



Summerfest



VIRGINIA-HIGHLAND

Festival Times:

Friday, June 3, 2011 - 7:00 PM: Community Dinner/Movie (at dusk)

Saturday, June 4, 2011 - 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM

(Artist Market closes at 6:30pm on Saturday)

Sunday, June 5, 2011 - 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

It's Festival Time!



Are you ready for some summer fun? The Virginia-Highland Civic Association (VHCA) and media partner DaveFM (92.9) radio are proud to present the 28th annual Virginia-Highland Summerfest.

Regularly recognized by local media as one of Atlanta's best neighborhood festivals, Summerfest takes place in the heart of our neighborhood, along tree-lined Virginia Avenue, between North Highland Avenue and Park Drive. It's a fantastic event with activities for the entire family, so plan now to participate and please support the artists in our market by buying some art!

Volunteer for Summerfest!

We need 300 volunteers to staff Summerfest. Support Va-Hi by volunteering for a few hours. It's fun! Sign-up online at www.vahi.org (click Summerfest, then Volunteers).



Summerfest proceeds are the primary source of revenue for the VHCA, a volunteer-run, non-profit organization that helps maintain Virginia-Highland as one of America's most livable urban communities.

Summerfest Special Events:

Community Dinner and Movie: The community dinner and outdoor movie will begin at 7:30pm and take place at the Inman Middle School ballfields at Virginia and Greencove avenues. Please bring ID to verify your Va-Hi residency. Dinner will be provided by Atkins Park Restaurant and dessert by Fifth Group Restaurants, La Tavola and the Original El Taco. The movie, Megamind begins at dusk.

Neighborhood Parade: This year's theme is "Send in the Circus." Go crazy and dress-up like your favorite circus performer or animal. If you can perform while walking the parade route, even better! The parade will begin at the top of Drewry (meet at Intown Ace Hardware), proceed down Drewry, turn right onto Barnett and end at the community dinner at Inman Field (total parade route about 0.6 miles). This year you'll be able to get dinner tickets at the beginning of the parade route, making it easier to participate or watch and then go straight to the dinner.

Meet at Intown Ace Hardware (Drewry & N. Highland) on Friday June 3rd at 6:30pm to register. The parade will start promptly at 7:00pm. Prizes - including passes for a family of four to the Georgia Aquarium - for best costumes for kids and grown-ups will be awarded at the conclusion of the parade. Register online at www.vahi.org/parade.html.

Summerfest Main Attractions:

Artist Market

The juried artist market features work and exhibits from more than 220 of the best artists in the southeast and beyond, in a variety of media including painting, clay, glass, jewelry,

photography, printmaking, fiber, wood, metal and mixed media.

5K Road Race

The Summerfest 5K will be held at 8am on Saturday June 4th and will feature 1,000 runners winding through the streets of Virginia-Highland. After the 5K Race, children five and under will run, waddle or crawl to the finish line of the Tot Trot, this year being held at 8:45am in the Inman Middle School field Virginia & Greencove. Registration for the 5K must be made in advance. See www.active.com to register with a credit card or www.running4fitness.com for details.

Food and Music

Summerfest always features a variety of delicious food, including items from local restaurants. Both non-alcoholic and alcoholic drinks are available throughout Summerfest.

Live music will be presented by radio station partner DaveFM (92.9), and this year's artist line-up is one of the best ever! The main music stage will be located on the Inman Middle School field at Virginia & Greencove and will feature renowned local musicians, along with nationally-acclaimed singer songwriters. For the complete line-up, visit www.vahi.org/summerfest.html.

Nights of Summerfest

Following the community dinner Friday night and after the last band on Saturday, be sure to join us for an evening of refreshments and acoustic music at the Virginia-Highland triangle island. Tables and trees adorned with sparkling lights will provide a special atmosphere in which to enjoy the "Nights of Summerfest."

Kidsfest

This year's Kidsfest will take place in John Howell Park (near Arcadia) on Saturday (10am to 5pm) and Sunday (Noon to 5pm). Kidsfest features unique games, crafts and activities for children of all ages. Most activities are free. This year's theme is "Space," and we will feature a NASA-type telescope to do viewings and presentations for the kids. Crafts are also space-themed, including a special "moon dig" where kids can dig in the sand for small treasures. We're also bringing back the music stage, which was very popular last year.

For more information or to volunteer, please visit www.vahi.org/summerfest.html or www.929dave.fm.

Summerfest Committee and Volunteers

The VHCA sincerely thanks all its Summerfest volunteers and sponsors. In particular, we recognize DaveFM Radio, which is providing advertising and music to make our event successful.

Virginia-Highland Civic Association

2010-2011 Board of Directors

Board members are volunteers with jobs and/or family, so please email rather than call, unless it's an emergency. Through email a mutually convenient time to discuss can be arranged, if necessary.

Allie Coker

Summerfest, Fundraising
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Anne Woodward

Secretary, Membership (Chair)
anne.m.woodward@comast.net 404-827-5593

Committee members who have invested many hours of their time to bring you this year's event include:

Director:	Pamela Papner
Co-Chairs:	Ann Guy and Charlie Lefort
DaveFM:	Will Davis, Marketing & Promotions Director, DaveFM 92.9 Radio
Logistics:	Rob Frazer, Premier Events
Artist Market:	Julie Tepp and Nancy Musser
Friday Dinner:	John Peter-Casey
Volunteers:	Allie Coker
KidsFest:	Jenny Thomas-Warner
Parade:	Doris Betz and Cindy Kaufman
Road Race:	Ed Williams
Safety/Parking:	John Wolfinger

The Virginia-Highland Voice

Published quarterly, by and for the residents of Virginia-Highland

Editor: John Becker

Design: Preeti Ayyangar

Business Managers: Nita Luce and Christopher Fling

We welcome your feedback on *The Virginia-Highland Voice*.

Please send your comments to editor@vahi.org.

VHCA Calendar

Monthly Board Meetings

When: Second Monday of each month, 7 pm.

Where: Public Library on Ponce de Leon Ave.

Planning Committee Meetings

When: Last Wednesday of each month

Where: Public Library on Ponce de Leon Ave.

Meeting locations subject to change

Keep up with community news and events on www.vahi.org.

NOTICE

Virginia-Highland Civic Association Annual Meeting and Election of Board Officers

When: Monday, September 12, 2011

Where: Inman Middle School Cafeteria

Time: 7:00 pm

Please join us!



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President's Corner

Pamela Papner *Board President, Virginia-Highland Civic Association*

Sometimes it's good to take a minute and reflect on the many positive results achieved by the Board of the Virginia-Highland Civic Association, along with supporting residents and business owners. It's particularly important to remember that the people contributing to these significant achievements are all un-paid volunteers who give generously of their time to make Virginia-Highland a great place to live. I encourage everyone to stay informed about VHCA activities, provide feedback and engage in informed debate. You can regularly review what is going in our community by visiting the association's official website at www.vahi.org. We are re-designing it soon, to make it more robust and easier for residents to stay informed of the facts via improved electronic newsletters and quickly updated content. And when you get a moment, please remember to thank the many volunteers who, in addition to their family and work duties, regularly and positively contribute to the Virginia-Highland Civic Association activities! If you can't attend our monthly meetings, at least be sure to attend our next annual meeting. It's always a great time to catch up on the past year and get involved in the coming one! This year our annual meeting will be held Monday, September 12 at 7pm at the Inman Middle School Cafeteria.

Recent Accomplishments of Your Civic Association:

- Passage of Neighborhood Commercial Zoning in December 2008
- Purchase of two lots at N. Highland and St. Charles Place in Atkins Park for new community green space in December 2008. The VHCA was first non-profit in state of Georgia to qualify for GEFA loan program
- Significant concessions to mitigate impact of Georgia Power substation negotiated in 2008
- Streetscape Phase I and II completed with significant community involvement
- Meetings in 2009 culminated in better street markings, signage, curbs, and truck loading
- Traffic study enabled all-way stop at Adair/Todd; street humps were approved for Vance/Highland View
- Summerfest and Home Tour revenues have enabled payment of the mortgage on New Highland Park (~\$103,000 in principle paid to-date) and annual grants have helped as well
- Annual Community Grants to schools, parks and programs in Virginia-Highland: \$33,700 (2007), \$19,000 (2008), \$25,250 (2009), \$18,450 (2010)
- Safety Program began from scratch. Today we have over 98 Street Captains, 750 resident members & 100 businesses actively participating in this network
- Graffiti Task Force formed in 2010, which regularly monitors and eradicates graffiti in Va-Hi
- VHCA paid for and constructed the island seating wall and landscaping at Virginia/N. Highland in 2010
- Orme Park improvements: \$243,000 raised to fund construction of all Phase I improvements, currently underway and targeted for completion by end of May 2011
- New Highland Park: More than \$120,000 has been raised for construction of new green space in the heart of Atkins Park area. Construction is set to start June 2011.

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Safety Update: Maintaining Curb Appeal

John Wolfinger

We are all blessed to live in Virginia-Highland, one of the area's most sought after neighborhoods in which to live, play and work. But as residents we must stay vigilant to protect our little piece of heaven on earth.

A neat, clean and orderly neighborhood is also a safer place for residents according to the "broken window" theory of crime prevention. If you don't believe me, check out Wikipedia at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Broken_Windows_Theory. Granted, cleanliness alone won't stop all crime. But, coupled with being alert and aware, it can go a long way toward stemming a lot of property violations. Here's a suggestion: take a plastic bag with you the next time you head out for a walk in the neighborhood. If you encounter some urban litter along your route, bend over (this is good exercise, too), pick it up and put it in your trash bag. You'll feel better for having done so and Virginia-Highland will look just a little bit better.

As city residents, we are continually plagued by illegal signage (unsightly litter) in our public spaces. Yes, all those signs, posters, and stickers on utility poles and boxes, traffic signs and park structures are unlawful per Atlanta city ordinances. The prolific violators can be reported for citations and fines. Take a digital picture of the offending sign and e-mail it to Gayla Dodson at gdodson@atlantaga.gov. Put "illegal sign" in the subject line and in the message body list the date the picture was taken, the exact location (by street number or intersecting streets), and any contact information you can provide about the offending party such as phone numbers, e-mail addresses or websites. After you've taken the photo, you can tear the sign down if you like. For more information about illegal signage and the pertinent city ordinances, go to www.keepatlantabeautiful.org.

Join our monthly neighborhood trash walks on the first Saturday of every month. Enjoy some good conversation and help keep North Highland Avenue clean all at the same time. We meet at 9am in the Intown Ace Hardware parking lot. This is a good family activity, too – you're never too young to pick up litter. Watch the vhlst message board for event cancellations (due to inclement weather, etc).

Our graffiti task force can always use help erasing or painting over the vandalistic taggings that plague all parts of Atlanta, Va-Hi included. Contact Laura Voisiniet at graffiti@vahi.org to join this dedicated group.

You can also organize or participate in special neighborhood clean-up sessions. In March we had an extremely successful clean-up of Maiden Lane from Ponce de Leon Place to Bonaventure Avenue. Some twenty folks picked up litter and trash, cut back overgrown shrubbery and trees and erased graffiti. After this group effort, the torch has been passed to the residents whose property borders Maiden Lane to keep their own street clean on an ongoing basis. If you know of another such

area of the neighborhood that needs special attention, contact me at safety@vahi.org and I'll help you get a session organized.

Together, we can accomplish much and help keep Virginia-Highland cleaner and safer.



Residents met recently to clean up graffiti on Maiden Lane

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Virginia-Highland Receives Funding to Benefit Parks

Two Recent Grants from Park Pride Will Enable Improvements to Orme Park and Construction of New Highland Park

With great pleasure and enormous appreciation to Park Pride, the Virginia-Highland Conservation League (VHCL) announces two significant grants recently awarded to Friends of Orme Park and the VHCL. A \$40,000 grant will benefit the Orme Park Project, already under construction. A second \$50,000 grant will go towards construction of New Highland Park at North Highland Avenue and St. Charles Place.

Orme Park Project

Construction began in late February on installation of a new entry plaza, stairway, and gently sloping sidewalks that provide wheelchair access and a safer landing area for entry into the park off Brookridge Drive. The playground just beyond the entry is being relocated to an adjacent shady area. This relocation will result in open lawn past the entry, allowing access from the improved park entrance to the pedestrian bridge without cutting through the playground. A beautiful granite seating wall has been built adjacent to the new playground location and extends to the nearby adult swings. A walkway connecting the two Brookridge Drive entrances is being constructed where a dirt path previously existed. This project cost \$203,000 and funding for it came from Friends of Orme Park and VHCL fundraising activities, the City of Atlanta, and a \$50,000 Park Pride grant received in 2010. The project had originally been scaled back a bit to meet our budget, and through April, we were still raising funds for trees/landscaping.

The most recent \$40,000 grant from Park Pride will enable completion of the entire "Phase I" plan. The additional funding will provide tree recompense, allow construction of the rain garden near the park entrance, a granite seat wall in front of the rain garden, additional plantings, and a new masonry sign for the park. This is an amazing and appreciated contribution that will significantly improve our much beloved Orme Park for many years to come.

A debt of thanks is owed to Park Pride and everyone who has contributed to this project. Many nearby residents have been very generous with personal donations to the project since late 2009, but it all began with the dedication of a grass roots group of residents - Friends of Orme Park - more than ten years ago. The \$20,000 they initially raised - through Ben & Jerry's cone day (thanks to owners Frank & Kim Lee) and numerous other small fundraisers - over an almost 10 year period led to a donation of \$43,000 in city discretionary funds from Anne Fauver. When Friends of Orme Park joined forces with

the VHCL in 2009, more fundraising activities were completed (dine-outs, donation drives, silent auction, etc.), plus \$24,000 in grants were awarded by the Virginia-Highland Civic Association (VHCA). Although many residents contributed to this effort over the years, special recognition goes to the original fundraising group (Peter Bade, Dawn Shipp, Alice Gepp, Victoria Talley, Ryan & Katie Healan, Bill Gilmore); to Ryan Healan who has spent countless hours this past year on design of the project and oversight of the construction; and to the team that led final fundraising efforts to "bring the project home" over the past 2 years: Peter Bade, Ryan Healan, Alice Gepp, Pamela Papner, Clare Richie, and Victoria Talley.

Orme Park is expected to re-open by the end of May. Save the date for ribbon cutting festivities: Saturday, June 11th at Noon, at Orme Park. Visit www.vahi.org for more details.

New Highland Park Project

The VHCL also received a matching grant of \$50,000 from Park Pride's 2011 Community Grant Program that will go towards completion of the new park on North Highland Avenue across from Belly General Store. The VHCL is the 501(c)(3) non-profit subsidiary of the VHCA, which has been doing fundraising to support Orme and New Highland Parks since early 2009.

"We are absolutely thrilled to receive this grant, as it will enable us to begin construction in June on the two vacant lots on North Highland Ave. and St. Charles Place - the area between Atkins Park businesses and historic residences," said Paul Burks, president of the Virginia-Highland Conservation League.

"We have so many people to thank: Park Pride, the VHCA, the VHCL, and the many residents and business owners who have contributed so generously to this project," Burks said. "Special thanks goes to Pamela Papner for all of her hard work to pursue the \$50,000 grant from Park Pride over two grant cycles. Her persistence to assist our parks will leave a legacy for years to come by improving the beauty and enjoyment of our neighborhood."

Special recognition for fundraising goes to: Pamela Papner for raising \$63,000 from the "Buy a Brick" program, AT&T easement, and letter campaign; to the 2010 silent auction team of Caroline Corwell, Hillary Sencer Edelstein, Alice Gepp, Holly Kilgore, Pamela Papner, and Anne Woodward who raised \$10,000 (half went to Orme project); to the neighbors who raised \$3,000 from their 2010 edible plant sale (Max Alligood, Connie Ward Cameron, Pat Penn, John Wolfinger); to Pat Penn for her generous personal donations;



Last Chance to Buy a Brick

Give the gift of community that keeps on giving...

Buy a Brick in the New Va-Hi Park!

LAST CHANCE! Construction will begin on New Highland Park in the late second quarter of 2011, so this is your last chance to purchase a brick that will be part of the New Highland Park. Please order today (using the form to the right). You can also order online at vahi.org. Please do so today, we really need your support!

The following generous neighbors purchased bricks for the park since the last issue of the Voice:

Farris Briggs
Alyssa Carlson
Jocelyn Challas
Diane Dickson
Kourtney Forster
Shari Herzberg
Michael Holmes
Phyllis Irby
Davar Irvani
John & Chris Mastin
Michael Milan
Tony Moulton
Nancy Napier
Albert Padwa
Angela Priest
Victor Skukalek
Bonny Valente

Special thanks to our "Founders" Level donors who contributed \$1000 since the last Voice issue: Cornelia Robertson, Katherine Rumbaugh and Pichulik Properties

Contribute \$100 and receive an engraved brick. Your donation is tax-deductible. The brick can be engraved with your family name(s), in honor of someone special, or you may simply wish to create something whimsical. You'll receive a certificate, suitable for gift-giving.

ORDER NOW! See details below.

Name: _____

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Mail To: Pamela Papner, VHCA Vice-President,
854 Highland Terrace, Atlanta 30306

Questions? E-mail: brickinfo@vahi.org

Giving Levels & Benefits

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Park Angel: (Brick + Special green "Park Angel" T-Shirt)	\$500
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continued from pg.6

to Atkins Park Neighborhood Association (\$3,316); and to the many residents and business owners who generously donated money to this project. Special thanks also goes to the significant in-kind contributors without whom, we would not be ready to construct: Sandy d'Aprile (real estate agent for land purchase, commission waived); Peter Hughes (civil engineer who developed and donated technical drawings required for construction); Peter Frawley (landscape architect who developed and donated plans/drawings required for construction); residents Jimmy Lee and Brenda & Malcolm Miller who have donated their time to keep the grass cut for almost three years; and to Paul Burks who helped secure funding for the purchase of the land and who is working on analysis of bids and execution of construction. There will be a Founders Plaque installed in New Highland Park recognizing everyone that contributed \$1,000 or more in cash or in-kind.

Finally, this project would never have happened without the financial support of the VHCA which purchased the land in December 2008, taking advantage of a change in the Georgia Land Conservation Program that allowed non-profits to apply for funding. The VHCA was the first non-profit in the state of Georgia to receive a loan under this program. One hundred percent of the \$855,500 acquisition cost was financed. As of June 2011, \$113,000 of the loan principle for the purchase of this land has been paid, all funded from Summerfest proceeds.

Construction of New Highland Park is scheduled to begin in June 2011, but there's still a long way to go to pay off the debt. Watch for a new thermometer sign (generously donated by resident Mario Tantillo) that will track our progress, and please continue to give generously and participate in future fundraising activities, as the neighborhood works to pay off the remaining debt.

For more details about the plans, visit www.vahi.org.

Intersection Improvements Made

Kathryn King-Metters, VHCA Sidewalks and Traffic Committee Chair, shared the following update with Voice about intersection improvements in the neighborhood.

The City of Atlanta has corrected a major problem with cars parking in the wrong places at the corner of Rosedale Dr. and N. Virginia Ave. New 'No Parking' signs were installed and a new crosswalk. King-Metters advises that, despite the new signage, some visitors to the shops at this corner are still parking in front of the fire hydrant there. King-Metters says ParkAtlanta will issue tickets to anyone parking in front of the fire hydrant so visitors to the area should to pay close attention to where they park.

Also, the crosswalk and curbs at the corner of Briarcliff Place and N. Highland Ave. have been fixed, according to King Metters. When the new turn lane was installed on Briarcliff Place, the contractor failed to install the new curbs properly or repaint the crosswalk. Anyone crossing N. Highland was crossing the street directly into oncoming traffic in the turn lane. King-Metters says the contractor returned recently and installed two new properly-designed curb ramps and repainted the crosswalk to align with the new curbs.

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New Businesses in the Neighborhood



Catalyst Fitness Midtown

Catalyst Fitness is Georgia's only fully accredited and medically recognized Personal Training and Performance Enhancement facility and has recently moved into the building formerly occupied by Urban Body Fitness on Ponce De Leon Place. Catalyst celebrated its Grand Opening on February 19th, raising over \$700 for the Virginia-Highland Conservation League. Catalyst's staff is dedicated to transforming lives and revolutionizing the health and fitness industry by providing unprecedented success through their unique scientific approach to group and private fitness training.

In today's economic climate, the number of people able to afford the investment in one-on-one personal training is shrinking, while the size of the population needing those services is growing. Also, with personal training becoming such a popular profession and the number of easily attainable certifications growing, the question of where to go for high quality professional services often leaves people feeling as though they are wasting money in search of the trainer that can provide proper, scientifically sound instruction, while delivering results and accountability at an affordable price. Many often give up on finding help.

All of these factors have led to an increased interest in boot camp and cross fit-like classes where people seemingly receive the motivation, instruction and accountability they are seeking at less expensive costs. However, these classes often lead to injury, expecting ill prepared clients to perform exercises far too advanced for their current fitness level, as well as alienating those that simply can't perform with other advanced group participants.

Catalyst Fitness addresses all of these issues with innovative and educational group training programs for the beginner to the advanced athlete that won't break the bank. All programs are designed by internationally recognized, award winning fitness professionals.

For less than the average cost of 3-4 private training sessions with a trainer, clients enjoy the flexibility of attending an unlimited number of any one of 11 daily classes guaranteed to provide a different, dynamic and scientifically based workout every day of the week.

Catalyst Fitness invites all Virginia-Highland residents to take advantage of their "10 Days for \$10" Personal Training On Demand introductory offer. For just \$10, you can attend an unlimited number of group training classes over 10 consecutive days to try before you buy. In addition, VaHi Residents can receive a free Catalyst Core Training DVD download by e-mailing info@Catalystfitness.com.

Catalyst Fitness Midtown is located at 742 Ponce de Leon Place. Contact them at 404-856-0513 or www.catalystfitness.com.



Genki Noodles & Sushi

Known for reasonably priced, Asian fusion cuisine, fresh sushi and an expansive cocktail menu, Genki Noodles and Sushi has opened its third location in Virginia-Highland. Featuring plenty of seating from comfy banquets to the sushi bar, the new neighborhood dining spot also has a 1000-square foot covered patio and boasts a substantial custom storefront window overlooking bustling Highland Avenue that can be opened to create its own awning. Genki's friendly and helpful staff help give the new dining spot a neighborly feel, while exposed brick walls, beautiful aquariums, eye-catching artwork, and a bar made out of repurposed wood only add to the warm and inviting atmosphere.

In conjunction with the opening, owner Reid Zeising has revamped the lunch, dinner and cocktail menus. Those familiar with Genki can expect impressive new lunch specials, all for under \$10, more traditional Japanese dishes, lower prices, and an array of new specialty cocktails. Aiming beyond the usual rolls and raw concoctions, Genki offers innovative combinations; favorites include the new Virginia-Highland roll; the Snapping Samurai roll; the beef, spinach and mushroom bowl served over rice; and Yakisoba – stir fried ramen noodles with thinly-sliced beef, carrots and shredded cabbage, sprinkled with nori and red ginger. In addition to weekly happy hour specials from 4 to 6 p.m. during "Genki Hour," every Tuesday Genki will host "Tokyo Tuesday" with \$1 nigiri, \$3 rolls, \$3 Genki house draft beers, and \$3.50 sake bombs. Like the other two locations at The Prado and Buckhead, Genki's newest location has both delivery and catering services and is open seven days a week for lunch and dinner.

The new Genki Noodles and Sushi is located in Virginia-Highland at 1040 N. Highland Ave NE. For more information visit www.genkiatl.com or call 404-853-3315. Complimentary valet parking is located behind the restaurant.

History of Virginia-Highland {Part XI}

Linda Merrill

EDITOR'S NOTE: THIS IS THE ELEVENTH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES ON THE HISTORY OF VIRGINIA-HIGHLAND, EXCERPTED FROM A LONGER WORK-IN-PROGRESS BEING RESEARCHED AND WRITTEN BY 10-YEAR VA-HI RESIDENT LINDA MERRILL. AN ART HISTORIAN BY TRAINING, LINDA WORKED AS A CURATOR AT THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION FOR THIRTEEN YEARS, AT THE HIGH MUSEUM FOR TWO, AND NOW – AFTER A HIATUS TO STAY HOME WITH HER TWO CHILDREN – SHE TEACHES AT EMORY. LINDA WELCOMES COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS ON HER WORK. SHE CAN BE REACHED AT MAGDALIN@MINDSPRING.COM.

Commerce

Natalie Cohen, who grew up in one of the condominiums at 982 Virginia Avenue, recalled that the area surrounding the intersection of Virginia and North Highland avenues was a veritable wilderness in 1921, “very woodsy.” Virginia ended abruptly at Highland, which was still an unpaved country road. From her bedroom window, Natalie witnessed the construction of the new commercial block at “the Corner” (as the intersection would long be known), and by 1927 it had become the hub of the neighborhood, offering the amenities of suburban life: a shoe-repair shop, a pharmacy, a barbershop, and a Piggly Wiggly.

Further south along Highland, where the number of houses in Highland Park had more than doubled, businesses sprang up to serve the burgeoning community. Several older, two-story houses lining the avenue were replaced with a pharmacy, a grocery store, and a dry cleaner, and in 1922 the roof of one surviving residence was raised twenty feet and two storefronts added below. One of those establishments, a delicatessen, is in business today as Atkins Park Restaurant, reputed to be the oldest continuously licensed tavern in Atlanta.

Another long-lived business was the Atkins Park Pharmacy, which opened in 1914 on the northwest corner of Highland and St. Charles Avenue. In the 1930s, as Cox & Baucom, it was one of ten pharmacies within a two-block stretch—a testament to the phenomenal popularity of the soda fountain (and, by extension, of Coca-Cola). As automobiles overtook the trolley on Highland Avenue, curbside service became a welcome convenience, and one of the “curb boys,” Jack Fleeman, eventually took over the business. Fleeman’s Pharmacy operated for decades as the “oldest independent drug store” in Atlanta, remaining in business well into the 1990s. The building, virtually unchanged, now houses Belly General Store; the original marble countertop is still in place.

On the opposite side of the district, a cluster of shops on Boulevard (now Monroe) at Cooledge Avenue served the residents of Boulevard Park. As in the other commercial blocks, low brick buildings with tiled roofs nestled unobtrusively along the boundary of the bungalow neighborhood. Lining both sides of the street, the Boulevard Park businesses created a commercial gateway to the community from the south and buffered it from the industrial district at Tenth Street. In 1922, when the subdivision was still developing, the block already featured a dry-cleaner,

two grocery stores, and the Boulevard Park Pharmacy; six years later it expanded to include a veritable supermarket—the Great A&P Tea Co.—which stood next door to the Nifty Jiffy Store, with a tire and battery shop across the street. Though comparatively modest, the business district was significant enough to merit a “white way,” brilliantly lit by electric lights, inaugurated in October 1929 with an orchestra and dancing in the streets. A similar commercial strip took shape around 1930 along the subdivision’s northern perimeter at Highland and Amsterdam, with a predictable array of shops—the Howard Dry Cleaning Company, the Phelps Millard Grocery, and Reeves Pharmacy, which conducted business on that corner for thirty years.

Besides dry goods, haircuts, and Coca-Cola, Virginia-Highland residents required gasoline, and a surprising number of businesses arose to satisfy the demand. Among the first was a “very attractive filling station” that replaced an unsightly coal yard on Boulevard, where the furniture store Cantoni now stands. In 1931, the Woco Pep opened on the corner of Highland and Drewry. Owned and operated by the brothers Doyle and Bell Langford, the station expanded into the adjacent lot on Highland Avenue, and the Langfords beautified the Drewry side with a rose garden that flourished, along with the business, for over fifty years. The 1939 building is now a bar and restaurant aptly named Diesel Filling Station.

Sources: Ann Taylor Boutwell, “Seventy Years Later, Her Tree is Doing Just Fine,” Atlanta 30306 (May 1995), p. 28; The Historical Atlanta Journal and Atlanta Constitution; Virginia-Highland neighborhood file, Atlanta History Center; Atlanta City Directories; www.bellystore.com, www.atkinspark.com.

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