

CONA Newsletter

The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County

October 2009

CONA's Mayoral Candidates Forum on Neighborhood Issues Oct 21st - 7 to 9 PM Sunshine Center

CONA congratulates all the nominees
and the award recipients at the
13th Annual Mayor's
Neighborhood Awards Social
at the Coliseum, October 13

CONA Board Meeting Wednesday, October 21, 2009

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

Agenda Items:

Mayoral Candidates Forum

Important Upcoming Events:

Nov 3 - Please Vote!

Nov 18 - CONA General Meeting

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Current workings in City and County

Here are your October updates on issues affecting all of us.

ABC-Coalition: All Committee Interim Reports and a draft consolidation summary are available for viewing. Please check the ABC website at www.abc-baseball.com/news/presentations.

REMEMBER!!! Free Foreclosure Counseling: Neighborhood Housing Services provides “free” counseling assistance to help homeowners in foreclosure manage their foreclosure or remediate their mortgage. They also provide Home Buyer Education courses designed to help people achieve the dream of home ownership. Go to <http://www.stpetehs.org> for more information.

www.crimereports.com The new online crime information service, updated daily, provides crime information for every area of the city. The website contains the past six months of “calls for service” information. Locations are mounted on the familiar “Google Maps”. You select the dates, the crime categories and the location. There is also an additional link (not SPPD) to the FDLE sex offender database maintained by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE). Dr. Gene Webb, SPPD IT manager, will visit any neighborhood association to train your Crime Watch group how to use the website. CONA's Public Safety Committee also will assist in setting up trainings for the neighborhoods and Crime Watch coordinators.

Waterfront Park Centennial: Peter Belmont and Cathy Martin are chairing the Steering Committee planning this 2010 year long event. New Year's Eve will start the celebration with a family oriented fun event highlighting some of the historic features of our waterfront parks. In partnership with many other groups, activities will be taking place in all of the waterfront parks from North Shore to Poynter Park. Volunteers are needed for all these events. To get involved, volunteer or donate resources, contact Peter Belmont at peterbelmont@earthlink.net.

Pier Task Force: CONA VP Will Michaels and DNA President Marilyn Olsen are serving on this 20 member Pier Task Force. Will chairs the Design Sub-committee. The Task Force is charged with providing multiple redevelopment alternatives for the Pier, identifying the estimated operating subsidy, reviewing the status of the Pier and identifying funding estimates for alternatives. The Task Force recommendations are due to City Council no later than February 25, 2010.

Land Development and Historic Resources Committee

Representatives of CONA recently met with the Mayor and his staff and with the City Council to review pending issues related to historic preservation. These included landmarking the Detroit Hotel and measures to make the transfer of development rights (TDRs) process easier to use.

A major CONA priority is the landmarking of the Detroit Hotel. The Detroit is the city's most historic building. It was virtually the first building constructed in St. Pete (the train station was the first). The Detroit was built by the Russian Peter Demens and his largely African American crew who brought the Orange Belt Railway to the city. The hotel is named after city co-founder John C. Williams' home city. It served as the city's commercial and social center for many years. Its guest list is a Who's Who ranging from Will Rogers to John F. Kennedy. The Mayor has reaffirmed his support of landmarking the Detroit. Saint Petersburg Preservation has recently filed an application with the city to initiate the landmarking. A hearing is scheduled for October 16, 9AM, at City Hall before the Community Preservation Commission. You may register your personal support of the landmarking by emailing the city at hispres@stpete.org with a copy to stpetepreservation@gmail.org.

The transfer of development rights process allows the owner of historic property to sell their development rights to a developer who can then use those rights to build a bigger building than would otherwise be allowed by code somewhere else in the city. Once the owner of the historic property sells their development rights, they can no longer build a larger building on their property. This greatly reduces the incentive to some day demolish the historic building in order to build a new building. The funds received by the sale of the rights are used to maintain the historic building to the extent needed. Otherwise they may be used at the discretion of the owner. As an example, the Snell Arcade has been certified for 609,000 square feet in development rights. If these were sold for \$5 per square foot the Snell would receive over \$3 million.

Under the current code developers may obtain increased development rights by either contributing to various city funds or directly purchasing rights from a historic property owner. It's much easier to write a check to a city fund than to negotiate the purchase of rights directly from an owner. CONA has supported Saint Petersburg Preservation's proposal is to create a historic fund so developers can just write a check to that. Moneys contributed to the fund would then be used to purchase rights from historic property owners. Also it is proposed that when a new development displaces a historic property, the developer must use the historic fund to obtain additional development rights rather than one of the other funds. Additionally it has been proposed that the city's oldest buildings, such as the Detroit and St. Peters Cathedral, receive bonus development rights to help assure their landmarkings. The City Council Public Safety and Infrastructure Committee chaired by Karl Nurse has requested the city to draft ordinances providing for these changes. Mayor Baker has also stated his support.

Maximize your energy S.A.V.I.N.G.S.

October is Energy Awareness Month, and there's no better time than the present to fall into significant energy S.A.V.I.N.G.S. By taking a careful look at the ways you use electricity in your home, you can make a significant dent in your electric bill.

To maximize your energy S.A.V.I.N.G.S. potential:

Sign up for EnergyWiseSM. Earn monthly credits on your energy bill when you allow Progress Energy Florida to temporarily cycle power off and on to your electric water heater, heating or air conditioning if there is an unusually high demand for power in your community. You could save more than \$145 a year on your energy bill.

Adjust your thermostat. Set the A/C at 78 degrees or warmer in the summer months and 70 degrees or cooler in the winter months and save up to \$299 a year.

Verify your water temperature. You could save up to \$85 a year by changing your water heater temperature from 140 degrees to 120.

Invest in compact fluorescent bulbs. Replacing just eight frequently used light bulbs with compact fluorescent ones can lead to an annual energy savings of up to \$140.

Note your thermostat's fan switch setting. Switch it to auto and save up to \$25 per month.

Go "green" in the laundry room. Switch from hot water to cold and save up to 50 cents a load. Hang clothes to dry for added savings.

Scrutinize your energy use with a free Home Energy Check. This is the best and lowest-cost way to get the most out of your energy S.A.V.I.N.G.S. efforts. Through this free program, a Progress Energy Florida energy advisor will offer a customized analysis of your home's energy use and recommendations on how you can save money on your energy bill. This is also the only way to qualify for valuable rebates Progress Energy Florida offers toward home energy improvements.

To find a full list of Progress Energy's 100 energy-saving tips and valuable rebates, or to sign up for a free Home Energy Check, visit www.savethe-watts.com or call 1-877-364-9003.

The savings listed above are based on a typical home of approx. 1850 sq. ft. with an annual kWh usage of 15,655 and are calculated at \$.13/kWh for simplification and are based upon engineering assumptions and approximations from PEF Base Study, DOE, and Energy Star. Actual savings may differ.

LOOKING AT POWER IN A NEW LIGHT



CONA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MINUTES

The Sunshine Multi-Service Center - September 16, 2009

- President Barbara Heck welcomed our guests and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag.
- Treasurer April Gausman made her August report, noting a current balance of \$1,617.66.
- Membership Chair noted three new member associations: Pasadena Bear Creek, Northeast Terraces, and The M.L.K. Business District.
- Ingrid Comberg spoke of our CONA Leadership Program.
 - We had a show of numerous hands from Leadership Alumni in our audience.
 - Ingrid noted that Pasadena Bear Creek has participated in our Leadership Program in prior years.
 - CONA President encouraged member neighborhood associations to sponsor members unable to pay the \$75. CONA Leadership fee.
- Judy Ellis Chair of the Nominations Committee announced that President Barbara Heck will retire and that 2nd. V.P. Will Michaels will be a candidate for that office. The other officers have agreed to remain as candidates for 2010.
 - Other association members, offering their appropriate skills as CONA Officers and Committee Chairs, were urged to contact Judy and her committee to be included in their slate of candidates to be announced at our November meeting.
 - Nominations from the floor will be accepted during the November CONA meeting. The elections will be held at our December meeting.
- Will Michaels offered a brief update of the work of his LDR & Historic Preservation Committee.
 - The city has agreed to work with us to facilitate historic site recognition for property owners who are seeking that preservation status.
 - The Mayor is supporting our efforts to promote historic recognition for the Detroit Hotel, so closely related to the early founders of our city.
- Dianne Kilbourne has accepted the Chair of our CONA Energy and Environment Committee replacing Jason Diviki a City Counsel Candidate.
 - They are seeking to identify and promote local neighborhood association initiatives to upgrade environmental concerns and energy efficiency.
 - Government and Progress Energy "Green" rebate programs will be promoted with targeted neighborhoods.
- Cass Rael Sr. made his last appeal to offer CONA Ray's baseball tickets for their game with The Yankees on October third.
- City Councilman, (and former CONA President), introduced a planned new program to reward efforts to make our city more "Green" through a series of rebates on our utility bills that would, in part, be funded by a proposed federal stimulus grant of \$390 M. This stimulus grant would be proposed in competition with many other applicants. It must illustrate the local "Green" efforts that will be funded.
 - Karl's concept calls for a rebate of the city taxes charged for the "Base Rate" increment of our electric bills as well as a rebate of the tax on the "Fuel Charge" increment. These rebates would be a reward for energy use reductions reflected on the electric bills.
 - The stimulus grant would make up the tax revenue loss to the city during this limited duration program.
 - Progress Energy already has in place, the accounting measures necessary to implement this program
 - The rewards for reduced energy consumption will flow to rental landlords, (a group often reluctant to invest in efficiency measures), as well as to homeowners.
 - This program will promote jobs for many facets of our construction and home repair industries.
 - These rebates, coupled with the existing Progress Energy efficiency reward programs will bring the costs of some "Green" projects to near zero.
- The next feature of our program was introduced by Rick Mussett of the city's Development Office. His presentation focused on our Baywalk Development. That city core development has changed owners and management. He introduced Thomas McGeachy, Managing Principal, of the new management team Ciminelli, who will manage retail and restaurant operations.
 - Mr. McGeachy made it clear that there are two owners and two management companies at Baywalk: the movie operations, (Muvico), and all other spaces, (i.e. the retailers and restaurants).
 - The opening months, (late 2000), saw foot traffic of 2.5 to 3 M visitors.
 - A movie complex for downtown St. Pete. is deemed essential by many.
 - We heard of numerous improvement, (planned and in progress), for improving the safety as well as the pleasurable enjoyment of all Baywalk visitors. Several security improvements in the garage are being implemented. Teenage curfews are going to be imposed.
- Ciminelli and Muvico have agreed to substantial capital investment improvements.
- A prominent concern of Ciminelli and many of their retail clients is the quality of the experience of pedestrians traveling from the garage to the central mall of Baywalk. To improve the comfort level of our visitors and to reduce negative impact of the ambient crowd, it has been deemed necessary to vacate the public sidewalk along the north side of 2nd Avenue, allowing Baywalk management to control the foot traffic as private property.
 - Vacation rather than sale or special permitting was said the best solution. Signage to delineate the public vs. the private property areas would be installed.
 - The legal ability to eject undesirable individuals is key to assuring the quality of the visitor's experience at Baywalk.
- The 2nd Avenue sidewalk vacation question will be debated at City Council on October first. ALL INTERESTED CITIZEN'S WERE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND.
- Curtis Rorebeck of the Equity Rental Organization provided several other details of Baywalk improvement work in progress, including lighting, remodeled rest rooms and new escalators.
 - He cited several new restaurants coming that would be "Affordable".
 - He reiterated the need for the city to vacate the 2nd. Avenue sidewalk.
- The Baywalk presenters turned to address any questions from the floor.
 - Responding to the safety issue, we heard that a larger video surveillance system is being installed, the Police Ready Room will be in the center of the garage, as will be their Segway Scooter Park. [We were reminded that horse mounted patrols are about to be added.]
 - Unaccompanied teens will be excluded after 9 PM some nights, 10 PM others.
 - It was wondered if other downtown businesses, (especially restaurants), may also demand vacancy for their sidewalk areas?
 - It was questioned if Baywalk would be willing to fund for other teenage activity programs, (elsewhere), in return for excluding some of these idle youths from the complex at night? [Agreed- take under consideration.]
- The Baywalk presenters threatened to discontinue and further promotional efforts if their vacancy petition to City Council is denied.
 - It was argued that crime and assaults not protesters and panhandlers that have deteriorated the public perception of Baywalk.
- Ciminelli has committed \$6 M to upgrading Baywalk, a major portion of which will be allocated rent reduction offers to attract new retailers & restaurants.
- Our next feature for the evening was a slide show presentation by John Bradley, Jr. a Senior Planner with TBARTA, (Tampa Bay Area Rapid Transit Authority). [TBARTA is a Regional Authority covering 7 counties].
 - Their planning is responsible for passengers and freight.
 - They have devoted 2 years to the development of a Regional Master Plan.
 - TBARTA partners with government agencies at every level, with local MPO organizations, and all bus system operators.
 - City Councilman Jeff Danner is on the TBARTA Board.
 - We were reminded that Sunrail is not an organization affiliated with TBARTA.
 - Travel traffic charts were shown depicting years 2030 and 2050.
 - Federal funding is usually at a 50% level, with Florida funding some of the remaining project costs.
 - Their construction planning is based on local affordability not tax driven.
- The St. Pete. Police Departments Gene Webb made a presentation about our new Crime Reports Web Site.
 - S.PPD. will hold a training seminar, for this new data system in the Sunshine Senior Center on October 6th. This program is available for presentation at Neighborhood Crime Watch Meetings throughout the city.
 - As of October 30th, all police patrol cars will mount laptop computers.
 - We heard briefly of a forthcoming computer program called "Cop Logic".
- We were urged to pickup a new handout from the Codes Department on Snipe signs. Remember neighborhood meeting signs must also comply.
- New Business:
 - Riviera Bay Yard Sale will be October 9 thru 11
 - The Women's Half Marathon will be November 22. 5,000 runners expected. Presenters avail. for you to your neighborhood. Volunteers needed during the race.
 - The 8th Greater Woodlawn Garage Sale will be held October 24th.
 - The October 21st. CONA Monthly Meeting will be devoted to a Mayoral
 - Candidates Forum with Tom Killian serving as the Moderator. Questions will be collected at the meeting.
 - The Old Northeast will issue maps for their Halloween Homes Tour October 30th.

Our meeting concluded at 9 PM, Conrad Weiser, Secretary

October President's Message

By Barbara McCormick Heck

VOTE:

November 3rd – Mayoral and Council Elections. Your vote is very important. Take the time to attend as many Candidate Forums and Debates as your schedule permits. Ask questions of each candidate on issues concerning you and your neighborhood. Listen to their answers. Then you decide who will do the best job for you and for your neighborhood. Finally, be certain to vote. You will be choosing the leaders who will move us forward for the next four years. These are very challenging times. Choose wisely.

ATTEND:

CONA's Mayoral Candidates Forum – October 21st. Mark your calendars and please join the two mayoral candidates at our October 21st Forum. This is your chance to ask questions relating to your neighborhood issues and challenges.

REPEAT:

A Message to all the Candidates. CONA does not take a stand on any particular candidate, but we definitely do take stands on those issues affecting our neighborhoods. CONA will work with whomever the residents elect as our Mayor and our new Council members. CONA

encourages your consensus building with our neighborhoods. CONA encourages your cooperation with all our neighborhoods. CONA wants our neighborhood voices to be heard – loud and clear. Each neighborhood may have differing priorities, but we want to work with you and city staff to achieve our goals. Listen to us and find ways to help us. Together we can make a difference. Together we can make St Petersburg a wonderful place to live and raise our families.

VOLUNTEER:

Your help is needed. Every public agency, civic group, church group, etc. is suffering from personnel cutbacks and funding shortfalls. In a month, we will be celebrating Thanksgiving. And for some, there will be no "thanksgiving". You may not have much money to donate or even lots of time to volunteer, but each of us can help in one small way or another. Offer to take someone to the grocery store, to the pharmacy. Bring the newspaper up to the door of a shut-in. Come by just to talk for a few minutes. Sometimes something as tiny as just a smile and a thank-you to a service person makes his/her day. (And it does not cost you anything). It's the little things that really count. Please make a real effort to "help" over the next month.

City of St. Petersburg Garbage Pick-up Holiday Schedule

Holidays will sometimes change your scheduled garbage pick-up day. Here is the schedule for November and December, 2009.

November - Thursday, Nov 26 collection will be on Wednesday
Monday, Tuesday and Friday will remain the same

December - Friday, Dec 25 collection will be on Thursday
Thursday collection will be on Wednesday
Monday, Tuesday collections will remain the same

Brush sites are closed on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day

You can also access this information at
www.stpete.org/sanitation/residential_collection/index.asp

www.stpetepreservation.org



St. Petersburg Preservation, Inc. will begin the new season of its popular downtown walking tours on Saturday, October 10th at 10:00 am. Tours depart from the historic Detroit Hotel on the northeast corner of Central Avenue and Second Street South. Tours are free, but a \$5 donation is appreciated.

WE'RE LOOKING AT POWER IN A NEW LIGHT.

INTRODUCING A **BALANCED SOLUTION** FOR THE FUTURE.

At Progress Energy, we're using innovative and environmentally responsible solutions to meet our area's growing energy needs. We are expanding our energy-efficiency programs to help you save energy and money.

We are supporting advanced technologies like solar power and plants fueled by vegetation waste. We are investing in existing power plants to

ENERGY EFFICIENCY
ALTERNATIVE ENERGY
STATE-OF-THE-ART PLANTS



ensure their safe, efficient operation while assessing the need for new plants and better ways to get electricity to you. The result is clean, reliable, affordable power – for today and tomorrow. To learn more about our bright thinking, visit progress-energy.com.





**2009 Officers and
Executive Board Members**

President

Barbara Heck - Snell Isle
894-6020 - barbara@theheckhouse.com

First Vice President

Mike Gulley - Coquina Key
244-8374 - jmgulley1@hotmail.com

Second Vice President

Will Michaels - Bahama Shores
420-9195 - wmichaels2@tampabay.rr.com

Secretary

Conrad Weiser - Edgemoor
522-5008 - conrad33702@verizon.net

Treasurer

April Gausman - Historic Uptown
244-1896 - april@realestatebyapril.com

CONA Leadership

Ingrid Comberg - Historic Uptown
821-2192

CourtWatch Committee

Carole Griffiths - Disston Heights
522-7206 - cgriff6721@aol.com

Membership

Barbara Hawkins - Greater Pinellas Point
866-1747 - be.hawkins@verizon.net

Nominating Committee

Judy Ellis - Lakewood Estates
864-3957 - jellis5610@tampabay.rr.com

Public Safety Committee

Jeff Frank - Live Oaks
322-0488 - kirstenjeffinn@yahoo.com

CONA General Meetings

3rd Wed of each month

CONA Board Meetings

2nd Wed of each month

Frequently Called Numbers

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

SPPD Community Service Numbers:

District: 1 551-3181
District 2 551-3182
District 3 551-3183

CONA Newsletter Deadlines

Copy Deadline (NEW):
25th of each month

In Hand:

2nd Wednesday of month

Layout: Mo Eppley 686-2146

Coordinator: Mike Gulley 244-8374

**The Council of Neighborhood
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P.O. Box 13693
St. Petersburg, FL 33733-3693**

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CONA ELECTIONS ARE COMING UP

The Nominating Committee is presently putting together the slate of those who wish to run for office for 2010. If you've never been part of the Executive Board, perhaps this is the time to consider pitching in to help run this very important organization. Consider running for:

President
First Vice President
Second Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer

Or consider heading one of the committees: Membership, Audit, Public Safety, Nominating, Leadership.

The slate of candidates will be presented at the November meeting, and the election will be at the December meeting. The Board meets at 6:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month.