

Kessler Plaza Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes

- Date:** Tuesday, March 28, 2006: beginning at 7:00 p.m.
- Place:** Jefferson Boulevard Church of Christ
- Attending:** John Cramer (presiding), Mary Ellen Phares (secretary), *see sign in sheet for other attendees*
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General Reports/Updates

- National Night Out = Tuesday, August 1, 2006.
- New Program for Kessler Plaza re Code Compliance
 - Gene Kriska and Chris Culak will do “code sweeps” of our neighborhood.
 - Any house in potential violation of a city code will be given a “Friendly Reminder” that the house may be in violation and will quote the non-compliant code section.
 - The most common code violations are listed at www.kesslerplaza.com.
 - Instead of calling 311 to report code violations, we encourage you to call or e-mail Chris and Gene first to give the person a chance to fix the problem.
 - This is NOT in conjunction with the City of Dallas; instead we want to monitor our neighborhood to ensure compliance so neighbors are not fined by the City.
- There will be a Wine Tour fundraiser on Friday, April 28th from 6 – 9:30pm \$15 donation.
 - Wine and appetizers will be served at 3 separate houses.
 - Tickets are a suggested donation of \$15 each.
 - Invite your friends! The more the merrier! They do not have to live in our neighborhood to come!
- Saturday, April 1, 2006, at 9am; meet at Church of Christ – We need volunteers to assist in getting neighborhood signatures to support new stop signs needed in Kessler Plaza.
 - We need signatures for at least two-thirds of the gray shaded area for each case study or stop sign designation of homes in Kessler Plaza.

New Business

- **Speaker: Dr. Elba Garcia, Dallas City Council Representative**

- Dr. Garcia discussed the five key priorities of the City of Dallas:

1. Trinity River Project –

- Video was shown on this Project.
- Began in 1998.
- \$298 million has been approved for this Project.
- By 2012, they hope to have Phase I completed.
- Phase I includes two (2) lakes which will try to connect the north part of the levee to West Dallas, Preston Center and the Trinity River Forest. It also includes three (3) bridges, including the Margaret Hunt Hill bridge which recently broke ground to begin construction.

2. Public Safety –

- Dr. Garcia is the Chair of Public Safety.
- She spoke of a Management/Efficiency Study which was done for this department which noted that 400 more officers were needed.
- A \$15 million grant from the Caruth Foundation helped out.
- This study also found that police cars need to be replaced *before* 125K miles instead of after.
- Goals for the police department were also set.
- Overall, there has been an almost 18% reduction in violent crime (very good!).

3. Quality of Life –

- Over \$100 million has been put into our streets.
- Now, a contractor must have a sign if they come into a neighborhood to do work.
- \$55 million will be put into libraries for the bond package.
- The Hampton/Illinois Library will have a meeting facility.
- For park improvements, one more year to go for new playgrounds, erosion control and signs.
- We need to give Dr. Garcia ideas now for Kessler Plaza special projects.

4. Staff Accountability –

- Per Dr. Garcia, it is important to focus on quality service – to teach employees to “understand, listen and act.”
- There are now customer service training sessions and merit increases in her department.
- They have enacted a Mystery Shopper Program whereby complaints are made by “shoppers” and reviewed by the different departments.

5. Economic Development –

- Per Dr. Garcia, the City of Dallas has lost EDS, Mary Kay and Dr. Pepper, to name a few large companies. “We cannot afford to lose big companies!”
- The City of Dallas estimates 220,000 new homes needed in the next 20 years in South Dallas.
- In the past 5 years, we’ve seen growth in commercial building of 200%.

o Code Enforcement:

- Dr. Garcia introduced the new Code Enforcement Manager/Inspector I, Paul Ramon. His direct line is 214-415-8969. We are to call him with any Code issues. His address is City of Dallas, Dept. of Code Compliance, Section 6B, 320 E. Jefferson Blvd, Dallas, TX 75203.
- With a recent reorganization, there are now 15 officers (inspectors) for historic districts.
- Prior to reorganization, an inspector was only assigned to either Premise, Zoning or Structural. Now, each inspector does all three (3) items.

o Graffiti Abatement-

- Dr. Garcia needs volunteers for Saturday, May 20, 2006 to clean up graffiti in certain areas of Oak Cliff.
- Leadership Dallas is providing the supplies.
- If we have graffiti issues in Kessler Plaza, we need to tell Dr. Garcia about them now.

- Garage Sales –
 - Dr. Garcia needs our ideas on stopping the “retail garage sales” which occur every weekend at certain houses.
 - Two ideas up for a vote in a few months:
 - Must have a permit to hold a garage sale; only 2 given per year; or
 - “Canton-style” – give set dates, like 2 days per year, that everyone could hold garage sales; or
 - She welcomes our ideas!

- The upcoming meetings are:
 - Tuesday, June 6
 - Tuesday, August 1
 - Tuesday, September 26
 - Tuesday, November 28

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, June 6, 2006, at 7:00pm. Guest Speaker will be Dwayne Jones, Preservation Dallas, and a representative from the Guardian Angels.

(End of Minutes)