

CONA Newsletter

The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

June 2005

President's Message

By Karl Nurse

The City Council will decide most of the crucial neighborhood issues during the next 30 days. CONA's agenda of more community policing, better enforcement of the "quality of life" laws, the green cities program, and improving code enforcement are all before city council this month! We need to communicate with our representatives now if we are going to be heard.

The City Council should discuss the Green Cities Program on June 16th, which is a day after the CONA meeting. Support for the resolution is broad. The question is: Will they provide a staff person to implement the program to reduce energy use and adopt a wide range of sustainable policies? Energy savings in city buildings and fleets alone will pay the long-term costs of the program.

Inside this newsletter is the letter that I shared with the Council, at your request, asking for more community policing and code enforcement. The budget vote will decide if we get this help. By July 1st, the City Council will set the millage. If our requests are funded then, we are in good shape, if not, it is very uphill. By the time of the "public hearings" at the end of the budget process, the millage has been set and all the money is spoken for.

I attended the budget workshop this week with City Council. Four City Council members spoke in FAVOR of adding the community police and code enforcement officers. The members are: Jamie Bennett, Richard Kriseman, Jay Lasita and Virginia Littrell. Two Council members were not at this part of the meeting: John Bryan and Rene Flowers. Two Council members spoke AGAINST adding police and code officers: Bill Foster and Earnest Williams. The administration opposed both proposals.

If neighborhood priorities are going to be heard, this is the time to call 893-7117 or email council@stpete.org or drop a letter, resolution or petition off at City Hall. We need to encourage those who spoke up for us, to amend the budget. We need to ask those who were absent to support us, and we need to try to get those who opposed us to reconsider their position.

Please come to the June 15th CONA meeting. We will have updates, and a plan for the final push for the CONA agenda. If we don't speak up for neighborhoods, who will?

CONA Board Meeting Wednesday, June 15, 2005

The SUNSHINE CENTER, 330 5th St. N.
Doors open at 6:30 p.m.; meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda Items:

Green Cities Program

2006 City Budget

**Featured Neighborhood:
Greater Pinellas Point**

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2006 CONA Nominating Committee

Karl Nurse has appointed the 2006 Nominating Committee to identify candidates for CONA Officers to serve next year. Elections are held in December. Nominations for CONA Officers are presented at the November meeting, and additional nominations are also accepted from the floor. Nominations are then closed and the Nominating Committee prepares a ballot and conducts an election at the December Meeting.

CONA Officers are: President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The term for all officers is one year.

This year's Nominating Committee is: Steve Plice, Ann McWilliams, Ed Van, Christina Page, and Eileen O`Sullivan.

Anyone interested in serving on the CONA Executive Board should contact one of the Committee members.

Overview of the Florida Green Local Government Standard

The Florida Green Local Government Standard designates Green Cities and Green Counties for outstanding environmental stewardship.

It is expected that certified green city and county governments will not only gain recognition and publicity, but also function in a more efficient manner through better internal communication, dollar savings, and effective risk and asset management. FGBC is actively working towards the availability of incentives that are based on compliance with this standard.

This standard presents a comprehensive list of criteria, organized in terms of local government department functions. It focuses on improving their environmental performance through a number of mediums (energy, water, air, land, waste), and evaluates:

- Environmental practices done "in-house."
- Incentives and ordinances to foster green practices.
- Educational activities to improve the environment.

The Florida Green Local Government Standard is similar to other green standards currently in effect in Florida and many other states, yet very unique in its target. In essence, a list of criteria is presented, and each is assigned a point value. A minimum total point value is set that represents a bar, and local governments who incorporate sufficient criteria such that they meet or exceed the bar are "certified" or "registered" as a Green Local Government. Typical components of green building programs have traditionally targeted individual buildings and land developments. One of the goals of the Local Government Standard is to increase the penetration of many types of green activities.

The Florida Green Local Government Standard leverages many existing programs, and also presents new criteria. Existing programs that are leveraged include statewide programs such as Waterfronts Florida, and Florida Main Street Designation, and national programs such as Tree City USA from the National Arbor Day Foundation. Examples of criteria that are not defined by an existing program include developing local government energy reduction plans, instituting an environmentally preferable purchasing program, utilizing green fleet management, and working with water utilities to promote conservation.

More information is available at:
<http://floridagreenbuilding.org>

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Karl Nurse sends letter to City Council

On behalf of CONA, Karl Nurse argues for more Community Policing Officers and more Code Enforcement Officers.
May 22, 2005

Dear Honorable Council Members,

CONA members met in January of this year to come up with a list of priorities in their efforts to improve their neighborhoods. Our membership widely believes that the best, most long-lasting way to better neighborhoods is to improve the quality of life for residents. For that reason, the top two priorities on our list are the Police and Codes Compliance Departments. As you begin the budget process for the coming year, we ask that you hold a public input session BEFORE the budget is drafted and the millage is set to allow the public to communicate our priorities.

While many changes have been made in our Police Department over the past several years, we have seen no improvement in enforcement at the neighborhood level; speeding and red light running are near epidemic levels; car thieves operate with seeming impunity due to the "no chase" policy; auto burglaries are at an all time high with a case closure rate of about 17%; street level drug dealing and prostitution crimes are rising and we solve less than half of the murders committed in our city. Many of our residents do not feel safe in their own homes much less on city streets or public parks.

Our members believe that at least part of this is due to the absence of community policing officers in their neighborhoods. Not only do those officers serve as the SPPD's eyes and ears on the ground but they come to be known and respected by residents who, in turn, are more willing to give information that helps to solve crime and rid of the criminals. The CPOs are reassigned to special task forces and posted out of their neighborhoods on a regular basis which leaves neighborhoods to fend for themselves where it occurs but does the most critical harm in areas that are already struggling with street crime and violence. We believe that more CPOs with smaller areas to manage are the key to improvement. The CPO's represent our primary effort to prevent the causes of crime.

We ask that more CPOs be added to the SPPD staff, that assignment areas be made smaller and that they be allowed to work in their neighborhoods, not on special assignments, at all times.

Our Codes Compliance Department has also made many changes in the past few years. Council Members can be justifiably proud that they've played an integral role in approving new equipment and shaping new ordinance to allow Codes to be ever more efficient and effective at the jobs they do. However, much remains to be done. Accumulated trash, dilapidated

rental housing and snipe signs all contribute to visual blight in our neighborhoods. If a picture is worth a thousand words, think of the message a neighborhood full of junk cars, overgrown weedy lots and tumble-down housing conveys. It is no wonder that the crime of all kinds flourishes in environments like these. Effective, consistent and constant codes enforcement is needed to keep these problems in check. Our codes investigators must have smaller areas to inspect and better training to spot violations if the situation is to improve.

Further, there are areas where codes enforcement overlaps with that of the police; front yard parking, abandoned vehicles, loose dogs and violations of the noise ordinance are some of the areas. It has become apparent that very little enforcement on these kinds of violations will occur if training/enforcement is not coordinated between the two departments. Our membership would like to see a combined effort, a CPTED approach if you will, to solve these community problems.

We ask that staffing for investigators be increased at the Codes Compliance Department, that the investigators be more consistently trained and that they work together with the police to comprehensively address problem areas in neighborhoods.

Our membership has only one goal - the improvement of our neighborhoods. Please help us in our efforts to make our city the beautiful place we know it can be.

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The Area

The Greater Pinellas Point Neighborhood is “St. Petersburg’s Southernmost Neighborhood”, whose boundaries are geographically defined as south of 54th Avenue South to the water’s edge of Tampa Bay, and from Boca Ciega Bay on the western border to 4th Street South on the eastern border. The Colony Point area, east of 4th St is included in the GPPCA. The neighborhood is bounded on the north by Lakewood Civic Association and on the east by Bahama shores homeowners association. The Civic Association encompasses a geographic area of approximately 2.5 square miles within the City of St. Petersburg. The neighborhood is approximately 4 to 5 miles from Downtown St. Petersburg, the Central Avenue Business District, and Baywalk. It is 3-4 miles from two major medical facilities, Bayfront Hospital and All Children’s Hospital. With a population of 18,922 (2002), it is one of, if not the largest neighborhoods in the city.

The Pinellas Point area has a small town ambiance with well-defined shopping corridors on two “main streets”, residential clusters of single-family and multi-family housing, a scattering of small and large parks offering both passive and active recreation, and various denominations of houses of worship throughout the Neighborhood. The Neighborhood has two elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. All the schools incorporate either magnet or fundamental educational programs, specializing in technology, foreign languages, mathematics, science, and computer technologies. Eckerd College, University of South Florida Bayboro, and St. Petersburg College campuses are within a 5 - 10 minute drive. The new South Branch Public Library is located within the neighborhood. There are two fire stations to provide support for the neighborhood, on 31st St, So., just north of 54th Ave., and on MLK just north of Country Club. Police service at the Skyway Community Police Resource Center is located in the Skyway Shopping Center, within the GPPCA area.

Major entry nodes crossing 54th Avenue South at the Civic Association boundaries exists at 31st Street, 16th Street, 9th Street, and 4th Street. The Neighborhood has a convenient distribution of major traffic arteries, with nearby connections to downtown St. Petersburg via Interstate 275 and to Manatee County over the Skyway Bridge. Downtown St. Petersburg is a 10-minute drive, with 25 minutes to downtown Tampa, and 45 minutes to downtown Sarasota. Interstate 275 provides access to

the neighborhood from the west via an exit at the intersection with Pinellas Point Drive, and an exit at the intersection with 54th Avenue South. The Pinellas Point area also has three east-west collector road corridors running within the Civic Association boundaries including 54th Avenue South, 62nd Avenue / Roy Hanna South, and Pinellas Point Drive.

History

About 1000 a.d., the Tocobaga Indians began the inhabitation of our area. Until the 1500s the Pinellas Point area was heavily populated by these now extinct Indians. They lived in small villages of ten to twenty huts, which paralleled the shore. Villages also contained a separate temple, burial mounds, and midden mounds (where trash such as shells and bones were discarded). The most visible remains of this culture are the well-preserved Pinellas Point Temple Mound, near Pinellas Point Drive and 20th Street South. Indian mounds also exist in what is now known as Maximo Park.

The Pinellas Point area was discovered and named around 1757 by Don Francisco Maria Celi, pilot of the Royal Spanish Fleet, who had set sail from Havana for Tampa Bay. Celi named the point “Punta de Pinal de Jiminez” in honor of Jose Jiminez, Captain of the San Francisco de Asis, and in recognition of the pine forest on the point. In time, the name changed to Point Pinellas.

The first authenticated European settlement in the area was by Antonio Maximo Hernandez in 1843, in the Maximo Park area. He established a fishery for the supply of dried fish to the Cuban market, specifically for sugar plantation workers. William Bunce joined him in 1846. The settlement was destroyed by a hurricane in 1848. At that time, Pinellas Point was called Punta Pinal.

Later settlers cleared some of the pine forests in the area and planted orange groves from, just prior to and around the time of it’s early development. A “health resort” of sorts was located on the water at 14th Street.

In 1906 the land in what is now known as the "Pink Streets" was purchased by Mrs. David Cook (from whom and boundaries unknown) with money from her late husband's David C. Cook Publishing Co. of Elgin, Illinois. The land was left virtually untouched for almost 20 years. In 1925, she and her son George E. Cook formed Murok Realty Company.

First house in the area was built in 1924, at 1800 Pinellas Point Drive. According to the 1930 city directory, there were three occupied homes or buildings on Pinellas Point Drive, seven more on Serpentine Drive and others sprinkled throughout the neighborhood.

The Association

The civic association was created as a non-profit corporation on the 5th of June 1973. The Association was formed “in the Greater Pinellas Point area of St. Petersburg, for the purpose of aiding and guiding, through established legal bodies, the improving of the beauty, tranquillity, livability and character within the said confines of the Pinellas Point area, as a result of and through group action.”

Monthly general meetings are held to inform residents and to provide a open, social forum for visiting City officials to present specific topics of interest that directly affect the Greater Pinellas Point community. Each resident has a voice to share in these informative meetings, bring suggestions and ideas to fellow neighbors, the Association’s Officers and Board Members; as well as vote on important Civic Association issues. An annual picnic and other social events provide an opportunity to meet neighbors and local business owners.

The association has several active committees. These include the Neighborhood Plan Committee, the Hospitality Committee, Traffic Committee, a Code Enforcement Committee, a Beautification Committee, a Newsletter Committee, an Advertising Committee, Membership Committee, Apartments and Condo Liaison Committee, a Parks and Recreation committee, and a Scholarship Committee. Various special committee projects, such as recognizing the Home and Yard of the Month and supporting the annual Children’s Christmas Parade are part of the neighborhood’s accomplishments.

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Council of Neighborhood Associations Neighborhood Nite at Tropicana Field

**Friday July 22, 2005
7:15PM**

- **Devil Ray's and Baltimore Orioles.**
- **\$3.00 per seat in advance.**
- **Seating upper deck behind home plate.**

**Association President to collect money
and the names of people who will attend.**

**Tickets to be picked up at will call
window before the game.**

**Send check and names to:
Jungle Terrace Civic Association
2275 80th. Street North
St. Petersburg, FL. 33710**

**Deadline July 6, 2005
Tom Killian Program Coordinator
343-2041 tomkillian@juno.com**

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.

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

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Continued from the back page

- The City Council
- Neighborhood associations were encouraged to attend the City Council hearing on the proposed LDR revisions on June 14th.
- Another LDR hearing at the Main Library on June 20th will focus on zoning regulations for garage apartments in “Traditional” neighborhoods.
- Bob then provided an interesting review of possible alternatives to the proposed LDRs being submitted.
- ◆ The focus of our meeting then turned to the issue of appointments to the several development approval boards with concerns expressed that these boards too often do not include neighborhood association leaders/ representatives and frequently only the developer/builders perspective.
- ◆ Bob Jeffrey went on to consider some alternative staffing schemes for the above boards, even suggesting some alternative titles that would more clearly identify their duties.
- ◆ Bob acknowledged that some of the “Fast Track” provisions for expediting board approvals should also provide for earlier notifications to impacted neighborhoods providing them with more opportunities to protest.
- ◆ Karl Nurse and Mort Sherman, (Crossroads), spoke of the urgency for our members to study and comment upon the establishment of the city tax millage rate since the required two public hearings on the budget are often too late to allow significant changes after the projected city revenues have been “Cast in concrete” by the millage rates already determined.
- ◆ This impact has been particularly devastating to appeals for “Quality of Life” issues submitted to the Police and other agencies.
- ◆ CONA will invite the city staff responsible for formulating the budget to address our meeting and clarify the millage rate process.
 - Moved, (Wilson), that CONA urge City Council to include budget funding for: (1) Additional Police Staffing, (2) Greater funding allocation to address “Quality of Life” issues in our community. [Approved]

- ◆ The President appointed the following members to serve as the Nominations Committee, charging them to identify a slate of officer candidates for next year and to consider adjustments of the size of our Executive Committee: Steve Plice, Ann McWilliams, Ed Van, Christina Page, and Eileen O`Sullivan.
- ◆ Theresa McEachern provided an interesting history of our featured neighborhood, Harbordale. They are proud of their progress that includes the recent construction of 20 new homes.
- ◆ Karl introduced Katie Wilson, our St. Petersburg Times correspondent for Neighborhood News. A third generation native of St. Petersburg, she provided her cell-phone number for news reporting: 742-8838.

Our meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.. ■

Announcing
CONA's 2005
All-Neighborhood Block Party

November 5, 2005
at
Walter Fuller Park

Hosted by
Jungle Terrace Civic Association

For more information, contact:
Tom Killian 343-2041



2005 Officers

President

Karl Nurse
Old Southeast
572-9311 Ext. 24
karl@baytechlabel.com

First Vice President

Steve Plice
Jungle Terrace
344-3120
Steveplice@verizon.net

Second Vice President

Theresa McEachern
Harbordale
823-6390
terre66@aol.com

Secretary

Conrad Weiser
Edgemoor
522-5008
MAOAI999@aol.com

Treasurer

Libby Steele
Lakewood Estates
867-6916
MPH56@aol.com

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 Plice 344-3120

CONA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MINUTES

The Sunshine Multi-Service Center - May 18, 2005

Minutes by Conrad Weiser

President Karl Nurse called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

- ◆ Karl invited newcomers and visitors to introduce themselves.
- ◆ Treasurer Libby Steele reported that dues collection has been improving providing us with a current balance of \$3,728.68.
 - Moved, (Whysong), to accept the April Minutes as published. [Approved]
- ◆ Christine Page informed us of a program to rejuvenate the Shuffle Board Courts and activities at the Mirror Lake facility next door.
- ◆ Tom Killian, (Jungle Terrace), announced a joint neighborhood picnic to be sponsored by CONA and Jungle Terrace on November fifth. After providing some details of the program at Walter Fuller Park, Tom invited all CONA associations to participate and solicited pledging of raffle prizes.
- ◆ Karl urged that members provide our Secretary with mailing addressees for our monthly CONA Newsletter, suggesting 4 or 5 subscribers per neighborhood.
- ◆ Jeff Francis made a presentation for the "Friends of The Belleview", an organization seeking to preserve the Belleview Biltmore Hotel. He offered a progress report as well as flyers and lawn signs for supporters.
 - Moved, (Heck), CONA supports the efforts to preserve the Belleview Biltmore Hotel. [Approved]
- ◆ Our principal speaker of the evening was Bob Jeffrey, City Asst. Director of Development & Historic Preservation. His subject was the proposed Land Development Regulations (LDR's), which will be discussed at City Council hearings shortly. He discussed the history and roll of each of the agencies that pass approval for land development proposals.
 - The Environmental Development Commission (EDC)
 - The Board of Adjustment
 - The Planning Commission and its counterpart The Historic Preservation Commission.

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