



P.O. Box 3088 Fort Worth, Texas 76113

July 26, 2010

DRAFT

Honorable Mike Moncrief, Mayor
Fort Worth City Council Members
City of Fort Worth
1000 Throckmorton St.
Fort Worth, TX 76102

Dear Mayor Moncrief and Council Members:

The League of Neighborhoods has formed a special committee of neighborhood leaders experienced with neighborhood events around the city to review the proposed Outdoor Events Ordinance. The committee members include:

- David Thrapp, Fairmount Neighborhood Association
- Fred Harper, Fairmount Neighborhood Association
- Mariann Taccia, Ryan Place Improvement Association
- Laura Rios, Worth Heights Neighborhood Association
- Libby Willis, Oakhurst Neighborhood Association
- Morris Lobrecht, Wedgwood Central Neighborhood Association
- Carol Graves, Wedgwood East Neighborhood Association
- Herb Biddle, Berkeley Place Neighborhood Association
- John Hudson, Como Planning Committee
- Deidra Norris, West Meadowbrook Neighborhood Association
- Richard Green, Eastern Hills Homeowners Association
- Kathleen Sassman, Hallmark-Camelot-Highland Terrace Neighborhood Association

The League produced a public information meeting about the proposed ordinance with City staff presenting information about it. We also posted our videotape of that meeting on our website so as many Fort Worth citizens as possible could learn about the proposed ordinance. The above mentioned committee has met several times (most recently on July 21) and submitted comments previously on the proposed Outdoor Events Ordinance for the public hearings.

The opinion of the committee representing the neighborhoods has not changed: all neighborhood events and/or parades in neighborhoods and/or special events produced by neighborhood organizations should be removed from the provisions of the proposed ordinance. Based on informal discussions, it appears that the Council is set to approve the proposed ordinance. While we understand the necessity and requirements of protecting the City from a legal and risk management point of view, the rules and concerns of the proposed ordinance regarding major commercial events in the City (downtown, in the Stockyards and Cultural District, etc.) are not applicable nor necessary for neighborhood events.

We also want to go on record that insufficient input from neighborhoods was solicited during drafting of the ordinance. It is obvious that neighborhoods require a different approach than the cobbled together mess that is in the proposed one under consideration. The biggest consequence of this proposed ordinance is that it will cause a wide variety and number of neighborhood events to simply disappear. When they disappear, the cohesiveness and fabric of those neighborhoods will disappear and they will be indistinguishable from the anonymity of the suburbs.

We do agree with the City Council that the City's Special Events Ordinance Task Force should be asked to review the ordinance and how it is working in a year's time. But we also ask that you form a committee based on the membership of FWLNA to study and recommend changes based on real neighborhood input and recommend changes based on that in one year's time. We also ask that you put that recommendation in writing, possibly as part of the motion to approve the ordinance.

We also continue to agree with the City's task force that no permit or application fees should be charged to neighborhood associations for neighborhood events or parades.

The committee has specific comments on certain items in the July 15 version of the ordinance and these are included in the attached list.

Please let us know your response to our requests.

Sincerely,

Libby Willis, President

cc: Dale Fisseler, City Manager
Sarah Fullenwider, Assistant City Attorney

Specific comment on proposed Special Events/Outdoor Events Ordinance, July 15, 2010 version:

1. Division 9, Section 20-438, (a) Permit required

Item (5): This should read: “Any Neighborhood Event or Neighborhood Parade with an expected attendance of five hundred (500) or more at one time shall be treated as a Special Event and must meet the requirements of a Special Event or Parade Permit.”

2. Division 9, Section 20-438, (b) Petition, Application and Notice Requirements, (1) Neighborhood Events

Item (a): This should read: “At least 50.1 % or fifty point one percent of the residents on the street affected by the Neighborhood Event must sign a petition on the City’s approved application form granting permission for the Neighborhood Event to be held. . . .” (The committee voted 5-1 to support this language; Mariann Taccia voted in the minority.)

3. Division 9, Section 20-439, Neighborhood Event and Neighborhood Parade Regulations

Item (g) should read: “. . . If the clean-up is performed by the City, the Neighborhood Association will receive the bill for such clean-up.”

Mariann, et. al.: Please send me other specific items we discussed at our committee meeting and agreed should be on this list.