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**DRUID HILLS CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
**Board Meeting**  
**Wed, 16 October 2019**  
**Location: St. John's Lutheran Church**

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**IN ATTENDANCE:**

K Eisterhold, S. Thornton, A. Silverman, C. Sleeth, J. Jones, T. Blalock, Y. Weatherly, L. VanGelderen, D. Rollins, D. Shuey, R. Foust, V. Biesel, T. Roeser, B. MacGregor, P. Killingsworth, M. Herold, C. Liggett, P. Moise, A. Wallace, R. Nelson, D. Engle, C. Vandenberg.

Guests: G. Walldorff, M. Pacini, L. Godwin, B. Evans, H. Handley

Pres. Kit Eisterhold called the meeting to order at 7:30 p. m.

Guest speakers Martha Pacini (DeKalb Citizens Advocacy Council ) and Becky Evans (Representative for part of Druid Hills in the General Assembly) addressed the meeting on the the November 5, 2019 Referendum on proposed revisions to the DeKalb County Ethics Act adopted in 2015. **THE REFERENDUM WILL BE THE ONLY ITEM ON THE BALLOT IN UNINCORPORATED DEKALB COUNTY.** These revisions would limit the independence of the Board of Ethics established under this act, reduce the professionalism of its staff, and restrict its authority to hear and investigate complaints. The DeKalb Citizens Advocacy Council asked Dr. Paul Root Wolpe , Director of the Emory Center for Ethics to review the 2015 Ethics Act and the proposed Revised Ethics Act. His conclusion was:

“ . . . this bill is clearly meant to weaken and dilute the excellent policy passed in 2015, without any convincing reasons to weaken the bill. DeKalb is slipping back to a former posture that got it in trouble in the first place. I would agree that this bill should be strongly opposed..”

A Pamphlet of the Advocacy Council that critiques the Revised Ethics Act and urges a “No” vote in the Referendum and a copy of Dr. Wolpe’s letter are attached.

Rep. Evans also spoke on the proposed Revised Ethics Act, describing the split in the DeKalb Delegation on the issue and the consideration of the matter in a well attended Town Hall on October 15<sup>th</sup>. This referendum is not the final word on the matter: the Act may still be further amended and there will be 2 more opportunities for additional referenda: the March presidential preference primary and the May primary. Further, access to legal remedies would not be changed by this Act.

On Motion made by Bruce MacGregor, the Board agreed that the membership be advised of the significance of the proposed ethics revision and the recommendation of the Board that the DHCA referendum be defeated.

A communication to the membership to the following effect is to be made:

The Board of Directors of the Druid Hills Civic Association supports the strong, independent, professionally qualified DeKalb County Ethics Board established in 2015. The Revised Ethics Act of 2019 substantially undermines that Board by reducing the professionalism of the Board and the scope of its authority. We therefore recommend that our members VOTE NO on the REVISED ETHICS ACT in the Referendum on Tuesday November 5<sup>th</sup> or during early voting.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

1. Guest GALE WALLDORF stated that 2022 is the BICENTENNIAL OF THE BIRTH OF FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED and a celebration of the event, "OLMSTED 200," is in the planning stages. There is an effort to make Atlanta and Riverside, Ill. Sister Cities because the first Olmsted Park is in Druid Hills and the last one in Riverside—"bookends" to Olmsted's legacy. She asked DHCA to participate.

2. Emory Village Alliance is sponsoring its annual OPEN STREETS event on Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup> in the village. DHCA will have a table there and volunteers are requested.

3. The President asked for volunteers for Tour Chair and other chairs for the specific committees that run the Tour and for Managing Editor.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. GOVERNANCE. The Board approved the selection of Harriett Lane as Chair of the Governance Committee. The other members of the Committee are: Rocky Atkins, Travis Blalock, Justin Critz and Renee Nelson.

An immediate responsibility of the Governance Committee is to act as Nominating Committee for 2020 officers and directors. Please suggest nominees to the Governance Committee. The position of Secretary has been filled on a temporary basis since the resignation of Ken Gibson. Please self nominate or other-nominate someone for 2020 Secretary.

2. LAND USE. Kit Eisterhold and Bruce MacGregor reported.

A. Elegant Homes, developers, have requested rezoning of 3 residential lots on Briarcliff containing 3 ranch style single family houses to RSM – Residential Small Lot—in order to construct 19 housing units (a combination of townhouses and flats). This plan is almost identical to one proposed by Minerva developers, which the Committee considered quite a good plan. The developer claims that these lots are not historic. That does not appear to be

accurate. The lots are on the historic plat and back up on historic residential lots on Springdale Road. The DeKalb Historic Commission refused to permit revision of historic lots on Briarcliff at Harvard and this has turned out to be a good decision. There was strong support for opposing any variance from the historic plat, for protecting the integrity of the historic neighborhood and supporting the affected neighbors. Also, agreeing to encroachments sets a bad precedent and invites salami tactics to further slice up the district.

Chris Liggett: On the other hand, Briarcliff Road is on the edge of the historic district; only one side of the street is included. Moreover, the street has changed dramatically: it is now a major thoroughfare and state highway. There are more multi unit dwellings and commercial activity. We should be more open minded and flexible in regard to the perimeters of the district, i.e. focus on protection of the interior of the historic district.

Alida Silverman: Our traditional focus was neighborhood protection; maintaining the integrity of the historic district. It would be helpful to have an accessible record of our previous actions, minutes, reports. Institutional memory is important.

Anne Wallace: Each President has records of his/her administration

B. Future Places Project of the City of Atlanta. Jan Jones described the project as in early planning stages looking toward maintaining historic identity as the city develops. She distributed a card listing meetings soliciting public involvement and suggestions. (See attachment)

3. PUBLIC SAFETY. Thea Roeser reported that the area has been experiencing a higher crime rate, as documented by Ellen Meshnick. Thea and Ellen met recently with David Payne and the Chief of Police of Emory University to discuss the issue.

Ellen will have a table at Open Streets to distribute literature and increase awareness of the problem.

Most incidents are car break-ins where items of value of left in the car are taken (including a gun in a gun safe from one car).

Thea has purchased \$500.00 worth of low denomination gift cards for distribution at events sponsored by the Police

4. TRANSPORTATION. Van Biesel reported. The next meeting of the Committee will be November 5<sup>th</sup>. At Open Streets there will be a demonstration of "Tactical Urbanism." On Oxford Rd., on the sidewalk in front of the new Chase Bank, Chipotle and Romeo's there will be a mock up of a new sidewalk arrangement, including sidewalk seating.

The Briarcliff Corridor water infrastructure construction in the Village was originally intended to take place at night. However, breaking of a water main in the early nights of the

project made it seem like a good idea to switch to daytime. Hence traffic on North Decatur and cross streets has been substantially disrupted.

Roundabouts on North Decatur at Springdale & Oakdale are on hold, pending funding.

Briarcliff Corridor project moved into the University streets area this week.

## OTHER BUSINESS

BECKY EVANS described the NATIONAL MEMORIAL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE in Montgomery, AL. This is a project of the Equal Justice Initiative, founded by Bryan Stevenson, to commemorate the victims of lynching in the U.S. The Memorial features 800 steel columns, each with the name of each county where lynching occurred and with the names of the known victims in that county. Coffin sized replicates of each column are laid out on the site—intended to be given to each county that will use it to erect its own memorial. Participating counties are requested to collect a jar of soil from known lynching sites for exhibit at the National Memorial.

. There were 4 known lynchings in DeKalb County—one in Druid Hills. DeKalb County is participating and intends to place its column in front of the new Court House in Decatur, with an unveiling ceremony in March 2020. OLPA is participating and DHCA may want to join.

For more info: See below: Sites for National Memorial for Peace and Justice.

BECKY also commented on ATLANTA-REGION TRANSIT LINK AUTHORITY, which plans transit projects for Atlanta Metro. It has released a 74 pg. report on projects that may be funded. See: <https://atltransit.ga.gov/>

Becky stated that there is a bi-partisan committee of the legislature working on Voter Protection issues to attempt to resolve problems that arose in part elections.

BRUCE MACGREGOR stated that DeKalb County Planning Com. is developing regulations for Air B&Bs. Send suggestions.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:00 P. M.

SITES FOR NATIONAL MEMORIAL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE IN  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

<https://www.citylab.com/design/2018/05/a-space-to-hold-the-horrors-of-lynching/560450/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/25/us/lynching-memorial-alabama.html>

<https://www.al.com/news/2018/11/jefferson-county-group-aims-to-memorialize-victims-of-lynching.html>

[https://www.meridianstar.com/news/local\\_news/equal-justice-initiative-remembrance-project-planned-for-saturday-in-hickory/article\\_13f53b9c-191a-564b-8253-c20f1c62d6b8.html](https://www.meridianstar.com/news/local_news/equal-justice-initiative-remembrance-project-planned-for-saturday-in-hickory/article_13f53b9c-191a-564b-8253-c20f1c62d6b8.html)

See separate attachments for

DeKalb Citizens Advocacy Council Pamphlet  
Emory Center for Ethics Letter  
Atlanta Future Places Project Card.