

AN ARGUMENT for KEEPING “PLANTATION” IN THE WOMEN’S CLUB NAME

I, like many others, do not want the name of our women’s club to be changed (rebranded). I do agree that our neighborhood is pristine and such a joy in which to live and that there are wonderful friendships forged in the women’s club. Through the years, the women’s club has worked hard to preserve the area and also to create connections and community with one another. I moved in to the neighborhood in 1987 and lived on Atlanta Country Club Drive for 34 years. I was invited to join the women’s club right away and became involved. I never heard anyone complain about our name.

There are two major reasons I am opposed to the name change. The first is the history of the neighborhood. If people understood that our name was created nearly 100 years after slavery and was never a plantation, they might not be offended by the name. Of course, slavery was barbaric, and no one denies that, but there were never slaves in our history. The second reason we need to keep the name is the connection to our neighborhood as a whole. Lettie Nixon, first women’s club President told us that the women’s club always worked side by side with the association to fight zoning, build entryway signs, act as officers and block captains, plant flowers, host outreach events for smaller neighborhoods, host the Yule Log Events, and the Luminary Project. We follow the former city boundaries of Chattahoochee Plantation. You can find the name Chattahoochee Plantation on a map.

Below, I have given other comments and a timeline of our history. Please read and consider. This is a very important decision, and I pray we all consider it strongly. Let’s stay connected as a COMMUNITY.

1. One of the main complaints is the word “Plantation” in our name. There are statements to the idea that Plantation made folks feel uncomfortable and brought up the idea of slavery. The name Plantation was not given to this area because it had slaves, but rather because it was a huge area of land and the lots carved from the property were very large. Plantation comes from *plantaire*, a French word that means large farm. The area was named in 1956, while slavery had been abolished nearly 100 years earlier in 1865.

2. Another point I have heard is that Chattahoochee Plantation had never been a city. It was a city, incorporated in 1961, with a Mayor and a Council. The argument was that the city was only 10 feet wide and was only created to keep the area away from Atlanta for racial reasons. The 10 foot wide area was added in 1968 to stop the annexation of the area by Atlanta and the Atlanta tax structure. A few articles have been written by journalists who added their own opinions to the facts. One was written by a journalist from the NPR, who insinuated that the area was trying to keep separate from the blacks of Atlanta. I would like to caution you not to take these opinions as fact. I think we are all glad we are living with Cobb taxes and Cobb schools.

3. As a club and neighborhood, we have always reached out to all new neighbors, no matter their ethnicity, and we think you would find that they feel welcome. One of our strong members of old was

Sharon Devonish, a black lady, who passed away a few years ago. When I was President, we started the International Group to reach out to that community in our neighborhood. We also invited each neighbor to join the women's club through our flyers and letters.

4. It has been stated that the original Chattahoochee Plantation Garden Club was not part of the homeowners' association. That is true, just as our women's club today is not a part of the homeowners' association. But the first Garden Club worked side by side with the association to create new entryways, plant flowers, clean up the streets, and serve on the board. I was put on the CPCA board in 1998 because I was President of the CPWC and they wanted my input and ideas on the board. But, Chattahoochee Plantation Women's Club is connected to the Chattahoochee Plantation Community Association. We are a unified COMMUNITY. We work for the good of the community at large.

Here are some of the historical facts about the community:

*In the 1930's, Hugh Spalding amassed 1000 acres of small farms around the north side of the Chattahoochee, east of Sope Creek here in Cobb County into a huge farm (plantation). He grew beans and vegetables and cattle on the farm. Vegetables were sold from trucks on what is now Columns Drive but was called Bean Farm Road. The farm was adjacent to the farm of John Sibley. In those days, the area was considered the sticks by Atlantans, since it was "far away." In fact, Atlantans came out to the area for vacations.

*The center of the farm was the area now called McFarlane Park. Spalding had the house built for his farm manager, Floyd Spruill, in 1941. It was designed by a noted architect.

* In 1954, the land was bought by the Corkin brothers from Boston. They developed Sherwood Lane and built two houses on Sherwood.

* The land was sold after the brothers had some difficulty completing their project to Fred Brown and Phoenix Investment in 1956. They gave the area the name Chattahoochee Plantation Estates. The lots were huge, and the name indicated that were large. I would suspect the builder felt that Chattahoochee Plantation Estates sounded more sophisticated than Chattahoochee Bean Farm.

*In 1959, Clyde King and Bill Ward bought the property and began to build the Chattahoochee Plantation Club. Paper Mill was paved and water was brought in during 1959.

* The first house was built in Chattahoochee Plantation Estates in 1960.

* In April, 1961, Georgia House bill 631 incorporated the City of Chattahoochee Plantation, GA. complete with a Mayor and a five man Council. Richard Simms became the first Mayor. The five man City Council members were Herman Warren, Bill McFarlane, Clyde King, Jr., Fred N. Brown, and William A. Ward.

* By 1964, there were 44 houses in Chattahoochee Plantation.

* Residents formed the Chattahoochee Plantation Community Association in 1964.

* The rest of the land and 280 acres bought from John Sibley were purchased by Atlanta Country Club, in 1964, which built the golf course and developed the area. Fred N. Brown and Associates bought the remaining land in 1971 and named it the Columns.

* The City of Chattahoochee Plantation was added onto in 1968-House Bill No. 1610, through a bill presented by Cobb Representative Hugh Lee McDonald. An area of land from Fulton County to Cherokee along the Chattahoochee River comprised this new addition. This new area was 10 feet wide and was added to stop Atlanta from annexing the City of Chattahoochee Plantation.

*Atlanta Mayor Ivan Allen had been annexing land north of Atlanta, including Wards 7, 8, and 9 to add to his tax base. He was Mayor from 1962-1970. The new section of Chattahoochee Plantation was added in an effort to "Stop Atlanta".

*In 1970, the Chattahoochee Plantation Garden Club was formed. Lettie Nixon was the first President. The ladies planted flowers in the neighborhood, created a stone entryway at the intersection of Paper Mill and Johnson Ferry that said "Chattahoochee Plantation". They worked with the neighborhood association and had craft sales to make money for charity.

* In 1994, the City of Chattahoochee Plantation lost its status of incorporation through a bill created by then Governor Zell Miller. It was then to be governed by Cobb County.

*Maps of our area depict the area as Chattahoochee Plantation. Signs have been placed around the former city boundaries, which state "Former City of Chattahoochee Plantation."

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No matter what our decision is, I trust that we will continue to forge strong connections and community.

Respectfully, Janie Kissling