



Longboat Key News

April 10, 2026

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Whittall Fires Back: St. Regis Arch is 'Not the Jersey Shore' as Showdown Looms LBK

"Almost everyone wants to be photographed out there, and it is a great place to kiss."

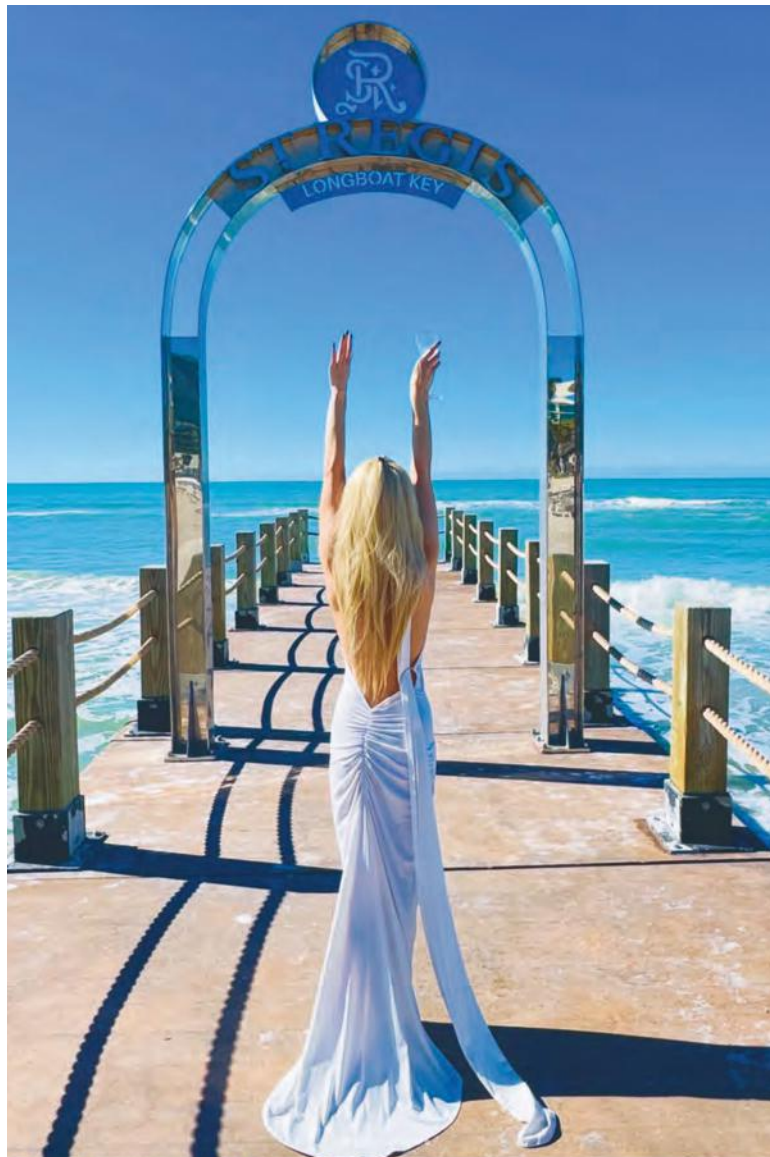
STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

Moments before strapping into his Ferrari 296 GTB at the Sebring International Raceway on Friday morning, Unicorp President and CEO Chuck Whittall had a clear message for the critics of the St. Regis Longboat Key Resort's controversial beachfront archway: It's staying classy, and it's certainly not the Jersey Shore.

Whittall pushed back forcefully against the town's Planning and Zoning Board, which recently recommended denying the ordinances that would allow the 14-foot metallic structure to remain on the resort's private rock groin stretching into the Gulf of Mexico. Code enforcement has already cited the structure under the town's strict sign code, leaving it draped and covered as the legal battles drag on.

"A comment was made not to be like the Jersey Shore; that is ridiculous and unfair since we are the only groin in town that is privately owned," Whittall told Longboat Key News. "The ordinance was going to be restricted to resort properties that have a private groin, so it would become a non-issue."

For Whittall, the arch isn't just



Whittall says the arch is a memory-maker. Above is Jessica Heiting.

an architectural afterthought—it's a critical component of the five-diamond experience he envisioned when pouring a half-billion dollars into the island's premier destina-

tion.

"People love to create memories there, and it is an integral part of the wedding experience," Whittall

See Arch, page 2

Blue-Chip Waterways: Longboat Key's \$9M Dredging Plan Secures Elite Real Estate Values Canal-front owners will enjoy a new critical guarantee: what is boatable today will be boatable tomorrow.

STEVE REID
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On Florida's West Coast, where multimillion-dollar real estate commands international attention, navigable water is the ultimate currency.

Now, for the first time since 2003, Longboat Key is staring down a massive \$9 million overhaul of its 88 canals—a move that promises to cement the island's status as a premier destination for elite homebuyers.

Although canal dredging may be mired in muck and mud, the proposed program represents a monumental victory for waterfront property owners. Given the uncertainty residents and boaters have felt for years regarding the navigability of the silt-laden canals, formalizing a maintenance plan changes the market calculus entirely. If passed, realtors and canal-front owners will at last be able to market their homes

See Canals, page 3

Post-Storm Rebuilding or a Trojan Horse? St. Armands Faces a Zoning Crossroads

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The barrier islands of Sarasota are approaching what many locals view as a defining crossroads. On Monday, April 13, the City of Sarasota will host its second and final "visioning workshop" to chart the post-hurricane future of St. Armands Circle. Yet, beneath the municipal framework of community roundtables and independent facilitators lies a deep-seated anxiety among residents: a fear that the city is quietly paving the way for sweeping zoning changes and the "hotelization" of the historic district.

A Process Born in Controversy

For many neighborhood advocates, the origins of the current visioning effort have cast a long shadow of suspicion. The public workshops were organized only after a scheduled August 2025 closed-door meeting between a handful of commercial property owners and Sarasota Director of Planning Steve Cover was brought to light.

Locals describe a complete renaissance for the historic district, with one glaring exception: the distressed corner where the developers seeking new zoning entitlements have left their building in a state of disrepair.

Emails uncovered through public records requests revealed that participants were referring to that private gathering as "The Future of St. Armands." Following a swift public outcry, the city canceled the private meeting and pivoted to the current public workshop format. Still, trust remains low. To resident leaders, the process resembles a Trojan horse designed to manufacture consent for density increases that have historically been fiercely opposed.

The Catalyst: Hurricanes and the '50 Percent Rule'

The renewed push for commercial expansion is deeply entangled with the aftermath of the devastating 2024 hurricane season. Storm surges from

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Arch, from page 1

said. "Almost everyone wants to be photographed out there, and it is a great place to kiss. We have done everything classy there, and we are trying to do a classy thing. I went to the property the other day, and it is the only place you can put something like this."

Addressing concerns that the arch is an exclusive corporate monument, Whittall clarified its accessibility. "It is open to the public; anyone can walk up and take pictures there," he noted.

He didn't mince words regarding the Planning and Zoning Board's recent 3-2 vote to recommend denying the sign code amendment, stating simply: "The Planning and Zoning Board were not being forward-thinking."

A 'Tremendously Successful' Season

Despite the regulatory hurdles, the St. Regis is experiencing a blockbuster inaugural season. Whittall reported that operations have been "tremendously successful" and "doing huge," adding that both room rates and occupancy are "top of market."

That success is bleeding over into the broader local economy. According to Whittall, Geoffrey Michel, owner of The Met clothing shop on St. Armands Circle, recently told him that business has "tripled at The Met since he opened the St. Regis."

The resort isn't done growing, either. Whittall revealed that the St. Regis will soon be adding two tennis courts and three pickleball courts to its sprawling amenities.

A Standoff Over "Legal Gymnastics"

Whittall's morning remarks stand in stark contrast to the fiery, philosophical showdown that took place at the March 17 Planning and Zoning Board meeting. What was supposed to be a highly technical hearing over "private groin signs" quickly dissolved into a broader debate about the aesthetic future of Longboat Key.

To circumvent the island's strict local sign codes, town staff and the resort's legal counsel initially leaned on a specific legal strategy: claiming the archway serves a "public safety purpose" by identifying the responsible entity (St. Regis) for emergency responders.

The board didn't buy it.

Board Member David Lapovsky called the justification "silly," while Board Member S. Jay Plager agreed: "When I read that in the material, I put BS in the margin because it was so obviously bull."

Brenda L. Patten, an attorney representing Whittall's Unicorp, candidly acknowledged that the safety argument was primarily a legal maneuver to satisfy state law, which requires a "public purpose" for legislative zoning changes.

"The courts have said if the board approving such an ordinance has any public purpose... the courts will accept that determination," Patten explained during the hearing. "You can have a hundred people in the audience saying, 'We hate this. It's terrible. It's ruining my property values.' The court doesn't care. If there's one legitimate public purpose in the ordinance, the court can ignore everybody who says this sucks."

"Tasteful" vs. "Developer Overreach"

The debate deeply divided the board and residents. St. Regis Hotel Manager Cara Hardman delivered an emotional defense of the structure at the hearing, calling her team "memory makers" and displaying photos of proposals and families under the arch.

Plager offered his full support for the resort's aesthetic. "This particular sign is tasteful, and I congratulate the gentleman who developed it," he noted. "The die was cast back then to have

a major commercial entity established on our otherwise little residential island... this little bit of archway and sign shouldn't come as a surprise to anybody."

But Board Member Nicholas Gladding led the fierce opposition, warning of a slippery slope where other waterfront resorts might demand their own massive beachfront structures. "I don't think it's good policy," Gladding warned. "We don't want to see Longboat Key turn into the Jersey Beach."

Local residents echoed those fears, urging the board to hold the line. Former Town Commissioner Maureen Merrigan characterized the ordinances as "legal gymnastics," arguing that carving out an exception would inevitably lead to future demands from other developers. Diane Canny, a resident of neighboring Beach Place, called the arch a "developer overreach on a private, unique groin," raising concerns about metallic glare and precedent.

The Hurricane Fact-Check

Tensions at the March meeting further flared during a brief fact-check. Developers initially praised the arch's structural integrity, with Whittall noting it was built to withstand 150 mph winds and claiming it had already survived Hurricanes Helene and Milton.

The board quickly pointed out that the hurricanes devastated the Gulf Coast in September 2024, but the arch wasn't erected until August 2025. Whittall apologized at the time, stating he had been misinformed by his team.

Eyes on May: A Commissioner Speaks Out

Despite the advisory board's rejection, the St. Regis arch is not ordered for removal just yet. The ultimate fate of the controversial structure—and a potential amendment to Longboat Key's famously strict sign code—now rests entirely in the hands of the Town Commission, which will take up the issue in May.

But Whittall's optimism regarding the Town Commission may face significant headwinds. At least one commissioner is already publicly vowing to push for the arch's removal.

In a recent email exchange, Longboat Key resident William Pepe wrote to Town Commissioner BJ Bishop, expressing deep frustration over the resort's "do it first and ask forgiveness later" approach.

"Many residents have already been troubled by the resort's issues involving sea turtle lighting compliance and the circumstances surrounding its temporary certificate of occupancy," Pepe wrote to the commissioner. "In that context, this latest action feels less like an oversight and more like part of a broader pattern of noncompliance. I respectfully urge the Town to support the Planning and Zoning Board's position and require the St. Regis to remove the sign."

Bishop's response was swift and definitive, leaving little doubt about where she stands ahead of the crucial vote.

"I first raised this issue when the sign went up and I will continue to urge my colleagues we follow our sign code and have this removed," Bishop replied. "I believe it is scheduled for our May meeting and I urge you to attend."

Before firing up his engine at Sebring, Whittall reiterated his belief that his massive investment in Longboat Key earns him a seat at the table to make these kinds of aesthetic requests.

"If someone else spends a half-billion dollars to build a resort, they should have the right to ask for a wedding arch," Whittall said. "It will not be an issue."

Confident that the Town Commission will view the situation from a different, more economically minded perspective, Whittall expects the drape to come off and the arch to stand tall once again. It remains to be seen if the rest of the commission will agree with him, or side with Bishop and the zoning board.



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St. Armands, from page 1

Hurricanes Helene and Milton inundated the area, triggering strict FEMA “50% Rule” guidelines. These federal regulations mandate that extensively damaged properties must be elevated to modern flood codes.

Faced with the exorbitant costs of elevating their buildings, developers are looking upward to make their investments financially viable. Most notably, the team seeking to rebuild the Shore restaurant at 24 and 28 N. Boulevard of the Presidents is pushing to add density, which could include controversial third-floor boutique hotel units or short-term rentals.

However, municipal zoning is rarely isolated. If the city yields to developers on density or height to revitalize one property, those allowances would legally apply to the rest of the Circle, potentially opening the door to widespread commercial buildup.

A Renaissance on the Street, A Blight on the Corner

What may be working against those pushing for hotels and rezoning is the empirical reality on the street. The Circle is currently vibrant, buzzing, and full of life. In fact, some businesses are reporting massive increases in commercial activity, buoyed by the recent opening of the St. Regis hotel on Longboat Key, a reprieve from storms last summer, and perfect weather this past season.

Almost every evening, the Circle is replete with enthusiastic diners—thronging of visitors enjoying outdoor cafés, while every quadrant fills with musicians and shoppers. Locals describe a complete renaissance for the historic district, with one glaring exception: the distressed corner where the developers seeking new zoning entitlements have left their building in a state of disrepair, making little to no cosmetic effort to spruce things up following the hurricanes.

A Resounding ‘No’: Sticky Notes and a Clear Directive

At the initial February 26 session, the community delivered a unified message that sharply diverged from the proposals of developers. Roughly 150 stakeholders gathered at the Mote Marine Keating Education Center, where outgoing Interim Sarasota City Manager David Bullock introduced Dr. David Brain, an independent facilitator and sociologist.

Dr. Brain asked attendees to envision what St. Armands should look like in the year 2046, utilizing sticky notes and voting stickers to gauge consensus. The results overwhelmingly favored preserving the Circle’s century-old tradition: a quaint village-center feel characterized by small boutique shops, charming residential streets, and a quiet traffic flow.

Rather than increased density, residents and business owners alike demanded infrastructural triage. High-priority requests included fixing historically failure-prone stormwater pumps,

improving flood-prone evacuation routes to Lido Beach and Longboat Key, and undergrounding vulnerable overhead utility lines. The concept of “hotel houses” and high-density lodging was firmly rejected by the attendees.

The Specter of Past Proposals

This is not the first time development interests have sought to reshape the Circle. In 2021 and 2022, an effort to authorize hotel use and increase commercial height limits was unanimously rejected by the City Commission, and a separate plan to build a hotel on the Fillmore Parking Lot also collapsed.

Now, residents worry that what developers failed to achieve through direct proposals is being repackaged under the guise of post-storm resilience.

“No one knows quite what to expect with the upcoming second visioning session,” Chris Goglia, President of the St. Armands Residents Association, noted in a recent bulletin to residents. “The more cynical among us expect city planning staff to ignore the feedback they got in the first session, and instead present proposed zoning changes that would allow larger buildings and hotel usage—what developers have been seeking for the past five years. In which case this would all be one big tax-payer funded dog and pony show.”

Whether the upcoming workshop will reflect the community’s demands for preservation and infrastructure, or pivot toward the density developers are seeking, remains to be seen. But for the residents of St. Armands, the future of their neighborhood hangs in the balance.

Meeting Details and Public Comment

- What: St. Armands Visioning Workshop II
- When: Monday, April 13, 2026, from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM (Attendees are advised to arrive 15 minutes early)
- Where: Mote Marine Keating Marine Education Center (the elevated building on City Island), 1599 Ken Thompson Pkwy, Sarasota, FL
- Parking: Limited parking is available under the building. Additional parking can be found near the Save Our Seabirds / Mote Marine parking lot.
- Registration: Encouraged for headcount purposes. Residents can register via Eventbrite by searching “St. Armands Visioning Workshop.”

Make Your Voice Heard:

If you are unable to attend the meeting but wish to have your stance on the zoning and development of St. Armands Circle placed on the record, residents are encouraged to email Sarasota City Mayor Debbie Trice at: debbie.trice@sarasotafl.gov

Canals, from page 1

on a “town-maintained waterway,” offering buyers a critical guarantee: what is boatable today will be boatable tomorrow.

A Wave of Island Momentum and Resiliency

The push for pristine canals arrives as Longboat Key rides a wave of historic civic momentum and recovery. Town Manager Howard Tipton has been busy shepherding major projects across the finish line while simultaneously navigating the aftermath of two of the worst storms to ever hit the region.

Storm recovery was an unprecedented undertaking for town staff and the community at large, requiring the removal of hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of debris and destroyed vegetation, navigating emergency permitting nightmares, and assisting residents whose homes were rendered unlivable. Today, Tipton says all the parks—including Durante Park—are opening, amenities are fully functioning, and Longboat Key is 100% recovered and stronger due to increased resiliency in construction.

That momentum extends beyond storm recovery. The town-wide undergrounding of utilities is completely finished. Additionally, the planned community center has morphed into a joint public library project with the county, expanded to include additional meeting space and an outdoor terrace for residents. The operations are fully funded, and construction is slated to begin this fall or early next winter.

For Tipton, who has been with the town for just over three years, the ability to see major initiatives cross the finish line makes the hard work worthwhile. “A bad day on Longboat is better than a good day in a county administrator position,” Tipton said.

Recognizing the economic stakes of the canals, the Town Commission has asked Tipton to explore short-term financing options to kickstart the dredging operations immediately, rather than waiting years for tax assessments to build up in reserve.

The State of the Waterways: Muck, Red Tide, and Flood Control

Through a series of town hall briefings, Public Works Director Charlie Mopps and consulting engineers from First Line Coastal have detailed exactly why the canals cannot wait.

“We’ve been kicking this can down the road quite a bit. It’s pretty flat; it’s not rolling anymore,” Mopps told residents. Decades of runoff have left some canals completely impassable at low tide, with recent town surveys handing out an alarming number of D and F grades for navigability.

Beyond property values, the shallow, muck-filled canals present severe environmental hazards. Nutrient-heavy “bio-loads” on the canal floors feed harmful algae blooms, and removing this sediment is a critical step in mitigating red tide.

Manager Tipton is highly focused on the public safety and infrastructure aspects of the project. He points out that for an island community, deepening the canals dramatically increases stormwater capacity. Having been on the front lines during recent hurricanes, Tipton noted that anything that expedites the removal of floodwater from the island out to the Gulf and the Intracoastal is paramount.

“It would also allow the Town to claim FEMA benefits and reimbursements since the town would be maintaining the canals,” Tipton added, solving a historical loophole that previously left the town footing the bill for storm-related canal debris.

The \$9 Million Question: The 80/20 Funding Split

The core of the current debate centers on the proposed funding methodology, modeled after the town’s 80/20 beach renourishment split.

Under the plan, properties with “direct access” to the canals will shoulder 80% of the project’s cost. This includes an annual Equivalent Benefit Unit (EBU) flat assessment of \$620, plus a minor ad-valorem millage rate. The remaining 20% will be funded by an island-wide ad-valorem tax, applying to non-waterfront properties, bayside condos, and commercial spaces. For a non-waterfront home assessed at \$500,000, this town-wide millage equates to roughly \$30 annually.

While some non-waterfront residents pushed back against paying for waterways they do not live on, town officials argue the 20% contribution reflects the shared, island-wide benefits of flood control and property value protection. After the initial five-year restoration phase, all

assessment fees are projected to drop by half as the program shifts strictly into maintenance mode.

National Lessons: How Other Coastal Communities Pay the Price

While Longboat Key’s proposed 80/20 hybrid model is unique, the “mud and money” dilemma is a standard feature of coastal governance. Other premier waterfront enclaves across the country highlight the controversies and trade-offs inherent in municipal dredging.

Cape Coral, Florida (The “Sticker Shock” Assessment): With over 400 miles of canals, Cape Coral relies on Special Dredging Assessments levied on an as-needed basis for specific quadrants.

The Pros: There is no recurring annual tax burden.

The Cons: This creates massive “sticker shock.” Homeowners in older sections have recently been hit with sudden, one-time bills exceeding \$10,000 per property.

The Controversy: Cape Coral faces fierce environmental pushback regarding unfiltered runoff polluting protected natural resource areas and harming manatees.

Punta Gorda, Florida (The “Slow Bleed” Utility Model): In Punta Gorda Isles, dredging and seawall maintenance are treated as a recurring municipal utility, much like trash collection.

The Pros: A recurring fee creates a predictable “slow bleed” rather than a sudden massive bill, allowing the city to maintain a permanent fleet of barges.

The Cons: Residents shoulder 100% of the cost. Because there is no town-wide contribution, fees can be volatile when disasters like Hurricane Ian strike.

Huntington Harbour, California (The Intergovernmental Tapestry): Because the canals border protected wetlands, dredging is funded through a complex mix of County funds, State Coastal Conservancy grants, and Federal U.S. Fish & Wildlife support.

The Pros: Shifts massive costs away from individual homeowners.

The Cons: Projects are highly bureaucratic, sometimes taking a decade or more to approve and execute.

Environmental Protections and a “Win-Win” Mitigation Plan

Residents concerned about the impact of heavy dredging machinery on local marine life have been offered strict reassurances. By permit, every dredging barge must have a dedicated crew member whose sole responsibility is to monitor for manatees. Furthermore, specialized “turbidity curtains” will be deployed to trap clouded, muddy water within the construction zone.

Before major dredging can begin, environmental permits require the town to establish a 3-acre seagrass mitigation area, requiring 24,000 cubic yards of fill. In a brilliant cost-saving and infrastructure maneuver, the town plans to use the high-quality sand pulled directly from the canals.

“Another benefit of this program is to use some of the clean dredged material to fill the subaqueous pipe across the bay,” Tipton said. “It is a win-win project.”

To further offset the financial burden on taxpayers, the town is actively pursuing a \$3 million federal appropriation through the Water Resource Development Act of 2026, with the support of Congressman Vern Buchanan and assistance from Representative Greg Steube.

What’s Next: The Legislative Timeline

The program is rapidly approaching its critical legislative hurdles. At the April 6 commission meeting, town officials gave formal guidance to proceed with the 80/20 methodology and move the program forward.

The upcoming timeline:

- May 4: The first public hearing to formally set the assessment and millage rates.
- May 11: Mass informational mailings will be sent to every Longboat Key resident.
- June: A final public hearing.

If officially passed, the assessments will appear on Longboat Key property tax bills in November 2026. If Town Manager Tipton is successful in securing short-term financing or federal grants, physical dredging operations could begin much sooner than the originally projected 2029 start date.

Editor Letters



Longboat Key News and Sarasota City News encourages Letters to the Editor on timely issues. Please email to: letters@lbknews.com or mail to PO Box 8001, Longboat Key, FL 34228. We also print letters sent to Town Hall that address Longboat Key issues. We reserve the right to edit.

High-span bridge the right choice

To: Editor

My wife has resided on LBK for 71 years. I have been here since 1972 when I relocated to Florida as the Executive Officer of the bank on St. Armands; hence I believe our opinions should carry some weight.

I recall vividly the big deal over the potential replacement of the Ringling Bridge. A group of mental-midgets in Sarasota argued aggressively and rudely in favor of replacing the bridge with a brand new bascule monstrosity. Fortunately, cooler and brighter heads prevailed in Sarasota (Bird Key, Lido etc) and thanks to FDOT and local logical thinking, we finally got a beautiful new high-span bridge .

So here we are years later having late-comers to LBK trying desperately to derail a high-span

bridge which, by the way, is less expensive to build and less costly to maintain.

The Town Commissioners and Mayor need to stay out of this and refrain from putting their thumb on the scale of public opinion. This annoying chatter lately about how a high span bridge would somehow destroy the ambiance and environment of LBK is ridiculous "baffle-gab".

Residents need to listen to the advice of the FDOT and understand logically why a high-span bridge is essential to the north end of LBK for numerous reasons which I shan't list in this epistle.

Anyone with half a brain should be capable of listing the positives for themselves. Bascule bridges are dinosaurs.

Dr. Warren G. Simonds
Longboat Key

Sea Turtle crawl

To: Terri Driver

Not a LBK North neighborhood issue directly so I am not the best people to connect with County on this. If this is a seabird/ turtle concern might be best as a note and questions coming from one of those organizations that Tal or Sarah can then forward to the event organizers or appropriate department. Never heard of biodegradable golf balls and glad LBK keeps the golfing to our golf courses.

Maureen Merrigan
Longboat Key

See Letters, page 6

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Her Oak Box
by Bob Parrish (c)

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I felt my hugging goodbye
That will be coming tomorrow

I do not want this what can be done
To help your body heal and be warm
You to be well and far from harm

The night before I saw your eyes
soft and blue
You looked at me as if you knew
I saw you rest your chin
As I had tears seeing you again
Your life again to keep your life



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As I Walk out of a room
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Editor Letters



Letters, from page 4

Sea Turtle crawl

To: Maureen Merrigan and Longboat Key Commissioner Sarah Karon
Any chance you can connect with our Manatee County Commissioner person, Tal Siddique, or whoever would be appropriate to discuss this issue further?

This concept is concerning in many ways, including "bio-degradable golf balls" (have they been vetted), two days before we begin Turtle Patrol, disruption of seabird nesting season, and private for profit (?) earnings on a public beach.

In conclusion, Town of Longboat Key does not allow golfing on beaches in any way shape or form (muni-code) due to the reasons specified above. High priority on our concerns!

Terri Driver

LBK Citizens Green Team, President of Rotary Club of Longboat Key

Permitted person on Mote STCRP Turtle Permit

Public Records Request Regarding St. Regis

To: Longboat Key Town Commission

As a precautionary measure, this notice is being distributed to all Town Commissioners to ensure a comprehensive search for any potentially responsive records.

We have received a records request that requires a thorough response. The requesting party is seeking any and all communications related to the matter below.

Please review your records and advise whether you have any responsive materials, including text messages, personal email, or other communications that may not have been captured in our archival system. Responses can come directly to me.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Time Frame: 1/1/2021 through present.

Request: Copies of all permit applications, permits, approval letters, certificates of completion and/or substantial completion, drawing/plans, inspections notes and documents, correspondence and memorandums, all communications, including email and texts communications, product approvals, and other documents relating to the construction.

Properties:

The Residences at The St. Regis Longboat Key Resort

1620 Gulf of Mexico Drive, Longboat Key, FL 34228

1561 Gulf of Mexico Drive, Longboat Key, FL 34228

1581 Gulf of Mexico Drive, Longboat Key, FL 34228

1591 Gulf of Mexico Drive, Longboat Key, FL 34228

St. Regis Longboat Key Resort (hotel)

1601 Gulf of Mexico Drive, Longboat Key, FL 34228

Stephanie Garcia

Assistant Town Clerk

Town of Longboat Key

St Regis Landscape plan

To: Longboat Key Town Commissioner Penny Gold

Good afternoon Commissioner Gold, I have copied our Planning, Zoning, & Building Department with your question. Thank you!

Isaac Brownman

Assistant Town Manager

Town of Longboat Key

See Letters, page 13



SECUR-ALL INSURANCE AGENCY

Sandra Smith | 941.383.3388

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1800 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DR Unit#B809	2,230	\$2,625,000	3 2 1	108	\$2,400,000
1800 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DR Unit#A405	1,350	\$1,499,900	2 2 0	416	\$1,300,000
323 MADISON DR	1,377	\$1,295,000	3 2 0	50	\$1,245,000
111 S PINEAPPLE AVE Unit#816	1,585	\$1,199,000	2 2 1	98	\$1,000,000
1116 YALE AVE	1,770	\$950,000	2 2 1	0	\$900,000
226 GOLDEN GATE PT Unit#34	1,396	\$849,000	2 2 0	9	\$820,000
1212 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DR Unit#907	1,421	\$899,000	2 2 0	38	\$780,000
1001 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DR Unit#406	1,367	\$599,999	2 2 1	70	\$530,000
585 GUNWALE LN	4,733	\$4,995,000	3 3 1	412	\$4,700,000
524 SCHOONER LN	4,438	\$4,300,000	4 4 1	212	\$3,985,000
3310 BAYOU RD	2,995	\$2,695,000	3 3 0	159	\$2,625,000
2123 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#903	2,352	\$1,295,000	3 3 0	45	\$1,200,000
2195 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#404	1,906	\$924,900	3 2 0	379	\$850,000
1975 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#G4-309	933	\$749,500	2 2 0	69	\$700,000
1932 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#217	1,442	\$599,000	2 2 0	109	\$590,000



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BeachResidences303.com

Sanctuary

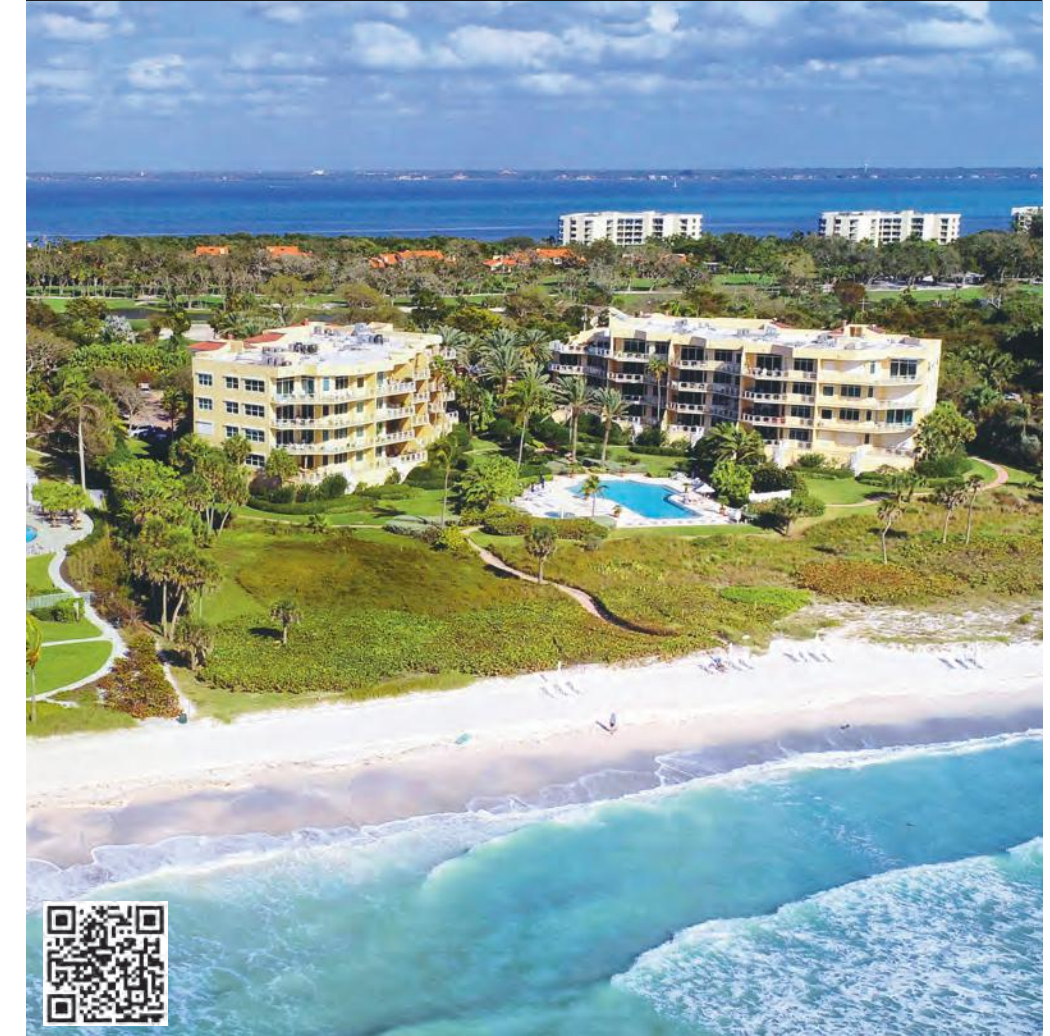


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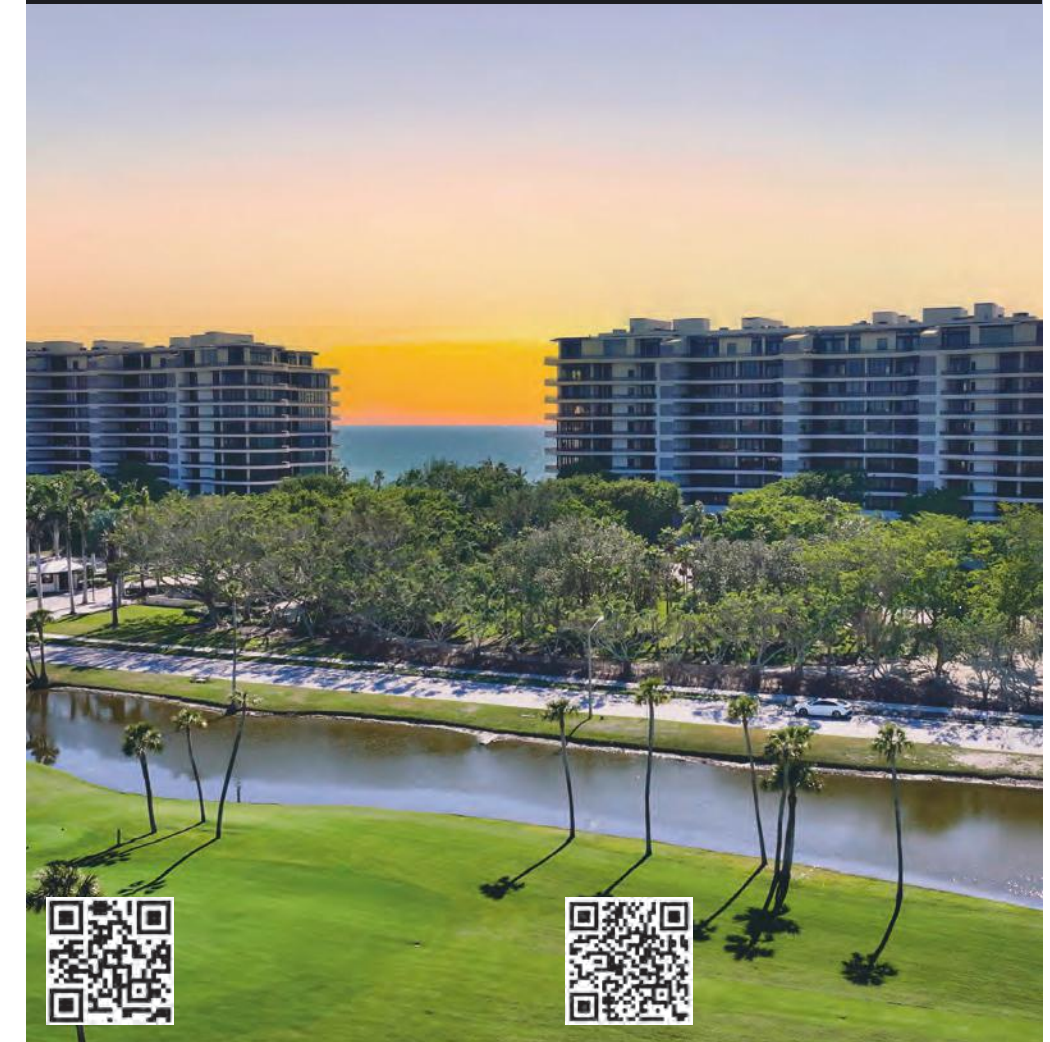
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OnPatrol



The following are actual police reports as written by Longboat Key Police Officers. They are edited for length, punctuation and to protect privacy.

April 3 Civil

11:29 a.m.

Sgt. Smith was dispatched to North Shore Road for a civil standby. Upon arrival, Sgt. Smith made contact with the complainant who advised he and his live-in girlfriend were in the process of separating. He requested law enforcement standby while he attempted to retrieve his property from the residence. While on scene, the woman arrived with her daughter. The woman advised she had applied for a restraining order against the man, however, it had not yet been served. She said she had previously instructed the man to cease all contact.

The woman further advised that any property belonging to the man had been removed from the residence following the recent hurricanes. She also stated the man had a .22 caliber pistol at the residence but advised he would need to go through the court process to retrieve any items. The daughter reiterated that the man should not return to the residence or attempt further contact. Both parties indicated the man had a prior restraining order related to stalking, however, an FCIC/NCIC check revealed no active injunctions or protection orders at this time. Sgt. Smith recontacted the man and advised him of the information provided by the woman. He disputed the claim that his property had been lost, specifically stating his bicycles were not washed away. Sgt. Smith informed the man that a restraining order had been applied for and that he was unable to confirm the current status of the process. Officer Maple entered the man's vehicle license plate into the License Plate Recognition system as a hot entry for 30 days. An informational bulletin was also issued to road patrol regarding the incident. Case clear.



reported to contain a firearm and possible narcotics. Upon inspection, the contents were found to include a firearm and prescription medications, which appeared to belong to the owner. While attempting to locate the owner, the individual arrived in the parking lot and took custody of the property from the resort security. Case clear.

Citizen assist

11:01 p.m.

Officer Miklos responded to Companion Way in reference to a suspicious person laying in the grass near the bus stop. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos came into contact with the

subject who voluntarily provided his Florida ID card. The man advised he was just resting and had no medical concerns. At this time, Longboat Key Fire Department arrived on scene and were advised that EMS could cancel. Officer Miklos offered the man a ride to the Salvation Army or another shelter in the area to which he denied the offer. The man stated he would just walk off of Longboat Key. Officer Miklos contacted Sgt. Puccio and advised him of the details. The man advised he was trying to return to Hialeah, Florida. The man requested a ride to 7-eleven on Cortez Road. Sgt. Puccio authorized the transport and conducted a Terry Frisk before placing him in the rear passenger seat of the vehicle. The man was provided a courtesy ride without incident. Prior to departing, Officer Miklos provided the man with a homeless services pamphlet. Case clear.

April 6 Noise

6:06 p.m.

Officer Pescuma was dispatched to Buttonwood Drive in reference to a construction noise complaint. The caller did not wish to meet. Upon arrival, Officer Pescuma observed a work crew cleaning up around the construction site and observed the crew supervisor start up heavy machinery. Officer Pescuma advised him to shut it down and educated him on the noise ordinance. He stated he just had to move it away from the residence to secure it for the day. Officer Pescuma issued a warning to the company, case clear.

April 7 Assist agency

8:09 p.m.

Officer Troyer responded to Longboat Club Road regarding an agency assist where the caller was reporting smoke in the building. Upon arrival, Officer Troyer canvassed the building but did not locate any smoke. Longboat Key Fire Department handled the call and determined possible air conditioning issue. Case clear.

April 8 Citizen assist

8:38 a.m.

Officer Nazareno was dispatched to the 6000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a citizen assist call to confirm if the driver of a gray Acura parked at Dream Island Road was working there. Upon arrival, Officer Nazareno was met by the employee of the Cable who advised he was trying to locate the fiber optic cable and was on his cell phone with his supervisor. No suspicious activity was observed. The caller did not wish to be seen or contacted. Case clear.

Vehicle

4:22 p.m.

Officer Maple while on patrol in the 3500 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in a patrol car and received an alert from the Bay Isles Parkway license plate reader camera regarding a northbound red Honda with a driver who had a suspended driver's license and expired tag. Officer Maple located the northbound vehicle at the 3600 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive. The red Honda was traveling at speed with a woman driver observed. Officer Maple initiated a traffic stop with lights energized at the 4400 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in Manatee County. Officer Maple approached the driver and informed her that the reason for the stop was due to the license plate reader returning information about an expired tag. The driver said she knew her registration was expired and was having problems with her mail. Unprovoked the woman stated her Driver's License was also suspended and she was working as a nurse and had to get to a job on the island. She also claimed to have paid her fines and was set up on a payment plan but the court costs were not covered. Officer Maple ran the driver through FCIC/NCIC and received a hit indicating no valid driver's license. Based on these facts, Officer Maple made a non-custodial arrest and the driver was given a court date. Case clear.

Property

6:05 p.m.

Officer Tillman responded to Cedar Street for a report of damaged property. Upon arrival, Officer Tillman spoke with the complainant who stated that he believed the construction crew working at the southwest corner of Cedar Street where a stop sign was knocked over. The stop sign was temporarily fixed by the complainant. Officer Tillman contacted the on call public works employee who advised to email Mark Richardson addressing the issue. Case clear.

Incident

2:19 p.m.

Sgt. Smith was dispatched to the beach in the area of 4400 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a report of two women in their 20s allegedly topless. Upon arrival, Sgt. Smith made contact with two women matching the description but observed any violations of Florida law or local ordinances. The reporting party declined to provide their information and did not wish to be contacted. Sgt. Smith asked the women if they had been topless earlier, both said they had not but had been lying on their stomachs and later turned onto their backs and it was possible they were briefly exposed during that movement. Sgt. Smith requested IDs from the women, but they refused to provide it. No further action, case clear.

April 4 Noise

7:33 a.m.

Officer Nazareno was dispatched to Fox Street for a noise complaint regarding construction noise prior to 8 a.m. Upon arrival, Officer Nazareno made contact with the complainant and advised him that he was in violation of sound ordinance and was issued a written warning. Case clear.

Disturbance

10:09 p.m.

Officer Martinson was dispatched to the 4600 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive on a call of a disturbance. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson was met by the onsite security guard who said there was a group of guests out by the pool being loud after hours. The security guard said when she told them they had to leave the pool area they got argumentative and refused. The security guard then lead me back through the property to the pool area and when he arrived the group of guests were already gone. Case clear.

April 5 Found property

2:48 p.m.

Sgt. Smith was dispatched to Sands Point Road in reference to a bag found containing a firearm and possible narcotics. Upon arrival, Sgt. Smith made contact with a security officer who stated that a bag was located inside the restaurant and the security officer advised the bag was



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**I do not want this what can be done
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**The night before I saw your eyes
soft and blue
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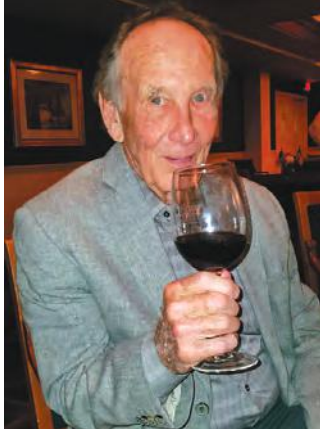


It's Wine Time!

The clean and simple Chenin Blanc steals the show. While the Sauvignon Blanc enhances a blue cheese in the second food course, the Chenin Blanc shines among the hors d'oeuvres and the Lobster Arancini in the second course.

S.W. and Rich Hermansen
Guest Writers
wine@lbknews.com

The cover of the program for the April 8, 2026 Wine Cellar Social Club event declared "It's Wine Time!" Well said. This latest in a series of wine tastings occupied much of the floor space in Michael's retail Wine Cellar in Sarasota Florida and featured a three-course tasting menu served by the kitchen and staff of Michael's-on-East. The wine list and menu selections gave around fifty guests seated at five large tables a chance to test pairings of different wines and foods.



Our guide for the tasting, David Warren Curran, Regional Accounts Manager of Jackson Family Fine Wines, introduced each of the seven wines in the tasting line-up. He gave briefings about the regions where the wines originated and the vineyards that produced them. He moved from table to table, answering questions about the wines and adding details of the terrain, climate, and culture of the coastal wine regions that extend from Monterrey to Sonoma Coast.

The Jackson Family company, a private company owned for many years by Jess Jackson's widow and her children, has acquired in the same form as Gina Gallo's fiefdom of smaller, fine wine vineyards that maintain their identities within a marketing empire. The Jackson Family relieves the winemakers of the burden of finding distributors for wines within the complex regulations of US States and working with importers of wine in other countries. The family wine regional representatives contact wine buyers in stores, restaurants, and distributors that in some states control deliveries of wines to retailers and restaurants.

All of these behind the scenes activities have little sway on the course of a wine tasting. David Warren Curran, the insider, discusses the nuances of the Matanzas Creek Sauvignon

Blanc, with less sharp an grapefruit acid edge than New Zealand competitors and a 2023 Hartford Family Wines Chenin Blanc, sold out at the vineyard, that reprises the many acres that California vineyards plowed under and replaced with bad Chardonnay.

The clean and simple Chenin Blanc steals the show. While the Sauvignon Blanc enhances a blue cheese in the second food course, the Chenin Blanc shines among the hors d'oeuvres and the Lobster Arancini in the second course. The Kendall-Jackson Vintner's Reserve Brut Cuvee sparkling wine sat too long in the glass waiting for the event to begin, but if fresh poured would have added zest to the lovely steamed green mussels with lime and Tequila and corn jalapeño salsa in the second course.



A Rosé of Pinot Noir looked white with no hint of a rosé hue. David suggested that the winemaker had left the red skins on the lees for too short of time to give impart a Rosé color. Something akin to Blanc du Noir as in Brut Champagne from Pinot Noir grapes.

Two Hartford Family Pinot Noir, one overrated but both tasty, and a Kendall-Jackson 'Grand Reserve' Cabernet Sauvignon, a dense and robust crowd-pleaser paired with Marrakesh chicken thigh meat skewers and a beef slider with grilled onions, bone marrow, and Tallegio cheese and crispy truffle fries.

The Wine Cellar and Jackson Family tasting afforded the guests an evening rich in flavors and an experience of the confluence of fine wine and food. It's a wine time!

S. W. Hermansen has used his expertise in econometrics, data science and epidemiology to help develop research databases for the Pentagon, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Agriculture, and Health Resources and Services. He has visited premier vineyards and taste wines from major appellations in California, Oregon, New York State, and internationally from Tuscany and the Piedmont in Italy, the Ribera del Duero in Spain, the Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale in Australia, and the Otago Valley in New Zealand. Currently he splits time between residences in Chevy Chase, Maryland and St. Armand's Circle in Florida.

Rich Hermansen selected his first wine list for a restaurant shortly after graduating from college with a degree in Mathematics. He has extensive service and management experience in the food and wine industry. Family and friends rate him as their favorite chef, bartender, and wine steward. He lives in Severna Park, Maryland.

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Letters, from page 6**St Regis Landscape plan**

To: Longboat Key Assistant Town Manager Isaac Brownman

The December 2023 rendering with the parking garage includes a planned row of trees between the hotel wall and the Aquarius Condominium property. If I recall, their original proposal also included a line of trees on the north side. I have received several complaints from Seaplace owners about the bare brick wall on the north-facing side of the hotel. Can we encourage St. Regis to move forward with that version of the landscape plan?

Penny Gold

Commissioner

Town of Longboat Key

Follow up to Inquiries

To: Bob Gault

Here are the approved landscape plans from December 2023, which revised previously approved landscape plans for the project. Also attached is a rendering used during Unicorn's presentation of the parking garage concept, which preceded the December 2023 plan update. Not sure if their intention was that the rendering (which most likely depicts fully matured trees and foliage) was for that concept to carry through with or without a parking garage. Please let us know if you have any more questions.

Isaac Brownman

Assistant Town Manager

Town of Longboat Key

Follow up to Inquiries

To: Longboat Key Assistant Town Manager Isaac Brownman

Thank you Isaac.

Bob Gault

Longboat Key

Follow up to Inquiries

To: Bob Gault

Yes, let me work our Planning, Zoning, & Building group to track that graphic down.

Isaac Brownman

Assistant Town Manager

Town of Longboat Key

Follow up to Inquiries

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Gary Coffin

Thanks Gary again to you and Isaac for the follow up on St Regis landscaping.

As I recall the elevation rendering presented in the public hearings depicted a very dense grove of palms helping screen the facility etc. I was thinking how can they plant palms so closely together side by side? It was a wall of landscaping. Currently there are only a handful of skinny Queen Palms and allot of low grass type plants. Can we get a pdf of the rendering perspective presented in the Commission meeting please?

Just trying to understand what happened.

Bob Gault

Longboat Key

Follow up to Inquiries

To: Bob Gault

Bob, Thank you for your enquiry this week. Here are the responses from our directors to your questions. Should you have any other questions or feedback, please don't hesitate to reply back or attend our next regular meeting scheduled on September 8th at 1 p.m.

Gary Coffin

Commissioner

Longboat Key

Follow up to Inquiries

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Gary Coffin

As a follow-up to your questions last week, here are some answers below. Please let me know if you have any follow-up questions.

Landscaping in front of St. Regis

Hearing from at least one resident that the expectation was that the landscaping would be heartier/more dense. The landscaping installed at the St. Regis is consistent with the approved landscaping plan.

Does the landscaping they have implemented match their approved landscape plans?

Yes. Allen Parsons walked the site with the project's Construction Manager to ensure the installed landscaping was consistent with the approved landscaping plan.

Does the landscaping implemented and approved on the landscape plans match the rendering they supplied during public hearings? Yes.

Do they have any plans of adding more?

Beyond ensuring the installed landscaping was consistent with the approved landscaping plan, Town staff would not have any involvement in the St. Regis' future plans for additional landscaping.

Seems sparse for a 5-star resort and condo development.

The landscaping installed at the St. Regis is consistent with the approved landscaping plan.

St. Regis Parking Lifts

Also, the recollection is that the final approved plan would have parking lifts. Have those been implemented?

As a part of an amendment package in 2023 (Resolution 2013-12), all 62 mechanical parking lift spaces were removed, and the parking was made up on an expanded surface parking area. The final approved plan in 2023 added one more parking space beyond the original 2021 plan that had the lifts. The 2023 approved plan included a total of 469 parking spaces. 971 Longboat Club Road

1. Property is out of sorts (still damaged from storms and no apparent repair activity in sight).

2. Any update/status to repairs on that property?

A Notice of Violation has been filed against the owner. Code Enforcement staff have been in communication with the property owner, who has committed to having her contractors file the correct permits. Code enforcement spoke to the property owner yesterday morning. The owner stated that she has signed contracts and does not know why the contractors haven't applied for permits. The Code enforcement officer has requested twice for her to send him

the contracts and still have not received anything. The Code Enforcement officer informed her that she has until 7.30.2025 to have permits applied for. If they are not applied for by then she will receive a Notice of Hearing to appear before the Special Magistrate.

As a side note, she stated to the Code Enforcement officer that she has been dealing personal matters as well.

Isaac Brownman

Assistant Town Manager

Town of Longboat Key

Biodegradable golf balls

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Sarah Karon

Greatly appreciated Sarah. Just another quick note regarding potential issues with golfing on the beach and the bio-degradeable" golf balls.

Apparently they will not be allowed to hit them into the Gulf which is a positive; However, any golfing on the beach would encourage others (and particularly young persons at this event) to continue this practice, figuring this is ok, which it is not for the many reasons I stated previously.

Also, one person looked up the "bio-degradeable" golf balls and it takes three weeks for them to break down. This is a concern in that seagulls and crows will readily eat anything on the land, and other birds and animals could mistake the breakdown pieces as some sort of food. A primary ingredient may be Polyvinyl Alcohol (PVA) which is "non-toxic to humans, but is not intended to be ingested." Please see this article... <https://www.elephchem.com/what-does-polyvinyl-alcohol-do-to-the-body>

Thanks for any information you can gather, so we can determine the potential environmental impacts from this permit provided for an event on a public beach.

Terri Driver

Longboat Key

Biodegradable golf balls

To: Terri Driver

Not a LBK North neighborhood issue directly so I am not the best people to connect with County on this. If this is a seabird/ turtle concern might be best as a note and questions coming from one of those organizations that Tal or Sarah can then forward to the event organizers or appropriate department. Never heard of biodegradable golf balls and glad LBK keeps the golfing to our golf courses.

Maureen Merrigan

Longboat Key

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BreakPoints



The Empire in Retreat: Surviving the Psychology of a Tennis Losing Streak

When absolute dominance turns into a string of defeats, Iga Świątek and local players alike must find a way to stop the bleeding and rebuild a shattered game.

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Last week in the Longboat Key News, we explored the frustrating phenomenon of the “second-set lull.” In many ways, it’s a purely psychological issue; the players remain the exact same, but somehow the pressure sets in, and the set simply slips away.

But what is infinitely worse is watching a dominant player’s complete game start to vaporize. Dominant confidence turns into loss after loss. It’s like watching a superpower that once looked poised to take over the world suddenly slip into full retreat mode, leaving us wondering if it can even hold onto its current borders.



REID

Currently, this is most obvious in Iga Świątek. She started off simply unbeatable. But soon, rivals like Aryna Sabalenka and Elena Rybakina started going head-to-head with her, taking the wins, and now you can see the frustration mount match after match. Recent early exits, like her stunning March losses to Elina Svitolina at Indian Wells and Magda Linette in Miami, show a player searching for answers.

It is arguable that it’s actually harder to turn the tide when you’re playing at the Key Club or the public tennis center here on Longboat Key. After all, when you lose a match on tour, you pack up and fly to the next city. When you lose here, you know you are going to face those exact same people tomorrow. You go home, your spouse asks, “How did you do? Did you win?” and you have to answer. Although there is no prize money at stake, most of us are investing in live balls, clinics, and lessons. We want to do better. We certainly don’t want to watch our games decline as we age, and we don’t even want to flatline.

So, let’s see what Iga does to remedy the problem. Let’s see if we can learn something from it so we don’t retreat home to open a pint of ice cream. Let’s instead reset, refocus, and look at some tips to regain mastery over our friends at the local club.

Świątek’s remedy? Fly to the Rafa Nadal Academy in Mallorca and work with the namesake clay-court master himself. Every day, postings surface about her progress, with peers like Danielle Collins musing that the knowledge she is gaining is simply not fair—likening the Nadal blueprint to “insider trading.” She has switched coaches, yet she firmly keeps Daria Abramowicz, her traveling courtside mental health practitioner. Many question whether she needs to switch up that dynamic as well, or whether working with the great Rafa will be enough to turn the tide.

When the Foundation Cracks

When a player hits this stage, it is no longer about a single set slipping away; it is about a complete collapse in the ability to win matches. A dominant streak ends, and suddenly two or three losses pile up. The psychology shifts dramatically. The court feels smaller, the net feels higher, and opponents who just last week seemed to have a weak puff serve like an octogenarian tossing the ball over the net suddenly seem like Jannik Sinner thumping the ball with overwhelming pace. You feel entirely vulnerable.

The natural instinct is to swing harder, attempting to muscle your way out of the slump and force the ball to do what it used to do automatically. But in tennis, panic breeds deceleration and errors. The muscle memory that once felt bulletproof is suddenly paralyzed by doubt. Professionals understand that a sudden, protracted freefall in form stems from a profound breakdown in trust—trust in the footwork, trust in the swing path, and ultimately, trust in oneself. When the wins stop coming, the mind becomes the greatest liability on the court.

Local Remedy: Breaking the Streak on the Keys

For the competitive crowds battling it out on the courts of Longboat Key, Bird Key, and Sarasota, breaking a losing streak requires a deliberate mental reset. When the victories dry up and that creeping vulnerability sets in, professionals

suggest these anchors to rebuild a shattered game:

Strip Away the Ego and the Expectations

When you are in a rut, the pressure of trying to maintain your past reputation is toxic. You have to stop trying to play the dominant, flawless tennis of last month and commit to the gritty tennis required today. Recommit to a high-percentage baseline game. If the timing is off and opponents feel like they are hitting harder, generate height and heavy rotation. Trust the AeroPro frame, let the textured strings bite the ball, and aim deep down the middle to neutralize their pace and buy yourself time. Let the racket do the work. As someone once said, aim for the big targets—the open spaces on the court—and stop trying to muscle out winners.

Redefine the Victory

When you cannot buy a win, stop focusing on the match score. The scoreboard will only induce panic. Instead, change the metric of success to executing specific patterns. Celebrate the heavy, cross-court forehand that pushes the opponent back behind the baseline, even if you ultimately lose the point. Focus entirely on the process of a single rally. Rebuilding a tennis empire starts brick by brick, point by point.

Control the Controllables

A losing streak creates mental chaos on the court. The fastest way to restore order is to fiercely protect your physical rituals off the court. Take back control of your preparation. Dial in the off-court routine—perfecting that pre-match hydration formula. Controlling the physical chemistry, the diet, and the bag preparation builds a subtle, quiet foundation of confidence before the first ball is even tossed.

Whether you are Iga Świątek retreating to a mountain fortress in Mallorca or a local player grinding through a Thursday morning doubles match, the solution to a slump is never found in panic. You have to embrace the retreat, strip the game down to its raw mechanics, and trust that the foundation is still there, waiting to be rebuilt. One thing is for sure: with patience, practice, and some deep breathing, that



local “Jannik Sinner” will eventually vaporize. They will turn back into human form and reappear on the play sheet as the friend from Longboat Key you had no problem beating not too long ago.

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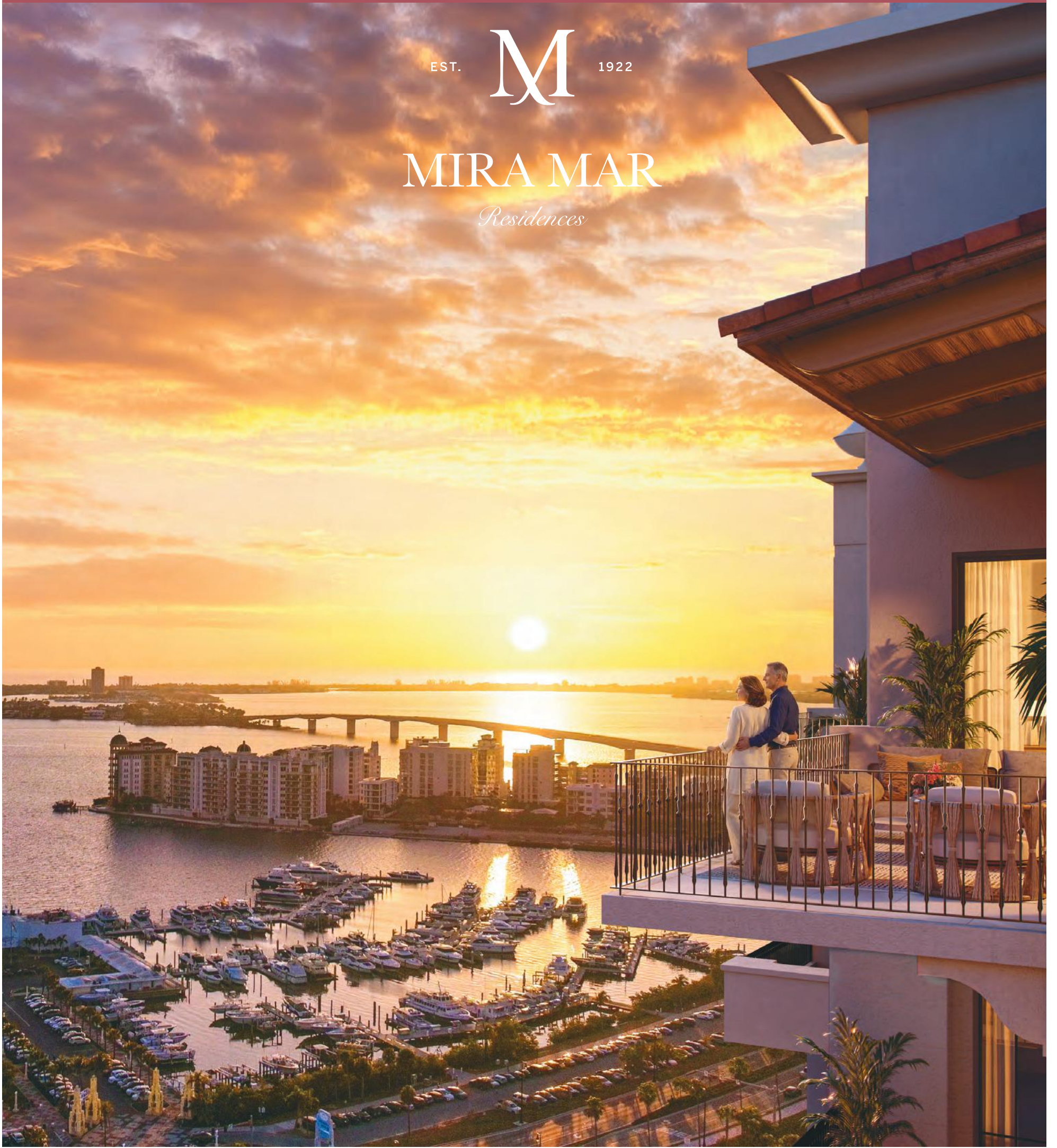
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