

The Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods

Annual Meeting

October 16, 2008

Peachtree Presbyterian Church

6:30 – 8:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Attendees:

| Name | Association | Email Address |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Gordon Certain | North Buckhead | gccertain@comcast.net |
| John Haliburton | Peachtree Hills | john@thrashgroup.com |
| Jack Hellriegel | West Paces Northside | jehellriegel@bellsouth.net |
| Michael Hilton | Tuxedo Park | michaelhiltonmd@gmail.com |
| Jay Jameson | Peachtree Hills | jjjameson@gproperties.com |
| Kim Kahwach | Buckhead Forest | kajensen@bellsouth.net |
| Jim King | Chastain Park | jimking@mindspring.com |
| Bill Langley | Ridgedale Park | billlangley@bellsouth.net |
| Jeff McQuinthy | Kingswood | |
| Jennifer Moyers | Whitewater Creek | jennifermoyers@beacham.com |
| Diane Olanskey | NPU-F | olansky@bellsouth.net |
| Garth Peters | Memorial Park | gpeters@thebuckheadcoalition.org |
| Elizabeth Pritchard (& Emily) | Peachtree Battle Alliance | elizpritchard@bellsouth.net |
| Jane Rawlings | Lindridge Martin Manor | president@lmmna.org |
| Jud Ready | Wildwood | jud.ready@gatech.edu |
| Sue Roberts | Peachtree Heights East | Sroberts20@bellsouth.net |
| Mercy Sandberg-Wright | Tuxedo Park | mercywright@msn.com |
| Sally Silver | NPU-B D&T, North Buckhead | sl_silver@hotmail.com |
| Brenda Smith | Mt. Paran-Northside | bdsmith@aol.com |
| Jim Wright | Ardmore Park | wrightjr@mindspring.com |
| Henry Wyche | Grant Estates/South Tuxedo Park | hwyche@valleycap.com |

Jim King called the meeting to order at 6:44 PM.

BCN Constituent Neighborhoods and Attendees

Gordon Certain had previously requested by e-mail that neighborhood associations intending to join BCN bring dues checks for 2008 in the amount of \$100 and letters designating their official representatives to BCN. Ten checks were given to Henry Wyche; seven letters were given to Gordon. (Two additional neighborhood associations have paid dues since.)

The attendees introduced themselves. At this stage of the meeting, 14 neighborhoods were represented. Later additions increased that number to 17, as listed in the table below:

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Buckhead neighborhoods represented by attendees:

| | Neighborhood | Representative/Attendee | Designation Letter Provided? | Dues Paid? |
|----|---------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------|
| 1 | Ardmore Park | Jim Wright | | |
| 2 | Buckhead Forest | Kim Kahwach | | Yes |
| 3 | Chastain Park | Jim King | | Yes |
| 4 | Grant Estates/South Tuxedo Park | Henry Wyche | | Yes |
| 5 | Kingswood | Jeff McQuinthy | Yes | Yes |
| 6 | Lindridge Martin Manor | Jane Rawlings | | |
| 7 | Memorial Park | Garth Peters | | |
| 8 | Mt. Paran-Northside | Brenda Smith | | |
| 9 | North Buckhead | Gordon Certain / Sally Silver | Yes | Yes |
| 10 | Peachtree Battle Alliance | Elizabeth Pritchard | Yes | Yes |
| 11 | Peachtree Heights East | Sue Roberts | Yes | Yes |
| 12 | Peachtree Hills | John Haliburton / Jay Jamison | Yes | Yes |
| 13 | Ridgedale Park | Bill Langley | | |
| 14 | Tuxedo Park | Michael Hilton / Mercy Sandberg-Wright | Yes | Yes |
| 15 | West Paces Northside | Jack Hellriegel | Yes | Yes |
| 16 | Whitewater Creek | Jennifer Moyers | | Yes |
| 17 | Wildwood | Jud Ready | | |

Jim noted that some neighborhood representatives had indicated that they wanted to attend but couldn't attend or had other issues with their status.

Jim said that BCN had reached about 80% of Buckhead neighborhoods. Jim said that he hasn't found a neighborhood yet that, if he got to the right person, was not interested in participating. Jim passed around a sign-in sheet. He summarized contacts with neighborhoods not attending, as shown below.

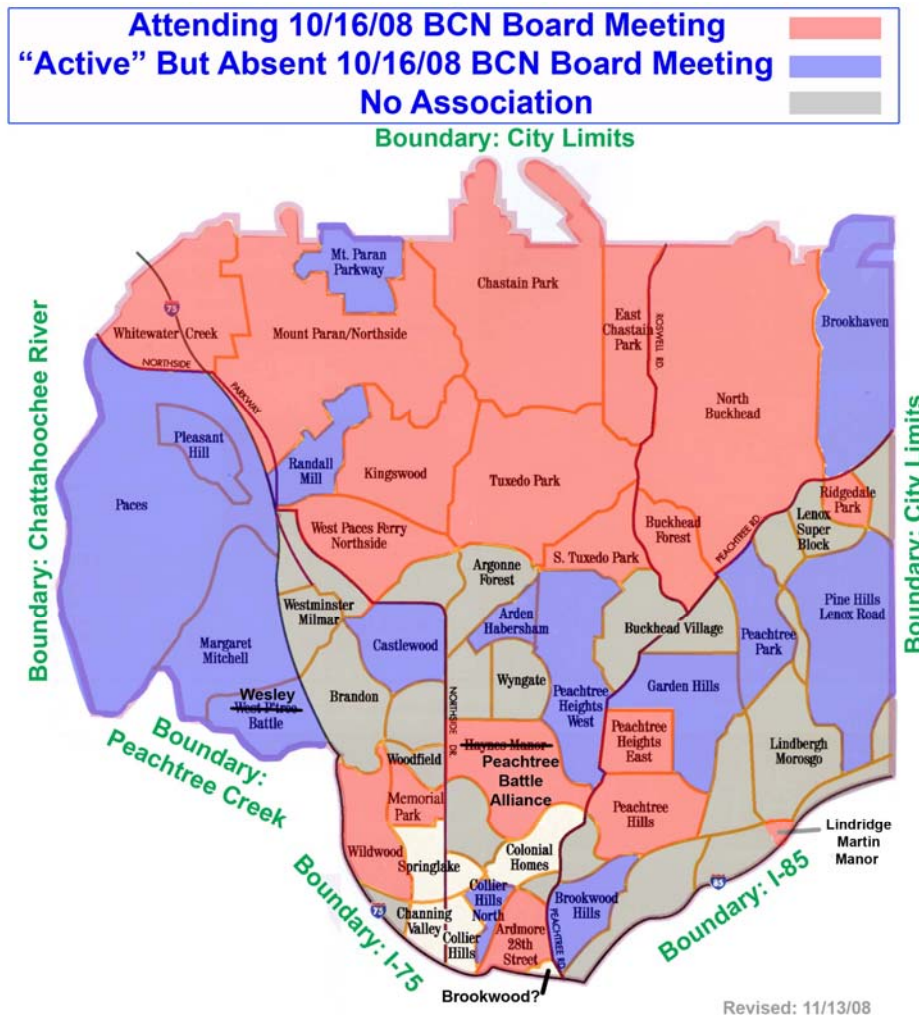
| | “Active” neighborhoods not attending | RSVP/Contact |
|----|---|---|
| 1 | Arden | Duncan Gray – out of town |
| 2 | Brookhaven | Barbara Delk |
| 3 | Brookwood Hills (3 with similar names) | Joe Jackson |
| 4 | Castlewood | Randy Bassett – out of town |
| 5 | Collier Hills North | Becky Winkler |
| 6 | Garden Hills | Bob Snyder wants to participate |
| 7 | Margret Mitchell | Julian de Juan has attended previously |
| 8 | Mount Paran Parkway | Craig Viergever |
| 9 | Paces | Frank Bennett |
| 10 | Peachtree Heights West | Joel Hughey attended last time |
| 11 | Peachtree Park | Jeremy Ellis (has been to many meetings) |
| 12 | Pine Hills | Murray Forbes |
| 13 | Pleasant Hill | Jane Collins |
| 14 | Randall Mill | Cathy Allen |
| 15 | Wesley Battle | Nowland Gwynn – neighborhood has voted to join (paid 11/13) |

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The following neighborhoods have not committed or may not be membership candidates:

| | Neighborhoods – other status | Contact/Status/Comment |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Argonne | No association |
| 2 | Berkley Park | Status unclear - just outside of Buckhead |
| 3 | Brandon | Eric Ranny NPU-C chair has volunteered to be their informal rep |
| 4 | Channing Valley | Rick Beamish (trying to contact) |
| 5 | Collier Hills | Catherine Caesar Montgomery (trying to contact) |
| 6 | Defoors Place | No association |
| 7 | Fernleaf | Status unclear |
| 8 | Hanover West | Frank Hendrick was listed; “Nixon”/”Mixon” may have attended earlier |
| 9 | Lenox/Lindbergh Morosco | No association |
| 10 | Longcourte | 6/7 houses – will eliminate from BCN list |
| 11 | Loring Heights | Status unclear – on border – contact may be Ron Grimwald |
| 12 | Ridgewood Heights | Derek VanNostran is listed |
| 13 | Springlake | Sean Fitzsimmons |
| 14 | Underwood Hills | Status unclear |
| 15 | Westminster-Milar | No association |
| 16 | Woodfield | No association |
| 17 | Wyngate | No association |

The following map is an attempt to display the information from the preceding three lists in map format.



Discussion of BCN Purpose and Bylaws

Jim discussed the provisions of the articles of incorporation and bylaws which had been established by the interim board members (King, Certain and **Kim Kahwach**). The bylaws permit each active association one board member each on the BCN Board and that only BCN board members were eligible to be officers, though non-board members would be able to head committees established by BCN. Since the various associations have different cycles, BCN board members will come and go during the year. Regardless, BCN elections will be held each October. If vacancies occur during the year, they will be replaced by BCN board votes.

Jim asked if there were questions. **Elizabeth Prichard** asked: “I have a question as it related to the NPUs. We all are in different NPUs, some in the same, [*Jim interjected there were at least four NPUs*] – which one are we?” Jim answered A, B, C, and F and possibly more in border neighborhoods. She continued, “and how does this group work with NPUs or does it supersede or is this an umbrella so that the neighborhoods in the different NPUs have an opportunity to talk?” Jim answered, “No, what we’re trying to is that we are one community and we are divided up by the NPUs and council districts, different creatures of government, and there are some third-party entities that have been established that are getting governmental authority and what we are trying to do is to bring everyone together so we have a forum to discuss things and to act, if we choose to. We don’t have any formal role or recognition by the NPUs (yet) – the group might want to seek that and that would be something for the group to decide. But basically we have never had a forum that has gone this far or has this much potential to bring people together on different issues. We have talked about infrastructure and development issues; we’ve talked about education issues; these are all common concerns, basically quality of life and services.”

Jim Wright (? male voice to Gordon’s left): “Looking over the bylaws, I see the language: “The Corporation shall be focused on, but shall not be limited to, improving, protecting, and enhancing the quality of life and services in the Buckhead neighborhoods and community, while serving as the voice of and watchdog for the Buckhead homeowners.”

Continuing, “The question I have is, the geographic area encompassed by the association is so large, how do we determine which issues will we take on? Because I could see that certain neighborhoods would have issues that they’d be dealing with but it wouldn’t affect the overall geographic area and how would you determine if you are going to address a land use issue, a transportation issue, an infrastructure issue, a traffic issue, or whatever, for a certain area that doesn’t affect all of them. What is going to be the criteria for determining how to choose your battles?”

Jim King: “Well, the consensus of the group of paying members, once we are there, will determine which battles you pick. Or issues you address. But it doesn’t preclude five neighborhoods in NPU-C from working together on a project but not using the name of the Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods. One of the ways we ended up here is that we had a

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bunch of neighborhoods on the north end that were dealing with a transportation issue that was overlapping neighborhood after neighborhood and everybody said we need to share what we're going through. Even if it is a process with the City, that could be really aggravating, as we all know – there is so much that can be learned and leveraged..."

Jim Wright: "I am not disagreeing with the concept, I'm just saying it is such a large area, how do you determine if you will bring the force and weight of the association to bear on upon an issue? How do you determine your agenda? Because, I would think that the things you would address would impact most of the neighborhoods – I don't know what the criteria is."

King: "At the last meeting, the mission statement was developed three or four meetings ago by the group that was participating at that time, the issue of I-85 and GA400 affects all of us directly or indirectly... **Jane (Rawlings)** and **Diane (Olansky)**, more directly that anybody ... that was a no-brainer. We can find issues that affect all of us, common ground are the best issues to tackle. Then we can learn from each other. We can have a debate in here; nobody's right and nobody's wrong. We'll live and we'll learn as a young organization – there is no "agenda" except to bring us together so we can work together – that's the main agenda."

Wright: "But there is a purpose, I would think, and that is to speak with a unified voice and have ourselves avail opportunities where we can effect positive change within our individual communities." King: "That is exactly right."

Sally Silver commented that one of the things that showed the potential of this is when, during the first couple of meetings that we were talking about the different things that affected every neighborhood ... we focused a little bit on taxes and the whole issue of the school's budget was coming up and a number of neighborhoods, as a result of the Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods meeting, we got together and went down to the School Board and argued about the budget and actually got it reduced, but a very incremental amount, but it's the first time I have ever heard of them doing anything like that. That's kind of the potential."

Sally went on to express concern about the phrase "serving as the voice of and watchdog for the Buckhead homeowners", saying that we already had our own associations and NPUs which are already voices for homeowners. She proposed changing the wording to "while serving as a voice". Some in attendance disagreed; others thought she had a point. Ultimately, it was agreed that the issue of the wording of the bylaws should be deferred to a future board meeting and that this meeting should focus on more urgent matters, such as election of officers, since some of the attendees needed to leave early.

It was agreed that in addition to the printed copies of the Bylaws at the meeting that King would get the e-mailed to the attendees.

Garth Peters asked about "proxy votes" in the event that a president is not available. King was not sure if that subject made it into the bylaws – if it didn't, we would address it.

Sue Roberts asked if we would have advance notice of the issues to be voted on, so the association's reps could get guidance from their own boards, because, for some issues a

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consensus of the association’s board would be needed. King understood, but said that “we may be put in the situation where we have to act quickly and if you don’t think you can vote, just abstain – the preference would be to give everyone as much notice as possible. We will try to work methodically.”

Treasurer’s Report

Henry Wyche said we have \$1,000 that has been collected as dues from neighborhoods. We have a bank account opened.

The question was asked, what are the dues for? King: “Basic needs. We set \$100 through the end of 2008 just as a number. When we have the ;larger group together we can leave the number the same or set it higher, as a group decision. We’ll have post office boxes, technology, stationery ... basic needs. And if there is a project where we need to raise money or do something, we can do that and people in the community can send checks to subsidize whatever... It is more the idea of having a little ‘skin in the game’ so people feel a part of the organization.” Jim went on to say that because it may be difficult to get dues payments authorized in some organizations, we agreed to waive the payment rule for 30 days so we could get moving forward, “but if associations are going to ‘partake’, they need to make that commitment” to pay the \$100 dues.

BCN Logo



BUCKHEAD
COUNCIL OF
NEIGHBORHOODS

Kim Kahwach showed the logo she had sketched out.

She plans to adjust the colors and make other refinements. Everyone liked the logo.

Web Site Domain Name

King reported that he had reserved **buckheadcouncil.org** some time ago. He mentioned

Election of BCN Officers

Gordon, who served as the chair of the Nominating Committee, outlined the committee’s actions. The committee, also made up of **Yolanda Adrean, Frank Bennett, Kim Kahwach, Jim King,** and **Garth Peters** made the following recommendations from a list of BCN board members who had indicated availability to serve as officers:

Nominating Committee Recommendations

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Chairman | Jim King |
| Vice-chairman | Kim Kahwach |
| Secretary | Gordon Certain |
| Treasurer | Henry Wyche |
| Communications | Jennifer Moyers |

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The committee recommended to keep the following positions unfilled: Parliamentarian/Legal and Member at Large. Bios were distributed for all candidates. Nominations were solicited from the floor – there were none. Each candidate for the five officer positions was unanimously accepted by the board.

The discussion turned to the two open positions. It was suggested that the Parliamentarian/Legal might best be offered to a lawyer and no one had volunteered to serve as Parliamentarian/Legal. There was also some interest in having an odd number of officers, to make Executive Committee votes decisive, ultimately it was proposed that the Member at Large position be filled. Two remaining candidates had expressed interest in serving as officers: **John Haliburton** and **Michael Hilton**. Michael withdrew and John was elected unanimously. The board reserved election of Parliamentarian/Legal to some future period.

As a result of the elections, the BCN officers were as follows:

2008/9 BCN Officers

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Chairman | Jim King |
| Vice-chairman | Kim Kahwach |
| Secretary | Gordon Certain |
| Treasurer | Henry Wyche |
| Communications | Jennifer Moyers |
| Member at Large | John Haliburton |
| Parliamentarian/Legal | (Open) |

GA400/I-85 Petition

At the previous BCN board meeting, discussion continued about the Connect Atlanta Plan and the concern many neighborhoods had that Connect Atlanta had somehow omitted what many thought was Buckhead's greatest traffic issue: the incomplete intersection of GA400 and I-85. A subcommittee had been designated at the September BCN board meeting to prepare a petition to applicable governments for member associations and others to sign that would convey the urgency that was felt about this project. Jim presented that draft petition to the BCN board and asked the member associations sign it. While some signed immediately, considerable followed, related to the concerns of Lindridge Martin Manor had about the interchange in general and the wording of the petition under consideration.

Sally Silver said that she had met with Connect Atlanta officials and could report progress:

- The GA400/I-85 Interchange project had been added to the Connect Atlanta project list, conditioned on ramp configurations and speeds which were neighborhood friendly.
- An "east-west" solution had been added to the Connect Atlanta Plan.¹

¹ In subsequent discussions between Heather Alhadeff of Connect Atlanta and Gordon Certain, this Connect Atlanta "solution" is the same solution presented at the September 8 final briefing by Connect Atlanta for the Northside area. This solution involves a proposed transit line from the Galleria area in Cobb, going southwest along the I-285 R-O-W and connecting with a transit line on Marietta Road, which would connect with the Beltline transit system, terminating at the Lindbergh station. Commuters wishing to continue to the business district along Peachtree Road would need to take

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Jane Rawlings spoke at length about the situation involving the I-85/GA400 interchange. Her neighborhood adjoins I-85, which borders on the northwest. She said that there is no official GDOT alignment for the completed interchange's ramps. But, through "open records" requests, they have secured proposed GDOT alignments that show 35-foot high ramps operating a highway speeds essentially in the back yards of existing homes. The discussion was quite long and detailed. Basically, Jane said they could not sign the petition for concern that if her neighborhood signed it with a "nebulous" configuration, they would potentially be endorsing a project that would be damaging to their neighborhood, undermining their attempts for protecting it. She outlined that the lane configuration expected from the GDOT would go through the floodplain of Peachtree Creek and flooding was already an issue in that area. Environmental studies are needed to determine the impact of the interchange project. Her neighborhood is working with planning experts from Georgia Tech to chart the future for neighborhoods in the area. Jane indicated that they wanted any proposed ramps to be "within the Y" and not encroaching on her neighborhood. By "within the Y" she meant the area between GA400 and I-85 to the north of the existing interchange. This approach would not affect the ramp from southbound I-85 to northbound GA400, since that ramp would be "within the Y" anyway. However, the ramp from southbound GA400 to northbound I-85 would have to cross over a number of lanes of both expressways.

King reiterated that the BCN did not want to support actions that would be neighborhood destructing. At the same time, the incomplete interchange was Buckhead's major traffic problem and it was extremely important to all Buckhead residents and well as those in DeKalb and Gwinnett to complete it. He said that BCN would include a cover letter from Lindridge Martin Manor, expressing that neighborhood's position and concerns about the interchange project.

The board went through the paragraphs of the proposed petition and made the following suggestions and comments:

- Jane had the concern about the wording supporting the acquisition of "additional land which may be needed to complete the interchange". Gordon tried to clarify that this involved the Home Depot site and was intended to minimize impact of the project on neighborhoods. Sally Silver suggested that the wording be as specific as possible. It was suggested that the statement be modified to address "commercial land". Jane went on to say that if land were purchased for expressway ramps, it would mean a loss to the tax base.
- Jane repeated that if the project were kept within the Y and if ramp design speeds were lowered, it would push the GDOT toward a design that might be acceptable. She also asked that no existing homes be destroyed as a consequence of the project.
- Diane Olansky was concerned about the last item under the "Basic Solution Criteria" (*"If solutions are not initially found, new ones must be found so this problem intersection is ultimately fixed."*) She felt that it contradicted the preceding criteria. Jim and Gordon disagreed. Gordon said it meant that the problem has to be solved. Jim said we have

MARTA to the Lenox or Buckhead stations. Heather indicated that they had a "design goal" of accomplishing the trip from Cobb to Lindbergh with only one transfer.

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access to external engineers who may provide needed expertise. It was agreed the item would be “circled” and reworded to eliminate possible conflicts.

- Sally felt the entire document was too lengthy.
- Garth said, given that Sally had reported that Connect Atlanta had added the project, wasn't a petition on a moot point? Jim said that inclusion on the Plan was just the beginning and we needed a sustained effort with various governments to see it completed. Gordon pointed out that the project could have been added to the plan with “zero priority”² Jim felt we needed to get the support of the neighborhood and business community so governments would take notice.
- Sally suggested that the wording indicating that the interchange project was “a gap project”, one that has been on the table for years but never completed. She said that we should do this before we did anything else on GA400.

In the end, it was agreed the petition would be reworked to address the concerns.

Community Concerns

King asked if there were any community concerns.

Piedmont Hospital/ Shepherd Center “Impact Assessment” Study

Jim Wright spoke about a study being performed by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. It is being performed now and will be published before the end of 2008. It is being done in conjunction with Ga Tech's School of Architecture, the CDC and others. Its purpose is to determine the impact of this growing medical center on the surrounding area (Brookwood Hills, Ardmore Park, Collier Hills, Collier Hills North, Brookwood, and Loring Heights). Areas of interest include:

- Land use
- Safety conditions
- Transportation & congestion
- Air pollution
- Etc.

As conditions are assessed, recommendations for mitigation of unfavorable conditions will be proposed. Wright believes the study will be of interest to BCN and plans to provide copies to be distributed among all BCN neighborhoods.

Project to Remove “Suicide Lane” of Northside Drive

Elizabeth Pritchard spoke about the need for progress on a long-delayed project to convert the reversible “suicide lane” on Northside Drive and replace it with turn lanes augmented with improvements such as sidewalks. Elizabeth recounted the years of preparation by the GDOT and City on this project. All design work and approvals have been completed for this project. It was supposed to be started in early 2007, but was deferred to 2009. Now they are hearing it will be 2010.

² Subsequent communications with Connect Atlanta confirm that the interchange project has indeed been added, but with essentially “zero priority”.

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The current configuration of the road causes many accidents. Jim King reported being in one, himself. [I received notification that a North Buckhead resident died last month as a result of a February crash on Northside – GC.]

Garth spoke about the GDOT's holdings of 40' of right-of-way for a new turn lane on Northside at Collier Road and the fact that the City, through poor coordination, had installed new granite curb stones in this same area, improvements that will need to be removed.

Elizabeth asked if BCN could help encourage the completion of this project. King asked her to bring a write-up in an appropriate format for the November board meeting.

Discussion Issues and Future Presentations

King outlined the desirability of having experts on topics of broad interest to come to future BCN board meetings and educate the board. He noted that we already get too many e-mails and it would be most productive to hear the facts in face to face presentations. Possible topics included: Transportation issues, Tax issues, Infrastructure, Government services, and Tax Allocation Districts (TADs) – King said that we had hoped to have time to discuss tax allocation districts in a pro and con session, but had not had the time to arrange such a presentation. Jim asked if there were proposal for other topics:

Current status of Connect Atlanta

Gordon Certain suggested that a presentation on the current status of Connect Atlanta would be an appropriate topic. That led to a long discussion about the problems encountered with this project. Sally Silver said that the contents of the project were still changing daily and that the planned review of the Connect Atlanta Plan by the City Council had been pushed from mid-October to mid-November and may be even later. Many neighborhoods are finding surprises and Sally had encouraged council members to have their neighborhoods scrub the plan.

Sally pointed out that, for instance, the widening of Roxboro Road had been a high-priority item in the near-term plan even though the road was widened years ago. She also said that the tunnel under the Buckhead Loop which had caused North Buckhead such surprise and concern was now gone from the plan.³ Sally has commitments from the City Council's Transportation Committee that the Connect Atlanta Plan will not leave that committee until everyone has seen its projects and commented.

Current Status of the Beltline Project

³ Unfortunately, subsequent discussions and correspondence with Connect Atlanta's Heather Alhadeff indicate that the tunnel is still on Connect Atlanta maps, awaiting rezoning of adjacent property from residential to commercial. However, land use planning of parcels in the affected area has already been successfully litigated to the Georgia Supreme Court and is unlikely to change. Thus, the laudable goal of the Connect Atlanta project to unify land use and transportation planning is somewhat threatened by contradictory visions of the future in this one particular area.

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Sally Silver provided a briefing on the status of the Beltline project. She said that the planned issuance of \$120 million in Beltline bonds was being scaled back to about \$67 million by the City Council, the minimum amount that was required legally. Gordon asked if the premised increase in property values needed to pay for Beltline TAD bonds did not occur – how would the bonds be paid off? Sally said it would fall back on the City's taxpayers. This reality is making the council act very carefully.

Presentations by Council Members and Candidates

King suggested that it would be useful to invite our various district and at-large council members to attend BCN meetings and brief us. He also suggested that we could invite candidates for mayor, etc. to brief us, being careful to treat them the same.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Prepared by Gordon Certain
BCN Secretary
November 12, 2008

Interim BCN Web Page

www.nbca.org/BCN

Minutes

Map

Bylaws