

# P & Z Board has Heavy Agenda

**Lisa Hoover**  
Staff Writer

The Planning and Zoning Board members will have a full plate when they sit down at their next Board meeting on Tuesday, May 16.

## Town Plaza Zoning Change?

Dead River Properties, a division of the Dead River Company and owner of Avenue of the Flowers, is requesting an Outline Development Plan amendment application for Town Plaza. Dead River would like to modify the list of permitted uses to those listed in the C-1 Limited Commercial Zoning District.

In a letter to Town Manager Bruce St. Denis and Town commissioners, the Bay Isles Association said they "have no objection to the approval of new business rentals achieved within the framework of the existing zoning ordinance." They are, however, opposed to a complete zone change to C-1 because of concern there might be "unintended consequences by the broader change."

## Ordinance up for Review

A ticklish ordinance is up for discussion again after being revised to reflect the Board's wishes following a discussion at the April 18 P & Z meeting. Ordinance 06-09, Reconstruction of Nonconformities in the Event of Involuntary Destruction or Damage, was at the center of great debate

when it was first presented to the Board.

The ordinance centers on the reconstruction of nonconforming structures in the event of their involuntary damage or destruction. If a hurricane or other natural disaster were to destroy more than 50% of an existing structure on Longboat Key, there are many things to consider before the structure may be rebuilt.

Since some structures in the Town are currently nonconforming, owners would be required to ensure that the newly rebuilt structure meets complies with the minimum federal, state or local codes and regulations. Though nonconforming structures will be allowed to maintain the same cubic content, which essentially means the new building must be the same size as the one it is replacing, there may be occasions when some of the interior space is taken over by additions designed to bring the new structure up to code.

In some cases, to bring a new structure into compliance with all codes and regulations, it will be necessary to add a new stairway, elevator, hallway or other important design change. Such changes may mean that some internal living space may be diminished to allow room for the new stairway or elevator. In some cases, such accommodations may need to be made to the exterior of the building, for example in the case of additional exterior walkways.

There was general disagreement between board members about how much leeway property owners should be given to rebuild nonconforming structures if it means making the actual building larger. Some board members felt that the structure should remain its original size, while others felt a 10% increase in cubic content was warranted to accommodate the new regulations and requirements.

After a lengthy discussion about the pros and cons of what percentage, if any, of allowable increase should be offered, a motion was made to change the amendment in the draft allow for no increase. Town staff has made the requested changes and the Board will discuss the ordinance again on Tuesday.

## 30-Day Rule on the Table

The Board plans to discuss whether to draft an ordinance that will relax the 30-day minimum occupancy requirements for residential units. Currently, property owners must rent out their homes for a minimum of 30 days at a time. Some business owners say that creates a hardship for them and is impacting the local economy.

At the Town Commission's recent Goals and Objectives Workshop, Andrew Vac, chairman of the board for the Longboat Key Chamber of Commerce, gave an impassioned plea to the board. He asked

the board to relax rental restrictions because "we need more people on the island — full time, part time and visitors — that will support the future of business."

## Visioning Meetings

Also up for discussion is whether the P & Z Board should hold more public meetings covering the various topics that are emerging from the Visioning Process. The consulting firm of Arrington-Marlowe has determined that the common themes concerning many Longboat Key residents are the future of retail and commercial business and the future of tourism on the Key.

## The Enclave Seeks Extension

In June 2005, Bay Isles Development received approval from the Planning and Zoning Board in June 2005 to construct 12 multi-family residences to be called The Enclave at Bay Isles.

At that time, the company anticipated construction would take 12 to 18 months. They say that a change in ownership in January coupled with delays in permitting from other agencies has delayed completion of The Enclave. Bay Isles Development is requesting their site plan expiration date be extended from June 21, 2006 to June 21, 2007 to accommodate the delay.

# Chamber Recognizes 'Shining Stars'

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The Longboat Key Chamber of Commerce accepted several nominations for this year's "Shining Stars" award. Chamber President Gail Loeffgren says the awards recognize "people in the hospitality industry who go above and beyond the call."

Club Bamboo Manager Marjorie Moran isn't sure who nominated her but says she is thrilled, nevertheless. "It feels great!" she beamed. Moran came to the area in 1997 and has been with Club Bamboo for nearly four years.

Kim Hoatland, deli manager at Harry's Continental Kitchen, was nominated by her supervisor. Her co-workers say she has exceptional customer service skill. "Kim has done incredible things with the deli," reports one staff member. "She's just great!"

Restaurant owner Lynn Christensen says, "She's just a really good employee. She's in the deli every day, knows the customers, takes care of things and manages the people under her really well. Kim

always gives 110%."

Two employees of The Colony Beach and Tennis Resort were nominated this year. Shirley Giles, director of housekeeping, has been with the Colony for three years and has over 40 years experience in the hospitality industry. Giles manages her team of over 55 employees so well that she won The Colony's Manager of the Year award in 2005. Trish Lurino, spokesperson for The Colony, says Giles is a wonderful example of a tourism leader and "Shirley has a grace under pressure, a solid work ethic and a devotion to making the guest experience while visiting Sarasota a memorable one."

Rhonda Hall, grounds and landscape manager at The Colony, is known for her dedication and commitment to her job and co-workers. She oversees all storm preparation and cleanup as well as all of the landscaping for 18 acres of resort property. Lurino says being nominated for a Shining Star award is "A well-deserved honor for someone who recognizes the importance of doing whatever it takes to get the job done."



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*Shining Star Nominees left to right: Kim Hoatland, Marge Moran, Betty Mathews, Donna Neary, Rhonda Hall, Shirley Giles*

The final winners of the Shining Star awards will be decided later this month and will be honored on Thursday, May 18 at the Hilton Longboat Key Beachfront Resort.

And the nominees are:

- Betty Mathews, Broken Egg Restaurant
- Marge Moran, Club Bamboo
- Eileen Whitney, The Beanz Man and Mattison's Steakhouse at the Plaza

- Kim Hoatland, Harry's Continental Kitchens
- Shirley Giles, The Colony Beach and Tennis Resort
- Rhonda Hall, The Colony Beach and Tennis Resort
- Linda Meece, Panache Beauty Salon
- Lois Ausherman, Gulf Beach Resort Motel
- Donna Neary, Right at Home

# State of the Beach: Groins, Birds, Turtles Dominate

**Melissa Reid**  
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The proposal for six solid T-groins, which are to be placed at the Islander to prevent beach erosion, is currently under review by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). The last Request For Additional Information (RAI) sent to the Town of Longboat Key from the FDEP stated that the FDEP could not support the proposal for the six T-groins as it was. The FDEP maintained that there was concern for adjacent beaches and whether the solid groins would cause erosion on the adjacent beaches.

The Town responded to the RAI with further information and the results of the Delft study, which showed the groins to have little effect on the adjacent beaches.

Florensa said, "Sometime after mid-April we gave the Delft results to the FDEP; now they're reviewing it. I expect to hear from them by next Friday; we should have some comments. If they (FDEP) say they still cannot support the six groins, we'll have to go to the Commission for direction. We can also ask the FDEP what they suggest. We can take some time with the decision since we'll have placed extra sand at the Islander by June."

## Beach Renourishment

Last week, the beach renourishment project spread coarse sand at the 6700 to 6350 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive, and from May 11-15, the Bayport dredge will be spreading white sand in that same area.

"We'll be putting sand at the Islander around June 1. We'll be placing 60,000 cubic yards of sand there before storm season," said Public Works Director Juan Florensa. The whole beach renourishment project is now scheduled to be complete by the end of June.

## Birds and Turtles

The beaches at the 6800 and 6100 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive are roped off for the snowy plovers who are displaying courtship behavior and may nest soon. Both beach areas are not places where beach renourishment construction is being performed, but the locations still need to be roped off and protected because, "we have to keep people away from the sites; and sometimes construc-

tion equipment is moved around in those areas," said Florensa.

There are no bird nests along the beaches at this time, but due to the courtship behavior, the 6800 block has an area 600 feet long and 300 feet wide roped off for the snowy plovers. At the 6100 block, a 75-foot radius is roped off to protect the plovers.

Turtle Season began May 1, and the Longboat Key Turtle Watch group has begun its morning patrol of the beaches. To date, no turtle tracks or nests have been found on the Manatee portion of the Key, but every morning the Turtle Watchers make their rounds. According to Vice President of Turtle Watch Mimi Siekmann, usually the first turtle tracks appear around Mother's Day.