

COUNCIL OF NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

May 24, 2007

Council Chambers

Germantown Municipal Center

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS REPRESENTED: Allenby Lakes, Bavarian Village, Duntreath, Gardens of Oakleigh, Germantown East, Germantown Trails, Kimbrough Grove, Kirby Hills, Neshoba North, Oakleigh III, Poplar Estates, Poplar Grove, Riggs/Arthur, Riverchase, South Germantown, Winchester Forest Hill Estates, Woodshire.

CALL TO ORDER: Edgar Babian called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: Edgar recognized first time visitors from Oakleigh III, Poplar Estates, and Kimbrough Grove.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the March 22 meeting were approved as written.

GUEST SPEAKERS: Pat Mahoney, Chairman of the Tennessee Home Improvement Commission and Chairman of the Memphis Remodelers' Association, addressed the group on the considerations that should be made when remodeling or making home improvements. During the past ten years demand for remodeling has exceeded that of new construction. There are some important considerations to weigh when thinking about home improvements. Obviously the cost is important but so is your trust in the experience of the contractor and his ability to translate your ideas to reality. Consider putting in improvements while you can still benefit from them, not just when you're ready to sell. Get a list of candidates from you family and friends, the Better Business Bureau and the Home Builders Association (NAHB.com). Interview prospective contractors. Ask questions, ask for references, for licensing--general contractors or home improvement. Ask about the type of warranty offered. Are the workers covered by Workman's Compensation? Will a contract be written, and what payments will be expected at what time? Find out what deposits will be required. Demand that all workers on your property be insured. Insist on no radios, no profanity and punctuality. Understand that the better contractors are in demand. You may have to delay your project to fit into your contractor's schedule. For further information on planning your project and selecting a remodeler you may contact the National Association of Home Builders at www.BuilderBooks.com or (800)368-5242.

Joe Nunes, Neighborhood Services Manager, presented information on construction permits for the City of Germantown and Shelby County. Construction permits are required for our own protection and to assure adherence to city codes; to meet legal and insurance requirements; and to see that zoning regulations are met. Shelby County requires a County Permit for building, electrical and wiring, mechanical (including HVAC and gas water heaters) and plumbing. Though some permits can only be pulled by a licensed contractor, it is ultimately the homeowner's responsibility to assure compliance with this requirement. City ordinance requires that the contractor be responsible for proper disposal of anything generated by the contractor--e.g. hot water heater, building materials, tree removal.

OLD BUSINESS:

Neighborhood Services Report: Joe Nunes mentioned the dramatic increase in total notices being issued is primarily due to the change in the grass height ordinance. He stated that inspections were down because of a recent shortage of personnel.

Planning Report: Joe Nunes stated that Goodwin Farms is working out a road dedication for a railroad crossing. The commission is looking at the construction of a Taco Bell, and at a Hyatt Hotel at the intersection of Forest Hill Irene and Winchester Roads.

CONA Special Events Coordinator's Report: Luci Cromer commended the recent Renovated Homes Tour. She mentioned the upcoming Neighborhood Leaders Conference scheduled for October 25 and introduced its coordinator Rebecca DeRousse. Rebecca asked that those present inform their associations of the event and consider a sponsorship. She encouraged planning on building a display booth and beginning to consider nominations for the various awards available.

Police Report: Lt. Mike Gray noted that nothing out of the ordinary was apparent in the March Crime Activity Report, but since that report there has been an increase in residential burglaries. He encouraged those using green belt areas to store their identification and personal belongings in their trunks or keep them to a minimum. School resource officers will be utilized back on patrols for an increased presence. The city has graduated eight new patrolmen this May 23rd, and sixteen reserve officers will graduate the following week. He reminded us that criminals know that your mailbox has something in it when the flag is raised. For greater protection against id theft, use the post office or postal drop boxes. He encouraged notifying the police to conduct a vacation check of your home when you are away. This may be done in person or online.

Mayor's Report: Sherrye Rhea highlighted the LAFS program (Learning about fire safety) being held at GPAC on June 10, and the CERTS program class beginning on June 13 -15. The Great Race is returning to Germantown on the July 3 at 3 p.m. She had sponsorship forms available. On July 4 is the traditional fireworks display. National Night Out will be on August 7 this year, and again all associations are encouraged to have a get together and consider inviting the police or fire department personnel. Sherrye has packets with sample flyers.

NEW BUSINESS:

Association concerns: There were no concerns expressed.

Announcements: Luci Cromer distributed a list of topics that the Sheriff's office will present at any neighborhood function. It covers topics of interest for children, adults, and businesses. April Strand from the Shelby County Schools Education Foundation related information on their "Watchful Eyes program. It is encouraged for anyone living within a one mile radius of any school to keep their eyes open for anything out of the ordinary, and to report any suspicious behavior to the authorities. The goal is to keep children safe and to reduce opportunities for crimes to occur.

Carrie Corbett from GPAC promoted the upcoming season. She offered to speak to any associations about the facility and the events being planned. On the 3rd Friday of each month the Black Box Theater is converted into a jazz club. At 8:30 on those evenings "Jazz in the Box" begins. Since it is a small theater she encouraged all interested to make reservations immediately. This popular event has been sold out regularly. Mike Palazzolo, city Alderman and Vice Mayor expressed his appreciation for CONA's efforts to disseminate information to neighborhoods. He noted the recent denial of the cable legislation which could have been detrimental to the Germantown High School TV, but he believes that the issue will return in the 2008 session.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m. The next meeting will be July 26.