

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING UNIT

Wednesday, September 17, 2025 at 7:00 PM

Meeting ID: 845 9824 9006

Dial In: +1 646-558-8656

Access Code: 845 9824 9006#



CONTACT INFORMATION

Debbie Skopczynski, **Chair** – 404.874.7483 or chair@npufatlanta.org

Tom Schwab, Vice-Chair - npu.f.TomSchwab@gmail.com

Doug Young, **City of Atlanta, Planner** – 404.330.6702 or dyoung@atlantaga.gov

Leah LaRue, **City of Atlanta, Director** – 404.330.6070 or llarue@atlantaga.gov

Minutes

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

- First order of business is to adopt the agenda
 - Posted in chat & NPU website
 - The agenda is adopted without objection.

2. Approval of Minutes

The August minutes are now ready for review & posted in the chat. Thanks to Kathryn King for getting them ready and Marla for posting to the NPU website.

Motion to adopt minutes made by Kevin Cronin, 2nd by Kady DeWees carries without objection.

3. Announcements

- Invest Atlanta Board Meeting, Funding for Amsterdam Walk - 135 multifamily housing units
 - Tomorrow, Thursday Sept 18 at 9:00 AM
 - NPU-F received very late notice, last night.
 - IA Finance committee voted to approve last week.
 - Meeting location: 133 Peachtree St, Suite
 - Contact Michele Lewis, IA (mlewis@investatlanta.com, +1 404 614-8280)
- Druid Hills High School Homecoming Parade - Sept 28, 2025
 - Begins & ends @ Druid Hills High School passes through Emory campus
 - Contact Pierce Bauer of Dekalb Public Schools for more info (pierson_bauer@dekalbschoolsga.org)
- Winship Win the Fight 5K – 10/4/2025
 - Benefit to fight cancer
 - Emory University Campus - walk will start on Asbury Circle, in front of Cox Hall
 - Contact Skip Breeser – Event organizer (racingsolutions@bellsouth.net)
- Walk a Mile in Their Shoes – 10/4/2025



- Benefits Alma Domestic Violence Foundation
 - Meeting @ Park Tavern, Beltline Eastside Trail
 - Alma Davis Event Organizer. info@almadvf.org
- Campaigning at NPU meetings is strictly prohibited by the City of Atlanta’s Code of Ordinances. Sec. 6-3019 Prohibition of Political Forums. Refrain from:
 - Introduction of elected officials as political candidates in upcoming elections;
 - Displaying, buttons, banners, signs
 - Distributing campaign materials and literature
 - NPU Elections in November
 - 1 year terms Jan 2026 - Dec 2026.
 - Several positions will be open. NPU-F needs you!
 - Great way to contribute to your neighborhood. Please consider running.
 - Please reach out to Tom, or any other Committee Chair if interested.

4. Reports from City Departmental Representatives

Atlanta Fire Department Station 19 North Highland, Station 29 Monroe Drive Battalion Chief Derek Harris Battalion Chief Christopher Martin	Not present
Atlanta Police Department Zone 2 – Major Ben Vaynes Lt. Jeffrey Henderson, Jphenderson@atlantaga.gov 404-227-3545 Zone 6 – Major Andrea Webster Lt. James Carroll jcarroll@atlantaga.gov	Zone 6: 31 incidents over the past 30 days. Motor vehicle thefts are down to 4. Burglaries are up to 8. Zone 2: Overall incidents are down. Please keep your vehicles clean.
APD Code Enforcement Atlanta Police Department Code Enforcement Section Officer Andrea Williams, 470-547-7339 fanjwilliams@atlantaga.gov	They currently have 34 open cases they are following pertaining to property maintenance. Six hazardous cases.
ATL311 Tamika Merriweather tmerriweather@atlantaga.gov	1. Dial 3-1-1 inside city limits or 404-546-0311 2. Visit and chat at www.ATL311.com 3. Email at ATL311@atlantaga.gov 4. Mobile App by searching “ATL311” in your app store 5. Social Media @ATL311 If you would like to leave ATL311 feedback from today's meeting, ask us questions, or report any outstanding issues,

	please take our survey by clicking this link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ATL311Meeting. If you would like to have ATL311 present for a Community Meeting or Community Event, please feel free to complete the form below and the Community Affairs Coordinator will reach out to you within two (2) business days: https://forms.office.com/g/JzTWX3gHx1 Suggested ATL311 requests a change to the underlying departments standard operating procedures (SOP): If duplicate tickets are submitted by different parties for the same issue, please keep both tickets open until resolution. The Duplicate ticket should not be prematurely closed.
Public Works Code Enforcement S.W.E.E.T. Officer Spurlock @ejspurlock@atlantaga.gov 470.755.5253	https://www.atlantaga.gov/government/departments/public-works/office-of-solid-waste-services If you pay someone to take down a tree, they are responsible for removing the tree, not the City. Glass recycling policy discussed. Glass can be recycled at Tower Liquor on Piedmont Avenue. You can also take them to CHaRM to recycle; you need to make an appt to go there. A schedule of changes to yard waste pickup was requested.
Parks and Recreation Tara Buchner	Their report included later with Piedmont Park presentation.
Watershed Management Aisha Brown aibrown@atlantaga.gov 678-637-1041 City cell	Not present
City of Atlanta / County Solicitor Janel O. Bowles, Solicitor Senior Counsel, City of Atlanta, Office of the Solicitor, jbowles@atlantaga.gov 770-542-7759	Happy Herman's case will be heard in Criminal Court on October 1st.
Office of Neighborhood Ombudsman Clyde K Mitchell clmitchell@atalantaga.gov 404.510.8498	Please be in touch if I can assist you. We can surface concerns to Departments, help you find information, mediate discord, and explore options to resolve outstanding constituent and neighborhood issues.

5. Comments from Elected Officials

Councilmembers Alex Wan , District 6 awan@atlantaga.gov, 404-330-6049 Amir Farokhi , District 2, 404-330-6038 Liliana Bakhtiari , District 5,	Voter registration deadline is October 6. Early voting is Tuesday, October 14 – October 31. Absentee ballot application deadline is October 24. Amir Farokhi has resigned. His replacement is Carden Wyckoff. She will serve through the end of the term.
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404-330-6048	
City Council at Large Michael Julian Bond, Post 1 Matt Westmoreland, Post 2 mwestmoreland@atlantaga.gov echumlongluk@atlantaga.gov Office : 404.330.6302	Elle Chumlongluk was here for Councilman Matt Westmoreland. She just started there as the Director of Stakeholder Engagement and Communication for this office.
State Rep Stacy Evans stacey@staceyevans.com Rachel Schiffer– Chief of Staff State Rep	Not present
Fulton County Commissioners	Not present

6. Consent Agenda

Note: All special event representatives are required by ordinance to attend an NPU meeting so please speak up so we can see you on camera.

Special Events

Event Name/ Applicant	Class/# Participants	Event Location/ Date	Recommendation
Light Up The Season @ Piedmont Park/ Terrell Henderson	Class E / 1000	Piedmont Park – Meadow 400 Park Drive / Nov. 23, 2025	Support
SMART-BTA Stop the Violence Community Fair (Amended date from 8/23/25 to 7/25/26, added rain date for 8/1/26. Previously supported in July)/ Brenda Banks	Class E / 700	Piedmont Park- The Meadow Charles Allen & 10th Street/ July 25, 2026	Support

Consent agenda requirements: All Class E events and one-day Class D events that are recurring. Neighborhood and gated events are not eligible.

Board of Zoning Adjustment

Application/ Address	Request	Neighborhood Report	Recommendation
V-25-172 955 Drewry Street NE	Applicant seeks a variance to 1) reduce the east side yard setback from 7 feet to 5.8 feet and 2) increase the maximum parking spaces from 4 to 5 parking spaces	VHCA: Site visit conducted, no neighbor opposition, Board voted unanimously	VHCA: recommends approval

V-25-180 864 Adair Avenue NE	Applicant seeks a variance from the zoning ordinance to reduce the front yard setback from 35 feet to 18 feet 8 inches.	VHCA: Site visit conducted, no neighbor opposition, Board voted unanimously	VHCA: recommends approval
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NPU-F Action: Motion to approve by Kevin Cronin, 2nd by Wiley Summerville carried by a vote of 20 ayes and 0 nays.

7. Matters for Voting

2026 NPU-F Bylaws

NPU-F Bylaws & Policies on NPU-F Website, <https://npufatlanta.org/> Under 'about' or 'contact' pages.

Discussed NPU-F's Bylaws at last month's NPU meeting.

There were no requested changes to NPU-F's Bylaws, which includes our policy statement. Last month served as official notification period of intent to renew existing NPU-F Bylaws.

Comments:

NPU-F Action: Motion to approve made by Rich Sussman, 2nd by Kevion Cronin carried with a vote of 22 ayes and 0 nays.

Special Event Applications (MOSE)

Event Name	Event Organizer	Event Location	Event Date
Light Up The Season @ Piedmont Park	Terrell Henderson	Piedmont Park – Meadow 400 Park Drive	November 23, 2025

Comments: **Consent Agenda**. Class E event, one day event, 1000 attendance

Walk to End Lupus Now	Consuelo Farley & Teri Emond	Piedmont Park – Oakhill 400 Park Drive	April 25, 2026
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Comments: Class D event, 5,000 Attendance, 1 Day event, Event has been reoccurring for 18 years. Busses shuttling people from Marta station to the park. No Amplified sounds. No Alcohol Sales. Event runs from 9:00AM to 2:00PM

NPU-F Action: Motion to approve made by Kay Stephenson, 2nd by Kevin Cronin carried with a vote of 21 ayes and 0 nays.

Fitness ATL	Kia Lewis & Brad Lewis	Piedmont Park	June 13-14, 2026
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Comments: Class E Event.

Applicant not present In July, August, nor September. August attendance and lack of desire to reschedule confirmed by Daniel Vesquez.

NPU-F Action: Motion to defer made by Rich Sussman, 2nd by Kevin Cronin carried with a vote of 14 ayes and 0 nays.

Juneteenth Atlanta Parade and Music Festival	Bob Johnson & Brad Lewis	Piedmont Park	June 19-21, 2026
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Comments: Class D Event, 8,500 participants, 3 day event, Not a new event.

Amended the load in date(s) from 6/15/2026 – 6/19/2026 to 6/11/2026 – 6/19/2026

Applicant not present In July, August, nor September. August attendance and lack of desire to reschedule confirmed by Daniel Vesquez.

NPU-F Action: Motion to defer made by Kevin Cronin, 2nd by Kay Stephenson carried with a vote of 17 ayes and 0 nays.

AMENDED SMART-BTA Stop the Violence Community Fair (Amended date from 8/23/25 to 7/25/26, added rain date for 8/1/26. Previously supported in July)	Brenda Banks	Piedmont Park- The Meadow Charles Allen & 10th Street	July 25, 2026
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Comments: **Consent Agenda**. Class E Event, 700 Attendance

Alcohol License Applications (LRB)				
Name of Business	Type of Business	Applicant	Property Address	Request
Lewis Barbecue	Restaurant	John Lewis	1544 Piedmont Road	New Business

Comments: Located in back side Ansly Mall facing beltline

John Lewis has 28 years experience with similar restaurants. Has held alcohol licenses at other Lewis BBQ Locations in Charleston and Greenville with no alcohol infractions. Zoned C1 in beltline overlay.

PHCA voted unanimously to recommend approval of both of the Lewis Barbecue applications

NPU-F Action: Motion to approve made by Tim Berube, 2nd by Susan Kanellos carried with a vote of 27 ayes and 0 nays.

Lewis Barbecue (Additional Facility)	Restaurant	John Lewis	1544 Piedmont Road	New Business
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Comments: PHCA Recommends Approval

NPU-F Action: Motion to approve made by Tim Berube, 2nd by Susan Kanellos carried with a vote of 27 ayes and 0 nays.

Thyme Restaurant Bar	Restaurant/Live Entertainment	Kandice R. Burns	1937 Piedmont Circle NE	New Business
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Comments: Application represented by Kandice Burnes and Attorney Hakim Hilliard of *Chilivis Grubman, LLP*

This is a re-filing of application ALCO-0525-40178 which was unanimously recommended for denial by NPU-F during the July 2025 meeting. The only substantive difference is the changing of the operating business from 'Brixton Restaurant Group. LLC' to the newly created '1937 Hospitality Group LLC'. it was stated Esther Tutu is still the sole owner of this new LLC and there are no other investors.

NPU-F Action: Motion to deny made by Tim Berube, 2nd by Wiley Summerville carried with a vote of 21 ayes and 0 nays.

Board of Zoning Adjustment Applications (BZA)		
Application	Property Address	Public Hearing
V-25-170 Applicant seeks a variance/special exception to reduce the minimum distance front facing garage doors must be recessed behind the front façade of the principal structure from 10 linear feet to 2 feet.	1130 Cumberland Road NE	October 2, 2025

Comments: Represented by Hakin Hillard

Original permit from the city was incorrect. The plans allowed for a 2' set back, but it should have been 10'.

Neighbors are objecting to the garage being located in front of house when there is space to the rear.

MLPA Report: Recommends Denial.

NPU-F Action: Motion to deny made by David Lyle, 2nd by Robert Silvia carried with a vote of 17 ayes and 2 nays.

[V-25-171](#)

Applicant seeks a variance from the zoning ordinance to **1) reduce the west side yard from the required 7 feet to 6.3 feet**, 2) increase the maximum lot coverage from the required 50 percent to 56.6 percent, 3) increase the paved area in the required front yard from the required one-third of the total area to 41.6 percent, 4) increase the maximum width of a driveway from the required 20 feet to 38.5 feet and 5) **increase the maximum height of a retaining wall in the rear yard from the required 6 feet to 8.6 feet.**

952 Cumberland
Road NE

October 2, 2025

Comments: Applicant was represented by Hakin Hillard

There was a late stage change to this application (i.e. referral certificate dated 9/12/25) received by NPU-F, yesterday, Sept 16.

The property currently has a stop work order against it to address all 5 non-compliances. The applicant has plans to address the issues necessitating three of the original variance requests. The subsequent application was amended to remove variance requests # 2), 3), & 4) stated above. The applicant is obligated by the city to bring these 3 infractions in compliance with the code.

The current application has 2 remaining variance requests:

- 1) Reduce the west side yard from the required 7 feet to 6.3 feet
- 2) Increase the maximum height of a "retaining wall" in the rear yard from the required 6 feet to 8.6 feet. The existing block retaining wall is ~8.6', The applicant will also be required to add a fall prevention fence on top of that.

The house and retaining walls are already built, so these 2 variances are retroactive.

MLPA Report: Recommends denial of the 2 remaining variances due to the fact the house location is not in character with the neighborhood, the problem with the house's foundation location was reportedly identified early in the process and the builder/homeowner elected to proceed with construction anyway. The house could have been relocated on the lot to ensure setback compliance. Furthermore, there was no reason for the retaining wall to be built higher than 6' other than the homeowner preferred a flat yard.

NPU-F Action: Motion to deny 2 remaining variances, namely: reduction of west setback and rear retaining wall height was made by David Lile, 2nd by Rich Sussman carries with a vote of 16 ayes 0 nays. This motion is tied to the referral certificate dated September 12, 2025.

[V-25-172](#)

Applicant seeks a variance to 1) reduce the east side yard setback from 7 feet to 5.8 feet and 2) increase the maximum parking spaces from 4 to 5 parking spaces.

955 Drewry Street
NE

October 2, 2025

Comments: Consent agenda

VHCA Report: Recommend approval. Site visit conducted, no neighbor opposition, Board voted unanimously to support.

V-25-180 Applicant seeks a variance from the zoning ordinance to reduce the front yard setback from 35 feet to 18 feet 8 inches.	864 Adair Avenue NE	October 9, 2025
Comments: Consent agenda		

VHCA Report: Recommend approval. Site visit conducted, no neighbor opposition, Board voted unanimously to support.

Text Amendments – Zoning Ordinance		
Legislation	Public Hearing	
Z-25-61 An Ordinance by Councilmember Howard Shook as substituted by the Zoning Committee to amend the 1982 Zoning Ordinance of the City Of Atlanta, as amended, so as to create a new overlay entitled “ Northeast Atlanta Quality of Life Regulation Overlay District ” for the purpose of limiting certain uses; to amend the official Zoning Map; and for other purposes. EXHIBIT A	Zoning Review Board – City Hall Council Chambers	October 2 or 9, 2025.

Comments: Comments: The portion of this ordinance within in NPU-F was included in error since this area is not within District 7. Furthermore, the Armour/Ottley area is 100% commercial and is not adjacent to residential property.

It was reported NPU-B has already voted to deny this application.

Alex Wan’s office has been notified and has agreed to drive the initiative to have the map corrected.

Doug Young will follow up with the Director of Zoning & Planning to obtain clarification on the ordinance.

NPU-F Action: Motion to support NPU-Bs recommendation made by Kay Stevenson, 2nd by Kevin Cronin carries with a vote of 26 ayes 0 nays. This motion contains the condition that any map errors be corrected.

MATTERS FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT

Members can review subdivision applications and provide comments to be forwarded to the Subdivision Review Committee (SRC). Other applications may be presented to an NPU for review and comment when the address is within a 300-foot radius of the NPU’s boundary. The Code of Ordinances does not require these applicants to attend NPU meetings.

Alcohol License Applications (LRB)				
Name of Business	Type of Business	Applicant	Property Address	Request
La Cueva	Open Air Café	Robert S. Hopper II	675 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (NPU-M)	New Business

Comments: Location resides in NPU-M, within 300’ of NPU-F.
 Located in shopping and retail entertainment center, Ponce City Market
 Zoned appropriately, no issues with close neighbors.
 Concern for NPU-F – Note: Traffic congestion on Ponce between Ponce Place and Glenn Iris was noted
 NPU-F will defer to decision to NPU-M as is customary

8. Presentations

- **Department of Parks and Recreation | Piedmont Park Conservancy Comprehensive plan**
 - NPU-F will be voting on plan next month – October 15
 - Tara Buckner and Doug Widener presenting
 - Entire plan is available at <https://plan.piedmontpark.org>
 - Doug Widener , dwidener@piedmontpark.org
 - Tara Buckner, Urban Planner, COA Department of Parks and Recreation, tlbuckner@atlantaga.gov, 404-217-9603
- **Center for Civic Innovation: Survey and NPU Initiative Report Updates | Kyle Kessler**
 - 11 year old organization that helps the community understand local government procedures/policy
 - 2018 initiative: Their recommendations were to strengthen the purpose, leadership, transparency of the NPUs
 - Please take our short NPU survey at civicatlanta.org/npusurvey and learn more about the NPU Initiative at civicatlanta.org/npu-initiative.
 - You can learn more about CCI at civicatlanta.org or across social media @civicatlanta. Our contact info is felix@civicatlanta.org and kyle@civicatlanta.org.
 - NPU-F requested a copy of data showing instances where city does & does not follow NPU's recommendation
- **Mercy Housing: Amsterdam Walk Phase I (501 Amsterdam Avenue) | James Talley & Billy Lummus**
 - Invest Atlanta Application. Requested funding, Billy.Lummus@MercyHousing.org; James.Talley@MercyHousing.org
 - Presentation: <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:8e9f2616-19cc-41c7-9651-7222ce967e03>
 - Mercy Housing is working in conjunction with Portman Holdings
 - Creating 135 affordable apartments ... Mercy focused on this phase/scope only
 - Creating affordability beyond 80% requirement, going down to 60% AMI. 60% AMI \$54,840 in this area for a two person unit. The local table was shared.
 - Pursuing multiple funding sources...primarily through Invest Atlanta & GA Dept. of Community Affairs. \$53M Needs to be raised. It is not yet known if , or how much, Portman will contribute towards this.
 - This phase of affordable units will be segregated, i.e. not interspersed with market rate units, as required by City ordinance. This phase will have its own amenities.
 - City Code requires affordable units required along the Beltline to be interspersed with market rate units. https://library.municode.com/ga/atlanta/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIIICOORANDECO_PT16_ZO_CH36AAFWOHOBEQVDI#:~:text=The%20affordable%20workforce%20housing%20units,interspersed%20among%20market%20rate%20units.
 - Mercy Housing has not been focused or engaged with the issues of public transit or traffic flow.
 - NPU-F declined to write a letter of recommendation due to objections of the overall project's housing density without adequate infrastructure considerations, coupled with the timing issues related to the Invest Atlanta notifications and votes.

9. Planner's Report

Doug Young, Director, Office of Design, Dept. of City Planning, 404-956-1536, dyoung@atlantaga.gov
(NPU F Planner)

Track applications in the NPU Dashboard:

<https://coaplangis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/0edb5ee66955448d9edf659e3472b3ee>

Find direct links to more info on the DCP updates page:

<https://www.atlantaga.gov/government/departments/city-planning/neighborhood-planning-units/updates>

Office of Design on Eventbrite

<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/office-of-design-108580996491>

All Atlanta City Studio Events

<https://www.atlcitystudio.org/acs-events>

10. Neighborhood and Committee Reports

Lindridge Martin Manor	They will hold their meeting either the first or second Wednesday of November. Probably at the Colonnade. More information will be presented next month.
Piedmont Heights	Third annual Taste of PiHi Fundraiser is Sunday, September 28, from 3-6 pm at Indie Studios (190 Ottley Drive NE). Master Plan was approved by Council.
Morningside Lenox Park	Morningside Wine Walk – September 18, 2025, 5:30 pm – 8:00 pm, – Event is Sold out
Virginia-Highland	- Held their annual (Town hall) meeting 9/8/25, hosted Alex Wan and Nan Oreck for a panel discussion. - Summerfest only made \$19,000 this year, so we need to look at our strategy for next year. - VHCA Elections close out tomorrow, sept 18 - Home Tour is December 13 & 14; partnering with Virginia Highland District's Winterfest. - Volunteers installed a bike lane on Virginia Avenue from Ponce Place to Monroe. This is a one-year pilot.
Edmund Park	Not present
Emory/CDC area/ Druid Hills	Not present
Parks, Trees & Environment	No report

(Rich Sussman)	
Education (Jason Holmes)	Not present.
Communications (Marla Johnson)	No report.
Public Safety (Kay Stephenson & Susan Kanellos)	- Va-Hi Security Patrol was approved for a grant. They'll be using it to buy banners to make awareness Clean Car Campaign safety banners being installed in conjunction with VHD.. They should be up in early October. - With a donation of tickets for Shaky Knees, they added 18 new members to the security patrol and raised an additional \$1,000. - Shaky Knees traffic will be bad due to 10th Street sewer project closures. - Celebration of Life for John Wolfinger will be held November 16 at the Colonnade. More details next month. - No update available on the mold/new precinct letter for APD District 6. The Safety Team will follow up.
Zoning & Economic Development (Wiley Sommerville)	No report.
APAB (Kady Dewees, Voting Member)	No report.
The Chair Report	NPU Elections – November - 1 year terms Jan 2026 - Dec 2026. - Several positions will be open. - Great way to meet your neighbors & contribute to your neighborhood. Please consider running. - To learn more, please reach out to Tom, or any other Committee Chair.

11. **Old Business** – None

12. **New Business** – None

13. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:48 pm. Motion made by Kay Stephenson and 2nd by Kevin Cronin that carried with no objections.