

MINUTES
NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY COMMISSION
City of Carrollton

SEPTEMBER 9, 2021

A meeting of the City of Carrollton Neighborhood Advisory Commission was held on Thursday, September 9, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall with the following members present:

Commission Members Present:

John Chollampel, Chair
Kathleen Foster, Vice Chair
Natasha Singh
Karyne Nguyen
Darby Merriman
Nikki Ellis
Anna Hammonds

Commission Members Absent:

Dennis Raso
Jane Harmon

Staff Members Present:

Cory Heiple, Environment Services Director
Brian Passwaters, Community Services Division Manager
Meagan Tucker, Sr. Community Development Program Specialist
Alka Agnihotri, Community Development Program Specialist

Guests Present:

Serena Allen
Gary Lovett Darice Taipalus
Tim Allen
Nicki Lyford

I. Call To Order – Chair Chollampel called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm

II. Introduction of new Neighborhood Advisory Commissioners: Item to recognize new Neighborhood Advisory Commissioners.

Nikki Ellis, Anna Hammonds and Darby Merriman introduced themselves.

III. Swearing In of new Commissioners: Item to swear in new commissioners.

The Oath of Office was administered to the three new commissioners; Nikki Ellis, Anna Hammonds and Darby Merriman.

IV. Public Hearing on the 2021 NEMGP Applications: Item to hear presentations from the following applicants:

- Trafalgar Square
- Cambridge Estates

Chair Chollampel opened the public hearing.

• **Trafalgar Square:** Serena Allen, President of Trafalgar Square HOA, began the presentation stating that Trafalgar Square was built in 1972 and consists of 173 homes with over 250 trees. She stated there is a beautiful park in the center of the community that has two lit tennis courts, a large grassy area, and two

picnic tables. She stated that the perimeter wall on Marsh Lane is the first motorists see as they drive north on Marsh Lane from Addison. She stated that the neighborhood was awarded a sign topper grant in 2020 to commemorate the 2022 50th Anniversary of the neighborhood and ten toppers were added in November 2020. She stated that they began the application process for this second grant in February 2021 to give the entrance a face lift. She felt that a well maintained neighborhood would deter crime and give the impression of an involved and alert neighborhood. She talked about the problems encountered with the 49 year old brick walls and talked about the high pedestrian traffic from the bus stop, convenience store and Race Trac that destroyed the sprinkler system, lighting and landscape. She provided before and after photos of the large section of sidewalk that had sunk causing the wall to move noting that the sidewalk has recently been replaced by the City. She talked about the expense incurred to fix the leaning wall stating that she hoped that the expenditure to repair the wall illustrated that the HOA is serious about the project and is worthy of the \$25,000 grant. She described in detail the efforts they expended on the proposal and referred to the revised drawings for the entrance wall. She added that a traffic plan was submitted and accepted by the City. She brought attention to items and particular facts as listed in the application and stated they are still receiving donations and financial pledges. She concluded the presentation with a description of the project in detail including landscaping, irrigation and sweat equity.

Chair Chollampel asked if there were any speakers; there being none, he opened the floor for discussion or a motion.

Commissioner Merriman asked about a maintenance plan and Ms. Allen replied that they contract with Bloomscares to maintain the area on a weekly basis.

Commissioner Foster asked if there would be a shortfall. Ms. Allen replied that they expect a very small shortfall but do and will continue to collect donations. As an example she advised that she received two donations that morning that were not accounted for in the application and she added that there were others that were willing to give more if needed. She stated it is important to complete the work before the 50th anniversary in 2022.

Chair Chollampel asked about the expected completion. Ms. Allen replied that they are penciled in with Complete Landsculpture for sometime at the end of October who said it would take a couple of weeks, depending on the weather. Chair Chollampel asked staff to explain how the funding would occur. Alka Agnihotri, Community Development Program Specialist, stated the HOA is asking for the full \$25,000 grant and the project costs is just over \$76,000. The HOA will pay the difference if the project is approved. She explained that the grant and the funds from the HOA would be placed into an account in order for the City to pay the contractors. The funds must be in the account before any work is done. Ms. Allen stressed that they expect to get all of the funds needed but if not, they could refinish the existing fence. She stated that they have the funds to refinish the fence now but would prefer to install the proposed new modern fence.

Commissioner Merriman underscored that if the project is approved with the new fence, then that is what must be constructed. Ms. Allen stated that they expect to have the remaining needed funds in the next month. Brian Passwaters, Community Services Manager, stated that a condition could be made that if the funds were not received timely, that the Commission could reconsider the application at the November meeting.

There being no other speakers, Chair Chollampel closed the public hearing and opened the floor for a motion.

Commissioner Foster moved approval of the application with the condition; second by Commissioner Merriman. The motion was approved with a unanimous 7-0 vote, Raso and Harmon absent.

Chair Chollampel opened the public hearing for the Cambridge Estates application.

• **Cambridge Estates:** Darice Taipalus, HOA President, stated that Cambridge Estates is a northern Carrollton neighborhood with 112 households and the Association is a voluntary HOA. She spoke about a previous grant awarded in 2017 for signs and stated the yearly maintenance for landscaping was expected to be \$2,500. She talked about various neighborhood events. She stated that the grant request is to paint 224 sq ft of the neighborhood wall that is behind one of the signs. She provided photos of the existing wall and explained that the best bid was just over \$2,000 and includes paint and labor. She explained that the homeowner of the lot where the wall is located is a widow and is elderly and cannot afford to do anything with the wall. The HOA would provide prep work and sweat equity for a total budget of a little over \$2,700. The City's portion would be a little under \$1,800. She explained the work that would be included in the sweat equity. She talked about notification to the members and the June 2021 meeting resulting in approval. Lastly, she reviewed the proposed traffic plan.

There being no public speakers, Chair Chollampel opened the floor for discussion by the Commission.

Commissioner Merriman asked if the project had been voted on by the members and what the result was; Ms. Taipalus stated it was unanimous in favor. Prior to 2019, the participation rate was 70% with 2020 and 2021 having fewer participants with 40-50 homes. Commissioner Merriman asked if the wall was painted and Ms. Taipalus replied that it was painted previously but there isn't much left as shown in the photo. Gary Lovett, HOA Vice President, stated that some of the wall is mildewed and a portion also has graffiti, some of which would remain with power washing. He felt that the wall would look worse than it does now if they only power washed it. He added that the current wall is 33 years old and they anticipate it being at least 15 years before they need to paint it again.

Brian Passwaters stressed that it is important for the HOA to understand that if they are awarded the grant, they will be forever responsible for the maintenance of the wall. Mr. Lovett stated that the HOA is not responsible for the wall that runs for half a mile with about 50 homes that use the wall as their back wall. He stated that the homeowner cannot afford to maintain the wall and the HOA wants to paint that one section because it's what people see as they drive into the neighborhood right off of Old Denton. After some discussion about responsibility for the wall, Ms. Taipalus stated that because they are a voluntary HOA, the HOA could not take that responsibility. She thanked the Commission for their time and withdrew the application.

Chair Chollampel closed the public hearing and announced that the application was withdrawn.

V. Review the Minutes of the June 10, 2021 Meeting: Item to review and adopt the minutes from the June 10, 2021 meeting of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission.

Commissioner Foster moved to approve the June 10, 2021 meeting; second by Commissioner Singh.

VI. Project Updates: Item to review NEMGP, MHRP, ERP and PHP projects.

Brian Passwaters advised that High Meadows of Indian Creek would be rebating its previously received \$1,300+ NEMGP grant because the HOA can no longer maintain the property. He stated this is the first time a grant must be rebated since the program began in 1999. Discussion was held about the term of the

contract and the role of the Commissioners. Cory Heiple, Environmental Services Director, stated staff could present some options to NAC for consideration at a future meeting.

Alka Agnihotri provided an update on the Villages of Greenway Park, 2020 project, stating the HOA just finished re-mortaring the entry way wall. They still have landscaping and irrigation to be done but they expect to be completed at the end of October.

Meagan Tucker, Sr. Community Development Program Specialist, advised that Kendra Heard was no longer with the City of Carrollton and is working with Dallas College. She hoped to have the position filled in November. She reviewed a couple of maps that staff has been working on to illustrate total projects that have been completed since the MHRP, ERP and PHP programs started.

VII. Workshop Updates: Item to discuss scheduled workshops and possible changes to the schedule and subject matter.

Alka Agnihotri reported that since the last NAC meeting, staff was prepared to hold Emergency Preparedness Workshop in July, but due to COVID, there were no attendees although there were 25 RSVPs received. She stated that staff is trying to reschedule the workshop. The Active Shooter Workshop scheduled in August received 14 RSVPs but only two individuals attended.

- Critters in Carrollton – September 2021 @ 6pm: Alka Agnihotri stated this workshop was still being worked on and may have to be pushed out.

VIII. Citizens' Evening Update and Sub-Committee: Item to discuss Citizens' Evening event and sub-committee volunteers.

Cory Heiple stated that the event may have to be held in a similar fashion as last year due to COVID. He felt it should be revisited again during the November meeting. Brian Passwaters suggested that NAC members volunteer to serve on a sub-committee for Citizens Evening Event and for the Volunteer Awards. He stated the sub-committees would still need to meet regardless if the event is virtual or in person.

Citizens Evening Event – Singh, Merriman, Nguyen
Volunteer Awards – Merriman, Foster, Singh, Nguyen

Heiple stated that staff would move forward expecting the event to be in-person but would not begin booking or making announcements until a final decision is made.

IX. Neighborhood Mentoring Program: Item to share information on NAC mentoring activity.
• Commissioner Jane Harmon

No report due to Commissioner Harmon's absence.

X. Sign Topper Program Review: Item for NAC Chair to share his ideas on Sign Topper Program changes.

Chair Chollampel requested that the item be tabled to the next meeting stating that he had not heard back from the Transportation Department.

Commissioner Foster moved to table the item as requested; second by Commissioner Singh and the motion was approved with a unanimous 7-0 vote, Raso and Harmon absent.

XI. Presentation on HOA Lunch Workshop: Item to discuss updates on HOA lunch workshop.

Chair Chollampel advised that the purpose of the workshop is to establish relationships with leaders in the HOAs and give those leaders an opportunity to learn about NAC as well. He referred to the Bylaws of the NAC to explain the need for the workshop and stated the sub-committee felt the workshop would give the NAC the opportunity to be proactive when it comes to outreach. The strategic and long-term goal is to start a NAC flagship event on an annual basis. The target audience is residents who volunteer their time with HOA Boards. He talked about the communication strategy and with regard to the budget, the recommendation is to invite 3 officers from each HOA Board at a cost of \$15 per person for a total of \$2,925. It was felt that the final amount would be less since it is unlikely that each HOA Board would be represented with 3 officers. He added that if a City space was not available, additional funds might be needed to rent a space. He also asked for a volunteer to fill former Commissioner Anderson's spot and asked for unanimous support from the Commission.

Passwaters voiced several points of clarification needed by staff as well as concerns regarding budget and staffing. Commissioner Merriman felt there are ways to accomplish what Chair Chollampel proposed without costs such as standardized communications and a quarterly zoom meeting. She stated she would be interested in filling Mr. Anderson's spot on the sub-committee. Commissioner Foster and Commissioner Singh felt an in-person event would be preferable and more discussion and ideas could be considered in sub-committee. Cory Heiple advised that the costs for the workshop would have to come from the current operating budget that was already reduced during the budget season. Chair Chollampel gave explanations for some points and felt that Zoom would not have the same personal touch that would be preferred. He stated that he would be willing to reduce the number of officers invited from 3 to 2. Chair Chollampel stressed that he understood that the event needs to start small, but it needs to start. Lastly, he thanked Commissioner Merriman for volunteering.

XII. Visitors Comments & Other Business:

Chair Chollampel advised that Commissioner Singh excused herself from the meeting at approximately 8:20 pm.

Passwaters urged the Commission members to attend as many National Night Out events as possible in October. Secondly, he advised that the November meeting would include the annual CAPER review.

- Update on city operations: Cory Heiple stated that the Environmental Services Department staff is back at City Hall after being displaced due to the remodel and is now located on the first floor. Given the current state of COVID staff is back in a split shift capacity; half working in the office and half in the field or working remotely. With regard to animal adoption, many are being adopted but there are some still available.

(Items not listed elsewhere on the agenda may be addressed at this time. No official action can be taken on any item discussed during this portion of the meeting.)

XIII. Adjournment

Chair Chollampel adjourned the meeting at 8:33 pm.


Cory Heiple, Environmental Services Dir.

John Chollampel, Chair