

# THE BOCA NEWSLETTER

BOULEVARD OAKS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

JUNE 2007

## Methodist Hospital Plans Toehold Next To Boulevard Oaks



Many BOCA residents oppose construction of a new 6-story medical office building and 7-story parking garage at Sunset, Cherokee and Rice Blvd, as currently designed. To help you understand the magnitude of this project, see the photo above and the diagram on page 2 showing the proposed new Clinic building as compared to nearby residences.

We are told the new Clinic building will be 88 feet tall, several times the height of the existing Medical Clinic of Houston (MCH) building, with 130,000 sq. ft. of space, plus a 600 space parking structure. Actually, they intend to have two separate clinics where one once stood because Methodist Hospital is under discussions to lease the 6th floor of the new Clinic for ancillary services, such as rehabilitation therapy, weight loss and wellness programs, nutrition and diet classes, smoking cessation clinics, sleep study clinic, overnight recovery facilities and the like. We are told Methodist also plans to take over the current 2-3 story Medical Clinic building for specialized medical services, administrative offices and storage. Construction is slated to begin in June.

This proposed complex is roughly 80 percent as large as the immense Kelsey-Seybold main campus on Holcombe. The 600 space garage is exactly the same size. When the old MCH building is replaced by a second, matching clinic building (an obvious growth option) the MCH complex will likely be the same size as Kelsey-Seybold. However--Kelsey's Holcombe campus occupies a site many times larger, and is situated on a multi-lane major thoroughfare, not a quiet residential street.

*(Continued on Page 2)*

## BOCA Annual Meeting Thurs., June 14, 2007 – 7:00 p.m.

BOCA will hold its 27th Annual Meeting on **Thursday, June 14 at 7:00 p.m.** at Poe Elementary School at 5100 Hazard. **Council Member Anne Clutterbuck** and **State Rep. Ellen Cohen** will be joining us, as will the **Captain Jay Jones**, the new captain of South Central H.P.D. **Jamie Brewster**, Co-Chair of the Kirby Coalition will talk to us about enhancements on Kirby Drive, **Sgt. Johnie Vollert**, Southampton/BOCA Patrol Supervisor, will report on security issues in the neighborhood, and you will hear about a number of other neighborhood issues. The Agenda will also include the annual BOCA Board of Directors election and committee reports. Please mark your calendars now and plan to attend this important meeting. **Lin Neese**, with **John Daugherty Realtors**, will provide refreshments. Below is the slate of officers and directors for the year beginning July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. If you'd like to vote by proxy, please send written notice to P.O. Box 540331, Houston, TX, 77254.

### Slate of Officers & Directors

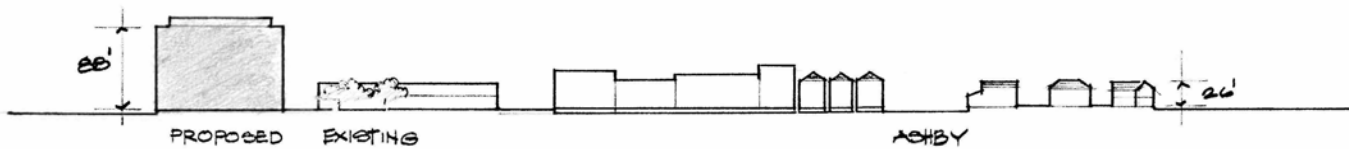
<i>President</i>	Mary Lou Henry	
<i>President-Elect</i>	Ron Kahanek	
<i>Vice President</i>	Sue Lawson	
<i>Treasurer</i>	Bob Wright	
<i>Secretary</i>	Helen Toombs	
<i>Past President</i>	Palmer Hutcheson	
<i>2005 – 2008</i>	Kathy DeLange Mary Nugent	Michael Scheurich Lily Wells
<i>2006 – 2009</i>	Stan Bunting John Cutler	Phil John Judy Penner
<i>2007 – 2010</i>	Marianne Jones Thad Lueders	Hal Perkins Norm Rund



Save the date!

BOCA's 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Fourth of July Party  
6 p.m. Wednesday, July 4, 2007  
1700 block of North Boulevard  
See Page 3 for more information.

## *Methodist Hospital plans toehold s next to Boulevard Oaks... continued from Page 1*



BOCA and Southampton are working together on this and have for the past five months been asking questions and voicing our concerns about the scale, noise, intensity of use, traffic and safety impact, the lighted parking garage, alleyway, Bolsover termination or closure, loading dock location and visual blight, etc., associated with this project. The Clinic has thus far not made any concessions or changes to its plans, and Clinic officials have done nothing to allay our fears.

The Clinic maintains that they are not expanding their business, but simply “right-sizing” their existing clinic, and that it will not harm the neighborhood. However, the scale of this project, coupled with Methodist Hospital’s creation of another clinic on site suggests a substantial expansion, resulting in a large multi-clinic medical complex amidst our homes, which we believe could harm the look, character and quality of life of our unique neighborhood. Further, Methodist Hospital’s power of eminent domain carries the potential for further expansion into our neighborhood. Deed restrictions are cancelled when property is taken through condemnation.

**We encourage you to give the Clinic immediate feedback to encourage it to respond substantively to our well documented concerns and your own personal concerns as well.** Please write a letter expressing your own views today. We have provided for your consideration a sample “go-by” letter on the next page. You decide what your concerns are as a resident. Please do not feel you need to follow the “go-by”—you may or may not agree with all concerns expressed and may think of others not included. **Email your letter to [boca@airmail.net](mailto:boca@airmail.net) or mail it to BOCA, P.O. Box 540331, Houston, Texas 77254. You may also fax it to 713-807-1790.** We will deliver it to Clinic doctors and Methodist Hospital Board Members.

**A sample letter is provided as an insert, but some key concerns you may want to raise in your own letter are:**

- A building and parking facility of this size belongs on a major thoroughfare, not in a quiet residential neighborhood.
- This project and those that follow, may compromise traffic and pedestrian convenience and safety, and impact both the quality of life so special in our historic neighborhood and our property values.
- The Clinic can right-size its operation, without creating a second clinic and giving a hospital a major toehold next to our neighborhood.
- Reduce the size of the parking garage and ensure it is an attractive design with adequate screening, especially from light pollution, like quality parking facilities constructed in recent years on Fannin and Main in the Medical Center.
- Delivery and services facilities need to be away from residences and the present location of the dock appears unacceptable.
- With the existing clinic and the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the proposed new clinic, Methodist Hospital could occupy roughly 66,500 sq ft. of space—approximately 40% of this clinic complex! This may be only the beginning.
- We need an enforceable agreement that neither Methodist Hospital nor any subsequent occupant of this property will ever exercise its eminent domain rights at this location, *in perpetuity*.

**Please make your views known by writing today. Again, you can use the sample letter on the next page or feel free to write one of your own.** For more information, including letters to MCH from the Boulevard Oaks Civic Association and the Southampton Civic Club, please go to [www.boulevardoaks.org](http://www.boulevardoaks.org), [www.southamptoncivicclub.org.com](http://www.southamptoncivicclub.org.com) or [www.mchllp.com](http://www.mchllp.com).

## Annual Membership Drive Begins July 1

BOCA's membership year runs from July 1 – June 30, so Boulevard Oaks residents will soon be receiving their BOCA membership packets for 2007-2008. As always, BOCA is working constantly on your behalf—from public works projects, the US59 project, street-tree planting and beautification, controlling signage in the neighborhood, improving traffic safety, and requesting STOP signs and traffic signals—the list is endless. Just as important are the many hours BOCA spends each week addressing individual concerns of Boulevard Oaks residents. This level of management is only possible, because in addition to a dedicated and hard-working Board of Directors and volunteer committees, BOCA employs a paid executive director, Kathie Easterly, to look after our neighborhood interests. Your dues make this possible. They also maintain the BOCA office and telephone, provide for the BOCA Newsletters, contribute towards BOCA's annual Easter Egg Hunt, and all the costs associated with running an effective and dynamic civic organization. In short, your dues ensure that Boulevard Oaks remains a safe, vital, beautiful neighborhood.

If you have always been a member, **THANK YOU VERY MUCH**, and please take a moment to renew your BOCA membership this year. If you haven't been a member before or haven't joined in a while, please join this year. BOCA needs the support of every resident in order to maintain the level of efficiency needed to meet the many challenges that arise each year. Thanks again for helping make Boulevard Oaks the greatest neighborhood in Houston.

## The 2035 Regional Transportation Plan

Over the next 30 years, an estimated 3.5 million new residents will call our region home, adding to our robust economy and the cultural diversity that makes the Houston-Galveston area such an attractive place for new businesses and residents. This dramatic increase brings with it new challenges as our growth will contribute to an already overburdened transportation system and a declining air quality.

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) has released its 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) <http://www.2035plan.org/documents.htm>, which outlines the short- and long-term projects and improvements needed to prepare our region for this population explosion.

During a public comment period, residents in the Houston-Galveston region are encouraged to become involved by attending an open house and expressing their views and opinions about the 2035 RTP.

To view event details on one of the upcoming open houses in your area, or if you would like to receive more information, please visit <http://www.2035plan.org/comments.asp> or call 713-627-3200.

### City Trash Schedule

Automated curbside collection	Tuesdays
Yard Waste (bagged)	
	Tuesdays
Heavy Trash	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thurs.

Recycling is collected every *other* Tuesday.

**June 5 & 19 July 3, 17 & 31 August 14, 28**

**Questions? Call 311**

### Private Trash Schedule

(Edgemont, Broadacres, Cherokee)

Curbside & Alley collection	Tues. & Fri.
Recycling	Every Friday
Yard waste	Tues. & Fri.

Call to arrange Heavy Trash pick-up  
Royal Disposal & Recycling **713-526-1536**

**Please Support the Southampton / BOCA Patrol Service  
713-825-5555**



**BOCA**  
**Invites You To The**  
**Annual 4th of July Extravaganza**  
**Wednesday, July 4, 2007 from 6:00 - 9:00 P.M.**  
**1700 Block of North Boulevard**  
**Dress in red, white, and blue, and bring a dish to share!**

Decorate your bikes, trikes, wagons, strollers, wheelchairs, and YOURSELVES for the parade. Come and sing patriotic songs, dance the Hokey-Pokey, and eat fried chicken and home-cooked prize-winning salads, vegetables, breads and desserts. All participants, including sponsors and their guests, are asked to bring a LARGE dish to share with others. It may win a ribbon in the food-judging contest. Dinner and dancing in the street will follow. *Rue Bourbon* will be back by popular demand to perform a mix of rock n' roll, zydeco, Top 40s, patriotic music and, of course, the Hokey Pokey, the Bunny Hop and the Cotton Eyed-Joe.

Join us also for the  
**SETUP PARTY**  
**Tuesday, July 3 at 6:00 p.m.**

and the

**TAKE-DOWN PARTY**  
**Thursday, July 5 at 6:00 p.m.**  
(FREE BEER & SNACKS WILL BE  
PROVIDED FOR WORKERS)

Though this event is free to Boulevard Oaks residents, it is BOCA's only major fundraiser other than membership. It is underwritten by sponsors and only sponsors may bring guests. Sponsorship levels are:

**Continental Congress (\$100+)   Sons and Daughters of Liberty (\$50+)   Minutemen and Women (\$25+).**

*Continental Congress and Sons and Daughters of Liberty may bring three (3) guest families to the party.*

*Minutemen and Women may bring one (1) guest family.*

Checks should be made out to BOCA, (memo 4<sup>th</sup> of July) and mailed to P.O. Box 540331, Houston, Texas, 77254. Sponsors' names will be published in the next newsletter. (Please note how you want your names to be listed, i.e. "The Doe Family," "John & Jane Doe," etc.) Many thanks to our sponsors of this not-to-be-missed event. We wouldn't be able to do it without you! For more information, or to volunteer, please call the BOCA office - **713-528-BOCA (2622)** or email [boca@airmail.net](mailto:boca@airmail.net).

**Needed:** Ice chests, large and small—if you can loan one, please drop it in the driveway at 1720 North Blvd. by Tuesday, July 3. We also need help monitoring the beer kegs (an adult-only responsibility), tending the food tables, and fighting off the hungry mob during the food judging (sticks will be provided). Leftover dishes and lost & found will be on the front porch at 1720 North Blvd. for a few days. Please put your name on your dish. Serving pieces are provided.

See you at the party!

# Letter to Medical Clinic of Houston and Methodist Hospital Board of Directors

June 2007

Dear Medical Clinic of Houston physicians and Methodist Hospital Board of Directors,

As a resident of the Southampton/Boulevard Oaks community, I am opposed to the Medical Clinic of Houston's current plans for a new clinic on the lot at the corner of Sunset, Cherokee, and Rice. The current plans amount to a large medical complex that is out of character with our residential neighborhood and belongs on a major thoroughfare. Destroying the character of this unique neighborhood isn't good for *anyone*—the Clinic, Rice University, First Christian Church, Temple EmanuEl, the businesses on Sunset, or the residents who live here.

## **I strongly request that the Medical Clinic of Houston:**

1. Keep Methodist Hospital out of the Clinic. Their involvement is driving the size of this project and their presence carries the potential for future growth of other medical facilities in the immediate area, and sets the precedent for other high-rise development in our neighborhood.
2. Downsize the clinic building to no more than four stories, and reduce its footprint.
3. Downsize the garage to match the downsized clinic building.
4. Design a context-sensitive garage—fully louvered to block light emissions at night, plus a first class finish on all sides, such as the garages built at Smith Tower, the new Hermann Professional Bldg on McGregor and Main, or the new Baylor clinic building on Main at Dryden. The external design you are now planning should be substantially redesigned.
5. Agree that these same limitations will be observed at the existing clinic site should it be redeveloped in the future.
6. Provide a proper termination of Bolsover with turning circle of appropriate design.
7. Provide an attractive facade for all sides of the parking garage, specifically to include the west side facing Bolsover.
8. Move the proposed loading dock to a location/street where garbage collection, delivery trucks, back-up signals, etc., won't disturb residents as it would if situated directly next to residents' homes.
9. Make a permanent and legally enforceable commitment that no occupant of the clinic facilities on Sunset, Cherokee or Rice shall ever have the right to condemn property or benefit from the power of eminent domain.

Sincerely,

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_