



30 Years of Protecting Our Park and Neighborhoods

June 24, 2008

CHASTAIN PARK CIVIC ASSOCIATION
P. O. Box 420473
Atlanta, Georgia 30342

CITY OF ATLANTA
Atlanta Urban Design Commission
55 Trinity Avenue, SW, Suite 3400
Atlanta, Georgia 30335

RE: Chastain Park Conservancy (CPC) Application No. RC-08-194
110 West Wieuca Road, Atlanta GA 30342

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the Chastain Park Civic Association (CPCA), the elected body that represents approximately 5,000 residents of the communities that surround Chastain Park, I am writing with respect to the referenced Application.

CPCA supports the improvement of the Chastain Park Tennis Center. The CPCA however opposes the Application in its current form and has conveyed the reasons to the Chastain Park Conservancy (CPC).

As a threshold matter, we do not believe that the current Application is consistent with the desires of the Chastain Park community. The CPC conducted a series of five open houses at which the Chastain Park Tennis Center Plan was discussed and surveys were conducted. Those surveys unambiguously supported the construction of an additional tennis court even if that court's construction resulted in a reduction in the size of the tennis center in order to keep the project within budget. The recently approved Chastain Park Master Plan, on page 125 & 126, commits the CPC to take into account community views. We believe, in ignoring the results of the CPC's own open houses and surveys, the CPC failed to do this. We do not believe the addition of a tennis court is inconsistent with the Master Plan; rather, it simply reflects the level of detail necessary for implementation.

June 24, 2008

Page 2

We also have concerns regarding the Application with respect to funding. The City of Atlanta has allocated \$800,000 in Opportunity Bond money for the tennis center. The use of these funds was extensively discussed at our Chastain Park Civic Association monthly board meeting held on Monday, June 2nd at 6:30 PM. A major topic of the discussion was the Tennis Center and the findings of the "Study Group". 21 Board Members were present. After a healthy discussion of the issues, the board voted on the following motion:

Tennis Center: To build an adequate new building and an additional tennis court within the \$800,000 Opportunity Bond budget. Also, it is stipulated that if the project exceeds the \$800,000 that it not use the additional Opportunity Bond monies (\$200,000) specifically allocated for the upgrade of the Chastain Gym. In such a case, CPCA support would be withdrawn.

Vote Results: 20 In Favor of the motion, 1 abstention

We plan to report the results of the study group and the subsequent vote of the Board of the Chastain Park Civic Association at NPU-A on Tuesday July 1st. We also plan to report our findings at NPU-B that same night.

The CPCA board has had a hard time understanding project costs and programming due to the multiple positions held by the CPC. These CPC positions ranged from proposing a 2,100 SQ FT tennis center to the study group; proposing a 3,200 SQ FT tennis center to the CPCA board at our June 2nd meeting; and then, in what we understand to be the latest proposal, submitting a 2,700 SQ FT plan to the UDC.

The wide-ranging discrepancies in the presented plans; the lack of adherence to the master plan study group processes (pages 125 & 126); the limited access to site plans; and no access to cost projections/analysis led the CPCA board to firmly oppose the CPC's proposals that repeatedly failed to include an additional tennis court at the cost of a larger tennis center. Unfortunately, despite ample time and opportunity for the CPC to provide the previously requested information, particularly prior to and during our June 2nd meeting, the CPC did not do so.

In addition, we have noticed that the CPC submitted their original application to the UDC at the end of March prior to the inception of the work study group process in early April and then withdrew it. This clearly put the cart before the horse. We understand the UDC is concerned with design, so please note the CPCA focused on enabling the views of the community to be heard in regards to the tennis center. However, the board did question the recreational nature, necessity and size of a 20 person conference room if it was at the expense of a potential new tennis court prioritized in the CPC gathered community input.

We are disappointed that the Application of the CPC did not fairly reflect the views of the Chastain Park community. We also cannot reconcile the CPC's Application which

June 24, 2008

Page 3

states that CPC heard a “strong desire for an additional tennis court” with the decision not to implement that desire now even if it means having a tennis center that is not as large.

Further, during the master planning process, the CPCA consistently objected to the use of public funds at this location within Chastain Park for a welcome center. The CPCA sees no compelling public purpose served by this proposed use, which was adamantly pushed by the CPC. Where the Application provides that the CPC contemplates a “second story, as a second phase, which will serve as a Chastain Park Welcome Center,” we want the UDC to know that CPCA has not supported such an addition. We deferred a greater debate on this issue to a future, separate study group process if private funding ever became available. In such a case, it is our hope that the welcome center concept would be fully vetted with consideration given to other possibly more suitable locations within the park that previously were not given appropriate consideration.

The CPCA agreed to support the recently passed Chastain Park Master Plan based on express assurances from the Atlanta Parks Department and the CPC that community input would be honored in the master plan study group process during the implementation phase of each project in the master plan. Again, this first test of the work study group process has not been successful to date or representative of our Chastain Park community. At this time, we are still hopeful of a positive resolution and engaged with city officials and our councilmember trying to create a win-win outcome for our community.

If necessary, we will be glad to put you in touch with members of our Chastain Park Civic Association board. We can be reached at (404) 966-2076 or info@chastainpark.org. Thank you for your consideration of the views of the Chastain Park community.

Faithfully on behalf of the Chastain Park Civic Association,

Jim King
CPCA president

cc: Honorable Clair Muller
Commissioner Dianne Harnell Cohen
CPCA Board Members
Mr. J.P. Matzigkeit – CPC