

Highland Park Neighborhood Association

June Minutes

Meeting Date: June 10, 2025

Meeting Location: Highland Park Golf Course, first floor

[Link to meeting recording](#)

President Elizabeth Sanfelippo called the June 2025 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: Marian Wilson.

MAY 2025 MINUTES

Sanfelippo asked if there were any corrections or additions to the May 2025 meeting minutes. Judy Jones moved to approve the May 2025 minutes and Connor Sandburn seconded the motion. A vote was taken, no one was opposed, and the minutes were approved.

SPEAKER: DAVID FLEMING, REV BIRMINGHAM

David Fleming was our special speaker for the meeting. He used to live in our neighborhood years ago and is happy to be back speaking with us about Rev Birmingham. Check out www.DowntownBHM.com to learn more.

REV Birmingham focuses on bringing vibrancy back to areas in Birmingham. They are currently focused on downtown Birmingham and Woodlawn. REV Birmingham acts as advocates for places and for good public policy that protects places. They also act as owners of property, they help with community development and they help to facilitate good projects. REV Birmingham uses data research to provide the actual facts of who is visiting and working in Birmingham, etc. You can read the latest Downtown Birmingham Economic Vitality Report by [clicking here](#).

REV Birmingham also manages the CAP program, which are safety ambassadors throughout downtown Birmingham. CAP helps with a variety of issues such as providing escorts to cars late at night, helping with flat tires or dead batteries, patrolling the district, outreach to unhoused populations to connect them to services, etc.

REV Birmingham also offers services to help small businesses stabilize, grow stronger, etc. REV Birmingham hopes to see more small businesses in vacant locations downtown. They want to see more local businesses open up across downtown Birmingham. Downtown's employment base is holding strong. It's the single largest concentration of employment in the region. Post-COVID numbers are getting closer and closer to full occupancy downtown. The Southside of Downtown is nearly back to pre-COVID numbers.

- 85% of residential units are occupied downtown
- 1100 new residential units opened in 2022-2023
- More and more restaurants are opening each month

This summer, REV Birmingham will release an economic growth plan for downtown Birmingham. They are also working with Woodlawn United to create an economic growth plan for Woodlawn. Stay tuned for that!

Fleming answered some questions from attendees about how many people are choosing to live downtown, school options downtown and transit issues.

UPDATES FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Sgt. Foster with the Birmingham Police Department was available for questions. First she provided some stats for the neighborhood: burglaries and break-ins to vehicles have gone down; but auto thefts and robberies have gone up 50% from last year. Sgt. Foster said they are increasing the amount of beat officers in the neighborhood.

UPDATE FROM COUNCILOR VALERIE ABBOTT

Abbott encouraged everyone to read over the proposed budget for Birmingham. She said there were several presentations to the Council today, including one from the transit department about losing some bus stops across the city. Abbott said the transit department has a plan for the future, including investing in more micro-transit options. Due to lack of federal funds for public transit, the department is figuring out new ways to provide transit options for the community; and they are working to improve their on-time rate to 80%, from below 60%.

Sanfelippo asked if there is anything in the budget for trees (per Tree City USA requirements); Abbott said no. Helen Rivas asked for more information about the transit presentation and discussion ensued about that issue across the state. Rivas encouraged community members to look into [Action Coalition for Transit](#). Judy Jones asked about the Tree City USA designation and Abbott said Randal Smith is in charge of that.

Sanfelippo said Dr. Lee said the gate latches for the parks are in the works and should be completed in 3-4 weeks..

Sanfelippo told Abbott that the City Capital Projects Department said to go through Abbott to get any information about the 26th Street / 23rd Street project. Abbott said she will call and ask for an update to share, but she also has not been given any information about that project.. With the roads all torn up, people are asking for information and we as the neighborhood have no information to share. Abbott said it would be great to see a drawing of the end project on a website, so she will mention that too.

OLD BUSINESS

- A few of the Highland Park Zoning Committee members attended a working meeting with

the Planning Commission. There was no new info shared, but we were expressing why we are pushing back on the City's plan. A very high level reason is so that we can be sure to preserve our neighborhood's architecture and character.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The PRIDE parade is Saturday, June 14
- Rojo's birthday party is Saturday, June 14 from 5:30 - 7:30. Free cake and champagne!
- June 26 - Safe Passage Training at Harris Homes Rec Center

The meeting was adjourned at 6:54 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Marshall
Secretary, Highland Park Neighborhood Association