

SOUTHWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

11063-D South Memorial Drive, Box 325, Tulsa, OK 74133

www.SNABixby.org

Russ Fischer - Secretary

Winter 20/21 Newsletter

Email: Fischerruss@hotmail.com

My goodness how the world has changed since the last Newsletter!! Who would have ever envisioned so many changes to whatever we all considered “normal” life? At least there was one thing that came through to help us feel some sense of normality, and that was Bixby Spartans once again winning the State Championship for Class 6A-II. This was Bixby’s 3rd in a row, and 6th State Title since Class 6A-II was created. Fun Fact; Bixby has been in every championship game for 6A-II since created in 2014. The only loss coming in 2017 to Booker T. Washington. Very impressive and nice to have the football team helping to normalize life in 2020.

As we’ve all heard many times, Covid19 meant the cancellation of events that we typically have such as the Annual Meeting at the Church and the October Block Party. While we’ll be able to organize a Zoom or Teams meeting as an alternate for the Annual Meeting, it’ll be interesting to see if we’ll ever be able to have another Block Party. Covid19 has delayed me getting this Newsletter out as it has been quite a challenge to keep things going at my engineering firm. I’d like to thank those of you that were super diligent and sent in your dues as usual during the Fall when I was supposed to get this out. But, better late than never!

City of Bixby News & Projects:

As some of you are aware, I am a Civil Engineer. At a recent professional association meeting, Jared Cottle, Bixby’s City Manager (who is a Civil Engineer), gave a very illustrative PowerPoint presentation of all that is happening in Bixby. One sees some of it as you drive around town, but we have a lot going on folks!!

The Bixby Beacon that we receive in our utility bill from the City also does a great job of highlighting projects and the status of various infrastructure improvements, but it was great to have Jared show so many pictures and project renderings. His pictures for the Harmony Bridge and Downtown Streetscape had the same view as the renderings. It was very interesting to see how close the renderings were to how the project has progressed. Following are a few comments on these projects.

The Downtown Streetscape project is nearing the final phase. One can readily see the “vision” and how this will set the stage for revitalization of downtown. A number of streets downtown have recently been redone, plus some very nice sidewalks with pavers added at the intersections. The street intersections themselves have patterned and dyed concrete so that they are very unique looking.

Additionally, there are new entry like features to set apart the Downtown Streetscape area. It all is coming together very nicely. City Hall and the Dawes Annex Building are getting facelifts as well that look stunning. The two buildings will now have a more City Hall unified look. The metal works now bridging the intersection of Dawes & Armstrong also looks great. This harkens back to Bixby’s days of farming and food storehouses when we were the Garden Spot of Oklahoma! This will give Bixby’s downtown an “iconic” structure and image.

I believe the Harmony Bridge is going to be a focal point and destination point locally. The powder blue paint certainly drew attention. No more banana Bridge! Jared showed the concept with food trucks and vendors, awnings and gathering space. With the LED lighting colors and programming that one can now do with lights, this should be a stunner!

The intersection of 131st & Mingo is complete and utility work is gearing up at 121st & Mingo to prepare for improvements. Work to widen 121st east of Memorial to 85th E. Ave. will be starting soon. The City is looking at the next bond issue. Thanks to those that took part in the survey and helped us have a voice on those projects and priorities.

Southwood Covenants & Legal Issues

Many of you are aware that SNA is currently in a legal dispute with a former resident who split their lot years ago. Covid has slowed down the proceedings as the Tulsa County Courthouse was closed for several months, but we appear to be coming toward the final stretch. We've had a flurry of legal motions and responses to those motions filed recently. It certainly makes for "interesting" reading!

Many of you have expressed encouragement to me and the SNA Board as we work to protect our neighborhood with its open spaces, large yards and relaxed character; rather than squeezing in more pad sites. We are working to retain the special neighborhood that Southwood is, as envisioned by the Developer, L.C. Neal, back in the mid-1960s. We very much appreciate the kindness and support!

While I cannot discuss any of the specifics of the case, I'll share some very interesting aspects that I've learned from the Attorneys. The first is that violations to the Covenants and Zoning Code never "cure". They always stay a violation and while someone may build a metal building in the neighborhood, which is not allowed per se, even after a number of years go by, it always can be litigated to address the violation.

Another interesting aspect is how the City of Bixby positions themselves in these matters. Those at the last Annual Meeting heard how my meeting went with the City Planner, City Engineer, and City Attorney as we discussed that the City does not have the authority to negate or change our Covenants. Be advised that the issuance of a permit from the City DOES NOT mean you're in compliance with our Neighborhood Covenants!

The City notes that their permits require the applicant to affirm that what is submitted complies with City Codes and neighborhood Covenants. We've advised them that any outbuilding not wood framed, without siding and masonry, or not having a shingled roof, is in violation of our covenants. But they'll issue the permit even when the building is in violation of our covenants if it meets City Code. There are at least 5 existing metal buildings within Southwood. None of them are compliant with the Covenants and never will be per our Attorneys.

If you are planning a project, please review the covenants that are posted on the website. Yes it costs more to put masonry and shingles on an outbuilding, but one should be looking to add value to their property. We all work to make our houses look nice and an outbuilding next to your house should reflect positively on your property, which in turn reflects positively on the entire neighborhood as well. Please be a Good Neighbor!

Membership Dues:

The annual dues increased last year to \$35. With the cost of the litigation we're hoping that you will find it in your heart to donate a little more! Maybe share some of that stimulus money? Our Attorneys affirm we are correct on our Covenants and they'll be with us thru this matter, but they have to be paid for their services of course. Any amount you can provide is appreciated and any extra is extra appreciated!!

You can mail the form below with your dues in the envelop provided or drop in to my mailbox at 8734 E. 113th Street. My mail box is across the street from my house and items cannot be taken out of it by the postal service. PLEASE make sure your contact info is current too. Thank-you very much!!

Russ Fischer, Secretary of SNA

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Name:		Date:	
Street Address:		2020/21 - Dues \$35.00	
Contact Preference (circle one):	Phone Postal E-mail	Willing to help as a: Volunteer?? YES No	
Ph. #	E-mail Address:		

