



## General Board Meeting - Agenda & Minutes April 8, 2024 - 7:00-8:30 PM

**Grace Lutheran Church**  
1155 N Highland Avenue NE  
Atlanta, GA 30306

**Zoom Meeting**  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89794061574>

---

**VHCA Directors:** Johnson Bazzel (not present), Melissa Clark, Kim Gnatt, Amy Harward, Karri Hobson-Pape, Lisl Huber (zoom), Jess Liddick, Leah Matthews, Scott Nickels (not present w/ notice), Alex Saucedo, Karen-Jane Wright

**Neighbors In attendance:** Marlin Zafft, Kay Stephenson, Jack White, David Zafft, Jamie Butler

---

**Approval of [Minutes](#) from February Board meeting - Leah - Board approved on 3/18 over email and [Google doc](#)**

**Approval of [Minutes](#) from March Board meeting - Leah - Board approved on 3/18 over email and [Google doc](#)**

**Review Current Agenda - Leah - approved.**  
**Minutes by Kim Gnatt**

### **Guests & Elected Officials**

**Atlanta Police Department Zone 6 Update - Sgt Savannah Berry - not present**

### **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**

### **Planning Committee Variances - Alex - This month's variance has been deferred**

- Question raised if Alcohol licensing review process is being changed. Response: Alcohol technical advisory group put together a list of recommendations being reviewed by City Council and various departments. Expect changes to be made over 12-18 months. No changes so far. Might include better vetting and better online access.
- Alcohol license applications - discussed the possibility of moving Alcohol licensing from Planning committee to Safety committee. For now, the decision was made for it to stay in the Planning committee.
  - Revisit the idea of applications moving to a different committee once Kay confirms that the new guidelines are published. Idea - use it as a catalyst to



decide on the change. Board wants to ensure the public has the opportunity to review/public notice. 30 days, etc.

- Amsterdam Walk
  - Several meetings with MLPA and VHCA have occurred to discuss the conditions we are requesting. Conditions = the things we are asking of the developer to help put our fingerprint on the project.
  - Working group has been established that is working across the 2 neighborhood associations to create that list. Aaron Fortner, hired as a consultant to help draft the initial Conditions list.
  - The 2 neighborhoods will continue working together to draft the Conditions request.
  - The VHCA has a commitment to conduct another neighborhood meeting to explain what the conditions would be with the opportunity to provide input. (possible May timing) and a smaller community meeting with neighbors directly adjacent to property. (possible May timing)
  - The working draft is not yet available for input. It will be available to neighbors in the next few weeks, by the end of May/early June. Before we vote, desire is for the 2 neighborhoods to align on a joint set of Conditions
  - We will provide notice of when the draft will be available and the meetings will be occurring

### Officer & Committee Updates

- Summerfest - Alex -
  - Music lineup is published and is being publicized.
  - Artist market received more applicants than we have space for. SF committee looking for Art jurors - minimum qualifications - background and credibility in the artist world. \$34K has already been received.
  - Friday night - trying to finalize music. Seeking musicians for Friday night. DJ is a last minute resort.
  - Kids Fest planning to use VHE field for Tot Trot, which ends at Kidsfest booths.
  - 5K working on securing sponsorships.
  - [vahi.org/summerfest](http://vahi.org/summerfest) is updated and live
- Budget - Jess / Leah
  - Funds are coming in! Gala tickets, Summerfest (5k, Artists Market, Sponsorships), Friends of VaHi, Voice ads, etc Enough cash on hand to pay for up front costs for events.
  - Will share the Budget v Actuals through Q1 and post on vahi.org
  - Treasurer's Report includes considerations for NHP - including lot line and recent work outside of that lot line not on VHCA property
  - New higher insurance costs this year - budget committee to meet and review
- Communications - KJ
  - Voice Sponsorships - are now sold out other than December. We have an opportunity in 2025 to increase our prices.



- Social Media request protocol - Morgan has been hired. Comms committee working on a new process.
  - Jan is complete with her brand/design work. We can now close her work. 2 things left for her to do - Concert series and Flags.
- Education & Grants - Melissa & Lisl -
  - APS Superintendent search is down to 6 candidates.
  - Grants Application form is being drafted for vahi.org website. August as Application deadline, with September meeting vote.
- Exec Operations - Leah, Amy, Kim, Jess
  - Leah met with Community Affairs lead in Mayor's office
  - Need to reconcile the approved committee members with the spreadsheet for Ida to update website. Kim to follow-up.
  - Need to follow-up on email issues with Ida. Jess to follow-up.
- Fundraising/Events - Leah & Karri
  - Easter Egg Hunt- Great success! More people in attendance than last year.
  - Gala-Thursday, April 18th 6-9. Atlanta Funk Society. Ticket sales are low. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to join.
  - Friends of VAHI - will evaluate yard flag options
- Historic Preservation - Karri - No updates
- Parks - Scott - Jess update since Scott was out
  - Jim Coe working on civil engineering work around stormwater for John Howell.
  - Friends of Orme Park members now on Parks committee.
  - Jess coordinating with Katie V to paint the VAHI sign in NHP.
  - Board asking for more regular / possibly quarterly updates on the John Howell Park Renovation project.
  - Request for John Howell Park sub-committee including Jess Liddick, Jim Coe, Karri Hobson-Pape to provide an update in May board meeting
  - Park Pride has an annual award inspiration award for leaders across the city. Jack White received the award for his 20 years of service in Atlanta Parks, specifically John Howell Memorial Park.
- Planning - Alex - covered above
- Tour of Homes - Lisl & Kim

Recent Progress
1) TOH committee established with 15 committee members meeting every 3-4 weeks
2) Alison & Mark leading the Sponsorship committee. They are working on a pitch deck to share with the group in 4/15 meeting. Modifying sponsorship levels to be more approachable
3) Home Selection committee working hard. Visited 2 more homes - both possible contenders for tour. Right now, we have 4 of 6 homes for the tour for consideration.
4) Created and distributing flyer postcard for Home Recruitment
5) Proceeding with Cookconnect as a food vendor. In negotiation re: details of # houses, promotional support, etc



6) Met with ParadeSmart technology and sales team. Provided feedback to them on the 2024 proposal. total cost \$2115 for website, app, etc. Gaining alignment from committee on 4/15 for approval

7) Secured photographer for Home photo shoots in May - same photographer as prior years

**Pressing Topics next 2-4 weeks**

1) Finalize budget needs

2) Elect a lead for Marketing committee

3) Finalize ParadeSmart agreement

4) Begin Sponsorship selling

5) Finalize home selection list

- Transportation & Safety - Johnson & Amy -
  - Renewed conversations on the Monroe Road Diet. Alex Wan's office confirmed the final design stage is not yet complete. Will likely see final design this Summer.

**Old Business**

- none

**New Business**

- none

**Announcements**

**Calendar** (All meetings are public) [2024 Calendar](#)

Meeting adjourned - 8:30 pm



## April Treasurer's Report

- In March, the Treasurer recommended rejection of two invoices directed to VHCA for work completed adjacent to North Highland Park. Treasurer recommended the invoices instead be paid by the persons listed on the invoices who incurred the expenses. This recommendation was based on two principles:
  - 1) the principle that VHCA should not pay expenses that are not legitimized through VHCA's budgeting or committee processes
  - 2) the principle of not paying for services that are not the responsibility of VHCA. Refer to Jess Liddick's [overview](#) for Board and Parks Committee for details.
- Three of four officers supported the payment of these invoices. This has now been resolved and the invoices have now been paid.
- To limit future financial exposure and future legal risk, VHCA Committee Chairs and Budget owners must understand their responsibilities per the bylaws to ensure appropriate expenses, review and approval of expenses by committee members and ensuring adequate liability coverage is in place to limit the organization's risk. Most notably, work around North Highland Park should not exceed the legally recorded boundaries.
- To protect VHCA from incurring costs and liability of any vendor working in or using the VHCA-owned park, Certificates of Insurance (COI) should be secured prior to any work or hosting an event on VHCA property.
- Certificates of Insurance we receive from vendors or users of the park should name Virginia-Highland Civic Association as Certificate Holder at 1076 & 1082 St. Charles Place Atlanta, GA 30306.
- VHCA's insurance agent advised that going forward, we need not only a COI for organizations hosting events in North Highland Park, but also that any smaller event must provide Special Event coverage. This includes even birthday parties and movie nights.





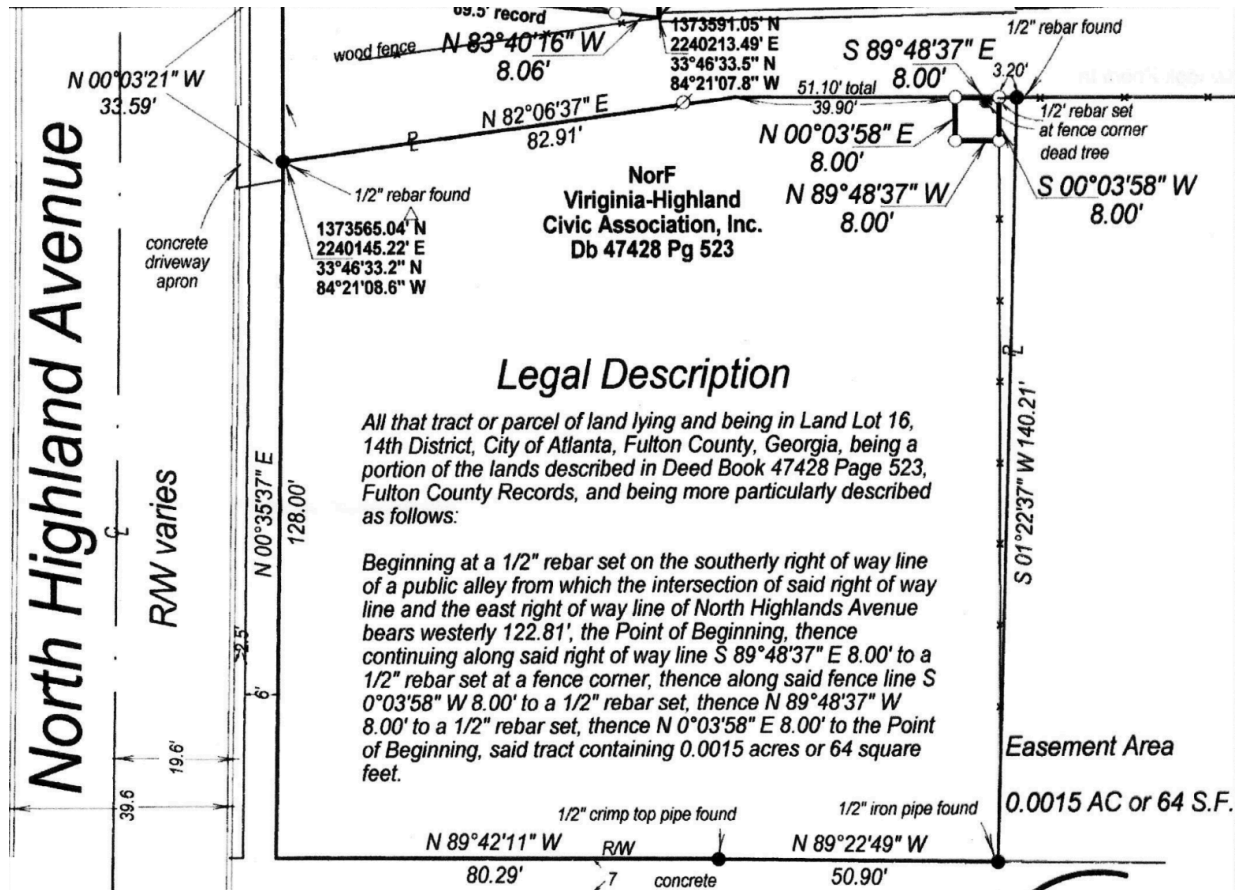
## Financial Exposure

- The land, maintenance of the land/plants, and removal of any plants in the adjacent owner's half of the abandoned alley is not the responsibility of VHCA.
- VHCA cannot install any furniture, further plantings, or permanent installation of any kind on the adjacent property owner's half of the abandoned alley.
- Boutte was hired for services completed on land that VHCA is not legally responsible for, as shown in surveys and described in property records. By hiring Boutte, VHCA has now encroached on AtlantaLux's side of the alley, which puts VHCA at risk in terms of *perceived* responsibilities going forward.
- Previous VHCA President correspondence with AtlantaLux clarified AtlantaLux's responsibility for the leaning mulberry, pruning any other plants coming from the adjacent alley, and all adjacent abandoned alley land. This was based on study of land records including surveys and recorded documents, correspondence with the City of Atlanta arborist, and legal opinion of abandoned alleyway ownership.
- As the land along the north side of the abandoned alley is the responsibility of the adjacent owner, AtlantaLux, the services VHCA Parks chair incurred are not legitimate VHCA expenses.
- Despite multiple requests to the Parks Chair, VHCA has not yet received written confirmation from AtlantaLux that they understand the fence repair to be their expense and will not be sending an invoice to VHCA to pay for repair or replacement of the fence.

## Liability

- To protect VHCA from incurring costs and liability of any vendor working in or using the VHCA-owned park, Certificates of Insurance (COI) should be secured prior to any work or hosting an event on VHCA property.
- Certificates of Insurance we receive from vendors or users of the park should name Virginia-Highland Civic Association as Certificate Holder at 1076 & 1082 St. Charles Place Atlanta, GA 30306.
- VHCA's insurance agent advised that going forward, we need not only a COI for organizations hosting events in the park, but also that any smaller event must provide Special Event coverage. This includes even birthday parties and movie nights.
- The COI provided for Professional Stump Grinding was received after work was complete and included the Parks Chair's personal address instead of the VHCA property address. The Treasurer asks the Parks Chair to provide timely and accurate COIs or Special Event coverage for this requirement to minimize liability going forward.

**Survey from one of two easements with AT&T/BellSouth (2010)**



**Timeline**

- **January**

2: Mark Nevitt, Parks Committee member, emailed the Parks Chair and committee members Jess Liddick, Jim Long, Katie Voepel, Patrick Crosby asking for an arborist to contact in regard to the mulberry leaning on the fence. His email states he is not sure who owns the fence but that “we will need to budget for that to be repaired as well.”

5: Scott indicated he had reached out to John at Boutte and that he would keep people in the loop.

5: A close-up and in-color survey was sent to Parks Chair along with committee members Mark Nevitt, Jim Long, Katie Voepel, Patrick Crosby, and VHCA President Leah Matthews. The history of the mulberry was noted as having come up in the past with background to share. The location of the mulberry was





indicated as x on the wooden fence in the survey. This demonstrates the property line of both properties and the abandoned alley in between them.

No Parks committee meeting was held in the month of January.

- **February**

- 12: VHCA Board directed Parks Chair to hold a Parks Committee meeting to discuss and work through concerns raised around three areas:
  - A bike rack proposed but lack of communication or confirmation of compliance with City of Atlanta requirements
  - Removal of the mulberry but lack of communication or confirmation of compliance with City of Atlanta arborist; And lack of Parks Chair's recognition of VHCA's ownership and responsibilities
  - Addition of new plantings in the abandoned alley on the adjacent owner's property
- 14: Parks Committee member researched and archived all legally stamped and dated, recorded real estate documents available from Fulton County online. Officially filed documents were shared with the VHCA Board including survey, legal description, stormwater mitigation, and permit for bricks in the sidewalk.
- Parks Chair moved forward with the removal of the mulberry and other invasives, pruning of an oak along the adjacent property and installation of new plantings.
- No Parks committee meeting was held in the month of February.

- **March**

- 3: Parks Chair forwarded two invoices to VHCA Treasurer: one for \$2,530.00 from Boutte and one from Professional Stump Grinding for \$300.
- 5: Treasurer outlined that AtlantaLux's contribution of half of the project cost should be paid to VHCA, since VHCA was covering the cost.
- 8: VHCL received a donation from AtlantaLux for \$1,415 overnight.
- 26: Treasurer recommends rejection of the invoices and re-routing to the people who approved the work instead of the association taking on expenses that are not legitimate from a process perspective nor a responsibility of VHCA.
- 27: Treasurer is asked by the three other Officers (President, VP, and Secretary) to pay the invoices with concern for the invoice's age at 30 days.
- 27: Treasurer paid Boutte \$2,605. Professional Stump Grinding was paid \$300.
- No Parks committee meeting was held in the month of March.