

# The Messenger

News for Candler Park

Our intown hometown

May 2000

## MEETINGS\*EVENTS

### CPNO MEETING MAY 8@7PM

The Candler Park Neighborhood Organization is for all residents! We meet the second MONDAY of each month at Epworth United Methodist Church at 1561 McLendon Avenue. Please use the Mell Avenue entrance. Membership is FREE!

#### MAY 8 MEETING AGENDA:

7:00 p.m. Refreshments

7:30 p.m. • Officer Reports

- Vote on Variances: 633 Terrace Avenue; 1208 North Avenue; 1409 Euclid Avenue
- Update on fund request applications
- Other business: pool, playground, etc.

TO SUBMIT AN AGENDA ITEM for the June meeting, email robinbel@bellsouth.net, or mail to Robin Bellinson, 405 Oakdale Road. Deadline is May 19, 2000.

### EVENTS CALENDAR

#### MAY

Monday, May 8 \* 7:30 PM

CPNO General Meeting

Monday, May 15 \* 7 PM

CPNO Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, May 25 \* 7:00 PM

N.P.U. Monthly Meeting

Friday, May 26

Candler Park Pool season begins

#### JUNE

Saturday, June 17, 2000

Candler Park 5K Road Race

#### SEPTEMBER

September 16-17, 2000

Candler Park/Lake Claire Music & Arts Festival

## Appeal your property tax assessment — get a freeze!

Did you recently received an increased appraisal of your house by DeKalb County? Taxes for both Atlanta and DeKalb County are based on the DeKalb appraisal, with Atlanta taxes being by far the larger.

If you believe your appraisal by DeKalb County is too high, you can appeal it; the deadline for filing is May 15.

There are three grounds upon which you can appeal an appraisal. First would be that your property is exempt from taxation. The primary examples of this in our neighborhoods are churches, so unless you recently founded your own religion, this probably doesn't apply to you.

The second ground for appeal is that DeKalb has appraised your house higher than market value. That is, the figure under "Appraised — 100%" is higher than you could sell your house for. This is called appealing on the basis of incorrect value.

The third ground for appeal is that DeKalb's appraisal of your property is higher than they have appraised similar nearby houses. For example, even if your house would sell for the amount DeKalb has it appraised for, if neighbors' houses similar to yours are appraised *lower* than yours, you can appeal. This is called appealing on the basis of lack of equalization with like properties.

How do you go about making an appeal? The overall concept is that your house must be compared to similar houses or "comparables." In setting its appraisal of your house, DeKalb must have compared your house to comparable houses. In making your appeal, you must do the same. Comparable houses share key common features, including square footage,

number of bedrooms and baths, the same degree of renovation and repair, and proximity. Other considerations are the street on which a house is located (e.g., houses on busy streets sell for less), driveways, garages/carports, landscaping, decks and patios, etc. In short, all the factors which affect the selling price of a house should be considered in finding

comparable houses to yours.

There are three steps: First, make sure the DeKalb Assessor's Office has correct information on your house. Sometimes they have a house listed as having two baths when it only has one or having a garage when it does not. Depending on how busy they are, they will frequently give you this information over the phone (call 404-371-2471). Ask for the Property Record Card. If DeKalb's information is incorrect, this can be a basis for appeal for both the

(continued on page 2)

*The deadline to  
appeal your  
property tax  
assessment is  
May 15 — hurry!*

# The Messenger

The Messenger is published monthly by the Candler Park Neighborhood Organization. Deadline for articles for the June issue is May 19. Submit to:

## EDITOR

Robin Bellinson ..... 4/522-8930  
robinbel@bellsouth.net  
405 Oakdale Road NE

## AD RATES, SPECIFICATIONS AND PAYMENT

**CLASSIFIED ADS** ..... \$2 per line  
One line = 35 characters/spaces. First few words will be bold/capitalized. Must be printed/typed.

**DISPLAY ADS** ..... \$10 per column inch  
Ad cost = # of columns x # of inches in height.  
1 col = 2.5"; 2 col = 5"; 3 col = 7.5". Max height = 9.75". Supply camera ready art (laser print OK).

## DEADLINES

18th of the month (prepaid) for publication in the following month's edition. No extensions. Include your name and phone number. Ads may not be phoned in or bought on credit.

## SEND AD AND CHECK (PAYABLE TO CPNO) TO:

Robin Bellinson, 405 Oakdale Rd. (ph. 522-8930)

# CPNO Officers

## PRESIDENT

Debra Snell ..... 4/370-0040  
dsnell@gsu.edu

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THE MESSENGER/CANDLER PARK

PO Box 5418 \* Atlanta, GA 30307  
www.candlerpark.org

# Appealing Your Property Tax Assessment *(continued from page 1)*

house's value and its equalization with other properties.

Next, find out what comparable houses in your area have sold for recently. If you go to the Tax Assessor's Office at 120 West Trinity, Decatur, they will give you a printout of recent house sales. You then find comparable houses and compare their sale prices to the appraised value of your house. Alternatively, the agent who sold your house may be willing to get this for you. If the appraised value of your house is higher than comparable houses, you can appeal on the basis of incorrect value.

Lastly, find out DeKalb's appraisal of comparable houses nearest you. Via Internet, go to [www.co.dekalb.ga.us](http://www.co.dekalb.ga.us); under Quick List find Property Appraisal, click on Property Information and enter the address of the property for which you want the appraisal value. If you do not have Internet access, you will need to go to the Tax Assessor's Office. If the appraised value of your house is higher than of comparable houses, you can appeal on the basis of lack of equalization.

In summary, to justify that your appraisal is higher than it should be: (1) correct any inaccuracies in DeKalb's records; (2) find comparable sales lower than the appraised value of your house; (3) find comparable appraisals lower than your appraisal; (4) make note of special conditions; e.g., old wiring, leaky basement, old roof, nice exterior but poor interior — anything that lowers the home's value.

Your appeal must be postmarked by May 15. You should state your reason for appeal in general terms (incorrect value, lack of equalization, or both) and specific terms (one bath rather than the listed two, condition of your house poorer than listed, etc.). Talking to people who had been through the appeals process yielded different opinions about whether one

should present all the evidence in this letter. Some say it's your best chance to get your appraisal lowered with the least trouble. Others want to save their best evidence for the Board of Equalization. In particular, some people do not say which houses they used for comparables at this stage, not wanting to give the county a chance to research their comparables before they appear before the Board of Equalization (see below).

If you are not satisfied with the value returned by the tax assessors after your letter, you can appeal to the Board of Equalization. This is composed of three lay residents

of the county, much like a jury, and is conducted like a trial: You present evidence that your valuation should be *x*; the county appraiser presents evidence that it should be *y*. The county presents its case based on three comparable houses; the addresses of these will be available to you one week in advance. You also need to base your appeal on three comparable houses; be prepared to state why your three houses are more comparable to your house than the county's. Photographs, drawings, and maps are very useful in making your point.

An important benefit of appealing to the Board of Equalization is that whatever appraisal value they place on your house stays the same for the next two years. DeKalb can only change your appraisal during that time if they make an on-site inspection (not usually done). In short, if you are willing to appear in person in front of the Board of Equalization, you will have your property taxes frozen for the next two years, a not inconsiderable benefit in this escalating housing market.

For other questions, call the DeKalb Tax Assessor's Office at 404-371-2471. They are actually quite helpful.

—Greg Smith

*An appeal  
now could  
freeze your  
assessed  
value for  
two years*

## Happy Hour At Candler Park Pool Previews Hot New Season

Hey... let's all meet at the pool on May 12th for Happy Hour! What? You say it's too cool for swimming? You say the pool won't even have water in it until Memorial Day weekend? Well, technically you're right – but that doesn't mean the party won't be lots of fun anyway!

All Candler Park residents – non-subscribers and subscribers to the pool alike – are invited to participate in our May 12 preview party at the pool (if not actually *in* the pool).

The Happy Hour hours will be from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. We'll provide the beverages and the music, and count on everyone else to bring munchies to share.

The reason for this festive occasion is simple. We want you to see how great the pool is shaping up for our second season. We think you'll be impressed with the new look we've given the concession area and the bath house, and with our plans for further renovations and expansions to come.

If you're not already a subscriber, or if you haven't renewed last year's subscription yet, the Happy Hour will make it easy to sign up (or at least pick up an application).

Now it's time to give you some great reasons to subscribe to our 2000 season:

### **Candler Park Pool – It's A Splash!**

Summer is just around the corner – what better way to spend a hot, humid Atlanta summer than at Candler Park Pool? It's a great place to spend the day with your family, drop by for a dip, hang out with neighbors (and meet new ones!) or to get some low-impact exercise. We're planning Dive-In Movie nights, cook-outs, and opportunities for private party rentals, too!

### **It's A Bargain – Same Low Rates!**

Due to the great response last summer, the rates for Summer 2000 will remain the same – from \$50 for individual children (over 12 only) to a maximum of \$200 for a family of four or more. This is truly a great bargain for summer recreation.

### **Expanded Subscriber Hours, All Summer!**

The pool will open this year on May 26, and will close Labor Day, September 4. Expanded hours will be from 10:00 A.M. to - 8:30 pm Monday - Saturday, and 12:00 noon - 8:30 pm on Sundays. We will also continue the subscribers-only hours in the evening.

### **Volunteers Make It Happen**

The Candler Park Pool Association is a volunteer organization, so please consider donating some time – it's lots of fun, and your support would be greatly appreciated! Help make Candler Park Pool a great place for your family, the neighborhood and other city residents who appreciate a safe clean facility. If you're interested, contact Shawn Foley at 404-522-3521, or e-mail [bfoley@mindspring.com](mailto:bfoley@mindspring.com).

### **Subscribe Now!**

Please send in your subscriptions now. Your early subscription is a vote of confidence in our accomplishments and will help us plan for the long range goals of renovating the bathhouse, adding a kiddie pool and expanding the deck.

To subscribe, you can get a form online at [www.candlerpark.org](http://www.candlerpark.org), or call the number listed above. Thanks for your support, and we'll see you at the pool!

—Candler Park Pool Association

*May 12 Happy  
Hour at the pool  
— great fun for  
all, even  
without the  
water!*

## Environmental Happenings in Candler Park – Get Involved!

Care about the environment? Want to do something about it? Check out the following workshops and projects happening around our neighborhood this spring and summer.

### **MAY**

Saturday, May 6, 10 AM - 3 PM

*Adopt-A-Stream Workshop*

Contact PWA, 404/508-7603

Saturday, May 13, 10 AM - 3 PM

*Adopt-A-Stream Workshop*

Contact PWA, 404/508-7603

### **JUNE**

Week of June 3-11

*9-Day Homebuilding School*

Learn to frame a wall, shingle a roof, hand drywall. \$494/person or \$695/couple. Contact 404/872-3549; [www.southface.org](http://www.southface.org).

Monday, June 12, 7:30 PM

*Building a Community Watershed;*

PWA presentation at CPNO meeting.

### **JULY**

Saturday, July 15, 9 AM - 1 PM

*PWA Cleanup in Candler Park!*

Contact Susan Grider, 404/373-2026.

Weekend of July 20-23

*Weekend Homebuilding School*

\$295/person or \$395 couple. Contact 404/872-3549; [www.southface.org](http://www.southface.org).

### **AUGUST**

Thursday, August 3, 10 AM - 3 PM

*Adopt-A-Stream Workshop*

Contact PWA, 404/508-7603

Friday, August 4, 10 AM - 3 PM

*Adopt-A-Stream Workshop*

Contact PWA, 404/508-7603

—Susan Grider

## Friends of Freedom Park East Rock Out (Literally!)

Friends of Freedom Park East, continuing its efforts to preserve and maintain Freedom Park as a safe, clean, passive urban space, recently completed its latest project:

"rocking out!" Specifically, we managed the removal of three dumptruck loads of refuse – including hundreds of tons of concrete, rocks and various construction debris from the park.

This most recent effort follows others completed over the past few months – including park clean-ups and our work with the City of Atlanta to fill sinkholes in the park and replace collapsed storm drains.

We thank all of the volunteers who helped with the rock-removal project. Please also join us in giving particular thanks to Brian Donnelly and his company, DHG Group Inc., without whose generous donation of help this job could not have been done.

Also, at the conclusion of the rock cleanup, we let the city know about our

efforts, and of areas we'll be needing their help. We wrote the City's Bureau of Parks a letter, notifying them that their grounds crews should now be able to mow the park in a manner that is safer, more efficient, and closer to the ground than in the past. (We trust this will also help us to better control the kudzu that, even at this early date in the year, has already begun its annual coverage of much of the park.)

Because the removal of some of the larger slabs of concrete has left holes in the ground, we also asked the Bureau to make a pass through the park with a truck full of fill dirt as soon as possible.

—Bernard Cox  
and Tom Chaffin,  
Friends of  
Freedom Park East

## Draft of Candler Park Community Plan Available For Review

Join us as we bring the CPNO Community Planning process to a close this spring/summer!

All Candler Park residents and interested parties are invited to review a 4-page draft plan on Wednesday, May 24, 7 PM, upstairs at Epworth United Methodist Church across from the Park.

— Susan Grider

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## New Look for *Messenger*; New Information for Advertising and Editorial Submissions

As you can see from the issue you're reading, *The Messenger* has a new look. It is the latest in an evolution begun last year to create a publication focused on delivering the news of the neighborhood in a more journalistic format. This evolution will continue, and all Candler Park residents are welcome to provide suggestions.

For advertisers, there are changes as well. The new format necessitates a change in ad sizes; for details, see the sidebar on page 2. Previously produced ads will continue to be accepted for the next two issues.

Finally, we have adjusted deadline dates for submission of editorial materials. Articles and news releases must be received by the third Friday of each month for publication in the following month's issue. The advertising deadline remains the 18th of the month for the following month's issue.

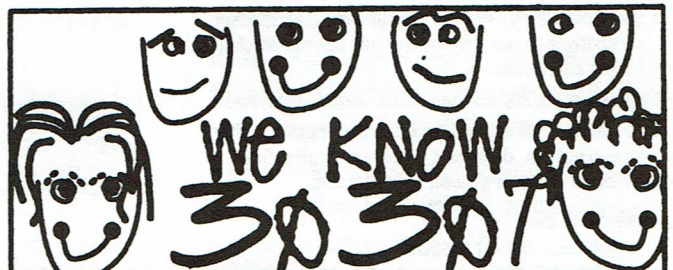
Editorial submissions may be e-mailed to robinbel@bellsouth.net, or mailed to Robin Bellinson at 405 Oakdale Road. Advertising must be mailed or hand delivered to the same address (and must be accompanied by prepayment). — Robin Bellinson

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## It's Time To Play For Money: Playground Funds Needed

The City of Atlanta's Bureau of Parks is continuing to go through their bidding process for the playground improvements described in the last two issues of the *Messenger*. Depending upon the final figures, we may or may not get everything in the proposed plan, or the plan may be phased in over this year and next.

The Candler Park Playground Task Force has been charged with raising the funds for the new, big piece of playground equipment (see sketch below), which will cost approximately \$20,000.

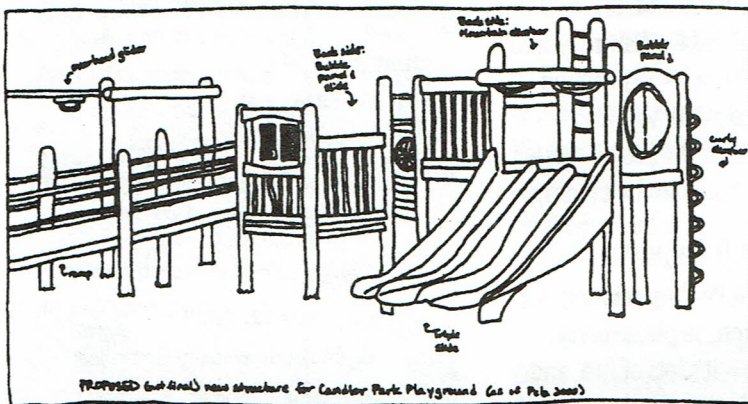
We're looking for (a) people with great fundraising ideas, (b) people willing to

pitch in for fundraising events, (c) people willing to donate money, (d) people willing to contact local companies and solicit funds, and (e) people familiar with the grant-writing process.

If you fall into any of these categories, please let Claire Pate, our Fundraising Chairperson, know at (404) 524-8104. Or you can always contact me (stacywms@aol.com; (404) 378-5564).

We've got some work ahead of us, but it'll result in a wonderful new playground that'll benefit the entire neighborhood!

—Stacy Williams



The proposed playground structure is composed primarily of wood with some plastic (in earth tones); estimated cost is \$20,000

## Laughter in the Park



## Property tax update: Refunds suspended

Right after last month's *Messenger* announcement that property tax refunds were being mailed, the City suspended all activities involved with making the refunds.

Why? In spite of assurances by the Atlanta School Board that their lawsuit would seek to block payment only of their portion of the tax refunds, the School Board is actually trying overturn the entire ordinance.

Since the entire ordinance is the subject of litigation, all refunds were stopped pending resolution of the lawsuit.

In a further, though not entirely surprising, development, the City attorneys charged with defending the ordinance granting us refunds are not even arguing that the School Board should refund any taxes at all; they are making only minimal effort to defend the ordinance itself. Not surprising since the mayor and his legal department spent six months fighting us on this.

Seeing that the City administration was not doing much to defend the ordinance, Fair Assessments for Intown Residents (F.A.I.R.) has raised enough money to enter the lawsuit on behalf of the neighborhoods. F.A.I.R.'s response to the School Board lawsuit should be filed in the next few weeks.

If you want to receive e-mail updates from F.A.I.R. (which are more timely than *Messenger* articles), e-mail me (GsmithMD1@aol.com) or call me (404-681-9945).

—Greg Smith



## CRIME REPORT

Crimes reported between March 23 and April 18, 2000 in Zone 6 police records. (Block numbers have been rounded to closest hundred.)

**Trends:** Fewer home robberies; more with weapons upon individuals. More crimes in LSP.

**300 Clifton Rd., 4/01, 00:10 am,** person took vehicle and keys without permission.

**Clifton Terrace, 3/26, 7:45 pm,** victim on bicycle hit from the rear by auto; black males took his wallet when they were helping him up.

**Elmira Place, 3/28, 6:15 pm,** attempt to flee police in vehicle, chased down, arrested by officer.

**Euclid Ave. and Moreland, 4/03, 9:00 am,** lost cell phone from auto.

**Euclid Ave. & Moreland, 4/05, 9:00 pm,** bag with items stolen.

**1400 Iverson, 4/9, 9:10 am** theft from vehicle; cell phone gone.

**1200 Euclid Ave., 4/14, 11:05,** cell phone stolen from car.

**Josephine, 3/23, 1:45 pm,** theft from auto, CD player and CDs, 3/23, 9:02 am, side window of car broken - 4th time it happened, nothing taken. 4/6, 9:30 am, subject vandalized apartment.

**1200 McLendon, 4/4, 9:00 am,** business entered and vandalized, a number of items stolen.

**600 McLendon, 4/15, 11:55 pm,** man was the victim and was assaulted by three males who also attacked manager; three men arrested.

**1200 McLendon, 4/18, 11:15 am,** intoxicated person arrested driving.

**Moreland Ave., 3/31, 10:50 pm,** woman refused to comply with command to remove herself from vehicle, was abusive to officer; arrested.

**300 Moreland, 4/3, 9:35 pm,** suspect snatched money from cash register; got away.

**Moreland, 4/5, 11:50 am,** handbag stolen, money and jewelry taken at restaurant booth.

**400 Moreland, 4/9, 11:03 pm,** store items were taken when clerk wasn't looking.

**400 Moreland, 4/9, 1:45 am,** car taken at gunpoint, gun stuck in victim's back, money taken.

**400 Moreland, 4/14, 12:45 pm,** suspect threatened victim, took store property.

**300 Moreland, 4/14, 12:45 pm,** unknown tractor trailer hit and damaged roof of house.

**1300 North Ave., 3/29, 11:00 pm,** VCR and electrical equipment stolen; bicycle, cordless phone removed from house.

**1300 North Ave., 4/18, 9:00 pm,** used weapon of screwdriver to rob woman who had been chased up to her apartment.

**Terrace Ave., 3/26, 9:51 pm,** stolen vehicle recovered.

**600 Terrace Ave., 4/17, 3:00 pm,** house under construction damaged, vagrant built fire in fireplace damaging floor, spilled paint.

### ZONE 6 POLICE

Telephone: 404-371-5002  
Major Carlos Banda, Commander  
Inspector Ruby Naylor, Prevention  
Officer Bud Watson, Evening Watch  
(Pager 404-225-7085)  
Officer Craig Cooper, Day Watch  
Officer F. Retledge, Morning Watch

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**TIPS FROM THE HOUSE DOCTOR** – When you install a new roof, the 30 pound felt should be installed horizontally. Use flashing and weave the shingles in the valleys. Four nails to each shingle. Keep your roof clean. Free and friendly advice. B.Z. Swain, 404-373-3953.

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## VARIANCE REQUESTS

Voting on the following requests for variance will be held at the May CPNO meeting.

### 633 TERRACE AVENUE

Variance to reduce side yard setback from 22.5 feet (if required by SPI-7 guidelines) to 7 feet, and to allow front door installation at 45-degree angle to frontage street instead of parallel to frontage street.

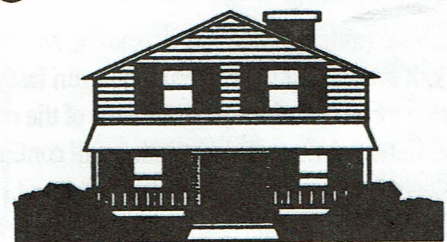
### 1208 NORTH AVENUE

Variance to adopt existing parcel dimensions (to amend official City of Atlanta zoning map) establishing parcel as "lot of record" under zoning ordinance. (FYI: This lot is the remainder of a lot apparently subdivided by the DOT condemnation, sold by DOT to the applicant, and never recombined with the parent tract, but on which the applicant's proposed improvements will apparently meet all zoning criteria if established as a lot of record for zoning review purposes).

### 1409 EUCLID AVENUE

Variance to allow reduced side yard setback. This triangular lot is at the NE corner of the intersection of the north side of North Avenue and Euclid Avenue. The applicant is seeking to amend a 1997 variance granted to allow a reduced side yard setback. Distance of the setback will be determined by the time of the May CPNO meeting. The 1997 variance apparently created a 17-foot setback, which means the City is making the applicant re-apply.

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