

vccahouston.org
PO Box 130891
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June 2014

CIVIC ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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Vermont Commons Civic Association
PO Box 130891, Houston, TX 77219
Issue No. 45

June VCCA Monthly Meeting

The Monthly VCCA meeting will be held on **Monday, June 9th at 7:00 PM** at Café Ginger, located at 1952 West Gray Street in the shopping center near the intersection with Driscoll.

In order to better manage the parking adjacent to River Oaks Shopping Center and to encourage employees to use the garage, the City of Houston has begun installing parking meters. You may have noticed the new meter parking areas on Driscoll south of West Gray and along McDuffie and Peden. The city believes that managing the parking spaces in this manner will encourage turnover of the parking spaces, increase the availability of convenient parking for short-term parkers and encourage long-term parkers to use the parking garage. The guest speaker at the June VCCA meeting will be **Melonie Curry** (melonie.curry@houston.tx.gov) from the **City of Houston Parking Management Division**, Administration and Regulatory Affairs. Ms. Curry will address the new parking situation along West Gray and any other parking issues that residents would like to discuss.



What is Houston's Residential Permit Parking Ordinance?

Houston Residential Permit Parking Ordinance is intended to enhance the quality of life in neighborhoods experiencing chronic non-resident parking along their streets. It provides for the establishment of parking permit areas in residential neighborhoods with documented problems from parking that "spills over" from nearby nonresidential activity centers. If an area is designated a "decal-only" area, only residents with the proper decal on their vehicles will be allowed to park along the street during the designated times.

The ordinance provides a basis for residents to apply to the City for the designation of permit parking areas in Houston's neighborhoods. The application must include a signed petition that has been circulated to residents of the proposed area. Once the area is approved, residents will be able to purchase parking permits for their vehicles and their visitors' vehicles that would allow curbside parking. With a few exceptions, all other vehicles not displaying the proper permit for on-street parking will be subject to ticketing. For more information, go to: <http://www.houston.tx.gov/parking/permits-faq.htm>

VCCA Reminders

- Elections of VCCA officers will be during the June meeting.
- There will be no July or August newsletters or meetings.
- September VCCA meeting will be Monday September 8th.

About Parking Management

Parking Management is a Division of the Administration & Regulatory Affairs Department. By servicing and maintaining 7,000 on-street parking spaces across the Greater Houston area, Parking Management creates sound regulations for all commercial and residential areas enhancing pedestrian safety, ensuring a smooth flow of traffic and allowing emergency vehicles to reach their destinations. Parking Management also encourages parking awareness while supporting public transit initiatives.

OUR MISSION

We are a Customer Service driven organization working to improve safety, traffic management and awareness, while supporting public transit initiatives. Our objective is to implement policies that use technology and human resources to provide quality services that are efficient, fair and equitable.

OUR VISION

Parking Management is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors of the City of Houston by encouraging efficient movement of people and goods

Houston Non-Emergency Service Line

Many of us use the city of Houston 3-1-1 service request phone number for a variety of issues that may concern our neighborhood. Whether we are wondering about a missed garbage pick up or reporting a leak from a fire hydrant, calling 3-1-1 may be able to help get us assistance or get our questions answered. Here are a just a few issues that someone might want to call 3-1-1* about:

- Report low water pressure or a line out of water.
- Report a leaking fire hydrant, a street light that is out, or a pothole, or a malfunctioning traffic light.
- Report missed garbage or recycling pickup.
- Request dates for next garbage, recycling, and yard waste pickup.
- Report a meter leak.
- Report a nuisance on a property.
- Report a dog running loose (note intersection).
- Report graffiti (note address or intersection).
- Request dead animal collection.
- Report repairs needed to be done in a city park or other facilities.

To check out a complete directory of services, please go to the website at www.houston311.org. Some cell phone users or persons outside the Houston area may need to dial [713-837-0311](tel:713-837-0311).

*Note: 3-1-1 is *not* to be used to report an emergency, a crime in progress, or any type of injury. For emergencies, please call 9-1-1. For any other situation that requires the response of an officer, please call the non-emergency number for police service at [713-884-3131](tel:713-884-3131).

Nina Otazo

VCCA Officers

President: Jeanette Hix hix@rmi.net
1st VP: Betsy Banks betsybanks1@gmail.com
2nd VP: Robin Greene rbogreene9@gmail.com
Secretary: Lisa McDavid lisamcdavid327@gmail.com
Treasurer: Andy Tallin atallin01@yahoo.com
Newsletter: Michael Forlenza & Karen Kane
vcca.newsletter@gmail.com

Citizen Patrol Update

Elizabeth and Mike McKenzie, Coordinators

The members of Citizen Patrol listed below drove 42 hours and walked 524 hours through our neighborhood in April. Thank you for looking out for your neighbors. Keep up the good work Citizen Patrol!

Betsy Banks	Tom Hix
Bill Banks	David Hoyer
Adrienne Bukstein	Karen Kane
Andriana Breidenstein	Elizabeth McKenzie
Bob Costantini	Michael McKenzie
Rob Fuller	Brenda Rojas
Cathy Gabor	Lisa Stephens
Jeanette Hix	Andy Tallin

Comments or concerns:

Thank you to the crew that installed the new citizen patrol signs: Tim Attoe, Barry Brandt, Michael Benrud and Linda Perez.

Look for the new signs at 1506 Woodhead, 2519 Woodhead, 1900 block Fairview, at 2323 Park, and 1908 Welch.

The city also removed the beat up citizen patrol signs on both Morse and Park.

A Huge Shout Out to VCCA Volunteers

It takes many residents for VCCA to be a vibrant organization. There are over 200 positions that require volunteers. Many residents have volunteered to take multiple positions. Thanks to all the volunteers who contribute their time. Without your help, VCCA would not be the successful organization that it is. To volunteer contact Jeanette Hix at hix@rmi.net

Come for Coffee



Craving some java and good conversation? Then come meet your neighbors at the monthly **Morning Coffee!** The hostess for this month will be Shirley

Donohue on **Tuesday, June 24th at 10:00 AM, 2410 Park Street.**

Sign up to host a monthly neighborhood coffee by emailing Carolynnk@sbcglobal.net Tuesdays or Wednesdays available, morning or afternoon. Look forward to hearing from you.

City of Houston Budget Workshops

City Council Member Stephen Costello, chair of the city's Budget and Fiscal Affairs Committee, was the speaker at the May VCCA meeting. He discussed the city's financial situation and the budgeting process. Mr. Costello provided a copy of the schedule of city budget workshops (presented below) which are open to the public.



Budget & Fiscal Affairs Committee
Stephen C. Costello, Chair
Jerry Davis, Dave Martin, Vice Chairs

Fiscal Year 2015
City Council Budget Workshop Schedule
City Hall Council Chamber
901 Bagby, 2nd floor
Houston, Texas 77002

Wed	May 14	9:00	City Council Meeting: Set Public Hearing on FY15 Proposed Budget
Tues	May 27	9:00	Budget & Fiscal Affairs Committee Meeting - Budget Presentation/5 Yr. Plan/Trends
		1:30	Public Works and Engineering
		2:30	Housing and Community Development
		3:00	Legal
		3:30	Planning and Development
Wed	May 28	9:00	Consolidated City Council Meeting
		2:00	Administration and Regulatory Affairs
		3:00	Controller
		3:30	Department of Neighborhoods
Thurs	May 29	10:00	Houston Airport System
		2:00	Municipal Courts
		3:00	City Council
		3:30	Mayor's Office
Tues	June 3	9:00	Solid Waste Management
		10:00	Fire
		11:00	Office of Business Opportunity
		1:30	City Council Meeting: Public Hearing on FY15 Proposed Budget
Weds	June 4	9:00	City Council Meeting
		1:30	Human Resources
		2:30	Library
		3:00	General Services
		3:30	Fleet Management
Thurs	June 5	10:00	Police
		11:00	Finance
		11:30	Health and Human Services
		2:00	Information Technology
		3:00	Parks & Recreation
Tues	June 10	10:00	Budget & Fiscal Affairs Committee Meeting - April MFR/Proposed FY15-FY19 CIP
Wed	June 11	9:00	Council Meeting - Consideration of FY15 Proposed Budget
Wed	June 18	9:00	Council Meeting - Consideration of FY15 Proposed Budget
Wed	June 25	9:00	Council Meeting - Consideration of FY15 Proposed Budget

Workshops are open to the public and the opportunity for public comment will be available at each presentation. No action will be taken on any item. This schedule is subject to change as the workshops progress. For an updated status on any given day, please call (832) 393-3014 to confirm.
Revised: 4/9/2014

Home Protection Tip My wife and I both left the house, and left the garage door open. A man saw this, went in, and stole our computers and some other relatively little things. My response was to buy and install a device that automatically closes our garage door if it is left open for more than a pre-set period of time. It is called a "Garage Butler" and sells for only about \$60. It works beautifully. - an Upper Kirby Resident

Update from the Graffiti Committee

About once a month the Graffiti Committee will check the Vermont Commons area for graffiti and then report the graffiti to the Montrose Management District at <http://montrosedistrict.org>. Residents can also report graffiti on this web page. Look on the right hand side of the web page to find how to report. One of the responsibilities of the Management District is to remove graffiti.

- Ann Ince, Chair of the Graffiti Committee

Head of Block Captains Moving

Betsy Banks, VCCA 1st Vice President, in charge of coordinating the block captains, has resigned her position as she is moving, with her husband Bill, back to Chicago. Betsy was instrumental in continuing the organization of the block captains and keeping the entire neighborhood aware of crime and VCCA activities. If you see her out and about, be sure and thank her for all her work on behalf of VCCA.

Sunday Streets HTX, a pilot initiative to promote and improve the health, involves closing streets to allow cycling and walking, providing a free, family-friendly opportunity to be physically active. Similar initiatives have been very successful in almost 100 cities across the country. During the 2nd event along Westheimer, many VCCA residents enjoyed the opportunity to walk, jog, skate and bike without traffic. The 3rd Sunday Streets HTX will be on Washington from Studemont to Milam from 11- 3 on June 1. Spread the word and visit www.gohealthyhouston.org/sunday-streetshtx for more info.

Gangs in Houston

Due to the growth of gang membership nationally and as a preventative measure, the Stop Houston Gangs Task Force has created this website to educate the public about criminal gangs and provide a way for residents to report tips to thwart the potential threat. This community policing initiative has been designed to help keep our neighborhoods and families safe from gangs and the related violence they bring. Check out this web site to become more knowledgeable. <http://stophoustongangs.org>.

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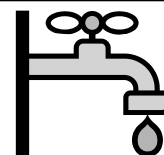
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