

Neighborhood News



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NEWSLETTER OF THE LAVISTA PARK CIVIC ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 244190 ATLANTA, GA 30324 WWW.LAVISTAPARK.ORG

LaVista Park Civic Association Quarterly Meeting Thursday, January 20

Westminster Presbyterian Church
1438 Sheridan Road

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7:00 p.m. social with refreshments

7:30 - 8:30 general meeting

8:30 - 9 informal discussion and social

The topic for the meeting will be Briar Vista Elementary School and the DeKalb County School System's school consolidation and closure plans, as presented by Briar Vista PTA representatives.

President's Message

2011 is here and your newly elected LaVista Park Civic Association (LVPCA) Board is ready to make this another great year in LaVista Park! We have a completely staffed board this year and look forward to serving you in the fulfillment of LVPCA's purpose "to unite homeowners in the beauty, peacefulness and residential character of the LaVista Park neighborhood."

The LVPCA Board held a December planning meeting to discuss ideas and initiatives for 2011. Below are some of the items we discussed:

The membership committee will focus on building upon our 2010 membership level - a solid 308 members. We will also continue to build up the security patrol reserves in our "rainy day" fund. We are entering year three of a four-year campaign to raise \$18K. We are on target with a total of \$7K raised to-date and a 2011 fundraising goal of \$5K.

Monitoring development and zoning activity will continue to be a key LVPCA activity. We will continue monitoring projects such as the Park Druid Hills (Executive Park). We will also continue to coordinate with LLCC on Blueprint Study initiatives as they continue to work toward obtaining

funding and targeting projects.

We will continue the fall festival, which was again a great success and continues to be the most popular neighborhood event of the year. The fall festival committee had a lot of fun putting this event together and they are ready to see if they can top last year.

We tried something new in 2010 by sponsoring additional social events – Pizza Night at Pizzeria Venti, Ice Cream Night at Bruster's and a fundraiser/social event in November, "Night at Nicola's." Each was a success with the attendance growing with each event. A special thank you to everyone who supported "Night at Nicola's" where 60 of our neighbors and friends gathered for some great food and dancing and raised over \$800 (which helped to close our 2010 budget gap). We plan on sponsoring one event per quarter this year and Nicola said we are welcome back anytime!

New Initiatives for 2011

Focus on our park- LaVista Park. The Citadel Garden Club has a master development plan for our neighborhood park and is looking for ways we can all work together to make the master plan a reality.

Form a communications committee focused on making sure we have effective and streamlined ways to best communicate to LaVista Park--including the LVPCA Web site, newsletter, e-mail notifications or social media like Facebook.

Voice our support and work with our neighborhood schools as the DeKalb County School Board considers school closings and consolidations.

Review our participation in the National Neighborhood Watch program and look to strengthen it.

LaVista Park is a wonderful place to live. It remains so because you care and stay involved in making this a great community. I look forward to working with you in 2011 and seeing you at the January 20 meeting.

Rock Nelson
404-354-9807
president@lavistapark.org

Briar Vista PTA to Speak at Meeting

Strong and vibrant schools bring growth and stability to communities. We see an opportunity to build community relationships and support with our area schools. LVPCA has invited the Briar Vista Elementary School PTA to speak at the January 20 LVPCA quarterly meeting to raise awareness and provide information to parents of school age children and concerned citizens alike.

Many attributes and unique components distinguish Briar Vista Elementary from other public elementary schools, including instructional methods, student and staff diversity, Montessori materials and multi-aged classes. Briar Vista is the only comprehensive public Montessori school in the DeKalb County School System (DCSS) and the greater Atlanta Metropolitan area.

Members of the Briar Vista PTA will present an overview of the Briar Vista Elementary School. Other topics covered will be: school testing results, the PTA's plans for the school, and the DCSS plans to convert from the Montessori instruction method to a "Two Tracks" educational platform. In addition, the PTA will discuss DeKalb County's 2020 Vision Initiative-A School Closure and Consolidation Plan, and possible impacts.

News and Notes from the Patrol

Although our crime statistics continue to be low, we have had some property crimes of note. Over the past month there have been two home burglaries and a car broken into. Unfortunately we usually see a spike in property crimes during the holiday season.

The LaVista Park Patrol and DeKalb Police detectives are working diligently to solve these crimes and to prevent further crimes. I recently received a report of a person going through mailboxes on Longwood Trace. Mail theft is a popular crime and easy to commit.

I want to remind everyone not to leave any outgoing mail in your mailbox. If you need to mail something, take it to the post office or hand it to the postal carrier. When you go on vacation, either cancel your mail or arrange to have a trusted party pick it up.

During the holidays the patrol did numerous house checks and I personally observed mailboxes filled with mail. Please take common sense precautions to safeguard your home and property. If you have any questions for the patrol, please contact your block captain or the neighborhood watch coordinator.

Sgt. Dan Brignone, DeKalb County Police Department
LaVista Park Patrol Supervisor

Zoning Issues

Happy New Year to all. As many of you know, two zoning issues emerged in the fourth quarter 2010. The status of each application is summarized as follows:

1489 Lavista Road Site – An application was filed by Dr. Wendy Jacobson for development of two small office buildings on this parcel. The original plan included curb cuts on Shepherds Lane and LaVista Road and set-back and parking variances to permit construction of a 750-sf single-tenant professional office building and a 1,500-sf multi-tenant professional office building. Since the property is located across from the LVPCA southerly boundary, our board of directors elected to take a neutral position while facilitating negotiations between the applicant and the Woodland Hills Neighborhood Association (WHNA).

Many meetings between the applicant and the WHNA, the DeKalb Planning Department, DeKalb Board of Zoning Appeals (ZBOA) and the GA DOT ensued.

As a result, the applicant and the WHNA reached the following compromise, which is also supported by the Planning Department and the DOT.

- Left and right ingress only to the site from LaVista Road
- Right egress only onto Shepherds Lane (requires a modification to original conditions of zoning by DeKalb Board of Commissioners)
- Various setback variances to permit construction of a maximum of 2,500 square feet of office space (requires approval by ZBOA)
- 35 foot maximum building height

In October, the ZBOA approved the requested setback variances, height restriction and site plan, conditioned on the Board of Commissioners' approval of the zoning condition modification to allow egress onto Shepherds Lane.

The foregoing recommendations from the Planning Department will be presented to the County Board of Commissioners for a final vote at their regular monthly meeting beginning at 10 a.m. on January 25. A report of the commission's final decision will appear in the February issue of Leaf Talk.

1400 Lavista Road Residence – Betsy and John Braden (long time members of the LVPCA) requested setback variances to permit reconstruction of their front entrance porch and construction of an attached garage. The garage setback would reduce the distance between an existing garage on the adjacent property and the new garage to about 10 feet, with the Braden portion being two feet from the property line. The requested variances were approved on December 8 by a 3 to 2 vote of the ZBOA.

Best wishes to the association and all of its members in the coming year.

David Sibley, Zoning Co-chair
zoning@lavistapark.org

Do Fences Make Good Neighbors?

Property owners erect fences for many reasons. Fences can delineate property boundaries, provide privacy, and keep pets in and unwanted pests out. Fences can also be an asset and add to a property's value.

DeKalb County does not require a permit be obtained to build a fence. But, this does not mean that there are no regulations concerning fences. Fences cannot be located in right-of-ways. Fences in front yards cannot be higher than four feet and fences in side and rear yards cannot be higher than eight feet. Simple enough except for corner lots.

Corner lots have two yards abutting a street. This means that fences in both yards cannot be higher than four feet, regardless of which yard is considered by the property owner to be the "side yard."

Fences can indeed make for good neighbors if they are built according to DeKalb's development standards, but fences can make for neighbor disputes if constructed contrary to regulations. No one wants to report a neighbor for building an illegal fence.

Even though a building permit is not required, before erecting a fence on your property, check with the county to be safe.

Bonnie Jackson, Registrar
registrar@lavistapark.org

Welcome New Civic Association Officers

Thanks for your service to the community!
We want to welcome three volunteers who joined the association board for 2011:

Joy Blount – Vice President, Section 2
Nicola Printer – Vice President, Section 3
Dan Strother – Vice President, Section 4

LLCC News

At the Lindbergh LaVista Corridor Coalition annual planning meeting on January 8, the board of directors elected the following as officers for the coming year:

- President - Jason Stephenson
- Vice President - Tom Woodward
- Secretary - Amanda Leech
- Treasurer - Dorean Neville

Congratulations to this fine group of leaders who will be guiding us in 2011.

The Lindbergh LaVista Corridor Coalition is a 501(c)(3) public non-profit corporation comprised of concerned residents and businesses of Lindridge-Martin Manor, LaVista Park and Woodland Hills. We have completed a 30-year visionary study and now plan to fund, adapt, and implement certain ideas from that Blueprints for Successful Communities Study that we determine are feasible.

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	K&M Automotive	2190 Briarcliff Rd 404.633.1677	10% off all products and services
	Pizzeria Venti	2770 Lenox Rd 404.228.2013	One of our famous Bocce Balls or a small gelato free with a purchase of \$10 or more.
	The Pet Set	2480 Briarcliff Rd. 404.634.7800	\$5 off any size dog or cat food with purchase of grooming or bathing.
	Whole Foods Market	2111 Briarcliff Rd	Reusable grocery bag filled with pantry items. Offer expires 8-31-2010.
SILVER	Jason's Pot & Pan Restaurant	1865 Piedmont Rd 404.874.0340	Free beverage offered with every meal.

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Executive Vice President

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Vice President Section 4

Dan Strother 404.321.1043 vp4@lavistapark.org

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Fall Festival Committee

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Missing or Damaged LaVista Park Patrol Signs

If you are a current LaVista Park Civic Association member and you do not have a patrol yard sign or your sign is damaged, please e-mail Wendy Yang, vp1@lavistapark.org to have your sign replaced.