

GALT MILE NEWS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GMCA

*Happy
Holidays*



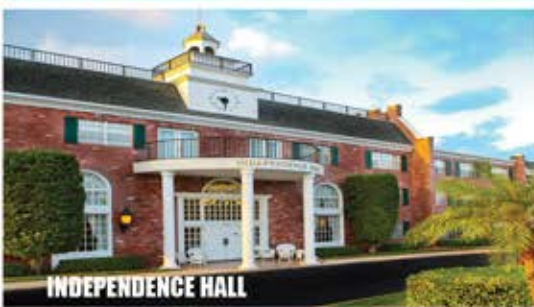
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treated pedestrians like pinballs. Community leaders and City officials offered various theories for the light being ignored and the dangerous turns. Some blamed a poorly placed traffic signal or confusing signage while others surmised that anxious drivers heading south on A1A might be preoccupied with the traffic light at the busy Oakland Park Boulevard intersection and inadvertently overlook the preceding light and/or street signs a few blocks north.

While failing to definitively diagnose the enigmatic accident zone or effectively curb the traffic abuses, these preventive actions occasionally shed light on contributing factors. Former Police District 1 Commander Major Mary Negrey (later promoted to Assistant Chief and now manages communications for Seminole casino operations) told the Advisory Board in 2006 that until the City Commission stiffened some toothless traffic regulations, A1A would remain a vehicular demilitarized zone.

Greenway Born

In 2007, the Florida Department of Transportation was finally preparing to rehabilitate State Road A1A from Flamingo Avenue to Oakland Park Boulevard. Engineering Consultants bidding on the lucrative project were charged with improving upon a scope of work that would bring the thoroughfare into compliance with State and local regulations, address traffic safety issues and reflect the neighborhood's character. To address the third objective, City officials recommended that aspiring applicants elicit feedback from the Galt Mile Community Association.

At a September 2008 meeting with Mike Sherman from H.W. Lochner, an engineering consulting company competing for the FDOT contract, GMCA President Pio Ieraci and Vice President Eric Berkowitz reviewed the project and imposed a community context on relevant safety and public nuisance issues (noise). While the discussion helped identify traffic and pedestrian hot spots, it additionally sought to insure that the outcome was aesthetically consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. One month later - after the City awarded the FDOT engineering consulting contract to GBF Engineering - GMCA officials met with Michael Melendez, the bid winner's engineering consultant. Melendez, a 7-year FDOT designer before joining GBF in 2003, explained that an A1A corridor study conducted by project planners had already begun evolving solutions to the widespread dangerous and illegal driving practices and the nerve-racking noise pollution.

To measure how a reduction from six to four traffic lanes would impact traffic volumes and service levels on State Road A1A from Oakland Park Boulevard to the northern City limit, the City of Fort Lauderdale and the Broward County MPO had commissioned Kimley-Horn and Associates Inc. to perform a Lane Reduction Feasibility Study on September 5, 2007. While confirming that a four lane A1A could easily manage current and future throughput without burdening adjacent or alternate routes (like Galt Ocean Drive), a subsequent study summary concluded that a lane reduction would curb speeding and reduce the number and seriousness of collisions.

More than a year after the Kimley-Horn study, on December 16, 2008, the City hired urban planners Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin (since absorbed by Los Angeles-based AECOM) to prepare conceptual design options that illustrated the roadway segment, pedestrian hardscape treatment, site furnishings and landscaping based upon six and four-lane scenarios. The options included four variations ranging from restriping the existing roadway and carving out bike lanes, to relocating existing curbs, expanding sidewalks and accommodating new bike lanes, on-street parking and street trees.

To present the new concepts and elicit local input, the City hosted a 6 PM public meeting on May 7, 2009 at the Beach Community Center and provided the design options on the City's website along with an interactive opportunity to comment. In a referendum conducted by the City, Galt Milers voted overwhelmingly to support an option that offered an expanded 24-foot wide sidewalk on the east side of A1A with a 10-foot pedestrian merchant zone and a 14-foot pedestrian area, a 10-foot bicycle zone, including on-street parking, street trees, landscaping in the median islands and a double row of trees defining the pedestrian area.

Reducing A1A to 4 lanes served to structurally inoculate the roadway against street races wherein competing vehicles require dedicated lanes. Parsing out bike lanes relieved a perceived need by bicycle enthusiasts to illegally vie with pedestrians for sidewalk space one block east on Galt Ocean Drive or risk being pancaked on A1A by a gardener's pickup barreling at 85 MPH. Following an extended debate over project impacts, community & City leaders, local vendors and project planners coalesced around the 4-lane option. With a credible plan in the works to clean up a segment of A1A reminiscent of a concrete blood blister, on July 20, 2009, former FDOT Secretary Stephanie C. Kopelouso notified Broward County that its 32 miles of A1A had been designated as a Florida Scenic Highway.

Continued on page 7

THE GALT MILE NEWS

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Although willing to approve the beautifully designed preferred option, its \$8.7 million price tag spooked FDOT. On November 3, 2009, the City Commission authorized staff to forward it (with cost-cutting revisions) to the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMPO) for inclusion in a list of projects which are considered annually for funding. Now envisioned as the first of two projects that would morph the dilapidated speedway into a high end thoroughfare, Melendez and City staff pared down this initial plan into a 4-lane skeleton with buffered bike lanes and peppered with targeted safety and landscaping modifications.

On January 12, 2010, GMCA officials met with FDOT Project Manager Jim Hughes and Project Engineer Michael Melendez to insure that the plan would serve as a stepping stone to elevating the Galt Mile stretch of A1A to a level of excellence worthy of its "Scenic Highway" designation. Although Lauderdale-by-the-Sea had successfully worked with FDOT to develop their slice of A1A into a beautiful transportation corridor, A1A's reputation as the "Ocean Highway" – a tailored picture postcard beachfront boulevard – was most exquisitely exemplified by the stretch approaching and adjacent to the Fort Lauderdale beach.

The sordid road connecting the two was a dilapidated, dreary, dangerous speedway marred by patched and unpatched potholes, extensive spiderweb cracks and scattered browning vegetation. One block east of A1A, the parallel Galt Ocean Drive is adorned with a luxurious package of aesthetic amenities such as paved crosswalks, pink aggregate sidewalks, interred utilities, landscaping uplights and decorative lamps. Contrasting the Galt Mile neighborhood's blighted stretch of A1A with surrounding well-appointed thoroughfares to the east, north and south served to dramatically emphasize its shared impediments with a squalid airport perimeter strip.

On August 18, 2010, Melendez and Hughes convened another public meeting at the Beach Community Center to better explain how the plan would address longstanding community concerns while improving the route. While staunchly in favor of curbing speeders, local residents repeatedly affirmed that they didn't want to trade in a race track for a permanent traffic plug. Addressing the prospect of overkill, Project Engineer Melendez remarked "This is not a typical project. You usually don't have many opportunities to reduce the number of road lanes. You can see where people speed up because of the open corridor. One of the benefits will be to slow down traffic, not to the point where it obstructs traffic, but to allow more pedestrians to walk on the sidewalk and bring more exposure to businesses along A1A."

Pleased with a planned 6-foot bike lane unique to the neighborhood, FDOT Project Manager Jim Hughes added "There's a lot of bicycle traffic in the area with no bike lanes, so I think the bike lanes will be a big addition." When repeatedly asked about community-endorsed amenities stripped from the plan to whittle overhead, the FDOT bureaucrats guaranteed their reappearance in the next stage of this two-part transformation.

The modified design plans were completed in the spring of 2011 and bid packages were sent to contractors the following autumn. On October 7, 2011, the job was snagged by Weekley Asphalt Paving, Inc. The Pembroke Pines contractor appointed Jorge Perez to supervise construction. Not surprisingly, their initial winning bid of \$1,728,489.86 was subsequently sweetened by almost \$400,000. Welcome to the Venice of America!

Phase I – A 4 Lane Structural Skeleton

On May 3, 2012, the City of Fort Lauderdale and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) hosted a "Construction Open House" at the Beach Community Center to review the \$2.1 million FDOT plan to resurface State Road A1A (SR A1A) from Flamingo Avenue to Oakland Park Boulevard. Melendez and construction coordinator Sara J. Duffoo (Senior Project Engineer at Target Engineering Group, Inc.) assured local residents and merchants that the structural changes to A1A wouldn't impair traffic on surrounding roads. After 6 years of tweaking, Financial Project Number 423000-1-52-01 (the preferred identifier for FDOT projects) was finalized and fitted with a May 7, 2012 start date.

Continued on page 10

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JAN/DEC

SUN	MON	TUE	WED
15 Las Olas Outdoor Green Market 333 E Las Olas Blvd. & SE 4th Ave. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-426-8436 Festival Flea Market Holiday Car Show Festival Flea Market Mall (Sample Rd at Ft. Turnpike - Exit 69) 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Info.: 954-563-4000	16 Commissioner Bruce Roberts: Pre-Agenda Meeting Beach Community Center, 6 p.m.	17 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268 Fort Lauderdale City Commission Meeting City Hall, 6 p.m.	18 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063 Christmas Day
22 Las Olas Outdoor Green Market 333 E Las Olas Blvd. & SE 4th Ave. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-426-8436 Jingle Bell Jog Sawgrass Technology Park 1601 NW 136 Ave, Sunrise 7 a.m. Reg./Info.: www.gflnc.org	23 Special Magistrate Hearing: WaterWorks 2011 City Commission Meeting Room - City Hall 10 a.m. Info.: 954-828-5225	24 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268	25 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063
29 Las Olas Outdoor Green Market 333 E Las Olas Blvd. & SE 4th Ave. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-426-8436	30	31 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268 New Year's Eve Downtown Countdown SW 2nd Street, Ft. Lauderdale 3 p.m. to 3 a.m. Info.: 954-396-3622	1 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063
5 Las Olas Outdoor Green Market 333 E Las Olas Blvd. & SE 4th Ave. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-426-8436 Sunday Jazz Brunch Riverwalk, Downtown FL 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5985	6 Commissioner Bruce Roberts: Pre-Agenda Meeting Beach Community Center, 6 p.m.	7 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268 Fort Lauderdale City Commission Meeting City Hall, 6 p.m.	8 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063
12 Las Olas Outdoor Green Market 333 E Las Olas Blvd. & SE 4th Ave. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-426-8436 2014 Florida Fast Expo Car Show Miami Airport Convention Center 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Info.: 954-647-6610	13	14 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268	15 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063 South Florida Business Expo Sheraton Fort Lauderdale Airport Hotel (Empire Ballroom) 5 to 8 p.m. Info.: 954-838-9644

DECEMBER 20: Winter Movie Nights "BF", Fairchild Tropical Gardens (Garden House Lawn), Gates open @ 5 p.m.; Movie begins @ 7 p.m., Info.: www.fairchildgarden.org

DECEMBER 22: Riverwalk Sunday Arts, Esplanade Park along the New River, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info: 954-468-1541

DECEMBER 28: Greater Ft. Lauderdale Road Runner's Club: 34th Annual Resolution 5K, Hugh Taylor Birch State Park, 7 a.m., Info: 954-461-5515

JANUARY 3-5: Fort Lauderdale Beach Collector Car Auction, War Memorial Auditorium, Info.: 561-533-7945

JANUARY 3-5: West Palm Beach Antiques Festival, South Florida Fairgrounds, WPB, Info.: 941-697-7475

JANUARY 11: Walk in the Wild, Flamingo Gardens, 8 a.m., Info.: www.flamingogardens.org

JANUARY 11-12: Fort Lauderdale Gun & Knife Show, War Memorial Auditorium, Info.: 954-828-5380

JANUARY 11-12: 27th Annual Boca Fest, The Shops at Boca Center, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Info.: 954-472-3755

JANUARY 12: 6th Annual Jazz Picnic in the Park, Ilene Lieberman Botanical Gardens (3801 Inverrary Blvd., Lauderdale), 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Info.: 954-730-3000

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UPCOMING EVENTS IN OUR AREA

19

G.M.C.A. Advisory Board Meeting
Nick's Italian Restaurant, 11 a.m.

26

Kwanzaa

2

9

Fairchild's Garden/Music Festival
(Through 1/19)
Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden
Tix.: www.fairchildgarden.org

16

Palm Beach Winter
Antiques Show
(Through 1/19)
WPB Marriott (1001 Okeechobee Blvd)
Info.: 954-563-6747

G.M.C.A. Advisory Board Meeting
Nick's Italian Restaurant, 11 a.m.

20

Jazz on the Square
El Mar Drive & Commercial Blvd
6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
Info.: 954-776-5092

27

Jazz on the Square
El Mar Drive & Commercial Blvd
6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
Info.: 954-776-5092

3

Jazz on the Square
El Mar Drive & Commercial Blvd
6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
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10

Jazz on the Square
El Mar Drive & Commercial Blvd
6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
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17

Jazz on the Square
El Mar Drive & Commercial Blvd
6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
Info.: 954-776-5092

21

Music-By-The-Sea
A1A & Commercial Blvd
6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
Info.: 954-771-2900

First Day of Winter

28

Music-By-The-Sea
A1A & Commercial Blvd
6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
Info.: 954-771-2900

7th Annual Downtown Delray Beach New
Years Weekend Craft Festival
(Through 12/29)
330 East Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Info.: 954-472-3755

4

Music-By-The-Sea
A1A & Commercial Blvd
6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
Info.: 954-771-2900

26th Annual Las Olas Art Fair - Part I
(Through 1/5)
East Las Olas Blvd.
(between SE 6th Ave and SE 11th Ave)
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Info.: 954-472-3755

11

Music-By-The-Sea
A1A & Commercial Blvd
6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
Info.: 954-771-2900

3rd Annual Stone Crab & Seafood Festival
Esplanade Park
11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Info.: 954-468-1541

18

Music-By-The-Sea
A1A & Commercial Blvd
6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
Info.: 954-771-2900

ANNUAL WHITE ELEPHANT SALE
Coral Ridge Towers South
(3333 NE 34th St.)
In the Community Room
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

January 24

CAI-SEFL Annual Golf Tournament
Plantation Preserve (7050 W. Broward Blvd), Plantation
Info.: 954-816-0661

January 24 - 26

8th Annual International Chocolate Fest
Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, 9:30 to 4:30 p.m.
Info.: www.fairchildgarden.org

January 25

CF Cycle For Life
Esplanade Park, 7:30 a.m.
Info.: 954-739-5006

January 25

5K 4 Kids
Hugh Taylor Birch Park, Pavilion #3, 7 a.m.
Info.: 954-461-5515

February 7 - 9

15th Annual Delray Beach Garlic Fest
Downtown Delray Beach
Info.: 561-279-0907

February 7 - 9

43rd Annual Seminole Tribal Fair
Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino
Info.: 866-625-5374

February 8 - 9

22nd Annual Florida Renaissance Festival
Quiet Waters Park, 10 a.m. to Sundown (weekends)
Info.: 954-776-1642

February 16

9th Annual Fort Lauderdale A1A Marathon
401 SW 2nd St. at NW 5th Ave., Ft. Lauderdale, 5 a.m. to Noon
Info.: 561-241-3801

February 22 - 23

7th Annual Ocean Adventure Expo 2013
Broward County Convention Center
Info.: 561-715-0247

**FOR A COMPLETE
LISTING OF EVENTS,
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CALENDAR AT
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JANUARY 12: Oshogatsu New Year Celebration 2014, Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Info.: 561-495-0233

JANUARY 18-19: 25th Annual Downtown Delray Beach Festival of the Arts, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Info.: 954-472-3755

Fridays: Aruba Beach Cafe's Friday Fun Fest Pig Roast, 4 to 7 p.m.

First Saturday of Every Month: Beach Cleanup, Commercial Blvd. & the Beach LBTS (Meet at Pavilion), 9 to 9:30 a.m., Info.: 954-776-1000

First Saturday of Every Month: North Beach Art Walk, 3280 NE 32nd St, 7 to 11 p.m., Info.: 954-537-3370

Second Saturday of Every Month: Beach Sweep, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., Info.: 954-474-1835

Sundays: Tour-the River Ghost Tour, Stranahan House & Water Taxi, 7:30 p.m., Tix.: 954-524-4736

Saturdays: Saturday Night Under the South Florida Stars, Fox Astronomical Observatory at Markham Park, Sunset to Midnight, Info.: 954-384-0442

As the improvements were actualized over the next seven months, FDOT's project information specialist Miranda Iglesias kept GMCA officials up to speed with regular progress updates. The six lanes of North Ocean Boulevard that served as a raceway through the Galt Mile neighborhood were reduced to four lanes abutting new curbs and gutters and bookended with bike lanes.

Intersections within project limits also received a makeover. ADA compliant curb ramps were installed and left turn lanes extended. Signalized intersections at NE 32nd Street, NE 34th Street, NE 36th Street, NE 41st Street and Flamingo Avenue were adorned with new Mast Arm Assemblies and vested with video detection capability, further dampening the strip's attraction to weekend & post-midnight speed demons who view traffic signals as course markers.

Along with remapping the layout at intersections, new stripes and traffic lines delimited the lane reduction and isolated the new bike lanes (in lieu of a physical barrier). New signage marks the entire route. As per an FDOT contract provision limiting funds available for landscaping enhancements to 4% of the overall contract amount, medians modified from NE 32nd Street to Flamingo Avenue were sparingly vegetated.

Phase II – Green Light for Greenway

Although it took more than 6 years, Melendez and City staffers made good on their promise to begin transforming the neighborhood's primary thoroughfare. Nevertheless, to actualize the second stage in our lifetime, the neighborhood association had to begin convincing Broward MPO to line up stage two funding shortly after the initial project's February, 2013 completion date. After all, other than the pittance expended to maintain the Galt Mile Library (despite thrice thwarted attempts by the County Board to close the doors), our neighborhood has been fiscally goose-egged by the County for three decades. As one of Broward's most fertile tax dollar districts, the Galt Mile was overdue.

Broward MPO is the hand on the funding faucet for Transportation infrastructure in the County. Without an allocation from BMPO, Greenway projects remain locked in a dream state. Fortunately, District 1 City Commissioner Bruce Roberts is the 2nd Vice Chair on the Broward MPO Board. He also serves on the Governance Committee, Chairs the Evaluation Committee and serves as 2nd Vice Chair of the Executive Committee. After helping breathe life into the decisive second stage of the "A1A Greenway Project", Roberts notified a surprised and grateful Advisory Board that 7 years of lobbying and planning was about to pay off. Although initially projected to cost \$12 million, an \$18 million variation was ultimately approved by Broward MPO.

Already intimately familiar with the design elements of the project that neighborhood residents voted to endorse in 2009, few neighborhood officials – or residents – attended the October 8, 2013 public meeting convened to explain the planned changes. At the subsequent October 17 Advisory Board meeting, members learned that the project described by meeting host Diana Alarcon differed substantially from the plan vetted and overwhelmingly approved by neighborhood residents.

What Went Wrong?

In short, the plan she described was riddled with disastrous repercussions. In addition to skyrocketing traffic volume on Galt Ocean Drive, Galt Mile residents would be forced to drive 1 or 2 miles in order to park their cars in the public lots directly across the street. Galt Ocean Drive residents would only be able to exit

the block at the northern and southern ends of the street, which would be perpetually clogged by the significantly increased traffic. The plan also deprived local vendors of access to critical street trade.

The initial objective to slow traffic on A1A admittedly challenged traffic planners. To help insure a favorable outcome, planners actively sought open two-way discourse with residents, merchants and neighborhood officials throughout Phase I. When Phase I ended, so did the communication; an enigmatic departure from the City's high profile policy of soliciting local input prior to every aspect of community development. Instead, after whipping up variations on the selected design, second stage planners anticipated revealing them at a public meeting. While cloistered, they squared out bear traps that would artfully induce traffic jams, maroon merchants and turn Galt Ocean Drive into a well-appointed activity wheel. Although planners may have viewed the October 8 meeting as a standard stage in the development process, stunned attendees prepared for battle.

Since project details for the A1A Greenway were also posted on the City of Fort Lauderdale website, scores of angry local residents contacted the Galt Mile association to ask why the City was punishing the neighborhood with a plan that created more problems than it cured. In addition to complaining bitterly that the project would force them out of business, stunned local merchants observed that no new enterprise will risk opening in a location that deterred access to critical street traffic. The following is a partial summary of the planned changes that sparked the intense local blowback.

Rube Goldberg on the Galt

First, the anathematic plan changed 35th and 36th Streets into one-way, single lane streets that force traffic east towards Galt Ocean Drive. Absent those two egresses, residents would have to exit the block by driving to the northern or southern end of Galt Ocean Drive, where the road intersects with A1A. The plan created two single lane service roads that would route vehicles past the businesses along the east side of A1A before feeding them onto 35th or 36th Street and then to Galt Ocean Drive. These service roads span the block from the south intersection of Galt Ocean Drive and A1A to 35th Street and the block from 35th Street to 36th Street, and are separated from A1A by a median; thereby restoring a third lane which was removed in Phase I to slow traffic.

Continued on page 13



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VICE MAYOR BRUCE ROBERTS



Cinderella Developer Takes a Federal Haymaker

"In his November 2013 Newsletter, Northwest Gardens is one of the City's Housing and Community Development projects deemed noteworthy by Vice Mayor Bruce Roberts. Dubbing the piece "Housing Authority/Carlisle Development", Roberts identifies the City Agency and a private developer who teamed to reverse the fortunes of City residents in neighborhoods infamous for chronic decay. In a related newsletter item, Roberts observes how this public/private partnership yielded energy-efficient, opulent properties that were repeatedly recognized as sustainable, socially responsible, healthy and prosperous environments; and would have been otherwise unavailable to impoverished local residents. Unlike most Cinderella stories, the ending of this one is cloudy – at best.

Founded in 1997 by retired CEO Lloyd J. Boggio (a real estate veteran appointed by former Gov. Jeb Bush to Florida's Affordable Housing Study Commission) and Miami attorney Bruce Greer (President of Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden's board of trustees), Carlisle Development Group is the largest affordable housing developer in Florida and the third largest in the United States. With more than 80 projects valued at \$1.4 billion, Carlisle's portfolio of assets includes LEED-certified (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design - a program that provides third-party verification of green buildings, developers, projects, etc.), mixed-use, transit-oriented, urban infill, historic rehabilitation, as well as mixed-income and market-rate housing developments. In 2004, Greer's son Matthew (whose mother Evelyn was the first Mayor of Pinecrest and a former Miami-Dade School Board member) joined the development company and rose to CEO four years later, replacing Boggio.

Over the next four years, he snagged unprecedented recognition for housing thousands of impoverished families, the chronically unemployed, the disabled, the working poor and low income seniors, some caring for several generations of dependents. South Florida's preeminent affordable housing developer pleasantly surprised Housing Authority bureaucrats, skeptical civic leaders in long-neglected neighborhoods and grateful Public Officials, who relish high profile ribbon cuttings to open architecturally opulent, full-featured housing projects on burned out blocks. Although based in Miami, Carlisle marked territories across

the country, including Fort Lauderdale's most distressed community.

The Northwest Neighborhood in Fort Lauderdale is mired in the region's highest unemployment and poverty rates. It's ground zero for the highest juvenile crime rate in the State of Florida. Rates of HIV/AIDS infection among its teenagers rival the highest in the nation. It's also the part of town that revs Matthew Greer's metabolism. The projects described by our City Commissioner - Northwest Gardens II (128 units) and IV (128 units) are the final two segments of a 4-part effort to transmogrify 14 blighted blocks for locals who couldn't afford market-rate rents in South Florida - or elsewhere.

Partnering with the Housing Authority of the City of Fort Lauderdale (HACFL), Greer's Carlisle Development Group also transformed four other properties in the Northwest Neighborhood, including Dixie Court Apartments (I-III), Dr. Kennedy Homes, Sailboat Bend Apartments and Sunnyreach Acres. \$200 million in focused financing added more than 1,100 affordable housing units to the community and salted more than 600 jobs into the local economy.

The 143-unit first phase of Northwest Gardens (71 newly built and 72 rehabbed) targeted grandparents raising their grandchildren while earning less than 30 percent and 60 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) in this impoverished neighborhood. Financing for the \$24 million first phase came from a Bank of America Merrill Lynch loan, HOME, Federal Home Loan Bank Affordable Housing Program funds and the straw that stirs the drink in Carlisle's developments, the Tax Credit Exchange Program. As phase one was completed in early 2012, phase 3, which lodges larger families in townhomes, soon followed. Northwest Gardens' first two phases won an array of green building awards, and were designated as the first LEED for Homes (Multifamily) Gold-certified community in Florida. They also comprised the first LEED for Neighborhood Development-certified community in Florida, and fifth in the U.S.

Designed by South Florida-based Zyscovich Architects and built by Carlisle's Fort Lauderdale contractor Michael Runyan of BJ&K Construction Services, the units feature energy-efficient fixtures, dual-flush toilets, highly efficient HVAC systems, newly added elevators, ceiling fans, dishwashers, microwave ovens, ceramic tile flooring, impact-resistant glass and window treatments. The development offers solar lights, clubhouses, fitness centers, library/computer rooms, playgrounds, community rooms, laundry facilities, on-site leasing/management offices and pervious concrete covers the parking lot, enabling precipitation to drain directly into Florida's aquifer instead of burdening the storm drain system.

Residents socialize while growing their own food in community gardens. The master plan for the neighborhood is one of only three LEED for Neighborhood Development communities registered in the state. Ten percent of the apartments in Phases II and IV will be designated for residents at 25 percent or less of the Area Median Income (AMI) of \$62,600. Ninety percent of the dwellings will be designated for residents at 60 percent or less of AMI. Many of the residents will be seniors and children.

Affordable Housing experts agree that Carlisle's success is driven by the firm's financial gymnastics. Hugo Ottolenghi, former real estate editor of the Daily Business Review, observed "Companies like Carlisle have found their niche because they have the expertise to accumulate the funding to build. This is what they do best." Fort Lauderdale housing authority executive director Tam English notes how Carlisle adapted to a nationwide trend by housing authorities to replace public housing with low-income units that can use other types of government subsidies, such as Section 8 vouchers. English said "Housing authorities don't get sufficient funding from HUD for building maintenance." Since voucher recipients can choose where they want to use them, they steer clear of deteriorating or bare-boned properties, forcing Affordable Housing developers to create competitively full-featured homes at a price point affordable to the people who will live there. Among the most complex in the development business, funding formulas for affordable housing blend federal and county money; conventional loans; the company's own capital and Carlisle's Holy Grail - tax credits awarded for projects that are environmentally certified or located near transit hubs.

The tax-credit program was approved by Congress as part of the 1986 Tax Reform Act (Internal Revenue Code Section 42) to spur the development of affordable housing. According to HUD, "The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) is the most important resource for creating affordable housing in the United States today." It is a windfall for banks, venture capital firms, individual real estate investors and overexposed trust fund babies. In contrast with simple deductions, they can deduct the credits dollar-for-dollar from their actual tax obligations - and over many years. Typically capped at 9 percent of the project's construction costs, the IRS grants tax credits to the developer, who sells the credits to investors. The influx of investment capital empowers the developer to limit debt, which provides for lower rents.

After reviewing tax-credit applications on a project-by-project basis, the Florida Housing Finance Corp. doles them out under strict IRS guidelines. Based on Florida's population, the state agency will allocate \$43 million in tax credits this year. Director Kevin Tatreau of the agency's multifamily development programs said that the desirability of

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affordable housing units skyrocketed over the past decade as incomes failed to keep pace with rising housing costs. Since the state receives proposals from affordable-housing developers seeking credits amounting to seven times Florida's allocation, the tax-credit program has become fiercely competitive.

Ironically, the tax credits that fueled Carlisle's Cinderella expansion may also precipitate its demise. After quitting in late 2011, two senior executives who worked under Greer ran to the U.S. attorney's office with allegations of fraud. Suspected of padding construction costs of rental apartments to jack up entitlements for government-issued tax credits, Carlisle then split the resulting unlawful profits with Fort Lauderdale contractor BJ&K and possibly others, according to sources in the Internal Revenue Service and FBI.

To prove that Greer and Boggio worked in cahoots with Fort Lauderdale building contractor Michael K. Runyan to rip off tax credits, Miami prosecutors empaneled a federal grand jury. A subpoena issued in January in connection with "an official criminal investigation of a suspected federal offense," names Carlisle and its development entities, along with the three businessmen. It demands access to loan documents and other records for two of Carlisle's rental projects built by Runyan's BJ&K Construction Services in Miami's low-income Little Haiti and Allapattah neighborhoods. The high-rise apartment projects, Villa Patricia and Amber Garden, were partially financed with multimillion-dollar, low-interest loans from the city and Miami-Dade County governments.

According to the Florida Housing Finance Corp., whenever a developer delivers a project below cost, the company must notify the state and return the extra tax credits initially approved by the agency. Federal prosecutors allege that Runyan's BJ&K construction company collaborated with the Carlisle executives to complete numerous affordable-housing projects below the costs reported by Carlisle to the Florida Housing Finance Corp., skewing the agency's allocation of tax credits. Instead of returning the bilked credits to taxpayers, Carlisle and the contractor split the illicit booty. The subpoena was the tip of the iceberg. Federal investigators uncovered evidence suggesting that Carlisle swindled the U.S. government out of millions of dollars in tax subsidies used to finance more than a dozen rental projects in Miami-Dade and Broward counties.

When it rains, it pours. Amid the Federal probe, Regions Bank filed a lawsuit earlier this year to recover \$5.1 million from Miami-based The Carlisle Group Inc., corporate predecessor to Carlisle Development Group, naming as defendants Carlisle founder Bruce Greer, retired CEO and founder Lloyd J. Boggio and former executive Luis Gonzalez. The bank's lawsuit is over a \$6.5 million line of credit issued by Region's predecessor Guildford Capital to help secure housing revenue bonds at Heron Pond Apartments in Lehigh Acres. On April 1, Senior U.S. District Judge James L. King denied Carlisle's attempt to dismiss the lawsuit and set a September 8, 2014 trial date.

Last month, the Miami Herald revealed that within months of her sudden resignation in late 2005, Carlisle hired longtime Miami-Dade Commissioner Barbara Carey-Shuler as a consultant, and paid her newly formed company, Eclectic Business Solutions, a total of \$170,000 between 2006 and 2007. Still a paid consultant for Carlisle, Carey-Shuler told the Miami Herald that she has "no recollection" of receiving any money from Carlisle back then, let alone what she might have done for the developer. "It's been so long ago. I don't remember at this point," remarked the 73-year-old former commissioner. During her three decades on the County Board, Carey-Shuler represented a district that included the Miami communities of Liberty City, Little Haiti, Overtown, the Upper Eastside, Allapattah and Wynwood, along with the village of Miami Shores — neighborhoods where Carlisle systematically landed Affordable Housing projects.

If they register with the County, Miami-Dade law allows former commissioners to work as a lobbyist two years after leaving office. More than seven years after she was hired by Carlisle, Carey-Shuler still hasn't registered with the county as a lobbyist for the developer. Her hand-picked successor on the Miami-Dade Commission, Audrey Edmonson, admitted discussing Carlisle's projects with Carey-Shuler in recent years. Edmonson, whose district includes Amber Garden, Villa Patricia and several other Carlisle projects, denied any "Quid Pro Quo" for having received more than \$19,800 in Carlisle campaign contributions since 2006 — including \$11,000 in last year's successful reelection struggle.

Despite the likelihood of indictments and convictions down the road, many South Florida politicians are hoping that Carlisle survives whatever shellacking prosecutors have in store for the Affordable Housing icon. Unlike the high profile Ponzi schemers, bribe-taking public officials and other slime balls nailed by the Feds for fondling the public ookie jar, these crooks actually produced something worthwhile. In 2012, the City of Fort Lauderdale honored Northwest Gardens I and III as Project of the Year. After all, whether or not pathologically predisposed to pilfering taxpayer funds, these Bozos pump out award-winning Affordable Housing like nobody's business. For Vice Mayor Roberts November 2013 constituent update, read on... — [editor]"

FROM VICE-MAYOR BRUCE G. ROBERTS
NOVEMBER 2013

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT STATUS REPORT

Economic Development

Uptown Business Group: The Uptown Business Group, which was fostered by City staff and myself, has continued to gain momentum. We now have 40 – 50 regular participants from Fort Lauderdale-based companies, developers, major employers and educational institutions. Topics being discussed include "How to Create a Business Improvement District" and land use and planning issues. The focus of this leadership group is to recruit, retain and expand business in the Cypress Creek/Executive Airport community, while creating a more friendly business neighborhood with safer pedestrian access. Future multi-modal transportation plans will enhance this effort. Just recently, the City was awarded a grant to fund two years of operations for trolley service to accommodate employees in this area.

Marine Industry Update: The City Commission and Marine Advisory Board conducted a workshop, which was held on May 13, 2013. City staff created a status report recommending issues that will require more attention. The discussions are addressing subjects such as the redevelopment and expansion of the Las Olas Marina. Staff, including Marine Facilities, recently held a follow-up meeting with Barry Flanagan (Chairman of the Marine Advisory Board) and Christy Hebert (President of the Marine Industries of South Florida) to discuss implementing the recommendations. A Marine Industry Summit in early 2014 may become the forum to continue these discussions.

Housing and Community Development

Housing Authority/Carlisle Development: The Northwest Gardens II (128 units) and IV (128 units) projects are new apartment developments being constructed in the Durrs and Home Beautiful neighborhoods just north of the Sistrunk corridor between NW 10 TERR, NW 8th St., NW 7th St., and NW 14th Ave. In total, the Northwest Gardens II and IV redevelopment projects will create 266 additional 1-5 bedrooms units, with an overall capital investment of more than \$57M. After these projects are completed, the Housing Authority of Fort Lauderdale will have reconstructed and renovated 935 affordable multi-family housing units.

NPF (Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights) CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) Plan Amendments: The NPF CRA Advisory Board and City staff proposed amendments to the NPF CRA budget to fund three new projects in the Community Redevelopment Plan. The City Commission recently approved these initiatives, which are Community Policing Innovation Program, a Wireless Surveillance Camera System and the development of a Public Wi-Fi system.

Central Beach Redevelopment and Beach Business Improvement District

Food and Beverage Service on the Beach: The goal of the program is to improve the experience of tourists and visitors to the beach by providing food and beverage service on the sand. Staff is working on an ordinance and service program that will regulate this activity. A draft ordinance will be presented to the City Commission for review and approval at a City Commission Conference Meeting in the near future.

FORT LAUDERDALE NAMED A TOP CITY FOR FAMILIES VIA GOOD MORNING AMERICA

We are proud to share the news that Fort Lauderdale has been named one of the top 10 cities for families as reported by Good Morning America. Family Vacation Critic, an online family travel planning guide, recently released its list of top 10 urban destinations based on a survey of its readers, with New York City leading the pack. The Big Apple was closely followed by Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Chicago, New Orleans, Honolulu, San Antonio, Fort Lauderdale, San Diego and Boston. Here is the link to the full article: <http://abcnews.go.com/Travel/10-great-cities-family-vacations/story?id=20272937>.

DECEASED ANIMAL PICK-UP: On October 1, 2013, Broward County announced that they would no longer provide a service of removing deceased animals from roadways. Instead, residents who want to report a deceased animal on a public roadway should contact the City's 24-hour Customer Service Hotline at 954-828-8000. The Customer Service Operator will take the information from the resident regarding the deceased animal's location and the resident's contact information. They will then contact the City's contracted vendor and relay the information regarding the report of the deceased animal to the vendor.

Continued on page 14

Having pain in the Joints? Knee pain? Hip pain? Have you been offered a joint replacement?

Plasma Rich Platelet (PRP) Treatment may be the answer!

Platelet Rich Plasma, or (PRP), is a revolutionary new treatment for chronic musculoskeletal degeneration. (PRP) is blood plasma with concentrated platelets that contain big reservoirs of bioactive proteins and growth factors enhancing healing tissue repair, bone and cartilage regeneration, as well as new blood vessels formation (angiogenesis).

Many endurance athletes are well known to have taken advantage of this treatment giving credit to (PRP) treatment for enabling them to stay in the game. Famous golfer Tiger Woods is known to have received (PRP) treatments to help him recover faster from surgery on his knee. Pittsburgh Steelers stars Hines Ward and Troy Polamalu credit (PRP) treatment for enabling them to play in the 2009 Super Bowl. *Golf Digest* reports (PRP) as a great option for golfers 40 and older because they typically don't heal as fast as younger players.

At Fort Lauderdale Pain Medicine Institute, Board Certified Interventional Pain Medicine Doctor Lenchig started doing this procedure over a year and a half ago when he brought it from the University of Miami where he worked previously and was the first one to start this revolutionary treatment with great success and outcomes.

The procedure takes about 15-20 minutes. It's your own blood (autologous) so there are NO side effects.

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A1A..Continued

Drivers seeking to enter either of the two consecutive A1A service roads can only do so at the southernmost beginning of each block. Once on the service road, they must drive past the angled parking in front of the businesses before being respectively funneled onto the one-way 35th or 36th Street to Galt Ocean Drive.

Since the businesses can only be accessed from the service road, by the time a driver heading north on A1A notices a business or restaurant he or she would like to patronize, it's too late, as the driver will have already passed the service road entrance. To return to the missed entrance, a driver on A1A must now turn right to Galt Ocean Drive, drive south along the length of Galt Ocean Drive to its southern intersection with A1A, turn right on A1A and enter the correct A1A service road. Since few drivers will know about this Rube Goldberg "second bite at the apple", the vast majority of potential customers would simply keep driving, and patronize some other restaurant or shop. Those that did circle back to A1A through Galt Ocean Drive would significantly add to the street's traffic, and explode an already sizable intersection backup at the exits to A1A.

Galt Ocean Drive residents who want to patronize the stores (or the Library) south of 36th Street and park in the public lots across the street from their homes would have to drive to the southern intersection with A1A, turn right onto A1A and enter the appropriate service road to 35th or 36th Street and head east on either of those two one-way roads to the lot entrance.

As an unintended consequence, buses on Galt Ocean Drive that currently turn on 36th Street to A1A and service Coral Ridge Towers residents who live across the street would either be rerouted to the street's southern intersection with A1A or bus service along Galt Ocean Drive would be discontinued.

The plan also made critical changes to A1A north of Galt Ocean Drive, including the creation of a controversial roundabout (traffic circle) at Flamingo Avenue, through which traffic would be funneled

from all directions. As this stretch of A1A is rarely abused by speeders, to achieve this pointless objective, it will gobble a chunk of Plaza East's streetfront property – and every other property that borders the roundabout.

Communication vs. Controversy

At the November 21st Advisory Board meeting, association officials and Commissioner Roberts discussed how the plan's most egregious consequences might be avoided with certain minor adjustments. Prior to the December 2nd Presidents Council meeting in Playa del Sol, Roberts agreed to set a meeting with association officials and traffic planners. If successful, the problems would become manageable. If, however, the City was hell bent on crippling an entire neighborhood, Galt Mile officials prepared to warn neighborhood residents about the project's dysfunctional contrecoup.

While it wasn't a precursor to Armageddon, this mutated outcome wasn't what we bargained for. Given the long, arduous process to design, fund and build an improved "Ocean Highway" through the Galt Mile neighborhood, association officials – as well as Commissioner Roberts – would prefer to "tweak" the project's flaws rather than trash years of planning and an \$18 million appropriation.

Alarcon to the Rescue!

On December 5 at 2:30 PM, GMCA officials Pio Ieraci, Eric Berkowitz and Fred Nesbitt converged on City Hall, where Vice Mayor Bruce Roberts scheduled the meeting with traffic planners. Accompanying Transportation & Mobility Director Diana Alarcon was Jim Hughes, an FDOT Project Manager who spent years developing the project, and Atkins North America Transportation Manager Dominic Novello. Representing the concerns of local merchants, owner Dominic Santarelli of Nick's Italian Restaurant arrived early – along with his landlords.

After enumerating their concerns, GMCA officials informed Project Gurus that dropping plans to change 35th Street and 36th Street into single-lane one-way thoroughfares would mitigate a majority of the anticipated problems on Galt Ocean Drive.

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City staff has contacted the county to advise of our new procedure and ask them to relay this to our residents who contact them. All information regarding this is posted on the City's website. You can also complete an online form.

CITY-WIDE PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: The City of Fort Lauderdale Public Works Department is currently implementing a citywide Pavement Management System. The new system will enable us to maintain an electronic database detailing the condition and needs of the streets and roadways under our supervision. As part of the program, the City will assess each road it maintains and assign a numerical score based on its current condition. The scores will enable us to prioritize which roads are in most need of repairs and maintenance and deploy our resources accordingly. The inspection phase of the program has been completed and staff is currently finalizing a report that is scheduled to be presented to the City Commission in November. Pending approval by the City Commission, the pavement restoration and repair work is expected to begin in early 2014.

FORT LAUDERDALE WINS TOP HONOR FROM SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER OF THE U.S. GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL: The City of Fort Lauderdale was recently named "Most Outstanding Green Government" by the South Florida Chapter of the United States Green Building Council (USGBC). The City received the designation at the annual USGBC GalaVerde Awards, South Florida's premiere LEEDership and Green Awards Program. The Most Outstanding Green Government award recognizes a local government that implements progressive initiatives and demonstrates an overall commitment to sustainability. Proactive initiatives highlighted in Fort Lauderdale's entry reflect the City's community-wide effort to engage employees and neighbors and encourage them to identify and apply practices to create a more sustainable community. Specific initiatives include: the creation of a Sustainability Advisory Board; the adoption of a citywide Sustainability Action Plan; the Smart Watts program to educate neighbors about techniques and benefits of reducing energy consumption; the Green Your Routine volunteer initiative that offers financial incentives to promote recycling throughout City neighborhoods; and the Go Solar campaign to encourage increased use of solar panels to create jobs and stimulate our economy." As a City, we recognize the importance of integrating environmentally sound practices into every aspect of our organization," said Fort Lauderdale Mayor John P. "Jack" Seiler. "This commitment is reflected in our recently adopted citywide Vision Plan, which identifies sustainable development as a top priority. We are confident that our long-term investment in sustainable solutions will pay dividends by making Fort Lauderdale a stronger, more resilient and adaptable City, while enhancing our quality of life today and for future generations. It is a tremendous honor to be recognized by the U.S. Green Building Council for our leadership efforts in this area, and we look forward to continuing to do our part to advance sustainability at the local, state and national levels." The mission of the South Florida Chapter of the USGBC is to transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated, to enable a sustainable, socially responsible, healthy and prosperous environment in which people can live, work, learn and play. The South Florida Chapter of USGBC hosts the annual GalaVerde awards to celebrate and honor exceptional programs that further the creation of a more sustainable South Florida. In addition to the City's "Most Outstanding Green Government" Award, the South Florida Chapter of USGBC recognized several other outstanding projects in Fort Lauderdale with GalaVerde awards. The City would like to congratulate the following award winners:

- Most Outstanding LEED Project (Private) - Pine Crest Central Chiller Plant
- Most Outstanding LEED for Schools Project - Pine Crest Preparatory School Lower Classroom Building
- Most Outstanding LEED Neighborhood Development Project - Northwest Gardens
- Most Outstanding LEED for Homes/Multi-Family Project - Northwest Gardens III
- Most Outstanding LEED for Homes/Mid-Rise Project - Dr. Kennedy Homes

HAZARDOUS WASTE: This City service, which was provided under the Interlocal Agreement with the County, expired on 9/30/2013. With a \$400,000 annual price tag, Fort Lauderdale chose not to renew the agreement with the County. The City is currently finalizing plans to form a consortium with other municipalities and develop a less costly disposal alternative. The City apologizes for not having a transitional service in place. If you have additional questions, please contact Customer Service directly at CustomerService@fortlauderdale.gov or for more time sensitive issues, Customer Service can be reached by calling (954) 828-8000 twenty-four hours a day.

REPORT STREETLIGHT OUTAGES: Fort Lauderdale's new "See the Light" campaign encourages residents to report streetlight outages. Before, residents would have had to figure out who owned the streetlight and contact that agency directly, whether it was the city, county or FPL. The new system will help serve our neighbors better by offering one centralized location to report all streetlight outages. That number is 954-828-8000.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- November 11, 28, 29 AND December 25: CITY HALL WILL BE CLOSED DUE TO HOLIDAYS
- November 4 & 18 Pre-agenda Meetings: NO meeting on 11/4; Imperial Point Hospital, South Entrance on the 18th; 6pm
- November 5 & 19: Commission Meetings
- December 2 & 16 Pre -agenda Meetings: 12/2 - Beach Community Center; 12/16 - Imperial Point Hospital, South Entrance; 6pm
- December 3 & 17: Commission Meetings

OFFICE CONTACT: Robbi Uptegrove – 954-828-5033; email: ruptegrove@fortlauderdale.gov

In addition to hosting two pre-agenda meetings twice a month, I am also available to attend your HOA meetings to update your neighborhood on what is going on in the City as well as answer any questions/concerns you may have. Please contact Robbi to schedule.

EMAIL LIST: If you would like to be on our email list so that you receive information pertaining to the City – especially District 1 (i.e. news releases, meeting notices, events), please let Robbi know and she will add you.

I would like to wish everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving.

...As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.
~John Fitzgerald Kennedy•

NOTE:

** To easily access the many links contained in Commissioner Roberts' update, go to the GMCA website (www.galtmile.com) and check the web-based version of the Commissioner's newsletter. - [Editor]*

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ATA. Continued

If two-way connectivity for these two key side streets was salvaged, it would cancel the need for drivers to circle the block to access shops across the street and on A1A – eliminating incremental traffic that would otherwise burden Galt Ocean Drive. Galt Mile residents could continue directly accessing parking lots across the street and bus routes servicing Galt Mile and Coral Ridge Towers residents would no longer be threatened. Merchants would preserve unfettered access for local customers and new street trade.

Alarcon retorted, "We heard these same concerns at the October 8th meeting in the Community Center. We took them seriously. After the meeting, we redesigned the project, restoring 35th and 36th Streets as two-way roads." Delighted association officials peppered Alarcon with a series of directional flow scenarios, confirming that drivers heading north or south on A1A or Galt Ocean Drive could turn into either connective side street. Alarcon pointed out that although several planned angled parking spaces along the side streets would be lost, the benefits to residents and merchants justified the minor sacrifice.

Elated by the news, a jubilant Santarelli queried Alarcon about access to customer parking along A1A and in the public lots along Galt Ocean Drive. While assuring him that it would be preserved, the City traffic boss added that since the storefront angled parking would be shielded from A1A by the service road (which she referred to as "an access road"), pulling out from these spots "will be far less dangerous than backing directly into A1A."

Satisfied that his misgivings about the project, and those of other local merchants, had been mitigated, a grateful Santarelli thanked the planners before departing. Discussion then turned to the rotary

Continued on page 16

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planned at Flamingo Avenue. Rotaries (AKA Roundabouts or Traffic Circles) have successfully enhanced countless intersections throughout Europe and South America. Although motorists have seemingly acclimated to larger traffic circles across the U.S., drivers confronted by smaller variations often succumb to trepidation and tend to hesitate before entering the rotary – occasionally in the wrong direction. As such, they often become traffic plugs.

Admonishing that Broward MPO officials perceived the rotary as an elegant enhancement that would naturally regulate traffic, Jim Hughes warned "they avidly supported its incorporation into the A1A Greenway." Despite lamenting "I like the rotary and I believe that local drivers would also like it once they got used to it," Roberts conceded that since constituents were overwhelmingly opposed, "It may have to go." Moreover, Hughes explained that subsequent traffic studies didn't support its anticipated throughput benefits. Ieraci added that Plaza East residents would resent losing a slice of their streetfront to help flesh out the rotary.

Consulting with Hughes and Novello, Alarcon conceded that its liabilities may outweigh its assets – and agreed to take a hard look at the rotary. When Berkowitz asked if support for the rotary by public officials in Lauderdale-by-the-Sea would complicate their decision, Alarcon said "This is Fort Lauderdale, and our obligation is to Fort Lauderdale residents, not our neighbors in Lauderdale-by-the-Sea." When he asked if Broward MPO officials might pressure the City into installing the rotary, Roberts remarked. "I may be able to help with that." Roberts applauded the planners for reacting quickly to quash local fears about the planned changes.

Since project planners effectively addressed the concerns of local residents and merchants, Galt Mile officials informed Roberts that they could

again support the A1A Greenway project. Alarcon and neighborhood officials agreed to work together to ensure that the project delivers on its six-year promise. As the meeting adjourned and the GMCA visitors thanked Alarcon, she brought up another obstacle facing the project. Notwithstanding neighborhood wishes, a few stakeholders were actively opposing any improvements to A1A, albeit their objections were enigmatically unrelated to any specific change.

Alarcon said she intended to announce the new changes at a planned December 11 public meeting in the Community Center. While notifying member associations that the project's adverse impacts had been expunged, Ieraci would also urge residents to attend the public meeting and express support for the corrected plan, prospectively encouraging holdouts to consider larger community interests. Of course, if they're only fishing for "special considerations", their neighbors – or customers – are likely to frown on efforts to bang the project budget for contributions to an early retirement fund. •

“... a few stakeholders were actively opposing any improvements to A1A, albeit their objections were enigmatically unrelated to any specific change.”

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