

# YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWS July 2021

As you're probably aware, we've had some busy weeks recently and the MLPA continues to work hard on behalf of our wonderful neighborhood. We always appreciate any and all efforts to help us strengthen and protect our community. One of the easiest ways to support Morningside Lenox Park is to join or renew your membership today!

# **OVERVIEW AND QUICK LINKS:**

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#### **President's Note**

We've had a lot of turnout lately for community events – with so much more to come.

- 1. **Security Meeting.** We had 130+ people attend our board meeting this week to discuss how we can do more as a community to thwart the more serious crime threats that have made us all uncomfortable lately. I want to thank everyone who participated, raised their hand to volunteer and express appreciation to the MLPA I have never seen such a large turnout that wanted to help drive solutions in my three years of working with this group. See below for a general update on what we discussed and how we will move forward.
- 2. **Already?** Don't forget: school starts Thursday, August 5 five days a week in person. If you're not already setting your alarm earlier to adjust for the new start time, you'll likely be seeing more traffic on the streets during start and end times of the day.
- 3. **Elections.** The signs are popping up for mayoral and city council candidates. It's a great time to get more informed about them especially their positions on crime. One of our goals from the meeting above is to create forums to learn about these candidates in the months ahead as we believe it is crucial to have leadership that will take bolder action across the entire city.

Needless to say...lots going on. We'll do our best to communicate updates in the months ahead. It's not all serious by the way. Thanks to all who attended our first summer movie night on Friday, June 25! I was impressed with the turnout – especially from newer neighborhood families that have not had the ability to interact much in concert events that we usually have all year. Hoping this trend is here to stay and increase. See you at the next one on July 30!

#### **Serenity Security NOW!**

We are all frustrated about the recent escalation in quantity and severity of criminal activity threatening our neighborhood. We were very grateful to the 130+ neighbors who joined us Monday to discuss how we can do more as a community.

Although we cannot solve for every root cause of this crime increase, we can certainly try to come up with solutions for those where we have influence over city leaders or actions we can take – including (1) better enforcement of alcohol licenses, (2) more street-level law enforcement presence, (3) deterring and preventing higher levels of pass-through neighborhood traffic, and (4) improving our own communications as a community to advocate for ourselves.

Since our July 12 meeting we have organized ~30 volunteers into four groups that will help advance initiatives in partnership with an MLPA board member. We will update a public version of our follow-up actions to maintain visibility into where we are able to make progress. We will also be coming to all of you to help us community asks of city leaders.

We appreciated that Zone 6 Major Peter Ries and Zone 2 Captain Allen Mitchell attended our meeting as well. It was clear they understand the issues we are facing as a neighborhood and city and gave us good updates on what they know as well as suggestions for where we can ask for changes that will help them be more effective.

This is a neverending issue but we are encouraged that so many people want to help to make sure we turn the recent escalation in the other direction. It's not too late to see how you can join the effort – just email me or our security chair Phyllis Wingo to learn more.

Ben Nemo, president@mlpa.org





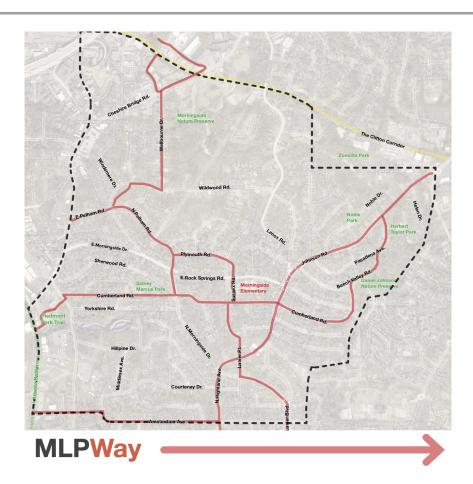
What fun we had at our first Summer Movie Series last month! It was wonderful to meet so many new families and catch up with friends. We hope everyone will join us for our next event on July 30. What's the feature movie this time? You tell us! Please take a few seconds to vote <a href="here">here</a>. The current poll is super close!

We are also excited to partner with one of our neighborhood restaurants, **Whiskey Bird**, for dinner and drink options. They have created a special menu of picnic baskets just for us! You can pre-order your delicious meals until midnight on July 29, then Whiskey Bird will deliver everything to Sunken Garden Park when the festivities begin at 5:30 on July 30. With options for both kids and adults, <u>click here</u> to see the menu and place your order.



The fun doesn't stop there! Enjoy music from Francisco Vidal until the movie starts at 6:30pm. And the Haygood Happy Camper will be there again with complimentary snacks and treats. This was a HUGE hit in June and we really appreciate their support. Also, the MLPA will be raffling two gift certificates to Nowak's, another neighborhood restaurant, before the movie starts. Will you be the lucky ones? Don't forget your picnic blankets/chairs. Registration not required but most appreciated. We can't wait!

Save this date for the last movie night of the series: August 27th. Special thanks to Haygood Memorial UMC and Carter Rude & Friends!



## **Master Plan Implementation: Help Wanted!**

Last month, we shared information about a major accomplishment of our Master Plan Implementation Steering Committee: preliminary plans and significant funding for a new roundabout at E Rock Springs, Cumberland and Beech Valley to improve traffic flow and safety. That is just one important initiative out of many, though, so we are looking for volunteers to help on another project!

The vast majority of residents who engaged in our <u>Master Plan</u> process expressed a desire to safely travel within and throughout the neighborhood either on foot or on a bicycle. In response to this desire, a neighborhood bike and pedestrian network is proposed. The "MLPWay" is the term that was presented in the process to further brand the network as something exclusive to the neighborhood. The goal of the MLPWay is to utilize a grid network of existing streets that enables connections to be made to every quadrant of the neighborhood and to provide a route for users to access high-trafficked destinations. This network of streets is designed to provide slow and safe streets for all of those who desire to bike and walk throughout the neighborhood.

As such, if you are an avid walker, runner or bicyclist, this could be a great opportunity for you! Please email <a href="mailto:communications@mlpa.org">communications@mlpa.org</a> if you are interested in helping us. You can make a difference!



# **Upcoming Construction on Piedmont Rd.**

Atlanta Gas Light is set to begin their Piedmont Enhancement Project next week. Construction will occur in phases along the Piedmont Road and East Paces Ferry Road corridor and is expected to last more than two years. It will include the installation of new natural gas mains, a regulator station, and the replacement of vintage mains. The project path runs along Piedmont Road from E. Pelham Rd (starting point) to Squire Place and from Fountainhead Lane to Peachtree Rd.

Both northbound lanes of Piedmont Rd near Morningside will be closed during work hours: 9:00am - 3:00pm Monday through Thursday and 7:00am - 5:00pm on Saturday and Sunday. During this time, one of the southbound lanes will be converted into a northbound lane. They will not set up detours or direct traffic through our neighborhood. However, we may see increased traffic from drivers using GPS apps/navigation systems. At the end of their workday, they will reopen the left northbound lane but the right one will remain closed. This phase of the project will involve rolling lane closures in 1500 foot increments through Spring '22. If you have any questions, please contact their project line at (404) 584-3145 or their project e-mail is PiedmontEnhancement@southernco.com.



# **Membership Drive**

Did you know that there are 3,800 homes in Morningside Lenox Park? Yet only 853 households are members of the MLPA. There is strength in numbers when working for the betterment of our community, so we need you (and your neighbors)! We deeply appreciate those who are already members and continue to renew year after year.

With your membership, we can host/sponsor more social events to foster our neighborhood's sense of community, improve communications, invest in neighborhood amenities (e.g. traffic calming measures, repairing sidewalks and park projects), support our local schools and so much more! If you'd like to learn more about joining our neighborhood association, please contact Sarah Chatel (Membership Chair) at <a href="mailto:membership@mlpa.org">membership@mlpa.org</a>, Ben Nemo (President) at <a href="mailto:membership@mlpa.org">president@mlpa.org</a> or visit <a href="mailto:www.mlpa.org/mlpa-memberships">www.mlpa.org/mlpa-memberships</a>.



# Morningside Farmers Market: Special Event on August 14

On August 14th from 8 - 11:30 am, Morningside Farmers Market will host the fun and fresh popup restaurant: **Vinetta**! Vinetta will feature hot food for eating at shaded picnic tables onsite and take-away boxes. We will have kids activities, music, and all of the market's standard farm and artisan offerings.

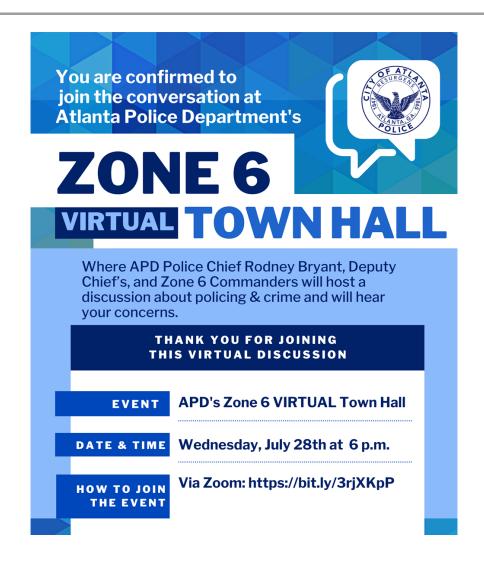
Morningside Farmers Market (MFM) can be found at Morningside Presbyterian Church's parking lot (1411 N. Morningside Drive NE). The market is located in a spacious, tree-lined setting offering shade for market-goers and vendors alike. Ample parking is available in a small parking lot off of Wessyngton Rd or on adjoining streets. MFM, known as "Atlanta's Organic Market", has been providing certified organic produce; local meats, breads, foods; flowers and artisan goods since 1995, every Saturday morning year-round.

Look for produce from **Diamond Hill** and **Sparta Gardens** and eggs and meats from **Grateful Pastures**, **Riverview Farms**, and **Woodsong Farms**. Wake up with **Café Campesino** coffee and a **Root Baking Co** pastry! Pick up local honey and soap from **Honey Next Door**. **Cradleboard Creations** offers an assortment of herbal botanical products. **Morningside Presbyterian Church** will host a children's corner with activities for kids. **Morningside Lenox Park Association (MLPA)** is always a strong supporter of MFM. Join us for a lovely market morning and dine-in or take-out with Vinetta on Saturday, August 14th!



# **Morningside Rocks**

Although super cute, Yoshi (pictured above) is actually not the winner of our fifth round of Morningside Rocks. But he is an excellent rock painter, and he helped create and hide the ones around our neighborhood! If you found the latest rock at Morningside Village, please check your Instagram and Facebook messages to see if you won. We are delighted to award two entries with a gift card from our sponsor **Whiskey Bird!** You could use it toward our next Movie Night!



# **Security**

#### Town Hall with Zone 6 and Chief Rodney Bryant of the Atlanta Police Department July 28

Below is the NEW link to the Zone 6 Town Hall that was canceled last month. The meeting will be streamed via Zoom on Wednesday, July 28th from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. **Registration** is **NOT** required.

#### Click here for the Zoom Link

Meeting ID: 812 3071 1674

Passcode: 242886

#### Updates from Atlanta Police Department – Meetings with Citizen Advisory Councils

Every other month, neighborhood security representatives meet by zoom with Atlanta Police Department (APD) Zone leadership. These zoom chats are referred to as the Citizen Advisory Council (CAC) meetings. Selected highlights from recent meetings follow.

#### Zone 2

On July 6, Captain Ailan Mitchell in Zone 2 met with neighborhood security representatives. Captain Mitchell (AAMitchell@AtlantaGA.gov) was recently promoted to serve as the Assistant Commander of Zone 2.

The 4th of July weekend in Zone 2 went well. Officers throughout the city were on 12-hour shifts throughout the weekend to man the Peachtree Road Race, help with calls, and help in the bar districts. Overall, there were no major incidents; and at the Peachtree Road Race, everyone was safe, and there were no injuries. They also had help from the Georgia State Patrol, the Fulton County Sheriff, and some specialized units within APD.

Restaurants and nightclubs continue to be a challenge. There are too many "restaurants" operating as nightclubs. More officers have been added to Licenses and Permits, as well as Code Enforcement, and they are actively doing nightclub checks, restaurant checks, checking permits, checking licenses. This is on ongoing effort with Major Senzer and Captain Mitchell providing the list of problem locations-- where 911 calls are coming from, where crime is occurring in those areas, etc.

#### Zone 6

On July 8, Major Peter Ries and Captain Zenelaj Hajredin in Zone 6 met with security leaders from Zone 6 neighborhoods. Of note, the APD has centralized the crime investigations unit. Instead of having units in each zone, these functions are now centralized so that detectives can recognize crime patterns across boundaries and focus on specific investigations more easily. The centralization may result in delayed responses to Zone Commanders requesting feedback on specific cases.

Several neighborhood representatives mentioned their use of the publicly available crime data through the COBRA reports or the APD <a href="http://opendata.atlantapd.org/">http://opendata.atlantapd.org/</a>. All depend on these data for sharing crime information in their own neighborhood.

A common question to the command at these meetings is "How can citizens help attract and retain new officers? What more can we do to support the police?" Greeting officers when you meet them, thanking them for their service, and any other gestures of appreciation are much appreciated. These actions greatly help with morale, especially in light of the difficult year that

the police have had. If you know of persons interested in policing, have them send resumes directly to the Zone Commanders. Of note, even if 200 officers are hired today, they will not be on the street for 10-12 months. Good news-- pay is increased and among the highest in the state and maybe the SE.

# **Zoning**

Two zoning cases were heard in July by the Zoning Committee and MLPA Board:

#### V-21-119 640 East Morningside Dr.

- Applicant seeks a variance from the zoning regulation to reduce the required east side
  yard setback from 7 feet to 3.3 feet in order to construct a deck addition on the side of an
  existing single-family residence.
- Denied

#### V-21-128 915 Cumberland Rd.

- Applicant seeks a special exception from the zoning regulations to allow active recreation in a yard adjacent to a street (Wessyngton Road) in order to install a swimming pool/spa.
- Approved

The next zoning meeting will be held online via Zoom on August 3 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. For more information, contact MLPA Zoning Chair, Rebekah Falkler, at zoning@mlpa.org.



#### **Parks Updates**





#### Morningside Nature Preserve Clean-Up and Call to Action

On June 17, a group of approximately 12 MLPA neighbors gathered at the beach area of the Morningside Nature Preserve for a work party. Our specific goal was to remove the abandoned structure, as well as a large amount of miscellaneous items in the immediate area including a lawnmower, rugs, wooden beams, etc. In addition, our group removed trash found at other nearby campsites that had also since been abandoned. The MLPA provided trash bags, cold water and work gloves, and our team of gracious volunteers worked for approximately two hours to clear the area and haul all the trash to the street for pick-up.

Please note that this was the final step in a series of prior steps that had been taken to work with local authorities, as well as the non-profit community to reach out and offer services to individuals who have previously camped at the park for any extend period of time. And while we all have incredible sympathy for anyone who is in search of a place to stay, it is illegal to camp in the park.

A special thanks to the following, as well as a few others whose names we unfortunately don't have: Brian Conlan, Peter Dean, Brett Howell, Jim Humphrey, Adam Keith, Doug Mohme, Randy and Tara Parrish, and John and Gigi Schwartz. We'd also like to recognize our MLPA Partnership Chair, Mark Smith, for spearheading this massive effort.

There are still opportunities to keep this momentum with sustainment operations and the continual fight against invasive species, with an active Friends group in our neighborhood committed to similar volunteer activities and planning events and capital targets (e.g. boardwalk and bridge repair). If you're wondering what is a Friends of Park group, please see <a href="Park Pride's page">Park Pride's page</a>. Instead of inventing an organization from scratch, we are fortunate to already have the Trees Atlanta workdays, a fairly healthy well-known nature preserve, and deep experience in neighbors, Park Pride, Trees Atlanta, and MLPA. If you have any interest in learning more, please contact Micah Coleman, our Parks Chair, at <a href="parks@mlpa.org">parks@mlpa.org</a>. He is happy to chat or walk the trails with you anytime.

Starting July 24, Trees Atlanta will resume hosting a volunteer workday the fourth Saturday of each month from 9am - 12pm. We hope to see you all out there helping keep the preserve healthy and learning about our native habitats.

Read <u>the history of MNP's founding</u> and <u>the Morningside Nature Preserve Master Plan</u>. Also see the <u>MLPA 2018 Master Plan</u>.







# **Herbert Taylor and Daniel Johnson Parks**

Join us on August 2 at 7:00pm for our monthly Friends Meeting. There won't be a workday next month because of the heat, but thanks to the dozen of volunteers who came out last weekend to control the Japanese Chaff Flower on the bottomlands trail. Please continue to be mindful of the copperheads who reside in Herbert Taylor and Daniel Johnson Parks - they are a vital part of our ecosystem and will keep to themselves as long as you keep an eye out for them and leave them alone. Yet another reason to keep dogs on leash in our parks!





#### **Meet the Board: Marc Tammes**

Many thanks to our eagle-eyed readers who noticed last month's error with the introduction to Marc Tammes, new MLPA Treasurer. Not only is Marc doing a wonderful job keeping our financials and accounting in order, he also has a great sense of understanding and humor!

Marc and his husband Michel moved to Morningside in late 2018. They previously lived in Garden Hills for 15 years, where Marc was Chairman of Civic Association Membership for several years. He holds a bachelor's in accounting from Iowa State University and a master's in finance from Indiana University. He retired from The Coca-Cola Company in 2014 after 25 years in various finance roles in Atlanta, Bangkok, Paris, and Brussels. Marc also serves on the board of directors of Voices of Note. Marc and Michel travel extensively in their spare time.

We are excited and grateful for Marc's experience and involvement!



# **Morningside Pride and History**

# Security Patrol History Adapted from the MLPA Archives

The Morningside Security Patrol first went into service in November 1992. It took the previous 10 months for Committee members, the MLPA Board, and other volunteers to research and organize this vital service for the Morningside, Lenox Park, and Johnson Estates neighborhoods.

It began after Martha Curtis and husband Blair were burglarized. She organized a committee that included Donna Cunningham, Jennifer Fuller, Joe Hope, Mary Huntz, JoAnn Kearns, Harry Miller, Tom Murphy, Zac Pasmanick, Dr. Paul Sherlag, and Karen Varsha. Together, they explored similar initiatives in nearby neighborhoods such as Brookwood Hills, Inman Park, Collier Hills, Admore-28th St., Ansley Park, Garden Hills, Brookhaven, and Peachtree Battle.

Hours were spent gathering information and analyzing all aspects of organizing and running a neighborhood security service. Flyers were distributed in the neighborhood. Joe Hope and several volunteers held a telephone drive to enlist members. They used phone banks that Zac made available at his real estate office and using Martha's database of residents.

Atlanta Police Officers Doug Little and Rick Vazquez offered to organize off-duty policemen. The patrol, then led by Officer Little, was on our streets with 8 off-duty officers, a motorcycle, and a cell phone. Later the off-duty Atlanta Police Department (APD) officers made their rounds in vehicles distinguished by magnetic signs. Officer Little was succeeded by Officer Jeff Easter; Easter was succeeded as Lead Officer by one of MSP's founding officers, Rick Vazquez, who remains with us today. Rick is an incredible partner with invaluable experience.

As one of the founding members remarked, "Intown living requires eternal vigilance." We appreciate our neighbors who launched the Security Patrol, the APD and those who are currently involved. In particular, today we recognize and appreciate Phyllis Wingo, our MLPA Security Chair, who has devoted countless hours serving our community over the years. She is a treasure and deserves a million thanks! We are also grateful to Morningside Presbyterian Church, as they have donated - for many years! - a parking spot and office space for our Security Patrol.

#### SUPPORT MLPA AND SEE YOUR BUSINESS HERE!

For sponsorship opportunities, contact partnerships@mlpa.org



# **MLPA Sponsorships**

We are excited to announce new partnership packages that will further support our work in the neighborhood! With three levels for engagement, the MLPA Business Partnership Program will connect you with our members and other Morningside homeowners and residents. Click <a href="here">here</a> to see our different tiers, their benefits and to become a sponsor. Select opportunities can include:

- MLPA Sponsor window decal
- Logo included in monthly newsletter
- Flyer/coupons in new resident packs
- "Live" social media introductions Featured "Meet our Sponsors" article
- Prominent placement on MLPA website
- Prominent signage at all MLPA events
- "Live" social media introductions Featured "Meet our Sponsors" article on the MLPA website
- 4x/yr. personalized social media posts
- MLPA Board Meeting business introduction

For more detailed information, click <u>here</u>. Please reach out to Mark Smith at <u>partnerships@mlpa.org</u> with any questions!



# **Back to School**

As mentioned above in our President's Note, please be aware as families walk, bike or bus to neighborhood and private schools again next month. Atlanta Public Schools will begin the 2021-22 school year on August 5th with an altered school bell schedule, as follows:

Elementary Schools	NEW TIME: 7:45am - 2:45pm	Previously: 8:00am - 2:30pm
Middle Schools	NEW TIME: 9:15am - 4:15pm	Previously: 9:05am - 4:05pm
High Schools	NEW TIME: 8:45am - 3:45pm	Previously: 8:30am - 3:30pm

#### **MLPA Wants Your Photos**

The MLPA Communications team is looking for photo submissions for our social media channels on <u>Facebook</u> and <u>Instagram</u> 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 <a href="mailto:communications@mlpa.org">communications@mlpa.org</a>. 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 <a href="mailto:communications@mlpa.org">communications@mlpa.org</a>. 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 Contact
- MLPA Parks Committee Meetings 1st Thursday of every month, 7:00pm Contact
- MLPA Zoning Meetings 1st Tuesday of every month, 7:00pm Contact
- NPU-F Meetings 3rd Monday of every month, 7:00pm, Online via Zoom

# **Around Town**



**ATLDOT Website Goes LIVE** Atlanta Department of Transportation (ATLDOT) is excited to announce the launch of its new website. This digital presence will serve as a "one-stop shop" for all the City of Atlanta's transportation services and information. From permitting to shareable dockless devices, construction projects and transportation maintenance requests…it's all here! Check out the <u>site</u> and find what you need.



**Atlanta Dogwood Festival** August 6-8, 2021 in Piedmont Park. An Atlanta staple for over 80 years, there is something for everyone. Virtually every kind of art imaginable is represented at the festival, with a nationally renowned, juried Fine Artist Market that includes sculpture, paintings, pottery, jewelry, photography and much more. Check out all the festival attractions here.



**2021 Comprehensive Development Plan.** Atlanta is growing. The Comprehensive Development Plan, Plan A, helps to guide Atlanta's growth. This plan examines how the city will use Housing and Community Development, Transportation, Public Land Use, and Nature to build a more equitable and sustainable city. Visit <a href="atlaitydesign.com/2021-cdp">atlaitydesign.com/2021-cdp</a> for more information.

## **MLPA Events Listing**

- Every Saturday Morning, 8:00-11:30am: Morningside Farmers' Market
- July 17, 9am-12pm: Friends of Lenox-Wildwood Park Workday
- July 19, 7pm: NPU F Meeting
- June 30, 5:30-8:30pm: Summer Movie Series in Sunken Garden Park
- August 2, 7pm: Friends of Herbert Taylor and Daniel Johnson Parks Meeting
- August 3, 7pm: MLPA Zoning Committee Meeting
- August 5, 7pm: MLPA Parks Committee Meeting
- August 9, 7pm: MLPA Board Meeting
- August 16, 7pm: NPU F Meeting
- August 27, 5:30-8:30pm: Summer Movie Series in Sunken Garden Park

#### **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, Midtown High School
- VHMPA -Virginia Highland Morningside Parent Association
- <u>NextDoor</u> Neighborhood List Serve (not affiliated with MLPA)



This is your newsletter. Please send questions, ideas and photos to <a href="mailto:communications@mlpa.org">communications@mlpa.org</a>.

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