



YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWS

April 2021

Spring has arrived and we think the warmer weather is here to stay! The neighborhood looks vibrant and with some normalcy returning, it seems as though more is blooming than just the flowers. Please take a moment to appreciate where we are and how far we have come, and [join or renew](#) your membership to make our community even stronger.

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President's Note

Spring is beautiful so far and we deserve it. I hope you are just enjoying this time with a steaming cup of optimism compared to the outlook at this time last year.

Welcome to the Back-to-School-But-Don't-Shoot-the-Messenger Top 3 edition. School has been one of the pandemic topics where the news has been fast and furious and it is hard to stay in the loop. Whether you are a current parent of a student, might be one day or just generally care about the impact of cluster schools on the neighborhood at large, I wanted to share some recent happenings and announcements that still can have an impact on all neighbors.

1. **Construction is happening.** If you have driven by Morningside Elementary School (MES) you have seen the tarps and the trucks. This is part of a two-year renovation of the MES building and property, due to needs for building updates and capacity improvement. Updates to the renovation project are posted [here](#).

2. **Fall 2021 is looking like back to "normal."** APS leadership recently stated several intentions for school when we go back four months from now (!) in August. (I am typing verbatim from the presentation to the APS Board - official communications typically follow our discussion.)

presentation to the APS Board – official communications typically follow any discussion):

- a. In-person learning will be five days per week
- b. All students will receive direct instruction
- c. All schools will be on a traditional bell schedule
- d. All elementary schools will have 30 minutes added to their school day
- e. All schools are required to implement intervention/acceleration/enrichment blocks (this includes summer academic recovery programs)
- f. No asynchronous instructional days (*yes, you probably heard me scream for joy)
- g. No simultaneous teaching

3. Fall 2022 options for Inman/MES are being prioritized. APS held a recent Community Listening session regarding the future use of the Inman building (presentation link [here](#)). They outlined the current status of considerations for Inman in light of long-term planning the district is doing to alleviate long-term overcrowding at the elementary level throughout the Grady Cluster (again, typing verbatim from APS communications):

- a. APS has seemingly narrowed the options down to two: Inman as a new K-5 elementary school or Inman as a 4/5 grade academy for the whole Grady Cluster.
- b. The option for a new K-5 elementary school has 4 different options for how elementary school boundaries could be drawn within the Cluster.
- c. Any option will impact a portion of the MES community in some way (either by redrawing elementary school lines, or by having MES become a K-3 school and moving upper grades to the Inman building).
- d. All options keep the Cluster boundaries intact and all students remain within the Grady Cluster.

It can be difficult to stay on top of this information when you are not a current parent receiving various emails, texts and “organic” chatter. The MLPA is not as directly involved as the PTA or GO Team in direct communication and influence with APS, but we certainly want to keep the neighborhood updated and be a voice at the table, particularly as topics like traffic are evaluated. If you are interested in more, reach out to us or search the APS websites for communications and updates – they are all there. Regardless of your feelings, in Fall 2022 we should have a beautiful new school facility to be proud of at the center of our neighborhood! It won't be bad for home values either hopefully.

The More You Know,

Ben Nemo, president@mlpa.org



Master Plan Implementation: Traffic Calming and Safety

If you've been along Johnson Rd. recently, then you've probably noticed some changes. And although change can be hard, it can also be for the better. Efforts to improve and enhance our neighborhood were most recently formalized in our [Master Plan](#), which was created in 2017-18 by a process that utilized various forms of community engagement to ensure that community input was heard. Large scale community forums - in addition to meetings, surveys and stakeholder group interviews - were well-attended and the feedback garnered at these gatherings was critical to shaping the final recommendations of the plan.

One such recommendation gathered from resident input was the need for safer, slower streets. Our Master Plan seeks to utilize existing traffic calming while adding other elements for a safer and slower neighborhood experience. Both drivers from outside of the neighborhood and local residents can speed through the neighborhood in areas with wider street lanes and few traffic calming mechanisms in place. As such, we have been working with our City Council Representative and various City departments to implement projects that address these concerns of neighbors and maintain the integrity of our community. The Master Plan was approved by the MLPA Board and then the City of Atlanta

New traffic lines, digital speed readers, medians, ADA ramps, painted crosswalks, pedestrian refuges, HAWK signals and lower speed limits are all designed to calm traffic and increase safety for pedestrians, bicycle riders and autos. Recent efforts and some still in early planning stages involve Lenox Rd, Johnson Rd, the Lenox & Johnson intersection, N. Highland Ave, E. Morningside Dr and the intersection of E. Rock Springs and Cumberland & Beech Valley Way. As the projects are implemented by the Department of Transportation, we continue to communicate with the City and work is still in progress.

As always, if you have concerns or would like to be involved, please reach out to communications@mlpa.org.

Morningside
LENOX PARK

Filming in the Neighborhood

By Donald Campbell, MLPA Vice President and Filming Liaison

Just as the cherry blossoms, dogwoods, and Bradford pears burst into bloom in our gorgeous Morningside neighborhood, so does the Hollywood filming machine burst into action. Spring is pilot season and considering the dearth of activity in 2020, movies and TV have a great deal of catching up to do. Location scouts and production coordinators are scouring the Atlanta area for houses, streets, and businesses that will serve as the backdrop for many of the upcoming entertainment offerings of the next few years. Morningside has attracted its share of attention largely due to the wide variety of housing styles from which to choose, the beautiful greenspaces, and tree lined streets that we all take for granted as residents of this gem of a neighborhood.

So you might be wondering how the process of filming a movie or tv series works on location here in Atlanta. There is a dedicated film and television office located in City Hall, and the people who interact with the production staff of various networks and studios are responsible for reviewing applications for permits, clearly communicating the rules and regulations regarding using our streets and public buildings, as well as advising production crews about various intricacies of filming in the many diverse communities around the city. The filming liaison for each neighborhood is usually among the first person the location scout makes contact with when considering filming there.

Here in Morningside, we have a set of guidelines that govern what we will usually allow. The final word is, of course, that of the City permit staff - but having us on board surely makes the location shoot run more smoothly and helps to avoid the pitfalls that cause bad feelings within the community. My most recent contact with filming requests came from Ben Smith, key assistant location manager for a Netflix series. We had a great conversation in which he responded to some of the most frequently asked questions received by the MLPA Board regarding filming projects in our area.

1. What do you look for when scouting locations for your various film projects?

Really what we look for when scouting is whatever the scripts call for. Between descriptors in the scripts and communication with the production designer and director, we go to areas we are familiar with or think will have what they are looking for, show them some options, and reassess from their feedback. Sometimes, like on this one, the showrunner will have a document with images from buildings in the area the story is set in that should influence the look of our project. This show is set in Savannah, so she gave us a lot of images from Savannah to base our search on.

2. What specific features do you find particularly appealing about the Morningside Lenox Park area of Atlanta?

The Morningside area is great because there are a lot of beautiful homes of different styles (Spanish, modern, brownstones, etc.) that can really play for anywhere. Plus there are some options for base camps and parking lots in the area, which is always an added bonus!

3. Are there any challenges that you encounter when selecting a location that makes your job difficult? Are these more or less evident when filming in our neighborhood?

Each neighborhood in Atlanta has different qualities and challenges that make them all unique.

Some neighborhoods have a lot of vacant houses or renters that make tracking down the owners difficult, other neighborhoods have really wealthy residents who would rather not be bothered with our filming, and some are filmed so often that the city makes our permitting process difficult, even putting moratoriums on areas that have been filmed a lot in quick succession. To this point, I have always had a relatively easy time filming in the Morningside/Lenox Park area. The neighbors are generally excited to see us and have never given me a hard time, and I always try to make sure we keep our impact to a minimum and over-communicate so there are no surprises!

4. Obviously filming in a residential area like ours causes some inconvenience for the residents. What steps do you take to notify the community of the extent of your shoot and briefly describe the process in place by the City of Atlanta for permitting?

In order to get a film permit in any part of the City of Atlanta, the Mayor's Office of Film and Entertainment requires that we notify all the residents and business owners in a 3 block radius. For a lane closure the city requires a 3-day lead time, and 5 days for the full closure of a road. If a schedule allows it, we try to provide notice no less than a week in advance of our first trucks showing up in the area. We also are required to provide a traffic control plan, no parking signs, and police/fire presence to enforce our permits and maintain public safety throughout the duration of our filming. When filming after the city's mandated quiet hours, they require us to obtain signatures from a minimum of 80% of the residents within that 3 block notification radius, acknowledging that we are requesting to film after quiet hours, or else the city will deny the permit. Typically when filming in a neighborhood we donate to the neighborhood association/HOA, and try to rent green rooms or driveways from neighboring houses to keep some tents and generators off the road, as well as offer financial compensation to the surrounding neighbors in addition to the fees given to the home we are filming in. We also typically provide inconvenience payments to surrounding houses who are immediately impacted by our presence in the area, especially during quiet hours.

5. Do you budget for donations to neighborhood associations, and if so, what is the standard amount?

For every film or television show I have worked on, we have budgeted for donations to neighborhood associations. We typically prepare to donate \$1000 each time we film in an area. In the event of a late evening/night shooting schedule or an unusual inconvenience, the production company donates double the amount. I am not sure if every show in town does it that way, but I have always found it super helpful to start a new relationship off on the right foot. As a native Atlantan I want to make sure the neighborhood has a good experience and is taken care of each time a film comes through, both to ensure an opportunity to return to the neighborhood in the future on another production, and to continue to encourage a positive relationship with the city and the film industry - guaranteeing the continued existence of the film incentive and future employment for myself and my peers. :)

There are a host of ongoing projects designed to beautify and further expand the public spaces that we use on a daily basis here in Morningside Lenox Park. Part of the expectation we encourage from the studios who use our public streets and greenspaces is to leave a lasting impact on our neighborhood in the form of a donation to the MLPA. In 2019 (pre-pandemic) the MLPA collected close to \$10,000 from filming that occurred in our area. Over the past few weeks, our filming liaison has received more calls about potential location shoots than all of 2019! We as a community will need to balance the benefits of short-term inconvenience with the long-term benefits to our parks and nature preserves. Maybe some of the goals we have identified to improve Morningside can be greatly impacted by Hollywood's love affair with an area of town that we already know to be among the best in Atlanta!

If you have any questions or concerns about filming in our neighborhood, please contact [Don](#).



greens, eggs & jam

Saturday, April 17th, 8am - 11:30am
Morningside Presbyterian Church

LIVE MUSIC | CHEF'S BREAKFAST | KIDS ACTIVITIES

Morningside Farmers Market Grand Re-Opening

On April 17 from 8-11:30 am, the 26-year-old Morningside Farmers Market will celebrate its brand new location and the spring season with “Greens, Eggs & Ham,” a COVID-safe market day with bonus food, features and vendors. The market will highlight a Chef’s Breakfast Pop-Up with Chef Cathy from Avalon Catering, organic produce, spring plant sale, kids activities, music and more. Masks, social distancing and pandemic best practices for the weekly market will continue.

Morningside Farmers Market has a new home at the Morningside Presbyterian Church’s parking lot. The market’s new location offers a more spacious, tree-lined setting for market-goers and vendors alike. Pastor Katie Owen Aumann remarked that, “Morningside Presbyterian strives to be a source of hospitality in the neighborhood. We are thrilled to welcome the historic neighborhood market to the church’s campus. Supporting an organic market in the neighborhood is a way we, as a church, can reflect our care for creation, our care for our bodies through healthy food, and our commitment to community.”

As the temperatures rise and the days get longer you’ll find more veggies in the stalls as well as other goodies. Look for produce from **Diamond Hill**, **Indian Ridge Farm** and **Sparta Gardens**, and eggs and meats from **Grateful Pastures**, **Riverview Farms** and **Woodsong Farms**. In addition, there’s **Café Campesino** coffee, and local honey from our neighborhood **Honey Next Door**. **Antonio’s Pasta** offers delicious ravioli, tagliatelle and pappardelle. And you can munch on **Pure Bliss** bars and granola or divine chocolate from Atlanta-based **Xocolatl**. Kids activities will include chalk food art and veggie tattoos. **Georgia Organics** will also be there to show off the first batch of organic peanut butter produced in the state by Georgia Grinders.

Morningside Farmers Market, known as “Atlanta’s Organic Market”, has been offering fresh, local, Certified Organic produce; meats, breads, foods; flowers and artisan crafts every Saturday morning year round, rain or shine. In 1995, a group of ambitious women led by Ann Brewer started the Morningside Farmers Market in the lot next to Indigo Grill. It was then the first of its kind; a totally organic market attracting farm produce from a variety of growers who used organic and sustainable farming methods. It was an instant hit with restaurant chefs who prized the incredibly fresh and wholesome ingredients the farmers offered.

Soon it was discovered by the larger community, in no small part, due to the dedication of Brewer and her friend and AJC food columnist, Cynthia Hizer. They were determined to bring the wonder of locally produced, organic products to Atlanta’s people. Farmers’ produce attracted local chefs as the farm-to-table movement grew, and Ann Brewer arranged the chef demonstrations that brought home cooks and discerning eaters out. Chefs like Guenter Seeger, Michael Tuohy, Scott Peacock, and Anne Quatrano would peruse the market stalls, picking out clean, fresh produce that they would then cook up for the crowd and farmers.

The Morningside Farmers Market is still the only totally organic market in Atlanta. If you have never been, bring out the entire family on Saturday. If you haven't been for a while, come see the farmers and makers that continue to work hard to bring good food to Atlanta!



The Pandemic Sounds of Music

There's something in the air around here, and it is not the usual sounds of spring. If you listen closely, amongst the buzzing bees and chirping birds, you might be surprised to hear the strums of a ukulele or the piping of a flute. In fact, you might have already been lucky enough to hear these joyful tunes in our neighborhood throughout this pandemic. Because for the past year, two groups of talented musicians have chosen a quiet corner of Sidney Marcus Park to do something they love: play together. And perhaps, like many of us, you have wondered about their story.

Many years ago, a group of ukulele players met weekly for informal sessions in the basement of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta (UUCA) when it was located on Cliff Valley Way. In 2012, longtime Morningside neighbor Pat Russell joined that group at the church until the UUCA relocated in 2018. Not too fond of the church's new space, the musical group of 8-10 players began to meet in Pat's backyard instead. Several of the group's members also played at Waikikie Hawaiian BBQ on Briarcliff Rd., where they regularly attended the Sunday evening uke jams for quite a long time (pre-pandemic).

They played for fun and they played for purpose, often performing for the residents of nearby Westminster Commons. The group had actually been preparing for a St. Patrick's Day gig there on March 17, 2020. But as we all know, that's when pretty much everything – including the nursing home – closed its doors. Later searching for a COVID-safe way to continue gathering, Pat and fellow uke player Bruce Bubier began to play in Pat's front yard on Yorkshire Rd., much to the delight of many nearby children and their families. But when it got too hot, they relocated again and found themselves under the shady trees at the corner of Cumberland Rd. and Cumberland Cir. You can usually find this group strumming away on Tuesday afternoons from 1:30-3:30pm. And quite remarkably, they have only missed playing two weeks out of this entire pandemic due to the weather.

In another turn of events resulting from the pandemic, contra dancing at the Decatur Recreation Center had also been suspended, and the local open band that occasionally played for dances ended biweekly rehearsals. Bill Porter, another Morningside resident and musician in several bands, began meeting with Ralph Reilly at the latter's home in Tucker. Both felt the Atlanta Open Band members might lose momentum and skills if everyone stopped playing for a year or more, and they were rapidly joined by others of a similar view.

Later on, Bill became aware of the ukulele gatherings only a few blocks from his home, and persuaded the newly dubbed “Pandemic Players” to meet at the same corner of Sidney Marcus Park. Hence, weekends there around 2:00-4:30 are often filled with Irish, Scottish, French Canadian and American Old-Time tunes played by fiddles, flute, banjo, guitars and assorted other instruments.

Both groups have, of course, been at the mercy of the weather and dates and times have varied accordingly. There has been some admixture of the groups, too, which has been a fun twist. This overlap is partly because some of the organizers now play in both groups, and because word spreads since meetings are in the same location. There are about six uke folks who have joined the Pandemic Players, and a few of the Pandemic Players have expressed interest in attending the uke gatherings. The biggest challenge for both groups has been hearing one another. Playing indoors is entirely different, as it provides for closer spacing and reflective surfaces. Open air spaces can eat up sound, and then add in the social distancing. As such, the groups have used battery-powered amps for a few instruments to compensate, mainly acting as monitors, giving everyone a minimal frame of reference about where they are at. But as more become vaccinated, spacing can safely decrease and that will help.

Like so many who were impacted by the coronavirus, Pat shared that musicians simply had to figure out a way to keep playing. “The music world is so connected. This saved us all,” she says. Members come from as near as Druid Hills and Inman Park and as far away as Stone Mountain and Tucker. Bill adds, “Meeting in the park is especially satisfying because of the passers-by and neighbors who come over, occasionally sit and listen on the bench, applaud and often say nice things. I was a little concerned that somebody would be bothered or object, but we’ve had nothing but positive comments.”

Little did these two groups know that they would provide our neighbors with such comfort and happiness. One afternoon, a woman walked by, stood and listened with tears in her eyes. When the group finished playing, she told them that her father - who had shared his love of music with her - had just died and she was having a difficult day. Not only did the musicians provide her solace, they also played a lovely Welsh waltz, *The Ash Grove*, for her in his memory. Another neighbor, artist Michal Liske, was so moved by their music one day that she went home and drew a charcoal sketch of the players. When a mutual friend saw the drawing posted on Instagram, she connected her artistic and musical neighbors. An introduction was made, and the piece instantly sold to one of the ukulele players.

Once in a while, a passer-by will comment that they used to play a particular instrument(s). Both groups always encourage them to come and join. So far, only one neighbor has accepted the group’s invitation - a banjo player who has now become a regular. “But it’s a very positive thing for people to realize that non-performative sharing of music is still alive,” Bill says. “And they can always be a part of that regardless of age or how long they may have laid off playing. Even in the midst of a pandemic!” If you are a musician interested in playing with these groups, they are both open and welcoming. Please email [Pat Russell](#) for the ukulele group and [Bill Porter](#) for the Pandemic Players. They would love to have you!

Parks alone have provided so much to our community during this time of COVID: fresh air, exercise, meditation, a break from the stresses of school and work. But the magic of this music has stopped us in our tracks; an unexpected surprise for so many who just happen to be walking their dogs, pushing a stroller, jogging around, out for a walk. These wonderful musicians are not looking for a huge crowd, but they certainly invite you to stay for a while. Take a moment, listen, dance a jig if you’re inclined or even make a request. We are grateful they have chosen Morningside as their pandemic base and hope they will stay. Their uplifting soundtracks ([see amateur videos here](#)) are a silver lining for us all.

ATLANTA

POLICE DEPARTMENT

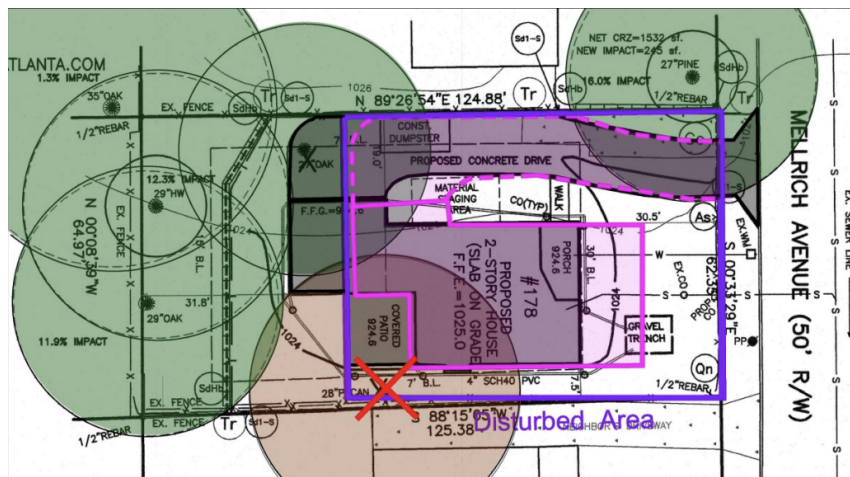
Security

How can YOU help with addressing the impact of adult businesses located along Cheshire Bridge and Piedmont?

Neighbors can help address the impact of adult businesses that are close to Morningside by turning out for neighborhood (see MLPA [calendar](#) of upcoming events) and [NPU-F](#) meetings to oppose changes in liquor licenses and other actions requested by these businesses from the City. Of note, at the last NPU-F meeting, neighbors voted to recommend disapproval of a Change of Owner liquor license application for the Platinum Club. The recommendation was based on a lack of supervision by the Agent/Manager who has managed the club for several years. Platinum was to be at the City Liquor Review Board meeting on April 6, but the results have not yet been posted. Concerned neighbors can use [this link](#) to see the agenda and attend these meetings via Zoom.

The presence of adult businesses on Cheshire Bridge and Piedmont frequently impacts some of us more than others. For example, neighbors in the townhouses behind the Platinum Club, have complained more than 100 times over the past two years to the Atlanta Police Department (APD) about this business regarding noise, public urination, illegal parking, fights, shouting at neighbors, etc. Onyx has generated similar complaints from Morningside residents since it reopened, and the activities near the Man Cave continue to be a concern for the Manchester area.

The MLPA always alerts concerns and feedback to City officials. Per Jim Hardy, Public Safety Chair for NPU-F, we are eager to work with the City, APD, and all nearby neighborhoods to find equitable solutions to our common problems. The recent [Nuisance Property effort](#) is a good start. Jim supports an overhaul of the antiquated liquor licensing system, along with better oversight and enforcement.



Zoning

A change to the criteria for granting a variance will be on the April NPU agenda for a vote, and then the item will be heard by the ZRB either May 6 or May 13, 2021. This legislation will allow administrative variances up to 80% of the setback for the preservation of trees.

Z-21-27 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE 1982 ATLANTA ZONING ORDINANCE, AS AMENDED, TO AMEND SECTION 16-26.003, ENTITLED “CONDITIONS OF GRANTING A VARIANCE” AND TO CREATE A NEW SECTION 16-26.008 ENTITLED “ADMINISTRATIVE ZONING SETBACK VARIANCES FOR THE PRESERVATION OF TREES”; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

This [fact sheet](#) gives an example for R-4 zoning. Click [here](#) for the full proposed ordinance. This [document](#) is an illustrated example.

Three zoning cases were heard in April by the Zoning Committee and MLPA Board:

- [V-21-038](#) 1198 McLynn Ave. *Approved*
- [V-21-084](#) 1147 Reeder Cir. *Approved*
- [V-21-088](#) 1436 High Point Pl. *Approved*

The next zoning meeting will be held online via Zoom on May 4 at 7:00 pm. Any neighbors interested in variance outcomes should come to these meetings. All neighbors are welcome to attend; come to three meetings to qualify to vote.



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Parks Updates





Sidney Marcus Park

Volunteer Cleanup Day Scheduled for April 24, 2021

Historic 40th Year Anniversary – A Park is Born

On this historic occasion, we gather for a long tradition of volunteerism and celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Georgia Department of Transportation transferring the land that is Sidney Marcus Park to the city! Stop the Road was a success and the Morningside Lenox Park residents started rebuilding the amazing neighborhood we have today.

Starting in 1964, a group of determined women and neighborhood residents began a “David versus Goliath” battle to stop GDOT plans to put a 6-lane expressway directly through the heart of Morningside, Virginia Highland and adjoining neighborhoods to connect the downtown connector to Georgia 400. Success came on April 18, 1981, when Sidney Marcus facilitated a land swap between the City of Atlanta and GDOT. This land now owned by the city, would be redeveloped with new housing and three new parks, Sidney Marcus Park, John Howell Park and Freedom Park. Orme Park was saved from destruction as well. There is a wonderful in-depth article on this battle for the neighborhood, linked below in the *Morningside Pride and History* section.

The Sidney Marcus Park property was maintained by neighborhood volunteers for 4 years to demonstrate that it would be a strongly supported park by the residents. The City officially made the property a city park in 1985. It is this strong spirit of volunteerism that is a hallmark of Morningside Lenox Park.

On Saturday, April 24, starting at 9am, [Friends of Sidney Marcus Park](#) will resume its volunteer cleanup days after a year of pandemic precautions. We will still need to mask up, but let's get into the park, enjoy the green grass on the lower level, and work to get the park in shape for a glorious summer.

It can be our way of celebrating the hard work of the women of the neighborhood that organized, fought and won a battle with the State, the DOT and the city of Atlanta. Bring your favorite garden tools and we will find a job for you and your tools. Pruners, loppers, shovels, rakes, wheelbarrows, work gloves, masks and vigor are in order for Saturday, the 24th .

And Friends of Sidney Marcus Park will be on hand to discuss the upcoming renovation, projected to start in June. The conservancy can be reached at friendsofsm@gmail.com.





Herbert Taylor and Daniel Johnson Parks

Rock Creek Falls Bench

Thanks to a dedicated group of [Friends of Herbert Taylor Park and Daniel Johnson Park](#), a Small Change Grant from Park Pride and the donors who matched it, Patrick Hand Landscape and a band of volunteers, visitors to the Rock Creek waterfall now have a bench for relaxing and listening to nature.

The bench, which meets the City of Atlanta design specifications, is solidly built - requiring a bobcat for transport and placement; that bit of hardware delighted all the volunteers, who ranged in age from 8 to that times 10.

The installation began just as the rains started on Saturday, making the entire process a challenge! Once it was completed, volunteers visited later in the day to see the end product and enjoy the fruits of our labors.

Want to help in our park? Meet at the kiosk at Beech Valley & Pasadena, Saturday, May 1 and Saturday May 8, 9am-noon. We will be working on habitat restoration and invasive species removal—there will be jobs for any age, so come join your neighbors! Also, there will be a Friends of Herbert Taylor Park and Daniel Johnson Park Meeting on May 3 at 7pm. Contact parks@mlpa.org for the zoom link.



Sunken Garden and Lenox-Wildwood Parks

The [Friends of Sunken Garden and Lenox-Wildwood Parks](#) have seen a lot of activity in the past couple of months, and we are excited to share some improvement projects:

- A group of 10 third-grade boys have been looking after Sunken Garden. The scouts of Pack 17, Den 7 have been holding their meetings in the park, and they are making some visible improvements. Not only are these boys clearing the drains and beautifying the grounds, they built some amazing bat boxes (complete with the Batman logo)! Bats are an important part of a functioning ecosystem, and we love that they eat mosquitoes!
- Last week, scout-led renovations of the W Sussex Rd entrance to Lenox-Wildwood Park began. The project is being led by Benne Ackerman, a Life Rank Scout from Troop 455 - the Scouts BSA Troop chartered with Haygood Methodist Church. Benne is working to restore an original feature of the park. During this work day, six scouts from Troops 455 and 29 pulled ivy along the trail. Additional project work will include installing new stone steps as well as fixing those which already exist, grading the footpath and installing ground stabilization. Thanks to Benne, park access will be greatly improved and the trail should be much safer and easier to walk.
- Once upon a time, there was a beautiful field in Sunken Garden Park. But as the years passed, drainage and erosion problems (among others) became an issue - and the green grass began to disappear. Fortunately, we have two generous neighbors - Russell Wagner and John Limehouse - who are determined to bring this area back to life, and they have wasted no time. With a long-term plan that follows cycles involving various seedings, mulching, mowing and praying for rain, we hope to have a thick level of thatch grass by the end of Summer 2022.
- Every third Saturday of the month, from 9am-12pm, we are hosting Volunteer Work Days to remove invasive plants at Lenox-Wildwood. Meet us at this Saturday, April 17 at the picnic table near the grill (by the parking lot on Lenox Rd.) with your masks, gloves and other tools like pruners and loppers. All skill levels and ages are welcome!



Noble Park

The Haygood Happy Camper will be visiting Noble Park on Saturday, April 24 from 3pm-5pm. As always, they will be serving complimentary refreshments and treats. And they look forward to getting to know even more of our neighbors. Everyone is invited!



MLPA Garden Club

The MLPA Garden Club is having our first post-pandemic meeting on Sunday, April 25 at 2pm. We will meet outside for a garden tour and talk with Hallie of Garden Hood. Contact mbreen@c3marketing.com for more information.



Native Plant Sales

By Laura Markson

Last spring most of the spring native plant sales vanished because of the pandemic. This spring a little normalcy has returned, but things are still a bit wonky with sales being virtual, by appointment, or just not happening. Now is peak native plant sale time so I compiled a short list of the remaining spring sales in the Atlanta area, including native plant nurseries. Click [here](#) to see the full blog post with direct links.



MES Story Walk

The award-winning Media Specialist at Morningside Elementary School has planned an innovative Story Walk along the Morningside Nature Trail (990 Plymouth Rd. NE). A Story Walk is a fun, educational activity that places a children's book (literally a book taken apart) along a popular walking route in the community. From April 15 (3pm) - April 20 (3pm), get some exercise for both the brain and body while reading the featured book, *Milo Imagines the World!* A QR code will be on the last sign along the trail, which will link to discussion questions you might use with your family afterward. It is open to the entire neighborhood and will surely be enjoyed by neighbors of all ages. Although outdoors, please remember social distancing guidelines and wear your masks.



Hillside's Global Youth Service Day

Global Youth Service Day is an annual global gathering of young people to participate in volunteer service. This year we are inviting volunteers to serve alongside Hillside clients in projects around campus! Hillside has been located in Morningside since 1926 and offers residential & outpatient behavioral therapy for children & young adults.

Where - Hillside's Midtown Campus, 690 Courtenay Dr. NE 30306

When - Saturday, April 24th 9am-12pm or 1pm-4pm

What - We will have three projects: painting a large outdoor mural designed by Hillside students with the help of Paint Love, beautifying our garden spaces with Hillside's Horticulture Therapy program, and organizing the Conant School Library. Lunch will be available to volunteers between 12-1pm in Hillside's Dining Hall.

Who - We welcome past volunteers, supporters, alumni, or anyone interested in learning more about Hillside. Volunteers must be at least 21 years old. Register [here](#).

Safety - All volunteers will be required to wear a mask while on campus. Space is limited to insure proper distancing. If you cannot make your shift, please reach out to gmarvin@hside.org to cancel your registration.



Morningside Rocks

The hunt continues! Have you found any of our bright yellow #MorningsideRocks yet? Win some great prizes while you learn more about our neighborhood. Congratulations to the winners of the third clue - Esther Kong and Meara McMahon. They found the hidden rock on the lawn of Morningside Presbyterian Church and each received a gift card from our sponsor **Highland Runners**.

Here's clue #4: *Find the next #MorningsideRocks hidden near the very center of our neighborhood. Founded in 1926 and originally located at N. Highland Ave and Lanier Pl, the building at this site was completed in 1947. In addition to being a house of worship, it is also known for its preschool and recreational programs. We hoop you have no trouble finding this rock! Winners will receive a gift card from our sponsor **Nowak's** restaurant. Happy hunting!*



Meet the Board: Grant Davies

The MLPA Board is excited to welcome Grant Davies as our Webmaster this year. He comes with great experience to fulfill the newly added position, and this is his first year serving on the board.

Grant moved to Morningside 13 years ago after living in various parts of Atlanta since 1996. Grant emigrated from the United Kingdom 25 years ago and proudly became an American Citizen in 2010.

Grant works for a digital consulting firm as a Principal over mobile and experience design by day, helping clients realize the experience they want their patients, customers and employees to have through mobile applications and websites. Grant lives with his wife, Kay, a realtor, and his niece Trinity who moved from Florida for school at Georgia State. For fun, he works on making cars go faster or fixing them and DIY/home renovation projects. Grant also enjoys traveling to other countries, having visited over 25 so far.



THE INTERSTATE THAT ALMOST WAS

Morningside Pride and History

In honor of Sidney Marcus Park's 40th Anniversary and Celebration, you must check out this [30th Anniversary Retrospective](#), a commemorative issue published by the MLPA in 2003. Read all about the five Morningside women who changed the course of our neighborhood's history. See the maps and plans of the proposed freeway and a chronological timeline of the events that spanned more than a decade. Learn of the prominent Morningside residents that got involved and read the dramatic details of dueling routes and dueling neighbors. It is absolutely worth knowing!

SUPPORT MLPA AND SEE YOUR BUSINESS HERE!

For sponsorship opportunities, contact partnerships@mlpa.org



Tree Protection Ordinance - It's Not Over

By Chet Tisdale, Founder of the Citizens Group

Atlanta is losing trees at an alarming rate. Recent studies concluded that Atlanta is the fifth worst US city in terms of tree loss and the third worst US city in temperature rise.

The existing Atlanta Tree Protection ordinance is not protecting Atlanta's trees. In 2018, the City Planning Department hired a consultant to prepare a new Tree Protection Ordinance (TPO). The consultant's March 2020 draft would have made it easier to cut down trees and pay a small fine. I concluded that the March 2020 draft was unworkable. So, I formed the "Citizens Group" to prepare a new TPO for Atlanta.

The Citizens Group prepared a draft TPO and presented it to the City Council in June of 2020. The City Council liked the Citizens Group Draft and directed the Planning Department to negotiate with our group on a new ordinance. The Citizens Group negotiated with the Planning Department for several months in 2020. The group made substantial progress on a new draft TPO. However, the Planning Department issued a new draft TPO on January 19 which will not protect Atlanta's trees and must be amended.

The Citizens Group took all of the acceptable language from the Planning Department draft and added the language necessary to assure that the draft TPO will protect Atlanta's trees. The result is the Citizens Group Blended Draft TPO.

On February 17, the City Council held a work session on the draft TPO. At that work session, the City Council listened to 232 voicemails from Atlanta citizens totaling 4 hours and 44 minutes. More than 90% of the voicemails supported the Citizens Group Blended Draft and opposed the Planning Department Draft.

[Here](#) is the Citizens Group Blended Draft TPO, which uses the Planning Department's language with our modifications shown on the document in a different color ink. Also [here](#) is a summary memo and a table which compares the existing TPO, the Planning Department draft and the Citizens Group Blended Draft.

Please [email](#) me if you have any questions. We anticipate that the City Council will vote on a new ordinance in early May.

MLPA Wants Your Photos

The MLPA Communications team is looking for photo submissions for our social media channels on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) which fall into the following categories:

Throwback Thursdays

"Throwback Thursdays" will feature your photos from Morningside-Lenox Park and the stories behind them to be shared on social media for the neighborhood to enjoy. Whether they are from the last century, or last year, we'd love to see and share them. Email your photo and the story behind it to communications@mlpa.org. Please include your name and social media handle for photo credits.

Our Beautiful Neighborhood

Calling all amateurs and professionals! We'd love to share your scenic shots of our neighborhood on social media. Email your photo submissions to communications@mlpa.org. Please include your name and social media handle for photo credits.

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 Passcode: TJb7U3)
 - **MLPA Parks Committee Meetings** - 1st Thursday of every month, 7:00pm, Online via Zoom (Meeting ID: 933 3649 3805 Passcode: 671035)
 - **MLPA Zoning Meetings** - 1st Tuesday of every month, 7:00pm, Online via Zoom (Meeting ID: 535 603 8520 Passcode: TJb7U3)
 - **NPU-F Meetings** - 3rd Monday of every month, 7:00pm, [Online via Zoom](#)
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MLPA Events Listing

- Ongoing, [Morningside Rocks](#)
 - **April 15 - April 20:** MES Story Walk on the Morningside Nature Trail
 - **April 17 Grand Re-Opening and Every Saturday Morning, 8:00-11:30am:** Morningside Farmers' Market
 - **April 17, 9am -12pm,** Friends of Sunken Garden and Lenox-Wildwood Parks Work Day
 - **April 19, 7:00pm:** NPU F Meeting
 - **April 24, 9am:** Friends of Sidney Marcus Park Work Day
 - **April 24, 3-5pm:** Haygood Happy Camper at Noble Park
 - **April 24, 9am-12pm or 1-4pm:** Hillside Global Youth Service Day
 - **April 25, 2pm:** MLPA Garden Club
 - **May 1, 9am-12pm:** Friends of Herbert Taylor and Daniel Johnson Parks Milkweed for Monarchs Planting
 - **May 3, 7pm:** Friends of Herbert Taylor and Daniel Johnson Parks Meeting
 - **May 4, 7pm:** MLPA Zoning Committee Meeting
 - **May 17, 7pm:** NPU F Meeting
 - **May 6, 7pm:** MLPA Parks Committee Meeting
 - **May 8, 9am-12pm:** Friends of Herbert Taylor and Daniel Johnson Parks Work Day
 - **May 10, 7pm:** MLPA Board Meeting
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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)
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Join MLPA or Renew Membership



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

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