

ELNCA Meeting January 12, 2004

Call to Order by President Kyle Caldwell - 7:30 pm

I. INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

New and existing board members were introduced to the neighborhood. The 2004 ELNCA Board consists of:

- President – Kyle Caldwell
- Vice President – Becky Payne
- Treasurer – Scott Brady
- Secretary – Ginny Perrine
- Board Members – Michelle Bonds, Craig Castle, Ed Harrell, Valencia Hudson, LeRoy O'Quinn, Jennifer Retzke, Margie Shine and Freddie Styles

II. EAST LAKE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Tina Pippin of the education committee introduced the principals of Drew Charter School, Karen Eldridge, and East Lake Elementary, Wendolyn Benton, who gave presentations on their respective schools. Key points to note are that 100% of fifth graders at East Lake Elementary scored in the top 3% of writing tests, and Drew Charter was ranked one of the top performing middle schools in Atlanta. For more information, visit their websites:

Charles R. Drew Charter School - http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/our_schools/charter/drew.html

East Lake Elementary School - http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/our_schools/elementary/elementary/elake/elake.htm

Anna Benefield is completing a neighborhood survey to develop data on households with children who are 18+ under. Please see Anna for a copy of the survey if you would like to participate. The next Education Committee meeting will be held Tuesday, January 13th at 7 p.m. at the East Lake Foundation Office.

III. HOSEA WILLIAMS HOME RESTORATION PROJECT

The Hosea Williams property at 8 East Lake Drive SE (corner of East Lake Drive and Hosea Williams Drive) is owned by the Martin Luther King Jr. Poor People's Church of Love, and currently is undergoing a comprehensive renovation. Residents have expressed concern about the project as work has begun to take place at the site and a groundbreaking ceremony has taken place without advanced notice to the neighborhood. Elisabeth Omilami, Hosea Williams' daughter, is leading the project and appeared before the neighborhood to discuss the restoration and address neighbors' concerns.

Ginny Perrine, ELNCA Zoning Chair, and Craig Castle, Zoning Committee member, first provided an overview of the zoning and permitting issues surrounding the property, a summary of which follows.

- The property currently is zoned R-4, single-family residence by the City of Atlanta.
- The Omilami family received an alteration permit, which allowed for demolition of the existing structure with the exception of two walls and the foundation. Once demolition began, it was discovered that the home was in worse condition than expected, and the entire house was demolished to and including part of the foundation.
- A stop work order was issued by the city since work exceeded the allowable amount of demolition for which the permit was granted.
- Craig Castle and Ginny Perrine met with Norm Koplon, Director of the Bureau of Buildings, to review the site permit/drawings and discuss building options for the site. The architectural drawings depict a 3,300-sf, 1-bedroom, 1.5-bath house that closely matches the design of the original home. According to Mr. Koplon, the existing permit allows the structure to be used solely as a residence, and a special use permit or rezoning would be required to use the facility for anything else. A special use permit provides 12 separate categories of use that could be applied for if the facility is to be used as anything other than a residence, and then additional renovations would need to be made to the structure to allow for commercial use. The difference between a special use permit and a rezoning is that the change in use (special use) is granted to the property owner for a specific period of time and stays with the owner, whereas a rezoning stays with the property for the life of the property unless another rezoning application is filed.
- Ms. Omilami spoke about the history of the home and her father's desire to renovate it up to his death. She views this renovation as an opportunity to create a memorial to her father and his work as a civil rights activist, including sharing historical records and artifacts with the public and researchers. Fundraising efforts are underway to raise money for future use of the property, and it was noted that fundraising efforts are directly tied to retirement of the debt to Citizens Trust Bank. Ms. Omilami emphasized that she has not decided the final use of the property and wants to involve the East Lake community in that decision through feedback from a committee of neighbors who would work with the Omilamis; the project's spokesperson, Nancy Cronin; and the builder, Louis White of Yahnique Design Group. Ms. Omilami has met historical department of Atlanta, DeKalb County and Georgia to enquire about potential historical designation for the property. Freddie Styles, ELNCA board member, volunteered to put Ms. Omilami in touch with the Atlanta Urban Design Commission since he is a board member of the organization.
- It was noted that an application for a special use permit or rezoning must come before the neighborhood association for approval before continuing through the approval process up to the city. It was also pointed out a special use permit could be transferred to a new property owner without seeking the approval of the neighborhood.

- The project was opened for discussion, which included residents' comments and concerns about traffic and parking, the desire to maintain the residential nature of East Lake, lack of communication between the Omilamis and the neighborhood thus far, and excitement about the project and revitalization of the corner.

- Residents were invited to volunteer as a committee member and work with the Omilami family in developing ideas for the property. The final committee consists of:

Freddie Styles, Chair

Lori Cornwell

Julia Fare

Ed Harrell

James Harris

Charlie Harrison

Edwin Henry

Cat Jaffin

Kim Kleiss

Cary Reams

Luana Slaughter

David Wallace

Meeting Adjourned – 10 pm