



Remembering the Past. Creating the Future.



# Westview

neighbor



Jul / Aug  
2012

## Divided Way: T-SPLOST Stalls

### What Happened, What's Next?

by Kisha Solomon

Just hours after metro Atlanta polls closed on July 31, Mayor Kasim Reed addressed a room full of reporters and T-SPLOST supporters, his tone humble but steadfast. "I respect the decision of the voters. But, on tomorrow, I'm going to wake up and work just as hard to change their minds."

In the months leading up to what many deemed the most important vote for metro Atlantans in recent history, Mayor Reed and other T-SPLOST advocates led a multi-million-dollar campaign to rally support for a 1-cent transportation tax under the slogan 'Untie Atlanta'. Yet, despite their efforts, the transportation referendum was soundly defeated.



#### What Happened?

The T-SPLOST was defeated by a wide margin, with 67% of voters voting 'no' on the tax increase. Many speculate that the lack of support for the referendum was due to several factors, from voters' mistrust of elected officials, to a lack of compromise on what projects should receive funding.

"If you look at the numbers on a precinct by precinct basis, the outlying metro counties were largely opposed to the tax. They cited concerns about too much transit and not enough road projects. Meanwhile, groups like the Sierra Club were against the tax because it contained too many road projects and not enough transit. There needs to be some compromise if we are going to move forward." Patrick Berry, Westview Community Organization (WCO) President, was a T-SPLOST supporter, but says he wasn't surprised on the outcome of the vote.

"Unfortunately, the metro Atlanta region has a long history of not supporting transportation initiatives or taxes," says Patrick.

#### T-SPLOST & Westview

So what exactly did residents of Westview miss out on as a result of the failed referendum? T-SPLOST opponents say, not much. With so many pro-

jects on tap, many doubted that any real progress would be made in the near future, and pointed to the proposed 10-year timeline as a major T-SPLOST



flaw. Patrick Berry offers another view: "The Belt-Line connection from Westview to Midtown was one of the

largest pieces of funding on the project list. Our public transit options and our roadways would have seen vast improvements if the tax had passed."

#### Where Do We Go From Here?

Now, many Atlantans and Westview residents are wondering what's next for the city and its transportation woes. Gov. Deal has announced that he will personally take charge of the state's future transportation projects through "traditional" means such as the state DOT. It's a move that hasn't met with a lot of support from either side of the debate.

"Instead of pushing ahead, we will continue to have more of the same. Hopefully, the city will be able to find ways to raise additional revenue to help fund local projects."

#### Newsletter Staff

**Patrick Berry**, Ad Design

**Keith Blackmon**, Photographer

**Ayana Gabriel**, Writer / Ad Sales

**Ashley Kirby**, Lead Distributor

**Katherine Little**, Copy Editor

**Earl Picard**, Writer

**Kisha Solomon**, Editor

For questions, story ideas, and advertising, contact: westviewnews@yahoo.com

# Simple Safety Tips for Seniors

Whether you're an active senior living comfortably on your own, or being cared for by a loved one, these simple safety tips will help you feel more secure and confident around the neighbor-

## Senior Safety

**Learn to Spot a Scam.** Think twice about unsolicited mail claiming you've won a prize, or door-to-door salespeople with a too-good-to-be-true offer. Get all the facts before handing over your money or personal information.

**Use the Buddy System.** Make an agreement with a neighbor to check on each other every day. Ask them to keep an eye out when you're out of town, and do the same for them. Consider going on trips to the store or bank with a trusted neighbor instead of alone.

**Try a Telephone Reassurance Program.** A professional service calls daily to check in on you and remind you of medications, appoint-

ments, etc. Service may be provided free of charge through state-run programs. Call 404.463.3333 for details.

**Take a self-defense course.** Learn how to defend yourself during a physical attack. Check local police stations and YMCAs for courses.

**Volunteer.** Many seniors are retired and at home during the day. You can be valuable eyes and ears for the neighborhood. Report suspicious persons or activity to the appropriate authorities.

Do you have other senior safety ideas? Share them on the Westview Yahoo Group! Visit: [groups.yahoo.com/group/westviewcommunity](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/westviewcommunity)

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## Meet John Davis Westview Neighbor

by Ayana Gabriel

John Davis is a former president of the Westview Community Organization. He has lived in Westview since 1968, and has a wealth of neighborhood history to share. The *Westview Neighbor* recently chatted with John about Westview.

*What made you get involved in the neighborhood association (WCO)?*

When I first moved here I was very involved with my church choir, Mt Mariah on the corner of Fair and Joseph Lowery, and I was gone with them most of time. I kept getting fliers, and in the mid 80s I became involved in the neighborhood. I became President in 2005.

*What are you most proud of accomplishing in the neighborhood?*

As President I brought consistency and integrity to the WCO. I am also proud of the beautification committee. We maintain the triangles at Willard and S. Gordon, S. Gordon and Abernathy, E. and W. Ontario. I cut the grass, plant

grass, pull up weeds, and cut the shrubbery.

*What do you like about the neighborhood?*

It is nice and clean but we have to report persons who don't keep up their house, or else it will deteriorate.

*What would you like to see in the neighborhood?*

I wish the police were more visible, when they are visible, persons don't do stuff. Plus over by Deals and Denny's persons hanging around... when you have a lot of guys hanging out it makes it uncomfortable for

ladies. You can't have a business and have people hanging out and looking like all types of things are going on.





# What You Should Know About NPU-T with Nia Knowles

Neighborhood Planning Units or, NPUs, are citizen advisory councils that make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on zoning, land use, and other planning issues. NPU-T consists of seven Atlanta neighborhoods, including Westview. In this Q&A, NPU-T Chair Nia Knowles shares how NPU-T is working to make a better community.



## What projects, events, agenda items does NPU-T have planned for remaining 2012 calendar year?

- NPU-T projects are continuing to get the word out and 'Likes' on our Code Enforcement Facebook page. Gathering support from around the city will help keep these projects in front of the Mayor.
- Getting a few rooming houses shut down with Zoning and making it known that we will not stand for investors setting them up within our community.
- Establishing a strong 'Court Watch' – i.e., a base of neighbors to show up to court and show the judge that we do have committed residents to appear and hear the verdict of repeat offenders within our community.
- Work with the D.A.'s office in finding suitable residents for the homes that were "Taken Back" to clean areas struggling to stabilize.

## What decisions, agenda items, or projects has NPU-T already accomplished in 2012?

- The city successfully denied an alcohol license to an establishment that was a repeat offender in providing poor service within our community with the push from NPU-T and community advocates.
- With the grant money issued to our NPU, we were able to provide pocket parks, beautification projects and web hosting to neighborhood associations.

## What benefit(s) do you think people receive by participating in NPU-T?

- The ability to speak directly to City Council and be an influence in some of the key decisions being made and ordinances written for our community.
- Priceless information about the progress our community is making on items such as public safety, code enforcement and zoning.
- The ability to participate in the comprehensive development planning sessions and make decisions to groom this community into being one of the city's best.

## Share some insight on your role as NPU-T Chair.

- I've served as NPU Chair for nearly 3 years after holding other roles such as Recording Secretary and Public Relations Officer. The role has allowed me to meet many public officials—which has not always been easy, especially when your opinions differ.
- The scariest thing about the role is remembering you are not only representing and speaking for yourself but for MANY, and keeping in mind what would be best for the majority.
- This has been a very humbling experience, to know that people trust you, and feel confident in your abilities to represent them. Knowing I have this much trust, keeps me in prayer and always seeking to do my best.

For more information about NPU-T, visit [www.nputatlanta.org](http://www.nputatlanta.org) or contact Nia Knowles at [nia@nputatlanta.org](mailto:nia@nputatlanta.org)



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# westview facts...

The AJC once dubbed Westview one of Atlanta's hidden gems. When in fact, Westview has long been the home of several 'hidden gems' for dining and shopping in Atlanta. In the 1950s and 60s, locals flocked to Westview restaurants and shopping outlets like the Teddy Bear Grill and Beulah Grocery. The Westview business district on Ralph David Abernathy is now home to such local crowd-pleasers as the Big Apple Inn, Miss Crumpy's and Secrets fashion boutique.



## Atlanta Habitat Comes to Westview

by Earl Picard

Atlanta Habitat partners with working families, sponsors, and communities to build affordable, green, high-quality homes. Atlanta Habitat also offers no-interest loans with low monthly payments to qualified families. Houses are built with locally sourced materials and volunteer labor. Atlanta Habitat is now one of the largest affordable single-family housing developers in the city, and is one of the largest of 1,500 affiliates of Habitat for Humanity in the United States.



The typical working family receiving an Atlanta Habitat home has to meet residency, credit and educational requirements. The family puts up a good-faith deposit of \$750 and also has to contribute "sweat equity" by helping on the build and in other ways to fulfill 250 required sweat-equity hours.

The Derry Avenue property was ac-

quired in March 2011 as a donation from First Intercontinental Bank. Construction has been sponsored by a group of corporate and civic organiza-



tions.

After a 5-week permitting process, Atlanta Habitat received approval to build a 1,248 sq. ft., 4 bedroom, 2 bath house. The house will be built over a 7-week timeframe as the crew of staff and volunteers will swarm the building site on 7 consecutive Saturdays. Their work will be supplemented by subcontractors who complete plumbing, electrical and HVAC installations.

The completed home's dedication will take place on Saturday, September 15.

### Important Numbers

Zone 4 Police: 404-756-1903  
Pothole Posse: 404-768-4653  
Code Enforcement: 404-330-6190  
Sanitation: 404-330-6333  
Tax Assessor: 404-612-6440  
Watershed Mgmt: 404-658-6500  
Housing Authority: 404-892-4700

### Upcoming Events

**Westview Community Organization Meeting** — 1st Monday of every month (except holidays); 7:00 pm, Calvary United Methodist Church, 1471 R.D. Abernathy Blvd. Upcoming meetings: Sep. 10 and Oct 1.

**NPU-T Monthly Meeting** — 2nd Wednesday of Every Month; 7:00 pm, Empire Board of Realists, 686 Joseph Lowery Blvd Upcoming meetings: Sep. 12 and Oct. 10

### Stay in Touch

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**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/westviewatl](http://www.facebook.com/westviewatl)

**Message Board:** [groups.yahoo.com/group/westviewcommunity](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/westviewcommunity)

**NPU-T:** [www.nputatlanta.org](http://www.nputatlanta.org)

  
**KELLER WILLIAMS**  
REALTY  
FIRST ATLANTA  
404-531-5700

**Sherry E. Bailey**  
Real Estate Consultant

Cell: 678-644-5820  
Office: 404-531-5700  
Fax: 404-531-5708

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