



BUCKHEAD COUNCIL
OF NEIGHBORHOODS
www.buckheadcouncil.org

The Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods

Board Meeting

January 12, 2017

Peachtree Presbyterian Church

6:45 – 8:15 PM

Meeting Minutes

Attendees

	<u>Full Name</u>	<u>Neighborhood/Organization</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
1	Jeff Clark	Garden Hills	jeffbclark@gmail.com
2	Doug Crawford	North Buckhead	DouglasCrawford@gmail.com
3	Jim Durrett	Buckhead CID	jdurrett@buckheadcid.com
4	Jim Elgar	Loring Heights- Ceasar Mitchell's office	jimelgar@gmail.com
5	Dieter Franz	North Buckhead	cdf Franz@comcast.net
6	Courtney English	Chairman, Atlanta Board of Education	
7	Jim Garcia	North Buckhead	jim.g@reagan.com
8	Ron Grunwald	Loring Heights	Rgrunwald@bellsouth.net
9	Ken Hoogs	Paces	khoogs@CommercialCapitalAI.com
10	Ben Howard	Buckhead Condo Alliance	benhoward@gatech.edu
11	Brad Humphrey	GA Department of Transportation	Jhumphrey@gdot.ga.gov
12	Brad Kaplan	Pine Hills	kaplanbr@yahoo.com
13	Alan Kauffmann	Ardmore Park	ajk123@icloud.com
14	Rebecca King	North Buckhead	Rebecca@c4a-inc.net
15	Walda Lavroff	North Buckhead	waldalavroff@gmail.com
16	Kathleen Moriarty	Peachtree Hills	katatl@comcast.net
17	Linda Nesper	North Buckhead	lxnesper@coca-cola.com
18	Garth Peters	Memorial Park & Buckhead Coalition	gpeters@thebuckheadcoalition.org
19	Lee Prichard	West Paces Northside	Lee@promove.com
20	Jennifer Rose	Mt. Paran-Northside	jenprose@gmail.com
21	Tom Tidwell	West Paces Northside	tom@tidwell-law.com
22	Frank Toye	Chastain Park	ftoye@bellsouth.net
23	Debra Wathen	Paces	6wathens@bellsouth.net
24	Matt Westmoreland	Atlanta Public Schools	MattWestmoreland@gmail.com

Attendance by Neighborhood

	<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Attendees</u>
1	Ardmore Park	Alan Kauffmann
2	Buckhead Condo Alliance	Ben Howard
3	Chastain Park	Frank Toye
4	Garden Hills	Jeff Clark
5	Loring Heights	Ron Grunwald, Jim Elgar
6	Memorial Park	Garth Peters
7	Mt. Paran-Northside	Jennifer Rose
8	North Buckhead	Walda Lavroff, Doug Crawford, Dieter Franz, Jim Garcia, Rebecca King, Linda Nesper
9	Paces	Debra Wathen, Ken Hoogs
10	Peachtree Hills	Kathleen Moriarty
11	Pine Hills	Brad Kaplan
12	West Paces Northside	Tom Tidwell, Lee Prichard

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BCN 2016/17 Officers (Executive Committee)

<u>Office</u>	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Email</u>
Chairman	Tom Tidwell	West Paces Northside	tom@tidwell-law.com
Vice-Chairman	Ron Grunwald	Loring Heights	rgrunwald@bellsouth.net
Secretary	Gordon Certain	North Buckhead	gcertain@comcast.net
Treasurer	Debra Wathen	Paces	6wathens@bellsouth.net
Communications	Jeff Clark	Garden Hills	jeffbclark@gmail.com

BCN Standing Committees

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Chair</u>	<u>Email</u>
Executive Committee	Tom Tidwell	tom@tidwell-law.com
Education	Tom Tidwell	tom@tidwell-law.com
Development and Infrastructure	Ron Grunwald	rgrunwald@bellsouth.net
Transportation	Debra Wathen Elizabeth Scattergood	6wathens@bellsouth.net betsy.scattergood@gmail.com

Other (Legislative, NPU, Parks, Voter Education/Registration, etc.)

I. Welcome & Introductions

Chair Tom Tidwell called the meeting to order at about 6:45 PM. A quorum was present.

Later in the meeting Tom Tidwell introduced Courtney English. Courtney is currently Chairman of the Atlanta Board of Education and is now running for Atlanta City Council Post 1 At Large. He then introduced Matt Westmoreland, also with the Atlanta Board of Education. Matt is also running for the City Council Post 2, hoping to take Mary Norwood's empty seat.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes for the November meeting were approved.

III. Admit New Member Neighborhoods

No neighborhoods asked to be considered for BCN membership. Treasurer Debra Wathen reminded neighborhoods that BCN membership dues are now payable for 2017. The amount is \$100 per neighborhood.

IV. Speakers

Jim Durrett, Executive Director, Buckhead Community Improvement District

Topic: Update on strategic plans for Buckhead, including the park over 400

Note: Jim made this presentation without planned visual aids due to a computer hardware issue.

Jim Durrett outlined the BCID's efforts to establish a gathering place in the Buckhead commercial district. He said that that is one of the glaring things that is missing in the commercial core in Buckhead. He said it needs a place for people to gather and have a community. He said that GA 400 had divided Buckhead but their plan took advantage of its location. He noted that GA 400's existence precluded development in that corridor. Their plan is to create a Park Over GA 400 and on top of the Buckhead MARTA Station.

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Their park concept also provides an alternate route for PATH400 which currently parallels Lenox Road from GA 400 to Tower Place Drive. Instead, PATH400 would rise over Lenox Road into the Park Over 400 and continue to Peachtree Road.

So far they are about half way through the concept development phase, costing the CID \$900,000 so far. They are not talking about capping all the space over GA 400, because that would turn it into a tunnel and would require a lot of costly infrastructure. Instead the park designers plan to leave gaps along some of the edges of the covered area. He likened the park structure as like a river flowing from Lenox Road down to Peachtree. It would be almost a half a mile long.

Park Over 400 would have three “nodes” where the park was widest, providing significant space for people to gather. The node nearest Lenox Road would resemble a natural area with an amphitheater, supporting passive recreation and gatherings for performances. An audience of up to two thousand could watch a performance in that area. The next node would be more of a “hardscape” which he described as “more of a community living room”. “People could watch a big screen or a celebration, have a market of some kind, a fair.” South toward Peachtree, that node would be more like “lush gardens” – they are talking to the Atlanta Botanical Gardens about a possible partnership. They seek something serene to encourage small group gatherings “in a nice pastoral setting”.

Today, halfway through the concept planning effort, they have very rough numbers of the park’s cost. Their estimates range between \$195 and \$245 million to build it and approximately \$2 million a year to provide programming, park operations, and maintenance. They are strategizing on how to provide funding, starting with Washington DC and going all the way down to the City of Atlanta – including MARTA, Georgia DOT, the Federal Transit Administration since they would be making improvements to the Buckhead MARTA Station. On the private side, funding might come from the Buckhead CID. They are also considering a *parks district*, “so that folks who are proximal to the park and are benefitting the most from it ... there may be the opportunity for them to pay for this to happen. And then the philanthropic community.” They’re talking about foundations and talking to wealthy individuals and to corporations. There might be opportunities for sponsorship, concessions in the park to help pay for park operations. He said, “we’re putting everything on the table, looking at everything, and we’re going to start picking them off, one by one”.

The BCID planners will be done with the concept development phase around June. Then the CID will make the decision whether they are satisfied with the information they have gathered and whether there are sufficient partners willing to help them. He said it can’t just be a CID project because they don’t have that kind of money but do have some money. He said they “just need to convince a whole bunch of people that this is a really good idea, not just for Buckhead, but for the City of Atlanta because it should be a local amenity as well as a regional amenity, especially since it is right on top of a MARTA station”.

Audience questions: Jeff Clark [sounded like his voice] asked, as part of this considerable effort, is the CID considering providing funds for providing traffic and parking enhancements or any other strategic initiatives? Or is the park now the primary focus of BCID? Jim said that the park is both a primary and also a secondary focus. He added, “it’s primary because I happen to believe it’s the most important thing that we could possibly be pursuing. I think that having a significant gathering place to actually create community in this part of Atlanta is extremely important for the long-term viability of Buckhead. So, I think it is extremely important. However, as it relates to our budget, it is a fraction of what we’re spending our money on. We’re spending so much more money on making improvements to roads, streets, streetscapes, walkability, that sort of thing. That expenditure dwarfs what we are doing with the park. And it will, in the future, dwarf anything we do with the park.”

Dieter Franz asked about GDOT’s ownership of air rights at the park. Jim said that not only GDOT and MARTA air rights are involved but also some private property rights are involved as well. He said he believes that it would be a City of Atlanta park. It would likely be operated by

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maintained by an independent, non-profit entity who would have an agreement with the City of Atlanta.

Tom Tidwell asked if there is any chance that this would be funded by an increased burden on taxpayers. Jim said, first of all the CID is funded by taxpayers (commercial property owners). If the CID put more money into it, then yes. Tom follows up: Do you foresee a SPLOST or a property tax hike for City of Atlanta residents? Jim said, "not for City of Atlanta residents, but we are going to explore the idea of some sort of a 'parks district' that has something to do with how close you are to it, and testing that idea. ... If the community says 'I'm willing to be taxed in order to have this amenity here', then we would absolutely explore that."

Another questioner asked about the traffic impact of the park. Jim said he didn't think that the increase in traffic would be tremendous.

Ben Howard asked if the "parks district" Jim had mentioned previously was the same thing as a rumored residential CID imposed on apartments or condos that Ben has been hearing about. Jim said that it's way too early in the process, adding "nothing's coming off the table."

Tom Tidwell: What is the BCID doing to alleviate or slow down the growth in traffic? Jim: "It's a tough nut to crack. As long as population is growing and people are choosing not to use alternative modes of transportation, we're running out of capacity for automobiles. And so, the strategies that we are using, and the city and region are using, are to make sure you are squeezing the most capacity and efficiency out of the existing road capacity that you've got." He mentioned the plan to strategically widen Piedmont Road between Lenox and Peachtree Roads, a major bottleneck. He also talked about making sure that the area is as walkable as possible and about pursuing bicycle facilities. He also mentioned investing more in MARTA. He said, noting that he is a MARTA board member, that MARTA's massive investment in and expansion of how bus service is delivered is extremely important.

Walda Lavroff inquired about the need for traffic signal coordination, especially on Peachtree Road. We cited problems resulting from poorly operated signals in nearby Brookhaven. Jim said the TSPLOST recently approved by voters provided for "state of the art" coordination of signals in the entire city. He added that GDOT is partnering with the City of Atlanta to take on some of the responsibility of having their signals and the City signals at the same operational level. He added, "Brighter days are ahead."

Another questioner asked about congestion on Piedmont between Lenox and Roswell Roads. Jim said they will be studying what can be done to improve the situation at the Habersham, Piedmont, Roswell triangle. He said the problem is there are three signals in very close proximity. The CID, supported by Yolanda Adrean, Howard Shook and the City of Atlanta will be conducting a study of that can be done to improve those intersections so GDOT can fix that area. He said BCID will be hiring the firm that will do that initial work, though, since much of the area is outside of BCID boundaries, they can't fund the physical project work.

Jim added that they are about to start on a "complete street" treatment of East Paces Ferry Road, from near the Gordon Bynum Bridge at GA 400 to Roxboro Road, much of it behind Lenox Square. Work will start later this year. Pedestrian and bicycle-friendly improvements will be made. These improvements will support safer and more convenient access to PATH400 which passes right by the other end of Gordon Bynum Bridge on the far side of GA 400.

During 2017, we should see milling and repaving of Peachtree Road, from Maple Drive down to Midtown. The road will be restriped with a center turn lane to improve traffic flow.

Beyond 2017, he said they are making plans to improve walkability, such as the area on Peachtree Road in front of the White House Restaurant, where there is currently no sidewalk.

He said that they are getting close to a final concept for the roundabout at Phipps Boulevard and Wieuca Road and hope to start work in late 2017 or early 2018.

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Jim concluded by offering to come to neighborhood meetings and to talk on any topic the neighborhood is interested in. He said he can be contacted at jdurrett@buckheadcid.com.

Brad Humphrey, Area Manager District 7, Georgia Dept. of Transportation

Topic: Overview of plans and timeline for improvement of intersection at Moores Mill and Northside Parkway

Brad Humphrey introduced himself by outlining the GDOT territory he is responsible for: all of the City of Atlanta as well as DeKalb and Rockdale Counties.

He said the Moores Mill and Northside Parkway intersection is one of his “hot projects”. The main objective of the project is to improve safety, especially, left turns. He said that the contractor is now on site. The first phase of the project will be installation of a City of Atlanta water line, which should start in mid-February. That will be followed in several months by grading for the widened road. The entire project is due to be completed by November 30 with work being performed during the day. Lane closures are not permitted during peak traffic times (6am to 9am, and 4pm to 6pm). The scheduled completion of the project is dependent on Georgia Power’s work at the site. He added that the contractor can be charged a daily rate for liquidated damages if the project is completed late. Matt had business cards to hand out and said if anyone had questions to feel free to call him.

Garth Peters asked about delays on GDT’s Northside Drive project. Matt said paving should start on January 13. Mat wasn’t sure of the completion date for the whole project.

Debra Wathen asked if there was a study to expand the I75 bridge over West Paces Ferry Road to make it less narrow for West Paces traffic. She said the bridge was a bottleneck to a lot of school-related traffic. Matt didn’t know and said he would check. **Tom Tidwell**, expressing concern about the same area and noting the threat of added Braves traffic, asked if neighborhoods could meet with him about the problems. Matt said yes, that community ideas would be appreciated.

Matt addressed the delayed project on **Piedmont Road at Habersham Road**. He recounted some problems including improperly installed drainage grates and the edge of the road collapsing due to water leakage of unknown cause. He indicated the project should be completed in a month or so.

He also updated us on the traffic signal on **Roswell Road at The Ivys** condominiums. He said that the installation was being done by the owners of the Powers Ferry shopping center. He was not sure of their schedule.

V. Election of BCN Officers for 2017

Current officers

Chair - Tom Tidwell, West Paces Northside Neighborhood

Vice-chair - Ron Grunwald, Loring Heights

Secretary – Gordon Certain, North Buckhead

Treasurer - Debra Wathen, Paces

Communications – Jeff Clark, Garden Hills

All incumbents were reelected. Tom Tidwell stated that this would be his last year as Chairman.

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VI. Mayoral Candidate Forum

Jeff Clark said he would be leading this effort for BCN, leading to a mayoral forum in September or October. He asked for volunteers to help plan – there will be a planning meeting. Jeff will send an email asking for ideas. Garth Peters said he would help by providing contacts to some of the campaigns.

Jeff also asked each neighborhood to check the neighborhoods section of the BCN web site. If any of the information there is wrong, please go to the “contact us” section and tell Jeff what corrections are needed.

VII. Community Concerns | New Business | Announcements

VIII. Next Meeting Thursday, February 9, 2017

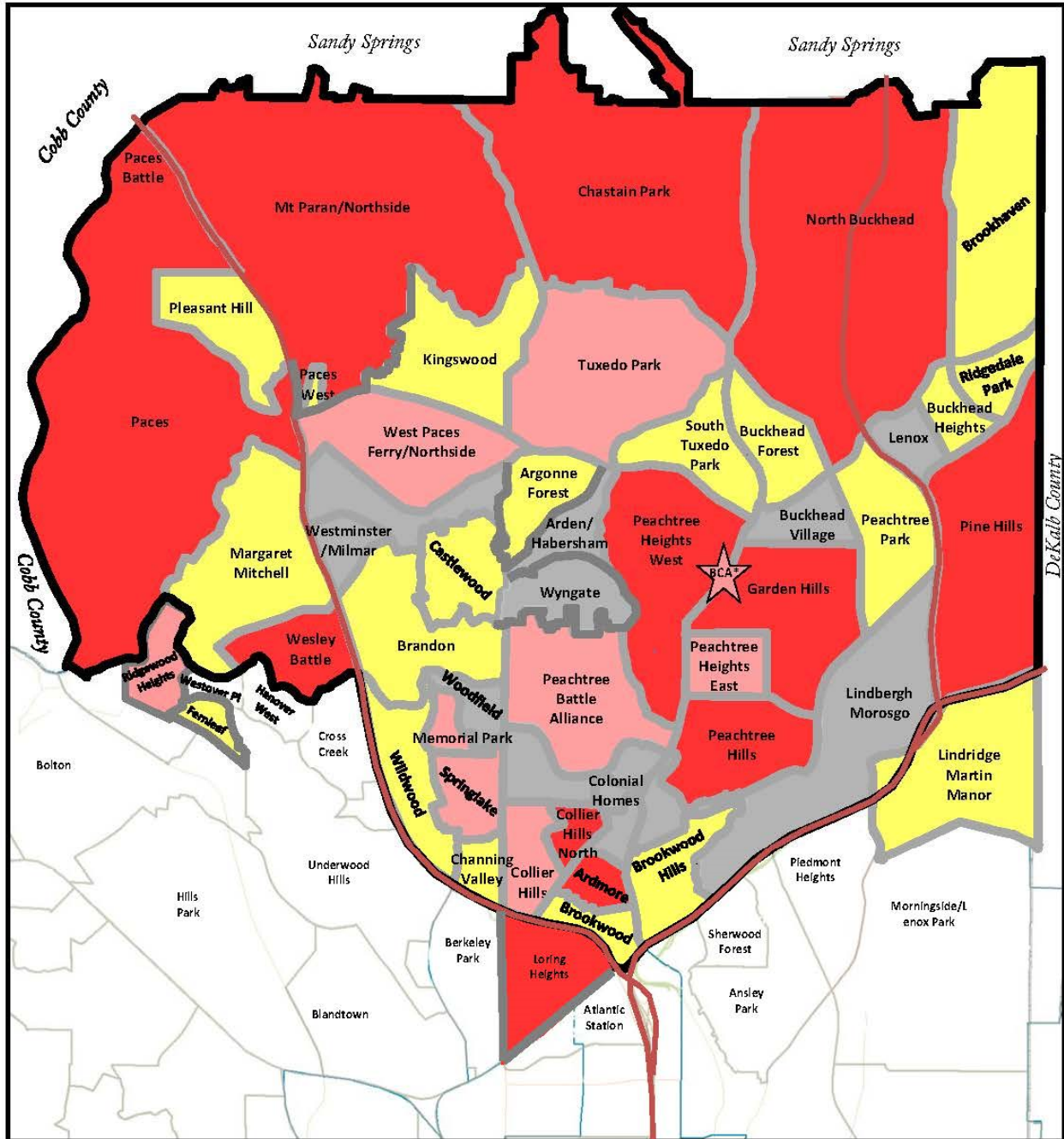
IX. Adjourn - The meeting adjourned at about 8:00 PM.

***Note:** The opinions expressed by the speakers and individual neighborhood representatives in these minutes do not necessarily represent those of BCN or its member neighborhoods.*

Prepared by Gordon Certain, BCN Secretary
February 2, 2017 – Revised February 6, 2017

BCN's web page is at www.BuckheadCouncil.org.

Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods



* BCA = Buckhead Condo Alliance

LEGEND

Paid Membership as of 02/03/17



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BCN Status as of February 3, 2017																
Neighborhood		Dues		Data	Neighborhood Representation at Board Meetings											
		2016	2017	2017 Census	2015	2016	2017									
					10 meetings	10 meetings	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
1	Arden/Habersham															
2	Ardmore Park	✓	✓		70%	55%	✓									
3	Argonne Forest				30%											
4	Brandon				0%											
5	Brookwood															
6	Brookwood Hills				10%											
7	BuckheadCondoAlliance	✓			90%	77%	✓									
8	Buckhead Forest				0%											
9	Buckhead Heights															
10	Buckhead Village				20%	44%										
11	Castlewood															
12	Channing Valley				0%											
13	Chastain Park		✓	✓	10%	44%	✓									
14	Collier Hills	✓			30%	33%										
15	Collier Hills North	✓	✓		20%	55%										
16	Fernleaf				0%											
17	Garden Hills	✓	✓		80%	44%	✓									
18	Grant Estates				20%											
19	Historic Brookhaven				10%	33%										
20	Kingswood				20%											
21	Lindbergh															
22	Lindridge Martin Manor				10%	11%										
23	Loring Heights	✓	✓		70%	77%	✓									
24	Margaret Mitchell				20%											
25	Memorial Park	✓			50%	44%	✓									
26	Mt. Paran-Northside	✓	✓		20%	88%	✓									
27	North Buckhead	✓	✓	✓	100%	100%	✓									
28	Paces	✓	✓		60%	77%	✓									
29	Peachtree Battle Alliance	✓			40%	33%										
30	Peachtree Heights East	✓			60%											
31	Peachtree Heights West	✓	✓		80%	55%										
32	Peachtree Hills		✓		10%		✓									
33	Peachtree Park				10%											
34	Pine Hills	✓	✓	✓	60%	55%	✓									
35	Pleasant Hill															
36	Ridgedale Park					11%										
37	Ridgewood Heights				20%	11%										
38	Springlake	✓			20%	11%										
39	Tuxedo Park	✓			50%	55%										
40	Wesley Battle		✓		10%											
41	West Paces Northside	✓			100%	88%	✓									
42	Wildwood															
43	Wyngate															
Totals		18	12	3	Avg:10	Avg:12	12									