

Neighborhood Association Coalition
Monthly Meeting
September 17, 2007

Doug Echlin, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

Andrea Tirres, Director, *El Paso Housing Finance Corporation & Affordable Housing Coordinator for the City of El Paso*, gave a presentation about FREE legal clinics for people with questions on mortgages, foreclosures, consumer loans, credit cards, and basic bankruptcy. Andrea explained that these free legal clinics are held once a month at the Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid office located at 1331 Texas Ave. from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Upcoming dates are Oct. 17, Nov. 14, and Dec. 12.

Robert Ardivino, representing *Get-the-Lead-Out Coalition*, asked meeting participants to invite their association members, families, and friends to take part this Sunday, September 23, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. (come early). Meet at Executive Center West and Interstate Highway 10 for the Faces Against aSARCO event. Robert explained the plan is for the community to come together for a giant group photograph to send to Governor Perry so that he knows where El Paso stands regarding reopening of aSARCO. He hopes that upwards of 10,000 people will meet for the group photograph. He also provided fliers and other information about the event to take back to associations. Ample parking is available in the Executive Center area, and Robert emphasized that you should come early.

Lorraine Quimiro, GIS Specialist, Neighborhood Services, Community and Human Development, gave a short presentation about the website update. She asked associations to check their registered neighborhood association maps to ensure they accurately represent their association boundaries. She also informed the meeting that the FREE, 2007-2008 Neighborhood Leadership Academy will be offered to the general public starting October 24, 2007. The 15-week course (with a 6-week Winter Break) has 45 slots available and those interested can contact Terry Villanueva at 541-4311. Applications were also made available at the meeting.

Marisa Quintanilla and Natalie Navarez-Straight, Regional Services Manager and Regional Services Planner, respectively, for *Rio Grande Council of Governments*, presented information about the Community Emergency Response Team program (CERT). The program's purpose is to form groups of people and provide them with life-saving skills so that in the event of an emergency those trained have the skills to try and sustain life until first responders arrive on the scene. They informed the meeting that the RGCOG will be hosting a CERT Train the Trainer session October 15 through 18, 2007 at the El Paso Sheriff's Academy, 12501 Montana (Monday-Wednesday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Thursday 8:00 a.m. to Noon). The session will train individuals to be CERT trainers. It is a great opportunity for one or two members of each association to be trained and return to their respective neighborhoods and train the rest of the members.

Doug informed the meeting that Chairman Bill Sparks has arranged for the 2008 Neighborhood Summit to meet at the Ysleta Independent School District HQ on July 19, 2008 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with lunch included. Items still needing attention are: breakout sessions desired by the associations, keynote speaker(s), and volunteers for serve as registration workers and as program moderators. Mark Benitez, Cielo Vista Neighborhood Association, recommended that a committee be setup to address pending items for the Summit; Doug agreed and suggested that the Coalition Council should also serve on the committee.

Lorraine provided information that changes have occurred to the Neighborhood Cleanup Policy. Roll-ups will no longer be provided for these neighborhood events. Environmental Services will designate areas for associations to stack debris for later pick-up. This sparked a separate discussion lead by Marie Eichelmann and Saul Sustaita stated their dismay over Environmental Services planned closing of six Citizen Collection Centers. Others joined in the discussion saying they are very concerned about the planned closures and their concerns about illegal desert disposals.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m. after Neighborhood Association announcements were provided by a few representatives.

Respectfully submitted,
Doug Echlin
Northwest El Paso Planning Area Representative
Neighborhood Association Coalition Council