



MORNINGSIDE LENOX PARK

ASSOCIATION

As you set out to enjoy the summer holidays, please take a moment to consider all this area means to you and [join us or renew](#) and volunteer to help maintain our wonderful neighborhood.

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Note from MLPA President, Ben Nemo

We held our July board meeting on a hot night for a hot topic – parks. The board met with our active friends' groups for the park as well as representatives from the city Parks department, Georgia Power and Park Pride to make sure we are supporting them as much as possible. Given our focus on advancing our recreational parks I wanted to highlight three park updates:

- 1) **Noble Park.** Not resting on their recent Urban Design Commission Award of Excellence, the friends group is about to kick off Phase 3 of development.
- 2) **Sidney Marcus.** Lots to celebrate as the group addresses drainage issues and improved seating for the high level of usage for parties and groups – and lots to look forward to as the group embarks on its capital campaign to add more sustainable solutions that expand the appeal of the park to younger and older age groups.
- 3) **Sunken Garden.** Only three months after the formation of a new friends' group, there are plans to quickly improve drainage with a new sock drain and retaining wall. In addition their initial work has led to Georgia Power finalizing plans for new upgraded lighting (potentially by end of year and funded by CoA) as well as focus to fix curbs. Once they get some initial fixes done the goal will be to turn to more of a long-term vision to restore this park to its full potential (in fact if you are interested in voicing your opinion for the park please take this [survey](#) to guide priorities). Did you know Celebration of Summer used to be held here when this park was the center meeting place of the neighborhood?

Naturally all of this work will take elbow grease and fundraising – more to come on how you can help, but let's just say we'll take anything from scouts groups for projects to donations for paver programs to restaurants weeks and more. And if anyone knows someone who is looking to make a

lasting impact on the neighborhood (or just wants to see their name on a park) by putting a personal foundation or significant donation to work – you know who to call. In the meantime I want to thank all of the group participants and other volunteers that put in so much work to make sure these parks can thrive.

In the meantime, we want to encourage neighbors to call 311 whenever they see an opportunity for a park fix – no need to wait for a vision plan to fix that crumbling curb along Sunken Garden’s boundary – get it on the radar for us by calling. It actually works.

As always please email me at president@mlpa.org if you ever have feedback or questions. This time next newsletter the new school year will be underway – enjoy these last weeks of summer!
Ben



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Friends of Sidney Marcus Capital Campaign

Morningside Lenox Park is fortunate to have tremendous assets in the neighborhood, our parks and our nature preserves. Located at 786 Cumberland Road, connecting Sherwood and Cumberland Roads, Sidney Marcus Park is one of the largest parks in the community and a focal point for Morningside Lenox Park. It hosts the annual MLPA Celebration of Summer and the MLPA Concerts in the Park from Spring-Fall, along with countless birthday parties and family gatherings.

What is both the park's best strength and its own worst enemy, the tree canopy has combined with the steep grades in the park to expose fundamental drainage and erosion issues at the park. What we see today at the park is a large amount of unusable space due to the rough areas of no ground cover, exposed roots and old construction debris. The drainage has created muddy, dangerous sidewalks, walkways in the park and particularly the playscape.

The park was originally established around a play area for neighborhood kids in the early 1980s in a historic effort by the in-town neighborhoods to stop the building of Interstate 485 through Virginia Highland and Morningside. Like John Howell Park, the community, led by Sidney Marcus, stopped the destruction of homes in the area, stopped the road project, and reclaimed the land for community parks.

In 2005, the park was updated to its current configuration through the great work of the neighborhood and a volunteer team of residents. As the bricks and signage at the park attest, the park we now enjoy was the result of key neighborhood, corporate, MLPA and Atlanta City Parks Department contributions and efforts. One theme that continues to hold true is the need for strong park support and care.

The neighborhood created a sustaining volunteer conservancy called Friends of Sidney Marcus (FoSMP), launched in May 2017. FoSMP has a dual focus, addressing the park's serious drainage and erosion issues, and improving the park with new features. It has worked closely with the Department of Parks and Recreation, Park Pride, Councilwoman Ide and SITE Solutions to develop a new vision for the park - one that is stable and sustainable. Through extensive requirements gathering, a Vision Plan for the park has been approved by the city, MLPA and NPU-F. The Vision is posted on their Facebook page - *Friends of Sidney Marcus Park*.

FoSMP has launched a campaign to turn the Sidney Marcus Park Vision Plan into reality in 2020. Great progress as already been made with an \$18,000 grant from MLPA and a \$7,000 Community Building Grant from Park Pride, and over \$10,000 raised through individual donors. But the cost estimates for the plan and repairs are over \$500,000.

FoSMP has several fundraising activities planned this year, but the cornerstone of the park's campaign is a new commemorative brick sale, enhancing the existing tribute area. Details, along with other tribute opportunities, are described in the *FoSMP Donation Form*. It can be obtained by sending an email to friendsofsmp@gmail.com.

And look for a month of dining for Sidney Marcus Park in September! Morningside restaurants are teaming with Friends of Sidney Marcus Park to make it easy and convenient to give to the park. To learn more about this group and effort, you can join the FoSMP email list by again sending an email to friendsofsmp@gmail.com or contact John Pappas at 404-664-4048 and johnleopappas@gmail.com.



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Security Report

Are we making progress to reduce car break-ins in Morningside?

During June 2019, there were 10 car break-ins in Morningside. Progress maybe? ...Keep your fingers crossed. Four occurred on interior neighborhood streets, three occurred in Morningside Village, and 3 occurred on Piedmont. **The perps keep coming here because they can easily steal items that can be quickly sold for cash. The APD and the MLPA cannot stress enough... keep items in your car out of sight.**

Reported Car Break-ins in Morningside/Lenox Park 2018-2019 by Month*

Month	2018	2019
January	11	19
February	17	10
March	16	12
April	13	26
May	17	19
June	23	10

Reported Crimes in Morningside/Lenox Park

Crime data come directly from the Atlanta Police Department open data portal [website](#). This website is updated at least weekly, usually on Thursday. These data were generated on July 18 and include incidents that occurred during July 1-15. Details like what was taken from a vehicle, house, or business are not available. These data represent a snapshot in time from a database that is always being updated.

Nextdoor and emails are one way to inform your neighbors about crime in our community...**BUT YOU MUST CALL 911** or the police will not know about the crime. For a variety of reasons, folks are reluctant to call 911. Don't hesitate. **The APD strongly encourages you to call 911 when you see something suspicious.**

Reported Crimes in Morningside/Lenox Park Compared to Other Nearby Neighborhoods

July 1-15, 2019

	MLP	VAHI	Ansley
Larceny from Vehicle	6	5	0
Larceny non-Vehicle	2	0	0
Pedestrian Robbery	0	0	0
Commercial Robbery	0	0	0
Aggravated Assault	0	0	1

Residential Burglary	1	0	0
Non-Residential Burglary	2	0	0
Auto Theft	1	1	0

Reported larceny from vehicle: There were 6 car break-ins reported in Morningside during this time, 2 in Morningside Village, 1 on Amsterdam Walk, and the others on interior streets in the neighborhood.

Street	Block	Date
-N Highland	1200	July 7
-Merton	1700	July 8
-Wessyngton	1300	July 14

Reported larceny, non-vehicle: Two non-vehicle related larcenies were reported: 1 in the 1900 block of Cheshire Bridge and the other on Cumberland Road (900 block, July 5).

Reported residential burglary: One burglary was reported at a residence in the 1300 block of Beech Valley on July 1.

Reported non-residential burglary: Two burglaries at businesses were reported: 1 in Morningside Village and the other in the 2100 block of Piedmont.

Reported auto theft: One car was reported stolen in the 2000 block of Rockledge on July 9.

Clean Car Campaign in Morningside Village

Look for the new Clean Car Campaign stickers at businesses in Morningside Village. Clean Car Campaigns are supported by police departments across the country. Do your part to prevent car break-ins... move all articles in car out of sight.

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North Highland Corridor Survey Results

Thanks to the 349 residents of Morningside Lenox Park and Virginia-Highland that responded to the survey to help with visioning for North Highland through the two neighborhoods. As advertised, everyone that took the time to provide input was entered into a drawing for a dining gift card. Congratulations to Lori Peterson, the winner.

The survey found there is a profound sense of community in our neighborhoods, with more than 72% being very likely or extremely likely to recommend living or working in Morningside/Virginia-Highland to a friend. Only 6% were very unlikely or not at all likely to make that recommendation. The top reasons noted for choosing to live in the area are that it is a walkable and bikeable; there are lots of dining options; there are great parks and open spaces; and the area is family friendly and a great place to raise kids. Other reasons cited were the uniqueness, history, and safety of the area.

We were particularly interested in finding how our residents currently interact with the North Highland Corridor and their desires for improvements. Now most folks frequent the area for its dining options, both at dinner and lunch, with dinner having a higher response rate. Fewer tend to shop in its retail establishments and the use of professional services is very low with 74% claiming they never use such services along the corridor. When asked why they didn't use the corridor more often, the main reason mentioned was little variety in dining/retail options (30%). Other reasons that figure in are lack of parking and traffic.

When queried about the types of businesses they'd like to see in the future, restaurants (73%) was closely followed by grocers (68%). It appears that most residents stick pretty close to home for their dining/shopping with almost half claiming to shop in Morningside/Virginia-Highland once a week or more. Other areas frequented were Ansley Mall, the Beltline, and Midtown.

As far as vision goes, residents cited Safety, Schools, and the Business District as the most important issues facing the area. An open-ended question that asked about their vision for the neighborhood 5 years from now also pointed to the importance of transportation, the business district, and housing rose to the top. Transportation concerns include traffic and ways to mitigate its impact on our neighborhoods. There is a common desire to see the area improve in terms of walk-and bike-ability. Respondents wish to see fewer vacant storefronts and more variety in our shopping/dining districts. Housing concerns are focused around affordability and the influx of McMansions.

The North Highland Corridor Alliance again thanks all who took the time to respond. You can rest assured that your comments will help us as we work to improve the vital neighborhood artery.



Half-Priced Wine at Varuni Napoli

Stop by Tuesday and Wednesday for half-priced bottles of Montepulciano and Pinot Grigio with a purchase of any artisan pizza.



MLPA Social News

Morningside Lenox Park is blessed with a number of active groups that welcome new and old members hoping to make connections with like-minded individuals. No matter what your area of interest, there is probably a group where you will be welcomed.

If reading and discussing great books appeal to you, the **Morningside Book Club** could be a great fit for you. Unlike many book clubs, this one is co-ed and actually devotes ample time in each meeting to talk about the books that we've read. Recent club selections include Calypso by David Sedaris, Small Country by Gael Faye, and Delia Owens's, Where the Crawdads Sing. The club uses a Facebook group and Book Movement to organize our meetings. Contact Jill Cobb, jillacobb@gmail.com, to learn more.

Gardeners of all experience levels are invited to join the **MLPA Garden Club**. Our current membership ranges from complete novices to experienced Master Gardeners and we meet monthly to tour gardens, hear programs and plan events. The group has adopted two small gardens in the neighborhood that we plant, mulch, and weed to make Morningside more beautiful. If you would like to learn more, contact Marti Breen, mbreen@c3marketing.com.

Foodies can connect with the **Morningside Supper Club**. This adult only group meets monthly, either at a member's home or at a nearby restaurant to share a meal and get to know each other better. If you like to dine out and want to be included in this group, contact Sarah Chatel, sarah@chatelgroup.com. The most recent was a joyful outing was to [Wisteria](#) in Inman Park.



If you do not see anything that interests you, consider starting a group of your own. Or you can always meet neighbors by volunteering with the Morningside Lenox Park Association (MLPA). Write volunteer@mlpa.org with your interest in the subject line and we will be happy to help you spread the word and find like-minded neighbors.



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What to do in Case of a Tear-Down Next Door

1. Find out who the new property owner is and introduce yourself. Exchange contact information and find out what the plans are—you can do this by meeting them on site or you can use the city's new database, [Accela](#), to find out using the address. Note that the first time you use it you must create a signon and password.
2. Before work begins, familiarize yourself with the code especially as it applies to home/garage setbacks, lot coverage, tree ordinances, noise, construction hours, placement of port-a-lets and dumpsters, etc.
3. Before any work begins take photos to thoroughly document your house, the surrounding landscaping (especially driveways or other improvements). Make sure you have photos of both the interior and exterior including your foundation/basement. Also take photos of the next door property BEFORE it is demolished in case there are questions later about whether the new structure complies with the plans as filed with the city.
4. Find a copy of your survey, noting where the boundaries are and make sure they are clearly marked.
5. Shield your home from any vermin/pests that may be loosed upon the area when the demolition occurs.
6. Familiarize yourself with the building permit so you know what size/height structure to expect, what trees will be lost, etc.
7. Establish a relationship with the developer/builder and the project manager. Get their contact info, preferably their cell number. Find out what rules they have for their sub-contractors/suppliers, i.e., start and stop times, clean up. Come to an agreement about how your property will be kept free of dust/debris, reimbursement for using your water, and how any shared property lines will be impacted (fencing, landscaping, etc.)
8. If issues arise at any point, contact the builder/project manager as soon as they do—don't let things fester. If that fails, threaten to go to the city and only follow through with that if you can't resolve it with the builder—they may be cited with a violation or stop work order, but that will only

drag out the project.

9. Beware of potential drainage issues—as there may be run off from the property onto yours. Make sure you discuss how this will be mitigated before it occurs. Consider getting hazard insurance to cover potential damage to your car from roofing nails, debris, etc.

10. If the new home is being built for a homeowner, you may have a better experience, but many new homes in our area are built on spec. It's important to talk to the builder about their plans and let them know about your concerns.

11. Stay positive and remember the noise and bother will only last so long. Wine is a coping mechanism that comes highly recommended.

Zoning Committee Report

The next zoning meeting will be held at Morningside Presbyterian Church at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, August 6. 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.

News from Atlanta City Council District 6 Representative, Jennifer Ide

[Click](#) to view and sign up for the latest newsletter from our Atlanta City Council District 6 Representative, Jennifer Ide.

MLPA Events Listing

Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM, [CHARM Recycling](#), 1110 Hill Street, SE. Check the website before visiting for accepted items and schedule changes.

Saturdays, 8:00 - 11:30 AM, Morningside Farmers' Market, Morningside Village lot next to Nowak's. Now in its 23rd year, the market features totally organic produce grown by local farm families. Email manager@morningsidemarket.com to get on the email list and see which vendors are coming.

Every Fourth Saturday, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM, [Morningside Nature Preserve Volunteer Day](#)

Thursday, July 27, 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM, [Hillside Open House](#), [Hillside](#) 693 Courtenay Dr NE

Tuesday, August 6, 7:00 PM, MLPA Zoning Committee Meeting, Morningside Presbyterian Church 1411 North Morningside. See mlpa.org/zoning/ for the variances to be reviewed.

Monday, August 12, APS First Day of Class!

Monday, August 12, 7:00 PM, MLPA Board Meeting, Morningside Presbyterian Church

Monday, August 19, 7:00 PM, [NPU-F Meeting](#), Hillside Center, 1301 Monroe Dr. NE. All neighbors are invited and those 18+ have a vote.

Friday, August 23, 6:00 PM, Concerts in the Park, Sidney Marcus Park

This is your newsletter. Please send us your ideas for articles, interviews, and photos for inclusion. Send them to communications@mlpa.org.

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 quick 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