

# CONA Newsletter

The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

January 2006

## President's Message

By Karl Nurse

Friends,

As we start 2006, it is time set our goals for the coming year. CONA had an active 2005 as we highlighted issues ranging from crime to Green Cities. In some cases like Green Cities, it was widely embraced and 2006 should see the beginnings of implementing polices that will make for a more efficient and greener city. In other cases like how to combat crime/community policing/and staffing levels, it is a continuing conversation.

Please come to the CONA meeting with ideas for priorities for 2006. We will attempt to list and group them for you. We will send these out to the neighborhood associations for feedback and vote on the priorities at the February meeting.

The long process of updating the 1977 LDR (Land Development Regulations or zoning) is coming to a finish during 2006. Hundreds of people of made suggestions and comments as the process has proceeded. Bob Jeffrey will present the proposal to CONA this month before it goes to the Planning Commission. Although zoning sounds boring, it is the rules that we use to decide what kind of community we want to build. The impact can not be overstated. Bob should be congratulated for leading this huge job with a consensus building style.

CONA receives dozens of notices of proposed zoning changes, variances, etc. each month. One notice should be passed on. On Tuesday, Jan 17th, 4:00 PM, the St. Petersburg Planning Commission will hold a public workshop at City Hall in the City Council Chambers to solicit citizen input "regarding the City's 2007 Comprehensive Plan... A major issue identified is REDEVELOPMENT IN THE COASTAL HIGH HAZARD AREA". In layman's terms, the question is should we allow more density in the lowest flood zone, category A, in St. Petersburg? Please consider attending and providing your common sense opinion.

Happy New Year! May 2006 have fewer hurricanes.

## CONA Board Meeting Wednesday, January 18, 2006

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

### Agenda Items:

- Installation of 2006 CONA Officers  
by Councilman John Bryan
- Land Development Regulation Update
- Pinellas Living Green Update
- CONA Goals and Objectives for 2006

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# Land Development Regulations on the move

The City of St. Petersburg will be bringing forward the proposed Land Development Regulations (LDRs) which have been discussed at CONA meetings several times over the last few years. At the January meeting, Bob Jeffrey, with the City of St. Petersburg who has been spearheading the project will report back to CONA on the final draft, the adoption process and answer specific questions regarding the draft document.

To see the draft of the proposed LDRs, please visit the City's web site at the following link:

<http://www.stpete.org/devserv.htm>.

This proposed draft provides the content of the document. Final formatting and numbering will begin during the adoption process. Graphics will be added during the formatting process which will depict the regulations. These graphics will not change the content of the regulations, but will provide for easier comprehension of the information. Also, please note that a number of the divisions and articles have the Development Services "logo" which consists of two gears and the words "City Works". If you see this logo please note that this regulation is the City's currently adopted regulations and nothing has changed but the location. Documents without this logo have been revised, rewritten or created completely.

The adoption process will begin with the draft document being presented to the City's Planning Commission on February 21, 2006. This is the first public hearing. City Council will hold a public hearing on March 16, 2006. City Council will request that the regulations be distributed to County and State agencies for their review. Another public hearing will be held April 19th, 2006 in front of the Pinellas Planning Council. On May 2, 2006, a public hearing will be held in front of the Board of County Commissioners. On August 17, 2006, the regulations will return to the City Council for second reading and final public hearing. Upon approval any final edits will be transmitted to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA a state agency) and other review agencies for final review. Adoption will be complete on October 30, 2006.

Throughout the months of March and April there will be a number of public forums held around the City where property owners may meet with City staff and review the regulations and provide input. These sessions will allow interested parties individual time with a staff member to ask specific questions concerning their property or surrounding properties they may have specific interest in. These meeting times will be announced in the near future and will be held in several locations throughout the City.

Under the proposed LDRs all aspects of the current Chapter 16 and Chapter 29 of the City code will be reorganized into one chapter. The new chapter 16 will start with basic information and get more specific during each section. The purpose of this reorganization is to allow all information concerning development to be located in one convenient and well organized chapter.

The Zoning Districts themselves are organized following the VISION 2020 format of NEIGHBORHOODS, CORRIDORS AND CENTERS. Each of these categories is divided into sub district which relates to the traditional pattern of our City established prior to WWII and the suburban pattern which developed after WWII. Unlike the "one size fits all" approach of the past regulations, the proposed regulations will address the existing context of City's established pattern and work to reinforce and enhance this pattern.

The application of the new zoning categories was done very conservatively. In general terms if you live in a single-family neighborhood now, you will have

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single-family zoning under the new proposal. The rules will allow neighborhoods and interested citizens to better predict what a new project will look like. This is because basic design standards will be put into each district so that any new construction or redevelopment will have to fit into the neighborhood context. In some of the more traditional neighborhoods front porches will be required. In suburban neighborhoods improved aesthetics of the garage door will be required. Suburban neighborhood will have larger yard requirements than traditional neighborhoods which have smaller front yards.

Please visit the City's web site and review the proposed regulations. This has been a long and involved process that has many hours of volunteer efforts put forward by the community. Your efforts will guide quality redevelopment for years to come in St. Petersburg. Please join us at the January meeting to discuss the proposed regulations.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

LDR's guide all built development and redevelopment within the City. They regulate building and site uses, occupancy loads, parking standards, building sizes, and in some cases, design standards. More generally, they are responsible for creating the overall framework of the City and directing the urban form of our community.

The proposed LDRs will recognize the built out character of our City. The regulations will reinforce the traditional patterns of development where the City was built out prior to World War II, and the suburban pattern of our City created after the 1940's. The LDR's will assist in creating practical, quality development and redevelopment, that is predictable and consistent with the goals of the citizenry, as well as practical for the development community. In addition to some of the regulations regarding the Zoning Districts, here is a brief description regarding some of the other issues that have arisen along the process and some of the more interesting items that will be included in the proposed regulations.

## PUBLIC INPUT, PLANNING COMMISSION AND BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

You may recall concern expressed over the limiting of public input to the development process. This mostly related to the proposal to eliminate the Board of Adjustment (BOA) and replace that entity with a hearing officer and taking some duties away from the Planning Commission (PC) and shifting those duties to the City Council. Under the proposed draft, the hearing officer has been eliminated. The name of the BOA will change to the COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMISSION but will maintain all of the same duties including public notice and being aired on Channel 35. The Planning Commission will retain all of its current functions including full public notice and its meetings being aired on Channel 35.

## THE HEIGHT AND INTENSITY OF DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

The downtown districts will better direct the intensity of development toward the center of the downtown with less intense development towards

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the edges where the downtown abuts residential neighborhoods. The bonus system which is in place now will stay. However, the bonuses have been redefined so that they are clearly written and better benefit the creation of a street level pedestrian environment. Bonuses will also provide for the protection of historic buildings, assist with affordable housing, and improve mass transit.

## **GARAGE APARTMENTS**

Some of the traditional neighborhood (Denoted by the Districts NT-1, NT-2 and NT-4) will allow the creation of new garage apartments. However, new garage apartments have to follow very strict standards. They must provide off-street parking and must address privacy issues between adjacent neighbors.

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The proposed LDR's will have an affordable housing component. Part of the component is to allow garage apartments as described above. There will also be slight density bonuses provided to allow the creation of a slight increase in the number of units along Corridors and within the Centers of our City. Mixed use development will allow commercial and residential to be built as part of the same project. The new rules will provide the opportunity for large box retail stores, hospitals or even schools to build an accessory housing component along with their development which can offset housing costs of housing to its employees.

## **ALLOWING MORE MIXED USE ZONING DISTRICTS**

Along the Corridors mixed use will be allowed. This creates a mixing of offices and residential in low intensity corridors, the construction of townhouse rows and in some cases, when commercial is appropriate, it will allow retail too. In traditional areas of the City this will look like the Grand Central District that has seen a tremendous renaissance in the last few years. In suburban areas Corridors might become lined with townhomes or low rise apartment buildings that can buffer the neighborhoods from the corridor traffic.

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# Pinellas Living Green Expo

Hosted by CONA

Admission is free for attendees.

**Saturday, June 17**

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Sunday, June 18**

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

The Coliseum, St. Petersburg

**Pinellas Living Green Expo is a FREE educational event focusing on smart energy solutions. Participants will learn how to **save money, save resources, and protect our environment for future generations.****

The **Pinellas Living Green Expo** is a **FREE**, fun-filled family event that helps residents make informed decisions and take action to lead more healthy and sustainable lives with less impact on the environment. The expo features workshops on a variety of topics: music, art and food demonstrations, and special activities for youth and children as well as tours.

## **Be a part of it!**

We invite you to participate in the first annual Pinellas Living Green Expo. This two-day event will provide information, ideas, resources, products, and motivation to live more sustainably.

**Admission is free for attendees.**

Information on becoming an Exhibitor and Sponsorship Opportunities are available on the website.

There will also be downloadable black and white ads to use in your neighborhood newsletters. Please help us to spread the word about this amazing event.

## **What are the Expo's goals?**

The Pinellas Living Green Expo provides real solutions for people to live better, healthier lives with less impact on the environment. The Expo connects people who are interested in making a positive difference in both their lives and in their communities.

## **The Pinellas Living Green Expo aims to do this by:**

- Educating people about the environmental impacts of daily living and the concepts and cost savings of sustainability
- Connecting people with environmentally friendly products, businesses, services and resources
- Building a citizen base that will adopt "living green" practices
- Gaining greater public participation and support for better government policies that support smart energy solutions.

**[www.pinellaslivinggreenexpo.org](http://www.pinellaslivinggreenexpo.org)**



# 2006 CONA Membership

2006 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 2006!*

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: \_\_\_\_\_



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## **Minutes for December 2006 CONA Board Meeting**

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- Scheduled for the Father's Day Weekend, (June 16/17), admission to the coliseum will be free.
- The event will be an annual program with rotating county venues.
- Many departments of city and county governments are expected to participate.
- Steve enumerated many other organizations that have indicated their plans to participate, and others that are being actively solicited. Shelly Schwartz is serving as the Program Chairman.
- ◆ Greg Karpinsky gave us an update for the CONA Leadership Program for which the 2006 schedule is now finalized.
- ◆ In keeping with the tradition of our President's Night Agenda, we then hear progress reports from 16 member neighborhood associations: Riviera Bay Civic, North Kenwood, Magnolia Heights, Disston Heights Civic, Greater Pinellas Point Civic, Jungle Terrace Civic, Old Southeast, Snell Isle Property Owners, Historic Kenwood, Grand Central Business District, Ponce De Leon, Historic Roser Park, Americana Cove, Northeast Park, Greater Woodlawn, and Bartlett Park.
- The Secretary appealed to all of the speakers to provide hardcopy of their progress reports in order to collect them for publishing on our web sites.

Our meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

## **Planning Commission to Hold a Public Workshop**

The City of St. Petersburg's Planning Commission will hold a public workshop on Tuesday, January 17, 2006 beginning at 4:00 p.m., in City Council Chambers.

The purpose of this workshop is to solicit citizen input on major issues and provide information regarding the City's 2007 Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR).

Any member of the public may attend and speak at this meeting regarding the major Comprehensive Plan issues. Because it is a workshop, the meeting may be less formal than a typical "public hearing". It is an excellent way to learn more about our Comprehensive Plan and how citizens can have input into the process.



## 2006 Officers

### President

Karl Nurse  
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### First Vice President

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Jungle Terrace  
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### Secretary

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### Treasurer

Annie McWilliams  
Isla Del Sol  
906-4042  
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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 - December 21, 2005

President Karl Nurse called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. commenting on the weird tension in our society aggravated by conflicting perspectives of appropriate terminology for our current holiday celebrations

- ◆ Karl then provided a brief resumé of our two candidates for CONA Treasurer in the upcoming year- Annie McWilliams, and April Gausman.
- ◆ Nominations Chairman Steve Plice then called for each eligible neighborhood representative to come forward and pickup a ballot form. [There were 72 in good standing.] He and Tom Killian then collected the completed ballots and compiled the votes. When the election returns were announced, later in the meeting, we learned that Annie McWilliams will serve as our Treasurer. The unchallenged candidates of Steve's Nominations Committee were: for President, incumbent Karl Nurse, First V.P. Barbara Heck, Second V.P. Tom Killian, and incumbent Secretary Conrad Weiser They will serve as our Executive Board in 2006. Karl thanked all candidates as well as the retiring officers.
- ◆ The Chairman then recognized the newly elected City Councilman, Jeff Danner, a long-standing supporter of CONA.
- ◆ Karl also introduced Paul Swider, the St. Petersburg Times journalists who devotes so much of his reporting to neighborhood activities.
- ◆ He also invited recognition of retiring City Councilman Jay Lasita.
- ◆ We then heard a presentation focused on the Court Watch Program offered by Carole Griffiths, (Disston Heights), and Pat Siracusa, (of District Attorney Bernie McKay's staff).
  - The program locally was organized by Ingrid Comberg of Uptown.
  - The Uptown Coalition was formed to identify and prosecute repeat offenders. Posters are used to display their long offense records.
  - The Program hopes to recruit one or two Court Watch participants from all of the CONA member neighborhoods.
  - Moved, (C. Wilson) CONA establishes a standing committee to support involvement in the Court Watch Program by all of our neighborhoods. [Approved]
- ◆ Steve Plice, (Chair-Steering Committee), then launched a broad ranging discussion of our CONA sponsored Pinellas Living Green Exposition slated for the Coliseum in June of 2006.

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