

Official Publication of the Meyerland Community Improvement Association

Volume 7 | Issue 11

MEYERLAND.NET

NOVEMBER 2019



Strengthening Community Through Relationships



5710 Grape Street 4 BEDROOMS | 2.5 BATHS Offered at \$475.000 | MLS 90848280 4978 Valkeith Drive 4 BEDROOMS (3 BATHS Offered at \$775.000 | MLS 80714455

MEYERLAND 9714 S Rice Avenue 5 BEDROOMS | 3.5 BATHS Offered at \$345.000 | MLS 58516721

Our 2019 success for Meyerland sellers to date include the sales of:



5227 Birdwood



5106 Yarwell

5126 Carew

5215 Birdwood

8907 Manhattan Drive



5230 Grape







5603 Beechnut

5210 Carew

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Martha Turner

2

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Catherine Martin,	Jasmine Davis	Office Staff

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Visit our website at www.meyerland.net

SECURITY

Precinct 5 Constable (including burglar alarms)	281-463-6666
Emergency	
Houston Police Dept. Non-Emergency	713-884-3131

CITY OF HOUSTON

Houston Help & Information	
District C Council Member, Ellen Cohen	
Godwin Park Community Center713-393-1840	
CENTERPOINT ENERGY	

Electric outages or electric emergencies

Suspected natural gas leak



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MAYORAL FORUM 2019

By Elaine Britt, Section 8N Director



The Brays Bayou Association and Meyerland Community Improvement Association (MCIA) held another mayoral forum on October 7, 2019 at Lovett Elementary. While five candidates were confirmed as attendees, only Bill King and incumbent Sylvester Turner actually attended the event.

Tony Buzbee provided notice that he would not be able to attend on the day of the event. Sue Lovell and Dwight Boykins were no-shows after confirming their attendance and, as of a few days after the event, have failed to respond to all inquiries regarding their absence. Mr. Buzbee's campaign did provide a statement and requested that it be read prior to the discussion. Most of the statement read like a political campaign statement, however, so the moderator, Eddy De Los Santos, Vice President of MCIA board of directors, declined to read it before the debate started.

The discussion started with the prescient topic of flooding and the candidates' positions on preventive action plans. Mayor Turner cited the success of Project Brays (scheduled for completion in 2021) in preventing flooding in the area with the recent test of Tropical Storm Imelda. Turner also noted some additional detention areas that will soon be available to help mitigate future flooding. These include the former Meyer Grove apartments that were razed off of S. Braeswood just inside I-610, the 13 acress of former Shell Gasmer research facility that will expand the Willow Waterhole area and the Community Development Block Grant funds that were used to purchase the Spellman Detention Pond area off of Brays Bayou and the Fondren Diversion Channel.

Mr. King noted that he, too, has been the victim of flooding. He cited his flood mitigation plan that is available on his website which includes information on detention and water conveyance opportunities and other proposed action steps. King also noted that most of the City's flood activity seems to happen just before election time. King mentioned the City's drainage fee and noted that at least half of what was tagged for repairing the City's drainage infrastructure has actually been used for other needs.

The discussion then turned to City finances and the use of property and sales taxes, funding for Houston police, city budgets

and pension deficits. Turner noted his progress on balancing budgets and reducing pension liability; whereas King noted that the funding for the Post Oak bus lane has cost taxpayers \$192 million with little benefit to the community.

Mayor Turner discussed the complicated process of approving flood funding and cited the 90-point check system that happens before any Federal dollars can actually be awarded and spent. In 2016 there were 39 properties that were awarded elevation grants, whereas that number jumped to 80 in 2018. He noted the \$1.3 billion in awards under his watch. King acknowledged the red tape that exists in the current process, but also cited that only 2/3rds of the money awarded has actually been spent and that the lack of institutional knowledge on these disasters has added to the slow response as the new administration has to re-learn the lessons from past flood events.

Mr. De Los Santos asked about investment in City infrastructure including the Meyer Branch Library and the police substation on Beechnut that remain vacant. He also noted that Meyerland does not have any local fire stations which makes Meyerland vulnerable in fire events, especially in the area around Chimney Rock and Beechnut which seems to be the area furthest away from a fire station. Turner responded by discussing the additional fire equipment and police cadets he has added, his reduction of the City's pension liabilities and his work on quickly fixing potholes as examples of infrastructure improvements that have happened under his watch. King responded by noting that the drainage fee actually pays for 500 City employees' salaries instead of drainage projects and that there has been a reduction in capital improvement project funding in the last few years. King also cited the challenge the City has in keeping larger employers, and he noted both Exxon's and Schlumberger's relocations into the suburbs as a threat to the City's reputation and long-term success. He noted that the City should not be investing in light rail, but should be investing in artificial intelligence and smart vehicles for future success.

Mr. De Los Santos asked about the ongoing concern regarding human trafficking in the area, and the candidates' plans for addressing this serious issue. Mr. King mentioned the "Sweet 16" agreement the City has with 16 of the area's strip clubs – these clubs collectively pay the City \$1 million per year in return for not having to abide by the city's strict laws on location and operation of these clubs. The \$1 million funds anti-trafficking training and enforcement for the Houston Police Department. Mr. King noted that Mayor Turner accepted campaign contributions from strip clubs and cited the Kelsey-Seybold physicians who contributed a significant contribution to Turner's campaign a few months before the City was set to renew an agreement for Kelsey-Seybold clinics to provide health care services to City employees. Turner

(Continued on Page 5)

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responded by noting that the "Sweet 16" deal was made before his administration was in place, and cited his work on the additional public health inspectors that are working under his watch, including the additional resources offered by the Salvation Army as shelter for trafficking victims. Training and resources have also been provided to health care facilities such as Ben Taub Hospital to recognize victims of human trafficking.

Mr. King summarized the evening by citing the City's current deficits and the lack of a true balanced budget. He also noted

that our streets are worse than before Turner's election; there's more flooding; homelessness is a major issue for the City; and there continues to be issues with garbage pick-up and recycling resources that were redirected to landfills under Turner's administration.

Mayor Turner wrapped up the discussion by noting how proud he is of the City and the national praise we received after Hurricane Harvey. He noted our reduction in unemployment, increase in City summer interns, increase in police officers, progress on Project Brays, additional detention acreage that is coming, his green infrastructure and the additional work he would like to accomplish with another term as mayor.

Both candidates appreciated the discussion and the opportunity to discuss these topics and interact with the community. As the forum closed, the candidates stayed to have personal interaction with attendees. Many of the over 400 attendees stayed to have this opportunity to discuss their personal concerns with both candidates.

Both the Brays Bayou Association and the MCIA thank everyone who worked so hard to make this event possible, including Lovett Elementary and Boy Scout Troop 197, who were earning their volunteer badge by assisting with the event.



GARAGE SALE SURVEY

The Meyerland Community Improvement Association (MCIA) Board of Directors is again reviewing the garage sale policy in Meyerland. This issue was raised in 2017, but community flooding interfered with any policy changes at that time.

Currently, garage sales, yard sales and estate sales are prohibited in Meyerland. In order to obtain the community's opinion about this matter, we ask for your input via this non-binding survey.

Please note that only one response will be accepted for each property address. Duplicate responses will be eliminated. The most recent submission will be considered the "final" version, should duplicates be found.

Please visit Meyerland.net to complete this online survey by November 30, 2019.



LIZZIE FLETCHER



Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher met with Meyerland residents at Godwin Park on October 10. She is pictured here with the MCIA office staff, Amy Hoechstetter, Catherine Martin and Jasmine Davis.

NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP SEMI-FINALISTS

By Joyce Young

In September, the National Merit Scholarship semi-finalists were announced and included approximately 16,000 high-school seniors. These students will have the opportunity to compete for some 7,600 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$31 million that will be offered in spring 2020. The National Merit Scholarship Corporation states that over 90 percent of the semifinalists are expected to attain the Finalist standing. Of those finalists, approximately half will win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the Merit Scholar[®] title.

The competition included more than 1.5 million students in approximately 21,000 high schools who applied for the highly competitive scholarship. The semi-finalists represent less than 1 percent of U.S. high-school seniors and comprise the highest scoring entrants in each state. For each state, the number of semi-finalists is proportional to that state's percentage of the total graduating seniors in the country. There are 20 semi-finalists from Bellaire High School who are competing for the Merit Scholar[®] title.

The National Merit Scholarship winners of 2020 will be announced in four nationwide news releases beginning next April and ending in July. Congratulations to all National Merit Semi-Finalists and good luck to our Bellaire High School students!

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THE NATIVES ARE FRIENDLY

By Lucy Randel, At-Large Director

When planning your

landscape, consider

devoting a part of it for

a habitat for birds and

butterflies that migrate

through Houston, which

is positioned on the

Central Flyway! Hawks,

hummingbirds, Chimney Swifts and more make

their way south through

Houston. Monarch

butterflies from eastern

North America travel

south to Mexico, and

some will overwinter in

the Houston area. With

wildlife a better chance to

Consider planting

vegetation of different

heights as it will provide

food and shelter to most

species because each has

its own niche. Houston is

generally considered part

of the Gulf Coast Prairies

and Marshes Ecoregion.

In the top layer of this

ecoregion are large native

trees often seen in the

neighborhood such as live

oak, water oak, willow

finish their journey.

The 99-degree days are finally behind us, leading to Houston's typically mild fall, which is the best time for most landscaping in this area. As new construction homes and remodels in the neighborhood are completed, many homeowners now have an opportunity to re-landscape their yards. Meyerland welcomes a variety of landscape designs as long as they are well maintained and do not block sight lines. There is no list of approved or required plants.



American Beautyberry

so much development in the area, native plants provide food sources in backyards and along roadsides and are critical to the survival of migrating species. Even if you are not able to plant your own native garden, please refrain from spraying insecticides during the migration season (as much as possible) in order to give traveling



Swamp Sunflower

oak, and Loblolly pine. Our local shrub layer, however, includes many non-native evergreen foundation shrubs that do not

flower or produce berries at the correct time. If they produce fruit at all, it is not the best nutritional profile for migrating species. While my house was being repaired and my yard torn up, I took advantage of the situation by replacing most of the 60-year old shrubs. The yard is still a work in progress, but I do have American Beautyberry in front, currently loaded with bright purple berries to feed the birds, and Buttonbush in back, which has pincushion like white flower balls frequented by native bees and butterflies. I also have Dwarf Palmetto, which I sometimes see peeking out from under trees in the neighborhood. This fan shaped small palm provides berries and cover for birds. Growing in light shade, sun and moderate shade, and well drained to low areas, I am able to adapt the planting to microhabitats on my small lot, even within one ecoregion.

The pollinator plants are the most fun, however. In addition to serving wildlife and helping pollinate our food crops, they provide bursts of color throughout the year and are small enough to experiment with until getting the right mix. My backyard is a bit of a laboratory. I plant a few species and observe how they adapt. For example, I planted smaller perennials around the buttonbush in my rain garden. The aquatic milkweeds are flourishing with their delicate white flowers, but more color was needed. Some scarlet sage from a nearby pot found its way into the bed and its red flowers provide a nice counterpoint. The swamp sunflowers along the back fence create an amazing show of yellow in October when not many nectar sources are available, but they get much taller in my garden bed than anticipated. Light pruning during summer seems to be keeping them more erect than last year when they were floppy and barely accessible for maintenance behind contractor equipment. A small bed and a packet of seeds could be enough to start a small wildflower garden for your own foray into the world of native plants.

Local nurseries should have a good selection of plants at this time of year. I prefer independent growers and nurseries that specialize in native plants. I have also been introduced to a variety of interesting pollinator plants at Native Plant Society of Texas meetings, where members often bring extras from their yards to give away. Even big box stores carry some natives. If you purchase there, however, be sure to ask or look for any labels that indicate if any insecticides like neonicotinoids have been used. When these chemicals are sprayed on the plants, residues can kill caterpillars hatched on the treated milkweed you bought hoping to provide a Monarch waystation.

Whether you start with a few pots or convert your entire yard, consider adding some natives to the neighborhood. More information on what plants are native to our area and how to incorporate them into your personal oasis can be found at https:// npsot.org/wp/houston/native-plant-info/.

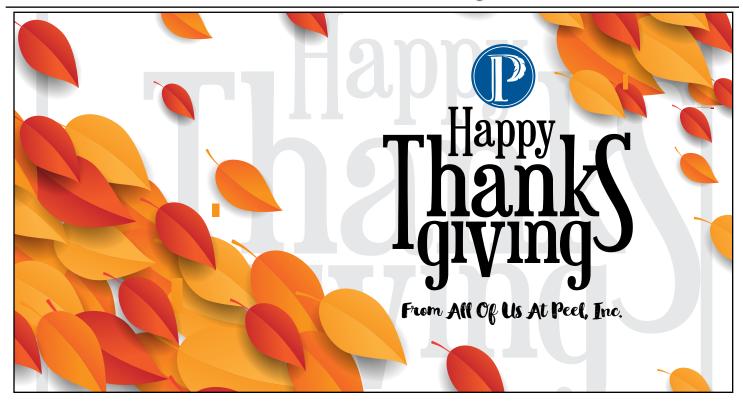


	November, 2019					December, 2019							
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
					1	2	1	2	3 Trash	4	5	6	7
3	4	5 Trash	6	7	8	9	8	9	10 T/R	11 Junk	12	13	14
10	11	12	13 T/R Tree	14	15	16	15	16	17 Trash	18	19	20	21
17	18	19 Trash	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26 T/R	27	28
24	25	26 T/R	27	28	29	30	29	30	31 Trash	1	2	3	4

MCIA Deed Restriction Rules: Weekly - Put garbage and recycling containers, as well as yard trimmings, etc., on the curb no earlier than 6:00 p.m. the evening before pickup. Remove containers no later than 10 p.m. on trash pickup day. Monthly - Put heavy junk/tree waste at the curb no earlier than Friday 6 p.m. before the 2nd Wednesday heavy junk/tree waste collection.

Changes to the holiday schedule will be reported in the Houston Chronicle as well as on our website, meyerland.net.





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in Northwest Houston

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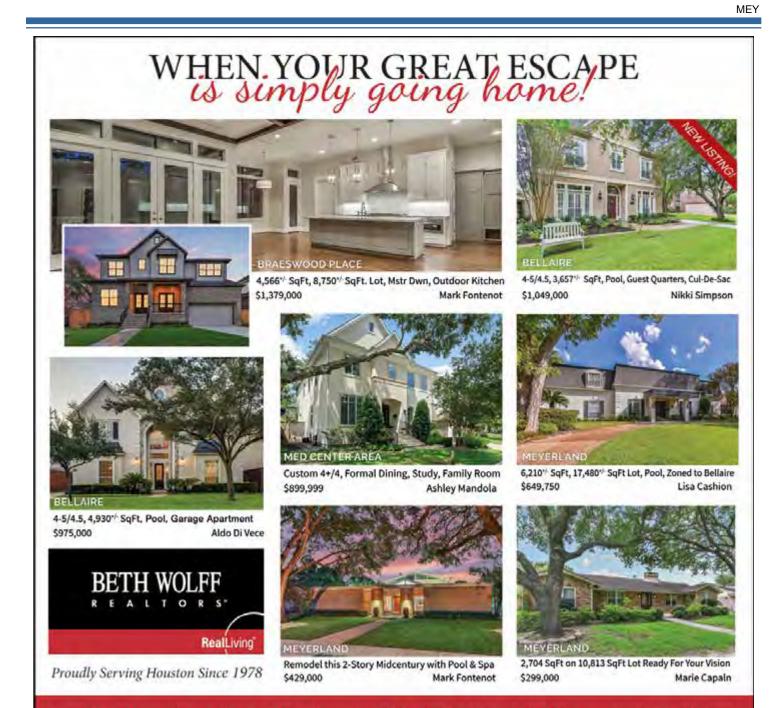




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