

# Downtown Area Neighborhood Alliance

## Meeting Minutes

Izaak Walton Club, Fairmount Park

Monday, July 17, 2006

7:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

**1. Meeting called to order by DANA Chairman Keith Alex at 7:15 p.m.**

Welcome and introductions

**2. Approval of Meeting Minutes of June 19, 2006.**

- ✓ Motion to approve Minutes as submitted  
M/S/V: Alex/Caesari/Carried

**3. Report from Councilman Betro**

- The Evergreen Quarter Traffic Calming Meeting (held on 7/13 at City Council Chambers) went well. Traffic Engineering is working on the ideas/suggestions from the 55 people in attendance. Dom suggests DANA take up the topic again at one of the regularly scheduled meetings. Also said the traffic department is interested in helping with the Evergreen Cemetery project.
- Fairmount Park Task Force meeting will be held Thursday, July 20 at 5:30 p.m. at the Boathouse. Everyone is invited to attend. Some of the ideas the Task Force will be working on:
  - Improving the entrance to the park
  - Security
  - Lake dredging/improvements
  - Children's play area
  - Special events
  - Golf course
  - Wetlands

The National Guard has been notified that they need to start thinking about alternate sites for the Armory. The Task Force's recommendations should be completed by September.

- Dom met with the developers of the Fox Plaza project, and initial planning calls for 500 condos, three hotels, a high profile restaurant, and high quality tenants.
- The next development meeting will focus on single-family homes, rentals, and the La Valenciana project.
- Special events: Instead of two huge events drawing 150,000+ people each year, city council would like to focus on several small, quality events throughout the year. Dom would like to see the Orange Blossom Festival held at the Citrus Heritage Park instead of downtown.
- Elections: the Governmental Affairs Committee recommends that City Council and Mayoral elections change to even-numbered years, the same as Presidential elections, with voting in June and run-offs in November, and an emphasis on

- mail-in ballots. Mayor Loveridge's four-year term would have to be cut by a year, or the next mayor's race would have to be for a three-year term, and then subsequent elections would be for four-year terms. The idea is to boost voter turnout and save money by consolidating with other elections.
- **New Projects:** There's an eminent domain issue on the council agenda almost every week now. Trying to clear the way for new development projects. Omikase, a new Japanese restaurant, just opened in California Tower, and Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf has signed a lease for the old McDonald's location. It's encouraging to see businesses interested in locating downtown. There will be 80,000 sq. ft. of new retail/office space when all projects are completed.
  - **Infrastructure:** The City Manager's infrastructure plan will be ready by September.
  - **Downtown parking:** A plan is in the works for improved parking downtown in anticipation of new construction and development, focusing on parking structures and meters. This might be difficult for downtown workers, but it's important to make parking easy for visitors and customers of downtown businesses.
  - **Questions/comments for Dom:**
    - *Where would proposed extension of golf course be located?* Near the wetlands/Santa Ana river area
    - *Any thought to creating a botanical garden at the park?* That idea isn't under discussion now, but it's a good idea overall

**4. No report from Riverside Police Department; Nancy Castillo is on vacation**  
Robbie Kennedy reported that the last neighborhood walk, held in the area near the Women's Club went well, with code enforcement making several citations.

Dom reminded the group to remain vigilant about reporting 6-pack houses in the area; For Sale signs with out-of-area phone numbers and real estate agents are tip offs.

**5. Treasurer's Report by Heather Troxel**

Heather distributed a statement of accounts/treasurer's report, and updated the group on the status of the rose project at Fairmount Park—Jackson & Perkins have been contacted, as well as local rose societies/clubs.

**6. DANA Bylaw Changes by Keith Alex**

Keith passed around a sign up sheet for anyone interested in joining a subcommittee on reviewing DANA bylaws.

**7. New / Old Issues**

- **DANA water** – The supply of bottled water with the DANA logo wasn't ready to be sold at the Pops concert in the park, but will be available for other events that group decides are appropriate.
- **DANA t-shirts** – T-shirts with the DANA logo are available for sale (at a cost of \$10 each to make). Motion to sell the shirts for \$15 each.  
Discussion: Should shirts be sold to the public?

Amended motion: t-shirts should be sold to the public, with a suggested *donation* of \$15 each. Bottles of water should be sold for \$1 each.

✓ M/S/V: Kennedy/Fitzpatrick/Carried

Further discussion of how money raised by t-shirt and water sales should be used, and if a specific project or goal should be decided upon before doing any fundraising. Ideas mentioned included a park bench with a “donated by DANA” Plaque, contributing to the Evergreen Quarter restoration, or wildflower planting in the fall. Dom suggested leveraging DANA money to fund seed grants, with residents submitting proposals for small projects in their neighborhoods. The Office of Neighborhoods could possibly help with matching funds, and there is some CDBG money available for eligible areas.

- Laurie DeFrance brought up the issue of new homes being built on Beacon Way, and wondered if the projects had gone through the required planning stages and approval process.
- Dom reported that the new traffic signals at Market and First are almost operational, and will be done by the end of summer.
- Questions/discussion of tree removal: Quite a few trees have been taken down in the area lately, though it was unclear if the trees were diseased, if there were liability/risk management issues, or if the trees removed will be replaced, as well as concerns about the lack of discussion or notification of residents. Dom said he would look into the issue.
- An interesting article in *951* magazine discussed some of the development plans for downtown; Keith provided copies.

**Next meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. Monday, August 21, 2006  
Izaak Walton Club, Fairmount Park**

**Adjourned at 8:25 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Molly Dougherty (for Chani Beeman, DANA Secretary)**