



# NEWS AND VIEWS

A Publication of the Indian Beach Sapphire Shores Association

INDIAN BEACH  
SAPHIRE SHORES  
ASSOCIATION

Spring 1999

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## Bay Shore Road Enhancement Project

By Burt Polishook

On January 26, 1999, the City's initial response to the IBSSA Bay Shore Road Enhancement Project (defined as a result of 2 neighborhood-wide planning meetings last year, and subsequently presented to and accepted by the Sarasota City Commission) was reviewed by over 40 IBSSA neighbors in an Open House review sponsored by the City's Engineering Department. In that review, neighbors learned that the Project was being considered as part of the City's Bayfront Recreational Trail Plan objectives:

"Specifically, the Bayfront Recreational Trail will extend from Selby Botanical Gardens to USF New College, linking such local riches as Island Park, 6th Street Lagoon, the Van Wezel Performance Arts Hall, Whitaker-Gateway Park, and the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art.

The Bayfront Recreational Trail will travel along Sarasota's beautiful bayfront and offer a lovely and safe place for people to walk, bicycle, jog, and in-line skate, in a friendly, lush, tropical setting.

The Bayfront Recreational Trail will provide a welcoming place for residents and visitors to explore and appreciate some of the valuable natural and historical resources along Sarasota Bay. The Trail will promote health and fitness by drawing peo-



ple of all ages and physical abilities to utilize its path.

Along with our many miles of sidewalks and bicycle lanes, the Engineering Department is eager to promote and develop this non-motorized trail as a means of general recreational enjoyment, as well as for commuter transportation.

The Bayfront Recreational Trail will be designed to comply with the Florida Department of Transportation's "Bicycle Facilities Planning and Design Manual" and the United States Department of Transportation's "Manual of Uniform Traffic Control De-

(Continued on page 3)

## BEAUTIFICATION NEWS

by Alan Lillie

Our Beautification Committee has grown - in fact it has doubled! New volunteers who signed up at our December annual meeting are: Ned & Nancy Garst, Gaia Goldman, Kathy Goldman, June Haley, Charles Robie, Page Saiia, Jane Shea and Neil Whitney. All have either accepted special assignments or taken on weeding responsibilities. Special thanks to some recent weeders of our completed projects: Sam Boss, Ned Garst, Nancy Garst. We can use more.

Our project for the 45th to 47th St. at Sarasota Ave. has be-

gun to have some action. The City has installed a split rail fence at the north end (behind the Melody Restaurant) to prevent parking/vehicle access and the City is now mowing on a regular basis. We plan to plant some plants donated by the Ringling Museum in the near future.

Projects in the preliminary investigative stage are:

Triangles at Mecca & Bay Shore Road.

Low Level Lighting in Sapphire Shores Park

(Continued on page 7)

# SEE IT! HEAR IT! REPORT IT!

## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWS

Report all crime and suspicious activity IMMEDIATELY!

- 1) Call the police 316-1199 or 911
- 2) Inform your Block Captain or Coordinator
- 3) Alert your neighbor

### NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH COORDINATORS

**SAPPHIRE I:**  
58<sup>th</sup> Street to 47<sup>th</sup> Street  
Debbie Muller 355-5743

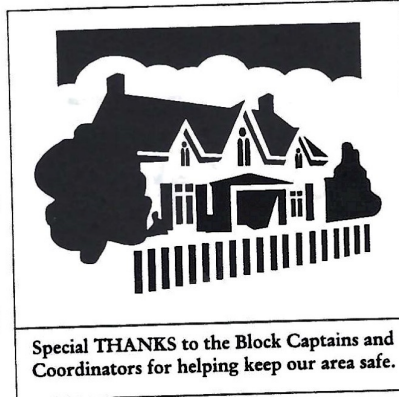
**SAPPHIRE II:**  
47<sup>th</sup> Street to Myrtle Street  
Paul Hoyt 355-6324  
(replacement needed)

**SAPPHIRE III:**  
Myrtle Street to Indian Beach Drive  
Don Kraft 359-3576  
(replacement needed)

**SAPPHIRE IV:**  
Indian Beach Drive to Whitaker Bayou  
Dianne Underwood 954-5129

**UPLANDS:**  
Sergeant Dave Hart 951-5051

Coordinators are needed in SAPPHIRE II (Paul Hoyt) and SAPPHIRE III (Don Kraft). Please call Paul or Don if you would like more information on becoming a coordinator. Or you can call Officer Debbie Rossnagle at 954-7057.



### Court Watch:

Volunteers are needed to attend hearings of repeat drug and prostitution offenders. The Court Watch volunteers are recognized in the courtroom and their presence has a positive impact. Recent rulings by several Judges have called for higher bonds and more severe sentences on convictions. Offenders are now realizing that their criminal actions are not going unnoticed and are not being accepted by the law abiding community.

For more information on Court Watch call:  
Tina Riggle at Court Watch office 361-6283  
Linda Holland at 365-1807

### REMINDER:

Please obey the 25 mph speed limit

There will be a City-Wide Neighborhood Watch Meeting on March 4, 1999 at 7:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers of City Hall. In attendance will be Chief John Lewis, Officer Debbie Rossnagle and District Lieutenants. We hope to see you there as well.

Keep our neighborhood safe....participate in Neighborhood Watch.

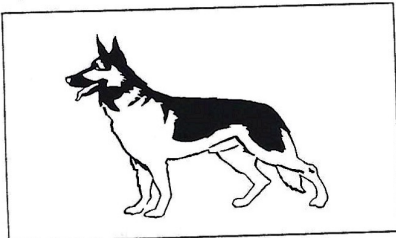
### SEE IT! HEAR IT! REPORT IT!

#### Thank You

The metal doggie poop bag boxes in Sapphire Shores Park have not withstood the test of time. Neighbors have been looking around to find something that would hold up better. George Luzier, one of our neighbors on Woodlands Drive, and a master boat builder, graciously volunteered to make us some. He has delivered 3 beautiful cypress boxes to be installed in the park. Three cheers and a woof woof for George!

#### Your Neighbor's Keeper

The IBSSA frequently receives complaints from residents concerning the violation of city ordinances by their neighbors. Examples of frequent complaints are those which center on the operation of for-profit businesses from a residence and the parking of boats and commercial vehicles in front of a residence. While the IBSSA is pleased to help our residents in gaining a timely response from the City if one is not forthcoming, our neighbors should recognize that the IBSSA itself has no authority to enforce the City's ordinances. We would like to suggest that code violations be called in to the City's code enforcement department at 954-4125 before contacting the IBSSA.



Dog owners please obey the leash law and pick-up after your pet.

### Pat J. Taylor, REALTOR, knows the Museum area.

She has lived in the neighborhood 22 years and sold 20 homes in the area since January 1998.

If you would like a current complimentary market analysis, please call

**ERA Mount Vernon Realty Co., Inc.**

(941)957-4663 office (941)355-1454 eves.



## Bay Shore Road Enhancement Project (Continued from page 1)

vices". It will be constructed within the existing right-of-way, except where landowners donate easements for the project, and will use existing sidewalks and bicycle lanes wherever possible. After completion, lighting, landscaping, street furniture, and recreational amenities will be added to enhance the users' experience."

As a result of preliminary meetings before the Open House and comments from neighbors at the the Open House, IBSSA sent a letter to the Engineering Department with the following content:

"Thank you for organizing the City's January 27th Open House review of the Bayfront Recreation Trail, which focused on trail plans, particularly the Indian Beach Sapphire Shores section. The outstanding attendance and vocal participation by neighbors indicated their keen interest in ensuring that the trail was properly designed to satisfy our neighborhood's requirements. You will recall that these requirements were defined as a result of two neighborhood-wide charrettes last year, the results of which were presented to and accepted by the City Commission for subsequent staff action.

Based on these requirements, IBSSA's reaction to the initial trail design, which suggests an eight foot wide shared pedestrian/bike path throughout the neighborhood, is negative. In fact, if this configuration were the final proposed plan, I feel certain that it would be rejected outright by the neighborhood, as it would be perceived as changing the character of our locality. In addition, there is good reason to believe a mixed use, single lane pathway would be both dysfunctional and unsafe. This option was carefully considered and rejected in our planning process.

We therefore recommend that the City assess the utilization (and widening where required) of the current roadway to accommodate 20 feet for vehicular transit (2 ten-foot lanes) and 6 to 7 feet of bike pathway (one 3 to 3-1/2-foot lane on each side of the road). This would ensure a narrow roadway to minimize speeding and provide adequate room for casual and serious biking. Further passive traffic calming methodologies should be considered. In addition, we believe that the increased usage of the trail exacerbates the already existing need for better lighting on the roadway. The design of such

lighting should be, as previously defined in our requirements, in keeping with lighting currently installed on Bay Shore Road north of 47th Street.

Also, as previously defined in our requirements, the following points should be considered :

1) Additional shrubbery and trees should be planted along the trail to provide for passive traffic calming and pedestrian/biker shading.

2) The current sidewalk should be renovated and extended to areas where not present. Any extension should be particularly sensitive to the impact on homes near the roadway.

3) The roadway surface should be consistent throughout and any subsequent patching should use similar material.

4) Current water drainage problems should be fixed.

5) All work relating to trail & sidewalk construction, gray water distribution, repaving, lighting, shrubbery, etc. should be done at the same time to minimize costs and neighborhood impact.

We also suggest that the pros and cons of the following alternative routes be defined and reviewed with the neighborhood:

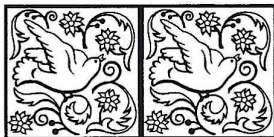
1) Hickory versus Alameda, after coming down 22nd Street. Both streets have possibilities.

2) Indian Beach Drive versus Bon Air & Virginia, after coming off Hickory or Alameda.

Finally, we are concerned at the prospect of the City expending an estimated \$200,000 of the available funding for this project to complete a right-of way study for a seemingly minor widening of the roadway. While we understand that the location of the existing right-of-way must be established in some locations, it would appear that abandoning the 8-foot, dual purpose trail and adopting the neighborhood's recommendations may significantly simplify this task, thus making more funding available for tangible improvements.

In summary, IBSSA supports the trail concept and objectives. The specific design for our neighborhood's section of the trail is not, however, acceptable as currently proposed and the ideas in this letter are offered to ensure a win-win situation for the Indian Beach Sapphire Shores neighborhood and the City of Sarasota."

JEFF MILLER



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## New Dean of New College Speaks at Library Association Lecture

...by Anne Arsenault

Michael Bassis, New Dean of New College/USF, Speaks at the New College Library Association (NCLA) Coffee Lecture on January 21

New College/USF is part of our neighborhood and many of our neighbors work and volunteer at this wonderful educational facility. Therefore, learning about NC/USF plans directly from their new Dean is of great importance to IBSSA.

With a wonderful talk about his plans for New College and the University of South Florida, Michael Bassis introduced himself and his plans to an interested group of NCLA members. He said that a library is central to any educational institution and praised NCLA for its support in making the Jane B. Cook a superior library.

Next he outlined the history of New College, with its founding in 1964 determined to provide high standards of academic excellence and innovative programs. In 1975 New College became part of the University of South Florida, acting as the honors college for all of the university. He called it an "arranged marriage" with little communication, although he believes they have more in common than they acknowledge. He does see the campus as the intellectual center of the area and New College as one of the finest public liberal arts colleges in the United States.

New College has 620 fulltime residential students and 56 fulltime faculty. USF has only part-time non-residential

students and 16 full time teachers supplemented by adjunct faculty. The New College Foundation raises money to keep the student to faculty ratio at 10 to 1.

He next discussed his planning process of asking all the constituencies of the college and university to send him their ideas. Then he will be able to come up with a campus plan for what he called "a beautiful campus with talented faculty and staff in a thriving metropolitan area." He plans to keep distinct missions and administrative structures for the two entities but promote collaborative efforts.

Anne Arsenault, Newsletter Editor, asked him what collaborative efforts with the community he had in mind. He said that depended on what the community told him it wanted. He did cite the new Senior Academy which has started classes for retirees to be held in Sudakoff Hall. The initial meeting attracted 600 people with an initial registration of over 100. This program allows registrants to use the library and park on campus, so during February and March there will be more people visiting our community.

Dick Lobo, Director on IBSSA Board, asked Dean Bassis if he intended to plan with the community as the Museum and the Asolo do. He said he did, but it wasn't clear how that would happen. We may need to keep reminding him that we want to be involved so that we can get a representative to participate in the planning process of the college.



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Thank you **Pat Taylor**, a long time neighbor and ex-IBSSA Director, who has been very gracious with her financial support of this issue's printing costs.



# DO YOU WANT THE CHARACTER OF OUR NEIGHBORHOOD'S BAY FRONT TO CHANGE?

An important decision about the future of our neighborhood's bay front and the enforcement of zoning laws designed to protect it is at hand. You can have an impact on the outcome. On April 14, 1999, the City of Sarasota Board of Adjustment will decide whether or not to grant multiple zoning variances to permit the construction of a non-conforming (232 foot) private dock impinging on valuable marine habitat in Sarasota Bay. The original hearing date for this decision was October 28th, 1998 but the hearing was cut short due to changes in the variance request. The proposed structure - which would be the largest ever permitted by the City to be built on IBSSA bay front - is of a design and scale sufficient to:



- 1) a maximum dock length of 100 feet. Approval of a 232 feet is being requested..
- 2) a maximum dock area of 500 Square feet. Approval of a 992 square foot dock is being requested
- 3) a minimum required water depth of minus three (-3) feet at mean low water. Approval

- of 2.2 foot minimum is being requested
- 4) a required setback of 25 feet from a neighbors property. Approval is being requested for a 9 foot setback

-permanently block bay views of abutting property owners who have resided in the neighborhood for decades, and degrade the bay vista for all neighbors by day and night.

-restrict the access to public lands west of the mean high water line for beachcombers and those using non-destructive watercraft suitable to our bay front (kayaks, sunfish, etc)

-result in the destruction of incredible seagrass beds which exist on and surround the project site.

-set a dangerous precedent which could lead to a proliferation of other long destructive docks on our bay front and exacerbate the "mega-house" phenomenon which is changing the character of our neighborhood and further cutting-off the bay from the neighborhood at large.

For many years, the IBSSA has opposed the construction of docks within our neighborhood which do not conform to the City's zoning code. The city code stipulates:

If allowed to be constructed ,the dock would be, by far, the most prominent feature, day or night ,on our bay front. And should the petition for variance be approved on April 14th., we are aware of another petition that will be submitted for approval of a 300 foot dock in the neighborhood.

### What can you do?

- 1) Attend the public hearing on the issue on Wednesday, April 14th at 9 AM, or
- 2) Write a letter addressed to the Board of Adjustment, City of Sarasota expressing your feelings and provide a copy of your letter to a neighbor who will be attending the hearing.

Please let the City of Sarasota hear your opinion on this vital issue.

## MERCEDES BENZ MECHANIC

- ⇒ Sapphire Shopes References
- ⇒ A.S.E. Certified
- ⇒ For a free astimate call
- ⇒ Randy Parson at 355-8674

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# THE FUTURE TRAIL...

by Charles Hegener

The North Tamiami Trail, the "Gateway to Sarasota": How do you like it? Is it an asset to this neighborhood? If not, what is being done, or should be done? What is Sarasota's planning vision for the main link between the Airport and downtown, between our city's main educational and cultural institutions? Does current zoning and land use zoning chart an appropriate course for the future? Are current regulations being enforced? What practical steps can be taken to assure that the main artery to our neighborhood is what we wish it to be?

These are some of the issues being addressed by a newly formed planning group of the IBSSA, the Tamiami Trail Committee (TTC). Based on the dissatisfaction with the road expressed by residents at our annual meeting last year and their vision statement, and the City's lack of current resources to support planning for Sarasota's "Gateway", the TTC will explore what options are available to upgrade the Trail. Working with abutting neighborhoods and institutions like the Ringling Museum and New College/USF, our goal is to develop a set of viable recommendations for the City. To avoid the outcome of many plans, however, we do not expect to then "wait and see", but to establish a planning function that

will be ongoing. And, we are investigating opportunities for the private sector to instigate new business activity in the area.

Background: During the Planning and Development Committee's review of the Sarasota Comprehensive Plan last year, we learned that the key planning concept for the Trail was for it to continue as a "linear strip mall" of commercial activity. Existing land use and zoning were to be as previously. Business owners were given maximum flexibility to make improvements based on market conditions, which would, hopefully, eventually enable the conversion of problem sites to higher and more desirable use. New NT zoning and signage regulations, if and when accepted by property owners voluntarily, would be applied only as usage changed or as existing facilities were upgraded by 50% or more. Otherwise, existing facilities, appearance, signage etc, were "grandfathered".

However, because of concerns expressed by the IBSSA, including the Trail's appearance and the limited number of businesses of value to the neighborhood, the IBSSA requested, and the City granted, an opportunity to make recommendations for the future of the

(Continued on page 7)

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## BEAUTIFICATION NEWS

(Continued from page 1)

We are currently working with the City on new plans to both stabilize and beautify the bluff and land area at Indian Beach Park - located at Bay Shore Rd. and Indian Beach Dr. Consultants have been interviewed and preliminary sketches are to be submitted. It was decided that the original plans for bluff stabilization didn't provide for aesthetic improvement and weren't sufficiently user friendly. This area is one of the few places where neighbors can gather to look at/wade in the water and to enjoy evening sunsets. Hopefully, it will become a very special place for all of us.

## Neighbors with Special Needs

There is interest in establishing a roster of our neighbors who are elderly or handicapped and who may like the assistance of a neighbor when it is available. Anyone who would like to register as either requiring assistance or being available to provide assistance to a neighbor or who would otherwise like to assist in this project, please contact Lissy Dickens at 362-7200

## THE FUTURE TRAIL...(continued from page 6)

"Gateway to Sarasota", to be incorporated in to the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Notably, much progress has been made in recent years, particularly on the Trail south of 27th Street. The City, with ongoing support from the IBSSA, Gateway 2000, and the North Trail Business Association, has been effective in reducing street crime and prostitution, and has made important initiatives to rid the area of problem businesses. Significant new developments are underway near downtown, and the Ringling School of Art has made major improvements. The North Trail Plaza is being renovated, and now contains a furniture store. But there has been little other positive change north of 27th Street. This area is the focus of the TTC initiative.

We have an excellent group of volunteers to work on this project, including representatives from the Ringling Museum, the Ringling School, the North Trail Business Association and Bayou

Oaks. Several professional planners who live in our area are donating their services, as are professional writers, artists, businesspeople and retirees. We have also had expressions of interest by neighbors willing to invest in viable new businesses on the Trail. To expedite our process, we are forming task groups to address major concern areas such as appearance, land use/zoning, economic development, crime and traffic. The recommendations of these groups will be integrated in the plan submitted to the City. The TTC is also outreaching to business interests, area foundations and governmental agencies for additional expertise and support.

The TTC is also taking immediate practical initiatives with positive results. Kafi Benz notified the city that Blue Video had been closed for 30 days, and the City, per the new

(Continued on page 9)

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Are you interested in volunteering for neighborhood projects? \_\_\_\_\_

1999 Dues Payment \$ 10.00

Voluntary Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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## **THE FUTURE TRAIL**...(continued from page 7)

Adult Business Ordinance that IBSSA supported, required it to remain closed as an adult business--permanently. A propane tank installed at Myrtle without proper permits is expected to be removed. Dick Lobo has notified the Code Enforcement Department of the City of some 50 possible code violations on the Trail.

This is a substantial undertaking made possible by the kind of people we have in our neighborhood. We welcome additional support, particularly from neighbors with research, administrative, design or business planning experience. Some of our current volunteers are: Kafi Benz, Alex Boudreau, Susan Burns, Barbara Cherry, Bart Cotten, John Burt Foster, Viola Goldberg, Beverly Hancock, Mary Anne Jablonski, JP Knaggs, Dick Lobo, Sharon Miller, Joseph O'Haver, Scott Pickett, Burt Polishook, , Mary Powers-Boss, Gene Ray, Olga Ronay, Christian Saiia, Louise Tessier, Joe Thiel, Tim Tilton, Richard Thomas, Carl Weiss, and Jesse White

### **City-Wide Neighborhood Watch Meeting**

Thursday March 4th, 1999....7:00 PM

City Commission Chambers – 1561 1st St.

#### **Agenda**

- 1-Welcome/Introduction- Officer Debbie Rosnagle
- 2-Opening Remarks-Chief John P. Lewis
- 3-District Updates-Lieutenant Bill Wall
  - Lieutenant Stan Duncan
  - Lieutenant Bill Spitler
- 4-Review 1988 Crime Statistics
- 5-General Discussion/Information

### **1999 IBSSA Events**

Spring General Meeting-June 8, 1999

Sudakoff Center 6:30 PM

Fall Picnic-October 24, 1999

Bay Side at Caples Hall

Winter General-December 1, 1999

Sudakoff Center 6:30 PM

Note: We are trying to plan a Spring event

and you will be notified if one can be scheduled





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