Service Request # 07-00130084
Activity:
Image Type: Other
Details: 1of2

PHD

Midell, Shameka - MYR

From: Larissa Lindsay [larissa@airmail.net]
Sent: Thursday, April 26, 2007 11:49 PM
To: mayor@cityofhouston.net
Subject: Tonights Old Sixth Ward meeting

Cc: 'marlene.gafrick@cityofhouston.net'; 'Jewett, Jill - MYR'; Randy Pace (randy.pace@cityofhouston.net); Adrian Garcia (A.Garcia@cityofhouston.net)
Subject: Tonights Old Sixth Ward meeting

Thursday , April 26, 2007

Good Evening Mayor White,

I truly appreciate your holding a Town Hall Meeting for Old Sixth Ward residents this evening. Even more, I appreciate your desire to learn more about the neighborhood, and both the problems we have, and in many cases the reason. Perhaps solutions from those of us who have lived here for many years is also in the offering. Some of my thoughts:

As for real estate sales - we have a problem with homes being marketed as tear down or lot value by investors hoping to make $50,000 or $100,000 on their sale (1808 State is for sale for $210,000, the owner told you tonight he bought it two years ago for $140,000). If the house is marketed for a reasonable profit, and touts it age, value to the community, and what a great opportunity to restore a 100 year old home, it might sell quicker. Instead, the marketing is for land only. The Old Sixth Ward Neighborhood Association has a form letter we send realtors when they are marketing a house as "no restrictions, perfect for new construction, etc." reminding them that this is a historic district, and to please change their listing. None has done so. The same marketing would help Tien Dinh sell his property. It is a corner building, and is an old storefront that is built to the corner of his property. If it was marketed that you don't lose square footage to set-backs if you restore the building, it might be more attractive to a commercial property owner. They need to market these properties to promote preservation, and do it with respect to those who live here. At some point, outside people need to take a moral stand, and respect this great City's history, instead of trying to make a fast buck on it. I am not against profit, I am against greed.

What about owners that have numerous rental properties on the land? We have a number of property owners that own dense rental property. These are often buildings that have been duplexed or triplexed, or added onto shortly after World War II to meet housing needs for returning veterans, especially near downtown. The houses are painted, and the housing units are often small, and low-rent, but they serve a purpose in the needs and history of this city. Often, the tenants have lived there for decades, and have good relationships with the owners. Some who have bought property in the area refuse to accept there is a need for affordable housing, or listen to the history of these rentals.

As for how long should it take to renovate? It depends. As President of the Old Sixth Ward Neighborhood Association, I hear many reasons. A few bought properties to save them from demolition, and are working with architects and/or contractors to develop a renovation plan. Another project is trying to find an engineer to work with, they are planning an addition

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with the house being raised to make accomodations - they have already renovated 12 properties in the neighborhood. Another reason - they may be working on one or two other properties at the moment, and since the main problem with their "derelict" property is cosmetic, they put off the project in favor of one more critical. Almost every one of the "problem" houses that are most often harped on are owned by people who live in the district, and are quite aware what their property looks like. Additionally, I know of people who lost money on their rentals in the West End area because their renovated properties became lot value only, unable to get out of the house what they put into it, and they are hesitant to make that financial risk here until they know protections are in place.

My biggest fear? is that there will be an opt-out option. I look at the Old Sixth Ward like an old quilt. We have some holes, and some wear and tear, but they can be fixed. Most love the quilt, others want to replace it with a new blanket. I want to see it patched with new pieces that fit into the pattern. Patched where you recognize the new material, but they are lovingly stitched in with the old. If you want a new blanket, there are many places to get one close into downtown - but don't destroy our City's quilt in the process.

I hope through this process, you and your staff have seen the Old Sixth Ward Neighborhood Association treat all of you with respect, honesty, and dignity. We try to treat our opposition with respect, but it is often difficult to ignore their accusations and threats. We move forward trying to be as truthful and up-front as possible, and try to leave pettiness behind. I welcome any corrections if you see otherwise.

Thank you all for listening, I know this was long.

With heartfelt thanks,

Larissa Lindsay
1816 Kane Street
Houston, Texas 77007
day - 713-831-6526
eve - 713-869-8309

McWhorter, Thomas - PD

From: McWhorter, Thomas - PD
Sent: Wednesday, May 02, 2007 4:10 PM
To: 'avalos11@swbell.net'
Subject: 6th Ward District

Mr. Avalos,
Thank you for contact the Planning and Development Department with your comments. I have added your comments to the file regarding this matter as I have done with other comments that I have received. I have also received your "level of Support " card for your property on Bismark Street. Your continued participation is very valuable to this process.
Sincerely,

Thomas McWhorter
City of Houston
Planning and Development Department
611 Walker 6th Floor
Houston, TX 77002

From: Victor Avalos [mailto:avalos11@swbell.net]
Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2007 10:59 PM
To: pd.planning@cityofhouston.net
Subject: Sixth Ward District

My property is located at 814 Bismark, and faces East towards Colorado.
The entrance is on Bismark, and not on Sabine.
All the other properties on Colorado are not in the proposed boundaries.
I wish to have my property also excluded from the proposed boundaries.

One possible solution that everyone may agree on, is to exclude townhomes in the district.
Most of the existing homes in the area are not historic just because they are 100 years old.
A property owner should have the option to demolish or relocate an existing home, as long as the new structure is not a townhome nor
constructed of metal exterior, and have some characteristics that will enhance the district for future historic consistency.

Houston is known for no zoning and having few restrictions.
It is an international city.
It is not historic when compared to New York, Chicago or other cities in Europe, of which some are over nine hundred years old.
It is a great young city still growing, and its personality & character shines, and is reflected thru the downtown skyline, the Galleria,
and other architecture all around.

Yes, there should be some restrictions that are evenly balanced and fair to any property owner or future property owner.
But lets not put the property owner in a predicament with restictions, where the uncertainty of a remodel/addition may not have the desired results,
versus the confidence and surety that new construction will.

Each property owner has different tolerances between new construction, remodels and additions.
Remodels are more costly, and can create more headaches than new construction.
Remodels or additions can create confusion for the owner if he is not sure how to remodel or add-on, and may decide to do nothing, where

having the option of constructing new, will make it easier to go forward with the project.

Sincerely,

Victor H. Avalos
713-305-7865

Service Request # 07-00140122
Activity:
Image Type: Other
Details: 1of2

Message

Midell, Shameka - MYR

From: Mayor Bill White
Sent: Thursday, May 03, 2007 4:38 PM
To: COH - Mayor
Subject: FW:

Frances Deary
Administrative Assistant to the Mayor
713-247-2021

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-----Original Message-----
From: Patrick Kopplin [mailto:plinkster@msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, May 03, 2007 3:43 PM
To: mayor.b.w@cityofhouston.net; Jill.Jewett@cityofhouston.net; Marlene.Gafrick@cityofhouston.net
Subject:

Mayor Bill White

Ms. Jill Jewett

Ms. Marlene Gafrick

I have spoken to my insurance agent concerning the proposed design guidelines for the Old Sixth Ward. My specific concern is that if my home is destroyed, the design guidelines would prevent me from rebuilding the current contemporary structure. I would be forced to rebuild a historically compatible structure. My agent is very familiar with this type of construction and feels that to build such a structure of similar size and features would cost significantly more than the replacement cost on my current home. Since you can only purchase coverage to replace what is currently insured, it would be impossible for me to have sufficient coverage to build to meet the design guidelines.

In the rush to protect a few older homes, the City and the Mayor is inadvertently putting other homeowners at risk of losing homes that they worked and saved for years to build. I request that this design guidelines be written to:

1. Allow for the reconstruction of noncontributing structures to their prior conditions,
2. Allow for the improvement of noncontributing structures in an style consistent with their current design, and
3. Allow for individual properties or block faces to opt out of the proposed design guidelines.

Please let me know your views on these items If you have any questions, you can call me at 281-494-8200 or 713-869-4501.

Service Request # 07-00164134
Activity:
Image Type: Other
Details: 1of1

DHO

Midell, Shameka - MYR

From: led [blue_irisnz@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, May 25, 2007 12:37 PM
To: mayor@cityofhouston.net
Subject: re: proposed historic district - Old Sixth Ward

Dear Mr. Mayor,

My husband and I are homeowners in the Old Sixth Ward. We would like to be assured that it has been recorded that we are against the proposal for making this a protected historical district. The group known as the Old Sixth Ward Neighborhood Association does not speak for us or represent us.

Our property came with a title that said "no deed restrictions". While we do agree that it is good for people to try to preserve what they can of the historical character of the neighborhood....and we, ourselves, are putting a great deal of time and money into restoring our Queen Anne Victorian home...it should not be compulsory....or complicated and delaying. I heard your speech where you said that those who are "putting their money where their mouth is" should be carefully listened to. We are investing in our home. We feel we should be listened to just as carefully as the so-called arbiters of taste in this neighborhood who want to force their views on us.

Homeowners should not be forced to become curators. Especially by the whims and desires of a small group of other neighbors on a power trip. Which is, truthfully, all that this is about. The OSWNA group is comprised of people who want to be able to tell everyone else here what to do. This is only a residential neighborhood of privately owned properties. Not a museum.

The irony is that while the city appears to want to impose these restrictions to "save the history" here...they have been, for many, many years, allowing the neighborhood, in general, to fall into neglect and disrepair. Parts of it are quite disgraceful. Buildings that are far beyond salvaging are allowed to stand and become dangers to the community, homes for rats and gathering places for vagrants, and fire-traps. There are virtually no proper sidewalks. Drainage and street lighting is haphazard. There are unsightly business properties (the bail bonds and shoddy little convenience stores, etc) and no proper shopping facilities. This area, so close to the shiny promise of downtown Houston, is like a "Brigadoon"...forgotten and neglected, as if invisible to the city.

Yet, here we are having to fight against some whimsical restrictions that can only have the effect of putting off potential home buyers who might have the financial resources to restore houses...and reducing the value of our homes. The proposal for a protected historic district will have, in the long run, the very opposite effect of what is supposedly intended. It would be funny.....if it wasn't so sad.

This really could be a beautiful neighborhood, a source of pride for Houston. More of the lovely old homes here could be restored. But they won't be....because these very misguided ideas for preservation are being forced upon us.

Mrs Linda Drouin
(713) 426-0152
2220 Decatur Street

5/29/2007

Service Request # 07-00179179
Activity:
Image Type: Other
Details: 1

The Minor Family, The Canales Family
The 1900 Block of State Street
Old Sixth Ward

Mayor Bill White
City of Houston
P.O. Box 1562
Houston, TX 77251

May 29, 2007

Dear Mayor White,

RE: New Boundaries for Old Sixth Ward Historic District

I attended the Town Hall Meeting on April 26th and was overwhelmed by your interest in and support of our neighborhood. We have lived at 1914 State Street in the OSW for 11 years. We also own 1910 State Street, which we purchased for our oldest daughter. We have the 2 center lots on our blockface - to the west of us is the Canales family. They have lived in the OSW more than 40 years, they raised their family here and now 2 of the children are raising their families here. There are 3 homes on the Canales' corner lot. To the east of us is Sam's Motorcycles, owned by Sam Romeo. His kids grew up in a cool shop my son loves having down the street.

Canales Family	Minor Family	Minor's	Sam	Sam

My husband, Brantly Minor, was the President of the OSW when The Historic District Designation was established and when the TIRZ was created. Due to philosophical differences, we have not been active in the TIRZ or OSWNA since that time but we have remained supporters of the Historic District. We cannot, however, support the new ordinance as currently put forth. We are specifically concerned with the block that includes 1900s State/1900s Memorial Way. Excluding this block from the new rules has the potential to affect not only our quality of life but also our property values.

We live across the street from Janice Jamail Garvis. In an effort to silence Janice's opposition, her properties were removed from the new historic district. Because her properties face ours, we will be bound by rules that won't affect her.

Janice's	Residence	Parking Lot	Rentals moved onto former parking lot	Parking Lot

If a low or mid-rise apartment or office building is built across the street from us, we will face the backside of the parking floors and the traffic will change our street to a place we no longer wish to raise our families. Our taxes will go up as our quality of life diminishes. Our section of State Street has already lost most of its residential character. Keeping the current boundaries, all the way to Memorial, allows us the potential to regain some of that character; reducing the boundaries as currently drawn, guarantees its further erosion. Putting plans in place that insure our taxes will go up and our property values will go down is not what we expected from the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Our quality of life will be diminished, our homes will have no value to us as single-family residences but we will be unable to sell to a developer because our homes are "protected".

We are willing to support the rules if they are applied equally. We spent years and continue to spend time, sweat, cash and credit restoring our homes. We want to live here. We want our children to raise their children here. We believe in preserving Houston's history but we know what our future is if the Historic District is reduced in this way. Please don't allow the boundaries to stand as currently drawn. Include the block that faces us or remove our blockface from the new boundaries.

Best Regards,

Tricia Minor

Brantly Minor

Delores Canales