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# Berkeley Park Bulletin

July 2008

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## President's Report

by Ron Horgan  
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Dear neighbors,

We had another successful neighborhood chili cook-off this past month! We had a day of fun with great chili and fantastic music again. Berkeley Park should be proud of its efforts in getting so many people out to enjoy each others company and friendship. Once again we had many neighbors and guests volunteer their time, talents and donations to make a successful repeat of last year. I can not begin to list everyone who helped out, so to all of you, a huge thank you! Congratulations to Dwight Glover, this year's winner and to all the Chili Cookers for their fine efforts and great Chili. We need to begin discussions of how to best utilize the funds that were raised. We have not had a beautification project for some time so that may be a good use of those monies. There are some ideas that have been floated in that direction. One that is interesting is to do a logo "floating" flower baskets from utility poles at several key locations in the neighborhood. Ideas are welcomed from all.

That gives a segue into another logo item, the flag. We have currently sold all of the flags that were ordered several years ago! That is a good thing; the bad side of it is that the cost of the replacements have doubled! That means that a new flag would sell for \$100.00. At a previous meeting we decided that amount might be a concerning asking price for folks. We are currently looking for alternative sources for flags and if anyone has any recommendations for flag companies please pass them on to me so we can get more soon. The original flags sold for \$50.00 and BPNA made a very small profit for the neighborhood at that price point. The last flag was purchased by one of our new neighborhood eating establishments, The Social House. I think that is cool!

Once again the political ball is rolling in Berkeley Park! On Monday, July 21st BPNA will host its second Mayoral Candidate Meet and Greet! The event will feature Mary Norwood, our District At Large City Council Representative. The M&G with Lisa Borders was a great success! We had 28 neighbors in attendance and room for

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more. Great questions were asked, one brave soul even asked about Sunday liquor sales through an interpreter (you had to be there to understand that). Once again Mark and Melody Harclerode, at 778 Holmes Street, will host the 7 PM event. For the first M&G we solicited the neighborhood for questions to ask Lisa Borders. In an effort to hear the different candidates responses to our concerns we will be sending Councilwoman Norwood the same list of questions. At the end of the first M&G we had time for an open Q&A and that will be the same for this one.

We discussed previously using the July 21 meet and greet event as our monthly meeting as it falls on the 3rd Monday, our normal meeting day. So, following the M&G we will have our July BPNA meeting. We have two items on the agenda that we will need to have discussion and vote on. One will be a transfer of the liquor license at the Wal-Mart. A liquor license has to be in an individual's name so I would think this is just the transfer from a departing manager to a new one. The other is a possible rezoning on Bellemeade at the Masonic Lodge from residential to RLC. The property is potentially being sold to a Berkeley Park resident to convert into office space with mainly cosmetic changes being made. Please plan to attend and to stay for this important development.

As we have seen over the last few weeks many improvements have been made to the infamous Howell Mill/Chattahoochee intersection. We have all waited so long for this to come to conclusion that it is hard to believe it is almost over. I would like to send out a long overdue "Thank You" to Mike Wagoner for his efforts in helping coordinate in the final stages when it seemed nothing would come to closure on this mess. The light patterns still seem to need some tweaking and from some of the things people have been saying tweaking may not be the right term. I have traveled on Howell Mill at varying times of day and for the most part I have had good results. Time will tell.

One change to the Howell Mill project may affect Berkeley Park in an even more positive way. It was reported several weeks ago that the Church at the corner of Holmes and Howell Mill had significant damage during the construction phase and recently the engineers of the project said the stamped concrete crosswalks would create damaging vibrations to the surrounding business. At that point Clair Muller sent out an email to all of the parties who she termed as "stake holders" over the course of the project with a message that the city was looking at alternatives to the stamped concrete. Three alternatives were given. Each one was given a cost with the money in potential savings being offered to BPNA for internal traffic calming. We were given two days to make a decision. The BPNA Board was asked to weigh in. 4 of the 5 responses were to go with the alternative that gave the most money to traffic calming. I have copied Clair's explanation of the outcome for everyone to see ([click here for Clair's letter](#)). The neighborhood has for years discussed traffic calming ideas and solutions, and from those discussions, and drawing from the Blueprints document the Traffic Committee gave a list of suggestions for the City to evaluate and determine costs. Once we hear back from Clair as to the City's response we will pass that information along to everyone for discussion and vote at the first available neighborhood meeting. This was not an easy process or decision, but I truly feel that the money is better spent within the neighborhood at this time. Until we can get the unnecessary truck traffic off of that intersection nothing will hold up there and this again will take time and a lot of persistence from us all.

I hope to see our great neighborhood have another good showing again for the Meet and Great with Mary Norwood. At this one we will have the wine! Please RSVP to Melody at [mharclerode@TheArchitectureGroup.com](mailto:mharclerode@TheArchitectureGroup.com).

Ron

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## City News

Dear Berkeley Park Neighbors-

I greatly appreciate your suggestions, comments and opinions regarding crosswalk installation options on Howell Mill at Bellemeade/Defoors and Chattahoochee/Holmes.

For those who may not clearly understand exactly why these options came about, the Department of Public Works (DPW) approached me last week with their concerns that the original stamped concrete option would produce outward vibrations for the properties bordering Howell Mill. What was attractive though was the option to use the \$70,000.00 allotted for the crosswalks for internal traffic calming in Berkeley Park if painted crosswalks were done instead of stamped concrete crosswalks. In going back through the notes from the numerous meetings we had regarding the intersection project, it was clear that the stamped concrete option was picked more for aesthetic reasons. Seeing that Berkeley Park, through the Berkeley Blueprints study and other forums has been requesting traffic calming for quite some time on their internal streets which are more affected than other nearby neighborhoods by Howell Mill cut-thru traffic, it only seems fair and appropriate to use this money for traffic calming. I also want to note that Ed Ellis, a well-respected traffic engineer who also sat in on the intersection meetings that took place for years, believes paint would be the best way to go seeing that it is easy to maintain and still serves the same purpose in regards to providing a clear crossing for pedestrians.

I know some of you have expressed concerns over making sure that the \$70,000.00 is used for traffic calming in Berkeley Park. I can assure you that it will be seeing that this \$70,000.00 is from 1994 Bond Money and abandonment fee money from District 8- not general fund DPW dollars or even Quality of Life dollars- so it will stay put until a decision is made by the neighborhood as to how it should be spent for traffic calming. Having said that I would also like to say that it makes the most sense to follow through with the traffic calming recommendations made in the Blueprints study that was based on neighborhood input. DPW is prepared to evaluate and give estimates for those recommendations which I will send to them, as well as any new ones you all have as a neighborhood. Once more consensus is gathered regarding possible traffic calming projects, we can have a meeting with DPW and neighborhood representatives to narrow down the list, make some decisions and get the work started.

Another issue I would like to point out is that the money for the Howell Mill improvement project is for one-time only. There is no money wrapped in for maintenance if one of the other crosswalk options- Streetprint or DuraTherm- were selected. This is not to say one of them could not be done, but it does cause DPW and me concern that in the near future maintenance might be needed and there would be no available funding to do such. Painted crosswalks can be done and repainted easily by the City and require little maintenance and upkeep.

I know that this is a hard decision and there was limited time to provide feedback, but based on what I'm gathering from DPW's evaluation as well as a majority of those who have responded from Berkeley Park, it would seem best at this point in time to select the painted crosswalk option and save the remaining \$70,000.00 for internal traffic calming in Berkeley Park. If we wait any longer to make a decision the contractor will demobilize and it will be hard to get them back once a decision is made, delaying this project even further.

Thank you all again, and I look forward to working with you on coming up with traffic calming solutions for your neighborhood streets.

Clair

Visit Clair Muller's Atlanta City Council District 8 website at <http://clairmuller.blogspot.com/>

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## Neighborhood News

by Maureen Finneran Hetrick  
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For the second year in a row, residents of Berkeley Park came out to eat chili, listen to music, and enjoy each other's company, all in the name of raising money for the Berkeley Park Neighborhood Association. On June 22, Berkeley Park held its 2 nd annual Chili Cookoff and Cook Out. Over \$1200 was raised. Dwight Glover won the chili cook off.

## Neighborhood News

by Maureen Finneran Hetrick  
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and

Melody Harclerode  
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As part of a series of events introducing the candidates for Atlanta's mayor in the 2009 election, current Atlanta City Council President and Mayoral Candidate Lisa Borders met with Berkeley Park residents on June 30, 2008 at the 778 Holmes Street residence of Mark and Melody Harclerode. The event was well-attended by Berkeley Park residents. Ms. Borders discussed the recently passed budget and her initiatives for the city of Atlanta if elected Mayor. She answered questions from residents and vowed that her office would assist Berkeley Park on several issues, including traffic and crime.

Ms. Borders first discussed the recent passage of the city budget by the council, with a vote of 15-0. She attributed the budget deficit from the previous fiscal year with the increased costs of employee pensions, healthcare, fuel and utilities, as well as an error made in the Mayor's accounting office. The new budget includes no new taxes, as council members did not want to add new property taxes to the increase in water rates that residents will be paying in coming years. Ms. Borders professed that as mayor, she would approach a budget crisis by focusing on the fundamentals of city government: firefighters, police, corrections, trash and water.

Ms. Borders said that her desire to become mayor of Atlanta in these difficult economic times stems from spending time in her grandfather's church as a child. There, she met then-mayor of Atlanta, Maynard Jackson, and she told him she wanted his job someday.

Other issues Ms. Borders said she wanted to work on as mayor included the Beltline, the housing and foreclosure problem in the city, and finances.

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The next meet and greet will be with Mary Norwood on Monday, July 21 at 7 pm at the home of Melody and Mark Harclerode at 778 Holmes St. Please RSVP to Melody Harclerode at [mharclerode@TheArchitectureGroup.com](mailto:mharclerode@TheArchitectureGroup.com) to attend.

The regular BPNA monthly meeting will commence immediately after the Meet and Greet event.

## NPU-D Report

by Jim Martin

[james.martin@me.gatech.edu](mailto:james.martin@me.gatech.edu)

The NPU-D meeting on June 24 th was filled with excitement. Mayor Franklin attended the meeting. She sat through all of our NPU business and answered questions for an hour at the end of the meeting. This was one of those unscheduled surprise visits, so only people who would have been there anyway and who sat through the whole meeting got to ask her questions.

Before we talked to the mayor, we dealt with about an hour of routine business. We heard an update on the rerouting of traffic around a proposed CSX bridge widening project on Hollywood Rd. This one doesn't seem to be on my way to anywhere, but if it happens to be a route that you drive frequently, you may want to consider some alternatives. We unanimously approved the setback variance for Chandler and Nina's carport and screened porch addition at 811 Verner. We also approved two liquor licenses by votes of 27 to 1 (a non-drinker appears to have infiltrated our group). One of these is for a restaurant called *Milk and Honey* that has moved into the old *Pangaea* location on Huff Rd. The coffee is good there, but I have not sampled the food yet. The other was for a change of ownership at *Depalma's* restaurant at Defoors and Collier. Things there should be going on much as usual. We endorsed the abandonment of the Spring Grove Avenue right-of-way to facilitate the construction of a second office tower at the Carter site on Howell Mill Rd by a vote of 19 to 1, mine being the only opposition. This was something that we had unanimously denied in July, but since then Underwood Hills reversed its position on the issue for reasons that made no sense to me.

In what was probably the most amusing zoning case that we have heard in a while, we abstained from taking a position on the Georgian Hills rezoning in on Collier Rd in NPU-C. Unlike an ordinary abstention, this one came with a lengthy list of conditions and qualifying statements and a lengthy introduction by Eva Nason (Underwood Hills) who had participated in the NPU-C task force that negotiated with the developer (Coro). Eva's position seemed to be that she opposed the development, but was less opposed to it than she would have been if not for the various conditions negotiated by the task force, although she would have preferred some additional conditions that were not including among them. In light of the moderating (but inadequate) conditions, Eva believed that we should adopt a middle-ground position between approval and denial i.e. abstention. Of course because all of this was based on the NPU-C agreement and the apparently inevitable zoning approval by NPU-C (which made our actions largely irrelevant anyway), she felt obliged to state all of the conditions on which our abstention was predicated. Once this was laid out in excruciating detail, we happily endorsed the no-action position and moved on.

Mayor Franklin answered questions on a variety of topics including city finances, law enforcement, permitting processes, code enforcement, reductions in city services, and the Beltline TAD (my personal *dragon-in-need-of-slaying* ). During the discussion of code violations the mayor asked me to send her a list of the top 20 code violations in NPU-D. After some back and forth on email with various neighborhood representatives, I whittled down about 30 suggestions and sent her the following list that Friday ([click here for the list](#)). Five of these sites are in Berkeley Park. The descriptions of the other 15 give the flavor of what the other neighborhoods in NPU-D are dealing with currently.

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Next NPU-D meeting:  
July 29  
7:30 pm  
Agape Center, 2351 Bolton Road, NW  
ALL NPU RESIDENTS ARE WELCOME

## Top 20 code violations in NPU-D

compiled by Jim Martin, NPU-D chair  
sent to Mayor Shirley Franklin at her request

**(1) 1605 Howell Mill Rd (Berkeley Park)** – An abandoned single-family house that has been vacant for 10 years or so. The structure is literally collapsing. The yard is overgrown and contains two large dead trees that potentially threaten the neighbors. The structures on the site (there is also an out building) frequently serve as a refuge for vagrants.

**(2) 2081-2097 Hollywood Rd. The Heather Glen Apartments (Riverside)** – A vacant apartment complex that has been seriously damaged by three separate fires. Many of the units are open and serve as refuge for vagrants (the likely cause of the fires). The property is overgrown and strewn with garbage. The structures are all in disrepair and/or gutted by fire.

**(3) 1956 Hollywood Rd. (Riverside)** – This is an open and vacant derelict property that has been the source of numerous complaints from neighbors relating to drug crime and prostitution.

**(4) 2045 Main Street (Riverside)** – This is an unpermitted construction project (major non-code-compliant addition to a single family home) that has been stagnant for years.

**(5) 1972 Grandview (Riverside)** – This is an abandoned construction project that is open and vacant. The property is strewn with trash. The structure serves as a refuge for vagrants.

**(6) 2386 Paul Ave (Riverside)** – Site of two abandoned houses with considerable debris in the yard and a substantial population of feral cats

**(7) 2408 Paul Ave (Riverside)** – An abandoned house that has been gutted by fire and is open and vacant. Trash is piled on the property and in the house. The yard is overgrown

**(8) Block of Burtz St, Peyton Rd, and Hollywood Rd: Multiple Addresses (Riverside)** – This is a site of a large proposed project called “The Burtz Street Development”, which appears to have run out of financing. Most of the site was clear cut without proper soil stabilization before work was halted. Some of the single-family homes that were acquired by the developer were not demolished and those are now open and vacant. There is trash on the site and its overall condition is gradually deteriorating.

**(9) 1906 Boyd Ave (Blandtown)** – This is an abandoned, dilapidated, open and vacant single-family home that needs to be torn down.

**(10) 1095 Huff Rd (Blandtown)** – This is a commercial building that has partially collapsed and is unsafe for occupancy. It needs to be demolished.

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**(11) No Number, corner of Old Chattahoochee and Morris (Berkeley Park)** – Abandoned, vacant, and boarded up. The house appears to be collapsing and there is trash in the yard. This property and those adjoining have I-1 zoning, which should be changed.

**(12) 892 and 896 Bowen St (Berkeley Park)** – These are single-family houses that were converted to boarding houses and now appear to be vacant. The structures are partially boarded up and are in obvious disrepair. These properties and those adjoining have I-1 zoning, which should be changed.

**(13) 1933 Claremont Rd (Underwood Hills)** – This is a semi-occupied house in poor repair. According to the neighbors someone is there occasionally, but no one lives there. There is considerable trash and debris in the yard, the grass is frequently overgrown, and there is a large population of resident feral cats.

**(14) Marvin St between Defoor Ave and Harper St (Underwood Hills)** – There are two apparently abandoned houses here that are in disrepair and have trash strewn yards.

**(15) Block of 656, 664, 674, 676, 684, and 690 Bellemeade; 1630, 1634, 1638, and 1632 Leona; 680, 684, and 688 Holmes; 1631 and 1635 Tallulah Tallulah St: Multiple addresses (Berkeley Park)** – This is the epicenter of a problem known locally as the *Techatoriums*, although there are a few others in Berkeley Park and Underwood Hills. These are large student-occupied boarding houses that are not zoning compliant and never have been. Most exceed permissible lot coverage because of extensive paving, some exceed permissible height, all are in violation of the SPI-14 restrictions and the prohibition against boarding houses in single-family districts. These yards are usually overgrown, strewn with trash, and/or have several cars parked in them. They have been the site of numerous noise, under age drinking, and property crime complaints ranging back 10 to 20 years. They are overusing city services (one has six herby-curbies) and underpaying city taxes because of comparatively low assessments. The owners may be actively committing tax fraud, or this may be the result of the incompetence in the Fulton County Assessor's office.

**(16) 2131 Rando Lane (Bolton)** – This is a very-badly deteriorated single family house with an overgrown yard.

**(17) 2184 Dunsheath (Bolton)** – This is an unpermitted second-story addition to a single-family home that was begun and then abandoned two years ago. There is trash and debris in the yard.

**(18) No address, Corner of Forrest and Howell Mill land lot# 17-0152-0010-028-9 (Berkeley Park)** – This is an empty lot that is badly overgrown (blocking a sidewalk), strewn with trash, and is the site of frequent illegal dumping (some rumored to have involved toxic waste from a nearby industrial site). The owner re-graded the site illegally several years ago and there now is an erosion problem that affects the neighbors on the east side.

**(19) 1868 LaDawn Lane (Bolton)** – There are many junk cars and trucks in the yard in addition to piles of trash and debris.

**(20) 2225 Adams Drive (Bolton)** – There are many junk cars and trucks in the yard. Property owner is running a business (auto repair) from a residence .

## Election News

by Maureen Finneran Hetrick  
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You may have thought that after the exciting Presidential Preference Primary election in February, you could sit back and relax until November, but wait! The primary election on Tuesday, July 15 will decide several key offices. For instance, the long-time representative from the 5 th congressional district, John Lewis, faces 2 challengers in his own (Democratic) party, but none in the Republican party, so the winner of the July Democratic primary will likely be running unopposed in November. In addition, multiple Democratic challengers have thrown their hats in the ring to run against Republican U.S. Senator Saxby Chambliss in the fall, so this election will determine the candidate on the ballot in the general election. Three Democratic challengers are trying to fill the State Representative seat for the 55 th district (which includes Berkeley Park) but no Republicans are vying for that office. There are multiple other state and local offices up for grabs this year, so be sure that your vote gets counted!

If you live in Berkeley Park, be sure to stop by the Senior Center on July 15 to vote (be sure to check your voter identification card to be sure of your polling location, or visit <http://www.sos.georgia.gov/cgi-bin/locator.asp> to look it up). You must already be registered, and you must show a picture identification in order to vote. Acceptable forms of identification include a driver's license (even if it's expired), valid U.S. passport, valid, military photo ID card, valid tribal ID card, valid employee photo ID card from any government office, or any valid state or federal government issued photo ID, including a free Voter ID Card issued by your county registrar's office or the Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS) Georgia state identification card. For more information, visit <http://sos.georgia.gov/gaphotoid/default.htm> or call the Fulton County Registrar at 404-612-7020.

In addition, the Fulton County Board of Elections has sample ballots on their website at <http://www.fultoncountyga.gov/county/elections/index.php> . Just click the link for "sample ballots" on the left side of the page for information.

Happy Voting!!

## About Us

The Berkeley Park Bulletin is published monthly in print and at [www.berkeleypark.org](http://www.berkeleypark.org) by the Berkeley Park Neighborhood Association, a non-profit organization. It is distributed to all Berkeley Park residents 3 times a year. To subscribe to the monthly edition, submit an article or Talk Back letter, or inquire about advertising, contact the editor, Maureen Hetrick, at 404-609-9873 or [maureenfh@mindspring.com](mailto:maureenfh@mindspring.com). We accept appropriate articles from all Berkeley Park residents or other interested community members at the discretion of the editor and as space permits.

Membership in the BPNA is \$10 per person (up to 3 adults per address are eligible to become members), and \$5 for seniors. To join the association, attend a monthly meeting and pay dues to the treasurer, [Nina-Daniela McCormack](#) , or the president, [Ron Horgan](#). If you cannot attend a meeting but wish to join, or for more information, email us at [info@berkeleypark.org](mailto:info@berkeleypark.org).

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