

MINUTES OF THE  
MIDTOWN MANAGEMENT DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

August 6, 2014

The Board of Directors of the Midtown Management District held a meeting, open to the public, on August 6, 2014 at 6:00 p.m., in the Learning Hub/Science Building at Houston Community College-Central Campus, 1300 Holman Street, Room 100, Houston, Texas 77004, inside the boundaries of the District, and the roll was called of the duly appointed members of the Board, to-wit:

Roger Neal  
Monte Large  
Willie H. Coleman, Jr.  
Bryn Poland  
F. Charles LeBlanc  
Michelle LeBlanc  
Eileen Morris

Julie Farr  
John Castillo  
Marylene Chan  
William R. Franks  
Debra McGaughey  
Gary Noble  
Charles Washington

All of the above were present except Directors Poland and F. Charles LeBlanc thus constituting a quorum.

In addition, present at the meeting were Matt Thibodeaux, Cynthia Alvarado, Elizabeth Powell, Marlon Marshall, Kandi Schramm, Harris County Precinct 7 Deputies - T. Rowe, A. Clopton, K. Jordan, J. Maldonado, K. Robinson and Sgt. O. Haynes. Also present were, Pat Whitten-Legé, Gary Bernard (General Manager for 2016 Main), Noel Cowart, (2016 Main HOA), Jaimin Shah, Gayle Fortson, Todd Romen, Lanette Romen, Emily Patterson, Anthony Barilla, Craig Lidji, Delise Ward, Yasmina Platt, Genevieve Stevens, Bill Tilney, Peter Postlmerge, Phillip Dee, Amar Mohite, Rogene Gee Calvert, Beverly Woods, Noah and Elia Quiles (UP Art Studios), Ralph Bivins, Joseph Manjos, Sherry Weesner (Scenic Houston), Ted Stiles (The Greensheet), Charles Grube, Andrew Hoffman, Lanette Raney, Dan Barnum, Dr. Cheryl Peters (HCC-Central Campus), Kathleen Flemming (HCC-Central Campus), Sebastien Boileau (Eyeful Art Murals and Designs), Ralph Cooper, Christine West (Lawndale Art Center), Elle Shebay, Theola Petteway (Executive Director of the OST/Alameda Redevelopment Authority), Jacquelyn Washington, Scott Harbers, Edward Bouquet, Cynthia Aceves-Lewis, Cindy Jackson, Ramona Crayton (METRO), Larry Plotsky, Carissa Lankpharm, Lt. P. Cantu ( HPD South Central), and Jordan Woods.

Cynthia Alvarado called the roll of the Board of Directors and verified that a quorum was present.

Chair Franks called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the District's 2014 Annual Meeting.

**RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS.**

Chair Franks invited all guests to introduce themselves and address the Board on any issues of concern. There were no public comments.

## **CONSENT AGENDA.**

- a. **Approve Minutes for the July 2, 2014 Board Meeting.**
- b. **Approve the June 2014 Financial Report.**
- c. **Approve the payment of invoices for August 2014.**
- d. **Approve the Equi-Tax Report for July 2014.**

Director Coleman made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Neal and carried by unanimous vote.

## **RECEIVE COMMITTEE ACTIVITY REPORTS AND REVIEW, DISCUSS AND TAKE NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING THE FOLLOWING, AS APPROPRIATE:**

### **A. Public Safety Committee – John G. Castillo, Chair**

Director Castillo reported on the activities of the Public Safety Committee. He stated that the Committee works to maintain and improve community safety for Midtown's property owners, residents, businesses and visitors. He reported that the Committee manages the contract with Harris County for the additional law enforcement services provided by Precinct 7 Deputy Constables. Director Castillo stated that the Committee strives to improve community safety by monitoring the street lights throughout the District and in November 2013 entered into a bi-monthly contract for a Street Light Outage Survey designed to identify and report non-working Street Lights in Midtown. He reminded everyone that the District also pays the excess electricity costs of operating the Midtown Decorative Street Lights. Director Castillo explained that the "excess electricity costs" is the amount that is over and above what the City of Houston (the "City") pays for operating its standard cobra head street lights. Finally, Director Castillo reminded those in attendance that everyone can play a role in helping to make Midtown a safer place to live and asked stakeholders to get involved by being aware of safety issues and participating in Public Safety Committee meetings which are typically held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month. He invited everyone to attend the next Public Safety Committee meeting on Tuesday, August 19, 2014 at 11:30 a.m. in the Midtown Management District's offices and the next evening Committee meeting on Tuesday, September 16, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. at Central Bank.

### **B. Marketing Committee – Michelle LeBlanc, Chair**

Ms. Alvarado reported on the activities of the Marketing Committee. She stated that the goal of the Marketing Committee is to foster community spirit with events and marketing strategies which promote the positive aspects of living and working in Midtown. Ms. Alvarado reported that the Committee has hosted a series of "Marketing 101: Business Development Roundtables" which focused on educating and sharing ideas to bring more visitors and patrons to Midtown. She stated that the next Marketing 101 is scheduled for Wednesday, August 20, 2014, from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the University of Houston Small Business Development Center located inside the Bank of America Building at 2302 Fannin St., Houston, Texas. Ms. Alvarado reported that the Midtown social media presence has increased since January 1, 2014 with followers on Facebook and Twitter being up 26% and 52%, respectively. She also reported that the Committee has worked with the Midtown Staff to develop a 10-year stakeholder report. Finally, Ms. Alvarado announced that Committee meetings are typically held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 4:00 p.m. with the next Committee meeting being scheduled for Tuesday, August 12, 2014 at 4:00 p.m. at the District's offices.

### **C. Service & Maintenance Committee – Roger Neal, Chair**

Director Neal reported that the Service and Maintenance Committee works to enhance the District's pedestrian nature, viability, and image by providing well-maintained public spaces and right-of-way. Director Neal reported that the District added one additional person to the existing six-member Field Services Team, which provides day-to-day maintenance of certain public spaces in Midtown. He further reported that, in addition to its regular maintenance responsibilities, in the past 12 month period, the Field Services Team has planted 30 new trees and completed tree trimming on 30 blocks in the public right-of-way on the east side of Main Street. Director Neal also reported that the Midtown Graffiti Abatement Team has abated 158 sites in the public right-of-way since January 1, 2014. He announced that Committee meetings are typically held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month at 3:30 p.m. and invited all interested persons to attend the next Service and Maintenance Committee meeting on Monday, August 18, 2014 at 3:30 p.m. in the District's offices.

**D. Urban Planning Committee – Monte Large, Chair**

Director Large stated that the Urban Planning Committee works to enhance the urban, mixed-use, character of Midtown. He stated that the Committee is currently working on developing a public arts master plan and implementing public art projects to enhance the pedestrian experience in Midtown. Director Large announced that the Urban Planning Committee meetings are typically held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at 4:00 p.m. and that the next Committee meeting will be on August 21, 2014 in the District's offices.

**i. Presentation: Scenic Houston.**

Sherry Weesner, Director of Projects for Scenic Houston, gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding Scenic Houston's Streetscape Resource Guide. Ms. Weesner stated that the guide was developed with the assistance of an Advisory Committee comprised of professionals in real estate development, civil engineering, landscape architecture, transportation planning and law. She stated that members of the Advisory Committee met with City officials to ensure that the Guide's content was compatible with the City's Transit Corridor Ordinance, ReBuild Houston Strategy, Complete Streets Program and the Mobility Plan. Ms. Weesner stated that the goal of the Guide was to show organizations such as Midtown how they can support optimal planning, design and construction using current Code standards. She further stated that the Guide illustrated opportunities to enhance design standards that can result in long-term cost savings for both public and private investment and describes how streetscape planning helps to support continued growth and economic development in the region. Finally, Ms. Weesner advised the Board that Scenic Houston is asking for letters of support from Houston area management districts, redevelopment authorities and TIRZs for the Streetscape Resource Guide.

**ii. Presentation: Before I Die Wall.**

Jaimin Shah, a 4<sup>th</sup> year University of Texas medical student, made a presentation regarding the "Before I Die Wall" project. He gave a brief history of the "Before I Die Wall" which was established by artist Candy Chang in New Orleans, Louisiana and is currently in various cities around the world. Mr. Shah expressed his strong desire to see a "Before I Die Wall" in Midtown Park and his belief that it would be a great way to attract lots of visitors to the Park. He stated that the "Before I Die Wall" would be a place where Midtown residents and visitors can express their thoughts in a unique way and would also serve as a means of bringing people together. Mr. Shah responded to questions from Board members about the project.

**E. Finance Committee – Gary Noble, Chair**

Director Noble explained that the Finance Committee's responsibility is to work with the various Board Committees and the Midtown Staff to develop an annual budget, monitor the approved budget for compliance and report to the Board. He reported that the Committee has reviewed the District's financials and that overall the District appears to be operating within its approved budget. He further stated that according to the District's Assessor-Collector, Equi-Tax, the District has collected approximately 97% of its assessments and continues to be one of the highest collected management districts in the City. Director Noble thanked those in attendance for continuing to support the efforts of the District by paying assessments in a timely manner.

**F. Cultural Arts & Entertainment – Eileen Morris, Chair**

Director Morris reported on activities of the Cultural Arts & Entertainment Committee. She stated that the Committee works to develop, encourage, coordinate, produce and promote cultural arts and entertainment in Midtown. She reported that the Committee planned and implemented the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Midtown Art in the Park in April 2014. Director Morris stated that the Art in the Park event continues to grow, with increasing numbers of attendees and artists participating each year. She reported that approximately 2000 visitors attended Art in the Park and that 88 diverse artists and 9 arts organizations participated. Director Morris stated that over the past year the Committee hosted numerous focus groups to help inform Cultural Arts and Entertainment programming for the upcoming 10-Year Service and Improvement Plan. Additionally, Director Morris reported that the District was also the Title Sponsor for the Preservons La Creation Mural on Fannin Street, which is the largest mural in Houston. She stated that the mural has received local, national and international press coverage. Director Morris reported that the Committee is also working to develop a Cultural Arts Master Plan for Midtown. Director Morris announced that Committee meetings are typically held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 3:30 p.m. and that the next Cultural Arts and Entertainment Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, August 19, 2014, at 3:30 p.m. in the District's Offices. Director Morris stated that her Committee is always looking for local arts venues to host monthly Committee meetings and asked that anyone interested in hosting a meeting please contact Cynthia Alvarado.

**G. Nominating Committee – Debra McGaughey, Chair**

Director McGaughey reported that the Committee received approximately 30 resumes from qualified candidates for three (3) vacant Board positions. She reported that the Committee first looked to ensure that all candidates met the basic legal qualifications to serve on the Board and then the Committee looked at the existing Board make-up and identified certain skill sets that would complement the existing Board and narrowed the list to 10 candidates who were asked to participate in the interview process. Director McGaughey advised the Board that the Committee was still working through the process and plans to make its recommendations to the full Board at the September 2014 Board of Directors' meeting.

**H. Service and Improvement Plan – Willie Coleman, Chair**

Director Coleman reported that the District is in the last year of its current Service and Improvement Plan and Assessment Plan and that the Committee is currently working on a new 10 year Service and Improvement and Assessment Plan. He explained that the

document will outline the services and improvements being proposed and the projected costs for such services and improvements. Director Coleman advised the Board that the most current draft of the proposed plan was contained in the Board Packet, was available for pick-up, and could be downloaded from the Midtown website. He described the process used to develop the preliminary draft of the Service Plan which included numerous meetings, focus groups, and interviews with Midtown stakeholders. Director Coleman thanked all of the Board Committees for their hard work on the preliminary draft of the new Service Plan but cautioned that the current version is a preliminary draft only and is by no means complete. He invited everyone to participate in the process by sharing suggestions, thoughts, and ideas for the desired services and improvements for the next 10 years. Director Coleman announced that the next Committee meeting would be held on Wednesday, August 13, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. and invited everyone present to attend.

**I. Executive Committee – William Franks, Chair**

Board Chair William Franks gave an update on matters discussed at the most recent Executive Committee meeting.

**REPORT ON CAPITAL PROJECTS OF THE MIDTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (MRA).**

Marlon Marshall gave the following report on the status of the current MRA capital improvement projects:

Holman Street Reconstruction – The Project is being reviewed by the City's Public Works Department to ensure that the project accommodates the needs of pedestrians, bikes and vehicular traffic. The Staff and Consultants are awaiting comments from the City's Traffic Group. Pending the City's response, the design team plans to make a final submittal in August 2014. The Project is scheduled to be bid in the 4th quarter of 2014.

Midtown Park Project – LED lights have been added to the Midtown sign and now lights up different colors at night. The Contractor continues work on site utilities, the water feature, and landscaping. The Substantial Completion walk-thru is currently scheduled for August 2014, however the walk-thru may be delayed. The Kiosk Tenant is awaiting City approval of its improvement plans.

Main Street Project – The Design Team is continuing to work on design. Meetings with property owners will be scheduled in upcoming weeks to review conceptual plans for the project.

Caroline Street Reconstruction Project – Caroline Street will be a complete reconstruction of the roadway but will not be considered a green road. There will be some elements similar to Bagby on this street, but not as extensive. Due to the large overrun of the low bid in comparison to the original Project cost estimate, Midtown has requested that TxDOT get new bids for the Caroline Street Reconstruction Project. TxDOT has agreed to relet the Project with the requirement that the scope be adjusted. Several options are being considered to adjust the scope of the Project and reduce the overall costs. These options include reduction of Project length, adjustments to back-of-curb improvements, and material changes. It is anticipated that the Project will be relet in November or December 2014.

SuperBlock Park Project – Construction of the parking garage is anticipated to start in late September or early October 2014.

**WITH RESPECT TO THE FOREGOING AGENDA ITEMS, CONDUCT AN EXECUTIVE SESSION WITH REGARDS TO THE FOLLOWING, AS APPROPROATE AND NECESSARY.**

- a. Consultation with attorney (Section 551.071, Texas Government Code);
- b. Personnel matters (Section 551.074, Texas Government Code).

There was no Executive Session.

**OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no other business announcements.

The District Operations Manager, Cynthia Alvarado, gave a PowerPoint presentation which highlighted in detail the projects and programs of the Committees.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Chair Franks announced that the next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 3, 2014, at 11:00 a.m. in the Midtown Management District offices located at 410 Pierce St. Suite 335, Houston, TX 77002.

**ADJOURN**

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.



Eileen J. Morris, Board Secretary

Date: 10/1/14