

Audubon Place Association
Minutes for February 5, 2004
Neighborhood Meeting at River Cafe

In attendance: Brad Harmes, Patti Thompson, Maaike Van Bommel, Peter Boyle, Tony Herrada, Anita Bryant, Peter Van Bommel, Marsha Bloxsom, Steve Hamilton, Tony Deleca (from Kipling Arms), Dan Piette, Linda Harmes (12 total)

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm by Brad Harmes, President.

Tony Deleca introduced himself and let us know he was attending as a representative of his complex, Kipling Arms. These units are interested in joining our neighborhood association en masse and he was attending to find out more about us. We hope we will be able to welcome the residents of Kipling Arms as APA members soon!

Brad also read a note from new member, Angela Young (sent along with her membership check).

Old Business

Esplanade: Tony Herrada announced that the gardeners have given him a price of \$450 to purchase and spread mulch on all 4 sections of the esplanade. It was agreed that this was a reasonable price and Patti Thompson motioned that the money be spent to get this done. The motion was seconded and passed. Patti Thompson also mentioned that we need to trim the crepe myrtles on the esplanade before our mystery pruner from last year decides to drastically cut back these plants. Hopefully, if the shrubs look trimmed the mystery person will not attack again! A group agreed to meet at 9:00 am on Saturday, Feb 7 to prune prudently.

Yard Sale: This event will be held Saturday, April 3 in the driveway of the Harmes' house at 3707 Audubon. The sale will begin in the early morning and go until? Items will be accepted the week before the sale at the Harmes' house. NO CLOTHES Small furniture that can be easily maneuvered is ok.

Abandoned Vehicles: Patti Thompson mentioned that she had much success in getting an abandoned car removed from in front of her house by visiting the police substation on Westheimer personally. The car was removed in 3 days. Last Fall, the Bryants called 311 repeatedly to get another car removed. A personal visit to the substation is clearly the better way to go.

Spur 527 News: Several neighbors attended the hearing this week in an effort to stop the closure of the spur scheduled for next week (Feb 13).

- + Judge Hittner was very sympathetic to the neighborhood groups and had a lot of questions for TXDOT regarding their traffic routing plans
- + A lot of alterations to TXDOT's incomplete traffic plan have been made as a result of community action - and the plan continues to be altered even in the eleventh hour. If the Spur project moves ahead, WALQ plans to continue its efforts in hopes that they can improve the traffic situation as the project unfolds.
- + WALQ is collecting contributions to a fund to cover the legal fees of their lawyer, J.Blackburn. WALQ will be holding a fundraiser to raise money for this need in the near future. Patti Thompson proposed that we consider a donation to this fund at our March meeting.

Spur 527 news continued:

- + Judge Hittner will rule by Monday, February 9 at the latest. The Spur closure has to cause "irreparable harm" and not just be an inconvenience (however big!) to be stopped. Even if the project moves forward, the Judge retains the power to stop it at any time if the traffic becomes too overwhelming thus forcing TXDOT to come up with other solutions for diverting traffic from US 59.

New Business:

Wine Tasting: Brad Harmes announced that the APA Wine tasting party that was such a success last year will be held on Thursday, April 15 at their home (3707 Audubon) More information to follow.

Dumpster on Audubon: Marsha Bloxsom asked if there was something that could be done about the big blue dumpster positioned at the corner of Audubon and W. Alabama. This is not a nice marker to the entrance of our neighborhood! This dumpster is owned by the Acadia Bakery. Marsha is attempting to find out who owns the shopping center to approach them about moving it as she has met with no success confronting the bakery owner. Tony Herrada suggested that it seemed to be sitting on the sidewalk and Patti Thompson offered to research if the dumpster must be moved if it sits on City property.

Trash around apartments: Maaike Van Bommel mentioned the large amount of trash (including discarded furniture) around the apartments at W. Alabama and Audubon. She has repeatedly contacted the owner of the building with no success. It was decided an official APA letter would be sent to the owner asking them to clean up their act.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm

The next meeting will be held at River Cafe, Thursday March 4 at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Anita Bryant, Secretary

The following information was submitted by Maaike Van Bommel, Treasurer, after the meeting. This information is accurate as of February 4, 2004

Checking Account balance:	\$ 1,109.15
Savings Balance:	\$4,700.87
Esplanade Balance:	\$2,916.54
Total bank balance	\$8,726.56

Audubon Place Association
Minutes for March 4, 2004
Neighborhood Meeting at River Cafe

In attendance: Brad Harmes, Patti Thompson, Anita Bryant, Dan Piette, Chris Bryant, Linda Harmes, Alex di Bagno, Doreen Stoller, Quincy Alien (TXDOT) (9 total)

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm by Brad Harmes, President.

Brad welcomed Quincy Alien from TXDOT who was attending our meeting in response to some concerns voiced by neighbors about the current work on US 59 and Spur 527.

It was agreed that traffic, so far, has been much smoother and lighter than our initial fears and all the preplanning seems to have helped a lot. Mr Alien touched on 5 main points of concern:

1. The street closure at Hawthorne and Bagby - this was necessary due to a promise to keep traffic flow out of Westmoreland Place. It may be possible to take down in the future but will remain for now. It was reiterated that the outbound Spur will remain open throughout the project.

2. Reversible lanes on W. Alabama - neighbors discussed some of the problems with getting used to the new reversible center lane and the problem with not being able to turn left.

3. Spur design - there was limited discussion about whether there was still any room to discuss the ultimate design of the Spur. Mr Alien informed us that it was pretty much done but small changes may be possible - particularly changes in regards to landscaping and pedestrian access

4. Street closures - as 59 is dropped below Montrose there will be lane shifts and closures on Montrose for the next 6 months. At that time, Montrose will return to 4 lanes (2 lanes each way). Montrose will ultimately cross over 59 on 2 bridges (one northbound and one southbound) similar in style to the bridges at Dunlavy, Mandell and Graustark. During the lane closures on Montrose, motorists coming from the Mecom fountain circle will be encouraged to use Main instead.

5. Noise - Construction work times are 6 am - 7 pm seven days a week. If neighbors feel the need to complain about excessive noise they may reach Mr Alien via e-mail at:

Oallen@dot.state.tx.us

Mr Alien is also happy to hear ideas about how to improve traffic flow or specific ideas about problem areas or safety issues with the redirected commuter traffic. He can be contacted at the above e-mail address.

Old Business

Yard Sale: The yard sale will be held Saturday, April 3 in the driveway of Brad and Linda Harmes at 3707 Audubon. Small furniture is welcome but no clothes please!

New Business

Patti suggested we do a Spring Clean in April in the neighborhood. Specific areas of concern include litter and fallen leaves blocking the storm drains. It was decided to discuss this at the April meeting.

Treasurer's Report

There was no Treasurer's Report presented at this meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm

The next meeting will be held at River Cafe, Thursday, April 1 at 7:30 pm (really!)

Respectfully submitted, Anita Bryant, Secretary

iSubj: **APA April minutes info**
^Date: 4/4/2004 6:45:54 PM Central Daylight Time
iFrom: AudubonPlace
To: Awbintx

Anita,

Linda took some brief notes at last Thursday's meeting.

Meeting called to order at 7:35 pm by Brad Harmes.

We received a refund check in the amount of \$701.45, as the balance remaining from our \$1000 donation to the Spur 527 alternative engineering study project.

We voted to use that refund and anticipated proceeds from the yard sale to give a \$1000 donation to the WALQ legal expense fund. The motion was made by Steve Hamilton, seconded by Andrea DiBagno and approved unanimously.

Maaike Van Bemmell gave the Treasurers report:

Checking as of 3/23 \$403.17 Esplanade
Fund as of 3/25 \$2,918.91 Savings as of
3/10 \$4,703.43

Total Balance \$8,010.03

There was a general discussion regarding logistics for the Saturday, April 3 yard sale.

John O'Donnell updated members on the burned out property on Stanford and the adjacent vacant insurance agency office with 2,5 lots. There is conjecture that these properties may be attractive to a townhouse developer.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm

Audubon Place Association
Minutes for May 6, 2004
Neighborhood Meeting at River Cafe

In attendance: Steve Hamilton, Patti Thompson, Anita Bryant, Peter Boyle, Tony Herrada, Maaike Van Bommel, John O'Donnell, Dan Piette, Doreen Stollen (9 total)

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm by Steve Hamilton, Acting President (in Brad Harmes' absence).

Old Business

Burned out apartments at Kipling: It has been reported that the owner will very soon begin demolishing the burned out buildings at this property.

New Business

Crime in Neighborhood: Tony Herrada reported on a crime (armed robbery) and everyone was reminded to be aware of your surroundings - especially at night. This crime was not reported to the police (at the decision of the victim) but all crimes should be reported so the police have a more clear picture of where extra patrols are needed so we will all stay safe!

Westheimer Street Festival: The noise from the Festival held the first weekend of May was a real problem for residents Patti Thompson moved that a letter be sent to the organizers. John O'Donnell volunteered to draft an official letter to be sent from Audubon Place to the organizers, City Hall, HPD and City council members regarding our problem. We will also encourage our neighboring associations to do the same,

Fundraising: Dan Piette suggested that, to raise money for the neighborhood fund, we sell advertising space in our newsletter to our local businesses. John O'Donnell offered to draft a letter that could be sent out Next month we will discuss which businesses might be interested in participating and will contact them at that time.

Summer Meetings: There will be a meeting as usual in June, no meeting in July, and Neighborhood Night Out in August There was some discussion of getting a "big draw" speaker for the September meeting in hopes of getting a good turnout and maybe seeing some new faces for the new year. Steve Hamilton volunteered to look into who might be available.

Treasurer's Report

Maaike Van Bommel presented the Treasurer's Report:

Checking Account balance:	\$ 551.54
Savings Balance:	\$4,704.92
Esplanade Balance:	\$2,918.97
Total bank balance	\$8,175.43

Treasurer's Report (continued)

It was reported that \$561.50 was collected at the APA Yard Sale in April. Some of these proceeds (\$298.55) were combined with the refund received from the Neartown Association (\$701.45) to total \$1000. This \$1000 was given to WALQ to help offset the legal bills incurred during the US 59 court case.

The meeting was adjourned by Peter Boyle.

The next meeting will be held at River Cafe, Thursday, June 3 at 7:30 pm No meeting will be held in July.

Respectfully submitted, Anita Bryant, Secretary

Audubon Place Association
Minutes for June 3, 2004
Neighborhood Meeting at River Cafe

In attendance: Steve Hamilton, Patti Thompson, Anita Bryant, Peter Boyle, Tony Herrada, Maaike Van Bommel, John O'Donnell, Andrea di Bagno, Alex di Bagno (9 total)

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm by Steve Hamilton, Acting President (in Brad Harmes' absence).

Old Business

Burned out apartments at Kipling Demolition has begun on these buildings. There were various reports about townhouses going in here and concern for the trees at this site. Patti Thompson moved that Brad Harmes write a letter or e-mail to Trees for Houston asking for assistance in saving these trees. Also, it was suggested that Brad find out from **Trees for Houston** what other City of Houston organizations might be able to help. Andrea di Bagno related a recent experience with the building project next door to her home on Harold that seemed to indicate that no one could pave within 6 feet of an existing tree and this would mean that if the new property owners intend to have driveways for each town home unit they will have to REMOVE the trees. **The members feel that every effort should be made to protect these old, beautiful trees.**

The letters for the Westheimer Street Festival organizers and for Fundraising mentioned in the May minutes have not yet been done. Those responsible promised to accomplish these goals over the Summer.

New Business

Crime in Neighborhood: Anita Bryant reported that there seems to be a problem with drugs (and sellers) on Marshall. A large, maroon American make sedan has been seen in the area many times with people leaning in the windows appearing to conduct some kind of transaction. If you see this car, write down the license plate number, make note of time and call the police.

Summer Meetings: There will be no meeting in July, but the annual Neighborhood Night Out will be held on **TUESDAY, August 3**. This will be a Potluck dinner event on the esplanade on Audubon. More information will follow. Patti Thompson moved that APA spend \$25 to join the National Night Out organization, Andrea di Bagno seconded and this passed. Brad will contact them. John O'Donnell offered to have a table at the August event to let neighbors know again about our Historical District aspirations, deed restrictions and setbacks.

Neighborhood Clean Up: Andrea di Bagno discussed a large wasp nest in the trees at the demolition site on Harold. There was a question about who to contact when a large hive appears like this in City of Houston trees. It was suggested that one call 3-1-1 to get help. Also, Andrea again expressed concern about the state of the alleys running behind our houses, especially those on Harold. This is a City right of way and is becoming a hazard. The question seems to be - **who is responsible for keeping these alleys clear of junk and potential fire hazards?** Again, it was suggested that 3-1-1 may be a good place to start getting some answers.

Treasurer's Report

Maaike Van Bommel did not present the Treasurer's Report during the meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Anita Bryant, Secretary

Subj: **Info for September Minutes**
Date: 9/11 /2004 4:33:30 PM Central Daylight Time
From: AudubonPlace
To: Awbintx. SHAMILT@entergy.com, patricia.thompson@hp.com, icgd55@yahoo.com, adibagno@mfa.org, linda@hibit.com

Anita,

Here are the notes Linda took at the September 2 meeting. Hope to see you at the October meeting!

Brad

We discussed attendance at the annual August National Neighbors Night Out, Due to the heat and humidity it is difficult to draw a crowd on the esplanade. Recommendations for next year include using a neighbors porch with fans or other cooling, with the option of having the food and refreshments indoors in air conditioning. One advantage of meeting in the esplanade is drawing attention from neighbors that don't know about APA, even if they don't come to the event.

We voted to express our concern over the October 16 & 17 Westheimer Festival. President Brad Harmes will write to Councilmember Ada Edwards. John O'Donnell suggested we take pictures afterwards of the trash to make our case to shut down the event. Andrea DiBagno mentioned that we should ask the City to monitor the music for compliance with the noise ordinance.

John O'Donnell agreed to chair the nominating committee, with the objective of a submitting a slate at the October meeting and having elections for 2005 at the November meeting. Vice President Steve Hamilton indicated that he would not be able to accept the Presidency next year due to health concerns.

The City has shut off the water supply to the esplanade due to the substandard sprinkler system and lack of backflow devices. We considered replacing the spinkler system last year but decided the cost was prohibitive. Rick Griener will check with the City to determine what we need to do to dismantle the sprinkler connection and restore the water for use with garden hoses.

The DiBagnos agreed to host the Holiday Party again this year on Thursday December 2.

Patty suggested we invite Quincy Alien from TxDOT to speak to us again on the progress on the Spur 527 project. Brad will invite Quincy to either the October or November meeting.

The next newsletter should contain a reminder that yard signs for candidates are limited to 4 square feet.

Maaike provided the following Treasurer's report:

Savings \$4,710.36
Checking \$241.54
Esplanade \$2,921.59
Balance \$7,873.49

Here is the email I sent to Ada Edwards:

Dear Council Member Edwards,

At the September meeting of the Audubon Place Association, we voted to express our concerns to you about the upcoming Westheimer Festival on October 16 & 17. This recurring event is an un-official remant of the original Westheimer Colony Arts festival.

As the art festival outgrew the Montrose neighborhood, it became the Bayou City Arts Festival with semi-annual

highly controlled events downtown and in Memorial Park. Montrose is now left with a renegade event. As I recall last year, the organizers didn't event get a City permit to close the street, but instead used private property.

Their website <http://www.westheimerfestival.com/Index.htm> contains the following interesting entry: **Will**

this be the the last West test?

It takes tens of thousands of dollars to produce the Westheimer Street Festival. This money must be generated by the festival. We need your help or this will be the last WESTFEST! The city will not let us sell beer and most of you already bring your own beer and soft drinks. Producers make their money on an entrance fee, but we have no admission fee.

When we closed the street we kept the beer and drinks out and were able to pay for the stages, clean-up, police, port-o-cans, insurance, radio, generators, barricades, two-way radios, newspaper ads and so much more.

This is indicative of exactly what the neighborhoods fear..... a large public gathering without adequate sanitation, parking or crowd control. If the organizers cannot afford to meet such minimal requirements for a major event, then they should not be allowed to hold the event.

I do hope the City will have sufficient law enforcement personnel on hand for crowd control, monitor music volume for compliance with the noise ordinance, ticket illegal parkers and other crowd infractions, and to assure that the organizers clean up the resulting mess.

If this was a closed event, with admission charge and all the other features that other groups are required to provide in order to sponsor a major gathering, we would not be quite as concerned. Since this loose knit group apparently has no resources, they are creating a disturbance and a mess without demonstrating an appropriate level of civic responsibility.

We appreciate whatever assistance and influence your office can bring to bear on this problem. Thank

you.

Brad Harmes
President
Audubon Place Association
3707 Audubon Place
Houston, Texas 77006
713-523-9423

**Audubon Place Association
Minutes for October 7, 2004
Neighborhood Meeting at River Cafe**

In attendance: Steve Hamilton, Anita Bryant, Maaike Van Bemmell, Dan Piette, Doreen Stollen, Brad Harnes, Linda Harnes, Peter Van Bemmell, Hannah Curry, Virginia Camerero (10 total)

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm by Brad Harnes

Treasurer's Report

Maaike Van Bemmell presented the Treasurer's Report:

Checking Account balance:	\$ 702.55
Savings Balance:	\$4,711.85
Esplanade Balance:	\$1,923.06

Total bank balance \$7,337.46 **

** Secretary Note** Please note this is a change from the original total reported. An error in addition was discovered so the total bank balance is 7337.46 not 6337.46 as reported at the meeting.***

Maaike reported that the only activity in the last month was a \$1000 transfer from the Esplanade Fund to the Checking account to pay for work done on the Esplanade.

There has been only one new neighbor joining the Association all Summer!

Special Guest: Quincv Alien, TXDOT, Spur 59 project manager

Mr Alien joined us to discuss the progress of the redesign of Hwy 59 and the Spur access from Downtown. He reassured those present that TXDOT continue to work with all speed and are, in fact, well ahead of schedule. The next big traffic challenge will be when the remaining portion of the old Spur is removed and traffic must be rerouted onto the new section of the Spur. This will take some getting used to and a bit of roundabout driving but the main point is that the outbound lanes on the Spur will remain open and keep the traffic flowing onto 59! One note of special interest to Audubon Place residents, during this phase the ramp access from W Alabama and from Richmond will be closed. These entrances will reopen when the final version of the Spun is in place.

Mr Alien is happy to answer questions from the community. If you wish to get in contact with him, Brad Harnes and Dan Piette have his contact information.

Old Business

2005 Board: John O'Donnell was scheduled to present the Officer's Slate for 2005 but was unable to get any takers for the President job.

Steve Hamilton suggested that we use a "rotating chair" plan to keep any one person from committing to chairing every month's meeting. There was some discussion on this topic and it was agreed that this could work if no one is found to actually become APA President.

Brad Harmes offered to continue to be in charge of the newsletter and email list if we opt to go with this plan for 2005.

We will look forward to hearing from John O'Donnell at the November meeting for further news.

Esplanade Sprinklers: Rick Greiner had volunteered to get in touch with the City of Houston to see what we must do to get our sprinkler system up to code and therefore operable again. Rick was not at this meeting and sent no report, so no further information was available.

New Business:

Esplanade Clean up: Brad Harmes pointed out that the shrubs on the Esplanade have become very leggy and need pruning. They are becoming a hazard for people wishing to turn left across Audubon. It was agreed there will be a work party to take care of this issue on Saturday, October 30. Those interested in helping should meet at the Harmes' house at 9:00 am. 3707 Audubon Place.

Welcome Committee: Maaiké Van Bommel suggested that it would be a nice addition to the neighborhood if we would have an informal welcome committee. As new neighbors move into our area we could visit them to welcome them to the neighborhood, offer information about the Association, answer any questions, and, perhaps, bring a small welcome gift. This idea was very popular with those in attendance and it was decided that if we notice new people moving in to mention it at the monthly meetings and someone will go to visit shortly!

The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be held at River Cafe, Thursday, November 4 at 7:30 pm The December meeting will be the Holiday Party.

Respectfully submitted, Anita Bryant, Secretary

Audubon Place Association
Minutes for November 4, 2004
Neighborhood Meeting at John O'Donnell's

In attendance: Anita Bryant, Brad Harmes, Linda Harmes, Peter Van Bemmell, Patty Thompson, John O'Donnell, Andrea di Bagno (7 total)

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 pm by Brad Harmes

The meeting was held at John O'Donnell's home due to the closure of the River Cafe. The River Cafe building will be torn down and replaced with a 13 story high rise containing condos and street level retail/restaurant space.

Most likely due to this abrupt change in our meeting space, our guest for the month was not in attendance and we went straight to old and new business.

Old Business

Elections for 2005: John O'Donnell was happy to announce that Patty Thompson had agreed to again serve as APA President. John O'Donnell nominated and Peter Van Bemmell seconded her nomination for President. John announced the 2005 slate as follows:

President: Patty Thompson
Vice Pres: Steve Hamilton
Treasurer: Maaike Van Bemmell
Secretary: Anita Bryant

The slate was unanimously accepted by the members in attendance.

Garage Sale: The Garage Sale will be held in April at the Harmes' driveway. An exact date was not set.

Newsletter: The next newsletter will come out shortly. It will contain requests for membership renewals and return envelopes as well as an invitation to the Holiday Party at the di Bagno's.

Sprinklers on the Esplanade: No news from Rick Greiner on this front. It was decided by those in attendance that rather than go to the expense of repairing the faulty system we should remove it. Hopefully the city would turn on the water again once this is accomplished and we could water the plants on the esplanade by sprinklers as needed. Patty Thompson agreed to contact someone at the City to see into this.

Treasurer's Report

There was no Treasurer's Report during the meeting.
(Maaike relayed after the meeting that there was no change to October's figures)

New Business

Meeting Location: We will need to find a new venue for our monthly meetings due to the closure of the River Cafe. Suggestions for a new meeting place included: Mango's, Bistro Vino, Berryhill's, the Lovett Inn, and L'Alliance Francaise. Patty Thompson agreed to contact these establishments to see if they would agree to accommodate us. *** It was noted that the notice signs alerting our neighbors to the monthly meetings will need to be changed to reflect the changed meeting spot. ***

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm

Next month's gathering will be the Holiday Party, December 2, at 6:30 pm
Hosted by Alex and Andrea di Bagno, 608 Harold

January's meeting place: TBA

Respectfully submitted, Anita Bryant, Secretary