

## GDCA Board Meeting Minutes – January 21, 2009

The meeting was held in the home of Willie and Mary Fontenot. In attendance were Tim Page, Alex Tucker, Carolyn Schwarzhoff, Ellen Alderman, Heather Westra, Ana Forbes, Greta Corona, Mary Fontenot, Paul Miller, Mike Schexnayder, and Suzanne Schexnayder.

Minutes: The minutes were discussed and approved.  
There was no security report due to Ray Mack's absence.

Beautification Committee: Mike said that the beautification committee sees a need for a median clean-up project. Alex announced that he still had two oak trees to plant. He and Mary agreed to try plant a replacement tree this Saturday for the one that Mrs. Holden planted, but was lost after Hurricane Gustav. There was no membership report.

Social Events: The Easter Egg Hunt is again planned for Palm Sunday, which is April 5<sup>th</sup>. Ellen will work on the details.

Listserve/Website: Carolyn said that there are about 400 people on the listserve, but some houses have more than one member. Board members were reminded that they can put items on the website themselves and do not have to go through Paul or Mike. Paul said that about 10-12 people visit the website each day.

Special Events: Since there is no one in charge of the Tour of Homes the board decided that it is too late to plan one for this spring.

Historic Preservation Committee: Martha Salomon sent a message through the e-mail and dropped off papers concerning Historic Preservation. The Baton Rouge Historic Preservation Committee meeting was this morning. Renovations were approved for a house at Myrtle and 22<sup>nd</sup>. There was a discussion as to whether the house at Drehr and Tulip actually built their wall as the approved plans specified. Ellen moved to have Martha and Flo check to see if the approved plans were implemented properly. Greta seconded the motion. It passed. Tim observed that following the guidelines is really the job of the citizens as there are no "guidelines police." The guidelines are only as good as their enforcement so we must be diligent and give feedback to the historic preservation representative. Poets and Philosophers neighborhood is trying to get historic guidelines, but they were deferred until a survey is finished. Heather asked if there is an ordinance against trash because there has been a problem across the street from her. The work crew building a house has left a terrible mess.

Treasurer's report: Alex read a report that Sonya sent out showing that the GDCA spent \$26,000 on security, but only budgeted for \$24,000. This did not come as a surprise since we increased patrols near the end of the year. We generally spent a little more than we brought in. There was a discussion about getting the dues bill out so people will pay before the annual meeting since only dues paying members are allowed to vote for the board members. The annual meeting was also discussed, but will be taken up later at the February meeting, which is dedicated to getting ready for it.

Newsletter: Mary will get a newsletter out in February advertising the annual meeting. She is happy to continue the newsletter now that Paul is doing the paste-up, but she does not want to deal with ads anymore. Paul reminded her that they could be paid through Paypal. Carolyn asked Paul if ads could be put on the website. He said it is possible.

Park Blvd. Zoning: Alex passed copies of an e-mail from Gil Morin, Coordinator of Land Use for the EBR Zoning Office. In it he explained that the lots on Park Blvd. did not fit the minimum lot size requirement to be changed to A1 zoning. He did suggest that we look into creating an Urban Design District, which would dictate permissible “uses.” He also recommended that we invite our councilwoman to chair the committee and hire an attorney to create subdivision restrictions prohibiting multi-family uses. The city would not enforce them, however. It would be up to the GDCA to enforce them through legal means. Tim would like to continue working on this committee and hopes the board will support the effort. He’d like to see it be a large, slow community process so there will be a collective voice. It was moved and accepted to pursue developing an urban design district for Park Blvd.

Nominating Committee: Mike started a discussion with the acknowledgement that the board has not been following the by-laws closely in reference to alternating seven or eight board members every year. No one has kept good track of it. In the past there were never more nominees than needed. Experience and qualifications were deemed important. It was decided that at the annual meeting all dues paying members will be given a ballot with all the nominees’ names on it and empty lines for write in nominees. The membership will be asked to vote for eight only. Elections will be held at the beginning of the meeting and votes tallied during the meeting. Before the vote each nominee will be allowed to quickly say something about himself. Tim will say that he hopes whoever is left off will offer to work with the board. Staying on the board will be Ellen, Greta, Anna, Ray, Alex, and Paul. It is a two year cycle time for Mike and Sonya. Mike would like to run again. Sonya was not present to voice her decision.

Medians: Suzanne Schexnayder asked the board what they thought of her idea to get better looking signs which say “No Trash” and “No Parking” both on the same signs for the medians. They could be placed at each end of the street entrances. There is an ordinance against both, but they are frequently not obeyed and not enforced because of a lack of signs. Parking on the medians compacts the soil and is very bad for the oak trees. She also mentioned that DPW roped off the medians for the St. Patrick’s Day parade for a few years and then promised to do it for two years but didn’t. It was agreed that her two requests should be in two separate letters to DPW. In the one about the signs she will ask if a representative from the Garden District could meet with someone from DPW to find out what the possibilities are for signs. In the St. Patrick’s letter she will ask that Terrace, Kleinert, and the southern half of Park are roped off. Suzanne will write the letters and Tim will sign them. The newsletter, listserv and website will all have messages about not parking on the medians and not hurting the trees. It was suggested that Tara Wicker be involved.

Heather wrote thank you notes to all the businesses who contributed to the holiday lighting contest. She asked if letters could be sent to Paul who could then attach the oak tree logo to them. He agreed to do it.

Next Meeting: The February meeting to plan the annual meeting is set for February 18<sup>th</sup>.

By Laws: There was a discussion about if we should change the by laws, how, and which ones. It was decided that we would ask members at the annual meeting to vote a mechanism for how to change the by laws. There is none in the current by laws. It was agreed to have the members vote on allowing a change to the by laws by a 2/3 majority. Mike moved that we proceed with the mechanism for a change now and suggested that next year’s board review the by laws. This was seconded by Greta and approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Fontenot, Secretary  
January 22, 2009, Revised February 18, 2009