



MORNINGSIDE LENOX PARK ASSOCIATION

Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

January 8, 2024

Board members present: *(asterisk indicates not present)*

President – Donald Campbell

Vice President – Rob Schuler

Secretary – Brandon Dhande

Treasurer – Marc Tammes

Membership – Kristen Pollack

Security – Phyllis Wingo

Parks – Micah Coleman

Marketing – Eric Lewis *

Technology – Grant Davies

Events – Ryan Murphy*

Zoning – Rebekah Falkler

Legal – Josh Kirschner*

Communications – Marla Johnson

Licensing – Ashley Milam

Public Affairs - Michael Parkerson

Business Liaison – Nick Vachon

Call to Order and Welcome

Don Campbell called the meeting to order and opened the floor to discussion topics.

Initial discussions included:

- The minutes from the December meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

President's Update:

- Don welcomed the new Board members. Don encouraged the Board to approach the new year with civility, kindness, and cooperation.

Committee Updates and Discussion

Zoning Topics:

- 1687 North Pelham: Replace existing carport with a garage. Diane Barfield appeared on behalf of the owner seeking variance. The resident and adjoining neighbors have agreed on a privacy fence and vegetation involving a setback variance. Zoning Committee recommends approval. Unanimous board vote in favor of variance.
- 837 Kings Court: The owner, Ahmad Oueid, appeared to explain variance for privacy fence height. Property is sloped and would make sense to have the fence this height at certain points. Zoning Committee recommend approval given the variance requirements. Approved by unanimous Board vote.
- 877 Berkshire Road: New detached garage with living space and new front porch. Garrett Daniel and owner appeared to explain project. Variance is to reduce setbacks



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on front and sides. Zoning Committee recommended approval. Approved by unanimous Board vote.

- **Licensing Discussion:**

- No license matters this month.

- **Finance Discussion:**

- We have a yearly operations net decline of \$55k for 2023, compared with net income in 2022. Reasons: membership revenues grew by a smaller percentage, and we made various investments in the neighborhood including park kiosks and street sign toppers. Also, some decline in movie revenues and timing of invoices. Loss in operating results reflected in cash balance, which is currently \$96k. This is adequate to support our ongoing operations but we should be careful about our cash position in the budgeting process.
- Budget will be reviewed at the February board meeting. It will be imperative for Board members to join, especially budget holders.
- Regarding operating efficiency: the Finance operations used to be entirely paper-based. But we now have more modern payment processes including Zelle and electronic automated payment. Incoming revenues are still coming by check, but we need to move to credit card or Zelle for receivables, as we continue to improve these processes.

- **Elected Official Discussion:**

- Councilmember Alex Wan joined to discuss:

- Cheshire Bridge does not need to come down, it needs repaired. Timeline is ten weeks, dependent on weather. Seven of twelve supports to the bridge are impacted by the fire. More important: how do we address moving forward? Nearby encampments have been cleared and police will do regular sweeps.
- The Lavista apartment fire may result in extensive litigation, which is causing delay in shoring up and demolition of the property. Alex, GDOT and others are pressing to move quickly given the importance of the intersection.
- Council approved funding for e-bike subsidies. Work is in progress for establishing the program.
- Monroe Complete Streets is a priority for 2024. More updates and the project timeline are coming soon.
- Regarding Tokyo Valentino: the Board of Zoning Adjustments meeting was postponed until February. There will be communication with neighbors ahead of



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the meeting. Residents will not be allowed to speak but they can be present for the meeting.

- Kennedie McClung appeared on behalf of Rep. Stacey Evans' office to answer questions.

- **Security Update:**

- Phyllis shared updates on the Security Patrol Package for HOAs: three associations have committed to joining and will start paying package dues soon.
- Regarding encampment under the Lenox Road Bridge: the Zone 6 Quality of Life Officer has visited several times in addition to the MLPA Security Patrol. This is a different situation than encampments in parks; there may not be an easy solution given public works resources. Rick Vasquez has proposed a clean-up day, to pull out debris. Rick has offered to have an officer there for the duration of the clean-up. Board unanimously agreed to approve costs for police support and clean up.

- **Communications Update:**

- We now have an official Nextdoor account for MLPA announcements.
- Website work is in progress, current effort is to comb through the website and update outdated content.
- Reminder about Volunteer Appreciation event on Thursday.
- Sejal Patel is taking the lead for recruiting volunteers this year; please reach out for specific requests for volunteers for the various committees.
- Don: it would be nice to add to the website Board bios a job description for what people in that role do.

- **Parks Update:**

- Smith Park: we have power back, with lighting. This may mean that our fountain pump could be working again soon.
- MLK Day of Service: Herbert Taylor Park has great service days. City of Atlanta will send 50 volunteers next month.
- Foundation Update: Micah updated: we had a recent meeting to establish the neighborhood foundation. Name will be Morningside Community Foundation. We have a mission statement and set plans for establishing the 501c3 organization. Micah shared plans for the foundation officers. Fundraising goal for 2024 will be set soon. We are meeting again soon to talk about entity formation and project ideas.



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- **Public Affairs Update:**

- Michael expects to have an update soon regarding concerns associated with Atlanta Fire Department.

- **Membership Update:**

- Kristen shared ideas for membership in 2024, including coordination with Eric to improve the membership package. New neighbors are important, but we should also focus on neighbors who come to events and receive the newsletter who are not yet members. We want to promote the basic membership option as a way of growing our membership base, in addition to the security package.

- **Sponsorship Update:**

- Nick shared sponsorship plans for 2024, including changes to tiering. Plans include a second presenting sponsor and change to the benefactor tier, splitting off a fourth tier for “friends of MLPA.” This is a way to get more businesses involved as sponsors. Goal is to start sending emails this week.

- **Technology Update:**

- Grant explained the recent progress on the website, including changes already covered in the meeting.

- **Concluding notes:**

- Don thanked the meeting attendees and concluded the meeting.

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