

November 25, 2022

City of Sarasota Planning Dept
Regarding application NO. 23-CW-01
Vacation of the Unimproved Marlin Dr ROW
Scheduled November 29, 2022

Dear Ms Dobbs,

I would like to go on record to say that *IBSSA is not in favor of vacating this property* "The Marlin Conservation Square" which is platted as a dead-end street on public records adjacent to 4815 and 4907 Eastchester Drive. We believe this would be a breach of contract with IBSSA, SWFWMD, and the neighbors who enjoy this pocket park. Both adjacent property owners should have been made aware of this historical use as a public space prior to their purchase of their adjacent property.

Looking back at our IBSSA records from 2000. I can see that this area was transformed from a property that was overgrown with exotic invasive plants (Brazilian Pepper Trees) growing over pavement. With both the help of the city and a grant from Swift Mud (SWFWMD).

The paragraphs below are taken from IBSSA records.

In 2000 under the leadership of then IBSSA Beautification Chair Alan Lillie. Members of IBSSA spearheaded a grant which was funded by the SWFWMD. Many neighbors and man power were involved with the restoration effort to convert the property into the wildlife corridor and groundwater recharge zone that is currently there now. In fact, the City assisted with the removal of the Exotics, and the Road base. They hauled away many truckloads of debris to clear the space and allow us to build the water retention area, and replant with natives.

The funding was granted in public trust that the space would remain in public control, with the effect of groundwater recharge, wildlife refuge, and public use.

Our records also indicate that Dr Miller who lived across the street from the pocket park maintained the area, added a bench and also added little signs to label the plants so that anyone walking there would be able to see the names of the plantings.

When Dr Miller could no longer maintain the pocket park on his own, he reached out to IBSSA. As then Beautification Chair, I gathered a group of neighborhood volunteers to trim and clean up the Pocket Park and maintain it.

A sign does exist on the site with its designation "Marlin Conservation Square", and this is part of our IBSSA Neighborhood map of green spaces. With limited greenspaces in our neighborhood, we are asking the city to not allow this vacation.

Regards,

Joanne L Gonet

President, IBSSA