

Berkeley Park Bulletin

May 2008

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President's Report

by Ron Horgan
(404) 355-0220
rhorgan@ansleygolfclub.org

Dear neighbors,

Another spring has come and summer is around the corner in Berkeley Park. It is that time again to get out and enjoy Atlanta weather with our neighbors. I would like to invite all the neighbors of Berkeley Park to join in **The Second Annual Berkeley Park Fund Raising Chili Cook-Off**, Sunday June 22nd from 2-6PM. With the success of last year's event we again are hoping to get between 6-10 official contestants for this one, and again there will be no fee for the contestants. We plan to have some special guest judges from the neighborhood as well as some surprise guest judges. The contestants will need to provide the chili, obviously, the heating or warming equipment (I can provide some if needed), serving utensils and any special condiments you would like to go with your chili. BPNA will provide water and soft drinks and paper goods to enjoy our contestants' chili. We will also make arrangements to have pasta salad, cole slaw and tossed salad as well as **Ribs and Chicken**, chips and condiments to round off the menu. If anyone wants to help out with these items and the manning of the grill please contact me. Negotiations are underway to secure live music for the event as well as closing Forrest Way between Antone Street and Berkeley Avenue. So dust off your recipes once more and call or email me to get your name on the list as a contestant by June 10th. The admission will be \$15.00 per person to raise money for neighborhood improvements that are in the plans and offset some of the cost of the food and drinks. Mark your calendars and look for Yahoo group announcements for continued details as well as a rain date. I hope to have a new order of flags, sweatshirts and t-shirts ordered and in by the 22nd for sale then also.

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As we all know, lots of things are happening on Howell Mill. I wish I could give a better and clearer update on the completion of the road work but I can not. My calls to the city, although they fall on sympathetic ears, have not been able to produce any results. We were told of an end of April completion on April 4th and that deadline has come and gone. I would like to encourage everyone to call Councilwoman Muller's office at 404-330-6051 and Deputy Commissioner of Public Works Sandra Jennings at 404-330-6215 and ask for results. I am afraid the squeaky wheels need to out of storage for this one.

The Cartel Property at the corner of Verner and Howell Mill is in the city's approval process for development of the site. Jim Martin received drawings as the NPU chair on the property and shared them with me. Currently the plan shows reusing the existing building, adding some greenspace about the size of one of our neighborhood's smaller lots and putting in parking. Not much detail was given on the plans, they are mainly to show compliance of the Beltline overlay requirement. The concept reported to me is to be that of a gourmet burger joint called "Flip" with acclaimed Atlanta Chef Richard Blais. We will see what comes of this.

On afternoon of Saturday, May 17th Underwood Hills will be having their neighborhood social at the Underwood Hills Park with a BBQ being served around 5 pm. If you are in the area stop in and say hello. On Sunday, May 18th at 5 pm Tawn Chi has organized another Senior's delivered dinner for our two neighborhoods. Last year the seniors were so excited that we would think to do something like this for them. We plan to deliver 18 meals. We think we have all of the seniors on our list but if you know any seniors in Berkeley Park or Underwood Hill that may not be included in our list email me and I will verify that they are included. Tawn is to be commended for her efforts.

At the last BPNA meeting we discussed our two main topics of interest lately. Park and Traffic Calming. Dwight Glover has been looking at more opportunities for the neighborhood to secure greenspace and Jim Martin is looking into traffic study opportunities. Not much has changed in regards to either of these concerns but we will keep plugging away. We also discussed doing some aesthetic projects to various areas. One interesting idea is to put some decorative pole planters with our logo at various strategic spots throughout the neighborhood that will define our boundaries in another way and pretty up the place.

I invite everyone come to the next meeting on Monday, May 19th, 7pm at the Senior Center to give input, get involved actively and constructively in your neighborhood's development.

NPU-D Report

by Jim Martin

james.martin@me.gatech.edu

The April 25 th NPU-D meeting was fairly busy and, with a few exceptions, moved along at a reasonable pace. We had quite a few city staff members there from various departments. If the early word on the mayor's new budget proposal is correct, this may be a thing of the past. It sounds as if community outreach will be pretty high on the list of things to be cut. Councilwoman Felicia Moore was there on the 25th and updated us on the budget situation. She was clearly very unhappy about it. Apparently, substantial staff cuts have been proposed in the City Planning Bureau (the agency that oversees NPUs)

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and in the city's already overburdened zoning and code enforcement offices. These cuts have not been as widely reported as the switch to biweekly recycling and yard trash collection and the associated staff reductions in the Public Works Department. Along with the substantial cuts in services, the mayor's proposed solution to the current, mysteriously unforeseeable, budget crisis will involve a significant increase in taxes. Perhaps, if the current crisis had been predictable, the decision to relegate an enormous portion of the city's property tax base to the Beltline TAD (where it would generate future revenue at "no cost" to the city's tax payers) would not have seemed like such a hot idea.

We had five zoning cases on our April agenda. The first of these was for a straightforward residential setback variance in Underwood Hills that had been unanimously approved by UHNA. The applicant for this variance was unexpectedly absent from the meeting and had not provided anyone with information to present his case. Because of this we unanimously voted to defer consideration of it.

Our second case was for a reduction in required parking for the new Selig development at the corner of Chattahoochee and Collier Rd (formerly Hills Ave). We had previously approved a variance for this project, but the number of spaces, building area, and expected uses changed since that approval thereby requiring a new variance. Since the development had already been completed, there did not seem like much point to debating its merits, and we approved the variance by a vote of 8 to 0 with three abstentions.

Our third case was for the rezoning of the Georgian Hills apartment complex that is in NPU-C across Collier Rd from NPU-D. Coro is proposing to rezone and redevelop this complex. They have been negotiating the details of their plan with an NPU-C task force that includes two members from Underwood Hills. Since those discussions are ongoing, Coro had requested a deferral. This was approved by a vote of 12 to 0.

Our fourth rezoning case was for the residential development at the corner of Deering and Northside Drive in NPU-E across the street from Berkeley Park. The site plans and elevations presented for this project were the same as the ones that we reviewed at the last two BPNA meetings. The developers had reverted to their original MR-4A zoning request for the site after toying with a density-doubling change to MR-5A a month earlier. It was a surprise to hear that NPU-E had endorsed the rezoning with no conditions, having opted instead to let the developer work these out in a contractual arrangement with Loring Heights. Given the nature of the site, which adjoins single family residences, some of us thought that this was an unwise choice. The rezoning was approved by a vote of 8 for, 1 against, and 2 abstentions.

Our last rezoning case was for a proposal to rezone the RA Siegel property at the corner of Chattahoochee and Ellsworth Avenue to allow for an obscenely dense residential development in the center of a nonresidential area. We discussed the numerous problems with this proposal at some length, before Underwood Hills representative Eva Nason made a motion to defer consideration of it because the applicants had not presented their case to the UHNA before coming to NPU-D. Some of us objected to deferral because the application clearly warranted an immediate denial, but the motion was approved by a vote of 7 favoring deferral and 2 favoring denial. After the meeting, Eva expressed regret that she did not move for a denial instead as she too believes that to be an appropriate decision. The developers have since moved to defer their ZRB (zoning review board) hearing in order to conduct a DRI (development of regional impact) review. This is the second rezoning applicant with an unpopular project in NPU-D to have taken this approach. It appears to be intended to preserve an option to buy a property that is contingent on the rezoning by dragging out the zoning review process for the longest time possible. Since financing problems have recently been hampering projects with appropriate zoning, this makes a certain amount

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of economic sense as a way to buy time. Also, dragging out the process creates the illusion that details are being worked out in contrast to the reality of the plan being fundamental flawed, unjustified, and unpopular. Developers who are eager to move ahead with their projects frequently avoid DRI review by submitting plans that fall just below the density that triggers this process rather than seeking it out.

Next NPU-D Meeting: Tuesday, May 27, 2008

7:30 pm

Agape Center, 2351 Bolton Road, NW

ALL NPU RESIDENTS ARE WELCOME!

Crime Watch

compiled by Maureen Finneran Hetrick

On Tuesday, April 15th, a neighbor on Woodward Way -- between Dellwood and Peachtree Battle -- drove up to her house around 4 pm to find a couple sitting in a car going through her mailbox. The mail had not yet arrived, but there was an outgoing magazine subscription card in the box. Through the back windshield, the homeowner could see the couple reading the card. The car had Tennessee plates (685 JXC) and was a light brown color, older model, make unknown. The male appeared to have reddish hair and a receding hairline. He had a left eye that appeared to be partially shut and was in his mid 30s to mid 40s. The female had dark hair pulled on top of her head.

We've been having lots of mail theft around Buckhead, so please remember that you should never put outgoing mail in your mailbox at all. Take it to a post office box. And for goodness sake, don't use your red flag!! This is like an advertisement to criminals. It's also a good idea to have all your bills and statements with personal information sent to your e-mail address.

Letter from the Atlanta Police Department

Good morning, as community leaders and Zone 2 residents, whom are interested in crime issues here in Zone 2, I have "blind copied" many of you on a theft from auto spree, which occurred on Friday, May 2, 2008. As you read the attachment, it informs you that several suspects were arrested for entering and taking items out of cars. Fortunately, an off-duty officer (SPO Billy Cartwright - Zone 1) working at 3380 Peachtree Road saw two Black Males and a Black Female tossing luggage into a trash receptacle and became alarmed. The officer contacted Zone 2 personnel (officers and radio dispatcher) and informed us of suspicious activity.

Our officers responded, located the Buick on Peachtree Road and stopped the vehicle. Their investigation revealed several purses, SIX laptop computers, GPS systems, cellular phones, and other bags - taken from 3368 Peachtree Road, 2339 Piedmont Road, and 1991 Howell Mill Road. I am forwarding the information to you, because we would request that you, as our residential leaders, please inform your family members, neighbors, and co-workers to PLEASE refrain from leaving ANY items of value inside of your vehicle. Criminals are venturing into the Zone 2 area, as stated by some of them, because they "know that stuff is left inside cars up here"...amazing!

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Remarkably, we have arrested TWENTY SIX individuals, since January 2008, for entering and taking items from cars, as oppose to only FIVE suspects during the same timeframe for 2007. Furthermore, we have had 848 incidents this year and only 476 during the same timeframe for 2007. Even though we are making the arrests, the crimes are still occurring-the courts are releasing the suspects as soon as we leave them at the jail.

Thus, to safeguard our citizens, and lower your crime rate, we have to diminish the supply for these menacing individuals and groups. Again, please ensure that there are ZERO items left inside our vehicles, whether we are parked at work, restaurants, shopping centers, places of religion, or even our most treasured locations: the home! Eventually, with your help in getting the word out and our continued patrols and arrests, we should see a decrease in larcenies from autos. Moreover, please dial 911 whenever you witness anything to be suspicious. If there are questions, please inquire.

Thank you for all of your efforts and interest,

Lieutenant Khirus E. Williams
Zone 2 assistant commander

Celebrate Tennis at Bitsy Grant

The Friends of Bitsy Grant Tennis Center are celebrating the kick-off of the USTA Pro League on Sunday, June 8 from 4-7 p.m. Bring your entire family to watch great tennis with local pros at Bitsy Grant Tennis Center at 2125 Northside Drive.

The Bitsyland String Band, a local group of musicians, who perform locally and call Bitsy *home*, will be playing. Enjoy old time music including fiddle tunes, folk, gospel and even some country western. Chili dogs, Cokes and onion rings from The Varsity are available. Children of all ages will enjoy tennis games and drills organized by volunteers from The Westminster Schools. A tennis racket and other tennis items donated by the USTA will be raffled.

The USTA Pro League is an opportunity for professional tennis players to compete locally. The match at Bitsy Grant is the first of the summer series of eight before they travel to neighboring centers. Watch players such as Stephen Enochs, Andre Janasik, Paul Mancini, Jonas Jarcholm, Matt Cozad, Maurice Roveri, Gavin O'Connell, Horace Reid, Eddie Gonzalez, Julian Raynal and Kip Layman all for free.

Call 404-575-0898 with questions on how to get involved or the Bitsy Grant Tennis Center at 404-609-7193 for more information .

Secretary's Report

by Michael Hagearty
mhagearty@mindspring.com

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Berkeley Park Neighborhood Association
April 21, 2008
Senior Citizens Center

President Ron Horgan announced that on May 18 he and Tawn Chi would be preparing a dinner for seniors living in Berkeley Park and Underwood Hills. Kroger is donating the food. Volunteers are needed for residential delivery, between 5-5:30 PM. To participate, e-mail Tawn at tc@tcproperties.net.

Ron reported that number of BPNA flags for sale is running low. He is gauging neighborhood interest for a new order.

June 22 is scheduled for the 2 nd annual BPNA Chili Cook-off and Battle of the Bands.

Dwight Glover met with the Trust for Public Land. The city is no longer in a position to put up money to help buy land for a park. However, he reported that a new law creates the opportunity for low-interest loans for parkland development. He is looking into that option for more information.

Melody Harclerode raised a discussion as to whether, given everyone's busy schedules, the neighborhood should reconsider hiring fundraisers to lead the park project.

Jim Martin reported that the development project at Deering and Northside has backed off plans to pursue MR5 zoning and instead seek a variance as an MR4A. He also informed attendees about a new mixed use/commercial project that is applying for MRC3 status. He expressed skepticism both that this was in the best interest of the area and in the application's likelihood of success.

About Us

The Berkeley Park Bulletin is published monthly in print and at www.berkeleypark.org by the Berkeley Park Neighborhood Association, a non-profit organization. It is distributed to all Berkeley Park residents 3 times a year. To subscribe to the monthly edition, submit an article or Talk Back letter, or inquire about advertising, contact the editor, Maureen Hetrick, at 404-609-9873 or maureenfh@mindspring.com. We accept appropriate articles from all Berkeley Park residents or other interested community members at the discretion of the editor and as space permits.

Membership in the BPNA is \$10 per person (up to 3 adults per address are eligible to become members), and \$5 for seniors. To join the association, attend a monthly meeting and pay dues to the treasurer, [Nina-Daniela Kleine](#), or the president, [Ron Horgan](#). If you cannot attend a meeting but wish to join, or for more information, email us at info@berkeleypark.org.

Berkeley Park is run solely on dues as well as advertisements from our sponsors. Please take a moment to visit our [sponsors](#) and thank them for their support of Berkeley Park.

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Calendar

To place events on the calendar, please contact
Maureen Finneran Hetrick at maureenfh@mindspring.com or 404-609-9873.

May

Monday, May 19

Berkeley Park Neighborhood Meeting

7 pm

Senior Citizen Services Center, 1705 Commerce Drive

Contact: Ron Horgan

at rhorgan@ansleygolfclub.org , (404) 355-0220

Wed., May 21

NCA Meeting

7 pm

Senior Citizen Services Center, 1705 Commerce Drive

Featured speakers: Martha Porter, chair of Atlanta's Zoning Review Board and Libba Grace, chair of the Board of Zoning Adjustment

Come learn about Atlanta's zoning process.

Contact: Michael Koblenz at byrere@aol.com or (404) 641-6005.

Tues. May 27

NPU-D meeting

7:30 pm

Agape Center, 2351 Bolton Road, NW

Contact: Jim Martin at (404) 351-6949, or james.martin@me.gatech.edu

June

Sun. June 8

Bitsy Grant Tennis Kick-off

Music, pro tennis, food for the whole family

4– 7 pm

Bitsy Grant Tennis Center

2125 Northside Drive

Contact: www.bitsytennis.com, 404-575-0898

Sun. June 22

The Second Annual Berkeley Park Fund Raising Chili Cook-Off

2—6 pm

Contact: Ron Horgan at rhorgan@ansleygolfclub.org , (404) 355-0220