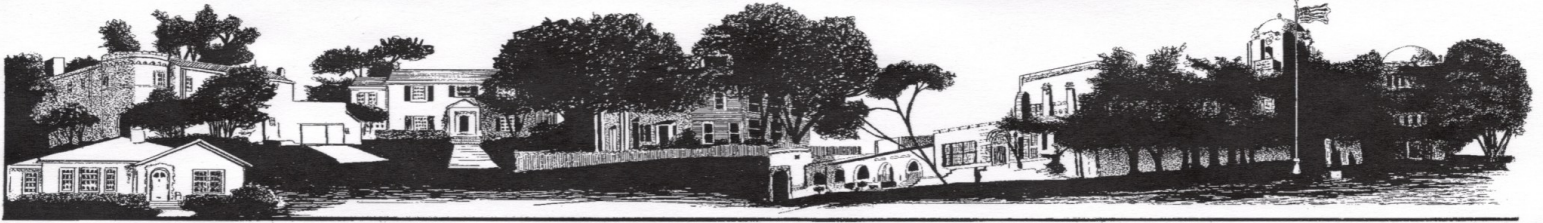


Monticello Park NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



MPNA is a 501(c)3 Nonprofit Organization

July-August 2019

Please attend the
Monticello Park
Neighborhood Association
**General Assembly
Meeting**

**MONDAY
July 29, 2019
7:00 PM**

950 Donaldson, Grace
Presbyterian Church

PROGRAM

Updates from City Hall

SAAFE Officer Report

MEET THE NEIGHBORS

by Drea Garza

A few weeks ago, Councilwoman Sandoval's office extended an invitation to the MPNA Board to participate in a roundtable discussion with George Munita, the new District Manager for the Deco HEB, as well as a representative from VIA. The District 7 Office had received some less than positive feedback about the shopping experience at HEB and concerns about the surrounding VIA bus stops. The D7 Office hosted the meeting as an opportunity for area neighborhoods to exchange ideas about improvements that could be made, but also learn about what steps HEB and VIA were already taking to address some of the very same concerns we identified.

Ressie O'Connors and I joined representatives from several other area neighborhoods, including Jefferson, Woodlawn Lake, Keystone, Sunshine Estates, Maverick, and Los Angeles Heights. Some of us regularly shopped at the Deco HEB, while others, myself included, tended to favor the HEB at Olmos Park. We shared some frustrations, but also feedback on what we felt could make our neighborhood HEB better.



*Two of our MPNA Officers met with
HEB and VIA*

One of the first concerns shared was the general lack of cleanliness in the parking lot. Mr. Munita noted his first impression of Deco HEB zeroed in the same thing – trash in the parking lot and overgrown landscaping. He stated they were working towards creating a better first impression and are more focused on picking up trash in the parking lot and along the perimeter of the property. They also recently changed to a new lawn care service and he said he would relay the suggestion to trim the surrounding hedges. One person pointed out that quite often, the VIA bus stops have a significant amount of trash that originated from a shopping trip to HEB; beer cans, containers, plastic bags are strewn all along the easements and stops. Although VIA did confirm that they have regular trash service, it was not very clear how often this occurred or whether those stops with greater ridership had additional trash service. We hope VIA will attend a future general assembly meeting to provide a little more detail on their efforts to keep the Fred Corridor safe and clean.

.....continued on page 5

President's Message

One look at my wilting yard and there's no doubt about it...summer is here in Monticello Park. Backyards that hosted children's parties earlier this year have been abandoned for the indoors as all of us try our best to keep cool and brace for our upcoming electric bills.

By the way, CPS Energy has customer assistance programs and People First! Community Fairs to learn about rebates programs and other ways to become more energy efficient. I invite you to click on www.cpsenergy.com/roadshows for locations and dates of upcoming events.

We have changes coming to our neighborhood: ongoing renovations at Thomas Jefferson High School will impact our ability to get in and around the school; construction begins at Monticello Park later this summer; and, sidewalk additions are underway in parts of our neighborhood. Stay alert, watch for workers and prepare for the extra minutes that are needed to navigate around these improvements.

We also have a new general manager at our Deco B, the neighborhood grocery store that's a source of pride and sometimes a source of frustration. A grocery store is certainly an asset to any neighborhood but there's always room for improvement, right? Read on to hear from Drea Garza, an MPNA Board member who, along with Board member Ressie O'Connors, attended a recent meeting held between the Deco District's H-E-B leadership and neighborhood representatives seeking improvements in security and other matters.

We have our General Assembly on Monday, August 5th. An 11th hour emergency at work meant I wasn't able to chair the June Assembly meeting. I want to thank Vice President Gary Hudman for leading the meeting in my absence. I hope to see you all at our August meeting.

Finally, while I was out of the country during June's terrible storms, I was kept informed by neighbors posting storm videos, others messaging me about the status of my own property after the storm and still more who pitched in and helped me by taking large, broken limbs to the curb. It was so encouraging to see people offering to help those who lost power and had property damage as the result of these storms. It's a testament to the power of community and more proof that we're living in a great neighborhood!

Cathy Teague
President
Monticello Park Neighborhood Association

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210-415-6670
Vice President: Gary Hudman (Mary Louise)
210-286-9212
Secretary: Drea Garza (Furr)
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Treasurer: Tom Simmons (Club)
210-701-4300

Board Members
Scott Gustafson
Ressie O'Connors
Tony Sanchez

Visit MonticelloParkNA.com

Or

Check us out on Facebook
Facebook.com/groups/MonticelloParkNA

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For ad pricing information, call
210-734-2445 or visit monticelloParkNA.com

MPNA

Mail to: 501 Club Drive
San Antonio, Texas. 78201

HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS

District 7 Council Office.	210-207-7044
SAWS	210-424-7097
CPS	210-353-2222
Officer Vincent Cano	210-207-0803
(Cell)	210-394-1398
Vincent.cano@sanantonio.gov	
SAPD, West Substation.	210-207-7420
SAPD, Non-emergency.	210-207-7273
SAISD Truancy Office.	210-223-2360
VIA Transit	210-362-2020
Code Compliance	311
Animal Control	311
Office of Historic Preservation	210-215-9274

Historic Building Enforcement Officer
report@sapreservation.com

Monticello Park Improvements Set to Begin This Month

After a year's worth of discussion, disagreement, design changes and finally approval, the efforts to improve Monticello Park (located at the intersection of Club and Kampmann) is set to begin in August. Voters approved the park's improvements as a part of the city's 2017 Bond Issue.

The park's existing crushed granite walking trail will be removed and, in its place, a new, safe, stamped concrete path perfect for walkers and strollers. An accessible path around the gazebo will be added as well as finials, decorative ironwork and benches. Our park's improvement will include a new sign designed to evoke the style of the Deco era and two trees recently lost due to the high winds will be replaced.

Weather permitting, work on the park should conclude in about three months. Your MPNA Board is planning a Dedication event. If you have any ideas or would like to join in the planning, we'd love to hear them!



National Night Out is Moving

Due to the fact that construction work will be underway at the traditional site of our neighborhood's National Night Out event, Monticello Park, we're looking for an alternative location. Stay tuned for details. Texas celebrates National Night Out this year on Tuesday, October 1st. Look for details on this year's NNO event location and other information on our neighborhood Face Book page. We hope to see you there!



Pink Flamingo Anyone?

If you're new to Monticello Park you may be confused by what we call our Pink Flamingo party. There's nothing special about a Pink Flamingo unless it happens to be six feet tall, made of metal and hanging out in front of the next spot for a neighborhood party. Several times a year, you'll see this crazy flamingo in a front yard. That's your signal to get ready for a swell time.

Parents are welcome to bring their children as long as you're aware that adult beverages will be served in their presence. It's an evening event. It's a BYOB event. And, you're also welcome to bring a food dish that can be shared as well as a portable chair.

There's no secret password, no need to RSVP and there's never a cover charge to participate. Our next Pink Flamingo party is Friday, August 23rd at the home of Jan Peranteau, 470 Furr Drive (corner of Shearer & Furr). There's a pool in Jan's backyard and she invites neighborhood children to bring their swimsuits. No lifeguard is on duty, however, so parents must be willing to supervise their children's time in the water. The fun begins at 6:30 p.m. Please say you'll join us!



.....Continued from page 1

Another concern focused on loitering and a general sense of safety. To help address this issue, HEB has increased patrols inside the store as well as in the parking lot. Uniformed, off-duty SAPD officers are located inside the store, along with a loss-prevention officer. The uniformed officer presence has been in place for a while, but they recently hired private security to conduct increased patrols outside. VIA also is trying to address the issue and VIA Transit Police does make regular patrols; however, once again, it was unclear how often the patrols occurred. Not too long ago, SAFFE Officer Cano suggested that one way to increase safety at the bus stops was to prohibit alcohol consumption at the stops. Officer Cano's suggestion was shared with VIA and we hope they take it into consideration. One of the suggestions related to both making a great impression and increasing safety was for the employees who collect the shopping carts to be more proactive in spotting suspicious activity and sharing it with security. It was also suggested that these employees be more engaged with customers, and less so with their phones.

Mr. Munita has already implemented several changes for the better within the store. He has brought in quite a lot of new employees and they regularly assess stock and re-fill shelves. If you have shopped at the Deco HEB over the last few months, you will have noticed eight new self-service check-out lanes. The new check-out lanes, combined with increased staffing, have hopefully contributed to making your grocery shopping go a little faster!

There were quite a few grumblings about the lack of availability of some products as compared to other stores, but Mr. Munita explained they tend to focus on stocking products that sell and demographics do play a role. Some products that sell in other neighborhood HEBs may not be a bestseller at Deco HEB. Also, the availability of products may depend on the manufacturer and some items may be phased out or only sold during a particular time of the year. If you do have a favorite item that you can't seem to find, don't be afraid to ask. Increased demand for a product could increase the likelihood of it being added to the shelf!

One final suggestion was to have an actual suggestion box in a readily available location. Mr. Munita pointed out that suggestions can be filled out online, but those suggestions are registered elsewhere, rather than at a local level. It was pointed out that a suggestion box that is maintained locally could pinpoint immediate issues and lead to a much faster resolution.

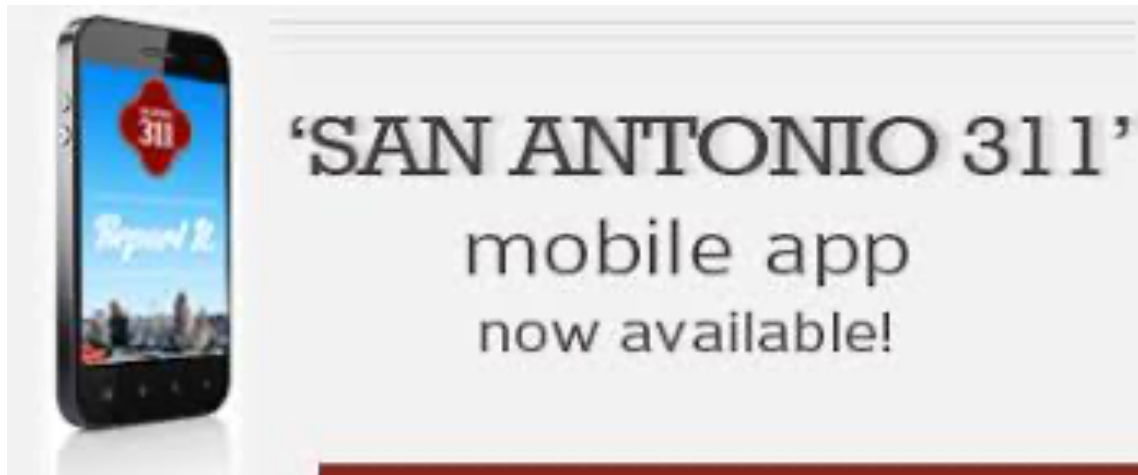
Have you shopped at our neighborhood HEB lately? Have you noticed any positive changes? What suggestions do you have to improve your shopping experience? We welcome your thoughts at our next meeting!



City Services Are Just an App Away

Whether it's a junk vehicle parked on the yard, a stray dog menacing the park or a growing pothole at a nearby intersection, those who attended the June 3rd General Assembly learned about the city's 3-1-1 App. It's easy to download and improvements to the original version have made it easier to use to report activities. You can still call 3-1-1, tweet @sanantonio311 or use your computer to report possible violations and seek city help, whichever you prefer.

The next time you see a problem in and around Monticello Park, please take a few minutes to report it. Your action makes our neighborhood safer, more attractive and shows you care!



General Assembly in August

Hear ye, hear ye (we're still in that 1776 spirit), the next General Assembly for the Monticello Park Neighborhood Association is on Monday, July 29 beginning at 7:00 p.m at Grace Presbyterian Church, located at Donaldson & Manor. Please plan on attending to learn something new, voice your opinion and participate. We always have updates from the folks at city hall, our SAFE officer and Code Enforcement.



Furr Drive Improvement Update

For those homeowners eager for the city to begin the reconstruction of Furr Drive, you'll have to wait a little longer. Earlier this year during a presentation by the Transportation and Capital Improvements Department (TCI) we were told that road work was projected to begin in September 2019.

After receiving a certificate of appropriateness from the Historic Design and Review Commission in June, the TCI staff says they are now proceeding under an adjusted timeline. Construction is tentatively planned to begin in November/December 2019 with an estimated completion in 2021. As you'll recall, Furr Drive will be torn down and completely rebuilt---sidewalks and individual driveway approaches included---from Fredericksburg Road to Kampmann. This bond project is extensive. A second meeting for Furr Drive homeowners to ask questions, receive more details and an updated timeline will be held prior to construction.

Monticello Park Needs YOU

It is never too early to think about our next Association Board elections. There are many faithful servants in our community who are always first in line to participate in ways large and small that contribute to our quality of life in Monticello Park. Are you willing to attend hearings and other city meetings where our neighborhood needs to be represented? Are you willing to share your thoughts, ideas and talents in helping the MPNA grow in preparation for the next generation of homeowners and their needs? Are you willing to offer a few hours every month to help organize upcoming activities that breath life into our community?

Think about it. We on the Monticello Park Neighborhood Board need you. If you're interested, reach out to one of us and learn how you might be able to add your voice to the conversations that matter. Change is always right around the corner. Will you help Monticello Park prepare for it?





Phone: 210-708-5959 and 210-875-3296

La Milpa - Tortilleria, Taqueria & Gorditas

Ever wish you could have fresh tortillas every day? Now you can. A new business opened a month ago at the entrance to Furr Drive and Fredericksburg Rd. Located at 1933 Fredricksburg Rd. they are open every day from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Antonio & Daniela Garcia, a young couple with son, Brian, 9 years old and daughter, Cassandra, 3 years old, have followed their dream of owning their own business. Antonio has worked in tortillerias all his life. With the help of his wife and brother, Fidel, they opened their own tortilleria, La Milpa. According to Antonio, La Milpa, is what the corn fields are called in his childhood home of Oaxaca, Mexico.

Antonio says he wants to provide for his family and ensure that his children have an opportunity to reach the highest level of education that they want and he saw owning his own business as the best way to succeed.

The family works very hard every day to provide the best tortillas, corn, flour, and wheat. In addition, they provide various kinds of tacos, gorditas, masa by the pound, chicharrones and barbacoa tacos every day. On weekends, they carry barbacoa by the pound, tamales and menudo. They also provide tortillas to various restaurants in the area. They want everyone to know that they are ready to serve and they provide quality products. So if you want just enough tortillas for lunch or dinner, a breakfast taco or you are having a summer Fiesta, you can count on La Milpa to provide all the delicious tacos, gorditas and tortillas that you need.

According to Antonio, they looked at other locations but really liked the neighborhood and Fredericksburg Road. He likes the fact that the neighborhood is quiet and very nice.

So, stop by and welcome Antonio and Daniela to our neighborhood and give their tortillas and tacos a try....you'll be glad you did. Let's support our local, small businesses.



June Storms Bring Out the Best in Monticello Park

In early June, Monticello Park was rocked by a monster thunderstorm. Palm trees fell into streets, shingles flew off roofs and homeowners watched with worry as they witnessed flying debris, heavy tree limbs and utility lines sway, break and turn our normally quiet neighborhood into a mini-disaster zone.

Thanks to the swift work of CPS Energy and the City of San Antonio under the request and leadership of our District 7 Council member Ana Sandoval, recovery crews whipped into action. Neighbors also pitched in taking downed tree limbs to the curb for quick removal and offered online advice and references for those who needed additional assistance. In the days that followed, free food was delivered to the needy, insurance adjusters began to do their thing and the tall piles of curbside limbs began to disappear as COSA offered to help families with a limited, free brush collection effort.

Ours was a small disaster, yet I'm sure it reminded many of the need to keep our property up to date on home repairs and clean of debris. It is amazing how forgotten yard tools can become flying objects and beautiful old pecans can snap with little provocation. Yet, it's the willingness of a neighbor to roll up their sleeves and help during the aftermath of a storm which is one of the most precious gifts of the place we call home. Thanks to all of you who lent a helping hand during this emergency.

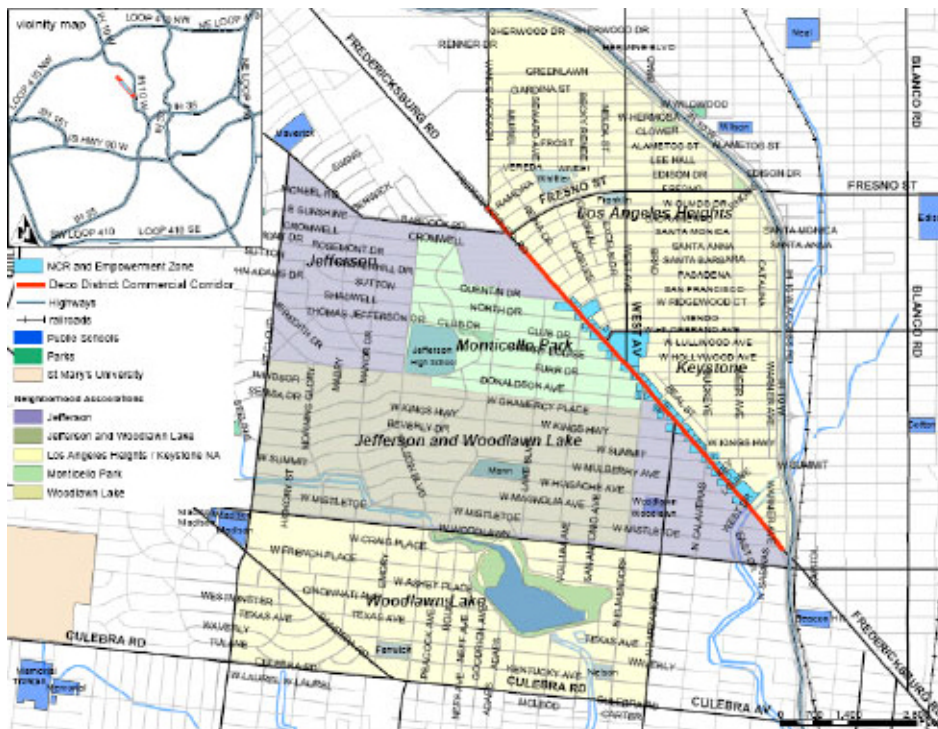
Future” movie sets.*rd Report*

Originally written October 11, 2013 by Jeff Reiningger for the Lifestyle section of the *San Antonio Express News*. Updated October 7, 2016. Still true for all of us.

Lately, it seems like everyone in San Antonio has been talking about downtown and urban living. The Pearl Brewery and surrounding developments, along with King William, Dignowity Hill, Lavaca, Five Points, etc. seem to get all the attention. People always seem to leave out one of San Antonio’s first “suburbs,” Monticello Park. “The Deco District.” “The 78201.”

An eclectic little nook of the city buried between I-10, Fredericksburg Road, Woodlawn Avenue and Babcock Road, this sleepy little district is where my family and I have called home for the past four years.

Monticello Park is one of San Antonio’s first suburbs. Built on a former dairy farm that was purchased for residential development in the 1920s, this area contains a stunning collection of revival, English Tudor, colonial, craftsman and bungalow style homes, amongst others.



Map courtesy of decodistrict.org. Click to enlarge.

Within this 3.5 square mile district located just northeast of downtown San Antonio is also a cluster of condemned, neglected and forgotten dwellings that have certainly seen their better days. Home prices within the area vary from about \$50,000 to over \$400,000 within a block or two radius.

Monticello Park is also home to the architectural masterpiece that is Thomas Jefferson High School. The facility was built in 1932 and was detested by many people at the time who thought the school a waste of money as it was built “out in the middle of nowhere.” Today, it rises from the ground like a monument to a time nearly forgotten – an era reserved for nostalgic photos and “Back to the Future” movie sets.

-On the southern border of the district is [Woodlawn Lake](#). This 30-acre man-made body of water was created in the 1880's in hopes of drawing real estate developers to the area (40 years later that dream became reality).

Visitors "from the city" once traveled by streetcar to enjoy the many features this lake (and surrounding park) had to offer, and was often referred to as "the finest artificial lake in the South."

Today, hundreds of people flock to the lake every weekend for barbecues and birthday parties, exercise and recreation, and simply to enjoy the beauty of the water and trees, all nestled well within the city.

Everyday life in the Deco District is a little different than places I've lived before. It's where it's okay to barbecue and gather in the front yard. The color of your grass and size of your flower bed isn't indicative of the person you are. Garages are buried toward the back of the property and living rooms face the street, rather than the opposite in that of post-WWII homes.

The simple little abode my family calls home was built in 1926. It's a slightly tight quartered two - bedroom, one bath, cedar post pier and beam construction. When a cold north wind blows you can literally feel the wind zoom by your feet on the hardwood floors. The single-pane, wood framed windows seem to breathe with the climate outside.

What my home might lack in wall insulation it more than makes up for in detail and character. My wife and I sometimes like to make up stories about who may have lived here before us and what events might have transpired in the near 100 year-history of this house.

What life may have been like here before these homes were retrofitted with air conditioning, I can't imagine. Our front porch that runs the full length of the home was probably used for much more than placing a few potted plants on and allowing a couple of chairs to gather dust.

The Deco District is honest, it's real. It never tries to be something it's not.

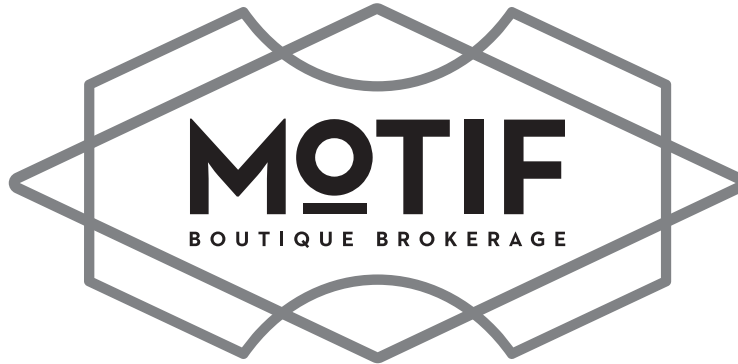
Perhaps that's because people can spot a counterfeit when it comes to community – they can tell when a place is trying create a false identity, rather than simply being what it was created to be, what it's been all along.

The 78201 is a plethora of garage sales and curbside mechanics, bike-riding paleta salesmen and classic muscle cars, successful businessmen and elderly people trying to survive on disability and social security benefits. It's neighbors helping neighbors and police helicopters flying overhead. A combination of wealth and poverty, of purpose and survival, a microcosm of America.

So, will we live in Monticello Park forever? I have no idea. I'd be lying if I thought the idea of calling The Pearl or a loft in the heart of downtown home wasn't tempting. However, what I can say is that wherever my family calls home in the future, I hope that its community is as honest and as proud as the 78201 has been of itself for nearly a century.

Note: My house is a three stop sign, zero traffic light, seven-minute drive from The Pearl, so that's not bad either!

Buying, Renovating, Staging, Selling - We Do it All!
A portion of all commissions donated back into our community.



YOUR HISTORIC HOME SPECIALIST

Camille Rodriguez Brigant *Realtor*[®]

 210.802.9797  Camille@MotifTX.com

Answer: Your neighborhood realtor.

VISIT US ON FACEBOOK!

This is a closed group.....only MPNA residents may join, offering a bit more privacy.

Learn about the neighborhood happenings and commentary. Stay up on the issues!

Look for the group “Monticello Park Neighborhood Association” and ask to join.

