



Combined Board/General Meeting Minutes

Ponce de Leon Library

Monday, October 1, 2007, 7:00 PM

Board Members in Attendance

Doris Betz – Alternate Secretary (Newsletters)
Allie Coker – Tour of Homes and Summerfest support
Hannah Coker – Secretary, Membership Chair
Rob Glancy – Parks & TOH Chair
Joe Krebs – Planning Co-Chair
Charlie LeFort – Sidewalks, Parks, Tour of Homes, and Summerfest support
Betsy Nicholas – Legal Committee
Karen Page - Treasurer
Pamela Papner – President & Summerfest Co-Chair
John Peak – Planning Co-Chair with Strategic Planning focus
Robbie Russell – Atkins Park Representative to Va-Hi Board
John Wolfinger – Safety Chair

I. Welcome

Pamela Papner

II. City/State/Police Officials

Office Schierbaum

- a. Officer Schierbaum informed the VHCA about personnel changes in the Police Department. Major Propes will be in Washington DC next three months in FBI leadership academy. Lt. Williams, the asst zone commander, is active zone commander during that period.
- b. As of 2 weeks ago, the Sector Seargent now supervises officers patrolling neighborhood
- c. There is a new beet officer, Officer Girley, who specializes auto and business break-ins
- d. Significant Recent Arrests:
 - i. A gentleman, Bobby Gains, was arrested on Bonaventure. He had been seen going through someone's window and had stolen a gun. He is currently in Fulton County jail, and was on parole for burglary.
 - ii. Troy Barber was arrested for break-ins in Poncy Highland area. An observant neighbor saw him. He had 6 prior convictions.



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- iii. There was an Ashland/Hill arrest of someone (Staznic) caught breaking into a car. He was driving another stolen car when arrested. He was arrested for grand theft.
- iv. There was a look out poster posted for Roshe Davis, who stole a car from 1026 Los Angeles. The police department had received calls regarding this individual casing the area for cars. He had been stopped 30 minutes prior to call for stealing a car. He sped away in construction truck with \$6,000 in tools, and was finally arrested in a stolen car in Zone 1.
- e. The police department needs help from the neighborhood to continue to catch and arrest these individuals. All of these arrests started with observant citizen being involved.
- f. The Mayor and city council recently approved a hire-back program. This program hires officers in their off time to patrol the streets. On duty officers primarily answer 911 calls, and do not have much time for preventative patrolling. Five officers are on each watch being proactive and being visible in high-crime areas. We should see more marked cars on the street as a result of this program.
- g. Doris' bedroom backs up to an alley on Briarcliff Summit. Saw three non-residents coming out of the building, making loud noises, piled in a car and sped off. People are throwing things out of windows. Happens quickly. The officer will notify Seargent Mills to investigate. New narcotics detectives have been recruited and trained and will soon be back on the street.
- h. John Wolfinger received email re: gun shots at Belleview, McClendon.

III. Anne Fauver's Office's Update

Ebony Farley

- a. No report from Anne's office.
- b. Ann introduced legislation for firefighters to purchase pet oxygen masks. Aim is to raise enough funds to purchase small med and large pet masks for all firehouses District 6. All donations can be sent to the City Council's office to Anne Fauver's attention.



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IV. General Updates

Pamela Papner

- a. Results of Election and Introductions

V. Zoning & Planning Variance Requests

Joe Krebs & John Peak

a. V-07-264, 1071 Monroe Drive

- **Current Situation** – Applicant seeks a variance from zoning regulations to reduce the half-depth front yard setback from 17.5' (required) to 7.3' and reduce the north side yard setback from 7' (required) to 4.3' to allow for a second story addition to an existing single-family house. Applicant verified Lot Coverage calculation with Jack prior to the meeting. Homeowner provided packet of information to each board member
 - i. Requested change to footprint to squares off area of house and make impervious an area of the house that used to exist. This changes the violation to side yard setback.
 - ii. City has everything but plans to move the garage back to have more impervious space.
 - iii. Any tree impact? None
 - iv. Applicant wants to re-present the variance request
- **Planning Committee Recommendation** – Unanimous (5) vote to recommend deferral at NPU-F meeting. Board requires stamped plans, recalculation of impervious coverage area and clarification of placement of garage. There is a nonconforming structure on side yard and front yard. They are not asking for a lot coverage variance.
- **Qualification for Variance**
 - i. The typical qualification for a variance is clearly showing a hardship that is caused by not allowing the variance. Current owner wants to expand house up and there is an odd corner on the other side of the house. The position of the planning committee is that no hardship has been demonstrated, that there is only a desire to maximize revenue of resale.
 - ii. However, the Planning Committee recommended squaring the house off



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- iii. Applicant believes the hardship is the lot is nonconforming to minimum lot requirements.
- iv. There is a water issue, which is a hardship.
- v. The house is a series of add-ons over 50 years.
- **Recommendations**
 - i. The group discussed the benefit of going up in way planned if applicant did not receive the squaring off variance. Group also discussed what makes going up without extending the footprint difficult.
 - ii. Jack recommends approving because the rear of the house is a mess. We still must deal with garage setback.
 - iii. Frazier feels that the house needs to be renovated and upgraded. During the discussions in zoning meeting, there was an issue of support on the corner if the variance is not approved. If increasing impervious area and outcome is better than what is there now, is that enough to allow the variance?
 - iv. Pamela said if approved, we should show that this is fine with the VHCA so he does not have to come back again between going to the city and NPU meeting.
- **Neighbor Support**
 - i. There are letters of support from neighbors, but these are unidentified as to which neighbors in which adjacent properties the letters are from.
 - ii. Any approval conditional on neighbors bordering the house on all sides. Confirmation of addresses and letters attributed to those neighbors.
- **Motion to approve V-07-264 conditional on the following:**
 - i. Moving of garage 2 feet into the yard
 - ii. Standard garage conditions (max 60amp electrical, no plumbing, max slab to ridge 16 feet)
 - iii. Removal of concrete slab behind existing bath on N.E. corner
 - iv. Letters of support from all contiguous neighbors



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v. Plans signed & dated 10/01/07

- Straw vote: 4 approve, no denials, several abstentions
- Unanimous approval by the board

b. V-07-167 – 890 Arlington Place

- **Current Situation** – Applicant seeks variance to reduce the north side yard setback from 7' (required) to 2' for 2-story room addition; reduce the rear yard setback from 10' (required) to 2', and increase the maximum total floor area from 30% (required) to the main structure to 37%, to allow for 2-story detached garage addition at rear of existing single family home.
- **Planning Committee Recommendation** – Unanimous (5) vote to recommend approval of a 2' side-yard setback (south side) and 2' rear yard setback. Note lot coverage is assumed to stay within 50%. Approval recommended with the following conditions: (1) Plans dated: 8/26/07 (note these need to be stamped by City), (2) Standard garage conditions of 60amp power and hose bib, (3) Garage size of 24'x24'x16' (l x w x h).
 - i. One thing came up in planning as concern, this plan is right at 50% lot coverage and there has to be a big cut-out in driveway to allow for it. Confirmed with city that this is a standard thing to do. Zoning code says you are not supposed to do this, but the City said it was ok. Cutout does not exist already, but is part of the plans. Concrete strips are being put in for tire treads, and this goes back to where it flares out leading to the garage.
- **Motion to approve** variances based on the following conditions:
 - a. Setback required from 7ft to 2ft
 - b. Rear from 10ft to 2ft
 - c. Floor area from 30% to 37% to accommodate detached garage addition at rear
 - d. Committee approved 2 ft side yard and 2ft rear yard, and lot coverage stays at 50%
 - e. Plans as of 8/26/07



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- f. Garage size 24x24x16
- g. Requirements are met
- h. Coverage of current plan is 46.5%
- i. Straw vote – favor 3, no nos, no abstentions
- j. Unanimous approval by board

c. V-07-244, 970 Los Angeles

- **Current Situation** – Applicant requests to be allowed to leave the strip of concrete in their driveway (460 sq. ft.), previously filled with grass and dirt. This will result in owners exceeding 50% of lot coverage to 55% OF LOT COVERAGE
- **Planning Committee Recommendation** – Unanimous (5) vote to recommend deferral at October NPU-F meeting, to give applicant time to consider options, including, but not limited to: (1) Complete removal of newly filled driveway strip and withdrawal of variance application, or (2) Partial removal of newly filled driveway strip and amendment of variance application for updated lot coverage.
- **Outcome** – Planning committee recommended deferral to review other options
 - i. Applicant not in attendance
 - ii. Motion to defer unanimous

d. V-07-258, 694 Cresthill

- **Current Situation** – Applicant is seeking the addition of 22x22 garage with rear entry to alley and new driveway. This will cause the lot coverage calculation to equal 51.8%. The Planning Committee delayed a vote until today because the applicant wanted to update site plan. The concrete driveway has been amended to add more grass, thus bringing the lot coverage calculation to 43.3%. Large tree in front was a concern near driveway. Frazier and Jack visited the home and met the homeowner Applicant requested taking out the center strip and making it grass. Have a



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14 year old son; need a place for his car in 2 years. Front part of driveway is where the tree is, and it has grown into the driveway.

- Planning Committee Recommendation – Committee delayed vote until Monday Oct. 1 before general/board meeting, to give applicant time to update site plan, showing removal of front most approx. 70 feet of driveway from side door forward. Note: it is not necessary for applicant to obtain City of Atlanta review/stamp prior to VHCA meeting, but that will be necessary prior to NPU-F hearing.
- **Motion:**
 - i. Need to know the 8 neighbors approval
 - ii. Motion to approve contingent on letters of approval from 8 contiguous neighbors
 - iii. Plans stamped 10/1/07
 - iv. Standard garage conditions
 - v. Garage height not to exceed 16 feet slab to ridge, 60 amp electrical, hose bib only, no electrical, no drain
 - vi. Motion seconded, and approved unanimously
- Next Steps:
 - i. Next meeting October 15th at Hillside cottages, off of Monroe
 - ii. Applicant to obtain letters of approval from 8 closest neighbors and document the location of 8 addresses in relation to the house.
 - iii. Applicant to send documents to Frazier. Draw a diagram of whose signatures collected and where they are in relation to the house. If go to Fulton County Tax Assessors website and print map of homes

VI. Virginia Highland Streetscape Project

Pamela Papner

- There will be a meeting on October 10th at 6:30pm at the Church of our Savior next to Chico's for a review of the Streetscape plans.



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- Revised plans have been developed. It is a time for the community to come by and review the revised plans for the streetscape project at N. Highland and Virginia Avenue.
- There were conflicting memories about whether or not the plans for what the island would become had been agreed to. The city has served a plan up, and the neighborhood needs to get involved to help shape the details
- Current rendering may not be as well defined as we would like. The original plans did not include this much detail. Jack White has original plans. This plan reduces parking spaces from 19 to 15, dumps traffic onto Todd, and we will need to specify a right turn off of Virginia. Will reduce drop off parking to Murphys. There is already an issue with cars trying to get into the bank parking lot, with traffic backing up onto VA. The situation needs to be looked at and thought about. What is the impact to traffic on N. Highland making left turn and traffic on VA trying to make a left turn?
- **Action Item:** Dorris to send out meeting notice in Email Communication
- **Action Item:** Jack White to send out plans to the Board
- **Action Item:** Board will get together with JD before meeting

VII. Parks Committee & Tour of Homes Committee Updates Rob Glancy

- There is a complete water ban in the City of Atlanta. No watering outside at all.
- Trees Atlanta is holding their annual tree sale on October 13th at Piedmont Park, from 8am-2pm. It is a good place to go to get information on varieties of trees that deal with drought. Proceeds from all sales will go to Va-Hi/Morningside.
- There is a Beltline Meeting on Thurs Oct 11 from 6-8 downtown at 130 Trinity
- Tour of Homes will take place Dec 8th and 9th. The committee is currently finalizing sponsorships. To date they have finalized the homes, restaurants, and press sponsors. All interested in



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volunteering or sponsoring the event should send an email
tour@vahi.org.

VIII. Orme Park Update

- The Orme Swarm will be held Sunday October 21st from 4-7pm. It is a celebration of the adoption of the final master plan. It will be a potluck dinner and all are invited to participate.
- The Orme Park Fall Workday will be held Sat, Nov 3rd from 9am-12pm. The entire neighborhood is invited.

IX. Safety Committee Update

John Wolfinger

- There is an upcoming National Conference for preventing crime in Atlanta. John will attend to learn more about crime prevention.
- On Oct 13th CERT (Civilian Emergency Response Team) will be holding a Disaster Drill, which is performed by a citywide mock disaster team. John and JD will attend.

X. Membership Committee Update

Hannah Coker

- Hannah encouraged all in attendance to sign up or renew memberships with the VHCA.
- The group discussed looking into creating the ability for people to sign up for memberships on-line in the future. John mentioned that we may have e-commerce capabilities through our existing web hosting provider, and he will look into what the options might be.
- The committee also intends to update the "Join the VHCA" webpage in the coming weeks.

General meeting ended