

Highland Park Neighborhood Association

February Minutes

Meeting Date: February 10, 2026 Meeting Location: Rojo Side Room

[Link to meeting recording](#)

President Elizabeth Sanfelippo called the February 2026 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

Those attending online are: Mary Helen and Ralph Crowe, Robin Rains, Annette Rodgers, Jon Davis, Majorie White, Jordan Carlisle, Jeff Porterfield, Haydeh Payami, Suzanne Baker, Captain Julie Quigley-Vining, Dennis Skully, Keica Lightener, Jeff Dance, Erin Pendergrass and Sam Woods, William Lipscomb, Whitney Mullen, Margaret X, Melissa Beck, Brandi Fuller

JANUARY MINUTES

Sanfelippo asked if there were any corrections or additions to the January meeting minutes. Judy Jones moved to approve the January minutes and Marian Wilson seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all approved, no one was opposed, and the minutes were approved.

SPEAKER: AL GILMER, RAILROAD PARK

Al Gilmer reminded us about the beautiful Railroad Park we have here in Birmingham, even though it has been raining and cold! The park is available for all sorts of events such as book club meetups, birthday parties, graduations, etc. There are rental opportunities for corporate events too. Small gatherings are available too. They also offer free vigils if you've lost a loved one. A resident asked about the unhoused population in the park and said he feels unsafe when he sees people smoking marijuana there. Gilmer said there are 24 hour park rangers there in full khakis and encouraged anyone to use the call buttons that are all around the park if you feel unsafe. She reminded us that the park is Birmingham's living room and all in the city are welcome. To book an event at the park, [click here](#) or call 205.521.9933.

SPEAKER: ALABAMA RIVERS ALLIANCE

Kelly Marshall, who is also the Deputy Director at Alabama Rivers Alliance, provided an update on a few bills that are working their way through the legislature at present: SB 71 and HB 392. [Note: SB 71 has since passed, and HB 392 is dead and will not be brought back this session]

Marshall also discussed the proliferation of data centers all across the southeast, and Alabama. The Birmingham City Council is currently considering a six month moratorium on data center development in the city to ensure ample time for the Planning, Engineering and Permitting team to meet with stakeholders, etc. to better address these water and energy guzzlers. This public hearing will be on Tuesday, March 3 at 9:30 am at City Hall.

TRAFFIC CALMING DISCUSSION

The City has created a new process for traffic calming submissions throughout Birmingham. They have received so many requests for help with traffic calming on various streets, and they sent us the Top 7 or so problem streets with the most complaints, and those that have a certain amount of speeding cars each day. Traffic calming can take several different forms including: road diet, medians, concrete planters, one way to two way conversion, speed cushions, and more. We will vote on the two streets from the seven that we want to submit to the City. It may take up to a year to begin the process, and we will have to allocate 50% of funding towards the traffic calming remediation.

Sanfelippo had sent a survey to the whole neighborhood several times and the results were:

First Choice Votes		Second Choice Votes	
33rd St S (Highland Ave S to Cliff Rd)	18	28th St S (10th Ave S to Highland Ct)	12
28th St S (10th Ave S to Highland Ct)	9	30th St S (Clairmont Ave to Highland Ave)	12
30th St S (Clairmont Ave to Highland Ave)	9	11th Ave S (28th St S to Rhodes Cir)	2
Highland Ave S *	4	Highland Ave S *	7
11th Ave S (28th St S to Rhodes Cir)	2	33rd St S (Highland Ave S to Cliff Rd)	6
		11th Ave S (26th St S to 28th St S)	1
*Highland Ave had existing traffic calming requests for almost its entirety, so it was combined into one street for the purposes of this survey. If it is selected as a priority street, BDOT will evaluate each block and determine what parts meet our criteria and what designs would effectively address those areas.)			

Priscilla Leberte asked about the construction on 26th and if that road would be considered in this decision. Sanfelippo answered that some of the construction currently happening will have an impact on the traffic.

Discussion around the various streets and needs for traffic calming ensued. A resident asked about the two speed bumps that are close to each other on 26th Street. Morris Newman asked about traffic accidents on the various streets. Captain Quigley-Vining said she knows that 26th Street has had several accidents. Sanfelippo will send Quigley-Vining a list of the top complained-about streets to see if she can get any additional information on accidents on these streets.

Judy Jones moved for HPNA to submit 33rd Street South (Highland Ave S to Cliff Road) as our first option for traffic calming. Haydeh Payami seconded. **27** voted in favor, **0** in opposition and **2** abstained. This motion passed.

A resident asked about all the cars that park illegally on 30th Street between Clairmont and Highland. Captain Quigley-Vining said she would have someone look into it.

Lance Moore moved for HPNA to submit 30th Street South (from Clairmont Ave to Highland Ave) as our second option for traffic calming. Madison seconded. **16** voted in favor, **6** opposed, **1** abstained. This motion passed.

Morris Newman moved for HPNA to submit 28th Street South (from 10th Ave to Highland Court) as our alternate option for traffic calming, in case either of our other options are deemed inappropriate or unavailable for traffic calming. Jeff Dance seconded. **24** voted in favor, **0** opposed, **1** abstained. This motion passed.

UPDATES FROM COUNCILOR JOSH VASA

Vasa talked a little bit more about data centers and reminded everyone that the public hearing on the proposed six month moratorium will be Tuesday, March 3 at 9:30 am. If you wish to speak, you must arrive by 9:15 am. Speakers at public hearings of the City Council get three minutes to speak.

There were several questions about data centers, speaking at council meetings, how permitting works, etc. and Vasa answered. Morris Newman asked if there would still be public hearings held for the two data centers who have already applied for a permit, and would not be impacted by the moratorium. Vasa said he would try to find that answer.

Vasa said at today's Council Meeting, some representatives from Virginia Samford Theatre sang a beautiful song and received a standing ovation! He also said that last week there was a great Town Hall at Vulcan Park where Vasa and his team presented the results of the survey of District 3, that will serve as a roadmap of what is important to residents. The top three concerns were: **Public Infrastructure** (pot holes, stormwater repair, sidewalks); **Public Safety** (police patrol, feeling safe on the streets, etc.); and **Zoning/Development/Short Term Rentals** (neighborhood character). His team will now come up with more action steps to address these issues by neighborhood.

Vasa said there was also a conversation with Mayor Woodfin today about Underwood Park and the unhoused community / encampments there. Vasa said the Mayor says his office is on it. Vasa said he wants to hear directly from us / the community if that area is given attention over the next couple of weeks.

Sanfelippo gave a huge shoutout to Councilor Vasa, Toni and Tony for hitting the ground running this year and all the great exciting things they are doing and how supportive and wonderful they are for Highland Park!

UPDATE FROM BIRMINGHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT

Brian Bonner, who literally checked in FROM THE STREET - FROM A CALL! - to remind us to reach out to them with any questions. Sanfelippo asked about the fires on 23rd Street. Bonner said they are currently being investigated.

UPDATE FROM BIRMINGHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT

Captain Quigley-Vining reminded everyone to use 311 when encountering an encampment, and to keep emailing the mayor's office if Underwood Park remains unsafe. She reminds us that being homeless is not a crime, but the police department is trespassing individuals when they can.

There was a question about the Tiny Home project for unhoused individuals. Vasa provided an update that the tiny homes will be located on a church's property. The first phase has 15 homes, along with a pipeline of care. Phase Two will have an additional 45. There are other efforts and tactics to help/support the 500 or so chronically unhoused in our area such as workforce development, education, trade schools, helping folks get IDs, hygiene, etc. Like a lot of major issues, this issue will take time, but a lot of effort is being put into it.

OLD BUSINESS

- Sanfelippo said that the more people can report abandoned homes or problem homes in the neighborhood, please report to problemproperty@birminghamal.gov, and copy her so she can make sure to follow up with appropriate city staff
- Reminder to continue using [My Bham 311](#) so that there is a paper trail and Sanfelippo can follow up / get notifications
- George's is *supposed* to open in 3-6 months.
- **Tramont update from Morris!** If anyone has any input about this proposed project, let Sanfelippo know. This is concerning the vacant lot on Arlington. The proposed plan is for a 125 feet tall hotel. The developers wanted to change the zoning to Mixed Use High. Our neighborhood agreed with the Redmont Neighborhood in rejecting this. HPNA's zoning committee has been talking to the developer. Newman says now they are asking for Mixed Use Medium (MUM). The Southern Framework Plan already is planning to rezone this area MUM. The developer has agreed to change their ask to the city to MUM rather than MUH, which is a great improvement. The developer has also agreed to a Q condition, which essentially means that if they are rezoned to MUM, they agree to NOT allow certain businesses (like tattoo parlors, tanning salons, etc.).

Newman then explained the most controversial issue which is the variance aspect. Newman says the developer has given all information requested and the HPNA Zoning Committee is now reviewing all of that. They will then work to make a recommendation to our next HPNA meeting on March 10. The developers claim for their project to be variable, their hotel needs to be 125 feet tall. MUM states the height max is 65 feet, but they have a previous variance to go to 80' and are asking for a variance to get to 125 feet tall. This is what the Zoning Committee is considering and will report back at the next meeting on March 10. If you have questions or comments about this, please email Sanfelippo.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Academy of Civic Engagement (ACE)** is a 6 or 8 week course with the central goal of getting residents directly involved and engaged with their local municipal government. ACE is a city-wide leadership initiative aimed at bringing everyday citizens together for a deeper understanding of how the City is working for them and how they can plug into a variety of opportunities. ACE wants to prepare residents to go out into their communities to act, serve, and lead. **Starting April 9.** [Click here to learn more.](#)
- **Short term rentals!** Forest Park Neighborhood will be presenting a petition against short term rentals in residential neighborhood zones next week. If you feel strongly about this issue, sign the petition in the back and Forest Park will present that at the next City Council meeting. Jones may survey the neighborhood soon about how you feel about STRs to see the diversity of thought around the issue in Highland Park.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Bulk trash** is on February 17.
- **Mayor Woodfin's State of the Community** will be February 24 at 6 pm.
- **Birmingham City Council's** public hearing on the data center moratorium is March 3.
- Next meeting: March 10!

The meeting was adjourned at around 7:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Marshall
Secretary, Highland Park Neighborhood Association