**Chastain Park Civic Association**

**Meeting Minutes: 3/28/16**

**Board in Attendance:**

Tejas Patel

Jason White

Jubal Gatwood

Sarah Lynch

Frank Toye

Ashley Battleson

John Terry

Kirk Oppenlander

Mikki Hawkins

Marsha Holcomb

Stacy Vaughn

Steve McClelland

Brink Dickerson

1. Welcome & Introductions: Jason White (CPCA Co-President)
	* Jason welcomed everyone and the Board introduced themselves. Jason recognized that most of the audience was present to hear about the Chastain Park pool.
2. Special Guest: Deborah Silcox (Running for Georgia House of Representatives District 52)
	* Deborah introduced herself as a Sandy Springs resident, community activist and attorney running for Georgia House of Representatives. She asked the audience for their support and vote in the upcoming election. The Republican Primary is May 24, just before Memorial Day. Early voting starts May 2.
3. Special Guest: Ray Mock (Director of Operations, Chastain Park Conservancy)
	* Ray introduced himself and stated that he was present to address residents’ concerns about pedestrian and vehicular traffic on Park Drive (given the increased traffic from the new playground).
	* Ray stated that the Civic Association, Conservancy and City Parks and Recreation Division met with City officials and walked Park Drive. Ray outlined the City’s plan to address pedestrian/vehicular traffic on Park Drive:
		1. The City has already installed new speed bumps and signage.
		2. The 1st turnout, closest to the playground will remain so that vehicular traffic can turn around and exit at Dudley.
		3. The City plans to place large, decorative, concrete planters (left over from the Olympics) prior to the Green Lot to block the pedestrian lane and indicate that the road is one-way.
		4. The Conservancy will present a plan to the City to re-stripe the road.
	* John Terry asked about the timing to present the final plan to the City and when the Conservancy expects the project to be completed. Rosa McHugh responded that the timing would depend on the approval from Parks and Recreation and the City.
	* There was a question about who would maintain the planters. Ray responded that it is still to be determined.
	* Kirk Oppenlander asked if there is a plan to increase the use of the Red and Blue Lot. Ray responded, yes, all traffic would be directed toward the Red and Blue Lot given the flow of traffic.
	* Kirk asked if there was a separate plan to make Park Drive pedestrian only. Ray responded that the City would not support that plan, so - no.
	* Jason White added that any additional questions or comments could be sent to info@chastianpark.org.
4. Speed Limit Reduction Update: Tejas Patel (CPCA Co-President) and Yolanda Adrean (Atlanta City Council Representative for District 8)
* Tejas reviewed the CPCA’s proposal to decrease the speed limits around the park on W. Wieuca, from 35mph to 25mph, and Lake Forrest and Powers Ferry, from 35mph to 30mph. The W. Wieuca speed reduction was approved. Lake Forrest and Powers Ferry speed reductions were approved by the City and sent to the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). GDOT declined the proposal. Tejas stated that in order to reintroduce the legislation for speed reductions on Lake Forrest and Powers Ferry, the CPCA needs neighborhood support.
* Jason White introduced Yolanda Adrean, Atlanta City Council Representative for District 8, to provide additional background on the speed limit reduction proposal. Yolanda stated that she understands the neighborhood’s concerns about the speed. She added that the City had hoped narrowing the road along Powers Ferry (to accommodate the sidewalk expansion) would cause vehicular traffic to slow down.
* Yolanda has talked with the Public Works Department and they recommend reinstalling the speed limit radar device. Kirk Oppenlander stated that he has the devices and can have them reinstalled in both directions along Powers Ferry.
* Yolanda recognized that the neighborhood would like several protected crosswalks with blinkers along Powers Ferry. She stated that the City would need to approve any crosswalks and ensure proper sight lines and appropriate pedestrian landings onto the side streets (given that the crosswalks do not line up to sidewalks).
* Yolanda stated that neighbors have also requested a stop sign at Hillside and Powers Ferry. In 2008, the City funded a study to determine if this was feasible and at that time, it was determined that it did not meet the requirements. Given the changes to Hillside and Powers Ferry since 2008, the City plans to relook at adding the stop sign.
* Yolanda stated that Lake Forrest speed reduction was not approved. She offered other potential options that may help slow down traffic such as making the crosswalks more visible (with new paint and blinkers) and additional stop signs.
* There was a comment from the audience thanking the City for reinstalling the pedestrian crosswalk signage along Lake Forrest. There was also a request for continued maintenance to ensure the signage remains. Yolanda encouraged neighbors to call 311 or her office when maintenance is needed.
* Brink Dickerson asked Yolanda to comment on the Chastain Park Arts Festival and the City’s intention to have the festival along W. Wieuca (shutting the road down on a weekend). Brink asked if there was an alternate plan. Yolanda stated that when there is an event scheduled at the park that overlaps with a concert, there is a Plan B, which would allow closure of W. Wieuca. The City’s main concern with shutting down W. Wieuca is safety – ensuring that emergency vehicles can enter the Park and NYO. This is still under discussion with the City. Yolanda will provide an update when information is available.
1. Special Guest: Jim King (Chastain Park Athletic Club/Pool (CPAC)) and Amy Phuong (Commissioner – Atlanta Department of Parks and Recreation)
* Jason introduced Jim and Amy and asked Jim to provide a summary of his October presentation to the Civic Association and an update on the pool project.
* Jim King provided a brief history on the pool starting in 2000 when he was asked by the community to save the pool from closing. In 2002, Jim created a non-profit organization - CPAC, gained support from the City, began repairs to make the pool operational and saved the pool. Since then, CPAC has continued to make improvements to the pool, developed a successful swim team, and built membership.
* Jim stated that membership in recent years has declined, so CPAC looked at private funding, which required making the pool available year-round (indoor/outdoor).
* Jim overviewed many of the issues and design deficiencies with the pool. He said they have plans to address these issues and improve the pool as funding becomes available.
* Amy Phuong introduced herself. She stated that the Department of Parks and Recreation has several business partnerships with organizations around Chastain Park (i.e. tennis facility, golf course, horse park, and NYO). These relationships exist to aid the Parks and Recreation Department when they do not have the capacity to oversee the facilities. This is the case with the Chastain Park pool and why CPAC operates the pool.
* Amy offered to answer any questions about the pool. She stated CPAC had presented their plan to cover the pool, and that they had gone through the Department of Parks and Recreation’s approval process, which included obtaining community feedback. Amy indicated that Jim had followed the Department’s review process.
* There was a question from the audience about the replacement of the MLK pool and why the Parks and Recreation Department was providing funding to replace it and not the Chastain Park pool. Amy responded that the MLK pool was structurally condemned and approved for replacement through the infrastructure bond. Amy added that her department is working with Yolanda to find additional funding (approximately $400,000) to help support the Chastain Park pool.
* Kirk Oppenlander asked what the budget is to replace the MLK pool. Amy responded that it is $23.5 million.
* John Terry asked if the Parks Department’s meetings are open to the public. Amy replied that they report bi-monthly to the Planning Department to ensure transparency with the community.
* Lisa Woods asked about the pool’s membership decline and the impact to revenue. Jim replied that membership peaked at around 400-500 families, which was driven by swim team. Revenue dropped by about $125,000 when Lifetime opened.
* There was a question from the audience about the Athletic Club website and the lack of information available about current and future plans for the pool. There was also a question from the audience about tree removal around the pool. Jim indicated that he would post the future plans as well as the tree replacement plans. He added that they plan to spend approximately $10,000 to $12,000 on tree removal and approximately $24,000 for tree replacement and beautification. Amy added that Jim is going through the City’s official process to remove trees. All condemned trees will be removed and any other trees requested for removal will be posted and open for public comment. Jim stated that they have requested 23 trees be removed (including condemned and non-condemned). Amy added that the City’s policy on tree replacement would be followed.
* Jim provided clarity on the pool cover. The white structure over the pool covers the middle swim team lanes, not the deep end of the pool or the kid pool section. He encouraged the community to come and see the structure.
* Jim overviewed the future plans for the pool (not currently funded), which includes a new entrance, handicap accessibility, a new fence, reclaiming the land in front of the bathhouse as a play area (short term) and a splash pad (long term) as well as permits to allow serving food and food trucks. Long term, they also have plans to replace the bathhouse. Jim added that any improvements to date do not preclude any future master plans.
* There was a question from the audience about sight lines with the new pool cover and whether or not she could see from the small pool to the deep end to watch her children. Jim replied that the clearance for the cover is 12’ 7”, so you have a clear line of sight from the street side all the way through the structure.
* Carson Matthews asked if the structure over the pool was permanent. Jim responded that yes, the structure is permanent. Jim noted that the sides of the cover are retractable. Carson asked about the location of the sun over the pool and how the structure would impact the amount of sun. Jim responded that once the trees are removed, there would be full sun exposure at both ends of the pool depending on the time of day.
* There was a question from the audience about CPAC and the amount of influence the City does or doesn’t have over CPAC. Amy responded that the City is ultimately responsible for the pool. There was a follow-up question asking when CPAC met with the community about the cover, when the CPAC Board meets, who sits on the Board, how Board members are elected, and whether the Board meeting minutes are available to the public. Jim responded that CPAC is a charitable non-profit organization with self-selected board members – similar to other non-profit organizations. Amy added that Jim and CPAC are required to validate all of their records back with the City.
* Jason White asked Amy/Jim if there was a way for interested neighbors to get involved with CPAC. Jim responded that anyone could volunteer to help CPAC through their website. Jason asked about those wanting to be a Board member. Jim replied that they are not expanding the Board with individuals that do not share the same vision for the pool because they have worked long and hard to get to this point. They are open to adding Board members (they currently have 5) and welcome volunteers, but they do not want to derail the current plans for the pool. Jim added that they welcome ideas and feedback.
* Mikki asked if CPAC meetings are open to the public and when they are held. Jim responded that the meetings are usually private and infrequent.
* There was a question from the audience asking when community meetings were held to discuss the structure covering the pool. Jim replied that 2 meetings were held last July and he presented to the Civic Association in October.
* There was a comment from the audience asking what the solution is to facilitate more neighborhood involvement and feedback given the way CPAC is organized. Amy responded that Jim described the long-range plan and that her department will ensure significant neighborhood involvement moving forward. Jim added that CPAC has followed the City’s approval process and that they have adhered to the City’s rules and regulations.
* Brink Dickerson provided additional perspective on the relationship between the City and CPAC. CPAC was awarded a long-term lease on the pool when the City was not in a financial position to keep the pool open. The Department of Parks and Recreation did not have the capacity or money to invest in the pool. The City offered similar leases to NYO, the Amphitheatre, the Horse Park, the golf course, the tennis facility, and the Conservancy to operate the PATH and playground. Brink added that these are private companies – they are tenants of the City. Brink asked Jim how long his lease was for and Jim responded that they are in the process of negotiating a renewal with the City. Brink stated that if the community was unhappy with the way Jim was operating the pool, they could establish another non-profit organization and submit a proposal to the City to try and win the lease. Brink added that as a private organization, CPAC isn’t required to have public meetings or share their minutes. Brink credited Jim with doing a good job and thanked him for saving the community pool.
* Matt Brown and Mikki Hawkins asked Jim to post the tree/landscape plan and the (Future) Master Plan on the CPAC website. Jim responded that he would share the proposed tree plan and long term plan. He added that he is willing to share their financials – just contact him. Matt expressed his concern that the pool would become private for swim team use. Amy answered that CPAC’s contract with the city requires that it remain a public pool.
* There was a question from the audience about the City’s investment in Chastain Park and the pool and why they are investing more in other areas and not Chastain. Amy replied that the Department of Parks and Recreation has invested in Chastain: $300,000 in Play Chastain, $1 million for the PATH project, $400,000 in the pool, and $130,000 in Yolanda’s safety program through the infrastructure bond. There was a follow-up question on how approximately $2 million compares to the $23 million they are investing in the MLK pool, when Chastain is the largest park in the City. Amy responded that different parts of the City require different investments and funding. Yolanda added that the investments are unfortunately not equitable. Amy added that her department is underfunded and that they are working to leverage federal funding, grants, etc. to support all the projects and demands they have.
* There was a request from the audience for the community to go and see the pool cover because it is really nice inside.
* There were additional comments from the audience to thank Jim for his service.
* Lisa Woods asked Jim to be more transparent in sharing his plans earlier in the process. She added that she supports the pool and wants to ensure that the community has adequate time to provide feedback and fundraise for the long-term plan. Jim agreed.
* Mikki asked Jim to share the tree plan and landscape plan to post on NextDoor. Jim responded that he would post the plan on the CPAC website.
* Jim stated that you can contact him through the CPAC website.
* Amy provided her contact information for any additional comments or questions – email: aphuong@atlantaga.gov or phone: (404) 546-6788
1. Next Meeting – April 25, 2016 at 6:30 pm, location TBD
2. Meeting Adjourned