



Longboat Key News

July 17, 2026

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FREE

InsideLook



Sarasota Sharks Swim onto TV
...page 5



LBK keeps winning it all!
...page 11



Enjoy a drink at the Juke Joint
...page 15



Trying to walk it off
...page 10

The Shore's First Hearing Ends With One Unit to Prove and a Plan to Redo

Fifteen zoning comments, a height finding the city won't bend, a flood reckoning, and an aging asbestos water main stood between the plan and its next step.



STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

The most consequential half-acre in Sarasota came up as the fourth item on a routine morning agenda. On Wednesday, July 15, in the

City Commission chambers, the Development Review Committee took up application 26-SP-11 — the redevelopment of 24 and 28 North Boulevard of the Presidents, the storm-gutted corner on St. Armands Circle where a new Shore

is meant to rise. The reading was procedural and the tone collegial. The stakes were not.

What Happened...

The Development Review
See Shore, page 12

Inside the \$15 Million Sale at 1067 Westway Drive

The transaction underscores both the enduring appeal of Florida's Gulf Coast and the shifting dynamics of the luxury real estate market.



The sprawling waterfront estate at 1067 Westway Drive has sold for \$15 million. The sale, which closed on July 15, 2026, involves one of the most prominent properties in the exclusive Lido Shores enclave.

A Generational Coastal Asset

The 1.82-acre estate is a rarity even among the multi-million dollar properties of Sarasota. Offering 100 feet of private, direct Gulf of Mexico beachfront, the residence was marketed as a "generational asset" in an area where parcels of this size and scale are increasingly scarce.

The home itself spans more than 7,400 square feet, meticulously designed to blur the boundaries between indoor and outdoor coastal living. It features six bedrooms, seven full bathrooms, and two partial baths, ensuring

See Sale, page 15

Sarasota Business Owners Revolt Over Expanded Parking Hours

Facing a \$2.8 million parking shortfall, the city chose longer meter hours over a 50% rate hike. Three months later, the landlords and restaurateurs it tried to spare packed City Hall to demand a repeal.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
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The city stretched its parking meters to midnight to help plug a projected \$2.8 million hole. On the morning of July 6, downtown packed the City Commission chamber to say the cure is worse than the disease.

Dozens of business owners, commercial landlords and residents

See Parking, page 13

State Probes Cause of Longboat Fire that Gutted Duplex

An early-morning fire tore through a two-story duplex at the Dock on the Bay condominium community last week.



The blaze destroyed two units and setting back a recovery effort that had nearly put the bayfront property back together after the 2024 hurricanes.

The cause remains undetermined.

See Fire, page 5

EditorLetters

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.

A big thank you

To: Judy Soden
I'm so glad that public works was able to improve the signage. Thanks go to Charlie Mopps and the public works department. Hope you enjoy the rest of your summer!
Debra Williams
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

A big thank you

To: Longboat Key Mayor Debra Williams
We just returned to our condo in Longboat and...the stop sign has been replaced! The look and wording are so much better. Thanks so much for your prompt attention. Thank you for making Longboat Key such a lovely place to live.
Judy Soden
Longboat Key

Thank you and great job

To: Longboat Key Mayor Debra Williams
Please accept my apologies - we left Sea Pines yesterday afternoon to head back to Tampa and I commented to my wife that someone had been out and cleared up the area. I said I must email you to let you know and thank you. We got home and I completely forgot!
I then saw your email. Please pass on our appreciation to the staff member who came out on a Sunday to check and to clear up. We will continue to monitor the situation and keep you informed of any future concerns. Again, thank you!
Trevor Rudderham
President, Sea Pines Condominium Association
Longboat Key

Trash collection at Broadway beach access

To: Trevor Rudderham
Trevor, thanks for sending me this. We sent a staff member

out there on Sunday to check the situation, empty some of the cans and pick up the large items that do not fit (boogie boards, chairs and the like). Some observations made by my staff and myself. When the beachgoers notice the first few can are full, they just add to the already full can and not check cans 4, 5 or 6 (which were not full), nor do they bring their trash to the cans where their cars were parked. All of those cans were 1/2 full or less.

We may bring some of the cans from the parking area, to the access point to maximize their usage, but even so human nature is human nature. We will continue to monitor the situation here and at other locations. Thanks again.

Charles Mopps
Public Works Director
Town of Longboat Key Public Works

Trash collection at Broadway beach

To: Longboat Key Mayor Debra Williams, Public Works Director Charlie Mopps

This picture was taken at 8:37am this morning (Sunday) at the Broadway public beach access:

The trash cans are already overflowing.
We are leaving this afternoon, so cannot take another picture after the Sunday crowds have left, but I expect there will be piles of trash left all around the cans.

Apart from being unsightly, it attracts vermin and crows who take the food remnants and discard them on our property, creating a health and safety issue. We frequently have to pick up chicken bones left by the crows around our pool. If a child treads on one it could be quite harmful.

You may also note that one of the discarded items is from a 12 pack of beer that has obviously been illegally consumed on the beach.

I understand the challenge of balancing the Town's resources and deploying them at weekends, but this situation is getting truly unpleasant for residents and visitors.

One thought I will share, in a recent overseas trip we were very surprised to see no trash cans in any public locations

(beaches, parks, etc.). The law is simple - if you bring it you take it away with you. I am sure an education process would be required and even some initial policing at the locations, but this might be a solution for our problem - no cans and heavy signage that trash must not be left.

Trevor Rudderham
President, Sea Pines Condominium Association
Longboat Key

Trash collection at Broadway beach To: Longboat Key Mayor Debra Williams

Mayor Williams, we will continue to monitor the situation
See Letters, page 4

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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 2

at that and other beach access points and adjust accordingly. These get emptied 3 time a week and we pick up any trash outside the can every day during the work week. Over major holiday weekends we also empty them on Sunday. I included Mark on this as well, in case he wants to add anything. I hope this helps.

Charles Mopps
Public Works Director
Town of Longboat Key Public Works

Trash collection at Broadway beach access

To: Longboat Key Public Works Director Charlie Mopps

I just had a conversation with LBK North representatives regarding trash collection at the Broadway beach access points, particularly on weekends. One of the big concerns is that there aren't ample trash receptacles, and/or they are not being emptied frequently enough. They are seeing an increase in crows, rodents and coyotes raiding the overflowing trash receptacles. Can public works arrange a fix for this (more frequent collection or more containers)?

Debra Williams
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

A big thank you

To: Judy Soden

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nature. Below are pictures of what it looked like at 6:45-6:50 a.m. this morning. This can by the parking area was only 1/3 full: We will continue to monitor the situation here and at other locations. Thanks again.

Charles Mopps
Public Works Director
Town of Longboat Key Public Works

Trash collection at Broadway beach access

To: Longboat Key Mayor Debra Williams

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Debra Williams
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Electric Bicycle Regulations

To: Kelly Brown

Kelly, in researching this, I believe that Governor DeSantis vetoed this bill and it did not become law. Here is an article:

Florida E-Bike Speed Limit Bill Vetoed by Gov. DeSantis
Can someone clarify before I put this out on the CCNA website.

Jim Ludwig
Sarasota

Electric Bicycle Regulations

To: Sarasota City Manager Karie Friling

I hope your day is going well. Below is a summary of what will become effective July 1, 2026, as part of Florida Statute § 316.20655: Electric bicycle regulations. The full text is attached along with the penalty schedule for violations. Parks and Recreation will coordinate with the City Attorney's Office to develop appropriate language for signage to be installed in parks that consistently experience issues related to the use of ebikes.

See Letters, page 6

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PBS Spotlight Turns to Mote’s Shark Breakthrough

For years, the story of the disappearing catch has played out just off our own beaches: a grouper or snapper hooked in 140 feet of water, reeled halfway to the boat, and then — in a swirl and a snap — gone, leaving the angler holding a rod, a fish head and a grudge. Now that very Gulf Coast frustration, and the Sarasota laboratory working to solve it, is getting a national close-up.

Mote Marine Laboratory’s research into an electronic shark deterrent is featured in a new episode of the PBS documentary series Changing Seas, the lab announced on July 13. The episode, “Getting Sharked: Search for Solutions,” follows scientists as they test “repellent” technology designed to keep sharks off anglers’ lines — and to keep the peace between fishermen and the predators that have been rebounding along the Southeast coast.

A Hometown Lab Takes the National Stage

Changing Seas, produced by South Florida PBS in Miami and distributed nationally by American Public Television, has spent 18 seasons taking viewers underwater alongside working scientists. Its newest season hands an entire episode to a problem painfully familiar to anyone who keeps a boat at a Longboat Key or Sarasota dock: sharks stealing hooked fish faster than anglers can land them.

The spotlight is a milestone for a local institution. Mote is the only congressionally designated National Center for Shark Research in the country, and its shark work stretches back nearly 70 years. Seeing that research carried into living rooms across the nation — under a title as plainspoken as “Getting Sharked” — is both validation and megaphone for science being done a few miles from St. Armands Circle.

The Problem Has a Name — and Local Anglers Know It Well

Scientists call it depredation: the partial or complete theft of a hooked fish by a shark before the angler can bring it aboard. To the men and women running charters out of our passes, it needs no definition.

The complaints have become a chorus across Gulf fishing communities. One Bradenton-area charter captain described running six offshore spots in 140 to 150 feet of water and getting “sharked” on five of them — losing, by his own count, more than 20 fish in a single day. A 2022 national survey found that 77 percent of anglers had experienced depredation, with Florida standing out as a national hot spot. Snapper and grouper are the most frequently stolen prizes, followed by king mackerel, cobia, tuna and sailfish, and the losses spike during the very season openings anglers wait for all year.

Why It Hits Home Between Longboat and the Reefs

This is not an abstract national issue that happens to be filmed nearby. It is a Sarasota-and-Manatee story. The reefs and hard bottom off Longboat Key, Lido and Anna Maria are exactly the waters where the conflict runs sharpest, and the charter fleet that serves our islands absorbs the cost in lost fish, damaged gear and longer, more expensive trips to find water the sharks haven’t already claimed.

Mote has been surveying sharks off Sarasota since 2003, sending crews into the Gulf every quarter to tag animals and track how fast their numbers are climbing. In one four-day stretch in 2021, researchers landed a record 104 sharks of eight species — a vivid measure of just how much company today’s anglers have on the water.

The Breakthrough, by the Numbers

The device at the heart of the episode is not theory. In a study published in the Journal of Fish Biology, Mote researchers reported hard evidence that an electronic pulse device can dramatically change shark behavior.

Working with captive bonnethead sharks across 198 paired trials, the team compared an active deterrent against an identical but powered-off unit. The results were stark. With the device switched off, sharks took the bait more than 90 percent of the time; with it switched on, that dropped to roughly 46 percent. Put another way, the sharks were more than 45 times less likely to eat the bait when the deterrent was live. Even the sharks that did feed hesitated — approaching more slowly and, researchers noted, often recoiling in a sudden “rapid withdrawal.”

Outsmarting a Shark With a Jolt No Bigger Than a Prank Pen

The technology exploits a sense sharks have and humans don’t. Sharks hunt in part through the ampullae of Lorenzini — jelly-filled pores on their snouts that detect the faint electric fields given off by living prey. The deterrent, a commercial unit called SharkGuard made by the U.K. company Fishtek Marine, floods those receptors with brief electric pulses.

The jolt is tiny — comparable, one Mote scientist has said, to the zap of a novelty prank pen — and it does not appear to harm the animal. It simply overwhelms a shark’s most sensitive sense, and the startled shark turns and flees. In the tank, some retreat to a corner and “sulk” rather than return to the bait. On working gear, the unit clips onto the line in place of a sinker, roughly 25 centimeters — about 10 inches — above the hook.

Not a War on Sharks — a Truce

Here is why the research matters far beyond the tackle box. Frustrated anglers have increasingly begun asking for sharks to be culled or removed from their fishing grounds — a demand Mote biologists warn runs directly counter to decades of conservation progress. A humane deterrent offers a third path: protect the catch without killing the predator.

Dr. Demian Chapman, who directs Mote’s Sharks and Rays Conservation Research Program, frames it as a genuine win-win. Sharks, he notes, are only now beginning to recover in the U.S. Atlantic after heavy overfishing in the 1980s and ‘90s, and easing the conflict protects both the fishery and the fragile public support that made that recovery possible. Cutting depredation, he has said, keeps that support from eroding over time. Lead author and Mote senior biologist Jack Morris puts the alternative bluntly: anglers are now asking for the removal of shark species from their grounds, which undercuts the very conservation work Mote has pursued for decades.

The stakes are not merely rhetorical. Some anglers have already taken matters into their own hands — dragging, shooting or knifing sharks — grim episodes that underscore why scientists are racing to put a nonlethal option in fishermen’s hands.

Standing on the Shoulders of the “Shark Lady”

The deterrent research is the latest chapter in a story that began with Mote’s founder. Dr. Eugenie Clark — the pioneering scientist known worldwide as “The Shark Lady” — was among the first to investigate natural shark repellents, showing in the 1970s and ‘80s that a Red Sea sole secretes a chemical sharks avoid. Mote’s former director, Dr. Perry W. Gilbert, tested a repellent called “Shark Chaser” for the U.S. Navy. The new work — funded in part



by the endowed chair that now bears Gilbert’s name, along with federal fisheries grants and the Roe Foundation — carries that legacy from chemistry into electronics. Notably, Mote and its scientists report no financial stake in Fishtek Marine, and the company neither funded nor designed the study.

What’s Really at Stake: A Multibillion-Dollar Coastline

Recreational fishing is not a side hobby in Florida; it is an economic engine. State anglers have generated billions of dollars in annual economic activity and tens of thousands of jobs — figures anchored by a coastline that includes our own. Every fish lost to a shark is a small subtraction from that ledger, and mounting frustration has already pushed the conflict into politics. Federal legislation introduced in 2025, the Florida Safe Seas Act, sought to curb shark feeding off the state’s coast, a practice some blame for concentrating sharks near popular fishing grounds.

A deterrent that actually works could take pressure off both the fish and the policy fights — letting anglers keep their catch while letting managers keep the conservation gains that have made Florida’s waters, for better and worse, so full of sharks.

What Comes Next

Mote’s scientists are careful to call this a first step, not a finished product. The published trials involved bonnethead sharks — a small, manageable species — in controlled tanks, and the team has also begun testing on sandbar sharks, one of the wild culprits anglers actually contend with. Different species lean on their electric sense to different degrees, so the next phase pushes the work toward real-world conditions and the larger, hungrier sharks doing the most damage on the reef. It is not yet a gadget you can buy at the local bait shop — but the Changing Seas episode makes clear it is moving in that direction.

Where to Watch

The full episode, “Getting Sharked: Search for Solutions,” is streaming now as part of the current season of Changing Seas and airing on public television stations nationwide. Mote has also released a companion video highlighting the research, available through the laboratory’s news page. For island anglers who have watched a trophy fish vanish in a boil of white water, it may be the most satisfying half-hour of television this summer.

Fire, from page 1

mined. The Longboat Key fire marshal and the Florida State Fire Marshal were on scene the morning of the fire, and state investigators have taken over the case, which Longboat Key Fire Rescue spokesperson Tina Adams said is standard procedure for structure fires.

How it unfolded

A bystander near the complex at 3440 Gulf of Mexico Drive spotted flames and called 911 at 3:10 a.m. Wednesday, July 15, a call responders credited with keeping the damage from spreading further. Longboat Key Fire Rescue units were dispatched immediately and arrived three minutes later, at 3:13 a.m., finding heavy smoke and flames pouring from the rear of the structure.

Crews quickly called a second alarm. Longboat Key Fire Rescue and the Sarasota Fire Department responded, with Sarasota County units assisting and Longboat Key and Sarasota police also on scene. Firefighters knocked the blaze down in roughly 30 minutes and had it fully extinguished in about an hour, though crews kept hoses at the ready to douse small flare-ups through the morning.

The fire burned through the roof of the second floor, and lower levels sustained water damage and flooding, Adams said. The Dock on the Bay comprises several separate buildings; only one, a single duplex holding units 8 and 9, was damaged, but Adams called the damage “extensive.” The duplex was unoccupied at the time, and no injuries were reported.

A setback for a community still rebuilding

The fire landed at a difficult moment. Site manager Frank Biondello said the community had been recovering from the 2024 hurricanes and had just finished rebuilding its 23-slip marina. An amenities project featuring a pool, hot tub, tennis and pickleball courts was about to break ground. That work is now on hold as crews assess the damage, file insurance claims and begin repairs.

One of Longboat Key’s longest-standing condominium communities, the Dock on the Bay has operated alongside Sarasota Bay for 46 years and is home to 19 units.

Not the island’s first recent fire

The blaze is the second major structure fire on Longboat Key this year. In February, a three-alarm fire gutted a duplex in the north-end Lands End community after a housekeeper spotted flames in an electrical outlet; both residences in that building were destroyed. Days before the Dock on the Bay fire, a lithium-ion golf cart battery ignited at Bent Tree Golf Club in Sarasota, prompting a renewed warning about the batteries.

Investigators have not said when they expect to determine what sparked the Dock on the Bay fire. Longboat Key News will update this story as the investigation continues.

EditorLetters



Letters, from page 2

Summary: CS/SB 382 (Micromobility Device Act)
Purpose: CS/SB 382 updates statewide rules for electric bicycles and other micromobility devices, improves safety reporting, and establishes a task force to modernize Florida’s micromobility policies.
Key Components:
Safety Rules for Electric Bicycle Riders (Effective July 1, 2026)
• Riders must yield to pedestrians on shared-use paths not next to roads.
• Riders must give an audible signal (bell, horn, or verbal alert) before passing a pedestrian.
• On sidewalks or pedestrian zones, riders must not exceed 10 mph when a pedestrian is within 50 feet.
• These rules apply statewide, regardless of local ordinances.
Penalties for Safety Violations (Effective July 1, 2026)
• Violations of the above rules are noncriminal traffic infractions.
• Treated as nonmoving violations under Chapter 318, subject to monetary fines.
• No driver’s license points and no criminal consequences.
Crash Data Collection (Takes effect when bill becomes law)
• All law enforcement agencies (FHP, sheriffs, city police) must track any crash involving an electric bicycle or micromobility device.
• Crash records must include date, time, device type, and operator information.
• Agencies must submit their crash summaries to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) by October 15, 2026.
• DHSMV must publish a statewide crash report by October 31, 2026.
Micromobility Device Safety Task Force (Begins when bill becomes law)
• Established under DHSMV.
• Members include law enforcement, local governments, medical experts, safety groups, and

industry representatives.
• Task force reviews the legal framework for ebikes and micromobility devices and recommends improvements.
• Must meet monthly and issue findings by late 2026.
No Licensing or New Vehicle Classes
• The bill does not create new licensing requirements, registrations, or new micromobility classifications.
• Early proposals to regulate Class 3 ebikes more strictly were removed.
Thanks, and enjoy your day!
Jerry Fogle
Parks and Recreation Director
City of Sarasota

Palm Ave parking garage

To: Colleen Dolly
Thank you for expressing your concern. The parking rate for the garages is per hour. In most instances, the rate is \$1 per hour. (If you leave before the end of the first hour, you will not be charged. However, any length of time between 1 and 2 hours results in a \$2 charge.)
I have been advised that a better approach to using the ParkMobile app is to add time, as needed, because — as you say — it doesn’t issue refunds for unused time. But your concern has been noted and will be taken into consideration as we monitor and reevaluate the parking program.
The City of Sarasota bases its parking charges on a variety of factors: expense of providing and maintaining parking, encouraging turnover of spaces so that all-day parking limits short term trips to shops and restaurants, recovering most of the costs of providing parking from people who park, rather than taxpayers. Clearly, Lakeland has chosen to balance those factors
See Letters, page 7



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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 6

differently from Sarasota.
Karie Friling
City Manager
City of Sarasota

Palm Ave parking garage

To: Sarasota City Commission
I used this parking garage using ParkMobile app. I've used the app elsewhere on city streets. However in the parking garage on Saturday July 11th. The minutes were not available. You could park for 1 hour, the next choice was two hours. No choice for 1 hour 15 minutes etc. On the streets the minutes are available. I don't appreciate rounding up to the next hour. By the way in the City of Lakeland I use the same app. I set the estimated time I need for parking. If I don't use all of my estimated time, I can tell the app that I am leaving and it charges me less! That feature is not available in Sarasota. Getting too greedy, aren't we?
Colleen F. Dolly
Sarasota

Palm Ave parking garage

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch
Richard also sent me an email last night, as well. I have asked Steve to add this our discussion topics for our workshop in August. We will discuss and come up with some options for the Commission to consider.
Karie Friling
City Manager
City of Sarasota

New City Parking Rules - Non-metered spaces surrounding the Sarasota Opera House

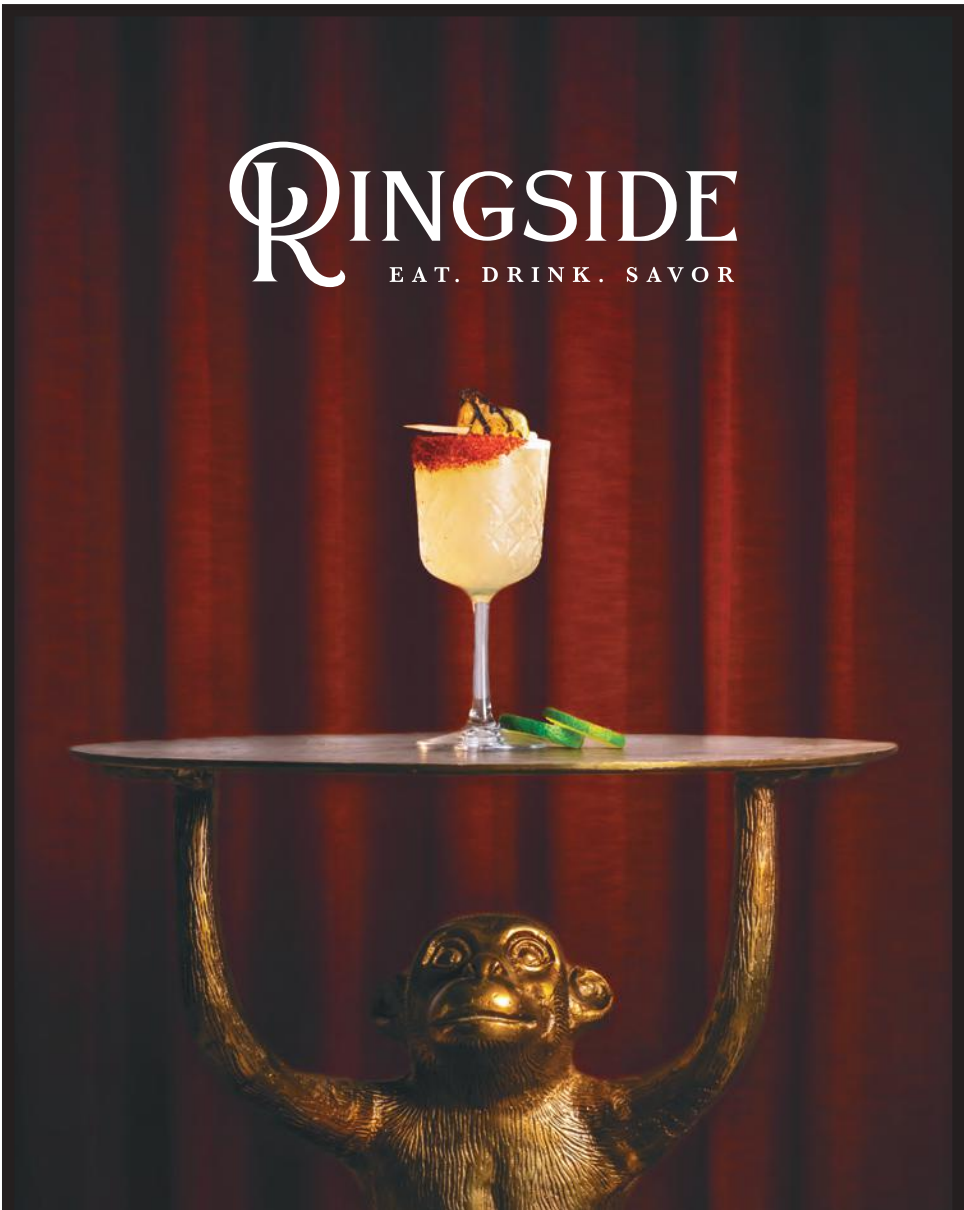
To: Sarasota Opera House General and Artistic Director Richard Russell
Thank you Richard. Thank you for providing valuable perspectives on this. One of your exact issues was brought to my attention by a Theater-goer at FST: if they park at 7 p.m. in a 2-hour spot, have dinner, attend a show at 8pm... do they have to leave in the middle of the show at 8:45 p.m. to move their car?
We are having a. Omission Workshop on August 31 at 10am so your email is timed perfectly! I've copied the. It's Manager and Deputy City Manager on this email so they have your comments as well.
Jen Ahearn-Koch

City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

New City Parking Rules - Non-metered spaces surrounding the Sarasota Opera House

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch
I am writing on behalf of Sarasota Opera to respectfully ask that the City revisit the recently extended hours for on-street timed parking, particularly as they apply to non-metered spaces. The City recently extended enforcement for paid and timed on-street parking from 8 a.m. until midnight, Monday through Saturday, with Sunday enforcement beginning at 1 p.m. While I recognize that one objective of this change is to help generate additional parking revenue and support the Parking Division, the practical effect is different for non-metered spaces. The spaces immediately surrounding the Sarasota Opera House are not metered and are now time-limited to two hours until midnight, seven days a week. Many of our patrons utilize those spaces. Because patrons cannot pay to extend their time in those spaces, the two-hour limit now makes it effectively impossible for many attendees to use nearby on-street parking for evening and weekend matinee performances. A typical performance, along with arrival and departure time, exceeds two hours. Patrons who park in a non-metered space near the theater therefore risk receiving a citation even though there is no opportunity to purchase additional time. This distinction is important. At a metered space, extended enforcement hours may generate additional revenue because a driver can pay for the time needed. At a non-metered space, however, the same rule does not create comparable revenue; it simply prevents patrons from reasonably using those spaces for cultural events that naturally last longer than two hours. For Sarasota Opera, this creates a real access issue for our patrons, including many who are older, have mobility limitations, or are visiting downtown specifically to attend a performance. We have increasing parking challenges: fewer available lots for our valet parking service and therefore limited capacity, and capacity issues at the Palm Avenue Garage. Adding a further impediment risks discouraging attendance. I respectfully urge the Parking Department, City staff, and City Commission to reconsider how the extended enforcement hours apply to non-metered timed spaces, especially those surrounding performing arts venues such as the Sarasota Opera House. Possible solutions could include restoring the prior 8 p.m. end time for non-metered spaces, or creating an evening and weekend exemption. Thank you for your consideration and for your continued attention to the needs of downtown residents, visitors, businesses, and cultural organizations. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue further and work with the City on a practical solution that

See Letters, page 8



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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 7

supports both the Parking Division’s goals and public access to the arts.
Richard Russell
General and Artistic Director
Sarasota Opera House

Code Enforcement and Infrastructure Concerns

To: Alexa Apple
Thank you for your email and for bringing this to our attention. I have copied the City Manager and the Deputy City Manager on this email to look into this matter and respond as soon as possible.
Jen Ahearn-Koch
City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Code Enforcement and Infrastructure Concerns

To: City of Sarasota Code Enforcement and Zoning Department
I am writing to formally report multiple code compliance and neighborhood preservation issues in the Carolina Estates community. As long-term, law-abiding residents, we are deeply concerned about the negative impact these violations are having on our local infrastructure, safety, and property values.
Specifically, I would like to bring the following urgent matters to your attention:
Unpermitted / Illegal Construction: At 3245 7th St, unpermitted construction is currently underway in the backyard. This property was recently sold, and the structural additions being built do not appear to have the required city permits or setbacks.
Overcrowding and Infrastructure Strain: The residence at 3245 7th St is a single-family home of approximately 1,200 square feet with a 2-bedroom, 1-bathroom layout. It is currently being occupied by approximately 10 adults. This severe overcrowding places an unsafe and unsustainable burden on our local residential plumbing and waste infrastructure.
Illegal Multi-Family Conversions: We are noticing a troubling trend in Carolina Estates where traditional 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom small single-family homes are being converted into multi-room rentals. This bypasses local zoning laws designed to protect single-family residential zones.
Blight and Public Hygiene: There is currently an abandoned commercial shopping cart left on the street near this area, contributing to the blight and creating a safety and hygiene hazard for residents.
Neighborhoods without an HOA rely entirely on the City of Sarasota to enforce its own ordinances and protect private homeowners. We love our community and ask that please the city exercise its authority to investigate these unpermitted building activities and zoning violations.
Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter and for your dedication to keeping Sarasota’s neighborhoods safe, clean, and compliant. I look forward to your update on any investigation or action taken.
Alexa Apple
Sarasota

Tree removal

To: Sarasota City Director, Development Services Lucia Panica
Thank you Ms Panica. I’ve copied Ms. Brady on this email, Kelly Brown, along with the Tahiti Park President Ms Delpesch (and request this be shared with the Gani Family who also

inquired about this. I don’t have their email but they too knocked on my door and my husband was at home so he let me know they were also upset).

This was very disturbing, as I am sure you know, and I thank you for the follow-up, especially so late. I really appreciate it.
My questions are, per the statement “This matter will continue to follow the City’s enforcement process”:
What exactly is “the process”?
The timeline?
The fines?
How can the neighborhood be involved in understanding what is next?
How can we be proactive in making changes to prevent this from happening again? (Once a Grand tree is gone, it’s gone. So sad but preventable?)
How will they be held accountable?
As a special note:
Thank you to Ms. Hartley for responding Immediately! She is to commended and thanked! I was in a ManaSota League of Cities meeting and received a call from Ms. Brady about this ... and I sent a text to Ms. Brady with Ms. Hartley’s contact info and apparently Ms. Hartley took the call from Ms. Brady and was on the spot in no time! And, in being there so quickly, possibly prevented more tree destruction (or so I was told). Amazing service... so thank you Ms. Brady for being engaged and Ms. Hartley for responding!
Thank you all again!
In the face of this very, very sad destruction, it is so heartwarming to know neighbors care alongside City staff! Lockstep!
Jen Ahearn-Koch
City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Tree Removal

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn Koch
At the request of City Manager Friling, I am providing the following information regarding the reported oak tree removal at 955 Whitakers Lane that was brought to the City’s attention by Ms. Veronica Brady. Our Sr Arborist, Jackie, received notification that a tree was being removed without a permit. Jackie immediately went out on site and observed that the tree was already removed. Contact was made with the owner of the tree company (who has a prior record of code violations) and a code case has been started for illegal removal. The property owner had an arborist report done in 2022 stating that the tree was in bad health but failed to apply for a permit. This matter will continue to follow the City’s enforcement process. Please let us know if you have any additional questions or need further information.
Lucia Panica
Director Development Services
City of Sarasota

Making Miracles (and Talking Taxes)

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Since leaving my role as Longboat Key Mayor in March, I have become active in a Longboat organization called Miracle on the Key, a small group of Republicans, Democrats and Independents who meet to engage in civil dialogue concerning local and national issues important to our society and to try to bring polarized sides closer together and to forge consensus views, when possible. We have reached consensus on the Florida Tax Reduction

See Letters, page 9

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KeyRealEstate

Bird Key, Lido Key, Longboat Key latest sales

Address	Sq. Ft.	List Price	Bed/Bath/Half Bath			Days On Market	Sale Price
1067 WESTWAY DR	7,438	\$18,000,000	6	7	2	153	\$15,000,000
35 WATERGATE DR Unit#1101	3,751	\$3,690,000	3	3	0	474	\$3,250,000
136 GOLDEN GATE PT Unit#502	3,785	\$2,600,000	3	3	1	144	\$2,350,000
404 S POLK DR	2,260	\$1,700,000	4	3	0	23	\$1,585,000
128 GOLDEN GATE PT Unit#301B	3,000	\$1,695,000	4	3	1	178	\$1,500,000
1255 N GULFSTREAM AVE Unit#1407	1,629	\$1,375,000	2	2	0	136	\$1,237,500
866 HUDSON AVE Unit#866	2,293	\$1,250,000	4	3	0	355	\$1,250,000
800 N TAMIAMI TRL Unit#1512	1,323	\$615,000	2	2	0	104	\$580,000
1500 STATE ST Unit#603	736	\$579,000	1	1	0	91	\$540,213
1064 N TAMIAMI TRL Unit#1425	1,352	\$535,000	3	2	0	32	\$515,000
1064 N TAMIAMI TRL Unit#1308	985	\$375,000	2	2	0	222	\$350,000
101 S GULFSTREAM AVE Unit#15C	985	\$314,900	1	2	0	377	\$290,000
1581 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#406	2,347	\$6,600,000	2	2	1	80	\$6,000,000
548 HORNBLOWER LN	3,976	\$4,950,000	4	4	2	153	\$4,500,000
2161 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#3	3,800	\$4,395,000	3	3	1	455	\$3,750,000
3444 MISTLETOE LN	2,836	\$2,600,000	4	3	1	0	\$2,600,000
3408 FAIR OAKS LN	4,510	\$2,595,000	5	5	0	189	\$2,450,000
6827 GULF OF MEXICO DR	2,392	\$2,500,000	3	3	0	0	\$2,450,000
2525 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#3D	1,468	\$1,650,000	2	2	0	7	\$1,575,000
1211 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#301	2,100	\$1,590,000	2	3	0	212	\$1,475,000
1918 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#902	1,748	\$1,299,000	2	2	1	87	\$1,235,000
1145 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#401	1,172	\$1,250,000	2	2	0	123	\$1,200,000
2367 HARBOUR OAKS DR	2,219	\$949,500	3	2	1	197	\$915,000
7105 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#21	1,170	\$895,000	2	2	0	269	\$825,000
779 SAINT JUDES DR N	882	\$479,000	2	1	1	227	\$460,000
6800 GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE Unit#184	1,287	\$475,000	2	2	0	74	\$465,000
604 SPANISH DR N	1,357	\$465,000	2	2	0	49	\$465,000
3810 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#F206	1,007	\$325,000	2	2	0	16	\$315,000

Letters, from page 8

Bill proposed for November’s ballot and have attached our “talking points” explaining why we believe the bill should be rejected and how that message might be conveyed to voters. We would be happy to cooperate with your organizations and others to get this message out and encourage you to use our talking points in any manner you find useful.

Ken Schneier
Longboat Key

House Cleaning and Talking Points

To: Ken Schneier
I have a meeting with the people we hope will clean out my brother in law’s home in Venice tomorrow morning. What time is your meeting? Maybe Stephanie could hand out our talking points ?
BJ Bishop
Commissioner, Town of Longboat Key

Referendum Reconnaissance

To: Ken Schneier
FLC staff will be at the Manasota League in the morning and making their presentation on property tax referendum. May be worth a listen.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Connecting the Capital Contacts

To: Ken Schneier
Thank you Ken for sharing the group’s informed and enlightened position. The best person at the Florida League of Cities is Casey Cook at ccook@flcities.com. Virginia “Ginger” Delegal is the Executive Director for the Florida Association of Counties, and her email address is gdelegal@fl-counties.com. Thank you again for the groups efforts on this matter.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager, Town of Longboat Key

To: Longboat Key Commission
Sea Turtle Conservancy (STC) is hosting a wildlife lighting webinar on Thursday, August 6th, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. eastern time. If you’re interested in attending this event, please click here to register! This free workshop is for code enforcement personnel, city planners, engineers, builders, architects or other lighting professionals who may benefit from learning more about wildlife lighting and the latest products and techniques available to meet sea turtle protection ordinance requirements. Additionally, this workshop provides job training for code enforcement personnel and lighting professionals to improve their lighting survey skills and better address problematic lighting on beachfront properties. The webinar also awards code enforcement officers with 3.5 credit hours towards Florida Association of Code Enforcement (FACE) certification. This webinar is not intended for the general public.
The webinar covers the following topics:
Part I: The Problem of Light on Sea Turtle Nesting Beaches

Part II: The Best Practices for Managing Artificial Light
Part III: Lighting Laws and Evaluating the Extent of the Problem
Part IV: Wildlife Lighting Resources and Discussion
Please refer to the attached flyer for more information about this webinar. If you’d like to attend, please follow the link below to register. As a reminder, please register individually so you can receive FACE credit for this training.
Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_jufyd_tBQf2scfP1ajsG8g
After registering, you will receive a confirmation email from Zoom containing information about joining the webinar (please check your junk folder if you do not receive a follow up email). If I have missed anyone in your area that may benefit from this webinar, please feel free to forward this information to them.
Emily Wooley
Senior Lighting Project Specialist, Sea Turtle Conservancy

Pleasantries and Policy Books

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
I understand you had inquired about me following my comments before the Longboat Key Commission, and I thought a brief introduction might be helpful. Having lived on Longboat Key before moving to downtown Sarasota about eight years ago, I’ve developed a strong interest in issues that affect both communities. Over the years I’ve become increasingly involved in local government, neighborhood organizations, and regional planning matters, particularly where I believe thoughtful analysis and long-range planning can contribute to better public policy.
I’ve attached a short background summary that provides a little context regarding my professional career and community involvement. The DSCA Briefing Book grew out of those interests and my desire to assemble information that might be useful as our communities address increasingly regional issues. Thank you for taking the time to learn a little more about me. I appreciate your service to Longboat Key and hope our paths cross in the future.
David Lough
Longboat Key

Badges, Banquets, and Michael’s on East

To: Office of Greg Steube Security Advisor Sami Araboghli
We are so thrilled you can join us. Your badge will be at the table on the left as you come into Michael’s on East which is on South Tamiami Trail just off Bahia Vista.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

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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.

July 10 Parking

1:35 p.m.
Officer Miklos and Officer Tillman were dispatched to the 3100 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a disturbance. Dispatch advised that the caller reported a verbal argument between an unknown man or woman. The caller described the person as heavy set wearing a black shirt with pink shorts. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos parked his vehicle and was using the crosswalk to the beach access when he observed a white male quickly walking toward him, which he said he was the caller. The caller was highly irate and said that a ‘dyke’ was blocking him from pulling into a parking spot. Officer Miklos advised that the man that doing so is not breaking any laws. The caller continue to say that the unknown person began to bang his or her hand on his driver side window leaving a palm print, however, no damage was done to the vehicle. The caller initially refused to provide his driver’s license. Officer Tillman advised him to remain near his vehicle while he spoke to the other party involved. Officer Tillman made contact with two women located near the rear of the Toyota SUV. The woman matching the description told Officer Tillman that nothing happened and she did not know why the police were called. Officer Tillman advised that he was dispatched to a verbal argument involving her and the man. The woman denied any involvement and walked toward the beach ending the interaction. Due to no crime being articulated and the woman not being detained, Officer Tillman allowed her to leave the scene. The caller and the woman exchanged words as they crossed the parking lot. The caller became more irate because Officer Tillman allowed the woman to leave and he began to raise his voice at officers and began to use profanity. Officer Tillman advised the man that he was beginning to cause a disturbance and requested he remain respectful. Officer Tillman advised the man that no crime had been committed and she was free to leave and not speak to the police. Officer Tillman advised that a disturbance report would be generated as no crime occurred. The man demanded Officer Tillman respond to the beach and get her name and phone number in fear of retaliation. Officer Tillman advised the man that Longboat Key has several other public beach locations where he could relocate to. The man declined to relocate and took a picture of the vehicle’s license plate. At this time, no crime had been committed and the matter appeared not physical and verbal in nature over a parking spot. Case clear.

Alarm

6:55 p.m.
Officer Maple was dispatched to Cutter Lane in reference to an alarm. Upon arrival at the residence, Officer Maple conducted a thorough canvass of the area around the home. Officer Maple found no signs of forced entry or criminal activity. The garage rear door burglar alarm had been triggered at the same time as a heavy weather event rolled through Longboat Key. Nothing outside the ordinary was observed and all the windows and doors checked were secure. Case clear.

July 11 Person

11:30 a.m.
Officer Miklos was dispatched to the 6600 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a suspicious persons call. A caller had observed a woman walking from the beach access to her vehicle located in the Whitney Plaza. The caller advised that the woman was stumbling and had an odor of an alcoholic beverage. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos came into contact with the caller who confirmed the vehicle. The caller advised she was available for phone call if required for further information. Officer Miklos made contact with the woman who was found in the driver’s seat of a Toyota Tacoma. The woman advised she just returned from the beach after several hours and could not locate her vehicle keys which prevented the vehicle from starting. During the conversation, Officer Miklos was able to smell the odor of an alcoholic beverage emanating from her. She said she had two mixed cocktails on the beach over a three-hour time frame. The woman was able to locate the keys of the vehicle in her backpack in the bed of



the truck. Officer Miklos observed two four packs located in the rear of the vehicle. One of the packs was open and missing two cans. At that time, Officer Tillman arrived on scene to assist. The woman advised she did feel dehydrated but refused medical attention, the woman drank two full bottles of water while speaking to Officers. The woman requested a Lyft from her phone to take her home. The Lyft driver arrived and took her home from the parking lot. She advised she will return for her vehicle.

July 13 Vehicle

12:12 a.m.
Officer Maple while on patrol observed an illegally parked vehicle at Bay Isles Road. Officer Maple issued a warning and left the area. For three days, during their routine patrols, the same car was observed in the same parking spot. While checking for violations, the vehicle was found to be owned by a man and he was contacted by phone and officer Maple left a voicemail. The vehicle was tagged and 24-hour clock started.

Person

4:11 a.m.
Officer Maple while on patrol in the 4000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive, observed a young man in just short with red shaggy hair walking on the westbound bicycle path heading southbound. Officer Maple initiated a stop and spoke with the young man. He said he had a verbal argument with his roommate and just needed to take a walk and get out of the argument. The man was instructed not to walk in the bike path especially early in the morning with minimal lighting in the area. No other suspicious activity was observed and the man was allowed to walk back to his hotel room. Case clear.

Incident

4:08 p.m.
Officer Pescuma was dispatched to the 5400 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a report of spam phone calls. Upon arrival, Officer Pescuma met with the complainant who stated that she received a call claiming to be an Amazon employee at 11:30 a.m. The Amazon employee stated that she needed to provide personal information regarding a computer that she purchased, however she stated she didn’t have any knowledge of a computer. Furthermore, she was transferred to an agent stating that she may be involved in illegal operations and needs to provide personal information. The complainant stated she did not provide any information nor lose funds and wished to make a report. Officer Pescuma educated the complainant on scam prevention and what to look for regarding scam calls and emails. Case clear.

July 14 Driver’s license

1:13 p.m.
Sgt. Butler responded to the 400 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a report of a suspended driver’s license. Sgt. Butler located the vehicle and conducted a traffic stop. The driver was asked to provide his driver’s license information and it was discovered to not be a valid driver’s license as it had been suspended indefinitely effective June 1 for failure to pay a traffic fine associated with a ticket in Hillsborough County. The driver said he knew he should not be driving and the license was suspended due to fines that were unpaid. The man said he was self-employed and was driving to work to receive payment. The man did not report any emergency or other immediate necessity requiring him to operate the vehicle. A review of available records also showed prior enforcement history involving the man for driving while his license was suspended or revoked. The driver was charged by noncustodial arrest with driving while license suspended, canceled or revoked with knowledge. Case clear.

July 15 Citizen assist

6:12 p.m.
Officer Castro was dispatched to Sands Point Road in response to a report of a missing person. Security personnel contacted 911 after located a woman wandering around Building 2. Security reported that the individual appeared disoriented and that she might have dementia. They also said that the woman was on the phone with a man who was searching for her. Upon arrival, Officer Castro met with the security in front of Building 3 and was informed that the woman had been reunited with her husband and it was confirmed that they were visiting from Kentucky and renting a unit. The woman said that she had gone to the resort bar earlier and had a few drinks. Afterwards, she left and experienced difficulty locating her apartment. The husband reported that he was attending a meeting with a realtor when his wife went to the bar. She called him for assistance after realizing she was lost, and he immediately returned to the resort. The husband confirmed that she does not have dementia or any other condition. The wife also confirmed. Case clear.

July 16 Alarm

7:00 p.m.
Sgt. Mathis was dispatched to the 2900 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for an alarm. Upon arrival, Sgt. Mathis conducted a thorough canvass of the area around the home. Sgt. Mathis found no signs of criminal activity or forced entry. Sgt. Mathis examined all other visible entry points and the surrounding grounds to determine if any unauthorized access had occurred with negative results. The dispatcher log indicated the burglar alarm had been triggered by a living room motion alarm. Sgt. Mathis knocked on the door and was greeted by a German family, the man said they had rented the residence for a month and were unable to deactivate the alarm after setting it prior to dinner. Sgt. Mathis confirmed the information with the homeowner.

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OpinionEditorial

We’re No. 9 on Longboat Key! (Please Yield to the 4,000 No. 1 Realtors Merging Into the Roundabout)

Years ago, Dr. Beach declared Siesta Key the No. 1 beach in America. And that, friends, was the original hit. That was our gateway accolade. Because once a region gets a taste of being No. 1 at something, it does not stop. It cannot stop. Just ask any ‘Waterfront Specialist.’

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

It happened again. I was standing in my kitchen, minding my own business and eating a grouper sandwich — and there will be more on the grouper sandwich later, because in this town there is always more on the grouper sandwich — when I learned that Longboat Key had been named the 9th Best Island in the Continental United States by Travel + Leisure magazine.

Ninth. Best. Island.

Now, a lesser community might read the word “ninth” and feel a flicker of insecurity. A lesser community might ask: who are these eight islands ahead of us, and can they be reached by boat, and do they have any idea what we are capable of? But we are not a lesser community. We are a community that collects Best Of awards with the calm, methodical enthusiasm of a raccoon working its way through your patio furniture, and we are not about to start apologizing for it now.

It All Started With a Man Named Dr. Beach

For those of you new to the area — meaning you closed on your condo sometime after lunch — allow me to explain how we got here. It began, as these things do, with a man named Dr. Beach. Dr. Beach is a real person with a real doctorate who ranks beaches for a living, which I mention because somewhere out there is a guidance counselor who once told a young man that “Beach Ranker” was not a viable career path, and that man is now Dr. Beach, and I hope he sends her a postcard.

Years ago, Dr. Beach declared Siesta Key the No. 1 beach in America. And that, friends, was the original hit. That was our gateway accolade. Because once a region gets a taste of being No. 1 at something, it does not stop. It cannot stop. It goes looking for the next ranking, and the next, until one day it wakes up as the 9th Best Island in the Continental U.S., surrounded by empty award ballots, telling itself it can quit anytime.

Every Realtor Here Is No. 1, Which Is Statistically Fascinating

I should note, purely in the interest of journalism, that this region contains roughly 4,000 luxury realtors, and every single one of them is the No. 1 Luxury Realtor. Every one. They are all also, simultaneously, in the “Top 1% Nationwide,” which means that our local Top 1% appears to contain approximately 118% of all realtors, a mathematical achievement I believe has never been matched anywhere on Earth, possibly including in physics.

And they do not stop at No. 1. They cannot stop, because if one of them is merely No. 1, the next one has to be No. 1 Platinum, and then the one after that is No. 1 Platinum Diamond Elite, and then it’s Chairman’s Circle, President’s Council, Founder’s Club, and eventually, I assume, Supreme Galactic Overlord of Closings. It is an arms race of self-issued superlatives with no ceiling and no shame, conducted entirely on the backs of bus benches.

Because that is where they live now: on things. Their faces are on bus benches, on shopping carts, on the sides of buildings, and inside glossy magazines roughly the width of a cinder block that arrive in your mailbox uninvited, each headshot featuring the same crossed arms, the same power blazer, and teeth so aggressively whitened you could use them to land a small aircraft at night. And every few weeks one of them mails you a postcard that says “I JUST SOLD YOUR NEIGHBOR’S HOME!” as though this is happy news, when in fact, given what it does to your tax reassessment, it reads less like a greeting card and more like a ransom note.

We Have Also Decided the Answer to Every Problem Is Another Roundabout

Which brings me to how we get around here, or, more accurately, how we go in circles. At some point, the greater Sarasota area concluded that the solution to every intersection, every disagreement, and possibly every unresolved geopolitical conflict was a roundabout. We are now building roundabouts faster than we can build the signs bragging about how we’re paradise. We have roundabouts downtown. We have roundabouts on the bayfront. We have roundabouts leading to roundabouts, and I am fairly confident that by 2030 we will unveil the region’s first roundabout located entirely inside another roundabout, at which point traffic will simply orbit the bayfront forever, like a very expensive, very tan asteroid belt.

And the roundabout is, philosophically, the perfect monument to who we are. You enter. You circle. You commit to absolutely nothing. And eventually you exit at precisely the spot where a nice man in a blazer can sell you a condo.

Of course, the roundabout only works if everyone agrees to yield, and here we run into a problem, because a meaningful percentage of our seasonal population regards the word “yield” as a direct personal insult. You know the maneuver. The car eases halfway into the circle, blinker on, and then stops dead — fully committed to being uncommitted — awaiting, apparently, further instructions from God. Meanwhile you are on your third full lap around St. Armands Circle, because you missed your exit the first two times, because you were reading a realtor’s face on a bus bench. Everything in this town connects. That is the magic of the place.

Now There Is a Hotel Where You Can Hang Out With Stingrays

Naturally, the awards have escalated. We now have the St. Regis Longboat Key, which opened in 2024 and was promptly named the second-best new hotel in the entire South, presumably by judges who were then gently escorted into its 20,000-square-foot spa and never heard from again.

The St. Regis features multiple pools, cabanas, a winding waterway, and — and I want to be very clear that I am not making this up — an “Under the Sea lagoon experience” featuring

stingrays, tortoises, and tropical fish. So we have officially reached the phase of human civilization in which a hotel is no longer considered competitive unless you can, at check-in, elect to swim with a stingray. I do not know who asked for this. But I know that somewhere in that lagoon is a man who paid \$2,000 a night, looked a tortoise dead in the eye, and thought to himself: worth it.

Which Brings Us Back to the Grouper Sandwich

And then there is CNN, which just this month named Sarasota the No. 1 Best Town to Visit in all of America, singling out our restaurants for particular praise. Longboat’s own Dry Dock Waterfront Grill got the full CNN treatment, with the network specifically advising visitors to order a grouper sandwich, sip something cold like a Hugo Spritz, and admire the egrets stalking the breakwater.

I want to focus on that egret for a moment.

Do you understand what it means to have your local wildlife written into a national CNN travel recommendation? That egret is now, functionally, an employee. That egret has a stakeholder. That egret cannot simply be an egret anymore — standing on one leg, contemplating the void, doing normal egret things. That egret has to show up. That egret has to stalk the breakwater on brand and on schedule. And frankly, given the several thousand dollars a night people are paying to stand near it, that egret is dramatically underpaid, and if it had any sense it would unionize with the tortoise.

At This Point We Are Winning Awards That Haven’t Been Invented Yet

We are, by now, so thoroughly and relentlessly acclaimed — Best Beach, Best Town, Best Island, Best New Hotel, Best Grouper, Best Bird-Adjacent Alfresco Dining Experience — that it has stopped being news and started being weather. Somewhere a computer server is scouring the internet as we speak, and it has already concluded we are Paradise. The AI has decided it. The AI’s boss has decided it. And by next Tuesday we will be formally named the No. 1 Place to Open a Checkbook and Quietly Weep With Joy, and we will put up a sign, and we will not take the sign down, because around here we never take the sign down. I remember when the old Colony Beach & Tennis Club was named the No. 1 tennis club in the country, and that sign stayed up long after the tennis did, in a display of civic commitment I personally found inspiring.

There Is Exactly One Critic Left

There remains, of course, one entity that has stubbornly declined to give us an award, and that is Mother Nature, who prefers to submit her reviews in the form of hurricanes — typically arriving the same week we finish hanging all the other signs. She is the only critic in the region who cannot be reached for comment, cannot be sold a sponsorship, cannot be seated near the breakwater, and cannot be talked into yielding at the roundabout. Every summer we squint nervously at the Gulf and pray that this year she gives us, if not a rave, then at least a polite miss.

But barring her opinion, the news could not possibly be better. We are the 9th Best Island in America — which means we are also, unofficially, the 9th Best Island in the known universe, because nobody has surveyed the other planets yet, and I, for one, like our odds.

So put up the sign. Leave it up. And if you’re new here, welcome. The grouper’s terrific, the egret is contractually obligated to be present, a tortoise in a lagoon is quietly judging you, and there are four thousand No. 1 realtors who would love to talk — just as soon as you finish this lap around the circle.

We wouldn’t have it any other way. And we’ll keep saying it, too — on the signs, on the bus benches, over the roar of every last roundabout — until the tape finally wears clean through. As John Lennon said, right before the whole thing dissolved into beautiful, unhinged noise: “Number 9. Number 9. Number 9.”



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Shore, from page 1

Committee is a technical body, not a political one. It grants no final approval; it reads the city’s departmental comments into the record, flags where a filing falls short of code, and tells the applicant what to fix before the plan can advance. As staff reminded a different applicant that same morning, a partial sign-off “does not mean approval or anything yet” — the plan still faces the full public-hearing process. By the time the committee adjourned, no project on the agenda had earned full sign-off, the Shore included.

Two consultants from Kimley-Horn came to the podium for the Shore: planner Emily Griffiths and planner Dominic Purdue, appearing on behalf of Kaufman Shore Properties, the entity behind the restaurant’s return. Development Review Planner Devynn Glanz read the zoning and current-planning comments; Senior Utilities Engineer Teresa Turner handled utilities. This was a first submittal, and it drew the scrutiny a first submittal on this corner was always going to draw.

The Claim Made at the Podium

The applicant’s framing, delivered in the opening breath, was precise and deliberately modest. The project unifies two existing commercial buildings into a three-story, mixed-use development, Griffiths told the committee: ground-floor retail and a café, a restaurant on the second floor, and — in her words — “a one residential dwelling unit on the third floor.”

One unit. It is the entire case for the project’s legality, and it is the precise claim the city spent the next several minutes testing.

Prove It’s One Home

The pivot came in the second zoning comment, and it is the heart of Wednesday’s hearing. The narrative says one unit, Glanz noted, and Sheet A104 is labeled a residential area — but that area “appears to be divided into individual units, with some labeled as suites.” Then, so there could be no confusion about the test, she read the code’s own definition into the record: a dwelling unit “shall have no more than one primary kitchen” and must “provide complete internal access to all rooms in the unit.” A building with more than one set of cooking facilities is treated as containing multiple dwelling units unless the extra kitchens are clearly incidental — a pool bath, a utility room, nothing more.

That is the fight, reduced to a plumbing question. One kitchen is a home. Several kitchens behind several suite doors is a hotel by another name — and hotels are barred on this stretch of the Circle.

This time, the applicant answered. “It is intended to be a single dwelling unit,” Griffiths told the committee, pledging to “update those references and clarify the residential layout” and to make sure the floor plan “accurately reflects those requirements.” It was a cooperative response, not a defiant one — the developer’s team did not defend the suites; it agreed to erase them from the drawings.

The promise, though, is verbal, and the proof is a floor plan not yet filed. The concept the Shore brand unveiled last winter was explicitly a suite-style “lifestyle destination” that could evolve into a boutique hotel, and redrawing that top floor as a genuine single residence — one kitchen, one family, complete internal access throughout — is a harder thing to certify than to say at a podium. The stakes reach past the zoning counter: as this newspaper has reported, the Sarasota County School Board’s exemption from school concurrency holds only if the residential unit count does not change. Should the suites survive as separate dwellings, that exemption can be reopened, and a project pitched as one home takes on the profile of the multi-unit building its own floor plan resembles. The committee, in effect, asked the developer to put in writing that the boutique hotel his brand described is not what these drawings show. On Wednesday, his team said it would. The revised plans will show whether it can.

The Height the City Won’t Concede

The reviewers were equally firm on how tall the building may stand. The code caps structures in the Commercial Tourist district and on the coastal islands at 35 feet, measured from the minimum FEMA flood elevation, with up to four feet of optional freeboard allowed for safety. Staff found the elevations using that four-foot allowance to gain height in a spot where the lowest floor is not actually located — stretching a safety cushion into extra stature — and ordered a revision. It is a warning with a squeeze inside it: the third floor, the rooftop pool, and the 35-foot ceiling may not all fit as drawn, and the freeboard the applicant leaned on to make them fit is the very allowance staff just said he is using in the wrong place.

“35 Stories,” and Other Errors of Haste

Beneath the defining findings sat a run of corrections that read, collectively, like a template dropped in a hurry onto a place that demands the opposite. The applicant’s own site-data table lists the maximum building height not as 35 feet but as “35 stories.” The same table cites the project’s development standards from the wrong zoning district entirely — a Downtown Bayfront section rather than the Commercial Tourist rules that govern St. Armands. On a corner lot with two front and two side setbacks, none of the setbacks are labeled. And the parking calculations rest on a net-commercial floor-area figure staff says is overstated by several hundred square feet. Individually minor; together, the portrait of a filing that arrived thinner than the corner deserves.

The Parking Problem

Parking remains the arithmetic that does not close. The site provides eleven spaces; the code requires more. To cover the gap, the application floated buying additional spaces from the St. Armands public parking garage next door — and, as this paper reported from the city’s written comments this week, the Planning Department’s position is that such a purchase “is not allowed” and would violate the public parking bond, with a lease the only conceivable path. Strip the borrowed spaces away and the project is short parking it does not have, on a third of

an acre already asked to hold a restaurant, a café, retail, a residence, a pool, an alley drive, and a loading zone it currently lacks.

A Loading Zone, Awnings, and Impervious Ground

On that loading zone: the code requires one, and the plan shows none; staff wants it drawn and tabulated. The reviewers flagged the awnings and canopies twice — first for possibly encroaching into the public right-of-way along the front property line, and again for materials, since the district bars glossy, plastic-looking finishes and prohibits backlighting. Impervious-surface coverage, staff noted, is missing and must be calculated to confirm the site does not exceed what the code allows.

The Flood Reckoning, Read Into the Record

The morning’s first comment, and its longest advisory, both circled the same problem: water. Staff asked for far more detail on the project’s flood-conscious design and its proposed flood panels, and spelled out a hard structural limit — the plans lean on dry floodproofing at the ground floor, which the code permits only for the non-residential portions of a mixed-use building. Translated, the residential floor above cannot be protected that way and must instead be elevated. The city’s list of what a compliant approach demands runs long: dry-floodproofing certification, a means of egress above the floodproofing level, waterproofing and seepage calculations, utility and backflow protection, and a Flood Emergency Operations Plan,

all to the ASCE 24 standard. None of it is cosmetic, and all of it costs money — the quiet engine under this entire project. As this paper has detailed, FEMA’s 50% Rule forces a full elevation once improvements cross half a building’s value, and the cheapest way to recover that mandated cost is to build up. The more honestly the flood questions are answered, the more expensive the answer becomes, and the more the third floor looks like the way to pay for it.

Before the Palms Can Fall

Then Turner reached the utilities, and the rendering’s pool gave way to the reality of a barrier-island infrastructure job. Before the large royal palms along Madison Drive can even be removed, she said, an aging twelve-inch asbestos-cement water main must be abandoned in place and grout-filled, and the plans revised to match the most current record drawings — because the old line conflicts directly with the proposed landscaping, demolition, and construction.

The exchange that followed showed how tangled that below-ground picture is. If the main in the landscaped area comes out, Griffiths asked, would it have to be replaced with another twelve-inch line? “It would be,” Turner answered — then, unusually, conceded that the city’s own paperwork had muddled the matter. There had originally been a plan to install a sixteen-inch main and replace the old line, she explained, but it “was confusing on a record drawing, so

we might have misguided you,” and further investigation showed the planned sixteen-inch connection “was never put in.” The developer, in other words, must now design around infrastructure the city’s records had described inaccurately. The rendering shows a pool. The paperwork shows a water-main puzzle the city is still untangling alongside the applicant.

Heard, Not Approved

Nothing was decided Wednesday, and by design nothing could be. The committee’s job was to issue comments, and it issued a great many — fifteen from zoning and current planning alone, before the advisory notes, the waste-and-recycling items, and the utility conditions. The Development Review Committee grants no final approval; it is one early gate in a process that can run as many as 17 steps, and the meeting closed with no project on the agenda fully signed off.

That procedural point cuts against anyone expecting the political system to simply say no again. In its pared-down form, the project proposes no rezoning, no height beyond the cap, and a residential count within what the site allows — a posture that would send it to the Planning Board but not to the City Commission, the body that has twice been the residents’ backstop. Which is why the staff comments matter more than their dry format suggests. They are the first hard look at how the city intends to treat the “by right” claim, and the answer, so far, is that “by right” arrives heavily conditioned: no stretched freeboard for height, no floor of suites accepted as one home without proof, and no borrowed public parking taken for granted.

What’s Next

The volume of unresolved comments makes the near-term path plain. The applicant cannot advance until the plan returns corrected — the setbacks labeled, the district fixed, the “35 stories” error erased, the loading zone added, the parking reconciled, the flood approach documented to ASCE 24, and, above all, the third floor redrawn to answer the question the city asked and the applicant agreed to resolve: is this one dwelling, or several? Staff signaled more than once that further comments will follow once more information arrives — the city’s polite way of saying the file is far from finished.

Some of that is clerical, and revision will dissolve it. The rest is structural, and revision cannot easily make it vanish. A sharper pencil can relabel a room, but it cannot turn a floor of suites into a single home if the kitchens say otherwise; it can redraw an elevation, but it cannot escape the elevation-and-flood costs the 50% Rule imposes.

Residents will note, too, that this is unfolding across the summer, when many of them are away — a timing the St. Armands Residents Association has openly worried about. The corner that has sat as a storm-wrecked box since 2024 remains exactly that, and the plan to revive it goes back for another submittal. Wednesday told us where the city intends to draw its lines. Whether those lines hold — and whether the promised single-unit redraw is real — is the story of the coming months.

Parking, from page 1

filled the July 6 meeting to unload on Sarasota’s expanded paid-parking program — the rewrite that now keeps the meters running from breakfast until well after most storefronts have gone dark. What the city sold as the gentler way to fix a bleeding parking budget has become the loudest downtown grievance of the summer. By the end of the meeting, even the commissioners were conceding the phones and inboxes have not stopped ringing — and reopening a debate they thought they’d settled in the spring.

What the meters do now

On the two metered downtown streets — Main Street and Palm Avenue — paid parking is now enforced from 8 a.m. to midnight Monday through Saturday, with Sunday enforcement starting at 1 p.m. That’s a substantial jump from the old 10 a.m.-to-8 p.m. window: two extra hours in the morning, four more piled onto the night, and Sundays folded in. The city also raised citation fines by \$5 across the board. The hourly rate itself stayed put at \$1.50. The expanded enforcement took effect July 1, and the backlash was immediate.

How Sarasota got here: a \$2.8 million hole

Sarasota’s parking program is supposed to pay for itself. It hasn’t. The city’s combined downtown and St. Armands parking funds ran a \$270,784 loss in the current budget year, and without changes the shortfall was projected to balloon to roughly \$2.8 million by 2028 — driven by storm-related revenue losses, aging garages, and a parking fund that underwrites the free Bay Runner trolley to the tune of more than \$924,000 a year.

Back in March, staff handed the commission two ways to close the gap: raise rates or extend hours. Option one would have pushed the on-street rate from \$1.50 to \$2.25 an hour — a 50% jump — and tripled some employee parking permits. Option two would freeze the rate but stretch enforcement deep into the night, a revenue-maximizing model borrowed from Seattle’s “After 5” program.

On March 23, the commission chose door number two. It approved the extended hours and the \$5 fine bump, and it rejected the rate hike and the permit increases outright — an explicit decision to spare shoppers and downtown workers a bigger bill. The plan drew heat even then: one resident branded city staff “nightmarish” and warned a rate hike would drain millions from the local economy, while the St. Armands Circle Association complained it had learned of the proposal from the news.

In other words, the very policy that packed the chamber on July 6 was the option the commission picked precisely because it was supposed to hurt less.

The landlords open fire

First to the microphone was Ronnie Shugar, who introduced himself as an entrepreneur, downtown landlord with more than 20,000 square feet of retail space, restaurateur, investor and philanthropist. He did not come to discuss parking theory.

“Paid parking is having a real, long-lasting and negative impact on downtown commerce,” Shugar told the commission. “People are choosing to go elsewhere. They’re cutting visits short, meeting friends, having lunch, shopping and spending their days in places where parking is easier and free.”

Every one of those decisions, he said, “costs a downtown business money, profit, customer curation and retention.” His verdict on the playing field: “Downtown businesses are being forced to compete with one hand tied behind our backs.”

Shugar zeroed in on the new hours as self-defeating. At 8 in the morning, he said, a customer who wants nothing more than a coffee and a Danish is looking at “\$2 just to step inside. Why?” — when there is “a Starbucks or Wawa off Washington with no parking fee headache.” And on the late nights, he argued, the meters are guarding empty streets: “There are literally less than 10% of retailers open. The streets are empty. Why does the city need to incur overhead, payroll or meter maids for those hours?”

A shot at Venice, and a petition

Shugar pointed the commission toward a neighbor. “I implore the commission, review the City of Venice’s successful two-hour free downtown parking system,” he said. “They’re treating businesses as partners rather than sources of additional government revenue.”

He reminded the dais that CNN Travel recently named Sarasota the most desirable place to visit in the country — Main Street among the reasons — then delivered the line that landed hardest: “To those of us who have invested in downtown, paid parking feels like a personal attack on our businesses and on the people whose livelihood depends on them.”

“We pay property taxes, we employ people, we attract visitors. We take risks,” he said. “We are being punished for it.”

Then he raised the stakes, announcing he is advocating for “a downtown petition to be signed by all commercial property owners and retail businesses” to bring the matter back before the commission and “vote to end paid parking downtown.” The mayor cut him off at the clock — but the message was delivered.

“We looked inside first”

Fellow business owner and commercial property owner Chris Voelker followed, armed with a pointed contrast. When the city’s parking manager explained that the division had lost revenue because of the three hurricanes, Voelker said, he could only think of his own storm season.

“We small businesses really suffered also because of the three hurricanes,” he said. “But what we did is we looked inside first.” Small businesses cut expenses without degrading their product, he said — “we couldn’t exactly just start charging twice as much for everything.”

Voelker urged the same introspection of the parking division, and he brought numbers. The division, he said, runs at 43% personnel cost — “one of the highest in the nation.” The city has poured money into parking technology, he added, with “no return on investment that we’re aware of. Why?” Smaller cities than Sarasota manage to offer businesses free parking, he noted, “and we have never even considered that.”

His closing framed the whole night: “We should be upholding the economic driver of the city. Not getting in its way.”

The commission reopens the March debate

By the time the meeting reached commissioner comments, the pushback had clearly registered — and the parking fight the commission thought it had resolved in March cracked back open.

Commissioner Liz Alpert acknowledged the “consternation” but argued a chunk of it stems from confusion. “There’s an awful lot of people who were not aware that we were charging for parking downtown already,” she said, “and are not aware that it’s only on two streets downtown.” The real irritant, she said, is the calendar: “It seems to be the extra hours that really are bothering people.”

Then she floated a trade that would effectively rerun the March vote — in reverse. “Maybe we should take a look at going back to the regular hours but then raising the rate,” Alpert said,

“because we got to do one or the other.” Her bottom line on the economics was blunt: “Parking is not free. Somebody has to bear the cost.” Either the whole city subsidizes it, or the people who use the spaces pay a user fee.

Accosted in the steam room

Commissioner Kyle Battie offered proof of how far the issue has traveled. “I’m at the YMCA in the steam room and I got accosted by somebody about parking,” he said, to laughter. His fix: find “some sort of way to funnel people into our garages,” which he noted are running below full capacity.

The enterprise fund that never was

Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch — the architect of the March compromise — said her inbox tells the story. “I have received a lot of e-mails and had meetings and conversations with folks experiencing all kinds of angst about it,” she said. “I don’t think it’s unfounded.”

She has watched this movie before. The whole point of metering, she noted, was to stop the general fund from subsidizing parking — a promise dating to her first election nine years ago that “just hasn’t happened.” The operation “is called an enterprise fund and doesn’t function as an enterprise fund the entire time I’ve been on the commission.” Part of the drag: the parking division carries the free Bay Runner trolley, a roughly \$924,000-a-year line item the city is now shifting to Sarasota County’s Breeze transit system to qualify for federal grants. Ahearn-Koch said she wants a top-to-bottom review to finally make the fund stand on its own.

Why the city can’t just shut the meters off

For all the anger, commissioners made clear there is no magic switch — and the reason sits across the bay on St. Armands Circle.

The city is contractually bound to charge for parking on St. Armands to service the bond on the circle’s parking garage — a roughly \$16 million debt that St. Armands merchants are themselves helping repay, by their own account to the tune of half. Baked into that arrangement, Alpert said, was an understanding that if the circle charged for parking, downtown would too, to keep a level playing field. Walking away is not a policy choice the commission can simply make. “We would be sued if we did not do that,” Alpert said.

That is the box the commission is in: a parking system residents assume is a cash grab, a downtown business corps that says it is bleeding customers, and a bond covenant that makes “just make it free” a fast track to court.

Where the money actually goes

Mayor Debbie Trice put her finger on the credibility gap. Too many residents, she said, “honestly believe that parking is free, and the minute that the city is charging for parking, we’re just trying to line our pockets” — without realizing the fees are meant to recoup the real cost of running the system.

And that cost is ugly where the public feels it most: the garages. The city is facing \$750,000 elevator replacements at both the State Street and Palm Avenue garages, plus a \$650,000 overhaul of the aging on-street meters. The garage elevators are “broken more often than not,” Trice said, and the cost to fix them is “obscene” — parts come from the manufacturer, not, as staff noted, from Ace Hardware. The expanded hours are, in the city’s telling, what pays for exactly that.

Ideas on the table

Rather than dig in, commissioners spent the back half of the discussion brainstorming — and the ideas came fast:

- A parking validation program. Trice floated letting downtown restaurants knock a couple of dollars off the check for customers who show an active ParkMobile session — “\$2 or \$3 off the dinner check” — and asked the parking team to study it before any workshop.
- Better signage to the free spaces. Trice suggested a simple green sign with an arrow, mounted under the city’s blue “P” logo, steering drivers to the free parking many of them do not know exists — including the garage above Whole Foods on Second Street. By the city’s own count, the vast majority of downtown parking — roughly 88% — remains free.
- Free time in the garages. Both Battie and Alpert pushed making the garages more financially attractive, with a free hour or two, to pull cars off the metered streets.
- Resident parking permits, among other suggestions Ahearn-Koch said residents have been floating.
- Alpert’s swap: roll the hours back to the old schedule and raise the hourly rate instead — the option the commission rejected in March, when staff noted that even at \$2.25 an hour Sarasota would still undercut downtown Tampa’s \$4 rate.

What’s next

The commission’s consensus destination is a workshop dedicated to parking, where members can “bat around ideas” instead of waiting for a formal agenda item — though staff will present first, and the parking division was asked to come back with recommendations on validation, signage and the rest. Ahearn-Koch signaled she may bring forward a separate agenda item for a comprehensive review aimed at finally making the enterprise fund actually function as one.

Whatever emerges will land on a familiar-but-new desk: the review arrives just weeks into the tenure of a brand-new city manager already juggling a historic property-tax referendum headed for the November ballot.

For now, the meters run till midnight. Three months after the commission picked extended hours as the fix that would sting the least, downtown’s message — delivered in person, on the record, and with a petition warming up in the wings — is that the sting is the whole problem.

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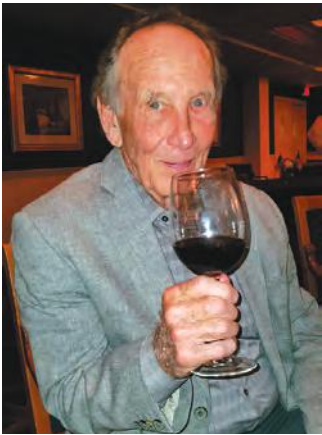
Juke Joint Update in Savannah Georgia

On the road again.,,, This time in South Savannah Georgia in a cluster of motels and fast-food restaurants off an exit of the Interstate.

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

On the road again.,,, This time in South Savannah Georgia in a cluster of motels and fast-food restaurants off an exit of the Interstate. We check the web for a bar that has the World Cup on cable. Close by we find a place called Little Lucky's.

The navigation system Waze takes us in circles. We eventually ignore it and find a landmark sign next to it. On a hot early weekday night, the outdoor seating stands empty. We go inside and see a bar with an array of TV monitors showing major league baseball, stock car racing, and, yes, a few minutes into a World Cup Futbol game. Several customers sit at both ends of the bar, leaving us isolated in the middle. The bartender, a young woman



in her twenties, approaches us warily, perhaps thinking that we had lost our way and wandered into her gin joint.

We asked about a gin and tonic. Little Lucky's had Hendrick's Gin on the shelf but no cucumber slice. We ordered the Hendrick's. The bartender served it with tonic in a pint beer glass. After paying \$16 for a gin and tonic in Washington DC, we did not mind foregoing the cucumber slice for a drink costing half the price. The bar also serves the excellent Lagunitas IPA beer from California.

Little Lucky's advertises itself as a pub. The music playlist that dominates the room says otherwise. The throbbing rap and hip-hop rhythms amid a background of neon green and violet lights elevate the place into a contemporary version of a southern Juke joint. It has the pool tables, gambling, and dance music of a country roadhouse.

Little Lucky sets the mood for the evening with a solo



dance. He moves his 280 or so pounds with surprising grace on the small dance floor next to a pool table and what comes close to slot machines at the end of the bar. He then moves to a keyboard where he programs a playlist into the computer that controls the music system.

A couple sitting at the bar notices us enjoying the music. The guy encourages his lady to give us dance lessons. We join her on the dance floor for a couple of numbers. She asks for brown-eyed girl and Little Lucky keys it in and dances up a storm.

We have not heard the phrase "Juke Joint" for years. Little Lucky's fits the bill perfectly. Glad to see the tradition continue in an updated version.

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 Orego Valley in New Zealand. Currently he splits time between residences in Chevy Chase, Maryland and St. Armand's Circle in Florida.

Rich Hermansen selected has 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.

sale, from page 1

ample space for both the homeowners and their guests. The primary suite acts as a self-contained sanctuary featuring its own beachfront terrace, a boutique-inspired dressing room, a spa bath, and a private fitness space.

Entertaining is central to the property's architectural layout. The estate boasts a grand atrium with a sweeping marble staircase, a media room, a sophisticated lounge with a custom glass wine room, and a gourmet chef's kitchen. Outdoors, residents can enjoy multiple rooftop terraces that offer sweeping sunrise-to-sunset vistas spanning Sarasota Bay and downtown, capped off with a heated infinity-edge pool overlooking the turquoise waters of the Gulf.

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An Architectural Mecca

To understand the true weight of a sale on Westway Drive, one must look beyond the shoreline to the neighborhood's international architectural pedigree. Lido Shores is widely considered the birthplace and epicenter of the "Sarasota School of Architecture," a celebrated mid-century modern design movement that flourished in the 1950s. Visionary developer Philip Hiss transformed the enclave into a laboratory for climate-responsive modernist design, commissioning legendary architects like Paul Rudolph, Tim Seibert, and Victor Lundy. They built homes that embraced their subtropical surroundings with floor-to-ceiling glass, flat roofs, deep overhangs, and open, cross-ventilated spaces.

Within this historic enclave, Westway Drive itself is hallowed ground in the architectural community. It is home to some of the most significant mid-century structures in the United States, including Paul Rudolph's 1953 "Umbrella House" at 1300 Westway Drive—a pioneering property once hailed by Architectural Digest as one of the most remarkable homes of the 20th century. The street also boasts the famed Hiss Studio and the geometric Arguedas "Zigzag" House. To own property on Westway Drive is to share an address with an internationally recognized architectural corridor, making the sale of 1067 Westway Drive a transfer of stewardship in one of Florida's most historically significant neighborhoods.

Contextualizing the Sale

While the \$15 million closing price is undeniably significant, the context of the transaction reflects a slight cooling or normalization in the ultra-luxury housing sector. The property was initially listed in February 2026 for a staggering \$20 million. After an unfulfilled period on the market, the price was reduced to \$18 million in late May before finally settling at the final closing price in mid-July. The \$5 million total discount from the original asking price represents a 25% adjustment, signaling that even elite buyers are negotiating more aggressively in today's economic climate.

The sellers, identified in property records as Thomas and Paula McInerney of Westport, Connecticut, successfully transitioned the property to new stewards. Monica Verinder of Coldwell Banker Realty handled the high-profile transaction, exclusively representing both the buyer and the seller in the deal.

A Legacy on Lido Shores

Lido Shores is historically celebrated for its architectural pedigree, Mid-Century Modern roots, and uncompromising privacy. As the Sarasota market continues to evolve following years of unprecedented post-pandemic growth, the sale of 1067 Westway Drive serves as a prominent benchmark. The transaction highlights that while aspirational pricing may be facing headwinds, the demand for unparalleled waterfront luxury, historical prestige, and prime location on Florida's West Coast remains incredibly robust.

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True wealth management requires a relentless advocate. After four years of battling an aggressive, stage four, inoperable cancer diagnosis where traditional options were limited, Bob Parrish is in full remission and stronger than ever. He applies this exact same fighting spirit and tenacity to defending your financial interests. Backed by profound empathy and an understanding of what it takes to overcome steep odds, Bob is the trusted advocate you want in your corner.

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