

COUNCIL OF NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

NOVEMBER 15, 2007

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

GERMANTOWN MUNICIPAL CENTER

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS REPRESENTED: Allenby Lakes, Bromley, Farmington South, Forest Estates, Gardens of Oakleigh, Germantown East, Germantown Trails, Mimosa Gardens, Oakleigh II, Poplar Estates, Riverchase, Sweet Oaks, Winchester Forest Hill Estates.

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

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: Edgar recognized first-time visitors to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the September 27 meeting were approved as written.

GUEST SPEAKER: David Pickler, Chairman, Shelby County Board of Education discussed several items that will impact Shelby County Schools in Germantown.

1. Today, November 15, County Mayor A. C. Wharton told the Memphis City School Board to surrender its charter and push for consolidation. People are confused by what this will mean and erroneously think that Shelby County Board of Education would then run the consolidated district. That is not so. Initially, there would be an interim board composed of the 9 members of the MCSB and the 7 members of the Shelby County School Board. Next, there would be a 15-member education planning committee—5 members would be appointed by Memphis Mayor Herenton, 5 appointed by County Mayor Wharton, and 5 appointed by the MCSB. In no way would consolidation benefit those of us in the Shelby County Schools attendance area.

2. The opening of Southwind High School has impacted both Germantown and Houston High Schools. In 2006-2007, Germantown was 62% Black and 32% Caucasian. In 2007-2008, the school is 54% Black and 39% Caucasian. The enrollment is 1850. In 2006-2007 Houston was 60% Caucasian and 32% Black. In 2007-2008, the school is 65% Caucasian and 26% Black. Enrollment is 2100, down 400 from last year.

3. Shelby County Schools is appealing the ruling handed down by Federal Judge Bernice Donald to the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals. In August, she denied unitary status to the district and imposed stricter standards. Included in her ruling is a mandate that every school must reflect the racial balance of the entire county within 15%. The county is 55% Caucasian and 36% Black. This ruling could force 600-700 Black children to be bused. She also mandated that the teacher population of the schools must also be re-aligned to the same percentages. This would result in the termination of 262 white teachers. She also decreed that she will appoint a special master who will set up the zoning areas and give them to the SC School Board. The SCSB has hired new legal counsel to file the appeal by November 27.

4. New elementary and middle schools were planned in the southeast Shelby County area. They would have alleviated overcrowding at Germantown Elementary and Middle, Southwind Elementary and Middle, and Highland Oaks. However, Judge Donald has indicated that she will not approve any redistricting, so the SCSB has tabled the plans for these schools until after the appeal of her ruling.

Pickler also announced that the Shelby County Schools received a straight-A report card—one of only ten in the state. Massive rezoning is planned for the Bartlett, Arlington, and Lakeland areas. The Board is looking at how fees and lab fees are structured throughout the district. Right now, the fees are set and approved by the principals, and that has resulted in a variety of charges for the same supplies. The Board is also looking at the possibility of having school supplies offered in-house.

OLD BUSINESS:

CONA Special Events Coordinator's Report: Luci Cromer reported that approximately 70 people attended the Neighborhood Leaders' Conference on October 25. The evaluations of the event were good, and people felt that they came away with a lot of valuable information.

Mayor's Report: Mayor Goldsworthy expressed concern about the issue of school consolidation and reminded those in attendance that there have been grassroots fights through the years. She felt that the business management of Memphis City Schools is what is driving Mayor Wharton. She also discussed the Hometown for the Holidays schedule starting with the Tree Lighting on November 23 and ending with the New Year's Eve Spectacular at GPAC on December 31.

Planning Report: Joe Nunes discussed the handout detailing the Planning Commission Projects from November 6-December 4. He also reports that a new Hazardous Waste facility will soon be opening off Farm Road. It will be open Tuesdays and Saturdays from 8:30 AM-12:30 PM. In going over the Neighborhood Services Division quarterly report, Joe mentioned that one code compliance office had resigned and has now been replaced by James Knight. He also mentioned that there are three court cases pending involving houses in Germantown Park, Germantown Station, and Kimbrough Woods.

Police Report: Marc Molina explained the new crime mapping reports. The most prevalent crimes are residential burglaries and thefts from vehicles. He also noted that these types of crime typically spike during the holidays. He also reported that there had been two calls regarding gang graffiti—one on a house on Burfordi Lane and one on a sign.

Neighborhood Services Report: Joe Nunes reported that Amnesty Dumpster Day has become an event with wide popularity and participation. The latest one saw 899 vehicles dropping off a total of over 420 cubic yards of debris. The next scheduled Amnesty Day will be April 15, 2008.

NEW BUSINESS:

Nominating Committee: John Gregory reported that the nominating committee, consisting of himself, Edgar Babian, and Greg Marcom, recommended the following slate of officers for a two-year term starting in January, 2008:

Billy Brown, Chairman

Jack Langenfelder and John Gregory, Vice-chairman membership

Luci Cromer, Vice-chairman program
Hazel Anderson, Secretary
Barbara Olmsted, Special Events.

Jerry Herman moved that the slate be accepted by acclamation, Ron Carlson seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Association Concerns: David Spann and Jason Williams, both from Farmington South, spoke about two issues. David talked about the citizen silence policy that states that citizens cannot speak to an agenda item on the night it is being discussed. Jason talked about the street and traffic patterns--specifically those involving Neshoba, Exeter, West Street, and Farmington—included in the Smart Growth zoning. He is concerned that proposed changes on those streets will force traffic into neighborhoods and that the street changes were not discussed separately from the zoning issues.

Announcements: Edgar mentioned that cityofgermantown.org is not a City webpage.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM. The next meeting will be January 24, 2008.