

# 2018 Annual Report of the President East Cobb Civic Association, Inc.

January 2019

Since its founding in 1982, the East Cobb Civic Association (ECCA) has been a strong influence in the development and progress of this important part of the county. ECCA has worked to ensure the long-term viability of the area by engaging the community and providing leadership in zoning and codes-related issues, development planning and execution, transportation, community service, and a myriad of other projects, programs and efforts. Here is an overview of the activities of your association for 2018:

## **Zonings, Variances and Other Business Items (OBIs)**

The organization's most active committee – the Zoning Committee – reviews monthly zoning and variance applications and other business items received by county staff, then selects the cases to follow up on based on the needs of our member neighborhoods, or if the case sets a precedent that might affect our area. The ECCA case manager alerts and educates the surrounding neighbors on the applicant's request, how it might affect them, and how to take any concerns to county officials. The case manager also presents information on the case to membership at the regular meetings. The committee then reports the ECCA's final position and recommendations on the zoning request to the appropriate county board, and often presents the recommendations in person at commission meetings.

Of increasing importance to the East Cobb area are requests for changes to stipulations for previously zoned properties. These are usually carried on the Board of Commissioners agenda as an Other Business Item (OBI). While OBIs may have a minor impact on an area, they also have the potential to negatively affect the overall appearance, quality of life and value of the involved and surrounding properties. Particularly challenging is that OBIs only have 30 days (as opposed to at least 90 days for zonings and 60 days for variances) between the time they are posted by county staff and are heard by the board. This means ECCA has a very short time to alert affected community members, determine the potential impact, define a position on the request, and prepare comments to present to the commissioners.

- ECCA caseworkers researched, conducted site visits and made recommendations to the Cobb County Planning Commission and the Board of Commissioners on a total of six applications for zoning changes, land-use permits and special land-use permits.
- ECCA caseworkers researched, visited and made recommendations to the Board of Zoning Appeals and Variances on seven variance applications.
- ECCA caseworkers researched and made recommendations to the Board of Commissions on nine OBIs.

Information on the zonings, variances and OBIs is available on our website at [www.eastcobb.net](http://www.eastcobb.net) under Zonings and Variances.

## **Comprehensive Plan and Code Amendments**

Cobb County proposes amendments to the Cobb County Comprehensive Plan (also known as the Future Land Use Plan) annually in January. The county amends the County Code four times a year with the proposed amendments coming out in January, April, July and October.

- ECCA examined proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan and made recommendations aimed at helping to ensure that any changes made to the plan would not adversely affect property values in the area.
- ECCA reviewed the code amendments and made recommendations on those of special importance to East Cobb, such as the outdoor burning ban, workforce housing proposal, and open space community overlay district.

### **Member/Community Education and Awareness**

One of ECCA's primary missions is to help educate and inform the East Cobb community about topics concerning their county government and services, as well as other areas of interest.

- Each regular monthly meeting of the ECCA includes a presentation on some issue, program, agency, organization or trend that affects the community in some way. The programs usually include a formal presentation followed by a question-and-answer session. In 2018, meeting attendees heard from:
  - Mike Boyce, Cobb County Commission Chairman
  - Bob Ott, District 2 Commissioner
  - Major Brian Batterton, Police Precinct 4 Commander
  - Jason Gaines, Cobb Planning Division Manager
  - Cathey Pickett, Manager of Cobb County Code Enforcement
  - Stephen Lively, Georgia Department of Transportation
  - Nelson Geter, Development Authority of Cobb County
- The "ECCA E-mail Blast" is distributed at the beginning of each month to members. This newsletter, which can easily be passed on by ECCA-member associations to their own members, contains information on community activities, notices and other matters that may be of interest to them and their neighborhoods.
- The ECCA website – [www.eastcobb.net](http://www.eastcobb.net) – includes information on upcoming membership meetings, commissioner contacts and meetings, zoning applications being worked on by ECCA, governmental and community resources, and other matters as needed.

### **Governmental and Community Engagement**

Staying engaged with county staff and leadership, and serving in positions that influence growth, development and redevelopment of the East Cobb area ensure direct input into decisions that affect the community now and well into the future. We also encourage members of the community to get involved in making East Cobb a better place to live.

- Representatives of ECCA serve on:
  - County boards as requested by Cobb County Commissioners.
  - Steering committees for design studies such as the Johnson Ferry-Shallowford Road Design Plan (also known as JOSH), and the Johnson Ferry Design Guidelines.
  - Architectural/landscape control committees that were created as a result of zoning stipulations.
- ECCA board and committee members work to maintain a positive working relationship with members of the Cobb County Commission and county staff. An ongoing, productive dialogue keeps issues of concern to the community in front of these decision-makers.
- ECCA participates in the Cobb County Adopt-A-Mile program, maintaining a section on Johnson Ferry Road between Little Willeo Road and East Cobb Drive. All members are invited to help one Saturday morning each quarter. The clean-up schedule is on the ECCA website.
- ECCA participates in the East Cobber Parade that is held each September, with all members invited to join in.

Your association was busy during 2018 looking after the business of the community. If you haven't been an active participant in its meetings and activities, please become active in 2019. The future of the community depends on an involved, engaged and vigilant citizenry. ECCA provides the perfect opportunity to be all of those things.

**Linda Carver**  
**President**