



General Virginia-Highland Civic Association Board Meeting Meeting Minutes

December 12, 2024 - 7:00 - 9:00 PM

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

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

VHCA Directors: Alex B. Jones (President), Melissa Clark (Vice President), Karri Hobson-Pape (Secretary), Miguel Barrios (Treasurer), Johnson Bazzel, Kevin Cronin (virtual), Amy Harward, Kenneth Herring, Karen Isenberg Jones, Tim Langan

Community Members In Attendance:
Undetermined

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Alex B. Jones. A Quorum was established. All board members in attendance, except for Karri Hobson-Pape, who provided prior notice.

Jones read the following prologue to begin the meeting:

Welcome, everyone, to the Virginia-Highland Civic Association meeting. As we gather here, we'd like to first express our gratitude to each of you for joining. This association has proudly served our neighborhood for over 50 years, powered entirely by dedicated volunteers who give their time and energy to help shape a stronger, more vibrant community. Together, we work on initiatives that support our parks, guide thoughtful planning, and bring neighbors together in meaningful ways.

We know that Virginia-Highland is home to a diverse group of voices, and with that comes a wide range of perspectives. While we may not always agree, we hope that everyone feels comfortable to share their thoughts in a way that is both respectful and neighborly. Disagreement is ok. Disrespect will not be tolerated. Let's continue to build on our legacy by focusing on what connects us and working together for the future of our community. Thank you for being here and for being part of this ongoing work.

Approval of Agenda

Motion #1:

(Jones/Clark) Motion to approve the agenda.

Motion Passed 9 in favor/ 0 opposed.



Miguel Barrios	<i>Approved</i>	Kenneth Herring	<i>Approved</i>
Johnson Bazzel	<i>Approved</i>	Karri Hobson-Pape	
Melissa Clark	<i>Approved</i>	Alex Jones	<i>Approved</i>
Kevin Cronin	<i>Approved</i>	Karen Isenberg Jones	<i>Approved</i>
Amy Harward	<i>Approved</i>	Tim Langan	<i>Approved</i>

Guest and Elected Officials

Atlanta Police Department - Lieutenant Carroll (Zone 6) shared that in last 30 days period

- Doing well in the last week -
- 11 thefts from auto - only area where we need some attention.
- Jones brought attention to APD about encampment on Paris on Ponce. Lt. Carroll agreed to check it out.

Thank you from Alex Jones to Zone 6 team.

Approval of Minutes

Motion #2:

(Jones/Clark) Motion to approve the November 2024 minutes.

Motion Passed 9 in favor/ 0 opposed.

Miguel Barrios	<i>Approved</i>	Kenneth Herring	<i>Approved</i>
Johnson Bazzel	<i>Approved</i>	Karri Hobson-Pape	
Melissa Clark	<i>Approved</i>	Alex Jones	<i>Approved</i>
Kevin Cronin	<i>Approved</i>	Karen Isenberg Jones	<i>Approved</i>
Amy Harward	<i>Approved</i>	Tim Langan	<i>Approved</i>

Planning Committee

- V-24-224 676 Elmwood Dr NE.
 - Pam Bulloch presented the plans for the variance (2-car carport). Clients would like to get both cars off of the street.
 - Reduce rear yard from 15' to 6'.
 - West Side 7' to 1.5"



- Increase lot coverage to 50% to 52.6%. Currently 51.6% on the property.
 - Opposition from neighbors in rear; attorney prepared following criteria.
 - Concern about height
 - Concern about building in set back
 - Mass of structure

Motion #3:

(Cronin/Langan) Motion to approve V-24-224 676 Elmwood Dr NE. to:

- Reduce rear yard set back from 15' to 6'
- Reduce westside yard from 7' to 1'6"
- Increase lot coverage from required 50% to 52.6%
- Special exemption to increase width of driveway to 24"
- Eliminate window in the back
- Site plan dated to 12-5-2024

Motion Passed 9 in favor/ 0 opposed.

Miguel Barrios	<i>Approved</i>	Kenneth Herring	<i>Approved</i>
Johnson Bazzel	<i>Approved</i>	Karri Hobson-Pape	
Melissa Clark	<i>Approved</i>	Alex Jones	<i>Approved</i>
Kevin Cronin	<i>Approved</i>	Karen Isenberg Jones	<i>Approved</i>
Amy Harward	<i>Approved</i>	Tim Langan	<i>Approved</i>

- V-24-225 816 Adair Ave - Deferred until January. Cronin shared that this was a unique lot because of a storm water drain. Will set a precedent because all neighbors have to deal with the storm drain.
- Discussion about the need to encourage neighbors to speak with each other in advance of the planning process.

Officer and Committee Updates

- Discussion re Committee & Subcommittee Members/Volunteers
 - Jones reminded all board members about formal vote in January; call for volunteers that are needed.
- Officer and Committee Updates

Motion #4:

(Jones/Clark) Motion to approve Melissa Clark, Amy Harward and Leah Matthews for VHCA Community Liaison to Virginia-Highland District



Motion Passed 9 in favor/ 0 opposed.

Miguel Barrios	<i>Approved</i>	Kenneth Herring	<i>Approved</i>
Johnson Bazzel	<i>Approved</i>	Karri Hobson-Pape	
Melissa Clark	<i>Approved</i>	Alex Jones	<i>Approved</i>
Kevin Cronin	<i>Approved</i>	Karen Isenberg Jones	<i>Approved</i>
Amy Harward	<i>Approved</i>	Tim Langan	<i>Approved</i>

- Virginia-Highland Safety Patrol Liaison was further discussed. Kim Gnatt was discussed and Kevin Cronin will follow up with her.

Motion #5:

(Jones/Clark) Motion to defer VHSP liaison to January.

Motion Passed 9 in favor/ 0 opposed.

Miguel Barrios	<i>Approved</i>	Kenneth Herring	<i>Approved</i>
Johnson Bazzel	<i>Approved</i>	Karri Hobson-Pape	
Melissa Clark	<i>Approved</i>	Alex Jones	<i>Approved</i>
Kevin Cronin	<i>Approved</i>	Karen Isenberg Jones	<i>Approved</i>
Amy Harward	<i>Approved</i>	Tim Langan	<i>Approved</i>

- Volunteer Appreciation Event - Dec 15
 - Discussion to recruit neighbors and friends. Logistics, Outreach to neighbors, Volunteer Recruiting process, Friends Yard Signs
 - Communications push to encourage as many people as possible
 - VHD offered for VHCA to have a table at Winterfest to recruit
- VAHI Holiday Decorations Contest
 - Signs ready for distribution, Judges are ready, All plans ready to have some fun
- Expectations of Committee Chairs - Review timeline or committee review and approval
 - December 9 VHCA Board Meeting - Committee & Subcommittee Names Proposed
 - December 15 - Strategic Goals and Proposed Budget (Bylaws)



- January 13 - VHCA Board Vote to Approve Budget and Committee members
- Budget Committee:
 - Barrios requested budget due December 15; approved at January meeting
 - Barrios shared changes have been made with Secretary of State
 - Barrios shared that some version of a review or audit will be discussed. Last was done in 2017.
 - Wells Fargo CD is on a rolling 3 month CD on \$50K. Need to decide if we continue with that program. Cronin encouraged to go a bit longer. Barrios planned to go further.
 - Barrios shared that P&L - Operating budget is \$40K behind this year. There are opportunities to reduce budgets in 2025 (e.g. Gala, branding) so can reduce expenses.
- Planning Committee
 - Presentation about Atlanta Rezoning 2.0 (Debbie Skopczynski)
 - City has taken on 2 large efforts: Comprehensive Development Plan (Plan A) and Rezoning 2.0
 - CDP is master plan for city - focus on land use; policy statements exist for NPUs. NPU will be having a meeting at end of January to develop policy statement as it relates to development.
 - ATL Zoning 2.0 is half way through development process. Made of 3 modules. Introducing 2 new concepts.
 - Module 2 is focused on site and development, which has created the discussions on NextDoor on RG2 (St. Charles and Greenwood)
 - Jan 13th is the Q&A for Site and Development
 - Module 3 - changes to variances and rezonings (important for VHCA/NPU)
 - Plan to have the final document in summer time.
 - Neighborhood Commercial Zoning (NC) will not be rezoned. Categories will not be rezoned, just retitled.
 - Next Steps - Q&A session on Jan 13th
 - Langan encouraged outside assistance/help for this. Cronin encouraged not to spend money on a consultant.
- Parks Committee:
 - North Highland Park Planting Update - 20-30 volunteers this weekend
 - Issues with unsheltered and activity
 - Budgeting considerations for maintenance support
 - Orme Park - very strong volunteer leaders; 100 year anniversary of bridge and opportunity
 - Update on John Howell Park Renovations (Jim Coe)
 - Received focus from Parks Commissioner from Moving Atlanta Forward Bond Program - indicated support with \$300K
 - Grant applications submitted to Park Pride, who suggested a maximum of \$100K
 - Raised \$100K (largely from Rob Glancy + Concerts, Summerfest)
 - Cost for stormwater will be \$800K
 - Need to solidify relationship with VHCA & VHCL
- Safety & Transportation:
 - Tactical Urbanism Proposal Update



- Emphasized not in front of any residence
 - Moving through approvals
 - Will discuss with transportation committee - Alex said there is a mechanism for repainting cross walks in the city. Will discuss high profile intersections.
-
- Communications Committee
 - Exploring improvements
 - Elections Committee
 - Fundraising Committee:
 - Summerfest update - work underway
 - Tour of Homes update
 - Friends of VAHI
 - Old Business
 - New Business

Adjournment

Meeting ended at 9:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
Karri Hobson-Pape



Appendix: Variances

V-24-224 676 Elmwood Dr NE https://drive.google.com/file/d/1O-Jbl1TcGiVLkxTBT_eG9N5bl-wg-PTX/view?usp=share_link

The Planning Committee recommends this variance with the following conditions:

- Approve V-24-224 6767 Elmwood Dr. NE:
- Reduce rear yard setback from 15 feet to 6 feet
- Reduce the West side yard from 7 feet to 1 feet 6 inches
- Increase the lot coverage from the required 50% to 52.6%
- Special Exception to increase the width of a driveway from the required 20 feet to 24 feet and eliminate the window in storage on the second floor facing the alley.

Planning Committee Vote 3-0 on Favor

The backyard neighbors did engage an attorney who presented opposition to this variance. They mainly objected to the height of the proposed garage of 17.1 at the peak. (Code allows for 20) They also felt the window in the garage's storage, and the applicant agreed to remove that as a concession. The immediate side neighbors and across-the-street neighbors do support his project. Kevin walked the alleyway, where there were several larger carriage houses with actual second floors. The applicant is using the space above the garage for storage only.

V-24-225 816 Adair Ave

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yHij1tVF42pTBBvGxapLtFUnxx5C5AT6/view?usp=sharing>

The Planning Committee and the applicant agreed to defer this so the neighbors can review plans, address several concerns, and work with the applicant and architect to explore any options/revisions.

Motion to Defer V-24-224 676 Elmwood Dr. NE without prejudice

Vote 2-0

Pam Bullock and the applicant to work with the neighbors to review plans and try to work on any compromises.

Atlanta Zoning 2.0 Now Ready For Review.

Over 10,000 public comments have helped shape Atlanta's proposed zoning for the 21st century.



Did you know..

A key part of creating the ATL 2.0 Zoning Ordinance involves converting existing zoning districts to the new format, as well as creating new zoning districts for future use. Together, these districts are key tools for implementing the community vision that will emerge from the ongoing Comprehensive Development Plan update.

Thanks to your feedback, over the past year, the City's Zoning Rewrite Consultant team has been busy converting Atlanta's existing Zoning Ordinance into the new ATL 2.0 Zoning Ordinance "Discussion Draft." This process has been guided by the Atlanta Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Diagnostic Report, public comments received in the 2022 and 2023 Idea Labs and Focused Workshops, and other City initiatives. The work has also been coordinated with the City's ongoing Comprehensive Development Plan update, which you can learn more about at atlantaforall.com.

The new Zoning Ordinance will be released as a series of modules. **Module I was released on May 20, 2024 to introduce the first of these modules which addresses form, frontage, and use regulations with a follow up Q & A Session held on July 9, 2024.**

Join us for the following public meetings to now review Modules II & III!



MODULE II: Development Standards

In-Person & Virtual Public Meeting
Dec 4, 2024 @ 6:30PM

Location

Trinity Presbyterian Church
3003 Howell Mill Rd. NW
Atlanta, GA 30327

Virtual via Zoom

Visit atlzoning.com to pre-register

Virtual Q & A Session

Jan 13, 2025 @ 6:30PM

Join via Zoom

Visit atlzoning.com to pre-register



MODULE III: Administration

In-Person & Virtual Public Meeting
Feb 3, 2025 @ 6:30PM

Location

Haley's Event Center, Greenbriar Mall
2841 Greenbriar Pkwy SW
Atlanta, GA, 30331

Virtual via Zoom

Visit atlzoning.com to pre-register

Virtual Q & A Session

March 17, 2025 @ 6:30PM

Join via Zoom

Visit atlzoning.com to pre-register



Scan here for more details and to register for an upcoming in-person or virtual meeting.

We look forward to connecting with you again!

To learn more information about ATL Zoning 2.0 please visit atlzoning.com. You may also email us at atlzoning2@atlantaga.gov or call 404-546-0116 with additional questions and comments.





Appendix:

Holiday Decoration Contest Plan:

Contest Categories and Judging Criteria

- Best Overall Display: Combination of creativity, effort, and visual impact.
- Most Creative: Unique, imaginative designs and use of materials.
- Best Traditional Design: Classic, traditional holiday decor.
- Kid-Friendliest: Fun, whimsical, or family-oriented displays.
- Best Decorated Street in VAHI: broad spirit displayed on the street

Prizes

Minimal Budget: Focus on simple, low-cost prizes to honor winners:

- Award Signs: Design and print small signs or banners (e.g., “Winner: Best Overall Holiday Display”) for each winning yard.
- Recognition in the Voice: Winners will be featured in the next edition of the *Voice*, the VAHI community newsletter.
- Social Media Announcement: Post winners on VAHI social media channels.
- “The Honor”: Emphasize the pride and recognition of winning within the community.

Establish a Judging Panel

- Ideally, aim for a diverse panel of 5-7 judges.
- Request Volunteers: At the Virginia-Highland Civic Association meeting on November 11th, announce the need for volunteer judges. Explain time commitment (evenings of December 8-14). Hopefully we can get volunteers that evening.
- Backup Call-Out: If needed, post a call for judges on VAHI’s social media on November 12th.

Contest Timeline

- November 11: Announce and recruit judges at the VAHI meeting.
- November 12: Post on social media if additional judges are needed.
- November 23: Announce contest to neighbors via social media and posters
- December 8-14: Judging period; judges tour the neighborhood in the evenings to evaluate displays.
- December 15: Judges submit their scores
- December 16: Announce winners on VAHI social media and submit for the next *Voice* newsletter.

Promotion Plan

- Newsletter: Include a notice in the *Voice* to reach residents who may not follow social media.
- Flyers: Create simple flyers or posters with contest details, categories, judging dates, and announcement plans. Post these at local businesses, coffee shops, and community boards.
- Social Media: Use VAHI’s Facebook, Instagram platforms to spread the word:



- o Initial announcement: Outline contest categories, judging dates, and prizes.
- o Reminders: Post on December 7th reminding residents that judging will occur Dec 8-14.
- o Final reminder on December 15th about the upcoming announcement of winners.

Coordinate Judging Process

- Judging Criteria: Provide a simple rubric for each category to help judges rate displays consistently.
- Judging Schedule: Encourage judges to coordinate their schedules to cover all areas of Virginia-Highland during the judging period (December 8-14).
- Final Tally: On December 14th-15th, collect scores from all judges, tally the results, and determine the winners for each category.

Announce Winners

- Social Media Announcement (December 16): Post winners on VAHI social media with photos of each winning display (if possible) and a congratulatory message.
- Feature in the Voice: Submit a write-up and photos of winners for the next edition of the Voice newsletter, celebrating their achievement and sharing a bit about each winning display.
- Award Signs: Deliver award signs to each winning yard, so neighbors can see and celebrate their accomplishment.

Budget

- TOTAL = \$900 maximum (including \$500 for “best street” for street party)

Collect Feedback for Future Improvement

After the contest, gather feedback from judges, residents, and participants to refine the process for next year. Ask for ideas on judging, promotion, or additional categories that might improve for future.

