



# The Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods

## Board Meeting

April 15, 2010

Peachtree Presbyterian Church

6:45 – 8:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

### Attendees:

	<b>Full Name</b>	<b>Neighborhood/Organization</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
1	Laura Braddick	Northside Neighbor	lbraddick@mdjonline.com
2	Major Robert Browning	APD Zone 2	rbrowning@atlantaGA.gov
3	Gordon Certain	North Buckhead	gcertain@comcast.net
4	Lt. Mark Cotter	APD Zone 2	mcotter@atlantaga.gov
5	Julian de Juan	Margaret Mitchell	jdejuan@rawdatainc.com
6	Randall Fox	Chastain Park	RandallFox2003@Yahoo.com
7	Kristy Gillmann	Peachtree Hills	phca_kristy@hotmail.com
8	John Haliburton	Peachtree Hills	john@thrashgroup.com
9	Sharla Jackson	Fulton County District Attorney Office	Sharla.Jackson@fultoncountyga.gov
10	LaDawn B Jones	Fulton County District Attorney Office	ladawn.blackett-jones@fultoncountyga.gov
11	Kim Kahwach	Buckhead Forest	kajensen@bellsouth.net
12	Barbara Kennedy	Collier Hills	bar2010@aol.com
13	Jim King	Chastain Park	jimking@mindspring.com
14	Walda Lavroff	North Buckhead	waldalavroff@comcast.net
15	George Mirgorod	Pine Hills	gMirgorod@comcast.net
16	Robb Pitts	Fulton County Commission Post 2	
17	John Schaffner	Buckhead Reporter	johnschaffner@reporternewspapers.net
18	Jim Sellers	Accion Security/Buckhead Blue	james.Sellers@AccionSecurity.com
19	Bob Stasiowski	Peachtree Park	rstasiowski@yahoo.com
20	Horacena Tate	State Senator District 38	Horacena.Tate@Senate.GA.gov
21	Paul Taylor	City of Atlanta DPRCA Commissioner	Pataylor@AtlantaGa.gov
22	Harriet Thomas	Fulton County	
23	Marci Vincent	Mt Paran Northside	marcia_vincent@hotmail.com
24	Jim Wright	Ardmore Park	wrightjr@mindspring.com

### Representation by Neighborhood:

<b>Neighborhood/Organization</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
1 Ardmore Park	Jim Wright
2 Buckhead Forest	Kim Kahwach
3 Chastain Park	Jim King, Randall Fox
4 Collier Hills	Barbara Kennedy
5 Margaret Mitchell	Julian de Juan
6 Mt Paran Northside	Marci Vincent
7 North Buckhead	Gordon Certain, Walda Lavroff
8 Peachtree Hills	John Haliburton, Kristy Gillmann
9 Peachtree Park	Bob Stasiowski
10 Pine Hills	George Mirgorod

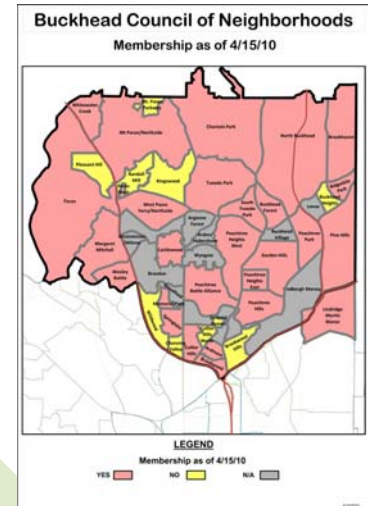
# BCN Board Meeting Minutes – April 15, 2010

## I. Welcome

**Jim King** called the meeting to order at around 6:45 PM. No quorum was present during the meeting.

## II. Introductions

The attendees introduced themselves. Current (April) dues payment status is shown in red in the map to the right. No quorum existed so the acceptance of three new neighborhoods into BCN was deferred until next meeting. Those new neighborhoods are Brookwood, Pine Hills and Springlake. Twenty-eight (28) neighborhoods have paid 2010 dues, an increase of two over 2009.



## III. Approval of Minutes

Minutes for March were not approved because of the lack of a quorum.

## IV. Committee Reports

**Treasurer** – No report.

**Communications** – No report.

**Development and Infrastructure** – No report.

**Education** – No report.

## Parks

Park Pride and the Woodruff Foundation awarded a \$50,000 grant to Little Nancy Creek Park on Peachtree Dunwoody Road. On May 1, the Blue Heron Nature Preserve is going to have its second annual "Eco Fair".

Paul Taylor – Acting Commissioner of Parks – commented saying he is very positive but the city is facing a difficult budget year in FY11. The administration is trying to fund some equipment: vehicles for trash pickup and foresters. They are still working on flood damage and is just now getting FEMA money. A lot of work is happening this year with the Beltline in the southern part of Buckhead.

Gordon discussed the Park Pride Conference and related events. He encouraged BCN members to attend the session next year. As part of the event, there was a tour of metro community gardens including two in North Buckhead. There are many opportunities for learning about the city at a modest cost, such as the world-class sewer water reclamation facilities in Clayton County. Mayor Reed was among many speakers at the conference's all-day session. He also discussed the proposed "red fields to green fields" initiative in which "TARP" money could be used to fund the acquisition of distressed commercial real estate for the creation of parks and greenspace and the creation of jobs.

Gordon reported that Howard Shook spoke to the North Buckhead Civic Association's Annual Meeting in March and had outlined a parks initiative. In particular, Howard said that a potential park site was being considered in the Lenox Superblock area (the area bounded by Roxboro Road on the east, East Paces Ferry Road on the south, Lenox Road on west and Peachtree Road on the north). The property under consideration, formerly the CityPlace project with nine high-rise condominium towers opposite the Lenox Marta station, is now in receivership. Gordon made the point that "Buckhead is so impoverished when it comes to parks – we need parks." He went on to say that if you go to the bottom of the BCN web site there is a map showing that the upper part of Buckhead, the northern 10% to 15% of the city's land area has just 1% of the city's public playgrounds. Buckhead, especially northern Buckhead, is an underserved area in terms of parks and playgrounds.

Jim King outlined that Howard Shook, BCID and BATMA have worked together on a plan to create a new non-profit to take an inventory of greenspace. The initiative deals only with District 7 and does not include the rest of Buckhead (District 8). Gordon as BCN Parks Chair and Sally Morgens, Tuxedo Park and NPU-A Parks Chair, plan to meet with Yolanda Adrean in several weeks to discuss this.

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Jim commented that there are already a few non-profits such as the Buckhead Alliance which has dealt with public safety and some parks work and that if we have existing non-profits, can they be put to a larger purpose? As BCN members, Jim felt we should focus on what is best for the overall community. BCN should deal with "macro issues", those of a common interest. Jim indicated that Gordon is on the right track in that if someone is looking at an initiative in half of Buckhead, can it be extended to the rest? Having introduced this greenspace initiative, Jim asked Gordon to report in more detail.

Gordon, who also serves on the BATMA board, reported that the new 501(c)(3) would be a separate organization from BATMA with its own board of directors. The focus of the new organization would be to find greenspace opportunities in the parts of District 7 lying within NPU-B. An RFP has been circulated to organizations with parks/greenspace expertise asking for a response by the end of April, asking for a plan to manage the process of identifying and acquiring greenspace. Gordon continued, "I really don't want to get into telling Howard how to do it, but it sure doesn't cover the rest of Buckhead and the rest of Buckhead has the same kind of problems that District 7 has. We, as BCN, have a Parks Committee and are trying to get organized and get a focus on what we want to work on."

Jim asked Paul Taylor about the city's "Greenspace Plan". Paul said it was an overall high level greenspace master plan, last updated in 1993. He said it includes a "huge to-do list of subsequent studies and initiatives", which they have been reviewing to see what is doable – everything requires money of some sort unless you are talking just pure policy. He said they are hoping to move forward with "some bits and pieces of it". Parkland provision citywide is an issue. He said the city was abundantly provided with tennis courts and were short on everything else. "Certainly, up in Buckhead, you don't need a high-priced planner to look a map and see the giant white space on the city map that doesn't have any little green flecks in it. It is a big challenge. I think it really needs to have a lot of thought put into some of our previous sessions about what are parks and what are the right sized parks. The city has been saddled with all of these little remnant bits and pieces, some of them smaller than a residential lot. ... As I understand it, a number of years ago we walked away from those and basically said the neighborhood associations and so on who want to adopt those, great, but it is just a black hole in terms of maintenance dollars to have crews going around to all of these tiny bits and pieces. Plus, you can't really do things – some of them are not big enough to put playgrounds on. For a number of years we have had a policy of backing away from anything that is less than two acres, primarily because of that concern. Two acres is the make or breakpoint in what makes logical sense in terms of maintenance crews going around and doing things. But obviously, when you are in the urban core of Buckhead or Downtown, that doesn't translate very well, so it really needs to be a separate strategy for what are really going to become urban squares and urban greenspaces. That's something we have to get our arms around."

Gordon: "The developers in the southern part of North Buckhead and along Peachtree have put in three or four thousand high-rise [condo] units, and there's not a place to walk a dog; there's not a place for a kid to play. And it is just bad and it needs to be retrofitted."

Jim: "My only point is, here's another non-profit being created. We have some existing non-profits that have done some good work. Even the red fields to green fields versus this, they are all in a similar [unintelligible – strategy?] and I think that Gordon is on the right track in getting people to focus ... Let's not create five different entities to run the greenspace acquisition effort. Maybe there can be an umbrella structure for coordination but it is like here [with organizations like BCN]. People asked me when the Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods started out, why don't you do the Atlanta Council of Neighborhoods? And I responded, 'Are you going to pay me to do this?' None of here are paid. It is all volunteer work. Our interest is in Buckhead. We can help people replicate this in the Southwest or in East Atlanta or Downtown or what have you, and we can let people affiliate with us because we have set the boundaries ... We don't want to have all these local groups from Downtown to Metro to Buckhead competing for the same dollars in an uncoordinated fashion. From a funding perspective, people are going to look at us and say 'you are not organized' and they will say 'we'll go on to somebody who's all on the same page'. Paul knows that all too well." Paul: "Absolutely. There's a limited appetite for seeing scarce resources sprinkled out among too many groups."

Gordon: "One of the things our neighborhood went through back in the year 2001 – there was an initiative back then in the Planning Department to buy greenspace. So we in my neighborhood had our board members identify parcels. We did a map that is still on our web site where you can 'mouse over' candidate parcels and link to the form we filled out for each parcel. We in North Buckhead have



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an inventory. Every BCN neighborhood should have an inventory of parcels because all the sudden money comes up and somebody says, 'We have some money' and we can say, 'Here are these candidates'. Of the properties which were in our inventory in 2001, about 10 acres of it has purchased by the city. It works to have a plan. We need a plan even if we don't know where the money is coming from. If you have a plan, some day the money will be there."

Jim: "To wrap this up: The committee is going to come up with the concept of a plan." Gordon: "Yes, we need to talk to Yolanda and see if she is interested and in what way." Jim: "and report back to us. None of these things are easy. They take time. But if you are organized, you can help the city move the greenspace plan forward."

John Shaffner: "Did I hear you say that the greenspace action plan that BATMA working on was actually being funded by the BCID?" Gordon: "There's some funding coming from the CID. There's also membership dues, ..." Shaffner: "Is some of this also spurred on by the SPI-9 initiative?" Gordon: "I don't think there is any relationship with SPI-9. It is a bigger view of the need than that. It is all of NPU-B." Kim Kahwach: "But it seems like it all along the same timeline as the SPI-9 legislation." Gordon: "It is totally separate from that." Shaffner: "The reason for asking is that if the CID is funding this, then the CID doesn't really stretch into all these parts of Buckhead." Gordon: "I understand that. You have a good point. But the CID does occupy some off this area, an area which is amongst the worst served for parks in the whole city." Jim: "The BCID and BATMA are 501(c)(4) like we are, advocacy groups, so that could be the reason they are forming a 501(c)(3) [to get around the geographical restrictions on BCID] if they are going to be a significant funds source. That could be the simple reason." Shaffner: "We could just say that we will stretch it all the way across. But if the funding is coming from the CID, those people are not going to say, 'yes, we'll build a park up by Fire Station 27.'" Gordon: "The funding is coming from many different sources."

Gordon concluded by saying: "I really did want to have Denise Starling and Howard here tonight because it is their 'baby' to talk about. *I would encourage the press to talk to them before they write anything.*"

### **Property Taxes**

George Mirgorod has expressed interest in representing BCN in relations with the Fulton County Assessors and Tax Commissioner. George has been through three years of contacts and appeals, he would like to share his knowledge and experiences.

Jim King said discussions related to the establishment of the proposed committee needs to await a quorum.

**Public Safety** – See VII. Invited Guest Speakers, Pitts and Jones.

**Transportation** – No report.

### **BCN Watershed Coordination Committee**

Kristy Gillman reported on the meeting she and George Mirgorod had with Peter Aman (the city's chief operating officer). She said they met with Aman for an entire hour. As background, when Mayor Reed addressed the BCN, several items came up and Peter volunteered to help us with them. She said she appreciated Aman's openness and candor. Part of her mission in the meeting was to establish how community leaders could work with the city to make the process of working with the city more streamlined and effective and "hopefully less frustrating for everybody". Kristy provided examples related to Watershed Management. For instance, she provided a report about the seven to eight stops it took at City Hall to get an irrigation meter and how they were sent back and forth to the same office multiple times. Kristy said Aman seems open to future dialogue and possibly an advisory panel including residents from across the city, possibly meeting quarterly. Kristy said the administration is reevaluating employee training and the performance of different tiers of the department, especially middle management. She said Aman was quite open to "mystery shopper" contacts to the city departments to understand how residents are really treated.

George added that Aman might be the most candid person that he had ever met with. He also suggested that neighborhoods should provide feedback to Aman when we see that city performance has improved in an area, so that he doesn't hear just negative comments.

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Kristy added that Peachtree Hills had been awarded the "Phoenix Award" by the City's Office of Sustainability for their "Greening the Neighborhood" project.

### **V. General Business**

No report.

### **VII. Invited Guest Speakers**

#### **Robert Browning – Commander Zone 2 APD**

Crime is down across the city. Car break-ins are down but are the still biggest problem.

Burglary of high-end houses that are unoccupied and for sale has increased. Neighbors who see any unusual activity at such homes should call 911.

"Spring Fest" (Freaknick) is expected this coming weekend. The APD is starting 12-hour shifts and all off-duty days are cancelled. There are no permitted festivals. APD will be ready.

A question was asked about alarm systems at unoccupied homes for sale. Realtors apparently advise that the systems not be monitored to preclude false alarms – some owners leave their homes armed. The USPS puts signs inside the mailboxes of such homes saying "Vacant" – thieves look for such signs – locking mailboxes are a solution.

#### **Horacena Tate - State Senator District 38**

Senator Tate said that the Legislature was currently in its 36th day. The Milton County legislation didn't make it out of committee but is will be back next year. Parts of Sandy Springs near Buckhead weren't in the original Milton boundaries. The legislators have not seen proposed Milton boundaries.

#### **Robb Pitts, Fulton County Commissioner**

#### **LaDawn Blackett Jones – Fulton County District Attorney Office – Zone 4 Community Prosecutor**

Commissioner Pitts said that Jim King had brought it to his attention that APD's Zone 2 Precinct was the only one in Atlanta without a designated "community prosecutor" (CP). Pitts contacted District Attorney Paul Howard, who wants a Zone 2 CP. Pitts says the price tag would be about \$82,000 for the balance of this year and up to \$130,000 next year. Pitts outlined the process: after the budget is approved, a procedure called "soundings" permits items to be added to the budget. At a recent meeting, the Zone 2 CP was listed in the soundings but no vote was taken. The actual vote will take place on April 21 at 10 AM. Pitts said that Jim King had spoken to the Fulton Commission on several occasions and encouraged additional BCN reps to speak in support of the CA during the public comment portion of the agenda before the vote is taken.

Jim King commented that the originator of the Zone 2 CP proposal was BCN's Public Safety Chair Kim Kahwach. He said BCN will send out an e-mail encouraging member neighborhoods to send a representative to the commission meeting.

Pitts added that after commission approval, donated office space will need to be found in the zone for the CP.

LaDawn Jones is a community prosecutor in southwest Atlanta (Zone 4) and also directs the community prosecutor program. She spoke about the functions and responsibilities of the community prosecutor. She said, as part of her job, she knows about every street in southwest Atlanta and about every criminal. "Your community prosecutor will be in your community and will more than likely live in or near the area. .. They will have a familiarity that will make it easy for them to work closely as a liaison between the police department and the citizens." She said there are a lot of holes in the system. In her area they have crack houses. Someone reports a crack house to the police and the CP follows up with the zone commander, from the arrest to court, prosecuting the case, to closing the crack house. The CP is required to come to community meetings and brief the citizens on the CP programs like "court watch" (CW). Under court watch, citizens are invited to trials of the worst offenders in their community, the ten to twenty worst repeat offenders as identified by the CP. The CP sends out an e-blast and attendees wear CW shirts to court. CW participants don't have to speak in court, they just attend. The defendant may have his/her family there to provide public support ("*don't send my daddy to*

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*jail*"), while the CW attendees are there to publicly represent the community. The CP provides CW training sessions periodically, though training is not a requirement to participate. LaDawn said they were starting a CW program for Zone 2 regardless of the CP vote by the commission. The CPs also work with zone commanders to figure out how to prevent common types of crime. Sharla Jackson (Zone 5 CP) added that court dates frequently are changed at the last minute and CPs are able to contact the neighborhoods and let them know about the schedule changes.

Julian de Jaun asked why Zone 2 was the only one without a CA. Sharla said that CPs originated in 1999 in areas of high crime rates, such as Zone 4 followed by Zone followed by Zone 5. Other areas saw the usefulness of having CPs. "North Fulton" and "South Fulton" each got CPs within the last several years. Zone 2 is the last. Why would anyone oppose this for Zone 2? Money.

### **VIII. Community Concerns**

#### **Candidates Forum for Primary?**

Gordon Certain observed that we had a candidates' forum for the mayoral race and that there were several races involving state Senate races (districts 38 and 39) which would be decided in the primary elections. Do we want to get into that? Jim asked that Gordon send the proposal out by e-mail to prepare for discussion in the May meeting.

#### **Randall Fox – Chastain Park Green Market, Dog Park, and Arts Festival**

Randall Fox of the Chastain Park neighborhood said that the Chastain Park Green Market recently opened on the grounds of the Horseradish Grill. Randall said the market was very successful in its first two weeks – five vendors sold out. 250 neighbors attended the first week; 350 the second.

Randall also provided background on the Chastain Dog Park. Randall described his experiences trying to walk his two St. Bernards (one weighs 280 pounds) down the Powers Ferry sidewalks. Randall said in his former home, Washington DC, every park has a defined dog area – he was surprised Atlanta didn't have them. When the Chastain master plan was prepared a dog park was overlooked but in a survey a dog park ranked sixth. An dog park initiative has been started. Over 100 yard signs have been distributed.

Paul Taylor commented that dog parks don't have to be on city park land – they can be on undeveloped industrial land and in utility corridors. They don't have to be regular shaped rectangles – they can be long and linear. Paul said dog parks improve security by bringing people into otherwise unoccupied areas and can benefit land owners. John Shaffner said that Georgia Power had been a big supplier of land in Sandy Springs.

The Buckhead Spring and Arts Festival will be held on May 22 and 23. More information next month.

### **IX. Next Meeting**

May 12

### **X. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at about 8:30 PM.

Prepared by Gordon Certain  
BCN Secretary  
May 11, 2010

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BCN Organizational Status as of 04/15/10																						
		Represented at BCN Board Meeting?																				
	Neighborhood	BCN Dues		2008			2009												2010			
		2009	2010	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
1	Arden																					
2	Ardmore Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
3	Brookwood		✓						✓								✓					
4	Brookwood Hills													✓								
5	Buckhead Forest	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
6	Buckhead Heights										✓											
7	Castlewood	✓	✓								✓				✓							
8	Chastain Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
9	Collier Hills	✓	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
10	Collier Hills North										✓											
11	Garden Hills	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
12	Grant Estates/South Tuxedo Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
13	Historic Brookhaven	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
14	Kingswood	✓		✓							✓											
15	Lindridge Martin Manor	✓	✓	✓				✓									✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
16	Margaret Mitchell	✓	✓					✓				✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
17	Memorial Park	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓	
18	Mount Paran Parkway																					
19	Mt. Paran-Northside	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	
20	North Buckhead	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
21	P'tree Battle Alliance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
22	Paces	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		
23	Paces West	✓	✓					✓	✓													
24	Peachtree Heights East	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓			✓			✓				
25	Peachtree Heights West	✓	✓			✓									✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
26	Peachtree Hills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
27	Peachtree Park	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
28	Pine Hills		✓			✓											✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
29	Pleasant Hill																					
30	Randall Mill																					
31	Ridgedale Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
32	Springlake		✓																✓	✓		
33	Tuxedo Park	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓		
34	Wesley Bohler	✓	✓				✓		✓													
35	West Paces Northside	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
36	Whitewater Creek	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		
37	Wildwood			✓																✓		
Count		26	28	17	13	18	14	20	17	12	14	18	17	15	17	11	18	16	17	24	20	10