

December 3, 2013

First Batch of Questions from Winlow Place Civic Club and Residents

Note: These questions are follow-up questions for the City from the residents at the General Meeting held on August 20, 2013. They were sent to the City on September 4, 2013 and the City delivered responses on November 8, 2013. There are two outstanding questions that need responses as the City is pushing them through their Legal department in hopes to accommodate our requests.

WINLOW'S QUESTION	CITY'S ANSWER
1. Specifically when in 2014 will this process begin? Will the design phase be starting in 2014 as well, or prior to?	The behind the scene work has already begun. We are anticipating on beginning mid to late 2014, but this could be delayed if we do not have at least 85 to 90% of the homeowners signed right of entry forms.
2. Specifically which blocks in Winlow Place is the City doing this work?	Because this is a backlog project there are several different block addresses that we will be working. Most of the streets will be in the Winlow Place area. The streets involved are, Kipling, Hawthorne, W. Alabama, Woodhead, Harold, and Marshall.
3. Winlow Place would like to see all existing plans/drafts/etc. with regards to this project, and a roll-out plan of this work (will the work be done street by street, etc.).	We will try and give you the design plans and anything with regards to this project to help the community understand. Also, this work will be done street by street.
4. How much advance notice will residents be given before the City does work on each individual phase (Design, Construction, and Reconnection)?	The proposed Substitute Service Contract award date is August 2014. A 72 hour notice will be given when a contractor goes out to draw sketches and take photos. At that point they will give you a more detailed date for when the actual construction begin.
5. How long will this work take place per house/block (so that we can plan alternate parking, etc.)?	It depends, every house is a case by case situation, If there are no complications and everything run smoothly it could take somewhere between 4 to 8 hours for reconnection. If there are any problems, for example if the homeowner will not allow a back hoe on to the property then the contractor will have to dig with a shovel, or if they have to bore through concrete it could be longer.
6. Will entry be necessary to the backyards of residents during any phase(s)? If so, which?	Yes, we will need entry to the backyard to determine how the lines will be re-routed. Also, we cannot say which yards until the contractor do sketches and take pictures. This is why it's important we get the ROE's as soon as possible.
7. Why was only one side of Marshall (I believe the North side) done previously on the 1900 block?	If we are short of lots when trying to complete a project, we will sometimes bundle lots together to make a complete package. Our records indicate that we have not done reconnections at this block yet. I will check further.
8. It appears that some work was also previously done on the 1800 block of Kipling – but was not completed – can you detail what was done on that block?	A wastewater mainline was put in with stubs in preparation to make reconnections in the near future.
9. Does the City know where the connections are? There have been situations where residents	Yes, we have a software app (GIMS) Geographic Information & Management System that will show

have had private plumbers do this work, and the plan/map that was provided did not match up to a connection as indicated.	where all existing and proposed lines are, and if there are lines that do not show up on the COH app the contractor will do a dye or smoke test to locate and indicate where the connecting lines are.
10. Do you know what the orange markings on trees indicate? Are these markings in relation to the work your department is doing, or another?	No, these marking are not related to the work that the City of Houston is doing.
11. This neighborhood has several old trees – are there any steps being taken to protect them during this work? If so, what?	Yes, the contractor will go around them. A licensed plumber will do the work, and will work with the homeowners on the details of routing the new line through the property to avoid damage to any of the trees.
12. Can Winlow Place be provided the specific portion of the City of Houston Charter that relates to the release of liability on page 2 of the Right of Entry?	Yes.
13. Will the City hold the Subcontractor responsible for the quality/completion of this work?	The City requires insurance, a performance bond, and a maintenance bond from City contractors to make sure the quality/completion of this work is done properly.
14. Can Winlow Place see the bid language/ contract agreement between the City and its Subcontractor?	Yes.
15. Is the release of liability language (in all caps on the second page of the Right of Entry) amendable?	Yes, the liability language was drawn up that way to protect the Citizen of Houston, but we understand that it needs to be clarified. So, we have somewhat revised it and it has been forward to our legal department to be amended.
16. Residents want to know what coverage/bonding the contractor would have in case they mess up (e.g., if they mess up and residents can't sue the City, can they sue the Subcontractor and would the Subcontractor be able to pay)?	The City requires insurance, a performance bond, and a maintenance bond from City contractors to make sure the quality/completion of this work is done properly.
17. There are discrepancies between the language in all caps on the second page of the Right of Entry regarding real property and the assurance on the official FAQ that the condition the property is left in will be "as good or better" – please clarify.	There are concerns from some of the homeowners about this issue but as I stated on question number 15, we have somewhat revised the language, but it has to be approved by legal. As soon as we receive the document back we will be better able to clarify any and all concerns.
18. Has the City worked with this contractor before?	Yes, the bid for this project has not been completed, but we usually work with contractors who have done business with the COH in the past.