



MIDTOWN PONCE SECURITY ALLIANCE

Eye on Midtown – 1/28/ 2008

SHOOTING NEAR BOULEVARD AND PONCE

As an MPSA officer patrolled the streets of Midtown on Thursday evening (1/24) she heard gunfire from about 100 yards outside the MPSA service area. According to her police report she immediately noticed a black male wearing a “bulky black jacket walking from the building where the shooting occurred towards another apartment building.” According to the police report narrative the officer then approached the building, later identified as 657 Boulevard, where she observed two black males inside the building through a window at the entrance. Upon seeing the officer the two subjects, including the suspicious individual who just crossed the street, fled up the stairs. The officer drew her weapon as she followed the subject. Once the officer was upstairs she could see several apartment doors but was not sure if the subjects were behind a blind corner. The subjects suddenly appeared from around a blind corner, so her report goes, and she then ordered them to the floor at gunpoint.

During this time Atlanta Police received a call about a shooting at 640 Boulevard, across the street. We have no word on the victim’s condition though unofficial sources tell us that he was in critical condition. This may develop into a homicide. Once her APD backup arrived they then searched the premises and found a handgun believed to have been used in the shooting.

The suspects, Tony C. of 398 Parkway Drive, and Curmetrius P. of 333 Angier Avenue, were promptly arrested on felony charges, taken to the ID Unit for paraffin testing (determines presence of gunpowder residue), and then transported to the Fulton County Jail. They remain in the Fulton County Jail on charges of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon.

It is worth noting that all addresses mentioned above - the home addresses claimed by the subjects, the location of the shooting, and the location of arrest - are part of the Bedford Pine Section 8 housing project. This Section 8 housing project, owned by Continental Wingate based in Needham, Massachusetts, largely coincides with the insurgent drug market along Parkway Drive and Boulevard. This incident reminds us that this dangerous Section 8 project needs to give way to transformation into a livable neighborhood.

ABOUT BEDFORD PINE

The large, insurgent street drug market along Parkway Drive and Boulevard drives much of the crime in intown neighborhoods. Once street people and hoodlums commit a crime in our area they go down there to buy crack and fence stolen items. It is not readily apparent watching from 10th and Myrtle, but countless hours watching the entire service area will reveal foot traffic patterns among street people revolving around Bedford Pine. Street criminals break into cars up here and then go down there to fence stolen goods and buy crack. Prostitutes turn tricks in our neighborhood and have their johns drop them off at Parkway Drive and Ponce.

The Bedford Pine project comprises 73 buildings, 750 units, and around 1400 residents officially living there. Corporations like Wingate have a contract with the federal government which sets a rate on units. Theoretically, a tenant pays a portion of their income as rent, and the federal government subsidizes the rest of the contract rate for the tenant’s unit. Many in the community believe that Wingate pursues zero-income tenants. It is logistically easier to get one big fat check from Uncle Sam at contract intervals rather than chase down 750 tenants for some minor portion and then get a check for the rest of the contract rate.

Officially around 1400 people live in Bedford Pine but the number actually living there is much higher. Officially the residents are mostly single mothers with 2-3 children each (often with 2-3 deadbeat fathers nowhere to be found except perhaps in prison). This single mother might even draw some welfare, but she really needs more money. So she brings in a crack-dealing boyfriend, or some other sub-tenant such as the guy driving a luxury car that residents point out to us (It belongs to someone frequently staying overnight at their property at Ponce and Parkway Drive,

and is likely living there). We do not imagine someone driving such a car to be in dire need of public assistance.

Under the Boulevard-Parkway regime - driven largely by the Bedford Pine nightmare - drug dealers recruit children as lookouts, and terrorize any resident known to interact in any way with the police or neighborhood security groups. The drug dealers are present 24/7, with keys to buildings – but the police rarely come around at least relatively speaking. So a single mother living under the arrangement who knows what's good for her children is forced to keep a very low profile.

ACTION NEEDED NOW

We are hopeful that good developers will eventually prevail in the redevelopment of the area. Since Wingate profits from these conditions they resist all attempts to give into transforming this gang-infested area into a desirable part of town.

We suggest that you send this email to your local, state and particularly your Federal representatives and request that they take action to STOP our federal taxes from paying for this housing project contributing so much our crime to Midtown, Old Fourth Ward, and other intown neighborhoods. Atlanta Housing Authority will soon tear down their properties. The Bedford Pine properties are clearly being abused to provide housing for criminals preying on all of us, and something needs to be done before these criminals shoot someone else!

Also, when you write to your legislators please CC us so we can compile a digest similar to our Peachtree Pine digest.

CARJACKING ON MYRTLE (sent separately as an alert on 1/24)

A Midtowner just informed us of a carjacking and assault on Myrtle at 4th Street in the early morning hours of January 24th. According to his report, his roommate was robbed and beaten, and the car was stolen. The victim's wallet was also taken in the incident, but so far no unauthorized activity on the credit cards has been noted. The injured victim to Atlanta Medical Center, where he was release later in the day.

The victim described the perpetrators as two black males, and the victim did not recall any guns. We are hoping that more details will emerge as the victim recovers at home from his injuries. The assailants struck the victim in the head with some kind of blunt object.

Coincidentally, the street light at 4th and Myrtle is burned out. We have reported this outage at a strategically-critical location (because the prostitute gang likes this spot) to Georgia Power, and hope they will give this repair order very high priority. Please report any street lights out to 1 888 891 0938.

CARJACKING AT CHARLES ALLEN DRIVE & 7TH

We received this e-mail from another Midtowner: *Sunday afternoon around 5pm in broad daylight I was carjacked at gunpoint in broad daylight while I was unloading my car. Two sets of cars pulled up in our back parking lot while I was unloading my jeep - 4 guys got out and I didn't think anything of it with all the people in and out of there. I thought they were turning around in the parking lot or something. I was turned around digging through my trunk and next thing I know the guy stuck a gun in the back of my head and then pushed me to the ground . I gave them my keys and they took off. The police caught some of them in Cobb County after chasing them on foot and with a helicopter - the rest were caught after they wrecked my car in someone's yard.*

The disturbing part is that they were quite possibly juveniles and will get away with it. The guys were all dressed in nicer clothing and looked like typical kids. I just want you all to be very, very aware of your surroundings!

ELSEWHERE

A newsletter serving the Lavista Park community in unincorporated Dekalb County reported a rash of pedestrian robberies in the Lavista Rd corridor, with similar suspect descriptions as some of the Midtown robberies. They specifically mentioned a gold sedan (A gold Lexus was reported in one of our robberies).

Their newsletter also shared some personal safety tips from the Dekalb Police Department:

Ways to possibly avoid becoming a victim:

- Avoid walking alone, especially in the early morning and late evening hours; in dimly lit areas
- Always be aware of your surroundings; pay attention to any person who appears to be following you on foot or in a vehicle
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash on your person
- Communicate with your neighbors on suspicious activity seen in shopping centers and other frequented places

If you are a victim:

- Do not attempt to struggle or fight with the perpetrator; do not resist
- Give them what they want as quickly as possible
- Try to memorize the description of the perpetrator and vehicle
- Call 911 immediately from a safe location as soon as possible

STAY SAFE AND KEEP WARM! Please encourage your fellow Midtowners to join the MPSA!

- Your Neighbors at the Midtown Ponce Security Alliance

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