

## IHLNA Board minutes July 20, 2021

### 7 pm Optimist Park

**Board members present:** KC Smith, Charity Myers, Edward Reid, Jason Khan-Hohensee, Ramona Abernathy-Paine, Charlotte Stuart-Tilly, Melissa Farley, Marie-Claire Leman (who prepared the minutes)

**Absent Board members:** Doug Martin, Ashley Arrington, Katie Clark, Ceci Michelotti, John Tomasino

**Neighbors present:** Haylee Glasel, Ernie Paine, Doug Schrock, Glen Gifford, Geoff Brown, Emma Hanley

Minutes of the June 15 board meeting were previously accepted via email and posted on website.

Election of Vice President: KC Smith was nominated last time and declined. Marie-Claire Leman was nominated at the last meeting and now declines. The floor was opened to for nominations. No nominations were made; the office remains open.

Glen Gifford asked, "What are the duties of the VP?" Ramona said these duties were not specified but are in development. The term of office is 2 years. Ramona explained

Ramona mentioned that we are trying to encourage use of our website and get away from Facebook as a way to interact with the neighborhood since we don't have control over either of the Facebook pages. Issues for the board to address, items to add to the agenda can be submitted through the neighborhood gmail address, IndianheadLehighNA@gmail.com.

Announcement that The City of Tallahassee Neighborhood Leadership Academy is accepting applications. This-program is designed to introduce citizens to how various city departments work: The group visits each city department. People can apply to join it. Jason and Geoff Brown are interested and Ramona will send the info. It is 2hours per week for 10 weeks.

- Treasurer's report  
Melissa will have a report at the next meeting.
- Committee reports

**Edward, website committee:** Eli Scheetz has made some under-cover improvements; David July has added a mailing list signup which is integrated to the page; logo was too big at top of page so it was changed but Charity may redesign the original. Eli is looking at BBpress as a forum to use for communication, but Google groups would be better since it is email-based which would

be better for some. But Google groups does not seem to be free (only available) for groups that are 501c(3). John has looked into this and might have an answer about how or what we can access and what the cost would be.

Still to work on: Calendar feature, improve menus, blog that can be updated regularly with news so that people can subscribe to it and see news/info on projects/developments and be encouraged to go back to it/subscribe to it if they want to see all the news

Jason: what is the issue with email for internal board communication?

Ramona: too many emails and hard to follow and chime in when the threads get long or split.

Marie-Claire: meeting more frequently has helped and we are not having such substantive discussion since we can have those at meetings. Has not felt as overwhelming.

Ernie: when we put out the signs for meetings, we should have the next meeting date on the home page.

Marie-Claire: we should maybe add an announcement block at the top of home page when something is coming up that week

Charity: For those physical signs, we can add "next *Thursday*" to the top of the signs once we have nailed down the "day".

**KC: moved to authorize Charity to order the little signs that can be added to the top of the signs.**

**Charlotte: seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Marie-Claire, South City Foundation:** Survey was sent to poll neighbors on their engagement and encourage more interactions with Hartsfield. The other part of the goal is to fundraise matching \$\$ for the grant received from SCF. The Survey will be available for another 2 weeks or so, with a reminder to participate and the fundraiser will end just before school starts. The support is for the Hartsfield Family Resource Center. The neighbor checks are payable to Hartsfield (and one was done online) but the grant was two checks to IHLNA and we will make out a check to Hartsfield for \$2000 for that contribution.

**Winewood:**

Ramona gave an update on the project and the waiver to change the land use designation of the Comprehensive Plan. This waiver allows residential use of property previously designated as office space. The Buyer has not closed yet on the purchase of the property; the developer wants to create 400 housing units for rent, ranging from 500sq feet to 1400 sq feet, priced aimed at those making 60-80% of area median income (AMI).

Doug Schrock distributed a map of the area showing the proximity of the project to their backyards and expressed the concern of increased noise and more cars driving right behind

back fence. He has questions about the process and wonders how to express concern. Some neighbors want to advocate for a wall/sound barrier.

Map shows access points to the neighborhood. Concerns about the developer seeing this as an opportunity to create affordable housing but does not carry through on it. Was hoping to dialogue with the board about what we might advocate for.

Emma: Lives on Wahalaw Court. Likes the green space buffer idea, we use our access to Blair Stone Rd. Would like to see access to the neighborhood and to Optimist Park. Wonders about a walking path as an extension of Chinnapakin between the two houses for more direct access to amenities of neighborhood.

Geoff: understands that Chinnapakin at some point went all the way through as a plotted road. Not sure if there is a public right of way there now.

Ramona was at the meeting when the waiver was approved. She has not yet been able to get in touch with the developer to set up a meeting with neighbors but will continue to try to reach him.

Doug S: was hoping that there could be a conversation before the sale happens to impose requirements towards neighbors. Would like to see the board come to an agreement with all the neighbors about a recommendations or requests of the developer.

Ramona: wants a group to get together and get the developer in to listen to ideas so that input can be included in the process. She asked that someone chair that group.

Doug S: feels unsure if there is a place to have input or someone to relay our suggestions to.

Ernie: there are city meetings and opportunities to give input.

Ramona: when Indianhead speaks, they listen.

Doug S: suggested that Ramona could go back and mention that there are neighbors with concerns, so that we can figure out how to be part of the conversation.

KC: thinks we need to make sure that neighborhood understands that the issue is important not only to some neighbors but that all neighbors should care about it. We need to do a better job of explaining the issues for the whole neighborhood to access and understand it.

Ramona will continue to monitor the process but wants neighbors to advocate for what they want, a plan. Ramona will do what she can to keep the neighborhood informed of the process and possible next step. There is no way or no one to approach to back track the support we expressed. We have to express those concerns moving forward when there is an opportunity.

Edward: Suggested that interested neighbors, especially those most directly impacted, start directly contacting city commissioners.

Ramona created an action item for herself to check with Karen Jumonville to find out what could happen next. She and Ernie also relayed that anyone can sign up to speak for 3 minutes at the commission meetings during the period for “unagendad” items.

**Ramona, Alliance of Tallahassee Neighborhoods (ATN):** 33 out of 35 items suggested by ATN were adopted by the City Commission to improve relations between the City and neighborhoods.

One that was not adopted was the requirement that a developer has to meet with neighbors during the design process but they will, going forward, encourage developers to do this, citing advantages to developers to meet with neighbors ahead of time.

**Ramona, Magnolia Preschool Expansion:** Magnolia Preschool has applied for a deviation to be able to have driveway access the school from Magnolia for child drop off and pick up. Everyone who spoke at two recent DRC reviews were against the deviation. The request has been tabled until August. Part of what neighbors working with Growth Management have proposed is to have the new drop off and pick up area routed to Chowkeebin. There will be a meeting (rescheduled) with the school and board members can attend. Edward wants to attend.

#### **Doug Martin, Magnolia Trail:**

Doug M provided, via email to John Tomasino, the following update he received from Susan Emmanuel, with the Blueprint group:

We are happy to report the Magnolia Drive Trail project is scheduled to begin construction on July 6, 2021. With utilities cost sharing from the City of Tallahassee and design support and construction management from Leon County, the Trail project incorporates major infrastructure improvements along the corridor including upgraded water and sewer infrastructure, roadway repair, an upgraded trail to provide connectivity, the conversion of overhead electric lines to underground, intersection improvements at Jim Lee Road and updated landscaping and street lighting.

To construct these improvements along the S. Magnolia Drive corridor, portions of S. Magnolia Drive will temporarily close in phases beginning Tuesday, July 6, 2021. The first phase of construction requires closing one block of S. Magnolia Drive between Gadsden and S. Meridian Streets. Detours will be clearly marked and access to residences will be maintained at all times. There are three residential properties located on the closed segment and each will be notified of the road closure via one-to-one outreach. The community is being notified using message boards, post cards, email notifications such as this one, and media announcements, including radio advertisements.

The second phase of construction will include the same improvements and will require closing a one block section of S. Magnolia Drive from S. Monroe Street to S. Gadsden Street. Again, detours will be clearly marked and access to residences and businesses will be maintained at all times. Construction will continue along Magnolia Drive east toward Pontiac Drive and will require lane closures and, possibly, additional detours.

S. Magnolia Drive between S. Monroe Street and Pontiac Drive is expected to open to thru traffic in spring 2022. Attached is the Blueprint Project Snapshot for Magnolia, which provides a general overview. The project [webpage \(https://cms.leoncountyfl.gov/Home/Departments/Public-Works/Magnolia-Road-Closure\)](https://cms.leoncountyfl.gov/Home/Departments/Public-Works/Magnolia-Road-Closure) is the best resource for detour and information about the construction project.

We look forward to continuing to provide updates as the project moves forward.

Please share this information with your neighbors and please let us know if you have any questions.

**John, fruit trees:** (Marie-Claire shared update since John wasn't there)

107 folks responded to the poll about seeing if neighbors are interested in fruit trees being planted to share fruit of. Over 75% were interested and supportive of the project. 39 folks are interested in joining a tree team. Lots of positive comments. John and Marie-Claire will work between now and our next board meeting to present a draft application for the board's approval at the next meeting. Geoff Brown also very interested in helping. The grant is for neighborhood improvement and the trees were the idea of John. We have talked to Just Fruit and Exotics and they want to contribute with trees and we will buy more trees from them.

### **KC, The Optimist**

Production schedule will be shared via email and FB

July 30 is when notice goes out.

Copy due on Aug 27

Ready for distribution first week of October

Neighborhood developments, Hartsfield, SILC, News+Notes

Features: re-wilding Neneland, SCF updates, Fall activities, introduce new board members, fruit trees

- **Halloween Party**

The leader of Tao Jones and the Ontological Elephants contacted Grant wanting to know if we will have a party this year.

Charity: have we decided that we can have a gathering?

Charlotte: it involves mostly kids and they won't be vaccinated probably by then

Emma: what parts need to be planned this far in advance?

Ramona: everything: date, reserving park, booking band

Emma: it is a lot to assume that everything will be fine; so maybe plan against indoor activity so we don't have to cancel, maybe not have food part.

Charity: band can happen outside, not have food, we can do almost everything else we did.

People can do what they feel comfortable with; maybe we can form a committee to organize?

Charity offered to head up the committee to plan outside activities and confirm the band. We don't have to do anything more formal. Ramona will reserve Park space for the 30<sup>th</sup>. Marie-Claire will connect Charity to volunteers from last year to see who wants to help. Haylee offered to help.

- **Height of basketball goals at Optimist Park**

Ramona: Ashley Edwards, Director of Tallahassee Parks and Recreation asked us if we had changed our mind about the height of basketball goals. What came from the board was that we had not changed our mind. It is a long standing policy and not a new decision.

Marie-Claire is uncomfortable with us answering Ashley without us having all talked about this first. Hears that little kids are enjoying it lowered and we don't want to take that away from the younger kids. It was contentious when it was lowered. Some popular solutions proposed on Facebook and that Marie-Claire wanted us to consider are:

- add a 3<sup>rd</sup> goal as the lower one with a half court somewhere else in the park, so we are not taking anything away from kids who enjoy it
- add a 3<sup>rd</sup> goal on the side of the court – seems maybe dangerous or wouldn't be able to use at the same time as court
- see about one of the two nets being able to be moved up and down; but you need a tool to do that.

Glen: 3<sup>rd</sup> goal on same space is recipe for injury, but maybe adding a 3<sup>rd</sup> elsewhere might work better.

Edward: groups coming in and taking over the court and not sharing was what led to lowering it

Glen: I think you can have rules to communicate expectations so that everyone has access.

Emma: this is not an issue with volleyball courts, why is there a difference?

Edward: basketball is a more popular sport so attracts more people.

Glen: wonders what the responsibility between City and neighborhood and is.

**Marie-Claire: moves that we take the step of finding out if we can add a basket to our park with a small court. That way we wouldn't be taking away anything from kids but allowing full court again.**

**KC seconded the motion**

**Charity, Melissa, Charlotte, Jason, Marie-Claire and KC: in favor  
Edward and Ramona voted against.**

- **Discussion of meeting day and time going forward**

Tuesday works for everyone except Katie

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month works for everyone, but Ramona has concerns that unexpected activities often arise to conflict with planned activities during the first week of any month. We are scheduling the meeting for **September 2<sup>nd</sup>** (skipping August since 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday in August is so soon and we are not required to meet monthly)

- **Unagendaed items**

Geoff: city cut ripening elderberry? Would like to know what department of city would do that?

Ramona: would be "streets" and will look into it to let him know.

Haylee: was there to bring up speeding on Jim Lee and it will be added to next meeting's agenda.