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MLPA News | October 12, 2017

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Halloween brings lots of activities-see the Events listing for a complete schedule. Be sure to stock your pantry with tricks and watch out for goblins (along with princesses, superheroes, clowns, etc.) throughout the neighborhood.

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MLPA Security Town Hall Draws Scores of Neighbors

MLPA Security and Neighborhood Watch Committees organized a meeting Tuesday, September 26 at Morningside Presbyterian with neighbors, the Atlanta Police Department (APD) and Morningside Security Patrol (MSP) to address safety concerns. The MLPA has launched a campaign, Stand Up Morningside, to recruit new members to help fund security improvements in the neighborhood. Ben Nemo, MLPA Security Committee member, pointed out that only about 20% of our neighbors are funding the security patrol, but we all benefit from their presence. He urged those that have not signed up to do so, and several attendees did.

The Atlanta Police Foundation related the success that is already being seen from Operation Shield, an effort to place cameras and license plate readers (LPRs) throughout the city. The cameras and LPRs are connected via the APD's Video Integration Center. Today, when a 911 call comes in, the cameras closest to the incident are identified and tapes are reviewed for clues. While they emphasized that the cameras are only being used to look for criminals, they have proven quite valuable in apprehending them. Since each camera is identified by a blue light, they also serve a deterrent function.

APD decides the camera locations and the Foundation is in the process of finishing up the deployment of the first 100 in the program. Morningside has been promised cameras and our board leadership is working with the Foundation to ensure that they are in place quickly.

David Hecht, MLPA Security Committee member, spoke about the installation of an additional camera network on our properties. The Stand Up Morningside campaign is aiming to raise funds to install and monitor a network of 10 LPR, wireless, solar powered cameras at a cost of \$10,000. Ric Vasquez, MSP leader and APD officer, stated that the deployment of this network would be a huge benefit for the neighborhood.

Vasquez talked about the recent uptick in car break-ins and urged everyone to keep their cars clean. As he stated, "Vehicle larcenies are the hardest crimes to combat. Often, by the time the crime is detected, the criminals are long gone."

Major Shaw, APD Zone 2 Commander, agreed with Vasquez and called cameras crucial to helping fight the spike in vehicle related crime the zone is experiencing. Shaw assured us that Morningside is not seeing the level that other parts of the Zone (like Lenox Square) are experiencing, but realizes that is small consolation for the auto owner who wakes to find their window broken. He reiterated that the best defense is keeping our cars cleaned out-as he emphasized, the criminals keep coming back if they are finding "good stuff"-guns, cash, computers and other items of value. He warned the neighborhood to beware of a new hazard at self-serve gas stations, urging us to remove our keys and lock our cars while filling up. He told us about a Grady doctor who landed in the hospital due to injuries sustained when she tried to stop 3-4 thieves that jumped into her car and took off while she was pumping gas.

Both Shaw and Vasquez remarked on the support the neighborhood lends to police, by coming to meet with them at forums like Tuesday's and learning more about ways to deter crime in our area. To learn more about the

Clean Car Campaign, see the article below.

NOTE: As this newsletter was being written, a troubling incident occurred on Rock Springs near Monroe-very close to our neighborhood. During the evening two people who were changing a flat were confronted at gunpoint by a group of 4 men driving a black SUV. Apparently, the same group had a busy evening, victimizing others on Moreland and Ralph David Abernathy before they hit Rock Springs.

Be aware of your surroundings and stay safe-if you see something, don't hesitate to call 911. You might just prevent an incident.



Half-Priced Wine

Stop by Tuesday and Wednesday for half-priced bottles from our Italian wine selection with the purchase of any artisan pizza.

Tuesday – Half priced bottles of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay Wednesday – Half priced bottles of Montepulciano and Pinot Grigio



Clean Car Campaign Checklist

We are again publishing this list to remind everyone that our biggest crime problem is car break-ins. The best way to combat this crime is to make our neighborhood less attractive-if the thieves are not getting rewarded with easily sold goods, they will move on to another more lucrative spot.

Remember to protect yourself and your belongings-place them in the trunk before you arrive!

- · Lock all windows and doors
- · Remove GPS and mounts
- · Remove cell phone
- · Remove laptop/tablet computers
- Remove all cords and power sources for electronic devices
- Remove book bags, brief cases, shopping bags, and purses
- Do not leave money, whether bills or coins, in view
- Do not leave firearms in your vehicle-guns are the number one target for thieves
- · Ask your visitors to follow these rules

If you find that your car or property has been victimized, CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY! If you'd like to get involved or learn more, contact neighborhoodwatch@mlpa.com.

Vote for the District 6 Candidate with

- Experience
- Knowledge
- Focus





City Council Candidates Address Neighbors at Rock Spring Presbyterian Church





Thanks to our neighbors in Piedmont Heights and Virginia Highland for co-hosting a chance for all of us to hear firsthand from the candidates vying to replace Alex Wan as our next District 6 City Council Representative. Almost 200 people attended. The candidates, Tracey Austin, Jennifer Ide, and Kirk Rich answered a wide array of excellent questions, submitted in advance from residents of District 6.

The 90 minutes allotted for the forum meant that the list of questions had to be culled, but veteran political reporter Tom Baxter, our moderator, did a fabulous job making sure the candidates touched on the big issues facing the City over the next few years. It began with an opportunity for them to introduce themselves and relate their qualifications. Baxter steered the candidates through a series of questions focusing on how their campaigns were financed, their stand on rezoning single family properties for denser development, traffic/bike/pedestrian safety, the tree canopy and efforts to protect it, affordable housing, transit, and the annexation of

Emory/CDC/Childrens' Healthcare, along with several others.

Unfortunately, we did not have a videographer for the session, but there are a number of neighborhood parties being held for the candidates where you can meet them and ask questions. Make time to do that and then remember to vote on November 7. See the events listing below for some Mayor's Forums coming up in the area.







MLPA Yard Sale, Sunday, Oct. 22 at Anshi S'fard, 1324 N Highland

Fall is the perfect time to purge your closets, cleaning out the outgrown clothes, toys, household items/furniture. While you're at it, why not make a little extra cash at the MLPA Yard Sale. Vendors can <u>sign up for a table</u> at mlpa.org-scroll down to the item on the MLPA Yard Sale.

Congregation Anshi S'fard has graciously offered to host this event in their front yard, right on the corner of N. Highland and Morningside. The sale will occur from 1-4 PM with vendors setting up beginning at noon. The event is free for MLPA residents, but you must reserve a spot to participate.

Note that vendors will be responsible for pricing their items and collecting payments-please come prepared with plenty of change. The local scout troops will be on hand to sell refreshments, so stop by and look through the treasures your neighbors have to offer.

Mark your calendars now and get to work going through all the extra 'stuff' that's taken over your home. Arts, antiques, and gift items will also be on sale. If you'd like to help out with the effort, contact events@mlpa.org to volunteer.



MLPA Traffic News

In Alex Wan's latest update on City Council actions, he reviewed the status of Renew Atlanta's plans for the Monroe Corridor. In essence, the proposed changes to Monroe Drive from Piedmont Road to North Avenue have been put on hold pending additional data collection, analysis, and public comment. The traffic crisis our neighborhood experienced during the I-85 collapse laid bare the potential unintended consequences of the original Renew Atlanta design, and the active debate in neighborhood forums brought to light several additional concerns and ideas that MLPA believed should be considered. Accordingly, MLPA President Sally Bayless and Vice President Charlie Nalbone requested meetings with both Wan and Renew Atlanta to present the neighborhood's suggestions.

Meetings were held with City representatives directly following the completion of repairs to I-85. MLPA reviewed the issues of congestion, excessive speed, and truck traffic on small, vulnerable residential streets in Morningside and Lenox Park as a result of widespread use of apps such as WAZE, which presented drivers with alternatives to the posted detour routes during the period of the collapse and which coincidentally offered a preview of what could be anticipated if the original Renew Atlanta changes to Monroe Drive result in the level of additional drive time that the analysis predicted. In particular, discussion centered upon Renew Atlanta's focus on modifications to individual streets without taking the broader traffic patterns into account. Neighborhood concerns were expressed regarding average daily traffic load on Monroe in light of lane reductions on Juniper and Piedmont as well as continuing increased density development in Inman Park, Old Fourth Ward, Edgewood, and other neighborhoods spawning pass-through east/west traffic on Monroe. Crucially, the neighborhood's increasing frustration with safety issues was emphasized, with the need for improvements to the Piedmont/Monroe intersection and pedestrian crossings vying with the importance of protecting the residential streets from the dangers of heavy redirected traffic seeking faster pass-through options to congested arterial streets.

MLPA successfully petitioned for further data collection on the effect of the lane reductions on Tenth Street and Ponce de Leon Avenue so those results can better inform decisions on Monroe. In addition, MLPA requested and received support for data collection and analysis of traffic patterns on specified neighborhood streets and City consideration of means by which to reduce Monroe's average daily traffic (ADT) during peak hours.

MLPA asked that these studies not postpone the installation of pedestrian safety improvements at intersections along Monroe that have been consistent areas of concern for residents. As Alex wrote in his update, these are in process of being installed.

MLPA will make the results of this additional research available as it is completed, and will continue to represent the viewpoint of our neighborhood as plans progress. Thanks to all who took the time to add their voices to this

process, and special thanks to Sally and Charlie for ensuring that those voices are heard. If you would like to join the MLPA Traffic Committee, please email traffic@mlpa.org.

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MLPA Concerts in the Park-the Place to Be This Fall

Friday, September 8, about 300 families joined their friends and neighbors in Sidney Marcus Park for a perfect evening at the MLPA Concert in the Park. Carter Rude and Friends Band was joined by special guests, Francisco Vidal, John Moye, and Lawton Feldman. Their tunes warmed up the crowd on the cool evening, getting the kids up and dancing.







A lot of families packed coolers, serving everything from elaborate picnics to take out pizza. Others took advantage of Cuban fare or hot dogs from Buena Gente and Doggy Dogg food trucks. Adding to the festivities were King of Pops and Fabulous Faces.

Your membership dues and the support of our sponsors make these concerts possible. We thank our Presenting Sponsor, Donna Boynton & Joy Myrick, Harry Norman Realtors, and Supporting Sponsors, Keisha Lance Bottoms for Mayor, Silver Smiles, Jennifer Ide for Atlanta, and Kirk Rich for Atlanta. Their contributions keep these events free for our neighborhood. If you are not a member, go to mlpa.org and click Join. Thanks to all those who stopped by the Stand Up Morningside table to lend their support!

Mark your calendars and make plans now to attend the final concert of 2017 on Friday, October 20, at 6 PM. You won't want to miss the fun!



Friends of Sidney Marcus Park is Launched

Speaking of Sidney Marcus Park, did you know that there is a new volunteer organization in the neighborhood that is focused on the park's wellbeing, usefulness, and beauty? Friends of Sidney Marcus Park (FOSMP) is that group and they need you!

First, let us tell you a little about Sidney Marcus Park. Located at 786 Cumberland Road, connecting Sherwood and Cumberland Roads, Sidney Marcus Park is one of our largest parks. It features a playground area with equipment, shaded areas for picnicking or play, and a boardwalk that runs the width of the park. It occupies property that would have been part of the I-485 road project and is named after the state representative (and MLPA Director) who helped fight the freeway and save our neighborhood.

The park was originally established around a play area for neighborhood kids in the early 1980s. About 15 years ago, it was updated to its current configuration through the great work of the neighborhood. As the bricks and signage attest, the park we now enjoy was the result of key neighborhood, corporate, MLPA, and organizational contributions. One theme that continues to hold true is the need for strong park support and care.

Sidney Marcus Park is a tremendous focal point for Morningside Lenox Park. It hosts the annual MLPA Celebration of Summer and the MLPA Concerts in the Park from Spring-Fall. Sadly, the extreme seasons we have had over the past several years, especially this one, have combined with the park's heavy use to expose

some fundamental drainage and erosion issues that have impacted the park. It is time to channel the energy (and money) in the community to renovate the park and make it attractive and useful for all to enjoy. At the same time, we hope to make changes that will not only improve the infrastructure, but will enhance your experience at the park.

Friends of Sidney Marcus Park is forming and we welcome your participation. Our first efforts are to solicit input from the community on what we want our park to be; our second is to raise money to address severe erosion and drainage issues at the park. Send us your ideas to: parks@mlpa.org

Join us on Saturday, November 18, 8:30-12:30 at the park for a workday. We will have jobs for everyone and will be on hand to hear neighbors' ideas about how the park might be improved. See events below for details.

Send your much needed tax deductible donation to the Sidney Marcus Fund at Park Pride: https://goo.gl/ZvfiPD (and select FRIENDS OF SIDNEY MARCUS PARK)



Fulton County Tax Bills Delayed-Expect Them in October

According to an article in the Atlanta Journal Constitution, the Fulton County Commission, which earlier this year voted to freeze property tax assessments, has also voted on a slightly reduced tax rate for the county's general fund of 10.38 mills. This clears the way for the Tax Commissioner to issue bills that homeowners can expect beginning in October, with taxes due by some time in December.

While you may see a slight reduction in the taxes going to the general fund (projected to be about \$5 for a \$250,000 assessed home), the rates are yet to be added for the City and APS.



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School News by Matt Westmoreland

Now that we've kicked off a new school year, I am writing to provide updates from the Grady Cluster and APS:

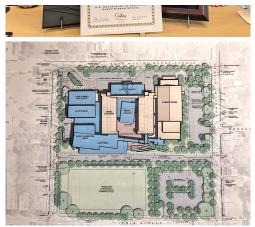


1. In late September, the State announced that the APS graduation rate was now 77%, a 6%-point increase from last year and an 18%-point increase over the last three years.

I'm also pleased to report we have seen rising SAT, ACT and AP scores in each of the last four years- all while more APS students are taking those exams.



2. Representatives from the U.S. Department of Education came to Morningside Elementary on September 20 to recognize MES as the only school in the nation to receive both a National Blue Ribbon (for academic achievement) and a National Green Ribbon (recognizing environmental, wellness, and sustainability efforts) in the same year.



3. Design work continues on the Grady Cluster's new \$52 million middle school, which will break ground at the Howard Building in July 2018 and open in July 2020. The project is one of four major capital projects happening in the Cluster over the next five years, including a \$33 million renovation and addition at Grady High, a \$20 million renovation of Morningside Elementary, and an \$8m million athletics complex for the Cluster at the Walden site.

If you have ideas and energy to share we would love to have you join the friends group or the MLPA Parks Committee to support in our efforts. Please email us at: education@mlpa.org.

Wan Succeeds in Having Watershed Convenience Fee Waived

As reported in his October newsletter (see below), Alex Wan has been working with the Department of Watershed Management to have the convenience fee for paying your water/sewage bill online rescinded. His efforts have borne fruit and the fee is no longer going to be charged. Hooray!

MLPA Garden Club Holds First Meeting

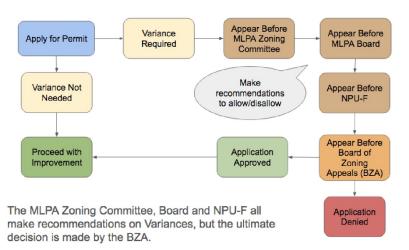
The first formal meeting of the MLPA Garden Club was held Thursday, Oct. 5 at 7:00 PM. We were joined by guests, Julia Payne, MLPA Parks Chair, and John Pappas, Friends of Sidney Marcus Park. They related the efforts that MLPA Parks and Friends committees are undertaking to revitalize the parks in Morningside Lenox Park

There is a plan to redo the playground and surroundings at Noble Park. That Friends group has presented plans that were accepted by the MLPA board. The friends group for Sidney Marcus Park is organizing and soliciting input from neighbors and users to develop the vision for the park. As the article above relates, Sidney Marcus is one of our largest parks and is certainly the most used, serving as the venue for both the MLPA's Celebration of Summer and Concerts in the Park.

After hearing plans, members asked questions and agreed to help out with the volunteer day planned for Saturday, November 18, 8:30-12:30. Members also agreed to support the park financially through the Park Pride donation site. A raffle for a set of perennials wrapped up the evening.

The MLPA Garden Club welcomes new members--our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 2 at 7 PM. If you would like to join us, contact Marti Breen, communications@mlpa.org.

Zoning Committee Report



No variance cases were brought before the community before the deadline so the committee did not meet in October. This was also the case in September-with all the new construction in the neighborhood, you may be surprised by this turn of events.

Apparently, developers doing scrape-offs in the neighborhood are opting to build within the set-backs in order to avoid having to come before the Zoning Committee, Board, and NPU-F to obtain variances. We have posted some additional information on zoning in our neighborhood on the Zoning page-see the link below. If you still have questions, email zoning@mlpa.org.

The next Zoning Committee Meeting will be held at Morningside Presbyterian Church at **7:00 PM on Tuesday, November 7**. The cases to be covered will be posted at www.mlpa.org/zoning/. Any neighbors interested in the outcome should come to these meetings. New committee members are always welcome, simply come to three meetings to qualify to vote.

Check the bottom of the mlpa.org homepage for listings of the variances that will be discussed. All our meetings are open. Contact zoning@mlpa.org.with questions.

News from Alex Wan's Office







Click here for Alex Wan's October District 6 Newsletter.

In the News Highlights:

Important Voter Information Emory/CDC/Childrens' Healthcare Annexation Updates Atlanta City Design Plan Released The Importance of Trees Watershed Management Feedback Halloween Safety Tips

For more information about Councilmember Alex Wan and District 6, Neighborhoods, or for additional city resources <u>click here</u>.

Calendar of Events

Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM, CHARM Recycling, 1110 Hill Street, SE.

Friday - Sunday, October 13-15, Piedmont Park, Atlanta Pride Festival.

Saturday, October 14, 10:00 - 3:00 PM, Keep Atlanta Beautiful Recycling, at NEW LOCATION, Coan Middle School, 1550 Hosea Williams Dr.

Monday, October 16, Early Voting begins for the Atlanta City races. Vote for Mayor, City Council President, City Council District 6 and At-Large Members, Board of Education, and Municipal Court Judges. Fulton County early voting locations, dates, and times are here. The link for DeKalb County is here.

Monday, October 16, 7:00 PM, NPU-F Meeting, Hillside Facility, 1301 Monroe Dr. NE. All neighbors welcome and able to vote.

<u>Friday, October 20, 6:00 PM, MLPA Concert in the Park</u>'s Final 2017 Concert at Sidney Marcus Park. Come for the musical stylings of Carter Rude & Friends Band, food from Willy's and other food trucks, and Movie Night, featuring Disney's *BFG*.

Firday, October 20, 6:00-8:00 PM, John Howell Park, Inman Middle School BBQ& Blues Bash. See Inman Middle School website for details and to volunteer.

Saturday, October 21, 4:00-6:00 PM, Little Five Points Halloween Festival & Parade.

<u>Sunday, October 22. MLPA Yard Sale,</u> 1:00-4:00 PM, Anshi S'Fard. Register to participate in this neighborhood wide garage sale-see the article above for details. Come get a jump start on your holiday shopping!

Sunday, October 22, 3:00-5:00 PM VHMPA Halloween House Decorating Trolley Tour at Haygood UMC parking lot. Email vhmpasocial@gmail.com for details.

Tuesday, October 24, 6:00-8:00 PM, <u>The Importance of Trees: A Conversation on Canopies</u>, Atlanta City Studio, 2311 Cascade Rd., SW

Tuesday, October 24, 5:00-7:30 PM, Food Trucks at Morningside Presbyterian Church. Come for great food in the parking lot at 1411 North Morningside.

Thursday, October 26, 7:00 PM, Mayoral Candidate Forum, Inman Middle School, 774 Virginia Ave. presented by the Alliance of Intown Neighborhoods (AIN, http://www.allianceatlanta.org). The five leading candidates for the office of Mayor of Atlanta, according to the most recent poll, will face off. The doors will open at 6:30 PM. Attendance is free, and all are invited. On site and street parking are available. Bring your questions!

Saturday, October 28, 11:00 AM-4:00 PM, Morningside Elementary School Halloween Carnival. Bring your monsters to the annual Monster Bash Halloween Carnival. Enjoy games, rides, food, bake sale, haunted house

and more! Consider a family sponsorship or volunteering an hour of your time. For volunteer sign up, advance ticket purchase and other information, visit the Halloween Carnival webpage. Questions - Elaine Gaeckler or Michelle Morris

Tuesday, October 31, 3:30-5:30, Trick or Treating at Ansley Mall. The merchants will be open and have treats for costumed kids so stop by before you head to your street.

Wednesday, November 1, Noon-1:30 PM, CINS Grady Cluster Principal's Forum. This annual event was cancelled by Hurricane Irma, but CINS has rescheduled it now. Register to attend and for more information.

Saturday, November 4, 8-Noon, American Lung Association LUNG FORCE 5K Run/Walk to raise money for the American Lung Association. The route begins and ends at John Howell Park in Virginia Highland winding through Morningside. Slow down and watch out for runners.

Tuesday, November 7, 7:00 PM, MLPA Zoning Committee, Morningside Presbyterian Church. Visit http://www.mlpa.org/zoning/ for variances that will be discussed. All neighbors are welcome.

Tuesday, November 7, 7:00 AM-7:00 PM, Election Day. Check the Georgia Secretary of State My Voter site for your polling location.

Monday, November 13, 7:00 PM, MLPA Annual Meeting, Morningside Presbyterian Church, 1401 North Morningside Dr. All neighbors are welcome. See article above for details. Go to www.mlpa.org/mlpamemberships/ to join so you can vote.

Saturday, November 18, 8:30 AM-12:30 PM, Help Sidney Marcus Park - Volunteer Day. We are going to work to clean up, straighten up, and spruce up Sidney Marcus Park. Bring your work shoes, gloves, rake, shovel, wheel barrow and any other of your favorite outdoor tools. And most of all, your thoughts on how to make our park better. Friends of Sidney Marcus Park will be there and soliciting input on our efforts to improve the park for you. Contact parks@mlpa.org for more information.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Tuesday, December 5, 7:00 AM-7:00 PM, Election Run Off Day. With all the candidates for the various offices, there are likely to be several run-off races. Absentee balloting will be available with a deadline of Dec. 1 for mailing these ballots.

This Is YOUR Newsletter

Please contact communications@mlpa.org with comments on our newsletter. We welcome your input and will consider all suggestions.

Neighborhood Meeting Schedule:

MLPA Zoning Meetings - 1st Tuesday of every month, 7:00 pm, Morningside Presbyterian Church MLPA Board Meetings - 2nd Monday of every month, 7:00 pm, Morningside Presbyterian Church NPU-F Meetings - 3rd Monday of every month, 7:00 pm, Hillside Facility, 1301 Monroe Drive

All neighborhood meetings are open to the public and your involvement is always welcome.

Quick Links:

MLPA - Morningside Lenox Park Association website NPU-F - Neighborhood Planning Unit F website APD - Atlanta Police website-- we are in Zone 2 PEDS - A guick link to report pedestrian hazards to city City of Atlanta - City's website Atlanta District 6 - Our City Council District website

Senate District 36 - Nan Orrock, Georgia State Senator
House District 57 - Pat Gardner, Georgia State Representative
Atlanta Public Schools, Morningside Elementary School, Inman Middle School, Grady High School

VHMPA - Virginia Highland Morningside Parent Association

NextDoor - Neighborhood list serve- not affiliated with MLPA

Morningside Lenox Park Association



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