

Highland Park Neighborhood Association

March Minutes

Meeting Date: March 10, 2026 Meeting Location: Episcopal Place

[Link to meeting recording](#)

President Elizabeth Sanfelippo called the March 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, Priscilla and Adam Leberte, Lt. Jamarcus Brown (Birmingham Fire Department), Matt Joiner, Annette Rodgers, Dennis Scully, Alan Roberson, Connie Urist, Jenny Craig (candidate for House District 55), Whitney Mullen (briefly), Captain Julie Quigley-Vining (Birmingham Police Department)

AGENDA

Ray Davis motioned to approve the agenda. Philip Foster seconded. All approved, none opposed.

FEBRUARY MINUTES

Sanfelippo asked if there were any corrections or additions to the February meeting minutes. John Somerset moved to approve the February minutes and Anne Sunkel seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all approved, no one was opposed, and the minutes were approved.

UPDATES FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Lt. Jamarcus Brown wanted to provide a few tips for everyone. Remember to hydrate as it warms up! The fire department has seen a lot of calls for dehydrated people. Don't leave your food when cooking, and don't have anything flammable near items you are cooking. Also, be sure to have an exit plan / exit route in mind for all areas of your home, and know how to locate your housemates. If there is a fire in your home, stick a wet towel under the door to stop smoke from entering your room. Crack a window and hold a brightly colored item out the window so a fireman can find you. The fire department can come install a smoke detector if you need one - just call fire station no. 22. (205) 254-2995

SPEAKER: CHARLES MILLER, ALABAMA RIVERS ALLIANCE

Charles, a resident of the neighborhood, provided an update on data centers. Birmingham City Council recently passed a 6 month pause on data center development in city limits. During that pause, the city's Planning and Zoning department is going to put together some guidance for regulations / ordinances for data center development in the city.

Charles reminded us there is only one city in the state with a comprehensive ordinance so far: Columbiana. There will be two public hearings (March 18 and April 28) to give your thoughts about data centers. Charles said that based on the draft ordinance he has seen, there is not a place within Highland Park where a data center would be cited.

Charles described the differences between hyperscaled data centers, and smaller data centers, and discussed the problems within (massive power and water use, utility rates rising, noise pollution, etc.) Miller said the proposed ordinance is not available to the public yet, but it should be before the next public meeting on March 18. Sanfelippo asked about Nebius and Miller said that there is a little bit of grey area with them, and they may be grandfathered in to be allowed to develop. For more info about data centers in general, [click here](#) and more about Bessemer's Project Marvel [here](#).

TRAMONT DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION

Next we heard from Morris Newman, co-chair of the Neighborhood Zoning Committee, and Randall Minor with the development team behind the proposed Tramont development in the Redmont neighborhood (but is adjacent to Highland Park). Both presenters discussed back and forth a proposed variance at property 1240 22nd Street South to allow a maximum building height of up to 125 feet instead of the maximum height of 80 feet (previously granted through a variance request several years ago) and a zoning change to mixed use medium (MUM) to construct a mixed-use building, consisting of residential and hospitality components in an R-6, Multiple Dwelling District. [Click here](#) to watch or listen to the lengthy discussion (beginning at 00:19:00) and [click here](#) to see documents shared during the presentation.

After the presentations and much discussion, Dian Weatherly made a motion to recommend the Tramont plan for the MUM zoning request because that's what the Southern Framework Plan is currently supporting. Morris Newman seconded it. **20 Highland Park residents approved; 4 opposed; 3 abstained. Motion passes.**

A second motion was made by Dian Weatherly that we recommend to the Board of Adjustments to **DENY** the 125" height variance. Grayson Rodgers seconded the motion. **14 Highland Park residents approved denying; 6 opposed denying; and 5 abstained. Motion passes to DENY the height variance.**

UPDATES FROM COUNCILOR JOSH VASA

Councilor Josh Vasa provided a few updates. First, his administration is four months in, woo! Vasa is excited to see that Charles is a big part of the data center ordinance discussion. Vasa said the Alabama Education Association recently awarded Dr. Mark Sullivan of Birmingham City Schools the best superintendent in the state! Next, the Committee of the Whole is Thursday, March 12 at 3 pm, which is an opportunity for the City Council to have an open discussion about various subject matters. This Thursday they will be discussing short term rentals and unhoused encampments. This is not a public hearing, but you are able to listen to the discussion. Vasa recognizes that short term rentals are an important issue for the people of Highland Park. His position is to exempt them from residential areas, as more than 95% of the neighborhood said in the surveys.

Finally, Vasa reminded us to use [My Bham 311](#) and/or call 311! He asks that you give the case 30 days to be resolved and if it is not, email Vasa and his staff with the case number and they will follow up.

UPDATE FROM FORMER COUNCILOR VALERIE ABBOTT

Former City Councilor Valerie Abbott asked that everyone sign her petition: [Ban short-term rentals in Birmingham, Alabama residential neighborhoods](#).

OLD BUSINESS

- Sanfelippo said to have a little patience and remember kindness when it comes to the unhoused in Underwood Park. The City is aware residents are frustrated. We hope for an update soon from the new police group working with the unhoused and that we should see some increased enforcement over the next few weeks.
- Remember 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

NEW BUSINESS

- March 12 at 3 pm - Committee of the Whole to discuss Short term rentals
- March 14 from 9 - 11 am - weeding in the Highland Park native plant medians! Free chips and dip at Rojo after.
- March 17 at 6 pm - ZAC meeting on 3rd floor of City Hall, should be the Tramont case

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Bulk trash** is on March 17 and March 31
- **March 31** - info session at Greenbriar about assistance for veterans
- **April 18** - [Gumbo Gala](#) benefiting Episcopal Place! Thank you to them for letting us have our meeting here!
- **May 31**- [Darter Fest](#) at Cahaba Brewing

The meeting was adjourned at around 8:13 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Marshall
Secretary, Highland Park Neighborhood Association