

vccahouston.org

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March 2018

CIVIC ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



*Vernal Equinox
March 20th*

Newsletter Published Monthly September thru June
Vermont Commons Civic Association
PO Box 130891, Houston, TX 77219
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March VCCA Happy Hour

VCCA monthly happy hours are the 2nd Monday, September through June, at Fuzzy's Taco Shop, 2015 W Gray St, Suite J, (right behind La Madeleine, east along Peden Street).
Join us March 12th at 6:30pm.



VCCA Happy Hour & Speaker

City of Houston Public Works — Avalon Place Reconstruction Project

Date: Monday, March 12th, 2018,
6:30pm

Location: Fuzzy's Taco Shop, 2015 W Gray St, Suite J, (right behind La Madeleine, east along Peden Street).



Jeff Masek and Markos Mengesha from the City of Houston Public Works Department will make a presentation at the March VCCA Happy Hour on the planned \$25 million Avalon Place Reconstruction Project. The project involves areas both east and west of S. Shepherd between Westheimer and Vermont. The project is designed to improve sanitary sewers, storm sewers, water distribution, improve roadway pavement conditions, and enhance pedestrian/bike safety and accessibility. It is very important that many residents attend as your ideas could be used to make changes.

Rob Hallenbeck, a Vermont Commons resident, attended a Houston Public Works meeting in January that discussed the Avalon Place Reconstruction project. Below are some notes of what was discussed:

- **Fairview** — Standardize roadway width to 22 feet of pavement with five feet of bike paths on each side, plus a green buffer and sidewalk. The section toward Hazard is currently particularly wide. Narrowing this section should help to slow down Fairview traffic. City is open to additional traffic-calming features.
- **Huldy**— Open drainage ditches south of Fairview to be converted into covered storm sewers.
- **Hazard and Driscoll** — decrease pavement width from Westheimer north to Indiana.



Construction schedule:

- Planned start in first quarter 2019 and to run through 2022.
- Will occur in phases (i.e. not everywhere all at once)

Utilities: will only be moved underground if there is a "technical" reason why that needs to be done. No good examples given, however, requests by residents for utilities to be moved underground seem unlikely to be implemented.

Backyard sewer lines: Sanitary sewer lines (gravity mains) on almost every block of Vermont Commons and Avalon Place run behind the homes along north-south easements, based on information available on the Houston Public Works utility database. Part of the project plan is to move these sewer lines from behind the houses to the front along the city roadways.

END OF WINTER CELEBRATION

It has been a long winter. Spring has sprung. The flowers are blooming. It is time to get out of your house, enjoy some spring air, catch some sun rays, and have a jolly great time. Grab your chairs, kids, drinks, and neighbors and head to the block party.



Mark your calendars!!

When: March 24th at 3:00 pm

Where: Parking lot at the corner of Haddon and Brun.

Who: You and all of your family.

The VCCA will sponsor hot dogs and ice cream. Yard games for kids and adults.

Play an instrument? Bring your guitar, horn, harmonica, or whatever to add to the fun.



VCCA February Meeting

More than 50 Vermont Commons residents attended the February VCCA



Happy Hour to listen to a presentation by the City of Houston Flood Czar Stephen Costello. Mr. Costello provided updated

information about the City of Houston and Harris County plans for continued recovery from Hurricane Harvey. He also encouraged residents to write your U S senators and Congress people asking that allocated federal funds be released so that Harvey recovery efforts can continue.

20-YEAR THROW BACK— Answers

Thanks to THE “Old Timers” Ann Ince, Cay Dickson, and Ed Quilter for submitting the answers to the questions from the February quiz:

1. Long before Tony Mandola’s opened in the River Oaks Shopping Center, there was another great seafood spot nearby. What was it? **CAPTAIN JOHN’S (WHERE Pier One is located)**
2. In 1975, where was the closest place you could pick up a donut at a drive-through window? **SHIPLEY’S**
3. What business was once parked at the site of Shepherd Square? **JIMMY GREEN CHEV-ROLET**
4. What former inner-VCCA restaurant was named for a character in the Hunchback of Notre Dame? **QUASIMODO’S**
5. What brand of bread was once backed at the

corner of Woodhead and West Gray? **MRS. BAIRD’S**

6. Where was the original 77019 post office? **BEHIND KROGER... ONE FARTHER AWAY, BUT NO CONFIRMATION**
7. For years there was a funny business at the southwest corner of S. Shepherd and San Felipe/Vermont. What was it? **COMEDY WORKSHOP**
8. Name the only business displaced by new development that relocated across the street from its earlier location? **NO ANSWER**
9. You have to know your alphabet for this one. What store once occupied the site now being redeveloped at the corner of S. Shepherd and Indiana? **ABC BABY STORE**
10. (A no-brainer if you have been to Diedrich’s) What brand of gas was once sold at the corner of Hazard and Westheimer? **TWO ANSWERS: PURE OIL AND TEXACO**

The Texas Bullet Train has announced its preferred location for its Houston passenger station, at the Northwest Mall site near the interchange of US 290 and Interstate 610. The terminal will be ideally located in a high-growth area, with easy access to employ-

Texas Bullet Train

ment centers, including the Galleria, the Energy Corridor, the Medical Center and downtown. The station not only will be a catalyst for economic growth but it also will offer a convenient, efficient and direct network for passengers to and from local transit systems.

Texas Central Partners, LLC (Texas Central) is a private company bringing a transformational project to Texas that advances the economy, respects Texan values and keeps our state on track for future growth. Texas Central is a Texas-based private company, employing a market-led approach. Unlike other high-speed rail projects, we are backed by private investors, not public funds. Texas Central is developing a new high-speed passenger rail system that will connect Dallas/Fort Worth and Houston using a proven, world-class technology that will provide a travel time of less than 90 minutes.



VCCA Treasurer’s Report - February 2018

	Beginning Balance (A)	\$ 7,300.49
Income		
Advertising	\$700.00	
Dues Received in January	\$40.00	
Randall’s Good Neighbor Program	\$0.00	
Total Revenue (B)	\$740.00	
	Sub Total A + B	\$ 8,040.49
Expenses		
January Newsletter	-\$566.00	
Postal Services (Box Rental)	-\$94.00	
Sub Total (C)	-\$660.00	-660.00
	Balance = A+B-C	\$ 7,380.49
Pending Payments (Feb Newsletter)	-\$521.69	
Subtotal	-\$521.69	
	Net Funds Available	\$6,858.80

VC Security Foundation Annual Members’ Meeting

On February 6th, the VC Security Foundation held its annual members’ meeting at the West Gray Municipal Service Center. At the meeting, we elected new officers and new board members. Cay Dickson will be our new Security Liaison; Leslie Cook will be our Treasurer, and Jeanette Hix andCarolynn Kevlin will be our Membership Co-Chairs. We are also fortunate to announce four new board members who will serve as Members-at-Large. They are Sam Dodson, Jeffrey Johnston, Jim Wisner, and Sam Schon. They will be advising us on a number of important issues facing the board, such as contracts, finances, scheduling, membership expansion, and other critical policy concerns. Further, we have a great group who have volunteered for the membership committee: Marilyn Ferhenkamp, Mary Porter, and Helen Yee. We are thrilled to have such a terrific team to start the new contract year.

Also, at the meeting, our two full time deputies met with the group. They gave safety tips, tips on “how to” report incidents, and much more. If you haven’t met them yet, you should. Raymond Garievey is our day patrol and Felicia Webb is our night patrol. They are enthusiastic about their jobs and are dedicated to insuring the safety of our entire neighborhood. They presented the annual activity report for 2017. The report was amazing. Among our members, we did not have a single home break-in during the year.

If you are not a member of the Constable Patrol program, you should go to www.vcpatrol.com for information on the program.

VCCA COFFEE

Monthly VCCA/Park Civic COFFEE at La Madeleine French Bakery and Café at 2047 West Gray, on March 7th (the first Wednesday each month) at 10:00am.



April VCCA Happy Hour Speaker

The April 9th VCCA Happy Hour will feature a presentation by Solarize Houston. Solarize Houston is a grass-roots, volunteer, non-profit group organizing Houstonians in a group purchase of solar panels and installation for residents and businesses. Solarize Houston's mission is to increase awareness and accelerate use of solar energy for electricity generation in Houston. Solarize Houston is modeled on similar efforts underway in Plano, TX and elsewhere.

Check the website for more information: houstonrenewableenergy.org

Watch for additional details in the April newsletter.



What Do I Do With Old Batteries?

Got old batteries? The City of Houston accepts lead-acid and rechargeable batteries at the [Westpark Consumer Recycling Center](#) and at the [Environmental Service Centers](#).

Accepted Batteries

Lead Acid batteries: those found in cars and boats as well as other motorized vehicles and equipment.

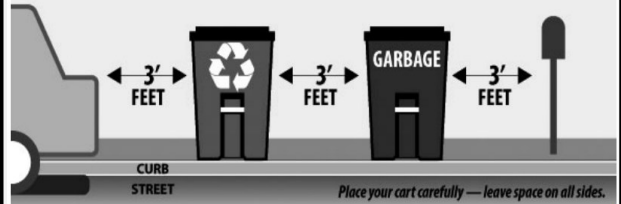
Rechargeable batteries: lithium - ion (Li-ION), nickel metal hydride (Ni-MH) and nickel cadmium (Ni-CD).

Not Accepted

Alkaline batteries (AA, AAA, C, D) and any other battery types not mentioned here. Most of the heavy metals have been removed from alkaline batteries, so it is ok to dispose of them in your regular household garbage. 9V and 6V batteries should have their terminals taped, then sealed in a plastic bag before tossing them in the trash.



City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department Curbside Collection Guidelines



How to set out your garbage and recycling:

- City-provided containers must be placed at the curb between 6 p.m. the day before and 7 a.m. on the scheduled collection day.
- Container must face the street with handle facing house.
- Containers must be accessible and not blocked by obstacles, including parked cars, trees, mailboxes, fencing etc. Blocked containers will not be emptied.
- Leave at least a three (3) feet space between garbage and recycling container. This allows the truck to operate safely.
- Containers must be removed from the curb line and/or public view by 10:00 p.m. on the day of collection and stored in a secure location.
- Do **NOT** put the following in your **BLACK GARBAGE** container:

- Household chemicals
- Computer equipment
- Construction, demolition, and remodeling debris
- Recyclables
- Yard trimmings
- Dead animals
- Hot ashes/coal

*Chemicals and hot ashes cause truck fires.

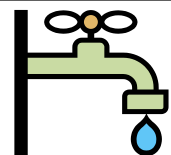
VCCA Citizens Patrol Citizen Patrol had 7 patrolers that did 174 hours of driving and walking patrol in January, or almost 6 hours per day. Our top patrolers were Bob Costantini with 110 hours and Brenda Rojas with 33 hours. We could use a few more patrolers, which you can do while walking your dog or whatever and entirely at your convenience. If interested please email me at davidhoyer@sbcglobal.net. Thank you to all our patrolers for keeping an eye on our neighborhood, - David

Send news, notices, photos, editorials, advertising requests to vcca_newsletter@gmail.com. Submissions are due the 15th of the month preceding the newsletter.

Michael Forlenza, Editor

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