



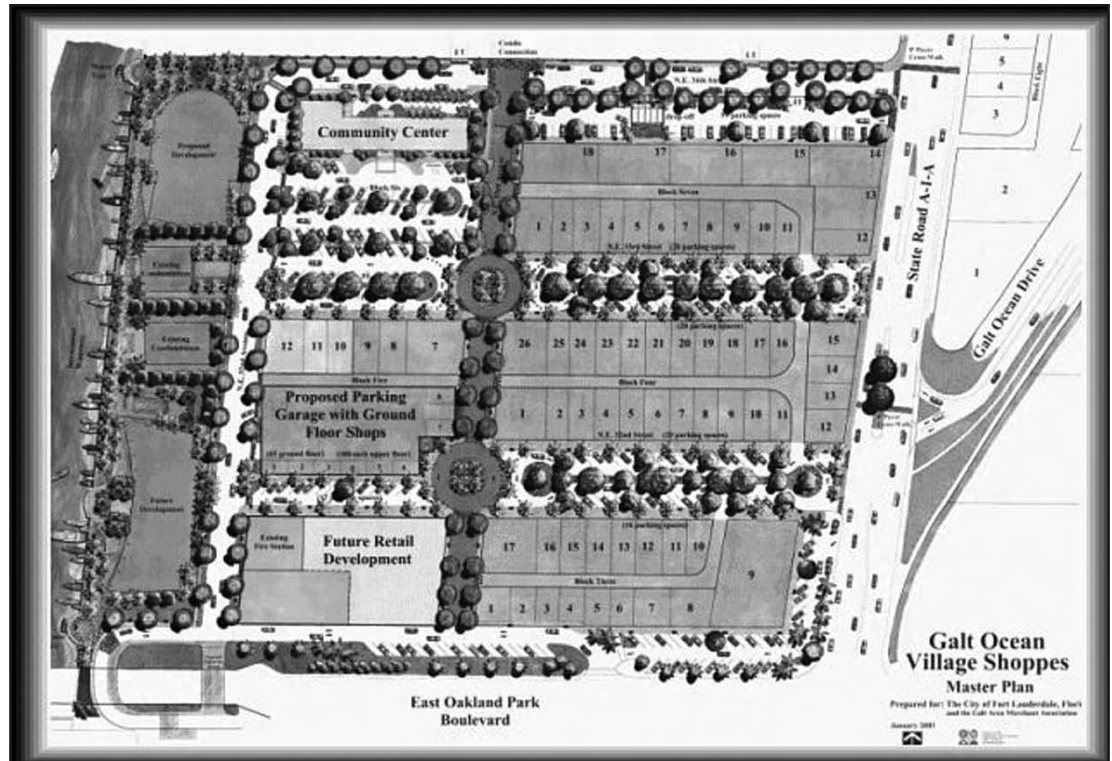
The Galt Mile News

"An Official Publication of the Galt Mile Community Association"

November 2008

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THE GALT MILE'S MISSING MASTER PLAN

By Eric Berkowitz

On July 14th, Fort Lauderdale City Manager George Gretsas hosted a presentation entitled "Goals and Objectives - 2008" at the Beach Community Center. The 250 local residents attending the meeting received a "State of the City" style update of Mr. Gretsas' plans "for reducing costs, while improving the quality of life for the residents and businesses in the City of Fort Lauderdale." Gretsas' management team of Assistant City Managers Kathleen Gunn, Stephen Scott and David Hébert also attended the meeting. Anticipating a blizzard of questions following his presentation, Gretsas also packed the audience with Fire Chief James Eddy, Director of Business Enterprises Cate McCaffrey, Building Services Manager Valerie Bohlander, Code Enforcement Manager Mike Maloney, Public Works Director Albert Carbon and the former Executive Officer for Police District 1, Captain Raul Diaz (subsequently promoted to Major of District 3).

After showing a somewhat overproduced PowerPoint portrayal of the City's recovery from the 2003 phantom budget that pushed the municipality to the brink of bankruptcy, the City Manager addressed the progress of various Master Plans underway in Fort Lauderdale. After expressing gratitude to "the 2,000 residents helping to

plan where the City will be in 5, 10 and 15 years down the line," he informed onlookers that "Their work on developing cohesive master plans for neighborhoods will become more evident with time."

Fort Lauderdale's breakneck growth through the 1980s and 1990s left the city continuously playing catch-up, building out the utilities and roads required to enervate every new neighborhood while patching together services for legacy communities. Since Master Plans created to organize this expansion were incessantly raped in Planning and Zoning and City Commission meetings, few successfully achieved fruition.

So many variances were handed out that neighborhoods rarely reflected the wishes of their residents. Lamenting the unpopular Box-like hotels along the Central Beach, City Manager Gretsas commented "Better zoning may have prevented some of the density issues currently facing Central Beach residents." Acknowledging the damage sustained by neighborhoods victimized by developer-prompted political tinkering, the City Manager's presentation intimated a commitment to end that abuse.

Continued on page 3

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Adhering to sensible Master Plans created by community input will preclude neighborhoods from becoming amorphous "works in progress" organized around developers' bottom lines and the campaign "shortfalls" of unscrupulous officials.

One by one, he extolled the virtues of each project and estimated its implementation timetable. Initiated in 2003, the Downtown Master Plan portends a mixed use development of housing, shopping and entertainment with concealed parking garages, vertical open space between towers and Thematic Planning Districts. The New River Master Plan envisions the Riverwalk as a skeleton around which the City must "flesh out" a waterfront promenade connecting the North and South sides of the River and integrates the riverfront back into to surrounding inland neighborhoods while encouraging coherent development for key sites on or near the river. The Riverwalk District Public Realm Plan is expected to kindle its as yet unfulfilled potential as an entertainment, leisure and recreation magnet.

Since the Central Beach Master Plan has been a twenty year work-in-progress, adapting objectives to the shifting character of the community created the impression that areas were haphazardly strung together. From its inception with the 1986 Central Beach Task Force through the recent Central Beach District & Gateway Plans, the neighborhood was victimized by "developmental flexibility," a polite metaphor for the numerous counterproductive variances gifted to predatory developers in exchange for presumably "coincidental" campaign expediencies. The plan finally diversifies the community's offerings, creates needed transportation corridors, develops greenspace, integrates commercial and residential areas and creates alternative destinations to the beach. A considered Intra-coastal boardwalk overlooking the waterfront could further the plan's connectivity goals.

Mixed use projects like the North US-1 Urban Design Plan improved convenience, utilization and aesthetics along one of the city's main transportation corridors while blending each block into its adjacent residential neighborhood. City Manager Gretsas described Master Plans for Parks and Recreation, Fire-Rescue stations across the City, the Fort Lauderdale Beach, Executive Airport, Port Everglades and the WaterWorks 2011 project. Every neighborhood from Sistrunk Boulevard to Birch Road is being planned to reflect the vision of its residents and merchants... with one major exception. Painfully absent is a Galt Ocean Mile Master Plan.

The Florida Department of Transportation is preparing to rehabilitate State Road A1A from north of Flamingo Avenue to just south of Oakland Park Boulevard. Contractors bidding on the lucrative project are charged with improving upon a scope of work that will bring the thoroughfare into compliance with State and local regulations, address traffic safety issues and maintain the neighborhood's character. To address the third objective, Commissioner Christine Teel recommended that they elicit feedback

from the Galt Mile Community Association.

A meeting was scheduled with a consultant and GMCA officials to review the project and clarify relevant safety and aesthetic issues expected to impact the community. Discussion touched on the locally infamous "Galt Triangle", where the southern end of Galt Ocean Drive empties into A1A (North Ocean Boulevard). Inexplicably, drivers heading south on A1A tend to run the traffic light one block north of Oakland Park Boulevard, precipitating repeated accidents with vehicles entering from Galt Ocean Drive and pedestrians crossing A1A. After considering other traffic and pedestrian hot spots, discussion turned to insuring that the outcome was aesthetically consistent with the surrounding neighborhood.

Although Lauderdale-by-the-Sea worked with FDOT to successfully develop their segment of A1A into a beautiful transportation corridor, A1A really earns its reputation as the "Ocean Highway" – a tailored picture postcard beachfront boulevard – as it passes by the Fort Lauderdale beach. The stretch connecting the two is a dilapidated, dreary, dangerous speedway filled with semi-patched potholes. One block east of A1A, the parallel Galt Ocean Drive is adorned with an impressive host of aesthetic amenities such as paved crosswalks, pink aggregate sidewalks, landscaping uplights and decorative lamps. Contrasting the Galt Mile neighborhood's degraded stretch of A1A with these surrounding well-appointed thoroughfares serves to emphasize its similarity to a rank airport perimeter strip.

A cursory review of the scope documentation revealed that up to 4% of the project budget could be used to address landscaping, including hardscape features such as stained sidewalks, stamped roadway elements and decorative lighting along with any trees, plants or shrubs. The discussion considered stylized neighborhood entry portals, lining the street with palm trees, installing aggregate sidewalks, high end lighting and a stamped concrete surface emulating a paved roadway or crosswalks (FDOT prohibits pavers on state roads). However, each individual improvement augurs a prospective battle with an army of State, County and City regulators. Expensive traffic studies, engineering and environmental impact reports, demographics and residential density data, product comparisons and fiscal viability projections are only part of the prerequisite documentation required to elicit a Finding of Sufficiency by the Local Planning Agency (LPA).

We lacked all the critical documentation necessary to initiate the community improvements that are either scheduled or already underway in other communities throughout the city. When opportunities such as this FDOT A1A project become available, neighboring communities can simply decide which of their Master Plan's elements should take priority and include them in the project. Since we have no Master Plan,

Continued on page 5

FDEP FOULS GALT MILE BEACH FIX

By Eric Berkowitz

During the September 18th Galt Mile Community Association Advisory Board meeting, several members reported a sudden cessation of the City's beach maintenance activities. The mechanical rake that ordinarily lumbers across the beach shortly after each dawn had been conspicuously absent. Two members said that while enjoying the beach, some of their residents encountered some beach maintenance personnel and inquired why the service was stopped. They were told "A suspension was instituted to protect Sea Turtle nests." Confused by the inexplicable change, the residents never received an explanation clarifying why the previously acceptable standard cleanup procedures suddenly constituted a threat to the endangered Sea Turtles. Association representatives also expressed confusion over whether this policy extended to our individual beachfront associations, all of which perform similar daily beach maintenance activities.

Following up on the issue, GMCA President Pio Ieraci contacted the city to elicit a rationale for the service cutback. On Monday, September 22, 2008, He received a digital "multi-mail" that was sent to beachfront neighborhood associations as well as relevant County and City officials. The email was sent by Donald Morris, the City's Beach Community Director of Development.

Morris explained that deploying the heavy equipment ordinarily used to mechanically rake and smooth the sand had been prohibited by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC). He confirmed that turtle nest markers were washed or blown away by Tropical Storms Fay and Hanna, and Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. Until all the displaced turtle nest markers could be reinstalled, City cleaning crews were constrained to hand-picking debris (excluding seaweed) along the entire beach from the Yankee Clipper to Oakland Park Boulevard (approximately 4 miles). Although this emergency substitute procedure soon proved inadequate for maintaining even minimum basic standards of coastal hygiene, Galt Mile recipients of the Don Morris email noticed their beach was enigmatically excluded from this token effort.

Beach Waste Ripens

Within several days, mounds of seaweed piled up along the beach. Waste from Cruise ships and other vessels soon became entangled in the rotting kelp, peppering the beach with organic incubators for bacterial communities. The net result was a mixture of unidentifiable mush oozing from what appeared to be decomposing marine skeletal material adorned with rotting flesh, plastic wrap, rusting construction materials, glass shards and broken bottles, multi-colored prophylactics, decomposing vegetation, broken wooden doweling and planks, tin cans, a rubber glove, cigarette filters, a license plate from Quebec, an oar, rubber hosing, batteries and a bicycle seat.

Continued on page 13



Deemed unnecessary - nest markers go unused

The Galt Mile News

The Galt Mile News is the official newsletter of the Galt Mile Community. Published 12 times a year, this publication is designed to educate the Galt residents of neighborhood-oriented current events and issues, and to offer residents Galt-specific discounts from various local merchants.

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these opportunities are either lost or severely hampered by unaddressed regulatory pitfalls. If the City had financed a Galt Mile Master Plan, the included improvements would benefit from having been reviewed and approved by the community and fully compliant with every jurisdictional requirement, facilitating passage through regulatory checkpoints that have consistently served as developmental dead-ends.

In annual presentations to the Galt Mile Community Association Advisory Board, Mayor Naugle repeatedly pointed out that we receive in public services, developmental assistance, municipal maintenance, etc. an embarrassingly small fraction of our tax contribution. The Galt Mile community contributes to city coffers almost as much as the downtown business district yet receives far fewer resources. By leaving attendees to foment a blend of anger, disgust and resentment at having been fiscally short-changed, the mayor hoped to elicit support for cutting taxes. Instead, he stirred a demand for a greater share of municipal resources. He inadvertently fueled an expectation for fair, if not equal, consideration.

The Galt Mile has always been uniquely self-sufficient. We buried our electrical lines a decade before it became a standard suburban strategy. We created our own environment, evolving a sandblown beachfront side street into an elegant internationally-known boulevard. Our community leaders realized that city politics precluded municipal investment into a high end neighborhood in which half the residents are snowbirds and snowflakes that vote elsewhere. The Galt Mile Improvement Project, this community's only comprehensive neighborhood development effort, was organized and paid for by the neighborhood's residents. The city's contribution was limited to certain engineering drawings, expeditious permit approval and a promise to maintain the improvements paid for via a community self-assessment.

The Galt Mile's few other improvement projects were either minor "bones" occasionally thrown to the neighborhood or part of some larger city, county or state development. The "Miles Corner" project, wherein the intersection of A1A and Oakland Park Boulevard was rehabilitated, had more to do with cleaning up the northern access to the Fort Lauderdale Beach area than with enhancing this neighborhood.

Continued on page 9

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COMMISSIONER KEN KEECHL'S CORNER

“Broward’s Tough Economic Times”

By Broward County Commissioner Ken Keechl

**Broward County Commissioner Ken Keechl recognizes that today’s prevailing pessimism is inversely proportional to the ebbing confidence we have in our economic environment. The willingness with which we ignored lessons of the recent past (remember Long Term Capital?) catalyzed the inevitable collapse of a fiscal house of cards. Financing guidelines implemented by the mortgage banking industry were long deemed irresponsible and dangerous by the Federal Reserve Board. The protective banking and insurance regulations discarded as impediments to increased profits were replaced by policies arguably more appropriate for the gaming industry. Despite the frightening repercussions of this multi-institutional implosion, our District 4 Commissioner is unwilling to sink into a melancholy funk. Taking solace in the cyclical nature of our economy, Keechl identifies a silver lining in this threatening climate.*

Commissioner Keechl contends that the recession reduced the need for county government to rely on political will for motivation to exercise fiscal responsibility. In a nutshell, the Broward Commission was forced to do what the rest of us are doing: learn to do more with less. Six months ago, his expressed plan to cut an additional \$100 million from the 2009 County Budget elicited a benign skepticism from peers, bureaucrats and a host of overtly vested program beneficiaries. He was characterized as naive for believing that the Commission’s March reform commitments wouldn’t melt like butter as September approached.

*Incredibly, after reducing 2008 budget spending by \$100 million, the County Commission knocked off another \$87 million from this year’s product. Despite receiving some unexpected help from greedy mortgage bankers and regretful speculators in setting the stage for the Fiscal Year 2009 austerity measures, Keechl did not look a gift horse in the mouth. He paints the huge spending cut “as a step in the right direction.” Keechl’s “matter-of-fact” attitude toward the Budget reductions isn’t surprising, given its high ranking on his early 2008 wish list. In fact, Commissioner Keechl identified “making living in Broward more affordable” as one of the primary reasons he ran for the District 4 seat. Against all odds, he did just that! Read On... [Editor]**

It shouldn’t be a surprise to anyone reading this article that our local, state, and national economies are suffering. Banks are collapsing, the stock market is plummeting, unemployment is rising, and home values are decreasing. At every event I attend, your neighbors are telling me that they are worried—very worried. I get it. It’s a scary time to be raising a family or running a business. And guess what? It’s a scary time to be one of nine Commissioners in charge of a County government as large as Broward County.

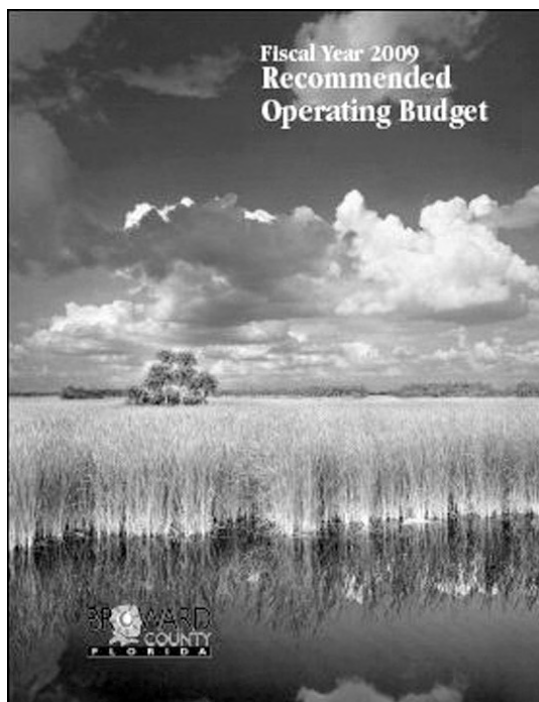
But it’s an exciting time as well. And the solution to our temporary economic problems isn’t difficult. Quite simply, as a governmental entity, Broward County must learn to do more with less. And this is imperative because we know from experience that when the economy suffers, the need for county services increases.

By a 7-2 vote, we have just approved Broward County’s FY 09 budget. And for the second year in a row, I have kept my campaign promise to never raise your property taxes. Similar to last year’s budget, the Broward County Commission has cut its FY 09 budget by approximately \$87,000,000.00. Before you elected me in November of 2006 to be your County Commissioner, it was common for the Broward County Commission to increase its budget year after year after year. Well, those days are over and property tax relief—at least at the County level—is finally becoming a reality.

How were we able to do this, especially in these tough economic times? By being fiscally prudent and rejecting historical spendthrift budgets. For the second year in a row, we have continued to consolidate our vast organizational structure (and eliminate unnecessary jobs); we have deferred capital programs where appropriate; and, as a last resort, we have minimally cut back library and park hours during times of limited utilization. Whenever we reduced or eliminated a program, we assessed the impact and worked diligently to minimize that impact if possible. We started funding “needs” and not “wants”—just like we all do at home every day when balancing our families’ budgets.

In closing, I want to tell you that after having served as your Broward County Commissioner for almost 2 years, I am optimistic about Broward’s economic future. One thing is for certain: this isn’t a time for politics. It’s a time for leadership. And this year’s FY09 budget is a step in the right direction.

**Broward County Commissioner
KEN KEECHL
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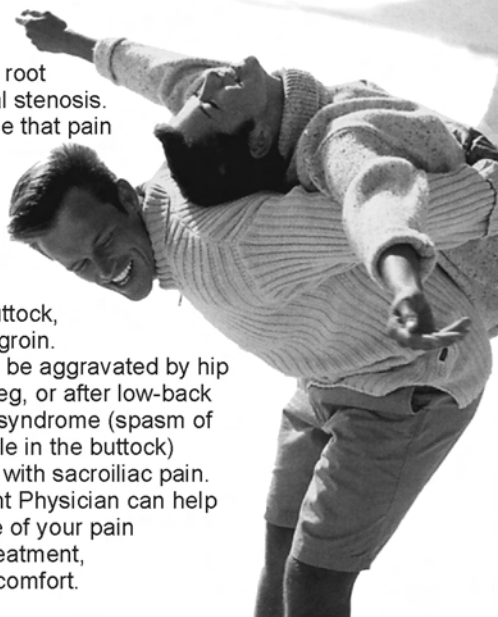
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Commissioner Christine Teel SEES GREEN

As Chairman and Founding Director of the prolific Tripp Scott law firm, Scott enjoyed unparalleled popularity with developers facing complicated land use issues. One of the firm's clients planned to turn the American Golf Club in Coral Ridge into high end McMansions. Keechl's neighbors, aware of his impressive credentials as a land use attorney, looked to Keechl to help thwart the developer's plan to build 61 homes on the 18-hole public Golf Course. As news of the issue spread, so did Keechl's reputation as a local organizer, environmental defender and civic leader. Given the overwhelming local interest in beach preservation and controlled shoreline development, Keechl's platform serendipitously coalesced around his predisposition to protect local natural resources. Keechl's defeat of Scott spelled defeat for Scott's client. Upon taking his seat in the Commission, Keechl rolled up his sleeves and promised constituents that he would prevent the developmental feeding frenzy from gobbling up Broward's few remaining Golf Courses. Keechl worked with the Planning Services Division to engineer a Golf Course Conversion Study. By a 9-0 vote in July of 2007, the County Commission directed staff to amend Broward's Comprehensive Land Use Plan to strongly discourage golf course conversions. After months of political wrangling, the County Commission approved language that amounted to a poison pill for developers with designs on County golf links.

*With the County Land Use template in place, District 1 City Commissioner Christine Teel opted to follow Keechl's lead and press the issue in the Fort Lauderdale City Commission. The City, as well as other Broward municipalities, must re-tool their Land Use ordinances to conform to Broward's new Land Use Amendment. In her "Green Space" Newsletter, Teel spells out the procedures that lead to compliance with the County Commission's vision. Representing largely overlapping jurisdictions, Teel and Keechl have evolved into an effective team, providing one another access to their respective political back yards. Their shared interest in this endeavor is not golf, but the underlying oceans of greenery that irresistibly attract developmental adulteration. Golf courses are Broward's largest remaining source of unmolested contiguous green space. The 18-step procedural maze that the City is about to navigate is a regulatory footrace with developers for control of these valuable parcels. Since the City Commission is charged with ultimately judging the fate of these resources, Commissioner Teel is constrained to remaining objective and precluded from issuing comments that may be interpreted as prejudicial. Notwithstanding, whether these irreplaceable recreational assets endure or disappear into a blend of Smillion row housing depends on the outcome of this regulatory marathon. READ ON... — editor**

From the Desk of Commissioner Christine Teel - District 1

Preservation and expansion of green space in Fort Lauderdale, especially in District 1, have always been my goals and commitment. During my two terms in office representing you, I have taken the following initiatives to protect, maximize and improve our parks and green spaces:

- Supported the Parks and Recreation Long Range Strategic Plan Initiative
- Successfully obtained funding from Broward County to build a new Community and Tennis Center in George English Park
- Obtained the funds to purchase the land on Bayview Drive for Coral Ridge Park
- Secured the funds to purchase land for a park in Twin Lakes North
- Obtained funding for improvements to Dottie Mancini Park at Imperial Point Hospital
- Successful in the redesign and rebuilding of The Landings open space entryway feature on Federal Highway
- Closely monitor any proposal to change privately owned park or open spaces

At many of the homeowners association meetings I attend, residents have expressed concern about potential development on the land once occupied by American Golf Course. In the spring of 2006 the privately owned Coral Ridge Country Club and American Golf Course were sold. This property is a designated open space on both the county and city Land Use Plans and any thought of compromising this gem was a concern to those of us who value more, not less open space.

The new owners at first put forth a plan to close the American Golf Course, build a number of single family homes on part of the property, and improve and enlarge the private, members-only country club. As they presented their proposal to members of the community, as well as submitting an application to the city, the cry was loud and clear. I had serious concerns and the majority of neighbors were adamant in their opposition to any development on this land.

Now, more than two years after the purchase, the American Golf Course, which had been open to the public, is now closed; the Coral Ridge Country Club continues to operate; the application for building homes has expired; there has been no further contact by the new owners of the property with the city's building department.

Continued on page 18



**In her September 2008 Newsletter, District 1 City Commissioner Christine Teel lays out the City's road map to preserving diminishing tracts of Green Space throughout Fort Lauderdale. Over the past three decades, officials charged with protecting the city's natural resources have instead bartered them as an accommodation to unscrupulous developers. To exemplify the upcoming challenge, Commissioner Teel reviews an incident that served as a wake up call to local public officials about the importance of controlling development. Not surprisingly, it also marked the beginning and the end of two political careers.*

Until 2006, former Broward County Commissioner Jim Scott nurtured a 30 year history of service to Broward County. When elected to the Florida Senate, he rose to the Senate Presidency on a reputation for even-handed bipartisan access. Upon leaving Tallahassee, he was appointed by Governor Jeb Bush in 2000 to the District 4 Commission seat vacated by predecessor Scott Cowan following his guilty plea to election law violations. Despite Republican credentials, Scott thrived in what is largely considered a Democratic stronghold and was subsequently re-elected in 2002. As the only Republican on the Broward Board of County Commissioners, Scott was assigned the responsibility of pressing Broward's agenda in Republican Tallahassee. His fellow Democratic Commissioners relied on Scott to make their case for Land Use Authority, beach restoration, education funds and a litany of other issues controlled in Tallahassee. Consequently, Scott was forced to spend an inordinate amount of time in the Capitol. Combined with his lack of political opposition regularly resulting in low profile automatic re-elections, Scott's visibility to County newcomers was nearly nonexistent. Following Scott's defeat by Ken Keechl, Democratic Statehouse Representative Jack Seiler credited Scott with having delivered "unparalleled political benefits to his Broward constituents during the course of a sterling career."

Scott's "absence of presence" contributed to his political demise, along with a powerful anti-Republican backlash stemming from a nationwide emotional fatigue fueled by a non-stop comedy of errors in Washington. Newcomer Ken Keechl knew that these obstacles facing Scott weren't enough to overcome his picture perfect political pedigree. As Assistant City Attorney for the City of Plantation for 14 years, Keechl protected community interests, preventing developers from turning green spaces into high-end housing. The Coral Ridge resident had only to look into his own back yard for the key to victory.

A few years ago, Commissioner Christine Teel finally won a decade-long fight to repair the collapsed drainage utility under the 32nd Street alley (the city wanted the local merchants to fix the city property). Otherwise, every decade or so, we would get a few trees planted around a decorative monolith in return for providing from 19% to 23 % of the city's tax revenue.

In 2002, after funding preliminary architectural drawings to improve the Galt Ocean Shoppes neighborhood, the city told local merchants that they would have to finance any prospective improvements to City property and cheerfully walked away. After years of futile pleading by the Galt Mile Community Association and Galt Merchants Association President Dr. Alex Leeds, the city finally agreed to make a partial contribution to rehabilitating the area's inadequate street lighting and installing a community entryway via a citywide matching grant program. In contrast, a quick drive down A1A reveals dozens of community entryways wholly funded by the city.

In most neighborhoods, these improvements would be component to a Master Plan that provided for the community's comprehensive development. It would include a timetable, architectural and engineering support, a prioritized construction schedule and the financial wherewithal. When municipal funding became tight, certain aspects would be adjusted or postponed. Absent a Master Plan, similar improvements projected for the Galt Mile neighborhood are simply eliminated.

Two operative guidelines to which a Master Plan must conform are "neighborhood character" and "consistency". City Manager Gretsas said, "We must keep in mind that neighborhoods are the most important parts of the city and must reflect the vision of their inhabitants." It is no coincidence that each of the City's official Master Plans is carefully integrated into a larger adjacent or surrounding jurisdiction as defined by the Fort Lauderdale Comprehensive Plan, considering transportation links, greenway connectivity and blending of commercial and residential areas.

Continued on page 12

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<p>16</p> <p>13.1 Marathon™ Start near Port Everglades on 17th St. 6:13 a.m.</p> <p>Urban Gourmet Market Las Olas Blvd. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Info.: 954-462-4166</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Vice Mayor Christine Teel: Pre-Agenda Meeting Beach Community Center 6 p.m.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>The Doobie Brothers Hard Rock Live Tix.: 954-797-5531</p> <p>Ian Fleming's Chitty Chitty Bang Bang Broward Center (Through 11/30) Info.: 954-462-0222</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>23</p> <p>Urban Gourmet Market Las Olas Blvd. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Info.: 954-462-4166</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Florida Panthers vs. Carolina Hurricanes BankAtlantic Center 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>White Party Week Begins (Through 12/1) Venue Info www.whiteparty.org or 305-576-1234</p> 
<p>30</p> <p>Urban Gourmet Market Las Olas Blvd. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Info.: 954-462-4166</p>	<p>1</p> <p>Vice Mayor Christine Teel: Pre-Agenda Meeting Beach Community Center 6 p.m.</p> <p>GMCA Presidents Council Meeting Place: TBA 7:30 to 9 p.m.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Christmas by the Sea Commercial Blvd. & the beach, LBTS Info.: 954-776-1000</p> <p>Christmas on Las Olas Las Olas Blvd. 6 to 10 p.m.</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>7 15th Holiday Music Fairchild Tropical Garden 6 to 10 p.m. Info.: 305-667-1651 X 3344</p> <p>Sunday Jazz Brunch Riverwalk, Downtown FL 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5985</p> 	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> 	<p>10</p> <p>Four Freshman Holiday Show Broward Center Info.: 954-524-0805</p>

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13

Trans-Siberian Orchestra
BankAtlantic Center
7:30 p.m.

14

Jazz on the Square
The Village Grille
Commercial Blvd. & A1A
7 p.m.
Info.: 954-776-5092

Florida Panthers vs. Detroit Red Wings
BankAtlantic Center, 7:30 p.m.

Riverwalk Get Downtown!
Downtown Ft Lauderdale
5 to 8:30 p.m.
Info.: 954-468-1541

15

Ft Lauderdale Marine Flea Market
War Memorial
Info.: 954-828-5380

Holiday Benefit Flea Market
Flamingo Gardens
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Coastal Tour of US Wines - Speakeasy Style
Gallery One Double Tree
Info.: 954-763-1288

20

Broward County Fair

Ft Lauderdale Stadium
Info.: 954-922-2224

G.M.C.A. Advisory Board Meeting
Nick's Italian Restaurant
11 a.m.

21

Jazz on the Square
The Village Grille
Commercial Blvd. & A1A
7 p.m.
Info.: 954-776-5092



22

27

THAN KSGIVING

28

Jazz on the Square
The Village Grille
Commercial Blvd. & A1A
7 p.m.
Info.: 954-776-5092

Florida Panthers vs. New York Rangers
BankAtlantic Center
7:30 p.m.

29

Downtown Delray Beach
Thanksgiving Weekend Art Festival
Pineapple Grove, Delray
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Info.: 954-472-3755

The 14th Annual Hurricane Showdown
Ft. Lauderdale
(Through 11/30)

4

La Traviata
Florida Grand Opera
Broward Center
Tix.: 954-462-0222

Florida Panthers vs. Buffalo Sabres
BankAtlantic Center
7:30 p.m.

5

Jazz on the Square
The Village Grille
Commercial Blvd. & A1A
7 p.m.

Fort Lauderdale Fall Home Design
& Remodeling Show
(Through 12/7)
Broward Convention Center
Info.: 305-667-9299

6

Hollywood Beach Candy Cane Parade
Hollywood Beach Broadwalk
7 to 10 p.m.
Info.: 954-921-3404

Bonnet House Orchid Fair
(Through 12/7)
Info.: 954-563-5393

Florida Panthers vs. Boston Bruins
BankAtlantic Center
7 p.m.

11

12

Jazz on the Square
The Village Grille
Commercial Blvd. & A1A
7 p.m.

George Balanchine's The Nutcracker
(Through 12/14)
Broward Center
Tix.: 954-462-0222

13

Seminole Hard Rock Winterfest Boat Parade
Intracoastal Waterway
6 p.m.
Info.: 954-767-0686

UPCOMING EVENTS IN OUR AREA

December 14
Pompano Beach Holiday Boat Parade
Intracoastal in Pompano, 6 p.m.
Info.: 954-941-2940

December 20
AC/DC
BankAtlantic Center
Tix.: ticketmaster.com

December 26 - January 15
73rd Annual College Swim Forum
Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Center
Info.: 954-828-4580

December 28
MetroPCS Orange Bowl Basketball Classic
BankAtlantic Center
Tix.: 305-341-4700

December 30 - January 11
Avenue Q, Broadway
Broward Center
Tix.: 954-462-0222

January 3 - 4
Las Olas Art Fair
Las Olas Blvd., 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Info.: 954-472-3755

January 16
Mother/Daughter Afternoon Tea
Fairchild Tropical Garden, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Info.: 305-663-8059



In turn, the City's Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 163, Florida Statutes) is required to be consistent with the State Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 187, Florida Statutes), as well as the Regional and County Comprehensive Plans. Each planning level provides a critical link between the neighborhood, City, State, Regional, and County plans.

For example, it would clearly benefit the entire State if the State DOT adhered to a Master Plan that imposed consistent standards along the entire "Ocean Highway" instead of the existing patchwork of randomly alternating burnout and beautiful stretches of A1A. As a consequence of standardizing the roadway's developmental criteria, material costs will benefit from volume purchasing, uniform maintenance procedures will deliver fiscal efficiencies and the State will save millions in repetitive, nearly identical preliminary studies to evaluate structural requirements, neighborhood compatibility, safety factors and environmental criteria for scores of individual one to twenty mile strips of roadway.

While the resources available for neighborhood improvements in FDOT's A1A plan could easily finance several project components, they will instead be barely adequate to fund the regulatory underpinnings for any single improvement. That expensive documentation groundwork would ordinarily be readily available in a community's Master Plan.

On September 18th, this costly deficiency was explained to the GMCA Advisory Board. Following some discussion, Board members recommended investigating the viability of applying to the city for a Galt Mile Master Plan. Instead of the current patchwork of minor fixes and opportunistic projects targeting relatively isolated problems, the plan would encompass landscaping, structural and aesthetic improvements for the entire Galt Mile neighborhood, incorporating the pre-existing Galt Ocean Shoppes plan into an overall strategy for commercial development. It would also enhance the neighborhood's transportation connectivity, address security needs, facilitate traffic flow, clarify expectations for beach and block main-

tenance, and provide a realistic basis for attracting development consistent with the community's vision. In addition to providing a viable platform for municipal funding, the Galt Mile will be appropriately prepared to maximize budgeting opportunities from State and County projects that serendipitously include our neighborhood.

If neighborhood development isn't planned and controlled, instead of extending the ambiance of Galt Ocean Drive west to A1A, these piecemeal fixes will more likely extend the ambiance of A1A east to the beach! While this might please those that long for '80s grunge, most Galt Mile residents entertain a more traditional community vision.

On Wednesday, October 15, 2008, GMCA officials met with City Manager George Gretsas to explore the possible creation of a Galt Mile Master Plan. In addition to expressing support for initiating such a project, Mr. Gretsas offered to help guide the community through the long and often contentious process. After reviewing the pitfalls that afflict community redevelopment, we agreed that the neighborhood's aesthetic features should be accorded priority status. Once discussed by the GMCA Advisory Board, Board members will be charged with instituting and overseeing a procedural development strategy including Vision Workshops open to all residents. Relevant information, meeting notices and project progress will be posted on the Galt Mile Community Association web site (www.galtmile.com <<http://www.galtmile.com>>) and the Galt Mile News.

While some Master Plans have taken a few years to finalize, others have taken decades. While the obstacles are substantial, the objective is straightforward - that the community "reflect the vision of its residents." •



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Beach...Continued

On September 25th, former President Justin Henry of the Royal Ambassador Condominium expressed his disgust with the repugnant wall of organic waste behind his home. He sent an email to Broward Commissioner Ken Keechl – copying Governor Crist – stating that in the 7 years since he moved here, “I have never seen our beach in worse condition.” Following a graphic description of the festering detritus mounds, he complained, “Not only is this an eyesore and a deterrent for anyone to purchase or rent property along our beach, but it also has to constitute some sort of health hazard....with everything from glass bottles to used birth control devices mangled in the mess.” Mr. Henry asks the Commissioner, “How much more do we have to give up for the sea turtles? How much to we have to endanger ourselves and our children to protect these animals?”

Justin Henry’s email joined scores of others sent to City, County and State officials questioning the State policy. “Why was it taking so long to mark the nests? Why did the cleanup have to await marking nests containing eggs destroyed weeks earlier by storm surge?” As the passage of time intensified the waste problem, the emails and letters became increasingly bitter, asking why the State changed the nesting policy last year. Until 2006, after marking the nests, trained teams would move the viable eggs to a deserted beach where they would be reinterred. The hatchlings would then set their nesting instincts to return to a dedicated nesting grounds free of man-made beach obstacles (beach furniture, etc), coastal armoring (seawalls, bulkheads, etc), beachgoers and the artificial lighting that disrupts a Sea Turtle’s nesting instincts and a hatchling’s biological compass.

At a May 7, 2007 Galt Mile Community Association Presidents Council meeting organized to inform participating association officials about the new turtle-safe lighting ordinance, Broward County marine biologist Lou Fisher explained the rationale for the revised nesting policy which left turtles to hatch on heavily populated beaches. Fisher said that State Fish and Wildlife Commission officials were concerned about the eggs that don’t survive the transfer. Apparently, a certain number of eggs sacrifice viability when handled. FWC aficionados decided to leave the nests in place and instead, try to mandate a safe nesting environment along the populated beaches.

Tempers Flare

When the city claimed that they were precluded from evacuating an abandoned 50-foot fishing vessel called “Seas a Lady” that washed up on the shore behind the Galt Ocean Mile condos on September 28th, tempers flared. Ordinarily, this would be considered a serious danger to beachgoers and removed immediately. Within days, tidal action started dismantling the boat, distributing large sections of hull and interior equipment south along the shoreline. A demolished refrigerator rolled almost a dozen blocks south before finally embedding itself in the sand just south of Northeast 23rd Street. Sporting an 8-year old Delaware registration, authorities said that since the vessel was intentionally stripped of identification and its engines, they have determined that it was deliberately cut free of its anchor at the Port Everglades sea buoy. When residents realized that the state edict placed the statistical value of non-viable turtle eggs above their safety, the communications began reflecting indignant rage.

Galt Mile residents who advocated cooperating with the turtle safe lighting mandate and were willing to patiently await completion of the nest marking procedures suddenly exploded. Regency Tower’s Jim Rigney, a level-headed former New York City Detective, sent out articles about the beach waste to neighbors, objecting to the State having elevated concern for turtles’ safety above that for people. Emails took on an “it’s us or them” tone, framing a

Continued on page 14

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Beach..Continued

threatened "battle of the species" with Sea Turtles or political retribution for those State officials behind the mandate. Local blogs started filling with pro and anti-Sea Turtle comments, recommendations, death threats and other monuments to stupidity. Participating geniuses jockeyed to affix blame on State, County and City officials, FDEP, FWC, radical environmentalists, anti-environmentalists, Sea Turtles, manatees, Condo Boards, Saddam Hussein, Karl Rove and Lee Harvey Oswald.

Several enigmatic decisions by officials served to inflame the controversy. Although the nest sites were all identified, Nova Oceanographic Institute volunteers hadn't completed marking them. Since officials knew where the eggs were located, the large equipment required to remove the dissipated sections of hull could be guided to avoid the nest sites and safely evacuate the beach hazards. However, beach operations foreman Mark Almy said "We can't take a tractor out there without state and county authorization." In a strange twist of what appeared to be jurisdictional confusion, Almy also stated in a newspaper article that the city isn't responsible for removing most of the wreckage from the "Seas A Lady" because it lies north of Oakland Park Boulevard. Galt Mile residents that read the article attacked city officials, threatening to sue and/or withhold taxes. Mr. Almy neglected to explain that responsibility for beach maintenance north of Oakland Park Boulevard falls to a private contractor operating under a different permit, leaving readers to mistakenly surmise they were being abandoned.

Turtle-Safe Lighting Cooperation

Galt Mile residents are largely supportive of contributing to the survival of the endangered Sea Turtle species. When the city first decided to enforce its version of the State's turtle-safe lighting ordinance model, it sent out violation notices to every beachfront association in the neighborhood. Attached were copies of the ordinance, which contained confusing language that appeared to require a comprehensive darkening of every property. When the neighborhood association called the City Code Compliance officer in charge of the project to notify him that no building would risk the safety and security of their unit owners by complying with such an insupportable demand, he requested a meeting to discuss the issue. At the meeting, Code Compliance Officer Al Lovingsheimer apologized for sending out the violation notices and quickly affirmed that the city would never require residents to compromise their own safety.

At the request of then Code Enforcement Manager Cate McCaffrey, a presentation by City, County and State environmental officials to explain their turtle-safe lighting objectives was scheduled at a GMCA Presidents Council meeting. They all agreed to work with associations to maintain safe environments for residents while implementing a plan for appropriate lighting along the beach. During a subsequent meeting with the Code Compliance officer Al Lovingsheimer, a viable working plan was developed. Each association would address the most egregious lighting violations immediately. Instead of trying to force people living in units overlooking the beach to live in the dark for nine months each year, every association would post a notice on their community bulletin board or newsletter asking residents to please turn off their lights when they retire from any room overlooking the beach. If one or more of an association's main deck lamps was in violation, a permanent change-out would be postponed until the association implemented a new deck lighting plan as part of a scheduled upgrade.

The plan ran without a hitch. The city worked with each association to develop a reasonable set of objectives which were expeditiously met. Al Lovingsheimer later reported that the Galt Mile neighborhood delivered the greatest turtle-safe lighting improvement of any Fort Lauderdale beachfront community. He also expressed concern about some of his counterparts in Tallahassee. Al met intermittently with officials in other municipalities that were implementing turtle-safe lighting plans. He also met with State officials that provided guidelines to assist jurisdictions with this effort.

Continued on page 15

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Beach..Continued

Lovingsheimer described being disturbed about a potential problem. He told GMCA officials that while most of the FDEP and FWC personnel were reasonable people that aspired to balance the needs of residents with the needs of sea turtles, a cadre of radical project participants in Tallahassee had a different agenda. Several officials in the State oversight program blatantly admitted that their goal is to clear the barrier islands of residents. Privately characterizing this group as "crazy", Al said that once the association lighting was fully compliant, they wanted the local jurisdictions to wage a campaign against unit owners with windows overlooking the beach. Al said he was approached by two FWC personnel who asked if he would be willing to require unit owners to install "one-way" windows or enforce the shuttering of windows overlooking the beach during turtle nesting season. Lovingsheimer's concern derived of actual language in the City ordinance that he didn't consider enforceable - Chapter 6, Article 3, Sec. 6-51. Lighting standards for existing development, (2) "Within one (1) year of the effective date of this division: Window treatments shall be installed in windows and glass doors in rooms in single and multi-story structures with windows or glass doors facing the beach so that lights are not visible from the beach, or filming in compliance with this division shall be installed on the exterior of all such windows and glass doors, so that internal lights are not visible from the beach. Shade screens can be substituted for this requirement." Describing members of this group as "CIA wannabees," Al complained that they opposed the City's successful policy of eliciting cooperation to protect the turtles, instead advocating strong-arm tactics and a series of "sting" operations. Al repeatedly pointed out that most of the State oversight personnel were reasonable and this group was a small, but vocal, minority. He also assured us that the City would only enforce those recommendations that they deemed reasonable.

Earlier this year, the Code Enforcement Department accidentally repeated last year's foul-up, sending out violation notices to every

association along the beach. Ironically, Cate McCaffrey had been promoted to Director of Business Enterprise and was replaced by Mike Maloney to manage Code Enforcement. Al Lovingsheimer became very ill and passed away, leaving no one in Code Enforcement familiar with the turtle-safe lighting arrangements between the City and the Galt Mile. Maloney discovered last year's notices lying on a desk and inadvertently sent them out again, unaware that everything cited on those notices had already been addressed. Upon receiving the bogus notices, GMCA officials contacted Maloney to arrange another meeting. Once up to speed, Mike Maloney agreed to continue the cooperative effort that successfully surpassed our mutual goals last year.

Not surprisingly, Maloney repeated some of the concerns expressed by Lovingsheimer. He confirmed that the City intends to insure a reasonable balance between the needs of its residents and the agenda promoted by Tallahassee. However, he learned that Tallahassee ultimately expected compliance with a much stricter interpretation of the ordinance than the city is willing to enforce. He warned that no matter how much improvement an association accomplishes, certain State environmental officials plan to intensify demands annually with no end in sight. As such, he recommended that each association demonstrate modest annual progress instead of mistakenly believing that comprehensive compliance will deter future state demands. Like McCaffrey and Lovingsheimer, he promised that the City would never enforce overtly punitive interpretations of the ordinance that could jeopardize residents' safety.

State Agency Reps Boot Neighborhood

As if to enshrine bureaucratic buffoonery, after mandating that no heavy beach maintenance equipment could be deployed until every nest was marked, the DEP told Nova volunteers that since turtle nesting season was over by October 31st, there was no reason to expedite the procedure - or even complete it. Forcing Galt Mile residents to live with the beach hazard for over a month caused no loss of sleep in Tallahassee or West Palm Beach.

Continued on page 17



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Beach...Continued

Given the State's disinterest in marking the nests after making that a precondition for maintaining the beach, Lovingsheimer's initial suspicions and subsequent concerns have since gained substantial credibility. Agency actions seemed less driven by their concerns for Sea Turtles than the pursuit of an opportunity to harass local beachfront communities - whether by malicious intent or benign neglect. Recently, other municipal officials have also expressed concern about the callous disregard evidenced by State Environmental Agency representatives. Some have suggested that if their local policy objectives continue to focus less on environmental protection than on capricious jurisdictional interference, a political conflict with certain State agency personnel may become unavoidable.

City Rescues Beach

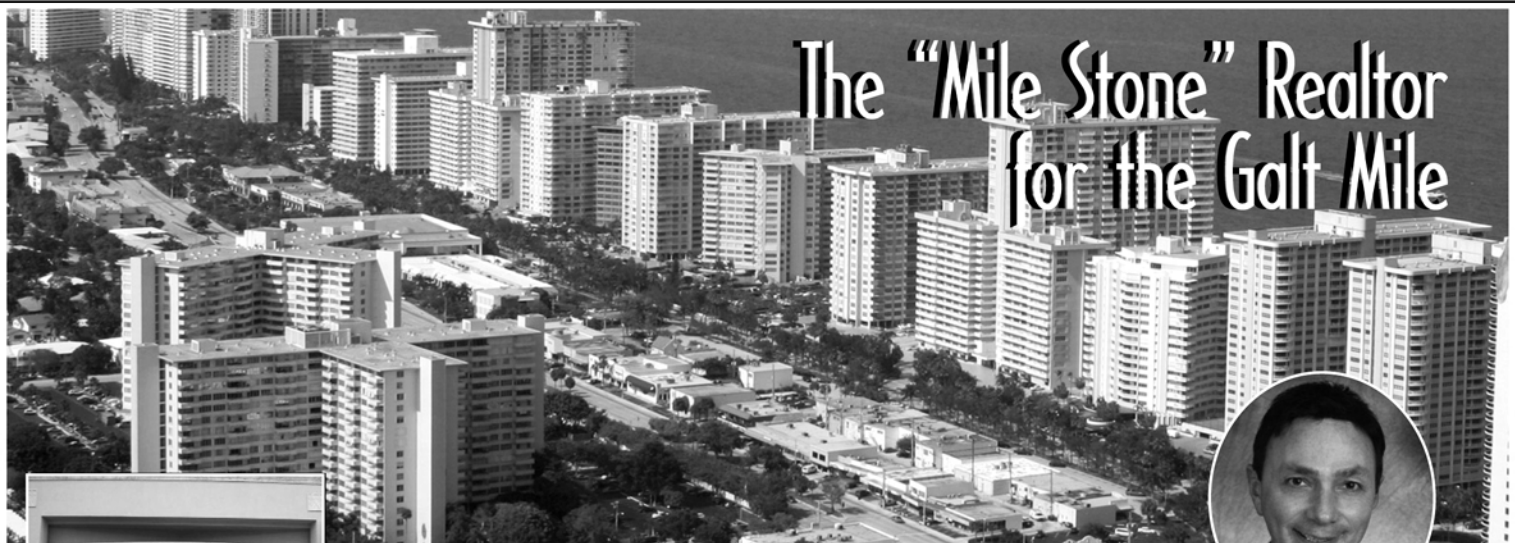
When the State finally gave a conditional green light to removing the beach hazards, Galt Mile officials contacted the Pompano Beach private contractor "Beach Raker" to arrange the demolition and extrication of the beached boat. After removing some debris, Beach Raker Operations Manager Bill O'Brien opted to take a shot at the jackpot. Apparently overconfident that the community would do anything to rid themselves of this dangerous eyesore, they quoted an unconscionable estimate of \$10,800 - \$2,800 for hauling away some boards and another eight grand to dump the remaining structure. Since the removal required a State permit, GMCA President Pio Ieraci asked the attendant State Agency representatives to assume responsibility for the cost. As if adhering to some "Catch-22" action policy, DEP field engineer Wesley Cich declared incisively, "That's still to be determined" - Agency spin for "You must be joking." Recognizing a dead end, Ieraci contacted City Commissioner Christine Teel, characterizing Justin Henry's email as exemplary of the community's disgust with the State's deliberate foot-dragging. Commissioner Teel engaged City Manager George Gretsas to help resolve the festering beach waste and the ship wreck. Gretsas, in turn, contacted Parks and Recreation Assistant Director Terry Rynard and Director Phil Thornburgh.

On October 7th, George Gretsas and Christine Teel had the City's Marine Facilities Department contact a private derelict vessel company to remove the wreckage. The next day, they met on site with State Environmental Protection staffers and company representatives. Commissioner Teel and City Manager Gretsas, despite being out of their jurisdiction, double teamed the DEP officials and secured a special permit on the spot. The wreck was finally dispensed with - for \$900 (less than 9% of the original bid) paid by the City of Fort Lauderdale!

This incident has crystallized a developing conflict between the City and certain bureaucrats in the State Environmental agencies. This confrontation is not unique, as other municipalities throughout the State have also been burnt by local DEP decisions that are inconsistent with stated Agency intentions. Whether the confusion resulted from some misdirected local agenda or seriously crippled communications, most residents and local officials hope that what happened doesn't foreshadow future FDEP policy. Since most Fort Lauderdale and Galt Mile residents support many of the agency's preservation and rescue objectives, a prospective conflict would elicit mixed emotions. Nevertheless, they share the belief that the harassment and/or expulsion of an ecosystem's people aren't prolific conservation methodologies. •



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Teel...Continued

There are several issues surrounding this property that need to be recognized:

- If the owner intends to develop the property, there are several obstacles, including the property's county and city land use designation and the city's zoning designation. Both restrict the usage to park or green space type uses.
- Broward County has recently approved a text amendment to protect golf courses in the county. Since the City of Fort Lauderdale's Land Use Plan must agree with the county's plan, we will be making a change to our text.
- The land use amendment process that would have to be followed, if and when the developer applies to change the land use plan or the zoning designation, is lengthy, with multiple opportunities for public hearings and rejection by the various bodies.

The process for amending the land use plan typically goes through the following steps:

Continued on page 19

Teel...Continued

STEP IN PROCESS	TIME PERIOD	PUBLIC TO SPEAK
Application submitted to City Planning and Zoning Dept (P&Z)	45 Days prior to DRC Mtg	
Application reviewed and found complete		
Development Review Committee (DRC) mtg	Dependent on applicant	Yes
Applicant prepares responses to DRC comments	Must have DRC sign off 1 month prior to P&Z mtg	
City P&Z Board recommendation of approval or denial/ Public Hearing		Yes
City Commission Transmittal to Review Agencies (by Resolution) Hearing	1-2 months after P&Z	Yes
Broward County Planning Council 1st Public Hearing	2-3 months after City Commission	Yes
Broward County Commission Transmittal 1st Public Hearing	2-3 months after Planning Council	Yes
Review by Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and other agencies	65 days after receipt of application	
South Florida Regional Planning Council 1st Hearing	Simultaneous with DCA Review	Yes
Broward County Planning Council 2nd Public Hearing	2 months after receipt of DCA report	Yes
Broward Cty Commission adoption 2nd Public Hearing	2 months after Planning Council	Yes
City Commission Public Hearing 1st reading of Ordinance	1 month after County Commission	Yes
City Commission Public Hearing 2nd reading of Ordinance	2 weeks after 1st reading	Yes
South Florida Regional Planning Council 2nd Hearing	1 month after City 2nd reading	Yes
DCA issues Notice of Intent finding amendment "In Compliance"	25-60 days after receipt (if adopted by City)	
DCA affected party challenge period	21 days after DCA Notice of Intent	
Broward County Planning Council Recertification Hearing	60-90 days after adoption by City of Fort Lauderdale	Yes

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Teel...Continued

The public has an opportunity to address the Fort Lauderdale City Commission, Broward County Commission and various boards 12 times during the 18- step process. The project can be delayed or stopped at any of these public hearings.

It is important for me to point out that the Fort Lauderdale City Commission is a quasi-judicial body, requiring that the commissioners not pre-judge matters that may come before it. If I am to have a voice and vote on this matter, if and when it comes before the commission, I must continue to keep an open mind. All sides must be able to present their cases before the commission and I ultimately cast my vote based upon all the input. I am sure everyone realizes that I could sacrifice my vote on this important matter if I support either side at this time.

I have always supported and encouraged the city to expand our green space throughout Fort Lauderdale. I will continue doing so, with special emphasis on the needs and desires of the residents of District 1.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or suggestions. I can be reached at city hall at (954) 828-5004 or by e-mail at cteel@fortlauderdale.gov •

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