



## General Board Meeting - Agenda & Notes February 12, 2024 - 7:00-8:00 PM

### Grace Lutheran Church

1155 N Highland Avenue NE  
Atlanta, GA 30306

### Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89794061574>

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**VHCA Directors:** Johnson Bazzel, Melissa Clark, Kim Gnatt, Amy Harward, Karri Hobson-Pape, Lisl Huber, Jess Liddick, Leah Matthews, Scott Nickels (zoom), Alex Saucedo, Karen-Jane Wright

**Neighbors In attendance:** Kay Stephenson, Katie V, Kristin Gorell, Brianna Gonzalez, Michael Sard, Mary Stouffer, Ben Darmer, Clint & Raina

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Approval of [Minutes](#) from prior month's Board meeting - **Leah** - Karri to make additional edits for Kim to then recirculate

Review Current Agenda - **Leah** - approved

### Guests & Elected Officials

#### Atlanta Police Department Zone 6 Update - **Sgt M Lucien**

- Crimes against persons - 2 (down 32%) - 2 simple assaults at 1050 Ponce De Leon avenue Briarcliff Summit
- Crimes against property - 34 (down 33%)
- Hyundai Event 2/16-18, 9am-5pm at Greenbriar Mall - all Hyundai vehicles 2011 or newer will do the upgrades. Free to Hyundai owners.
- Question - complaints by Neighbors about noise issues. [mtlucien@atlantaga.gov](mailto:mtlucien@atlantaga.gov) - share business hours and time of noise issues.

#### Elected Public Officials & Municipal Representatives -

- City Councilman District 6 - **Alex Wan** - not present
- State District 57 Representative - **Stacey Evans**; Kennedie McClung, Chief of Staff - not present
- US House 5th District - **Nikema Williams** - not present
- District 4 Fulton County Commissioner - **Natalie Hall**; Anita Harris - Chief of Staff - not present

### Efforts around Homelessness at VaHi corner - **Mary Stouffer**

- Mary joined meeting in person - Expressing concerns about homelessness population in the neighborhood
- 2 came in to Press and Grind. Harassing Press & Grind employees. Our neighborhood is not the place for them to put up residence. Porta Potty at the Fire Station is the worst idea. Will be a public health issue. Immediate neighbors on Los Angeles do not support - have vocalized their opposition
- Private businesses and private property - not the right place for public bathroom
- It is a point of discussion at this point. There is no forward motion to implement the portapotty.



- Private security at corner - update from Katie V - via Zoom - conducted round table on 1/18 with stakeholders including businesses at corner. Possible outcome is landlords - for VAHI and Atkins Park nodes. Stuart Meddin working with Katie. 4 security quotes have been submitted. PAD initiative signage is going up this week. Landlords recommend the pilot project of the Porta Potty that it should be on public land. Katie to forward the creative assets for the PAD signage to consider putting up in other locations.

#### Planning Committee Variances - Alex

- **V-23-081 (638 Park Drive) - Ben Darmer**
  - Variance to reduce rear yard setback from 15 ft → 5; reduce east side yard setback from 7 ft → 2.6; and to increase lot coverage from 50% → 52.15%
  - Planning C. voted 5-0 in favor
  - Aquatic exercise needed for his son's medical purposes. Someone reported it to the City and then pushed for a stop work order. Needed to apply for a variance
  - Adjoining neighbors have been connected. Letters of support provided with all adjoining neighbors. Planning C did site visit.
  - Board voted 11-0 recommend to support
- **V-23-210 (926 Drewry St.) - Clint & Raina - homeowners**
  - Variance to reduce north rear yard setback from 15 ft → 3 ft; reduce required west side yard setback from 7 ft → 3 ft, and to exceed max. Lot coverage from 53% → 54%
  - Applicants will build a rain garden that captures 9% of runoff, effectively brings lot coverage down to 44.8%
  - Planning C. voted 5-0 in favor
  - Building an inlaw suite. Bought house in 2021. Neighbors have provided verbal support including a shared driveway. DDH tree removed. ADU will be used for guest room and garage for office, inlaw suite and storage.
  - Site visit conducted by Planning C.
  - Board voted 11-0 recommend to support
- **V-24-018 (1065 Rosedale Dr.) - Nina Gentry presented on behalf the Marchak family-homeowners not present in the meeting**
  - Variance to reduce front yard setback from 35 ft → 33.3; reduce required west side setback from 7 ft → 3; reduce required rear yard setback from 7 ft → 3
  - At time of Planning C., some neighbors had not been notified
  - Planning C. voted 2-1 in favor
  - 9 neighbors have been contacted and notified with letters. 6 of the 9 have expressed their support.
  - 2 of 5 Planning committee members had not voted. For following reasons: Storm water not complete, impervious space not calculated, notifications to neighbors were not completed.
  - Mark confirmed the documents have been received as of today.
  - Board expressed questions and concerns re: neighbors not yet having enough time to express support/not. Jack White mentioned that neighbor support is not a requirement for homeowners to proceed. Board members also expressed concern with the removal of the pine tree.
  - Certified letter listed all upcoming meeting dates including VHCA, NPU, BZA



## VIRGINIA-HIGHLAND CIVIC ASSOCIATION

- Conditions have been met of the reasons that Mark didn't vote. And tree conditions have been met per Karri
- Nina mentioned the distribution went to the HOA President
- Board voted 9-1 (Jess Liddick no)-1 (Kim Gnatt no vote) recommend to support



**Atlanta Beltline NE Trail Construction Plan - Brittany Brewster - Community Engagement Manager, ABI**  
- not present

### Officer & Committee Updates

- Summerfest - Alex
  - Music has been confirmed. List of bands will be communicated publicly in March. Over 100+ applicants with artists market. Decision made to do Jury artists. Betty will be doing the Jurying.
  - Friday night raffle collection in process. KJ suggested adding to VOICE in April.
  - Meeting next week - encouraged attendance by board
  - Website updated by Summerfest committee technical. Logo completed and available on the drive. It's on WordPress. Ida can manage it if we want to transition it.
  - Sponsor committed today \$2k - Leaf Filter. Great news.
- Budget - Jess / Leah
  - 2023 Review Treasurer's Report - below
  - Summerfest expenses have started coming in.
- Communications - KJ
  - Brand Refresh - New Visual Identity complete (web, social, Voice)
  - 2 weeks ago, completed updated visual identity guidelines - available on Google Drive. Ida working on updating main website and social channels that she has access to. Created a new masthead for The VOICE. Will slowly roll out as events launch. Event marks created for Summerfest and History Tours.
  - Indicate what we want for it. Talk through it or brief Jan. Standard approach existing with master brand on top and banner on bottom mentioning the event.



- Have Jan to keep the current look and feel for Tour of Homes.
- Greg, the volunteer who supported the Comms team with Social is taking a break. Need to determine the best way forward to handle day to day Social management. Table the conversation around renaming the accounts/tabs. In meantime, KJ and Meagan managing the social accounts.
- Education & Grants - Melissa & Lisl
  - APS just completed a review. Our neighborhood schools are not on the list for redistricting. Will not be any in cue through 2025.
  - Coffee scheduled with VHCA and APS board of representatives - community meeting - discuss facilities plans - Tuesday Feb 13. 12:00pm and 6:00 pm - Zoom
  - Grant form being created by Lisl. Will be shared by end of month. Make sure to talk to Jess about spending money in big chunks. Timing is important.
- Exec Operations - Leah, Amy, Kim, Jess
  - Q1 Volunteers -
  - Q2 volunteers - let Kim know when needed
  - Signup Genius upgrade to GOLD for Summerfest use \$260.
  - Kim to look into using VHCA emails for the administrators to ensure emails come from VHCA, not personal emails
  - Town Hall
    - **REMINDER OF DATES FOR PRESO** (SLIDES COMPLETE - FRIDAY 2/16, FINAL EDITS - SUNDAY 2/25, New Visual Identity)
    - Review Agenda
- Fundraising/Event - Leah & Karri
  - Concert coming up. Changing approach a bit. Bring your own chairs. No table rentals. Considering single-ticket walk-ups.
  - Gala scheduled for Thursday, 4/18. Will be at Murphy's.
  - Process setup for Films. First check in the mail. \$30k in budget for Film in 2024.
  - Friends of VAHI - kicked off with new logo this past weekend. \$650 in donations on History Tours. Request board to participate. One pager started. Karri to share with neighbors.
- Historic Preservation - Karri
  - History Tours 2/10-11 - 2-day tour. Model worked well. Had 7 tours this past weekend. 98 people signed up right away. Had to shift gears for liability reasons that volunteers were not able to drive. Had to move to chauffeur service. Made \$350. Very positive feedback from people. They mentioned the places where the VHCA made a difference. Had 140 people on the tours.
  - Amazing job to Karri for leading, planning, businesses involved, San Fran discount. There was a definite interest. New logo on the van looked great!
  - Going to decide how frequently to do it. Maybe annually?
  - Make sure that we clear up the confusion on the VHD website that we designate when it's a VHCA event. We appreciate that VHD has integrated our VHCA



calendar. Now need to edit the calendar to ideally link to the VHCA website.  
Asked Katie V to do as soon as possible

- Parks - Scott
  - North Highland Park
    - To honor Winnie Currie's son, Daniel Currie, a bike rack is being gifted to North Highland Park to be installed behind the pillar on St. Charles and North Highland. Discussion around location of bike rack. Ensure alliance with the City to ensure we are not in the right of way. Scott to take next steps to ensure alignment.
    - The Todd Memorial base foundation has been laid. Could be installed this week, and has been in the works for many years.
    - Beech Tree - discussion around what trees were being implemented in the park and how they were decided.. Question raised if Peter Frawley was consulted. Scott mentioned that Trees Atlanta planted the tree before the Parks committee was aware. Suggestion made to engage Frawley to act as 3rd party to decide on what trees to be planted.
    - Mulberry Tree - at back of property - committee members expressed that the discussions around this tree should be brought to the committee before action taken. Jess' preference is that the owner be the one to take down the tree. Scott to take action to regroup with the Parks committee to sus out
- Planning - Alex
  - Amsterdam Walk - forum for community questions and concerns
    - Board discussed the importance of the traffic survey
    - There is evident mistrust of the traffic study so that needs to be addressed
    - Our board approach should be holistic.
    - We will be posting the transcript of the meeting at Red Light Cafe. Will share the amendments made by Aaron & Alex.
    - Meeting scheduled for Wednesday to discuss the documentation that Portman
- Tour of Homes - Lisl & Kim - share decisions made and progress to date
  - Sunday 10/20/24, 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
  - Home Selection committee kicked off
  - Survey
  - Bringing food back
  - Seeking sponsorship committee lead
  - Entire committee kickoff meeting - 3/2
- Transportation & Safety - Johnson & Amy

#### Old Business

- VHD - 2024 Calendars integrated successfully - now available on VHD website



### New Business

- Liquor license review - Dark Horse management changing. Changing the structure of the operation. Been in business since 1990. Technically compliant with the alcohol code. - Brianna Gonzalez (new Dark Horse business manager), M. Sard
  - Will be building new patios. Parking spots behind building with additional 'ample' parking. Kay requested to make sure parking is amended to show the additional spots across the street.
  - Kay raised issue of noise issues/complaints by residents in the neighborhood with the bars. Request to Neighbors/Dark Horse mgmt to mitigate the noise challenges.
  - Kay has no opposition to the application.
  - Motion to recommend. 9 recommended to support approval for the change of agent for the liquor licenses at Dark Horse tavern. 9 supported, 1 not present, 1 no vote.
  - Not sure if we'll see a change of management at Neighbors. Brianna will be the manager of both properties.
  - Raised the issue of noise concerns from Neighbors and asked Michael to address. Kay to be the point of contact with Michael to address current concerns.
- Amsterdam Walk Plans - Kristen Gorell shared concerns about height of buildings, limiting viewing. Traffic concerns about the current rate of accidents at intersections. She is for the Monroe Diet but against Amsterdam Walk. Lived in the neighborhood since 1991 and was involved in the Sewage Treatment plant not getting implemented in Piedmont Park.
  - We requested her to remain involved and stay connected to our communication channels. Requested that Kristen pass the word so we can garner continued public opinion.
  - Planning committee will share dates of decisions and voting as they become available.

### Announcements

none

### Calendar (All meetings are public)

- [2024 Calendar](#)



## Treasurer's Report - February

Website is updated with the 2024 budget and the actual spend through the end of 2023. We ended the year with \$59,107 cash on hand, and have an ultimate goal of starting each year with \$120,000 cash on hand so that baseline expenses can be covered for about 3 years without relying on reserves.

In 2023, we **raised a total of \$82,715** for VHCA:

- \$42,809 from Summerfest
- \$31,905 for Tour of Homes
- \$8,000 from Friends

In 2023, we **reinvested a total of \$44,451**:

- \$20,466 in Parks
- \$11,674 in Planning
- \$11,000 in Grants
- \$1,310 in Safety

1099s have been distributed to people who were vendors of Virginia-Highland in 2023. I have secured services for VHCA to file tax documentation for Virginia-Highland Civic Association and started to organize our 1099s. Once complete, tax forms will be uploaded to vahi.org, which date back to 2004.

For every transaction, I keep a record of the receipt/invoice organized in the VHCAWeb Google account, log the transaction details for Melissa K so that she can align it to the budget, and capture W9s for anyone receiving over \$600 per year. This is for adequate record keeping requirements by the Georgia Secretary of State required for nonprofits.

Summerfest music deposits have gone out (\$19,000) as well as sponsorship retainer and marketing. Income has started to come in from the 5k and Artists Market. If you have not already, mark your calendar for Summerfest and board members will need to get the Square app on your phone 48hrs before the event for the VHCA Booth and be manager on duty.