



The Decatur Heights Neighborhood Association

June Meeting Recap (June 14, 2011)

More than 30 people attended the June Decatur Heights Neighborhood Association meeting, held on June 14 in the Community Room of the Church at Decatur Heights. Thank you, church neighbors, for hosting the event! Our next meetings will be in August (topics TBA) and October (2012 elections).

● **DHNA Activities Update (January-June 2011)**

- Organized March Potluck sponsored by DHNA and the Church at Decatur Heights
- Hosted City-Sponsored Kilowatt Crackdown Party in May
- Submitted Traffic-Calming Petitions to the City
- Developed DHNA Neighborhood Watch Program
- Launched [Google Group](#) (began Nov. 2010)
- Established [DHNA Website](#)
- Started Monthly Newsletter for Non-Wired Neighbors
- Created Announcement Line – 404-220-9777

● **DHNA Committees**

Looking for a great way to meet neighbors and boost community spirit? Join one of DHNA's several committees. You can pitch in as your schedule allows, and any amount of help is appreciated. Here's our current list of committees: Administration, Communications, Event Planning, Parents & Kids, Neighborhood Watch, Traffic & Public Safety, and Park & Garden. See the [Get Involved](#) section of our website for details, or call DHNA at 404-220-9777.

● **Petitions News**

DHNA submitted the following petitions at the May 2, 2011 Commission Meeting:

- 25 MPH Residential Speed Zone Designation
- Stop Signs & Crosswalk at Sycamore Dr./Ridgeland Ave./Springdale St.
- Study of Sycamore Dr./Grove St. Curve Area for Traffic Calming.

The petition for No Right Turn Signs for E. Ponce at Sycamore Dr. & Poplar St. didn't reach the 75% signatures required.

John Madajewski, Chief Engineer, is now reviewing the information. A traffic calming meeting with the City and neighbors may be the next step in the process. (Realistically, it won't happen until the City completes the citywide Safe Routes Project.)

These Safe Routes proposals were submitted with the petitions materials: 1) Adding Crosswalks at Lockwood Terr./ Pinehurst St.; 2) Adding Crosswalk at Hillcrest Ave./Oak Lane and Re-stripping the Stop Bar; and 3) Adding Crosswalk at Oak Lane/Mountainview St. The DHNA particularly pointed out the need for a crosswalk over Sycamore Drive.

● Decatur Police Department Highlights

DHNA thanks Deputy Police Chief Keith Lee for being the June meeting's featured speaker. He described the Decatur Police Department's philosophy, answered neighbors' questions, and highlighted information from the Police Department's [2010 Annual Report](#).

Neighborhood Watch

There is no "one size fits all" Watch program. A successful Watch is one in which the neighbors get to know one another and establish a way to convey alerts. Knowing neighbors' habits makes it easier to spot when something is amiss, and it boosts the likelihood of folks making a phone call to the police to come check it out. (Please do not hesitate to make the call. It's much better to have a concern ruled out than a crime trail go cold.)

The Department is happy to support neighborhood association meetings and will have an officer attend to hear from neighbors and answer questions. The non-emergency police phone line is 404-373-6551. To reach Deputy Police Chief Keith Lee directly, call 678-553-6620

For more info on Watch programs, please visit the Department's [Crime Prevention Resources](#) page.

To volunteer as a block captain or to participate, write DecaturHeightsNeighbors@gmail.com or call DHNA at 404-220-9777,

Crime Control

Decatur has more police on patrol per square mile than in nearby jurisdictions. Dispatchers process calls quickly with no hold time, and police respond within a few minutes on average.

Last year, Decatur experienced a 25% reduction in these crimes: burglary, robbery, entering auto, motor vehicle theft, sexual assault, arson, and theft.

The Department investigates every citizen complaint that it receives. There were 26 complaints in 2010, most of which were courtesy violations. Officers were exonerated in 19 of the complaints.

In 2010, the Decatur Police Department made 1,462 custodial arrests, 2.4% (36) of which included use of force. Five arrests involved the use of pepper spray and/or a baton.

Any incidents involving a motor vehicle accident, use of force, or high-speed pursuit are reviewed by the Department. Decatur's definition of use of force is broader and more encompassing than it is in many other police jurisdictions.

[CrimeReports](#), a national tracking website for crime statistics around the country, is a useful tool for Neighborhood Watch programs and interested residents.

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Neighborhood Crime Statistics

Crimes committed in Decatur Heights and nearby Sycamore Ridge, January 1 to June 14, 2011.

Crime Type	Decatur Total	Decatur Heights	Sycamore Ridge
Burglary	38	1	0
Robbery	8	0	0
Entering Auto	121	2	4 *
Motor Vehicle Theft	36	0	0
Sexual Assault	2	0	0
Totals	205	3	4 *

* Note: In Sycamore Ridge, individuals entered a total of four autos in two incidents.

Traffic Safety

Stop signs require a *complete* cessation of movement. This applies to both autos and bikes.

Decatur's police do not provide verbal warnings to drivers. Officers issue either regular citations or warning citations.

The Police Department keeps traffic complaints posted prominently at headquarters, and officers review the problematic road situations in person within one to two days.

Community Relations

The Decatur Police Department's second [Junior Police Academy](#) starts in July. The Academy accepts a minimum of six and a maximum of 12 young people in each year's program. Participating youth must have finished the 7th or 8th grade during the 2010-2011 school year.

Decatur's next [Citizens Public Safety Academy](#) starts in September. Participants meet once weekly for eight weeks, and many graduates opt to join Decatur's CAPS program ([Citizens Assisting Public Safety](#)). CAPS assist with special events, business district patrol, disaster response, and other department activities.

The Decatur Police Department will soon hire a new community relations coordinator to serve as a liaison to neighborhood associations.

The Police Department uses a variety of methods to provide alerts and news of interest. Look for updates in these local blogs: [Decatur Metro](#) and [Decatur-Avondale Estates, GA Patch](#).

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