

LVPCA Cityhood Survey Dec 2014

- 1 La Vista Hills would be the least favorable choice.
- 2 We do not need more government, we need more effective government. We should join the City of Atlanta to better improve our region's economic engine.
- 3 HUGE and ENDLESS thanks to wonderful Steve Richards for all of his hard work on this!!
- 4 First, thanks to Steve and the rest of the leadership for actively addressing these issues. Second, the survey results and leaf talk posts make it pretty clear that a large percentage of people are making this decision based on the current perception of which choice will impact them the most financially. The rest of the arguments pro/con appear to be something close window dressing in a battle between people who don't want to pay higher school taxes and people who don't want to see their property values destroyed by re-districting into Cross Keys (or other very bad Dekalb schools). For example, the complaints about the efficiency/corruption of Atlanta are laughable in light of our county CEO and other elected officials being under indictment. I also have a hard time seeing how anyone could be certain that government services would be a benefit of either Brookhaven/Lavista Hills when we will be a far outpost of either city - separated from the core of those areas and in a completely different school cluster than the power centers of those cities. For me, annexation into Atlanta seems like an easy decision as it preserves property values and daily life/services/policing will be about the same. ☐
☐
One final comment - the survey does not discuss Emory. While it is not contiguous to Lavista Park, it is a dominant presence in our area - which is obvious from a trip to Whole Foods or El Torrero or Mellow Mushroom.
- 5 I have worked with the neighbor association in the past, but just don't have the time due to work. I mostly agree with Steve Richard's position taken in the special newsletter. I feel like I'm being forced into a municipality against my will and subject to the motivations I don't particularly think that those motivations are pure and I believe they make for poor public policy. I also worry about what happens in the rest of the county particularly those less affluent. I think that ultimately this balkanization of the county leads to duplication of services (by definition less efficient), higher taxes, more regulation, and less freedom. I do believe that DeKalb can be improved, in part by requiring public internal & external audits, publishing financial reports, and establishing an Inspector General office to handle complaints and investigate corruption.

6 Thanks to LVPCA for doing a more in-depth and up-to-date survey. I responded to the first survey, with some extensive comments in support of joining Atlanta. My original comments still apply. Schools and their effect on property values are critical. If Druid Hills and Briar Vista Elementary join Atlanta, we should too. In Atlanta we would join the Neighborhood Planning Unit (NPU) system which would empower us to affect development on Cheshire Bridge and Lindbergh. If Toco Hills also annexes into Atlanta, we will be able to affect any development there. We are right next to Atlanta, and identify most strongly with it and Emory/Druid Hills. The City is on a positive trajectory with finances, services, and development to enhance quality of life.¶

Since the first survey, Brookhaven has annexed Executive Park. Some neighbors think joining Brookhaven will gain us some say over the development of that site. This is not the case. Brookhaven has made their deal with those property owners, who have paid them cash/taxes for the privilege of having their own way. If Brookhaven gave a hoot what we thought, they would have annexed our residential areas along with commercial. They were so eager to please Exec Park owners, and get their tax money, that they ignored the pleas of their own Republican benefactors in the Legislature, who opposed the annexation. They will not listen to us for a moment.¶

Another important point is that the Brookhaven police would have to cross I-85 at N. Druid Hills or Cheshire Bridge to respond to our neighborhood. Given the often gridlocked traffic around 85, it would be pure folly for us to rely on Brookhaven police.¶

I attended the House Subcommittee meeting re: Tucker and LaVista Hills. I went to this meeting with no detailed prior knowledge of the issues in dispute between the proposed cities, and had no position on the matter. Tucker had some very convincing historical and map evidence of Northlake's inclusion in their community. Northlake Mall and surrounding commercial is included in a Community Improvement District that stretches outside 285 into the heart of Tucker. They are clearly joined. A banker involved with the CID pleaded with the Subcommittee NOT to split the commercial district in two. What a mess it would be to split that CID between two jurisdictions. If Tucker gets Northlake commercial areas, LaVista Hills is likely in serious financial trouble.¶

The residential areas outside 285 that are in dispute between the two proposed cities are in the Lakeside High School cluster. LaVista Hills is clearly working to preserve the integrity of their school cluster, despite the fact that many people in those neighborhoods identify as part of Tucker.¶

What this means to LaVista Park is that LaVista Hills will NEVER allow our kids into Lakeside High (in the event Druid Hills High goes to Atlanta through annexation). I believe it was Marshall Orson of the DeKalb School Board who said that Lakeside is so crowded there is no way our kids would be sent there. Cross Keys High is more likely, and that would be very bad for our kids and all of our property values.¶

On the western end of LaVista Hills, Executive Park has already been removed from their map by Brookhaven's annexation. If Druid Hills succeeds in its annexation effort into Atlanta, and takes Toco Hills with it, LaVista Hills will have no significant commercial tax base left. Right now, they look like a failing effort: death by a thousand cuts, so to speak.¶

I also attended the multi-neighborhood meeting at Young Israel building. Mary Kay Woodworth of the LaVista Hills team told the assembly that LaVista Hills is planning to have their charter include a provision that will allow areas which choose to stay off their map initially, to annex into the new city within the first few years. They know that many of us are skeptical about joining this effort given all the confusion now, and it looks like they don't want our trepidation to blossom into full opposition and help torpedo their entire cityhood effort.¶

LaVista Park must get out of the LaVista Hills map. If we choose to join them at a later date, we will be able to do that via annexation. The smartest course is to make sure they are operating in a viable manner before we consider joining them. They are an unknown entity with an agenda that centers on the Lakeside HS cluster - a cluster we will not be able to join. We cannot wind up stuck in LaVista Hills, while Druid Hills takes our schools with them into Atlanta.¶

If the Druid Hills into Atlanta annexation effort moves forward, we must have the opportunity to vote on that option. This will give us the chance to preserve our school cluster and hence our property values. If an annexation vote fails, our schools will stay with DeKalb, and this will also preserve the cluster.¶

All that said, it would be best for the Legislature to put a moratorium on annexations and new cities for a year or more. I signed a petition to this effect at the multi-neighborhood meeting. The entire DeKalb community needs to work out all these issues in an orderly fashion. All these land grabs are counterproductive to the community.¶

Perhaps Druid Hills' move to annex into Atlanta, taking the schools with them, will wake up the DeKalb School District to the fact that people want more control over what happens in their clusters. If the School Board can finally act in a positive way, maybe that will relieve all this pressure to secede. ¶ Thanks to the LVPCA Board for all your time and effort on this important issue.¶

- 7 I have read the special addition of the Neighborhood News, letters posted on Leaf Talk in support of LaVista Hills and Brookhaven. And the end result is still one in which I have no clear cut determination on what I think is the best course of action. I have ranked Atlanta last due to my assessment my taxes will increase and a track record of mismanagement and inefficiency. LaVista Hills was my #1 choice over Brookhaven only because it would be easier and more likely to happen than collecting the 60% neighborhood signatures to be annexed into Brookhaven. I don't like any of the choices and do not think the information we have been provided by the competing entities to date helps me make a decision I believe is best for myself and LVP as a whole. The LVPCA Board has done a great job in providing as much information as they can on this complex issue.
- 8 Schools are the most important to us. If Druid High is annexed into the City of Atlanta then we are for annexation into the City of Atlanta if we have to decide now. Looking at LaVista Hills and Brookhaven we have no idea of where our children would go to school. If we had that information we could make a more informed decision.
- 9 Thank you for all the work the board has given to this.
- 10 Thank you for all the work you are doing to help keep us informed on this issue.
- 11 Thank you for what you are doing for this community.
- 12 Steve, and the rest of the Board, thank you for your considerable time and energy on this matter. The latest Newsletter, with the breakdown of taxes etc, was extremely informational.
- 13 We don't like Question 6 because, for both choices, we don't think the conclusion in the second sentence follows from the premise in the first. In short, we're fine with the level of services from unincorporated Dekalb, and would be fine staying if none of this was happening. But it is. And so we also think that we need to make a decision soon, because not all options may be on the table in the future. □
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Also, on a separate note: a very big thank-you to all of the Board for all of your work on this issue. We know that this kind of work can be tedious, and frustrating, and thankless. But we really appreciate all that you have done to keep all of us informed.
- 14 Thanks to our board and board President for all of your hard work and efforts getting as much information to the neighborhood as possible. Huge responsibility and many moving parts! No matter where we end up, you guys/gals have done an excellent job!
- 15 My only concern about going into the City of Atlanta is that we would be leaving one corrupt government (Dekalb) for another corrupt government (Atlanta). I am afraid our voice will be lost in Atlanta, which is why I am voting for Lavista Hills. I am not a fan of Brookhaven either because my first impression of their mayor turned me off of that option.

16 Last year, and even during the most recent LVPCA Cityhood Survey, I was a big supporter of the City of Briarcliff / LaVista Hills initiatives. However, that was prior to the recent developments with potential annexation into City of Atlanta (and the impact of Briar Vista Elementary, Fernbank Elementary and Druid Hills High going to Atlanta,) potential annexation into City of Brookhaven, and the uncertainty of the LaVista Hills-Tucker map boundaries being created by the House Governmental Affairs subcommittee. Now my current sentiment is that we surely must join an existing or soon-to-be created city very soon, but I do not think we have enough information and will not have enough information for at least several months to make a decision about which city or soon-to-be city we should join. I think we should remain unincorporated for the next several months to see what happens with the City of Atlanta annexation, the LaVista Hills-Tucker map, and to understand how the schools issue will play out between Atlanta and DeKalb. ¶

¶

My three priorities regarding cityhood are 1) Maintaining/increasing LaVista Park property values, 2) Being zoned for the best possible schools available to us, and 3) Paying an appropriate level of property taxes for the schools and services we receive. ¶

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Regarding property values, my best conjecture is we would be able to maintain or increase property values with Atlanta, but LaVista Hills (especially when not knowing the map boundaries and tax base) is an unknown at this time. We may also maintain or increase property values with Brookhaven given the increasing attraction of the city to home buyers, but it's hard to say whether being the 'butt' of Brookhaven is really going to help. I have doubts someone trying to buy a home in Brookhaven would really consider our LVP neighborhood as being part of the Brookhaven a buyer is trying to get into. Regarding being zoned for the best schools, we truly do not know what is going to happen with any of our three cityhood options. We can only guess which schools we may be zoned to under any of the three cityhood options, but we really do not know where APS or DeKalb may zone and place our LaVista Park children. If we wait we will have a better idea of APS and DeKalb's intentions with our children's attendance zones. Finally, regarding property taxes, I was very concerned about a dramatic increase in property taxes but the information LVPCA sent out has calmed me. The increase is not as high as I expected and is something I am comfortable with. However, I do feel for some of our senior residents who would experience a dramatic tax increase. It also appears our property taxes with Brookhaven would remain favorable at this time. However, taxes with LaVista Hills remain an unknown. ¶

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For all these reasons I have replied within the survey that I believe we should first remain in Unincorporated DeKalb for the time being and later, once we have more information, choose which city to join. If Unincorporated DeKalb is not an option then, as much as I would like to continue with my early support of LaVista Hills, I would have to go with the most known variables and information I have available right now. My vote then goes to City of Atlanta, followed by City of Brookhaven, and lastly LaVista Hills.

17 Thanks for keeping us informed.

18 Many thanks to our board members for all of the hard work in gathering and articulately disseminating this information so everyone can make the most informed decisions as possible.

19 I am not as familiar with the need to delay our decision versus making a decision now. Atlanta, in line with Emery, all the way. I personally want no part of Brookhaven, or LaVista Hills.

20 Thank you for pulling this together!

21 I thank the LVPCA for all their hard work with the cityhood issues. I am concerned about rushing into one of the three city options without knowing the full picture.

22 I am opposed to being part of the city of Atlanta in any way.¶

The survey asks conflicting questions.

23 it is schools, schools, schools. They greatly affect property values. Also, we need to have a say in Cheshire Bridge activity. Executive Park will be well planned and well managed by default. Cheshire Bridge negatively affects our neighborhood and needs to be cleaned up. By choosing Atlanta, this is our chance to make an impact. Thanks for all the help of this committee! We really appreciate it.

24 do not want to pay Atlanta city taxes. I am elderly and can't afford more, and don't want to be forced out.

25 Compliments to the staff of LPCA for doing an outstanding job!!

LaVista Hills is the worst possible choice. They are a start up and would be on shaky ground without much commercial real estate revenue. They are a pipe dream, not a real city.[]
Atlanta, 1st choice, Brookhaven second. Although my top top choice is to fix DeKalb. We do not need another layer of government.

26 Annexation into City of Atlanta would be bad. "Jumping from the frying pan into the fire."

27 Thanks to ALL of you for making this information available to the neighborhood!

28 If we are annexed into the City of Atlanta will we pay an additional City Real Estate Tax in addition to Dekalb County Real Estate Taxes? When I lived on Lenox Road in Fulton County/Morningside Lenox Park Neighborhood I paid an additional \$2500.00 a year in Real Estate Taxes labeled as Atlanta City Tax. []

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Will we in LVP in Dekalb County also be paying a similar city tax?[]

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If so this was not included in the Dekalb / Atlanta tax comparison chart included in the special newsletter. []

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This is important to all residents especially seniors and those living on Social Security & Disability.

29 Disappointed that president of LVPCA used the newsletter to "cast his vote" and thus influence others. Certainly not right.

30 If and only if, our schools move, I want my property to be Annexed into the City of Atlanta.

31 We have been in our home >20 years and have been generally happy with our current unincorporated DeKalb status, and are uncomfortable with the mindset underlying cityhood initiatives throughout the county: that everyone has to rush to "grab theirs," skimming the cream off DeKalb County before others take it away. Our preference would be the status quo, but the status quo of 2014 is not an option; things seem destined to change whether or not we participate in cityhood fever. []

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We've tried to inform ourselves about the issues but they are fluid, complex and unpredictable. I do not think anyone has the information with which to make a truly informed decision: I am a firm believer in the "rule of unintended consequences." []

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In terms of philosophy, our default that we all do better if we all think about the greater good rather than our own self-interest. In that light, the entire metro Atlanta area should be a single political unit, with all neighbors and communities cooperating instead of competing. But that is utopian; we can be certain that communities and other interests do compete, and I worry that as part of a larger entity we would not be able to influence decisions regarding development and transportation affecting our more immediate community. []

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Our votes are thus uninformed and philosophically tenuous (our only certainty is uncertainty).

32 i do not want to be part of atlanta, although prestigious, has to many problems. brookhaven--too far-- will not meet our needs-- not large enough

33 Not enough info to make a decision.[]

Too many variables.[]
Will our security patrol still be the same?

34 City of Atlanta is too large and we would have very little influence.[]

Brookhaven has annex several large commercial areas and will probably annex several more on this side of I85 and we must have input regarding government, zoning, traffic and a general "say" on what happens. Executive Park will become a major commercial player in the near future and it is in our back yard.[]

Brookhaven is much smaller than City of Atlanta and LaVista Hills but has great commercial areas to keep the tax base lower. Also, I have seen more Brookhaven police in our area over three days than DeKalb County's (on duty police) in 14 years.[]

City of LVista would also be large, very little commercial properties for a good tax base and a large unknown.

- 35 I prefer to be associated with a recognized international city like Atlanta as opposed to a local district community.
- 36 Unless there is a hard copy of this survey delivered to each household in LaVista Park, the results of this survey will not give a true reflection of the preferences of its' residents, particularly its' seniors.
- 37 Thanks LVPCA officers for efforts in researching and gathering info on this thorny issue.
- 38 Thank you all for the work you have done and continue to do.
- 39 Just have a core belief that over time Brookhaven will improve schools and has demonstrated an aggressive competency to run their city. Also believe it'll lead to higher property values. Thank you for all your hard work on this!
- 40 Thanks to Steve and board members for all your hard work. I would like to be a member of the Assn and not be considered a guest -- feels like membership in the patrol not the community -- the signs say so. If more money went into the community, I'd reconsider.
- 41 Annexation to the city of Atlanta continues to be the least favorable annexation option.
- 42 I prefer unincorporated DeKalb. However, I recognize that it may not be a viable, or long-term, option. (If I knew one of the cities involved would be more likely to follow through on traffic calming plans for Sheridan Rd, it would likely sway my decision.)
- 43 What makes life for residents happier than how they live it now does not depend on what city they live in but on the way they conduct their behavior in their household and with their immediate neighbors.
- 44 Absolutely need to proceed with being annexed into Atlanta.
- 45 Excellent survey.
- 46 With 4 options, this becomes a "Bad" primary election where the vote gets distributed across too many candidates and a true majority is never understood. Also not having the emails of the non members of the LVPA furthers this dilemma. Being able to contact approx. 50% of the LP households via email because we do not have the balance of their emails prohibits us from understand what our neighborhood at large really wants. If we lived in a perfect world, I would propose this "primary" vote be followed by a run-off between the 2 top choices. Maybe then we house have a better idea of what our neighbors really want. Thank you for all you have done
- 47 Keeping Briarvista elementary and druid high are our priorities.
- 48 Remaining with DeKalb School System is important to us as our child attends The GLOBE Academy DCSD public charter school. We are not alone as there are several other GLOBE families that reside in LaVista Park. If annexation into City of Atlanta were to occur, our child would be forced into APS and no longer eligible to attend The GLOBE Academy. Should LaVista Park be annexed into the City of Atlanta, we would sadly move out of LaVista Park, our home for over 22 years. We support any effort to keep LaVista Park within the DCSD (unincorporated DeKalb, Brookhaven, or LaVista Hills). We also want to thank the LVPCA board for all your efforts with the cityhood/annexation issues, and for always look out for what is best for LaVista Park.
- 49 One of the main reasons to have originally moved to LaVista Park is not being part of City of Atlanta. Not sure why anyone would consider joining a City that everyone else is trying to leave. City of Atlanta is bureaucratic and not very transparent..
- 50 Schools are our most important criterion, yet we are not impressed with the quality of the schools to which we are zoned. If any of the options would improve the quality of those schools, then that would be our preferred option.

- 51 This is a very sophisticated survey, requiring deep thought about one's values and priorities. It may be TOO good to elicit a broad response. I took it on my iPhone in Mexico, which was a challenge.
- 52 I do not wish to join Atlanta and strongly favor joint Brookl Haven
- 53 Thanks for the hard work in putting the survey together.
- 54 I am distressed that the latest newsletter did not merely present facts but opinions. It has prejudiced the outcome of the survey and, I believe, invalidated whatever result is compiled.
- 55 City of Atlanta is not even on my radar. Specifically made sure before buying my current home that this house was NOT in the city of Atlanta! Taxes too high, city management poor, schools leave much to be desired (cheating scandal), etc.
- 56 Your questions are a little biased towards Atlanta since Atlanta always on top. We oppose Atlanta, agnostic on Brookhaven or LaVista Hills. For us anything but Atlanta. We specifically located where we are to be outside of Atlanta. Schools not important to us, more honest, efficient government is. DeKalb, Fulton, Atlanta all dysfunctional.
- 57 Thanks to all who have worked so very hard on this. This second survey is very important in my opinion.
- 58 Schools and children should be the first concern for everyone. They are the future of our community.
- 59 Great job on this, Steve. None of us asked to be in this position, but now we are here. Hang tough!
- 60 I don't like the school options of LaVista Hills or Brookhaven. Also, I believe we will have better access to police and fire services through Atlanta.
- 61 thanks for your efforts
- 62 I have been following the issues, challenges, and opportunities associated with LaVista Park's position in the annexation/cityhood subject matter and have attended many meetings on the situation. It is my adamant position that we continue to be a part of the Briar Vista, Fernbank and North Druid school cluster. In order to do so, we must follow suite with the communities of Druid Hills and Woodland Hills and remain a part of that strong cluster by annexing into the city of Atlanta. Remaining in a strong school system is not only excellent for the people of our prestigious community but also positions our homeowners with a strong property value base. The viability of an economically healthy LaVista Hills is still very much in the balance considering we still do not have a clear picture of the boundaries that could desperately compromise the balance between personal property taxes and a commercial/industrial tax base. Without a strong balance, this new city could conceivably be saddled with an economically stressed city situation. On the Brookhaven front, I just feel LaVista Park is too far removed from the culture and proximity of this relatively new city. I, like a number of members of our community, more closely associate with the International City of Atlanta. If the LVPCC Board is looking for ambassadors to promote the annexation efforts into the city of Atlanta, sign me up. I feel that strongly about it.
- 63 Thank you for your tireless efforts on this matter.
- 64 At this time, It appears that we are being forced to choose from a bunch of bad alternatives, where we really have no truly vested interests. I do appreciate the efforts by the LPCA Board to provide as much information as possible regarding the various options. The problem is that there are too many unknowns and we are being squeezed on all sides.
- 65 The summaries that you have provided have been excellent and I very much appreciate the Board's work on this. We are, indeed, between a rock and a hard place in this ongoing Balkanization of metro Atlanta.
- 66 It was hard to make choices on some questions because of so many "ifs." We would be for annexation into City of Atlanta IF Druid Hills/Emory went that way. We would be for remaining in uninc. DeKalb IF there were a possibility that it could show reform results BEFORE the legislature and cityhood-interests put us in and either/or position. This whole thing is moving way too fast!

- 67 I have told the Association that I would join if I could get another yard sign. No response. So no membership fees.
- 68 If I could, I'd join the board in a flash. Not sure the board would want that. If possible, and you have this info, it would be helpful for everyone to hear, just what are the demographics of the neighborhood. How many families with children do we truly have? How many seniors? How many homes over 500k. If someone told me that we have 200 homes with kids, it would be much easier to move me to the Atlanta side. But my guess is that there are more seniors. If I can help get answers to that question, please let me know. Thanks again for all this, and whatever happens, we can agree to disagree and wash it down with wine and cheese.
- 69 thanks for all of the work you've put into this. I think we should align ourselves with Emory and Druid Hills
- 70 I don't have the knowledge or physical stamina to do much work, but I can stuff envelopes, affix newsletters/letters to mailboxes, and put a sign in my yard. Bless all of you who have worked so hard to make this understandable.
- 71 We have avoided being in the city of Atlanta for over 40 years, and we are not willing to consider Atlanta as an option.
- 72 I so appreciate how much time and energy you all are putting into this. It's a huge issue and you have not backed down! I really don't know the best route at this point but trust that the best decision we have available at this time will be made.
- 73 Of the viable choices (remaining unincorporated, unfortunately, is not viable), Atlanta is the worst. Taxes will be higher, police and fire coverage will be worse, garbage collection will be worse, and LVP will never be a priority for the city. The schools are still terrible, while the DeKalb County schools just to our east (e.g., Lakeside) are just as good as the schools in the Druid Hills area. Most people would say Lakeside is better than Druid Hills, which is one reason for the unhappiness of Druid Hills residents and why they agitated for charter schools. Brookhaven's annexation of Executive Park, together with the Druid Hills annexation effort, will leave LVP on a peninsula if it stays with LaVista Hills. As a consequence, LVP will be as much an afterthought for LaVista Hills as it will be for Atlanta - a distant area that is only useful for paying taxes. Brookhaven is not ideal - the legal fights they have picked were wrongheaded and costly - but acquaintances who are residents (some of whom were against cityhood) seem to be reasonably satisfied. And it is a functioning city - it does not have to be started up, with all of the uncertainty that entails. It is a known entity. For these reasons I view Brookhaven as the least bad choice for LVP.
- 74 Still not sure whether Lavista Park residents through this survey or possible future vote will have significant input into the decision as to where we are placed.
- 75 I did not like the choices for #9. I would have selected remaining with DeKalb County Schools. I am not willing to base my decision on what Druid Hills does--particularly if they choose to go to Atlanta. I strongly feel that the ONLY reason this group is interested in Briar Vista is to gain the property at old Briarcliff HS/Adams Stadium. While DeKalb Co. schools were not allowed to sell that property, I think it is very likely that Atlanta would sell if they could. Given that an offer of 50 million was made for that property, I think it is VERY possible that property would be sold and developed.
- 76 What a problem!
- 77 We are extremely disturbed with any possible annexation to the City of Atlanta due to the changes in the tax structure and changes to senior exemptions.
- 78 Would be great to know which elementary school we'd get redistricted to if we don't/can't stay with Briarvista.
- 79 City Of Atlanta option should be extended to include all of the feeder schools to Druid Hills High. OR let Druid Hills High and the 2 feeder schools stay in the DeKalb School System independent of Atlanta's boarder.
- 80 We appreciate deeply the work performed to inform us fully of these proposals ! Our very advanced age precludes our actively engaging in actions and fruitful discussions. We will voice by on-line response, our opinion and desires !
- 81 This decision would be easier to make if we knew what schools would be assigned if we joined LaVista Hills. Woodward in Brookhaven and BriarVista are both ranked very low by bestschools.

82 If LaVista Hills doesn't get approved as a city hood, I would rather remain unincorporated dekalb, and focus all of this energy toward dekalb county to force changes to the good of our neighborhood, that's why Wayne and I bought here. However if Lavista Hills becomes a cityhood, then I'd rather be annexed into Atlanta, the only increase would be property tax, but I fell we would better benefit from Atlanta than Brookhaven, or LaVista Hills.

83 Thanks for your work on this important matter.

84 I lived for over a decade on Beech Valley Rd. NE, which was a lot divided into 2 parts. One portion was in City of Atlanta Dekalb, and the other portion was in Unincorporated Dekalb County. Then I moved to Sherwood Forest. The community of Sherwood Forest was fearful of changes in Pershing Point (Sherwood Forest abutted commercial property on Peachtree St. We saw what happened to Ansley Park, our neighborhood abutting Sherwood Forest on the South. So we decided to spend over \$250,000.00 on Development Studies to fight Pershing Point/Peachtree St. developments. Sherwood Forest only had 2 exits, Peachtree St and by Ansley Golf Club. So we hired a BUS to show the City of Atlanta how important the development of Pershing Point was to Sherwood Forest. We all wore RED and had name tags with Sherwood Forest to show our neighborhood solidarity.[]

Well, the bottom line is after hundreds of hours and over \$250,000.00 plus bus rental and driver the City of Atlanta forgot about our needs/exit and built the biggest, most dense monoliths on Pershing Point. White Columns was TORN DOWN and a huge MONSTER building took its place. We had 4 neighbors that worked directly for Anne Cox Chambers (decorator, G-4 pilot, dog trainer, planner) and were assured that White Columns would NOT be torn down.[]

The bottom line is \$\$\$\$ talks. The developers built around Ansley Park and Sherwood Forest, and it is a MESS to get in and out of the neighborhood. I moved to Lavista Park because of the lower taxes and the ease of access to I-85, Cheshire Bridge via Lavista/Lindbergh not so much. []

My caveat is that the DEVELOPERS will always win. They pay off the public officials. The ex-mayor of Atlanta is still in prison. I know you all are trying HARD and I really appreciate it. I wish Greed and Corruption was NOT the way business is done in Atlanta, but it is. The reality is that the City of Brookhaven will let the Developers of Executive Park build a mini-Atlantic station if they will. They want the TAX revenue that it will produce. Their constituents are NOT affected by the Executive Park development.[]

I question the legality of the City of Brookhaven's ability to claim land so far away from the city. Hop over Buford Hwy and I-85 and annex Executive Park. I would question the legality of that annexation.[]

Thanks for all of your hard work. I really HOPE it will make a difference. I hate the whole school system changes. I think that will hurt our property values.[]

THANKS!!

85 The board seems to be doing a good job. This Leaf edition was excellent.

86 Choices have been too swift for all of neighborhood to understand and make informed decisions. Cityhood will ultimately be more expensive. We need time as an unincorporated entity so that all of us can make an informed choice. The holiday season is here and people are distracted and busy making the survey urgently important.[]

A quick decision on this critical issue may result in regret and anguish.

87 I would love to hear some definitive statement from DeKalb County School Board officials as to where our children would be districted from elementary to high school. If we were to be districted to, or allowed to attend, Sagamore Hills Elem., Henderson Middle and Lakeside I would be opt for the LaVista Hills incorporation. I assume a Brookhaven annexation would call for a Cross Keys HS districting and I would not be satisfied with that outcome. []

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If there could be some definitive answers to the exact schools that would come with the various annexation options that would be most helpful. Given the state of DeKalb County School Board, however, that might not be possible and thus it is another reason I'll probably opt for the Atlanta annexation option.

88 Many would love to stay in an "unincorporated" area mainly I think due to taxes and such. But that is no longer a choice for our area. We will be forced into some city. It's best for that to happen now while there are choices rather than a "here it is so deal with it" option that could happen later. I do NOT have any faith in the new proposed city of Lavista Hills for a couple of reasons- the main one is we didn't actively choose to create a city because we felt disgusted with DeKalb (like Sandy Springs with Fulton or Dunwoody with DeKalb years ago)- it was done because of the original city of Lakeside and their plans and how it would affect us. At least Atlanta has an established system for incoming revenue and projects. Is it perfect- heck no. But have we forgotten all the crap that DeKalb has done too (almost losing their accreditation due to their board of education not working together and the governor having to step in) and constant indictments of CEOs. Plus there are a lot of projects in the works for the Chesire Bridge and Lindberg area- that butts up right to us. That will affect us as much as Executive Park and North Druids Hills area does.

89 Any city but City of Atlanta

- 90 If people would stop annexing out of city of Atlanta, it wouldn't be such a terribly run municipality. Rich white people keep taking away tax money from the city, yet they want to use its roads, belt line trails, restaurants and theaters to facilitate their metropolitan life style. I live in Atlanta. I don't need to change the name of the city I live in order to feel superior. The funniest thing about Brookhaven is they use the name "Brookhaven" in order to facilitate prestige yet the actual rich and exclusive "Historic Brookhaven" is in city of Atlanta. I find this whole issue bonkers and basically a manifestation of racist southern tribalism that stems from segregation.
- 91 Even though we no longer have school age children I am concerned about what will happen to the neighborhood school children regardless of the final decision. As a senior citizen I think we will be worse off as far as taxes than we are now regardless of final decision. I feel like we are collateral damage in this whole mess. I appreciate all the work that Steve and our LPCA have done through the years and especially with this important issue. Thank you.
- 92 Some of the questions will skew toward a response that does not fit my feelings. The city of Lavista Hills is a complete unknown, we are not even certain it will be a viable choice. I don't want to be annexed into Brookhaven based on what I do know. Therefore I responded to the last several questions because I had no other option to say no.
- 93 Thanks for your thoughtfully prepared newsletter. I am very impressed with the consideration you have given to this issue. That said, I am on the Zoning Board of Appeals and have seen first hand the operations of the county planning department. I think this department does high quality work and is not broken. DeKalb County police have always responded quickly and professionally when I needed them. The county's trash collection and sanitation department does a first class job. Our recycling program is effective and easy to use. There are certainly aspects of the county government we could improve with real citizen input. It is unfortunate the actions of a few elected officials make it easy for those who are otherwise uninterested in participating in county government cynical enough to think merely changing the government entity is going to make our government better. The annexation of Executive Park, CHOA and Loehman's Plaza by Brookhaven are legal but an obvious effort to circumvent direct community input into the future use of those properties by the owners. Transportation improvements necessary to this area have been stymied by this annexation and may prove to be a very serious problem for our neighborhood. ☹
- 94 I know that there are very few children in LaVista Park, but I still think it would be a crime to have our high school become that heinous Cross Keys, where they are very proud of the fact that they speak 58 different languages in the school. You may as well not even send your children to school for all the knowledge they would attain there. Vehemently against annexing with Brookhaven!
- 95 The problem is that we are on the edge of three different fronts and we have to pick one in which we can have input as a member. I think being part of Atlanta is going to give us the most impact, especially if the Emory area and Druid Hills goes that direction. I think this gives us input in what happens with the Clifton corridor as well as Cheshire/Lavista/Lindberg.
- 96 Thank you for all the hard work and dedication to those who are staying on top of all this. It is very much appreciated.
- 97 thank you to all of you for all of the hours and hard work you are doing on this issue, know that the information you are sending out is helpful and is being read. thank you.
- 98 already a board member
- 99 I am impressed and grateful for the work that the association has put into educating us about the initiatives. Although I am a renter, I will join the association as I now see the benefits that the organization provides to the community.☺
Thank You!!!!
- 100 our Association officers continue to do stellar job

101 I realize my answers are inconsistent...so many unknowns. What stands out to me:[]

- Chamblee Middle & High Schools are best (Brookhaven). Brookhaven is functioning well. Identity fits us (on this edge of Atlanta without its hassles). How are their property values?[]
- Oakgrove Elementary and LaVista High are good (LaVista Hills). Identity: Solid mid/upper mid class suburb-good property values.[]
- Fernbank Elementary is best (Atlanta probably). How will going along with Druid Hills/Emory to Atlanta actually help us? They are hugely prestigious but how will it translate to us? Can Fernbank absorb our kids? Druid Hills Middle/High are good mostly only for high achievers. Marrying Atlanta government is intimidating...[]
- Can we reach out to the three governments and see if they'll take us later? There's no reason not to take us later, is there?[]

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THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HARD WORK. I am the biggest Steve Richards fan...so thoughtful, eloquent, balanced! Steve and team: I cannot thank you enough. You all are beyond organized, professional....simply the best Board I can imagine. I'm sending an email hug to you all!

102 I still believe the best option is to day with the county, but if that is not possible then Atlanta is a far better alternative than either Briarvista or Brookhaven. I do not believe that Brookhaven has ANY interest in our welfare and wish we could tell them to stay on the other side of I85 and out of our business. The changes to Exec Park and CHOA will only increase traffic and congestion and crime.

103 Excellent job keeping us updated. Thank you for your work.

104 Thank you to everyone who has worked so hard to keep us informed. You are doing an outstanding job!

105 I strongly feel that annexation into Atlanta is the right choice and the only one that makes sense for our community. I think we would see a serious decline across the board should the community vote on a new proposed city (LaVista Hills)

106 1. Atlanta School System has many problem and is just one step above DeKalb's, just read the papers or watch the local news.[]

2. Joining City of Atlanta will be an increase in taxes and still less police, as they are all in south Atlanta. Just drive around and count the number of Atlanta police cars you see.[]

3. Becoming Atlanta would not give us any more input as to what happens on Cheshire Bridge or other close areas in Atlanta. Morningside has had little, if any, influence on Cheshire Bridge Road. []

4. Can DeKalb County government be repaired, questionable.[]

5. Will LaVista Hills have enough commercial properties to support such a large area?[]

6. Executive Park will become a major commercial area within a few years and it is in Brookhaven.[]

7. Unless we become part of Brookhaven we will have NO influence on what happens in that area.

107 Thank you all for your time and effort in keeping us informed.

108 Just want to Steve and the board once again for putting in the amazing amount of time and work for this.

109 Thank you for spending so much of your valuable time dealing with this complex and unfortunate set of decisions that have been forced upon us. Please know that it has not gone unrecognized at our home. We do not have a problem with the county government that can't be fixed by community involvement. However, we are now faced with choices that must be made, even if we don't want them. Thank you again.

110 Since our side of the street isn't included in the Lavista Hills map, it seems we on the south side of Lavista Road will be going into the City of Atlanta. Suits me. I do think all of this rush to cityhood crap is alarmist is being shoved down our throats.

111 Anything but annexation into Atlanta, but doing nothing is not an option.

112 We would like it to remain as it is.

113 I think this whole process needs to be slowed down so that more intensive study can be done on the complicated issues surrounding any of these options. At this point, there are still way too many unknowns for any of us to be able to make a rational decision.

- 114 It seems Atlanta is the only viable choice - unfortunate about senior tax rates.
- 115 City of Atlanta has the best future for us.
- 116 Thanks for all of your work on this survey
- 117 I honestly feel moving to brookhaven would be a mistake.
- 118 question #9 about schools, there are several of us in this community that send our kids to other dekalb schools instead of Briar Vista. We have worked hard to start a Dekalb Charter school called Globe Academy, located near Lakeside High at the moment. If we could keep our school choice in Dekalb, we would be open to all possibilities. If we lose access to our charter school, we will most likely have to move.
- 119 As a new resident, I do not have others' depth of knowledge and experience vis a vis the many discussions, options, and extensive research surrounding this decision. However, I do NOT believe that this community's interests would be well served by annexation into Atlanta, despite the push in this direction by Emory and Druid Hills. I DO think that our interests have the potential to improve if we become part of Brookhaven or incorporate as LaVista Hills.
- 120 I feel that LVP is more closely identified with the city of Atlanta, which is one of the major reasons I chose to live here. 95%+ of my time outside of LVP is spent in the city of Atlanta and not some area further away from the city.
- 121 Rhetoric about Atlanta being corrupt and more expensive are unwarranted; for one, look at the corruption in our own county, from the CEO's office to the board of commissioners to the schools. Brookhaven has not played fair, only expressing interest in us when we brought up the topic. LaVista Hills seems an "unknown." Property values, which are strongly influenced by schools, are paramount, as is having a say in in-process development happening on Cheshire and Lindbergh/LaVista. THANK YOU for taking time to poll your neighbors.
- 122 Thanks Steve, your hard work on this is certainly appreciated. Hope this provides a bit of clarity, although I get the feeling this decision will eventually have to be made by higher up powers that be...getting 50-60% of this neighborhood to agree on whether or not the sky is blue would be a fight in itself.
- 123 Steve, great job on presenting this issue and excellent special edition Neighborhood News. Wish there was a clear answer.
- 124 In question 13, there was no mention of Brookhaven as an option.
- 125 for question #13, did you mean to say "Brookhaven" in place of "Briarcliff"?... (I am assuming that)
- 126 Thank you for doing such good work on behalf of Lavista Park. Very much appreciated!
- 127 Some of these answers depend on how the other neighborhood survey results come back. It would be helpful, if possible, to do a community wide survey to see where either the Atlanta Referendum or LaWe received a report from the appraiser for 417 CLAIREMONT AVE 113, DECATUR, GA, 6092407. Our quality control process has identified corrections needed from the appraiser prior to delivery. A report will be delivered once we receive the correction from the appraiser. Vista Hills referendum stand with support.[]
[]
Question 7 - Cheshire bridge has already had a master plan and has been litigated. There is probably very little influence that can or will be had on the future development.
- 128 Please check options for #13. This is not easy, and I appreciate the time, energy, and efforts of the Board! In the end, we need to be heard by our governing agency, and we need good services, including fire and police and development of area.
- 129 Thank you for serving. I would hope that no matter what, we have an opportunity to VOTE on this issue. Been on Citadel Drive since 1963, graduate of Briarcliff High so have a very vested interest in this area.

130 I am already over-committed and simply do not have the time to serve on the Board. wish I did