

Winter 2002

# Fern Creek Crier

[www.ndhra.org](http://www.ndhra.org)

A Quarterly Newsletter by the North Druid Hills Residents Association

*The North Druid Hills Residents Association (NDHRA) is a volunteer, not-for-profit, civic association incorporated under Georgia law and supported by membership dues.*

## Spring Membership Meeting

**Sunday March 3**

**5 pm**

Cokesbury United Methodist Church

Fellowship Hall

2650 N. Druid Hills Rd.

*Join us for refreshments and news about your neighborhood*

Please try to attend

### NDHRA Membership Drive

As the pace of development quickens in DeKalb County and in our neighborhood, the NDHRA has evolved and hopes to foster an increased sense of community among area residents. The NDHRA attempts to reflect the reasonable views of the majority of the area's residents, whether they actually belong to the Association or choose to remain non-affiliated. We are not affiliated with any type of political

association, group or cause, and remain non-partisan.

The Association dues for 2002 are \$25 per household. This is a relatively small investment in the continued protection and further enhancement of the quality of life in our neighborhood. Your dues help produce this newsletter, the Web site and the Meeting Notice signs you see announcing the next membership meeting. In addition, the NDHRA

periodically contributes to legal fees for neighborhood representation in negotiations with developers. As our zoning and development update suggests (page 2), this will be an ongoing necessity. Joining the NDHRA is one way for your voice to be heard.

*Any contribution in addition to the \$25 annual fee is welcome, and will help the NDHRA with rising printing costs and future legal fees and other services.*

### North Druid Hills Residents Association 2002 Membership Form

Would you like to participate in one of the following Committees?

(Please one committee per person. A description of each committee appears on page 4.)

- Zoning/Land use
- Environmental Enhancement
- Community Relations
- Newsletter/Communications
- Membership

PLEASE PRINT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership fees for 2002 are \$25. Make your check payable to NDHRA.

Mail your application with payment to: NDHRA, Inc., P.O. Box 95965, Atlanta, GA 30347

## Land Use Updates

### County Rezoning Moratorium

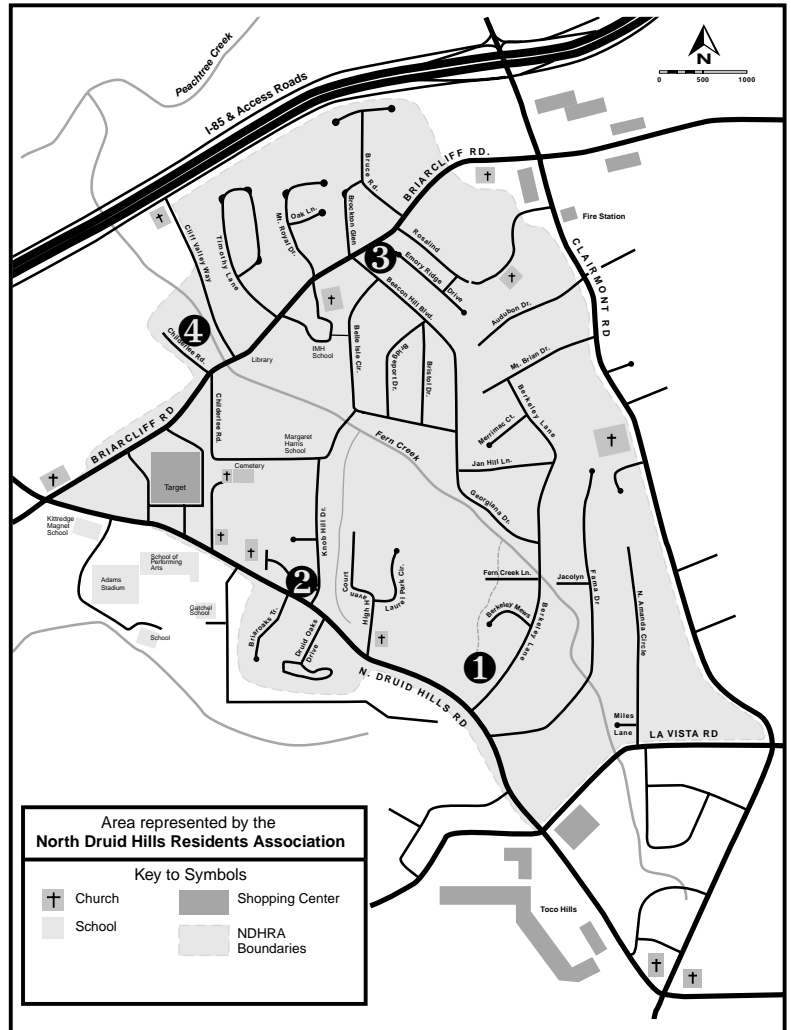
On 1/22/02 the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners extended for 60 days the now famous moratorium on residential rezoning. Within a week a group of our local zoning attorneys got Superior Court Senior Judge Ed Wheeler to issue a 30 day Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) against enforcing the moratorium. Some of the attorneys showed up early the next morning with boxes of rezoning requests. The County put them off by various means, and quickly appealed to the State Supreme Court. That stayed the TRO until the Court rules. Who knows what they will decide, but don't feel optimistic.

### Neighborhood Projects

#### **Berkeley Oaks Subdivision:** (#1 on map)

On 8/24/01, the NDHRA filed an appeal with the Dekalb Co. BOC re: the Dekalb Planning Commissions' 8/15/01 approval of the Preliminary Plat for Berkeley Oaks Subdivision. On 12/20/01, the Dekalb Co. BOC voted *unanimously* to uphold the NDHRA appeal (and overturn the 8/15/01 Planning Commission Decision). On 1/18/02, the owner of the "Berkeley Oaks" property appealed that decision in the Superior Court of Dekalb Co. The NDHRA future course of action is being considered as we go to press. **Emory Place** (Jolly/Centex, #2 on map) is under construction; building mass can now be visualized.

**Noland Ridge** (3 lots on Briarcliff, #3 on map) is poking along; this has been sloppy site work. The first stage of **Cliff Valley Apartments** (#4 on map) is under construction, with the second phase to the rear up the hill to await market response to the front section; erosion and impact on that portion of Fern Creek are of great concern. **Target** has been demolished and rebuilding started; the site will be raised higher and somewhat better landscaped. **CVS** is well into construction; check out the turn-out lane along LaVista for which a row of trees was sacrificed. On the Greek Orthodox Cathedral site you can now see the form and mass of their new buildings and the turn-out lane along Clairmont. Finally, look across the street from the new Church entrance (careful of traffic!). What do you think of the character and mass of the houses under construction in relation to the other nearby houses along Clairmont?



### Neighborhood History

While the Neighborhood is making current history, we thought you'd like to know more about it's interesting past. The area around Toco Hill and toward Briarcliff Road was once dominated by dairy farms. Some of our residents can remember when the Post property at Briarcliff and Sheridan Dr. was an operating dairy, but did you know that the site of Loehmann's Plaza was also a dairy just prior to the shopping center being built? In fact, the house across Briarcliff Road that houses the real estate office was the residence of the dairy farm owners. If you look closely in front of Kroger on LaVista at Toco Hill, you may see an abandoned house behind a hedge of overgrown bushes. That too, was once the residence of a dairy that occupied the land that Toco Hill now sits on.

*If anyone would like to contribute more facts about our local history, please write Joe Greear care of NDHRA P.O. Box 95965, Atlanta, GA 30347 or email [jgreear1905@yahoo.com](mailto:jgreear1905@yahoo.com)*

## DeKalb Peachtree Airport (PDK)

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From an article by Mike Principino published in *The Drew Valley Voice*

“While the lack of security has not yet been resolved at the DeKalb Peachtree Airport, the current Airport Director, Lee Rimmel, has presented to the Board of Commissioners (BOC) another program designed to remove a homeowners rights.

The Sound Insulation Program (SIP) is designed to provide upgrades to your home, at the county’s expense, in exchange for aviation rights above it. Possible upgrades include HVAC, storm or replacement windows, doors and insulation.

The Airport Director has used the Airport Compatibility Overlay District (ACOD) maps to determine the number of single-family units (864), multi family units (1857) and churches (4) affected.

This program would require the county to take more funding from the FAA at approximately \$3,000,000 per year. Airport revenue would contribute \$300,000 per year.

The project timeline is somewhere between 8 and 16 years for completion.

**What Mr. Rimmel presented to the BOC is that the homeowner would receive:**

1. Quieter interior of the house (Outside your house would be noisier because you gave up the aviation rights over your home.)
2. Improve overall value of the house (as all home improvements do)
3. Improve the entire neighborhood. (not sure how bigger, noisier and more planes improve the neighborhood.)

**What the County receives: Aviation Easement.**

The FAR Part 150 study was completed in 1997. It was done to evaluate the noise impact of the airport on the surrounding neighborhoods. The results were to be used to make recommendation to the county and the FAA using alternate flight patterns to minimize noise. The findings have never been implemented.

While the SIP attempts to reduce the decibel level of noise inside your home, implementing the FAR Part 150 recommended flight patterns would reduce the levels inside and outside your home. A reduction of 5 decibels is equivalent to “doubling” the distance of the aircraft from your roof. Moving flight patterns over commercial areas and roadways would reduce the noise to tolerant levels at a much greater savings to the county and would not require the same FAA funding. A reduction in aircraft over the neighborhoods would certainly improve the neighborhoods at no cost.

Commissioner Gale Waldorff has suggested that the flight patterns be changed and set according to the FAR Part 150 study before the county implements a sound insulation program. The current ACOD maps used would also be evaluated. Gale also added that money is limited and should be allocated towards improving safety first.”

For more information, go to the PDK Watch website at [www.pdkwatch.org](http://www.pdkwatch.org).

**What you can do:**

Please contact your Board of Commissioners and urge them to continue their focus on security, stringent rules on weight limits, and implementing the FAR Part 150 findings. Thank them for their understanding of the impact of the airport on our neighborhood and the efforts they have made so far.

## Redistricting Update

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From an article by Blair Belton published in *The Drew Valley Voice*

“State legislature has been working on redrawing the boundaries of districts for all of our elected officials. As of January 2002, the legislature has approved plans for U.S. Congressional districts, state Senate districts, and state Representative districts. The legislature is still considering County Commission districts and School Board districts. Any plans approved by the state legislature also have to be approved by the federal Justice Department.

Only one of our elected officials has changed in the redistricting plans to date. Our U.S Representative is still Cynthia McKinney. Our state Senator is still Mike Polak. Our state Representative, however, will change from Doug Teper to Sally Harrell.

*Note: The preceding paragraph applies only to resident of the Drew Valley neighborhood, on the other side of I-85. For our neighborhood, the U.S. Representative and State Representative districts are likely to change. To view the latest proposed redistricting maps, visit <http://ga2000.itos.uga.edu/>*

The state Senators and Representatives from DeKalb have been holding hearings on the County Commission and School Board districts. So far both the Commission and School Board members have proposed plans that modify the current boundaries only slightly. A citizen’s group in Tucker has proposed new Commission boundaries for the entire county. Other plans have been proposed to eliminate the 2 super-districts in the county and for other community based district boundaries.

You cannot vote for any elected official unless you are registered to vote at least 30 days before the election. You can register to vote at any county library. The next scheduled election is the general primary in the summer of 2002. The Board of Education is attempting to schedule a referendum to extend the school sales tax in a March 2002 election.”

## Committees – the Backbone of our Association

From the Immediate Past President, Diane Buch

For the year 2002, NDHRA has the goal of focusing on increasing the membership of the individual committees and improving the active participation of those committee members. The Committees, with active, participating members are the backbone of any successful Neighborhood Association. The Officers, Board Members, and the residents of a large neighborhood such as ours need people serving on all of our various committees.

Our 5 Committees and their functions:

### 1. Communications:

Develop and maintain a system of communicating correct information about issues affecting the NDHRA and the surrounding area; produce the quarterly Association Newsletter (the Fern Creek Crier). The current chairperson is Joe Greear (jgreear1905@yahoo.com)

### 2. Community Relations:

Establish cooperative working relationships with local merchants, businesses, institution, places of worship and elected officials. The temporary chairperson is Diane Buch (dbuch311@yahoo.com).

### 3. Membership Committee:

Work to increase the number of active, dues-paying members of the Association and coordinate fundraising opportunities for the Association. The current chairperson is Debbie Wehunt (debbiedlw@yahoo.com).

### 4. Zoning and Land Use Committee:

Develop and maintain proactive involvement in all matters related to development in the NDHRA area in general, with the goal of maintaining the residential quality of the Community. The current chairperson is John Steinichen (stein@mindspring.com).

### 5. Environmental Enhancement Committee

Plan, promote, and conduct activities to motivate and mobilize residents, commercial, and institutional entities to maintain and improve the surroundings and quality of life within the NDHRA area.

Your active participation can help the NDHRA protect your property values, enhance the residential quality of your neighborhood, and monitor the activities that threaten your quality of life. Please join and participate! Don't leave it up to others.

## How to Contact Your Commissioners

**District 6** - At-Large Area Comm. for north 1/2 of County (Districts 2&6)

**Judy Yates**  
jayates@co.dekalb.ga.us  
404.371.2863

**District 2** - our local district Comm.

**Gale Walldorff**  
galew@co.dekalb.ga.us  
404.371.4609

Comm. Walldorff and Comm. Yates share the same FAX: 404.371.7004

Write each Commissioner at the following common address:

Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_  
1300 Commerce Drive  
Decatur GA 30030

*They want to hear from you!*

## Spring Cleaning!

Maureen Corley is looking into organizing a Neighborhood Yard Sale, a one weekend NDHRA event for sometime in the late spring. For a nominal donation (\$5 to \$10, tbd), the NDHRA will place an ad in AJC, put up signs around the neighborhood, and balloons on your mailbox. Interested in participating? Email Maureen at: ranchomo@hotmail.com or call her at (404) 634-9054.

## Calling All Handymen...

This neighborhood needs Handymen! We have elderly people, single people, renters and two employee families. Our housing is aging. All of us need help keeping up our property.

Let's bring together those who need help with those who can provide help. There are a number of ways to do that, but we need to start with a roster of handymen and yardmen. Then that can be made available via our website: <http://ndhra.org/>

P O Box 95965 Atlanta GA 30347 Email at [info@ndhra.org](mailto:info@ndhra.org)

### Become a contributor or an advertiser to the Fern Creek Crier!

Business-card sized ads (3.5" x 2") are \$25.  
Submit ads or articles to Joe Greear c/o NDHRA - Fern Creek Crier, P.O. Box 95965, Atlanta, GA 30347 or call 404-315-9977 for more information.

Upcoming deadlines:  
May 1 (Summer issue), Aug. 1 (Fall issue), and Nov. 1 (Winter issue).

For a list of NDHRA officers and contact information, see our web site at [www.ndhra.org](http://www.ndhra.org)