asking them to cut weeds, but they must have several "no responses" to get the job done themselves. Sam complained to the police about daytime burglaries through the alleyways. He got a call from the daytime patrolman saying he would increase the patrol in the area, looking at alleyways more.

Laura requested support by the association for the Neartown Youth Baseball league. The motion was made and seconded to give \$50 to the group. In return, the association gets a banner with it's name on it at the games, and does a little to enrich the lives of all those kids.

Gary suggested we give ad space to the River Cafe for allowing us to hold meetings there. The suggestion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Audubon Place Association
Minutes of Meeting, May 1, 1997

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm. In attendance were Sam & Karen Bernstein, Alex & Andrea DiBagno, Karen & Harry Deakin, John Greiner, Lewis LaMaster, Philip Paratore, Rob & Laura Devinney, John O'Donnell, Gabriele Schuster, Bonnie Goodrich, Gary Coover, Jim Dougherty, and Chuck Noll.

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. Andrea DiBagno moved and Laura Devinney seconded the minutes be accepted after the spellings of Louis LaMaster's and Alex and Andrea DiBagno's names were corrected. The motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Sam announced that the APA is reinstated as a 501-C corporation. Sam said he would call the Internal Revenue service to verify the APA's tax status.

Bonnie Goodrich gave the historical committee report. There is only one more street left to walk for the historical research (Hawthorne on May 11, 1:30 pm). Gary will call the committee to confirm. He is beginning to write the application.

The neighborhood walking tour is scheduled for 5/25 at HSPVA. The photograph of 3608 Audubon enroute to its current location was passed around the meeting. Signs for APA say 1912 and this is okay. More flyers announcing the walking tour will be made and delivered by hand to neighborhood residents.

The matching grant application was submitted before the deadline. John O'Donnell, Peter Boyle, Tony Herrada, and Sam Bernstein did lots of hard work to complete this assignment. Assuming contributed labor, we asked for \$3700. Our contribution is about \$4100. No one has knowledge of when the grant decision will be made. The proposal was for beautification.

The esplanades will be planted with annuals for a 1 year probation. Water is available but not easily applied. Ideas were discussed for watering techniques, such as soaker hoses, drip systems, and regular sprinklers. The esplanade fund is taking pledges. Current level is \$1000 pledged. John O'Donnell asked members to consider pledging money but also time. Sam notes that we can reapply next year if we are not successful this time.

Signs; We agreed to 15 signs plus 3 spares. These have been ordered. The colors are dark green with beige. The signs should be up by the walking tour. Sign company will install them per our map.

There will be a SWAP meeting on 5/8/97 at Poe Elementary. The Southwest Freeway will be buried between Mandell and Montrose and a new offramp to South Main will be added.

Sam brought in a proposed advertisement concerning spaying and neutering dogs and cats. 90,000 dogs and cats are destroyed in Houston every year. The Fund for Animals is conducting a campaign to disseminate this information. They are offering a low-rate spay and neuter clinic. Laura made a motion to put an add in our newsletter. John O'Donnell seconded. The motion passed.

Westheimer Street Festival will start Saturday May 3. It will go Saturday and Sunday until 7:30 pm. There will no parking on certain streets in Audubon Place starting Friday evening. Ticketing and towing will be enforced. The parking signs will be better anchored so they can't be stolen. Street closures were discussed. If anyone has a problem with the festival, they should call the HPD storefront. Criminal activities should be reported to HPD downtown. City ordinances are not in abeyance during the festival.

A special traffic plan meeting will be held 5/6/97 at 318 Hawthorne. A plan has been devised to make Hawthorne one way only at Bagby. A public meeting is scheduled for June 1997. Flyers will be distributed to residents.

NEW BUSINESS:

Senator Rodney Ellis is giving away seedlings and saplings in concert with the Girlscouts. Trees may be picked up at 3410 Southwest Freeway starting 5/2/97.

The Decorative Center is offering a group tour of their facility. Sam proposes we go in the summer - he will check the possibilities.

Sam wrote a letter to the Neighborhood Protection office, c/o Mr. Tom Eng, complaining about the fire debris at 539 W. Alabama. He plans to fax the letter to Jew Don Boney. Laura proposes a copy go to Chris Bell and Bea Link, since these two have expressed interests in NearTown issues.

A new parking ordinance has been proposed to city council, involving stickers for residents to put on their cars. There may be a fee involved. Neighborhoods will be petitioned to see what residents feel. Sam will get more information from NearTown.

There are no plans for an APA fundraiser. Sam will ask Valerie what her availability is re a fall yard sale.

Jim Dougherty notes that The Right Step (TRS) has blocked the alley again with a padlocked sliding gate. He is annoyed because TRS did not coordinate this with their neighbors. Jim will draft a letter to TRS for APA's review.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

June 5, 1997

The meeting was called to order at 7:40p.m. In attendance were Sam Bernstein, Rick Grenier, Valerie Peiser, John O'Donnell, Clay Sterling, Patti Thompson, Tony Herrada, Peter Boyle, Laura Deviny, Rob Deviny, and Ann Lugg.

The minutes were reviewed and Clay made a motion that they be approved. John seconded, and all in attendance voted for approval.

Old Business**Treasurer's report**

There was none.

Historical Committee report

Sam reported on the activities of the Historical Committee. Gary led a tour of the neighborhood on May 25, and although it was sparsely attended, Sam commended Gary on the fine job he did gathering facts and leading the tour. The group walked 40-50% of Montrose Commons and Audubon Place. There will be another tour in the Fall that will be open to the public. It will be sponsored by the Greater Houston Preservation Alliance (GHPA).

As for historical designation, all of the neighborhood has now been canvassed to determine contributing and noncontributing homes. Sam said he believes that Gary is putting together the package to submit to the Texas Historical Commission.

Valerie suggested that APA join the GHPA. After some discussion it was agreed that if the GHPA didn't have provisions for groups joining, that the head of the Historical Committee be designated the member, at APA's expense. Valerie made a motion to that effect, it was seconded by Laura, and was unanimously approved.

Report on matching grant proposal

At the time of the meeting, it had not been announced whether APA's grant request had been approved by the city. The announcement was to be made the following Tuesday.

Update on signs

Signs were supposed to have been installed today (June 5). Holes have been dug, and the signs will probably go up tomorrow. They will be installed without cement, but the holes will be several feet deep, so that should not be a problem. The sign project has been paid for. There was some discussion on where to place the signs near the new shopping center on Hawthorne, and it was decided that we should wait until after the construction is done to choose a spot. Peter suggested that we put a sign on both ends of Audubon as a temporary measure until we can install the big signs on the esplanade. Laura suggested mounting them low to the ground. Tony suggested mounting them to the light poles. Patti made the motion that the signs be temporarily mounted to the light poles at each end of the Audubon esplanade, and John seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Fire debris report

Sam has written to Chris Bell, Jew Don Boney, and the Neighborhood Protection Team

about the debris at the site of the former Pasternak's grocery store. Bell's office was informative, and Pasternak has been cooperative in trying to do something. The State of Texas is holding things up, though, because of the presence of harmful materials in the debris (asbestos). The state has rules for removal and a list of particular contractors who must be used to do the work. There will be a hearing on June 9 concerning the clean-up because all the tests from the site will be completed. Sam wants to call State Representative Debra Danburg to ask for help in getting this ruled on and taken care of.

Valeric proposed a citizen's action to protest the lack of removal activity. She has made a list of people to contact to publicize action, which it was agreed, will be at 5 pm on Monday, June 9. Valeric will make some calls to activate participants. Sam said that the APA supports the action, and Valerie will write a summary of what happened for the newsletter.

New Business

Neighborhood traffic proposals

Clay reported on the public meeting that was held on Monday so the city could reveal their plan to local residents. The city will temporarily make Hawthorne 1-way at Hawthorne and Bagby ; no traffic will be allowed to enter Hawthorne at that intersection. Clay said that we will never have less traffic on Hawthorne if nothing is done. We must support this effort, or there's no hope of easing the traffic at all. He reported that permanent turn signals will be installed in October on Westheimer at Montrose and on Alabama at Montrose. The temporary obstacles will be put in place shortly thereafter, and stay in place for 90 days so the city can study their efficacy.

Decorative center tour/Astros game

Sam suggested a group tour of the Decorative Center of Houston and perhaps a mass trip to an Astros game. Clay is on the DC board. They have showrooms and groups can make arrangements to have tours given by designers. Sam will look into APA getting such a tour, possibly in July or August.

Sam's suggestion that APA members go to an Astros game was briefly discussed, but no decisions were made.

Meetings

Sam suggested that we change the meetings to every other month, as we are not getting very good attendance as it is. There was some discussion of this suggestion, and generally, there was support for continuing meeting every month. Sam's suggestion was tabled, but then Valerie made a motion that the July meeting be cancelled because many regular attendees will be out of town (it's July 3). Laura seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to cancel the July meeting.

House at corner of Hawthorne and Audubon

This derelict house was sold to a builder of townhouses who wants to put four units on the lot. The lot is subject to deed restrictions, but the title company has misplaced the paperwork reflecting that. An attorney at Stewart Title is investigating the situation. Laura invited the builder to the APA meeting, but he declined. He has obtained preliminary

approval from the city on a variance of the standard setback of 10 feet. Sam said the challenge period for disputing the deed restriction is over, so we should have a good case, if we have to take legal action. In the meantime, Laura said that if anyone sees action on that lot, such as the house being torn down, they should call her immediately.

There was much discussion about what APA needs to do to make title companies aware of the APA deed restrictions. The deed restriction committee will meet to discuss what action needs to be taken.

Graffiti

Valerie has been trying to get a police officer to work graffiti detail in the neighborhood. She said that anyone seeing graffiti should let her know. She will take a picture of it for documentation purposes before it's removed. She wants to convince the police that the area has a graffiti problem.

Patti made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Laura seconded. The vote was unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

September 5, 1997

The meeting was called to order at 7:40p.m. In attendance were Sam Bernstein, Maaike Van Bommel, Gary Coover, Bonnie Goodrich, Karen Bernstein, Laura Devinney, Rob Devinney, and Ann Lugg.

The minutes from the June meeting (our most recent) were not available for review.

Old Business

Treasurer's report

The association has \$362.17 in the checking account and \$4977.00 in the savings account. A new account has been opened for the esplanade project. It contains \$800.

Historical Committee report

The Greater Houston Preservation Alliance will be holding another walking tour, but doesn't yet know when it will be. In November they will give a tour of Link House (on the St. Thomas campus), and Gary Coover will give a lecture on architecture in Montrose.

Matching Grant Committee report

The committee wants to have a series of volunteering events: the first is digging up and preparing the beds. Next, planting, mulching, etc. They want to install spigots on meters, then use soaker hoses or some other simple irrigation method to water the plants.

The association needs to raise \$4,000 to match the city funds. We have agreed to pay up to \$2,500 out of our funds to match the city funds. We have pledges of \$3,000-3,500, and have more fundraising opportunities. The committee is looking into placing plaques or signs saying that different people or businesses have paid for beautification projects.

Laura Devinney and Maaike Van Bommel volunteered to be on the beautification committee along with the present members, John O'Donnell, Sam Bernstein, Peter Boyle, Tony Herrada, and Patti Thompson.

There was some discussion on pulling grass vs. using Roundup, so a vote was held to decide the method we should use to get rid of the grass. The majority of those voting preferred not using Roundup.

New Business

Neighborhood traffic proposals

The traffic barriers are now in place. Courtland Place "had a cow" when they heard that it would not be possible to take a right off of Smith onto Hawthorne under the trial traffic abatement conditions. They had a meeting with Jew Don Boney, then called the mayor's office. They got the plan changed, so that the shunt will be open for 30 days of the trial, then will be closed. Traffic counts will be taken under both conditions to determine what kind of difference it makes. All Audubon Place residents are encouraged to write to the mayor's office in protest of this change in plan.

Security in August

Sam Bernstein and his mother were robbed at gunpoint by two teenage boys in August.

This was after they had robbed a woman up the street who was visiting Valerie Peiser. Sam was punched in the face, and both Sam and his mother were held at gunpoint. The robbers took Sam's mother's purse.

On August 25 at 12:30 p.m., a woman resident of 614 Kiping pulled into the parking area at the complex. As she parked, she noticed a man walking by. She walked up the stairs, put her key in the door, and was shoved from behind into her apartment. The attacker tore the phone out of the wall, and after the woman pleaded with him not to rape her because she had AIDS tied her up, stole her car, and left the scene.

Also in August, a young man was caught after breaking 3 large glass windows and several flower pots on Marshall.

All residents of Audubon Place are encouraged to call the police if they see anyone suspicious in the area. There was limited discussion of renewing the security patrol in the neighborhood. As always, funding is the problem.

Announcements

Griffs is hosting a mayoral candidate forum Thursday, September 25.

Several members of the Audubon Place association are going to the City of Houston Neighborhood Conference: Gary Coover, Laura Devinney, and Maaike Van Bommel.

Saturday, September 27 is the city's hazardous materials recycling day.

Phil Peritori wants to know if residents on Harold want to get decorative lights like those he is installing on his property.

At 8:55 Laura Devinney made the motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Rob Devinney.

October 2, 1997

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. In attendance were Sam Bernstein, Gary Coover, Bonnie Goodrich, Laura Devinney, Rob Devinney, John Unger, Patti Thompson, Valerie Peiser, Gabriele Salensus (apologies; couldn't read name), John C. O'Donnell, Maaike Van Bommel, and Ann Lugg.

The minutes from the September meeting were read and approved with corrections.

Old Business

Treasurer's report

The association has \$362.17 in the checking account and \$4985.10 in the savings account. The esplanade account contains \$800.

Historical Committee report

Gary Coover reported that the application for historical designation is not quite complete. There are 96 homes out of 181 in the "contributing" category and 36 that could be put into that category with a little work.

Gary also reported that on Sunday, Oct. 26 at 2pm the Neighborhood Preservation Alliance will meet at Stanford & West Main for a walking tour of Montrose. Then, on Nov. 23, a tour of the Link Mansion will be held, with Gary giving a lecture and slide show on the architecture in Montrose. There are moves to start a council for historic neighborhoods (there are 8 with national designation) in the city. It will try to be the focal point for action for these neighborhoods. Gary said that by the November meeting the application should be completed. He thinks we should apply for historic designation from the city. The fact that it takes 3/4 of property owners to sign on (among other criteria) for city designation was discussed, and Laura Devinney suggested that we wait until we have state and national designation before trying for the (more difficult to get) city designation. Everyone agreed.

Matching Grant Committee report

John O'Donnell said that we have met all the city's requirements so far for our matching grant. The committee will meet to discuss exactly what our next actions should be. We have one year to use the city's matching funds after we sign the contract (which we had not done at the time of the meeting).

New Business

City of Houston Neighborhood, Conference

Laura Devinney, John O'Donnell, Gary Coover, Valerie Peiser, and Maaike Van Bommel attended the conference, which was held earlier in September. Everyone thought the conference was very well done and that it was worth the effort to attend. Different people attending went to different discussion groups, and all reported that they got valuable information (and inspiration) from the sessions. A synopsis of the sessions will be presented at the November meeting. Laura commented that the city really put its best foot forward at the conference and did a great job. She opined that Audubon should attend every year.

Street Festival

Sam encouraged everyone to call the police to report any problems during the Westheimer street festival, Oct. 18 & 19.

Fundraising

There was renewed discussion about holding a neighborhood yard sale to raise money. It was agreed that although a couple of people normally end up doing all the work (Valeric and Terri), the association did manage to raise around \$2,500 at the last sale, so it's worth it. It was agreed to impose restrictions on what could be donated (no clothes except coats), no junk; only quality items. Saturday, Nov. 15 was decided on as the date to hold the sale. The rain date is Nov. 22. **Speaker for next meeting**

Sam wants Kim Ogg to speak at the November meeting. She is from the mayor's anti-gang activity office. Laura suggested that it would be embarrassing for Kim to come to speak to so few people, so perhaps we could combine meetings with area associations and invite her to come and speak.

Laura suggested that area associations should designate one person to serve on a security task force for the area. Sam is going to talk to other associations about the idea. Several suggestions were made for working toward improved security, but the general consensus was that there's not enough interest to get anything going.

Laura suggested that we get a nominating committee to start working on new elections for the association. It was agreed that this needs to be done.

Patti made a motion that the meeting adjourn. Rob seconded. The time was about 8:50 p.m.

November 6, 1997

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. In attendance were Sam & Karen Bernstein, Gary Coover, Laura Devinney, Chuck Noll, Valeric Peiser, Patti Thompson, Sherri Rogers, Victor & Ramona Rojas, Clay Sterling, Jack Rose, Tony Herrada, Peter Boyle, Sarah Tyler, John C. O'Donnell, Peter and Maaike Van Bommel, Ann Lugg, and Olympia.

The minutes from the October meeting were read and approved.

The four newcomers who attended the meeting were welcomed. They were: Sarah Tyler, Sherry Rogers, and Ramona and Victor Rojas.

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Treasurer's report

The association has \$362.17 in the checking account and \$4993.75 in the savings account.

Historical Committee report

Gary Coover reported that walking tour through Audubon Place and First Montrose Commons drew about 80 people and was considered quite a success. He also reminded everyone of the tour of the Link Mansion to be held Nov. 23rd. Gary will be giving a lecture and slide show on the architecture in Montrose.

Matching Grant Committee report

So far there have been pledges of \$2700 for the beautification project. We need \$4000 to match the city funds. Sam said he wants to approach businesses in the neighborhood and see if they'd buy ads in the newsletter and to make contributions to the fund.

The committee met in October. The date needs to be set for starting the prep work. It will be best to do it in the winter (hopefully December) so that we can plant in the spring. There was some discussion of what sort of rental equipment will be needed to do the job.

Garage Sale

At the October meeting it was decided to hold the garage sale at Valerie Peiser's house. The sale is to be held Saturday, Nov. 15, with a rain date date of Nov. 22. Valerie made a call for donations, and for help on the day of the sale. John O'Donnell moved to place ads in the newspapers. Laura Devinney seconded. The vote to spend money on ads was unanimous. Patti Thompson and Karen Bernstein volunteered to help on Sale Day.

Neighborhood Group Meetings

It was recommended last month that we have a "council" of neighborhood associations so that we can share speakers. First Montrose Commons and Roseland Estates think it's a great idea. They want to aim to get together in mid-February at HSPVA. That meeting would be held in lieu of our regular monthly meeting.

Gary Coover reported that the Historic Neighborhoods Association is now open to anyone interested. There will be a Dec. 6 meeting at Montrose Library at 10:30am. Our association is joining the group. Patti Thompson and Laura Devinney will attend meetings. Gary is on the board.

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Maaike and Peter Van Bommel will be hosting the 1997 holiday party will be Thursday, Dec. 4 at 7:30pm. Call 521-1091 to volunteer to bring a dish.

Election of Officers

The nominating committee reported that the slate for the election contained just about the same names that it had last year. The exception is that Gary Coover has agreed to share duties with Sam, splitting the year Jan-June and July-Dec. Valerie Peiser moved that the slate be accepted. Karen Bernstein seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Development Activities in the Area

Laura brought up the fact that a developer is trying to close the Hyde Park cul de sac. It was decided that we should support the Hyde Park Civic organization in their opposition to the move. Gary Coover made a motion that Sam write to the city voicing the association's opposition to this action. Valerie Peiser seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Jack Rose described teh city's new building ordinance for inside the Loop. He urged people to contact city council to let them know how they feel about the new ordinance. The public will be allowed to speak at the planning commission meeting next Thursday. The meeting begins at 2pm.

Laura suggested that Sam write a letter to voice the association's concerns about the new ordinance. Sam asked that Gary Coover, Jack Rose, and Valerie Peiser help to write the letter.

Clay Sterling made a motion that the meeting adjourn. Tony Herrada seconded. The time was about 8:30 p.m.