

CONA Newsletter

The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

March 2005

President's Message

By Karl Nurse

St. Petersburg and the country is experiencing a building boom not seen since the late 1940's. This is mostly a very good thing. However, it would have helped if we had updated our zoning regulations (LDR's) before the boom got rolling. As a result, neighbor-hoods around the City are calling asking for help to defend their neighborhoods from inappropriate, large developments in or around their neighborhoods. For example, within 60 days, the Wal-mart on Gandy and a 5 story development proposal in Bahama Shores will go for variances before City Boards.

Please read the notice in this newsletter about the proposed LDR's. Please plan to attend one or more forum in May. The future rules of development for our City are being decided. We can not fight, and win, defensive battles one at a time. If the new LDR's and the variance & appeal systems are done right, we will not have to continually deal with these issues. Imagine how we could spend our time as neighborhood leaders, if the rules fit various kinds of neighborhoods, were clearly written for non-lawyers, and most importantly, variances were rare and based upon hardships unique to a particular property. We could spend our time on neighborhood improvement projects instead of playing defense!

CONA is trying to build a city-wide email list of neighborhood activists to help pass our agenda. Please sign up. Send an email to Steve Plice (steveplice@verizon.net) and ask to be added to the list. Please share your list of neighborhood activists with Steve, who is leading this effort.

By the time you read this, City Council member, Jamie Bennett, will have introduced a resolution to support the "Green Cities" program. This will be before city council within six weeks. We want the ability to provide neighborhood leaders with background information and who to contact when an issue is coming to a head. The issues often require quick action – an email, a phone call, or a meeting at which to speak. Email lists of activists provide us a chance to even the playing field and improve our city.

It is a beautiful spring day and I am going for a kayak ride. Hope to see you at the CONA meeting. Thank you to the several neighborhoods who paid their dues this month. Please help us, help you by sending in your dues.

CONA Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 20, 2005

The SUNSHINE CENTER, 330 5th St. N.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m.; meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda Items:

Progress Energy Presentation:

Undergrounding Utilities

Featured Neighborhood:

Old Southeast

On the inside

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Partnership Notes | 2 |
| What Exactly is Open Space? | 3 |
| Featured Neighborhood | 4-5 |
| New Times Correspondent | 5 |
| CONA E-mail list expands | 7 |
| Membership Application | 6 |
| CONA Officers | 8 |
| CONA Minutes | 8 |



Partnership Notes

Neighborhood Partnership Office

Susan P. Ajoc, AICP, Director
Neighborhood Partnership Program
City of St. Petersburg
P.O. Box 2842
St. Petersburg, FL 33731-2842
Phone: (727) 892-5141 Fax: (727) 893-5323
Email: Susan.Ajoc@stpete.org

Neighborhood Partnership Matching Grant applications are now available at
<http://www.stpete.org/pdf/nggrant05.pdf>.

Future grant workshops are being held at the City Hall Annex (440 2nd Avenue North) on the following dates:

Tuesday, March 15 @ 1:00 & 6:00 p.m. (neighborhood plans)

Wednesday, March 23 @ 1:00 & 6:00 p.m. (landscaping)

Monday, July 25 @ 1:00 & 6:00 p.m. (general)

Associations may also contact Terese Hilliard, Neighborhood Planner, at 551-3249 for more information.

Reminder to the new presidents:

Please contact Sharon Cimarik at 892-5141 with updated information about your Neighborhood Association.

Call before you dig

It's not just another catchy slogan. It's the law.

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Learn more about the "Call Before You Dig" law at your next homeowner's association meeting.

Contact
Jerry Novak at
(727) 520-8159.

www.callsunshine.com

Log in anytime!!

www.stpetecona.org

[www.neighborhoodlink.com/
stpetersburg/cona/](http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/stpetersburg/cona/)



LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS (LDR'S) UPDATE

By Bob Jeffrey

Staff has completed the initial editing and revisions to the proposed Land Development Regulations (LDR's). City staff will be rolling out the revised districts and the proposed location of the new districts so that the community can review the proposed LDR's. Now is the time to review these proposed regulations so that you know what they will mean to your property and your neighborhood. To do this, we will work in conjunction with the Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA) to help spread the word. There are several meetings that will be occurring in the near future which are important to the residents of Our City. These meetings will go over the basic regulations as they relate to neighborhoods and to the corridors which surround them.

At each meeting we will provide an overview of the regulations being proposed. We will also address how each district will be different for the existing regulations. We will provide time for you to ask any questions you may have.

To prepare for the meeting, please visit our web site <http://www.stpete.org/LDRproposed.htm> to read the latest edited versions. You can also view the map indicating the location of the new designations.

The following meetings are scheduled:

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS:

Monday, May 9th at 7:00 pm. City Hall | 75 5th Street North

SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOODS :

Monday, May 16th at 7:00 pm. City Hall | 75 5th Street North

BOARDS COMMISSIONS AND PROCEDURES:

Tuesday, June 14th at 7:00 pm. City Hall | 75 5th Street North

These meetings are being held in City Council Chambers so that they can be rebroadcast on the City's television station, Channel 35. Additional meetings will be announced.

The adoption process of the new LDRs will commence in late summer. A series of public hearings will be scheduled to review draft documents with the Planning Commission and City Council beginning in August. These dates will be provided to CONA for publication future newsletters.

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Old Southeast Neighborhood

Amenities/character/etc.

The Old Southeast Neighborhood is proud of its rich ethnic and cultural diversity. The focal point and eastern boundary of the neighborhood is Lassing Park, 12.5 acres, fronting Tampa Bay from 16th to 22nd Avenues Southeast. Few city parks offer such spectacular water scenery coupled with the tranquility of a residential backdrop. Its landscaping has recently been upgraded with many palms and native plants clustered at the ends of avenues. It is a beacon for any who seek the delight of fishing, the space for games and walking or the solace to contemplate while seabirds and sailboats grace the waters. Another showplace of the neighborhood is Bayboro House on Beach Drive SE, a bed & breakfast, which the City designated a historical landmark in 1994. It was the home of the area's developer, C.A. Harvey.

History

The Old Southeast Neighborhood began in mid-1950 when C.A. Harvey and A.F. Freeman's Bayboro Investment Co. bought the land east of 4th Street between 7th and 19th Avenues South around Booker and Salt Creeks as well as Bayboro Harbor. Mr. Henry built a home, what is now Bayboro Bed & Breakfast, and resided there while the company continued to develop the area. Another early resident, Judge Robert B. Lassing, donated waterfront land to the City in 1924, with the proviso that it and any structures on it are to be used only for park purposes. The City acquired additional land in 1926, 1944, and 1945 for the park. On January 8, 1942, Lassing Park was dedicated and has continued to provide solace, enjoyment and beauty to the neighborhood residents and visitors.

Organizations/programs

The Old Southeast Neighborhood Association is an active organization meeting monthly to discuss and plan projects in and adjacent to the neighborhood. The Old Southeast Gazette, which is the association's newsletter, is supported by dues and commercial advertising. The Association sponsors holiday activities (ie. Christmas and the 4th of July parties in the park) and city organized home tours. The Association joined the City's Neighborhood Planning Program in 1991, prepared a neighborhood plan which was adopted by the City in 1993, and has been, to date, nearly fully implemented. The Association participated in the City's Certificate of Inspection Program (CIP) and the neighborhood has been adopted by NationsBank for the Working to Improve Neighborhoods (WIN) program.

Neighborhood grant projects

The neighborhood received a grant of \$9,000 in October 1997, for construction of a nine-foot tall neighborhood identity marker, designed by a resident, to identify the neighborhood. It will be placed at 3rd Street South and 22nd Avenue South. Construction, to begin by mid-1998, will be shared by City experts and resident volunteers.

In 1993, the neighborhood received \$100,000 for implementing the neighborhood plan. The Association elected to spend the fundst for the old-style "theme" street lighting on 3rd Street between 17th and 22nd Avenues South, trees to be planted on these same streets and installation of street signs with the Association's logo throughout the neighborhood. The following projects were identified in the neighborhood plan and have been completed: rerouting all commercial traffic through the marine district by creating cul-de-sacs, hex-block rehabilitation, expanding reclaimed water service and landscaping Lassing Park.

Boundaries

4th Street to Tampa Bay from Salt Creek to 25th Avenue South.

Katie Wilson is the New St. Petersburg Times Correspondent for Neighborhood Issues

By Steve Plice

Andy Meacham has written about St. Petersburg neighborhoods for the past five years. Andy served as the St. Petersburg Times correspondent writing the **Neighborhood Notebook** feature in the Sunday Neighborhood Times. We all got used to Andy's emails and phone calls as he kept track of Neighborhood Association meetings and agendas.

Now, Andy has accepted a new assignment at the Times Brandon bureau. It is a great and well-deserved career move for Andy, but we will miss him here in St. Petersburg. Congratulations, Andy. We all wish you the best. "It's a strange sensation, knowing I don't have to call anyone to ask whether they are going to meet next week, and if they have a speaker or topic or any agenda items planned ", Andy said.

Now, the St. Petersburg Times has announced the appointment of **Katie Wilson** as the new correspondent to continue covering neighborhoods in the City. CONA extends a warm welcome to Katie. Karl Nurse has already taken her on a tour of neighborhoods, pointing out some of our challenges and success stories.

Katie does not really need an introduction to St. Petersburg. She has lived here her whole life. In fact, she is a fourth generation St. Petersburg resident. Currently, she is a senior in the Journalism school at the University of South Florida here in St. Petersburg, and before that, she earned an AA at the University of Florida in Gainesville. She went to Shore Acres and Campbell Park Elementary, John Hopkins Middle School, and St. Petersburg High School. "I'm looking forward to this new job for many reasons, but most of all I am excited to get to know the city and the people in it in ways that I would otherwise not have the chance to." Said Katie.

To get your neighborhood stuff in the Times, contact Katie at Phone number: 727.742.8838 or
E-Mail: KTWils@aol.com



2005 CONA Membership

2005 CONA Membership fees are now due. Please complete the form below and mail it to CONA, or bring it to the next meeting.

We will be using these forms to update our mailing list so be sure to include phone numbers and email addresses. Please include the names and addresses of people to whom we should be sending the CONA Newsletter.

CONA Membership Application

Time to renew you CONA membership for 2005!

2005 dues are due January 1, 2005. Fill out this CONA Membership Application and mail it along with the Membership Fee to: C.O.N.A., P.O. Box 13693, St. Petersburg, FL 33733-3693. Or you may bring it to the next Board Meeting.

Association Name: _____

Boundaries: _____

of Households: _____ # of Members: _____

Meeting Dates & Location: _____

President: _____ Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

CONA Representative: _____ Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Alternative Rep: _____ Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Add these names to the CONA Mailing List:

| Name | Address | Zip |
|------|---------|-----|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Please include annual dues of \$35. If you would like to use the Bulk Mail Permit #, please add \$15 to your dues to help pay for the cost of the permit. Indicate below, the frequency of your mailings (monthly, quarterly, etc.), approximate mailing dates and # of pieces per mailing.

Frequency of Mailing: _____ (monthly, quarterly, etc.)

Approximate Mailing Dates: _____ # of pieces per Mailing: _____

Continued from the back page

suggested using URL links to the stories displayed on our CONA News site.

- ◆ With the approval hearings for the dramatic proposed revisions to the Land Development Regulations (LDR) scheduled in April, there has been a flood of zoning waiver applications hoping to win approval, (and “Grandfather exemptions}, before the new rules are applied.
- ◆ We then heard a presentation by two residents of the Gandy Boulevard area in north St. Petersburg, Tarey Franxman and Rob Kappes describing their efforts to prevent the construction of a Wal-Mart Center in their neighborhood.
 - Traffic congestion on Gandy Boulevard and an 8 acre wet lands landfill for a parking lot are their major objections.
 - They have established a web site to advertise their position. <http://web.tampabay.rr.com/craig>
 - The group has engaged a Land Use Attorney as well as a team of traffic engineering consultants that challenge the congestion data presented by Wal-Mart.
 - They will carry their appeal to City Council tomorrow, (3/17/05).
 - Wal-Mart has widely mailed supportive flyers urging mail in cards approving the planned new storebut not to Gandy area!
 - Wal-Mart has agreed to pay for remedies of the environmental impacts.
 - Petitions supporting the neighborhood’s efforts to resist the imposition of the Wal-Mart store were available hoping for wide spread distribution, (and response) from our CONA members. Steve promised to post their petition for download on our CONA website.
 - Crucial plans to widen Brighton Bay Boulevard are currently blocked by adjacent neighborhood landowners.
 - The Sierra Club is actively supporting the neighborhood protest.
 - Moved, (Plice), CONA supports the “Concerned Citizens for Gandy Boulevard, Inc.” in their campaign to preserve the quality of life in their neighborhood. [Approved]
 - It was suggested that the Audubon Society could also be called upon to protect the threatened wetlands area.
 - We were reminded that in cases of appeal to our St. Petersburg City Council, mailed letters have been responded to more frequently than requests sent by e-mail.
 - We were urged to wear green as a symbol of our environmental concern, (rather than a celebration of St. Patrick’s Day), if planning to attend the City Council

hearing on the Wal-Mart proposal.

- ◆ Travis Jarman, (Bayway Isles), made a presentation of a highway signage issue asking our support.
 - The 1965 federal highway construction legislation required that highway billboards that violated local codes, (size, location, etc.), could not be rebuilt if destroyed.
 - The storms of 2004 destroyed 263 Florida highway billboards.
 - The Florida Department of Transportation negotiated an approval, (rather than face a lawsuit from the billboard advertisers industry), to rebuild 2/3 of the storm damaged sign.....that were non-compliant with local signage codes.
 - The Florida Scenic Beauty Council has requested assistance from the Federal Department of Transportation to enforce the 1965 regulations on these non-compliant sign restorations.
- ◆ Moved, (MacDonald), CONA will draft a letter to the Governor and to our local area legislators in Tallahassee urging enforcement of the federal prohibition of restoring highway billboards that are non-compliant with local Florida signage codes. [Approved]
- ◆ Moved, (Jarman), To amend the resolution to address our CONA appeal to the Governor and all Florida legislators. [Approved]
- ◆ It was suggested that CONA could sponsor large notices in the St. Petersburg Times stating our “Official” position on specific major topics of concern, (e.g. Wal-Mart construction, highway bill board restoration).
- ◆ We heard, again, the concern that 30% of the city property owners are currently exempt from property tax thus making no contribution to the city public services born by the remainder of the taxpayers.
- ◆ We then heard an impressive report from our featured member neighborhood for March: The North Kenwood Neighborhood Association.
- ◆ Old Southeast will be our featured member neighborhood in April.
- ◆ Libby Steele gave her Treasurer’s Reported balance of \$5,025. with a current paid membership of 36 associations.
- ◆ Tom Killian, (Jungle Terrace), offered to address monthly meetings of local neighborhood associations to promote CONA membership and enrollment in our CONA Leadership Program.
- ◆ We learned that the EDC had approved a car wash building application that the local neighborhoods had objected to.
- ◆ Our meeting adjourned at 8:32 P.M.



2005 Officers

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Frequently Called Numbers

Neighborhood Partnership Office:
892-5141
Mayor's Action Line: 893-7111
Codes Office: 893-7373

CONA Newsletter Deadlines

Copy Deadline: 30th of each month.
Publication: 2nd Wednesday of month.
Mailing: 2nd Friday of month.

Editor: Steve Pllice 344-3120

CONA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MINUTES The Sunshine Multi-Service Center - March 16, 2005

Our joint meeting with The League of Women Voters opened at 7:00 p.m.

- ◆ President Karl Nurse called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., introducing to our meeting Katie Wilson the St. Petersburg Times Reporter who will gather and publish neighborhood news as did her predecessor Andy Meacham. She can be e-mailed your meeting information at ktwils@aol.com
- ◆ Karl then invited members of the new CONA Leadership Class as well as any first time visitors to rise and introduce themselves.
- ◆ Our next speaker was Andy Garr of the Neighborhood Partnership Office.
 - Andy distributed flyers about the Honda Grand Prix Races offering 4 free tickets to every member association.
 - We also heard of the exceptional opportunity for youth intern opportunities at the Boley Centers this Summer. Applications for youths of age 14 to 23 were available but must be completed by March 31st.
 - He also distributed flyers of a Treasury Department program seeking to identify individuals who have unclaimed tax refunds available.
 - Hand fans were also distributed advertising the annual Florida Neighborhood Associations Convention October 20 through the 22nd.
- ◆ Karl then introduced our V.P. and Newsletter Editor, Steve Pllice, as the "Chief Technology Officer" announcing the program to expand the flow of information to the neighborhood activists in our city.
 - Citing Howard Dean's national political campaign efforts founded on an e-mail subscriber list of 4 million addresses, Steve solicited our help to compile an e-mail mailing list of 5,000 local neighborhood addressees.
 - Our CONA News postings will funnel readers to our website "Blog" offering our neighbors an interactive opportunity to share and respond to the issues posted.
 - Steve reminded us of how effective mass e-mail responses have been influencing the County Commissioners decisions.
 - Our members present were asked to provide Steve with e-mail addresses of interested, active neighborhood workers.
 - Steve will request that our CONA News service be listed on the city's Fast Fax news release system.
 - As an alternative to posting local issues as "Attachments" to e-mail, Steve

Conitued on page 7

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Associations of S Pinellas County
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St. Petersburg, FL 33733-3693**

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