

TELEVISION STATION WSB-TV / ATLANTA
QUARTERLY LISTING OF LOCAL PROGRAMS REFLECTING CONCERNS
AND/OR NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY
APRIL 1, 2012 – JUNE 30, 2012

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(Mini-Series Documentaries are produced by WSB-TV's News Department and appear within the newscasts as a public service to the community. The Action News "mini-series" are aired one to four times daily Monday -Friday from 430am-7am; 12-1:00pm; 4-7pm; 11-11:35pm; 1:35-2:05am (repeat). On Saturdays, Action News is aired from 6-9am; 12-12:30pm; 6-6:30pm; and 11-11:35pm. Sundays: 7:30-11am; 12-12:30pm; 6-7pm; and 11-11:35pm. Segments are generally 1:00-6:00 minutes in length. The following, in date order, are the reports broadcast during second quarter, 2012)

QUARTERLY ISSUES / PROGRAMS LIST

- EDUCATION / YOUTH
 - ECONOMY
 - IMMIGRATION
- TRAFFIC / TRANSPORTATION
- LAW ENFORCEMENT & CRIMINAL JUSTICE
 - POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
 - COMMUNITY/NEIGHBORHOODS

Atlanta Public Schools Redistricting Plans

Date: 04/03/12 6pm duration :39 Richard Elliot

Some Spanish-speaking parents at t northwest Atlanta school are upset because they got an English-only letter warning their children's school could close. Atlanta Public Schools is recommending closing Towns Elementary as part of its redistricting plan. The letter is in English, but Towns is home to many Spanish-speaking parents. And usually letters go out in Spanish too. Ana Zarate: "I don't know, because only say, I here see they say closing." Elliot: "That was the only word you understood there?" Zarate: "Yeah" Elliot: "So you still don't know exactly what it says?" Zarate: "No, I don't know." APS believes the problem is because the list came out during spring break, and there might not have been any translators available.

Date: 04/03/12 11pm duration :26 Linda Stouffer

Tonight parents and neighbors of DH Stanton Elementary school held a meeting to try and keep their school open. Feroza Syed: "We are not going to you know, just go down without a fight. We really, really want this school open and we have some wonderful, positive ideas." The group organized at Emmaus House in southeast Atlanta tonight. They're planning a rally Thursday. It will start at Emmaus House at 5:30pm and move to Stanton by 6:30pm.

Date: 04/04/12 5pm duration Monica Pearson

Things got heated as residents met to discuss the redistricting. Some in the audience didn't think the sponsors, the Atlanta Business League, were showing enough support for keeping the buildings open. "Will you wait a minute...under the structure we'll have. We know how to take it to the streets. the street is out there have your fun." Business League members said last night the financial aspects cannot be ignored and some schools likely will have to shut down. They suggest establishing charter-like operations in areas where buildings are slated to close.

Parents Support Assistant Principal in Cell Phone Controversy

Date: 05/08/12 5am duration :32 Fred Blankenship

Several parents at a DeKalb County elementary school are standing behind an assistant principal caught in a picture controversy. The administrator is accused of showing a picture of a private part to this fifth grader to see if she texted it to another student. That girl's parent complained. But at a meeting Monday, other parents said the intent by the DeKalb elementary school administrator wasn't malicious. Jordan: "We don't feel that removing this particular assistant principal is in the best interest of the children." The assistant principal is on leave pending an investigation.

Gwinnett Coach Accused of Recruiting Violations

Date: 04/20/12 5pm duration 1:22

Brian Montgomery tells me he made the difficult decision to resign from Gwinnett County schools to avoid a termination on his record. The district informed him Monday his contract would not be renewed as they – along with GHSA – investigated allegations of recruiting violations. Thursday the father of Will Larimore a transfer student at the center of the controversy, spoke out for the first time. Larimore told me the coach did not ask them to transfer. In a statement he said, “Neither Will nor I ever recall saying any such thing. In fact, the contrary occurred in that it was our decision and intention to transfer to Shiloh. I didn't ask players to come over there with us. They came on their own. From the information I have I don't believe it happened, but if it did, our school shouldn't be singled out because it's been going on. It's been going on at all the schools.” Brian Montgomery tells me he made the difficult decision to resign from Gwinnett County schools to avoid a termination on his record. The district informed him Monday his contract would not be renewed as they – along with GHSA – investigated allegations of recruiting violations. Jamie Keys told me at Thursday's Gwinnett School Board meeting the district should investigate all schools. He feels Shiloh, which finished with a 2-8 record and Coach Montgomery were targeted. “It has some real overt racial undertones. It really does.” Parents say the biggest loss could come *off* the football field. It's the coach's focus on academics they will miss the most. “We started a strong foundation with this new coach and taking him away, we're at rock bottom right now.” Coach: “I hope the kids maintain the direction we were heading in to get the program turned around.”

School Newspaper Satire May Have Gone Too Far

Date: 04/26/12 11pm duration :35 Justin Farmer

A controversy is brewing in Cobb County over a satirical section of a school newspaper. The article in the Sprayberry High School newspaper called President Obama a “nazi” and said, among other things, he should not be re-elected because he's black and half white. Some parents want the newspaper advisor punished. Students we talked with say the article was misunderstood. Student 1: “It's pretty much obvious it is meant not to be taken seriously.” Student 2: “They meant it as a joke. They meant it all in good fun.” Sprayberry administrators posted an apology on the school's website. School officials don't expect to punish the advisor.

DeKalb School Calendar Changes Proposed

Date: 04/11/12 6pm duration :16 Justin Farmer

DeKalb County's school superintendent caught parents and school board members off guard today. She's calling for early dismissal from school once a week and a new school-balanced calendar which includes a new start date for middle schoolers. She's

asking parents to take an online survey about some big school calendar changes. So far - 13,000 have responded. Many complain this is too fast and some school board members didn't know about the calendar proposals. The online survey continues through tomorrow.

Graduation Flap in Cobb

Date: 05/18/12 4pm duration :30 Monica Pearson

We have an update on a graduation controversy in Cobb County. As we first reported earlier this week, high school students who do not pass the mandatory graduation test are not allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies – even if they passed all of their classes. Students say it's not fair. Quamisha Campbell: "We deserve this. We worked 12 hard years for this. It's our chance to walk across the stage." Since our story first aired, we learned the Cobb district will hold a special graduation ceremony for students who pass the re-test in July. School officials say students had two years to pass the test.

Atlanta Superintendent Subject of Controversial Flyer

Date: 04/06/12 11pm duration :34 Justin Farmer

Atlanta Public School redistricting opponents say they do *not* support a controversial flyer. A man handed out these flyers Thursday during a meeting at DH Stanton Elementary School. Stanton and Kennedy Middle are on a list of schools the district could close. The flyer shows Superintendent Erroll Davis wearing a Ku Klux Klan robe. The creator says he won't bow to neighborhood pressure. Nathaniel Dyer: "I can respect their tactics, and I just have mine. I'm not asking them to sign off on it or anything like that." Dyer believes APS is unfairly targeting predominantly African-American schools.

Parents Upset Over Yearbook Signing Rules

Date: 05/14/12 4pm duration :17 John Bachman/Mike Petchenik

"L.O.L is a common acronym for "laugh out loud." But some Milton parents aren't laughing about an elementary school's attempt to ban the phrase, and other slang from student yearbooks. School officials say this was a big misunderstanding. A pledge limiting how students at a North Fulton county elementary school can sign their yearbooks sparked a controversy. Parents tell us they got upset when their children had to promise not to write acronyms like "LOL" in their new yearbooks. It happened at Birmingham Falls elementary in Milton. The principal tells us she did not approve the pledge, so the children will no longer be required to sign it.

Georgia's Hospitals Boost State Economy

Date: 05/29/12 6am duration :25 Fred Blankenship

Georgia's hospitals appear to be having a good impact on the state's economy. We looked over new reports that show a \$38 billion dollar boost to the state's economy from hospital revenue in 2010. The Georgia Hospital Association says 337,000 people work full time in Georgia hospitals. But uninsured patients cost them \$1.5 billion dollars in 2010. They say more people are using emergency services instead of primary care.

Georgia Small Businesses Get Influx of Federal Dollars

Date: 04/20/12 5pm duration 1:43 Jim Strickland

The contractor building this home told me today the life blood of small business is credit. We found out today Georgia's about to get a transfusion of tens of millions of dollars. This is about a 3000 square foot home. Builder Monte Hewett says small businesses like his are still struggling to get loans after so many banks got hit in the financial crisis 3 years ago. He has plans to add employees. I could easily see us going from the 14 we have now up to 25 in the next year. At the Department of Community Affairs, big news for small business. We received verbal approval today. Assistant Commissioner Brian Williamson says the Treasury Department just OK'ed Georgia's plans for a small business credit initiative. The Feds will kick in \$47.8 million dollars – money used for loan guarantees, credit insurance, and special financing – all designed to help spur job growth. We'd be increasing jobs and investment in small business, which as you know are the lynch pins of the economy. Hewett says even if he doesn't apply under the program, other businesses that do will hire, and hopefully it'll all mean more home backers in the end. Hewett: "You hear about these big companies moving in a thousand jobs here and there and that's a big deal, but at the end of the day smaller businesses really generate the jobs. State officials aren't sure when they'll start the money rolling. One of the biggest challenges is getting word out the money is even available. The Council for Quality Growth is holding a program for banks next month, and the state's even hiring a PR firm to get the word out.

Realtors Rally for Easing of Housing Finance Rules

Date: 05/17/12 6pm

duration 1:30

SM

Thousands of realtors, including a huge contingent from Georgia, swarmed outside the Washington monument in DC today. Urging the federal government to do more, to salvage Atlanta home prices. And the huge number of owners at risk of “going under” We’ve been affected greatly. Real estate is local so all our areas in Georgia are affected differently, but we’ve certainly felt the heat. Realtors and local buyers want Washington to pass a new law making it easier for people to refinance to escape high interest rates, and to make it easier for would-be buyers to buy. Stiff new regulations passed after the housing bubble first burst in 2007 have made it difficult for buyers to get credit. And US Senator Johnny Isakson – a former realtor – says in just the past few years, government regulations have *doubled* the closing costs on a home. But congress – absolutely gridlocked in recent months. All the while, the price of the average Atlanta home has plummeted 12% in the past 12 months. According to new federal data obtained today by Channel 2, “it’s gonna take a while for that to come back – as long as housing is sluggish. It’s going to have a pretty big impact on the economy of metro Atlanta.”

Reaction to Supreme Court Ruling on Lake Lanier

Date: 06/25/12 5pm

duration 1:13

Tom Regan

On Lake Lanier, metro Atlanta’s water source and the fluid of the regional economy – a glad reaction to the Supreme Court decision not to jump into the decades old tri-state water wars, letting stand an earlier ruling that gives Georgia drinking water rights to the massive reservoir. Val Perry, Executive VP – Lake Lanier Association: “We are very pleased with that.” I spoke with Val Perry of the Lake Lanier Association, a 3,000 member organization of lakeside homeowners, business and lake enthusiasts. He says the high court’s ruling will give Georgia a stronger hand in future water sharing negotiations with Florida and Alabama. This gives Governor Deal an extra arrow in his quiver, if you will, to negotiate the right things for Lake Lanier and the state of Georgia. Florida and Alabama have been fighting Georgia over the water of Lake Lanier arguing not enough is sent down the Chattahoochee River for communities, wildlife and industries. But lake users say they’re happy. The issue of whether Lanier was authorized for drinking water has been finally put to rest. “We are a boat dealership. And we use the lake every day for personal as well as business and I’m thrilled to hear that.” Celina Leigh: “Since we don’t have many other places to take water, it’s good for Georgia.”

Georgia Perimeter College's Financial Troubles

Date: 05/25/12 5pm

duration 1:13

Richard Eliot

Gwendolyn Walker-Russell: "Uh, it's kinda shaky." That's how part time Georgia Perimeter College employee Gwendolyn Walker-Russell described her co-workers mood ... after they all learned that the new budget reduction plan means jobs cuts – lots of job cuts. Walker-Russell: "A little frightening. You know, with everything going on with the economy and everybody needs a job. GPC announced two weeks ago it discovered a \$25 million dollar budget shortfall. No one knows yet just how that happened, but it cost the former president his job. Now the interim president just released his plan to fill in that deep budget hole. Among other things the plan calls for cutting 185 jobs, eliminating vacant positions, cutting some part time employees, and increasing class sizes. Gabrielle Shepard: "I don't know how you miss \$25 million dollars." We talked with several students about the deficit and the budget cuts. Most admitted, it concerned them. Ameer Ali: "It could as far as packing up the classes where you can't focus and then the teachers could easily get stressed out because there's so much stuff going on and then that could also reflect on us. Gwendolyn Walker-Russell just hopes she, and her friends can keep their jobs. Walker-Russell: "We're hoping it can be corrected without causing a lot of us lost jobs. Hoping they can correct that. I don't know. That's a lot of money.

Carter's Corporation Brings 1000 Jobs to Braselton

Date: 04/04/12 5pm

duration 1:15

Aaron Diamant

Work is already underway inside this massive, million-square-foot warehouse in Braselton, preparing for its new tenant, Atlanta-based Carters Corporation. Courtney Bernardi, Jackson County Economic Development Director: "It's going to be funneling out to a lot of different things, fulfillment, distribution and wholesale and retail, so it's going to have a lot going on in here." Jackson County's economic development director says the new distribution center is a huge win, while laying out the children's clothing giant's planned \$50 million dollar investment here and a thousand new jobs by 2015. Bernardi: "I think this is providing a lot of hope for those who have been in a very dark tunnel for a very long time. This is light at the end of that tunnel." Hiring is already underway to fill 250 of those jobs needed for when the center opens in June. Job seeker Danielle Fortner: "It's really exciting, because I mean the economy everywhere has been low, especially in small towns where there's not many jobs period and now you've got a branch like this opening up, it's a pretty big deal." Meantime, Braselton's town manager calls the Carter's deal a coup – beating out communities in Georgia and other states. Town Manager Jennifer Dees: "When you find out that they've actually chosen your community, you feel a sense of well-being that you're doing something right and that's why they chose you."

Kennesaw State Student Jessica Colotl's Immigration Case

Date: 05/07/12 6pm duration :26 Jovita Moore

The federal government is allowing a woman at the center of an immigration controversy to stay in the country even longer. Immigration officials determined Jessica Colotl was in the US illegally after a traffic stop in Cobb County in 2010. Colotl was a Kennesaw State University at the time. Immigration officials have given Colotl a third deferment of a deportation order. Since graduating, Colotl is working for her immigration attorney

Date: 06/15/12 11pm duration 1:28 Carl Willis

Jessica Colotl, the 23-year-old who was thrust into the center of the immigration debate, says a new policy *could* provide her protection from deportation. Colotl: "I think my case is part of what I can call a domino effect. We were seeing many cases throughout the country." Colotl's parents brought her to the US from Mexico when she was just 11 years old. As a senior at Kennesaw State in 2010, she was stopped for a traffic violation and was nearly deported when it was discovered that she was in the country illegally. But today, President Obama announced, effective immediately, certain young illegal immigrants who were brought to the country as young children, and who meet key requirements, will be immune to deportation. "I have a valid work permit which allows me to stay in the U.S. another year..." Attorney Danielle Conley: "She can now rest comfortably, that she's here. She will not have to face that impending removal, having to be renewed, having to be concerned about removal each year." Delilah Holmes, Pro-Immigration Reform: "If they are doing what they need to do and aren't causing any issues or problems, I feel that they should be here." Bryan Owens: "That's the same thing as coming across the border. If we have to do it for one, we have to do it for all. There's a legal way of doing it." Despite opposition, Colotl says she's hopeful that this is a step towards larger changes. "Specifically, talking about the Dream Act and immigration reform because that's what this country desperately needs."

Reaction to Change in Immigration Enforcement

Date: 06/18/12 6pm duration :36 Justin Farmer

People are speaking out today about new changes in US immigration policy. Today, we stopped by the Buckhead Studio of "El Patron." Attorney Charles Kuck spoke to listeners about President Obama's new policy allowing hundreds of thousands of young illegal immigrants to stay in the U.S. Attorney Charles Kuck: "They've grown up here. They all speak English. They associate with the American society. They would be

completely out of place in their home country. This is a remarkable opportunity for them to move forward." Over the weekend, Mitt Romney repeatedly *declined* to say whether he would overturn the policy, if he defeats President Obama in November.

Local Concern Over Stricter Immigration Laws

Date: 04/25/12 6pm

duration 1:24

Manuel Bojorquez

For those who have opposed Georgia's immigration law, the concern was clear this afternoon, as they discussed arguments before the US Supreme Court regarding a similar law in Arizona – a decision that could have an impact here. Kuck: "Obviously, those of us who believe this type of law is bad for Georgia, bad for Arizona, bad for the US. [We] hope that the Supreme Court will agree that the states simply do not have the power to infringe on a typically historically federal area of immigration. Opponents claim Georgia's law is harmful for immigrant communities and the state in general, even though a provision that would allow police to check the immigration status of certain suspects is still held up in the courts. Helen Ho: "We're talking about American-owned, American-immigrant owned small businesses in our city have had trouble retaining and hiring workers." They hope if Arizona's law is struck down, Georgia's controversial provisions would be too, but Phil Kent, who is on the board, overseeing implementation of Georgia's law, believes the law is not only legally sound, but necessary to deal with the negative impacts of illegal immigration. Kent: "So the argument is, states have the right to enforce the laws if the feds aren't." He says even if Arizona's police provision is struck down, Georgia's might not be. Kent: "Georgia actually has a little cushion there regardless of how the Arizona case goes, because basically they aren't required to check legal status, like Arizona is.

Date: 05/01/12 5pm

duration 1:19

Manuel Bojorquez

It's May Day – what some call International Workers Day – and this immigration rally sought to bring the two themes together. Georgina Perez: "Immigrants are workers; everything is linked together." Perez is one of dozens who gathered her, one of their demands – that the Obama administration end a program called "secure communities" which begins the deportation process at local jails, including many in Georgia. Among their complaints, that some are deported for minor traffic offenses, and children are sometimes left behind. Perez: "All we're seeing is that our communities have been separated and hurt, so there are family's torn apart." They want the government to go beyond an announcement Friday, that fewer people stopped for minor traffic offenses would face deportation. Watching nearby, DA King says the Obama administration should be more concerned with enforcing immigration laws, than what he considers weakening them. King: "The goal here is to use families as an excuse to violate the law – for what crime do we say we're not going to enforce the law if someone has children, or a wife, or a husband." He worked to pass Georgia's new immigration law, and says enforcement is working. King: "No one has ever been deported for a broken tail light – the singular reason for deportation is violation of American immigration laws.

Date: 05/16/12 5pm

duration :30

Justin Farmer

The American Civil Liberties Union says there are major problems with immigration detention facilities across Georgia. Azadeh Shahshahani: "The conditions documented by the ACLU of Georgia violate the detainees constitutional and human rights, as well as ICE standards." The organization released a report today examining conditions at four immigration detention facilities across the state. The report cites inadequate living conditions and not enough access to medical and mental health facilities. Three of those facilities are privately operated.

Feds Investigate Harassment Claim Against Immigration Agent

Date: 04/06/12 11pm

duration :24

Erin Coleman

The federal government is investigating after some people in Gwinnett County said they were harassed by an immigration agent. Right now we do not know if the investigation focuses on an actual agent, or someone who is posing as a federal officer. Some residents say they were questioned without just cause, or threatened with deportation. Immigrations and customs enforcement officials say they are conducting an internal investigation.

Program Sends Prisoners to Fill Labor Shortage at State Farms

Date: 05/03/12 5pm

duration 1:51

Diana Davis

For the first time, Georgia prison inmates are on the job to help. Billy James Mander: "It's hard work but it's honest work." Mander is one of ten inmates from the Smith Transition prison in Claxton at Wayne Durrence farms. It's a joint program between the Departments of Corrections and Agriculture. Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black: "It's an opportunity for them to have a job. Secondly, it's an opportunity for them to contribute to the needs that are in the marketplace – the need for labor for the farmer." Georgia farmers have complained of worker shortages since the legislature passed House Bill 87 last year. It requires enforcement of immigration laws and penalizes anyone caught hiring illegals. Durrence agreed to the program due to the hassles of immigrant guest worker programs. Durrence: "It's a lot of red tape and a lot of costs involved with getting those folks here." Transitional inmates all near the end of serving time for non-violent crimes can volunteer. They earn minimum wage. Some pay their expenses at the prison. They can save the rest. Mander: "Instead of just walking out of prison with the \$25 dollars the state gives you, you got the opportunity to come out here and save money" Money they can use to make a new start without going back to a life of crime. "The things that I'm used to doing I see now that I don't have to do that no more. I can make an honest living." And so far, Durrence says it's working for him. "They're working great. They're doing a great job; doing everything I ask them to do." Black says the program is only one piece of the immigration and labor shortage puzzle. Black:

Gwinnett Airport Expansion Discussed

Date: 06/03/12 11pm

duration :25

Erin Coleman

Tomorrow, a CEO is expected to speak publicly on an airport expansion controversy. Brett Smith with “propeller airports” wants to expand Briscoe Field to accommodate commercial flights. But he says a vote by the Gwinnett County commission right now would be unfair because one seat is vacant. Commissioner Shirley Lassiter resigned last week after pleading guilty to federal bribery charges. The commission plans to vote on the plan Tuesday.

Cobb Waste Station Plans Scrapped

Date: 05/14/12 6pm

duration :24

Monica Pearson

A waste station controversy in Cobb County soon could be over, after a warning about birds. Many residents in Mableton protested the expansion of the Bankhead Waste Transfer station on Veteran’s Highway. The station wanted to start accepting household garbage, but now the Federal Aviation Administration says the plant is too close to Fulton County airport, and the smells would attract birds, which could interfere with flights.

Park Atlanta Fines Continue to Enrage Motorists

Date: 05/22/12 6pm

duration :19

Jeff Dore

There is controversy once again about Park Atlanta’s parking meter enforcement. While we were looking into a city council bill that could raise penalties, we found repeated problems for people who were trying to pay for parking, but could not.

Sandy Springs Roundabout Plans Spark Concern

Date: 04/04/12 6pm

duration :36

Justin Farmer

Plans to build a roundabout at one Roswell intersection have created some controversy in a nearby neighborhood. The city plans to turn the intersection of Houze and Hembree Roads from a four-way stop into a roundabout. Traffic engineers tell us the project will improve traffic flow and reduce crashes at the busy intersection. But a homeowner in the nearby Saddle Creek neighborhood told us her neighbors feel blindsided by the decision. Courtney Rozear: “This is going to be a very different concept, and part of my

concern, is not so much the roundabout, but the lack of answers to my questions." Construction is not scheduled to begin for a few years.

Upcoming Transportation Tax Vote (T-SPLOST)

Date: 04/12/12 4pm

duration 1:32

Sophia Choi

Woodstock resident Karen Sacandy: "I am very worried about the big picture, and this we cannot afford it." Residents at this meeting had a lot of comments. "This is about an Atlanta bailout." And questions about the proposed 1% tax in the upcoming July 31st regional transportation referendum. "What is Cherokee County's potential to modify that?" The Atlanta Regional Commission, or ARC, and county leaders held this meeting to lay out what Cherokee County could get from passing the referendum, before politicians running for office started spreading the word. Buzz Ahrens, Cherokee County Commissioner: "It's going to be on everybody's campaign, so our goal specifically was to get data and information in front before it got all mixed up in the political campaigns." ARC estimates Cherokee County will raise nearly \$280 million dollars over ten years. The bulk of the money would be used to help commuters headed to Fulton County by widening Highway 140 or Hickory Flat Highway. ARC says more than 30% of Cherokee County residents who work, leave the county, with most spending 30-45 minutes or more, stuck in traffic – one way. This is typical of the commute on Highway 575. Despite that, residents we spoke with say they're against the proposed tax. Cherokee resident Carolyn Cosby: "We just think this is a goody bag – grab bag – of all kinds of special projects that are not gonna solve transportation problems." Judging by the questions at this meeting, one county leader told me it's clear many are against it. But ARC says this meeting was not to sway voters, jut to educate them. Jayne Hayse, ARC Planning Chief: "I'm here to inform. It's not my job to convince people to vote for it or against it."

Date: 04/26/12 6am

duration :38

Fred Blankenship

DeKalb County residents say despite new ad campaigns, they still have questions about the regional transportation tax proposal. The .01¢ sales tax referendum is up for a vote in July. It would generate about \$6 billion dollars for regional projects. At a meeting last night with community members, DeKalb County CEO Burrell Ellis said the tax is crucial to metro Atlanta's future. Some taxpayers say they're undecided on how they'll vote. Lance Netland: "I'm not sure which way to vote yet. I'd like to know more and I'm going to do some studying." Some people at the meeting said they are concerned about the overall look and impact of the proposed Clifton Corridor light rail service.

Date: 04/26/12 6pm

duration 1:27

Lori Geary

It's a daily scene all over metro Atlanta. But all this time sitting and idling is costing drivers time and money. "We spend a lot of wasted time in traffic." According to Citizens for Transportation Mobility" it adds up to \$924 dollars a year on average. The group is using that number to try and convince voters to vote yes on the .01¢ transportation sales tax this summer. Jim Tharpe: "The real question comes in will this one cent sales

tax solve these problems and nobody has really answered that at this point.” But the folks at Politifact Georgia wanted to see if there was truth to that \$924 dollar number. The Texas Transportation Institute calculated it by concluding the average metro Atlanta driver spends each year about 43 hours stuck in traffic during rush hour, and wasting about 20 extra gallons of fuel. Angela: “I think their analysis for the most part is pretty sound.” But the group gets a “mostly true” because some critics question how they came up with that exact dollar amount. Tharpe: “That number is somewhat controversial. Some people have questioned the methodology. I don’t think anyone who drives in Atlanta would argue – a lot of time in traffic but the exact number people would argue about that and how you get to it.” You can expect to hear more on these types of numbers over the next few months. Voters decide on the transportation 01¢ sales tax on July 31st.

Date: 05/15/12 5pm

duration 1:45

Lori Geary

By now, you’ve seen the billboards – maybe even heard of seen the ads. Are you willing to pay a penny sales tax to untie metro Atlanta’s gridlock? “Traffic is absolutely horrible. Yes, I would do that.” “I’m willing to pay it – yes.” State Senate Majority Leader Chip Rogers is one of the highest ranking Republicans at the state capitol and disagrees. Rogers: “I think we can find a better solution to reducing traffic than one of the largest tax increases in state history.” He voted to get the issue on the ballot but says the project list killed it for him. “In general, we have over 50% of the projects are transit which have been shown not to relieve traffic. I think we’ve got to do better than that.” Rogers says as an elected official, he needs to be honest with his constituents. “We’ve created a ten year tax. In the legislation it talks about these projects should be completed in ten years. Transit projects are never completed in ten years because they must always receive a subsidy going forward.” Supporters of the transportation sales tax say this is all about compromise. That even if you don’t like the part of the list that includes transit, a lot of the money is also going towards roads. Bert Brantley: “Once people peel back the layers, they’ll realize the money isn’t going from Cherokee County into a transit project in Atlanta. It’s going to be spent on projects in Cherokee. Same in Henry; same in Fayette; all over the region.” Brantley is part of an education group informing voters about the tax and says Rogers District which includes Cherokee and North Fulton counties would get almost \$300 million for road improvements. “At the time as they put this compromise together, there was a lot of forward momentum. Now we’re starting to see some folks raising issues they weren’t raising when they were putting it together last summer.” Voters will decide the issue on July 31st.

Date: 06/07/12 5pm

duration 1:13

Richard Eliot

Traffic hums along Georgia 400 but anyone who drives along it knows it’s not always like this. Donna Minnich: “and 400 is our lifeline.” Minnich is an insurance agent and chair of the Lumpkin County Chamber of Commerce. Her chamber supports the transportation tax, but she admits even her own home is divided over the issue. She knows it’ll be a hard sell. Minnich: “With this economy, I believe it could be. People don’t normally like taxes. I know that I don’t like to pay more taxes.” Some of the sales tax

money would go to improving 400. That's one reason why the Forsyth Chamber held this meeting – to convince folks here to support the tax. James McCoy: "It is the future of our economy." Chamber President McCoy supports it and says what they have to sell is not the transportation projects, but trust that the government will spend the money wisely. McCoy: "and I think when people really hear the facts and really understand that it's very clear where the money is going, it's very clear what's going to happen with that, that they'll come to the conclusion that this is the best option." Voter John Chidester: "I was really going to go for it, but I think I'm going to go against it." Chidester plans to vote no because, quite frankly, he doesn't trust the government with the money. "One, I'm afraid that the money isn't necessarily going to what's touted as being for and two, that we're just going to end up spending this extra little bit of tax forever."

Roadway to Ease Congestion in Northern Suburbs Proposed

Date: 04/23/12 5pm

duration 1:28

Manuel Bojorquez

Officials made the announcement under this tent, as soon as crews can get it knocked down, this section of Westside Parkway will open. A ribbon cutting after 20 years in the making, for this stretch of Westside Parkway, which will connect Roswell, Alpharetta, and Milton. More importantly, it will offer people an alternative. Brandon Beach: "This is big. It keeps people off of Georgia 400 and we also think it will alleviate a lot of traffic on Highway 9." Beach, president of the North Fulton Chamber of Commerce, says when construction started on the first stretch of Westside Parkway Zell Miller was governor. That's how long it's taken to complete – given the ups and downs of the economy – now a partnership between the North Fulton Community Improvement District, the city of Alpharetta, a private developer, and the Georgia Department of Transportation, put \$2.3 million dollars to use – to complete it – for all who need it. Beach: "If you come down this parkway, you'll see different license plates from Cobb, Forsyth, Cherokee – different areas." But for this area – this city – Alpharetta, it's part of a bigger plan. David Bell Isle: "We're looking at branding the city as the technology city of the south and creating those opportunities and attracting business you gotta have your roads right, and this is a good step in that direction." That's especially true when you consider a plan for the land next to the parkway – for a \$700 million dollar mixed use development – the city council will vote on that tonight.

Poorly Timed Traffic Lights in Midtown Clog Traffic

Date: 04/07/12 5am

duration 1:17

John Bachman

One block, and back to red, creating bottlenecks in midtown Atlanta. Koren Conrad: "It's not timed. As soon as you get to the next light, it's stop again." DJ Meyer: "They're too long. They're not synchronized." The goal – synchronize the lights to keep traffic flowing and cut down on congestion. And in some spots, the manually timed lights do just that. But all it takes is one out-of-sync light to mess things up. DOT Spokesman Jill Goldberg: "When power goes out, you do have to go back and look at a lot of the lights. It will throw off the timing of them." But a \$1 million dollar grant – renewable for up to \$3

million dollars over three years – is expected to change that. Georgia's Department of Transportation has awarded the city of Atlanta the federal money to update their midtown traffic lights. Goldberg: "They use technology, and computerized systems to keep signals moving and they can change them on the fly if they have to. There are 90+ intersections that would be included in this program. And right now the city is working out a partnership with Midtown Alliance to run it." G-DOT has worked on similar projects in other parts of metro Atlanta. Goldberg: "We actually won some awards for our work in this area...for being innovative in it." The city of Atlanta is expected to finalize plans for the project in the next month or so.

Georgia 400 Congestion Relief Measure Enacted: Allow Drivers on Shoulder

Date: 04/18/12 6pm duration 1:15

E

"I route myself anywhere other than going on 400 southbound." Because drivers say traffic is awful, now – come mid-May, they're getting relief. "Whatever is going to cut that commute down and so we can get to work or wherever you need to go that's the best thing." On a five mile stretch between the Holcomb Bridge Road Exit and the North Springs Marta station on Georgia 400 southbound, drivers will be able to use the shoulder as a full lane of travel – 6:30am to 9:30am Monday through Friday. "Those are what we've determined to be the most congested periods with the slowest travel times in this section." The DOT's Jill Goldberg showed me the plans to put up new signs and create six more emergency pull-off lanes every half mile. "A lot of this is going to be 'wait and see how it works.'" Captain Steve Rose with Sandy Springs police admits the department was against the proposal initially because of safety concerns. But now that the DOT is moving forward, so are they. The plan – to have at least one officer positioned in the area every morning and every night so they can respond to accidents quicker. Rose: "The important thing is monitoring the area physically. We're also going to be measuring to see what success measures we have." Drivers we spoke with say anything will help. "I think it's a good idea. I think they need to do something. The traffic in Atlanta is terrible."

Date: 06/08/12 6pm

duration 1:33

Erin Coleman

Right now, in parts of North Fulton County and Forsyth County, there is a lane of traffic dedicated solely for entering and exiting Georgia 400 South. It stretches 9 miles to Holcomb Bridge Road. Now the DOT will be using it differently. "It is a lane instead of being used for short periods we're going to change the striping on it so it can be used for a continual period." That means drivers, essentially, get another lane. Commuters say that's good news. "The majority of the congestion begins here and then it just bottlenecks until you get up to Northridge." It comes just three weeks after the shoulder lane project on Georgia 400. That too, is designed to ease congestion and the DOT says – though their research isn't complete yet – it appears to be working. The shoulder lane runs from the North Springs MARTA station to Holcomb Bridge Road. Drivers can only use it from 6:30 to 9:30 Monday through Friday mornings. The new lane will be north of that from Holcomb Bridge to McFarland. Drivers will be able to use it any time

and they'll see changes almost immediately. Tuesday morning the first parts will open – working from the southern section up to McFarlane Road. “I think the cost is minimal because it's already there. I believe it's a quick fix. I don't think it's the permanent fix. There are a lot of other issues with 400.”

Crime Concerns Along Beltline Trail

Date: 06/25/12 5am

duration 1:16

Darryn Moore

The new trail is still under construction. Beltline officials say until they can get some lights along that trail, they'll work with the police department to address safety concerns. Garrett Burns: "It could definitely use a lot more lights." Garrett Burns' apartment building is in the Old Fourth Ward and borders the 2 ¼ mile stretch of the Beltline. He and others say the trail that runs through their northeast Atlanta neighborhood does not have lights and could be an advantage for criminals. Resident Cece Ukatu: "It's going to be a little concerning especially since there has been some concern about the crime around here." Ethan Davidson, Director of Atlanta Beltline, Inc: "As it stands now there is a significant amount of ambient light from the surrounding properties... so even at night there is decent visibility, however we will improve that in the future when there is funding for it." The new section will run from the tip of Piedmont Park in midtown all the way to the Old Fourth Ward. Some residents who plan to use the trail at night think criminals could use it to make their getaway. Davidson: "It's understandable that people have fears, but I think the opposite will be true." Officials say phase two of the beltline project will have lights, but that's five to seven years down the road. Chris Broughton: "That is a long time." The trail is supposed to open sometime in July.

Laws Evolve to Meet Challenges Brought by Rising Use of Synthetic Marijuana

Date: 04/17/12 6pm

duration 1:15

Tom Regan

"We don't want to take any kind of risk." This store owner told me he used to sell herbal incense and other products that he says were once legal under Georgia law. But he's quit selling the stuff and has no thoughts of doing it again, especially with the new law that makes the sale of banned ingredients in fake pot a felony. Regan: "Do people come in looking for it?" Patel: "Yeah, we just tell them, we don't sell it." And that is apparently the case with more and more stores across the metro area, including here in Cherokee County. Phil Price, Cherokee Narcotics Squad: "As far as we know, we have had a hundred percent compliance from the business. We have had individuals who work for businesses, who tried to circumvent the law. In one case, the business owner fired that employee." The Cherokee multi-agency narcotics squad says store owners don't want to risk going to jail if they're caught selling products that are illegal under the new and broader law on synthetic pot. Phil Price: "They're in business to make money. But they're also in business to stay in business and not go to jail." We visited the GBI crime lab where scientist Mary Catherine was testing samples of suspected illegal synthetic pot. She says the amount of material sent to the lab has declined in recent weeks. Mary Catherine: "It suggests to me at least for now. They're trying to get the stuff off the shelves and stop selling it."

Date: 04/24/12 4pm

duration 1:23

Linda Stouffer

Pam Gilbertz showed me pictures of her 19-year-old daughter, Ceilidh. It's this recent picture that has her so upset – her mugshot after being arrested for possession of a synthetic marijuana called purple flame. "If I can walk in the store and buy it, and they tell me it doesn't have anything illegal in it- on top of that- how can I go to jail for it?" I got a copy of the police report. It says Ceilidh's eyes were glazed over, her face twitching – but it doesn't mention where she bought the spice. So her mother came here to "Smoke 911" in Roswell and she says she bought it for herself. Lisa Holland, Roswell Police: "It tested positive that it is a controlled substance in the state of GA." Roswell police did not want to comment on Smoke 911, but in a previous Channel 2 story, said they are investigating whether the shop is still selling products. Banned for a month by Chase's Law, which outlaws the root chemicals of most synthetic drugs, stores that are selling it need to remove it off the shelves. But even though Ceilidh was charged with a felony, the store tells me they think their product *is* legal and I got this statement from Smoke 911's attorney: "Smoke 911 was informed by a local law enforcement agency AFTER the new GA ban on synthetic marijuana went into effect that "Flame" was not listed as a banned substance." Pam Gilbertz: "What you are selling is ruining people's lives and killing people and is morally and ethically wrong."

Georgia Perimeter's Handling of Theft Case Criticized

Date: 05/09/12 6pm

duration 2:24

Richard Belcher

A campus security camera clearly documented the incident. A 20-year-old student walked out with a laptop which a fellow student had left behind at the Georgia Perimeter campus on Panthersville Road in South DeKalb. Chris Albers was chief of the campus police. Belcher: "Did this look like a complicated case to you?" Albers: "Oh no, not at all. It was a very simple case." Garry Tuttle was Deputy Chief. Belcher: "Was that a good case against that student?" Tuttle: "Absolutely it was. It was a perfect case." Both say Vandashia Anderson admitted taking and pawning the computer but promised to repay the student who owned it. When she didn't, the owner demanded police arrest Anderson, and police complied. I looked at the case file I looked at the shots being taken by our camera systems – and they were in the police report – of Ms. Anderson exiting the classroom with a laptop in question. Belcher: "You got the right person?" Tuttle: "Yes sir." Belcher: "How quickly did you realize that you'd stuck a stick in a hornet's nest?" Tuttle: "Um, almost immediately." Tuttle and Albers say the case exploded into a major confrontation with senior college officials – in particular Executive Vice President Ron Carruth and Ombudsman Karen Truesdale. The former chief and former deputy chief have spelled out Georgia Perimeter's reaction in whistleblower lawsuits filed against the college. Both contend they were pressured to ask the DeKalb DA's office to drop the criminal case against Vandashia Anderson. Here the former chief talks about Ombudsman Truesdale. Albers: "We informed her that she was obstructing justice, that she was engaging in an activity that interfered with our criminal investigation, and that she needed to stop." Albers said Truesdale was verging on a criminal act herself. Fourteen months after the incident, Anderson was charged with one

felony count of theft. The case is still pending. But by the time Anderson was charged, both Chris Albers and Garry Tuttle had been fired from Georgia Perimeter. Both say the Anderson case was about keeping the college from looking bad – and not about what doing what the law clearly required. Albers: ““I think there was a conscious effort to prevent the enforcement of the law on our campus.” Tuttle: I think they want every criminal case that’s committed by a student and a student’s involved to go away because it reflects bad on the college.

Tougher Laws Enacted on Scrap Metal Businesses to Deter Thieves

Date: 07/02/12 5am duration :20 Carol Sbarge

Lawmakers are hoping a new law now in effect for recycling businesses will deter and help catch scrap metal thieves. The new secondary metals recycler registration law requires businesses to register with county law enforcement each year. Also in the law, businesses must obtain photo copies of seller ID’s and also get vehicle information from sellers.

Clayton Jail Brutality Case

Date: 06/07/12 12pm duration 1:28 Mark Winne

Kem Kimbrough: “Officer St. Louis apparently was provoked by some statement that the inmate made and he came up and took the inmate away from Officer Feemster and forced the inmate to the ground. Is it clear to you the inmate was not resisting or posing a threat in any way at that point? That’s absolutely clear from the video.” Clayton County Sheriff Kem Kimbrough says a cover up cost three correctional officers their jobs – a cover-up defeated by a camera that caught most of an excessive force incident on video. Kimbrough: “The reporting of it after the fact, and the creation of the cover-up are certainly things that are intolerable. They speak directly to the integrity of our officers.” Kimbrough says the inmate had been combative in an earlier situation in his cell but settled down, was not resisting but still spouting off when Officer Enrique St. Louis suddenly came up from behind and took him to the floor – hard. Kimbrough: “Our official complainant was the inmate’s mother.” The Sheriff says officers Herbert Feemster and Ronnie Wyatt, who were both present but did not use excessive force, and St. Louis were all fired. Keith Martin: “Ron told the truth best of his recollection. He accurately related the facts of which he was certain.” His lawyer Keith Martin says Ron Wyatt did not cover up and did nothing wrong. Martin: “We’re gonna file an appeal to the civil service board to protect his rights, try to get his job back.”

Parking Ticket Fines Go Up

Date: 05/24/12 12pm duration :40 Fred Blankenship

The head of “Park Atlanta” is responding to ticket complaints. This week, we watched as a meter reader ticketed a New York police officer, 90 minutes *before* the officer’s

parking pass expired. "Park Atlanta" director Anderson Moore says the officer should get a letter voiding that citation. Some critics say up to 5% of "Park Atlanta's" tickets are in error. Moore: "If I'm on the street, and I see someone that's having problems with the equipment, I'll go and talk to them. Sometimes, if they have too much trouble, I'll make the payment myself, just to [calm] the experience and train them on how to use the equipment." Councilman Kwanza Hall says Atlanta should consider cutting its contract with "Park Atlanta" even though that move would cost \$8 million dollars.

Date: 06/19/12 6am duration 1:15 Amanda Cook

One of the most surprising things about this – this new budget passed without a big debate. A vote of 12 to 2 means that this morning you can expect to see big changes coming to the city of Atlanta soon. "There should be an additional 100 officers. At a minimum, it should take us over 2000 for the first time in the city's history." Two thousand police officers on the force – a goal city leaders hoped to accomplish in 2007. Another big change you just might notice if you deal with these... parking fines are going up from \$25 to \$35 dollars. By increasing the fines, the city will try to recoup a \$4 million dollar loss they changed its contract with Park Atlanta. After two weeks, your unpaid ticket jumps to \$70 dollars; after 45 days - \$95 dollars. "\$25-\$50 was a lot before, but I guess the city has to make money somehow." One council member stressed the price to park did not go up, just the price of parking tickets.

Website Being Used to Advertise Prostitution

Date: 05/03/12 5am duration :35 Fred Blankenship

This morning, the Clayton County Sheriff's office is warning about a website criminals are using to lure people into prostitution. Investigators say people advertising prostitution almost always use "backpage.com." A woman tells us two people lured her 19-year-old granddaughter into staying with them. They then posted pictures to advertise her online as an escort and threatened her if she didn't go along with it. Grandmother: ""She was beaten with a belt to make do what he wanted her to do." The 19-year-old got away after three months. Investigators say the website makes it hard to find the people behind the operations like this one.

Date: 05/03/12 4pm duration :37 Monica Pearson

One local family's horrifying experience stresses a warning the Clayton County sheriff issued about a website. It's called "backpage.com" We talked with one local grandmother about these photos of her granddaughter on the site. She asked we protect her identity. She says the girl's mother found the pictures after the 19-year-old disappeared from her job at a Stockbridge McDonald's. "She was just screaming that my granddaughter was in trouble. She's in trouble, mom. She's in trouble." Police say the teen met a man at the McDonald's who pushed her to take prostitution jobs. The girl returned home after calling her family from Oregon.

Library Bans Popular, But Racy Book

Date: 05/10/12 5pm

duration :13

Kerry Kavanaugh

A best-selling series of steamy novels is barred from Gwinnett County public libraries. Library patrons are both disappointed and confused. The author is talking about the ban of her book from libraries. You won't find "50 Shades of Grey" on the shelves of Gwinnett Public Library and other county libraries. Officials said their policy is not to stock what is categorized as "erotica." Today, author E.L. James talked about the story and the controversy on ABC's "The View." "I think people should have the right to read what they like providing its age appropriate. What can we say?" We checked, and Clayton, DeKalb, Fulton and Cobb county libraries also say they are not offering the book.

State Candidates Spar Over Transportation Bill

Date: 05/14/12 6pm

duration 1:45

Lori Geary

Chip Rogers: "We will campaign vigorously." Brandon Beach: "I'm very much a conservative candidate." North Fulton Chamber president Brandon Beach knows he has a tough fight ahead if he's going to take down a powerful incumbent – State Senator Majority Leader Chip Rogers. The two have much different takes on metro Atlanta's transportation sales tax. Rogers told me – personally – he'll be voting no. Rogers: "When you have over 50% of the projects that are transit – shown not to relieve traffic – I think we can do better than that." Beach: "He voted for that bill. Mr. Rogers was the majority leader. If he wanted to, he could have put it in there – no more than 25% transit." As a current member of the DOT board, Beach says if you want more roads in metro Atlanta, you should vote yes. Rogers says to look at the facts; transit projects are never completed in 10 years. Rogers: "I don't think from a fundamental tax standpoint we ought to be charging people a ten-year tax for something we know is going to cost more than ten years. Government needs to be honest about this. We as elected officials need to be honest about this. God gave parents children, not the school boards." Beach: "I'm not going against charter schools. What I am against is a top-down, Washington style approach to charter schools." Rogers: "I'm tired of Georgia being 47th in SAT scores. I'm tired of our state being next to last in drop-out rates. We change that when we put parents in charge." Beach: "That is where Chip is missing the boat. We're not 47th in Fulton and Cherokee County. That's because of local control." This race will be decided July 31st, the same day voters decide the one cent transportation tax.

Cost of New Signs in DeKalb County Raises Some Eyebrows

Date: 04/13/12 6am duration :39 Carol Sbarge

They look innocent enough at first glance, but some signs going up across DeKalb County are igniting controversy. The signs all say “One DeKalb Works.” A county spokesman says the purpose is to let people know that DeKalb is putting people to work. But some commissioners we spoke with say they’re a big waste of money. Lee May: “We don’t need to spend \$30,000+ to show people we are doing the work. The work will speak for itself.” Burke Brennan, DeKalb Spokesperson: “Having signage for construction projects is already a budgeted expense, so it's not new money.” So far the county’s put up 5 signs for a total cost of \$2,700 dollars. The county has about 80 more “One DeKalb Works” projects planned – and each one may get a sign.

DeKalb Residents Receive Appraisal Appeal Notices After Deadline

Date: 04/22/12 9am duration :35 Linda Stouffer

An old glitch is bringing up new concerns in DeKalb County. Last month, we told you residents trying to appeal their property values did not get enough notice for their hearings. The county blamed a glitch and said those taxpayers would be rescheduled. But one homeowner told us, rather than a new date – she got a shock in the mail. Susan Blackwell: “It’s telling me because I did not appear on March 5th, I’ve lost my appeal.” The DeKalb County Clerk of Superior Court said Blackwell has *not* lost her appeal. She says the letter, which was automatically generated based on the old error. Affected residents will get new dates in the coming weeks.

State Officials Use of State Planes Costs Taxpayer Dollars

Date: 04/26/12 6pm duration 2:41 Jodie Fleischer

You know it; you hate it; you can’t avoid it. But some people can, and do. Flying high above the bumper-to-bumper traffic at your expense. “There’s a lot of people who have to make that commute and I think they wouldn’t expect their elected officials to skip that commute.” State rules allow the flights – for state business. “It’s a matter of convenience. If we can make it a little less intrusive on their lives by giving them air travel back and forth to their duties then it’s well worth it.” But we spent months reviewing state records and found nearly 550 flights with *no passengers on board* costing more than \$185,000 dollars. One of the worst offenders? Georgia’s Department of Transportation. “Let’s help untie the knot. Well I guess they’ve got a bird’s eye view of the knot.” We showed a government watch dog what we found. “That is just ridiculous, to have our state officials being flown place to place and empty planes and empty helicopters being sent for them.” Two GDOT board members, Jay Shaw and Bobby Parham, routinely use the planes to commute to meetings in Atlanta. “Yeah, I’ve flown out of Valdosta. Basically cause it’s a 4 hour drive.” The Aviation Authority houses the planes at the Fulton County airport, so like a taxi, they fly empty to Milledgeville for

Parham and to Valdosta for Shaw, where we found a Delta flight for \$377 round trip. His state flight costs \$2000. "I really don't even know what the department pays for it. I had no idea. I know it's in the general fund." And it isn't just transportation board members. We found some elected officials using the expensive cab ride just as much. We found at least 33 times Lieutenant Governor Casey Cagle requested planes to pick him up or drop him off at the Gainesville airport near his home, avoiding the hour-long commute to Atlanta. "Do you feel like that's an appropriate use of taxpayer money?" Cagle: ""Most of the time that is a function of the fact that we're getting back very late at night, and I do make it a priority to be home with my family." State records show there were a handful of late-night returns, but the average is before 6:00pm. He says he only flies when he has to. Cagle: "The constituencies – they really want us to be at their event, and they become very offended when you're not able to do so." But as for the GDOT board members, a spokesman defended them. "They serve without any salary, they have a modest per diem and travel expenses, and it's sort of a price you pay to have an active and engaged board." "They're doing a job that is a great public service, but it shouldn't be done at great public expense."

WSB-TV Local News of Public Interest: Community/Neighborhoods

Neighbors Fight Proposed Crematory

Date: 06/04/12 6pm duration :34 Monica Pearson

Controversy over a new crematory has Douglas County leaders looking to re-write zoning rules for funeral homes. The crematory is attached to Jones-Wynn funeral home on Midway Road. It is set to open within the next six weeks. Nearby homeowners are worried about the odor and the health risks. However, county zoning rules gave them no say on the project. Dana Wynn: "We're certainly not trying to hide it. I would feel like I was doing something wrong if I was trying to hide it and I have not." The owner of the funeral home says a family member with a child will live there and called the crematory "state of the art" and "safe."

Kennesaw Allows Pawn Shop, Though Zoning Rules Would Have Prohibited

Date: 04/03/12 5am duration :39 Carol Sbarge

A local pawn shop at the center of a controversy will remain where it is .. for now. Months ago, Cruchelow's Jewelry and Loan in Kennesaw moved in – even though zoning does not allow for a pawn shop at this Cobb Parkway location. The city admits it made a mistake by allowing it. Now some residents want city leaders to correct it by revoking the shop's business license. They thought that might happen at last night's meeting, but it did not. The land owner is petitioning the city to change the zoning so the pawn shop can stay. The planning commission will consider that application in May.

Neighbors Want More Details on Planned Sandy Springs Park

Date: 04/01/12 7:30am duration :28 Linda Stouffer

Some neighbors have concerns about plans for a new park in Sandy Springs. Leaders want to build the park on 20-acres along the Chattahoochee River on Old Riverside Drive. One woman told us she is worried because the city has *not* said what kind of park it will be. Susan Zweig: "The traffic concerns, the parking concerns, having adequate police protection." Last week, the city council passed a resolution to continue negotiations with Fulton County for the land. But a councilman told us it is not a done deal yet.

Canton City Manager May Have Received Special Treatment

Date: 04/06/12 12pm

duration :35

Fred Blankenship

There's some controversy over a traffic stop involving the city manager of Canton. A police officer pulled over E. Scott Wood last month, and gave him a verbal warning for speeding. Now, the Police Chief tells Channel 2 that the officer turned off his dash cam microphone during the stop. Wood insists there was no favoritism involved. Wood: "I don't have any direct authority over that policeman. That policeman did not know who I was. But it's his call as to when he gives a warning, versus when he gives a citation." The police chief says the officer violated department protocol by turning off the mic.

Fire Station Closure Worries Community Members

Date: 06/12/12 11pm

duration 1:15

Eric Phillips

"Well, frankly speaking, I'm disturbed." There are no lights, no sirens coming from fire station 14 at the corner of Lee Street and Avon Avenue in southwest Atlanta. The doors are closed. The engines inside dormant. For anyone wondering why, there's an explanation posted on several doors that reads: "The fire station is temporarily closed. If you have an emergency, call 9-1-1." "There was no communication. There was just a sign put up. Residents are upset because they say they were not in the loop. It does create concern a level of concern, right around the corner. And we don't know where they are or when they're going to be back. Fire officials tell us the station has been closed for about a week while workers remove mold from the living quarters here. They say there were no community meetings around the time of the closure where fire officials could have informed residents. Wilbert Smith says that's not true. He's president of the Oakland City community organization. "We have monthly meetings ... the third Thursday of every month." Residents say several community organizations that usually meet at the fire station had to make last minute alternate plans. "This is not only a fire station – it's a community meeting place."

Residents Near Site of New Falcons Stadium Seek to Have Their Voices Heard

Date: 05/25/12 6pm

duration 1:19

John Bachman

Northside Drive: the dividing line. On one side – the Georgia Dome, home to the Atlanta Falcons. On the other side, Vine City. Tillman Ward, Vine City Civic Association: "One hundred feet from \$100 million dollar investment or \$1 billion dollar investment, you have low wealth community and 20 years later it's still low wealth community." Tillman Ward grew up in Vine City, and still lives here. He hopes to get his neighborhood involved in discussions about a proposed new Falcons football stadium, planned for one of two sites on either side of the existing Georgia Dome, but on the same side of Northside. Ward wants some of the billion+ dollar investment which could go right there – to make it across the street – literally to the west side of Northside Drive. Ward: "West side equity is a concern. How do we have equity in economic opportunity?" Ward says

he and his neighbors are also concerned about traffic issues. "When you are held captive to your own community you cannot go to school, to church, because there's an event." Ward hopes to work with the Georgia World Congress Center, the Falcons, and the city to address some of these concerns. "The director of the Georgia World Congress Center said he would work with us. The Mayor's office said he would like to work with us." A spokeswoman with the Ga. World Congress Center says they are asking for feedback for the community, but couldn't give more specifics because no definite plans are in place yet.

Residents Believe New Restaurant is Actually a Night Club

Date: 04/25/12 6pm duration :38 Monica Pearson

Some Buckhead residents are expressing concerns about a business moving into their neighborhood shopping center. The "Solstice" is scheduled to open in Chastain Square Plaza, off Roswell Road. Neighbors told Channel 2 Action News, they do not believe the business owners claims that "Solstice" is a restaurant. An online ad for the business says the owners want to hire dancers, security and bartenders and stay open until 3:00am. Jim King: "They've disrespected the neighborhood; they've disrespected the tenants, they've disrespected the community." Neighbors are calling on the landlord to step in. Today a worker at the location told us he could not comment because the owner was not there.

Toccoa Plant Cited for Violations

Date: 05/31/12 6pm duration :34 John Bachman

"It stinks!" That's what hundreds of Stephens County residents say about a Toccoa fertilizer and biofuels plant. Nearly 50 protesters, some in face masks, picketed the Willbros Plant in Toccoa today. It's been cited at least 18 times for foul odors, but fined only once. Now the county says it will sue if the plant does not reduce or eliminate the odor in 30 days. Darryl Addison: "Our lawsuit is to try and get him into compliance where he will be more community friendly to where we can live and work here and go to school here. A company representative says it is trying to work with the city and county."