



MORNINGSIDE LENOX PARK

ASSOCIATION



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President's Note

If you're anything like me, you have enjoyed a little more normalcy this summer with time spent outdoors. Although we won't yet return to our MLPA schedule of in-person meetings and summer concerts, stay tuned on ways we still hope to engage the community as we stick together. Thanks to all of you I see on the streets and in our neighborhood restaurants that continue to mask up and protect us all.

1. **The party's over.** If you've read recent newsletters, you've seen our ask for input on party house situations related to Airbnb rentals that create nuisance for the neighborhood. We had collected a lot of feedback and apparently many neighborhoods were complaining of similar situations as Airbnb implemented a crackdown on parties by removing listings for over 50 homes in Atlanta that were hosting parties during rentals. Subsequently the company implemented a global

policy limiting any Airbnb occupancy to 16 people and outright banning parties and events. Please continue to [let us know](#) if you see any behavior to the contrary but this was a super example of your feedback making an enormous difference.

2. **APS FTW.** The delayed school year starts this Monday. Although you won't be seeing all the families walking to school this year, our students are heading into a much better virtual experience this fall thanks to thorough preparation from school officials and teachers. Based on initial previews I think my own homeschooling anxiety may actually subside based on the improved experience we are about to have – but in this new normal I am prepared for anything to change. Regardless, I am very appreciative of how school leadership and teachers have prepared for a much more engaging educational experience this fall.

3. **Light Up Morningside – the sequel!** The favorite fall Lantern Festival is going local this year – so you'll see below we are hoping to bring back the good vibes from our April event to Light Up Morningside with Lanterns in September. Please note the details and participate in this fun festival and the Morningside Art Contest!

We are continuing to meet as a board via Zoom on the second Monday of each month – if you are interested in participating please [reach out](#) for details. Thanks to the outreach from new prospective board members – we have had several people raise their hands with interest, and it is encouraging to see the response!

Good luck to all the parents out there next week – we can do this!

Ben



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Heroes of 2020

Morningside Art Contest

Kids – what is a Hero? In these challenging times, local businesses are jumping into the community spirit. The Morningside Art Contest allows K-12 children to use their imagination and art skills to create their rendition of what a Hero is this year. A mural of submitted artwork is already hanging between Pierce Chiropractic Center and Fit Learning on the East side of Morningside Village. In early September they will hold a socially distanced gathering in the parking lot to announce the winners. There will be cash prizes for the top three entries in each age group. Stop by one of those two businesses or the Morningside Business Association [Facebook page](#) for entry forms and more details. The deadline for submission is August 31. Here's to our Morningside kids' community spirit and talent!





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Light Up Morningside With Lanterns, September 21 - 26

Each year since 2010, intown residents have enjoyed the [Atlanta Beltline Lantern Parade](#). This event has attracted nearly 70,000 persons in recent years. Because of the pandemic, this year's event will be a [parade in place](#), and nearby neighborhoods are participating.

The MLPA is encouraging Morningside neighbors to participate in **Light Up Morningside with Lanterns** by decorating their porches and yards with [homemade lanterns](#) in September. For those who do not think they are particularly creative, lanterns can be purchased on numerous websites. We had great participation in Light Up Morningside to support front line workers in the spring. We view this as an extension of that event to honor again those workers who put their lives on the line every day.

September 21-26

Decorate the front of your home or porch with lanterns and lights. Take a photo and post on social media with #BeltLineParadeinPlace.

September 24, 25, 26

The Krewe of the Grateful Glutton (the creator and host of the Beltline Lantern Parade) will make unannounced pop-up appearances in BeltLine neighborhoods from 8 to 10 PM.

September 26, 7 - 9 PM

Morningside neighbors can walk their block to see lantern lights. Wearing masks and social distancing is important, of course.

Sooo... get your creative juices going and plan for lanterns on your porch or in your yard in September. Looking forward to significant participation. Post with #BeltLineParadeinPlace to share ideas or show off your work of art!



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.



What's Blooming Now - The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

On the second Saturday of the month, neighbors volunteer in Daniel Johnson and Herbert Taylor Parks to remove invasive species, while masked and socially distant. Fortunately, following the CDC guidelines is easy in these nature preserves.

This month about a half dozen of us continued to work on removing the Japanese chaff flower (*Achyranthes japonica*)—the bad referenced above and pictured below. This invasive, native of Southeast Asia, was first documented in Kentucky in the early 1980's and is spreading throughout our shady bottomlands. The Friends of Herbert Taylor Park and Daniel Johnson Park have been removing it to control its spread over the past couple of years.



Where we have managed to eradicate most of the chaff flower, native species like jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*) have made a comeback as this photo shows. While not as prolific as earlier in the season, you will still see some jewelweed blooms in the parks if you look for them. Another native that in flower now is jumpseed (*Polygonum virginianum*). It grows in the shade and is seen along Daniel Johnson's [Bottomlands Trail](#).



Other blooms spotted on our workday include floating primrose-willow (*Ludwigia peploides*) and Rose of Sharon (*Hibiscus syriacus*). Unfortunately, we also saw a lot of Poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), the Ugly of the title. It has no blooms but is pervasive in the park providing another reason to stay on the trails and keep your pets on leash—poison ivy toxins are spread by the plants' oils that can cling to clothes, shoes, and animals.

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Parks

Food Drive at Sidney Marcus Park

Friends of Sidney Marcus Park and Intown Collaborative Ministries will hold a food drive Friday, August 21 from 10 to noon and Saturday, August 22 from 8 to 10. and Saturday to collect items and distribute to those in need. There will be a table along Cumberland Rd. See what's needed at intowncm.org. Bring some food for the needy and chat with Friends of Sidney Marcus Park about plans for the park.



Planning for Trees Atlanta's fall tree planting on Beech Valley, Pasadena, Homestead, and connected streets is proceeding nicely. If you encounter or hear from Jacob Kennedy from [Trees Atlanta](#), please thank him for all the hard work he has put into sustaining our tree cover. Trees have been selected and communications are going out to residents on those streets. Planting dates have not yet been set but will likely be in October. Trees are planted in the City Right of Way (between sidewalks and the road). All residents have the option to accept or decline a planting in the right of way in front of their homes. Trees Atlanta also has a separate program for planting trees on private property in front of residences if owners wish.

MLPA Parks and Preserves During Covid-19 - Recreational Park and Nature Preserve use is up substantially compared to this time last year and a much higher percentage of users, particularly in the Preserves, are first time users and/or drive-ins from outside the neighborhood. Please welcome our guests.

If you have any questions about park or preserve use during the lockdown, please visit the [City of Atlanta Parks Department](#) for the most up-to-date information. As has been the case for the past few months all parks and preserves are open for use subject to social distancing and no groups greater than ten. **All playground equipment is still off limits.**

Please help the city during this crisis by observing the rules, not removing the off-limits tape on playground equipment and not removing the signs with the rules.

Many people who are using the parks, and especially the preserves for the first time may not be familiar with normal park etiquette and rules. We have had particular problems with dogs off-leash. Please politely remind owners that all dogs must be on leash in order for all residents to be able to safely use the preserves and protect habitat and wildlife. Call 911 whenever you encounter aggressive or illegal behavior.

Urban Campers - We are seeing a resurgence of urban campers in public spaces and particularly green spaces. Lavista Parks, Lindbergh/Morosgo, and Lindridge-Martin Manor are especially affected and we are aware of the increased presence in Morningside Nature Preserve. We are working with these other neighborhoods and with the appropriate agencies in the City to address and mitigate the problem.

Tennis Courts at Lenox-Wildwood Park - The tennis courts are completed. The contractor still has to complete the parking area. Jennifer Ide's office is making inquiries as to when the parking area will be completed, how many parking spaces there will be, and how many of those will be reserved for disabled drivers.

If you are interested in being involved in Morningside Parks and Preserves, protecting the environment or volunteering for some other greenspace initiative in the neighborhood, please email parks@mlpa.org.



Back-to-School Supplies Needed for Conant School at Hillside

As APS students plan to go back to school virtually for the first 9 weeks, there is one school in the Morningside neighborhood where children will be back in their classrooms next month.

The Hillside Conant School is a specialized school for children and adolescents struggling with mental health challenges. Located on the campus of [Hillside](#), one of the premier mental health facilities in Georgia for children and young adults, Conant provides an environment for Hillside residents to remediate their skill gaps and encourages students to move forward with their education. Children attending Conant are also enrolled in the Atlanta Public School system for the duration of their treatment. The Conant School is fully accredited and each child receives credits for the coursework they complete during their stay.

This year they are seeing the impact COVID-19 is having on children's mental health as well as their education. New guidelines discourage sharing of school supplies, so there's an increased need for classroom basics for each student. Please consider

supporting Hillside and Conant by purchasing Back-to-School supplies for these students via their [Amazon Wish List link](#). We've had a great turnout of support already, but there are still supplies needed. Follow the link to see the list. Of course, they are always appreciative of your financial or volunteer support as well. [Reach out](#) to learn more.



Back-to-School and Mental Health

Feeling stressed about back-to-school? Our neighbors at Hillside, Inc. and Heads Up for Harry are hosting a free virtual event to discuss going back-to-school in the current environment. Dr. Adam Silberman, board-certified child & adolescent psychiatrist, and Dr. Christina Kennedy, veteran APS educator and Morningside resident, will discuss best practices for virtual learning, developing healthy coping skills for stress, and how to start conversations about mental health. Join in on August 27th from 8-9pm.

Learn about this free event and get your online tickets at the links below:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/292028098719750/>

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/back-to-school-mental-health-tickets-115231255788>

MLPA Treasurer Lynn Ayers

Lynn Ayers and her husband, John, have been residents of Morningside for ten years and lived in the Druid Hills, Midtown, and Morningside for thirty-eight years. Their company, J W Ayers Plumbing, Inc., which has been in business for thirty-four years, is also located in the Morningside area. She has served MLPA as a member of the zoning, events, membership, and parks committees. Lynn has also been a volunteer with the Alliance Theatre for over thirty years. They have four grown children and four grandchildren that, unfortunately, live on the west coast.



Security - Safety Concerns in Morningside

Zone 6 of the Atlanta Police Department asked the MLPA to poll the community to identify our primary public safety concerns at this time. We sent out 2 questions through the Security Patrol Report and posted the questions on [NextDoor](#). Within 48 hours, 148 persons responded.

Neighbors were asked “What are your top 3 public safety concerns in Zone 6 at this time?” The number of mentions for each category were:

Car break-ins: 114

Nighttime speeding or drag racing: 74

Mail/package theft: 58

Theft of equipment from yard workers and/or contractors: 23

Homelessness and potential drug/mental health issues: 50

Panhandling/aggressive stoplight salespeople: 18

Police response time: 38

The MLPA asked for additional feedback to provide to the Zone 6 command. Many comments focused on **supporting the officers** who work in our neighborhood. See a sampling of these comments below. Other comments emphasized a need for more patrols and increased visibility in the neighborhood.

Several neighbors expressed concerns about **city leadership** and the city's chronic problem with a "catch-and-release" system for managing criminals. To quote one neighbor,

"It is a well-known fact that criminals come specifically to the city of Atlanta to commit crimes, so to ask what specific concerns people have is to miss the bigger picture. One person says vandalism is their greatest concern, one person says auto break-ins, another says street racing... we need to address the underlying problem. We see our mayor and 'leaders' calling for the police NOT to respond to shoplifting, NOT to engage in police chases, NOT to respond in a timely manner for petty theft and crime, cut funding to the already underfunded and understaffed police department, etc. Policies are such that there is NO REPERCUSSION for criminal activity. We have a 'catch and release' criminal system in Atlanta and criminals flock here to exploit this stupidity. When someone is arrested for the 67th time for the same crime, we clearly have a broken system and a lack of leadership. Address that fact, not the consequences and secondary problems it brings."

Historically and at present, **car break-ins** are the biggest concern in the neighborhood. Perhaps, the LPRs placed around the neighborhood could be used to identify vehicles entering the community during early morning hours. It is easy to rule out residents. Arresting the ring leaders should be an APD priority.

Speeding at night as well as during the day is a major concern. Excessive speeding on neighborhood streets during the day and the drag racing and speeding at night contribute to a sense of lawlessness. Apparently, dirt bikes and ATVs are also being driven on the streets and sidewalks in the North Highland corridor. The APD needs to continue to identify the details for these events (where begin, when, etc.) and stop them in advance.

Mail and package theft was mentioned 58 times as a concern. Getting to know your neighbors and asking them to retrieve packages when you are not around is a neighborly thing to do and it keeps your packages safe. Preventive actions to take with mail and package deliveries are listed at <https://www.mlpa.org/security-tips/>.

Neighbors also called attention to the needs of **homeless persons** and their mental health (50 mentions). Several noted a need for greater social support (housing, assistance with rent and groceries, job training and placement, etc.).

Police response time was mentioned 37 times. Folks were careful to separate response time for minor issues such as fender benders, bike thefts, and car break-ins from real emergencies like accidents with injuries, prowlers, etc. A few persons expressed concern about response time for an emergency.

Other issues that were raised included:

- criminals scoping out houses in the early morning hours
- basic ordinance enforcement such as use of cell phones while driving, off-leash dogs, Airbnb rentals, urban campers, etc.
- crime involving guns

Cautions about interpreting these data: Please remember when you are looking at these data that this is a convenience sample of self-selected persons who chose to answer the questions posed. As such, these findings may not be representative of all Morningside residents.

Support for APD Officers

“I appreciate your efforts in these challenging times.”

“Thank you for your hard work!”

“I feel very safe in Morningside. Thank you for keeping us safe and for all you do.”

“We support BLM movement and appreciate the hard work of all police officers working on the frontlines during this pandemic!”

“Thank you for your service.”

“We’ve got your back! We appreciate all you do!”

“Y’all do a great job of keeping the neighborhood safe.”

“Be a presence; not everyone is in favor of defunding the police.”

“We appreciate your presence in our community. Thank you for all you are doing despite all of the obstacles that you are currently facing.”

“I want the City of Atlanta government to support APD officers as they do their jobs and protect citizens.”

“Thank you for all you do to create a community where I feel comfortable letting my kids play outside. Our family appreciates all you do.”

“Thank you for serving!”

“Thank you for all you do! We appreciate your dedication to serving our community and keeping us safe. It is unfortunate that you have to deal with all the negativity around law enforcement. We stand with you!”

“We appreciate you and don’t want police defunded!! We need criminals in our area to know that they WILL NOT be allowed to take advantage of the current climate.”

“Thank you for protecting us and creating a safe environment for our families.”

“Thank you for all you are doing under challenging circumstances.”

“Our family supports the police 100%! They are needed and appreciated.”

“It’s got to be tougher than usual to be a cop right now. Stay frosty & don’t let the crazies bring you down.”

Zoning

The zoning committee had no variances to review for July.

The next zoning meeting is scheduled to be held at Morningside Presbyterian Church at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, September 1. This meeting will be held online. The cases to be covered will be posted at www.mlpa.org/zoning/.

Events

Saturdays, 8:00 - 11:30 AM

[Morningside Farmers' Market](#), Morningside Village

Saturday, August 22 8:00 - 10:00 AM

Food Drive, Sidney Marcus Park

Tuesday, September 1 7:00 PM

Zoning Committee Meeting. See mlpa.org/zoning for the variances to be reviewed.

Monday, September 14 7:00 PM

MLPA Board Meeting, via Zoom. [Contact us](#) for login details.

Monday, September 21 7:00 PM

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

Friday, October 16 6:00 PM

Concert in the Park, Location TBD

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

News from Atlanta City Council District 6 Representative Ide

[View](#) and sign up for the latest newsletter from our Atlanta City Council District 6 Representative, Jennifer Ide, with legislative updates and important information on Renew Atlanta work.

Neighborhood Meeting Schedule

MLPA Zoning Meeting

1st Tuesday each month, 7:00 PM, Morningside Presbyterian Church

MLPA Board Meeting

2nd Monday each month, 7:00 PM, Morningside Presbyterian Church

NPU-F Meetings

3rd Monday of every month, 7:00 PM, Hillside, 1301 Monroe Drive

Quick Links

[MLPA](#) - Morningside Lenox Park Association website

[NPU-F](#) - Neighborhood Planning Unit F website

[APD](#) - Atlanta Police website – we are in Zone 2 and Zone 6.

[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

[House District 83](#) - Becky Evans, Georgia State Representative

[Atlanta Public Schools](#), [Morningside Elementary School](#), [David T Howard Middle School](#), [Grady High School](#)

[VHMPA](#) -Virginia Highland Morningside Parent Association
