

Neighborhood News

Volume 26 Number 1
Winter 2019

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



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President's Message

Happy New Year! With the New Year comes a new Board for LVPCA.

In preparation for this transition the Board held two key meetings in November and December to lay the groundwork for the coming year. In November, we undertook a deep dive into our financials to understand the drivers and forecast what the future is likely to hold. You will see more details on this in the Treasurer's Update at our Membership Meeting on January 17th.

In December we took a step back to ask ourselves what we wanted LaVista Park to be known for in 3 years and identified key priorities to get us there. Out of this we defined what we want to address in 2019. This vision for the future is that LaVista Park will be:

- Known as a **progressive** and **inclusive** neighborhood
- A **secure** environment that makes use of both technology and people to achieve this security
- A **welcoming** neighborhood where it is easy to meet your neighbors and that has fun social events
- Have a Civic Association that is **proactive in addressing key needs of the neighborhood**, marshals its resources well, and spends your money wisely
- Has a **distinct identity** as a highly desirable place to live within metro Atlanta

To achieve this vision, the Board is creating the following committees. These committees will each be led by a board member and staffed with volunteers from the membership of LVPCA. This is an opportunity for you to help shape these efforts and bring your talents.

- **Cityhood** – moving forward with the next steps for annexation into Brookhaven, to include securing the needed signatures
- **Code Violations** – developing and publishing a database of code violations that create traffic hazards, such as overgrown properties that obstruct line-of-sight at intersections, and lingering blight issues. This will be periodically updated and published on lavistapark.org
- **Communications** – defining and implementing a communications strategy that utilizes multiple vehicles to better



Quarterly Meeting Thursday, January 17th

Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1438 Sheridan Road

7:00 pm social with refreshments

7:30 - 9:00 pm Meeting

communicate activities of LVPCA

- **Fall Festival** – plan and execute a Fall Festival in its return to the Park
- **Financial Health** – identify and execute reductions in administrative expenses to minimize the need to increase dues
- **Garage Sale** – define and conduct a garage sale for LaVista Park residents
- **Infrastructure Survey** – survey LVP residents to identify issues such as traffic volume and speed, sidewalks, drainage, desired Park improvements and LVP identity. This information will be shared with Government officials to help shape plans for the future.
- **Park** – continue improvements to LaVista Park.
- **Security** – develop and publish quarterly tracking of crime statistics for the LaVista Park website - lavistapark.org - to define and execute a comprehensive security strategy for LaVista Park that includes the existing Patrol plus new technologies.
- **Social Committee** – develop and execute a plan for more social events to bring neighbors together
- **Tour of Homes** – develop a LaVista Park Tour of Homes to showcase our unique neighborhood and generate an alternative source of revenue for LVPCA

These efforts are a significant undertaking and your Board can't do it alone – we need your help! Committees that need volunteer support are:

- **Fall Festival** – both planning and "day of" volunteers for set-up and take-down
- **Garage Sale** – both planning and "day of" volunteers for set-up and take-down
- **Park** - planning
- **Security** – planning and someone with PC skills to build and maintain the crime database
- **Social Committee** – planning and execution of social events
- **Tour of Homes** - planning and "day of" docents at each house

If you have an interest in any of these committees, there will be sign-up sheets at the "Meet the Board" Meeting on the 13th or our next Membership Meeting on January 17th at Westminster Church at 7:30pm. You can also send me an email to resident@lavistapark.org. Thanks for your support and participation.

★ Treasurer's Message

In order to make sure that every dollar of your membership dues is used to support the neighborhood, starting in the 2019-2020 membership year, members who pay the LVPCA dues via PayPal or Credit Card (via Square on request) will incur an administrative fee of \$10 to cover the vendor processing charges.

The board is instituting this measure to keep dues stable for as long as possible, and to continue the convenience that these allow. This expense item is the fast growing of all of the expense items. For 2019, without instituting this change, we would have had to budget approximately \$1200 to account for the PayPal & Square fees; funds which otherwise could be used to support the patrol and/or other expenses such as bringing goats in to help maintain the park. As these payment methods continue to become the preferred method of payment with more members, this administrative expense would have continued to rise.

Prior to voting on this change, the board researched other associations in the Atlanta area and of those we looked at, we discovered that LVPCA is the only association that absorbs this cost. In the other associations, the administrative fees are passed on to their members during payment.

The breakout of the fees will be shown on the website as follows:

- Annual Membership Fee
- PayPal & CC Administrative Fee
- Total Charge

Speaking on behalf of the board, we are proud to keep the dues unchanged for another year. If you don't want to incur the \$10 administrative fee, payment via check continues to be graciously accepted.

This change is one of several that we are looking at to minimize and control administrative expenses so funds can be better directed to the patrol and other investments that support the neighborhood. Learn more about these initiatives at the January Quarterly meeting.

Marsha Hanus
treasurer@lavistapark.org

Postal Delivery Update

The neighborhood's appeal to the Atlanta postmaster appears to have had some positive effect. During the weeks around Christmas, residents who had been getting mail as late as 11pm started noticing the mail delivered in the afternoons. Post office 30324 tells us that after the board's most recent complaints, efforts and letters, they've decided to re-organize a few of their routes. It's not clear if this change is permanent.

While this is certainly an improvement, other issues persist. For examples, too much mail is still being delivered to the wrong homes, and packages are often left far from the homeowner's door. We also have continued problems with packages that are reported via tracking as being delivered, but don't truthfully arrive until the next day or two.

We still strongly encourage all residents with delivery issues to take photos and forward them to VP2@lavistapark.org. The pictures and videos have provided undeniable proof of the continued problems, which is are now two years on-going. Of utmost important are clear pictures of the USPS barcodes.



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Steve Osunsami
VP2@lavistapark.org



CAN Civic Association Network

The last 2 meetings of 2018 (Oct. 24th & Nov. 28th) were devoted to organizational discussions. C.A.N. is increasingly being tapped by the Board of Commissioners and DeKalb County officials to sponsor public meetings and present the face of neighborhoods.

Over the years, CAN has expanded from the core neighborhoods as it has gained recognition and strength. The original civic associations were in Board of Commissioners District 2, but over time other neighborhoods with similar countywide issues were welcomed. Currently run as a loose confederation of neighborhoods sharing common issues, there is a movement to consider creating an elected board and expand county wide and take in all interested groups.

I'm not sure the majority want to formalize the group, and founding members like myself are no longer officially on their respective Civic Association Boards and not in a position to officially represent our neighborhoods (I consider myself as a reporter there and take no official position). Possibly big changes ahead, will keep you posted.

Gene Schmidt
Your Civic Association Network Rep

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Darren Shoyer, M.D.
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Mary Dampier, M.D.
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Membership Drive 2019

The LaVista Park Civic Association (LVPCA) membership drive will run for 2 months with the following dues structure:

- **April 1-30:** As we did last year, we will offer an Early Bird discount of \$10 during the month of April, or \$215.
- **May 1-31:** The regular dues pricing of \$225 will be in effect during May
- **June 1:** The dues will increase to \$235
- An administrative fee of \$10 will now be assessed for all payments made through PayPal and Credit Cards to recover the processing costs for these payments.

In addition, LVPCA will offer an auto-renew option at \$215 at any time. Going forward, these memberships will be debited at the end of April each year. This option will require that the member agree to use PayPal, which will incur the administrative fee noted above. *(This discount does not apply to 100% participating HOA members, who join as a group under a separate discount program.)*

Membership cards will be mailed out during the first week in June. Current LVPCA members and non-members that have provided LVPCA with their email addresses, will receive an email notice of the start of the membership campaign at the beginning of April. In addition there will be a paper reminder in the 2nd quarter Newsletter sent out in mid-April.

Larry Hoskins
president@lavistapark.org



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Annexation Update

LaVista Park's annexation effort continues to move forward. At the last quarterly meeting we announced the survey results and the next steps. To recap, we received 286 residents of LaVista Park responded to the survey regarding annexation options, with over 80% of those responses favoring Brookhaven and 51% desiring that we move forward with an annexation immediately.

In the board's strategic planning session, we committed to completing this effort in 2019, and hope to do it as early in the year as possible. We need your support!

The next step in the process involves raising the required funds to hire an outside consultant to help complete the effort. It is a lot of work that has to be done perfectly to ensure that the annexation is approved. For this reason we need to get a consultant that understands the process and has done this before in other areas.

The process involves obtaining voter data for the impacted area and property ownership of the area. Once these lists are obtained the petition will be circulated by canvassers going door-to-door, as well as through some announced times where people can come by and sign the required documents. We have a time limit of six months from the first signature to the last signature so we need to plan carefully before we start collecting signatures. The more people that will pro-actively come by and sign the faster we can complete this.

Annexations into existing cities can be done through three methods. We have determined that the 60% method is the most reasonable, meaning that we need 60% of the voters AND 60% of the land owners to sign indicating that they support annexing into Brookhaven. We create each list and then need to have 60% of each.

Once we have the lists and start the project we hope to complete it quickly. The next step after collecting signatures would be presenting the annexation petition to Brookhaven for City Council approval. If that is granted we would officially become part of Brookhaven with a quick transition to Brookhaven Police, Roads, Parks and Building and Code Enforcement.

Several board members have been working to raise funds for this effort. We have commitments for more than half of the expected costs so far but do need to raise more. **If you would like to contribute to this effort, please go to lavistapark.org. Under the About Us drop down box we have added a donate option. You can also reach out to Larry Hoskins (President@lavistapark.org), Steve Osunsami (VP2@lavistapark.org), or Michael Lappin (VP3@lavistapark.org).**

Michael Lappin
VP3@lavistapark.org

Friends of Kittredge Park

Volunteer Action Days

Nov. 10th: Emory University - The Friends of Kittredge Park hosted nearly 40 Emory students who braved a chilly but sunny day to help clean up the Park. The focus was on invasive plant removal and they did a great job.

Dec. 15th: Home Depot had to reschedule their service day to December 15th (from Nov 11) due to weather and had an impressive turnout of 150 employees. They were joined by some friends at the Atlanta Tree Climbing Club and some great folks at Park Pride. The Home Depot generously provided 900 bags of mulch, which was used as weed control (and it looks great too) in the field south of the vehicular bridge that was cleared earlier by our Emory volunteers. The Home Depot crew put their skills to work building and installing picnic tables in the area as well as some sturdy wooden park benches. A 3rd group rebuilt the wooden neighborhood footbridge at the east end of park, while a 4th group cleared invasive plants at the rock grouping in middle of Kittredge. Job well done.

Upcoming: Our next event will be with Emory students on or near MLK Jr. holiday. Pictures from past Volunteer Days are on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Kittredge-Park/>. Please check there for future opportunities to make a real difference in our parks - join us for a fun day out. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Gene Schmidt
Your FKP rep.

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- Ruth H.

Brookhaven Q&A

Representatives of the City of Brookhaven presented information at the October 27th quarterly membership meeting and responded to questions about their government. In attendance from Brookhaven were: John Ernst - President, Joe Gebbia - District 4 Council Rep, Steve Chapman - Assistant City Manager, Gary Yandura - Police Chief, and Brian Borden - Parks & Recreation Director.

Brookhaven provides parks, roads, building/code enforcement and police services to its residents. DeKalb County continues to provide fire, animal control, jail services, libraries, schools and utilities.

Gary Yandura, Police Chief – Brookhaven currently has 74 officers. They have 8-12 officers in each zone per shift compared to DeKalb County providing 2-5 per zone per shift. Brookhaven also has license plate readers at every entrance to the city limits and has had success apprehending criminals using the cameras.

Brian Borden, Parks & Recreation Director – Brookhaven has 15 parks within 12 square miles, including 3 public pools.

La Vista Park

The Goats are coming back!!!

It is confirmed with Michael at GetYourGoat rentals that the goats will arrive Saturday January 19th with kids in utero – or maybe a few already “on the ground” as he says. I will post on NextDoor and by email the approximate time once I hear from Michael.

We are going to have a **fundraiser photo shoot!** This great idea evolved from a suggestion by a visitor to the park last year. Michael will set aside a space and with some of his staff, and we will offer 5-10 minutes of time for a family photo shoot holding a baby goat. The time will vary depending on how cooperative the goats are! We want to make sure people have plenty of time to get the pictures they need, so we won't cut you off, but we do want to accommodate everyone who is interested. I'm writing this article on January 6th and the goats aren't even here yet, therefore we are estimating that the photo shoot will take place on Saturday February 2nd and be announced by email and on NextDoor. So, for just \$25, you can take selfies, have friends take your pictures, or we will (do our best). But please, don't bring your dogs. The goats come with their own entourage including guard dogs and they are very protective of THEIR babies! We don't want a Bevo/Uga altercation.

This year we have selected only smaller goats to visit the park – to keep the bigger “tree climbers” from bending and damaging saplings with their hunt for new growth. Also, the goats will be here for a shorter time period this year - as they did such a good job last year, there's less ivy for them to eat. What we WILL do is have them back in the summer to work on the other weeds that come up in the absence of ivy.

In other park news, the dysfunctional weir at the corner of Wild Creek Trail and Brookforest is finally being addressed. I have worked for 4 years to get the county to repair it, and with one budget shortfall after another, it was postponed. It's taken special SPLOST money to finally get action. They have removed the branches and debris covering the drain, allowing the stored water in the soggy soil to start draining out. This may take a few iterations before the area is in shape to have the heavy equipment come in and rebuild the entire approach to the weir.

Also, the county has hired a firm to remove dead, diseased and compromised trees and limbs. *continued on page 7*

Q&A:

What is the current population?

52,000

How do you get on the list to repave your street?

Public Works will scan our streets and determine priority based on the economics of repairs.

Would the DeKalb County Senior Tax Exemption be affected?

No. Brookhaven is looking into expanding the exemption program.

Is Brookhaven planning to decriminalize the use of cannabis?

It might be discussed in the future, but the Chief indicated that possession is only a minor offense unless you have the intent to traffic.

Is Brookhaven's charter available online?

Yes. And within the next 2-3 weeks, all expenditures will be posted online.

If LaVista Park is on the edge of the city limits, will we receive the same level of services?

Chief says the response time will be the same for all areas.

What would be the immediate plan for LaVista Park?

A character study would be conducted before making any plans.

Will the south side of LaVista Road be included?

Boundaries will be set when the map is drawn for annexation.

Will there be a police precinct on our side of I-85?

The newest station will be on Briarwood between Buford Highway and I-85 but no immediate plans for a station located east of I-85.

Are there future plans for a fire department?

Brookhaven is keeping an eye on DeKalb's response times.

Adding a fire department would be expensive.

Could LVPCA keep the patrol?

LVPCA could maintain its patrol.

Would we receive 2 tax bills?

No, we would continue to receive one bill.

What is Brookhaven's stance on public transit?

Brookhaven has a good relationship with MARTA and has no plans to change transit.

How does Brookhaven handle code enforcement?

Brookhaven has an app for reporting problems and has a quick turn-around for submitting violations to owners and pursuing resolution.

Does Brookhaven offer protection of trees?

Brookhaven has a strong program for maintaining trees and addressing which trees should come down.

Will Brookhaven manage water and sanitation?

No, DeKalb County will continue to manage those services.

Does Brookhaven manage drainage?

Yes, Brookhaven manages storm water runoff. All locations are rated and monitored. All new construction must manage runoff onsite and bury storm water collection.

Does Brookhaven plan to remain a primarily residential community or is it actively seeking corporate HQ bids?

Brookhaven would welcome the opportunity to have a corporate HQ if a site could be identified on Peachtree or Buford Highway.

How is diversity represented in its leadership?

All races and diversity of mind are represented in Brookhaven's governance. The police force also represents the Hispanic and African American make-up of the citizens.

Does Brookhaven plan to allow increases in density for new development?

Current density allowance is 30 units per acre.



LVPCA Board Member Contact Info

President

Larry Hoskins, president@lavistapark.org

Executive Vice President

Christina Jobe Davisson, execvp@lavistapark.org

Secretary

John Cassanos, secretary@lavistapark.org

Registrar

Mike Principino, registrar@lavistapark.org

Treasurer

Marsha Hanus, treasurer@lavistapark.org

Vice President, Section 1

Andy More, vp1@lavistapark.org

Vice President, Section 2

Steve Osunsami, vp2@lavistapark.org

Vice President, Section 3

Michael Lappin, vp3@lavistapark.org

Vice President, Section 4

Gina Henschen, vp4@lavistapark.org

Patrol Coordinator

Kay Vydareny, watch@lavistapark.org

Zoning Coordinators

Steve Graves, zoning@lavistapark.org

Park Coordinator

Donna Newman, LVPark@lavistapark.org

Webmaster

Bob Owen

Fall Festival Committee Chair

Dan Henricksen, festival@lavistapark.org

Scan This QR Code to Join LVPCA

When you scan this QR code using your phone or tablet, it will take you straight to the LVPCA membership page where you can pay via PayPal. If you're not already a member, please try it now!

If you don't have a QR Code reader, you can download it as a free app for Apple and Android products through stores such as iTunes App Store and Google Play.



continued from page 6

This Spring we will landscape the corner with flowering perennials, add a matching patio table on Wild Creek Trail (like the one on Beech Haven Rd.) and add azalea bushes down the slope to the pond. We need volunteers to make the magic happen. Please stay tuned and join us for these volunteer events as they are scheduled, it's a great way to meet your neighbors and to keep the neighborhood and our park beautiful!

If anyone would like to be part of the park restoration committee, please contact me at LVPark@lavistapark.org

Donna Newman
LVPark@lavistapark.org



LaVista Park Donation

In December a donation of \$2,500 was received from Donna Peters and Jonathan Darsey, which allowed us to complete the erosion control and flagstone installation at the corner of Beech Haven and Wild Creek. This work was completed by Sweeney Gardens. This donation was made as a parting gift by Donna and Jonathan as they are moving out of LaVista Park after 18 years. They will be listing their home at 1133 Beech Haven in late January. If you have an interest in making a donation to help our Park, just go to ParkPride.org and designate Friends of LaVista Park. **Thanks to Donna and Jonathan for this wonderful parting gift!**



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Friends of LaVista Park through May 31, 2019

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	Piedmont Physicians at North Druid Hills	2171 LaVista Rd, Suite 100 404.982.8009	
GOLD	EATaliano	2480 Briarcliff Rd 404.321.2111	10% off bill
	Mellow Mushroom Emory	1679 LaVista Rd 404.325.0330	10% off bill
	Next Age Fitness	1610 Lavista Rd 404.998.4432	10% off 5 workous
	Peachtree Creek Animal Clinic	1085 Lindbergh Drive Suite 100 404.467.8779	Free nail trim with shampoo
	Rain Thai and Sushi Bar	2345 Cheshire Bridge Rd. 404.325.6963	\$5 off on purchases of \$40 or more
SILVER	Athletic Club North East	1515 Sheridan Road 404.325.2700	2 personal coaching sessions for new members
	Delias Chicken Sausage Stand	489 Moreland Ave SE 404.474.9651 881 Marietta St 404.254.0408	quarterly meeting catering
	K & M Foreign & Domestic Auto Repair	2195 Briarcliff Rd 404.633.1677	10% off all products and services
	Nicola's Restaurant	1602 Lavista Rd 404.325.2524	10% off bill
	Sunny's Cleaners	2280 Cheshire Bridge Road 404.248.1957	10% off dry cleaning

Friends Program – SHOW YOUR CARD

One of the benefits of membership in the LaVista Park Civic Association are the incentives offered by the Friends of Lavista Park. These 12 local businesses have made contributions to our civic association to be good neighbors who support our mission as well as to incentivize you, our members, to patronize their business. While many of you patronize them, I know some of you don't request the discount offered, feeling that you're helping the business. Unfortunately, this approach makes it more difficult to get them to sponsor us on a recurring basis. They actually judge how effective our Friends program is in generating business by pulling data from their cash registers to see how many discounts were requested. If you don't request the discount at check out, they don't recognize you as a member of LaVista Park! So please, show your LVPCA card when patronizing a Friend. If you can't find your card, send an email to registrar@lavistapark.org and we will send you another one.

Larry Hoskins
president@lavistapark.org



Got Potholes?

If you have potholes on your street in LaVista Park, let us know at LVPCA. We will provide Dekalb County with a list to get fixed. Just send an email to president@lavistapark.org with the street address or intersection (such as Citadel and Wild Creek) by January 31st.

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Newsletter Published Quarterly
 Editor: John Cassanos
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