

The Virginia-Highland

VOICE

Winter 2010

Va-Hi "Green Dream" Silent Auction!

Date: Friday January 22, 2010, 7:00pm -11:00pm.

Place: Callanwolde Fine Arts Center

Event: Tickets will be available beginning December 1, 2009 through vahi.org.

- Proceeds to benefit Orme Park and New Highland Park. Hundreds of fantastic items up for bid!
- Our neighbor, Mara Davis from DaveFM, will host the event.
- Dinner, drinks and dancing begin at 7pm.

The Virginia-Highland Conservation League, in partnership with DaveFM Radio, will host a fabulous Silent Auction to benefit green space in our neighborhood. This benefit event is in support of the following projects:

- Debt on the "New Highland Park" green space (corner of St. Charles and N. Highland, across from Belly) acquired by the VHCA. We want to pay off this debt so the space remains ours forever!
- First Phase of Orme Park Renovation Project. This is an exciting NEW project made possible by recent funding from the city (Anne Fauver support) and from Friends of Orme Park and VHCA grants. We have raised \$85,500 toward improvements planned for the park, and we want to raise more money to do more!

Plans for both these projects are described in more detail on pp. 6-7 of this issue.

Save the date now and plan to attend!

15th Annual Virginia-Highland Tour of Homes December 12th & 13th

by: Charlie Lefort and Rob Glancy

The Virginia-Highland Civic Association with media support from Dave FM is proud to present the 15th Annual Virginia-Highland Tour of Homes. This year's tour marks the sixth consecutive year after a hiatus of over 20 years. The event takes place on Saturday, December 12th from 10am - 5pm, and Sunday, December 13th from Noon - 5pm.

Themed Homes for the Holidays, the event has established itself as the most distinctive home tour in the city thanks to the pairing of wonderful homes and some of Atlanta's finest restaurants. Over the past four years the tour has raised over \$100,000 for the neighborhood with tour proceeds directly benefiting Virginia-Highland schools, parks and sidewalk projects. This year's tour is especially significant due to the recent purchase of the new Highland Park, located on the corner of N. Highland Avenue and St. Charles Place. With its close proximity to Home #1, this year's will-call and ticket sales will take place at the site of the new park.



the Virginia-Highland Tour of Homes
www.vahihometour.org

Rob Glancy, Steering Committee Co-Chair, says, "We have a truly spectacular lineup of homes this year. The committee was most interested in pursuing a diverse group of homes that represent something for everyone, yet maintain the integrity of the neighborhood."

Returning Co-chair Charlie Lefort adds, "We are especially excited to be featuring a first - a beautiful residence in The St. Charles, the 1920's classical revival building on St. Charles Avenue."

Food tastings generously provided by local restaurants Murphy's, El Taco, La Tavola, Rosebud, Shorty's, D.B.A. Barbecue, Atkins Park and MetroFresh will be held in the seven homes from noon to 4 PM on both afternoons. Afterwards, volunteers and sponsors will enjoy a lively Sunday evening after party at D.B.A. Barbecue.

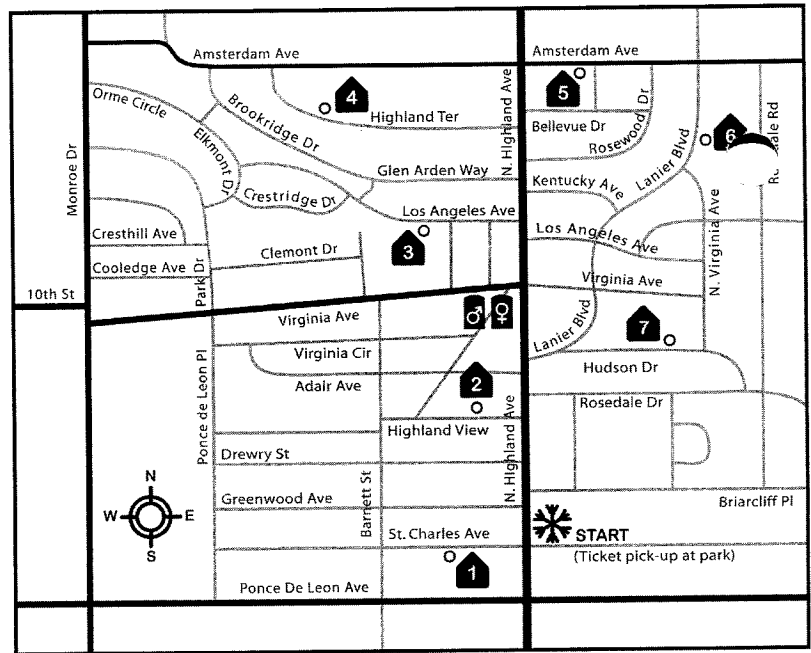
We want to thank our generous sponsors, advertisers, partners and restaurants in advance, which include Dave FM, Atlanta Homes and Lifestyles, Atlanta Intown, Michael Gaddy - 14 West Realty, Whole Foods Market, San Francisco Coffee, Mitzi & Romano, Highland Investment, James Garvey - Work2Home Technology, Festivity, CityStorage, Amuse Restaurant, Anis/ Apres Diem, Nadine's Triple Crown, Emmy Parker Interiors, Peter Bade - RE/MAX Greater Atlanta Realty, Dixie Home Crafters, The Atlanta Journal Constitution, Mary Hallenberg - Harry Norman Realtors, Creative Crop, Sammy Boykin Photography, Rhonda Geraci and Nita Luce.

Tickets are \$20 in advance or \$25 the weekend of the Tour and can be purchased at:

- www.vahihometour.org
- Intown Ace Hardware, 854 N. Highland Avenue
- Aurora Coffee, 992 N. Highland Avenue
- San Francisco Coffee, 1192 North Highland Avenue
- Habersham Gardens, 2067 Manchester Street NE
- Hastings Garden Center, 3920 Peachtree Road NE
- Whole Foods Market, Ponce de Leon Avenue
- The new Highland Park located at N. Highland Avenue and St. Charles Place (weekend of the tour only)

Please help support our neighborhood and purchase tickets!

Visit www.vahihometour.org for more information or to purchase tickets or e-mail the Tour Committee at tour@vahi.org. Anyone interested in volunteering should email volunteer@vahihometour.org to sign up for a shift.



Complete loop is approximately 4 miles

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HOMES

TASTINGS

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 1027-A St. Charles Ave | Atkins Park |
| 2 | 1002 Highland View | MetroFresh |
| 3 | 909 Los Angeles Ave | Rosebud / Whole Foods |
| 4 | 854 Highland Terrace | El Taco / La Tavola |
| 5 | 1029 Amsterdam Ave | DBA BBQ |
| 6 | 1125 Lanier Blvd | Shorty's |
| 7 | 1118 Hudson St | Murphy's |



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The Virginia-Highland Voice

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of Virginia-Highland

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We welcome your feedback on *The Virginia-Highland Voice*.
Please send your comments to editor@vahi.org.

VHCA Calendar

Monthly Board Meetings

When: First 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

Please visit our web site for calendar updates, additional
information on VHCA or to join: www.vahi.org

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President's Corner

Pamela Papner

President, Virginia-Highland Civic Association Board

Anne Fauver has been our area's representative to City Council for many years. She is not running for re-election in November, so I'd like to take this opportunity to thank her sincerely for all the work she has done to support us. Her job is a very difficult one. I have often remarked how patient she can be, how well she listens, and how she can get to the "heart" of any issue. We thank Anne for her dedication and the tireless work she has provided to benefit our community. Anne recently allocated \$42,200 of discretionary funds toward implementation of the Orme Park "Master Plan" that was created as the result of a grant from Park Pride and approved by NPU-F in late 2007. With this money, we can finally make some headway and begin implementing the master plan. We are so thankful for this financial support to improve a park that means so much to us. Anne was very helpful with our "Neighborhood Zoning" initiative, and many others. She has

always made herself available to assist, provide sound advice and otherwise promote our neighborhood. I will miss her support at City Hall, and cannot thank her enough for her long history of support. Thank you, Anne!

Also, we just received word that local realtor Peter Bade has generously donated \$1,500 toward the Orme Park improvement project! Peter has been a long-time supporter of Orme Park. It was through his efforts that we received the original \$5,000 grant from Park Pride to create the visioning plan. Peter has also worked tirelessly to raise funds to support this renovation via many fundraisers, including his own birthday party at "Paris on Ponce" and other initiatives like "Ben & Jerry's Free Cone Day". The community owes a huge thank you to Peter Bade!

Springdale Park Elementary Opens Its Doors!

David Rein

Springdale Park Elementary PTO Vice President



Children enjoy the first ever Farm to Market Fair at SPARK, courtesy of Art Barn

The opening of Springdale Park Elementary – nicknamed SPARK – has been a tremendous success. Principal Yolanda C. Brown led the school in recruiting an exceptionally qualified group of teachers and securing needed resources from the Atlanta Public School system, and parent involvement has been strong. In addition to the Georgia curriculum, all children receive daily Spanish instruction, biweekly physical education, and weekly art, music, and library instruction. Orchestra, chorus and band programs are also available to children in third grade and higher. To provide extra time for learning and transitions, SPARK operates an extended day program.

Volunteer parent committees raise money, manage communications, organize school enrichment activities, and participate in school transportation and physical site planning. Parents and community organizations donated more than \$50,000 to the school's kickoff fund, and parent volunteers organized the school's bus routes and transportation plan. Parents also organized SPARK's afterschool clubs: chess (2), drama, debate (older students only), Earth friends, Girls on the Run, martial arts, triathlon, Girls Scouts and Boy Scouts

The school's official values are to be responsible, respectful and 'green.' From a transportation perspective, SPARK is one of the 'greenest' schools in the city. Four out of five of the school's 371 students take the bus to school in the morning, with another 5-10% walking or riding bikes.

Special activities have focused on sustainable agriculture, maintaining a healthy diet, and environmental stewardship. In September, parent volunteers worked with students to plant collards, chard, beets and lettuce on the roof top garden. In October, SPARK partnered with Sodexo-Jackmont to host the first ever Farm to Market Fair in Atlanta public schools. Students especially loved the live farm animals, courtesy of Art Barn. Also in October, first graders watched a food demonstration and tasted sweet potato biscuits prepared by Chef Andrew Smith of Atkins Park Tavern.

SPARK's art teacher, Dalia Collins, helped students create a "scarecrow" of Sparky the dragon, the school mascot, out of recyclable materials. To create Sparky, students flattened aluminum cans that were attached to a 10-foot tall wooden and chicken wire frame. This unique piece of folk art was put on display along side other schools' contributions at the Atlanta Botanical Garden's Scarecrow Exhibit.

For more information about Springdale Park Elementary School please visit www.springdaleparkelementary.org.

Spotlight on Grady High School

Vernell Stewart Britton
PTSA President

It's said that change is the one constant and this has definitely been the case at Grady High School this year. Change is an opportunity to learn cooperation, coordination, creativity, and achievement. At Grady, change helps us realize more fully the importance of our motto: "individually we are one, together we are Grady".

With a record 1,500 students entering Grady this year, we faced challenges including classroom space, class size, and teacher/student ratio. Seven new teachers have been hired and we have assured that all students are enrolled in core classes and that other classroom standards are met.

Our undefeated (at deadline) Grey Knights football team has not been able to play in our home stadium due to renovations that are scheduled for completion in the spring of 2010. Renovations include improvements to the field, new offices for coaches, and new locker rooms.

Several new programs were initiated this year. Our character development program focuses on developing core ethics, including personal responsibility and respect. Several sessions are being scheduled on topics such as choices and consequences, dressing for success, integrity, and the benefits of a good attitude.

The college career center (CCC) is a new resource at our school that's become a focal point for providing information to students and parents about the opportunities available after high school. Students can research information about schools, obtain information about summer programs, and talk with representatives from colleges and universities. The center is open daily and is manned by parent volunteers. Thus far, representatives from 36 colleges and universities have visited our school.

Grady students continue to excel. We had the highest average SAT score (1498) in Atlanta Public Schools and exceeded the average state score (1460). One of our seniors, Tiffany Vernon, was chosen as a "20 Under 20" leader by the Atlanta Business Chronicle and Grady's Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) parliamentary procedures team won first place in this year's state competition.

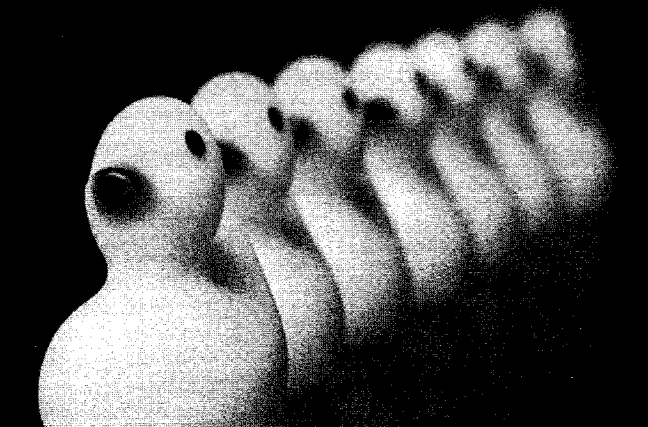
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Virginia-Highland's "Green Dream"

by: Pamela Papner

Several exciting new developments will enable progress toward our goal of improving green space in Virginia-Highland. Please do what you can to support the following initiatives.

Friends of Orme Park (FOOP) has joined forces with the Virginia-Highland Conservation League, Inc. (VHCL), a 501(c)(3) subsidiary of the Virginia-Highland Civic Assn., Inc. The primary goal of the VHCL is to raise funds to support the acquisition of the New Highland Park at St. Charles/N. Highland (across from Belly) and to contribute funding to enable completion of the Orme Park Visioning Plan developed by FOOP and approved by NPU-F in late 2007.

Orme Park Phase One Improvements: To-date, \$82,500 has been raised as the result of (1) \$42,500 received from Anne Fauver's discretionary funds (Thank you Anne!); (2) \$20,000 raised by Friends of Orme Park; and (3) \$20,000 matching grant from the VHCA (Summerfest proceeds). These funds will be used to upgrade about two acres that extend along Brookridge Drive from the entrance near the bridge to the entrance past the playground area. These improvements are in line with the overall goal to retain Orme's "woody" look/feel, and are being performed under the auspices of the City of Atlanta Parks Department, which owns/controls the property.

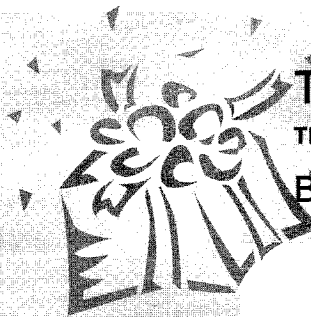
- Phase One (Part A) improvements include design, site preparation (grading, storm water allowance, erosion controls) and installation of hardscape improvements (granite wall, demo/re-construction of stairs/entrance, and improved walkway with decorative pavers).
- Phase One (Part B) will require more funding but would include additional hardscape (granite walls and decorative pavers), relocation of playground equipment to the area just to the right of where it is today, and addition of plants and benches.
- The Orme Park Visioning Plan will require a long time and significant dollars to complete in its entirety. The goal is to proceed in stages. The next logical phase is renovation of the stream bank and/or the Brookridge bridge, each being very costly endeavors. The VHCL will continue to encourage the City of Atlanta to allocate funds (and will separately help raise funds) to ultimately

enable completion of all components of the Orme Park Visioning Plan.

- High level design can be viewed at www.vahi.org

New Highland Park Fundraising: We have made significant progress toward payment of the debt and development of plans for the two lots purchased for new green space at St. Charles Place and N. Highland Ave. (across from Belly), but we still have a long way to go! Please, please help us with fundraising!!

- We received 100% financing for the purchase of two lots at 1076 and 1082 St. Charles Place in December 2008. The original debt, including closing costs (which were wrapped into the loan) was \$855,000 for both lots. The loan interest rate is 3% over 15 years. Sandy d'Aprile acted as our real estate agent (without commission).
- We have paid approximately \$38,000 in principal toward the debt as of November 1, 2009. Monthly loan payments are funded through Summerfest proceeds.
- We raised just over \$30,000 through our "Buy a Brick" campaign and other fundraising initiatives to-date. We hope to raise a significant amount from the Silent Auction coming up January 22, 2010 at Callanwolde. We will concentrate on raising funds via foundation grants and corporate giving programs during 2010.
- Our wonderful neighbors, Peter Hughes (civil engineer) and Peter Frawley (landscape architect) recently completed highly technical and detailed plans for construction of our new passive park/rain garden on a pro bono basis. This very generous donation of their time and expertise has saved us a lot of money, and we thank them sincerely for their contributions. Both will be considered "Park Founders" and honored as such when the New Highland Park is actually constructed.



The Best Holiday Gift Ever!

This year, give the gift of community that keeps on giving...

Buy a Brick in the New Va-Hi Park!

• According to the terms of the loan, construction must begin by January 2011. We do not yet have bids for that work.

Assuming we use Summerfest proceeds for monthly loan payments over the next two years, we still have an incremental \$650,000 to raise during that same period to come close to retiring this debt. Our goal is to retire the debt well before the 15-year loan term, as Board members and priorities can change. We want to be sure this green space remains ours forever! Please consider a contribution TODAY!

Neighbors Who Purchased a Brick in New Highland Park:

Below is the list of residents who purchased a brick to support our New Highland Park since the last Voice listing of donors. Thank you! If you have not already done so, please "Buy a Brick" or otherwise donate TODAY! It's the perfect holiday gift!

New Brick Donors:

- Ashley Clifton • Leigh McDougal
- Subie & Phil Green • Raj Patel & Niku Desai
- John W. Greenwald • Nancy Stafford & Bill Bagwill
- Oliver Koehler • Laura Voisinet & Mark Becker
- Chris Kaufman • Conne Ward-Cameron

Park Founders Donors List (Gifts of \$1,000)

The neighbors below have generously donated \$1,000 to the New Highland Park. We thank them so much for their very generous support:

- Sandy d'Aprile (*professional services*)
- Pat Hunt
- Winnie Currie
- Pamela Papner
- Peter Frawley (*professional services*)
- John & Julie Peak
- Rob Glancy
- Charles & Valerie Surasky
- Karen Hegtvedt & Patrick Flinn
- Eric Taub & Penya Sandor
- Peter Hughes (*professional services*)
- Paul R. Tiegen
- Charles & Valerie Surasky

We've raised almost \$30,000 from the "Buy A Brick" campaign to-date, but we still must raise more than \$700,000 to pay off the debt for the two lots. If every family in the neighborhood contributed \$100, we would be near our final goal. If you have not already done so, please contribute TODAY! Here's the offer:

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 this holiday season. Orders (Certificates) will be fulfilled within 5 days of receipt. Orders received by Monday 12/21 will be delivered (within the neighborhood) by Thursday, 12/24.

ORDER NOW! See details below.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Gift is for: _____

(Name desired on personalized certificate)

Provide Specific Engraving Desired:

(Up to 3 lines of text, with no more than 14 characters -including spaces- per line).

Checks Payable To: Virginia-Highland Conservation League
Mail To: Pamela Papner, VHCA President, 854 Highland Terrace, Atlanta 30306

Questions? E-mail: brickinfo@vahi.org

Giving Levels & Benefits:

Buy A Brick: (Brick + Certificate)	\$100
Park Patron: (Brick + Special blue "Park Patron" T-Shirt)	\$250
Park Angel: (Brick + Special green "Park Angel" T-Shirt	\$500
Park Angel: (Brick + Special "Park Angel" T-shirt and Donor Name on Park Plaque)	\$1,000

Spotlight on Public Safety

by: John Wolfinger, VCHA Safety Chair

Here's a thought: this holiday season don't let the spirit of giving lull you into giving our area thugs a chance to do their dirty work. Criminals love the holidays as much as everyone else, chiefly because it's a perfect opportunity to commit a crime. We tend to be less "on guard" as we hurry to do shopping, attend parties and gatherings, and await packages delivered by FedEx and UPS.

Here are some tips to help to keep yourself from being a victim this holiday season and on into the new year.

If you must place your Christmas tree in front of a window, don't display gift packages under the tree where they are visible from the outside. Eliminate this "come steal from me" invitation.

Foil the front porch package thieves by taking advantage of the free, safe delivery address service offered by either Intown Hardware on N. Highland Avenue or CityStorage on Ponce de Leon Place. Stop by either of these businesses to sign up to have intended shipments sent to them. Be sure to let relatives and friends know of your new delivery address to ensure you get the presents they'll be sending you. Avoid the embarrassing situation of having Aunt Edna call to ask why she never got a thank you for her package of home made fruitcake. Also, call 911 right away if you see non-uniformed folks carrying packages to your neighbor's front door - more than likely they are going to exchange a box of fruitcake they found elsewhere for a computer box on that doorstep. The fruitcake won't get them much cash on Boulevard - but that computer can certainly be sold to fund additional illegal activities.

If you are having visitors and guests from out of town or the suburbs, make sure they know to remove all valuables from their cars while parked on your street. Help make their visit more enjoyable by saving them the frustration of a broken car window and the loss of their valuable possessions.

If you have holiday lighting outside your home, take note of how much lighter it is around your home now. Then make plans to install outdoor lights on a permanent basis. So many of our neighborhood homes are pitch dark and are very inviting for thieves. Light your front and back doorways, as well as garage and driveway areas all night, all year long.

We have become a very alert and aware neighborhood as a whole - just don't let your guard down for the holiday season.

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Spotlight on Businesses in the Neighborhood

Atlanta Activewear

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Beneath the couture chandeliers and ultra high ceilings, Atlanta Activewear carries the finest Men's and Women's athletic apparel in Atlanta. Recently opened at 996 Virginia Ave NE, this boutique that you'd expect to find nestled in the Soho district of New York carries exclusive brands such as Rogiani and Zobha in the heart of Virginia-Highland.

The super chic boutique is owned by Atlanta native Danielle Burke, who found fashionable, moisture-wicking active wear to be lacking in the Atlanta area. Other brands featured within Atlanta Activewear include: Under Armour, Brooks Running, Pearl Izumi, Rese, MPG Sport, Nux Seamless, CW-X, Avani, and an extensive collection of Maui Jim and Rayban. With many brands under one roof, Atlanta Activewear prides itself on being able to fit any customer and have them feel and look their best. Customers have called the staff the "Rachel Zoe" of active wear.



Atlanta Activewear has loved the reception of the Virginia-Highland neighborhood and is excited to style all its residents. Join the store for Champagne Saturdays, feel free to bring in the dog, and let the kids play on the Wii while you shop! Atlanta Activewear is open *Mon-Thurs 11am-7pm, Fri & Sat 10:30am-10pm, and Sun 10:30am-7pm.*

Knitch Relocates

Our neighborhood yarn shop, Knitch, has moved from its original St. Charles location to the center of the neighborhood at 1044 N. Highland Avenue in the space previously occupied by South of Market. Knitch's former space in the alley off St. Charles served knitters well for the first three years of business, but owner and neighborhood resident Kim Nickels says they are happy to be in their new digs near the neighborhood's center.

"Not only will our customers notice improvements in parking and handicap accessibility," Nickels says, "but the store will be more visible now and the single floor layout will be a tremendous benefit."

Knitch offers a wide range of yarn, knitting and crochet tools and patterns for beginners as well as advanced knitters. Classes are offered daily and their knowledgeable staff - many of whom



live in Virginia-Highland - are always happy to help you with your knitting project or to help you learn a new skill. Knitch hosts many nationally known knitting teachers and authors and their popular and action-packed kids camps each Summer fill quickly. Stop by the shop and say hello or visit Knitch online at www.ShopKnitch.com.

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City Responds to Streetscape Project Concerns

by: Pamela Papner and John Becker

On July 30, the VHCA held a meeting for concerned residents to discuss with city officials construction and traffic concerns related to the recently completed second phase of streetscape improvements at and south of the intersection of Virginia and N. Highland avenues.

City officials leading the project – including Joe Basista, Atlanta's Commissioner of Public Works – attended the meeting to listen to issues and brainstorm with residents options for addressing them. The city studied our concerns, and a follow-up meeting to discuss their proposed plan to address the issues was held October 27th. Following is a summary of the issues and the city's action plan.

Traffic Back-Up and "Cut-Through" Issues

The city conducted a traffic study to determine the magnitude of cut-through traffic and delay at Virginia and N. Highland avenues. The study was conducted over a 24-hour period during a weekday and the delay issue was also studied on a Saturday in late August/early September. Results of that study are published on www.vahi.org. Highlights of the study's findings:

- Street markings recently implemented for the "slip" lane in front of Murphy's and Taco Mac, along with growing awareness that the slip lane can still be used for traffic traveling eastbound on Virginia turning right onto N. Highland Ave., appear to have already significantly improved the traffic back-up situation.
- The study showed that, as compared to the traffic statistics collected prior to the second phase improvements, the amount of delay at Virginia and N. Highland actually improved during weekdays (post-streetscape), and it stayed the same on Saturday. After initial markings were completed, it appears residents realized they could still use the slip lane for right turns from eastbound Virginia onto southbound N. Highland (entry being via the new apron cut), and it also became more evident that we still have two lanes eastbound on Virginia (one straight/right and one for left turns).
- The city's traffic study also showed that traffic volume did not show a significant spike during rush hours or, over a 24-hour period, along nearby residential streets. However, Vance and Highland View met speed hump requirements (15% or more cars exceeded speed limit by 10 mph or more). Therefore, if Vance and/ or Highland View residents choose to petition for the city's speed hump program, they can. The VHCA will work with residents of those streets on the petition process (75% or more of property owners on each street must approve).

Kathryn King-Metters, a new VHCA Board Member will take the lead on traffic issues in the future, and she will be "on point" to:

- Communicate with residents of Vance and Highland View about the street hump opportunity; and
 - Monitor any future streetscape-related traffic issues once the immediate plans to ameliorate the problems have been implemented.
- All-way stop analyses were performed at Todd/Adair, Vance/Los Angeles, Todd/Rupley, Todd/Highland View, and Todd/Virginia Circle. The analysis at Todd/Adair showed this intersection met the minimum requirements for all-way stop installation (it's a two-way stop today). Legislation will be introduced by the city, with installation expected in early 2010. Agreement by the city to install a 4-way stop at that intersection was an important "win" for neighbors on Adair, who have been trying to get this done for years.

Blockage of Left Turn From Todd, Slip Lane Signage, Crosswalk and Exaggerated Curb Cut Issues

- Two 'Do Not Enter' signs were posted to prevent wrong way traffic from entering the slip from N. Highland. A 'One Way' sign was also added at the entrance to the slip eastbound off of Virginia.
- Painted traffic directional arrows have been added to the slip (with word ONLY drawn, to be painted soon), and two 'No Parking' signs were also added along the left side of the slip.
- A 'Do Not Block' sign was added west of the curb cut at Todd to prevent blockage of left turns from Todd onto Virginia. Edge lines were also added in this area.
- A painted, triangular tapered area will be added west of the curb cut at Todd, which will extend from the bus stop to the taxi stand. Raised, reflective pavement markers will be added throughout the triangle to "warn" people about the upcoming exaggerated curb cut. The striping and particularly the raised markers should dramatically ameliorate the unexpected curb cut area in front of the bank, which was implemented to promote traffic calming.
- Existing crosswalks were found to be the 'natural' places for people walking to cross from one side of Virginia Avenue to the other. Crosswalk signage and PEDS warning signs were/will be added to the two crosswalks near the bank to improve visibility and promote safety.

- The sharp curb cut in front of Mooncake (that had proved to be tire-damaging) was rounded, and a parking space was added.

Truck Unloading, Murphy's Valet and Additional Items

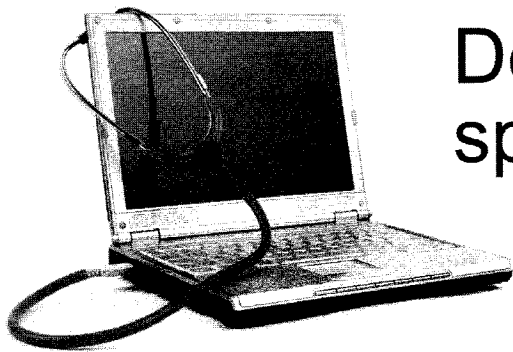
- The apron cut into the slip lane was found to be adequate for traffic, including trucks. People seem to be adjusting now that there is more signage. This redesigned entry into the slip appears to be promoting traffic-calming at the new pedestrian-friendly island area, which was the intent.
- The city reversed their original position and agreed to create a 'Truck Unloading' zone in the slip from 9am-Noon weekdays to address the issue of inadequate space for our commercial area trucks to unload. Murphy's and Taco Mac will continue to direct trucks to unload in the parking spaces directly in front of their restaurants or they can use slip area zone, once it's created. This resolution should make residents very happy because trucks can now avoid unloading on Todd and other areas that were problematic for residents.
- Signage for the 'Truck Unloading' zone will be combined with 'No Parking' signage to avoid too much clutter along the slip.
- Murphy's has already relocated its valet parking sign from the city right-of-way to appropriate Murphy-owned areas, where it will remain. Murphy's agreed that its valets will walk owners of cars parked in front of Murphy's to those cars and advise them to exit toward N. Highland. This is intended to resolve a possible safety issue (preventing customers from going the wrong way in the slip and exiting on Todd or Virginia).
- Directional signage westbound on Virginia in front of the Chevron has been added to make it clear there are two lanes

(one left turn and the other straight/right turn). This should improve traffic flow westbound on Virginia.

- For now, parking in front of Murphy's and Taco Mac shall remain straight and not become angled as originally planned, as angled parking would have resulted in the loss of two parking spaces. It was originally thought that angled parking would make the flow of traffic in the slip more obvious, but the city and Murphy's would like to monitor the situation to see if wrong way traffic really is problematic in the future.
- Better-matching, deeper red color pavers are being installed where a color mis-match existed near Taco Mac and along the Mooncake to Paolo's area.

"I am so appreciative that both residents and the city took the time to meet and have a productive conversation about unintended consequences resulting from the Streetscape II improvements," said Pamela Papner, Virginia-Highland Civic Association president. "The city was extremely responsive, and we should allow some time for changes to be implemented and give them a chance to work. I was very impressed by the productive feedback from residents; by the city's responsiveness; by our local merchants' support; and by everyone's desire to make sure this wonderful project is properly completed. We are also very appreciative of Council Member Anne Fauver's support throughout this process."

The VHCA has a new Board Member, Kathryn King-Metters, who will be in charge of neighborhood traffic concerns. If we find we have any continuing or new issues, Kathryn is prepared to coordinate communication with the city. The email address for contacting her is: traffic@vahi.org.



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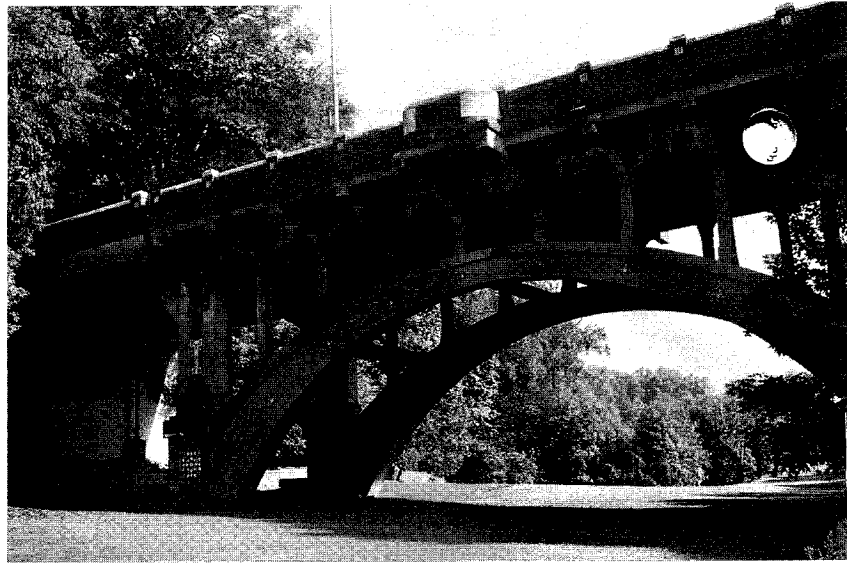
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The Park Drive Bridge

History of Virginia-Highland

{Part V}

by: Linda Merrill

EDITOR'S NOTE: THIS IS THE FIFTH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES ON THE HISTORY OF VIRGINIA-HIGHLAND, EXCERPTED FROM A LONGER WORK-IN-PROGRESS BEING RESEARCHED AND WRITTEN BY 9-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.

Dr. Henry Lumpkin Wilson and the Park Drive Bridge

The northwest quadrant of Virginia-Highland was developed later than the southern side of the district bordering Ponce de Leon Avenue. Though only two-and-a-half miles from the center of Atlanta, the land had remained largely undeveloped throughout the nineteenth century, cut off from Peachtree Street by the Clear Creek valley and the Southern Railroad tracks. The property belonged to Henry Lumpkin Wilson, a longtime Atlanta resident whose father, the city's first postmaster, had died in the Battle of Second Manassas; Henry Wilson himself had served the Confederacy as an army surgeon in the Seventh Georgia regiment, while his wife attended the wounded in Atlanta's makeshift hospitals.

After the war, Dr. Wilson resumed his medical practice in the ravaged region around town, accepting payment for his services in eggs, butter, and chickens. His lasting contribution to the history of Atlanta, however, came in 1870, when he learned from his barber about a certain spring "way over in the woods" with reputedly curative properties. When he found it himself, Wilson christened the source "Ponce de Leon Springs," after the Spanish conquistador who sought the Fountain of Youth, and although by the mid-1920s the springs had been subsumed in the sprawl of suburban Atlanta, the name of the locality has survived.

In his lifetime, Wilson's reputation rested primarily on his property holdings and real-estate transactions. He acquired the

212-acre tract of heavily wooded land east of the Beltline tracks sometime in the mid-1870s, and briefly considered making it into an entertainment park with a zoo, racetrack, refreshment rooms, tenpin alleys, shooting galleries, and other diversions. The land still lay vacant, however, in 1887, when Wilson offered to sell it to the Gentlemen's Driving Club (later the Piedmont Driving Club); but the gentlemen decided to acquire the 189-acre farm of Benjamin F. Walker instead.

Then, in 1904, the City of Atlanta purchased a large part of the Driving Club property to use for a public park. It soon became apparent that the city needed an impressive thoroughfare to connect the north and south ends of town, with Piedmont Park at one end and Grant Park on the other. Accordingly, "the Boulevard"—"a real city boulevard," as the Atlanta Constitution described it, "possessing all the attractiveness the name implies"—was paved and planted, making the area around Piedmont Park more accessible to every part of the city, and Henry Wilson's property considerably more desirable. Finally, in the summer of 1914, Wilson sold sixty valuable acres to Aquilla J. Orme, Charles Black, and their associates, a company of developers that came to be called the North Boulevard Park Corporation.


Although the city limits had been extended to encompass the new district, the Corporation's intention to develop a middle-

class suburb just east of the park was contingent upon the completion of a viaduct spanning Clear Creek and the railroad tracks. The new 625-foot bridge was conceived as a continuation of Fourteenth Street through the park, offering the shortest route between the established neighborhoods of Ansley Park and Druid Hills; it would also make a gracious, ornamental gateway from the west to the new suburb of Boulevard Park.

Constructed of brick and reinforced concrete, forty feet wide including walks on both sides, the Park Drive Bridge had been designed, according to the Atlanta Constitution, "to harmonize with the park surroundings." But in style and materials, it also signaled the transition from urban park to residential district. The roadway at both ends was flanked with granite pillars faced with tiny terracotta tiles, miniatures of those that paved the walkways of the bridge and the floors of many Boulevard Park porches. The pillars themselves were crowned with acorn finials alluding to the magnificent trees in Piedmont Park and the "original oaks" said to shade the residential avenues. The walls were intricate constructions of red brick, a material that would feature prominently in the domestic architecture of the neighborhood. And halfway across the bridge on each side were lookout points affording glimpses of the brand-new bungalows bordering Boulevard Park.

Sources: The Historical Atlanta Journal and Atlanta Constitution; Franklin M. Garrett, *Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of Its People and Events* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1954), vol. 2.

Next issue: Boulevard Park



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Colonel Mustard in the Kitchen With a Knife

Colonel Mustard – referring to the character from the board game Clue – is a pseudonym for a Virginia-Highland resident who enjoys dining at the many wonderful restaurants in our neighborhood and sharing thoughts on the dining experience with others. In this issue the Colonel takes a look at a neighborhood classic known for some of the best burgers in Atlanta, George's Bar and Restaurant.

George's opened its door in 1961 so it's a true neighborhood landmark. It's famous for burgers and it can be hard to eat there on Wednesday evenings since runners from all over the city meet there before and after their runs. That's part of the ambience, though, so fight the crowds and have a burger. Since burgers are their specialty, I thought about trying something else, but my companions did that for me so I went ahead and had what I really wanted: a Mexican burger. Mmm, good...with guacamole, salsa and cheese. There's a reason why they win awards for their burgers. You'd be hard pressed to find a better one anywhere in town.

I had a flight of fancy about my weight so I ordered a side green salad, but they also have fries or potato salad or coleslaw for sides. One of my friends might have had the same flight of fancy: she had a salmon salad that she described as fresh and tasty. But she was overcome by her desire to indulge in something guilty and had a cup of chili that she described as 'just spicy enough,' not fire engine style. My other friend – also weight conscious – went for the black bean burger. The patty wasn't as firm as she likes but it soon disappeared, along with the accompanying fries (not too weight conscious, I guess). We all cleaned our plates and two of us took extra burgers home with us for friends. There's no sense being overly disciplined when eating at George's but if you must there are plenty of choices for vegetarians, dieters, and children. Kids have some great options with hot dogs, grilled cheese, corn dogs, popcorn shrimp, and chicken fingers. No cheating - you have to be 10 or under to order from this menu - rats!

Because I was full, it didn't occur to me until later that there were no desserts. My guess is that – with so many pre-dessert food options – most people don't notice. Being satiated is the rule, I think. There are some nice wines by the glass and plenty of beers including Yuengling and Woodpecker Cider - don't you love it? This is a reliable, pleasant neighborhood spot with lots of history for a casual night out.

Colonel Mustard gives it 5 hotdogs (or should we say 'burgers'?).

George's Bar and Restaurant
1041 N. Highland
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www.georgesbarandrestaurant.com

Update on Callanwolde Drainage Concerns by: Tom Spach & Jack White

Residents on the east side of Rosedale Road adjacent to Callanwolde haven't historically paid much attention to the headwaters of Rock Creek at the bottom of the hill behind their homes. The stream has been quiescent for many years, a situation that has changed in the last twelve months.

Callanwolde's 2008-09 construction of an amphitheater and supporting new roadways created a sharp increase in impervious surfaces, which translated into vastly increased runoff during the summer and fall's prolific rainfalls (21" at the USGS station on Johnson Road). The flows are tough to precisely measure at the site, but they caused some significant erosion on both sides of the stream. Residents report that on several occasions this year some backyards were completely submerged as water levels rose dramatically. According to some residents, water levels exceeded six feet above the pre-development norm of roughly a few inches.

Since the project's completion earlier this spring, impacted residents (with support from the VHCA) have been meeting with Robert Simms, Deputy Director of DeKalb County Facilities Management (who oversaw the construction and engineering) and Callanwolde Executive Director Sam Goldman. Simms' team is reviewing potential new approaches designed to reduce and disburse the runoff. Residents were initially expecting a workable proposal for resolving the drainage problem from Simms in September; it is still pending as this issue of Voice goes to press in October.

The situation profoundly illustrates the challenges of owning property in or near a flood plain. Atlanta and DeKalb prescribe a 75-foot buffer on each side of a stream. Rosedale residents have recently come to the realization that not only do their backyards

occupy a flood plain - which, after decades of minimal flow, now sometimes actually floods when it rains - but that their own actions in their backyard riparian buffer can have a major impact on those downstream as well as their own property. This realization weighs heavily on residents who are very concerned by the dramatic and sudden new situation.

Progress has been made on the residents' sound and light issues with Callanwolde, with particular help from Sam Goldman. Light intrusion issues will be handled as they arise once the leaves are off the trees. Residents have agreed to tolerate a keen earful of whatever happens in the new amphitheater as long as they have advance notice and the events are not too frequent or too loud.

That leaves the more vexing challenge of storm water runoff, which is difficult for residents to accept and needs resolution. We will continue to provide status updates as circumstances warrant.

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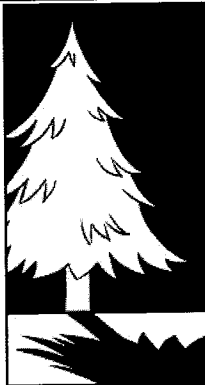
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