

The Messenger

News for Candler Park

Our intown hometown

February 2001

MEETINGS*EVENTS

CPNO MEETING FEB 12 @7 PM

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!

FEBRUARY MEETING AGENDA:

7:00 pm NOTE: EARLIER MEETING TIME!

- Officer Reports
- Conservation Community discussion
- VOTE on variance: 1280 North Avenue

TO SUBMIT AN AGENDA ITEM for the February meeting, contact any CPNO officer (see list on page 2). Deadline is February 19, 2000.

EVENTS CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 2001

Monday, February 12 * 7 PM

CPNO General Meeting

Monday, February 19 * 7 PM

CPNO Executive Committee Meeting

MARCH/APRIL 2001

Candler Park Playground Grand Reopening

Look for details in next month's Messenger.

FALL 2001

October 13-14, 2001

Candler Park FallFest

Volunteers welcome! Get in on the ground floor and have a great time while planning Candler Park's greatest event! For more information, contact Bert Bellinson at bert@tangentinindustries.com or call 404-351-8000.

Update On The Property Tax Issue: Where Are The Refunds?

By now most everyone knows that in 1999, in order to save money, the Atlanta city government changed a 30-year policy of having all property in Atlanta assessed by one county to having different parts of Atlanta assessed by different counties. Atlanta contracted with DeKalb County to perform assessments for Atlanta/DeKalb while continuing to have Fulton County do assessments for the rest of Atlanta lying in Fulton County. Because DeKalb assesses

equivalent homes higher than Fulton does, this change resulted in most Atlanta/DeKalb homeowners paying higher taxes than their counterparts in Atlanta/Fulton.

Thanks to an outpouring of protests by Atlanta/DeKalb homeowners and efforts by our Councilperson Cathy Woolard, the Atlanta government agreed to grant refunds for the extra tax that Atlanta collected as a result of the changeover to DeKalb. Unfortunately, the Atlanta School Board and the Fulton County Taxpayers Association disagreed with granting refunds to us and have sued to stop the refunds.

While the evidence that DeKalb assesses homes higher than Fulton is clear (see the table on page 4), the law is not. Our basic problem is that the laws governing tax assessment assume a city lies entirely in one county. We, of course, are in the odd situation of being in a different county than 95% of Atlanta. This is novel legal territory.

Thus, while the Atlanta School Board and the Fulton County Taxpayers Association could not argue against the fact of a

disparity, they could attempt to prevent refunds by attacking the legal method used to provide these refunds. Fair Assessments for Intown Residents (F.A.I.R.) is defending the refunds in court, but until this is resolved the refunds are suspended.

We are having better success in appealing

our 2000 assessments to DeKalb County thanks to a new state law crafted by our State Senator Mike Polak. This law specifically addresses our dilemma of being located in a different county than the majority of Atlanta.

Those making appeals this year to the DeKalb Boards of Equalization on the basis of Senate Bill 309 are getting the assessment of their property reduced by 15% to 20%. Unfortunately, for tax year 2000, the law only applies to those who chose to appeal their assessments, not to everyone. In 2001, though, Fulton and DeKalb will be required to equalize assessments for everyone. F.A.I.R. will be watching closely to ensure they indeed carry out the law.

For more information and/or to make contributions to continue these efforts, call or email Greg Smith at 404-681-9945/GSmithMD1@aol.com.

(continued on page 4)

*F.A.I.R. is defending
'99 refunds in
court; 2000 appeals
are being granted
assessment
reductions*

The Messenger

The Messenger is published monthly by the Candler Park Neighborhood Organization. Deadline for articles for the Mar. issue is Feb. 23. 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)

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THE MESSENGER/CANDLER PARK

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Conservation Community Proposed In Candler Park

A small "conservation community" is being envisioned in Candler Park neighborhood, somewhat similar to the "co-housing" community located in Lake Claire at the end of Arizona Ave. at DeKalb Ave. The vision is for an environmentally responsible and aesthetically pleasing small community that will also set aside and preserve a significant pocket of greenspace and watershed. The location would be at the dead ends of Miller Ave. and Marion St., west off of Oakdale, and also the vacant lots on McLendon between Oakdale and Sterling (next to the stucco apartment building) where a community garden is envisioned.

At the February CPNO meeting the preliminary plans will be presented by the designers for comments and discussion.

—Kelly Jordan

Candler Park Pool Seeks Volunteers To Get In The Swim

The Candler Park Pool Association (CPPA) is preparing for the upcoming summer season, and will kick off its planning with a pre-season meeting on Thursday, February 15. The meeting will be held at 7 PM at Epworth Church, and all residents are welcome to come to share opinions about activities, policies, and procedures.

This is an excellent opportunity to get involved at any level, from occasional helping out to planning pool-sponsored events (including encores of last year's acclaimed Shrimp Boil, Pizza At The Pool Fridays, and Dive-In Movies).

There are currently a number of Board positions open, as well as a wealth of opportunities for volunteers unable to serve as officers.

At press time the CPPA had not yet received word from the City of Atlanta regarding the renewal of the neighborhood's contract to manage the pool, but is expecting to hear soon. If you'd like more information, call Shawn Foley at 404-522-3521, or email to bfoley@mindspring.com.

Laughter in the Park by Deb Milbrath



New Full Service Fitness Center Opens In Intown

Exercising Art, a full service fitness facility located in Inman Park, is now open for business. Exercising Art provides cardiovascular and weight training services, personal training, sports massage therapy, men's and women's lockers, showers and changing rooms, all in a comfortable and personalized facility.

Future plans for the wellness facility include a health and protein drink bar and pro shop for customers. Space is available for members to cool down, socialize and relax after a workout.

The facility is conveniently located Elizabeth Street at the intersection of N. Highland Ave., and is open from 5:45 am to 9 pm Monday through Sunday. Monthly to yearly memberships are available and are limited to adults only. For more information, call 404-529-9108.

IT'S A NEW YEAR. DO YOU NEED A NEW HOUSE?



Maya Hahn

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Summary of The Evidence: F.A.I.R. Update On Tax Refunds *(continued from page 1)*

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Sales Ratio Studies: Medians of sales ratios using appraisals expressed as percentage.

Georgia Law 48-5-274 requires sales ratios be used to determine whether counties are appraising property close to its market value. Sales ratio (more properly, the appraisal-sales ratio) is the ratio between the value for which a property was appraised and the sales price of that property. A sales ratio of 100% would indicate that a property or group of properties was appraised exactly at their sales price. The lower the ratio, e.g., 85%, 80%, the lower a property or group of properties is being appraised as compared to its market price.

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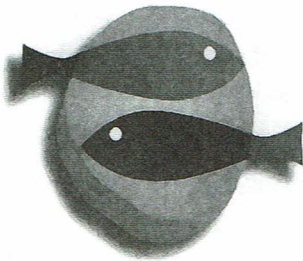


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NEIGHBORHOOD SALES RATIO STUDIES

	<u>Fulton</u>	<u>DeKalb</u>	<u>Difference</u>
1999	82.1%	88.0%	DeKalb is 7.2% higher
2000	76.1%	90.5%	DeKalb is 18.9% higher

Source: Fulton and DeKalb neighborhood sales ratio studies.

CITYWIDE: ATLANTA/FULTON VS. ATLANTA/DEKALB

	<u>Atlanta/Fulton</u>	<u>Atlanta/DeKalb</u>	<u>Difference</u>
1999	80.3%	88.0%	DeKalb is 9.6% higher
2000	Not available	90.5%	

Sources: 1999 State of Georgia Fulton Sales Ratio Study; DeKalb neighborhood sales ratio studies.

COUNTYWIDE: FULTON VS. DEKALB

	<u>Fulton</u>	<u>DeKalb</u>	<u>Difference</u>
1994	89.1%	93.2%	DeKalb is 4.6% higher
1995	89.1%	93.4%	DeKalb is 4.8% higher
1996	(1)	91.5%	
1997	87.3%	91.2%	DeKalb is 4.5% higher
1998	94.6%	93.2%	Fulton is 1.5% higher
1999	88.9%	94.2%	DeKalb is 6.0% higher
2000	Not available	Not available	

(1) Fulton did not submit its 1996 data to the state in time for a sales ratio to be constructed.

Source: State of Georgia sales ratio studies.

City of Atlanta Millage Rollback Study

Percentage increase in appraisal value of existing property in Atlanta from 1999 to 2000. Determination of the millage rollback rate was required by Georgia Code 48-5-32 and 48-5-32.1 beginning in 2000. (Go to <http://www2.state.ga.us/Departments/DOR/ptd/cas/rollback/index.html> for a very good explanation of this law.) Among other things, this law requires Taxing Jurisdictions such as cities to calculate the amount of increase in value that has occurred in an area solely as a result of an increase in appraisal value from one year to the next.

MILLAGE: ATLANTA/FULTON VS. ATLANTA/DEKALB

	<u>Atlanta/Fulton</u>	<u>Atlanta/DeKalb</u>	<u>Difference</u>
2000	3.7% increase	32.9%	DeKalb is 789.2% higher

Source: City of Atlanta Millage Rate study released June 21, 2000.

—Greg Smith

Stating The Case For College Savings Plans

[Editor's Note: This article is provided by Candler Park resident Mike Hyser, a financial planner with The Prudential Insurance Company of America. No endorsement is intended.]

Whether you have a toddler or a teen, you're more likely to go to the head of the class if you study the college savings plans offered by individual states.

More than 40 states now have prepaid tuition or college savings plans that can offer significant federal and state tax advantages. Several states have recently established IRA-like savings programs that are not pegged to future tuition costs. They may produce a better return than prepaid plans for the long-term investor, given that college costs have been rising at about 4 - 5% annually in recent years.

If you don't like your state's plan, shop around. Some states have no residency requirements for contributors or beneficiaries. Caveat: Know what tax or other penalties apply if the money in the account is not used for college, or if transferred to another state plan.

Just about anyone can set up a state savings plan for your child. For example, a grandparent can contribute the entire costs of tuition (but no living expenses) to a state plan without regard to the gift tax. Under some state plans grandparents could gift up to \$50,000 tax-free to a grandchild's college account, effectively removing the amount from their otherwise taxable estate. Consult your tax advisor for more information about your particular situation. —Mike Hyser

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Dance Company To Present Concert

Louise Runyon Barth Dance Company will present Louise Runyon and Wayne M. Smith in a concert of their works on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, February 16, 17 and 18, at 8 pm at The Beam, 750 Glenwood Avenue, Atlanta. Tickets are \$12 for the general public and \$10 for artists, seniors and students. Seating is limited and reservations are advised; call 404-728-8991. Artistic director Louise Runyon will present two works exploring relationship, including a duet with Smith; Smith, a professor of dance at Emory University, will show three works, one performed by Moving In The Spirit Dance Company.

Have An Unused Cell Phone? Help Donna Van Gogh's Help Someone!

Drop off that unused cell phone at Donna Van Gogh's Artists Market of Candler Park, and help someone who needs it. All phones are being donated to the International Women's House. Please include your name and address with your donated phone.

Phones can be dropped off at Donna Van Gogh's, 1651 McLendon, during business hours: Monday through Saturday from 10 am to 7 pm, Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm.

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CRIME REPORT

Crimes reported Dec. 20 '00 - Jan. 15, '01 in Zone 6 police records. (Block numbers rounded to closest hundred.)

Several times in the last few months the 6th Zone police officers have been proactive and stopped suspects possibly causing us less grief later on. See North Avenue on 1/12/01 below:

1200 North Avenue, 12/20/00, 11:00 am, damage to inside of house under construction - fireplace and smoke-damaged cabinets.

500 Clifton Road, 12/20/00, 4:30 pm, man did not pay \$30 taxi fare, he ran away.

1300 McLendon Avenue, 1/01/01, 5:20 am, suspect played loud music and stomped on floor as had been happening before. When neighbor complained, suspect was abusive. Warned by police.

400 Candler Park Drive, 1/01/01, 5:52 pm, stolen W-2 form, later, credit card numbers were used by unknown person.

1400 Iverson Street, 1/02/01, 10:29 pm, victim's car window broken - pocketbook or anything else not taken as far as could be seen.

1700 McLendon Avenue, 1/02/01, 11:15 pm, left purse in restaurant, no one had seen it when she returned.

600 Clifton Road, 1/04/01, 10:05 pm, someone stole the Georgia tag decal from license plate.

1200 McLendon Avenue, 1/05/01, 12:57 pm, items stolen from garage - 2 bikes and tools.

Moreland and North Avenues, 1/06/01, 4:02 am, car ran red light, D.U.I., couldn't say ABCs.

300 Ferguson Street, 1/09/01, 5:35 pm, person arrested for DUI: backed up into building in store area, drove wrong lane on McLendon just avoiding other vehicles, kicked police officers, profanity, when a lady officer attempted to take her to the bathroom as she requested, she was kicked - more screaming.

1350 North Avenue, 1/12/01, 5:00 am, in park area suspect with bag was stopped. He had a sawed off shotgun in his bag with duct tape. When his record was checked he was a repeated felon with weapons offenses.

900 Oakdale Road, 1/14/01, 7:16 am, DUI, overturned Mercedes, person bleeding on curb in a drugged state - ambulance called. Marijuana pipe found in car.

300 Moreland Avenue, 1/15/01, 3:25 am, person took initiative and reported to a patrol car that she had been given a suspected substance. Police attempted to locate suspects.

ZONE 6 POLICE: CALL 911 FIRST!
Individual Officers: 404-371-5002

Candler Park FallFest Volunteers Needed

Lots of help needed, big and small!
If you are interested in helping plan FallFest (October 13-14, 2001), contact Bert Bellinson at 404-351-8000 or email bert@tangentindustries.com.

VARIANCE REQUESTS

Discussion and voting on the following issue will be held at the February CPNO meeting.

1280 NORTH AVENUE

Homes by Design Enterprises, Inc. (c/o Tony Tripoli, 404-597-0292), developer (SPI 7 Candler Park zoning), will apply to Atlanta Board of Zoning Adjustment for a variance to reduce the half-depth easterly front yard (frontage along Candler Street) from 20' (required) to 0' (zero lot line). **Note:** CPNO Zoning VP recommends CPNO approval be granted, conditioned on applicant's completion (at its expense within not less than 2 years from issuance of building permit), of all formal procedures for official municipal abandonment of Candler Street (apparently no longer in use). This matter is similar in nature to a variance request granted by CPNO in 2000 to allow Robert Reed, as owner of similar SPI 7-zoned property located on North Avenue on the opposite (east) side of Candler Street, approving a half-depth side-yard setback reduction. Upon formal abandonment of Candler Street to adjoining lot owners, the evenly-divided 40' right-of-way would then serve as the new apparent "side-yards" for each of these lots. However, since the former Candler Street was not specifically included in the adoption of SPI zoning for former DOT properties, it should be concurrently "rezoned" by applicant to have Atlanta adopt SPI-7 zoning consistent with current adjoining privately-held lots.

CLASSIFIED ADS

ABOVE THE HEDGES! - Spring's -a-poppin! Wake up your yard with our "curb appeal" services. Weekly or biweekly. We do the gardening chores you want, and give you the satisfaction (guaranteed)! Blend in or stand out. Reasonable prices. Free consultations. Experienced owner-operator. Call Dennis at 770-621-YARD (9273).

EXPERIENCED NANNY NEEDED - 45 hrs. per week, M-F. Lake Claire prof. couple seeks gentle, loving care for 3-month old. No smoking. References, background check required. 404-378-3502.

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*How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
All people take refuge in the shadow of your wings.*
- Psalm 36:7

Please join us for our Ash Wednesday service on February 28 at 7:00 p.m. Then, Wednesday nights through Lent, we will be offering special sessions about Baptism at 7:00 p.m.

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