**Chastain Park Civic Association**

**Meeting Minutes: 8/22/16**

**Board in Attendance (visual inspection):**

Jason White

Sarah Lynch

Kelley Gambrell

Tejas Patel

Lea Smith

Kirk Oppenlander

Mikki Hawkins

Debra Fowler

Steve McClelland

John Terry

Jubal Gatwood

Frank Toye

Stacy Vaughn

1. Welcome: Tejas Patel (CPCA Co-President)
   1. Tejas introduced Kelley Gambrell (CPCA Treasurer) to review the financials.
2. Treasurer’s Report: Kelley Gambrell (CPCA Treasurer)
   1. Kelley reported that we have 548 members. Tejas added that given the full agenda, the Board would discuss separately via email how to manage the budget through the end of the year. He explained that the CPCA does not have the funding to support 4 hours of security patrol through the end of the year (with the remaining membership dues).
3. Meeting Minutes: Sarah Lynch (CPCA Secretary)
   1. Sarah Lynch requested that the Board review and approve the minutes from April, May & July 2016.
   2. Tejas made a motion to approve the minutes for April, May & July 2016. The motion was 2nd. The minutes were approved with all Board members in favor and no additional discussion.
4. Special Guest: Yolanda Adrean (Atlanta City Council, District 8)
   1. Tejas introduced Yolanda and thanked her for coming. Yolanda recognized that most of residents in attendance were present to talk about water bills, but she requested a few minutes to talk about some of her projects going on throughout the City and then she would take Q&A from the audience.
   2. Yolanda stated that she would talk about security first given the recent break-ins and other incidents throughout the summer. She explained that Chastain now has 7 cameras operating around the park: near the playground, by the Red Lot, near Mark Elliott Way, 3 on Wieuca, near the NYO parking lot, and 1 soon to be installed by the NYO parking lot on Lake Forrest Drive. Yolanda explained that her current plan calls for additional cameras along Powers Ferry, near Tuxedo, Hillside & Putnam. She added that our neighbors in Tuxedo Park are also investing in cameras that will benefit Chastain Park. In addition to the cameras, there is also a license plate reader at Powers Ferry and Roswell Road, which capture continuous images of license plates. Yolanda explained that this technology might be used to identify stolen vehicles and/or drivers with outstanding warrants. Yolanda stated that she has $300,000 more to invest in cameras in District 8. She is working with neighborhood associations and businesses in District 8 to maximize the number of cameras. The Regency Center at Roswell and Powers Ferry has agreed to help fund 2 cameras at their location. Yolanda stated that she has about $2.5 million invested in cameras for District 8, more than any other District in the City.
   3. There was a question from the audience that requested clarification between cameras and license plate readers. Yolanda explained that the cameras capture images and can recognize facial features if needed. The range is 800 feet in each direction and they function in both the day and night. The data from the cameras is stored for a few weeks downtown by the Atlanta Video Integration System (part of the 911 system). She continued to explain that when a call comes into 911, the operator has the option to scroll to the nearest camera in the area where the crime has taken place to look for information. Yolanda gave an example about a recent incident with an Uber driver where a woman was allegedly assaulted and dumped along Wieuca near the Park. She said the police were using data from the cameras to try and validate her police report. The license plate readers just capture license plate numbers.
   4. Yolanda reminded the audience that our best defense against crime is our police force. She stated that the City has invested over $11 million to retain and grow the police force by making sure wages are competitive, and by investing in technology for officers (i.e. helmets, vests, cameras, etc.).
   5. John Terry thanked Yolanda for her investment in and commitment to installing cameras around the park. He added that usually this type of work takes years with the City, and Yolanda has got it done in months.
   6. There was a request from the audience for success stories with the cameras. Yolanda replied that there was a bank robbery on Howell Mill at Collier. The individual was described as a landscaper. The camera was able to identify a landscape truck and company. Another example was at the OK Café. A couple was held at gunpoint and their car was stolen. The camera identified which direction the person headed with the stolen car and police were able to catch the person. Yolanda said that the cameras are relatively new (about a year), so she still needs additional time to collect success stories.
   7. Yolanda stated that another hot topic is infrastructure, specifically road conditions and traffic. Yolanda said there was a bill proposed a couple of years ago for a $0.01 regional tax. The City of Atlanta passed the bill, but the surrounding counties did not and the bill was not passed. A Plan B had not been offered by the state until recently. She stated that the City and MARTA can ask for a tax, so in November, voters will see 2 referendums on the ballot. One is ½ penny tax for MARTA that would be in effect for 40 years, which is expected to raise $2.5 billion to be spent within the City limits on projects like light rail (some heavy rail), improvements to MARTA stations and additional stations and improvements to the buses and bus systems.
   8. There was a question from the audience about MARTA line expansions. Yolanda replied that the money would be dedicated to use within the City limits, so no expansion north.
   9. Yolanda stated that the second tax would be a 4 tenths of a penny tax for the City of Atlanta. It would be a 5-year tax, expected to raise between $260 and $300 billion in taxes. The projects would include the expansion of the PATH along Wieuca, a connection between Chastain and the Blue Herron Nature Preserve, $66 million invested in Beltline improvements, $2 million invested in sidewalks in District 8, a sidewalk around Memorial Park, and several other projects within District 8.
   10. There was a question about what type of tax the T-SPLOST (special purpose local option sales tax for transportation) would be. Yolanda replied that it is a sales tax, not a property tax.
   11. There was a question about the future of the Bobby Jones Golf Course. Yolanda responded that it will close temporarily and be converted into a 9-hole course with a new clubhouse.
   12. There was a question about the District 8 sidewalk plans. Yolanda stated that the priority would be where there is a need to walk to parks and schools.
   13. Yolanda stated that the proposed tax increases would increase sales taxes from 8% to 8.9%.
   14. There was a question from the audience about the PATH project that expanded sidewalks along Powers Ferry, and why the utilities weren’t buried. Yolanda replied that the PATH budget was $2 million and it would have required an additional $1.6 million to burry the utilities.
   15. Yolanda informed the audience that Google Fiber would be in the area laying fiber optic lines. Yolanda supplied the audience with business cards for the company doing the digging if anyone would have questions or if they were unhappy with anything.
   16. There was a question from the audience asking why Google Fiber didn’t coordinate with AT&T, since they recently installed fiber lines. Yolanda agreed that they should have coordinated their efforts. She also added that when the City of Atlanta is doing projects, they are laying conduit to plan for future needs. For instance, conduit has been installed along the Beltline Project and with Renew Atlanta, so that they won’t have to dig up concrete later.
   17. There was a comment from the audience stating that the contractors for AT&T and Google Fiber are unresponsive to complaints. Yolanda requested that neighbors call the companies and also call her office to report complaints. She has communicated with Google and informed them that she and the neighborhood expect quality work. Yolanda provided her cell phone number (404) 210-1618 for any comments or complaints.
   18. Yolanda informed the group that the Powers Ferry Bridge would be replaced in about 1 year using Renew Atlanta budget. Public information meetings are scheduled, and she urged neighbors to go and provide feedback.
   19. Kirk Oppenlander commented that there is a Renew Atlanta website that provides detailed information on the projects associated with Renew Atlanta.
   20. Yolanda recognized that may people were there to talk about water bills. She stated that she would be available after the meeting to answer specific questions from the audience.
   21. There was a request from the audience for Yolanda to review the process on how water bills were calculated. Yolanda responded that all houses have meters (for their household and potentially for their sprinkler system). The Water Department generates bills based on usage using the meter readings. When there is an issue with a water bill, Yolanda stated that neighbors should 1st contact the customer care group within the Department of Watershed Management. There is a new Commissioner for the Department of Watershed Management. Yolanda stated that she is here to help with issues related to water bills if neighbors are struggling with Watershed Department. She provided her cell number and office number (404) 330-6051. Yolanda mentioned that her assistant is Katie Howard is available to help navigate through the City Departments.
   22. The audience voiced their frustration with the Department of Watershed Management, inconsistencies in water bills, the Department’s appeal process and their response to extremely high water bills.
   23. There was a question from the audience about estimated water bills. Yolanda replied that as far as she was aware the Department of Watershed Management was not estimating bills. Jason White polled the audience and determined many neighbors had received estimated bills at some time. Yolanda stated that she would look into why bills were being estimated.
   24. When calling the Dept. of Watershed Management, Yolanda encouraged neighbors to record the customer service representative’s name, and the date and time of call.
   25. Yolanda apologized that she couldn’t help with any water issues in Sandy Springs, but encouraged neighbors to contact Andy Bauman (the Councilman for Sandy Springs – abauman@sandyspringsga.gov)
   26. Jason thanked Yolanda for coming.
5. Special Guest: Jim Elgar (Council President Caesar C. Mitchell’s Office)

* Jim introduced himself and thanked Yolanda (on behalf of the Council President’s office) for all of the work she is doing, specifically her commitment to installing cameras throughout District 8.
* Jim stated that the Council President’s office is working with Atlanta communities and the Atlanta Police Department to reduce speeds and increase radar throughout the city. He encouraged neighbors to take “Slow Down” signs he had brought with him to place throughout the neighborhood. He provided his phone number for any questions, comments or complaints: (404) 330-6052.

1. Special Guest: Deborah Silcox (State House – Representative Elect)

* Deborah thanked neighbors for voting on May 24th in the Primary Election. She is the new Representative Elect given that there is no opposition in the November Election. She stated that she is available to discuss any issues. Her cell phone is (404) 683-2611.
* Deborah stated that the City of Atlanta and the City of Sandy Springs are rewriting their zoning ordinances. She encouraged neighbors to be involved by attending public meetings and providing input. She added that the City of Sandy Springs has a website called thenextten.org where neighbors can view the plans that will be voted on in September.
* Deborah commented on the T-SPLOST (special purpose local option sales tax for transportation) Yolanda overviewed stating how critical it was to improve connections in the City and to improve Atlanta’s existing transit system.
* Deborah stated that the Governor would like neighbors to know that tax revenue was up over 9% this year. The state has gone from 2 days of reserves (when Governor Deal took office) to about 2 months of “rainy day” money for running our state.
* Deborah encouraged neighbors to go to the DOT website to review the 11 statewide transportation projects in progress.
* Deborah informed neighbors that there would be a Forum on the Braves traffic on Sept. 21st at 7:00pm at Riverwood High School. She encouraged neighbors to attend.

1. Advocacy: NPU A & B and Sandy Springs Update
   1. NPU A (Kirk Oppenlander): Kirk reported that NPU A is working on the Zoning Rewrite to make sure their interests were represented.
   2. NPU B (Frank Toye) – Frank stated that NPU B is also working on the Zoning Rewrite.
   3. Sandy Springs (John Terry) – John stated that Sandy Springs was working on their Zoning Ordinances.
2. Safety and Security Update: John Terry

* John stated that the Conservancy is working on restriping Park Drive (which is one-way).
* Rosa McHugh introduced herself as the head of the Chastain Park Conservancy and she thanked neighbors for supporting their organization. She stated that the Conservancy takes care of the Park property and the CPCA supports the neighborhood. Rosa added that the Conservancy is partnering with the CPCA to address the issues with Park Drive.
* Jason White asked Rosa to provide the Conservancy’s website: Chastainparkconservancy.org. Jason added that the CPCA’s website is Chastainpark.org. Jason encouraged everyone to join for the $65 membership fee that goes directly to security patrol and neighborhood events.
* Jason mentioned that we are having a neighborhood event September 26th following the CPCA monthly meeting at Gateway Sandy Springs.
* There was a comment from the audience asking neighbors to support Amendment 2 – The Safe Harbor Amendment (Sex Trafficking)
* There was a question about what is being done about the speed on Powers Ferry.
  + Jason White stated that the speed is temporarily 25mph (due to construction of the PATH project).
  + Yolanda added that the speed limit is normally 35mph.
  + Rosa McHugh also added that the Conservancy is planning on adding an additional speed limit radar sign along Powers Ferry (there is currently 1 near the entrance to the American Legion).
  + Yolanda informed the audience that the City had looked at putting a stop sign at Powers Ferry and Hillside, but a traffic study found it wasn’t warranted. Yolanda stated that the neighborhood could still get a stop sign at Hillside. Mikki Hawkins made a motion to develop a petition for adding a stop sign at Hillside Drive. There was additional discussion…
  + Someone from the audience asked for additional police patrol along Powers Ferry to enforce the speed limit. Yolanda stated that she can request a speed trap on Powers Ferry, but warned that friends and neighbors would most likely be ticketed.
  + Given the support for a stop sign along Lake Forrest Drive and at Hillside Drive and Powers Ferry, Tejas updated Mikki’s motion recommending a stop sign be placed at Hillside Drive and Lake Forrest Drive, essentially parallel to the one at Hillside Drive. The motion was 2nd. 10 board members were in favor, 3 opposed and 1 abstention. The motion was passed.

1. Next Meeting – September 26, 2016 at 6:30 pm at the Gateway Development (4600 Roswell Road)
2. Meeting Adjourned