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Election Day

# Charter Questions

Article by Eric Berkowitz

On November 2nd, Fort Lauderdale affirmatively answered the four questions asked on the Broward County General Ballot! The official inquiries posed to the electorate were a necessary prerequisite to altering the City's Charter. Now that the citizenry of Fort Lauderdale has assented to the amending the Charter, city officials can proceed with the housekeeping required to implement the issues framed in the questions. What does this mean? For example, the Charter designates the City Manager as the official responsible for selecting the City Commission assistants and aides. Commissioners agree that they are, in fact, quite capable of choosing their own assistants despite the language in the City Charter. In order to transfer this "hiring authority" from the City Manager to the City Commission, the language in the Charter had to be changed. The Charter, a municipal Constitution of sorts, cannot be changed without the consent of the City's voters. Since "permission" was given on Election Day, City Commissioners will henceforth choose their own aides, control the City Auditor and safeguard City Park land. The cost of modernizing Fire-Rescue's dilapidated facilities will be equitably shared by all. On the whole, it was a productive day for the "Venice of America".

OK...what happened at the polls? The results from the Broward County Supervisor of Elections, Dr. Brenda C. Snipes, reflect 124 precincts (100%) tabulated. Question 1 asked if the City Commissioners could select their own assistants. As mentioned, that task was previously performed by the City Manager. Surprisingly, the vote was relatively close, with 32,803 (54.15%) positive and 27,770 (45.85%) negative responses. Apparently, many voters were confused by the question, "Should the Charter of the City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, be amended to authorize the City Commission to appoint and supervise commission assistants?" Voters thought that the Commissioners were asking for permission to hire additional assistants immediately, thereby inflating the city's hefty payroll during the budget crunch. In fact, no such intention exists. The question refers to assistants that will be retained in the future. Question 2 transfers control of the City Auditor's Office from the City Manager to the City Commission. Despite a marginal controversy because it envisions the Commission financially policing itself, the issue passed with landslide support, 47,421 (77.58%) vs. 13,701 (22.42%). Question 3 positioned the Commission to offer better protection for our City Parks, requiring a unanimous vote by the City Commission to alter the protective zoning of City Park land. This effectively invests every Commissioner with a veto power over any suspicious arrangement that threatens "Public Trust" park assets. The question passed with 45,553 (74.59%) YEAS vs. 15,522 (25.41%) NAYS.

Continued on page 13

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Galt Ocean Club	1, 3 or 4 BRs	398,000 - 1,100,000
Regency South	1 or 2 BRs	315,000 - 459,000
Royal Ambassador	1, 2 or 3 BRs	297,500 - 489,000
Playa Del Sol	1, 2 or 3 BRs	260,000 - 625,000
Commodore	1, 2, 3 or 4 BRs	320,000 - 925,000
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P R E S S : L L C

Allison Weingard Muss  
954-292-6553  
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*Art Director:* Gio Castiglione  
*Distribution:* Michael Loomis  
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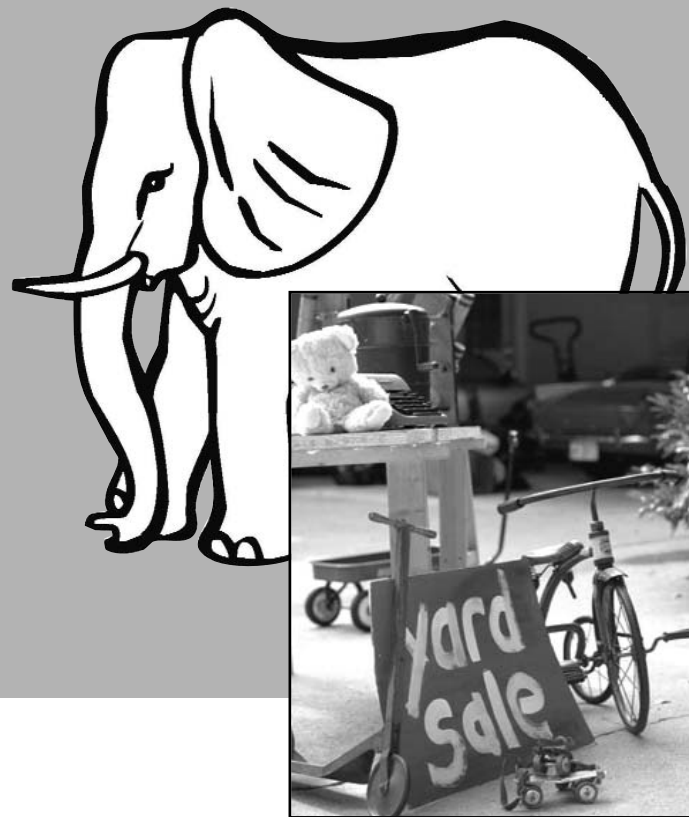
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# White Elephant Sale

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# Mayor Kristin D. JACOBS

Eric Berkowitz

The Broward County Commission has been reelected. Each year, a different Commissioner assumes the mantle of Mayor. The interests and issues important to the new Mayor become key factors in County politics. This year, the top spot passed from District 1's Ilene Lieberman to Kristin D. Jacobs, the Commissioner from District 2. The issue at the core of Kristin Jacobs' political persona is the environment. Of the 5 topics that cover the "accomplishments" noted on her Broward County web page, only one (the living wage) is not squarely an environmental issue. Environmentalists in Broward County have distilled their assorted objectives into one salient issue - development. The lynchpin of Ms. Jacobs' plan for Broward is the redevelopment of east Broward - anticipating that if the "population infill" experienced by the overdeveloped coastal regions can be offset by rebalancing resources - central and west Broward will follow suit.

Kristin Jacobs fits the current "anti-development" trend like a glove. "Controlled development" has become a "make or break" political platform in municipal races throughout the County for the past three years. In Fort Lauderdale, Commissioner Christine Teel defeated incumbent Gloria Katz after waging a single-issue anti-development campaign. Likewise, Vice Mayor Dean Trantalis gained a Commission seat by pledging a tough stand on growth.

Earlier this year, the County went to war with its municipalities over the control of Land Use within city boundaries. In a strange turnabout, the Broward County Commission - after years of supporting unrestricted and often chaotic growth in west Broward, Weston, the Sawgrass Expressway and airport expansion - maneuvered to reinvent itself as a champion of controlled development. John Rodstrom (who never met a development that he didn't like) and Lori Parrish (who worked for the Swap Shop, a prime example of "twilight zone" development) were suddenly holding hands with environmentalists who, one year earlier, faced them across the table over airport expansion. From a historical perspective, the Commission's relationship with its new environmental bedfellows is an ironic, almost sarcastic, alliance of accommodation. It wasn't lost on suspicious county-watchers that control of Land Use, especially on the Barrier Island, would also control the spigot from which property taxes, campaign dollars and a Santa-sized bag of perks flowed. While Rodstrom and Parrish donned their new environmental hats and adopted a scorched earth policy over sharing power with the cities, Kristin Jacobs joined with former Mayor Ilene Lieberman and Ben Graber to steer the Broward Commission to a more reasonable moderate stance. What little credibility the Commission enjoys as a steward of the environment derives primarily from Kristin Jacobs. Failing an attempt at the Mayor's seat three years ago due to a Commission feud, it's now her turn to step up to the plate.

Continued on page 10

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<b>12</b> Santa's Holiday Revue Family Fun Series 1 p.m. & 3 p.m. Broward Center Info.: 954-462-0222	<b>13</b> Santa's Holiday Revue Family Fun Series 10 a.m. & 11:30 a.m. Broward Center Info.: 954-462-0222	<b>14</b> WinterFest Black Tie Ball Seminole Hardrock Hotel & Casino 6:30 p.m. - midnight Info.: 954-767-0686	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Galt Mile Community Association Meeting Nick's Italian Restaurant 11 a.m.	<b>17</b> The Nutcracker Through 12/19 Broward Center Info.: 954-462-0222	<b>18</b> WinterFest Boat Parade Intracoastal Waterway Info.: 954-767-0686
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> Dolphins vs New England 9 p.m. Pro Player  Commissioner Christine Teel: Pre-Agenda Meeting Beach Community Center Info.: 954-828-5033	<b>21</b> Fort Lauderdale City Commission Meeting City Hall 6 p.m.	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> Christmas Day
<b>26</b> Kwanzaa Fiesta Ft Lauderdale Las Olas Riverfront 11:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. Info.: 954-527-0627	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> My Mother's Italian, My Father's Jewish & I'm in Therapy Broward Center Info.: 954-462-0222	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b> Heat vs Charlotte 7:30 p.m. American Airlines Arena Tix: nba.com/heat  New Year's Day
<b>2</b> Salute to Vienna A New Year's Concert Broward Center Info.: 954-462-0222  Sunday Jazz Brunch Riverwalk, Downtown FL 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5985	<b>3</b> Heat vs Seattle 7:30 p.m. American Airlines Arena Tix: nba.com/heat	<b>4</b> Books by the River New River Inn 7 p.m. Info.: 954-357-7386	<b>5</b> Hairspray Through 1/16 Broward Center Info.: 954-462-0222  Heat vs New York 7:30 p.m. American Airlines Arena Tix: nba.com/heat	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Christmas (Eastern Orthodox)	<b>8</b> Las Olas Art Fest Part I Las Olas Blvd. 954-472-3755
<b>9</b> Las Olas Art Fest Part I Las Olas Blvd. 954-472-3755	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Coffee & Conversation for Educators 6 p.m. Old Ft. Lauderdale Museum 954-463-4431 X 12	<b>12</b> The Glenn Miller Orchestra Broward Center Info.: 954-462-0222	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> S. Fla. Folk Fest Easterlin Park 954-486-4040

## A look ahead

- January 20 White Elephant Sale, 3333 NE 34th St., 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- January 23 Bill Cosby Broward Center, 4 p.m. & 7 p.m., Info.: 954-462-0222
- January 24 Fairchild Tropical Garden Moonlight Tour, Info.: 305-667-1651
- February 9 - 20 Oliver! Broward Center, Info.: 954-462-0222



# Commission Collision

## A Contest for Broward's Future

As District 2 Broward County Commissioner Kristin D. Jacobs prepared to take the reins of County Government from Ilene Lieberman, county residents were curious to see how Jacobs' proclaimed "Year of the Environment" would impact on their lives. The only credentialed environmentalist on the County Board, her intention to balance development with resources is music to the ears of "controlled development" proponents. Despite the fact that nervous Broward developers are biting their political nails, Ms. Jacobs had no real opposition to her assumption of the Mayoralty. The transition was smooth and painless.

Strangely enough, there was a real battle underway for the Vice Mayor's seat - below the radar. Broward County Commissioners Jim Scott and Ben Graber were locked in a struggle for the right to be "next in line" for Kristin Jacobs' Vice Mayor position when she stepped up. The Vice Mayor will most likely follow in Ms. Jacobs' footsteps and subsequently become Mayor in 2006. Both Scott and Graber had significant designs on being the 2006 County captain. Both Commissioners also faced serious obstacles. Neither of the combatants could rely upon Jacobs' support for their bids. She didn't want to risk a distraction from her core concerns through involvement in a messy political conflict. Ultimately, however, she changed her mind.

On November 16th, Graber was named Vice-Mayor by a majority of the Broward County Commission. Jacobs, in a last minute show of support, joined Diana Wasserman-Rubin, Suzanne Gunzburger and Lois Wexler to install Graber as Jacob's Vice-Mayor. The rotating Mayor and Vice-Mayor positions are determined by a formula that allows each Commissioner a term in the two top spots. Referring to Scott after deciding to support Graber, Jacobs remarked, "It wasn't his turn."

District 4 Commissioner Jim Scott represents the Galt Mile on the Board of County Commissioners. A former president of the Florida Senate, Scott is the sole Republican on the Broward County Commission. His G.O.P. affiliation shaped up as both an asset and a liability. Broward County has historically been a Democratic stronghold. It has earned the Republican political designation as "the Killing Fields" - a reference to its reputation as a source of anxiety to statewide Republican candidates that

Continued on page 9

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Collision...Continued

generally suffer until the Broward vote has been accounted for and overcome. The Election Day disappointment suffered by Democrats stiffened the Party's resolve against what might be considered another defeat - the Commission's only Republican assuming the 2006 County Board's top spot after 30 years of Democratic leadership. 2006 portends another political concern for both candidates. The County's Mayor will play a substantial role in the election mechanics (i.e. election preparations and vote counting) that will be in place during Governor Bush's 2006 re-election bid. In view of past Florida election inconsistencies, how the system is operated generally receives as much attention as the actual vote. Jitters about an inaccurate count posed an additional obstacle for Scott.

Notwithstanding qualms about his political predilections, while presiding over the Florida Senate from 1994 to 1996, Scott earned a solid reputation for bipartisanship, assigning Democrats to important posts. During his legislative career, he served as Minority Floor Leader (1978-80), Minority Leader (1980-82), Judiciary Committee Chairman (1982-84), Appropriations Committee Chairman (1986-88 and 1992-93), Chairman of Rules and Calendar (1989-90), Vice Chairman of Rules and Calendar (1993-94), President of the Florida Senate (1994-96), Chairman of Regulated Industries (1997-1998) and, Banking and Insurance Chair (1998-2000).

Although his initial inclusion into the Broward County Commission was as an appointee of Governor Bush to fill a Commission vacancy in December of 2000, Scott won the District 4 seat in November, 2002. As Broward's District 4 County Commissioner,

Scott has supported a living wage and affirmative action policies, ostensibly Democratic issues. In 1982, however, he cast the deciding vote against the "Equal Rights Amendment", feeding the belief that Florida was "out of step" with modern attitudes. Prior to his distinguished 24-year Senate career (1976 - 2000), Scott served as an Associate Municipal Judge (1972) and then as a prosecutor (1973 - 1976) in Deerfield Beach. A member of the Florida, Kentucky, Broward County, Palm Beach County and American Bar Associations, he also represented the Broward County Legislative Delegation from 1972 to 1974.

Given the ensconced Republican monopoly in Tallahassee, Scott offered a comfort level with the legislature and an access to the Governor that the eight Democratic County Commissioners couldn't match. Democratic Commissioner John Rodstrom stated, "I think given where we are and who the governor is, Jim is the best person and gives us an edge in the Legislature." Rodstrom's comment, however, is possibly colored by his stormy relationship with fellow Democrat Graber - Scott's rival.

When Scott did the math after Jacob's decision to support Graber's candidacy, he withdrew from the race. Overly disappointed, Scott remarked, "I was kind of taken aback that this was done over small things like party labels." In view of Tallahassee's chilly disposition to Broward's Democrat-dominated County government, the Commission's lone Republican has been doing most of the heavy lifting in the County's dealings with the Capitol's Republican monopoly.

Continued on page 12

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**Collission...Continued**

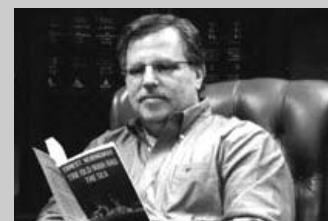
Commission recently killed a minority-owned Convention Center hotel project and spearheaded the challenge against the controversial former Elections Supervisor Miriam Oliphant, despite her popularity in the black community. The fact that minority-owned businesses were not receiving an equitable share of county contracts, according to a 2001 study, created continuing suspicion and animosity. Eggleston would have been only the second black to occupy the Vice-Mayor's office in Broward's history.

Graber's victorious supporters explained that both Scott and Eggleston, who joined the Commission in 2000 with Graber, would get their respective turns as County chief. They simply saw no reason to interrupt the projected chain of succession. Despite this conciliatory rationale for their decision, Scott said he was "surprised that the commission didn't take the opportunity either to send a message of bipartisanship to Tallahassee or to acknowledge the growing diversity of Broward."

In any event, it would best serve the citizens of Broward County if the Commission purges this residual animosity prior to the onset of Kristin Jacobs' "Year of the Environment". If not, Jacobs' rein might be recast as the "Year of the Stagnant Political Environment". Stranger things have happened. •



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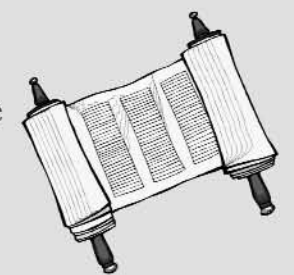
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  - 1838 to 1907—From \$199 up to \$550,000
  - 1907 to 1933—From \$245 up to \$150,000
- \$20 Gold Coin 1850 to 1907—From \$390 up to \$500,000
  - 1907 to 1933—From \$395 up to \$1,000,000

### United States Silver Dollars

- 1795 to 1798—From \$600 up to \$500,000
- 1799 to 1803—From \$500 up to \$150,000
- 1840 to 1873—From \$120 up to \$100,000
- 1873 to 1884—From \$50 up to \$7,000
- 1878 to 1935—From \$750 up to \$500,000

### United States Half Dollars

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- 1801 to 1807—From \$100 up to \$45,000
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### Election...Continued

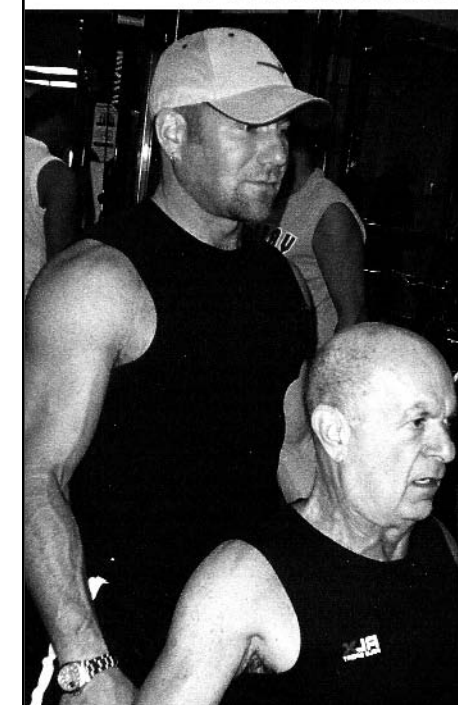
The Fire-Rescue Bond Issue, Question 4 on the Ballot, enjoyed heavy support by city officials, neighborhood associations (including the Galt Mile Community Association), residents, businesses and municipal employees. It passed by a 2 to 1 plurality, with 42,209 (66.68%) YEAS and 21,096 (33.32%) NAYS. It relieves current city taxpayers of the full financial burden posed by the modernizing of our antiquated Fire-Rescue facilities. Its mortgage-like structure will "spread the pain" equitably to both future and current residents. Simply put, everyone that benefits from the upgrade will participate in its financing! The question met with minor resistance from some realtors and the "time-share" industry because those "future residents" with whom the cost will be shared comprise their customer base. Additional expenses for Fire-Rescue facilities - or anything else - are additional obstacles that interfere with attracting new business for Realtors.

Passage of the Fire-Rescue Bond referendum yielded a serendipitous benefit. Owing to the City's budgetary woes, bond rating agencies have cut the precious rating assigned to the City of Fort Lauderdale. The diminished rating makes it more expensive for the city to raise money in the secondary market. Any demonstration of fiscal stability will encourage a positive reevaluation of the risk factor that determines the City's rating. The sensible financing structured in the Fire-Rescue Bond Issue will serve as a palliative to those that pass judgment on the municipality's fiscal health - a step in the right direction.

To better inform yourself about the Fort Lauderdale issues decided on Election Day and for details concerning the critical Fire-Rescue Bond referendum, go online to the Galt Mile Community Association web site ([www.galt-mile.com](http://www.galt-mile.com)). The Galt Mile Community Association wishes to thank all of our residents for VOTING ON ELECTION DAY. When we vote, we stay strong! •



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Collision...Continued

A Coral Springs physician, Ben Graber helped shape Florida health care policy as a Democratic Statehouse Representative (1988 – 1996), ultimately becoming Deputy Majority Leader of the House. In Tallahassee, he chaired the Health Standards Subcommittee, the Joint Legislative Information Technology Resources Committee and the Health Care Committee while sponsoring the Enhancement of Development Disabilities Bill, the creation of the Elderly Affairs Department, the creation of the Clean Indoor Air Act, the Health Care Insurance Reform Act of 1993, the Tobacco Liability Act and the Managed Care Reform Act of 1996. A Pro-Choice Democrat with strong liberal credentials, Dr. Graber steadfastly endured pickets at his medical practice for consenting to perform legal abortions.

First elected to the Broward Commission from District 3 in 2000 and again (unopposed) this past Election Day, Graber has a reputation for airing disagreements with colleagues in the "court of public opinion." This indiscretion has fomented antipathy among his peers. He has repeatedly criticized long-time purchasing and lobbying practices of his colleagues, and in doing so developed a reputation as a "loose cannon". In turn, he has accused both Rodstrom and Lieberman of questionable ethics. While Graber insists that his reputation is undeserved, Lieberman disagrees. Commenting on Graber's bid for Vice Mayor, Lieberman said, "The vice mayor needs to be a team player who understands the importance of being part of a collegial body," intimating that Graber was therein ostensibly deficient.

There was a distinct possibility that the controversy surrounding the two top contenders for Vice Mayor might serve to eliminate both of them. That could have left the door open for Commissioner Suzanne Gunzburger, who had identified herself as a less controversial alternative. Despite having told colleagues he was not interested in becoming the Vice Mayor, Commissioner Josephus Eggelletion Jr. represented a fourth viable choice.

Ultimately, Scott nominated Eggelletion to the Vice-Mayor's seat after his withdrawal from the contest. Lieberman and Rodstrom, whose antipathy to Graber is no secret, also threw their support behind Eggelletion. Despite his prior statement indicating his disinterest in becoming Vice-Mayor, Eggelletion represented a palliative to Broward's black community. The County

Continued on page 18

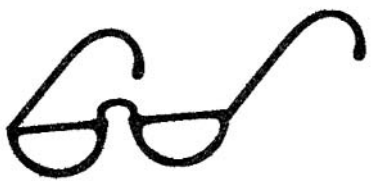
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Twelve more properties were sold in the Galt Ocean Mile Community:

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|---|--|
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| <b>Galleon #1701</b><br>(3/2.5)<br>\$660,000 - closed 10/6/04     | <b>Coral Ridge Towers N #1705</b><br>(2/2)<br>\$262,500 - closed 9/17/04 |
| <b>Galt Towers #15G</b><br>(1/1)<br>\$238,000 - closed 9/28/04    | <b>Regency Tower #1711</b><br>(3/2.5)<br>\$580,000 - closed 10/8/04      |
| <b>Plaza East #20H</b><br>(3/2.5)<br>\$600,000 - closed 9/21/04   | <b>Plaza South #16K</b><br>(2/2)<br>\$425,000 - closed 9/15/04           |
| <b>L'Ambiance #1104</b><br>(3/4.5)<br>\$985,000 - closed 10/1/04  | <b>Playa Del Mar #1510</b><br>(2/2)<br>\$471,600 - closed 9/24/04        |
| <b>Southpoint #1510N</b><br>(2/2)<br>\$417,000 - closed 9/29/04   | <b>Ocean Club #PH1810</b><br>(1/1.5)<br>\$380,000 - closed 9/17/04       |

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Jacobs...Continued

Pointing to the entropic growth suffered by her native Southern California as a negative example, Jacobs regards the redevelopment of Eastern Broward as the first step to achieving a balance between resources and growth. Her roadmap to a harmonious equilibrium in Broward County aspires to "village-like, pedestrian-oriented developments with plenty of green space nearby," a sustainable environment she calls, "Smart Growth." Jacobs contends that current policy encourages "separate land uses, such as stand-alone business parks, residential subdivisions and shopping malls separated from one another by excessively wide streets and highways." Central to "Smart Growth" is the prodigious application of "Mixed Use" zoning designations to encourage "the mixing or combining of land uses to reduce our dependency on the automobile and increase our sense of community." Jacobs explains, "Mixed use is achieved by placing housing, civic spaces, shopping & dining, employment centers, schools, and recreational land uses closer to each other and in walking distance of public transit, greenways, and pedestrian malls."



Jacobs was a major supporter of Broward's \$400 Million Safe Parks and Land Preservation Bond Referendum, passed on November 7, 2000, that helped reclaim approximately 1,425 acres of natural lands and open space. It also hiked wages paid by contractors, repaired and enhanced Broward's aging parks and imposed restrictions on new development. Commissioner Jacobs' 1998 campaign platform contained a "Greenways" plank

- a pledge to formulate and implement a Greenway and Trail system for Broward County. Jacobs describes Greenways as, "a network of improved pathways and trails linking our neighborhoods, parks, cultural and historic buildings, waterways and even businesses and schools." The system is component to a formidable statewide operation run by Florida's Office of Greenways and Trails in an effort to link natural areas and open spaces, conserve native landscapes and ecosystems and offer recreational opportunities across the state.

Jacobs intends to create a functional compromise with the County's Cities over Land Use governance. During the recent legislative session, a bill sponsored by Hollywood Senator Steven Geller that eviscerated Broward's claim to ultimate control over Land Use within its cities' borders nearly became law. The Governor, caught between the popular "controlled development" espoused by the County and cries of "Home Rule" from the cities, opted for a compromise as opposed to a clear victory by one side or the other. As such, he nuked the legislation with a veto threat and sent both sides back to their respective corners. The current stand-off between the County and a coalition of municipalities should provide "Mayor" Jacobs with the opportunity to make peace and share control over development with City officials. This should integrate harmoniously with the VisionBROWARD project assembled by community leaders. The plan balances transportation, schools, housing, economic development and public services with Broward's exploding population.

Continued on page 19

Jacobs...Continued

Expanding the NatureScape program is another cornerstone of Jacobs' vision. She intends to "create and certify NatureScape sanctuaries throughout Broward County." NatureScape envisions natural indigenous ecosystems of all sizes proliferating in backyards, schoolyards, workplaces and communities. Immediate goals include 1) increasing the propagation and use of native plants by 50%. 2) Be a role model for the State of Florida for compliance with xeriscape statutes and 3) Become a nationally recognized program of environmental stewardship. One of NatureScape's benefits is that once it attains a "critical mass", it could help with Broward's water conservation dilemma - naturally and inexpensively. Jacobs also plans on building a nature center bordering the Everglades.

Kristin D. Jacobs participates in a wide spectrum of Associations, Boards and Clubs. She serves on the South Florida Water Management District's Water Resource Advisory Committee, Florida Regional Council's Association, Metropolitan Planning Organization, Water Advisory Board, Resource Recovery Board, Homeless Initiative Partnership, EV (Electric Vehicle) Ready Broward, Broward League of Women Voters, Broward Urban River Trails, Pompano Proud, Greater Deerfield Beach Chamber of Commerce, Coconut Creek Democratic Club, Deerfield Beach Democratic Club, Margate Democratic Club, North Broward Democratic Club - Life Member, Sample-McDougald House Preservation Society and the PTA - Pompano Beach Elementary, Pompano Beach High.

Jacobs Chairs the Community Bus Application & Evaluation Committee and Chaired the South Florida Regional Planning Council in 2001. She currently serves as a Director on the Florida Association of Counties, the Broward League of Cities, Women In Distress, the Greater Pompano Beach Chamber of Commerce, the Deerfield Beach Historical Society and the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber - Uptown Business Council.

The "Elected Official of the Year", "Feminist of the Year", "Woman of the Year", "Humanitarian of the Year", "Environmental of the Year", "Government Official of the Year" and "Trailblazer of the Year" awards earned by Jacobs from an impressive assortment of prestigious Associations is too numerous to list. An accurate perspective of Jacobs' priorities is embodied in the opening statement on her Broward web page. She documents a quote from Vice President Hubert Humphrey, "The moral test of Government is how it treats those who are in the dawn of life - - the children; those who are in the twilight of life - - the aged; and those who are in the shadows of life - - the sick, the needy and the handicapped." The "Year of the Environment", as she characterizes her upcoming stint as the Mayor of Broward County, could be a productive one. We'll see. •



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Police...Continued



Major Negrey

Traffic issues continue to be a significant concern. We request our Motor Unit to conduct traffic enforcement action on those sites when requested. The round-about at NE 15 Ave and NE 18 St. has been one where we have issued numerous warnings as well as citations. We are working with Traffic Engineering to suggest some changes to the intersection that we feel will resolve the problem of drivers failing to yield as they travel through that area.



Commissioner Teel

We have started hiring Police Officers again after more than a year. We have hired 11 new Police Officers, 7 are in the Academy and 3 are certified (meaning they are already Police officers and will start training on the road immediately). Our background investigators continue to process applicants as quickly as possible so we can fill vacancies. Our current total sworn staffing will be 498 sworn and 49 PSA's. We currently have 45 Police Officer vacancies (9%) and 6 PSA vacancies (12%). As we continue to bring our staffing levels back toward full strength, we will work to address community concerns, quality of life issues, traffic and crime in those creative and problem solving ways.

As we approach the Holiday Season, we ask that everyone work to keep themselves as well as their belongings safe and secure.

We will continue to provide information to all our Homeowners Groups regarding tips on security, both personal as well as for your property.

- Our thanks to Commissioner Teel and F.L.P.D. Major Mary Negrey! - Editor•

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December 18th

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On November 17th, the Galt Mile's City Commissioner, Christine Teel, received a crime update for our neighborhood from Major Mary Negrey of Police District 1. Included in the report are the first steps taken towards revitalizing the budget-ravaged Police Department. Our new City Manager, George Gretsas, helped settle the new contract with the Fort Lauderdale Police Department. He successfully traded the "longevity" provision wanted by the Union for new hires to fill budget-related vacancies. Commissioner Teel decided that this information should be shared with the affected community - us! As such, this is the original report as delivered to Commissioner Teel and forwarded to us. - Editor

## Police Crime Review

In reviewing our statistical information in October, comparing to last October and the previous three months, we note a reduction of 23 part one crimes or -12% Sept 04 to Oct 04. However, there was a 12% increase when comparing Oct 03 to Oct 04. For the first 2 weeks of November, we have reported a decline in the second week in virtually all part 1 crimes (except larcenies). Week to week changes do occur frequently, but our close monitoring of these help us direct our Tactical Officers quickly to address problems as they occur.

Burglaries continue to be of concern, especially vehicular burglaries. Vehicular burglaries occur in any setting - mall parking, shopping center parking, restaurant parking lots, schools and aftercare parking or at your home. They occur all times of the day and during the night. Recently, the most problematic are those burglaries of vehicles along major roadways such as N. Federal Highway where someone parked their car and left valuables clearly visible from the outside in the passenger compartment. Commonly, the driver only ran inside a store for a short while (for example, just to get a cup of coffee). Frequently stolen items are laptops, purses, briefcases, and cell phones. We've been distributing flyers to businesses where more frequent occurrences have been reported, placing our mobile message board on heavily traveled roadways, issuing Beat Watches, covertly surveillance of targeted lots, and speaking at every opportunity to remind folks to be more aware and diligent when securing their belongings. (As an aside - I saw one of the news channels is doing a story on this tonight, I think it was channel 6 or 7 - I'll have to watch for that!).

Over the last month, we also noted an increase in the number of burglaries of the kiosks inside the Galleria Mall. We have been using decoy officers to monitor the activity here. The burglaries are occurring just before the mall opens in the early morning hours. We've found that due to the continued construction of the shops inside the mall, many doors are open to allow worker (and possibly others) access. We have identified a suspect and continue with working towards making an arrest.

Continued on page 8



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# "do it yourself"

On October 21st, Fort Lauderdale Mayor Jim Naugle told Galt Mile Community Association Advisory Board members that an

## URBAN DEVELOPMENT Park Permit Hijinx

affirmative answer to Fort Lauderdale Ballot Question No. 3 on Election Day would help protect precious park areas throughout the city. The Question, "Should the Charter of the City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, be amended to require that any conveyance of City-owned land zoned Park in accordance with the City's Unified Land Development Regulations or the removal of such zoning designation be approved by a unanimous vote of the entire City Commission?" Since each Commissioner represents a different area or "district" of Fort Lauderdale, passing this amendment would give the Commissioner whose park space was at risk a "veto" over its loss or "transformation". That Commissioner would then have to explain to constituents why the loss of valuable "green space" was allowed - no wiggle room. The Mayor was right. If park space in a particular district is to be forfeit, the benefit to the City should be so self-evident and all-encompassing that the representative Commissioner will be comfortable explaining its loss to constituents.

Ironically, a recent incident questioned the efficacy of this amendment (which, incidentally, passed with a bullet). Galt Mile residents aren't the only unfortunates that are unceremoniously awakened to the soft strains of construction equipment. It happens throughout the "Venice of America". On Southeast 13th Street in Poinciana Park, the inhabitants awoke one July morning to find a tree-dotted median park being noisily transformed into a parking lot. The grassy street medians that afford that neighborhood some "green space" are generally used by joggers and dog walkers. The residents of the neighborhood didn't ask for the 15-space parking lot. They preferred the greenery. A Broward County powerbroker, Hamilton Forman, wanted the parking lot.

The resilient real estate investor who's Charter School of Excellence lies adjacent to the parking lot (as well as his church), applied for a permit to accommodate their parking needs. The neighborhood, zoned for residential and commercial use, is home to some influential county icons including Broward Circuit Judge Kathleen Ireland and Broward County Commissioner Ilene Lieberman's law practice. Not coincidentally, the area is also home to Ham Forman's Way, a tribute street that meanders through Poinciana Park to SE 11th Street.

Local residents were never consulted about their median park's conversion into an asphalt strip. Angry community activists are engaged in a whirlwind of damage control, contacting and meeting with City officials to reverse what they consider to be a perversion of the permit process. They want their park back. Intransigent, Forman responded that, "I have no intention of giving up those spaces. I personally have parked in those medians there for 75 years." The cost to Forman for the construction was \$8000 plus a

few bucks for the permit. He asserted, "I regard my ability to park there as kind of a constitutional right."

83 Year-old Hamilton Forman once owned most of Davie. He is probably the individ-

ual most responsible for West Broward's explosive growth. He sued the State to prevent the Florida Turnpike from being built on its originally intended site, the corridor currently occupied by Interstate 95. Instead, he maneuvered the Turnpike's placement further west to snake through his land, eliciting additional overpasses and exits that provided the access required for West Broward's ultimate development. Nova Southeastern University and the four Nova public schools were built on Forman's land and financed, in large part, through his efforts - in recognition for which Blanch Forman Elementary School was named after his mother. Forman fostered the growth of the North Broward Hospital District, engineering the construction of the North Broward, Imperial Point and Coral Springs medical centers. Forman also developed Broward's first County Charter, wherein the powers and responsibilities of county government are delimited. During his 55 years as a shaper of worlds, he has sponsored a huge collection of elected officials who are a phone call away. Campaign support in the form of professional advisors, poll workers and buckets of money has inflated Forman's political black book to unparalleled stature. As such, he has cultivated a crop of new "power brokers", all indebted to Forman. The community activists trying to reclaim their green space have their hands full.

Although the Ballot Question amendment will enable a City Commissioner to slam the front door on an unsupportable loss of "Public Trust" park land, this incident outlines an elephant-size loophole that effectively subverts the amendment's intention. There is no need to change the zoning designation of a park when anyone can apply for (and receive) a permit to legally construct self-serving projects on city-owned park property. Using the permit process as a fast track to "back-door" the loss of green space sets a dangerous precedent. Genia Ellis, president of the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations, explained, "It tells you that any area in a neighborhood can basically be acquired for private use through a permitting process; the public isn't even queried on it." What use is providing Commissioners with de facto veto power over zoning indiscretions if a permit will provide the applicant with permission to build a parking lot, or anything else, on park land?

Again, the Mayor was correct in supporting this amendment. It's a laudable first step. However, city officials would do well to consider plugging this permit loophole before they come to City Hall one day and find construction of a toxic waste dump underway in Stranahan Park. •

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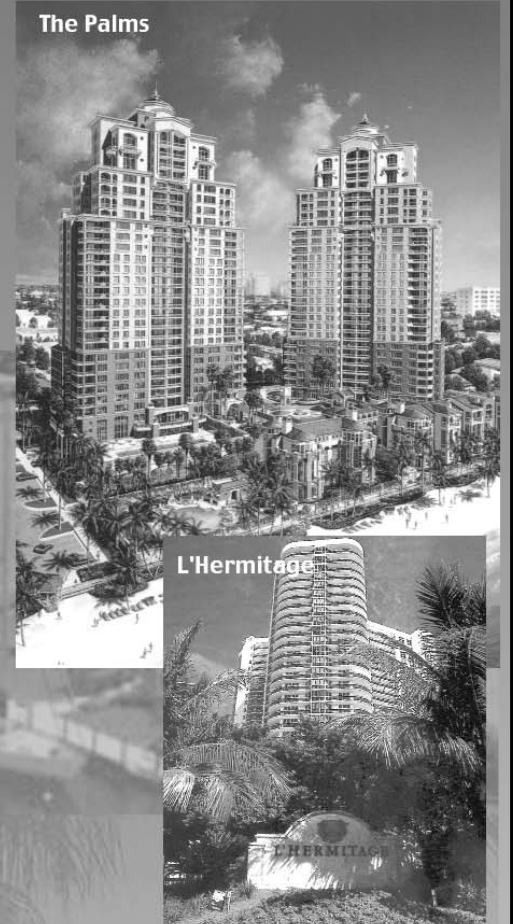
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