



Events Calendar

All Membership Meetings held at Lido Beach Resort 8th floor, 10:00 on the 3rd Saturday of the month:
NEXT MEETING: April 17, 2021

Zoom Meeting connection to be emailed, presentation:

Selby Gardens New Plan

**“Meet and Greet“
Happy Hours 5-7 pm**

On Hold

Presidents Letter

Good morning to all members of the Lido Key Resident Association.

There are many things going on Lido Key. The beach shoreline protection project is rapidly coming to conclusion; the second groin will be completed in the next few weeks. After that, the only thing needed to be finished is the staging areas that will need to be restored. The sand seems to be holding up fairly well at this point.

The pavilion is open now and has been very busy with spring break going on. The bathroom renovations are getting ready to start. Restroom trailers have been installed in the parking lot until the permanent restrooms are completed.

We had a very good turnout for our March membership meeting; the presentation was By Sandy Gilbert (START) regarding RED TIDE. A link of the presentation is in this newsletter if anyone would like to see it.

Some other projects that are continuing: Hotel houses (Jim Ludwig will give update in this newsletter). The planning Board will be hearing the presentation (Wednesday the 14th at 1:30) for the upcoming new condominium that is being proposed on the Gulf Beach and Coquina property on Ben Franklin.

Another project that has started that will affect all of the barrier islands is the roundabout at Gulf Stream. As we get updates from city, we are sending them out to try to keep everyone informed.

The last thing I would like to mention is it seems like the covid-19 pandemic is ending (not soon enough for me) so hopefully when next season rolls around we will be able to meet in person as well as have some social events again.

Until I see you again

Be Safe

Carl Shoffstall
President LKRA
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Sarasota, FL 34236 813-967-2687 cell 941-7061217 home/fax, carl@floridaplaystructures.com

Marlon Brown

City Manager

Greetings members of the Lido Key Residents Association. I previously introduced myself as Marlon Brown the ~~Interim~~ City Manager (please notice the strike-through 😊). I have since been appointed City Manager.

I shared with you that I would be making some structural changes to the organization. These have been completed. We also took the opportunity to make the appearance of our elected and leadership officials more professional (photos) with links so you can easily contact them. Please see the links below for our new organizational structure.

<https://www.sarasotafl.gov/government>

<https://www.sarasotafl.gov/home/showpublisheddocument?id=7679>

Now for a couple of updates. We have begun the process for developing the City budget for fiscal year 2022 which begins October 1, 2021 (the fiscal calendar is October to September each year). All departments are currently working on their budget submittals. I will be providing the City Commission with regular updates from time to time to keep them informed on what to expect so there are no surprises when all-day budget workshops begin on Monday July 12 and Tuesday July 13, and the two evening public hearings to adopt the budget scheduled for Wednesday September 8 and Tuesday September 21. The public is welcomed to attend these workshops and public hearings.

Congratulations to all Lido residents and beachgoers!!! Lido Island Grill is now open. The opening of the concession stand, with local chef Laszlo Bevardi, owner of Bevardi's Salute, a long-time restaurant in downtown Sarasota, who renovated the kitchen and created a new menu, highlights the significant improvements to the Lido Pavilion by the City of Sarasota. Improvements include: a new pavilion roof, new concrete patio, new shade covering, new patio furniture, new concession vent hood system, newly painted building, and new landscaping. Public restrooms are scheduled to be renovated this summer. In the meantime, a restroom trailer opened on Friday April 9 to the public as we begin work on the restrooms.

Finally, as it relates to Lido Key renourishment project, groin 1, the northern groin is complete and has been accepted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Groin 2 is still under construction and roughly halfway complete. Work is estimated to be finished by April 22, followed by a final week of cleanup and demobilization by the contractor, who will also work to restore public parking in the north staging area by the Lido Pool. The City has received many positive comments about the sand placement and availability of extra space on the beach. The state permit outlines future monitoring phases of sand as well as bird and turtle habitats.

As I mentioned in the last article, I am committed that our organization/personnel will be responsive, will be respectful, will be honest and will be accountable. Remember, our organization (the City of Sarasota) is a part of the community and that means we will listen and apply common sense principles to arrive at common ground solutions to be the best run city. Thank you and please continue to be safe and take all necessary precautions to remain healthy.

Marlon Brown

City Manager

Liz Alpert, Esq.

City Commissioner

On April 6, the hotel house ordinance passed its first reading before the City Commission. Before it becomes final, there must be a second reading which is scheduled to occur on May 3. The ordinance requires registration, safety measures, limits on occupancy, and a designated person to call if there are problems. It is our hope that with this ordinance in place, the nuisance issues with the hotel houses will be greatly reduced or eliminated.

If you have not been out to the beach, the renourishment looks wonderful! The groins to help protect the sand from eroding are still being worked on. The anticipated date for completion is April 22.

Just a reminder, sea turtle nesting season starts next month. If you need information on how to prepare and what the lighting is recommended, you can go to www.conserveturtles.org.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can reach me at liz.alpert@sarasotafl.gov or 941- 228-5979.

Alexandrea DavisShaw

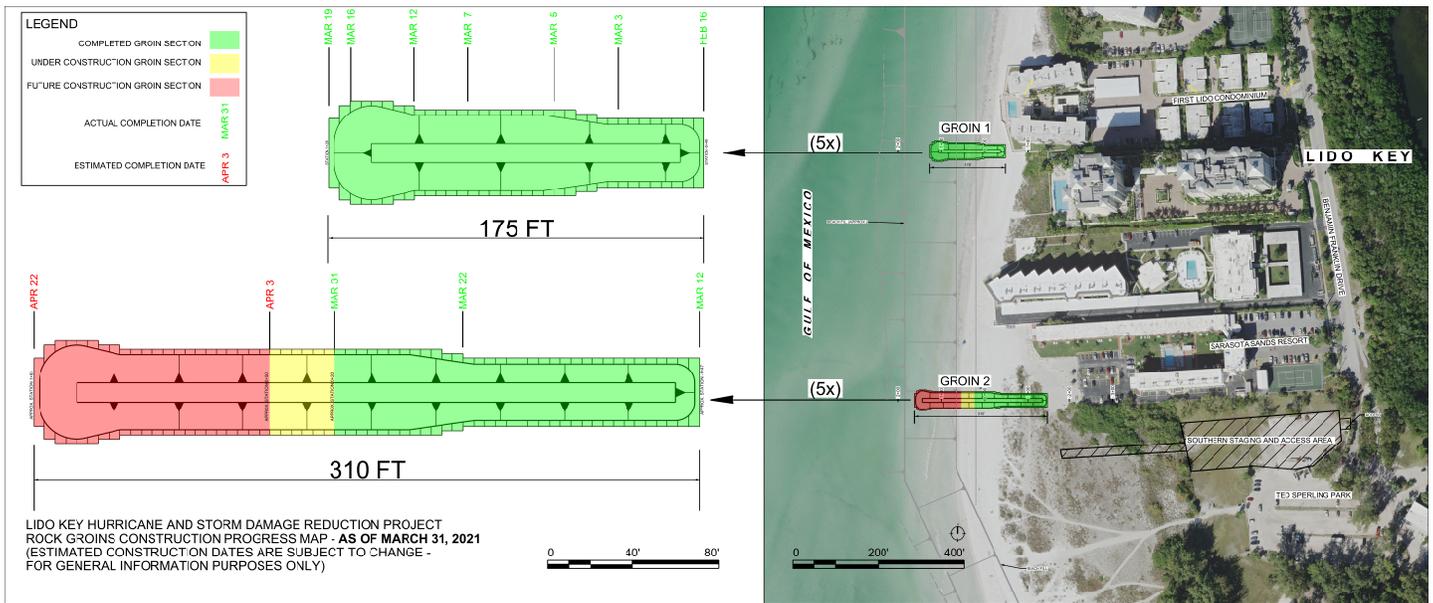
City Engineer

The contractor is still working on Groin 2. They have had a delay in getting the train down from Georgia with the Rock so they haven't been working for the last few days. They expect the next train on the 11th or 12th and hope to be working on Groin 2 next week. They still think they can have that groin done by April 22. Turtle Monitoring will begin next month so please remember to check your lights in preparation of Turtle nesting season. I have attached a handout on lighting in case that may be helpful. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you,

Alex DavisShaw, P.E., PTOE, F.FES
City Engineer, Public WorksCity of Sarasota. (941) 954-4181





Sea Turtle Season and Lighting

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Follow your local lighting ordinance requirements.
- If you are a beachfront homeowner, shield, redirect or lower lights on your property that are visible from the beach, and turn off lights not required for safety.
- Replace problematic lights with sea turtle friendly alternatives. Use long wavelength LED bulbs (560 nm and above), such as yellow, amber, or red.
- Apply window tint at 15% light transmittance level and close opaque curtains or blinds after dark to reduce interior lighting problems.
- Do not use flashlights, cell phones, flash photography or lanterns on the beach at night during nesting season.

THE BENEFITS

- Improved sleep cycles
- Restored night vision
- Energy savings
- Clear views of the night sky
- Compliance with local lighting ordinances
- Protection of threatened and endangered sea turtles and other wildlife



Cover photo by Ben Watkins

QUESTIONS?

- Check with your local municipality or county to find out if a lighting ordinance is enforced in your area. If you live in an area without an ordinance, you are still responsible for protecting sea turtles by adopting wildlife certified lighting.
- You can purchase sea turtle friendly lights through local lighting distributors. All fixtures and bulbs must be wildlife certified by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Visit our website at www.conserveturtles.org for more information.

Supported by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

Sea Turtle Conservancy is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization based in Florida with a 60-year history of sea turtle research, conservation and education.



@conserveturtles

SEA TURTLES & LIGHTING



SEA TURTLE



CONSERVANCY

Sea Turtle Conservancy
www.conserveturtles.org
(352) 373-6441

THE PROBLEM



Our beaches have transformed over the last 200 years from dark, highly evolving ecosystems to

tourist destinations lined with brightly lit businesses and condominiums.



Nesting sea turtles are deterred by artificial lights found on beachfront properties and

often fail to come ashore to nest on brightly lit beaches. In addition, artificial lights serve as the brightest lights on the beach, attracting sea turtle hatchlings toward land. Many affected hatchlings often become disoriented, or confused, and die from dehydration, exhaustion or meet terrestrial predators on the beach.

DID YOU KNOW?



It is estimated that one third of all lighting in the U.S. is wasted in the form of light trespass and sky glow. With an annual release of 21 million tons of carbon dioxide, the cost of wasted lighting is about \$3 billion each year! (IDA, darksky.org)

THREE RULES TO TURTLE FRIENDLY LIGHTING



Rule #1

Keep it low. The lower the fixture, the less likely it is to be seen from the beach.



Rule #2

Keep it shielded. Shielding directs the light and prevents light sources from being seen from the beach, while still providing sufficient lighting for people.



Rule #3

Keep it long. Sea turtles are less disturbed by long wavelengths of light (560 nm and above), such as yellow, amber, and red.

SEA TURTLE FRIENDLY FIXTURES AND BULBS

A good sea turtle friendly fixture directs light down where it's needed for safety, shields the light source from being visible from the beach, and is outfitted with a long wavelength LED bulb.



Wall Mounted Fixtures



Ceiling Mounted Fixtures



Pathway Lighting



Area Lighting



Red & Amber LEDs



Shielded Spotlights

Miri Hardy

Save Our Seabirds

Bird of the Week: Laughing gull

Commonly seen, and often heard, laughing gulls are named for their raucous, laugh-like calls. Of the nine gull species found in Florida, only laughing gulls breed here, and many are year-long residents. These web-footed coastal birds nest in large colonies, on the grounds of coastal islands free of human disturbance and terrestrial predators (such as raccoons and cats).

Adult laughing gulls sport two different looks, depending on the time of year. In breeding season, their head is black, and their bill reddish. In non-breeding season, their head turns mostly gray, and their bill black. Young gulls are more subtly patterned.



Laughing gulls are opportunistic feeders and their diet is varied. Along the coast they eat small fish and crustaceans. You'll also spot them stealing food from other birds, even boldly landing on brown pelicans' heads to do so! Inland, they eat earthworms, snails, garbage and flying insects.

When foraging for flying insects, gulls exhibit a behavior called "hawking," meaning they take their prey on the wing (while flying). This feeding behavior, unfortunately, has popularized the human custom of tossing bread (or other food) into the air to attract gulls, often just to create a photo opportunity.

Citywide public health emergency extended through April 16

Sarasota, FL: The City of Sarasota has extended its declaration of a local citywide public health emergency through April 16 following a weekly review, as required by the City Charter, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The emergency order was issued Friday by City Manager Marlon Brown, in consultation with Mayor Hagen Brody and City Attorney Robert Fournier.

The City's temporary street closure program allows additional space for outdoor dining to help restaurants and retailers severely impacted by the pandemic. Lemon Avenue will be closed between Main Street and State Street from 5 p.m. to midnight Friday and from 3:30 p.m. to midnight Saturday.

The City of Sarasota is assisting Sarasota County to disperse \$13 million received from the U.S. Department of Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance program to help households unable to pay rent due to the pandemic. Residents can [register now](#) to be notified when the application portal opens for the program. Program details are available at www.scgov.net/rent

City Hall and other City buildings are now open to the public, and face coverings are required. Some offices, including Permitting, are open by appointment only. Call 941-263-6000 to schedule an appointment, or visit www.SarasotaFL.gov for online services.

Vaccine Information

The Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County is now offering COVID-19 vaccine to all individuals age 18 and older. DOH-Sarasota will offer a walk-up, no-appointment needed, first dose clinic at the Sarasota Square Mall, 8201 S. Tamiami Trail, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, April 9 and Saturday, April 10.

Effective 5 p.m. Monday, April 12, new account registrations will no longer be accepted as DOH-Sarasota transitions to the next phase of administering vaccine to the community. Registration can be completed online via [the department's website](#) until 5 p.m. Monday, April 12 or by calling 941-861-VAXS. The registration call center hours are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Information on [other vaccine distribution sources](#) in the area can be found here. Homebound individuals can fill out an [online survey](#) or [email HomeboundVaccine@em.myflorida.com](mailto:email.HomeboundVaccine@em.myflorida.com) to register to receive a COVID-19 vaccine in their home. For questions and assistance filling out the survey, call 866-779-6121.



EPA TO REVISIT OFFSHORE FISH FARM PERMIT

The Environmental Appeals Board has requested the Environmental Protection Agency to provide a status report on the permit with guidance under the Biden Administration.

More than a year into the process, environmental regulators are being asked to revisit a permit issued for an offshore fish farm in the Gulf of Mexico. In response to actions under the Biden Administration, the federal Environmental Appeals Board has asked the Environmental Protection Agency to provide a report on the permit it issued last year.

The farm, which would be operated by Hawaii-based company Ocean Era, would host 20,000 almaco jack in a pen suspended 45 miles offshore in the Gulf. It would be the first finfish project in the Gulf and the first in federal waters near the contiguous 48 states. It would produce a maximum annual harvest of 88,000 pounds and if approved, Mote Marine Lab & Aquarium would supply Ocean Era with fingerling almaco jack raised at its research park. Ocean Era needs a water-discharge permit from the EPA and a construction permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The EPA held a hearing in January 2020 and approved a permit in October 2020, but the Army Corps has yet to do so.

The Biden Administration issued an executive order directing federal agencies to review actions taken during the past four years and consider suspending, revising or rescinding them, the Appeals Board order noted. The order states that arguments raised against the farm present issues of national significance concerning the application of several federal laws, including the Clean Water Act, the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act.

Speaking to the Siesta Key Condominium Council, Siesta resident Neal Schleifer, who has opposed the project since the beginning, said the review offers a renewed hope. "That should work in favor, we hope, for the people who oppose the fish farm," Schleifer said. During their public hearing periods, the Army Corps received more than 1,000 comments and the EPA received more than 9,000, with the majority in opposition to the project. Throughout the hearing process, many residents and business owners expressed concern that the pen would exacerbate the problems the Gulf ecosystem has experienced, such as red tide and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Others worry the farm will pave a trail for similar farms in the future.

"Fish eat and fish produce waste, and that waste goes directly into the waterways," Friends of the Earth member Hallie Templeton said during one hearing. "There's excess feed that can go into the waterway. There's pharmaceutical residues and other toxins going into the Gulf and this is a big red flag."

As part of the EPA's permit requirements, Ocean Era would have to monitor several factors, such as medicinal products used on the almaco jack and discharges of pollutants including chlorophyll, phosphorus, copper, sulfide and nitrogen. Project Manager and Permit Coordinator Dennis Peters said Ocean Era selected the Sarasota site out of about 18 sites because it has the appropriate water, depth, substrate and temperature regimes to keep the project clean. It also is away from sensitive reef habitats and endangered species, he said.

The EPA must now file a status report which will allow the Appeals Board to review the permit in light of the Biden executive order. The status report must be filed no later than March 31 and the board will then decide whether to proceed with deliberations, including setting a date for an oral argument.

Should the EPA permit stand, Ocean Era would still need a permit from the Army Corps.

Cindy Burnett was at home in Siesta Harbor on April 12, 2021 when she noticed a manatee acting strangely in the water. Burnett is a volunteer at Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium, and knew to immediately call Mote's Standing Investigations Program (SIP) 24/7 hotline (888-345-2335) to report the behavior. While on the phone with Staff Biologist Amber Lea Kincaid, everyone realized the manatee was in a different kind of distress that human moms will understand: the manatee was giving birth!

The manatee mom was identified by Mote's Manatee Research Program (MRP), which conducts photo-identification surveys and contributes to a statewide database of cataloged manatees. By using the unique scars on their backs and tails, many of which are caused by watercraft interactions, researchers can identify individual manatees and learn about their life histories (reproduction and mortality), habitats they like to frequent and why, behaviors, and more.

Staff Biologist Jennifer Johnson was able to look through past records to learn a little more about this mom. "We first documented this manatee, U2494, in January 2005 at Lee County Manatee Park in Ft. Myers, and we had 10 total sightings of her from 2005-2019. We've also documented at least three other calves with her throughout the years, making April 12th's birth at least her fourth. Our sightings usually had her around the Ft. Myers power plant in the winter and then several locations around Sarasota Bay in the summer."

In addition to photo identification, Mote's MRP also conducts aerial surveys to estimate population distribution and monitor manatee's seasonal movements. The surveys are funded through a grant from Sarasota County's West Coast Inland Navigation District (WCIND) Waterway Development Program. Aerial surveys conducted this month indicate that many manatees in the region hadn't made it all the way to their preferred summer sites quite yet.

"We also saw quite a few manatee mom and calf pairs from the air around Sarasota County this week, including U2494 and her newborn calf," said Kerri Scolardi, Senior Biologist. "Many manatees are still in their spring distribution areas, so we can expect to see a lot of manatees on the move in the coming weeks, including mom and calf pairs, as local waters continue to warm. This is a very important time for everyone recreating out on the water to remain vigilant in abiding by best practices to keep manatees safe."

Watercraft collisions, often deadly, are the leading human-related causes of death for manatees. As manatees are on the move, and soon-to-be-summer will lead to more recreational boat activity, the **following are ways for boaters to help keep manatees safe:**

Abide by speed zones and go slow in shallow areas or near seagrass beds. Manatees spend a lot of time near the surface of the water or foraging near seagrass. Slowing down can save a life.

Wearing polarized lenses and using a spotter can also aide in a boater's ability to spot marine life in the water.

Stow your line and dispose of trash properly. Pollution can cause entanglements or can be ingested by manatees.

Never feed or provide water to manatees. Not only is this illegal due to the protections that manatees enjoy, but it can habituate manatees to humans and alter their behavior.

If you see a distressed or deceased manatee in the Sarasota or Manatee counties, call Mote's 24/7 hotline at 888-345-2335. In other Florida counties, call Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's 24/7 hotline at 888-404-3922. Do NOT attempt to assist a manatee in distress.

Summer also means an increase in manatee mating activity. Manatees mate in groups called herds, and often come close to shore. If you see a group of manatees on shore, please remember to keep a safe distance of 50 yards and call Mote's hotline.

CITY FAVORS OPEN-AIR TROLLEY FOR ISLANDS TRANSIT

THE CITY COMMISSION IS INTERESTED IN SPENDING ADDITIONAL MONEY TO EXPAND A TRANSPORTATION SERVICE BETWEEN DOWNTOWN AND LIDO KEY, THOUGH IT'S UNCLEAR HOW THE ROUTE MAY BE FUNDED.

Not satisfied with the state and county's plans for a free shuttle bus route from downtown to St. Armands Circle, the City Commission voted Monday to pursue plans for an enhanced and expanded transit service to the barrier islands. The commission unanimously agreed to put out a request for proposals in hopes of finding a transportation company to operate an open-air trolley linking Main Street to Lido Key. The board did not finalize details regarding the trolley service, but under the most robust plan the commission discussed Monday, the route could run seven days a week between Main Street east of U.S. 301 and Ted Sperling Park at South Lido Beach.

Launching the trolley service could cost the city hundreds of thousands of dollars, according to estimates city staff produced. That expense is reflective of the commission's desire to go above and beyond the initial plans the Florida Department of Transportation and Sarasota County Area Transit developed for a bus service between downtown and the barrier islands.

FDOT provided a \$1.5 million grant to cover three years of a free bus route running from the downtown SCAT transfer station to St. Armands Circle. The service was designed in response to anticipated traffic congestion associated with the construction of a roundabout at U.S. 41 and Gulfstream Avenue.

Under the initial plan, a single bus would run on a loop, serving each stop on the route every 30 minutes. The service would run from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday beginning in July. The only expenses the city would incur involved marketing, buying signal prioritization equipment and wrapping the buses with a design to look like a trolley. Staff estimated the city's costs at about \$40,000 under that plan.

At Monday's meeting, staff presented a menu of options for enhancing the service. The potential changes included adding additional vehicles to reduce wait times, expanding the service to Sundays, providing late-night operations, extending the route to Lido Key and using open-air trolley vehicles instead of SCAT buses.

Mayor Hagen Brody has been a vocal advocate for creating a trolley service between downtown and the barrier islands. He said he believed a trolley would attract higher ridership numbers than a bus route would, and he wanted to pursue a more expansive route that could allow users to travel between the east and west ends of downtown in addition to riding out to St. Armands or Lido. Brody expressed hope the trolley could be beneficial for tourists, residents, businesses and more. "I think this is a huge economic development tool," Brody said.

Although the FDOT grant could be used to fund a trolley service rather than the planned bus route, the city would still be responsible for covering any additional costs above \$500,000 annually. According to staff estimates, the additional expense of running a service with three trolley vehicles from Thursday through Sunday is between \$210,000 and \$515,000 annually. Commissioner Liz Alpert said she felt it was important to offer the service Monday through Wednesday as well, stating traffic congestion is a problem during rush hour on weekdays.

Brody suggested the city could look to organizations including the St. Armands Business Improvement District and the Downtown Improvement District to assist with funding. The proposed bus service would feature SCAT vehicles wrapped to look like trolleys. Image via city of Sarasota.

Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch was the lone board member to express her preference for a modified version of the original plan. Staff said the process of finding a private operator for the trolley service would likely take four months, pushing the launch date of the new route beyond July. Ahearn-Koch suggested opting for the bus service would allow the program to begin sooner while giving the city more time to explore its budgetary capacity to enhance the transportation line. "I think it's more important to start this and then eventually move into the trolley situation," Ahearn-Koch said.

The rest of the commission was supportive of the open-air trolleys. Staff said details regarding the trolley service, including a finalized route and hours of operation, could be sorted out in negotiations once the city selects an operator. Planning Director Steve Cover said that even after the route begins operations, the city would have the ability to make revisions to the service based on how the public uses it. "As time goes on, and we run the system — if there are weaknesses or times that aren't productive, we can adjust on the go," Cover said.

Jim Ludwig

Chair, LKRA Hotel Houses Committee

HOTEL HOUSE UPDATE:

As a refresher, a “hotel house” as we are calling it, is a large single family structure in a residential neighborhood built to accommodate upwards of 25 vacation renters on a weekly basis. Developers are buying single family homes (mostly 2-3 bedrooms) tearing them down and putting on the same lot 5-8 bedroom houses, usually with a swimming pool and other outside amenities. Most of these houses include maid and other services you would find at a hotel or resort. These types of houses are being built in residential neighborhoods both on our barrier islands and within other Sarasota neighborhoods. This recent housing phenomenon is happening all over Florida and other states as well. Many communities have strong zoning codes and have used them to limit this non-permitted (commercial) use in their residential neighborhoods. The City of Sarasota would not. Other communities also passed significant vacation rental ordinances to deal with the noise, trash, illegal parking, over occupancy and other behavioral issues these properties bring.

"The Lido Key (LKRA), St. Armand's (SARA) and the Lido Shores Neighborhood Associations have all been working diligently with City Commissioners and City Staff to find some relief from this “hotel house” threat that most residents feel are destroying our barrier islands neighborhoods." The LKRA and the SARA position from the onset was that “hotel houses” were an illegal use of residential property under the City's zoning code, and never should have been permitted. Although we are making some progress in working with the City on this, “the horse is out of the barn” and in the past two years there are more than 25 of these structures either already built or where land is cleared.

Both of our neighborhoods share the goal to achieve a peaceful and respectful coexistence of residents and vacationing guests renting our neighborhood houses. What we found was that 90+% of the issues raised by the neighbors about “hotel houses” would be mitigated if the vacation rental in a residential neighborhood mirrored the typical occupancy and use of the other structures in our neighborhood. Having longer term tenants in our residential properties is beneficial to the community and should be encouraged. There is, however, a significant difference between a tenant that lives here and a tenant that stays here.

Never was there a question of a property owner's right to rent their property. Never was there a question of trying to restrict the renting of those residences to vacationers for a period less than the minimum duration well established in City Code. Never was there a question of including owner occupied properties, where the owner leases out a room or a part of the home, they actively live in. Never was there a question of including structures other than 1-4 family structures in residential zones. Never was there a question of including residences where the tenant lives here.

After a lot of communication to our Commissioners from both residents and the neighborhood associations, finally, about a year ago the Commission directed the City Attorney to draft an ordinance to address the problems residents were experiencing by researching what other communities were doing. Almost every other community that has addressed this situation implemented an ordinance that would require all short term rental property owners to register each property, designate a responsible person that would be available to mitigate issues such as trash, illegal parking, noise and limit occupancy to be consistent with the residential neighborhood. Our discussion with other communities both in Florida and other states has found that this approach has been successful.

A first draft of the Vacation Rental ordinance mirroring those in other communities with a registration, inspection, responsible person, and occupancy elements came to the Commissioners in early February 2021. No question, the pandemic caused delays in staff working on this, but as we pointed out to the Commissioners it did not stop the developers who seemed to easily get demolition and building permits to build yet another “Hotel House”, much to the dismay of nearby residents.

This first draft had the bones but included several issues the neighborhoods could not support. As drafted, it would have excluded a significant portion of the Lido Key residential neighborhoods where the “hotel houses” were being built. After the public hearing with extensive testimony from both neighborhoods, the Commissioners in a 3-2 vote sent the ordinance back to the City Attorney for redrafting. Following that meeting, both neighborhood associations met together with the City Attorney and presented a revised draft that included all residential zones and restricted the ordinance to only properties on the barrier islands using an existing zoning overlay. Further the neighborhoods added changes to clarify that the ordinance did not apply to any condos, to any owner-occupied rentals (like an Airbnb), and to anyone that rented for 30 days or more, a concern some Commissioners expressed.

In the interim, while waiting for these revisions to be drafted and come back before the Commissioners, the two associations and several concerned residents held countless meetings with City Staff, City Commissioners and with other communities, including their attorneys. The neighborhoods also launched an extensive media campaign that included press, television and “STOP HOTEL HOUSES” yard signs throughout the neighborhoods.

The revised Vacation Rental ordinance came back before the City Commissioners on April 6th. After extensive testimony of residents in support, the Commissions made a couple minor changes and ultimately passed the ordinance with a 5-0 vote.

This was the first reading of the revised ordinance and the process in Sarasota is for the ordinance to come back to the Commissioners for a second reading, currently set for May 3rd, where they will again vote on it. If it passes, most of the provisions within the ordinance will have immediate effect. The registration piece currently is set to begin on January 1st, 2022 and requires a building inspection.

Personally, I feel particularly good we got this far in this process. Following a final vote with the second reading the Commissioners will follow other Florida communities in protecting their residential neighborhoods from the “commercial use” invasion these Vacation Rental “hotel houses” present.

However, passing this ordinance May 3rd is only a first step and the longer term solution to this issue is in the hands of the City Manager and staff. As almost every speaker commented, “City Staff could have prevented this in the first place”. Sarasota has strong zoning ordinances in place and if used could reign in and control the situation, and we need to continue to pursue this point. The neighborhoods also will monitor the development of processes and procedures for some of the specific aspects of the Vacation Rental ordinance to make sure they will be effective. Code compliance, as we all know, is also crucial not only to this issue but shared by the coalition of neighborhood associations for the City as a whole. The focus will be to strengthen code compliance to be more proactive, more visible and more responsive. We have already begun the process of meeting with the City Manager and key staff on all of these fronts and so far, they are listening and seem willing to work with us.

Stay tuned!

Jim Ludwig,

Chair of LKRA Committee on “Hotel Houses”

APRIL 3, 2021 CCNA MEETING NOTES

CCNA is instigating a regular award to honor a City resident, civic leader, government official, or individual who makes a strong contribution and works tirelessly towards the continued development and betterment of the Sarasota community and its neighborhoods . . . the first such award was presented at the April 3 CCNA meeting to Marlon Brown, City Manager, for his diligent leadership, understanding, direction, help and support to make this City where we are all proud and thankful to live . . . Marlon was visibly surprised and moved and quite emotional . . . and being the leader he is, he made it a special point to thank the City Staff for their contributions and making all of this possible.

Moving forward with plans for the Sarasota Orchestra to provide concerts in the park . . . the program is called Parks and Partners.

Next time you visit the City website, click on the Menu bar in the upper left-hand corner and go down the list and click on Government . . . you will find the new organizational chart which is just the first step in a complete revamping of the public access functionality for the city . . . the whole system will be more professional and user friendly, with links to all social networking platforms, and much more transparent and intuitive when having to interact with any city entity.

The status of several projects was mentioned . . .

The mangrove bayou walk will be coming to completion soon at the Bay Park and is a good sign of things to come for those 53 acres . . . it will be one of the jewels of Southwest Florida.

The construction on the Gulfstream-US 41 Roundabout has become more obvious and is getting closer to the lane changes and traffic redirecting coming in May . . . the hope is with the financial incentives available to the contractor, the project will be finished in March, next year . . . this contractor does have a good record with the State on completing projects on time, so this goal is entirely possible . . . if so, it wouldn't go through the entire season and would even be open before spring break . . . if it doesn't work out, however, the completion will not be until May or June.

There does not appear to be any movement on the discussion with the Sarasota Orchestra about their new location . . . their letter to the City apparently says they will only consider Payne Park.

As an example of cooperation between the neighborhoods and the City, the noise complaints at the Cabana Inn have virtually disappeared because of Staff and Police Department meeting with property management and stronger enforcement.

The Lift station should be completed by late May or early June and the Osprey bridge should be open to traffic.

Florida Power and Light made a presentation . . . they receive awards for solar programs over the years and are the largest generator of sun power in world . . . they are making large investments to better the energy grid, to make it more reliable and speed up restoration after storms . . . they have many programs to support the environment and the community . . . obviously all of this requires funds and they will be filing a base rate request in January . . . the increased rates will still be 20 % below national averages.

The County Commission awarded the Arts and Cultural Alliance the right to begin negotiations and develop specifics for parcel of land at 4644 N Tamiami Trail . . . it will be a live-work space for the arts and include affordable housing . . . the amount of park space was minimized to achieve more living units . . . it's also an economic stimulator for the area . . . they're working on potential partnerships to move the project forward.

Chris Goglia from the St Armands Residents Association spoke on the 'Hotel Houses' situation and Short-term Vacation Rentals . . . he covered the main points that LKRA has been Mayors Hagan Brody was the main speaker and he covered most of the same points that he mentioned when he spoke at our February membership meeting. He did start with the 30-thousand-foot view of what is changing . . . from his first years on the Commission after joining in 2017 . . . where it felt like the City was not spending money wisely and was grid locked in general and just not able to move forward.

This Commission has taken a 180-degree turn and become a Customer service-based organization . . . more professional from top to bottom . . . nimbler and more responsive to the community . . . working in the best interest of making this a better place to live and work.

He went on to list the numerous successes and projects in process that are achieving these ends, included of course are the 2 that are near and dear to our hearts, the Lido Pavilion and beach re-nourishment.

In addition to those 2, there are many more, but several have more relevance to Lido Key and are worth briefly mentioning.

The Legacy Trail, which is coming along quite well, and the focus on connectivity will definitely involve the barrier islands and better access for different modes of movement . . . the MURT trail will be our link to downtown and the bayfront and the whole city and county, for that matter . . . the new trolley has been announced and possibly a water taxi will be discussed.

The mayor did make the point that the beach is our gem and one of the key economic drivers, along with downtown, and the City is dedicated to making them as classy as possible - his word . . . as an example, 1.1 mil \$'s are being invested to upgrade streetscape, landscaping and sidewalks.

Another very positive development that should bode well for achieving better results for the community and the area in general is a much better working relationship with county staff and board, which is much improved from several years ago.

The mayor also went into details about several general issues in the area of public safety and traffic . . . one of course was the new leaders that are now in place and the positive direction being taken . . . but crime statistics have not been good and traffic needs to slow down . . . Sarasota is not known as a very safe place for pedestrians and cyclist . . . these issues will be strongly addressed . . . as an example, he discovered that no Sarasota Police Vehicles have speed monitoring devices, so we haven't been too active in controlling traffic speeds . . .

The zoning code has not been updated in 20 years and needs a lot of work . . . there are several issues, such as commercial corridors that haven't seen enough investment and blighted area that have not been redeveloped . . . we're not attracting quality life businesses within walking or bicycle riding distance . . . these are needed to benefit the neighborhoods and strengthen the community.

There was even more, but I will finish only with his comments about 'hotel houses', a subject near and dear to our hearts . . . Carl can qualify this, but my notes are that he specifically said he is non-committal about this issue . . . he wants a balanced approach . . . he wants to protect the Air BNB participants and allow folks to rent their properties.

Following the Mayors comments there were 2 ending conversations that may be of interest . . . one involved the proposal to close all parts from 11 PM until 5 AM, with certain exceptions . . . basically one concern was with the process, but it is still early and will be evolutionary and collaborative with the neighborhoods, the PREP Board, the police, City Attorney and City Commission . . . there are behavior and usage problems with the 7 that are open until 2:30 AM and complaints from surrounding residents . . . there is data to support the negativity issues . . . it's difficult for the Police to address situations with the present hours . . . so this will be in discussion and studied over the next few months with the hope of agreeing on a standard set of rules and operating procedures for all City Parks.

The final discussion was about the recent media reports about a City Commissioner eavesdropping on a citizen's private conversation . . . upon hearing criticisms of some City actions, subpoenas were threatened . . . it resulted in a Advisory Board member resigning . . . there were comments from CCNA participants such as chilling, troubling, unacceptable . . . not a good precedent . . . the link to the Herald Tribune article was provided.

<https://www.heraldtribune.com/story/news/local/sarasota/2021/03/23/sarasota-planning-board-member-patrick-gannon-resigns-over-mask-ordinance/6967526002/>

OUR APPRECIATION TO THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE CREATION, PUBLICATION, AND DISTRIBUTION OF THIS NEWSLETTER

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Submit your letter in 150 words or less to the Editor at carl@floridaplaystructures.com and get your letter and/or picture printed in an upcoming newsletter.

Editor reserves the right to shorten submissions as necessary and, in case of multiple submissions, the Editor will make a final decision on which letter(s) to print.

Heidi Brandt

Membership

We currently have 478 households, which equates to 680 members. If anyone ever is questioning if they are up to date on paying membership dues, please reach out to me and I will check: heidimbrandt@gmail.com. We've had 3 new families join since the beginning of the year. Talk to your friends and neighbors and have them reach out to me if they have questions about joining. We are usually a very active and social group. Hopefully next fall we will be back in person with our monthly meetings and events.

Official 2021 membership starts on January 1st. **THE YEARLY MEMBERSHIP FEE FOR 2021 is \$30.** The membership application is on the next page of this newsletter. Please feel free to email me with any questions heidimbrandt@gmail.com.

When filling out your application, write legibly and fill out all the blanks. Please put your condo number with your street address. Please provide your EMAIL ADDRESS and PHONE NUMBER in order to receive our regular updates and notifications of things pertaining to Lido Key. You can have additional email addresses if a husband and wife both have their own emails.

ONLINE PAYMENT LINKS FOR LEGAL FUND DONATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP

[HTTPS://LKRA.ORG/MEMBERSHIP](https://lkra.org/membership)

[HTTPS://LKRA.ORG/DONATE](https://lkra.org/donate)

2021 LKRA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

2021 DUES: **\$30.00** ANNUALLY PER HOUSEHOLD

PLEASE PRINT:

MEMBER NAME: _____

SPOUSE/PARTNER:

CONDO (IF APPLICABLE):

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

LIDO KEY STREET ADDRESS:

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP:**

MAILING ADDRESS (IF DIFFERENT):

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP:**

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HAVE A QUESTION? CALL CARL SHOFFSTALL: 813-967-2687. OR EMAIL MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

HEIDI BRANDT: HEIDIMBRANDT@GMAIL.COM. MAIL MEMBERSHIP FORM AND CHECK TO THE ADDRESS BELOW. MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS ARE HELD THE 3RD SATURDAY IN THE MONTHS OF ; OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY,

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