



NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 16

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INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONER



Mr. Rich O'Brien was sworn in as a City Commissioner at the Commission's November 6th meeting. Commissioner O'Brien takes the place of former Commissioner Barbara Ellis, who had to resign from the Commission in October because of medical reasons. Commissioner O'Brien is the owner of several businesses in the City: The Beachfront Bed and Breakfast at 1 F Street; the La Fiesta Ocean Inn and Suites, 810 A1A Beach Boulevard; and Fiesta Falls Miniature Golf, 818 A1A Beach Boulevard. He was a member of the City's Comprehensive Planning and Zoning Board from April 2002 to November 2006. He is the City's representative on the Tourist Development. His term as Commissioner will expire on December 31, 2008.



IN RECOGNITION

Commissioner Michael Longstreet (right) receives plaque from Mayor Charles in recognition

Commissioner Michael Longstreet (right) receives plaque from Mayor Charles in recognition of his four

years of service to the City as a Commissioner. Commissioner Longstreet was the City's representative on the Countywide Intergovernmental Committee, and before being elected to the City Commission, he served on the City's Beautification Advisory Committee from August 2001 to December 2002.

Ms. Elaine Allman receives plaque from Mayor Charles for her service on the Beautification Advisory Committee. Ms. Allman was appointed by the City Commission as an alternate to the Committee in February 2004 and was appointed as a regular member in July 2004. She was especially helpful with the Committee's planning for the City's annual Arbor Day celebration in April.



Mr. George Richardi (right) receives a plaque in recognition of his services to the City on the Code Enforcement Board. The City Commission appointed Mr. Richardi as an alternate to the Board in November 2004 and as a regular member in January 2005. The Code Enforcement Board conducts hearings on alleged violations of the City's regulations and determines whether a violation has been committed and what the fine should be.

Ms. Sheila Bell, Police Department Records Specialist, receives plaque in recognition of her ten years of employment with the City.





Zachary Longstreet (Center) of Troop 43, Boy Scouts of America, receives proclamation from Mayor Charles in recognition of his attaining the rank of Eagle Scout. Zachary is the son of Michael and Hester Longstreet of St. Augustine Beach. For his community service project, Zachary put mile markers on the beach which help police, lifeguards, and emergency medical personnel to accurately and quickly locate where emergencies are happening on the beach.

INCOME TAX HELP FOR 2006

The local chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons will again provide trained tax preparers who will help citizens with their 2006 income tax returns. The preparers will be at the public meeting room in city hall, 2200 A1A South on Friday, February 2, 2007 from noon to 4 p.m., and thereafter at the same place every Thursday and Friday through February, March, and part of April, between noon and 4 p.m. Persons who want help are asked to bring their 2005 tax return, their Social Security card, and any documents, such as 1099 forms, related to the income they received in 2006.

TELEVISION OF MEETINGS

City Commission and Planning Board meetings are now televised live. The City Commission regular meetings are held on the first Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m., unless the first Monday is a holiday. Then the meeting will be held on either the first Tuesday or the second Monday of the month. The Planning Board meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. The meetings can be viewed on Comcast Cable Channel 2. Tapes of Commission meetings can be viewed on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE: The Commission's regular meeting in January will be held on TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. because January 1st is New Year's Day.

PROJECTS FOR 2007

During 2007, the following major projects will either be started or done:

1. Sewer System Improvements. This is a County Utility Department project. The County provides water and sewer service to the City's residents. In the older subdivisions, the residents rely on individual septic systems for sewage collection and treatment. The County's project is to construct sewer mains in these neighborhoods with grant funds provided by the State. The project is in the planning stages. Mr. Bill Young, Utility Department Director, will be at the City Commission's January 2nd meeting to provide an update report on the project.

2. 16th Street Sidewalk. There is a section of 16th Street along the north side by the Anastasia Dunes condos where there's a gap in the sidewalk. Because the right-of-way between the condos' fence and the road is too narrow for a sidewalk, the City administration has proposed to the Commission jogging 16th Street to the south by perhaps four feet and thus widening the right-of-way along the north side. The Commission has appropriated \$25,000 in the Fiscal Year 2007 budget for this project. No timetable has yet been set for the engineering work for the project to be started.

3. Drainage Projects. Several major ones will be completed in 2007. These include improvements for Atlantic Alley between 6th and 9th Streets east of the Boulevard; replacement of culverts along 11th Street, and piping the 11th Street ditch from Mickler Boulevard east to the west boundary of the Raintree subdivision; drainage improvements for 2nd Street through 4th Street along the east side of the Boulevard; other improvements to the drainage pond at 16th Street and Old Beach Road; and to the intersection of 16th Street and Woodland Avenue. The total cost will be about \$1,100,000. This money will come from bonds that the City obtained in 2004. The Commission awarded the bids for these projects at its September 7, 2006 meeting. Construction of some of them has begun. All should be completed by June 2007.

4. Restrooms for Beach Visitors. Two restrooms have been constructed on property that the City owns at 10th Street east of the Boulevard. A parking area has been constructed as well. The County contributed \$114,000 for this project. Now the City Commission will consider putting other restrooms at another location. Because the State will not permit restrooms to be built directly on the beach, they will have to be built near A1A Beach Boulevard. One possible location is a plaza on the east side of the Boulevard at A Street. The Commission will likely decide in the spring of 2007 exactly where the restrooms are to be put. Plans can then be done and permits obtained.

5. Splash Park at the Pier. This will be a children's play fountain, which will be located next to the Visitor Information Center at the County pier park. A State grant will provide \$112,500 towards the fountain's cost, the total of which is estimated to be \$245,000. The City has provided \$12,500, and additional money is being raised by the South Beaches Area Council of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce. Money for the project will also come from recreation impact fees and the City's savings. At its December 4th meeting, the City Commission authorized the Public Works Director to negotiate a design-build contract with Mudrak Engineering & Construction Co. of Christmas, Florida and to have the City's civil engineering consulting firm, Stone, Joca and Mahoney, obtain the required State permits for the project. The fountain project would be completed before the end of 2007.

6. Beach Access Walkovers. The County's Beach Services Division has received a grant to construct six walkovers to the beach in the City. In 2007, walkovers will be built at two locations: 1st Street and 10th Street. The walkovers will be constructed sometime between January and May 1, 2007, when the sea turtle nesting season will begin. Two more walkovers will be constructed in 2008 and two more in 2009. The City already has walkovers at the following locations: County pier park, 16th, 14th, 11th, 9th, 4th, and F Streets.

7. Branch Library in the Sea Grove Subdivision. This is a County project. Plans have been done, a contractor hired, and the work started. The two-story, 10,000 square foot library should be completed by July 2007.

8. Streetlights on State Road A1A. Vice Mayor Terrill has proposed that the streetlights be put on the east side of State Road A1A From 16th Street south to the Anastasia Shopping Plaza.

According to the Florida Department of Transportation, the record of accidents along this section of highway doesn't justify the Department paying to put up the lights. The City can pay to have the lights put up. The DOT requires that the streetlights be put up on both sides of SR-A1A. The services of a highway lighting consulting engineering firm to develop a lighting plan that will meet the DOT's specifications could cost over \$40,000. The Commission will discuss this project at its meeting in February or March.

9. Traffic Signal and State Road A1A and A Street. The signal is needed because of the residential and commercial development in the Sea Grove subdivision on the west side of the highway at A Street. The developer, McGarvey Residential Properties, has had a traffic study done which has shown clearly that the signal is needed. Once the Florida Department of Transportation issues the permit, plans for the signal can be drafted and the contractor hired by McGarvey Residential Properties can put up the signal.

10. Wooden Walkway and Second Fishing Pier, Lakeside Park. The Park is located south of the City's police station. The City Commission has budgeted \$12,000 for the construction of a second fishing pier on the lake's west side and for a wooden walkway along the lake's west bank. No date has been set for this project to be started.

WHERE WE'VE BEEN

During the past three months, the City Commission has made the following decisions, among many:

1. Approved the following ordinances:

- to revise the following elements of the Comprehensive Plan so as to strengthen the City's applications for grants related to the purchase and preservation of environmentally sensitive lands: Intergovernmental Coordination, Recreation/Open Space, Conservation/Coastal Management, and Infrastructure.
- to amend the Comprehensive Plan to provide that the adopted level of service for traffic on A, 11th, and 16th Streets shall be the same as the level of service adopted by the County.
- to amend the Land Development Regulations to adopt regulations pertaining to proportionate fair-share mitigation for traffic concurrency.
- to prohibit the operation of all-terrain and similar types of vehicles on the City's beach except for purposes authorized by the City or the County.
- to vacate an alley between 8th and 9th Streets on the east side of A1A Beach Boulevard.
- to set the compensation of the Mayor at \$600 a month and of each Commissioner at \$500 a month.
- to have the Beautification Advisory Committee also act as the City's Tree Board.

2. Approved the following resolutions:

- to have the canvassing and certification of absentee ballots cast in the November 7th general election done by the Supervisor of Elections and the County Canvassing Board.
- to list the specific accomplishments regarding the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan's goals and objectives from August 2005 to August 2006.
- to amend the Fiscal Year 2006 and 2007 budgets for various reasons.

3. Made the following miscellaneous decisions:

- appointed the following citizens: Mr. Michael Aulicino to a new term as a Planning Board member; Mr. Albert Peppe to a new term as a Code Enforcement Board member; Ms. Undine Celeste Pawlowski as a regular member of the Planning Board; Mr. Joe Hatin as an alternate to the Planning Board; Commissioner Rich O'Brien to be the City's representative on the Tourist Development Council; Ms. Robin Nadeau as an alternate to the Beautification Advisory Committee.
 - approved a contract with Santore and Sons to provide fireworks for the New Year's Eve fireworks show at the County pier for \$25,000. The Tourist Development Council will reimburse the City the \$25,000. The show was held in conjunction with the South Beaches Area Council of the Chamber of Commerce's chili cook-off.
 - approved a special event permit for the Civic Association's Surf Illumination event at the County pier park on Saturday, December 2nd.
 - decided not to amend the City's Land Development Regulations to allow the Planning Board to issue conditional use permits. At this time, the Board can approve permits for home occupations, but only the Commission can approve permits for condominium hotels, the serving of food and beverages outside of a building, and allowing such businesses as pet shops, day care centers, and mini-storage warehouses.
 - approved asking the County to include certain County streets in the City in the County's neighborhood traffic calming program.
 - took no action on the proposal to change the name of A1A Beach Boulevard, but did ask the City Manager to ask the Florida Department of Transportation if the designation of State Road A1A could be changed to the route designation of State Road 3 that it was several years ago before the State road was widened to four lanes.
 - approved a sculpture to be made by a local artist, Mr. Thomas Glover, to be put in front of the south entrance to the city hall. City residents Maida and Barry Tuttle donated money to have the sculpture made. It will feature marine life, such as fishes and a turtle, will be 7 feet tall and weigh two tons. The estimated cost is \$6,000.
 - heard a report by Mr. Paul Studivant, the County's Animal Control Director, on the problem of roaming cats in the City. The City has a contract with the County for Mr. Studivant's department to enforce the regulations concerning cats and dogs in the City.
 - approved the City administrations' request that the City provide regular household trash pickup service on three holidays: Dr. Martin Luther King Day in January, Presidents' Day in February, and Veterans' Day on November 11th of each year.
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WHERE WE'RE GOING.....

During the next three months, the City Commission will consider the following topics, among many:

1. Election of Mayor and Vice Mayor for 2007. The five members of the City Commission each December or January elect one of their members the City's Mayor and another the Vice Mayor for the coming year. For 2007, the election will be done at the Commission's January 2nd meeting.

2. Beach Management Interlocal Agreement. Since 1985, the County has been managing the City's beach under an interlocal agreement. Because the terms of the agreement are obsolete, the City Commission authorized the creation of a nine-person Beach Management Advisory Committee. To date, the Committee has approved the following terms for the next agreement: 1) that City staff meet with County staff by January 15th of each year before the beach season begins to review the County's program to manage the City's beach and meet by November 15th each year to review the beach season just concluded to see if any changes are needed to the program;. 2) that wording be added to require the County to provide for specific beach services revenue beyond those general revenues already provided to maintain recognized standards for public health and safety; 3) that the agreement may be cancelled by either party with advance notice of 120 days to the other party; 4) that the cleaning of the port-o-lets on the beach shall include pumping out, cleaning and disinfecting of the interior of the port-o-lets; 5) that the port-o-lets are to be maintained in a safe, sanitary, decent condition no less frequently than daily; 6) that two port-o-lets are to be required at A Street and two at Pope Road; 7) that there be no fewer than five lifeguards and lifeguard towers on the beach, with the number, location, and hours to be determined by the County's Beach Operations Chief; 8) that a new section be added to require the County and the City to work together on a plan for additional showers and sanitary facilities; 9) and technical wording changes to other parts of the agreement. The Committee's next meeting will be on Thursday, January 11, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the Commission meeting room at city hall. The public is invited to attend and to participate in the drafting of terms for a new interlocal agreement with the County. It is possible that a draft of the proposed new agreement will be ready for the City Commission to review at its February 5th meeting.

3. Hurricane Preparedness Plan. The City's current plan needs to be revised and redrafted. During the next few months, the Commission will work on the provisions of a new plan. Policies need to be drafted and put in it so that the role and responsibilities of the Commission and the City staff are clear. One key part of hurricane preparedness is an updating of the list of City residents who cannot drive or have no one to drive them, and thus will need to be evacuated to an area away from the coastline. Residents who themselves cannot drive or who know of someone who cannot drive and has no relatives or friends to assist them are asked to notify County Emergency Management Services at 824-5550, at their website at www.sjcemergencymanagement.org, or by following the link on the City's website to obtain a Request for Assistance form online. Names and addresses will be put on a list, and school buses will be used to pick up persons without transportation and take them to a shelter. ON A RELATED MATTER: Starting with the 2007 hurricane season, the County will have two pet-friendly shelters where dog and cat owners can bring their pets and stay with the pets at the shelter. The two shelters are: Southward Elementary off State Road 206, and Timberline Elementary in the northwest part of the County. Persons must bring their pets in cages and provide food and water for them. Persons interested in what services and facilities the County Emergency Management Division has for residents with special needs, such as frail people who

regularly must use oxygen, are invited to go to the Division's website. The site has forms people with special needs can fill out and send to the Division well before an evacuation is ordered.

4. Vision Plan for A1A Beach Boulevard. In September 2005, the City Commission hired a south Florida planning firm, Roberts Wallace and Todd, to hold a series of meetings with City residents for the development of a vision plan for the City's "main street," A1A Beach Boulevard. The consultant completed the plan in May 2006. Two key components of the vision plan are for the Commission to allow mixed uses (residential and commercial) along the Boulevard, and to adopt architectural standards and a design code for buildings along the Boulevard. For the past several months, the Planning Board at its monthly meetings has discussed these two components. At its November 21st meeting, the Board asked the City Attorney to draft an ordinance that will adopt architectural standards for buildings along the Boulevard and thus implement a key goal of the vision plan. The City Commission will likely review this ordinance at its January meeting.

For the vision plan's recommendation for mixed use, there'll be a public hearing at the Commission's January 2nd meeting to amend the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed ordinance defines a "mixed-use building" as one "that contains at least one floor devoted to permitted uses. The residential uses will be allowed only above the ground floor. The ordinance as passed on first reading last September applied to those properties between 16th and F Streets along A1A Beach Boulevard that are now zoned commercial, and to the area now zoned medium density residential west of the Boulevard up to 2nd Avenue between 11th and F Streets. However, the Planning Board at its September meeting recommended that the ordinance apply only to the commercial zoned property on each side of the Boulevard from 16th Street south to and including the LaFiesta Ocean Inn and Suites at 818 A1A Beach Boulevard. The Commission will consider this recommendation at its January meeting. If the ordinance is passed on second reading, it will be sent to the Florida Department of Community Affairs and other agencies for the customary review and will have a second public hearing and third reading most likely at the Commission's March or April meeting.

5. Development in the City. Besides individual platted lots here and there in various subdivisions, there are still in the City larger tracts of land. These include the 23 acres east of Mickler Boulevard and south of 11th Street; 14-plus acres on the east side of the Boulevard between Bermuda Run and Sea Colony subdivisions; and approximately eight acres on the west side of the Boulevard between 4th and 8th Streets. Though a final development plan for 72 residential units has been approved for the property east of Mickler Boulevard, no plat has been submitted to the City. Sixty-six multi-family residential units are permitted for the tract between Bermuda Run and Sea Colony. According to the developers, once a certain number of units have been presold, then the subdivision, to be called Maratea, will be started. For the eight acres between 4th and 8th Streets, it's likely that the City's Planning Board will be asked to review a proposed planned unit development at the Board's January 16th meeting. The developers may ask for approval of 57 single-family homes. Fourth, 6th and 8th Streets will be opened. In exchange for a reduction of side setbacks and to be allowed to build residences in the commercial and use district adjacent to the Boulevard, the developers will build a beach access walkway at 6th Street, provide decorative crosswalks on the Boulevard, and may pipe the 2nd Avenue ditch between 4th and 8th Streets. Residents who want to review before the Planning Board's meeting any information provided by the developers may do so at the Building Department office at city hall.

Other than the commercial development underway as part of the Sea Grove subdivision Town Center, the only other commercial building under construction is a real estate office on the west side of SR-A1A north of the Compass Bank. Another commercial project, the Shutters condominium hotel on the west side of the Boulevard at 12th Street, has been approved, but

construction has not yet been started. At its December 4th meeting, the City Commission approved an extension for one year of the original conditional use permit that will allow the condo hotel to be built adjacent to the Boulevard.

6. Replacing Part of Mickler Boulevard Ditch with Pipe. Some Ocean Walk subdivision residents who live east of Mickler Boulevard between 16th Street and Pope Road will request in 2007 that the City Commission pipe this section of the ditch. In some sections of it, erosion of the banks has endangered adjacent private property. A petition concerning this request may be submitted to the Commission in February or March 2007. If the Commission decides to have this project done, engineering and permitting work could be done in the spring and summer of 2007, with money for construction put in the Fiscal Year 2008 budget, which will go into effect on October 1, 2007 and end on September 30, 2008.

7. Ordinances. At its January 2nd meeting, the City Commission will hold a public hearing on three ordinances: the first to standardize that the term of office of Code Enforcement Board members will end on April 1st; the second to amend the City's Comprehensive Plan's Capital Improvements Element to provide for proportionate fair-share contributions (this concerns developers meeting the City's traffic concurrency requirements); and the third to amend the City's Comprehensive Plan to designate the zoning for properties between 16th and F Streets as mixed use. This ordinance has been described under Item 4 above.

Proposed ordinances that may be considered at the January 2nd meeting are: a) changes to the City's regulations for the parking of vehicles; b) the creation of an overlay district for all properties east of the Boulevard between 16th and F Streets that are now zoned medium density residential. The purpose of this ordinance will be to allow existing non-conforming properties to be renovated under certain conditions.

8. Regulating Short-Term Rentals in Medium Density Residential Land Use Districts. Such Districts are on both sides of the Boulevard between 16th and F Streets, and west of 2nd Avenue between 11th and A Streets. In these districts there are many duplexes and triplexes. Residents have complained that some property owners are renting their properties for short-term use, perhaps several times a month. Neighborhoods where this happens are disrupted by traffic, noise and parking problems. The City Commission at its December 4th meeting asked the Planning Board to review how short-term rentals might be regulated. The Board will do this at its December 19th meeting, while this Newsletter is being prepared for mailing. The Board may have regulations for the City Commission to review at the Commission's January 2nd meeting. Property owners interested in what regulations may be proposed are asked to contact the City Manager at 471-2122 or by e-mail at sabadmin@bellsouth.net.

9. Land Acquisition. The City Commission in 2003 instituted a program to acquire land for open space, preservation, and recreational purposes. This program has resulted in the purchase of three lots on 10th Street east of the Boulevard, where there now is a parking lot and restrooms for beach visitors; and in the joint purchase with the County of Hammock Dunes Park, 6.1 acres of vacant land north of the Anastasia shopping plaza. The Park will be left largely in its natural state, though a walkway through it will be built, as well as an observation deck and small playground area. The City has an option to buy two lots on 11th Street east of the Boulevard. At its December 4th meeting, the City Commission asked that the City staff see if the owner would extend the option by six months so that the Commission can decide whether to purchase the lots. Another possible land acquisition is the former Riptides restaurant property at 321 A1A Beach Boulevard, northeast of the County pier park. This property could be used to provide additional parking for events at the pier. The City will ask the County to consider a possible joint purchase of this property.