

The LORE

THE (OCCASIONALLY) QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE LORING HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



Message from the President

By Ron Grunwald

Sorry for the late arrival of this quarter's LORE – we were hoping to have some news regarding our efforts with Atlantic Station and were waiting for some information to come last Friday, June 4th - while it arrived, it still left gray areas (explained later). This LORE will include updates on various topics the Board is working on currently. It has been a long time coming since an update and I know from many emails in the neighborhood that there is a lot of curiosity, so hopefully this edition of LORE will provide some good information for you.

I would like to take this opportunity to make an appeal on two important things the Association needs from all of you in order to make for a successful and productive Neighborhood Association.

- First is the payment of our annual dues, which are \$50. We have seen a marked slow down in payments. In years past, we have run significant surpluses simply because our costs involved providing small services to the neighborhood that were mainly for beautification of common areas and social events. Recently, though, we are experiencing the need to contribute more for things such as legal fees incurred in connection with our efforts to recover from Atlantic Station, filing fees for appeals against the City, and grants to be used for capital improvements in the neighborhood (discussed later in the LORE). We currently still have a surplus budget (see Treasurer's update) but need funding to continue these efforts on all of our behalves.
- Second is the involvement of you, the members. We have had, and continue to have, a core group of members participating in many, if not all, of the neighborhood's functions (obviously the social aspects are the greatest) - but we need more participation. Not necessarily for Board positions (which would be nice) or Committees, but for tasks the LHNA has been undertaking that could benefit from your expertise - such as the various work days within the neighborhood. Some call for simply an hour of your time every year, which can be done while having a nice cold one on the deck or perhaps coming to one or two General Assembly meetings. Our May General Assembly meeting was attended by our new District Councilwoman, Yolanda Adrean, where she spoke to seven people in attendance...so when I try to go to her now for resolution of our issues or legislation, she may not see a significant concern about the issues on the neighborhood's behalf – this does not speak well for us and curtails our efforts to present a strong and united front on many issues we are trying to pursue with the City. Simply put, we would appreciate seeing more of our neighbors involved in the neighborhood's activities. Many thanks to everyone who is already involved!

NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING: AUGUST 17 @ 7:00 PM

Atlantic Station Update

We are in continuing negotiations with AIG Global Real Estate, the ownership group for Atlantic Station, regarding the payment of the \$700,000.00 owed to the neighborhood. The latest update received last week was that AIG GRE has successfully requested from their parent company in New York the approval of this budgetary line item, and they received the green light to move forward to fulfill this payment to us. However, the payment will be contingent on the City of Atlanta approving a re-issuance of Tax Allocation District (TAD) Bonds to pay for the line item. We are anticipating that, upon this approval, we may see this payment early in 2011. We are awaiting more specifics from AIG at this moment, but this is good news and some forward movement.

Conversely, we have been made aware of a change to the zoning condition that stated a connection would be made to our neighborhood by Atlantic Station (the "Bridge") that was not done through the required public hearing process. This was done back in 2001, but since it was not publicly announced, we were only made aware of it earlier this year and subsequently requested that the City state whether they considered this a valid text amendment of a zoning ordinance since it was done administratively. They stated that they did indeed think it was valid. This is problematic because State and City law require these type of text amendments to go through a public hearing process and affects us on two levels: (1) it distinctly changes the requirements for achieving this connection by Atlantic Station (see website documents for more information on this) and (2) it is relevant citywide as it means that the City deems it acceptable to change the wording of zoning ordinances without a public hearing, despite State and Local laws and ordinances. We have filed an appeal of this decision which will be heard by the Board of Zoning Appeals on September 2. There will be more information on this forthcoming and at the August General Assembly meeting.

August
2010

Loring Heights Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 7845
Atlanta, Georgia 30357

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Pond Park

We have decided to split the Master Plan into two phases to address the more immediate needs of a playground and healthy pond first, while the other improvements may come later depending on cash flow. We are moving forward with a fundraising effort that will supplement any monies anticipated from the settlement with Atlantic Station – stay tuned for details coming soon. We hope to leverage our fundraising effort with matching grants from various organizations, such as Park Pride. We are also re-engaging the City to make sure we can achieve our Phase One goals with their help. We are confident that we can deliver a better park for the biggest bang for our dollar, but we will need your help! Stay tuned for more information shortly!

One of the big items involved is how to control the duckweed blooms – even though we had a great effort from select members of the neighborhood and the Midtown Church youth group in June, it wasn't enough to permanently change the situation. While the fish kill has ceased, this is mainly due to (a) the city water spigot being turned on again (but this is a temporary solution) and (b) some ingenious neighbors re-engineering the busted outfall pipe to allow the overflow to skim the algae out of the pond – while this has improved the situation, it is not a long-term solution and we are hoping for some City help on this issue.



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Pet Tips from Dr. Brian Berger

By Dr. Brian Berger

Hey Neighbors! I am the owner of PetWell Veterinary Healthcare and I have offered to write a small column in your newsletter. I am open to suggestions if anyone has a topic that they'd like to learn more about but for the time being I decided to write about parasites.

I need to let you know that I am seeing a large increase in the number of parasites (worms) and Giardia cases at my veterinary clinic. I believe that this is directly related to the large amount of rain we have gotten over the past several months along with the standing water that is now so very common.

Giardia, hook worms and round worms fall into the category of ZOO NOTIC diseases. Zoonotic diseases are diseases that can be transmitted from dogs-to-dogs and from dogs-to-humans. This is especially true in youngsters, elderly and immunocompromised individuals. The best way to prevent zoonotic transmission is to clean up after our pets, minimize the amount of close contact that you have with your pets (stuff like face licking, etc) and, in general, practice good hygiene.

In an effort to minimize the chances of spread of these diseases we must, as a community, make an honest effort to clean up after our pets! This not only means while walking around the neighborhood but in your own yard as well.

These parasites persist for long periods in the environment and they can continue to re infest your dog even after they have been treated.

Please feel free to email me with questions and/or topics that you'd like for me to write about in the next news letter. Thanks! Brian

CSO Tanyard Creek

You may have noticed some slow, yet subtle improvements at the greenspace over the past month. We engaged Watershed early in April to address multiple items regarding ongoing maintenance and other issues at the greenspace and are continuing to attempt to work with them and Councilwoman Adrean's office. These efforts include:

- Replenishment of the dog enclosure gravel fines.
- Installation of pine straw in landscaped areas.
- Repair and turning on the irrigation system (we appear to have lost six trees to the recent heat and lack of watering and are working with Watershed to get those replaced).
- Installation of skate stops on the concrete walls and railings to disrupt skateboarders from using the greenspace as a skate park.
- The painting of the vent shaft structure to blend in more with the natural surroundings (we may also paint some of the other concrete steps and walls at our expense).
- General weeding and application of post emergent.

We are still trying to get confirmation on an ongoing program for maintenance. We are also exploring solar lights, more plantings, dog bag stations, and some method of regular trash pick up.

Beltline - Subarea 8 Master Plan

Since February, we have been involved in our subarea's Master Planning of the Beltline corridor. We are presently taking a break from the progress as we have all requested a sabbatical until the proposed route which the Beltline will take through our neighborhood is determined. We have always believed that the CSX tracks to the north of us would be the Beltline. However, a study by the Federal Transit Agency is being done now to determine whether these tracks or the Norfolk Southern tracks at the south end of our neighborhood would be better. As this study's draft won't be ready until the fall, we requested a hold on any Master Planning for now. Once the preferred route is presented, our Land Use Committee will be holding at least one, if not more, meetings for feedback on all that is being proposed.



Dr. Brian Berger - Owner & Neighbor

Dr. Berger has lived in Atlanta for 12 years and in the immediate area for 3 years. He has extensive training and experience at the UGA College of Veterinary Medicine, the Animal Medical Center (New York), and at Cobb Emergency.*

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*Please visit our website for more info on Dr. Berger

*PetWell offers a 10% discount to
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Event Facilities on Bishop Street

On July 1, the Board of Zoning Appeals heard the LHNA case against an administrative decision to allow the current parking variance originally issued to LIT Kitchen at 433 Bishop to stand as approved in 2006. Our contention was that the original variance, after reviewing City files, was given for the entire property, not just for the one event facility tenant. Also, since a new event tenant, Bradford on Bishop's, has begun operating, there have been a number of events that involved illegal parking on neighboring properties. We attempted to first get the new tenant to present a new parking variance plan, but that did not go anywhere. After several months, we decided we needed to appeal the decision of City Hall to transfer the existing variance when clearly it was erroneously assessed and processed in 2006. Unfortunately, the Board did not grant the appeal. However, we are still in a position to possibly appeal again (for example, due process of sign posting was not followed) if the current owner and facility operator do not agree to a new binding agreement. Our position all along has not been to try to make the facility go away - we only want them to have a plan to manage their events in a proper way, especially considering a larger event facility is now approved next door.

This leads us to the successful negotiation of a Parking Variance for Novare Events at 409 Bishop (Summerour Architects space). After months of negotiating, we finally came to an agreement on offsite parking and operation of the event space that we believe will work in the long run.

Finally, we have pitched the idea to Public Works that a re-striping of Bishop might allow on-street parking as well for the existing businesses - the idea is borne out of what we wish to see Bishop as in the future with on-street parking for new developments. In this case, two lanes of traffic would coexist with parking along the sidewalk - PARKAtlanta might install meters here as well.

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Money Matters

By Brian O'Neill - Treasurer

The LHNA Treasury currently has \$6,819.57 in cash. Year-to-date, we have collected \$2,241 in neighbor dues and \$250 in business dues. This is much less than our annually budgeted amount of \$6,000, so we need everyone to pay dues to continue our normal operations. Most expenses for 2010 have surrounded legal fees for continuing work on the agreement with Atlantic Station, and normal operating expenses such as hosting our website, LORE production costs (net of LORE sponsorships), etc.

As always, please remember to pay dues! We appreciate your continued support of the 'hood!

Amtrak Update

We have seen an increase in the morning train parking patrols by the Police, but this isn't being done on a regular basis and certainly not in the evenings, despite numerous requests. We have asked that more sturdy bollards be put in place by Public Works (and extended into the intersection more), only to be met with resistance and excuses. We are now trying a new tactic with Councilwoman Adrean's office whereby PARKAtlanta will install some meters along the sidewalk and the lane will be reconfigured. This would allow people to park there, but they will be forced to pay by PARKAtlanta... and the lanes which exist now will still exist as the striping is reconfigured to allow this flow. We are currently trying to work through this and we will see what happens but, clearly, we are all annoyed by the illegal parking, the disrespect, and the crazy left turns into and out of the front parking area - stay tuned.

Social Aspects

By Kevin Landry - Social Chair

Hello neighbors,

The last Friday Fiesta will be held on Friday, September 10, 2009 at the Miles Edson Residence - 1479 Groveland Ave.

Upcoming events in addition to the Friday Fiestas include the Halloween / Fall Festival in October, and the Holiday Party in December!

If you are interested in participating in an LHNA Supper Club, please contact me at kevin.paul.landry@gmail.com. There have been preliminary discussions, but no finalized plans have been made!

It is your participation in the neighborhood and its events that make living in Loring Heights such an active and great place to live! Have a great Summer!

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CLIFF BOSTOCK, CREATIVE LOAFING, APRIL 7, 2010

IMPORTANT NOTICE: IF YOU HAVE NOT REGISTERED FOR THE EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS FROM THE WEB MESSAGE BOARDS, PLEASE DO SO IMMEDIATELY FOR FREQUENT IMPORTANT UPDATES FROM THE BOARD AT WWW.LORINGHEIGHTS.ORG OR EMAIL RON AT RGRUNWALD@BELLSOUTH.NET

Deering Road Improvements

While it seems that Atlanta Gas Light's work may never end (they continually seem to change their schedule), at least the major detour headaches are over. We have requested and received confirmation from the City that they will repave the surface for the stretch of Deering most impacted between Mecaslin and the bridge over I-75.

We have also made some other requests for Deering Road to create a safer and slower situation:

We have made a request, through Councilwoman Adrean's office, to re-stripe Deering Road's centerline between Steele and Mecaslin so that on-street parking would be allowed on the south side of Deering adjacent to the sidewalk. The idea is that cars parked along the sidewalk would provide a buffer between the heavy traffic and pedestrians. Long term, we hopefully will see some major dollars put towards traffic calming and landscape strip buffers but, in the interim, we thought this might be a cheap, immediate help. Since this is still being explored and is a relatively new concept, if anyone has concerns or opposition to this, please email me at rgrunwald@bellsouth.net and I will compile all positive and negative remarks. I imagine before this goes forward we will have a neighborhood meeting to see if the majority is agreement on this.

You may have noticed that two spots along Deering that seem to consistently be maintenance headaches (landscape) – one at Northside and Deering and the other in front of the entire span of the Amtrak Station – have recently been cleared. Deering and Northside were finally handled by the City. Amtrak was done by myself and Tim Turis in an all-out assault – we just got tired of looking at it and waiting for the government to do something about it. Hopefully we will not have to address either of these areas for another season.

The landscaping at the Loring and Deering intersection has been tended to by Cece Maxwell and Jo McIver (and some volunteers on the work days) – these are areas that should be maintained by the City and/or Norfolk Southern...but are not – so we owe a lot of thanks to Cece and Jo for their efforts and they could really use some help every now and then – this is one of the gateways to our neighborhood!

There are now 3 easy ways to pay your LHNA dues:

- 1.) Go to LoringHeights.org and use the PayPal link
- 2.) Drop a check by the Treasurer's house at 367 N. Garden
- 3.) Mail this form along with your check to:
LHNA, P.O. Box 7845, Atlanta, GA 30357

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email/Phone: _____

Thank you for your continued support of the LHNA!

the lore

LORING HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSN.
PO BOX 7845
ATLANTA, GA 30357

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