

**Virginia-Highland Civic Association  
2011/2012 Strategic Plan  
January 11, 2012**

In accordance with Article I, Section 7 of the Bylaws of Virginia-Highland Civic Association, the following goals and objectives are presented for comment and adoption by the Board of Directors. These goals and objectives will guide the Board of Directors in carrying out the business of the Association, through the following committees:

- I. Budget Committee**
- II. Communications Committee**
- III. Fundraising Committee**
- IV. Parks Committee**
- V. Planning Committee**
- VI. Safety Committee**

**I. Budget Committee**

**Primary Contacts:** Frazier Dworet, Lola Carlisle, Jack White

**Goal:** Insure the general legal financial obligations of the association are met and that the assets of the association are safeguarded. Review budget procedures and bookkeeping practices in order to improve access to financial information.

- categorize costs to provide more access to detail of costs by committee/effort
- keep an accurate record of income and expenses of Association
- review goals and budgets to ensure goals are attached to tactics with detailed budget projections
- identify goal for monthly reporting of actuals versus budgeted – to allow for reallocation of funds as goals may be adjusted through the year (requiring more or less funds)
- provide insurance for officers and volunteers
- establish and implement standard practices of fiduciary responsibility within the association.

**II. Communications Committee**

**Primary Contacts:** Brian Gross, Lola Carlisle, Ida Centner (Programmer), Christopher Fling (Ad Sales), Brent Schnee (Voice Editor), Anne Woodward (Contact Lists)

**Goals:**

1. Raise awareness of VHCA and neighborhood activities and provide useful information and planning resources to the community through print (Voice and other mailers) but primarily by greatly increasing the quality of communication via electronic media (incl. website, email, and Facebook)

2. Develop and publish editorial plan and calendar
3. Assess and structure ad units and prices across all communication channels.
4. Attract advertisers and retain existing ones for both online and print ads
5. Compile more complete email list for e-communication – while maintaining compliance about opting in and out
6. Roll out new VHCA Website with CMS for all board to use after training on the software
7. Maintain (sub-)sites for Summerfest and Tour of Homes to ensure their effective marketing

**Tactics:**

1. Work with committee to create communications plan and present to board. (Ongoing.)
2. Committee to establish editorial plan and calendar and present to board. (Jan. 15)
3. Committee to set ad units and prices. (Jan. 15)
4. Christopher to create list of potential advertisers and communication regarding new advertising opportunities, benefits and prices - ongoing
5. Anne to work with Brian on activities such as improving the email lists, getting the word out about electronic Voice and other activities to be determined. (ongoing)
6. Improve effectiveness of email campaigns and quality of email layout with MailChimp and Formstack tools. (Partially complete; ongoing)
7. Enhance look and feel of emails to match new website. (April 2012)
8. Brent and Brian to solicit quality, relevant content for publication across all channels. (ongoing)
9. Solicit committees to identify old material to migrate and new material to add. Finalize design, port old content and create new assets. Content porting activities Jan & Feb; content ported by 2-15-12.
10. Maximize the online content and resources by training the Board to use the CMS, encouraging them to place as much relevant content and information online, and by continuously encouraging them to publish in a timely manner. Training in Feb 2012. "Encouragement" activities are ongoing.

### **III. Fundraising Committees**

#### **A. 2012 Summerfest**

**Primary Contacts:** Pamela Papner, Ann Guy

**Goals:**

1. Identify & train new committee members; increase committee capacity
2. Earn revenues equivalent to or greater than last year

3. Offer a fun, safe, quality event for all ages
4. Continue to solicit participation by local businesses
5. Maintain high quality of artwork
6. Continue successful community parade & dinner
7. Review comments and suggestions from last year's road race entrants in planning this year's race

**Tactics:**

Increase revenues:

- Sell the 15 available neighborhood sponsorships.
- Pay strict attention to cost of beverages and select those that will maximize contribution margin.
- Implement tighter alcoholic beverage cash controls / possible cup inventory program, if feasible.
- Monetize Kidsfest again this year
- Maintain cost of artist market booths at last year's level
- Improve quality of publicity and advertising
- Develop brochure with artist names/locations, as we did last year
- Appoint specific person to be in charge of print/online PR
- Post street banners on light posts and within square
- Try to sell leftover premium items

Encourage participation by and benefits to local businesses.

- Offer other promotional opportunities – food tastings, publicity booth, etc.

**Timeline:**

- Kick-off meeting to be held no later than January 2012.
- Complete contracts & insurance:
- Artist Market, Road Race and Movie contracts to be completed by Feb. 2012.
- Radio sponsor contract completed. It includes Tour of Homes radio/DJ chatter support.
- PEM contract to be completed by Feb. 2012.
- Review and finalize event insurance by 5/1/12.

**B. VHCA ToH**

**Primary Contacts 2011:** Charlie LeFort, Ann Guy, Cindy Kaufman, Mandi Robertson, Eleanor Barrineau, Lauren Wilkes Fralick

**Goals:**

- Continue to develop the home tour as one of the premiere home tours in the region
- Maintain the grassroots feel of the home tour while showcasing exquisite homes

- coupled with first class food tastings
- Improve the profitability of the tour through close analysis of past successes and failures. Ensure sponsorship money is successfully solicited and collected
- Develop a cohesive team to put on a neighborhood friendly event
- Be cognizant of issues regarding infill housing during the home selection process and showcase the importance of the historic character of Va-Hi via the homes selected
- Work toward more tie-ins with the local Virginia-Highland Business Community

**Tactics/Timeline:**

- 3/1/12 – 2012 Tour Director and Steering Committee in Place
- 4/1/12 – All committee chairs in place
- 5/15/12 – All Homes Selected for Tour
- 10/1/12 – Restaurants Selected for Tour
- 11/15/12 – Sponsorship Deadline
- 12/8/12 & 12/9/10 – 2012 Virginia Highland Tour of Homes

**IV. Parks Committee**

**John Howell Park, Orme Park, Va-Highland Island, New Highland Park and Streetscape (the Triangle)**

**Primary Contacts:** Lauren Wilkes Fralick and Jack White

**2012 Goals/Tactics/Timeline:**

- Monitor and advocate for all VaHi community parks and public spaces.
  - Organize and create a network of citizens interested in parks and park activities. Stage occasional volunteer days to work on plantings and cleanups, etc.
  - Oversee new plantings with the Parks Department and non-profits such as Trees Atlanta.

**A. John Howell Park**

Ongoing:

- Develop a group of interested citizens to monitor, volunteer, and advocate for the park.
- Develop and maintain a functional and inclusive relationship with the CoA Parks Department that makes effective use of the services they can provide.
- Engage Volleyball Atlanta and begin the process of finding solutions to the maintenance challenges posed by the volleyball courts.
- Renovate the lawns; clearly define their boundaries, and reduce runoff from them.

By end of spring:

- Develop a comprehensive plan that systematically addresses the challenges posed by the existing uses of John Howell Park, improves its appearance and minimizes maintenance. Begin its implementation, including (but not limited to) these tasks: Simplify the planting at the Virginia Ave. entrance and the Howell Memorial. Prune & clean understory areas. Repair the fence on the southern boundary of the park. Remove all invasive plants. Design and determine cost of a set of steps from the lower western levels park to the higher areas on the east. Identify, cost, prioritize and plan for additional tasks.

## **B. New Highland Park**

**Primary Contact:** Virginia-Highland Conservation League, Inc. and Pamela Papner

### **Goals:**

- Complete permits and complete construction – End of Q1
- Apply for more grants & plan fundraisers to earn incremental funds to apply to retirement of mortgage debt
- Organize & recruit more resident participation in fundraising – Q2
- Plan for ways to utilize the land for revenue producing activities (i.e.: weddings)

## **C. Orme Park**

Ongoing:

Monitor the growth and functionality of the renovation completed last year. Continue the park's well-established tradition of community participation by having at least one spring or fall volunteer day. Re-convene the Orme Park committee and being focusing on the goals identified but not addressed by last year's project, particularly the renovation of the northwest steps and the riparian corridor. Maintain a functional and inclusive relationship with the CoA Parks.

## **D. The Triangle and Streetscape (and other street frontages)**

**Primary Contacts:** Lauren Wilkes Fralick and Jack White

Repair the park benches that are broken in both areas. Seek and implement solutions to strengthen and preserve the remaining benches. (Q1) Establish additional plantings in the Triangle. (Q2) Continue working with Parks arborist and arborists from the Department of Parks to replace the two Bradford Pears in front of Belly. (Q3)

## **V. PLANNING COMMITTEE:**

### **A. Planning**

**Primary Contacts:** Mark Arnold, Lola Carlisle, Genny Ferraro, Nicole Foerschler Horn, Jack White

**Goals Ongoing:**

- Review all new applications for variances, special exceptions and liquor licenses and make recommendations to the Board.
- Represent the association's interests at NPU-F meetings, with special attention to NPU activities that impact Virginia-Highland. Provide updates and feedback to VHCA Board.
- Attend relevant BZA meetings to advocate for VHCA and NPU decisions. Monitor trends and developments within BZA.
- Monitor the development of public policies in the city that might impact the neighborhood and the Association, with a particular emphasis on land use, zoning, transportation and the environment.
- Monitor the ongoing development of the commercial nodes to ensure that development does not adversely affect residents and traffic patterns in the surrounding streets
- Compile and maintain a record of all existing businesses in each NC node. Share with the City and business owners a list of each node's eating and drinking establishments.
- Review public education policies and help educate residents learn and respond to their impacts.
- Respond to citizen complaints and concerns about potential building code violations.
- Monitor Beltline-related developments and other citywide transportation and development initiatives, including the contemplated extension of Ponce de Leon Place through Kroger to North Ave. Lauren Wilkes Fralick may be involved in these efforts.

#### **Goals 2012:**

- Work with Communications to create an online database that Planning will update on an ongoing basis as applications move through the process. Contemplated are displays of the applications and plans, Planning Committee notes, and the votes of the Planning Committee, VHCA Board, NPU-F and BZA. Q2
- Prepare online info about the variance process and how it is handled within VHCA. Q1
- Review VHCA's bylaws and recommend revisions in a timely manner to the board. Q2.
- Continue monitoring the outcomes of ongoing stormwater mitigation strategies at Callanwolde on adjacent residents on Rosedale Road. Q3
- Provide formal opportunities for the committee, board and public to increase their understanding of the Neighborhood Commercial code and its meaning, limits & application within VaHi. Q1
- Formalize the committee's approach and response to variance applications. Q2
- Map parking spaces and their assignors at each NC node. Q1

#### **B. Preservation & History**

**Primary Contacts:** Lola Carlisle, Brian Gross, Karri Hobson-Pape, Judy Potter, Jack White,

**Mission:** Promote and Identify and preserve the historic features and defining qualities of Virginia-Highland.

**Goals/Tactics/Timelines:**

- 1) Search for a site to house a VH History Center; speak with local commercial property owners and city officials regarding available space in visible locations. Q1
- 2) Maintain and expand historic archives (already in existence as result of research done for historic designation and Images of America – Virginia-Highland) and digitize historic images and documents – post (on an ongoing basis) on site within VHCA site. (The majority of these archives belong to Lola Carlisle and Karri Hobson-Pape, who will have final approval of any uses of these images.)  
Post and maintain preservation and history section on VHCA web site using archival conventions: 1) Database - load images and documents by street, family name, business name, organization name, event, movement, cause, subdivision, commercial node, building name, developer, architect, artist, publication, 2) load overarching historic documents (Linda Merrill’s history, Voice history articles, maps, etc.) 3) Area to type in stories and contribute images, 4) Meeting schedule and relevant event/activity dates, 5) Resources (design guidelines, for example) and Important Org links (other historic groups), 6) Create an email sub-group interested in historic information email notifications. By August 31.
- 3) Inform (through events, meetings and vahi.org) the citizenry about the preservation of historic features and their defining qualities. Ongoing through August 31:

Continue to gather news in the historic library – monitor publications and gather imagery and video

Post Design Book reflecting proposed regulations created by the Historic Designation Group and by Georgia State University Heritage Preservation Students as a reference for design and renovation that is sensitive to the historic features and defining qualities of Virginia-Highland

Encourage representation of historic homes on Tour of Homes and provide history of those homes for promotional pieces and handouts on tour

Maintain the Wikipedia page.

Create History Committee Awards that credit individuals, businesses, architects, and others who have given exemplary support to the history committee mission.

Update Atlanta History Center Archives to better reflect the holdings in VH’s extensive current collection

Initiate programs to involve youth – encourage documentaries and projects (coloring books, for example) through the schools that educate the youth and support the VH History Committee mission

Research the installation of Historic Virginia-Highland signage noting the neighborhood’s listing on the national historic registry.

Display historic images in public places; update Atkins Park images.

Invite speakers to other Civic Association events - Storytelling booth at Summerfest for example

Research incentives to encourage preservation and methods of education on the topic: matching grants and tax write-offs, etc.

- 4) Link with and learn from other relevant orgs to support VHCA History Committee goals. By May 30.

#### **Future Goals and Tactics – beyond 2012:**

1. Raise funds to support the committee's goals
  - Create a database of home histories and a method for individuals to make a donation to download neighborhood plats and records.
  - Create appropriate items to sell to raise funds for preservation: coasters, images, t-shirts, note cards, republished cookbooks (Stone Soup, Druid Hills), The 7 Adairs recordings, etc.
  - Conduct walking history tours/events for donations (possibly wrapped in with tree tours and/or garden tours).
  - Have a booth or tent at Summerfest promoting preservation and interest in the history of the area - where you pay to enter to participate in historic trivia games or hear storytellers.
  - Request donations for items needed – fireproof file cabinet, space, paper, frames.
  
2. Identify and recommend actions to protect historic sites and their defining qualities. Research and apply for grants and apply tactics to help preserve historic and defining features:
  - Orme Park Bridge (landmark already?)
  - Orme Creek at Orme Park
  - Malcomb's Way
  - Alleys
  - Historic signage – (Key Lime Pie – painted sugar sign, Belly Coke sign – last hand painted Coke mural)
  - Inman School (probably too far from its original state)
  - Specific houses/businesses (Padgett Home, Dr. Denmark's Home/Office, Cohen Condos, Adair Home, Atkins Park Tavern, Moe's & Joe's)
  - Todd graveyard
  - Firehouse
  - Historic markers

#### **VI. Safety Committee**

**Primary Contact:** John Wolfinger, David Wolfson, Eleanor Barrineau

Goal: Use community resources (residents / businesses) and governmental resources to promote a safe, clean, and orderly neighborhood. This will in turn preserve and enhance a

safe quality of life for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

**Tactics / Timeline:**

- Expand Committee membership and capacity  
Identify new:
  - trash walk leaders
  - Court Watch Monitors - reports, vh connect, news & other safety committees
  - media contact – build and grow connections and media list
  - street captain coordinator
- Continue trash walks, Court Watch, crime summaries
- Provide role descriptions for committee members
- Create a “House Number and Outdoor Lighting Campaign”; publicize in newsletter
- Explore creating a “Streetlight Enhancement Campaign”; identify areas of greatest need, examine costs and liabilities; develop budget
- Coordinate and share info with Planning (& other committees as needed) on common issues (parking, event licensing, etc.)
- Explore options for promoting sidewalk repair, including city programs and policy issues
- Provide occasional quality of life support (holiday dinners, e.g.) to local police and fire personnel.

**Traffic/Transportation & Sidewalks**

**Primary Contact:** Peggy Berg

**Tactics / Timeline:**

- Sidewalk Repair Program: Explore a VHCA neighborhood sidewalk repair program. Develop a plan to identify sidewalks in need of repair and incentivize select home owners to complete such repair. Identify contractors and costs.
- Traffic & Transportation: Serve as primary person “on point” to receive traffic and transportation issues; liaise with city officials to resolve.
- Streetscape/Commercial Area Maintenance
- Primary lead to develop and implement program to encourage business owners to better maintain our Streetscape bricks and beds.
- With Pamela Papner, follow up with city Public Works to ensure extra light pole is removed and sunken pavers/cement residue is repaired (from Chevron to Highland Hardware).