



2013

WELCOME TO AFTON OAKS

Welcome to the Neighborhood!

We're glad you're here. We're excited to welcome you to one of Houston's best neighborhoods. We hope you will find Afton Oaks to be just what you're looking for with friendly, thoughtful neighbors, lovely green space and a short drive to many resources that our great city has to offer. We are your neighborhood Civic Club. You'll find how to reach us on our website www.aftonoaks.org. Please contact any of us whenever you need to, and enjoy your new home and neighborhood!

**Stacy Jinnette
Welcome Committee Chair**

History

Created out of farm and ranch land owned by the Stahlman and O'Meara families in the early 1950s, Afton Oaks developed in several stages mainly between 1951 and 1959. At that time, Richmond Avenue did not cross the railroad tracks, and other farms and stables were in operation to the north and south of the neighborhood. With little development to the west, the retail needs of Afton Oaks were met by the small shops of Highland Village. The early land development efforts of Afton Oaks focused on the building of attractive single-family homes with a focus on fine landscaping, including the stately oak trees you see as a canopy over Newcastle Drive. While most of the neighborhood is single-story ranch style, new construction of modern two-story brick or stucco residences began in the mid 1980s and is occurring to a great degree today.

The Civic Club

Afton Oaks Civic Club, Inc. was chartered in 1955 and is non-profit organization acting on behalf of its members, the 530 homeowners of Afton Oaks. The Civic Club is operated according to by-laws which govern elections,

budgets and activities. General meetings of the members of the Civic Club are held on the third Thursday of February, May, August and November. The November meeting is especially important as that is when the volunteer Board of Directors and Officers of the Civic Club are elected for a calendar year of service and the Civic Club's budget for the following year is voted upon.

The Civic Club has a reputation in Houston as being a well organized and vocal defender of the residential character of the neighborhood. Past major Civic Club initiatives have included fighting to keep Newcastle closed at US59 (1960s and 1980s), defeating the proposed monorail down Richmond (1980s), fighting creeping commercialism by enforcing deed restrictions, lobbying the City for major upgrades in streets/sewers (1990s) and working to defeat METRO's plans for Rail on Richmond (2000s).

Dues

Dues are mandatory in Afton Oaks and are due January 1 each year, though you may pay semi-annually or quarterly. The current \$540/year assessment pays for services common to the neighborhood as a whole such as the patrol, "garage-door" garbage pick-up, landscaping and maintenance for the common areas such as the Newcastle median, Richmond median and the various triangles in Afton Oaks. When you look around, you'll see that the amenities of our neighborhood are well worth maintaining.

Deed Restrictions/Trees

Like many fine Houston neighborhoods, Afton Oaks homes have deed restrictions that are carefully enforced. The deed restrictions are based on the common sense that many of us have to maintain our homes and property within certain guidelines, while respecting our neighbors' property rights. Any time property owners initiate plans to build or add on – or to remove any tree -- the Civic Club's Architectural Review Committee (ARC) must review plans and

the trees involved to ensure deed restriction compliance. The deed restrictions should have been provided to you when you bought your house, and a representative copy is available on the website. Please feel free to contact the Civic Club if you have questions about our deed restrictions.

Garbage Service



While the City of Houston only offers once-weekly service, Afton Oaks is pleased to provide garbage pick-up on both Monday and Thursday using a private garbage service, Republic Services. We also have “garage-door” pick-up for the convenience of our homeowners and to enhance the beauty of our neighborhood. The City reimburses the Club for a portion of the cost of the Republic Services program. You may leave your garbage anywhere generally accessible up your driveway, i.e. near your garage, by a gate, etc. Please note that Republic Services crews must see the garbage from the street and will not open any gates to access the garbage. We encourage everyone to keep the neighborhood looking good by using the garage door service. If you prefer to bring your garbage to the curb, it should be brought out no earlier than 6:00 p.m. the evening before. Also, with our private service we are still able to use regular trash bags for yard waste, and are not required to use compostable bags, unlike residents served by the City of Houston Solid Waste. If this policy changes, we will let you know well in advance.

Republic will pick up a combination of up to six (6) bags or cans at the garage door. Lawn clippings may also be left at the garage door. Homeowners should take the extra step to communicate to their lawn service to leave bags of clippings in the back since garage door pick-up of lawn clippings is provided. The curb appeal of our streets looks so much nicer with garbage bags kept at the garage door. If clippings make up more than six bags, please bring the extras to the curb. Our garbage service requires branches to be bundled with twine in no longer than 4-foot lengths for easy handling and left at the curb. Heavy trash pickup is every Thursday. Republic will not remove construction materials; you must contract with a private disposal company.

Thursday is also our weekly recycling pick-up day, and you must take the bin to the curb. Recycling bins can be requested from by Republic (713) 726-7300. There is no fee for this service. Recyclable materials include plastics #1 and #2, aluminum, newspaper and glass. No sorting is necessary, feel free to put all recyclables in the bin together. Recycling is

easy and it’s good for our environment. Thank you for recycling. Additional information on garbage and recycling services can be found on the website.

Patrol Service

Security is a priority for Afton Oaks, which is why we have hired off-duty Houston police officers to patrol our neighborhood in a marked car. There are many advantages to having off-duty police officers in our neighborhood regularly during certain periods of the week. We are blessed to have a relatively safe neighborhood, and we hope that with extra police officers patrolling our streets, it will remain so. Our officers can be reached on the Afton Oaks cell phone when they are patrolling (713-201-3535). The kinds of calls they answer from residents include those concerning door-to-door solicitors, unfamiliar parked cars and mysterious activity. If you will be away on vacation, you can alert the officers to keep an extra watch on your house. Fill out the form available on the website, or call the Board patrol service chair or the officers for details.



Streets & Sewers Project

The beautiful streets you see in our neighborhood represents a long awaited, \$16 million project to improve our drainage and streets. The Civic Club spent nearly a decade lobbying city officials to have the project included on the City’s Capital Improvement Plan. The Civic Club used its own capital improvement fund to pay for the enhanced decorative lighting you see throughout Afton Oaks.

Communications

One good source of information will most certainly be your neighbors. In addition to chatting with those next door, your Civic Club communicates regularly through the spring and fall newsletters, our quarterly meetings, neighborhood email alerts, and our website (www.aftonoaks.org). The *Afton Oaks Post* is our biannual newsletter. It is emailed in the spring and fall, and available on the website. If you are a business owner, consider advertising in the *Post* as well (rates/sizes available online).

City Hall

Many issues relating to homes -- such a dangerous conditions, traffic, and neglect -- are covered by City ordinances. Call the City’s main service line at “311” for all City issues. Your Civic Club works to assist in these matters, but you should also feel free to make your voice heard by your elected officials. Our Council member for District G is Oliver Pennington, email districtg@houstontx.gov or (832) 393-3007.