

MHHA ♦ CONNECTION



Fall 2007 ♦ Volume 12, Issue 4

www.merryhills.com

A quarterly newsletter by the Merry Hills Homeowners Association

MHHA Annual Meeting
Tuesday, November 6, 7:00 p.m.
at Life Enrichment Services
Upper level of Mason Mill Recreation Center
1340 McConnell Drive

Agenda

Speaker: How water-smart is your household?
Bylaws revision
Elections of MHHA Officers

Merry Hills Homeowners Association (MHHA) will have its annual meeting on Tuesday, November 6, starting at 7:00 p.m.

Speaker

Our scheduled speaker, Alicia T. Pennie from the DeKalb County Dept. of Watershed Management, will discuss the current serious drought in Georgia, what DeKalb County is doing to address it, and how residents can help in conservation efforts. The entire State of Georgia is currently under Level 4 drought restrictions, which prohibits outdoor water use.

Bylaws revision

President Flo Wolf has proposed a major revision of the MHHA Bylaws for consideration by the membership at the Nov. 6 meeting. The revision would open membership to all residents within expanded boundaries. See *Bylaws Revision* on page 3.

Election of Officers

We need volunteers to fill these officer positions -- so volunteer to join the MHHA leadership team and make a difference in your neighborhood.

Our agenda includes the election of MHHA Officers. Currently, all positions are open for nomination. We need to elect:

President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary

If the bylaws are revised as proposed, nominations will also be accepted for a Membership Coordinator and 5 Directors.

Contact Dan Wenger, secretary@merryhills.com, or leave a message for him at 404-935-6936, to nominate yourself or another person as a candidate for any of these positions or for more information about serving as an officer. Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the meeting as well. All nominations must be with the consent of the individual being nominated. Members who have paid dues in 2007 are eligible to vote and hold office.

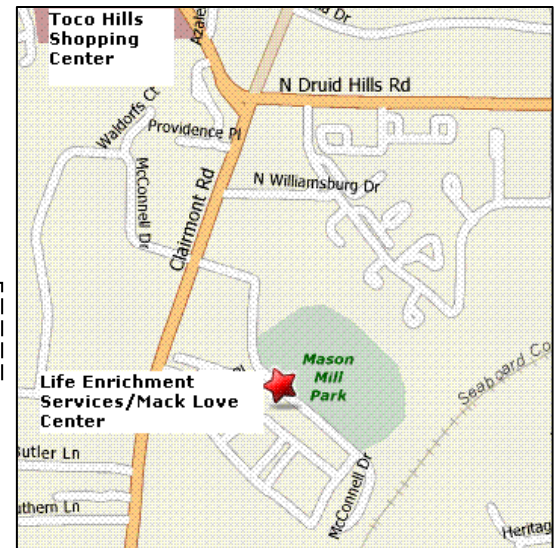
Approval of minutes

Please review the minutes of the May 7 Spring Membership Meeting that are published at the "Minutes" section of www.merryhills.com so the membership can vote on approving the minutes at our Annual Meeting. A copy will be available for review prior to the meeting as well.

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Location of Nov. 6 Meeting



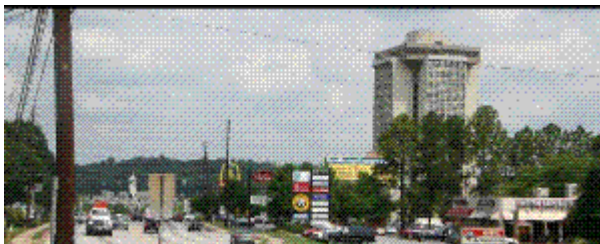
Zoning update

By Debra Edelson, MHHA Zoning Chair

The Briarcliff/N. Druid Hills Study Technical Review Committee had one meeting in recent weeks, which was attended by an Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) representative. Topics of discussion included the lack of traffic numbers and data, and the Development of Regional Impact (DRI) review that ARC requires for the projects proposed by Sembler, Pattni/Telcom Hotel and Executive Park. Commissioner Rader seems intent on conducting a coordinated set of traffic reviews for these three major proposed projects that will reference each other's newly generated trips. This matter is still under discussion.

As of Oct. 18, the Review Committee had not received Alex Garvin's final report for the Briarcliff/N. Druid Hills Study that was due to Livable Cities Coalition on Oct. 12.

Meanwhile, the following item is on the agenda for a hearing before the Planning Commission on Nov. 7, 6:30 p.m. and DeKalb Board of Commissioners on Nov. 19, 6:30 p.m.: Application of Plaza Hotel Management Group to rezone property from M (Industrial) to C-1 (Commercial) and O-I (Office-Institutional). The property consists of 5.64 acres at the intersection of North Druid Hills Road and Tullie Road near I-85. This property contains the old Bellsouth Tower shown below and was included in the Briarcliff/N. Druid Hills Study area. It appears that the project is listed on the agenda in error since it cannot be heard without regional ARC/GRTA review. The project cannot move forward until those reviews are completed.



DeKalb Police provide update

DeKalb County center precinct police officers spoke to more than 200 residents at the October 16 meeting organized to discuss the increase in home burglaries and car thefts in our area. Officers said they have arrested a number of juveniles who are suspects in several of the cases. We were given tips on how to secure our homes and cars and directed to www.burglaryprevention.org for more crime prevention tips.

We heard about a new neighborhood list-serve group that was formed to share information on security, safety and crime prevention. To share such information with the group members, send a message to tocowatch@yahoo.com. To join the group, click on the "Join this Group" button at www.groups.yahoo.com/group/tocowatch.

Many thanks to Congregation Beth Jacob for providing meeting space.

New MHHA members

Barbara Blount, Christmas Lane
Emmanuel and Randee Goldberger, N. Holly Lane

Take action to curb nightclub influx

State Representative Mike Jacobs circulated the following message. On Oct. 9, the Board of Commissioners deferred a decision until its Nov. 13 meeting.

Message from Rep. Mike Jacobs:

...the DeKalb County Commission will consider a proposal by Commissioner Jeff Rader to change "last call" for serving alcohol from 4:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m.

Citizen involvement is needed to encourage the commissioners to support this measure.

Why is an earlier last call important to our neighborhoods? When the City of Atlanta changed its last call to 2:30 a.m. in response to a wave of violent activity around Buckhead nightclubs, it prompted an exodus of nightclubs to shopping centers in neighboring DeKalb, where last call is later. In fact, DeKalb County presently has the latest last call in all of Metro Atlanta.

It is widely rumored that management from Club 112, the now-closed Atlanta nightclub with a notorious history of violence, is planning to open a new nightclub called "Pure" in Williamsburg Plaza at Briarcliff and Clairmont Roads. ...The later these establishments stay open and pour alcohol, the more problems tend to arise. DeKalb County simply does not have the police manpower to keep after the problems that accompany more nightclubs taking advantage of the 4:00 a.m. last call.

Commissioner Rader (District 2) and Commissioner Boyer (District 1)...deserve our thanks for standing strong in the face of outrageous paid advertising in local newspapers calling this proposal "DeKalb's Jena 6."

In addition to Commissioners Rader and Boyer, at least two of the following commissioners must support the proposal in order for it to pass. Please call or e-mail these commissioners, and ask them to stand up for our neighborhoods.

Commissioner Larry Johnson, District 3
larryjohnson@co.dekalb.ga.us, 404-371-2425

Commissioner Burrell Ellis, District 4
burrell@burrellellis.com, 404-371-4907

Commissioner Lee May, District 5
lmay@co.dekalb.ga.us, 404-371-4745

Commissioner Kathie Gannon, District 6
kgannon@co.dekalb.ga.us, 404-371-4909

Commissioner Connie Stokes, District 7
conniestokes@co.dekalb.ga.us, 404-371-3053

Crime update

Crime updates through September 30, 2007 from the DeKalb County Police Dept. are online at <http://www.merryhills.com/watch.htm>.

During 3rd Quarter 2007, the following incidents were recorded in written police reports:

- Bramble Rd. – theft from vehicle 7/8; stolen vehicle, 8/26 (recovered 9/26); burglary, 9/11
- Christmas Ln. – burglary, 9/5
- Holly Ln. – 2 burglaries, 9/25
- Merry Ln. – burglaries, 7/24 (forced entry), 9/11, 9/25
- LaVista Rd. – burglaries, 7/6, 8/12, 9/24



To report a crime or suspicious activity:

Call 911 to report the incident.

To inform the neighborhood, leave a message for Connie Locke on the MHHA Hotline, 404-935-6936, or send a message to safety@merryhills.com

Cityhood for Dunwoody, Tucker, and Brookhaven?

Citizens in three areas in DeKalb County are currently studying the possibility of incorporating as a city: Dunwoody, Tucker, and Brookhaven. The proposed city of Brookhaven is nearest geographically and could be in our backyard since its proposed boundaries are I-285 on the north and Buford Highway on the south.

The Georgia State legislature must first pass legislation and then a referendum must be approved by voters in an area in order for a city to be formed. Legislation for the city of Dunwoody was introduced but failed to pass in the last legislative session.

Those in favor of cityhood would like greater local control of zoning, tax revenue, police and other services. Those opposed to cityhood are concerned with the possible loss of revenue to the county.

DeKalb County considers tougher rules for residential infill overlay districts

DeKalb County is considering an amendment that would toughen the petition requirements for the creation of a residential infill overlay district (RIOD) and permit the removal of an existing RIOD.

About 20 residential areas in DeKalb County are now regulated by a RIOD. One district nearby is on Fama Drive off North Druid Hills Road. A RIOD is approved by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners when 55 percent of the residents in a designated area sign a petition.

The district forbids infill homes from being constructed higher than 28 feet measured from the front threshold to the highest point of the roof. The threshold of the new house cannot be raised 2 feet higher than that of the previous house.

Residents contend that out-of-scale infill homes tend to reduce the value of adjoining property to its teardown value. Legislation to regulate infill housing was a contentious issue, with strong opposition from developers who said it would prevent infill houses from being built. But Ted Daniel, president of the Leafmore Creek Park Hills civic association which initiated one of the first RIODs, told www.godekalb.com, "We have at least six houses that have had a second story added on, or been completely rebuilt from the ground up, and they are all within the 28 foot height level."

For more information about the requirements for a residential infill overlay district, call 404-371-2155 or see www.co.dekalb.ga.us/planning.

Major Bylaws revision proposed for consideration of membership

President Flo Wolf has proposed revising the MHHA bylaws. Possible major changes to the Merry Hills Homeowners Assn. include the following:

1. Membership. Voting members can be any resident or homeowner within boundaries.
2. Boundaries. Expanded to include triangular area bordered by LaVista Road, Briarcliff Road, and North Druid Hills Road.
3. Board of Directors. Eliminates appointed section representatives. Replaces current board structure with:
 - a. Elected Officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Coordinator
 - b. Five (5) Elected Directors
 - c. Appointed Officers: Zoning Coordinator and Crime Prevention Coordinator
4. Term of office. Two years instead of one.
5. Elections. Eliminates nominating committee and designates Secretary to receive nominations.
6. Simplifies Purpose statement. Eliminates reference to "maintenance and upkeep of homes, lawns, and entryways" since we have no common property and it is misleading.
7. Requires only 1 meeting of the Association annually, in November.

The complete proposal for revising the bylaws has been submitted to the MHHA Secretary and is being distributed to the MHHA membership. The Nov. 6 Annual Meeting agenda includes discussion of the revisions and a vote on their acceptance by the MHHA membership. The current bylaws, as well as the proposed revised bylaws, are available at www.merryhills.com.

Protect your vehicles from theft and burglary

by *Connie Locke, MHHA Crime Prevention Coordinator*

Do you have one of the 10 Most Stolen Vehicles shown in the box to the right? If so, you need to be especially careful when parking and lock all vehicle doors. Park it in such a way that it is first in your driveway and closest to your house with another type of vehicle parked directly behind it. By “sandwiching” this vehicle in, the car thief will not be able to maneuver the car out onto the street, making it more difficult and even impossible for the car thief to steal that car of his dreams. The positioning of these vehicles is the key.

All drivers: Do NOT leave your keys in an unattended vehicle. Also, secure items of value (laptops, cell phones, purses and recently purchased packages) out of sight and in the trunk of your vehicle until you arrive at your final destination when they can be removed.

Most Stolen Vehicles in Georgia 2006

1. 1994 Honda Accord
2. 1994 Chevrolet Full Size C/K 1500 Pickup
3. 1989 Chevrolet Caprice
4. 1986 Oldsmobile Cutlass
5. 1997 Ford F-150 Series
6. 1995 Honda Civic
7. 1994 Jeep Cherokee/Grand Cherokee
8. 2000 Ford Explorer
9. 1994 Toyota Camry
10. 1999 Ford Taurus

Source: National Insurance Crime Bureau

PEDS Golden Shoe Awards Celebration

Pedestrians Educating Drivers on Safety (PEDS) is hosting its 8th annual Golden Shoe Awards Celebration on October 25 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10. Help recognize pedestrian-friendly people, places and projects. Location of event: Savannah College of Art and Design, 1600 Peachtree Street in Atlanta. Advance tickets are strongly encouraged. Light hors d'oeuvres, wine, beer, and great walking music by DJ Brian McGreevey. For more info, see www.peds.org or call 404-522-3666.

MHHA Connection

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MHHA HOTLINE: 404-935-6936



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