



**DIGNOWITY HILL**  
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

**Newsletter**

**February 2010**

The Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Association membership is open to all residents of the Dignowity Hill area. Become a part of this active group of neighbors and make a difference in Dignowity Hill. Meetings are held every 3rd Monday of the month (except in April, November and December because of Fiesta and the holidays) at Childress Memorial Church located at the corner of Hays and N. Pine Streets. Meeting time is at 6:30pm.

### Notes from the Prez

In the last several months we have been through a whirlwind of activities and initiatives that will have both short and long term implications for Dignowity Hill and the greater Eastside community.

- Eastside Economic Summit Series**
- The Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Plan**
- A.C.T.I.O.N.**
- BRAC activities at Ft. Sam Houston**

Read on for more details.

On the historic preservation front, Nettie Hinton and I serve on the Ellis Alley Enclave Task Force. Nettie Hinton has been a strong advocate to preserve this important piece of African-American history.

On the home front, the association along with its leadership group will continue to serve the neighborhood in finding ways to improve the quality of life of the neighborhood, raise the awareness on crime prevention and promoting and maintaining the historic character of Dignowity Hill. We will continue to strengthen our partnerships with the city, police and other community institutions. The association created a historic preservation committee headed by Diane Green to work closely with the city's historic preservation office when preservation issues surface. The association is involved in providing input to the city and police when a structure is deemed dangerous and is being considered for demolition. We will also strive to bring neighbors together with various community and social events. In March a membership drive will be focus on expanding and our membership base. Also in March, the pushcart derby will be held in Dignowity Park. A picnic in the park is planned for May. In October we are planning on hosting another community fair, which by the way was a great success in October of last year. Most importantly, we will work to keep our membership and residents informed on city and community wide initiatives and events.

This is an exciting time for Dignowity Hill and the Eastside. I urge all our members and residents to get involved not just in the association but in projects that impact the greater community.

Juan A Garcia

In January, the mayor and council woman Ivy Taylor initiated a series of **Eastside Economic Summit** meetings to identify and initiate sustainable economic development on the Eastside. Over 300 Community leaders, business owners, stake holders and City leaders came together in workshop style meetings facilitated by Huntley Partners. Several projects were identified as having potential to generate jobs and business growth for the Eastside as a whole. An important offshoot of the discussions was the commitment by the city to begin enforcing and addressing code compliance issues, safety concerns and crime. Dignowity Hill will be a focus area for many of the projects that were identified. Here are some of the highlights from the Economic Summit meetings:

- \*Create financial incentives for development.
- \*Develop corridors on the Eastside in stages. New Braunfels, Walters, Binz Engleman and Houston.
- \*Improve the image of the Eastside by creating a positive marketing campaign.
- \*Create mixed use development.
- \*Assess vacant property and make it available for development.
- \* Improve Schools and facilities to include community services.
- \*Develop existing parks.
- \*Develop a Street car along the corridors into downtown and northern neighborhoods.

Work on code compliance issues and increase public safety efforts.

Top city leaders like the Mayor, City manager, police and fire chiefs, Judge Wolf, Commissioner Adkisson and many of our councilwoman's fellow council members were involved in the summit. In the wrap up session the process was graded and it was unanimous that the participants agreed that the city was on the right track. We were asked to pick a word to describe how we felt and many said "Hopeful". These are exciting times and there are lots of projects so if you have ever wanted to get involved now is the best time. Attend our Neighborhood Association Meetings to hear updates on all the activities.

**The Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Plan** was drafted utilizing feedback from a series of community meetings and then approved by city council in December of 2009. The plan lays out goals and objectives that address infrastructure, quality of life, historic preservation and re-investment strategies for the Dignowity Hill community. The implementation phase of the plan was initiated in January of this year with a focus on researching available funding sources to begin implementing the plan. The city has assigned a project manager Kristine Egan. Kristine will be providing progress updates at the DHNA meetings.

You can view the neighborhood plan on line at:

[http://www.sanantonio.gov/planning/neighborhoods/dignowityHillNP\\_dec2009.asp](http://www.sanantonio.gov/planning/neighborhoods/dignowityHillNP_dec2009.asp)

### Advocacy to Combat Threats Impacting Our Neighborhood Plans (A.C.T.I.O.N)

In collaboration with the Community Development Division of Planning and Development Services, Housing Neighborhood Services will provide concentrated code enforcement services to "targeted" neighborhoods. The City is implementing a new pilot program in Council District 2 that aims to improve conditions that threaten the viability of older, inner-city neighborhoods. The pilot program began in the Dignowity Hill area and focused on the areas of environment, housing, property characteristics, public safety and transportation. Other efforts will occur in targeted Eastside areas. HNS will coordinate these efforts with other City Council Districts throughout the City as additional neighborhoods are identified.

Proposed Timeline:

- Dignowity Hill, Zones 1-4 January-April 2010
- Government Hill (Proposed) May-July 2010
- Mahnce Park (Proposed) August-October 2010
- Other Council Districts-TBD

### BRAC Updates

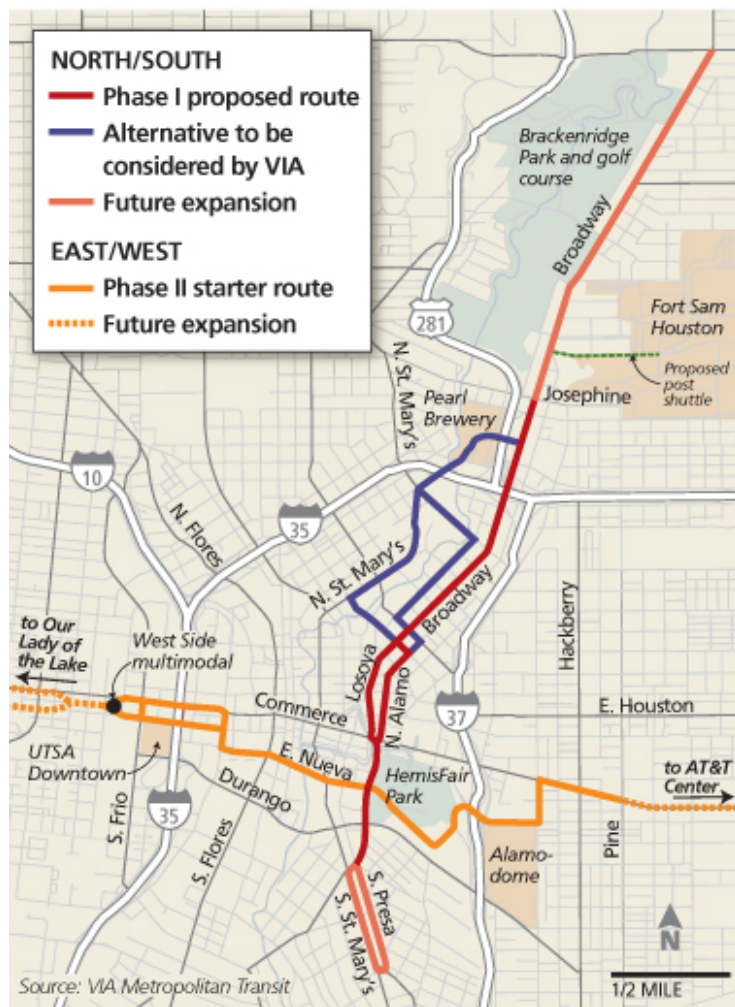
The BRAC activities at Ft. Sam Houston will also have an impact on our community in 2010. Beginning in September of 2010 the first of an estimated 12,000 military and civilian personnel will begin arriving. These folks will be looking for housing off post in the surrounding neighborhoods of Government Hill, Dignowity Hill and other neighborhoods that border the post. The city is developing incentives for homeowners and businesses to take advantage of the potential economic development stemming from the BRAC. Here is a list of some of the projects as a result.

- \*Walters Street Commercial and Residential Design Charrette
- \*Government Hill Rezoning
- \*Fort Sam Houston Community Development Office  
1422 E. Grayson, 5<sup>th</sup> floor
- \*Public Safety
- \*Mobility and Infrastructure
- \*Infrastructure Projects

### SMARTWAY SA Project

## Making connections

VIA is seeking a \$25 million federal grant to help fund a starter streetcar system. The first phase – a north-south route – could cost \$90 million and would run along Broadway and South Alamo Street. A second phase, with an east-west line, would run from a West Side multimodal center near UTSA Downtown to South Pine Street, east of the Alamodome. That line could eventually connect the AT&T Center to Our Lady of the Lake University.



Visit VIA's website for more information:

<http://www.smartwaysa.com/>

### Project QUEST

Explore your career opportunities. Project QUEST helps with Career Management, College Tuition, Books, Fee and Job Placement.

301 South Frio Street, Suite 400, San Antonio, Texas 78207-4426  
Monday through Friday 8-5. 210-270-4690

### A few words from one of our local realtors

So far in 2010 Dignowity Hill is doing better than ever in terms of number of homes sold and I'm very optimistic about the outlook for the coming years, especially with the Fort Sam expansion, the Hays Street Bridge and other projects aimed at improving the neighborhood. Today there are 17 active listings in Dignowity Hill; they have been on the market an average of 149 days. Three-bedroom homes have been on the market the longest; there are 8 of them listed. Two homes had sold by February 10th this year compared with none in 2005, 2007, 2008 and one in 2004, 2006, and 2009.

A few facts:

- For all properties sold, 2005 brought the highest average (median) selling price and 2009 brought the lowest;
- For properties selling above \$120,000, 2005 brought the highest average (median) selling price with 2008 as a close second and 2007 brought the lowest;
- Homes sold fastest in 2007 and slowest in 2008;
- The number of homes sold was lowest in 2004 and highest in 2006;
- In terms of volume, 2005 and 2006 brought over \$1,200,000 in sales (more than doubling the 2004 volume)

Trends (based on 2009 numbers):

-Down: selling prices

Number of days on the market

Number of homes sold

- Up: volume

With the exception of 2008, the ratio of selling to listing price is highest for 4 and 5 bedroom homes. There's no pattern in quickness of sale or selling price based on the number of bedrooms.

Sylvie Shurgot Real Estate  
(210) 380-8681

[www.homeinsa.com](http://www.homeinsa.com)

### Dignowity Hill Community Garden

A community garden has sprouted in Dignowity Hill! Located at 624 Nolan, the garden is a collaborative effort between Dignowity Hill stakeholders, the Catholic Worker House and Green Spaces Alliance. The Catholic Worker House has generously donated the use of the property for the garden space. An \$8,000 grant was obtained through Green Spaces Alliances to fund the project. A committee of resident stakeholders has been meeting since December to plan and lay out the garden beds. So far several fruit trees have been planted. In January, a group of Cornell University students provided some muscle to do the initial tilling and prep work for the garden beds. Tomatoes and other veggies will soon be planted. Stop by and check it out. For more information on the community garden contact Barb Garcia at 210-299-5234.



### Animal Control

A common issue that has been identified in all the different meetings and discussions is the **animal control** issue. The city will begin to target Dignowity Hill. Here are some of the city codes you should be aware of.

#### City of SA Code: Regulating the Care and Control of Animals

**Leashing and Control-** All dogs must be confined to their owner's property at all times except when on a leash. Animal Care Officers have the legal authority to enter unenclosed front yards of private property to impound unrestrained animals.

**Rabies Vaccination-** All dogs, cats & domestic ferrets must be vaccinated against rabies by sixteen (16) weeks of age. Booster vaccinations are required by State, County and City law one year following the initial rabies vaccination and then at one or three year intervals depending on the vaccine used.

**Licensing-**All dogs, cats & domestic ferrets must be licensed by sixteen (16) weeks of age and annually thereafter with the City of San Antonio, Animal Care Services Division. **Effective January 1, 2008, micro chips will be the primary form of registration used to identify animals in the City of San Antonio.** License fees are not required for government owned working dogs or dogs properly trained to guide or otherwise assist a physically handicapped person. No person may use any pet license for any dog other than the pet for which it was issued.

**Animal Limits-**A maximum number of eight (8) cats or five (5) dogs or an aggregate number of eight (8) may be permitted at a residence within the City limits.

**Strays-**The City Code defines an owner of an animal as a person or the legal guardian of the person who feeds or harbors the subject animal for more than 72 hours without the presence of the subject animal being recorded in the records of the Animal Care Services Department as a stray animal.

**Animal Bites-**All animal bites and scratches which have broken the skin must be reported to the Animal Care Services Division within 24 hours by calling **311** -or- 207-6667 anytime day or night.

**Abandoned Animals-** It is unlawful to abandon an animal within the City Limits. An abandoned animal is any animal abandoned while in the person's custody without making reasonable arrangements for assumption of custody by another person.

#### Intact dog permit (Effective 1/1/09)

Any owner or keeper of a dog that is not spayed or neutered must obtain an intact dog permit, unless the dog qualifies for a certified medical exception from a licensed veterinarian or is less than six (6) months old. This does not apply to 1) A dog or cat owner who is a nonresident of this City and is keeping the subject pet in the City for fewer than sixty (60) days; or 2) Dog or cat owners who have been a resident of this City for fewer than thirty (30) days.

#### Litter permit.

Any person whose female dog or cat has a litter must obtain a litter permit prior to or within ten (10) business days of the litter's birth  
Other codes:

#### Dangerous Animals

#### Vicious Animals

#### Sale of animals

#### Sale of baby chicks, ducklings or other fowl and rabbits

#### Excess animal permit

For more information about the city's animal codes and where you can get help go to [www.saacs.net](http://www.saacs.net) or call 210-207-4PET

The **Dignowity Center** was recently featured in the Office of Historic Preservations Newsletter called "San Antonio Preservations Newslink"

Here's an excerpt from that article.

*"After many years of hard work Byron Trott is proud to announce the completion of his neighborhood commercial building located at 900 Nolan. The 7,400 square foot Dignowity Center was painstakingly restored over a six year period.*

*Throughout the rehabilitation many problems were encountered, "Every window had iron bars on them; the place looked like a jail. Once we removed the iron bars, we found few of the windows were made of glass. They were plastic. The roof had been leaking for so long, the water had attracted termites. Most of the floor joists have been replaced."*

Please visit [www.dignowitycenter.com](http://www.dignowitycenter.com) for more information and photos.

To sign up to receive the newsletter or get more information about the Office of Historic Preservation go to: [www.sanantonio.gov/historic](http://www.sanantonio.gov/historic)

#### **6th ANNUAL DIGNOWITY HILL PUSH CART DERBY**

ARTIST CRUZ ORTIZ ACTIVATES SAN ANTONIO'S EASTSIDE LANDSCAPE ON SATURDAY, MARCH 27, 2010

This ain't your regular pushcart derby Cruz Ortiz (Dignowity Hill resident), creative mastermind behind the event, hopes his public art intervention will continue to strengthen the east-side community and show other San Antonians that this part of the city is a dynamic and safe place to live and play. "I designed this relationship between crazy pushcarts and community cultivation as a creative way to stimulate the rebuilding of urban decay. Art is the interactive bond and its success is reflected through the yearly increase in pushcart teams and Derby attendance.

<http://www.myspace.com/dignowity>

Log on for more information and pictures.

#### **ASSOCIATION OFFICERS**

##### **Association Officers**

Juan A. Garcia-President  
210-299-5234

Email: [jbgarcia80@hotmail.com](mailto:jbgarcia80@hotmail.com)

Liz Montez-Vice President  
210-223-4704

Email: [lizmontez@satx.rr.com](mailto:lizmontez@satx.rr.com)

Hector J. Gonzalez-Secretary  
210-226-6069

Email: [hjgonzalez@aol.com](mailto:hjgonzalez@aol.com)

Jonathan Proctor -Treasurer  
936-577-4535

Email: [jvproctor@att.net](mailto:jvproctor@att.net)

Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Association

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 8092, San Antonio, TX 78208

#### **CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS-District 2**

**-Tuesday, February 23, 2010 9:00am-12:00pm**

**"Community Fair"**

**The City of San Antonio's Fort Sam Houston Community Development Office**

Area residents are invited to join us for a small informational community fair in the parking lot of **St. Stephen Baptist Church Parking lot, 2011 East Carson**. There will be organizations and agencies with a wealth of information on services that will be of great benefit to the community. Staff will be available to address any questions you may have or you may contact:

**Lisa A. Rodriguez @ 210-207-4683**

**([lisa.a.rodriguez@sanantonio.gov](mailto:lisa.a.rodriguez@sanantonio.gov)) or**

**Ramiro N. Fernandez @ 210-207-4681**

**([ramiro.fernandez@sanantonio.gov](mailto:ramiro.fernandez@sanantonio.gov))**

**-Thursday, February 25, 2010**

**"A Night of Talent"**

In celebration of Black History Month D2 will host an event of talent centered on Black History.

Locations: Little Carver from 6-8pm

**-Saturday, March 6, 2010**

**"Town Hall Meeting"**

Locations: Ed White

**-Saturday, March 27, 2010**

**1. "Caesar Chavez March"**

**2. "Dignowity Pushcart Derby"**

The Dignowity Hill Pushcart Derby a community event.

Locations: Dignowity Hill Park Noon - 3pm

**District 2 field office will be open for late night Tuesdays.**

**In case you work late and want to stop by the office, we will be open until 7pm every Tuesday.**

**Every fourth Thursday of the month Councilwoman Taylor will be available for walk-ins from 4:30- 6:30 pm starting in January 2010.**

#### **ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBERS**

##### **Board of Directors:**

Betty Green  
210-442-7709

Andrea Pruitt  
210-442-7709  
Email: [A2Pru@aol.com](mailto:A2Pru@aol.com)

Dee Smith  
210-666-3466  
Email: [donalda\\_smith@sbcglobal.net](mailto:donalda_smith@sbcglobal.net)

#### **HOW DO I JOIN**

Come to a meeting.

Annual Membership Dues:

- (a) Resident/Landowner Individual \$5
- (b) Resident/Landowner Family \$10
- (c) Business \$15
- (d) Associate \$25