

DRUID HILLS CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
Board Meeting
Wed., November 18, 2015; 7:30 P.M.
St. John's Lutheran Church, 1420 Ponce De Leon Ave., Atlanta

IN ATTENDANCE

Officers: C Vandenberg, F Finegan, K Taylor, K Gibson

B MacGregor, J Heerin, R Graham

A Wallace, M St. Louis, D Parrington, S Thornton, R Foust, V Biesel, S Misner

2015: B Evans, C Waterbury

2016: J Boone, J Hart, A Howell, J Markham, T Winn, D Winston

2017: R Benfield, K Eisterhold, P Mitchell, J Morawetz, S Silverman

Guests: Cynthia Tauxe, Jonathan and Lauren Kernya, Richard Jackson, Chuck & Betsy Marvin

President Cathy Vandenberg opened the November Board meeting by introducing six guests with local concerns: Cynthia Tauxe and Jonathan and Lauren Kernya who will report on a proposed development on the Fox 5 property, and Richard Jackson, and Chuck and Betsy Marvin who are concerned about reports of a Lullwater bike path study.

The October 21, 2015 DHCA Board Minutes were then approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Cynthia Tauxe expressed concerns of **a new townhomes development** on a section of the **Fox 5 property** on the corner of Briarcliff and Emory Road. The property, which is in the historic district, is currently zoned O&I with two story height limits and 50' set backs. Historic homes on upper Emory Drive including the 1920's "Lou's House" border the property. The developers have proposed changing the zoning to residential which would reduce set backs and increase height limits and are seeking approval of the site plan from the Historic Preservation Commission. However, the rezoning would still need to be approved by the DeKalb County Commissioners. Neighboring residents are not opposed to a residential townhome development, but are concerned with the proposed setbacks and height limits and the potential to interfere with the integrity of the existing historic district. The neighbors are seeking the support of the DHCA in opposing the current site plan.

The following **Motion** was seconded and Passed without opposition: To oppose the current zoning application for the townhomes on the Fox 5 property as presented on the current site plan and to ask for a denial from the commissioners. President Cathy Vandenberg will write a letter outlining the DHCA position on the developers' proposal for the property.

The new **Fernbank Elementary School** is opening after Thanksgiving and they have applied for a \$1000 DHCA grant for general improvements. The Executive Committee recommends the standard school donation of \$500 at this time but also suggests that FES could apply for additional funding for a specific need.

A Motion to approve a \$500 grant to Fernbank Elementary School passed without opposition.

Jon Hart was heartily applauded for becoming the newest **DeKalb County Historic Preservation Commissioner**. A question was posed if representing both the DHCA and the HPC would ever put Jon in a position of having a conflict of interest.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Safety Committee

Jim Boone reported that a DHCA initiated **Town Hall Meeting on Crime** in the Community will be held at the DHHS auditorium on December 1. Senator Elena Parent, Commissioners Kathie Gannon

and Jeff Rader, Atlanta Councilmember Alex Wan, as well as Atlanta and DeKalb police department representatives will all participate in panel discussions and presentations. Questions can be submitted in advance on cards but there may also be time for ad hoc questions. It is important to have a strong turnout to show how important crime reduction is to our community. Twenty-five signs are being made at a cost of \$18.95 each, and DHCA Facebook, twitter and e-news will announce the event. There was an armed robbery three weeks ago and two more car break-ins occurred this week.

A Motion to fund the purchase of 25 signs advertising the panel discussion was approved without opposition.

The **Extra Surveillance “Blitz” patrol** funded by the DHCA started last week and will continue for 6 weeks. Residents are encouraged to join the Druid Hills Patrol, but the extra surveillance is a short-term experiment to assess successful ways to intervene when crime is on the rise. Results of the experiment will be updated to the neighborhood through Next Door and the e-News.

Transportation Committee

Van Biesel explained that a pro bono report on improving **bicycling and pedestrian connections to Emory Village** is considering Lullwater Road as a candidate for three reasons: 1) Residences are on only one side of the road on much of Lullwater. 2) Lullwater may provide a safe connection to Emory Village. 3) Lullwater may provide a safe connection to existing bike paths under Ponce de Leon. A flyer was distributed to residents on Lullwater that shows a path going through private property and mentions a DHCA and EV Alliance. However, the DHCA committee looking into the feasibility of a connector was unaware of the flyer and does not know who distributed it. Concerns were expressed to the Board by Richard Jackson, and Chuck and Betsy Marvin. The DHCA Transportation Committee is in the information gathering stage and had no positions or presentations at this time.

Home and Garden Tour

Ryan Graham reported that five homes and one garden have been selected with a possible sixth home being considered for the 2016 Home and Garden Tour. Locations will include Springdale, Oxford, Clifton and the Durand Falls waterfall on the McConaughy’s property. The Patch Dash will be a part of the tour again this year and all committees have formed and are functioning.

Communications Committee

The DHCA online presence will be updated with Wild Apricot in January.

Land Use/Historic Preservation

Bruce MacGregor reported that the **Historic Preservation Commission** denied a COA for a new house on Chelsea Circle and denied a proposed development at 1125 Lullwater for inappropriate size.

For the Commissioners to make appropriate decisions, new construction site plans should show topology, trees, neighboring structures and details such as locations of garage/apartments that are allowed in the new zoning code.

Rob Benfield reported that the COA for a home in **Clifton Ridge** has been appealed to the Board of Commissioners, and the appeal will be heard at the December 8 meeting.

Membership & Community Committee

The DHCA and **Trees Atlanta** planted 56 trees in Divisions 5 and 8 on November 7.

The DHCA subsidized \$1500 in costs and is still collecting fees from neighbors. Trees Atlanta was very organized and volunteers worked until 1:30.

The end of the year **Holiday party** will be at the Frazer Center next month. Please contact Frances Finegan to volunteer or share ideas. The party is open to families and will be catered.

Nominating Committee

Mike St. Louis reports that the nominating committee is seeking nominations for DHCA President, 1st Vice President and Communications VP. There will be an e-alert asking for nominations of those interested in serving these important roles.

Ad Hoc - State, County & Local Governments Committee

Anne Wallace attended a presentation of the **Blue Print to Redefine DeKalb** project that was facilitated by Kathie Gannon. Three goals that have already been enacted include Ethics legislation, establishing an internal auditor, and revising purchasing and contracts procedures. There was very good attendance and suggestions were made to add more commissioners that represent smaller populations and to replace the Community Council with an NPU type system.

On **University Drive** where half of the street is in Atlanta and half in unincorporated DeKalb County, those desiring to be annexed into Atlanta were advised to contact Alex Wong.

The **LaVista Hills** cityhood vote did not pass by a small amount. Last minute changes such as the inclusion of the North DeKalb Mall turned off some residents

Bruce MacGregor reported that an effort in the City of Atlanta to enhance their **senior tax exemption** could affect annexation prospects.

Ad Hoc - Governance Committee

Amy Howell distributed a draft of the new DHCA by-laws voted on by the committee. A goal is to post the by-laws before the Annual Meeting after a board vote at the December Board Meeting.

DIVISION REPORTS

Division 6: Danielle Parrington reported that a petition is circulating to include a sidewalk on Briarcliff to the Sage Hill shopping center.

Division 9: Steven Misner reported that the HPC is respecting the Chelsea Heights guidelines.

The November DHCA Board Meeting adjourned at 9:20

The Next Board Meeting is Wednesday, December 16, 2015 at 7:30 P.M. in the Frazer Center