

DRUID HILLS CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
Board Meeting
Wed., August, 19, 2015; 7:00 p.m.
St. John's Lutheran Church, 1420 Ponce De Leon Ave., Atlanta

IN ATTENDANCE

Officers: C Vandenberg, J Critz, F Finegan, C Keenan, K Taylor, K Gibson
B MacGregor, D Shuey, J Heerin, R Graham
A Wallace, R Vicevich, M St. Louis, E Riley, D Parrington, S Thornton, R Foust, V Biesel, S Misner
2015: B Clark, B Evans, S Montgomery, L Sones, C Waterbury
2016: J Hart, A Howell, J Markham, P Moise
2017: R Benfield, H Handley, C Liggett, T McGuigan, P Mitchell, J Morawetz
Guests: M Terry, F Jenkins, Major TS Voss, Lieutenant FT Merrifield

Ad Hoc Safety Committee Report

Jon Markham reported that the Safety Committee is collecting local crime data that show a significant increase in property crimes. Maps were distributed that show locations of reported crimes in our neighborhood over the last three 10 week periods. The number of incidents have doubled and most are car break-ins. Areas with disproportionate crime include Divisions 7, 4, 3, and 9 (the parts of Division 1 in the City of Atlanta were not included). He then introduced our North Central Precinct Commander, Major T.S. Voss.

DeKalb County Police Department Presentation

Major Voss presented official police records for the DH area within a one-mile radius, which shows very little violent crime, especially when compared with the rest of our large precinct. Much of the recent county crime is gang related and suspects are usually caught with surveillance cameras. Lieutenant Jeffrey Merrifield reported that in addition to Emory security and the DH Patrol, there is one patrol car (occasionally there are two) allocated to the DH area. The recent increase in car break-ins generally takes place between dusk and 1:00 am on streets without streetlights or speed bumps. The criminals do not appear to be scoping out the cars but just take whatever is found by prying the window so as not to set off car alarms. However, things that can be tracked such as credit cards have not been taken. Descriptions have not been consistent and detectives have checked out but found nothing with the homeless. Lieutenant Merrifield related that he has never spent so much time driving around in an unmarked car almost every night with so little success.

Recommendations: If you see something suspicious, call 911 first and then take a picture if possible. Use "Find my i-product" and know serial numbers.

Some people recommend leaving the car open without anything to steal.

Approval of July minutes.

The July 15, 2015 Board Minutes were approved without any changes.

Olmsted Documentary

On October 27, a documentary on FL Olmsted will be presented free to the public at the Fernbank Museum. This is a fundraiser and there is a request for the DHCA to donate \$500 for credits on the program.

A motion to support the Olmsted Documentary with a contribution of \$500 passed without opposition.

Assistant Treasurer

Scott Storbeck, who has selflessly served on the Executive Committee, on House Tour Committees, and as Treasurer will no longer be able to serve as Assistant Treasurer. Fortunately, Tom McGuigan has agreed to take his place as Assistant Treasurer.

A Motion to appoint Tom McGuigan Assistant Treasurer passed without objection.

A motion was made and seconded to go into EXECUTIVE SESSION. After the Executive Session ended, the meeting resumed with Committee Reports.

Home and Garden Tour

Ryan Graham reported that the new committee had their first meeting two weeks ago and will need several chairs or co-chairs, including a Revenue Chair for a “rock solid” Revenue Committee as well as a Home Selection Chair for a committee already on track.

The 2016 House and Garden Tour will take place on the weekend of April 23 & 24, a week before the Plein Air event in the Olmsted Parks (last year we were the week after the Plein Air event). In order to avoid traffic problems and low attendance Friday morning, this year’s tour will include a half-day on Friday and a full day on Sunday.

The committee is looking for input on making our 50th anniversary tour in 2017 a memorable event! Barbara Vogel mentioned that the East Lake House tour will be resurrected this year and we are helping with materials and volunteers. If we support them, they will support us!

Land use

Steve Misner reported that on July 20 the HPC denied the demolition of 1680 E. Clifton but approved the accessory building behind it. The DHCA is joining the neighbors’ appeal of the COA granted for the accessory building. The developer is Chris Carter, and the BOC may reverse this as they have before.

Bruce MacGregor reported that the HPC turned down the development of three reconfigured lots on N Decatur and 1907-1911 Ridgewood which would have added a fourth lot. However, the owner of the two merged lots across the street on 1900 & 1904 Ridgewood split them without a public hearing. The owner and his attorney are opposed to the Lot Merger Ordinance that we support.

A COA application for the house on Hummingbird with a paved front yard that was being converted into a duplex without a permit has been deferred at the owner’s request. The Stop Work Order is still in effect.

Commissioner Sharon Barnes Sutton added an amendment to the new Zoning Code that limits appeals by BOC members only to the Zoning Board of Appeals but not to other boards such as the Planning Commission. Our Commissioner, Jeff Rader, had added a provision in an earlier draft that reinstated the ability of affected BOC members to appeal decisions as has been established in the current code for decades.

Cityhood

Anne Wallace will co chair our renamed “State, County, and Local Government Committee” with a broader purpose to inform residents and to get out the vote.

Communications

The next issue of the DH News comes out in September and will cover the Emory Village Open Streets Festival. Also, a Yard Sale alert is coming up.

Transportation

Kathy Oglesby is moving to Florida so we need new leadership in the Transportation Committee. Mike St. Louis met with MARTA engineers for 2 ½ hours and was impressed with their willingness to meet and their optimistic outlook that they are working on plans that will eventually take place when funding materializes.

Van Biesel and Becky Evans are leading the sub committee on walking and biking. The first open meeting is Sunday, August 30 at 4:00 pm at the OLPA house on Ponce & Clifton.

Ron Foust expressed concerns that if a Rail ROW is granted in the front yards of the houses on the North side of N. Decatur, it would make it difficult to get out driveways. Residents would prefer a ROW down the middle of the street. There are 26 properties between Haygood & Clairmont, and Emory owns half of them.

Membership & Community

Sally Montgomery and Frances Finegan reported that welcome packets for new neighbors have been distributed to division chairs.. Also have t-shirts!

Cynthia Waterbury will head the September 19th yard sale and she needs volunteers to place and retrieve signs for the sale.

Ad Hoc Governance

Dick Shuey reports that the committee remains open for more questions and comments concerning revised by-laws.

Budget Committee

Kelli Taylor is putting together a new budget for review.

Division Reports

2) Anne Wallace reports that a core leader for our Wildlife Habitat Certification will be needed in each division. Division Chairs will be expected to either lead or find a leader.

6) New neighbors in Division 6 were burglarized!

7) A question was raised if there are ways for individuals to add a streetlight. The HPC would need to approve it if placed on the property. Sandra Thornton will look into federal money for improvements.

A Motion

In response to the message from the police officer's presentation about limited resources in our neighborhood, Ryan Graham made a Motion for the DHCA to ask our commissioners to advocate for increased financial and manpower support for protection of our neighborhood.

The Motion Passed without opposition.

The meeting adjourned at 9:22