



YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWS

JANUARY 2021

The MLPA is excited to ramp up and continue our efforts and initiatives in support of our neighborhood, and we look forward to introducing new projects and events in 2021. Need an easy resolution that you can keep? Join the MLPA or renew your membership today if you haven't already. Simply [click here](#) and cross it off your list. We need you and appreciate your support!

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President's Note

Is it only the middle of January? Seems like “eventful” is the most polite way to characterize the start of the year. I just hope 2021 isn't saying “hold my beer” to 2020. In the meantime, we soldier on and just had our first board meeting of the year.

1. **Accessibility.** We are finding that meeting on Zoom has its upside – it's easier for neighbors to join our meetings, whether the monthly board session or interim committee meetings regarding parks or zoning. We will be posting the Zoom info on our social media sites and in newsletters so you can consider taking a peek – we always make time for public comments.
2. **Tech feedback.** We regularly hear feedback that neighbors have trouble completing membership enrollments or security patrol requests online. If this is you and you are willing to share your experience or insights, please send an email to me as our webmaster and communications are eager to hear any insights. (PS – we are now an Insta-ssociation – please follow us on [Instagram!](#))
3. **The year ahead.** In our first board meeting last evening we discussed our objectives for the year ahead. We're working on several new plans, ranging from a formal business sponsorship program (interested in knowing more? Email partnerships@mlpa.org) to figuring out our strategy for non-profit contributions to strengthening our Neighborhood Watch program. We'll report more as we finalize the priorities.

One side note – if you don't have school children, you may not know that Atlanta Public Schools are scheduled to restart face-to-face learning for many students with classes starting January 25 for younger grades. Although schools will not have 100% of students back, you will see bus and carpool traffic return and increase as more grades return through stages in February. Please be patient – these kids and their parents sure have been – and know that all families were given the choice to send kids back or keep them home based on family preference. #nojudgment!

While case counts may be up, at least political ads are down. Stay well!!!

Ben Nemo, president@mlpa.org

Food Drive at Sidney Marcus Park

Our [Friends of Sidney Marcus Park](#) (FoSMP) hope you had a safe and restful holiday season! This dedicated group of residents is not only working hard on major park improvements, they are also helping the larger community around Morningside. In just a few days, the group will host their third food drive to benefit our neighbors at [Intown Collaborative Ministries](#) (ICM). During the first two drives, the FoSMP collected and delivered over 2700 pounds of food and hygiene essentials to this organization that works to prevent and reverse homelessness in Intown Atlanta.



The FoSMP will be at Sidney Marcus Park (786 Cumberland Rd. NE 30306) this **Friday, January 15 from 9am to 11am** and **Saturday, January 16 from 9am to 11am**. There will be a drop-off table and a Friends table at the picnic area on Cumberland Rd. Following are examples of the most requested items: canned proteins, canned fruits and vegetables, pasta, peanut butter, cereals, personal hygiene products.

Sidney Marcus Park is a focal point for this important need during these stressful times, and the Friends of the Park group plans to continue their successful drives this month and quarterly in 2021. Let's keep it going and catch up on park activities and plans. We hope to see you at the park!

Atlanta Neighborhood Security Coalition and Homelessness

As many in our neighborhood know, the problem of homelessness and urban camping has grown significantly during the pandemic, creating significant quality of life issues for both these individuals and our neighbors. MLPA has joined with other neighborhood associations to form the Atlanta Neighborhood Security Coalition (ANSC) with an aim of working with city and state authorities to address these issues.

While crime, the plight of the mentally ill and addicted, and community safety are among the issues these camps raise, three very significant challenges are the risk of fires set by urban campers during the cold winter days, the difficulty of finding appropriate shelter for these individuals, and the added struggle of convincing the long-term homeless to accept help.

In recent weeks, ANSC leaders have met via Zoom with the Georgia Department of Transportation, local Atlanta Police Department zone leadership, the leadership of Partners for Home (the City's public-private "continuum of care" housing initiative), and with Atlanta COO Jon Keen. While the coalition pushes for GDOT to work with city officials to address the urban camps under the interstates and near GDOT-controlled rights of way, we are also encouraging the city to expand northward from downtown its efforts to address homelessness.

Meetings with the commander of APD's Community-Oriented Policing Section (COPS) and Homeless Outreach Proactive Enforcement (HOPE) team have also been fruitful. We understand that in January and February, the city will be working specifically to address the urban camps in the area of Cheshire Bridge, Sidney Marcus Boulevard and Morosgo/Piedmont. In the past few days, crews have cleared out the camps at I-85 and Cheshire Bridge and have offered housing to a number of campers. Trash was removed from both sites, as well, and rip rap (rocks) will be installed under I-85.



Until the pandemic passes, however, it appears that completely clearing these urban camps will not occur. The CDC has recommended that the city not close camps during the pandemic, and the

AJC's J.D. Capelouto [reported in November](#) that the city has determined not to eliminate the camps until it can find housing for their residents.

Should you see a camp or individual who may benefit from public assistance or should you be concerned about camp-related trash or debris, please contact ATL311 and ask for outreach from one of the HOPE officers.

Holiday Gifts to Police and Fire Departments

Every year around the holidays, MLPA thanks our police and fire departments for their service. Often partnering with nearby neighborhoods, including Virginia Highlands and Piedmont Heights, we recognize those working in APD's Zone 2 and Zone 6 and at Fire Station #19 on North Highland Ave. Last month, MLPA showed our appreciation in the following ways:

- A contribution towards gift cards for Zone 2 officers (who mainly handle incidents along Cheshire Bridge, north of Cheshire Bridge and Piedmont, and part of Piedmont Heights).
- The purchase of \$20 gift cards for all Zone 6 officers (who cover most of the incidents in the interior of our neighborhood).
- The purchase of \$20 gift cards for the men and women of Fire Station #19.



Because of your membership in MLPA, we are able to continually support these praiseworthy endeavors. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to acknowledge and honor the efforts of those serving our neighborhood!

Meridian Chorale Surprises Neighbors with Holiday Concert

Some of us may have missed the sounds of Christmas caroling this holiday season, but several lucky neighbors were surprised last month with a concert by some of the South's finest professional and amateur singers. On December 21st, the date of the Winter Solstice and the Great Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn, Sally and Peter Dean hosted [The Meridian Chorale](#) in their front yard on West Sussex Rd.

Led by Steven Darsey, a small group of mask-wearing and socially-distanced singers gathered to perform traditional songs, while curious neighbors and passers-by stopped to enjoy the artistic program. One of the soloists is Timothy Miller, whom you might recognize from his regular performances at Atlanta Braves games. Other singers have been soloists with the Atlanta Symphony Chorus and other choral groups. Part of the Governor's Award winning arts and humanities nonprofit [Meridian Herald](#), you can watch a video of the Morningside concert [here](#).



Master Plan Committee Needs You!

A few years ago, hundreds of neighbors gathered to discuss their hopes and dreams for our neighborhood. The result was the [Morningside Lenox Park Master Plan](#), which the MLPA Board approved and the Atlanta City Council adopted.

A committee was appointed to prioritize projects and move key initiatives forward. As the plan will only become reality when members of our community pitch in with their time, talent and resources, we are looking for neighbors who are willing to actively work on projects. COVID has stalled some of our work, but we are once again gaining steam as city, county and state offices start re-opening. Take a few minutes and read through the plan to see how you might contribute. Contact communications@mlpa.org if you are interested. Now is the perfect time to make a difference for YOUR neighborhood!

2021 Parks Committee Update

Happy New Year from your Parks Committee. This pandemic has reinforced to us the critical importance of experiences in nature in our life. We've seen increased use of our parks and trails the past year and will leverage this in 2021. Our working philosophy is based on Transparency and Engagement.

In January we held our first 2021 MLPA Parks Committee meeting, an open forum for all neighbors with an interest in our parks and greenspaces. Held 7pm the first Thursday of each month, this is an opportunity to learn about other groups' efforts, share concerns, and help plan and enact our visions for these gems of our neighborhood. Please contact parks@mlpa.org for Zoom login details.

There were three clear takeaways from this meeting.

- **Fundraising.** We need a neighborhood-wide fundraising mechanism supporting all our parks in order to pool resources, maintain a coherent approach, and avoid donor fatigue. MLPA will take the lead and is calling for volunteers who want to help plan some fun events and work with motivated neighbors to support our community.
- **Erosion.** With climate change and continual upstream development, we have witnessed severe erosion along the banks of South Fork Peachtree Creek. We are forming a committee to identify potential solutions.
- **Liaison.** Friends of Park groups are composed of park guardians focusing their tireless efforts on their local parks. The Parks Chair will maintain the various relationships with City of Atlanta and non-profit groups to bring expertise, funding, and support to these groups.

We need you! We need your time, expertise, love, and money. With volunteer workdays, Covid-style virtual workdays, event planning, education and engagement, there is plenty of work to do, so [please reach out](#). No experience required!



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Friends of Herbert Taylor and Daniel Johnson Parks Find the Trill

Forgive the bad pun, but last Saturday more than a half dozen neighbors braved the freezing temperatures to remove invasive species so that we can enjoy trillium, little brown jugs, and other native flowers this spring! Invasive species including Chinese privet, Cherry Laurels, English ivy, and Japanese honey suckle were pulled out so that nutrients and light can reach these ephemerals.



A lot of work remains to be done and that's where you and your family come in. MLK, Jr. Day is a day of service so join us **Monday, January 18 at 9:00 am**. Please wear a mask, bring your own gloves/tools, and plan to remain socially distant from all but your immediate pod. We'll work until about noon and will have forest stewards on hand to help show you how to identify and remove problem plants.

And even if you can't come on MLK Day, you can join the [Friends of Herbert Taylor and Daniel Johnson Parks](#) on the 2nd Saturday of every month, 9:00-noon, practicing CDC compliant work days so mark your calendar to join us.

Building a Community: Sidney Marcus Park and Girl Scouts

Friends of Sidney Marcus Park saw a real bright spot in 2020 with an outpouring of support for the park as they work toward a major renovation in 2021. The group received donations from over 170 donors totaling \$112,000. There are so many people and organizations to thank and highlight, but one stands out: Girl Scout Troop 17744.

This Morningside Elementary troop has been meeting in Sidney Marcus Park for the past 6 years on Sunday evenings (monthly) from kindergarten through 5th grade. They made terrific use of the

park: Girl Scouts honor and pledge, Red Cross emergency preparedness, my family story recipe swap, crafts, drawing, painting, singing, and lots of Juliette Gordon Low birthday parties.



Over the years, the troop has focused on the needs of the community by donating to various causes, such as CHOA and rescue dog organizations. In 2020, the girls decided to use their cookie sale earnings to improve their own home base by donating \$400 to the Friends of Sidney Marcus Park capital campaign.

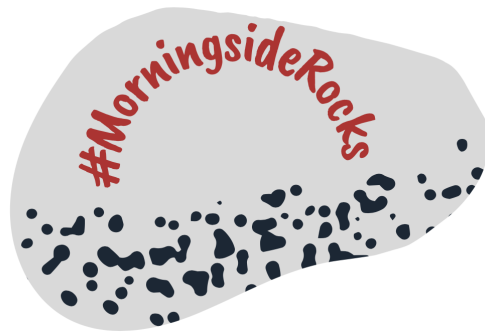
"We were so happy to see the troop's support for our park, but more importantly, their use of the park and their relationship with the park and our neighborhood," said John Pappas from Friends of Sidney Marcus Park. "We continue to uncover the history of the park and its value to Morningside. Girl Scout Troop 17744 is a joyful example of the role of our parks and community groups."

The Girl Scout troop, led by Betty Treschitta and Yolanda Foreman, deserves special recognition for its hard work and philanthropy. These girls are moving on to young adulthood, but their impact and use of Sidney Marcus Park will be lasting a lasting memory in the rich history of the park. Many thanks to the dedicated Troop members: Candy Treschitta, Kennedy Coons, Katharine Dziuina, Lucy Stong, Elizabeth Stong, Inara Price, Jayce Foreman, Erin Smearman, Clara Speigel, Deanna Davenport, Estelle Reavey, Ayo Lomax, Ramona Muse, Emory Pitts, Kayla Braunstein, Katherine Harkness, Sasha Peter.

Morningside Rocks!

MLPA is thrilled to announce *Morningside Rocks*, inspired by Morningside family the Toledos and their [painted rocks](#) venture - which places painted pet rocks strategically around the neighborhood to bring random joy during the pandemic. With a bit of sleuthing and a fresh air walk, you can join the fun of our virtual scavenger hunt and learn a bit about our neighborhood's parks, institutes, and history.

Starting in February, we will release hints of a painted rock's location each week on our social media channels. Every neighbor who posts a photo tagged #MorningsideRocks will be entered into a raffle for a \$25 gift certificate from a local business. Extra gratitude awarded for funny photos and anecdotes about your family's rock hunting adventure. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and watch for the first clues next month!



Contact us for help painting your own rocks, or share photos of your rock painting and release them into the wild for others to enjoy. Says Emily Toledo, "The best way to make yourself feel better is to make somebody else smile."

SUPPORT MLPA AND SEE YOUR BUSINESS HERE!

FOR SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES,

CONTACT PARTNERSHIPS@MLPA.ORG

MES Renovation Construction

Morningside Elementary School will undergo a \$20 million renovation (2021 - summer 2022) and construction is set to begin soon. [Click here](#) to see the Project Overview and Design Committee Presentations. Once work starts, weekly Progress Reports will also be posted to the website.



Grady High School and Stadium Renaming

As you may be aware, the Atlanta Board of Education (ABOE) recently voted to rename Grady High School to Midtown High School. Read [this article](#), written by the school's student publication, for more information. The ABOE is now considering the renaming of Grady Stadium, which is a city-wide facility. The Renaming Committee had its last meeting yesterday and will recommend to the ABOE that the stadium be named after Eddie S. Henderson, Sr.



Our State House Representatives

Georgia lawmakers began their annual session on Monday, and it will be a busy one. These elected officials will decide Georgia's budget, major healthcare funding, voting laws and much more this year. Our state representatives are engaged with MLPA and want to hear from you! In fact, both Becky Evans and Stacey Evans attended the association's first Board Meeting this week and will stay involved. Please don't hesitate to reach out to them. You can also watch [House Broadcasts and Video Archives](#).

Serving MLP residents in DeKalb County: Rep. Becky Evans (D), District 83

- [Official Page and Contact Information](#)
- [Website](#)

Serving MLP residents in Fulton County: Rep. Stacey Evans (D), District 57

- [Official Page and Contact Information](#)
- [Website](#)
- You may also reach out to [Olivia Buckner](#), Chief of Staff, 678-837-5535.

News from Atlanta City Council District 6

Jennifer Ide has been busy this new year, continuing to represent our neighborhood as Atlanta City Councilmember for [District 6](#). She encourages your feedback and comments, as well. If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to [Jennifer](#). Also willing to help are [Lance Orchid](#), Chief of Staff and [Kent Strickland](#), Constituent Services.

If you don't already receive the Atlanta City Council District 6 eNewsletter, consider [subscribing](#). The following topics are addressed in the latest issue that was published yesterday.

- One Atlanta: APD Plan to Address Violent Crime
- Safer School Zones
- General Assembly & Congressional Update
- Crosswalks & Street Sign Fixes
- Sidney Marcus Park Food Drive
- Fulton & DeKalb County COVID Vaccination Information
- Review of Alcohol Code and City Liquor Licensing Audit
- On the Horizon ... Trees, Impact Fees, and More

About Us: Meet Josh Kirschner

There are three new MLPA Board positions this year to help us increase our bandwidth and accomplish more goals. One of these essential roles is Legal Chair. To help us figure out the best structure for non-profit financial contributions, update our by-laws for some long-needed changes, assist with contract review and provide general advice, we are excited to welcome Josh Kirschner.



Josh is a Dunwoody, GA native and, along with his spouse Dana and two dogs, are first year residents of Morningside. Josh returned to Atlanta in 2017 after spending a year in Macao working for Sands China and three years at Case Western Reserve University School of Law in Cleveland, OH pursuing his J.D. When not cooking dinner with Dana or chasing the dogs around the yard, Josh serves as a white collar defense attorney at Morris, Manning & Martin LLP.

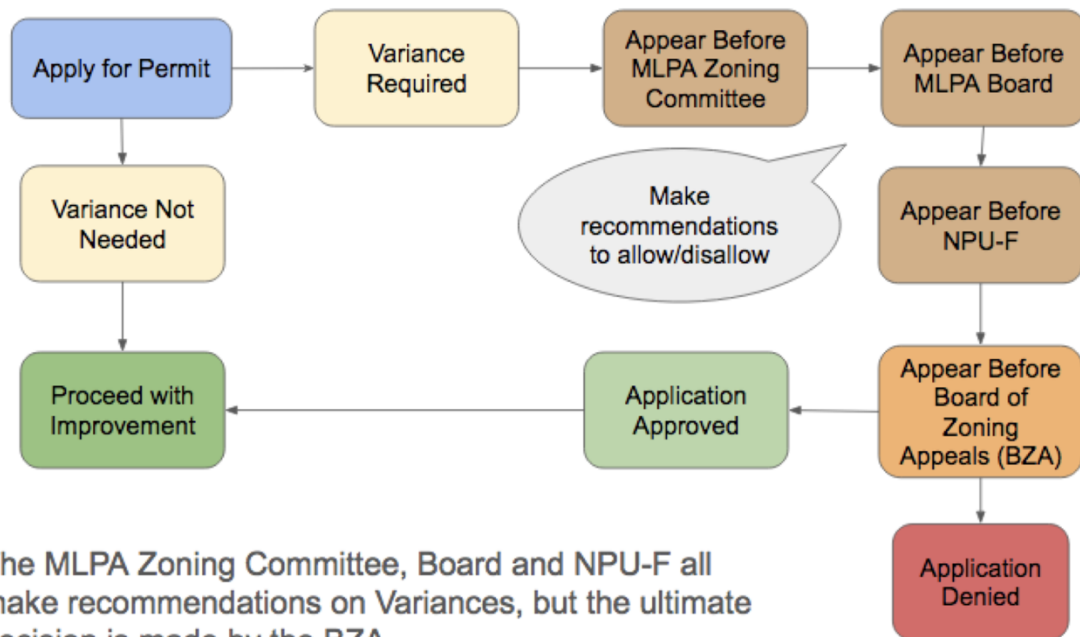
This is Josh's first term serving on the MLPA Board. Please do not hesitate to reach out to him (legal@mlpa.org) if you have any interest in serving on a neighborhood legal advisory board or have any other questions, comments or concerns!

Zoning Committee Report

One zoning case was heard in January by the Zoning Committee and MLPA Board:

- [V-20-177](#) 1330 North Highland Ave. Approved 13-0-0

The next zoning meeting will be held online via Zoom on February 2 at 7:00 pm. Cases to be covered will be posted [here](#). Any neighbors interested in the outcome should come to these meetings. All neighbors are welcome to attend; come to three meetings to qualify to vote.



The MLPA Zoning Committee, Board and NPU-F all make recommendations on Variances, but the ultimate decision is made by the BZA.

NPU University

Interested in enhancing your leadership capacity as a board member, emerging community or neighborhood leader? Want to strengthen your ability to participate in the solving of both simple and complex problems by enhancing your knowledge, skills and attitudes? Want to focus on contributing to positive outcomes for residents of Atlanta and to the function of City government?

NPU University is now accepting applications for the Community Leadership Institute of Atlanta's 2021 Spring Cohort, in partnership with the University of Georgia. The six-session course begins next month and is free to Atlanta residents. Only 25 slots are available, so apply today! Applications must be submitted by Monday, February 1st at 5:00 p.m. [Click here](#) to apply or for more information.

Morningside Pride and History

In 1990-91, the MLPA erected 12 monuments to mark the neighborhood's borders. Patterned after the original monuments fashioned by Smith and Rankin, they were updated using the only original Lenox Park marker - located at 878 Plymouth Rd. - as a model. Have you found all of these urn-capped pillars? The one in our MLPA logo does not count! ;)



Interested in learning more about our neighborhood while you are out and about? Check out the [Morningside Walking Tour!](#) Originally researched by MLPA stalwarts in the early 1990s for publication around the time of the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, it is a six mile walk through history (but you don't have to do it all at once).

Neighborhood Meeting Schedule

All neighborhood meetings are open to the public and your involvement is always welcome. There will be a public comment period at the beginning of each MLPA Board meeting if you would like to share an idea or concern. Or just join us to learn more. We hope to see you there!

- **MLPA Board Meetings** - 2nd Monday of every month, 7:00 pm, Online via Zoom (Meeting ID: 535 603 8520 Password: TjB7U3)
- **MLPA Parks Committee Meetings** - 1st Thursday of every month, 7:00pm, Online via Zoom (Contact parks@mlpa.org for login details)
- **MLPA Zoning Meetings** - 1st Tuesday of every month, 7:00pm, Online via Zoom (Meeting ID: 535 603 8520 Password: TjB7U3)
- **NPU-F Meetings** - 3rd Monday of every month, 7:00pm, [Online via Zoom](#)

MLPA Events Listing

- **Every Saturday Morning**, 8:00-11:30am: Morningside Farmer's Market
- **January 15-16**, 9:00-11:00am: Friends of Sidney Marcus Park Food Drive
- **January 18**, 9:00am-12:00pm: Friends of Herbert Taylor Park MLK Jr. Day
- **February 2**, 7:00pm: MLPA Zoning Committee Meeting
- **February 4**, 7:00pm: MLPA Parks Committee Meeting
- **February 8**, 7:00pm: MLPA Board Meeting
- **February 13**, 9:00am-12:00pm: Friends of Herbert Taylor Park Work Day
- **February 15**, 7:00pm: NPU F Meeting
- **Beginning in February**, Morningside Rocks

Quick Links

- [MLPA](#) - Morningside Lenox Park Association website
- [NPU-F](#) - Neighborhood Planning Unit F website
- [APD](#) - Atlanta Police website
- [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](#) - Stacey Evans, 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
- [NextDoor](#) - Neighborhood List Serve (not affiliated with MLPA)

[Join MLPA or Renew Membership](#)



This is your newsletter. Please send questions, ideas and photos to communications@mlpa.org.

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