



Mayor's Message *August, 2009*

Your city needs good leaders, and we will have **municipal elections** in November for three council seats. Qualifying week begins Monday, August 31st at 11 A.M. at City Hall and will continue during City Hall business hours until Thursday, September 3rd at 4 p.m. A \$27 fee will be due at the time of qualifying. The strength of the city affects us all in our life styles and property values, so please consider serving in this way, or encourage someone you respect to sign up. If you have questions about time commitment, etc., call me or a council member and we'll be glad to talk with you about it.

The Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources (GCDWR) has completed the design phase of the proposed **water main replacement project for Lakeshore Drive**. This included subsurface utility location, field surveying, and subsurface geotechnical investigations (road borings). Due to the existing field conditions, the proposed water main will be located beneath the asphalt of the inside lane of traffic on Lakeshore Drive. The main will be installed in an excavated trench which will be backfilled and patched with asphalt. During construction, a rolling road block will result in the blocking of some driveways each day. GCDWR and construction personnel will coordinate with the local residents in advance to allow residents to move their vehicles out of the construction area each morning. There will be periodic water shut-offs of about 1.5 to 2 hours. Prior to construction beginning (expected January 2010), GCDWR will conduct public meetings with interested residents to provide more information. Construction is expected to last about 6 months, and more info is available on our website.

Many **thanks** to Kay and Scott Lee for all they did in organizing our July 4th festivities. I think a good time was had by all. Thanks also to the following folks who ably assisted them:
June & Bob Spruell, Dana Nigh, Debbie Peters & Trey, Jacob & James, Stan & Ryan Waldheim. Thanks to everyone who brought canned goods for the Norcross Cooperative Ministry on that day. We delivered them along with the unused prizes for games, etc., and they were much appreciated.

I recently met with the county DOT regarding my request for some additional short sections of **sidewalk** on South Berkeley Lake Rd. near BL Elementary School to help kids get to school more safely. The principal of BLES and Ann Tuck Baden of Berkeley Field also attended. We discussed the ongoing preparation for sidewalks on North Berkeley Lake Rd. as well.

Our city has won a **grant** for \$15,000 from the Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program. Rebecca Spitler found this opportunity and completed the application for us successfully.

We have completed a **refinancing** of our greenspace bond which is expected to save the city @ \$100,000. Thanks to Nick Lore who volunteered his time and expertise in the initial exploratory phase of this project, which was completed recently by our city attorney.

The City's **Comprehensive Plan 2030** commits us to explore some new options which you can review on our website. New ideas sometimes cause a commotion and I wanted to let you know about these for your consideration. You will recall that we hired an outside, objective consultant to draft the Plan, after holding citizen meetings to gain input from you. One of the citizen concerns voiced was that as people age they may no longer be able to keep up a large house and be forced to leave our community. The consultant originally suggested that we look for a place in the city to develop assisted living, but nobody was keen on that. His second suggestion was to explore allowing accessory housing as long as it was compatible with the character of the single-family residential area. That arouses the specter of duplexes which no one wants. Council is considering allowing limited separate living facilities that are not visible as separate *if* the homeowner still lives there and other restrictions are met (i.e. septic approval, off street parking, etc.) This would be possible in individual homes only if a special use permit were granted after review by our P&Z, a public hearing, and approval by council. This may have no effect on the subdivisions which are controlled by covenants, but it could allow a few such places in the older part of the city. The issue is similar to the changes we made a couple of years ago to allow certain businesses in our homes with restrictions designed to minimize any adverse effect on neighbors. We want to allow people some freedom within their own homes as long as it doesn't hurt the rest of us. Whether the changes being considered adequately do that is a decision for you and your council members. Read the details on our website.

Art for City Hall - Since Berkeley Lake has long been blessed by outstanding artists, we have decided to use our new City Hall to showcase some of their works. I have appointed an Arts Advisory Committee to help us coordinate this effort. They want our first showing to be called "**REFLECTIONS**", artworks related to our city – its history and its beauty. We hope to be able to display these very soon in conjunction with the Grand Opening of City Hall. For further information, contact Carol Seitz (Chairperson). Thanks to her and the other members: Virginia Andreu, Ann Tuck Baden, Britt Collins, and Patty Green for contributing their time. Artists who are interested in showcasing their work in the new City Hall, please send an email to: arts@berkeley-lake.com by Sept. 1.

Our fall **Earth Day** is scheduled for Saturday, Oct 17, from 9am - 1pm. We will again hold a **citywide garage sale** to help you clean out those basements. The city will provide advertising and coordinate pickup of your leftovers by a charity, should you desire to donate them.

As you know, we have moved into the **new city hall** and are holding our meetings there now. Everyone is excited about the **Grand Opening Celebration** which has been set for **Sunday, Oct. 18 from 3-5 PM**. We'll have more information on the website as plans develop, but I wanted everyone to save this date now. I hope all our citizens will come out to tour the facility, to thank the committee who nurtured it into being, and generally to share in this happy occasion.

As in past years, the city funds a **Fall Festival** which will be on Sunday afternoon, Oct. 25. Please save that date, too. Lots of good things coming up! See you soon--

Lisa D. Salter