

Bus Parking at R.M.S.

The school buses, which were being parked at Renfroe Middle School (RMS) for the past year, have been moved to the parking lot behind the Chick-fil-a downtown. The Decatur Board of Education (DBOE) responded to the many concerns of storing the diesel-fueled buses in a residential neighborhood brought forth by MAK residents by entering a long-term lease with the owners of the parking lot. We applaud the efforts of the DBOE in finding a workable solution that minimizes the impact on Decatur's residential areas.

Proposed New Gym at RMS

In October, the DBOE voted on and approved a design concept for a new gym at RMS as part of the Decatur High School Master Plan (DHSMP). Though the seeming lack of information on and lack of inclusion of MAK neighbors in the process has caused much grief among many MAKers, the vote only approved the high level concept for a new gym in order to determine funding requirements – no design elements have been finalized. The DBOE stressed that a committee will ultimately decide those design elements and that members from MAK should be included on the committee. The committee will have input on such design elements as size, exact location on the property, building materials, landscaping, impacts on parking, etc. As neighbors of an important public school in Decatur's school system (RMS is the only middle school in Decatur), MAK has a chance to assist in making the school system better for all students and to ensure MAK's interests are represented. We intend to stay very involved in the process going forward. **The DBOE next meets March 14 at 6:30 pm in the RMS Media Center.** They will decide on the funding option for the DHSMP, which includes the RMS new gym. All MAK neighbors are invited and encouraged to attend this meeting. Currently, the DBOE is expected to lean toward a bond offering (which will include a bond allowing the use of SPLOST funds to pay the bond obligations and interest and a general obligation bond which will raise taxes at least by a 0.59 millage rate). This should raise taxes on a \$250,000 home by \$75/year and on a \$300,000 home by roughly \$90/year. These bonds will go to a referendum in Sept. 2006. If approved, construction could start late '07 or early '08.

MAK Initiatives – Get involved!

- ◆ Green Space Clean-up and Beautification – Please contact Susan Parry (sparry1234@aol.com) if you want to help spruce up MAK's green spaces. Thank you, Susan, for spearheading this effort!
- ◆ MAK Historical District House Signs – Please contact Suzanne Thigpen (see below) if you'd like to assist in the ordering/selling of MAK house signs.
- ◆ MAK Trees Huggers – Concerned about MAK's aging trees? Are the trees surrounding your home self-pruning? Contact Dan Branch (see below) if you'd like to help organize a neighborhood tree education program for MAK residents.
- ◆ Email Newsletter and MAK Info Distribution – In order to quickly and more efficiently get word out, please sign up for MAK's email list. Contact Suzanne Thigpen (see below). All email addresses will be kept confidential and will not be shared with any entities.
- ◆ Reinstitute Traditional MAK Events – Want to help with traditional MAK events like an Easter Egg Hunt, holiday brunches, etc.? Contact Tim Bricker (see below) to help reestablish some of these traditional MAK community events.
- ◆ Like to Socialize? – If you'd like to assist in coordinating wine tastings, softball/wiffleball competitions, home tours, etc., please contact Kent Fisher (see below). And if you have other ideas for bringing MAK neighbors together, share those too!
- ◆ Speeding Cars – Concerned about the speed of cars as they pass through our residential neighborhood? We can make that change! Please contact Tim Bricker (see below) if you'd like to assist in working with the Decatur Police Department on behalf of MAK to increase police presence. A few speed traps should help minimize this issue quickly...

MAK 2006 Officers

President Dan Branch, 404-378-9619, dan_branch@hotmail.com
 V.P. Tim Bricker, BrickerT@ttnus.com
 Secretary Suzanne Thigpen, thigpen.mac@mac.com
 Treasurer Miriam Mathura, miriamm1@bellsouth.net
 Social Ch. Kent Fisher, k_fisher@mindspring.com

Lastly, a special thank you to outgoing MAK Officers: Joe Bergin (President), Nicole Buckley (Secretary), Judy Uchitel (Treasurer), Mae Bergin (Co-Social Chair), and Linda Hilsmaid (Co-Social Chair).