Board of Directors Meeting
Druid Hills Civic Association
Emory University, North Decatur Building
7:30 pm Wednesday, February 22, 2012

Presentation by Robert Buckler
Bruce MacGregor opened the meeting by stating that the position of the DHCA is to support the sale of the Nunan/Buckler property to DeKalb County as greenspace.
Robert Buckler then spoke for ten minutes stating his perspective. As this matter involves pending litigation, there were no discussions with nor questions of Mr. Buckler by Board members during the meeting. A legal transcript was made by a court recorder.

no time for discussion or questions.
Tom Barefoot of the DH Golf Club advised Mr. Buckler to speak with Scott Riley who suggested that Mr. Buckler speak to DHCA to give a brief history of his development plans.
Mr. Buckler presented a map showing the neighborhood along the Clifton Corridor in the historic District.
His first proposal had 5 lots, 3 in the back & 2 in front, but this was rejected due to the flag lots even though several existing flag lots are on the map.
His second of three proposals had 5 long lots from front to back, but this was successfully opposed.
Doug Grimm met with Mr. Buckler asking him to consider selling the lot as green space. Mr. Buckler is not opposed to this as long as he gets a fair price.
The property was nominated as county green space by Doug Grimm when Cathy Vandenberg was president in March 2010, but Mr. Buckler heard nothing about this until later. He believes Commissioner Jeff Rader sat on the proposal because the price would be too high, but he is meeting with Jeff on Friday.
In the Fall of 2010, Mr. Buckler proposed developing three long skinny lots of one acre each and selling the remainder of the lot to the county to be added to Burbank Park, but he never heard anything back.
In December 2010, a DeKalb County Attorney advised Mr. Bucker to bypass the Historic Commission and submit a proposal for seven lots on a cul de sac directly to the DeKalb Planning Committee, which approved the plan.
Mr. Buckler has been asked to put the legal battle on hold while a compromise is being considered.
Mr. Buckler is willing to field questions and talk to anyone, either in the hallway or at his workplace at Troutman Sanders.

Approval of January 2012 Minutes: The January 18, 2012 Minutes were approved.

Installation of 2012 Officers and Board
Cathy Vandenberg welcomed the new officers and members in attendance and each new officer affirmed the stated objectives of the association. Then the new members and the officers introduced themselves.

Land Use Updates
A single ranch house at 1642 Clifton Terrace (south of Ponce, west of Clifton and adjacent to Paradiso Dr.) was built on land owned by Rocky Atkins in the 1950's and was zoned multifamily but is now surrounded by single-family homes. The property had been foreclosed and the new owners want to replace the single ranch with two Craftsman Houses. Scott Riley is familiar with this property and believes it was once zoned

for seven units. Because the new owners are proposing only two lots, the plan appears to be appropriate for the neighborhood and presents no problems.

Frazier Center update: (Bob Ballou) Mediation meetings between the Frazier Center Board and neighboring residents were held by Dick Shuey, but since then, the Center has hired an attorney. The center wishes to create an overlay area for the 34-acre parcel to allow more use. Their proposal has four tiers: 1) the hospitality house, 2) the Education Center 3) the garden and 4) an Event Center with parking expanding from 33-45,000 sq ft to 70,000 sq ft. and a reduced buffer from 50' to 35'.
The parcel is zoned single family, and the nonconforming use was grandfathered in 1956. However, this does not permit the significant expansion that the center has experienced since then. The overlay and special use permits will allow expansion.
Most of the development is in DeKalb County, and development of the parts in the City of Atlanta will not be permitted.

Legislative Updates
HB 802: Rob Benfield explained how this bill, which was instigated by Mr. Buckler, would allow subdivisions to be approved without oversight by historic commissions anywhere in Georgia. While initially attached to another, unrelated bill, proponents of the bill are now presenting the proposal as a separate bill. However, at the Committee Meeting, many spoke against the proposal and the only pro opinion came from Mr. Buckler's Attorney.

Potential Changes to Historic Property Designation: Chris Leeth, chair of the Historic Preservation Committee, attends the monthly DeKalb Historic Preservation Commission meetings. The ordinance was adopted in 1994 and defines historic structures as older than 50 years, locking in those designated structures from before 1946 without adding newer structures as time advances. A 50-year rolling designation of historic structures may preserve structures we do not want to preserve. The Commission did not address new business until the end of their February 21 meeting after midnight, and asks communities to look into the positives and negatives of a rolling 50-year designation. Chris is calling for interested members to join him in taking a position on this. This change would affect developments such as the proposal on Dan Johnson Road, which include applications for demolition.

Dekalb County School System Redistricting A proposed reduction in the number of school board members would affect the school district map. The State and the School Board are working on a compromise. Pairing of schools appears to be off the table.

A Proposed City of Brookhaven (also called Ashford) appears to be a land grab for income producing real estate. The Brookhaven bill passed the house and may come up for a vote in the summer primary if it passes the Senate. The area would include the Northwest part of DeKalb county areas from the Century Center, to Dresden and up to 285. Chamblee is considering annexing more land to Dresden, which would mean most of the job-rich areas of DeKalb between 285 and 85 would be incorporated.
A meeting will be held at the Mack Love Senior Center at Mason Mill Park on February 26.
Options for the Druid Hills neighborhood to consider: 1) do nothing 2) form our own city 3) pursue annexation by Decatur or the City of Atlanta.

Home/Garden and Artist Market Tour update:

Thomas Winn gave an update of this year's tour, Druid Hills, The Second Century, and revealed a new logo. The Artists Market opening will be on April 19 and the Gala for patrons and Friends will be at the Druid Hills Golf Club on Wednesday, April 18. Forty people are working behind the scenes and ALL board members will be docents or shift chairs. 100 Friends and 300 Docents are needed this year. The North Druid Hills – Briarcliff Patch will feature houses on the Tour in a weekly feature before the tour date.

Good Growth DeKalb Presentation

Good Growth DeKalb is an organization of neighbors around Suburban Plaza who are opposed to its redevelopment by Selig Enterprises to include a Walmart Supercenter. The mixed use zoning appears to allow the development but neighbors are concerned about traffic, parking, property devaluation and crime. The organization has hired a lawyer to look for loopholes in the plan. Good Growth DeKalb is looking for support from the DHCA. There will be a forum tomorrow, February 23, 2012.

Emory Grove Historic Guidelines Presentation

Ron Foust brought up a concern of residents in the Emory Grove neighborhood that arbitrary and capricious decisions are made favoring wealthy architects and putting residents at a disadvantage. Color photographs of past renovations were shared of added Dormers and non-conforming siding. In particular, windows and doors are a common source of consternation. Because permanent storm windows without mullions are allowed, Ron suggests that windows with mullions behind the outer window should be allowed. The prevalent steel windows in many of the houses are very inefficient.

Chris Leeth, chair of the DHCA Historic Committee reminded everyone of the differences between the DHCA Historic Committee and the DeKalb Historic Commission, which makes the rulings. Emory Grove is a character area with significant differences to much of the rest of the DH area. Cathy Vandenberg proposed to have Ron write up new guidelines of the Emory Grove Character Area with assistance of the DHCA Historic Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 9:49 pm.