

Highland Park Neighborhood Association

November Minutes

Meeting Date: November 19, 2024

Meeting Location: Highland Park Golf Course, on the second floor

[Link to meeting recording](#) (recording begins a little late this time, sorry!)

President Elizabeth Sanfelippo called the November 2024 meeting of the Highland Park Neighborhood Association to order at 6 pm. She welcomed everyone and introduced herself as President, Judy Jones as Vice President and Kelly Marshall as Secretary.

ROLL CALL

Sanfelippo performed a roll call of online attendees as required by the City. Online attendees were: Jim Carnes, Erin Kellen, Kecia Lightener, Annie Chester, Jenny and John Lewis

August Minutes

Sanfelippo asked if there were any corrections or additions to the August meeting minutes. David Herring moved to approve the minutes from the August 2024 meeting. Maria Elliott seconded the motion. A vote was taken, no one was opposed, and the minutes were approved. We had a Community meeting in September and October.

SPECIAL SPEAKER: CHRISTA MAYFIELD, MAGIC CITY WELLNESS CENTER AT HANOVER DIRECTOR

The [Magic City Wellness Center @ Hanover](#) is an eating disorder wellness in-patient facility located at 39 Hanover Circle and is a project of Birmingham AIDS Outreach (BAO). The facility will employ around 30 people, but only about 20 people at any given time.

The mission of Magic City Wellness Center at Hanover is to provide residential, partial hospitalization, and intensive outpatient care for individuals with eating disorders and co-occurring mental health conditions through compassionate, comprehensive mental health services

Mayfield shared some of the history of the need for this facility, such as: 9% of Americans are diagnosed with an eating disorder in their lifetime and a person every 52 minutes passes away from an eating disorder. Facilities across the country have waiting lists to help people in need. As BAO has traditionally worked with people in the LGBTQ community, and 54% of these adolescents have been diagnosed with an eating disorder, and 58% of those have considered suicide. Mayfield says their research guided them to develop a facility like this and it will be the first of its kind in the country.

The Magic City Wellness Center at Hanover will be a facility that addresses the urgent need for in-patient care for individuals with eating disorders. Patients are medically compromised because of their nutrition deficiencies, but are not bedridden. This facility is going to be “top-notch” state-of-the-art and will be considered “next level”. One reason for that uniqueness is because this facility is located in an urban environment, like many people’s real homes. This facility will recreate a

home environment where each patient has their own living space.

In addition to the patient's rooms, the facility will have sitting areas, an educational kitchen and a commercial kitchen. The kitchens are an important part of the therapy so that the patients engage in the cooking process. There will be a den area as well, and it will feel very homey for the patients. Staff will not wear scrubs, so that they take the clinical feeling away from the facility. There will be field trips to the movies, grocery shopping, going out to eat, etc. There will also be group counseling sessions, individual counseling sessions, art therapy, etc.

David Herring asks if the teenagers will be allowed to walk free. He is worried about teenagers potentially whistling at neighbors, etc. Mayfield assures him that patients are not allowed to leave the property without a supervisor. The facility will have its own courtyard and outdoor space as well.

Maria Elliott asks how many beds the facility will have? Mayfield said the original plan was 38, but now it may be 40, but it has not been finalized. Residents are not allowed to bring their cars. They will serve a nationwide region. Another community member asked about discharge plans. Mayfield couldn't get into specifics with discharge plans, as each case will be different.

Someone asked if there are specific visitor hours? Mayfield said for the first four weeks, they are not allowed visitors. There may be family therapy sessions, but they will be individually planned, not as a group. Someone asked if there will be security and Mayfield assures everyone each door is access controlled, but there will not be security guards.

All patients come from referrals from other outpatient facilities, schools, therapists, etc. Another neighbor asked if the patients are there because they want to be there, or are they forced to be there? Mayfield said it will probably be a mixed bag of both. She also said they collaborate with UAB, St. Vincent's, Harvard, and many other universities across the country. During a shift, the personnel will be made up of roughly: 2 psychiatrists, 2 part time medical doctors, 4-5 Nurse Practitioners, nutritionists and therapists.

John Chapman is the developer of this project and has worked with BAO on many of their other projects, so he is keenly interested in their success and partnership. He says he is very proud of the "next level" nature of this facility. The intent is to exist cohesively within the neighborhood, but to also be unseen. A lot of activity is happening inside the structure, but as a neighbor, you should hardly know they are there.

But the big question is parking! Chapman said historically the building catered to non drivers, which is similar here. Chapman said when they acquired the property, there were 12 spots on site. After the redevelopment, there are now 24 real parking spaces, plus one spot for the van. In the event that there will be needs for parking that they have not anticipated, there will be a shuttle service to bring them from another place off-site, not in Highland Park.

Herring asks about the arrivals of the patients. Will it be all arriving all at the same time and leaving

all at the same time? Mayfield said a typical stay is 35-60 days, but the arrivals and departures are going to be staggered and could be any time of day or night. Every patient's chart is different, and they will all be on different schedules and individualized.

A community member asked if a visitor could park on the street. Chapman said that is possible. Someone else asked if there will be signage about parking. Chapman said all of that information will be included in the package of information sent to all of the parents and patients before arrival. There will be signs showing the flow of traffic. Mayfield and Chapman said they are willing to answer any more questions about the facility, just let them know!

UPDATE FROM COUNCILOR ABBOTT

Councilor Abbott said the City Council meeting was relatively quiet. One of the interesting items was called "BRT and District 3 Sidewalk Funding", but didn't have a description. She hasn't received the list yet, but as soon as she gets the list of sidewalks being done, she will share them!

The Historical Commission met today and elected new officers. There are now three vacancies on the Historical Commission, if anyone is interested in preservation. Linda Nelson is the new Chairman and David Fleming is the Vice-Chair.

Judy Jones asked where advance notice of meetings are posted. Abbott said there is a bulletin board on the third floor of City Hall, and also on the City Council website.

NEW BUSINESS

- There is a resident who is interested in a dog park in one of the parks. She has created a survey ([here](#)) and is currently gathering feedback.

OLD BUSINESS

- We have about \$56,000 in our City account. Thank you to Councilor Abbott for her contributions! :)
- Agenda items for these meetings need to be sent to Sanfelippo at least two weeks ahead of the meeting.
- Garden spots are now open until March! [Click here to apply](#) for a garden spot in the 2025 growing season.
- Filming on Lakeview Crescent starting November 20 at 1 pm through November 22. We don't have a lot of information about this, but the road will be closed.
- There is an encampment near Red Mountain Expressway on the edge of Highland Park, across from Freddy's. It is ALDOT property and Sanfelippo has reached out to state troopers, local police, City officials, One Roof, and more to see about helping this community. ALDOT is aware of it and is compiling a list of encampments on their properties and will be working to clear those sites. It is very unsafe.

OTHER DISCUSSION

A resident asked if anyone else had heard about an increase in crime (break ins, theft) as she heard there were two cars stolen from 28th Street. We have not been made aware of an increase.

Sanfelippo will ask for them to come back to our meetings to provide updates. A reminder that we are getting into the Holiday season (and colder temperatures), so just be aware, lock doors, pay attention, don't leave anything in your car (especially guns) and let us know about things happening near you so we can also be aware and make sure police are aware. With deliveries, be aware that you can send your packages to lockers or other secure areas if needed.

We have heard that Niazuma has trees dropping big limbs near Christopher Architecture. The City said they will be working on it, but we don't know when. Judy Jones believes Niazuma is closing tomorrow, but we have not been told about it yet.

A neighbor said in front of McDonald's, there used to be signage painted on the road to go straight or turn, and since the repaving, those markings have not been there and it has been a crazy bottleneck. Sanfelippo will send an email about that.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- No December meeting!
- **Update: Mtg Postponed until February 11...Next meeting: January 14.** We will vote to approve the community minutes from the last two meetings because the City PEP (Planning, Engineering and Permit) staff will be coming back with their proposed changes to the new neighborhood zoning proposed changes. They did not take into account our comments in the current map, so we will send a new map soon.
- This Saturday - help us in Hanover Park! There are some downed limbs in the small park. We will leave the leaves, but Elizabeth will be there at 10 am on Saturday to move the downed limbs. If you are interested in more discussion about Hanover Park, let Sanfelippo know and she will connect you with others who are interested.
- The Community Advisory Board Crime Reduction Commission has a survey. [Take it here.](#)
- **BIG ANNOUNCEMENT!** Friends of Highland Park got their first grant! They have been raising funds to help with all sorts of great visible projects around the neighborhood, such as the native plants in the medians, stanchions in the crosswalks, repair of walls, etc.. Jones and Ray Davis worked together and received DOUBLE their ask to replace some dying trees on Highland Avenue! Thank you to Judy for helping make that happen! Thank you so much to Ray for all his incredible hard work for years planting these trees!

A reminder of ways to report issues:

- Dial 311 or 205-254-2489
- Use the new My Bham 311 app ([Scan this QR code with your phone to download](#))
- Visit www.birminghamal.gov/311 and click on the box that says, "311 Request." When submitting a complaint online or via the app, be sure that you have a registered account.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20ish pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kelly Marshall
Secretary, Highland Park Neighborhood Association