

Crestline Neighborhood Association
Meeting Minutes
May 22, 2025, 6:00PM
Fellowship Hall, Hope Community Church

Call to Order

President Todd Russell called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Attendees were asked to sign in at the back. 37 people were present.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

- Motion to accept the agenda: Jennifer Fisher; seconded by Apryl Marie Fogel.
- Motion to approve the April meeting minutes: Apryl Marie Fogel; seconded by Jennifer Fisher.

Guest Report: Avondale Elementary School

David Seale, Principal of Avondale Elementary School, shared his experiences since becoming principal in 2020. He described initial challenges, including a "D" state report card and strained relations with parents. Over five years, he and his staff have created a positive environment, and he is confident the school will receive a "B" on the upcoming state report card. The school serves Pre-K through 5th grade and 10 of Birmingham's 99 neighborhoods. He encouraged parents to contact him for a tour.

- Apryl Marie Fogel inquired about building maintenance. Mr. Seale noted the 100-year-old building requires ongoing upkeep but repairs are handled diligently. The school has only two entrances and a School Resource Officer for security.
- Don Ferguson asked about enrollment; the school currently has 330 students.

City Council Report

Councilor Hunter Williams discussed the proposed city budget, which is similar in size to last year's (just under \$9 million). His requests, including full funding for the Birmingham Police Department, \$1 million for new police vehicles, new fire and rescue vehicles, and \$15 million for street resurfacing, were included. If passed on time, the budget will take effect July 1, 2025.

- Stormwater drain repair at Hagood/Dunston is scheduled to begin this week.
- The Shades Creek Nature Trail project is moving forward despite some opposition. Concerns should be directed to the City Attorney's Office.
- The Crestwood sidewalk project at Trinity is complete.
- Todd Russell requested a stop sign at Gladstone and Hoadley due to safety concerns. Councilor Williams advised submitting a 311 request and sharing the case number with him and India Bailey for follow-up.
- Several attendees commented on the Shades Creek Trail.
- Don Ferguson asked if Councilor Williams will seek re-election; he confirmed he will.

New Business: St. Peter's Anglican Church Proposal

Representatives from St. Peter's Anglican Church, Senior Pastor Bryan White and Ricky Brooks, discussed their attempt to purchase the property at Hagood St. and Dunston Ave. from FiveStone Group Developers.

- Pastor White explained the church's growth and current parking challenges at their Montevallo Rd. location.
- Ricky Brooks outlined the plan for a new church on the R3-zoned property, which requires a variance for front yard parking.

- Renderings showed a 505-seat sanctuary facing Dunston Ave., a chapel, nursery, secure playground, fellowship hall, and prayer garden, totaling 29,000 sq. ft. The plan includes 215 parking spaces, two entrances (Hagood and Dunston), sidewalks, and landscaping.
- An alternative plan with parking at the rear was presented but provides fewer spaces and less landscaping.
- Todd Russell asked about preserving an old oak tree; Mr. Brooks said landscaping details are under review.
- The church is considering allowing overflow parking for nearby businesses, pending legal review of liability.
- Civil engineering is being handled by an outside firm; city engineers are focused on water retention and drainage.
- The property is under contract, with closing scheduled for June 30.
- The landscape company is LIVE Design Group (Craig Krawczyk, Principal Architect).
- Pastor White explained the church's Anglican roots and history.

Special Meeting Announcement

A special Crestline NA meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 5th to vote on the variance request for front yard parking for the new church.

CAB Report, May 2025

The recent history at the Citizens Advisory Board has been marked by repeated violations of the Citizen Participation Plan, beginning with the 2022 election that led to the Glen Iris lawsuit. The Community Resource Office compounded these issues by approving Crestline's community officer election despite knowing it did not follow proper procedures. Since January, I have actively served as Crestline's representative based on direction from the previous president. In February, the city indefinitely suspended all officer elections, leaving Crestline with vacancies, improperly elected representatives, and no clear path to proper representation. Despite her 2023 resignation, the city listed Barbara White as eligible, and backup officer Sophie Cosper attended the May 19th meeting in my place. After I was removed from the dais without notice, CAB Vice President William Harden informed me of my replacement and expressed regret for the lack of transparency.

At the May CAB meeting, Melony Martin from Community Resources announced a new rule requiring all neighborhood funding requests to be submitted to Councilor JT Moore's community resource committee for approval. This new step appears to have originated directly from Councilor Moore himself, not from the Community Resource Office, and was imposed without prior public notice, discussion, or a CAB vote. CAB members were asked to submit questions about this policy to the CAB vice president by Friday. In response, we have submitted the following six questions:

1. What is the official rationale for requiring all neighborhood funding requests to be approved by Councilor JT Moore's community resource committee?
2. By what authority was this new rule enacted requiring neighborhood funding requests to be approved by Councilor JT Moore's community resource committee?
3. Did the city provide reasonable advance public notice, a public comment period of at least 30 days, and hold public hearings to solicit input from affected neighborhoods before implementing this new funding approval rule?
4. When did Community Resource Services (or the Community Development Department) come under the direct purview of the Birmingham City Council? Please specify when the Council assumed oversight of this department, including any relevant ordinances or resolutions, and whether this represents a change from previous practice.

5. When was the City Council's Community Resource (or Community Development) Committee formed, and what is its official authority over neighborhood funding and participation? Please clarify the committee's formation date, its intended scope, and whether it has previously had a role in approving neighborhood funding requests or amending the Citizen Participation Plan.

6. Given the city's repeated violations of the Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) and federal HUD regulations (24 CFR 91.105 and 91.115)—including imposing new rules without public notice, comment, or a CAB vote, suspending neighborhood elections, and undermining legitimate representation—does the city have any concern about its ongoing disregard for these legally mandated processes? What steps, if any, is the city taking to restore compliance, transparency, and trust with Birmingham's neighborhoods, or does it view the CPP and its federal obligations as merely symbolic?

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Don Ferguson; seconded by Apryl Marie Fogel. The meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM.

Notes:

- The meeting was recorded and will be posted on YouTube: CNA Meeting 5/22/25-YouTube
- Subscribe for updates: [YouTube Channel](<https://www.youtube.com/@CrestlinePark>)
- Neighborhood Association Facebook: [WhatsHappeningInCrestlinePark](<https://www.Facebook.com/WhatsHappeningInCrestlinePark>)