

# HYDE • PARK

JANUARY 2015

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[hydeparkhouston.org](http://hydeparkhouston.org)

## Letter from the President

### Happy New Year, Hyde Parkers!



Welcome to 2015. Here's hoping that your year started off with a bang.

It was great to see some of you at the Hyde Park

holiday party in December. Check inside this newsletter for photos.

All residents and homeowners are eligible for Civic Association membership at an annual cost of just \$30, due at the beginning of each year. If you're a current member, please renew your 2015 membership. If you haven't joined before or are new to the community, I encourage you to sign up. Dues pay for this newsletter, which is delivered to 1,100+ local households. See the membership form on page 3. Paying is easy by mailing a check or

online through PayPal. You can also come to the January 5th meeting and pay by cash, check or credit card.

Everyone is invited to attend the Civic Association monthly meetings, where we engage on topics of general community concern, hold regular business updates, and feature guest speakers on topics of neighborhood interest. See the year's meeting schedule on page 3. We'll kick off the first meeting with a city representative from the Mayor's Citizen Assistance office. Like many of you, I'm not exactly sure what this department does, so come and find out.

Got a topic that you would like to see a speaker address at a monthly meeting? Let me know at [president@hydeparkhouston.org](mailto:president@hydeparkhouston.org).

**Macy Bodenhamer**, President

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**HPD Non-Emergency Line**  
(713) 884-3131

**24/7 Montrose Management District Security Patrol**  
(832) 370-9191

**Dial 311 for City Helpline**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Jan. 5 - General Mtg., Rudz, 6:30 p.m.**

**Feb. 2 - General Mtg., Rudz, 6:30 p.m.**

**Mar. 2 - General Mtg., Rudz, 6:30 p.m.**

**Apr. 6 - General Mtg., Rudz, 6:30 p.m.**

## City Tables Plan to Expand Midtown Development Zone

Reprinted from [www.ellencohen.org](http://www.ellencohen.org) on the TIRZ annexation proposal Dec. 17, 2014 • *Houston Chronicle*

City Council on Wednesday shelved the proposed expansion of a Midtown economic development zone into Montrose and the Museum District amid complaints that the plan was rushed and did not include key neighborhood groups.

Critics say the expansion came as a surprise when it first appeared

on council agenda this month, with some blasting the lack of community notice and others calling the plan a landgrab. After delaying the item last week, Councilwoman **Ellen Cohen** vowed to pull the expansion and go back to the drawing board.

After Wednesday's council

*Continued Page 2*

## BOARD CONTACTS

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**JANUARY  
5TH GUEST  
SPEAKER**



**Jack Valinski**  
Mayor's Citizen's Assistance Office  
Department of Neighborhoods  
City of Houston

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#### Commonwealth

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Mark McCreary

#### Fairview

Irene Dahlgren 713-299-5190

#### Hyde Park / Hyde Park Apts.

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Alex Aranda 713-533-9474

#### Hyde Park Crescent

Susan Ellis 713-528-8289

Carlos Fernandez 713-520-7017

#### Hyde Park Townhomes

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#### Indiana / Yupon

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#### Jackson

Brandon Bartee 832-866-1426

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#### Michigan

Tom Whitworth 713-523-8035

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Tammi Wallace 713-301-2266

#### Montrose/Waugh

Christina Ptasinski 832-516-9811

#### Peden

Lori Corwin 832-582-6520

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Sharon Lord 713-522-9427

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Cliff Jones 713-524-3055

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Mike McKann 713-526-6777

#### West Gray / Hazel

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of any changes in contact information.

## Development Zone

(Continued)

meeting, **Mayor Annise Parker** acknowledged key parties weren't at the table to discuss the proposal, which would have wrapped 235 more acres into the existing Midtown tax increment reinvestment zone, including some business heavy corridors in Montrose.

"That's one of those where we could have done a better job of communicating," Parker said. "I need to own this because it's internal. We didn't go to the district council member in the expansion area."

Within a tax increment reinvestment zone, property tax revenues within the zone's boundaries are frozen at a base level. The amount collected above that level, known as the increment, is funneled back into the zone to pay for infrastructure and capital improvements in hopes of spurring private development.

Though originally created as an incentive to help eliminate blight, the city also has used TIRZs to help speed efforts in areas targeted for redevelopment. Critics have questioned whether isolating those funds to improve one area is better than distributing the money across the city, and others have called for greater transparency around TIRZ spending decisions.

The Midtown annexation focused on a piece of the Museum District and the areas bordering Richmond, Alabama and Westheimer as well as most of Montrose Boulevard.

Midtown Redevelopment Authority director **Matt Thibodeaux** said the improvements would have focused on improving Montrose and Richmond with an eye toward better connecting the Montrose, Midtown and the Museum District areas.

Civic group leaders sent out urgent emails when the plan first landed on council agenda this month, later testifying during public comment.

**Doug Childers**, a Montrose resident, told council he was "dumbfounded" and that "civic leaders were completely in the dark."

"It is not acceptable for the fate of Montrose to be governed by the interests and priorities of Midtown," he said.

Even some Midtown residents appeared surprised. **Dan Barnum**, who previously served on the Midtown Board of Directors, told council there was a "lack of transparency."

"I am concerned that some of Midtown's accumulated tax increment will be spent outside of Midtown when there is still much redevelopment and infrastructure rebuilding to be done (here)," Barnum said.

Cohen and Councilman **David Robinson** held a community meeting Monday night on the proposal, encouraging residents to add their ideas and promising to start anew on any Montrose TIRZ plans. Cohen said the earliest any revamped TIRZ plans would come back to council would be sometime in the spring.

"A number of people and groups were taken aback by the fact that something was seemingly moving forward without their knowledge and approval," Cohen said. "Personally, I feel the same way."

In other TIRZ news, City Council unanimously approved a separate expansion Wednesday, adding almost 8,000 acres to the once tiny Gulfgate zone. That expansion includes streets and neighborhoods around Hobby Airport and Glenbrook Golf Course.

### Hyde Park Needs You! VOLUNTEER NEEDED! Newsletter Editor

We need a volunteer to fill role of newsletter editor starting in February. The newsletter is one of our most important communication channels. It also generates ad revenue that supports the Hyde Park Civic Association.

Please consider volunteering - you can make the difference! If you are interested in learning more, please email [vicepresident@hydeparkhouston.org](mailto:vicepresident@hydeparkhouston.org).

# Hyde Park Civic Association 2015 MEETING SCHEDULE

All residents are welcomed to monthly meetings (@ **6:30-7:45pm**, **2nd floor Rudyard's Pub on Waugh**). Featured guest speakers will be announced in advance. Come early to order dinner or a beverage and enjoy during the meeting. Meetings are always held on the 1st Monday of each month, with exceptions noted below.

- Monday, January 5 - Jack Valinski, City of Houston**
- Monday, February 2**
- Monday, March 2**
- Monday, April 6**
- Monday, May 4**
- Monday, June 1**
- Monday, July 6 - No meeting, Volunteer Reception TBA**
- Monday, August 3**
- Tuesday, September 8 (Monday the 7th is Labor Day)**
- Tuesday, October 6 - National Night Out in Lamar Pk.**
- Monday, November 2**
- December - No meeting, Holiday Party TBA**

## TRASH/RECYCLING:

**TRASH PICK-UP: MONDAYS**

**SINGLE STREAM: Jan. 5, 19; Feb. 2, 16**

**TREE WASTE: Jan. 7; Mar. 4; May 6; Jul. 1**

**HEAVY/JUNK: Feb. 4; Apr. 1; Jun. 3**

**NEWSLETTER:** newsletter@hydeparkhouston.org



Thanks to Dimitri at Niko Nikos for again donating the Hyde Park holiday tree this year, as he has for many years now. The tree originally served as a memorial to his father's passing. And kudos to **Stephen Hill** for designing the tree decoration, with display help from other resident volunteers.

## Are You Expiring? Or is it Time to Join? Members Sought!

All Hyde Park residents are eligible to become members. For just \$30/year, you can help support your community. The funds bring this newsletter to all households plus, help us maintain Lamar Park, and more. Only 10-15% of our 1,100 households have members. Won't you join them? See the envelope enclosed in this newsletter to submit your payment.

Mail form and check in enclosed envelope to:  
Hyde Park Civic Association  
PO Box 66422  
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Or just pay online at  
[www.hydeparkhouston.org](http://www.hydeparkhouston.org).

## Hyde Park Civic Association Annual Membership

(Due each January, no proration)

Individual - \$30	Couple - \$60	New or Renewal (circle one)
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Each \$30 membership is per person, not per household.

<b>Date Paid:</b>	
<b>Amount Paid: \$</b>	<b>Check No.:</b>
<b>Name(s):</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Telephone:</b>	
<b>E-mail:</b>	

# Residents Tied a Yellow Ribbon 'Round an Old Oak Tree...Only to be Bulldozed 48 Hours Later

Submitted by Macy Bodenhamer

Earlier this year, the large, non-deed restricted lot where the former Waugh Drive Baptist Church stood was purchased by Carnegie Homes. On the corner stood a lovely old oak tree more than 10 feet in diameter. Residents concerned for the preservation of the tree held a vigil to demonstrate the community's desire and invited news media. Of late, most developers have simply wiped out trees to make room for more livable square footage for sale and some have even covertly taken out trees illegally. (See the November "Tree Massacre" article.) Sure enough, the 100+-year-old oak tree was bulldozed two days later.

Two TV stations filmed the event and following is a newspaper article on the topic. Note that at no point has a Carnegie representative ever attempted to contact the Civic Association, to work with us to save the oak, or to modify their site plan around the oak, or even to demonstrate their desire to be a good community partner. Interestingly, the developer claims to have worked to save trees in other neighborhoods.

It's a shame that more and more new residents coming to Hyde Park will never get to experience the shade and glory of this gorgeous live oak, and that more and more developers care more about profit than spending a little extra for the sake of a greener, historic community.

(Article reprinted from the December 18, 2014 edition of The Examiner)

## Tree Falls, Townhomes Rise

By Jocelyn Kerr

On December 7, a balmy Sunday morning, Hyde Park residents gathered outside the former Waugh Drive Baptist Church to wrap yellow ribbon around the old oak tree on the corner. It wasn't in remembrance of Pearl Harbor Day, although that would've been appropriate.

Residents were trying to save the tree.

At the heart of the mid-morning demonstration was a century-old oak tree that sat on the corner of Waugh Drive and Peden Street. It had likely been there since the area was founded in 1893.

Developer Carnegie Homes & Construction purchased the corner property to build 11 three-story townhomes, and it was time to begin demolition. According to the company's website, townhome prices will start at \$1 million.

**Macy Bodenhamer** has been an area resident for 20 years and purchased her Hyde Park home in 2007. She has since become president of the Hyde Park Civic Association.

"I bought my first home here and wanted to become a deeper part of the community," Bodenhamer said. "I love this neighborhood. It's a great place to live; a great place to work."

Bodenhamer and other residents have become concerned about the number of multi-family residences replacing single-family properties in the area, and the number of mature trees that have been demolished in the process.

"In the past year business has been growing around the neighborhood and it's become more desirable for developers," Bodenhamer said. "We welcome new residents, but we feel there needs to be a balance."

Part of that balance includes developers and residents working together to ensure the neighborhood retains some of the features, like mature trees, that make Hyde

Park and the surrounding area an appealing community to invest in.

"New residents are making a huge investment here," Bodenhamer said, citing half-million and million dollar price tags on new developments. "We think the new residents appreciate the character of the neighborhood, especially the mature oak trees."

In order for century-old mature trees to be fully protected from demolition, there must be a deed restriction placed on the property. Such was the case with another Carnegie Homes & Construction project, the Masterson Oaks at Westmoreland on Marshall Street.

Located in the Westmoreland Historic District, a 300-year-old oak occupies about a third of that property's lot. To accommodate the tree, the company incorporated a community park into the development's design.

"We save trees wherever we can," said **Andy Gupta**, director of operations at Carnegie Homes & Construction. "We try our best, but sometimes it's just something we can't do."

According to Gupta, the company brought in a specialist to evaluate saving the tree at Waugh and Peden. The tree was situated on the footprint of the corner townhome.

"The issue with the tree was not only was it going into the last lot, but the root system was blocking our access to connect with the city line," Gupta said. "If there was a way for the plumber to tap into the well a different way, we would have."

**Bo Butler**, president of Butler Brothers Construction, worked with the neighborhood civic association when they were developing Flats on Fairview, the first mid-rise development in the area at 2312 Commonwealth Street.

*Continued Page 5*

# Tree Falls

(Continued)

Flats on Fairview will be a nine-story building in a largely single family and townhouse neighborhood. They met with residents throughout the design process to address concerns.

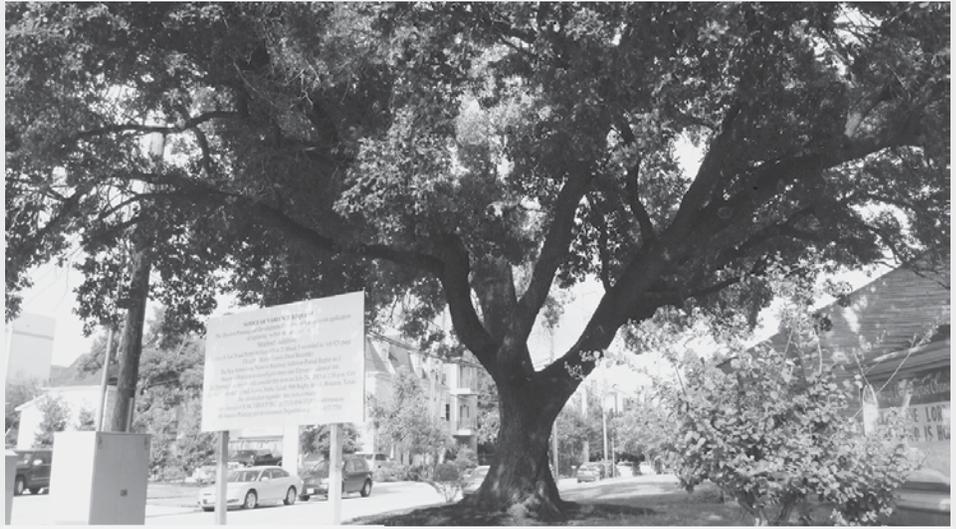
"When we go in, we want to be involved in the community," Butler said. "We always want to shake hands. We know there will be growing pains between the two of us, but we want to embrace the community."

Butler acknowledges, however, that the foundation of the property is the developer's primary consideration.

"Typically when we go in, if the tree is located within our footprint we remove it. If it's on the perimeter, if there's any possibility we can keep it, we'll bring in an arborist to evaluate if the root structure will affect our foundation. We can't jeopardize the structural integrity of the building because of a tree," said Butler. "We always go back and plant trees, but we plant the proper trees and take into consideration the foundation and root structure."

Bodenhamer had hoped a compromise like the one at Westmoreland would have been reached before the tree was removed.

The day after the demonstration, a bulldozer arrived at the lot. The tree was demolished on Tuesday, December 9.



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# Hyde Park Holiday Party

Rivas Restaurant December 8th





**Photography: Sara Fernandez**



Great seeing so many neighbors!

Much appreciation to **Michael Sibouyeh** of Rivas for being our wonderful host.

Special thanks to **Sandie Zilker** and **Rex** and **Jayne Richardson** for coordinating and managing guest attendance.



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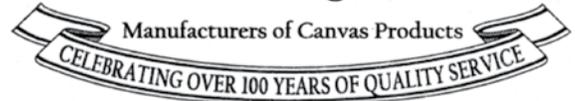
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*We wish you a Happy Holiday Season & a New Year filled with Peace & Prosperity.*

# 2015

## ○ Monthly Meeting

### JANUARY 2015

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### FEBRUARY 2015

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### MARCH 2015

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### APRIL 2015

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### MAY 2015

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### JUNE 2015

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### JULY 2015

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## Volunteer Party-TBD

### AUGUST 2015

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### SEPTEMBER 2015

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### OCTOBER 2015

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### NOVEMBER 2015

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### DECEMBER 2015

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27	28	29	30	31		

## NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

## Annual Holiday Party-TBD



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