



Lake Claire Greenspace Acquired by City of Atlanta

by Mary Jo Bryan

Lake Claire's City Councilwoman Natalyn Archibong recently announced that the City has acquired undeveloped land on Harold Avenue as permanent green space. The half-acre tract is on the east side of Harold where it intersects with Muriel Drive. The tract borders the Frazer Center Forest, is crossed by a spring-fed creek that is a source of Peavine Creek, and is home to many mature hardwood trees.

The story of how Lake Claire became the beneficiary of such wonderful space began simply. In January 2003, Lake Claire resident Kathy Evans was strolling her son through the neighborhood when she noticed large red X's, signifying imminent destruction, on almost every mature tree on the tract: "I never like to see trees being removed if it isn't necessary, but when I saw all the red X's on the trees so close to the banks of a stream and at the edge of this incredible urban forest, I immediately thought, someone has to do something to prevent this." In talking with friends and neighbors, she realized she was not alone in feeling that the proposed development was too insensitive to the environmental riches of the property.

A nearby neighbor, Chad Pollazzo, had already nominated the property for DeKalb County's green space program with the support of Robert Reed, the owner of the property, but the County had not completed its evaluation when the red X's appeared. Evans and other neighbors collected over 100 signatures on a petition calling for more environmentally-sensitive development than the proposed plan of three large homes that would require removal of most mature trees and overly stress the stream.

A core group of neighbors met with Reed and tried to find a compromise for development that would not be as devastating to the mature trees and stream. The neighbors filed an appeal with the City's Tree Conservation Commission while continuing

dialogue with Reed. Shortly thereafter, the City realized that it erred in granting a building permit for three homes. The tract consists of only two legal lots and a former city right-of-way that the City had sold to Reed. However, without a variance, the portion of the tract that was the former city right-of-way did not meet current zoning regulations for a buildable lot, and the director of the Bureau of Buildings placed a hold on the permit. Reed appealed that decision to the Board of Zoning Appeals. More than a dozen neighbors turned out to support the City in the appeal and the Board upheld the City's decision. The neighbors and Reed continued to seek a compromise solution and engaged in several weeks of mediation with the Neighborhood Justice Center in Inman Park, resulting in an agreement in principle that called for the building of two homes on the parcel.

During this same time, neighbors who had long appreciated the forested acres of the Frazer Center began to talk about how they had wanted to do something about the increasing erosion and invasive plant problems in the forest. Under the leadership of Dan White, president of Lake Claire Neighbors, and with the assistance of Kathryn Kolb, a local nature photographer and naturalist, LCN founded Friends of the Frazer Center Forest to work with The Frazer Center to develop and implement a management plan for their urban forest in our midst.

To launch their efforts, the Friends of the Frazer Center Forest and LCN, co-hosted an Urban Forest Seminar to heighten awareness about the benefits of urban forests and to learn more about how to best restore and preserve the Frazer Center Forest. Councilwoman Archibong was represented at the seminar by staffer Kristina Garcia-Bunuel. After learning more about the storm water runoff challenges of the neighborhood and forest and walking the Harold Avenue parcels, Garcia-Bunuel realized that the most appropriate plan for the site would be permanent

Lake Claire Neighbors, Agenda for General Meeting: May 19, 2005

Frazer Center - 1815 S. Ponce de Leon or back entrance at end of Ridgewood Rd.

Social Time 6:30-7:00 PM (pizza and beverage)

Meeting Starts 7:00 PM

Guest Speakers & Announcements

*DeKalb County Tax Assessor Eugene James: How the assessment process works

*Dirk Botterbusch—Candler Park Market—donation

Current Issues for Discussion

*LCNA exec comm. mtg Tues May 10 7:30pm- 362 Connecticut Ave

*Special Public Interest zoning district for LCN -Roger Swift

*Discussion of donation to Clifton Sanctuary Ministries-\$1000

*Discussion of resolution supporting "Atlanta - City of Peace Campaign"

*LCNA and its role in the tree appeal ordinance

*Identify projects for 2005 funding

*Dues drive/fundraising

Voting Item

* Donation to Frazer Center for work in the forest-\$1000

Officers' Reports

*Public Safety-Randy Byrd (may be moved up in meeting to accommodate APD officers)

*Treasurer (year end summary)

Volunteer & LCNA Member Reports

*Anyone with issues they wish to bring to the membership

Variations

No variations submitted at this time

Lake Claire Neighbors Meeting April 21, 2005, Items voted upon:

Variance approved for 446 Hardendorf Avenue for the reduction in front yard setback.

Funding unanimously approved to renovate Pavilion at Lake Claire Park (\$1000), to support Freedom Park and Olmstead Linear Park (\$500 each), and to contribute to Spring Event in Lake Claire Park (up to \$250).

preservation. She took her insight and enthusiasm back to Councilwoman Archibong, who began working with the City to repurchase the right-of-way the City had sold to Reed, and to purchase the two lots as well. Archibong's collaboration with The Conservation Fund and Reed resulted in a mutually-beneficial agreement that permitted the City to buy the tract at fair-market value and allowed its preservation as permanent green space. Although Reed is a little disappointed in the final economic return in comparison to what would have been realized had homes been built on the property, he is nevertheless "very pleased" that the property will remain green space. The Friends of the Frazer Center Forest were ecstatic and within days of the announcement that an agreement had been reached, were out with their tools beginning to reclaim the new green space adjacent to the forest from the ivy and kudzu.

Evans is thrilled that the site will be permanently protected and is grateful that the perfect combination of factors came together – dedicated neighbors, a willing property owner, and Councilwoman Archibong, whom she describes as "a forward thinking public official who recognizes the very important purposes of green space beyond its traditional recreational uses — filtering stormwater runoff, providing space for mature trees, protecting water quality, and adding to the city's green infrastructure." Although Evans describes the task of reclaiming the site from invasive plants as daunting, she and White are hopeful that it will be restored and be a showcase of native plants that the neighborhood and City may enjoy.

While they work toward that goal, Evans and White remain grateful for the efforts of the people who brought the process this far. Evans finds inspiration in "the individuals who worked so hard toward the protection of this space – Elizabeth Hamilton, Kathryn Kolb, Terri Stewart, Roger Swift, Sarah Wynn, Kristina Garcia-Bunuel – and all the other neighbors and friends who supported the efforts and who are continuing the positive work for our local environment as a part of the Friends of the Frazer Center Forest." White too is encouraged by the long process that began so simply, "I learned that a committed group of neighbors working consistently on an issue over time in collaboration with a responsive elected official can produce a positive outcome to almost any problem."

Lake Claire's President, Dan White, sent this letter to Councilwoman Natalyn Archibong in response to the news of the greenspace acquisition.
Dear Natalyn,

On behalf of the residents of Lake Claire I would like to thank you and your entire staff for the all your efforts in acquiring the tract of land on Harold Avenue as green space to be protected and preserved forever. Our two year struggle to stop inappropriate development has culminated in an outcome no one even thought to consider at the outset of this process.

The dedicated efforts of neighborhood residents working closely with you and your staff have saved all the mature hardwood trees as well as safeguarded the spring fed stream that originates on that site. The possibilities to demonstrate low cost storm water management techniques, the possible creation a living laboratory for the planting of native flowers and shrubs, and the preservation of the Frazer Forest corridor to Harold Avenue are immediate and potential achievements we can all celebrate. We in Lake Claire look forward to future collaboration with you on similar efforts within district 5.

Thank you.



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Letter to the Editor

We have resided at 622 Harold Avenue in Lake Claire for over 15 years. We are active volunteers in community, school, church and neighborhood issues. It is our understanding that developers are currently targeting our close neighborhood with the goal of demolishing existing homes and replacing with "Hummer" houses, also known as "McMansions."

We are not adverse to new home construction nor change per se, but strongly oppose the disturbing trend to build out-of-scale, super-sized houses that are grossly disproportional to the existing homes of our lovely wooded urban neighborhood. It is regrettable that modest homes in excellent condition may be demolished and replaced with new structures on steroids. Just as Hummer vehicles have come to symbolize wasteful consumption, boastful greed and super ego, so too do the Hummer houses that stand as distorted mismatches and exploitations of what is reasonable for our mutual well being. This practice is strongly opposed by many existing neighborhood residents and under current review by the Atlanta City Council.

Maxing out lot coverage in this fashion results in, with few exceptions, old growth tree removal and distress, habitat elimination and watershed drainage problems for the surrounding dwellings. It creates ill will and alienation amongst neighbors. Several homes recently built in the neighborhood with this approach have resulted in almost complete tree loss, water

damage to adjacent homes, and litigation between neighbors. Short of the quick and substantial profit for developers and realty agents, most will concur that there appears to be absolutely no upside for our community.

We are hopeful and optimistic that our neighborhood properties can be profitably and reasonably developed with sensitivity to the surrounding neighbors for the benefit of all who live here. From the outset, we recommend adjoining property owners establish a dialogue with developers to avoid potential conflicts. However, just as the sellers and buyers have rights, so do we as affected surrounding residents.

We must and will exercise our rights in monitoring adherence to all applicable codes, enforcement and fees involving, but not limited to, proper site development, demolition, tree removal/impact/recompense, grading/elevation, watershed/drainage, building permit, height restrictions, lot coverage/impervious surfaces, noise ordinances and of course any direct damage to our property.

As they say, we all live downstream.

We look forward to and welcome sensible development in Lake Claire, our home, and to developers that can still sleep at night.

Roger and Megan Swift

Got a Story to Tell?

We're looking for writers, photographers, poets and neighbors interested in telling the Lake Claire Story in all its glory. No age limit. No big deal.

Contribute when you can and get your byline (maybe even a picture) in *The Clarion*.

Contact editor@lakeclaire.org

This is YOUR neighborhood newsletter!

We want to hear from YOU. What do you want to read about? What issues are key to you? Want this monthly to reflect YOUR neighborhood?

Then give us the news!

- *Tell us about your pie-eating record.
- *Send us Sara's birth announcement.
- *Snitch on Leroy's birthday.
- *Beam about your grandkids (Sprite & Trixie)
- *Tattle on Fiona's accomplishments.
- *Share how Mo helped in a pinch.
- *Acknowledge Jackie making the team.

Tell us if you're planning yard sales, looking for pets and we'll spread the word - if we can.

Email editor@lakeclaire.org by 1st of the month.

LOCAL DOINGS'

Frazer Center Volunteer Opportunity – The Frazer Center is seeking volunteers to help with springtime planting in the Cator Woolford Gardens. Volunteers are also needed to assist with its Adult and Children's Programs, which serve children ages birth to 5 years and adults with disabilities over the age of 18. Activities include reading to the children, playing games, teaching job readiness skills to adults as well as other adult driven activities. Volunteers are needed Monday through Friday from 8am – 6pm. To volunteer call 404.377.3836 and ask for Christy Jellerts – Gardening, Erica Mouton – Children's activities, or Tammy Irvin – Adult activities.

Lake Claire Land Trust Hosting EcoWatch AmeriCorps Volunteers – Volunteers from The EcoWatch AmeriCorps program of the Atlanta Outward Bound Center will be working in the Land Trust Gardens May 27 from 9:00 to 4:30. EcoWatch is funded in partnership with a Federal AmeriCorps grant, administered by the Georgia Commission on Service and Volunteerism. EcoWatch is a community service initiative that engages 10-30 young adults in full time environmental service. To help, contact Charlie Pope, 404-427-0422.

Tour de Lake Claire

Legislation authored by Lake Claire's senator, David Adelman, has created a new "Share the Road" license plate. Sen. Adelman, a strong advocate for the bicycling community, was able to capitalize on the popularity of the bill to create a NASCAR license plate with proceeds to benefit the Governor's Office of Highway Safety by adding an amendment on the floor of the Senate to promote bicycle safety. The "Share the Road" tag will be designed in conjunction with the Southern Bicycle League and Bicycle Ride Across Georgia.

Art in Freedom Park – May 1st through September 15th

The Freedom Park Conservancy announces Art in Freedom Park, the culmination of nine years of discussion and planning by a group of visionaries, artists and neighborhood activists. The idea and inspiration is to establish the vast green space of Freedom Park as a venue for temporary and permanent public art. As of 2005, the open air gallery has become a reality—an artist-initiated presentation of over 30 artworks and performances in a wide variety of mediums, scattered throughout the park. These works will be presented throughout the summer. Visit www.artinfreedompark.org for details. The mile-long trail of art begins near the Candler Park Golf course and Mary Lin Elementary school, then travels west towards familiar skyline views of downtown Atlanta. Discover the park's diverse topography and history, stretching from Civil War to Civil Rights.

New Non-Profit Forming

John Randolph Naugle, also known as professional clown character "Johnny D'Farmer," has formed a new non-profit "Friends of GKC" to honor Nobel Peace Prize winners Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. through the renaming of Atlanta's airport to GKC-Airport, and to encourage the

adoption of "Atlanta: City of Peace" as the official slogan of the City. For more information or to sign the online international peace petition go to www.GKC-Airport.com. If you want to help develop this non-profit, please contact Johnny at i@SeePeace.org.

Virginia-Highland Summerfest

Virginia-Highland hosts its annual Summerfest Saturday, June 4, 2005 - 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, June 5, 2005 - 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Summerfest celebrates the beginning of summer with diverse arts, great food, live musical performances and much more. The festival takes place along Virginia Avenue, in the heart of historic Virginia-Highland. Recently voted the "Best Neighborhood Festival" in Creative Loafing and consistently revered by art professionals as one of the best artists' markets in the southeast, Summerfest is a great event for the entire family. Admission is free.

Candler Park Pool Applications

Applications for membership in the Candler Park Pool are now available online at <http://www.candlerpark.org/temporary/poolapp.pdf>. The pool is scheduled to open May 14 and is open to the public from 9:30 to 4:00. Members only hours are 4:15 - 8:30 p.m. Membership prices may go up after May 31, so sign up early!

Health Fair

June 24
The Frazer Center is hosting a Health Fair on June 24 from 10 to 3 in collaboration with the DeKalb County Board of Health. Available screenings include blood pressure, ear, eye and dental exam, and a breast examination model. You can get your child's EED form completed for \$25.00. There will be refreshments and children's activities. The fair will be in the Frazer Center Atrium. Contact Erica Mouton, 404-377-3836 for more information.

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SKIING IN AND AROUND LAKE CLAIRE

In May we enjoy Cinco de Mayo, Mothers Day and Memorial Day plus the Kentucky Derby and the Indy 500! And amazingly May is also the national month for Date your Mate-BBQ-Bike-Blood Pressure-Hamburger-Photograph-Recommitment-Salad and Older Americans! More May weekly celebrations include Nurses, Wildflowers, Police and Emergency Medical Services!

Stork sighting. LCN webmaster Dennis McCarthy and wife Alison of Harold Avenue recently had their second baby named Aidan. Brother Declan is thrilled with new kid brother.

Say buh bye! Best of luck to McLendon Ave's Swan Johnston and Scott Smith who have moved to Dallas and adios to Lakeshore Ave's Erin Kelly and Jason Duffy who are relocating to Phoenix.

Ward and June in April! Lake Claire Tour Lady Valerie Neville hosted a "Leave It to Beaver" theme party to say happy birthday to Virginia Hamm. Guests included Margeauxxx, Ellery Whitehead, Annette Presley, Bella Balenciaga and new member of the social circle Tara Firma. The 50's food and couture were delightful and the fictionary game hilarious!

Strange but true. Three of the houses on the 2004 Lake Claire Tour of Homes are sporting real estate signs this spring: Mark and Michele Bell on Palifox, Kristin and Scott Chapman on Gordon and one of the lofts of Allan Robbins and Jan Clausen on McLendon.

Two golden opportunities!! Anybody who wants to take over the SKIING IN and OUT of LAKE CLAIRE column from this reporter starting with July issue. ALSO anyone interested in delivering newsletters once a month starting in July on one or all of the following streets-Lakeshore/Claire/Howard Circle/Palifox south of McLendon/Ridgecrest and DeKalb from Rocky Ford up to Ridgecrest. Please contact Pat Marsh 404-373 8982 or email at ski@lakeclaire.org.

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Don't be a bonehead

While perusing the crime stats in this month's Clarion, I was struck by the number of crimes caused by (there is no nice way to say this) stupidity. Checkbooks, wallets, purses, DVD players left in cars? C'mon people! Why not just put a sign on your car that says "Free Stuff"? Don't be a bonehead - don't leave wallets & purses, credit cards, ATM cards or checkbooks in your cars. Don't write your ATM code on your ATM card. If you can't remember it, disguise it as part of a phone number somewhere else in your wallet.

Let's not make it so easy for crooks to get your stuff.
Susan Beeching

KEEP AN EYE ON THE CRIME AND THE TIME

Crime Stats For Lake Claire and Candler Park

Submitted by Randy Byrd, V.P. for Public Safety, safety@lakeclaire.org

ASSAULT

Sun. 3/27 2:45am to 3:00am – 2000 Palifox Dr. – The victim called police when he saw man inside of his neighbor's vehicle. When the victim confronted the man, he pulled an umbrella and started swinging it at the victim. Police arrived and arrested Michael Tribble B/M 47 years old, missing teeth, clean-shaven.

AUTO THEFTS

Thurs. 3/31 6:00pm to 8:00pm – 1300 McLendon Ave. 2003 black Jeep Cherokee tag number 654CSN was taken from the street.
Tues. 4/17 12:00am to 4:00pm – 1300 Iverson St. – 2005 Saab 900 taken from residence. Recovered, no damage.

BURGLARY COMMERCIAL

Sat. 4/7 1:00pm to 5:00pm – 1300 Euclid Ave. – Apartment Office was broken into. 4 Stoves and 1 Refrigerator were taken.

BURGLARY RESIDENTIAL

Sat. 4/2 9:23pm to 9:41pm 1300 Euclid Ave. – Victim left home for 10 minutes without locking door. Change and a Dell Lap Top computer were stolen.

Tues. 4/5 11:30pm to 7:00am – 2100 Palifox Dr. – A red Murray lawnmower was stolen from unlocked shed.

LARCENY FROM AUTO

During last week in March and first week in April, during evening and overnight hours, various items were stolen from unlocked vehicles in the following blocks: 300 Elmira Pl.; 1400 McLendon Ave.; 1300

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Miller Ave; 500 Oakdale Rd.; 400 Oakdale Rd.; 400 Page Ave.
 The following blocks had vehicles broken into and items stolen: 400 Sterling St.; 400 Candler St.; 1400 McLendon Ave; 500 Page Ave.

Thurs. 4/7 10:56pm to 1:15am – 1300 McLendon Ave. – A Witness saw Kenneth Driskell walking down the road, and pulling on the door handles of at least 10 vehicles from the street side. Driskell was arrested for loitering and prowling. He had two prior convictions for Theft by Taking Auto and twenty- two prior arrests.

LARCENY OTHER

Tues. 4/5 2:00pm to 2:15pm – 400 Page Ave. – Unlocked bicycle stolen from driveway. Upstairs neighbor saw suspect, Anthony Mason, take the bike. Suspect—white male, 50-55 years of age, 6-0 to 6-1.

Thurs. 4/7 7:00am to Fri. 3:30am – 1300 Euclid Ave. – Victim states she left her key under the mat for the maintenance man to work on her house. She came home to find her lap top missing. She asked the maintenance man where he left the key and he said underneath the center of the doormat. She found it in the right hand corner of the mat.

Fri. 4/15 5:00pm to Mon. 8:00am – 1300 Iverson St. – Refrigerator stolen/No forced entry or entry point determined. The new refrigerator had been delivered on Friday afternoon and was discovered missing Monday morning. All the keys to the house had been accounted for.

Crime Information Website

The news lately has been filled with reports of young children kidnapped, molested, and killed, allegedly by persons who had prior convictions for sexual crimes against children. A recent search of a Georgia Bureau of Investigation website revealed that there are nine individuals living in DeKalb County in zip code 30307 who have prior convictions for sexual assaults. Sexually violent offenders who have been placed on probation, parole, supervised release or released from prison after July 1, 1996 are required to register their residence, employment, or school address with the Sheriff’s office. This information is available to the public on a Georgia Bureau of Investigation website at <http://www.ganet.org/gbi/disclaim.html>. A sexually violent offender is a person who is convicted of a criminal offense against a victim who is a minor or who is otherwise convicted of a sexually violent offense. A person may search the website by City, County, zip code, or by the offender’s name. The website will give the offender’s name, a description, sometimes a photo, address, type and date of conviction. Due to the fact this information is continually changing, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation makes no expressed or implied guarantee concerning the accuracy of this information.

Your Neighbors Need You!

We are looking for contributors to share their experience of life in/around Lake Claire.

Be as creative as you want to be. Write a poem. Draw a cartoon. Take a photo. Interview a neighbor. Build a community.

This newsletter should reflect the neighborhood.

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Aloha & Mahalo

I've known Pat Marsh since April 2000 when she landed on the LCN Tour of Homes Committee. That was the year of the "Styling in Lake Claire" tour. Pat made her mark on the committee with her hard work, sense of humor and dependability. In fact, she's been involved up to her neck in the last three tours. We couldn't have pulled them off without her.

Pat has also been unflagging in her role as the Grand Dame of LCN parades and LCN's participation in other people's parades. We have seen five Lake Claire Easter Parades, at least as many LC contingents in the Little Five Points Halloween Parade, and several pet parades.

Pat has been a newsletter delivery person for many years. She has been the mind and pen behind the "Skiing In and Out" column for at least five years. She always shows up at our annual covered dish supper with something that June Cleaver would have been proud to serve. She remembers



everyone's birthday, organizing a party with an appropriate theme for each. Her presents are always the cleverest and most perfectly suited to the recipient.

She is known as Wendell's mom, pet sitter extraordinaire, friend, ally, one-woman support group and neighborhood booster. And now, she is leaving the 'hood.

Pat and her husband, John Goese, are moving to Hawaii. Yes, the land of aloha. Pat will be sorely missed for all of the reasons mentioned above. Personally, though, what I will miss the most is the

sense of humor. And I think the rest of the original TOH ladies would agree. So, Ellery Whitehead - the best of luck to you, John and Wendell in paradise. Much love from Trixie St. Claire, Virginia Hamm, Margauxx, and Valerie Neville.

Submitted by Susan Beeching

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