

# CONA Newsletter

The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

August 2005

## President's Message

By Karl Nurse

We had another success in getting the Green Cities program passed by City Council in workshop on August 4th. Happily, in the end, everyone understood that it makes sense to, in a comprehensive fashion, review our city's environmental and energy (power/water) policies. This allows us to see how well are we doing and develop a plan to get better. The results should include cleaner city cars and trucks, more efficient buildings, more use of recycled materials, and lower energy costs in everything the city touches. The funding to get started will be on the consent agenda on August 25th. Please thank the Mayor and City Council members for looking to the future.

Several major issues will come to a head in the upcoming sixty days. Please participate in those that move you. They include:

1) The Wal-Mart proposed for the wetlands on Gandy Blvd will be heard before City Council on August 23rd at a special meeting. Because we won before the EDC (Environmental Development Commission), Wal-Mart needs 6 City Council to overrule the EDC.

2) Downtown building heights and density regulations (LDR's) will come before the Planning Commission on September 13th. The proposals range from unlimited heights and density as being pushed by some developers, to 300-400 height limits at the core of downtown as proposed by CONA and the Downtown Neighborhood Association. We will have updates on this issue at the August meeting. The future of our downtown is being decided. We need to voice our concerns.

3) Community Policing and Code Enforcement staffing will be decided at City Council budget hearings in late August and September. We need to communicate to our elected officials and those running for office, why we believe that community policing and code enforcement play a pivotal role in improving neighborhoods. The Mayor and 4 City Council members are up for re-election this fall. Neighborhood Associations need to take this opportunity to hold debates and forums where our issues can be discussed. This is when we can make the most progress in getting concrete commitments to help support our neighborhoods.

## CONA Board Meeting Wednesday, August 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:

Gandy Blvd Wal-Mart update

New Shopping Center in Tyrone Area update

Budget Hearings • LDR/Vision 2020

City Elections • Green Citys Report

Sexual Preditor/Offender Report

Featured Neighborhood:

Snell Isle Property Owners Association

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## City Elections: Mayor plus four Council Seats to be decided at the polls

The deadline for applicants to file for City elections was Aug. 2nd 2005. There are two candidates for Mayor and at least two candidates for all four of the City Council seats with terms expiring this year.

For those Council Districts with more than two qualified candidates, there will be a primary election (conducted district-wide only) for those districts. The primary will be held on September 27th. The two candidates with the most votes from the primary will participate in the city-wide general elections on November 8th.

Neighborhoods may wish to invite the candidates to their meetings or hold special meetings for the candidates. Contact informatin, as provided to the City Clerk, is provided below:

### **MAYOR** \_\_\_\_\_

***Richard M. Baker***

205 25th Avenue North  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33704 (Qualified: 8/1/05)

***Ed Helm***

2900 68th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33712 (Qualified: 8/2/05)  
Tel. 867-5947

### **COUNCIL DISTRICT 2** \_\_\_\_\_

***John Bryan***

P.O. Box 23004  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33742 (Qualified: 8/1/05)  
Tel. 570-4928

***Eve Joy***

P.O. Box 1452  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33731 (Qualified: 8/2/05)  
Tel. 577-5254

### **COUNCIL DISTRICT 4** \_\_\_\_\_

***Virginia Littrell***

145 19th Avenue NE  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33704 (Qualified: 8/2/05)  
Tel. 823-9042

***Leslie Ann Curran***

3510 Locust Street N.E.  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33704 (Qualified: 8/1/05)  
Tel. 898-6061

***Kim Trombley***

1461 27th Avenue North  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33704 (Qualified: 8/2/05)  
Tel. 822-1734

### **COUNCIL DISTRICT 6** \_\_\_\_\_

***Ernest Williams***

2517 Madrid Way South  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33712 (Qualified: 7/25/05)  
Tel. 823-5566

***Cassandra Jackson***

1657 27th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33712 (Qualified: 8/2/05)  
Tel. 822-1708

***Darden Rice***

110 18th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33705 (Qualified: 8/1/05)  
Tel. 822-6241

***Gerald Dwight "Chimurenga" Waller***

2130 26th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33712 (Qualified: 7/25/05)  
Tel. 897-9006

***Maria Scruggs-Weston***

980 Melrose Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33705 (Qualified: 8/2/05)  
Tel. 824-2817

### **COUNCIL DISTRICT 8** \_\_\_\_\_

***Jeff Danner***

2351 Dartmouth Avenue North  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33713 (Qualified: 7/29/05)  
Tel. 323-8544

***Jamie L. Pugh-Mayo***

5536 15th Avenue North  
St. Petersburg, FL 33710 (Qualified: 8/2/05)  
Tel. 347-9180

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## Bayfront Medical Center's Speakers Bureau

Finding experienced and capable speakers can be the difference between an average neighborhood association meeting and truly outstanding one. Bayfront's panel of experts, including physicians, nurses, trauma experts and hospital leadership, are available to speak your group to provide answers to many of your health-related questions and concerns.

To schedule a speaker for your meeting, call Dawn Jones, community relations manager, at (727) 893-6895. Also, if you want to take your meeting off-site to Bayfront and tour the hospital, she can help you arrange that too.

# Police Staffing: The true number of Police Officers is a moving target

By Steve Plice

Every time I ask, it seems I get a different answer. How many police officers do we have in the St. Petersburg Police Department? As strange as it may seem, it is extremely difficult for a citizen to find the correct answer to what would appear to be an easy question.

It seems like an important question, too. CONA has suggested that additional money be put into the budget for more Community Police Officers. The City Administration has said that we have enough officers already. OK... so how many officers do we have? Don't bother checking the City Website. The answer is not there. The website reports how many

*Continued on page 5*

## Another Shopping Center for Tyrone

By Lance Lubin

President

Eagle Crest Neighborhood Association

Commercial development. Some neighborhoods desperate to have it, some desperate to prevent it. Eagle Crest, Garden Manor, Crossroads, and Jungle Terrace are trying to prevent The Sembler Company from having residential property in their midst re-zoned for commercial development. September 13th will be a public hearing on PC-690, an application for land use plan amendment and rezoning for the parcel of land to the west of St Petersburg Catholic High School to 66th Street, from 9th Ave to 13th Ave North. The Sembler Company is proposing a shopping center and multi family housing for this parcel of land where Notre Dame used to be. The Sembler Company has tried to convince the surrounding neighborhoods that they should welcome a shopping center on their front doorstep. The neighborhoods disagree. The property is currently zoned residential and the neighborhoods don't see any compelling reason to violate the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Vision 20/20 by forcing commercial development on neighborhoods concerned with maintaining their "character" and finding ways to minimize rather than promote unwanted traffic.

September 13th , 4:00 PM at City Hall will be the first in a series of battles to see whether the will of the citizens or the wishes of the developers prevail. There are those who believe that commercial development of this property is so obviously misguided that the "decision makers" can't possibly see it any other way. There are others that believe that the "decision makers" are in the back pockets of the developers and that you "can't fight City Hall". No one is naive enough to believe that this land will not ultimately be developed in some fashion, the issue is whether or not it's done in keeping with the character of the surrounding neighborhoods. We could use your help. This week it's our neighborhood, next week it may be yours. United we stand, divided we get paved.

## Announcing CONA's 2005 All-Nighborhood Block Party

### November 5, 2005

at Walter Fuller Park

Hosted by  
Jungle Terrace Civic Association

For more information, contact:  
Tom Killian 343-2041

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# Curbside Recycling for St. Petersburg

By Ed Helm

The citizen effort to secure curbside recycling is alive and well but under attack. Curbside recycling is not dead as 7 members of the City Council and the Mayor have found out--despite what some have seen as their best efforts to kill it.

Instead, support for recycling grows as more citizens learn the facts:

- St. Petersburg (and tiny Redington Shores) are the only municipalities in Pinellas without curbside recycling!
- St. Petersburg is the largest city in Florida without curbside recycling!
- Neighboring Largo charges its citizens \$15.37 a month for trash service that includes curbside recycling (and which includes other services not provided by St. Petersburg) as part of its city operations, yet we are charged more, \$16.35 a month, and don't have curbside recycling.

This leads our citizens to wonder, if everyone else can figure out how to do this affordably, why can't our city staff and political leaders?

## **The City's proposed budget has a \$3.60/ month rate increase!**

*The facts:*

- *The Pinellas County trash-to-electricity incinerator is unable to burn all the trash that it gets. In fact, 15-18% of the trash and garbage is never burned, but diverted into the only landfill.*
- *Our city is charged for the trash ("fuel" as some like to call it) it dumps at the incinerator. This 'tipping fee' or dumping fee is (and has been for over a dozen years) \$37.50 per ton. How many million dollars a year do we pay to the incinerator? Over \$8,000,000 a year in 2003, the most recent year with available information.*

## **The City is trying to reduce this fee by \$4.00 a ton; with all other municipalities recycling, this could backfire.**

- *The payments for the electricity sold by the corporation managing the incinerator do not return to us or reduce our electric bills.*
- *The county landfill is a scare and precious resource which is expected to be filled in 34 years. (Assuming no direct hit from a hurricane or other disaster.) A major section of the landfill is now over 67 feet high of garbage and ash, an 'ash [and garbage] mountain.' For every three tons of trash incinerated, one ton of ash is created. Its disposal, because of health issues, must be controlled.*
- *When the landfill is filled, it is not clear whether the incinerator will be able to be used, but in the form of ash or trash, our solid waste will be transported out of Pinellas. Some landfill tipping fees in Florida are over \$80 a ton now. The closest, large open landfill is near Lake Okeechobee, about 150 miles from St. Petersburg. Imagine what it will cost to transport our trash there!*

These facts have lead citizens to challenge the Mayor and City Council's inaction and indecision on curbside recycling. On June 2, our City Council voted 7 to 1 to end consideration of curbside recycling. Councilwoman Littrell declared that "the issue is done."

But citizens have not given up. Council members' claims that 'no one is interested,' and that 'nothing has changed' and that 'there is



*St. Petersburg Citizens on a recent tour of the County Incinerator.*

no market for any of this trash,' have been met by groups organizing tours of the incinerator and landfill, contacting their councilpersons, and speaking out at public forums including the public forum time at City Council meetings. People

have toured the incinerator and spoken to experts and other cities in Pinellas about their curbside recycling programs. A group of over 30 citizens (including two neighborhood association presidents) in one Council area have signed up to tour the incinerator and landfill getting their Councilperson to agree to join them. Other tours are planned for all eight council areas. Neighborhood association representatives are welcome to join them and work with them.

A group of over a dozen religious leaders from Moslem, Jewish, and Christian faiths have agreed to tour the incinerator and landfill and have written to all the congregations in St. Petersburg inviting them to identify a person in their congregation to become a "witness for creation," take the tour, and become more informed about curbside recycling issues. This group includes Bishop Knox, Chancellor Gibbons, Canon Connor, Rabbi Torop and Imam Ali. Other congregations have positively responded to their call.

The newest effort to defang curbside recycling has been to create what Councilman Lasita, the only true curbside advocate on the Council, has called 'boutique curbside' -- a subscription based program which would be contracted out to a private operator. The cost per household has been estimated to be \$5-\$8/ month. What some have called a 'fig leaf' recycling proposal came from Councilpersons Kriseman and Bennett. The Council approved doing a FRP (request for proposal) in a Council vote on August 4, 2005 by a vote of 7 to 1, with Councilman Lasita opposing it.

Citizens, especially CONA leaders, should contact Councilmembers (893-7117) to get an answer to the question we are all asking, "How can all these other Pinellas cities like Largo offer complete curbside recycling programs for less cost to their citizens than what St. Petersburg citizens are being charged for its trash program which doesn't include curbside recycling?" The next City Council meeting on August 18, 2005, the August 25 and September 8 Public Hearings on the City Budget will offer new opportunities for speaking out on effective and affordable curbside recycling and opposition to sham approaches.



# Brighton Bay faces Wal-Mart once again in an appeal to City Council

by Tarey Franxman

The Wal-Mart Corporation has submitted plans to build a supercenter on Gandy Boulevard and Brighton Bay. This project will be in the vicinity of two hundred and seven thousand square feet (207,000 sq. feet). The estimated traffic will be in the range of 13,000 to 18,000 vehicles per day and over 5 million vehicles per year.

The Environmental Development Commission (EDC) has already determined that Wal-Mart brings significant traffic and environmental issues and voted against this development. Wal-Mart has appealed the decision to City Council.

Our community is strongly against this development. If Wal-Mart is willing to severely impact our neighborhood, our community road and blatantly destroy a lake and the surrounding wetlands what else will they do to our City.

The Brighton Bay Community hired experts to review the impact that this development would bring to the area. It was determined that a large part of the surrounding area would be negatively impacted. Not only will this project destroy numerous acres of wetlands it will also adversely impact Old Tampa Bay by filling the bay with pollutants such as radiator fluid, battery acid, chemicals,

and fertilizers from the garden center.

This is not just a Brighton Bay issue. The big-box will also bring many of our roads to a standstill. Our traffic engineer determined that Gandy, 4th Street, Roosevelt, Brighton Bay Boulevard and San Martin will be critically impacted. Specifically, the Gandy & 4th street intersection will see traffic levels increase by 7% and traffic will impact other parts of Gandy and 4th street even more. Wal-Mart's traffic estimates are well over the established guidelines for traffic impact. Not only is it significantly impacted, Wal-Mart has failed offer any mitigation for the impact that they will create on this intersection. According to City Code, Chapter 16, this would be considered a Significant Degrade to the roadways. Chapter 16 states, that a Significant Degrade is a peak hour increase in traffic volume of five percent or a decrease in average travel speed

of ten percent. Remember, we all use these roads and this corridor provides our only hurricane evacuation route.

Please notify your council members and let them know that this project is bad for St. Pete. Please vote no for the destruction of Wetlands, Flooding, and Traffic Jams. Please ask them to vote NO for this project.

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## Police Staffing *continued from page 3*

new hires" we had and it tells us how many "exit interviews we conducted. The website does not, however, tell us how many officers we actually have.

After much searching on the FBI website and with some help from Richard Kriseman, I have the beginnings of an answer.

Currently, we the City budget authorizes 540 police officers. This includes the Chief as well as all other officers who have been sworn in and issued a gun and badge. It does not include trainees, cadets or individuals that have been given job offer.

The FBI asks every police agency to take a "census" of all sworn officers on October 31st of each year. The numbers reported by St. Petersburg are:

YEAR	SWORN OFFICERS
2000	503
2001	523
2002	507
2003	517
2004	511

Another count will be taken on October 31st 2005, to arrive at the official number for this year. The number of officers varies week to week, maybe even day to day. Officers retire or resign. Academy

classes graduate.

The police department produces a "strength report" each month. According to this report, we had 526 sworn officers on March 31, 2005. We had 525 sworn officers on April 30, 2005. On May 31, 2005, we had 524 sworn officers.

From the data, it is obvious that not much has changed. In spite of pay increases, take home cruisers and other improvements, we have the same number of police officers now as we had in 2001.

Snell Isle has always played an interesting part in the history of St. Petersburg. Our beloved Snell Isle, although mostly underwater at the time, started when C. Perry Snell bought 40 acres from the Barnard estate for \$2,000 in 1911. In 1914 he purchased more land with partner JC Hamlett whom he bought out in 1919. He continued to add to his holdings both here, in Clearwater and at the beaches. That same year he started to build the second golf course in St. Petersburg on Snell Isle, calling it Coffee Pot Golf Course. In 1924 he hired a dredging company to dredge additional areas. In October 1925, Snell announced the Snell Isle development and the resulting land sale was the largest ever to occur in St. Petersburg. Total sales exceeded \$7 million. Even though the housing market boom went bust, Perry Snell continued to fill the streets and parkways on Snell Isle with statuary to continue his dream of a Mediterranean style development.

Snell Isle's natural boundaries include Coffee Pot Bayou, old Tampa Bay and Smacks Bayou. Developments include Snell Isle, Eden Isle and Snell Isle estates. Our families reside in single family homes, duplexes, triplexes, apartments or condos. We are very lucky to have 2 churches on the island (St. Thomas and St. Raphael's) each with a parochial school. We also have a marina, a shopping center, a restaurant, a world class golf course and club, an historic Women's Club and many historic and architecturally significant homes – some famous for who lived there and some famous for who designed them. We (well actually our bridge and surrounding entrance) were even in a Hollywood movie (Coupe de Ville - 1995).

SIPOA membership is represented by 4 Officers and 4 Directors each elected by the members for a one-year term. We also have 12 standing committees each with a chairperson. SIPOA general membership meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month (July excepted) at the historic Women's Club on Snell Isle. Board Meetings are held at the current president's home on the last Thursday of each month.

Current membership is 705 paid members. Dues are \$25.00 annually and a Premier membership is now available at \$45.00. Additional tax-deductible donations may be made to the Snell Isle Foundation. Membership dues make it possible to maintain and keep our Snell Isle gardens and plantings beautiful. We maintain the following: Snell Isle Entrance Fountain and planting, Monterey Triangle Park, Monterey/Almedo Traffic Island, Monterey/Coffee Pot Riviera Traffic Island, Maple/34th Ave Circle, Planting beds at Snell Isle Blvd/Rafael Dr and at Brightwaters Park, Brightwaters Circle Bridge, Canary Island Date Palms along Snell Isle Blvd, Statues, Christmas lights in Park.

Our Panther Newsletter is published monthly and distributed to all homes on the island. It includes information about the upcoming meeting(s), President's letter, News around the Isle, Social column, Letters to the Editor and paid advertising. We are very fortunate in that our advertising now pays completely for our newsletter printing and mailing.

Snell Isle was the proud recipient of a 2005 Neighborhood Grant to place historic style lighting around Snell Isle Parkway. We were able to match the grant with funds generously donated by you to the Snell Isle Foundation. We have had so many compliments on how great the lighting looks – especially with no unsightly overhead wires. In June, we submitted our Phase Two Historic Lighting Grant proposal to the city. Our commitment is to continue these lights down both sides of Snell Isle Boulevard from the Park to the Snell Isle Bridge.

### **2005 Special Projects**

We have also been very busy with some very new items this year. Here is additional information about our special 2005 SIPOA projects.

SIPOA developed our Paint the Panthers Program to spruce up our beautiful statues. Over time they have shown wear. Families were encouraged to "adopt" a pet panther statue and spruce it up. SIPOA supplied the paint and our families supplied the manpower. They cleaned the statues, painted an undercoat and then two final coats of special paint. Painters from 2 years on up brought our statues back to life. We even had three generations of one family paint for us. Each participant received a special Panther Pal certificate (complete with Panther paw print) as SIPOA's thanks for painting.

New this year is our Family Friendly Programs. Five of our eleven monthly programs have been designed to appeal especially to our families with young children. Our first program was a Valentine's Day Party where members of all ages could make valentines for that special someone. We provided different craft materials and lots of helpers. We had some very creative cards producing by our budding Picassos. Our May meeting was our Ice Cream Social. Kids of all ages could make their own sundaes with all the toppings and ice cream supplied by SIPOA. August 4th we hosted our Snell Isle Pets with Style. Cats were preening, turtles waxed their shells to a bright shine and dogs learned new tricks. All gathered with their owners (or staff as our cats would say) to parade around Pete's Park. Prizes were given in many categories. In October we will host our Halloween Howl where we greet ghosts, goblins, and all manner of wild people. In December we will have our annual Christmas Social and later that month we are so lucky to have a very special visitor from the north. Santa Claus will visit us December 17th – 20th for Santa in the Park. Children of all ages can whisper their Christmas list in his ear and enjoy the wonderful holiday light display in Snell Isle Park.

Our first ever Snell Isle Sells garage sale will be Saturday, September 10th

Smart Snell Isle homeowners are scouring their closets and examining the contents of their attics and garages for all those "treasures" to be sold at our very first garage sale from 8 until noon. Families throughout Snell Isle will have all sorts of bargains, treasures and "white elephants" for sale. In addition, a part of each sale is generously being donated to the Snell Isle Foundation - Historic Lighting Project.

- Wal-Mart average wages are lower than Florida State averages.
- Though police data has been difficult to obtain, big box stores result in a heavy demand for police service.
- ◆ WARN urges, via City Council or voter initiative, that development rules define any business over 75,000 sq.ft. be regarded as a “Special Exception” that would automatically require an impact study before approval.
- ◆ Darden Rice, a Sierra Club worker announced two public hearings on the Wal-Mart building proposal issue:
  - August 11th Town Hall Meeting, (7-9pm), at our Sunshine Service Center
  - August 23rd. City Council Chambers at 9 am.
  - Speakers from every neighborhood were urged to make it clear to City Council that Karl Nurse is not the only resident dissatisfied with the proposed budgets for “Cops & Codes”.
- ◆ Introducing another informative PowerPoint presentation, Kathleen Small, of Progress Energy Florida, illustrated a new statewide program to replace all of their conventional, residential power consumption meters, (1.2 million in FL), with digital display units that report their readings through wireless transponders.
  - Billing data will be more accurately recoded
  - No meter reading employees will enter your property
  - The improved efficiency, (reduced staff), will reduce operating expenses though a period to amortize the capital investments in the new meters will defer any immediate rate reductions.
  - The program begins in ZIP Code area 33702 on August 8th. Mailed notices will be sent to alert customers to brief power interruption during installation.
- ◆ Tim Baker (Downtown N/A), alerted us to the upcoming hearing before the Planning Commission on September 13th at which the proposed revisions to the Land Development Rules (LDRs), will be considered.
  - Proposal largely ignores the Vision 20/20 recommendations.
  - The area defined as the “Downtown Core” has been expanded to embrace a much larger area of mixed uses.
  - Height and space limitations are relaxed under new rules.
  - Discussion meetings with city staff have been limited to developers, excluding neighborhood resident representatives.
  - Steve Pllice, (Jungle Terrace), pointed out that the proposed new rules are in violation of the city’s Comprehensive Plan.
  - A new definition of the D2 zone allows for much greater height [FAR of 7]
    - Moved, (Pllice), CONA urges City Council to include an issue of height limitations for new construction approval on our November 2nd poll of resident voters. [Approved]
    - Moved, (Romeo), Amend above motion to define height limitation for new construction as 300 feet. [Approved]

- ◆ Neighborhood President Tim Baker then offered yet another PowerPoint presentation highlighting our featured CONA member, Downtown Neighborhood Association.
  - The Downtown area has lost population in the last decade despite developments. 1982 projection of 80,000 has actually fallen to 7,000. New estimates predict a doubling of the current population.

**Upcoming meetings of general interest were announced:**

- ▲ CONA ticket sales for the July 22nd. Devil Rays game have passed 150.
- ▲ On July 30th, St. Pete. College, (Seminole Campus) will host a seminar with the Pinellas Sheriff’s Dept. dealing with senior’s safety and predators.
- ▲ Snell Isle Property Owners will hold their first neighborhood wide garage sale on Saturday, September 10th
- ▲ The Public Service Commission will hold a hearing on proposed Progress Energy rates at our Sunshine Center, July 21st at 9 am.
- ▲ Jan Frazer-Smith urged attendance at the August 2nd. Pinellas School Board meeting to promote reforms which will overcome educational shortcomings experienced by Afro-American students.
- ▲ Mo Eppley invited attendance at a “Common Ground: Progressive Values Rally” in Fossil Park, July 23rd from 10 - 4 pm featuring 20 guest speakers.
- ▲ July 22nd. will be the date for Jeff Danner’s Campaign Meeting, 7 - 9pm, at the residence of 2900 Seventh Avenue North.
- ▲ Phil Whysong reminded us all that “National Night Out” celebrations on August 2nd. will be developed by each neighborhood independently.
- ▲ Jim Mason, (Crossroads), called our attention to a proposal to revise the zoning on a parcel at 66th Street and 8th Avenue North. The Sembler Company will present their proposal to the Planning Commission on September 16th. Crossroads, Eagle Crest, and Garden Manor neighborhood associations oppose this change of land use status.
  - Moved, (Mason), CONA urges City Council to reject the proposed land use status of the development project planned for 66th Street & Ninth Avenue North. [Approved]
- ▲ Darden Rice announced her candidacy for City Council, District 6
- ▲ A representative of Brighton Bay Homeowner’s Association urged all citizens to contact their City Council members to oppose the traffic overload which approval of a new Gandy Boulevard Wal-Mart will surely incur.
- ▲ Cathy Wilson, resident of Historic Woodlawn urged our members to consider changes to our City Council office definitions to raise the responsibility to a full time employment, (with a salary greater than the current \$25,000), and to provide an independent, [of the Mayor], legal staff.

Our meeting closed at 8:45 p.m. ■



## 2005 Officers

### President

Karl Nurse  
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### First Vice President

Steve Plice  
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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 Plice 344-3120

## CONA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MINUTES The Sunshine Multi-Service Center - July 20, 2005 Minutes by Conrad Weiser

President Karl Nurse called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

- ◆ After noting that several pivotal issues will be addressed by city government in the next 60 days, Karl expressed our appreciation for Steve Plice and Mo Eppley who have designed and assembled a new web page for CONA. He urged all member neighborhood web sites to provide HTML cross links in hopes of promoting greater traffic for all.
- ◆ Karl then offered a brief treasurer's report, substituting for Libby Steele who had not arrived. Our current balance was given as \$3,224.00.
- ◆ City Councilman Ernest Williams was recognized to offer his response to comments, in our CONA Newsletter, that he and Councilman Bill Foster had opposed the CONA appeal for additional budget funding for police staff. He noted that Police Chief Harmon had testified, to City Council, that no enlarged staffing was currently needed
  - Several commentators from the floor refuted the Chief's appraisal noting that FBI statistics rate Miami as a city of lower crime rate than St. Petersburg, and the New York City rates are only 1/3 as high as here.
  - Addressing a parallel issue, it was noted that Councilman Richard Kriseman, supporting the CONA position, favors budget for more Codes Inspectors even while Vice Mayor Dove testifies that no additional staffing budget is called for.
  - All member associations were urged to pose the issues of city budget for "Cops & Codes" at all upcoming candidate forums before our fall elections.
- ◆ The August fourth City Council meeting will convene as a "Committee as a whole" to address the issue of seeking recognition as a "Green City". Member neighborhoods were urged to communicate their support for this issue to their councilmen. [Supporting postcards were distributed.]
- ◆ The focus then switched to a PowerPoint presentation by Rick Smith speaking for WARN, (Wal-Mart Alliance for Reform Now). He offered extensive data, (photos, charts, and maps), depicting the incursion of Wal-Mart Big Box stores in Florida and revealing their projected plans for further growth. [He promised to make this file available for viewing on our CONA web site.] Among the statistics offered were:
  - The community wide impact of a big box is a loss of jobs
  - Wal-Mart, (due to low wages and high employee plan costs), brings a swelling of Medicaid patients, their medical care then born by taxpayers.

*Continued on page 7*

**The Council of Neighborhood  
Associations of S Pinellas County  
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