



Old Towne Neighborhood

Revisiting Project Summary

Background

The Old Towne Neighborhood is located at the northeast corner of K Avenue and 14th Street. The 1st Choice Neighborhoods Program (formerly known as Neighborhood Planning) completed a neighborhood action plan with residents from this area in 1999. This revisiting project is a strategy to re-connect with these residents and re-energize a sense of community in this neighborhood. City staff held four meetings with residents throughout June 2011 before completing this process.

Meetings



Community Services Planner, Monique Coleman met with Old Towne Residents June 2, 9, 14, and 28. Each meeting was held at the Plano Municipal Center in the Building Inspections Training Rm. Residents attended meeting to discuss concerns and meet city staff. During the June 14 meeting, residents were able to activate crime watch group for the Southwood Estates area. Chris Bedwell volunteered to become the area's crime watch coordinator. At the June 28 meeting, a small group of residents from the Southwood Estates area attended a by-laws writing workshop to draft bylaws that will proposed for adoption at an upcoming September meeting.

Topics of Discussion

Pending Capital Improvement Projects for Old Towne

- Water and sanitary sewer replacement: Along 14th Street (from Ave. K to Ridgewood)
- Water Infrastructure rehabilitation: Along 15th Place (from N Ave to P Ave); Along N Ave (from 16th Place to 18th St); Along M Ave (from 16 St. to 18th St.).
- Water and sanitary sewer reconstruction: On Ave R (from 17th St. to 18th St.).
- Water and sanitary sewer reconstruction: On 17th St. (from Ave P to Ave R).

Property Standards



Vacant Properties: Residents expressed concerns with properties being vacant for an extended period of time. Property Standards informed residents if the home as violation, they work to address them with the homeowner.

Code Enforcement for Businesses: Residents expressed concerns regarding vacant and deteriorating businesses on retail corners. Property Standards informed residents these properties are inspected; however, residents should

submit a formal complaint to staff to help staff address problems quickly and efficiently.

Graffiti Abatement: Property Standards staff informed residents of the graffiti abatement waiver program because graffiti seems to be prevalent in the Old Towne neighborhood.

Crime Prevention

Residents expressed a desire to re-activate a crime watch group for their neighborhood. Officer Chris Biane attended the June 14 meeting to officially activate the Southwood Estates crime watch group for the area indicated in the map below. Chris Bedwell was chosen as the Area Crime Watch Coordinator.



Traffic Related Concerns

Speed Assessment: At the June 9 meeting, Richard Berry, Transportation Engineer for the City of Plano informed residents he conducted a speed assessment on 15th St. at P Avenue and R Avenue between 2pm-4pm in both the eastbound and westbound directions and determined there was no speeding. The highest speed documented in the eastbound direction was 31mph with the 85th percentile speed at 28mph. Likewise, the highest speed documented in the westbound direction was 33mph with the 85th percentile speed at 29mph.

Infrastructure Related Requests



Speed Humps: The speed humps along 15th Street were a topic of concern. Residents did not request the humps be removed. However, residents felt there is too much signage around the speed humps and felt the humps need repair. Richard Berry, Sr. Transportation Engineer for the City of Plano informed residents the signs must be present while the speed humps are installed. Monique Coleman informed residents she will submit a repair request to Public Works for the speed humps along 15th St.

Speed Hump Removal: Richard Berry, Sr. Transportation Engineer informed residents speed humps can be removed by a petitioning process but a resident has to volunteer to lead this resident initiative. Residents stated although vehicles traveling down 15th make lots of noise, the removal of the speed humps would likely create a greater concern than noise, which would be high rates of speeds down 15th Street.

Al Dia Newspapers

Residents requested contact information for Al Dia to be placed on a do-not-distribute list. City staff is working to obtain this information to distribute to residents as needed.

Amber Vista and other Multi-Family Complex Concerns

Some residents expressed concerns about the condition and maintenance of Amber Vista. Officer Bowie, the Old Towne Neighborhood Police Officer informed residents of the many improvements that have been made to the complex. In addition, Monique Coleman communicated via phone and e-mail with Lydena Bruce, Amber Vista Apartment Manager about the meetings. Ms. Bruce informed Monique Coleman apartment rental rates have been raised, the complex is a diverse community, the calls to the Plano Police Department and visits from Officer Bowie have decreased significantly since she has been managing the property. Ms. Bruce also stated physical improvements such as landscaping to include crushed granite and new blinds has helped improve the overall curb appeal of the property. This information was given to meeting attendees.

Landscape Debris Blowers

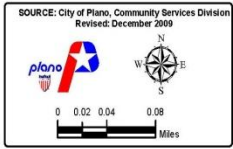
Residents stated landscape crews are blowing debris into the street, the next yard, and into storm drains. Monique Coleman informed residents she would look in to this but was not sure of possible action that can be taken at this time. This information was relayed to the Parks & Recreation Department to make city staff aware of this concern as well.

Litter

Although several residents stated the neighborhood was free of litter and debris on the survey and in the first meeting, other residents expressed concerns with the amount of trash throughout Old Towne. As a result, the Planning and Sustainability collaborated to host a community cleanup for Old Towne. See *Community Projects section below for details.*

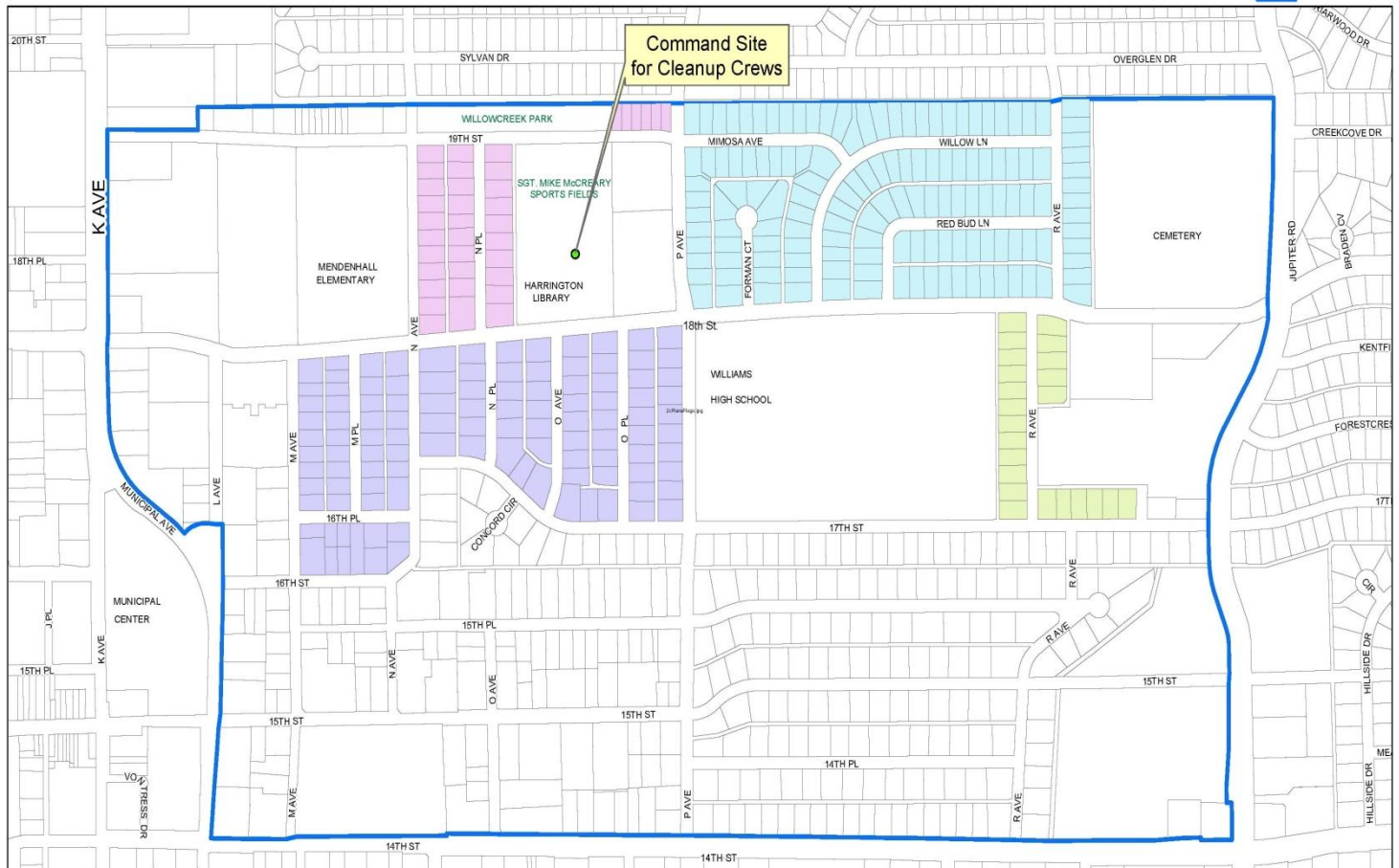
Community Projects

On June 18, 7 volunteers, 1 resident, 2 police officers, and 2 city staff representatives cleaned the northern areas of the Old Towne Neighborhood (as shown in the map below).

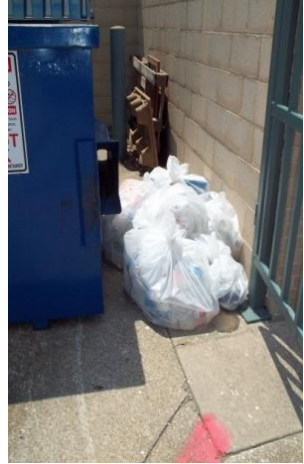
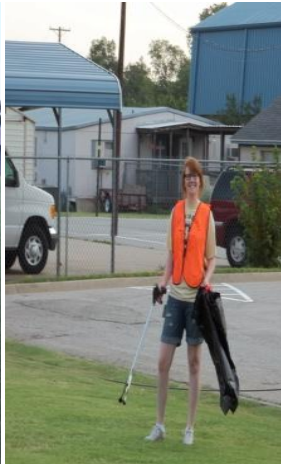
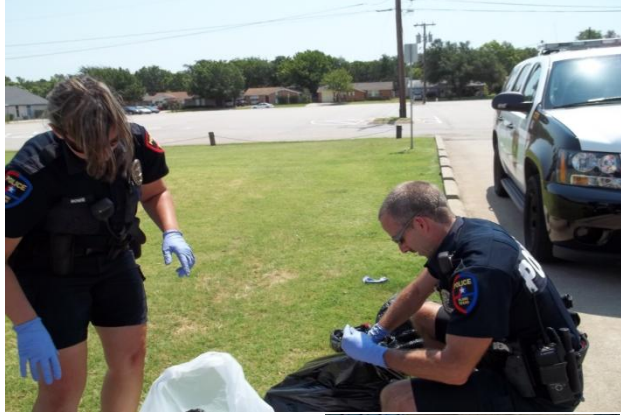


Old Towne Neighborhood Cleanup Project Map

- Legend**
- Area 1
 - Area 2
 - Area 3
 - Area 4
 - Old Towne



The cleanup was held from 7am-12pm. City staff provided a command site with water, refreshments, cleanup supplies, and giveaway bags courtesy of the Sustainability and Environmental Services Department. The cleanup crew collected 20 bags of trash and 7 bags of recyclable materials! Overall, the day was very successful!



Project Outcomes and Ongoing Efforts

Crime Watch Group: Residents established a crime watch group for the Southwood Estates area (17th St, 14th St., R Ave, and P Ave).



Homeowners Association: Residents drafted by-laws for the Southwood Estates as a first step to re-activate the Southwood Estates Homeowners Association. Residents will meet again on September 17 at Harrington Library to adopt by-laws and elect officer for the Southwood Estates Homeowners Association. If the association is re-established, Monique Coleman will work with the association to address the following concerns:

- Work to establish a relationship with Apartment Complexes in the area. This would include knowing complex management and exchanging contact information.
- Maintenance and crime at apartment complexes. Develop a list of concerns and strategies with apartment management, the City of Plano Property Standards Rental Inspector, and Office Bowie.
- The 1999 Old Towne Action Plan had an objective to require absentee property owners to register their contact information with the City of Plano.

Once the association is active, residents will work with staff to address these concerns.

Upcoming Meeting: Southwood Estates residents will meet Saturday, **September 17 from 10AM-12PM at Harrington Library** to adopt the proposed bylaws and elect officers. A meeting notice and reminders will be sent 2-3 weeks before the meeting. If you would like a copy of the proposed by-laws before this meeting, please contact Monique Coleman at 972-941-5397 or moniquec@plano.gov.

Survey Results

7 of 21 meeting attendees submitted responses.

1. **City Government is responsive to our needs as a neighborhood**
 - a. 57% Strongly Agree
 - b. 43% Agree
 - c. 0% Neutral
 - d. 0% Disagree
 - e. 0% Strongly Disagree
2. **Overall, my neighborhood is free of litter and debris**
 - a. 57% Strongly Agree
 - b. 43% Agree
3. **Overall, my neighborhood is well-maintained**
 - a. 71% Strongly Agree
 - b. 14% Agree
 - c. 14% Neutral
4. **I feel comfortable walking in my neighborhood at night**
 - a. 57% Strongly Agree
 - b. 43% Agree
5. **Crime is a serious problem in my neighborhood**
 - a. 29% Neutral
 - b. 71% Strongly Disagree
6. **Streets, sidewalks, curbs, and alleys (if applicable) in my neighborhood are in good condition**
 - a. 57% Strongly Agree
 - b. 43% Agree
7. **Did you participate in the development of your neighborhood's action plan?**
 - a. 86% NO
 - b. 14% YES
8. **How long have you lived in your neighborhood?**
 - a. 14% 0-5 years
 - b. 0% 6-10 years
 - c. 0% 11-15 years
 - d. 0% 16-20 years
 - a. 86% 20+ years
9. **What do you like most about your neighborhood? (mark all that apply)**
 - a. 1 response -Location/proximity
 - b. 6 responses - It's quiet
 - c. 4 responses - Neighborly (friendly)
 - d. 1 response -Close to work or school
 - e. 1 response- Other
10. **In your neighborhood, what type of crimes concern you the most? (mark all that apply)**
 - a. 3 responses-Auto Burglary/Theft
 - b. 3responses- Home Burglary/Robbery
 - c. 1 response-Drugs
 - d. 1-response-Vandalism
 - e. 0 responses-Juvenile mischief
 - f. 1-response-Other
11. **Do you use DART for transportation?**
 - a. 43%- NO
 - b. 14%- YES
 - i. Rail
12. **In Plano, some home occupations, such as contract construction, auto repair, landscape services, and manufacturing are prohibited in residential areas. Have you noticed any of these businesses being operated out of homes in your neighborhood?**
 - a. 43% NO
 - b. 14% YES