February 14, 2015

WPNA meeting

President Karen Pagani welcomed new members.

Meghan Dougherty submitted the minutes from January. Minutes were approved.

**Guest Speaker** – Nelson Linder, head of the NAACP of Austin

He has been president for the past 15 years. He gave a brief biography. The NAACP led the effort for the 10-1 redistricting. They have addressed issues like unemployment, housing, police/safety. They hope 10-1 will help address some of the inequities in Austin. He discussed the issues of police use of force. Under Acevedo use of force has gone down. Lack of good schools, students dropping out of school, getting involved in criminal activity, are all related. Linder encouraged everyone to speak out against use of force.

East side of Austin has 25% unemployment. Median income in Austin for whites is over 100% higher than for African Americans. He mentioned that these inequalities don’t get addressed.

He requested that people communicate to the government when we see inequity and advocate for change.

Affordability is the main issue driving people out of the city and out of the public schools. Along with taxation and poor public schools, this is the main reason people are leaving Austin.

He encouraged people to contact the DA’s office about police use of force. The state law says the police can use force when they feel threatened.

**Yard of the Month** – Sara Jane Lee presented. Sherry LeBlanc – 1900 Coventry Lane. She will receive a gift certificate from Shoal Creek Nursery.

**Treasurer’s Report** – Ward Davison – we have about 60 members who have signed up for 2015. A lot of new neighbors have been going door to door to ask people to join. The annual audit went well. The audit is a requirement to maintain our 501c3 status. All receipts have been checked, and it all has checked out.

**Person of the Month** – Martin Luecke will be writing up person of the month column in the newsletter. He’ll be featuring people in the community so we can know our community better. He’d like to get ideas from the community about interesting people in the neighborhood.

**Schools Committee** – Meghan Dougherty mentioned that there will be a big forum organized by Save Texas Schools this upcoming weekend – people can register on their website to participate – they will be lobbying the Texas Legislature on Friday Feb 20. There will also be a forum Friday night and a big workshop/round robin organized Saturday morning at Reagan HS. We could also use someone to sit on the CAC at Reagan HS. We meet once a month with Ted Gordon to keep him informed about issues in our schools. Equity is a big issue in Ausitn schools, including issues around diversity in magnet schools.

**Traffic Calming** – Karen is proposing Berkman, Corona, Northridge, Rogge, Northeast Dr, Westminster get signs to place around the neighborhood (“Welcome to Windsor Park – Please slow down, respect all traffic signs, and yield to pedestrians”)

Suggestion to place a forum on the website that would open problem tickets to the city of Austin. Maybe even advocate placing a roundabout. Maybe a sign to display speeds of cars. Some neighborhoods have raised money to give the city to do traffic calming.

**ANC update** – Ashley Holmes is the rep to Austin Neighborhoods Council. Ora Houston was a speaker at the last meeting – Blackshear Elementary is getting a blue ribbon. 311 is not completely anonymous – someone could do a public records request and get phone numbers.

First resolution: One was proposed to support the use of body cameras by active duty police officers. There was a move to support the resolution, none opposed. Discussion: there is a possible downside in the cost. There could be a federal program to provide grants for that. There are some questions about privacy concerns. We voted in favor of the resolution.

Second resolution – Ensure that neighborhood plans are supported in the current CodeNext initiative. There was some confusion about the resolution. It is primarily zoning and development. Last time it was redone was in 1984. Question about whether we can redesign our neighborhood plan – the contact team would be involved in that. There is a fear that something could be implemented in CodeNext that we’re not prepared for, so we’re asking in the ANC that the city respect what’s already in the neighborhood. Motion to support resolution. No one was opposed. It has been approved.

**Mueller commission** – Rick missed the meeting this week. Currently no date for the 51st street vision plan open house. There is a pizza place putting in a request for an alcohol license.

**Transportation Committee** – Stafford Gunning – meeting this Tuesday at the library at 6:30. The “fishhook” updates – is about 50% complete – it is the access from I-35 northbound to get onto 51st and Cameron. It goes under 51st and connects to 53rd street. Completion date – about 3-4 months. There will be a median on 51st street that could keep people from turning left from the westernmost Home Depot exit. I-35 open house – it’s not too late to submit input. Roundabout on the southbound frontage at 51st is one of the main proposals, or a through lane going under 51st. Converging diamond is also a proposal.

TXDoT would be happy to come to neighborhood meeting and/or at transportation committee meeting. Request to invite city transportation office and TXDoT to a neighborhood meeting.

Greg Casar stopped by. Has regular office hours on Fridays. On Friday Feb 27th he will be at Corona Café all morning.

Parks Committee – Bob Wheeless presented on behalf of Jeanette Swenson. On Saturday March 7 is It’s My Park Day. Apparently there will be a project at Bartholomew, it’s just not on the website right now. Lots of flower beds planted by the Neighborhood Association, has actually reduced amount of trash being left in that area. There’s been a reduction of plastic bags in the creek since the city went bagless. There used to be a lot of trash getting dumped at Cameron and 51st; it seemed to be reduced.

We’ve paid the 50% deposit for the sails in the playscape. The executive committee voted for laguna blue and silver. They’re starting 2 of the shades, we still need to raise more money for the 3rd shade.

Tomorrow the UT Lions club is going to cut back bamboo.

Park Stewards meet at the splash pad on Fridays to maintain the park.

Mark Boyden is organizing a Happy Hour at the Nomad on Tuesday starting at 5:30.

Meeting adjourned.