

**Minutes of NPU-B regular monthly meeting
Tuesday, July 7, 2020**

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Nancy Bliwise, NPU-B Chairperson.

****This meeting was held by Zoom****

Present: 21

Proxies: None

No members of the press were in attendance at opening remarks.

*6 member joined following the approval of the minutes

Dyana Bagby with the Atlanta Business Chronicle joined in the meeting in session.

1. OPENING REMARKS / CHAIRPERSON’S COMMENTS

Welcome, mission of NPU-B, and introductory remarks

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

NPU-B Action: A motion to approve the revised minutes from the previous regular monthly meeting (June) of the NPU-B passed by vote of 15-0-0.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

NPU-B Action: A motion to approve the agenda of the NPU-B passed by vote of 16-0-0.

4. REPORTS FROM CITY DEPARTMENTAL REPRESENTATIVES, ELECTED OFFICIALS, AND OTHERS IN AUDIENCE

Atlanta Police Department (APD) Zone 2

Major Senzer, Commander Zone 2, asenzer@atlantaga.gov ; 404-624-0674.

Major Senzer noted that a lot has changed since the last meeting. Major Senzer shared the year-to-date crime data from last year to this year for NPU-B. Homicides are up 400% (5 this year, compared to 1 last year), rape is down 55%, robbery is down 20%, burglaries are up 39% (with much of this due to the riots following the protests), larcenies are down 16%, shoplifting is down 31%, and auto thefts are up 11% (noting that 70% of stolen autos had the keys in the car and/or the cars were running). Major Senzer reminded everyone not to keep a spare key in your car.

Officer morale is low at present as the officers are concerned that they will not be supported even if they have followed the City’s policies and procedures. Zone 2 did not see as many “sick outs” as the other Zones. The proactive policing is not to the level that it was prior to Chief Shield’s resignation. It will take the officers time to absorb the current situation. The officers need to protect themselves, their families, and their careers. As a Zone Commander, Major Senzer noted that moving from the pandemic into the riots, and beyond has been tough. When officers are comfortable, they will begin proactive policing practices. Major Senzer ensured NPU-B that we

will all come out of this stronger. He noted that the cards, food, and outpouring of support from NPU-B communities has been appreciated and helped morale.

Major Senzer noted that kids selling water in the streets continues to be a problem. The Zone gets 20 to 30 calls per day. Major Senzer has talked to many of the juveniles and most of these kids don't live in Zone 2, they come from Clayton County and East Point and the south side of town because they can make more money in Buckhead. They make between \$150 - \$350 per day selling bottles of water. If the officers detain a kid for illegal actions, juvenile intake won't accept them because typically they don't have enough points to justify holding them. It can take the City hours to find a legal guardian to pick-up the minor children. Major Senzer is trying to think outside of the box. If the source of revenue disappears, then the illegal vending may disappear. One idea is to make it illegal to pay money on the side of the street.

There was a suggestion to start with a public education campaign to explain why it is dangerous to give money to the kids selling water on the streets. A board member noted that they block traffic and fight in the streets and added that these kids need mentors and need to fill out a permit and have an adult present. Some of the kids are aggressive and one hit a pedestrian in the head.

Another board member noted that the teens are damaging the landscaping in the medians and destroying public and private property. Several groups of kids have been seen fighting for territory. The numbers are growing exponentially every week.

Lenox Mall has a group of robust off-duty officers who are increasing their presence. Simon properties has increased the number of officers scheduled to work. The private officers are turning away many patrons carrying guns. Just last Saturday, 20 people with guns were turned away from entering the mall.

A board member asked where the City is on the arrests of the looters. Major Senzer noted that arrests are happening where there was good quality store video or VIC cameras in place. Several suspects have been identified and several have been arrested. It is taking a long time to identify suspects because there were so many different incidents over a large area and face masks limit the use of facial recognition software.

A board member asked about the street racing issues and the increase in ATVs racing around town. Major Senzer noted that the City had developed a plan to address the street racing that did not get implemented due to Covid, riots, and ensuing challenges. APD is monitoring social media. There was a group from Detroit that came a few weeks ago. The City was able to patrol the more popular spaces for street racing and displace the Detroit group. Using an undercover officer, the City was able to identify the organizer and hold them accountable. Most of the street racers speed off to avoid getting caught by police, as the City cannot chase them. The City has been trying to get ahead of the street racers. Major Senzer added that most of the car noise residents hear at night is just loud cars versus the organized racing groups. The City's noise ordinance is subjective and exhaust noise is very hard to prove and therefore enforce.

A board member described groups of Dodge Chargers driving down Roswell Road to Irby and Cains Hill that then do burn outs in the intersection or in parking lots for 20 or 30 minutes. There was an incident on E Andrews on Saturday at one of the parking lots. The group disbursed when the police arrived. Major Senzer noted that last weekend, he had to send many of his officers to Zone 3 to protect the precinct.

A board member talked about the hot spot of Copper Cove and Luca Lounge at N Fulton, Grandview, and Pharr where there is a large party atmosphere. The location is supposed to be operated as a restaurant but at 5am in the morning, there was still many people and party noises. The board member asked whether the restaurant was operating outside of City ordinance. The restaurant was shooting fireworks until 3am. Likely they are serving alcohol during these overtime hours. The neighbors are afraid. The license and permits officer noted that they are licensed as restaurants. Major Senzer noted that APD officers can't assess the percent of revenues from food versus alcohol to know whether a facility is operating within their permit requirements.

Major Senzer added that was a long zoom meeting with the neighbors, and everyone has observed the same things. Major Senzer put together an initiative with discretionary officers to address parking, loitering, noise, and other issues at the BP station... but this initiative is on hold due to the civil unrest. Major Senzer plans to put more emphasis on policing this area.

A board member noted that the restaurant could be guilty of fraud if they are misrepresenting their food/alcohol sales on their insurance. Another board member noted that the owner of the property is not getting reports from the restaurants that are required by the lease.

The licensing and permit department has the authority and responsibility to fine or revoke licenses if they are in violation. Several described difficulties in engaging the licensing and permitting enforcement team. A board member noted that restaurant licenses require less parking than bars so many facilities will apply for a restaurant license and operate as a bar because there is no downside.

Nancy noted that we can take some of these suggestions offline and this may be an area that Public Safety Committee can help us address effectively as an NPU.

Atlanta Fire Rescue Department (AFRD)
404-546-4400 (or dial 404-546-4421 to reach station 21)

No Report.

Atlanta Office of the Solicitors
Judge Sylvia J Lee; 404-932-5566, sjlee@atlantaga.gov

Hala Carey, Senior Assistant Solicitor, 404-658-6003, hcarey@atlantaga.gov

Ms. Carey noted that she will work with the head of code enforcement to support the licensing concerns discussed in the Garden Hills area. Licensing and permits cannot work remotely, so the pandemic has impacted some of this work.

Hala provided more information on the urban camping on the I-85 interstate. Because this area is GOT (state) property, it is a state issue. The City has informed the state that there is an issue.

Ms. Carey noted that the Roxboro Road party house case will be heard on August 3. The case may be re-set based on whether the courts are open or not. Having commercial parties in a residential zone is illegal. It is also illegal to have a rental in a residential zone based on current zoning laws.

Ms. Carey has been supporting some of the work to bring looters to trial following the riots.

Fulton County District Attorney Community Prosecutor's Office

Megan McCulloch, Zone 2 Community Prosecutor (megan.mcculloch@fultoncountyga.gov, 678-362-1855)

Ms. McCulloch plans to attend the August NPU B meeting to discuss potential gun violence reduction programs, as distributed by email.

MARTA Police Department (MPD) North Precinct (404-848-3902) www.itsmarta.com

Major Matthew Carrier; mcarrier@itsmarta.com, 404-848-4813

No report.

Department of Watershed Management (DWM) (404-982-1480) www.atlantawatershed.org

Vacant, Office of Safety, Security, & Emergency Management (404-546-3374)

Denise Stewart noted that the DWM is working on a stream stabilization project in the NPU-B in the Pine Hills subdivision to protect an existing sewer line. The project will be completed by August 2020.

You can receive alerts from the City DWM by signing up online.

Ms. Stewart announced the "No Wipes in Pipes" campaign. Wipes and other non-disposable items are challenging the ability of Watershed to carefully collect and treat wastewater. Please do not flush wipes and other non-disposable items.

Water is not being disconnected due for non-payment during the Covid pandemic. There are resources available to pay bills and other financial assistance may be available.

A board member noted that there was a notification regarding the City's Watershed Code update. Denise noted that she will get more information from Lisa Baker.

A board member noted that the stream restoration and stabilization is a massive undertaking and just upstream of the Shady Valley property where the DWM approved a stream buffer encroachment and more density than prudent at this site. The problems will be aggravated with this approved development and encroachment.

Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) (404-546-6813)

www.atlantaGA.gov/iparcs

Vacant, Manager, Peachtree Hills Recreation Center (PHRC), 308 Peachtree Hills Ave.

No report.

Department of Public Works

Marcus McGaw (404-865-8743) mlmcgaw@atlantaga.gov

Verna Singleton, VSingleton@AtlantaGA.gov

Officer O (404-807-2610)

Sama 404-865-8621 samakoi@atlantaga.gov

Officer McLendon, amclendon@atlantaga.gov, 404-273-0865

No report.

Code Enforcement Section, APD Community Services Division
CodesRequests@AtlantaGA.gov 404-546-3800 (call to report an issue)

No report.

Buckhead Business Association

Bob Gibeling, VP, Community Alliance, BBA office: 404-467-7607

No report.

Buckhead Coalition

Jim Durrett announced that the Buckhead CID and the Buckhead Coalition are creating a formal relationship, but the exact composition of this group has not been determined. Mr. Durrett noted that since it is impossible to replace Sam Massell; several existing organizations are merging to improve communications and messaging. The merger will provide more opportunities for people to get engaged.

Jim noted that the CID is meeting with the Target shopping center to determine how the shopping carts are leaving their property and ending up in the street. Limiting the supply of the shopping carts is one proactive move to reduce water sales at the intersections. Jim offered the CID communication media to help educate people on why supporting the water sellers is damaging to our community.

Jim updated the group on the CID's plan to fund supplemental patrols that Tony shared at the last NPU meeting. The vehicle has been purchased and outfitted and is currently at APD. The supplemental patrols will begin soon now that APD's 12-hour shifts are winding down. The CID will target the inappropriate behavior within the CID area. The CID will fund this initiative for the rest of 2020 and reassess at the end of the year. The supplemental patrol will be 6pm to 2am on Tuesday through Sunday nights.

Livable Buckhead, Inc (LBI) - Denise Starling, Executive Director
www.livablebuckhead.org

Denise welcomed Dr. Bliwise to the Livable Buckhead Board, and shared that Livable Buckhead is excited to increase the relationship with NPU-B. Denise commented that with recent traffic efforts, there is a missing link in the transit chain between Cobb County and Buckhead. Denise shared a concept for commuter buses connecting Town Center/Big Shanty and Buckhead with two potential interstate-based routing options. Livable Buckhead is looking at which of these two options works best. The route will focus on the commercial core, keeping the buses on major roadways and limiting their encroachment into neighborhoods. The concept is not overly defined at this point, but Livable Buckhead wants to get the project into the long-term ATL plan so that the concept is eligible for funding. The effort is in coordination with the Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods. Denise would love a letter of support from NPU-B to send with the application.

Nancy asked Jason Kendall as Chair of D&T for comments. Jason noted that the concept should be supported so that it can be flushed out into further detail.

Several board members voiced support for the concept to remove traffic from neighborhoods and provide other options. It was noted that transit takes a long-time to develop from concept to reality, so this is an important first step.

NPU-B Action: A motion to approve the letter of support for transit between Cobb County and Buckhead from NPU-B passed by vote of 19-0-0.

Buckhead Community Improvement District (CID)

www.buckheadcid.com

Buckhead Business Association

Garth Peters

ATL 311

Yusuf McCaskill

Mr. McCaskill noted that 311 is the non-emergency call number for City Service issues such as missed trash collections, bulk pickups, potholes, etc. Inside the City limits, 311 or outside of the City limits, 404-546-0311. Service requests can be submitted online, by email, or via the City's app.

ATL311- Non-Emergency Call Center for City of Atlanta Services

Hours: M-F, 7am-7pm

Dial 3-1-1- inside city limits, or (404)546-0311

website at www.ATL311.com

Email us at ATL311@atlantaga.gov

Download & report via app by searching "ATL311" in the App or Google Play Stores

Message and follow us on social media— search "ATL311" on Twitter, Facebook,

Instagram, Reddit, NextDoor, SnapChat, and YouTube

To sign up for COVID-related emergency notifications, text "ATLSTRONG" to 888-777

To report any COVID-related concerns, please email stayathome@atlantaga.gov or by calling 311

A board member called 311 to find out about the 811 dig markings in the street. It was explained that the City does not control these locates unless it is a City project. Mr. McCaskill noted that ROW work should be coordinated through the City's transportation and right-of-way departments. Everyone is urged to contact your Council office with questions.

Invest Atlanta

Bill Bozarth noted that his term on the Invest Atlanta Board is ending. The organization is tasked with focusing on job retention, job attraction, and creating affordable housing. They are working to support small businesses. The Mayor ultimately makes the nominations. Bill wanted to make sure that NPU-B is represented on this important Board.

District 7: Councilman Howard Shook

Sally Silver with Howard Shook's office reminded everyone to wash their hands and follow social distancing. She added that police budgets will be discussed for a while.

5. PLANNER'S REPORT

See below.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

APAB report was distributed via email.

A. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Mandi Gibson, Chair

No report. Mandi noted that public safety was happy to support the efforts to address licensing and insurance. Sally Silver added that Howard Shook's office has launched an audit to investigate the effectiveness of the licensing division to ensure they are acting effectively. Dr. Bliwise commented that there needs to be a better way to communicate our concerns with the City.

B. DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORTATION and SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE

Jason Kendall, Chair

No report. Josh Rowan is coming to the August meeting and Jason and the committee will coordinate in advance.

C. ZONING COMMITTEE

Bill Murray, Chair

Consent agenda

V-20-063 8 Parkside Court Approved 9-0-0
Applicant seeks a special exception to allow active recreation (swimming pool) in a yard adjacent to a street.

NPU-B action: A motion to approve the consent agenda passed by vote of 20-0-0.

V-20-037 Piedmont Center Approved 5-4-0

An Ordinance to amend SPI12 (Buckhead/Lenox Stations Special Public Interest District) to create a new Subarea Four (4) entitled Piedmont Center; to rezone certain properties listed herein and commonly known as Piedmont Center from the PD-OC (Planned Development – Office Commercial) zoning classification to the SPI-12 SA4 (Buckhead Lenox Stations Special Public Interest District Subarea 4) zoning classification and to the Buckhead Parking Overlay District; and for other purposes.

Sally Silver noted that she has been working with the owners of Piedmont Center and Denise Starling for months. The owners would like to increase public access and connectivity to the multi-purpose trail. The opportunities would be enhanced if it was a sub-area of SPI-12. The North Buckhead Civic Association was concerned about the Old Ivy Road access. There are some concerns regarding future development once the project is in the SPI. They noted that they do not plan to develop anything in the next 10 years. They are amenable to address concerns and the legislation can possibly be tweaked to protect the long-term interest for the property. The owner is going to defer this until the issues can be discussed and resolved.

7. PLANNERS REPORT

No report.

8. MATTERS FOR VOTING (above)

Z-20-36 - Front Facing Garage Ordinance

An Ordinance by Councilmembers Dustin Hillis, Andrea Boone, Andre Dickens, Antonio Brown, Joyce Sheperd, and Matt Westmoreland as substituted by Zoning Committee to amend the 1982 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta (Part 16), as amended, to amend sections 16-06.12(2), 16-06a.012(2), 16-06b.012(2) garage recess of the R-4 (single family residential), R-4A (single family residential), R-4B (single family residential), and R-5 (two family residential) districts and for other purposes.

Krishanna-Marie noted that it resets the placement of garages relative to the home in R-4 and R-5 areas. It reduces the setback from 10 feet to 6 feet. Dr. Bliwise noted that neighborhoods in NPU-B with R-4 and R-5 properties were asked to review this ordinance carefully. Peachtree Park is opposed to the ordinance because there is no consideration to the historic design or the historic nature of the neighborhood. Garden Hills feels that this is better handled as a variance and while there may be some areas where this is a benefit, it should be evaluated based on the topography, setbacks, and other hardships. Garden Hills does not support the ordinance. Buckhead Forest also noted that the historic nature of the development is inconsistent with this ordinance.

NPU-B action: A motion to deny Z-20-36 passed by vote of 21-0-0.

Z-20-43 - Billboards

Nancy noted that they are removing billboards from one area to create greenspace and relocating them to other parts of the City. Nancy received a lot of feedback from members and other NPUs. Sally noted that she expected that the NPU would be in opposition. The existing billboards would be replaced with digital billboards. There was overwhelming opposition from all of the members of the NPU. There were many strong concerns regarding the precedent that this would set placing a billboard into C-1 areas.

NPU-B action: A motion to deny Z-20-36 passed by vote of 20-0-0.

9. PRESENTATIONS

Jack White wanted to thank Bill Bozarth for his contributions to APAB. He would like 3 strong candidates to send to the Mayor's office. We need critical thinkers in this organization.

10. OLD BUSINESS

Ben reminded everyone that dues are \$60 for neighborhood and business reps (non-sole proprietorship) and \$30 for sole proprietorship. Ben noted that three of the six late groups have already sent checks.

11. NEW BUSINESS

Kim Wachtel shared that Arno Michele is going to withdraw from NPU-B as a result of a Covid-19 issues. John Bagwell has attended several NPU-B meetings and there was a discussion about engaging John in an official capacity.

John has lived in Buckhead for over 10 years and does a lot of advising and occasionally teaches wheelchair tennis clinics. Nancy noted that John is an advocate for people with physical challenges and his perspective on accessibility is important. John works for the Federal Government from home.

Nancy noted that this was something that we need to discuss how to move forward and whether he could qualify as a business representative or possibly as a special appointment.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nancy noted that she was invited to attend a meeting to reflect the NPUs position on “defunding the police” and she asked for input. Generally, people are against defunding or reallocating the police. If police need additional mental health trained officers/resources, then these resources should be provided. Public safety needs to be paramount. Some board members commented that the schedule appears too fast and that any decision should be based on a review of best practices from other communities and public outreach. Several board members noted that it appears that the police do not have sufficient funds to address their current workload and responsibilities, so it appears that extra funds/resources are needed to provide a better mental health structure.

The next NPU meeting will be August 4, 2020.

The next BZA meetings have not been scheduled.

The next ZRB meetings have not been scheduled.

13. ADJOURNMENT

NPU-B action: A motion to adjourn passed by vote of 18-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 PM