

DRUID HILLS CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
Board Meeting
Wed., May 15, 2019 @ 7:30 pm
Location: St. John's Lutheran Church

IN ATTENDANCE

Officers: K Eisterhold, C Liggett, A Wallace, F Putney, K Gibson.
Past Pres./Ex-Officio: B MacGregor, C Vandenberg, J Richardson, C Sleeth.
Div Chairs: J Critz, S Day, Y Weatherly, M St Louis, D Engle, S Thornton, R Foust, V Biesel.
2019: H Lane, T McGuigan, P Moise, A Silverman.
2020: J Jones, S Sullivan, L Van Gelderen
2021: T Blalock.
Guests: Sally Sears (South Fork Conservancy).

President Kit Eisterhold called the Board meeting to order and the March minutes were approved.

Announcements

Phil Moise reminded the board that the 2019 Board Training takes place this Saturday, May 19. The agenda was handed out and the main focus will be how to best use DHCA disposable income. The eight objectives of the Association from the 1965 Bylaws were also shared with members.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Transportation

Van Biesel reported on the May 2 meeting on Ponce Safety with GDOT. The safety data & existing projects presented include signal timing optimization on Ponce from Moreland to Scott, upgrading existing signals with backplates at Springdale, Oakdale and Lullwater, drainage along Deepdene Park, refurbishing the bridge at Lullwater in 2021, and resurfacing all of ponce with new striping and crosswalks in 2 years. In the future, GDOT will be looking at reducing speed in general as well as installing speed cameras in school zones. Justin Critz is also leading efforts to install speed cameras near Paideia and SPARK. GDOT also presented other projects in DeKalb County including planned roundabouts on N Decatur at the Oakdale and Springdale intersections, but funding is not currently available for at least three years.

Emory Grove's meeting on Marta's light rail plans was attended by 60 residents. The deadline to establish a route is this summer. The preferred route is for a tunnel but if not that, consensus is split between the CSX route and down the center of N Decatur Road. The N Decatur route should minimize widening having single lanes in each direction and the rail and turn lanes in the center as a road diet. The next step is to meet with MARTA.

The bridge on Briarcliff over the South Fork Creek will be completely replaced. The South Fork Conservancy has been proactively advocating for three things: 1) Sidewalks should be extended beyond the bridge along Briarcliff on both sides of the street in both directions. 2) Access from all 4 corners of the bridge to the creek should be provided. 3) GDOT should manage storm water runoff through the development of a stormwater park using a 2.5 acre floodplain parcel in the NW corner. The floodplain parcel was purchased as an investment and the owner is open to selling it. The proposed stormwater park could include a walkway around a retention pond. Sally Sears expressed appreciation for all the help getting rid of invasives along the South Fork trails and presented a new brochure from the Conservancy.

A motion was made to endorse the three items that the South Fork Conservancy is advocating for GDOT to include when they replace the Ambassador David Alderman Bridge on Briarcliff Road: 1)

Extend sidewalks beyond the bridge along both sides of Briarcliff Road in both directions, 2) Provide safe access to the creek from all four corners of the new bridge, and 3) Manage surface runoff through the development of a stormwater park using a 2.5 acre floodplain parcel in the NW corner. The motion passed without opposition.

Leon Van Gelderen noted that a downtown container rail yard is closing which may reduce CSX traffic. Van Biesel reported that CSX land may become available for transportation options.

Communications

Fran Putney is soliciting articles as well as ideas for articles before the August deadline for the September issue of the Druid Hills News magazine. She is also seeking news and articles on each of the DHCA divisions for a future feature. Appreciation was expressed for the monthly online e-news. The next monthly e-news has a June first deadline.

Tour

Kit Eisterhold reported that the 2019 Tour had one of the highest net incomes, partly because of the savings from not having trolleys. There was a focus on using the twittens and tour participants appreciated walking to get to so many of the houses on the tour. John Critz donated all the work on making the twittens clear and safe. New ideas for next year envision Emory Village and Candler themes. Anne Wallace is seeking a legal opinion on ownership of and responsibility for the twittens. Sandra Thornton reported that she pursued this information years ago and never got a definitive answer.

Finance

John Giegerich reported that total cash increased this past year so we are in good financial health with the successful Tour helping substantially. Although annual revenue decreased a little, expenses were cut in half. Membership decreased 10% and insurance is our biggest annual expense. Reduction of past legal expenses gives opportunities for contributing more to the community which will be discussed at Sunday's Board Training meeting. A suggestion was made to ask enterprises filming in DH to contribute to the DHCA.

NPU-N

Carol Sleeth reported that the former ReMax office in the historic house on Ponce which was converted to offices is for sale on the open market. The building is no longer appropriate for residential use and the LDCP recommends the current plans for law offices as appropriate. Alida Silverman questioned if this will make it easier for developers to convert houses to offices in the future. A Motion to not oppose the special use permit passed without opposition among City of Atlanta residents.

The former Boy Choir house at 1215 South Ponce will be occupied by the Atlanta Montessori International School and construction has started.

City of Atlanta members vote on new liquor law...?

Motion Approved without opposition among City of Atlanta residents.

Annexation Study

Anne Wallace reported that Governor Kemp vetoed SB53 after City of Decatur Schools hired a lobbyist. SB53, which Elena Parent had sponsored and had passed both the House and Senate unanimously, separated school district boundaries changes from annexation boundary changes. \$2.5M in tax revenue from Emory Point will now go from DeKalb County schools to Atlanta Public Schools although only ten students are affected by the annexation.

Public Safety

Kit Eisterhold suggested two main ways to increase public safety is to increase Flock camera coverage and to increase street lighting. Division chairs will be asked to determine the number of cameras their division needs.

Funding provided by neighbors with supplemental funds from DHCA can be used to have additional street lighting installed and maintained.

Governance

Kit reported on his 2019 appointments to the Governance Committee: Phil Moise, Chris Liggett, Justin Critz,, Steven Misner and Harriett Lane.

Land Use

Phil presented a proposed "Position Regarding the Rezoning of Emory University Property." The Emory annexation "resulted in nearly 6 miles of boundary with surrounding DeKalb County neighborhoods which are profoundly impacted by development in the annexed area, but have a very limited voice in development decisions made in the annexed area." Within Druid Hills, there is now a gap between Atlanta residents and Emory University in Atlanta. An 'Emory Land Use Committee' appointed by the President to address issues pertaining to land use in Emory that is now in the City of Atlanta but not in the Landmark District could address the new set of rules needed to deal with development. A motion to adopt the resolutions as stated in the addendum passed without opposition.

The May DHCA Board meeting adjourned at 9:25.

ADDENDUM: Formation of Emory Land Use Committee

Background

The annexation of Emory University into the City of Atlanta appears to have left a coverage gap in how Emory land use issues are dealt with by the Landmark District Preservation Committee and the DeKalb Land Use & Historic Preservation Committee. The majority of Emory property is not in the Landmark District, and that Emory property is now subject to City of Atlanta land use regulation instead of DeKalb County land use regulation.

Under the current bylaws:

Section 6.2.5 gives the DeKalb Land Use and Historic Preservation Committee responsibilities concerning DeKalb County land use, zoning, development and related issues, including applications within the unincorporated DeKalb County portion of DHCA's boundaries, and

Section 6.2.6 gives the Landmark District Preservation Committee responsibilities concerning land use, zoning, development and related issues in the portion of DHCA within the City of Atlanta Landmark District, including the review of land use, zoning and design applications within the Landmark District.

Because of this apparent coverage gap, the Executive Committee has proposed that the Board form a special committee to deal specifically with Emory land use issues in City of Atlanta but outside the Landmark District.

Proposed Resolutions

In accordance with Section 6.3 of the bylaws:

1. The Board hereby forms a special committee to consider and advise the Board concerning applications and other issues pertaining to land use at Emory University that have a potential impact on Druid Hills.
2. The special committee will not have responsibility over applications or other issues for which the bylaws have already assigned responsibility to either the Landmark District Preservation Committee or the DeKalb Land Use & Historic Preservation Committee.
3. The special committee shall be called the “Emory Land Use Committee.”
4. The members of the special committee shall be appointed by the President.
5. The special committee shall remain activated until the Board deactivates the special committee.