

Esplanade Ridge/Treme Civic Association Board Meeting

Minutes

February 4th, 2009

ERTCA Board President Matt Norton called meeting to order at 6:52 p.m. at Bill Edwards's resident on Esplanade Avenue.

Board Members present included Marie Marcal, L.T. Thomas, Bill Edwards, Marva Arcenaux, Hilda Young, Raymond Young, Gregory Douglas and Rhodesia Douglas.

Novelt Estrella was not present.

Order of Business

1. 2003 Kerlerec Zoning for the location at Johnson and Keller doesn't allow more than two-family dwelling. Records indicate that it is slated for use as an office (law practice) and two units. M. Norton suggested that a building permit has not been issued for this project. M. Norton proposes a motion to oppose. B. Edwards interjects the importance of consistency on such issues. "Rules are rules," he stresses. G. Douglas inquires about HDLC's jurisdiction, which in this case is nonexistent. More questions arise from various board members about parking, grandfathering. B. Edwards agrees to speak to City's safety and permits departmental head about the matter. M. Marcal adds to copy council members on all correspondence. B. Edwards reiterates his concern to see that the property is "fixed" correctly. M. Norton calls for a motion, then given by H. Young seconded by M. Marcal to oppose the project in writing. The vote is unanimous.
2. Odyssey House Proposal M. Norton reported that a representative called and that he met with the group for a guided tour of the Governor Nichols campus. He distributed copies of Odyssey House's proposal to expand its facilities to Esplanade Avenue in the now empty Bethany House. This is followed by a discussion regarding the proposed usage, which claims to alleviate pressure on the N. Tonti community and to shift it to the Esplanade/Broad corridor. Various pros and cons were weighed. A majority of board members questioned what the real benefit of the proposal is, if it creates the same problem for Esplanade Avenue, particularly in relocating drug rehabilitation directly across from a troubled public high school. G. Douglas restated his position about the revolving door and recidivism among Odyssey's clients. "The bottom-line is that they import drug addicts into the community." H. Young said, "It sounds like we really don't want them to do this." M. Arcenaux, "In essence we will be giving them two facilities." M. Norton tried to assure that the group's intention is *only leave women and children* at the current overcrowded location, which may be in violation of Fire Code standards. Others voice concern about the effect on neighbors to this proposed site such as the Tribune (newspaper), Bayou Road businesses (Community, Cajun King, etc.). B. Edwards motions to list the Board's concerns the

vulnerability to businesses, the school and the over saturation of social services programs to this area. H. Young seconds. The board's final position in a vote of 8-1: no expansion of services.

3. Newsletter

H. Young informed board that past advertising underwriter Allstate Insurance will not fund. B. Edwards suggested to contact Churchill Down as a potential advertiser. H. Young revisited the glory days of the newsletter during its peak circulation of 5,000, restaurant reviews and feature articles. A target date of mid-April was set for the new premier date in time for Jazz Fest. R. Douglas stated that she would find out information about the U.S. Postal Service's Bulk Rate program.

Meeting adjourned 7:45 p.m.