

MINUTES
NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY COMMISSION
City of Carrollton

SEPTEMBER 8, 2022

A meeting of the City of Carrollton Neighborhood Advisory Commission was held on September 8, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall with the following members present:

Commission Members Present:

Natasha Singh, Chair
Darby Merriman, Vice Chair
Sunil Sundaran
Karyne Nguyen
Henry Rivas
Dennis Raso
Anna Hammonds
Kristi Sheffy
Matthew Hicks

Commission Members Absent:

Staff Members Present:

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

Guests Present:

Kelli Joseph
Janice Smith
Jack Bennett
Carabeth Bennett
Wanda Vollenweider
Pamela Goodin
Margo Phillips
Kenneth Garcia
Linda Caldwell
Nicole Dickerson

I. Call To Order – Chair Singh called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

II. Review the Minutes of the August 11, 2022 Meeting: Item to review and adopt the minutes from the August 11, 2022 meeting of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission.

Commissioner Nguyen moved approval of the minutes; second by Vice Chair Merriman. The motion was approved with a unanimous 9-0 vote.

III. Sign Topper Application: Item to have a public hearing on a Sign Topper Application for Sumner Oaks HOA.

Wanda Vollenweider referred to the information provided to the Commission stating that the neighborhood is located north of Furneaux Creek, beside Old Denton Road and described Sumner Oak as a very walkable neighborhood noting all of the retail, restaurants and open space within walking distance. She stated that Sumner Oak is a small neighborhood consisting of 56 homes and she introduced Pam Goodin to provide the history of the neighborhood. Ms. Goodin advised that the neighborhood was named after Bill Sumner who was the Postmaster General at one time and a World War II veteran who married Mary Blanton and together had five daughters. Ms. Vollenweider stated the HOA members meet to plan social events, maintain the two entrance areas, and the last gathering was at 3 Nations Brewery in Downtown Carrollton, among other activities. She stated they were requesting sign toppers for the neighborhood to demonstrate their pride in the neighborhood. She stated they were requesting seven toppers; 5 intersections and two extras. She explained the HOA chose acorns and oak leaves to represent the neighborhood name on the toppers. She requested approval of the request.

Commissioner Merriman asked about the support by the neighborhood and Ms. Vollenweider stated 37 were in support and the other 25 did not respond.

Commissioner Raso moved approval of the sign topper grant for Sumner Oak; second by Commissioner Rivas. The motion was approved with a unanimous 9-0 vote.

IV. NEMPG Applications: Item to hear NEMGP presentations from the following:

- **Mallard Cove 1** – Kelli Joseph, President, and Jan Smith presented the request. Ms. Joseph stated that Mallard Cove was located off of Dove Creek and Marsh Lane and was established in 1983. She stated there were 20 homes in the community and talked about the successful events. She stated the goal is to improve the signage, beautify the landscaping, modify the irrigation and to engage residents. She referred to photos of the current sign that is almost 40 years old and the proposed new sign. She spoke about the community garage sale that garnered \$860 the first day and spoke about the enthusiasm of the residents. She stated that on September 17, if the request is approved, everyone in the neighborhood would be there to support implementation of the landscape plan. She stated that individuals have donated personal materials, sweat equity and expressed the excitement of the residents. Lastly, she thanked Alka Agnihotri for her assistance.

Chair Singh opened the floor for comments from the audience; there being no speakers, she opened the floor to the Commission.

Commissioner Raso asked what the total cost of the project would be. Ms. Joseph stated that the total project cost would be a little over \$21,000.

Commissioner Merriman asked if there was a plan for ongoing maintenance. Ms. Joseph talked about the proposed maintenance and replied that they plan to regularly weed the plantings.

Commissioner Nguyen moved approval of the NEMPG for Mallard Cove; second by Commissioner Sundaran. The motion was approved with a unanimous 9-0 vote.

- **Highlands** – Jack Bennett, Co-Project Coordinator, began the presentation stating that the Highlands neighborhood is 42 years old. The first home was built in 1981, the voluntary HOA was founded in 1985 and there is between 60-65% membership with dues being \$135 a year. He talked about the projects completed in the past some of which were matching grant projects. The

current proposal is to install 5 four-foot diameter planter bowls with a stone base on the Rosemeade entryways similar to what was done at the Marsh entryway. He talked about the proposed plantings including river rock and boulders as well as modifying the sprinkler system as needed to ensure the bowls are covered. He used photographs of the current various entryways to illustrate where the bowls would be installed without the stone radius wall. He stated that the members of the HOA were told during the November 2021 annual meeting about the plan to apply for the NEMPG for the project and he noted there were about 40 members present at the meeting. He explained that emails were also sent to the members in January 2022 describing the project and information was placed in the monthly newsletter as well as posting on the Next-Door forum; and block captains visited with residents in their area. He explained that in May, just prior to submittal of the application, they had 109 support forms and explained that in trying a new method for people to sign-up, the forms were not returned. With regard to the amount of funds donated for the project, he stated they currently have \$6,810 and they have \$941 that was carried over from a 2020 matching grant program totaling \$7,751. He noted that the neighborhoods share would be approximately \$8,300 and they have the funds in place to pay the amount. He talked about the bids received and stated the low bid was from Southwest Nursery and the remaining materials bid would be awarded to Richman Landscaping at \$20,194. The total cost of the project excluding the sweat equity was \$27,989.86 and the City's share at \$19,635.

There being no speakers, Chair Singh opened the floor to the Commission.

Vice Chair Merriman asked if they knew the total amount of grant funds that the Highlands has received from the NEMPG for past projects. Alka Agnihotri, Community Development Program Specialist, stated she could get the information. Mr. Bennett replied that he believed it was between \$40,000 - \$50,000. Commissioner Merriman asked if there was a limitation on the amount a single neighborhood could receive and if there was a maintenance plan. Agnihotri replied there was no limitation and Mr. Bennett replied that he has taken care of the sprinkler system over the past four years and they contract for mowing, weeding, tree trimming and typical maintenance. He stated that the contract now also includes maintenance of the sprinkler system. The HOA dues collected covers the cost of the contract.

Commissioner Nguyen asked about the support forms. Mr. Bennett reiterated that the new program for making payment led to a reduced number of forms that were submitted. He underscored the support and voiced approval by the residents of the first two projects that were completed because it really improved the neighborhood.

Kenneth Garcia, 2301 Stone Glen Lane, corroborated the comments by Mr. Bennett about the mailers and the new Stripe system noting that he wasn't sure that the Board received his approval form. He also talked about people who donate funds above and beyond the HOA fee.

Margo Phillips, 2300 Stone Glen Lane, stated there is a large amount of support from the neighborhood, such as herself, even if they did not submit the approval form.

Mr. Bennett spoke about the sweat equity that would be provided. He stated that if the Commission approves the project, the contractor would order the materials and would probably begin in mid-October and it should be completed in about 2 weeks to early November. The installation of the bowls would be the last component.

Vice Chair Merriman felt it was important to know the amount previously awarded to the neighborhood prior to voting on the request. In answer to Chair Singh, Mr. Bennett stated they did a project in 2019, 2020 and this would be last time they would apply. Environmental Services Director Cory Heiple stated that although they do not have the figure with them, he encouraged the Commission to take action because the project is eligible for funding. He stated he understands the concerns, but the total amount doesn't factor into the current request.

Linda Caldwell, 2300 Heatherwoods Way, stated they have conducted many fundraisers to improve the neighborhood and described the problems in the late 80's and early 90's with snakes and rodents. She stated the neighborhood has been very supportive of all of the projects and have been super active in their efforts to improve the community. She stated they spend their funds to keep the perimeter looking good and felt that it helps the neighborhood and helps the City.

Chair Singh stated that she did not see a problem with the neighborhood requesting future grants because it illustrates their involvement and enthusiasm. She felt the projects on the entryways really benefit the City.

Vice Chair Merriman stated her concern was about the total cost. She felt it was high and felt it was a lot of funding for one neighborhood. She added that the work that has been done is beautiful and she appreciates how the neighborhood is maintained.

Mr. Bennett responded that it was his feeling that they were doing what the City asked residents to do; make their subdivision look good. He stated that he thought that was what the program was for.

Community Services Division Manager Brian Passwaters stated that the program allows up to \$60,000 a year on the Neighborhood Enhancement Matching Grant Program. As long as the funding is available, it can be used by any neighborhood and it was his understanding that the funding is available. If there were multiple applications, then the Commission would have to decide on the funding amount.

Chair Singh opened the floor for a motion.

Commissioner Sheffy moved approval of the Highlands' NEMPG application; second by Commissioner Raso. The motion was approved with a 7-1-0, Commissioner Merriman opposed and Commissioner Rivas abstained.

V. **NAC Email Accounts:** Item to discuss NAC correspondence options.

Heiple referred to the previous meeting's discussion about trying to better communication between citizens, staff and the commissioners. He stated he spoke with the Legal Department about commissioners using personal email accounts and was advised that it was okay so long as the members signed an acknowledgement that should there be an Open Records request, they would be required to provide the document(s). He stated that staff would have a form prepared and sent to each commissioner. Those who want to use their personal account should just sign the form and return to staff. He cautioned the Commission members against group texts and emails due to the Open Meetings Act requirements and regulations.

VI. **Program Update:** Item to discuss program updates.

Meagan Tucker, Sr. Community Development Program Specialist, talked about the emergency repair program that provides a grant up to \$5,000 for low-income residents to help with safety and health issues; mainly AC units or plumbing leaks. She referred to a before and after photo for a recent project.

VII. Calendar Update: Item to review updated NAC calendar for 2022-2023.

Tucker referred to the calendar for 2022-23 that was provided to the Commission in their meeting packet. She noted that the Citizen's Evening date would need to be adjusted once the date has been selected.

VIII. Sub-Committee Selections: Item to discuss commissioner selection for the following committees:

- **Citizens' Evening** – Natasha Singh, Dennis Raso, Kristi Sheffy, Karyne Nguyen
- **Volunteer Award** – Henry Rivas, Sunil Sundaran, Karyne Nguyen, Natasha Singh
- **HOA Luncheon** – Dennis Raso, Natasha Singh, Sunil Sundaran
- **Workshop Selection** – Henry Rivas, Sunil Sundaran, Kristi Sheffy

IX. Citizens' Evening: Item to decide date for Citizens' Evening.

- **Wednesday, March 1, 2023**
- **Wednesday, March 15, 2023**
- **Wednesday, March 29, 2023**

Agnihotri stated the event is usually held at the end of February or beginning of March. It was noted that Spring Break is the week of March 15. Discussion was held and a consensus was reached in favor of March 29, 2023. Heiple stated staff would hold that date until they receive confirmation with the Mayor and City Manager's office.

X. Visitors Comments & Other Business:

- **Upcoming Meetings**
 - **November – Review of CAPER** – scheduled for November 10; new members should be sworn in and ready to serve.
 - **December – Holiday Party** – December 8


(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.)

Chair Singh stated Commissioner Hicks and Vice Chair Merriman were rolling off of the Commission and voiced her thanks and appreciation for their service. Commissioner Hicks stated he would have liked to stay on longer but was relocating. Vice Chair Merriman stated that NAC is her favorite board to serve on but felt that because of calendar conflicts, she felt it would be better to have a member who could be more present.

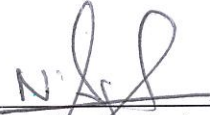
Tucker stated that Carrollton Night Out is October 4; staff is available to attend, and she encouraged Commission members to attend as many as possible. Chair Singh stated it was a great opportunity to reach out to their neighborhoods and have a face-to-face visit.

XI. Adjournment

Chair Singh adjourned the meeting at 7:25 pm.



Cory Heple, Environmental Services Dir.



Natasha Singh, Chair