

"Your link to a better neighborhood"

Clearwater

Neighborhoods

Coalition

NEWSLETTER

Volume 26

Issue 4

April 7, 2008

Next Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition Meeting

Monday—April 7th, 2008

7:00 PM– 8:30PM

>>Salvation Army– Joy Center<<

1521 Druid Road East

The building is at the corner of Highland and Druid. the 2nd building on the right.

THE PURPOSE OF THE COALITION

The Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition has been part of the community since 1981, and its ongoing purpose is to provide a forum for neighborhood associations to voice their concerns about neighborhood issues and to use our combined resources to address those issues effectively.

3rd Annual Pet Spring Fair

Location: Downtown Clearwater, Cleveland St. between East & Ft. Harrison

Time: 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Contact: Anne Fogarty, 562-4044

Description: A pet parade with prizes for best-dressed pet and pet/owner look-alike, a pet training demonstration, and puppy races are planned. Pinellas County Animobile, rescue groups and vendors that offer unique items for pets and people. Food, Entertainment, F-U-N!!!! Coordinated by Clearwater Main Street, an award winning Florida Main Street.

Reader's can sign up for Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition newsletter access by sending an email to clearwater@newpobox.com with their name, email address and affiliation, requesting they be added to the CNC listserv. Call Dave Campbell at 725-1276 if you have questions.

A neighborhood is not simply a multitude of homes, it is a place that as a whole we identify as home.

P.O. Box 8204, Clearwater, FL 33758-8204

Web Page: www.clearwatercoalition.com

Email: Clearwater@newpobox.com

March 3, 2008

Meeting called to order by President, Shelley Kuroghlian at 7:03 PM.

Members present: Norma Carlough, Windsor Park; Ron Delp, Clearwater Beach; JoAnna Siskin, Skycrest; Russell Gabel, Hillcrest; Bill Jonson, Countryside Northridge; Shelley Kuroghlian, Spring Lake; Greg Mathis, Bayview Heights; Herb McLachlan, Sand Key Civic; Diana Schlafley & Ken Holloway, Grovewood; Julie Thompson, Glen Oaks; Doug Williams, Northwood West and Ron Wright, Tropic Hills. Guests present: John Doran, VP City Council; George Cretekos, City Council; Paul Bertels, City of Clearwater Traffic Engineer; Sgt. Greg Stewart, CPD; Jeff Kronschnabl, City Of Clearwater Development & Neighborhood Svcs; Dan Bates, Development Services Mgr; Becky Melendez, Neighborhood Svcs. Mgr; John Hedrick and Kip Corriveau Dir. Social Services, Salvation Army.

President's Report

Shelley Kuroghlian thanked Kip Corriveau, Salvation Army for the use of the Joy Center for future CNC meetings. It is a wonderful space. Kip provided information on the complex and welcomed the CNC.

City of Clearwater Neighborhood services have three events planned for the neighborhoods. There is a City of Clearwater Informational Fair at Countryside Mall on March 12th, a Movie Under the Stars at Crest Lake Park on Friday evening, March 14th and Neighborhoods Day on Saturday, March 15th. We encourage all members to ask their neighbors to participate. .

Secretary Report

Motion by Herb McLachlan 2nd by Bill Jonsen to approve minutes as submitted. Approved.

Treasurer's Report

Doug Williams presented the balance sheet and updated the members on new payments. He encouraged all members, who haven't done so, to send their dues for 2008. New cards were printed to reflect the complimentary membership information. Motion to accept Treasurers report by Herb McLachlan, 2nd by Bill Jonsen. Approved

GUEST SPEAKERSNeighborhood Watch

Shelley Kuroghlian introduced Sgt. Gregory Stewart of CPD Crime Prevention. He has been working with Neighborhood Watch for 19 years and replaces Off. Scott Ballard, who returned to patrol as the key contact. There are currently 75 neighborhood watch groups in Clearwater, 32 of which are active. He indicated that you do not need to be a neighborhood association to have a neighborhood watch. Sgt. Stewart is happy to visit any meeting to provide information on the program. He answered questions regarding the program and set-up for new watch groups.

Code Enforcement

Jeff Kronschnabl, Director, Development and Neighborhood Services introduced Dan Bates the new Development Services Manager who is replacing Bob Hall. Shelley asked about C-Track and asked that we have someone from Development Services tell us more about that system at a future meeting. Jeff gave the history of Code development in Clearwater since 1993. He explained the "broken window" theory and its impact on surrounding properties. One of the key strategies for Development Services in 2008 is the identification of abandoned properties. With the increasing number of foreclosures it is imperative that Development Services be able to identify empty properties, take action to keep them up to code and to accelerate the code enforcement resolution cycle. Clearwater has been identified as the number one city in the nation for mortgage fraud. The financial impact of an abandoned property on the surrounding homes is approximately \$8,000 loss of value per home. It costs the City \$34,000 per house to support actions associated with an abandoned property. Current coverage is 24 hours a day, seven days a week using eight people to effect enforcement. Owners of rental properties must secure occupational licenses to rent. If properties are not kept up to code, the license can be revoked. Norma Carlough encouraged members to identify these properties and work with the city to brainstorm how to identify the information needed by the City to address the problem. Shelley Kuroghlian asked Development Services to put together a "cheat sheet" that helps neighborhoods get the information required. Dan Bates spoke about putting focus on environmental conditions to make communities safer. The lighting initiative is an example of this strategy. He will also focus on assessment to better understand what has been accomplished. Norma Carlough identified a disjoint in the Community Response Team Guide to Code Enforcement and a CPD pamphlet regarding motorized scooters. Norma will forward the information to Dan. Jeff introduced Becky Melendez, Manager Neighborhood Services who reiterated the events being sponsored in March. Shelley Kuroghlian asked that each member check with the president of their associations and asked that they respond to the letter sent by Becky Melendez to identify abandoned / empty properties. There was further discussion regarding the increase in gang graffiti and Bill Jonsen asked what action the City is taking in the East Gateway on abandoned properties. JoAnna Siskin expressed concern that the graffiti is increasing within the actual neighborhoods. Jeff indicated that there is a CPD Gang Task Force headed by Det. Roberto Verabetes

Traffic Calming

Paul Bertels, City of Clearwater Traffic Engineer, provided an update on the various traffic calming projects. North Greenwood is nearing completion and should be finished by the end of March 2008. Skycrest is at 100% plans and will begin construction in 2008. Morningside is at 30% plans which are currently in review. Morningside and Wood Valley projects are scheduled for build in 2009. The key engineering concern is the impact on drainage and movement of utilities. Russ Gabel asked about the traffic calming plans for Hillcrest he will contact Paul directly. Paul encouraged the members to use the roundabout on Douglas / Marshall in North Greenwood. This is a perfect example of a good use of traffic calming to slow speeders and make the community safer.

COORDINATOR REPORTS

Code Enforcement

Norma Carlough passed out copies of the Community Response Team Guide to Code Enforcement in English and Spanish. She also provided copies of the Citizens Guide and the Residential Rental Housing Educational Materials and forms. John Doran also provided copies of the Guide to Code Enforcement for CNC members.

Membership Committee

Shelley asked that members who were given call lists provide an update. Action: Selected members to update list with call results and new address information and forward to Shelley Kuroghlian
Shelley announced that Tom Calhoun, Coachman Ridge has resigned but a new member of the community will participate beginning in April

Parks and Recreation

Ron Delp contacted Kevin Dunbar, Leroy Chin and Larry Dowd to get information regarding the benches around the lake in Crest Lake Park and the impact of ADA on the decision to face 3 of them away from the lake. To replace the benches will cost \$1000. There is money in Penny for Pinellas #3. Ron's feeling was that the replacement would not happen as this is not a big issue. Shelley Kuroghlian indicated that when the benches were being newly installed, Kevin Dunbar was notified of the park users concerns about facing the benches toward the street and away from the water. At that time they could have been installed to face the lake for little to no additional money. The request was denied. JoAnna Siskin noted that all new benches installed in Clearwater on Edgewater Drive, face the water, regardless of the side of the walkway on which they are situated. She questioned why the ADA requirements did not apply to that location. Julie Thompson noted that "if a person was in a wheelchair they may have a very different opinion than that the City as to how important it was that they be able to face the water". The CNC agreed to take no further action.

Shelley Kuroghlian contacted Bill Horne, City Manager, regarding Country Hollow Park He indicated that since the playground is less than 1 mile from Forest Run Park that the playground will not be replaced. While not an ideal situation, this a direction that the city will be moving towards as revenues continue to shrink. The existing playground had out lived its useful life and was removed due to safety concerns. Bill Jonson, expressed his disappointment with the decision and indicated that he wrote to Kevin Dunbar and did not receive a response. St. Petersburg is trying to reduce the distance between playgrounds to one half mile. He asked for a copy of the memo. Bill is still waiting to find out if a member of Parks and Recreation will address his neighborhood on alternatives. Action: Shelley Kuroghlian to send copy of Bill Horne memo to Bill Jonsen who will follow up with the City Manager.

Chamber of Commerce

Doug Williams reported that the chamber has been reinvigorated. Meetings have been well attended.

Environment / Downtown Development

Doug Williams updated the new members on Pinellas Living Green. They are making good progress with getting vendors and sponsors for the event. Everyone wants to participate though all are not eligible if they are not a "green" company. He encouraged the members to have their neighbors attend. May 3-4, 2008 is the date of the event.

Community Development Board

Norma Carlough, alternate member to the Community Development Board, could not speak on the Shoppes at Sand Key per the advice of the City of Clearwater Attorney. A new vote will be taken this month. Herb McLachlan said that at the next meeting of the CDB citizens will not be allowed to speak. Members not present at the last meeting will be allowed to vote which is a concern to the people on Sand Key. Prior vote was a tie, 3 for and 3 against to change to a Tourist (T) zone.

Neighborhood Input

Julie Thompson spoke about the formation of a Neighborhood Watch in the Druid Road area and the formation of a future Neighborhood Association. They are making good progress..

Ron Delp has a concern with "flexible standards" in Planning and Development. He and Bill Jonsen will do some work over the next few months to put together information to present to the CNC on this issue.

OLD BUSINESS

East Gateway Coalition

The EGC met with representatives of the CPD and Development Services. They were disappointed that businesses had not been contacted, as promised, to get Affidavit of Trespass signed for 31 businesses over the prior 10 month period. JoAnna Siskin indicated that Sgt. Stewart notified her this evening that a packet of materials for a business crime watch which includes the trespass affidavits will be delivered to each of the businesses by March 7th. The EGC will continue to try to move ahead to effect change in the East Gateway. They were advised to work with Economic Development , Geri Campos-Lopez, in regard to the 5-year plan. Shelley Kuroghlian noted that they would like to get agreement from the City to take action sooner than a 5-year timeframe to improve quality of life in that neighborhood. Julie Thompson noted the impact of the soup kitchen on the area and the need to get factual data. JoAnna Siskin and Norma Carlough reminded the group of the multiple issues facing the neighborhood to include, drugs, prostitution, code violations and problematic use by some businesses.

NEW BUSINESS

Meeting on March 13 for the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA) to gain input from Pinellas citizens on "master plan" for public transit that will connect the 7 counties. Bill Jonsen asked that you urge your neighbors to attend. Action: Bill Jonsen to send copy of notice to Shelley Kuroghlian who will send copy out on the list-serve.

Doug Williams made a motion to adjourn, 2nd by Norma Carlough . Approved. Meeting adjourned 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

JoAnna Siskin, Secretary



Your VOICE is important to the Coalition.

We need to hear your concerns as well as suggestions and ideas for solutions on the issues that affect your neighborhoods.



Change in Association Officers Notification Please forward names of new officers for your association to JoAnna Siskin, CNC Secretary at siskinj@aol.com.

Please send comments, opinions, and suggestions regarding the **Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition** to P.O. Box 8204, Clearwater, FL 33758-8204 **or please contact an officer.**

2008 Officers

Shelley Kuroghlian	President	727-736-0154	Spring Lake
Ric Ortega	Vice President	727-938-2835	Sunset-Highland
JoAnna Siskin	Secretary	727-442-0096	Skycrest
Doug Williams	Treasurer	727-725-3345	Northwood West

This newsletter is available by free subscription to anyone. Simply E-mail Clearwater@newpobox.com with your name, email address & affiliation.