

DRUID HILLS CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

Board Meeting

Wed., August 21, 2019 @ 7:30 pm

Location: St. John's Lutheran Church

IN ATTENDANCE

Officers:

Past Pres./Ex-Officio:

Div Chairs:

2019:

2020:

2021:

Guests:

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM

June and July minutes were approved

Kit made announcements: Need new Secretary and Tour Chair. Rob Kincheloe will take over from Kit as Land Use Chair. Board voted to approve this.

- Alida: How do you go about this, my first reaction is to look again at the tour, the board list, other things
 - Is there any sort of strategy?
- Kit: I could cold call various members; we know some of their interests
 - It would be nice if we could tap some of the folks who have worked on the tour
 - However these folks are tired
 - This is a structural issue with the org; we don't have any succession plan for these committees
 - Cynthia W was sponsorship chair for seven years
- Alida: I'm looking for solutions
- Kit: if someone wants to cold call all interested members
- Anne: I talked with Bonnie Wolf and she had some very good suggestions of folks we should tap into that have previously been active
 - Bonnie knows them
 - There will be an initial meeting the second week of September
 - I begged Bonnie to do this herself; she ***might*** be persuaded, but either way she's been around a long time and she has some good ideas
 - We are looking for co-chairs
 - The Geigriches would be wonderful co-chairs
 - The Harolds were the same kind of ask but they just moved into a new home

- Phil: I believe the tour and membership could be more effective if we had a paid professional staffer to relieve some of the burdens that our volunteers have suffered under for years
 - I think it would be a good investment
- Alida: are you familiar with the year we did have a paid tour chair and that experience?
- Phil: when was this?
- I'm not talking about a chairman; I'm talking about paid staff person
- Alida: who remembers when the civic assoc had an ED?
- She was a paid staff person
- Alida: would be good to look into the experience with a paid ED
- Alida: My own opinion is that a paid ED did not work
- Thea: to me the membership committee should be paired with the parent network; we want these parents to sign up for the civic association
- Could we combine these two missions?
- Kit notes this might help us pull in some younger blood as well
- Thea: I've been membership chair before; I'd have to find someone to take over the Public Safety Committee chair role
 - This could be a short term solution to get through this year
 - I can't leave the public safety committee without a chair
- I would push for two things:
 - That I hook up with the Parent Network
 - That we dedicate one of our newsletters to nothing but membership
 - Anne: this what the November issue is about
- Fran says yes, we can do this with the Nov issue
- Chris: I'd like to come back to Phil's suggestion
 - I recognize that our paid attempts at paid positions have had questionable success but this isn't a reason to dismiss this idea out of hand
 - Since the tour is our #1 revenue source, we ought to have someone who has professional skills in fundraising involved on some level
 - We have talked about having a matrix / roster of all the skills that are represented on this board
 - Justin and Renee and perhaps others raise their hands
 - This is our major fundraising activity; we sink or swim based on the success of this
 - I think we should consider going through a vetting process
 - Identify what the job is, what we want done and when, how much we're willing to pay
 - I'd like to see us kick this idea around and not throw it away just bc we had a bad experience a couple of years ago
 - Many non-profits outsource to backfill gaps in their capabilities
- Justin agrees that the conversation needs to be had but this isn't the right forum; perhaps EC should take this up
- Kit will put this on the agenda for the next EC meeting
- COMMITTEE REPORTS
 - Transportation – Van
 - The main activity for the past couple of months was a sub committee that was formed to look at the Clifton area bicycle and pedestrian connectivity study
 - We had our second meeting last Tuesday
 - At this meeting there was a request by several folks in the group

- Our main objective is to study the report and possibly bring to the board a statement position
 - The next meeting is scheduled for this coming Tuesday
- Anne: Honora scheduled a meeting with Jeff Rader's office at DeKalb county
 - Jeff Rader, Davis Fox from Kathy Gannon, David P from DeKalb transportation, Patrice Keeter
 - She had a list of about seven items; we were there for about 90 minutes
 - Kit joined as well
 - It surprised me how often they asked for the opinion of the DHCA
 - Honora suggested they bring some resolution to the board
 - 95% of these residents are opposed to this thing
 - DHCA does have a prior resolution
 - Van will craft a resolution that we will look at in a month
 - Anne: one thing that came out: Honora brought forth some of the various theories that folks on Lullwater have such as "they own the road"
 - Jeff Rader explained that Joel Hurt may have deeded acreage by lot into what was to be Lullwater Road, once a municipality begins to maintain this they own it
 - Anne asked Honora to explain this to her fellow residents
 - Use the example of Clifton Ridge
 - A developer poured the cul de sac, put in all the plumbing and infrastructure, and when this is finished the property is deeded to the county and if the county agrees to maintain then they accept ownership of it.
 - There were several things similar to this, and between Patrice Keeter and Jeff Rader – Jeff's response to Honora suggesting the residents don't know what is going on was that this report goes into a hopper that feeds into a 30 year transportation plan
 - The first phase is mass transit and then we'll move on to the next thing and then the next
 - In this hopper are all kinds of plans across all of DeKalb county
 - All these plans get scored
 - When any particular plan bubbles up to the top, and this could be 25 years from now, if there were to be something proposed that would impact DH we would come and engage with DH residents
 - He asserted that DeKalb County has never done anything in DH without working with the residents
 - Anything like traffic calming on the roads are always resident initiated; these are never initiated by the county. For instance bulb outs on roads or speed humps
 - Phil asks is this the same in COA?
 - Sue: Apparently COA is different, but all the steps that the residents have to take is crazy
 - For the speed bumps on the byway I got all the signatures of all my neighbors
 - Then they come to do a study
 - Then they give Sue a plan and Sue has to get signatures from everyone on title
 - I have to tell them there will be a \$25 assessment per year
 - Van says it's very a similar process
 - Leon says I've litigated issues like this and this is nonsense
 - Either the county has right of way given by the developer or a plat that says that county ...
 - When the Clifton Ridge plat was filed there would be dedication language
 - For anyone on Lullwater to say they own the road; this is a serious allegation that needs to be researched

- Aren't they doing research on the twittens?
- Dekalb has gone back to the deeds from way back when and the documents are unreadable essentially
- Most agree that the twittens are public property
- Leon motions that we ask Jeff Rader to research who owns Lullwater road
- Alida seconds
- Anne suggests letting the residents push for this
- Alida: both sides need to back up what they are saying
- If the private citizens own the road they'd have to maintain it says Anne
- Honora is looking for every opportunity to throw up a challenge
- Kit offers to call Rader over having a board vote / resolution
- Justin: are we going to ask the same for Springdale and Oakdale
- Kit: I know that Honora is a pit bull
- Moving on in the agenda
 - The one thing I got out of this meeting is street lights so that's good
- COMMUNICATIONS
 - The Sept issue of the magazine is at the printer right now
 - We need to turn our attention to the Nov newsletter
 - This is a good kick off to our membership drive
 - Fran will reach out to committee chairs
 - The deadline for the next issue is loosely Oct 1
 - Other discussion:
 - Do we know why people aren't joining?
 - Is there anything we can do soon that might help us understand what the barriers are to joining?
 - Phil: what Thea said about getting the parents' network involved resonates with me
 - Phil has already talked to the two co-chairs and they seem amenable
 - We need to get more young people and young families and we are looking for a window into that demographic
 - The EVA streets alive will be the last Sunday in Oct so if membership would like to have a table or booth let Anne know and she'll speak to EVA about it
 - The Parent Network will have a table also
 - The last streets alive is where they got most of the names of their current members
 - It would be good to get the Division Chairs more active
 - It all starts with the Division Chairs and welcoming new people to the community
 - Anne: do you think that when we stopped mailing a physical mailer that this caused an appreciable drop off compared to doing it just through wild apricot
 - Tom: it's based on the demographic; younger folks are more electronic
 - Thea: I still don't think that we're really connecting with the community
 - The whole reason I wanted to donate the yard sale proceeds
 - I asked if we could send an info flyer through their email (Fernbank elementary) that goes weekly
 - Every committee needs to be reaching out to the community
 - My gut feeling is that the community thinks that the civic assoc is made up of the "Dale" streets
 - We've got to reach out to people and it's got to be non-stop
 - There are so many little areas of passion and expertise; folks in the community don't know what we stand for

- What are the two or three things we plan to do well this year and into the next few years, what is our clear message?
 - What are the barriers and how do we refine
 - Kit: we are hoping to engage more folks in the community
 - Jan: membership in the civic association and the druid hills patrol makes sense; why don't we bundle them?
 - Anne: the patrol asks for \$400/year
 - We ask for \$35
 - Ansley Park and Morningside/Lenox patrols are embedded in their civic associations
 - Thea: I talked to the guy who heads up public safety and he said they have a very active patrol
 - Also COA is constantly coming through their neighborhood
 - The streets are, you can get lost back there
 - They have a commitment; Morningside/Lenox Park has levels of membership: No patrol, patrol, vacation patrol
 - It all boils down to data and information; at least research it and see what's out there
 - Kit: you still think that tying ourselves more tightly to the patrol would drive membership? Thea: yes
- 2020 TOUR COMMITTEE MEETING SEPT 2
 - We have no tour chair
- 2020 BUDGET DISCUSSION
 - Any questions from last month's meeting?
 - We will publish this to the website and this will be our outward facing document to the public
 - We're trying to make this a zero income budget; we anticipate spending every dollar that comes in
 - We therefore need our committee chairs to commit to their missions
 - We've been budgeting \$1000/division and we've not spent a single one of these dollars for many years
 - The big thing about this budget is that if you're a committee chair, please use this money
 - Let's promote ourselves and put ourselves out there
 - Justin: Fairview throws a Halloween party every year
 - How do I give them some money?
 - Tom: I think that would fall under community activities
 - Bring it up with John, he can bring it up to the EC and then it would go to the board
 - Does it need to be this cumbersome, filling out a form, etc?
 - They need to fill out the form, send it to treasurer, the treasurer brings it to the EC, this has always been the process
 - What does the civic association get out of a donation like this?
 - Phil notes this is similar to the parade; it's not necessarily a DHCA thing
 - Kit says we could put signage out
 - Yvette: so this is on the website
 - The \$1000/division is no longer there
 - If this budget is approved, we'll upload to the website and make it public
 - Leon: bc of the nightmare on N Decatur road at Oakdale and Springdale perhaps we could get a traffic cop out there, perhaps Emory could chip in?

- If we could split the cost of a traffic cop with Emory, maybe this would alleviate some of the issues we're experiencing
- Thea: I called Emory last summer when the south entrance off Oxford turned into a total traffic jam
- I contact Emory and they immediately sent an officer to help direct traffic
- Our committee early on was trying to get the four enforcement groups to work more closely together: Patrol, Emory, COA and DeKalb County
- Doug talked to the transportation committee about us possibly purchasing a used radar gun, getting data on each street and taking this data to our commissions
- Leon: there was a community meeting with Emory a couple of months ago; the Emory representative said they are not concerned with what goes on on neighborhood streets
- Thea: we talked about car breakins; from 12 to 2 they said they'd increase their patrols down N Decatur road
- Chris: Leon, if you want to make a request, please work with the public safety committee, they can bring it to the EC and the EC can bring it to the board
- Phil: the surplus through June, \$66K ish, where does that go?
- Tom: we have a checking account, perhaps at BB&T. John wants to move this; it's a very low i
- \$125K in the checking account and perhaps around \$95K in the other account
- Periodically we'll move funds from the checking account into the interest bearing account
- We try to keep at least one year of cash on hand so we can run operations for a year
- We'll shift the difference into the interest bearing account
- Alida: for instance, under Parks / Greenspace, other
 - Tom said we can provide a subschedule if someone wants it
 - It shows what makes up the funds for a specific number
 - The item Alida is concerned with is under planned donations
 - We're trying to keep this version to one page; if we include everything it might be 10 pages long
 - Alida should request a sub schedule from John
 - There is \$12K in unassigned; is there a subschedule for this one?
 - No
 - That's why it's called unassigned
 - There are orgs that we have committed to a membership fee if not a donation; might they fall off the radar?
 - This is a question for John
 - He can provide the report out of Quickbooks
 - We create this fil through V lookups
- Phil: people can request part of that 12K
- It's incumbent upon someone who wants to spend some of that \$12K to use the forms on the website to request the funds
- Tom: I understand that you're asking for a list of the preservation orgs
- Anne: they have to make an application
- WE need a renewal or letter
- Tom says they always do this
- Anne moves to approve the budget
- Kit and other second
- Alida: I'm stunned that a board member who is trying to ask a question has essentially been slammed and I object

- I had one item and I have another
- Kit: please check with Tom
- The rule is you have a motion and then a second before you even begin discussion according to Robert's rules
- It's totally wrong to go to a vote the moment you have the motion
- Chris: we generally have the discussion before the final vote
- Chris: it seems like your questions are more operational than structural or about the overall assignment of monies to various questions
- If you have further questions about this please get with Tom or John and work those out
- We are trying to avoid having the whole board involved in this discussion
- Alida: the second part of what I was asking for comes under Parks, Greenspace and Watershed
- John said that we need a committee to focus on this
- Alida: I think our parks are important, I am asking the board if they are important enough to be named here?
- I have provided input to the budget when it was first called for and again after last month's presentation of the draft and all input has been ignored
- Chris: all of your questions are covered under Parks, Greenspace and Watershed; just because we aren't naming each individual item doesn't mean we don't care about this
 - I would object to the idea of trying to list every line and subline item
 - In my role with the gov't it drove people crazy; in reality you want the flexibility to work with various organizations over time and to have the leeway to make these choices over the years
 - We are attempting to present the budget in a streamlined way that captures everything that everyone does
 - We are attempting to keep some categorical and operational streamlining so we have flexibility to do what we want to do
 - Kit: I think in aggregate we allocated more money to Parks and Greenspace
- Parks can be included in Other
- The purpose of having a committee chair would be to manage this says Tom
- The twittens are public property says Alida
- Anne notes the opinion is coming
- Leon: am I hearing any objection to any item on the budget, any particular line item?
- Alida: I'm trying to understand what is covered but I'm hearing conflicting evidence
- LAND USE COMMITTEE
 - They have done good work on zoning on Briarcliff north of the Metro church
 - \$2.85 million for three homes
 - Steve Misner – the land use committee unanimously rejected it
 - There is lots of opposition, the case is very strong
 - For once the community is unanimously behind it so I suspect the thing is going to be killed
 - Kit has tapped a chair to replace him as Land Use Chair: Rob Kincheloe
 - I'm in real estate; I work in
 - I lived in Grant Park for 10 years and then moved to DH in 2013
 - Licensed but not currently active in real estate
 - Development investment

- Kit: we've done what we had to do to shepherd responsible development in DH
- BRuce: the last HPC
 - The condos on Briarcliff – they came up to be redone
 - There were two provisos: maintaining sidewalks toward Emory
 - Installing street lights; s
 - 440 Burlington: historic cottage was to be knocked down; the lot is large and the building is very small
 - The applicant came in a year with a plan that grossly exceeded the size
 - Was given advice on what to do and not to do
 - The applicant came back a year later with the exact same plan
 - The larger issue is accepting COA applications for things that exceed aspects of the code
 - It would be like proposing a large house in a flood plain; why should you accept an application that don't meet aspects of the code
 - This is a brand new board with just two holdovers
 - Nine folks showed up but only two got to speak
 - The recommendation was to defer vs. denying and the applicant got a deferral
 - There is a creek running through this property
 - Not sure how they got this variance
 - Alida: how does this question get put before them
 - Bruce: we made the statement that it shouldn't be put before them
 - Kit: there's a lot of blind spots and there will now also be a lot of fresh faces
 - Most of the issues we've had have been site issues; trees being cut down on boundaries, etc
 - Site is more important than the house itself says Kit
 - They'll spend an hour deliberating nuances of a window and ignore a 60-inch beech about to be cut down
- LANDMARK
 - Nothing new to report at this point in time
 - The projects we've talked about for the past six months are ongoing
- ANNE: don't forget the Sunday afternoon book signing at the bridal pavilion at the Cater Wolford gardens in the Frazer center; drop by for light refreshments and get an autographed copy of the book
- Meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM