

Garden District Civic Association

Baton Rouge

The meeting was held at the home of Sandi Lucas. Present were Randy Nichols, Beverly Arceneaux, Tim Page, Martha Saloman, Carolyn Schwarzhoff, Pam Rice, Mike Schexnayder, Sandi Lucas, Mary Fontenot, Heather Westra, Greta Corona, and Becky Lane.

In Joe Alton's absence Mike gave the security report. The police patrol's log book is kept in a locked mailbox on the side of Lynn Lamia's house. Mike looked through it and found that most days just have time in and time out written down. One day had a police report number. Lynn sends Sonya a report of how many hours the police work each month. She also pays the police. Sonya has asked that someone else also check the numbers so that the money responsibility is not all on Lynn. There is a phone in the mailbox that costs \$2 per month and appears to be unused. Mike is going to ask Don Stone if they ever use it. If not he might cancel it.

There was a discussion about the historical guidelines that are being rewritten for Roseland Terrace and Kleintert Terrace. The board is in general agreement that the guidelines are being changed until they are useless. It is wondering if the subdivisions can be designated as historical districts while but postponing the acceptance of guidelines for several months. This way more thought could be put into what is being written. Several board members volunteered to meet with Councilwoman Lorri Burgess to discuss the idea. Martha agreed to set up the meeting. Other Council members whom they would like to talk to are Councilwoman Martha Jane Tassin, and Councilmen Ourso and Boneno. The board discussed having the shell of the Historic District and filling it later. Pam suggested another committee could be made. Greta said that she and her aunt might want to be on it. Carolyn said she would look for the general points that were written for Drehr Place as to why one would want a historic district. One possibility is that after the new committee drafts another set of guidelines there could be a meeting and they could be compared and discussed. Tim and others felt that the whole Garden District should be involved in the guidelines. Gail Cooper, the elected chairperson for the Guidelines Committee, had asked Mary to bring up the possibility that she might be reimbursed for the flyer that she personally sent door-to-door. The board decided that flyers must be pre-approved and that they have always been board generated. Gail would like to keep the neighborhood updated. The board felt that constant flyers would be too expensive since 90% of our budget must go to security and the flyers are not in the budget. Therefore, Carolyn thought of an alternate plan. A newsletter will go out soon. On the front in a box will be a declaration that if a person wants to know about the guidelines they may join the neighborhood list-serve where regular updates can be posted.

Greta resigned from the special events position and Becky volunteered to take it over. Greta promised to organize what she had learned about the Tour of Homes so Becky wouldn't have to reinvent it. Mary will get a newsletter out very soon with the instructions for participating in the guidelines, an article about why the Garden District is special by Becky Lane, and positive reasons for historic guidelines by Martha. Martha is going to give Mary an article from Hickory Ridge about why they have restrictions.

Sandi discussed the Live Oak Program because she sent out an e-mail saying that she was paying for an arborist to trim the tree that she had adopted, was going to put a plaque by it the same way that LSU does and had planted flowers around it. Steve Shurtz fired back an e-mail telling her not to do any of that. After several e-mails and a phone call he said she may do it all. She wants to know how we can help the trees we are adopting if we are not allowed to do anything. She said that the live oaks in the Garden District have not been trimmed or fertilized in eight years. There are no allocated funds. Martha suggested that we look into how much it would cost to fertilize all the adopted trees and let the people who adopted them pay if they wish to do it. It would be cheaper if done all at once. A tree committee was suggested. Sandi said that she has a lot of information that she could put on the website and in the newsletter.

Beverly said that the drainage at Cherokee and Drehr has improved greatly. Sandi still doesn't have a recycling bin. Beverly just received her welcome packet and said it is very nice. She was impressed.

Randy updated everyone on Harmony Center's group home. Michael Jackson took longer to do anything than he anticipated. At the last minute he called Randy and asked him to meet at the State Capitol, during legislature. Representative Michael Jackson and Deputy Secretary Lisa Woodruff White, from the Department of Social Services were there. Harmony said they would join the GDCA and be more responsive to problems. Becky said that just about every afternoon two of the boys pass her house, greet her and she greets them by name. Randy said that a resident from one of Harmony's homes was caught stealing a car, which he wrecked in north Baton Rouge. Mary told them that the Sheriff of Jackson, LA closed down a group home run by Collis Temple's ex-wife by keeping a list of all the times they had to go there and all the offenses that were done by the boys. Pam reminded everyone that Michael Jackson promised the neighbors a meeting with several agencies about the home. At the last board meeting in May the Board told the neighbors who live near Harmony House that they would be notified of and could attend the meeting with Rep. Jackson, Dept of Social Services and Office of Youth Development. Pam suggested that we needed to honor our commitment to those residents and set up such a meeting. She also stated that they probably were not aware of Randy's meeting because they were not emailed and needed to be informed. In addition, Randy was to write a letter on behalf of the GDCA to Harmony House, which has not been circulated for review or sent. Finally, the board at the last meeting voted to revisit the issue of Harmony House after the meeting with Michael Jackson, Youth Development and Social Services, to check on the progress/status. Randy is going to e-mail the neighbors, tell them about his meeting and ask if there have been any problems. Michael Jackson asked to speak to us. It was agreed that he could be put on the September 12th agenda and that we might consider having a political forum for all the candidates who are running in our district. Martha suggested that the board invite politicians who are in office to our neighborhood picnics.

Carolyn reminded the board that in Spring 2008 she will be moving to England for 18-24 months so a new person will be needed for the e-mail list serve. She asked that people think about who might take it over. Sandi said she will consider it. Heather offered to store the neighborhood's long tables when they leave. Carolyn will send Mary "Craig's List" for the newsletter.

The next board meeting will be September 12, 2007. The Fall Picnic will be September 28, 2007. The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m. sharp.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Fontenot
GDCA Secretary

