

MINUTES
Board of Directors Meeting
Druid Hills Civic Association
7:30 pm Wednesday, September 16, 2009
St. John's Lutheran Church

President Dick Shuey opened the meeting by welcoming guests including District 6 Atlanta Council candidate Ms. Bahareh Azizi.

1. "Greening Druid Hills" Proposal:

Tom Cross, a resident since 1999 and former House Tour Participant, and George Hornbein, an architect from Peachtree Hills, both have an interest in sustainable living and proposed making Druid Hills a model of a sustainable community. They are proposing a bottom up approach which will not rely on Atlanta's Office of Sustainability directed by Mandy Schmitt or DeKalb County's newly established Green Commission. These offices make energy audits but do not usually generate a reduction of an entire community's carbon footprint.

The first step in reducing our fossil fuel use is to establish individual base line evaluations of water, gas, and electricity use for households in the community so the effectiveness of our actions can be measured. Households will log car mileage and gasoline purchases as well as Water, Gas and Electricity use. Greening Druid Hills will establish a web site with useful information for our community including tips, logs & forms, car pool matching, resources, and a lobby for local governments. There are already 75 households participating by email, and 400 participants are expected with the formation of a web site.

DISCUSSION: There were no reasons not to support this proposal expressed at the meeting. Dick Shuey suggested looking at the DHCA bylaws to see if there are any problems in taking an active role in supporting this program.

2. Parents Network Events Budget:

Claudia Edwards proposed budgeting for two family oriented events:

- 1) Making the Halloween Potluck Party on Oxford Rd. an annual event with a \$500 budget for paper products and kids' toys. 100 people turnout last year. It will be held on Oct. 25 this year.
- 2) Establishing a Christmas time event to be held on Dec 12. One possibility is to hold it at Glenn UMC & pre-school with a volunteer Santa Claus for children with a budget of \$300.

DISCUSSION: Alida Silverman reminded us that Community & Lifestyle has a budget of \$4k.

Dick Shuey reminded us that the budget will not be made until October.

A motion to approve \$800 for Parents Network passed without dissent.

3. Roundabout Maintenance on North Decatur Rd.

The first two signs were installed but were immediately stolen. There are two more signs made in reserve so these will be set in concrete.

4. Traffic Issues

Ron Foust reported on traffic issues that were discussed at a Clifton/Ridgewood/Oxford neighborhood meeting attended by Commissioners Kathi Gannon and Jeff Rader, DeKalb Transportation engineer John Portwood, and 19 residents, and organized by Mark Goldman: Consideration was given to remove the Clifton/Oxford intersection island with a 3 way stop similar to the Ridgewood/Clifton intersection or a small circle.

According to engineer Portwood, placing pedestrian crosswalk signs in the middle of roads is not supported by DeKalb County due to maintenance costs, but residents feel they are very effective and there is support from the commissioners.

Upgrading the visibility of crosswalks with painted lines and crosshatches on local streets may be supported by DeKalb County.

Street sign toppers were recognized as a way to send a message to commuters stating that Druid Hills is a residential area. Consideration was given to something more visible, such as signs or monuments, at the entrances of the neighborhood, especially at the Clifton/North Decatur intersection.

There was broad support to prune bushes and trees that obscure stop signs.

DISCUSSION: Bruce MacGregor: The Civic Association needs funds for small things the county should be doing but is not, such as sign toppers, cross walk signs, landscaping in islands.

Nil Toulme: There is a need for traffic calming crosswalks on N. Decatur west of Emory village.

Tom Cross: A left turn lane is needed on Briarcliff at Ponce. This intersection has been a problem for decades, and City of Atlanta is for it but State DOT has been opposed to it.

5. Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of August 19, 2009 were approved with a quorum.

6. Annexation of House on Kay Lane:

A house for sale near sage hill was annexed by Atlanta in order to be in the Morningside school District.

7. Land Use:

Bruce MacGregor reported for the DHCA Land Use Committee:

The Atlanta Regional Commission had a meeting on Saturday but due to the last minute invitation, no one from the DHCA attended.

A proposal for zoning the Kittredge school and the stadium on North Druid Hills Rd as Multiuse/Town Center comes up for a vote on Tuesday.

Pure night club: The court ruled in favor of the community that Pure is not a restaurant and revoked the certificate of occupancy. This case brings up several important issues: Neighborhoods DO have standing to bring issues before the Board of Zoning Appeals and the argument that neighborhoods are generally precluded from ZBA appeals as they generally are for re-zoning decisions was rejected. This major win came about only because the Sagamore Hills CA's zoning chair with the Sagamore Hills CA and the Briarwood Hills CA, who were all named as defendants in Pure's lawsuit, courageously prevailed in the lawsuit. The county Law Department elected not to defend the Zoning Board of Appeals and a Law Department attorney sat with Pure's representatives as "an observer." Major issues to watch:

- a) Will the DeKalb County attorney defend the case on appeal?
- b) Will the club's C.O. remain revoked during any appeal?
- c) What happens to the Planning & Development Director who issued an illegal C.O.?
- d) Will the county reimburse the neighborhoods for legal expenses incurred in defending the County's Board of Zoning Appeals?

Zoning Ordinance Update: The proposed ordinance first seen by the Commissioners on September 15 is very complex. Bruce listed some of the major elements of the draft:

- a) Existing single family zones remain but with allowance of accessory dwelling units within the main structure or as accessory structures (Mother-in-law suites & carriage houses)
- b) New zones for mixed uses with higher densities and increased heights and sometimes reduced setbacks and parking requirements.
- c) "Shared parking" for mixed use areas.
- d) Density bonuses for provision of workforce housing and "green development."
- e) General reduction of setbacks, parking & loading requirements, and tree save provisions.

DISCUSSION: Steve Misner asked if the adoption of new intensified development includes areas to be left alone or green space?

Dick Shuey: We need to free Chad for the zoning committee with a replacement for the Community & Lifestyle Committee.

8. Olmsted NHS planning process:

Alida Silverman reported that the original Druid Hills plans and correspondence from 1892 - 1905 are housed in the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site located in Brookline, Massachusetts. Selected texts and correspondence between the Olmsted Firm and the Kirkwood Land Company can be accessed at the DHCA website through the Historic Preservation link

(<http://www.druidhills.org/preservation/index.htm>)

The Olmsted Linear Park Alliance has applied for a certificate of appropriateness to add 1'x3' signs indicating that parks are a part of the Olmsted Linear Park.

OLPA has agreed to consider having a representative from the DHCA on their board. We need to pursue this since we agreed to continue supporting them annually with \$5k on Druid Hills Day, the 1st Sunday in November. (Nov. 1, this year)

9. Druid Hills Master Plan:

Max Creighton reported on the master plan which needs adjustments, especially in the transportation parts of the master plan.

Commissioner Rader is supportive of the process and sympathetic to the zoning needs of our community. Development outside the DH historic district threatens to affect Druid Hills.

Emory Commons and Sage Hill areas are especially in need of grants from ARC for transportation improvements.

Alida: We are looking to finish the task of establishing the Historic District with the designation of character areas (areas that share common characteristics). Six character areas currently exist: 1 & 2, Emory Grove, Parkwood, University Heights, and Chelsea Heights. The adoption of NEW Character Areas by the HPC will strengthen our Historic District. The Chelsea Heights Guidelines are a successful example of defining appropriate characteristics of one area. If we have guidelines for all areas, it will be easier to preserve these areas in an appropriate way. With more specificity, protection measures like an overlay area become more valid. The costs of creating guidelines could be spread out over time by working on only one at a time.

10. 501(c)(3) progress

Send ideas for projects appropriate for a 501(c)(3) arm of the DHCA to Chad Henderson. Guidelines are a good example of this.

11) Division Reports:

Div. 1: Barbara Vogel reports that the Home & Garden tour is off to good start. They will ask for money to host a party to kick off this year's organization.

Loretta Miller died in late August. She was a longtime active DHCA member who used to write articles for the news. Mary Angela will have an article on her.

Div. 7: Elliot Kyle reported that Division 7 held a successful ice cream social.

Div. 8: Ron Foust reported that Emory Grove is having a block party in one of their parks.

New Business:

The DHCA has lost 2 people to jobs (Tammy Ellerbe is working in NY), so we need several replacements. Also, Jo Ann Harold & Valerie Gallagher & Tara Bartell, all on Publicity, are no longer available to help. We will need to advertise.

Marshall Orson reported that Fernbank ES enrollment has increased from 420 to over 700 – it is one of the fastest growing elementary schools. They are raising funds for a science coordinator since 1/3 of the parents are associated with Emory/CDC.

Fernbank has their fall open house on October 24. This event would be a good opportunity for DHCA to have a presence. We should be seen as supporting the Elementary School.

ING Registration is now open for the March 21 event.

The meeting adjourned 9:48 pm.

Ken Gibson