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# Berkeley Park Bulletin

## December 2008

In this Issue:

[Home](#)

[Fire Station #23](#)

[Tawn Chi / TC Properties](#)

[Neighborhood Election News](#)

[Calendar](#)

[Jeff DePaola ReMax](#)

[President's Report](#)

[About Us](#)

[Florist Atlanta](#)

[Seniors Report](#)

[Join BPNA Today!!](#)

[Andrew T. Crawford Ironworks](#)

[NPU-D Report](#)

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[Crime Watch](#)

[Hammersmith](#)

### BPNA Election News

by Maureen Finneran Hetrick  
[maureenfh@mindspring.com](mailto:maureenfh@mindspring.com)  
404-609-9873

At the November meeting of the BPNA, we elected officers for the coming year. The 2009 Board of Directors are:

Michael Wagoner, President

Chandler McCormack, Vice president

Nina McCormack, Treasurer

Michael Hagearty, Secretary

Jim Martin, Jeffrey Rogerson and Joel Iverson, At Large Board Members

As always, we are in need of volunteers to help out on a variety of committees. If you would like to help out in the neighborhood, please contact our new president, Michael Wagoner, at 404-351-4417 or [mwagoner@clcnetworks.com](mailto:mwagoner@clcnetworks.com). No special skills are necessary, but we'd love to utilize any skills you do have!

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## President's Report

by Ron Horgan  
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Dear neighbors,

I want to invite everyone to the annual Christmas Party on Sunday December 14 th at the home of Chandler and Nina McCormack. The Party will begin at 5 PM and last until... PM. The McCormack's live at 811Verner Street, the Swiss Alps section of the street. Food and Adult beverages will be provided for by the neighborhood so join in for this festive neighborhood tradition.

As you know a lot is always going on in our little neighborhood and I ask that everyone support Mike Wagoner's efforts in the coming months as our new President. I am very confident we will be well served by Michael and I wish him much success in his role.

We have at times in the past postponed our December monthly meeting based on issues surrounding permit applications mainly and this month we have an application for a liquor license for The Social House restaurant. There are certainly many issues surrounding our neighborhood that we will also be discussing so I hope to see a good turn out at the meeting.

Thanks again for all the support over the past two years everyone has given me and I look forward to serving the neighborhood in other roles moving forward.

Ron

## Seniors Report

by Tawn Chi  
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[tc@tcproperties.net](mailto:tc@tcproperties.net)

Hello Neighbors,

When we delivered the Piccadilly gift cards to the Seniors for Thanksgiving, we learned many were not going to be in town for Caroling to the Seniors this Saturday, December 6th. So, we've been trying to think of what else we can do for them.

My own children made this suggestion. "Let's read a Christmas Story to the Seniors! Then afterwards, let's all sing them Jingle Bells. We can also deliver a gift basket donated by Kroger and Publix. And, I have plenty of bells, while we sing.

We have decided to do this for our older Seniors only on Sunday, December 14th, starting at 2:pm to 5:pm. We have 5 in Underwood Hills and 5 in Berkeley Park, a total of 10 Seniors.

We need 8 more little volunteers that enjoy reading, like Maya Gibson who has a library of books. Each child will be assigned to a Senior. I will create a map and organize it.

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Please email me direct if you're interested in volunteering your child to read and sing to a Senior for Christmas on Sunday, December 14th.

What a special gift this will be for all! Thank you for helping to support our Seniors!

Tawn Chi

[tc@tcproperties.net](mailto:tc@tcproperties.net)

## NPU-D Report

by Jim Martin

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

The November 25 th NPU-D meeting was filled with excitement. Unfortunately, attendance was poor, so there were only about 10 residents there to enjoy it. We elected NPU-D officers for 2009. This involved residents from each of our seven neighborhoods caucusing with each other to select their neighborhood representatives and these representatives then electing the chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary. The whole thing was fairly comical given the poor attendance. As the sole resident of Berkeley Park present, I caucused with myself and unanimously elected myself to be our representative. I then unanimously elected Drew Jackson to be our alternate representative in absentia. Fortunately, our turnout was not the worst. Both Hills Park representatives were quasi-elected in absentia by residents from other neighborhoods. The six neighborhood representatives who were in attendance then caucused and elected me to be the 2009 chairperson by a vote of 5 to 1. The runner up for chairperson, Karyn Hudson, was then unanimously elected vice-chairperson. Karl Goodhew was unanimously elected to be our secretary.

We had two zoning cases on our agenda. The first was a variance to allow the Piedmont Hospital people to put a sign on their building on Howell Mill at a height well above that permitted by its C-1 zoning. In general, to be granted a variance, one must demonstrate some sort of hardship that is requiring relief. Their hardship appeared to be that they really...really wanted this sign. We did not find that to be a compelling rationale and voted to deny the variance 6 to 3 with 1 abstention. The second zoning case was for the Murray Mill property on Foster St off of Huff Road (AKA the Goat Farm). This was one that the executive committee had discussed with the developers on two previous occasions. The application was for a PDMU (planned development mixed use) zoning, which is completely defined by the site plan and a set of conditions rather than by the strictures of an underlying zoning category. In this case, matters were complicated by the fact that the developers did not submit revisions to the draft of their conditions until the morning of the meeting and these revisions failed to address concerns that had been previously raised. Thus all of the haggling over these conditions had to occur at the meeting. For this, it was somewhat fortunate that the meeting was poorly attended. The site is rather large, and their plan is to construct several new commercial and residential buildings while rehabilitating several of the older buildings that have historical significance. We discussed the details of their plans to save existing mature trees on the site. I pointed out that their proposed commitment to "obey the law" in this regard was not a particularly restrictive condition and that I hoped that they would obey all relevant laws during this project. In response, they pledged to identify specific trees on the site plan and to list the preservation of these in the zoning conditions. We discussed height limits on the project. One of the proposed buildings that backs up to the railroad tracks is considerably taller than anything else in Blandtown (11 stories) and the proposed conditions would have permitted a similar height anywhere else on the site. They agreed to a condition restricting all of the other buildings on the site to heights consistent with the surroundings. We also discussed the Beltline zoning overlay and the possibility that planning staff might require changes to the site plan that we were presented with. The proposed conditions would have superseded any of these requirements. Instead, we agreed that any administrative changes that were of a

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substantial nature would need to be approved by the NPU in order to give planning staff a change to improve on the plan.

After all that it was getting pretty late and we didn't have much enthusiasm for discussing two proposed ordinances that were on the agenda. One of these imposes a charge on VOIP phone lines to pay for 911 service. We endorsed that. The other is intended to create a new planned development housing zoning category (PD-CS) with environmental conservation features. We discussed this briefly, but did not take any action. Superficially, it seems harmless in that creating the category does not actually impose the zoning anywhere. However, we were all a bit wary of the underlying motives for this as there appeared to be nothing defined in the new category that could not have been permitted under the existing PDH zoning category.

At the December 23 rd NPU-D meeting we will be considering a liquor-license application for the Social House. We will probably also be voting on the new PD-CS zoning category. Other than that, we should have a pretty quiet meeting. Zoning applications seem to be falling off in response to the economic downturn.

On November 21 st , the city submitted a proposal to the ARC for the Howell Mill / Chattahoochee LCI study that I reported on in the August newsletter. We should hear back about this early next year. If the study is funded, planning activities will begin next spring.

Next NPU-D meeting:  
Tuesday, December 23  
7:30 pm  
Agape Center, 2351 Bolton Road, NW  
ALL NPU RESIDENTS ARE WELCOME

### Crime Watch Update

Maureen Hetrick  
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There has been much discussion online and in our meetings about the recent crime wave hitting Berkeley Park and the surrounding neighborhoods. Most of the time, the burglars are in and out of the home in less than 2 minutes, so they aren't deterred by home security systems. They seem to be most interested in large flat screen television sets, but also take new, portable technology such as video game systems, laptop computers, and MP3 players.

Berkeley Park is still exploring the possibility of hiring a private security company to patrol the neighborhood, but the best defense we have right now is each other. PLEASE keep your eyes open and report ANYTHING that seems unusual to you. The police will determine whether or not it is something to worry about.

Some things to look for:

- a person you do not know walking in the neighborhood talking on a cell phone. This person may be casing the area to determine which residents are not home.
- any vehicle driving slowly through the neighborhood, or stopped in the road with someone sitting in it.

The following notice was posted on our email list recently by Mindy Petzer, the crime watch chair for Underwood Hills. Here are her suggestions for keeping yourself safe.

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Christina Walker of the APD Crime Prevention Dept spoke at our meeting two weeks ago and had the following to say: Make sure you do everything to "break-in proof" your doors. You can do that by replacing the old locksets with newer, stronger sets. Also, add a reinforced strike plate to withstand the force of several strong kicks. Replace short screws on the strike plate with 3 inch long screws. Is your door hollow, would easily crease inward if struck hard? Replace it. On French doors, add bolts/sliding locks along the top and bottom on the inside. She suggested two on top and two on bottom for each door.

You can also use door stoppers on the inside of any door you don't want pushed open. This would work on any doors you don't plan to access from the exterior while the stopper is in place.

Here are my two cents from the research I have done:

Doors with side-light windows or any breakable window can be reinforced with 3M window film products that range from completely clear to opaque. Here are 2 installers- the first one has been used by two Underwood Hills neighbors (and they were happy with the results): Energy Control Consultants - 770-667-8200. The second one came to the Riverside neighborhood meeting back in October- Window Film Depot- Joe Reyes- 770-374-2817.

Leave radios on when you are not home. Make your home appear to be occupied when it isn't. Use lamp timers in unoccupied rooms at night even when you are home. This will make it look like someone is up at 3am.

Keep your blinds and curtains shut at all times. Increase the wattage on your exterior lights, and add extra lights if they do not cover the entire perimeter in bright light.

This may sound silly, but it wouldn't hurt to buy a big dog bowl, add water and put it just outside your door.

Get a video security camera and mount it where it is visible.

Keep your car remote key fob near your phone. If you hear or see anything suspicious while you are at home, let your car scare them away.

Test your home alarm. Make sure it blasts noise outside (very important- some don't or are weak) as well as inside. You can set up a test by calling your alarm company ahead of time. Also make sure they have the latest contact phone numbers for you and the emergency contacts you gave them at installation. Make sure you know how to activate the Panic Alarm (police are automatically sent) if you have an incident at home.

If you buy big ticket items, keep a copy of the serial number w/description and put it away in case you ever have to fill out a report. Destroy the packing boxes, or break down larger boxes and take them to the recycle dumpsters on Northside (just north of Myers Carpets on that same side). Do not leave anything on garbage day that would be remotely interesting.

Send UPS/Fed-Ex/large packages to work, not home. If that is impossible, request that the package be left in a designated spot behind your home/hidden area if you are not there to accept it.

Mindy Petzer  
UHNA Crime Watch

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Finally, this checklist was handed out at a recent Underwood Hills meeting. It can be a good tool to discover ways your home may be vulnerable to burglars.

### Burglary Prevention Checklist for Homes

Survey your home with this checklist. Every “no” check mark shows a weak point that may help a

burglar. As you eliminate the “no” checks, you improve your protection. Go through this list carefully and systematically. You may want to look over this situation in day light, when most burglars work, as well as in the night. Remember, this check list only points out your weak points. You are not protected until these are corrected. Complying with the suggestions will not, or course, make your property burglar proof, but will certainly improve your protection.

DOORS	YES	NO
1. Are your exterior doors made of solid core materials?		
2. Are they the deadlocking type, w/min. 3 inch screws?		
3. Can any of your door locks be opened by breaking out glass or a panel?		
4. Do all exterior doors have wide-angle peep holes?		
5. Is your door jamb reinforced/kick-proof?		
6. Can all of your doors be securely locked?		
7. Are your locks all in good working order?		
8. Can you account for all copies of the key to your home?		
<b>WINDOWS</b>		
9. Are your window locks properly and securely mounted?		
10. Do you keep your windows locked when they are shut?		
11. Do you use locks that allow you to lock a window that is partly open?		
12. In high hazard locations, do you lock a window that is partly open?		
13. Have you made it more difficult for a burglar by locking up your ladder and removing trellises that can be used as a ladder for climbing?		
<b>GARAGE</b>		
14. Do you lock your garage door at night and when away?		
15. Do you lock you're the door between the garage and the interior?		

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16. Do you have good, secure locks on the garage doors and windows?		
17. Do you lock your car and take the keys out even when it is parked in your garage?		
<b>WHEN YOU GO AWAY (Night or longer)</b>		
18. Do you stop all deliveries or arrange for neighbors to pick up papers and packages?		
19. Do you notify a neighbor?		
20. Do you notify your police department? They provide extra watches for vacant homes.		
21. Do you have some interior lights on so the house doesn't look deserted?		
22. Do you arrange to keep your lawn and garden in shape?		
<b>SAFE PRACTICES</b>		
23. Do you plan so that you or others do not need a "Hide-A-Key"?		
24. Do you have lamps and radios on timers for daylight and evening hours?		
25. Are there exterior lights around the front, back and sides of your house, with minimum 60 watt bulbs?		
26. Do you have a list of the serial numbers of your TV's, iPods, cameras, computers, TVs, video equipment/games and similar items?		
27. Do you have a description of other valuable property that does not have a number?		
28. Do you avoid unnecessary display or publicity of your valuables?		
29. Have you told your family what to do if they discover a burglar breaking in or already in the home?		
30. Have you told your family to leave the house undisturbed and call the police department if they discover a burglary has been committed?		
31. Is your landscaping trimmed to eliminate hiding places, tree branches trimmed to a minimum 7 feet off the ground?		
32. Are all windows and door windows covered to prevent someone from looking in?		
33. Do you report suspicious people and activity to the police immediately?		

**This checklist was designed to help you go through your home and make sure you are not inviting a burglary. The checklist covers the common areas of weakness in residential security. To keep your guard, take a critical look at your home security every three to four months. Don't become lax - crime prevention is a continuous process.**

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## Neighborhood News

Maureen Hetrick  
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The Mayor's office has determined that in order to provide the city with a balanced budget in the current economic climate, they will reduce funding for the city's Fire Department. This will include closing Berkeley Park's fire station #23 for a period of at least 6 months (essentially the rest of the fiscal year).

Atlanta residents have mobilized to contest this action. Two online petitions have been started at <http://www.PetitionOnline.com/AFRD/petition.html> and <http://www.PetitionOnline.com/FS23/>.

The Berkeley Park Neighborhood Association was formed in the last 1990's when the city previously closed Station #23. We were successful in that venture, and the Association hopes the city will reverse this decision this time as well.

Station #23 was the first responder to the terrible bus crash of 2007 that occurred on the I-75 off-ramp. Station #23 often responds to incidents on the interstate and in the area. They also operate a paramedic truck from the station, reducing the time that it takes to respond to a health emergency for the entire area.

Please consider contacting the Mayor and telling her your opinion about this issue. She can be contacted at [sfranklin@atlantaga.gov](mailto:sfranklin@atlantaga.gov) and 404-330-6100.

Additionally, two upcoming City Council meetings are open to the public and will be opportunities to express your views on the reduction of services. The City Council Committee on Public Safety meets on Tuesday December 9th at 3:00 pm, and the Finance Committee meets on Wednesday December 10th at 1:00 pm. Both of these meetings are open to the public and take place at City Hall, 55 Trinity Avenue SW, Committee Room 2, Atlanta, GA 30303. The link to City Council is [www.atlantaga.gov](http://www.atlantaga.gov).

## Calendar

To place events on the calendar, please contact  
Maureen Finneran Hetrick at [maureenfh@mindspring.com](mailto:maureenfh@mindspring.com) or 404-609-9873.

## December

### **Berkeley Park Holiday Party**

Sunday, December 14

5 pm

Home of Chandler and Nina-Daniela McCormack  
811 Verner St.

Food and Drink will be provided

All Berkeley Park residents are welcome!

### **Berkeley Park Meeting**

Monday, December 15



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7 pm  
Senior Center  
1705 Commerce Drive

**NPU-D Meeting**

Tuesday, December 23  
7:30 pm  
Agape Center, 2351 Bolton Road, NW  
All NPU-D residents are welcome

## **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.

Effective January 1, 2009, membership in the BPNA is \$20 per person (up to 3 adults per address are eligible to become members), and \$10 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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